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# NATO's FUTURE PARTNERSHIPS

Bratislava – Warszawa 2012

Centre for European and North Atlantic Affairs (CENAA) – Polish Institute of International  
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## EDITOR'S ADDRESS

### NATO's Future Partnerships

The North Atlantic Alliance made significant strides during the last two decades and was able to both transform its mission and extend its geographic reach. NATO's global engagement proceeded in lockstep with establishing partnerships around the world. As a result NATO partners are spread across all continents – they are significant contributors to Alliance's operations, providing almost all possible kind of support. On the other hand the very essence of these partnerships differs significantly in scope, depth, nature, goals, and intensity. The most important objective of this publication is to analyse the future perspectives of NATO's most important partnerships with different state actors around the globe.

We try to offer not only an analysis of the current state of these partnerships, but also to take a look into their future. We defined 2014, the end of current operation in Afghanistan, as a watershed moment. The reason is that the majority of partner countries have crucial involvement in ISAF and its termination will determine their relations vis-a-vis NATO. However, it is clear that Afghanistan is not equally important for each and every partner. For some countries it is the essence of cooperation, for others the membership perspective is the absolute priority. Finally, there are countries interested in cooperation based on strictly defined national strategic interests, without the will to develop the partnership into actual membership in the organization.

During the recent years, a number of experts presented innovative approaches for NATO to adopt while building partnerships with different countries. This "exercise" was fuelled by an in-depth review of how these relations are functioning in practice and resulted in a rather obvious conclusion that there is no "one size fits all" policy that the Alliance could fall back upon. Europe is a case in point, since it is clear now that not every country would be ultimately interested in NATO membership (which was not



so apparent some time ago). Furthermore, the need to tailor individual instruments to every single NATO partner is more than evident. The Alliance responded by adopting its partnership policy towards non-NATO European countries quite successfully, taking into consideration the completely different internal political conditions and motivations presented by partners.

Also, while some time ago the prevailing view held that the cooperation with the Alliance should be attractive especially for those countries that share its values presented in basic NATO documents, with the Washington Treaty as the most prominent one, we are now witnessing a change of tone. Several major crises that affected NATO during the last decade, including the necessity to fight for its credibility in Afghanistan, dramatically shrinking financial resources, and new threats and challenges like international terrorism, led many opinion-makers to the conclusion that the Alliance cannot be too picky when choosing partners, and vice-versa. Many countries around the globe may and will need NATO when confronting the challenges of the XXI century. Such a situation presents an unprecedented chance for the Alliance since it will never have at its disposal all essential instruments required for coping with the threats stemming from a turbulent security environment.

While broadening the scope of cooperation with different countries around the globe surely is a positive development, it carries with it several enormous challenges for the Alliance, too. The most important one is political. The question of how to incentivize current and potential NATO partners is the most pertinent. Their involvement, especially in the case of Afghanistan, should not be taken for granted as many countries need to expend extensive resources to support the Alliance, so their desire to shape NATO policies is likely to increase. Will the Allies be ready to accept these ambitions? Current financial constraints also call for a deep transformation of NATO institutions, including those responsible for day-to-day cooperation with partners. It will no doubt cause growing problems in terms of managing a variety of activities connected to dealing with the outer world. Highly individualised formulas of cooperation will pose a mounting challenge in this sphere and will test NATO's capabilities to adapt to the limitations stemming from the internal transformation.

This publication covers NATO's partnership with Afghanistan, Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, the Balkan countries (non-members), the Middle Eastern and Mediterranean, as well as the so-called global partners.



The chapter on Afghanistan discusses a complex topic of transition of NATO's presence in this country as well as the future of Alliance's engagement in Central Asia. The chapter on Russia analyses issues like cooperation in Afghanistan, piracy, ballistic missile and offers a perspective on ballistic missile defence as a potential "game changer." The chapter on Ukraine focuses on the complex nature of partnership that is influenced by internal changes in that country. The partnership with Georgia is still determined by several challenges, including the strategic situation in the Southern Caucasus as well as the country's transition. The Middle East and Mediterranean are, and remain among the most important strategic regions for Allies.

Global partnerships – among others with Australia, Japan that have an enormous share in the stabilization of Afghanistan – will need to be re-thought after 2014. These countries' involvement in supporting NATO in its struggle with the current challenges – not just in this particular theatre, but elsewhere, makes them extremely valuable partners for the Alliance. In the post-ISAF environment, the necessity of sustaining ties with these countries will be particularly important, not least because their perception of the current threats and the shared views with NATO concerning the ways and methods of tackling them is proving extremely valuable.

The editors of this volume hope that this publication will not only provide insight into the most important developments around particular NATO partnerships, but also serve as a basis for practical recommendations for policy-makers in an area with a growing importance for years to come.



## **“NATO’S PARTNERSHIPS – A CONTINUING SUCCESS”**

James Appathurai

NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General  
for Political Affairs & Security Policy

For over sixty years, NATO’s greatest responsibility has been to protect and defend our territory and our populations against attack. However, in the face of global risks and threats such as terrorism, missile proliferation and cyber attacks, security must be a cooperative effort. This means that, to deliver security at home, NATO must continue to strengthen its ties with countries and organisations around the world..

Over the past two decades, our partners have already been key to NATO’s success. They have made a major contribution to the operational outcome and the political legitimacy of our missions from the Balkans to Afghanistan, and last year over Libya. Today, strong partnerships are as important for NATO as modern military hardware and flexible forces.

By the end of 2014, NATO’s current mission in Afghanistan will be completed, as Afghans fully take charge of their own security. But in our fast-changing world, other security challenges will no doubt emerge. To meet those challenges, it will be vital to build on the practical experience of working with our partners, and to further develop the Alliance’s global network of security partnerships.

This is not about NATO expanding its foot-print into other parts of the world, or assuming global responsibilities. It is about NATO being globally aware, globally connected, and globally capable. And there is considerable scope for strengthening the Alliance in such a way.



Today, we hold regular consultations with all our partners on security issues of common interest. It will be important to make those consultations much more frequent, focused and substance-driven.

In addition, willing and able Allies and partners could work together on specific issues in “cooperation clusters”. For example, we could collaborate more on military training, education and exercises, to make sure that our forces are able to meet future contingencies together..

NATO, partner nations, and the European Union could also work more closely together on multinational capability projects. This would help us to learn from each other’s initiatives, to give greater focus to our efforts, and to get the most out of our limited resources.

Finally, NATO should be open to deepening its engagement with new, global partners.. For example, we have exchanged views with China on our contributions to the fight against piracy. If we intensify our dialogue we can better understand each other’s security concerns and define other areas for concrete cooperation.

Of course, as NATO looks to develop its vast network of security partnerships, it cannot and will not be distracted from its other responsibilities. Our new Strategic Concept makes it very clear that both collective defence and crisis management remain core tasks for NATO in addition to cooperative security.

But if we want to face today’s global security challenges, we cannot maintain a purely European perspective. NATO must be engaged wherever our security is at stake – in Europe, across the Euro-Atlantic area, and around the globe. Our partnerships have been and will remain key building blocks in that engagement.



# NATO IN AFGHANISTAN

Marian Majer

History of Afghanistan shows that this country has never succeeded to secure a reliable alliance with a world power to defend its boundaries and protect itself from interfering attempts of other states, predominantly its neighbours. The developments during the last decade in conjunction with the policy of international coalition towards this region saw a demonstration of efforts to break this negative legacy and to create a long-term and stable cooperation of international players with Kabul. But the current challenges Afghanistan is facing on its path from the devastation, triggered by the several decades' long war, are still strong enough to reverse the present gains. Therefore many circumstances will continue to influence whether the current attempts of world powers, especially those by the North Atlantic Alliance, to build a viable relationship with Afghanistan may or may not see the same fate as previous attempts.

## Early NATO Deployment

After the initial US military operation<sup>1</sup> against Taliban bases in Afghanistan, which followed after the attacks on New York and Washington in September 2001, an agreement between members of the international community, representatives of various Afghan ethnic groups, and military commanders has been signed. The Annex of the Bonn Agreement urged United Nations Security Council (UN SC) to endorse the deployment of an International Security Assistance Force to assist in maintaining security for Kabul,

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<sup>1</sup> The operation was conducted also with the support of other NATO Allies.



with the possibility of further extension as required (United Nations 2001). The call has been approved by UN SC Resolution 1386 which was passed on 20 December 2001, establishing the first ISAF deployment for the first period of six months. A total of eighteen countries, led by the United States, initially contributed to the ISAF mission. The technical conditions of the deployment were set up by a Military Technical Agreement (MTA) signed in January 2002 between the succeeding government of Afghanistan and the ISAF. The area covered by the first ISAF mission was delineated in a map that was annexed to the MTA. It encompassed Kabul and its immediate environs with an extension to include the Bagram Airbase (Brooking 2012, p.58).<sup>2</sup>

By early 2003 ISAF was still the operation of the international coalition under auspices of the UN, although most of the contributing nations were also members of NATO. The Alliance began to increase its role on 16 April 2003, when the North Atlantic Council agreed to take over ISAF mission's command and coordination, finally doing so in August of that year. NATO, in phased steps, significantly widened its involvement with an agreement to extend its mandate until it covered the whole country. This decision was based upon the UN Security Council Resolution 1510 approved on 13 October 2003 and finally agreed upon by NATO in December 2003. In late 2003, NATO also decided to deploy its first NATO Senior Civilian Representative in order to ensure balance between the political and military sides of the NATO mission.<sup>3</sup>

Resolution 1510 called upon NATO to provide security and law and order, promote governance and development, help reform the justice system, train a national police force and army, provide security for elections, and to provide assistance to the local effort to address the narcotics industry (UN SC 2003). The problem was that the scope of the mission was quite general and it did not provide details of how NATO should accomplish these tasks. Even worse, in the upcoming years this resolution was not (also due to objective reasons of complicated decision-making within the NATO framework) followed by any clear strategy determining the military goal of NATO in Afghanistan and what kind of end-state it is seeking. That led to the pragmatic ad-hoc

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2 Besides ISAF there was also other deployment of international military forces under the Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) led by the US Central Command (CENTCOM).

3 Since NATO has taken over ISAF command, it implemented four stages designed to bring all of Afghanistan under NATO's operational responsibility. In Stage One in 2003-2004 the Alliance moved into the northern part of the country. Stage Two began in May 2005 when NATO moved into western Afghanistan. Stage Three came into force in July 2006, after some delays due to insurgent violence and, finally, Stage Four began in October 2006, finally consolidating NATO's responsibilities all over the country.



approach and strategic dominance of US, which was reflected not only in the operational situation in the Afghan theatre, but also on the political level while conducting the main political decisions about the future NATO's course (see more Münch 2011 and Ruttig 2012).

### **Strategy Change and the American Surge**

From the beginning of 2008, many NATO officials (mostly American) started to admit that the security situation in Afghanistan did not develop in line with the expectations and some kind of adequate action was necessary.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, on 1 December 2009, the newly elected president Barack Obama announced in his speech at the Military Academy in West Point a Plan for next steps in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The plan was based on the new strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan, released by the U.S. Department of Defense in March 2009. The goal of the revised U.S. policy in Afghanistan was “to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and to prevent its capacity to threaten America and our allies in the future” (White House 2009). According to the strategy, the U.S. would increase its military presence by 30,000 troops in the coming months (summer 2010). This move was to be accompanied by the strengthening of civilian efforts and cooperation between military and civilian components, as well as the intensification of training efforts and strengthening the capacity and capabilities of the Afghan security forces. Obama also declared July 2011 to be a starting point for a progressive draw-down of U.S. troops.

The new U.S. strategy encompassed three key components: first, increasing of military presence leading to the improvement of the security situation and increasing of capabilities of the Afghan national security forces (ANSF); second, more effective steps in the civilian sector; and third, close partnership and cooperation with Pakistan. Concerning especially the first component, Obama accepted the recommendation from then ISAF Commander General Stanley McChrystal. By doing so, he identified himself with those who emphasized the necessity of boosting the

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4 For example according to a view expressed by Admiral Mike Mullen in September 2008 “no amount of troops in no amount of time can ever achieve all the objectives we seek. And frankly we are running out of time.” (New York Times 2008).



U.S. military presence in the theatre. In parallel, he followed in line with his previous statements from the presidential campaign, when he promised that for a “necessary and proper” war in Afghanistan he would always allocate and ensure the necessary resources and support. This was one of the earliest evidence that the exit strategy of ISAF had much more to do with the American domestic politics than with any NATO/ISAF coalition strategy.

Nevertheless, there was not a general acceptance of the strategy within the U.S. administration. Vice-president Joe Biden, for instance, raised the question of viability of counterinsurgency as he was skeptical of the view of generals who were calling for the surge. Also, the then Secretary of Defense Robert Gates was restrained in his evaluation of the future effects of this move, as he said that after the Iraq experience, nobody was prepared to have a long slog where it is not apparent that the U.S. will be making headway (Los Angeles Times 2009). Doubtful impact of the surge and these cautious words of some American officials were, according to many analysts, confirmed in the following years. U.S. underestimated how many troops it needed, allowing key al Qaeda figures to escape to Pakistan and the security within Afghanistan to deteriorate. So the policy that emerged from the reassessment of strategy in 2009 – increasing the troop levels through the summer of 2010 and withdrawing them the next year – failed to take into account that al Qaeda (and other militants) was all but gone from Afghanistan and that the overwhelming majority of those fighting ISAF in Afghanistan were locals with limited ambitions beyond the country’s borders. On one hand, the increased troop levels allowed ISAF to fight the insurgency, but the time limits placed on the mission kept that fighting from producing enduring political results (Yingling 2011).

### **Fulfilling Goals**

Over the last decade, NATO and the Afghan government set for themselves many ambitious goals, not only in the area of security, but also in other fields of life in Afghanistan. As Morelli and Belkin point out, NATO’s efforts in Afghanistan are mostly determined by the fact that ISAF is the Alliance’s first “out-of-area” mission beyond Europe. Although NATO has undertaken stabilization and reconstruction missions before, for ex-



ample in Kosovo, the scope of the undertaking in Afghanistan is considerably more difficult. This is especially so given that Taliban and al Qaeda insurgents are providing strong resistance to the operation; Afghanistan has a persistent problem with functioning of its central government; the distance from Europe and the country's terrain present daunting obstacles to both NATO manpower and equipment. Stabilization and reconstruction had to take place in parallel with the ongoing combat operations. And not to forget, although the allies agreed on the general political objective of the ISAF mission, some have had differing interpretations of how to achieve these (Morelli and Belkin 2009, p.1). These circumstances were transferred to the NATO policy discourse and to its initiatives and projections presented primarily by NATO summits or gatherings of foreign and defence ministers.

The Declaration by NATO and Afghanistan from September 2006 and the ISAF's Strategic Vision presented in Bucharest summit 2008 were of special importance. The former because it "de facto" put Afghanistan in the group of Partnership for Peace (PfP) countries as it declared to "draw upon selected PfP instruments, and carefully selected PfP activities to meet and identified needs of Afghan authorities" (NATO 2006). The latter because it formulated four principal points under which the allies promised a "long-term commitment" to Afghanistan; expressed support to improve the country's governance; promised increased engagement with Afghanistan's neighbours, especially Pakistan; and finally and foremost pledged a "comprehensive approach" to bring the civil and military efforts together (NATO 2008). This comprehensive approach has later to a great extent influenced NATO's steps as well as its "narrative" and still is the crucial precondition for effectiveness of international support for Afghanistan.

An important milestone in the life of mutual cooperation between NATO and Afghanistan was the Summit in Strasbourg and Kehl in 2009, which by establishing a NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan (NTM-A) and operational mentoring and liaison teams (OMLT), strengthened the stabilization and training role of ISAF in the country (NATO 2009). Broadening of this partnership was also to be achieved by adopting a "NATO Afghan first policy" developed by NATO Economic Committee in coordination with the NATO Senior Resource Board in spring 2010 to maximize the positive impact of ISAF presence in Afghanistan. Citing the document, the aim of the Alliance was "to contribute to the development of the Afghan economy by increasing local procurement of goods and services whenever the acceptable standards for security, quality, price and



reliable supply were met including the use of Afghan contractors and the employment of Afghan labour for works and jobs in Afghanistan“ (NATO 2010).

The positive language of NATO officials and documents is, unfortunately in many aspects, offset by the much more negative reality on the ground. There are two main characteristics, which accompanied the ISAF mission and its objectives ever since NATO took it over. First, NATO commanders had enormous difficulties to persuade political decision-makers to bring appropriate military capabilities to the theatre. From one point of view, this was not so surprising since forces of most of NATO members were not ready for such expeditionary, flexible and distant deployments. As many analysts point out, most of Allied forces lack sufficient helicopter support, night-vision equipment, or the technology necessary to detect roadside bombs (see for example Morelli and Belkin 2009, p.34). Moreover, shrinking military budgets did not even allow most NATO members to think about buying the requisite equipment. But with ongoing time these shortcomings started to present a great obstacle for NATO’s mission. The second factor was the embarrassing results in building and training of Afghan security forces. It seemed that the international coalition, as well as the Afghan government, concentrated in this process more on quantitative growth than on the quality of trained soldiers. Besides that, regarding the Afghan national army (ANA), problems were stemming from an inadequate internal structure. The prioritization of combat units over command structures and logistics has led to an ANA that is heavily dependent on ISAF support. Similarly, ISAF and NATO have not been able to tackle the ongoing ethnic rivalry within the ANA. The issue is not how many Pashtuns are actually enlisted, but what such rivalries will mean once the ANA has to manage itself without external help. In other words, how sustainable are the effects of the training/mentoring imparted by ISAF (Giustozzi 2012, p.65). No less important problem is the desertion of newly recruited soldiers. Thousands of them are leaving the Army already during the preliminary training without any notification.

There is no doubt that many complications have been also caused by over-ambitious strategies of the Afghan government. A good example of this are the “Plans” prepared by Kabul in cooperation with the international community setting comprehensive goals to resolve the most visible problems of the country in the fields of security, economy, social development, justice and human rights. The Afghanistan Compact was one of these plans introduced at the international conference in London 2006. Just two years



later, with less than expected progress in meeting the objectives, another Afghanistan National Development Strategy was declared at a conference in Paris which laid-out the national development priorities. And yet another plan was introduced two years later, at the Kabul Conference in 2010, where these priorities have been translated into focused implementation plans in the form of 22 National Priority Programs, referred to as the Kabul Peace Process. Needless to say according to critics, the Kabul Process can just be another piece of paper in a line of governmental strategies with indefinite fate and bring no real change in the approach of the Afghan government in fulfilling the declared targets and programs.

Regardless of the setbacks, from the view of the Afghan government, the Kabul Peace Process initiated at the London and formalized at the Kabul Conference in 2010 appears to be very promising. It is supposed to create a framework for transferring civilian and military responsibilities from the international partners to the Afghan government and civil society organizations. The process is envisioned to last until the end of 2014 and should be followed by a decade of transformation. But the most critical observers point out that each of the international conferences and their initiatives were just a hopeless theatre of empty promises of the Afghan government. So while each conference has had a pledging component, aid effectiveness still remains a controversial question in Afghanistan. In each conference, the Afghan government and the international allies created more plans and unlimited benchmarks, but none of the conferences in the past have taken stock of the progress made towards the achievement of those benchmarks (Frogh 2010).

To avoid the setbacks and previous inconvenience under the Kabul Process, the role of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB)<sup>5</sup> has been changed to have more competences for oversight of the progress. Both Bonn (2011) and Tokyo (2012) international conferences even strengthened this mechanism standing it on three pillars: 1. The Standing Committees and Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) to review progress on a regular basis; 2. A Senior Officials Meeting to be held in 2013 and every second year subsequently to review progress and update indicators where needed; and 3. A Ministerial-level Meeting to be held in 2014, and every second year subsequently to review progress, update indicators, assess re-

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5 A body established in 2006 at the London Conference to oversee the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact.



source requirements and renew international commitments (Tokyo Declaration 2012). It needs to be said that the objectives of the programs are no less ambitious than those put forth several years ago. Thus the international community and donors have to be cautious in terms of their expectations of the results on the ground.

### **Future of International Engagement**

Nine years after the Western countries launched the first military operation against Taliban, NATO leaders met in Lisbon to discuss their future engagement in Afghanistan. That was at the time of very unpleasant security situation in the theater, despite the fact that there was almost 140,000 foreign troops deployed in the country. In fact, the number of security incidents was two-thirds higher than in the previous year 2009, and the number of civilian deaths caused by the conflict was continuously growing, reaching 2777 in 2010. The coalition military casualties kept mounting (more than 700 in 2010 compared to about 500 in 2009) (for more details see annex Strategic Geography, p. VI-VII, in Dodge and Redman 2011). Driven by these circumstances, NATO Lisbon Summit Declaration stated:

“We are entering a new phase in our mission. The process of transition to full Afghan security responsibility and leadership in some provinces and districts is on track to begin in early 2011, following a joint Afghan and NATO/ISAF assessment and decision. *Transition will be conditions-based, not calendar-driven*, and will not equate to withdrawal of ISAF-troops. Looking to the end of 2014, Afghan forces will be assuming full responsibility for security across the whole of Afghanistan” (NATO 2010).

This was the beginning of a discussion within NATO about a more detailed exit strategy, whose principal aim was to avoid the rush of withdrawal and reflected the unwillingness to formulate an open-ended commitment after 2014. As was mentioned earlier, the debate was to a great extent also influenced by the development of the U.S. domestic policy. In June 2011 the U.S. president ordered

the withdrawal of 10,000 U.S. troops by the end of that year and another 23,000 by the summer of 2012, part of what he called “the beginning, but not the end, of our effort to wind down this war” (ABC News 2011). This move had very much to do with economic reasons, given that the yearly estimated cost of the international presence



in Afghanistan was 140 billion USD. Of this amount, just the Americans paid more than 500 billion USD over a decade for direct military engagement and approximately other 60 billion USD for other aid to the Afghan government. Of course, we should not overlook the effects of the European defence budgets restrictions and the public opinion pressures in non-U.S. NATO countries, which caused the earlier withdrawals of such important contributors as Netherlands or Canada. Two years later, another NATO summit held in Chicago, thus, came with more concrete conclusions and set the end of 2014 as the latest date for withdrawal of NATO troops. According to the Summit Declaration,

“[NATO] will, however, continue to provide strong and long-term political and practical support through our Enduring Partnership with Afghanistan. NATO is ready to work towards establishing, at the request of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, a new post-2014 mission of a different nature in Afghanistan, to train, advise and assist the ANSF, including the Afghan Special Operations Forces. This will not be a combat mission” (NATO 2012).

It is quite clear not only from these official statements but also from behind-the-scenes diplomatic and expert discussions that in spite of the declaration on the NATO combat troops withdrawal, there is still a need for long-term commitment from the international coalition to Afghanistan. Although there are real gains in security, economic and societal conditions in the country that have been achieved, all of them are still reversible putting the future of the entire security situation in question. In the view of the former U.S. Ambassador to Kabul, Afghanistan is no longer a global hub of terrorist activity, but a Taliban resurgence would threaten to make it one again. Thus, the core U.S. interests would require the U.S. (and other Allies) to remain in Afghanistan for another decade to build up and train the Afghan forces, conduct counterterrorism operations, and respond to regional contingencies (Khalilzad 2011). In other words, even with a greater involvement of outside powers, U.S. efforts to internationalize the mission will not succeed without a sustained level of its military and civilian engagement. But in fact, this is not really news, as similar predictions appeared much sooner.<sup>6</sup>

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6 See for instance a statement of UK General David Richards from August 2009, that “the combat role will start to decline in 2011, but we will remain military engaged in training and support roles for another five years, and we will remain in a support role for many years to come.” (BBC Online 2010)



The Strategic Partnership Agreement signed by presidents Obama and Karzai in May 2012 should form a good base for the future cooperation between Washington and Kabul (White House 2012). Although there was similar partnership signed already in 2005 (NATO 2005), the key difference is that the latter is subjected to the approval of both the Afghan National Loya Jirga and the U.S. Congress. This technically means that this new agreement is regarded as a treaty, which attaches legal commitments to both states (although it lacks clear consequences should the commitments made therein not be met). This in effect brings the Afghan-American cooperation to the same level as between Washington and Japan or South Korea (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 1960; Korean Embassy in US 1953). Even though, the agreement affirms, “the nature and scope of the future presence and operations of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, and the related obligations of Afghanistan and the United States, shall be addressed in the Bilateral Security Agreement”, statements of U.S. officials indicate there will be no permanent American bases on the Afghan soil, but some kind of joint military bases with the U.S. personnel access to train and equip the Afghan security forces. The length of this presence is also in question. But it cannot be ruled out that it can easily last for several decades, as the example of American engagement in Japan shows.

Moreover, there are other problems and challenges to be solved in the upcoming years. First is the withdrawal of foreign troops itself. By the end of 2014, NATO needs to remove approximately 100,000 shipping containers full of equipment and 50,000 wheeled vehicles from the country. NATO officials point out that in order for all ISAF military equipment to be removed from Afghanistan in time, a container would have to leave the country every seven minutes, 24 hours a day,

seven days a week, starting right after the decision has been made (Felbab-Brown 2012). And that is really a tall order.

Another problem, a much more complicated one, is the character of the future international mission. In the time of Chicago summit, only two conditions seemed to be clear with regard to the nature of the mission: a UN mandated and non-combatant. Although there are some rumors about possible changes even in these terms of international presence, the probability of their revision is not really high. Discussion will rather revolve around what a non-combat mission actually means and where its boundaries will be compared to a combat mission. The robustness of the mission is also of concern, since many of the NATO countries are rather unwilling to spend more resources in Afghani-



stan.<sup>7</sup> Because money is of issue not only in relation to the deployment of troops or training personnel, but mostly regarding the financing of some basic expenditures of the Afghan government, including those for building and training of the Afghan security forces.

The question of viability of ANSF after 2014 was one of the crucial ones before the NATO Summit in Chicago. There are two reasons for this: one, it is a key factor for sustainability of security; two, it depends entirely on the willingness of the international community. According to the U.S. calculations from early 2012, a long-term sustainable size of the Afghan forces of about 230,000 soldiers – 120,000 less than today – requires 4.1 billion USD a year. This amount is nearly one-fourth of the Afghan GDP. This is why one of the deals struck in Chicago called for the burden of the ANSF financing to be divided among more actors. Thus 2.1 billion USD would be paid by the United States and 1.5 billion USD by the European Allies. The rest of the amount would be covered by Afghanistan with an outlook to be fully financially responsible for financing its own forces by 2024.

## Conclusion

More than ten years after the declared fall of Taliban, Afghanistan still attracts much attention of the international community. No doubt, taking into account the level of the population's level of freedom, respect for human rights, access to education or openness of the country in all aspects, it is now a better place to live than in 2001. But in many other respects it is far from what has been expected a decade ago. By that time, the Allies assumed they will help the new Afghan government to rebuild Afghanistan to be a secure, effectively governed and economically stabilized country with a solid rule of law and representative political bodies. As it started to be clear after several years following the intervention, this task would not be so easily accomplished and such goals could be achieved (if ever) only in a very long-term perspective. That is also why

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<sup>7</sup> Example of this fact is attitude of France: The French President Nikolas Sarkozy announced in January 2012 an accelerated timeline for the withdrawal of French forces from Afghanistan. Of the 3,300 French soldiers then stationed in Afghanistan, 1,000 were planned to be withdrawn by the end of 2012, 400 more than originally planned. France has announced that it will remove all combat troops by the end of 2013, which was confirmed by Sarkozy's successor Francois Hollande at the NATO Summit in Chicago.



the very positive predictions and evaluations of western politicians have been, with the ongoing international presence, replaced by much more modest ones. Declarations of victory over terrorism were replaced by warnings that the gains in Afghanistan are very fragile and subject to reversal. This fact is especially important now, when the date for official withdrawal of the international forces has been set and the expectations of Allies for the Afghan government to take up more responsibility for running its country are much higher.

The most skeptical interpretation says that in 2014 the country will be handed over to unstable, unsustainable, incompetent and unwilling Afghan institutions that operate in an increasingly militarized, politically, ethnically and socially fragmented environment. And the Western countries, being aware of this situation, are washing their hands off the political obligation undertaken towards the Afghan population in 2001, before it has been fulfilled with the rhetoric of progress without any real success (Ruttig 2012, p.158). Although ISAF and NATO authorities would hardly accept this language, they all know that the upcoming years will be decisive for the future of Afghanistan. Not only because of the risky security situation and alarming picture of the state of some security forces but also because of the unclear economic prospects and forces disruptive of the main pillars of the state. Despite of ofthe steady economic growth, the increasing ratio of revenues and government spending remains a big challenge. The current rate is only about 15-20%, which leaves a large gap for donors to finance. Although donors have pledged additional 16 billion USD by 2015 (4 billion USD a year over 2012-2015) at the donor conference in Tokyo in 2012, they agreed to meet this target only under the condition of a stronger expenditure control. This is crucial for at least two reasons: first, donors have heard many promises before with only a few of them fulfilled so far; second, problems with corruption are enormous and there is a long list of “lost” international money in the pockets of local clans, warlords or non-governmental organizations.

The presidential elections, expected for 2014, will be the crucial moment in this context. The new president – (Karzai ends his second term in office) will face the enormous political animosities among different political groups invigorated by unceasing ethnic rivalries. These complications will likely have a negative effect on the effectiveness not only of the Afghan government, but by the political representation of the country as a whole. The way the new president and his government will rise to the occasion will also have a huge impact on the future Afghan cooperation with NATO.



If the last decade in Afghanistan was about bringing Kabul back into the international community by transforming all the sectors of society, the next decade will be crucial for answering a question of whether Afghanistan will stay on this path or whether it will experience yet another disappointment, one of many it has known from its history. The international assistance will certainly be a key factor in this.

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# NATO-RUSSIA RELATIONS

Barbora Padrtová

The NATO-Russia relationship is undoubtedly one of the most important relationships that affects overall Euro-Atlantic security. Although, there are number of issues where NATO and Russia cooperate (ISAF mission – transit of NATO freight through the Russian territory, counter-terrorism, nuclear weapons issues, crisis management, counter-narcotics), they also face a number of challenges (missile defence in Europe, NATO enlargement), which are negatively influencing the practical cooperation and can be source of potential conflict. However, cooperation enables them to achieve important overlapping policy objectives. The goal of this paper is to analyse the challenges of NATO-Russia relations. By brief evaluation of current status of their relationship, this paper mainly specifies the future platforms of cooperation, concentrating on the post-ISAF period, as cooperation in Afghanistan is currently the most important area of NATO-Russia relations. Here, after 2014, cooperation in the present form will end which will undoubtedly bring about the search for other areas of cooperation.

## Current status of the NATO-Russia relations

Foreign and security policy thinking are derived from strategic culture. In this sense NATO and Russia sustain different views on European security and what threatens it. The differing perceptions by both sides on security have to be taken into account in part because each country's strategic thinking comes out of different security cultures. Whereas Russia maintains a remorselessly geopolitical understanding of



security,<sup>1</sup> NATO's approach moved away from strictly geopolitical towards wider interpretation of security. Russia desires to be a part of the "Euro-Atlantic Club" and has a real influence on the decision-making process. One of the most exclusive examples is Russian position towards missile defence in Europe. NATO's real focus is on building trust with its partners. The Alliance is encouraging a trust-building process through the gradual increase and broadening of daily contacts between NATO members and Russian officials because – in their view – it will help build a more durable and trusting relationship. However, there are deep-seated suspicions held by some in Russia's ruling circles and in several NATO countries as well, which deteriorate the intentions of both sides to cooperate.

Besides strategic interests of both entities, their mutual perceptions play an important role in their policy formulations. According to the new NATO's Strategic Concept: "NATO poses no threat to Russia" (NATO 2010). This position was further confirmed by NATO Secretary General Rasmussen in his statement at the press conference following the NATO-Russia Council meeting in Foreign Ministers session in April – "We do not consider Russia a threat to NATO countries, to NATO territory, to NATO populations. And Russia should not consider NATO a threat towards Russia" (Rasmussen 2012). However, Russian approach is different. Kremlin perceives Alliance as a military bloc hostile to its interests as was clearly expressed by President Putin at the press-conference after the NATO-Russia Council meeting in Bucharest, when he said that "approximation of NATO to Russia's borders will be seen as a direct threat to the security of the Russian Federation" (RIA Novosti 2008). Moreover, Russian position was also officially declared in the latest Military Doctrine from 2010, which lists both NATO and its strategic missile defence as first amongst the military dangers faced by the country (Voennaya doktrina Rossiiskoi Federatsii 2010).

Despite negative rhetoric on the Russian side, there were created two institutionalized platforms of cooperation between NATO and Russia – Partnership for Peace Programme (PfP) and NATO-Russia Council (NRC). Russia joined PfP in 1994 to build up

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1 To learn more about Russian strategic thinking please see: Tsygankov, A., P., 2010, *Russian Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity*. Rowman&Littlefield Publishers, Plymouth. 244 pp. ISBN 978-0742567528.; De Haas, Marcel, 2010, *Russia's Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century – Putin, Medvedev and Beyond*, Routledge, 211 pages. ISBN 978-0415477307.; Fedorov, Yury, E., 2006, 'Boffins' and 'Buffoons': Different Strains of Thought in Russia's Strategic Thinking, *Russia And Eurasia Programme*, Chatham House, <http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Russia%20and%20Eurasia/bp0306russia.pdf>;



an individual relationship with NATO. PfP offers practical bilateral cooperation on a wide range of issues. Russia was involved in NATO's peacekeeping operation in Bosnia (SFOR) and contributed the largest troop contingent among non-NATO states. It was also involved in the Kosovo peacekeeping operation (KFOR). In regards to NATO eastward enlargement, Kremlin has a negative view of the PfP. Russia's resistance can be mainly explained by its classical geopolitical view on the Russian "near abroad", where Moscow's key interest is to have a major influence in the region and tie these countries as close to Russia as possible. The secondary reason why Moscow has been restrained with regards to PfP is the fact that Russia has virtually the same status as other post-Soviet countries. This was considered as insufficient for Russia's own interpretation of its geopolitical position and Moscow demanded more exclusive position. Moreover, PfP does not have the same significance for Russia as it does for Central and Eastern European countries, which had used the program to reconfigure their armed forces in line with NATO standards.

In 2002, NATO has started cooperation with Russia more intensively on the basis of NATO-Russia Council, which replaced the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council (PJC).<sup>2</sup> The post- 9/11 atmosphere was fundamental in shaping the NATO-Russia relations. It has allowed Russia to take a greater part in discussions and has been far more satisfactory to Moscow than the previous "NATO +1" format under the PJC (Hendrickson 2005). The major advantage of the new format of cooperation enables Russia to be part of the discussions within Alliance from the beginning, which was not possible under the previous arrangement. Despite ambitious goals to work within the framework of the NATO-Russia Council as equal partners in areas of common interest,<sup>3</sup> real activities have been much more restrained. There is a need to focus on areas where actual results can be achieved such as in Afghanistan.

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2 NATO member states and Russia will continue to intensify their cooperation in areas including the struggle against terrorism, crisis management, non-proliferation, arms control and confidence-building measures, theatre missile defence, search and rescue at sea, military-to-military cooperation, and civil emergencies. This cooperation may complement cooperation in other fora. (Foundation Act of NATO-Russia Council)

3 Mechanism for consultation, consensus-building, cooperation, joint decision, and joint action for the member states of NATO and Russia on a wide spectrum of security issues in the Euro-Atlantic region (Foundation Act of NATO-Russia Council).



## NATO-Russia cooperation in Afghanistan

ISAF is considered one of the most successful examples of practical cooperation between Russia and NATO. They share common interests in the region's stabilization and face common threats of radical Islamists in Afghanistan. From March 2008, a Russian political decision based on strictly defined strategic interests allowed land transit through Russia of non-military freight from NATO, NATO members and non-NATO ISAF contributors, in support of the ISAF in accordance with UNSCR 1386 (NATO-Russia Council 2011). Moreover, on 25 June 2012 the Russian Government adopted a decree,<sup>4</sup> which extends ISAF transit options to include multimodal transportation to combine – rail, road and air transport. Under these arrangements, the transportation of non-military ISAF supplies through Russian territory has been implemented by Russian transport companies. Since August 1, 2012 the transit is implemented through the Vostochny airport in the Russian city of Ulyanovsk (Larionov 2012).

In order to be able to “sell” this political decision in this highly sensitive area of cooperation with NATO to the Russian public and domestic political representatives, an argument of broad international consensus and cooperation in the context of Afghanistan was used, as the head of the parliamentary committee for defence, Vladimir Komoyedov reminded that a refusal to fulfil UN Security Council resolution 1386, would be a major blow to Russia's reputation as a reliable partner (Vestnik Kavkaza 2012).

According to NATO officials, in order to remove ISAF military equipment from Afghanistan by the end of 2014: “a container would have to leave the country every seven minutes, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, starting now.” So far, more than 60 thousand ISAF containers have been transported by Russian carriers to ISAF through Russian territory and there are about 100 thousand containers and 50 thousand wheeled vehicles that need to go (Felbab-Brown 2012). Thus Russian economic benefits from transit are considerable. Although it has not been officially declared, according to Ulyanovsk Customs Chief Valery Gerasev, the transit of each container

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4 Decree No. 637 “Amending the Government of the Russian Federation Resolution No. 219 of 28 March 2008.” Postanovlenie pravitelstva RF ot 25.06.2012 n 637 “o vnesenii izmenenii v postanovlenie pravitelstva Rossiiskoi Federacii ot 28 marta 2008 g. n 219”, <http://government.consultant.ru/page.aspx?1617268>.



costs about 5,000 USD. Based on this figure, it can be roughly estimated that Russia already earned about 300 million USD for the transport of 60 thousand containers so far. The 100 thousand containers that still need to be transported, means another 500 million USD for Russia (Vestnik Kavkaza 2012). Moreover, Russia has also profited from selling military equipment and ammunition to NATO. In 2010 NATO bought from Russia 31 helicopters Mi-17 and refurbished them for the Afghan army, which resulted in earnings for Moscow of about 600 million USD, with NATO planning to buy another 10 helicopters by 2015 (Maslov 2010). According to a statement of Russia's state arms exporter Rosoboronexport, Russia was for the first time invited by US defence firms to become a subcontractor on the delivery of Russian-made ammunition for coalition forces in Afghanistan. If this tender is realized, Moscow stands to gain additional economic profit from the ISAF mission.

Transit of NATO freight through the Russian territory has been a keystone in NATO-Russia cooperation. Besides the Pakistani route, which is more unstable, expensive and less secure, transit across Russia is the main route for supplying ISAF. In addition Russia is deriving advantage from ISAF in terms of security and stability. Russia welcomes NATO's efforts to control the area and stabilizes Russian southern peripheries. Without NATO's presence, Russian armed forces would have to take the responsibility for maintaining security and launch more stabilizing and defence campaigns in the Central Asia region, as it was the case before 2001. Moreover, ISAF protects Russia against the spill-over and infiltration of extremist powers to the "heart of Asia" – Russia's key region of influence. Thus it is Russia's direct interest to preserve stability in the region and keep Central Asia secure.

### **Key areas of disagreement**

Despite positive efforts to cooperate on a practical level in Afghanistan, there are number of areas where the attitudes of Russia and NATO diverge. Among the most contentious one's is the issue of *Georgian war* and Russian recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The second is *NATO's open door policy*, especially towards Georgia and Ukraine. The third challenge is cooperation on *missile defence in Europe*. These three issues concern strategic interests of both entities. Further, these problematic is-



sues are long-term and probably will last into the future as well. However, there are disagreements in other areas, as was shown during the recent Syria crisis, where their strategic interests diverged due to the broader geopolitical interests of both entities in the Middle East.

NATO's position towards the Georgian war is well described on the official NATO website stating, that "Alliance expressed particular concern over Russia's disproportionate military action which was incompatible with Russia's peacekeeping role in the breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia" (NATO 2012a). Following the 2008 war, NATO-Russia relations reached the lowest point in a decade and they were gradually and slowly improving in the following years. The war definitely caused a rift in their mutual relations, which were formally re-built in 2010, when NATO invited Russia to the Lisbon summit.

Another issue critical to NATO-Russia relations is Alliance's continuing commitment to future enlargement. The less Moscow obstructs potential memberships of the Balkan states, the more it is against accession of countries from "near abroad." NATO confirmed many times (Bucharest Summit in 2008, Lisbon Summit in 2010, and the latest summit in Chicago), that Georgia is a real candidate for NATO membership. Georgia is also actively contributing to the ISAF as the second largest non-NATO troop contributor nation (NATO 2012a). However, within the Alliance there is a strong group of member states led by France and Germany who see Georgia's accession as unacceptable. Despite the fact that the NATO summit in Chicago is considered to be the "last NATO summit without enlargement," it is more focused on the Balkans.

An Intensified Dialogue on Ukraine's membership aspirations and related reforms was launched in 2005. Nevertheless, Ukraine's membership in the Alliance is not realistic in the foreseeable future. The reason is primarily that under the current President Viktor Yanukovich, Ukraine is not pursuing NATO membership as a foreign policy goal. Secondly, according to numerous independent polls, NATO membership has low public support (40% of Ukrainians see NATO as a threat) (Gallup 2010). For more than three years Ukraine has been out of NATO's accession discussions. The change may eventually occur, depending on the results of the Ukrainian parliamentary elections, which will take place in October 2012. However, based on the present situation, such a shift is not realistic. It is important to mention that both Georgian and Ukrainian membership are just theoretical possibilities at the moment.



Missile defence in Europe can be a catalyst for mutual NATO-Russia relations. It could either lead to pragmatic cooperation or to deterioration of relations. As Russian foreign policy expert Dmitri Trenin expressed in an interview for NATO Review – “Missile defence can be a game changer [a bridge towards the future that leads to real cooperation] or a game breaker [bridge towards the past where the danger of sliding back is very real]” (Trenin 2010). When NATO leaders met almost two years ago in Lisbon, the possibilities for cooperation looked promising. They attempted to neutralize the most disputed issue in NATO-Russia relations. The NATO-Russian Council, with the participation of Russian President Dmitri Medvedev, specifically “agreed on joint ballistic missile threat assessment and to continue dialogue in this area” (Chicago Summit Declaration 2012). However the promising political declaration was not further translated into real steps. Until there is some concrete binding document, any real progress on this issue cannot be expected.

Russia would like to participate on the missile defence plan as a partner on the basis of complete reciprocity and transparency. Thus, Moscow wants an equal participation in NATO’s decision-making process. To this effect Russia proposed that NATO creates a “sectoral” missile defence, with each entity responsible for providing missile defence protection for their own sector in Europe. Such conditions are naturally unacceptable for the Alliance. Moreover, Russian officials have expressed concerns about any deployments close to their borders because the fast interceptor missiles can possibly threaten Moscow’s nuclear deterrence. Therefore Kremlin requires from NATO “more transparency” about missile defence capabilities and plans, which would assure them that it poses no threat.

Whereas the Alliance seeks to develop two separate systems working independently of each other, Russia wants to lock the two systems, thereby effectively securing itself a veto. This in turn clashes with the provisions of The NATO-Russia Founding Act that rules out any “right of veto over the actions of the other” or any restriction on “the rights of NATO or Russia to independent decision-making and action” (Sherr 2011). Currently, pragmatic cooperation is feasible. On the one hand, this sort of cooperation requires trust that just isn’t there. On the other hand, further developing of practical cooperation will help increase mutual trust and improve relations. If Russia misses the chance to collaborate with NATO on common missile defence, for sure the US and NATO will create their own system without Russia and that’s what Kremlin has to take into account. The challenges are tremendous, but returning to the status quo is not a sustainable, longer-term option (Trenin 2012).



## Future platforms of cooperation

In the post-ISAF period, the importance of Afghanistan will decrease and cooperation in other areas will gain in prominence. Nevertheless, Afghanistan will be important for Moscow in the future as well. According to the results of the Chicago NATO Summit, there will be a new operation where NATO forces will gradually move into a more supportive role (Chicago Summit Declaration 2012). So far, there is no NATO official information about the numbers of troops, which will stay there after the deadline, but it is estimated that it will be around 50,000 troops. The force generation procedure will start next year and Russia will have an opportunity once again to be involved in the process of Afghanistan's transition.

Leaving aside Afghanistan, the cooperation will most probably continue in key areas of shared interests including the fight against terrorism, counter-narcotics, counter-piracy, nuclear weapons issues (New START – a nuclear arms reduction treaty between the US and Russia, signed on 8 April 2010, ratified on 5 February 2011), crisis management [between 1996 and 2003, Russia was the largest non-NATO troop contributor to NATO-led peacekeeping operations (NATO 2012b)], Cooperative Airspace Initiative, non-proliferation and arms control, military-to-military cooperation, submarine-crew search and rescue, defence transparency, strategy and reform, defence industrial cooperation, logistics, civil emergencies, and raising public awareness of the NRC.

NATO-Russia cooperation in *combating terrorism* has taken the form of regular exchanges of information, in-depth consultations, joint threat assessments, civil emergency planning for terrorist attacks, high-level dialogue on the role of the military in combating terrorism, lessons learned from recent terrorist attacks, and scientific and technical cooperation. NRC members also cooperate in areas related to terrorism such as border control, non-proliferation, airspace management, and nuclear safety. A concrete example of cooperation in this field is the “Stand-off Detection of Explosive Devices” project aimed at confronting and countering the threat of attacks on mass transit and possibly other public gathering places through jointly developing technology to detect explosives. Part of the struggle against terrorism is also Cooperative Airspace Initiative (CAI) for air traffic coordination. This project significantly contributes to building mutual trust between NATO and Russia (NATO 2012b).



In the area of *counter-narcotics* cooperation, NATO and Russia cooperate within the framework of NATO-Russia Council through joint projects such as the NRC Counter Narcotics Training Project. Since 2006, the NRC has been assisting in building regional capacity against narcotics trafficking by training counter narcotics personnel from Afghanistan, Central Asian nations and Pakistan. The initiative seeks to build local capacity and to promote regional networking and cooperation by sharing the expertise (NATO 2012b).

Since December 2004 Russia supports NATO's maritime *counter-piracy* operation in the Mediterranean Sea – Operation Active Endeavour. Piracy and armed robbery at sea continue to pose a significant and growing threat to maritime security. Taking into account, that the share of maritime transport accounts for 38% of all freight (Cargo.ru 2012), it is in Russian direct interest to keep sea waters secure from pirates which could threaten the country's export. The NRC member states expand existing tactical level cooperation, including through joint training and exercises. The more Russia and NATO will cooperate in different areas, the better the relationship will be. Diversification of areas where they cooperate means that they are feeling and perceiving the same threat in the same view, which results in more trust on both sides (NATO 2012b).

### **Role of the United States and Putin's return to Kremlin**

The United States as the leader of the Alliance is an important element in NATO-Russia relations, as the US-Russia relationship has always determined the NATO-Russia relations. Generally, if Moscow's relations with Washington are going the right way, they are also on the right path with the Alliance. In Russia the perception of the Alliance is even more simplified, where the US equates to NATO. After all, much will depend on the outcome of the November 2012 US Presidential elections. If Barack Obama becomes re-elected US, it is probable that cooperation will go on in the same direction. For President Putin it would be much to his advantage, because he can expect some concession from the US side, as it was already visible during Obama's 1<sup>st</sup> administration (efforts for realignment via "reset policy," the decision to cancel Bush administration's plans for European missile defence system). Should Obama be voted out of office, however, there will be a greater probability that US-Russian relations may sour, given that all leading Republican contenders advocate a tougher stance on



issues of importance to Russia, including missile defence. Toughening of US policy towards Russia will force Putin to reciprocate also in order to secure support in the State Duma, where all opposition parties are more anti-Western than the party of power (Saradzhyan – Abdullaev 2012).

Furthermore, some statements made by US representatives do not help Russians to understand the “West” thinking and position. A case in point is the interview for CNN with Mitt Romney, nominee of the Republican Party for President, who recently charged Russia with being America’s “number one geopolitical foe” (Romney 2012). Such contradictions produce only confusion on the Russian side and poison even more NATO’s relations with Russia. Moreover, treating Moscow like a foe will make Russia more suspicious of NATO’s relationship. Washington should not give Moscow additional reasons to indulge its paranoia.

Regarding future prospects of cooperation, we also have to take into account the results of Russian presidential elections and Putin’s return to Kremlin. Foreign policy under the new-old President should not radically change the strategic course, though the tone and style will likely differ from that of Dmitry Medvedev. Even as Prime Minister, Vladimir Putin was the principal architect of the Russian foreign policy, therefore we can expect a significant degree of continuity. Nevertheless, President Putin will have to confront domestic political and economic challenges that may affect his foreign policy choices: he could resort to the traditional Russian tactic of depicting a foreign adversary to rally domestic support as during his election campaign, or he could pursue a more accommodating foreign policy so that he can focus on issues at home (Katz 2012). The domestic political challenges have begun late last year when the results of Duma elections were accompanied by massive demonstrations. These events led Putin to project himself as a more fervent guardian of Russia’s interests on the international scene as a way to increase his support at home. His foreign policy pragmatism has a long-term goal of making Russia strong and restoring its role as a great world power. Unlike his predecessor, Putin has deliberately cultivated his image as a strong leader ready to defend Russia’s national interests.



## Conclusion

Although it has been more than two decades since the Cold War ended, the attitudes from that period have continued to influence the political thinking in Russia and NATO. There is still a lingering feeling of distrust and the level of cooperation is not up to its full potential. The animosities of the Cold War years proved difficult to overcome, and each side's suspicions of the other's motives persist. While there have been improvements in the relationship, it is still stuck halfway between former enmity and the aspired strategic partnership. The ISAF mission enabled Russia to play an important role due to the transit through Russian territory and enhanced both entities' ability to work together in areas of common interest.

Common security challenges demand unified responses, which is why cooperation between NATO and Russia is inevitable for ensuring the Euro-Atlantic zone's security. Both Russia and NATO should deepen mutual cooperation where common interests exist and put on ice differences in conflict areas. The most developed areas of cooperation remain Afghanistan, counter-terrorism, nuclear arms, crisis management, counter-narcotics, and counter-piracy. From a strategic point of view, cooperation on missile defence has the potential to either move NATO-Russia relations down a common path or it could end up in a deadlock. While, the technical hurdles are not inconsiderable, it is mostly the political considerations and Russia's delusion about the danger of missile defence that block cooperation. Failure to see eye to eye on this issue will not mean another Cold War – it will definitely lead to deeper and more pronounced hostility and further isolation of Russia.

Despite some recent improvements in mutual relations, we cannot make the assumption that cooperation in select areas will have a cumulative effect generating sufficient momentum towards cooperation in other areas or rule out conflicting approaches on a range of issues in the future.



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## NATO-UKRAINE PARTNERSHIP

Igor Lyubashenko, Konrad Zasztowt

Looking back at the first 20 years of NATO-Ukraine cooperation, one can state that its development was highly irregular and was largely a function of changes in Ukraine's foreign policy concept. Ukraine has balanced between Euro-Atlantic integration and closer cooperation with Russia both on a declarative and practical level. More recently, both Ukraine and NATO seem to be interested in maximizing the pragmatic effects of mutual relations. Despite this, both sides fail to design a strategy for further development of cooperation in order to make it more efficient and constructive.

### Historical Background of NATO-Ukraine Relations

The first official contacts between NATO and Ukraine were established in 1991. Soon after obtaining independence, Ukraine joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. In 1994, Ukraine was the first post-Soviet state to join the Partnership for Peace programme. 1997 marked a new period of intensification of cooperation. A Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine has been signed then. It remains the basic document defining legal and institutional framework of mutual relations as well as areas for consultation and cooperation. Moreover, the NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) was established as a special forum of dialogue and cooperation between the Alliance and the government in Kyiv. As a result of will to engage in the Partnership for Peace programme under Leonid Kuchma's presidency, Ukraine sent its troops to join NATO's peacekeeping operations in former Yugoslavia (IFOR/SFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina, KFOR in Kosovo).



In 2002 Ukraine proclaimed NATO membership an official foreign policy goal. It resulted in further deepening of the NATO-Ukraine relations. A NATO-Ukraine Action Plan aimed at supporting Ukraine's reforms towards Euro-Atlantic integration, was signed in November 2002. In order to support Ukraine's NATO membership aspirations that were reinforced by the newly elected President Viktor Yushchenko after the "Orange Revolution", the parties launched an Intensified Dialogue on NATO membership and the process of reforms supporting this aim. The culmination of political rapprochement was achieved during the NATO Bucharest Summit in 2008 when the Allies have declared that Ukraine will become a NATO member in the future.

After Viktor Yanukovych won the presidential elections in 2010, a new stage of relations between NATO and Ukraine has started. Ukraine's foreign policy priorities have been changed radically. A new "non-aligned" (or non-bloc) status was adopted. As a result, NATO membership has been removed from the foreign policy priorities of Ukraine.

Regardless of political fluctuations, the institutional framework of cooperation set by the Charter remains unchanged. The NUC is the main institution steering cooperation activities and providing a platform for consultations between the Allies and Ukraine on security issues of common concern. Joint working groups have been set up under the auspices of the NUC to take work forward in specific areas. Finally, there are NATO offices in Kyiv supporting the cooperation: the NATO Information and Documentation Centre, established in 1997 and the NATO Liaison Office, established in 1999.

The fields of practical cooperation also remain largely unchanged. Ukrainian troops served within Polish-Ukrainian battalion in Kosovo until 2010. Ukraine became one of the non-allied states that joined the ISAF operation in Afghanistan. More recently, Ukraine engaged in NATO's anti-terrorist and anti-piracy operations. Furthermore, a number of mutual exercises took place.

### **The Impact of the "Eastern Vector" on NATO-Ukraine Relations**

The historical background presented above has to be nuanced and complemented by the account on the subsequent Kyiv governments' hesitations, slowdowns and periods of coolness in Ukraine-NATO relations. Among causes of these predicaments in mutual relationship, certainly the most important one was the role of the "Eastern vector" – the



Russia's impact on Ukrainian foreign policy. Since the early 1990's Russia has tried to re-establish its zone of influence on the territory of the former USSR, and especially in Ukraine. The latter was perceived by the Moscow's leadership as geopolitically the most important Post-Soviet republic, control over which was a condition of Russia's super-power status. Therefore one of the main Russia's strategic aims was to keep Ukraine within common political and military structures and not to allow the Ukrainian authorities a closer rapprochement with NATO. The Ukrainian leadership had to take Russian pressure into account. Bearing in mind Russia's strong opposition towards Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration, governments in Kyiv proclaimed its foreign policy "multivectoral", that is equally directed towards cooperation with the U.S., the European countries and Russia. Moreover, the internal cultural and political division of Ukraine into the Western and the Eastern part of the country also played its role in hampering the Ukrainian-NATO relationship. The Russian-speaking inhabitants of Eastern and Southern regions of Ukraine always sympathised with Russia-led projects of integration of Post-Soviet states and opposed any collaboration with NATO. Social resistance against the latter was especially visible in Autonomous Republic of Crimea, inhabited by a large minority of ethnic Russians. Protests against NATO's *Sea Breeze* naval exercises and American fleet presence on the peninsula led to cancelation of the drills in 2009.

Nevertheless, Ukraine did not sign the Collective Security Treaty (CST), a military alliance comprised of Commonwealth of Independent States' members in the years 1992-1993. It did not join the CST Organisation (CSTO) created in 2002 by Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, which in Russian ruling elite's concept was to become a counterweight to NATO military alliance. However, Ukraine did cooperate with CSTO, perceiving such collaboration as an instrument for improving political relations with Russia. On the other hand, relationship with CSTO could not and did not bring any progress in terms of reforms of the Ukrainian security sector, its technological modernisation, development of civilian democratic control and professionalism of military personnel or unit training for participation in joint operations (Razumkov Centre 2012, p. 6).

The weak support of the population for Ukraine's NATO membership gradually decreased in the last decade. That was mainly the result of Russian political and information pressure. The 2008 Russian-Georgian war was one of the most important factors influencing Ukrainians' attitudes towards NATO. The event was portrayed in Russian



media as the result of NATO's irresponsible policy towards Georgia. Another crucial reason was the disappointment of the Ukrainian society with the policies of the pro-Western parties, which came to power after the "Orange Revolution." Characteristically, in the 2010 presidential campaign, even the "Orange" candidate Yulia Tymoshenko did not mention the issue of Ukraine's relations with NATO. Victor Yanukovich, already as a Prime Minister of Ukraine in 2006, when visiting Brussels declared that Ukraine's membership in the Alliance is not on the agenda. One of his first moves in foreign policy after winning the presidential election in January 2010, were the April 2010 Kharkiv agreements with Russian President Dmitri Medvedev. According to them, Ukraine was to receive a discount for the price of gas imported from Russia in exchange for the prolongation of Russian Federation's use of the Sevastopol navy base from 2017 to 2042. Obviously, the signing was a sign of Yanukovich's administration's lack of interest in NATO's membership as the Russian base will be an obstacle for Ukraine's integration into the Alliance.

### **Ukraine's Changing Position Towards NATO**

A new law on principles of domestic and foreign policy was adapted by the parliament in July 2010. According to it, the "non-aligned" status means the lack of membership aspirations considering any military blocks (Verkhovna Rada Ukrayiny 2010). However, the document does not exclude the possibility of cooperation with international security organisations. In particular, the mentioned law proclaims Ukraine's will to participate in the improvement and development of European collective security system, as well as to continue a constructive partnership with NATO and other military-political blocs on all issues of mutual interest. It is worth noting that such approach has also indicated a lack of interest in integration with the Russia-led CSTO. Relations with this organisation have also been reduced to the possibility of cooperation.

Ukrainian authorities continue to regard NATO as the most powerful alliance in the world, which is gradually becoming a global security player. Although the ultimate goal of membership has been rejected, the current government has not made any steps to reduce the degree of mutual relations. It is especially worth noting, taking into account that the ruling Party of Regions traditionally operated with the anti-NATO rhetoric. In



practice, the institutional framework established by the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine remains unchanged. In particular, the current priorities of mutual relations continue to be set up in the framework of Annual National Programme, established in 2009. Despite the change in Ukraine's foreign policy, the government did not insist on reviewing any chapter of the document, which refers to political and economic issues, defence and military issues, resources, security issues, or legal issues. This fact may suggest that at least on the declarative level Ukraine regards cooperation with NATO as beneficial for the country's internal development.

Indeed, Ukraine continues practical cooperation with the Alliance. In particular, Ukraine has declared its readiness to continue cooperation during the final phase of the ISAF operation. Ukraine has also joined a project on training of antidrug experts in Afghanistan and Central Asian countries. Furthermore, immediately after the Chicago Summit the government has supported a presidential decree on providing financial support for Afghanistan in 2015-2017 (\$500 thousand annually).

On the other hand, the most evident evolution of Ukraine's position towards NATO can be observed in the political dialogue. Ukrainian authorities have chosen a more balanced approach to compliance with the democratic values, emphasizing that the country's internal problems should not dominate the mutual dialogue. As a result, Ukraine's changed policy towards NATO can thus be defined as more pragmatic and focused on mutual benefits. Taking into account the recent crisis in relations between Ukraine and its key European partners triggered by doubts about the respect for democratic values in Ukraine, the country has faced a possibility of isolation by the West. In such circumstances, one cannot exclude that the "benefits-oriented" partnership with NATO can be regarded by the Ukrainian authorities in an instrumental way as a channel to maintain contacts with key western counterparts on the highest official level.

Ukraine's changing position towards relations with NATO is influenced by two major factors. First of all it is the above-mentioned "Eastern vector" and Russia's attempts to prevent Ukraine from deepening relations with NATO and recently with the EU. Secondly, Ukraine's relations with NATO remain one of the most sensitive political issues for the Ukrainian society. After Ukraine obtained independence in 1991, the majority of Ukrainian society was continually against the country's membership in the Alliance. Recent polls still confirm this tendency. In May 2012, only 15% of Ukrainian citizens supported the idea of joining NATO, while 62% opposed it. The lack of support is cor-



related with the lack of understanding of what the Alliance actually is. According to the survey, 42% of respondents are not familiar with the procedures of decision-making in the Alliance and as much as 46% of respondents consider NATO to be an “aggressive imperialistic block” (Demokratychni initsiatyvy 2012).

As a result, playing with the anti-NATO stereotypes has been one of the traditional means of mobilizing public opinion in virtually all Ukrainian elections. From this perspective, introduction of “non-aligned” status can be regarded as a contribution to the stabilisation of Ukraine’s domestic political situation, as the issue of NATO membership ceased to be a pawn in the game of Ukrainian political forces (Aleksandrov 2012, p. 34). Indeed, the issue of NATO membership has been virtually removed from the political debate in Ukraine. This is especially evident ahead of the upcoming elections in October 2012. Only the right-wing opposition Svoboda, which balances on the edge of electoral threshold, openly supports the idea of accession to NATO and highlights the need to require the member states to present clear guarantees and terms for Ukraine’s joining the Alliance on favourable conditions. On the other extreme side of the political spectrum, the Communist Party of Ukraine calls for consolidation and consistent implementation of foreign policy that excludes Ukraine’s membership in NATO and “other aggressive blocs.” The ruling Party of Regions presents a position that is in line with the official policy of Ukraine. According to it, the issue of NATO membership should be regarded in accordance with the results of an eventual referendum. Remarkably, two key opposition political forces – Batkivshchyna and UDAR – do not mention NATO in their programs at all. In general, neither party presents a comprehensive view on the development of relations with the Alliance. The fact that the issue of NATO occupies a marginal place in programs of key Ukrainian parties that have a chance to enter the parliament supports the thesis that the problem is not regarded as essential by the Ukrainian society.

To sum up, Ukraine’s position towards NATO is evolving in the direction of less “value-oriented” and more “benefit-oriented.” At the same time, such policy is not a result of a national consensus. Lacking appropriate popular support and understanding, it turns out to be an “elite-driven” project that can be modified on *ad hoc* basis in accordance with the current interest of the authorities. Such approach may eventually result in instability in the country’s foreign relations.



## **Chicago Summit Results – Indicators of NATO’s Changing Policy Towards Ukraine**

NATO pays a significant attention to support and development of its extensive network of partnerships, which reflects the Alliance’s attempts to build a global system of cooperative security. NATO’s new Strategic Concept adopted at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010 has underlined the bloc’s interest and will to further enhance cooperation with partners around the globe in order to face the evolving global security challenges effectively. The document has also marked an attempt to reform the partnerships policy of the Alliance. The general concept was to develop a pragmatic and flexible approach that would provide openness to cooperation with any country “on security issues of common concern” (NATO 2010).

Recent NATO summit that took place in Chicago on May 21-22 has reinforced the mentioned tendencies in partnership policies started in 2010. According to the Chicago Summit Declaration, strengthening the wide range of partnerships was one of the key goals of the meeting. Importantly, the Declaration refers to partners on a significant extent of issues, such as Afghanistan, missile defense, smart defense or cyber defense (François 2012). Furthermore, the Chicago summit demonstrated NATO’s attempts to manage its wide network of partnerships in a flexible way. An insight into the meeting arrangement with partners allows to conclude that a logic of “variable geometry” was used to deal with different issues and concerns of different partner countries. In particular, the following meetings reflecting variable sets of common interests took place:

- a meeting with 13 NATO’s key partners, defined as those who “recently made particular political, operational and financial contributions to NATO-led operations” (NATO 2012);
- a meeting with partners aspiring for NATO membership, which reaffirmed the continuation of the open doors policy without putting it into the centre of the Alliance’s agenda;
- a meeting with partners engaged in the ISAF operation, which highlighted the importance of partnerships of operational nature.

The summit presents a good opportunity to assess the current NATO’s position towards Ukraine. Despite Ukraine’s “non-aligned” status, the Alliance remains interested in maintaining and deepening cooperation. In practice, during the Summit, representa-



tives of Ukrainian authorities were invited to participate only in the ISAF meeting. This fact reflects the NATO's way of understanding the mentioned common interests that define its policy towards Ukraine. Firstly, the financial crisis has forced most NATO countries, including the United States, to reduce their defense budgets. As a result, potential role of partners as contributors to addressing key security challenges increases. Secondly, participation of partners in NATO operations increases the legitimacy of its actions. It is thus possible to conclude that NATO's approach to partnership with Ukraine also evolves in the direction of pragmatism, and focuses on addressing specific problems.

It would be wrong, however, to say that NATO's current approach to Ukraine is devoid of values. Taking into account that the basic legal and institutional framework of mutual relations remains unchanged, NATO cannot back down from promoting democratic values. As a result, member states have expressed their concerns regarding "the selective application of justice and what appear to be politically motivated prosecutions, including those of leading members of the opposition" (NATO 2012). Furthermore, bilateral meetings of President Yanukovich during the Summit were dominated by talks about internal situation in Ukraine (Kravchenko 2012). Moreover, NATO officials present their concerns about the Tymoshenko case regularly.

Summing up, it is possible to say that NATO's approach to partnership with Ukraine is gradually becoming more pragmatic as well. At the same time, the relatively high level of mutual relations defined by the Distinctive Partnership does not allow the Alliance to remove the issue of democratic values from the agenda. It is possible to say that from this perspective NATO's approach to Ukraine is significantly influenced by the current problems of Ukraine's relations with the European Union due to the overlapping membership of the majority of Western European states in both organisations.

### **Conclusions: Dilemmas of Future Cooperation**

As it has been mentioned in the previous chapters, there is a consensus on a declarative level regarding mutual interest in further cooperation between NATO and Ukraine. Both parties seem to signal interest in bringing relations to a pragmatic level. However, the scope and depth of future cooperation remain unclear due to several tendencies that may affect further pragmatic rapprochement.



Support for reforms in Ukraine remains one of the priorities of cooperation. Leaving aside the question of democratic development, doubts remain on the readiness and will of the Ukrainian authorities to implement basic reforms in the country's security sector. After 2010, a significant reduction of institutions and experts responsible for Euro-Atlantic integration took place (Razumkov Centre 2012, p. 6). As a result, professional know-how of the Ukrainian administration deteriorated and the pragmatic approach to cooperation often resembled stagnation. For example, a presidential decree of 10 December 2010 required preparation within three months of a new National Security Strategy of Ukraine. In practice, the document was adopted only in June 2012, along with Ukraine's new military doctrine.

All the mentioned documents highlight the importance of reforming the armed forces in order to continue their modernization and increase their capability to face the security challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Needs for adequate financial resources for this purpose are mentioned as well. The importance of such steps is closely linked with Ukraine's "non-aligned" status, which de facto means that the country has to increase its security expenditures in order to increase its defense capabilities (Razumkov Centre 2012, p. 5). However, the progress in this field remains limited and has been recently criticized by Ukrainian media (see Mendelev 2012). According to the Chicago Summit Declaration, the Alliance remains ready to assist with the implementation of reforms. The unclear position of Ukraine may eventually hamper further cooperation even on the technical level.

It is hard to expect that NATO-Ukraine relations will develop exclusively on a pragmatic and technical level. It is still unclear, however, where the proper balance between pragmatic and value-driven cooperation should be. The concept of relations as outlined in existing legal and institutional framework seems to be misaligned with the practical side of cooperation. In order to reinforce mutual relations a dialogue is needed on a new strategic vision based on goals for cooperation.

Such an approach would be impossible, however, without taking into account Russia's policies towards its "near abroad." The experience of the last two decades has proven that while at least one of the major security players in Europe regards the relations on the continent in terms of geo-political rivalry, Ukraine as one of the main targets of such rivalry will have to face problems in formulating and executing its security policy in a clear way that excludes ambiguity and balancing efforts.



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## PERSPECTIVES OF NATO-GEORGIA RELATIONS

Róbert Ondrejcsák

Relations between Georgia and NATO are among the most complex among Alliance's partnerships. They are determined by several mutually interlinked factors, both internal and external. We have to mention geopolitical situation of a broader region of Southern Caucasus, internal political development in Georgia, state of internal reforms in Georgia including security sector reform and institutional preparedness, state of the armed forces, developments of bilateral Georgian-Russian relations, NATO's strategic visions, USA-Georgian partnership, NATO/USA-Russia partnership, approaches of NATO member states towards the region, as well as Russian Federation and many other factors. The primary goal of this paper is to analyze these factors that influence the future of Georgia-NATO relations, as well as to offer possible scenarios for this partnership.

### **Georgian foreign and security policy and strategic culture – NATO's status**

Georgia is one of most dedicated countries among potential NATO members and aspirant countries. Georgian ambitions were always the most clearly declared within tree South Caucasian countries; however it is clear that it is also because of the very different geopolitical orientation and position of Georgia, compared to Azerbaijan and Armenia.

First declarations about potential Georgian integration into Euro-Atlantic structures, particularly NATO, were made in the early 90's and in 1994 the country joined the Partnership for Peace programme. Note, that Georgia was among the very few post-Soviet republics which were reluctant to join the Commonwealth of Independent States created



in December 1991. The CIS was perceived as a tool of Russian influence, respectively an instrument how to mark boundaries of the sphere of “specific Russian interests” or “near abroad”. The membership in CIS was accepted only after relatively strong pressure from Moscow two years later, in 1993. One could say that it came as a result of semi-open blackmailing by separatism or as a result of failed re-integration of Abkhazia by force the same year. However, after changes following the so-called Rose revolution, Georgia first withdrew from the CIS Defence Ministers Council in 2006 – the official argumentation was that Georgia “cannot be a part of two military structures simultaneously” and it will make efforts to join NATO. After Russian-Georgian war in August 2008 Tbilisi declared that it will leave CIS completely – a step which officially became a reality a year later, in 2009.

The orientation towards the transatlantic security community and its priority was declared clearly in the majority of official security and foreign policy documents of strategic significance, including the “National Security Concept of Georgia.”<sup>1</sup> As the document states “Georgia aspires to become part of European and Euro-Atlantic structures – as one of key “national security interests” (note: the author) – which will enable it to consolidate its democracy and strengthen its national security” (NSC 2011). That ambition is one of key proclamations determining the creation and execution of the country’s foreign and security policy. Georgian security policy thinking and strategic culture are influenced by “small state in a dangerous environment”-like thinking. As a natural consequence of that and also because of the perception of direct military threat, there is a “need of being allied.” The National Security Concept states that “Georgia views NATO as the basis of the Euro-Atlantic security architecture as well as the major mechanism for ensuring security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic space” (NSC 2011).

Moreover, among the priorities of Georgian security policy, listed by the same document, “the increased interoperability of the Georgian Armed Forces with NATO remains the priority of Georgian defense reform” (NSC 2011). This de facto means that the most important driving force of reforms in that area is the prospect of NATO membership – a situation which is quite well known from Central Europe in the 90’s.

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1 The up-to-date national security concept, adopted by the Georgian parliament on December 23, 2011, is the de facto updated version of a previous one from 2005. Strategic documents were issued in Georgia after the Rose revolution – as a result of strictly defined foreign policy and security goals. Previously, mainly during the “equilibrium-like” policies of Shevardnadze, such strong declarations were avoided.



Georgia's orientation towards NATO in the field of security is supplemented by searching for strategic partnership with the United States – Georgians are seeing NATO membership and the USA's close partnership as mutually interlinked.

The definite orientation towards NATO expressed by the political elite and declared in strategic documents has a solid basis in public opinion. According to various sources, including research made by Caucasus Resource Research Center, around 70 – 80 percent of Georgia's population supports the country's transatlantic orientation. These data were confirmed by a non-binding referendum, simultaneously organized with the presidential elections in January 2008, when 77 percent of voters supported NATO-membership (Georgian Daily 2011). Such a high level of support is possible partially because of existing consensus across the Georgian political elite. It means that both the relevant governing and opposition parties are declaring support towards transatlantic integration. However, there were some doubts over that question: Irina Sarishvili, an unsuccessful presidential candidate in 2008 elections tried to gain signatures before the 2008 Russian-Georgian war for a voter referendum on Georgia's a neutrality. In her view Russia would retaliate against Georgian membership in NATO by never permitting Georgia to peacefully regain authority over Abkhazia and South Ossetia (Morelli 2009). However the events of August 2008 reduced the influence of these voices and the orientation towards NATO is based on broad societal consensus.

### **NATO's approach**

From the Alliance's point of view, there are several factors crucial for maintaining permanent focus on Georgian ambitions. First, a relatively strong commitment of the United States to Georgia's strategic future. The attention paid by the USA towards Georgia almost automatically guarantees NATO's strong focus as well, given Washington's decisive influence on Euro-Atlantic security.

Second, the Southern Caucasus's own strategic and geopolitical importance in a broader strategic framework.<sup>2</sup> Third, Georgia's strong commitment to integration,

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2 E. g. proximity of World's most important strategic hotspots, conflict zones, as well as important transit corridor – including energy resources (oil pipeline Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, gas pipeline Baku-Tbilisi-Eruzum)– between Central Asia and Europe and the Middle East.



intensively declared Euro-Atlantic orientation, simultaneously with democratic institutions and procedures are hardly to be ignored by a value-driven Alliance. Fourth, Georgia's strong participation in NATO's missions, with exclusive focus on Afghanistan only strengthens its prospects. At the time of this writing Tbilisi's participation is among the most important non-NATO-member contributions to ISAF and also Georgia is amongst the largest per capita contributors (NATO 2012)<sup>3</sup>. Currently, Georgia has deployed a battalion-sized unit to Afghanistan and also other elements of Armed Forces (MoD 2012).<sup>4</sup> According to presentations of Georgian officials during the Security Conference organized in Batumi June 2012, Tbilisi will increase its participation by one more battalion in the near future, thus becoming the largest non-NATO contributor. The country is also committed to keeping its presence in the post-2014 Afghanistan mission and probably will focus on mentoring and training.

Besides strategic-political gains, the participation in ISAF is also seen as a tool to increase the interoperability with potential allies' armed forces, to train Georgian armed forces in real war-fighting scenarios, to gain experience from heavy armed conflicts, and to contribute to the transformation of Georgian Armed Forces in general. Moreover, the real-world scenarios sometimes trump the projections, as it happened in 2008. One of the most important lessons learned was that while forces with experience from missions abroad were among the most skilled, their real usability in war against Russia was limited by the specifics of their former deployment. They were experienced in a coalition-type conflict mostly in non-direct-fighting roles, although demanding, but with limited usability in case of heavy conflict against Russia. From that point of view, Georgia has modified the nature of its engagement and mission in ISAF.

The cumulative effect of the above-mentioned factors is the main reason why NATO members are not in a position to ignore Georgia. Despite establishing formal ties and cooperation between NATO and Georgia during 90's the real turning point was the Alliance's Bucharest Summit in April 2008. Georgian ambitions were recognized by de facto promising the country membership – with a very important footnote: Tbilisi naturally has to fulfill each and every criteria of membership. On the other hand, despite strong lobbying

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3 For comparison see: NATO, 2012, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF): Key Facts and Figures, <http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/placemat.pdf>.

4 For detailed structure, as well as short history of Georgian participation in missions abroad see Ministry of Defence of Georgia, 2012, <http://www.mod.gov.ge/en/ArmedForces/InternationalMission/>.



of American and like-minded diplomacies, Georgia was not granted the MAP status. In reality de-facto two camps occurred within the allies. It was the most intensive internal NATO discussion ever on Georgian integration ambitions. Basically the Allies were divided on Georgia with the United States, the Baltic states, the majority of Central European countries on one side, and German-French-Italian position on the other. This internal division resulted in Georgia not invited to MAP procedure. According to some unofficial opinions that should the country have a status of a MAP country in 2008, the developments in the region would have gone differently –MAP being a kind of deterrent. However we have to note that from legal point of view the MAP-status means nothing in terms of security guarantees. The political implications were different however as the results of internal discussion made it to the final communiqué issued after the Bucharest Summit. The wording was very definite and strong: “We agreed today that these countries (Georgia and Ukraine – note of the author) will become members of NATO (NATO 2008a).”

While the Georgian-Russian war in August 2008 has changed the strategic situation both in Georgia and the broader Southern Caucasus, because of the above-described factors, the Alliance maintained its promise to accept Tbilisi– in unspecified future, of course. Even the leader of one of the most reserved positions towards Georgian membership, Germany’s Angela Merkel, declared during her visit of Georgia that “Georgia will become a member of NATO if it wants to -- and it does want to” (Beste 2008). In a very short time after the war, on September 15, 2008 a NATO-Georgia Commission was established. Its main role is to shape political, strategic and technical consultations, as well as strengthen practical cooperation. The Framework Document establishing the Commission was signed by NATO’s Secretary General and the Georgian Prime Minister on 15 September 2010 in Tbilisi (NATO 2008b). The main message was to declare that NATO is remaining committed towards Georgia’s membership and it was symbolically supported by Secretary General’s visit to the Georgian capital.

NATO’s formal commitment was sustained by the following Summits, both in Strasbourg/Kehl and Lisbon. In 2009 after the Strasbourg-Kehl meeting, the leaders of member states released a joint statement where they confirmed their position that Georgia (and Ukraine) will become NATO members, though again without a clear schedule of accession (NATO 2009)<sup>5</sup>.

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5 They also confirmed that NATO reiterate its “continued support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders” (NATO 2009).



The same wording was used during the Lisbon Summit (NATO 2010). In Chicago, the allies emphasized the integration perspective for Georgia by extending an invitation to a special meeting of allied and aspiring countries' foreign ministers (together with Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYROM-Macedonia). The declaration of US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton about having Chicago as a "last non-enlargement summit" was positively interpreted in each country, of course (Parrish 2012).

On the other hand, it is necessary to note that despite keeping and re-iterating promises towards Georgia, there is no real political progress in its membership, despite the demonstrated technical one. The future remains unpredictable with several serious challenges and also a strategic dilemma.

### **Challenges**

There is a key factor in NATO's declarations about Georgian membership: The criteria and the necessity of fulfilling them. With some simplification, it is possible to divide them into three groups: technical, strategic, and political.

Naturally the most unambiguous are the technical ones, as the reform of armed forces, security sector reform, institutional preparedness, defense planning, level of interoperability, etc. It is possible to clearly define them and also distinctly measure their fulfillment, progress and define shortfalls. If there is a clear political will, motivated and skilled personnel, as well as necessary resources, it is possible to achieve significant progress. Moreover, NATO is providing assistance to Georgia in order to be able to meet the set goals. Even though Georgia still has to do a lot, if the above-mentioned supporting elements are maintained, the technical aspects will be the less problematic part of accession.

The next issue is the strategic framework – both external and internal. Among the most important requirements there is being able to solve political problems with neighboring countries, establish non-conflict driven relations with them, and also being able to exercise sovereignty over the whole territory of the country. For Georgia, this is undoubtedly the most demanding and challenging part of the story. With close-to-hostile relations with Russia and also by losing control over two separatist territories, it is clear that the strategic-political factors are the main obstacles of progress in gaining member-



ship. Thus Georgia's real strategic dilemma is the following: On one hand, the natural reaction to strong feeling of being threatened by Russian military presence is accelerating efforts to be a part of NATO because of its security guarantees. On the other hand, the stepped-up efforts towards membership leads to more intensified Russian pressure and blackmailing by Southern Ossetia and Abkhazia. It also means less chances to regain control over these territories and because of the frozen-conflict-like-situation with Russia, there is more reluctance of some European member states to invite Georgia for membership.

Mainly as a reaction to fears of NATO members to be unwillingly involved in a conflict with Russia via Georgian membership, Tbilisi developed a strategy of "non-first-use" of military force. As the National Security Concept declares "...Georgia has undertaken a unilateral commitment on non-use of force, as declared by the President of Georgia during his speech to the European Parliament on November 23, 2010. This obligation was confirmed by the letter of the President of Georgia to the leadership of the EU, NATO, UN, and OSCE, as well as to the President of the United States" (NSC 2011). The reason for this move is to calm the fears of some NATO-members that the Georgian membership should result in unwanted engagement of the Alliance in an armed conflict in Southern Caucasus, potentially against the Russian Federation. The declaration of Georgian president was followed by a negative Russian reaction arguing that Moscow is not a party of the conflict. We have to note that the quasi-independence of these two entities is recognized only by Moscow and few smaller distant countries<sup>6</sup> (no CIS country followed Russia) and Russian military is dislocating approximately one brigade-sized unit and significant land-to-air capabilities in both entities. The problem is that even if Georgia wants to regain its sovereignty over its full territory and simultaneously establish "good relations" with its neighbors it does not depend just on Tbilisi's will. It takes two to tango – but Moscow is using its presence in the region to block Georgia's attempts to break free from Russian strategic orbit. It is very difficult to predict that if Georgia exercises "strategic patience" – as it has been asked by senior NATO-country representatives many times, including during the Batumi Security Conference in June 2012 – it will lead to the resolution of this "strategic dilemma."

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6 Nicaragua, Venezuela, Nauru, Vanuatu, Tuvalu.



Because of the unlikelihood of fulfilling these criteria in the short-term perspective, Georgia is focusing on issues which are attractive for Alliance's most influential members, especially the United States. It results in strong participation in key missions – first in Iraq, currently in Afghanistan. But at the end of the day although it is enough to keep Alliance's attention, it is not sufficient to overcome the strategic dilemmas and problems.

The third group of challenges is associated with Georgia's internal political development and state of democratic institutions and procedures. Currently Georgia is described as a "Transitional democracy or Hybrid regime" by Freedom House's "Nations in Transit" earning a score of 4.82.<sup>7</sup> According to the report, the worst result was achieved in "National Democratic Governance," the best in the state of Civil Society (Freedom House 2012). The Atlantic Council's "Policy Road Map to Georgia's Euro-Atlantic Future" based on broad expert and policy oriented research presents several recommendations in the field of political reforms, including empowering the parliament, strengthening judicial independence, participating in the democratic process, facilitating free media, support a competitive electoral environment, decentralizing politics by directly electing mayors (Romero 2011).

The country is facing two crucial elections in the months to come: parliamentary this year (2012) and even more importantly, presidential in 2013. The democratic transition of power will be crucial for country's international image and also the perception of NATO countries. NATO Secretary General stressed the importance of elections during his visit to Georgia in November 2011: "the upcoming elections will be an important indicator of just how strong the democratic institutions are and how ready Georgia is for NATO membership"(Brunnstrom 2011). Similarly, the United States declared recently the importance of democratic framework and strengthening democratic institutions. Secretary of State, Clinton stressed during her visit of Batumi in June 2012 on the Georgian-US Strategic Partnership Commission that consolidation of Georgian "democratic gains" is "key to Georgia's future" (Clinton 2012). She also argued that "The parliamentary elections this fall and the presidential election next year are an opportunity for

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7 For comparison: Ukraine earned 4.82; Albania 4.14 – both are in the same category: "Transitional democracy or Hybrid regime" – Bulgaria (3.14 ) and Romania (3,43 ) were described as "semi-Consolidated democracies", while Central European and Baltic countries are "consolidated democracies" with scores around 2-2.5 (Freedom House 2012).



Georgia to deepen its democracy and strengthen the legitimacy of Georgia's democratic institutions in the eyes of your public and of the world" (Clinton 2012). Whether Georgia is able to manage the transition of power – first time in the country's modern history – it will strengthen its argumentation for gaining membership in the value-oriented organization as NATO describes itself.

### **Possible scenarios after 2014**

The year of 2014 was defined as a watershed analyses contained in this publication. The reason is that we believe that the end of the current NATO operation in Afghanistan – even though the Alliance's robust engagement will continue – will determine the nature of its partnerships with several countries around the globe. On the other hand, it is clear that NATO's gradual withdrawal from Afghanistan will have different implications for partnership with – for example – Australia and Georgia. It will also pose other kind of challenges for their future engagement. According to the current situation, some key trends in NATO-Georgia partnership will continue after 2014 without major change. Georgian aspirations for membership and NATO's already-made-promises toward Tbilisi will last for the foreseeable future, as well as the country's strategic dilemmas. We see these factors as relatively stable – unless some earthquake-like change occurs, of course.

The future of partnership will be determined by factors described at the very beginning, but more exclusively by internal political development in Georgia – especially the power transition after two crucial elections, continuation of internal reforms and building up of institutional capabilities, the state of Georgian-Russian relations, and the general geopolitical and strategic situation in Southern Caucasus. Other factors at play will be the evolution of NATO's strategic vision, approaches of NATO member states towards the region, as well as Russian Federation. According to the combination of factors, we can ponder several possible scenarios for the future of NATO-Georgian partnership.

**First** – favorable developments for Georgia, both internally and externally. At the political level Georgia will be successful in managing democratic changes and transition. At the technical level the country will continue in security sector reform and



will continue developing economy and civil society. The situation in South Ossetia and Abkhazia will be resolved by peaceful agreement and Tbilisi will be able to exercise its sovereignty.

External factors: Georgia will be able to secure continuation of strong support of its current supporters (USA, Central European and Baltic countries), and overcome the reluctance of other members. It also requires a dramatic change of Russian position and abandoning the current regime in Tschinvali and Sukhumi.

Likelihood: it is impossible to rule out, but not the most likely scenario. Major risks for realization: status quo in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, as well as in Russia's position.

NATO's interests: keep the momentum of Georgian reforms; keep up cooperation, including missions abroad. The Alliance has limited possibility to influence strategic developments in separatists regions but has strong interest in Georgia's long-term stabilization and keeping it on track towards Western orientation.

That theoretical scenario should result in relatively fast achievement of NATO membership.

**Second** – positive developments in domestic affairs; status quo in external factors.

At a political and technical level, Georgia will manage the changes as described above, including the power transition and technical reforms, as well as in the economy.

External factors: particularly strong Russian opposition towards Georgian membership and continuation of a division of NATO members. The conflicts in South Ossetia and Abkhazia will remain frozen ones in the long-term.

In case of this quite likely development, the Alliance will face serious questions including the credibility of its own promises. This namely means that Georgia will do its domestic "homework" but NATO will not be able to fulfill its policies/promises because of external factors. It is questionable how long will Georgia be able to exercise "strategic patience" and also keep public opinion motivated in support of membership. For NATO and the West in general it would be a major strategic risk to allow erosion of Georgia's Western orientation and its public support.

This scenario means a de facto blockage of country's accession to the Alliance and gives Russia's hand a decisive trump card over Georgia's strategic future. Moreover, it could deadlock the situation long-term, without the potential for a way-out: no chance to re-establish full sovereignty, and thus no chance for membership. One theoretical way out is to let the separatists regions go, and focus on membership, but



it is very unlikely (and understandable) that Georgia will renounce its sovereignty which are widely supported by the West and based on international law.

Likelihood: much more probable than the No. 1 scenario. Major risks for realization: stagnation in domestic political and/or technical reforms. NATO's interests: support for internal reforms, keeping the integration perspective alive.

**Third** – failure of democratization and transition.

In case of negative developments in the field of democracy, there is no chance for Georgian membership in NATO. Moreover, the country could lose its relatively positive image as a reform-minded, rapidly developing democracy with all its negative consequences.

Likelihood: limited but theoretically possible. NATO's interests: support for internal reforms and transition.

The above-mentioned scenarios are strictly theoretical, however based on solid trend-analysis. The strategic and political developments always have the potential to overwrite or modify these scenarios. The continuation of current status quo could also pose a very important question: If Georgia continues to have strong public support as well as maintain strong integration ambitions – will this constitute the basis for increasing the pressure towards current “ambiguous” of NATO?

If the country continues to keep strong presence in NATO's missions abroad, including Afghanistan “post-2014” to strengthen its foreign policy ambitions, it will also serve to maintain the above-mentioned political pressure. Of course, this will not automatically result in invitation, but from Georgian perspective, it will not allow Georgia's ambitions to be ignored.



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## NON-NATO MEMBER STATES OF WESTERN BALKAN AND NATO PARTNERSHIPS AFTER 2014

Imre Szilágyi

More than one and a half decade after NATO's intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina and more than ten years after NATO bombing of Serbia, the relationship between the above mentioned states and NATO can be characterized by a very mixed picture. The Chicago Summit Declaration stated: "The Alliance continues to be fully committed to the stability and security of the strategically important Balkans region" (NATO 2012a). This is very important, especially in light of the fact that although there is no war in the region at present, the peace remains very fragile and the stability hasn't been rooted firmly enough.

### Cooperation with NATO before the Chicago Summit

A very important fact is that currently all the countries of the region cooperate with NATO.

#### The Western Balkans and NATO (this chart is made on the basis of EKEM 2010)

Country	Partnership for Peace (PfP)	Membership Action Plan (MAP)	Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP)	Intensified Dialogue
BiH	December 2006	April 2010*	September 2008	April 2008
Serbia	December 2006		April 2011**	April 2008
Macedonia	November 1995	April 1999		
Montenegro	December 2006	December 2009	July 2008	

NOTE: Dates above indicate when agreements came into effect.



\* As for Bosnia and Hercegovina “In April 2010, the Allies formally invited the country to join the MAP with one important condition: the first Annual National Programme under the MAP will only be accepted by NATO once a key remaining issue concerning immovable defence property has been resolved” (NATO 2012b).

\*\* Serbia submitted its first Individual Partnership Programme (IPP) to NATO in early 2009. In April 2011, the North Atlantic Council approved Serbia’s request to undertake an Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO (NATO 2011).

The most complicated case is Serbia. For this country NATO and U. S. was an aggressor in Kosovo and Serbia in 1999. This is why Serbia didn’t want to join NATO. But at the same time experts know very well that “NATO and EU will preserve their main roles in ensuring stability in the region of South-East Europe” (Djerić-Magazinović 2010). For them (in this case for Jelesije Radivojević, Head of the Peacekeeping operations center which is an organizational unit of Joint Operations Command GS SAF) it is obvious that cooperation with NATO, participation in peacekeeping missions, (would be) very useful for Serbian soldiers. “One doesn’t participate in missions, because he wants to fight for NATO – as some analysts assert – but because our soldiers get acquainted with NATO’s standards and military training and will practice them in concrete situations” (DANAS 2012). So Serbia cooperates with NATO. Since February 2006 there is a Serbia-NATO Defence Reform Group. This initiative was launched in order to increase the support of the Alliance to the process of defense reforms in Serbia (and Montenegro). There is a NATO Military Liaison Office in Belgrade. “The main responsibilities of the Office are: implementation of the Agreement on transit arrangements, support to NATO and EU forces (EUFOR) involved in the region, supporting the work of the Serbia-NATO Defence Reform Group” (Ministry of Defence 2012a). A special form of the cooperation is the Serbian Military representative Office in NATO which was established on 27 September 2010. The Office represents the Ministry of Defense and the Serbian Armed Forces in the NATO headquarters in Brussels. It cooperates with NATO and its member states and reports on activities and developments in NATO.

Another special case is Kosovo. Despite the fact that on February 2008 Kosovo declared its independence, the country is under international supervision. Although Kosovo is far from NATO membership (and doesn’t have yet a Defence Ministry) its government fully cooperates with NATO-led KFOR, which is present in Kosovo since 1999. KFOR was the main guarantor of independence and implemented several tasks.



Although the International Steering Group for Kosovo decided to end the international supervision of Kosovo's independence, and announced that the territory will acquire full independence as of autumn 2012 (ISG 2012), it is clear that NATO will remain in Kosovo for some time (TANJUG 2012a).

### **NATO's new partnership policy and the Chicago Summit**

It is, I think, surprising that there is no mention of the Berlin strategic package endorsed on 15 April 2011 – either in online press of the region, or the websites of governments (including foreign ministries, defence ministries and Armed Forces). The question is whether this is in connection with the fact that the public opinion of the region (partly because of Yugoslavia's non-aligned tradition, but even more because of NATO's bombing campaign) doesn't support NATO membership. This is most obvious in Serbia, where 70 percent of those polled were opposed to the membership (B92 2012), just like majority of Serbian politicians. Although NATO leaders from time to time praise Montenegro for raising the support of membership, this growth in reality means, that the proportion of supporters comes up to 37-38% whilst the proportion of opponents is about 43% (CEDEM 2012). What's more, the Montenegrin political elite is divided.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is ostensibly favorable, with 70 percent of those polled supporting the membership. But analysts in Republika Srpska claim that in this entity, which is formally part of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the proportion of opponents reaches 85-90% (Karabeg 2012). According to a survey from 2010 "public opinion among Serbs in Serbia, Montenegro and the Bosnian Serb entity, Republika Srpska, remains sharply opposed - both to NATO itself and to the prospect of NATO membership." 63 per cent of the population in the mainly Serb Republika Srpska opposed NATO membership (Radoman, Feta 2010). In the case of Macedonia, it is very hard to discern the actual support for NATO as in this country they assess the support of EU and NATO membership together. The combined proportion of supporters is 61.4% (MIA 2012). One thing is certain however, the majority of Macedonian political elite unequivocally supports NATO membership.

Among strategic objectives for partnership (Berlin strategic package) I would like to emphasize the following: promotion of regional security and cooperation; promotion of



democratic values and reforms; enhancing the support for NATO-led operations and missions (NATO 2012c). In the Chicago Summit Declaration 21 May 2012 the member states declared the most important aims. As for Afghanistan they stated: “We are gradually and responsibly drawing down our forces to complete the ISAF mission by 31 December 2014. (...) Continued progress towards these goals will encourage NATO nations to further provide their support up to and beyond 2014.” Regarding the Western Balkans they made a statement: “In the strategically important Western Balkans region, democratic values, regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations are important for lasting peace and stability” (NATO 2012a).

### **Western Balkan countries and Afghanistan**

It is absolutely clear that Kosovo and Serbia will not participate in NATO’s involvement in Afghanistan. Kosovo is still unprepared for such a task, while Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro have contributed officers to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Macedonia is the fourth-largest contributor to the NATO-led mission in Afghanistan (The Washington Times 2010). Although the Serbian Government, in August 2006, decided that Serbian Army would send contingents to the multilateral forces in Afghanistan, the minister of defence in September 2011 could not answer whether there is any possibility that one day Serbia will take part in an operation under the mandate of NATO (Ministry of Defence 2011). The new defence minister Serbia Vučić stated in July 2012 that “Serbia would not be a member of any military alliance, but as a member of Partnership for Peace Programme it would continue to develop the cooperation required by the programme (Ministry of Defence 2012b). It is likely that the new government in this case will follow the policy of previous administration and not participate in any operation in Afghanistan.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro will continue the cooperation with NATO in Afghanistan. ISAF is on track for completion by the end of 2014 and it is more than likely that after this date, there will be some new operation taking its place with the participation of the above- mentioned three Western Balkan countries.



## Western Balkan countries and regional security and cooperation

Because not only NATO, but also the EU emphasizes the importance of regional cooperation (European Commission 2005), the countries of the region in the last years made efforts to realize this aim. There are some ongoing initiatives of regional cooperation among the Western Balkans countries in the field of defence (Gjoreski – Avramoska-Gjoreska 2012). Also, there are some achievements regarding borders, migration flows, fight against trafficking in human beings and illegal migration, police and judicial cooperation (European Parliament 2011, p. 9.). In this regard, it is noteworthy to emphasize the importance of the Igman Initiative. Unlike SECI or SEECP, it is a genuine Western Balkan cooperation forum, which is governed by four co-Presidents from Croatia, BiH, Serbia and Montenegro (Mission Statement).

So as the EU Commission stated in its communication October 2011 regarding regional cooperation and reconciliation: “Significant progress has been achieved in this respect over the past decade and further important steps can be reported in the past year. Visits by leaders of the region, in particular those of Serbia and Croatia, to neighbouring countries, as well as statements made on the conflicts of the 1990s have contributed substantially to regional reconciliation” (European Commission 2011, p. 7).

Despite the progress achieved, it has to be admitted that there is a very serious problem because Serbia refuses to recognize Kosovo as an independent state. This refusal has automatically excluded it from a lot of regional programs, with presence of Albanian politicians from Kosovo. In 2012, there were two very important events. The round of the Belgrade-Priština dialogue that ended in Brussels on February 24 yielded an agreement about Arrangements Regarding Regional Representation and Cooperation (Serbian Government 2012).

According to this agreement:

1. Both parties confirm their commitment to effective, inclusive and representative regional cooperation.
2. To this effect ‘Kosovo\*’ is the only denomination to be used within the framework of regional cooperation.
3. The footnote to be applied to the asterisk in para 2 above will read “This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.”



But despite this agreement, there were some tensions between Belgrade and Prishtina. Firstly at a conference held in Belgrade, the participants from Prishtina didn't want to take part because of the footnote attached to the word "Kosovo." A little bit later the Serbian delegation left the meeting in Sarajevo because the footnote was not included (TANJUG 2012b).

Another interesting event was held at the annual Croatia Summit in Dubrovnik in July. Serbian officials (as usual) were not attending the summit due to Thaci's – Kosovo's prime minister – participation. The former Serbian President Boris Tadić not only participated in the Summit, but also shook hands with Thaci. Serbian President Tomislav Nikolić wasn't invited to the Summit. Although he stated that he would not have recommended to Tadić to engage in the handshake, but he didn't say expressly that he wouldn't go to Dubrovnik in case he were invited.

It is likely that one of the motives of not inviting him was hinted at in an interview given by Nikolić to *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* where he said that "Vukovar was a Serb city and Croats have nothing to go back there to" (FAZ 2012). As a reaction, the Croatian president Ivo Josipović said that he would not attend the inauguration of Nikolić (although he was invited). "I hope that the positions of newly elected Serbian President Tomislav Nikolić will change. (...) We have made significant progress in relations in the past two to three years and it would be a shame if those relations stopped developing due to tactless and wrong statements and political concepts," he added (TANJUG 2012c).

On June 1, Nikolić caused yet another scandal. In an interview with Montenegrin state television posted on its website, he said: "There was no genocide in Srebrenica. In Srebrenica, grave war crimes were committed by some Serbs who should be found, prosecuted and punished. (...) It is very difficult to indict someone and prove before a court that an event qualifies as genocide" (Reuters 2012a). The Muslim chairman of Bosnia's three-way presidency, Bakir Izetbegović was shocked. According to Catherine Ashton in a reaction to his statement, she reaffirmed "the EU strongly rejects any intention to rewrite history," (Associated Press 2012). Because of the above-mentioned two statements of Nikolić, the presidents of the states of the region (with exception of the Montenegrin president) boycotted the Serbian presidential inauguration ceremony. In this way Nikolić missed an opportunity to have a regional summit in Belgrade. Although some say that Nikolić wants the best possible relations with neighbouring countries, this aim remains irreconcilable with his irresponsible statements.



### **Promoting democratic values and reforms**

The most problematic country in the region is Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is a dispute among the experts whether this country is a sovereign state, or a protectorate in practice (Szilágyi 2009, pp. 121, 126.; Patten 2009). It is clear that without the presence of the international actors (OHR, EUFOR, NATO HQ Sarajevo), the country would break up. The President of Republika Srpska, Milorad Dodik reiterated his opinion many times: “Bosnia-Herzegovina is in a state of permanent crisis, which proves its inability to survive. It exists only because the international community maintains an illusion of it functioning, otherwise it would not exist” (TANJUG 2012d). But the problem is not only Dodik and Republika Srpska. There is also a permanent political crisis in the Federation Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) which is strongly impacting not only the politics, but also the economy of the country. Obviously the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina which is an integral part of the so-called Dayton Peace Agreement contains some problematic solutions. This is why European politicians expect Bosnian political elites to agree on constitutional changes, but these are almost impossible to pass. Regarding NATO membership, Bosnia and Herzegovina has to resolve the issue of immovable defence property before further progress can be made in the country’s admission to NATO Membership Action Plan (NATO 2012d). But this is obviously not an easy problem to solve. Thus, although we’ve seen encouraging signs of progress this year, maybe experts claiming that Bosnia and Herzegovina remains a some kind of failed state are right after all.

Some say that Serbia is the most important country in the region. Since July 2008 until July 2012 there was a government in place which enjoyed a highly positive opinion from the European Commission: “Serbia has a comprehensive constitutional, legislative and institutional framework which overall corresponds to European and international standards. Parliament has become far more effective in its legislative activity under the current legislature. The legal and institutional framework for the rule of law is comprehensive, including in the areas of the fight against corruption and organised crime where initial results were achieved. The legal framework for the protection of human rights and minorities is well developed and has started being implemented” (European Commission 2011, p. 29.). Of course alongside positive findings there were also critical observations, but it was clear that if Serbia fulfills



conditions regarding Kosovo, EU leaders will grant it the candidate status. It happened on 1. March 2012. But in July 2012, there was a government change. Although the EU and U.S. support the new government and would like to cooperate with it, at the moment it is not clear which way the two most important leaders – the Prime Minister (Ivica Dačić) and his first deputy minister (Aleksandar Vučić) – who is at the same time minister of defence – want to go. Their first very questionable act was the passage of amendments to the NBS (National Bank of Serbia), which, in the opinion of the EU “would be a considerable step back in the alignment of Serbia’s legislation and principles with the European Union” (Reuters 2012b). The new government also began the fight against corruption. The first action was that of the Anti-Corruption Agency that has filed a criminal complaint against former defense minister Dragan Šutanovac – who had good cooperation with NATO – alleging that he “did not report that he and his wife had acquired ownership of one tenth of a 63-square-meter apartment in Belgrade” (BETA 2012).

Montenegro – a multiethnic state – is a promising country in the region. Montenegro started accession negotiations with the European Union at the end of June 2012. But despite its integration successes, the country isn’t flawless. Montenegro’s President has set early parliamentary elections for October 14. According to one political analyst the recently created opposition coalition is organizationally weak, espousing a program that is very problematic in that it sweeps all controversial questions under the carpet – including the position against NATO, the status of the Serbian Orthodox Church, the use of Serbian language and state symbols, program of economic reforms (Đuranović 2012). What’s more, the present ruling coalition is under the shadow of a terrible accusation. Dr Moisés Naím in the U.S. Foreign Affairs Magazine has published an analysis of Montenegro, stating that it is a “mafia state” and that the key players are top government officials (Naím 2012).

Macedonia (the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) is on the way to Euro-Atlantic integration for several years now. The biggest problem facing the aspiring country is the name dispute with Greece. Macedonia isn’t an innocent victim in this case, given that Skopje also follows a nationalistic policy (Guardian 2011). But also the EU does not stint of criticism: “Some progress has been made in the fields of the judiciary and public administration, notably as regards the legal framework. Further efforts are needed to ensure effective implementation, in particular concerning



freedom of expression in the media, judicial and administrative reform and fighting corruption. Dialogue between the government and the opposition needs to be strengthened in order to ensure the smooth functioning of institutions” (European Commission 2011, p. 38).

### Summary

It is clear that there is almost no problem when it comes to cooperation between Western Balkans and NATO in the military area. The countries of the region are conscious of the benefit of such cooperation, so it is likely that they will continue in the set course. But enormous problems remain in the field of democratic values and reforms, which are not likely to be overcome in the near future. In this area, there is a need for joint efforts of all relevant actors.

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## **PARTNERS IN THE SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN AND THE MIDDLE EAST**

Lukasz Kulesa

By the virtue of geography and politics, the countries of the Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East occupy a special place on the map of NATO partners. They do not aspire for NATO membership, and the comprehensive transformational agenda of the Partnership for Peace (including e.g. the change of the internal security culture towards full accountability and civilian control) applies to them only to a limited degree. At the same time, these two regions directly border NATO area and are major exporters of strategically important resources, such as oil and natural gas. The security developments in the Mediterranean and Middle East therefore have a direct effect on the level of security in the NATO countries. It is important to note that some partners in the two regions are also increasingly seen by the Alliance not as security challenges, but as strategic assets, due to their political influence and civilian and military capabilities. This advantage of involving regional partners in NATO-led operations was clearly visible during the ‘Unified Protector’ operation in Libya in 2011.

Finding interlocutors and forging partnerships in these turbulent regions has become a necessity for NATO. Building on the foundations laid by the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, the two major outreach programs launched by NATO in 1994 and in 2004 respectively, the Alliance has been trying to find the most productive ways of engaging the crucial local players. These initiatives are supplemented by the bilateral contacts with other countries, such as Saudi Arabia or Iraq, as well as more flexible formats of cooperation.



## **Growing importance of the Mediterranean region and the Middle East for NATO's security**

Historically, several NATO members were heavily engaged in the security affairs in the two regions, from the colonial era to the Cold War confrontations. Some of them have maintained strong political ties and military presence in the states of the Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East, as well as conducted military operations there unilaterally or in the framework of the coalitions of the willing (e.g. the 1956 Suez intervention by France and the UK, or the US-led wars against Iraq in 1991 and 2003 to name a few). Compared to this legacy, the engagement of the North Atlantic Alliance as a whole has been a relatively new phenomenon. Indeed, it may be argued that NATO can still be perceived in the region mainly as a tool of those Allies who are most interested in the regional affairs (mainly the United States, but also Turkey, France, the United Kingdom, Spain and Italy) – whereas other members remain reluctant to focus more attention on the southern frontier of the NATO area. It is especially true for the Central and Northern European Allies, who envision the Alliance focused mostly on the collective defence dimension, as well as the management of the relations with Russia and other NATO partners in Eastern Europe. It is important to distinguish between the overall NATO interest in the two regions and the engagement of its most prominent member states (Burns Wilson and Lighfoot 2012, p.11). In fact, most of them prefer to approach the regional partners on a bilateral basis, which gives them more freedom to promote their national agendas. To put it simply, Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East are too important as a security challenge for a number of Allies to be left mainly to NATO.

Nevertheless, for a number of reasons the security developments in the Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East can have direct consequences for all members of the Alliance. Firstly, and most importantly, they may be a source of a direct threat or aggression leading to the activation of NATO's collective defence mechanism. One can point to the historical cases of crises originating in both regions. The end of Saddam Husain's rule in Iraq and Muammar Kaddafi's regime in Libya seem to have removed the possibility of adventurist actions against the NATO territory originating from these countries. It is worth recalling however both the failed Libyan 1986 Scud missile attack on the Italian island of Lampedusa or the controversies surrounding the NATO decision on the augmentation of the deterrence potential of Turkey against possible Iraqi actions in 2003.



The biggest immediate challenge for NATO seems to be the developments in Syria, especially the likelihood of the transformation of the civil war into an inter-state conflict, with the participation of Turkey and possibly other NATO members. As the tensions between Syria and Turkey grew in the spring of 2012, the latter has been frequently referring to its membership in NATO and Article 5 guarantees as a bulwark against the aggressive actions of Syria. After the Syrian air defence shot down the Turkish F-4 fighter on 22 June 2012, the North Atlantic Council held an extraordinary meeting following the request by Turkey under Article 4 obligatory consultation procedure. In its statement, the NAC condemned Syria's actions and expressed "strong solidarity" with Turkey, but no actions followed in terms of deployment of additional NATO assets (NAC 2012). On the one hand, some members of the Alliance may have been careful about the possibility of NATO being dragged into a wider conflict if Turkey decided to openly intervene in the north of Syria. On the other hand, Turkey seemed to be interested in preserving options for launching an independent action in its immediate neighborhood. As the situation in Syria developed rapidly, a scenario of the Assad regime resorting to the use of force against Turkey or other NATO members accused of providing assistance to the rebel forces could not be ruled out. Warnings by the representatives of the Assad regime about the use of "unconventional weapons" (understood as chemical weapons) in the event of an "external aggression" added to the gravity of the situation (New York Times 2012). In case of such an attack, NATO as such would be expected to get directly involved in defence of Turkey and the neutralization of the threat.

While the Syrian civil war may ultimately spill over to the NATO-protected territory, the developments surrounding the Iranian nuclear crisis can also directly affect Alliance's security. The perspective of an Israeli or a US-led attack against the Iranian nuclear installations have prompted some Iranian officials to threaten to retaliate against the missile defence radar in Turkey and other targets, a move which would require NATO response (Eurasianet 2011). There is also a possibility of Iran waging a terrorist campaign against the targets in NATO countries, directly or through the use of proxies. The wave of the successful and foiled terrorist attacks against Israeli targets in the spring and summer of 2012, including the deadly suicide attack in Bulgaria in July 2012, may serve as an example of elements of such a strategy in action. NATO would also need to seriously contemplate its overall course of action in the event of the acquisition of



nuclear weapons by Iran. Establishing a credible deterrence regime against Iran can be part of the solution, as the NATO allies could be subjects of nuclear threats or coercion.

Regarding the challenges from non-state organizations, the importance of the Mediterranean Sea as a possible space for maritime terrorist activities, as well as the transit route for the dangerous cargo involving the weapons of mass destruction and their components, was recognized by NATO already in the aftermath of the 2001 terrorist attacks against the US. An Article 5-mandated operation “Active Endeavour” was launched. In the framework of the operation, more than 100 thousand ships were monitored and approximately 155 suspect ships were boarded (Active Endeavour Factsheet 2012). The recent developments have added additional aspect to the terrorist threat dimension. One can already observe the attempts by the Jihadist terrorist organizations to strengthen their position and expand their base for operations in the context of the violent upheavals which are a part of the Arab Spring in Yemen, Egypt, Libya and Syria. Jihadist fighters, some with Al-Qaida affiliations, were present in Libya and participated in the Syrian civil war, although their importance and influence over the opposition forces in both cases seem not to be decisive. Their profile was much higher in the takeover of northern Mali territories by the Tuareg separatists in early 2012. It remains to be seen whether the events of the Arab Spring would result in the strengthening of the Jihadist movement with the global terrorist agenda, or the groups and individuals involved would be concentrating on local contingencies. Still, the emergence of the areas with little or no government control can be used by such groups as launching pads for terrorist attacks against targets in the NATO countries, which in the most extreme cases can lead to the activation of the Article 5 obligations.

Beyond the danger of a direct attack against the territories, citizens or core interests of NATO allies, the indirect security challenges emanating from the Mediterranean and Middle East seem to be equally grave. It is worth recalling that the events of the Arab Spring caught NATO countries by surprise. The crises resulting from both regions’ complex political, military, societal, religious, and economic situation will require increased attention of the Alliance. Among the most prominent challenges from the Alliance’s perspective are:

- The failing and failed states, especially when gross violations of human rights bring about the issue of NATO intervention, such as in Libya, or increased migration movements;



- Proliferation of the weapons of mass destructions, especially as a consequence of a possible Iranian nuclear breakout;
- The disruption of the flow of energy resources from the both regions to the importers in the NATO area.

At the same time, NATO would have only a limited role in addressing some of these indirect challenges, since they require e.g. the transformation of the political systems, dealing with the ethnic and sectarian divisions, addressing the financial and economic woes, or answering the fundamental societal and educational needs. In these cases, the Alliance should not be expected to provide leadership, but rather to interact with other international organizations and actors and engage in specific areas (e.g. security sector reform). While stability of its neighborhood is in vital interest of the Alliance, the Libyan experience shows the unwillingness of NATO to assume wider responsibilities for nation-building, in contrast e.g. to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan.

The importance of both regions for NATO should not be seen only through the prism of the threats and challenges to the Allies' territory or population. The countries in the Southern Mediterranean and Middle East form a diverse group, but some of them possess assets which enable them to engage with the Alliance on many issues as equal partners. From the point of view of the Alliance, the advantages of the relationship is primarily connected with three factors. Firstly, NATO can reap concrete political benefits from the already established partnership with the countries which are considered leaders of the Arab world (also in the framework of the Arab League, African Union, non-aligned movement). Some of them, most notably Jordan, Morocco, United Arab Emirates and Qatar, have visibly increased their engagement in the shaping of international security relations. Saudi Arabia and Israel remain special cases, with distinct political and security agendas which in many cases coincide with those of NATO. Secondly, the relationship brings opportunities in terms of providing an outreach to the Muslim communities and societies in the regions which viewed NATO with hostility and as a tool of foreign interventionism. Closer contacts with the countries of the Southern Mediterranean and Middle East should help the Alliance shape its policies in a way which would avoid perpetuating the misperceptions about NATO's goals. Thirdly, some partners from both regions already possess modern military capabilities, fully interoperable with NATO. Taking



into account the planned defence expenditure in 2011, the Middle East and North Africa accounted for 7.9% of global spending, as compared with 18.3% defence expenditures in Europe (Military Balance 2012). Due to their perceptions of security threats and the likelihood of regional conflicts, these countries are likely to continue to invest in the development of their militaries, including air- and missile defence capabilities, air forces, navies and other power projection capabilities. This aspect may become even more important for the Alliance in the future decade, as the reductions in defence budgets in most NATO countries result in diminished pool of available modern combat-capable systems. One should also note the non-military assets which may have equally crucial role in NATO's operations: from the language skills and religious-cultural awareness, through civil emergency capabilities and the skills suitable for strategic communication and public diplomacy, to the cooperation of intelligence services.

### **The historical background and present state of the partnership**

Two distinct initiatives - the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative have been so far the main vehicles for NATO's engagement with the countries of the Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East. .

The Mediterranean Dialogue has been launched in 1994 as a tool for bilateral engagement with the countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean and as a forum for multilateral discussions on the security issues and regional cooperation (Razoux 2008, p.2). The creation of such a framework reflected the will of the Alliance to intensify contact with the countries of the South - in parallel to the opening to the partners in Central and Eastern Europe and in Central Asia. It also reflected the optimism about the advances of the Middle East peace process and the prospect of the reconciliation between Israel and its partners through confidence-building measures. Seven countries became part of the dialogue: Egypt, Israel, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan (in 1995), and Algeria (in 2000).

On the bilateral track, Individual Cooperation Programmes were agreed with the individual MD countries (with the exception of Algeria), each listing the jointly agreed main interest areas, objectives and activities. The subjects of cooperation included these



support of security sector and defence reforms, modernisation of the armed forces and the increase of interoperability, civil emergency planning and crisis management, border security, scientific and environmental cooperation, cooperation on fighting terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The level of interest and consequently the scope of contacts and cooperation differed considerably from partner to partner, resulting in a certain fragmentation of the MD.<sup>1</sup> In terms of the engagement in the operational activities of NATO, MD partners have provided contingents for operations in Kosovo (KFOR), Afghanistan (ISAF), as well as the anti-terrorist mission in the Mediterranean (Active Endeavor). There has been a gradual development of the multilateral track of practical activities offered by NATO to the countries of the MD framework. Formulated in 2004 in the form of an annual MD Work Programme, the number of activities (courses, workshops, seminars, study visits, military training, participation in exercises) expanded from approximately 100 activities in 2004, to around 700 in 2011, covering over 30 issue areas (Mediterranean Dialogue Factsheet 2012).

The political dialogue and consultations in the NATO+7 format was meant to include different levels and fora, including ministers of foreign affairs and defence, ambassadors to NATO, chiefs of defence, as well as working groups. Despite a number of events and meetings taking place, this part of the Mediterranean Dialogue is the most disappointing one. Even during the relatively good phases in the Israeli-Arab conflict, the MD framework was not used to pursue any important political or confidence-building initiatives. The deterioration of the relationship of the countries of the region with Israel (including the Turkish-Israeli crisis, aggravated by the 2010 *Mavi Marmara* incident) had an immediate negative impact on the functioning of the multilateral political track.

The initiative to reach out further to the Middle East region and propose a partnership initiative to the countries of the Gulf (grouped in the Gulf Cooperation Council) had its origins in the developments connected with the 2001 Al-Qaida terrorist attacks in the United States. The countries of the Alliance became involved in the operations in Afghanistan and in Iraq, and NATO stepped up its engagement in the fight against terrorism. Unlike the broad political aims of the Mediterranean Dialogue, the new

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1 The relationship with Israel could be seen as a special case, since the country is interested in strategic dialogue on the regional security issues, as well as practical cooperation, but is careful about the 'red lines' in the political dialogue, in order to safeguard its freedom of action.



cooperation framework was to pursue narrow, practice-oriented cooperation in order to re-assure both the countries of the region and NATO allies that the Alliance does not intend to get itself permanently engaged in regional security. Consequently, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) unveiled at the 2004 NATO summit, focused on the practical cooperation in specific areas such as defence reform, training and interoperability, fight against terrorism, proliferation of WMDs, crisis emergency planning. Four countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, United Arab Emirates) accepted NATO's invitation to participate in the ICI in 2005, while Oman and, crucially, Saudi Arabia, declined to take part in the multilateral initiative. Similar to the bilateral MD track, a menu of practical activities and initiatives was drawn up with each ICI country. Due to the availability of financial resources in the target countries made cooperation with NATO easier than in the case of some of the Mediterranean partners. Some of the Gulf countries decided also to participate in the NATO operations, such as KFOR (United Arab Emirates) and ISAF.

In 2011 NATO implemented the decision to simplify and streamline the overall system of partnerships, with consequences for the MD and ICI formats (Reisinger 2011, 4). One general set of institutions was created in the form of the IPCP (Individual Partnership Cooperation Programmes), while different instruments available to the partners were grouped under the Partnership Cooperation Menu. The reform would enable to diversify even further the character of NATO's relationship with particular countries, e.g. move further with the operational cooperation or reform of the armed forces. Also, the reform prioritizes the flexible 28+n format of contacts, which would allow the Alliance to bring together partners from different regions interested in a particular subject. The effect of the reform for the countries of the Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East can be in the form of even further differentiation of the intensity of contacts, and it can also lead to the atrophy of the formal multilateral track such as the NATO+7 Mediterranean framework.

Iraq presented a special case in the history of the engagement of NATO in the Middle East. The Alliance was sharply divided regarding the political and legal rationale for the 2003 war against this country. While some Allies took part in the US-led coalition of the willing, others – such as France and Germany – remained opposed to even indirect engagement of NATO assets in the operation. By 2004, however, all the Allies looked for ways to enhance the cohesion of NATO and show practical support for the US-led efforts to create and train Iraqi security forces. Consequently, NATO Training



Mission in Iraq (NTM-I) was established, with the aim to mentor the Iraqi army officers and NCOs, as well as higher echelons of police forces. The mission did not engage in any operational activities, and its average strength was 100 troops. The operation was concluded in December 2011, after having trained approximately 5,000 military and 10,000 police personnel directly in Iraq and 2,000 personnel in NATO member countries (NTM-I Factsheet 2011).

The Libyan experience might not provide a model for future NATO interventions, but it was certainly unique in terms of the active political and operational engagement of the partners, including the states from the two regions under consideration. The backing of the Arab states was crucial in securing the support of the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council for the establishment of the no-fly zone over Libya in March 2011, mandated by the UN SC Resolution 1973 (Joshi 2012, p.63). Such a political ‘umbrella’ made it possible to fulfill the condition set by many NATO countries (including the United States) that the operation in Libya can only be conducted at the request and with the support of regional actors and organizations. Algeria, the immediate neighbor of Libya, had taken a more cautious approach, fearing the spillover of the conflict, but did not attempt to block the operation. Importantly, the political support of the regional players was upheld even when the military conflict briefly reached a stalemate in April-June 2011. The countries from the region also provided direct political and diplomatic support for the National Transitional Council and other anti-Qaddafi groups.

The operational engagement of NATO partners from the Middle East was important symbolically and politically (exemplifying the diversity and resolve of the anti-Qaddafi coalition). It also helped to conduct the campaign in which the US role was smaller than in the previous NATO operation, and where a number of NATO Allies (such as Germany or Poland) decided not to deploy their assets. In terms of the air campaign, the Middle Eastern partners’ share included active participation by Jordan (six F-16 aircraft), United Arab Emirates (six Migage-2000, six F-16 aircraft) and Qatar (six Migage-2000, two C-17 transport aircraft). These countries’ aircraft assets were conducting air patrol missions in support of the no-fly zone, but the Qatari and UAE air forces were also engaged in ground attacks. The specialists from these countries provided also support (e.g. intelligence) for the air operation. The presence of the partners’ intelligence services operatives and special forces on the ground in Libya was yet another aspect of support for the NATO operation, with the distinctive role of Egypt, Jordan, UAE and Qatar.



These countries also provided supplies, equipment and weapons to the rebel forces, as well as trained and supported combat operations. Albeit the full extent of these activities was not made public, the actions of Qatar were highlighted as particularly useful and energetic, to the point of generating criticism about pursuing a narrow Qatari political agenda on the ground (Guardian 2011).

### **The way forward for the partnership with the Southern Mediterranean and Middle East**

During the NATO summit in Chicago in May 2012, a special meeting was held for the partners who made the most significant political, operational or financial contribution in the cooperation with the Alliance. Out of the 13 participants, four came from the Mediterranean or Middle East regions: Morocco, Jordan, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates (NATO 2012). Their participation in the Alliance's operations, including Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Libya, was greatly facilitated by the previous outreach and cooperation activities conducted in the framework of the MD and the ICI.

The successful completion of the operation *Unified Protector* ignited the debate about the role and the importance of the network of partnerships in fulfilling NATO's strategic objectives. Already in the Strategic Concept adopted in 2010 in Lisbon, where cooperative security was listed as one of the Alliance's core tasks, the Allies agreed that "partnerships make a concrete and valued contribution to the success of NATO's fundamental tasks" (NATO 2010). The Libyan campaign moved the discussion further: would it be possible for the crucial NATO partners to form together with the most interested NATO Allies the 'global NATO', for joint engagements out-of-the-area, working alongside the more traditional 'core NATO', bound by Article 5 commitments (Slaughter 2012)? If the Alliance was to take such a course of action, then the partners in the Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East would have the opportunity not just to engage in the Alliance-led operations and activities, but to promote their own interest and influence NATO's agenda. In a July 2012 speech, Secretary General Rasmussen hinted at such a possibility when he supported the development of the "clusters of willing and able Allies and partners ready to cooperate in specific areas", such as training, defence procurement cooperation, or emerging security challenges (Rasmussen 2012).



The Alliance needs to carefully weigh the benefits of cooperating closer with the countries of the region on tackling security challenges and balance the dangers of engaging too deeply in the problems of the regions which fall outside the NATO-defended area. Obviously, the Alliance needs to take into account the Article 5 scenarios outlined at the beginning of the chapter. But beyond that, NATO countries must clearly define the political terms of engagement with both regions and the political and operational capital they would be willing to invest in them. The Arab Spring has radically changed the political landscape in both regions. In the case of Libya, NATO decided (although reluctantly) to get engaged militarily, but in other cases (such as Yemen or Syria) it has so far showed more caution. Therefore, it seems to be too early to project the permanent focus of the Alliance on its south and south-eastern neighbourhood.

In the years to come, the Alliance may also be confronted more directly with the issue of the value and limits of cooperation with its non-democratic partners in the both regions. The issue was already brought to the fore in 2011 by the events in Bahrain, where the authorities brutally suppressed demonstrations by the opposition and invited the Gulf Cooperation Council forces to intervene in support of the regime. Since some of the NATO partners from the GCC were simultaneously engaged in the operation in Libya, where the human rights violations by the regime were one of the main reasons for the intervention, the development of the events raised the questions of applying double standards by NATO countries. If in the future NATO decides to strengthen its cooperation with the North African and Middle East regimes, the problems of internal political situation and the respect for human rights inside the partner countries can create further tensions.

Finally, two specific cases will require increased attention of the Allies. Firstly, the scope of cooperation with the regional partners on the Iranian issue will need to be determined, especially in the case of Iran crossing the nuclear threshold. NATO should be ready to implement specific programs and initiatives and providing security assurances for the Gulf countries, in parallel to the actions taken by the United States. These activities can include a closer cooperation with local militaries (including exercises), joint or coordinated development of Missile Defence systems, or even nuclear extended deterrence pledges. Secondly, the Alliance will most probably face difficult dilemmas connected with its relationship with Israel and its Arab and Muslim partners. Already now the Turkish-Israeli row has registered negative consequences



for the functioning of the NATO's policy towards the Middle East and the Southern Mediterranean. In the future, the Alliance may be pressured by its regional partners (with the support of some member states) to push Israel towards the change of its policy regarding the Palestinian question and wider regional security.

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## NATO GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS IN THE XXI CENTURY

Beata Górka-Winter, Bartłomiej Znojek

“NATO must revise its approach towards partnerships” – this stance has become an official mantra for the political leaders of the Alliance for the last few years. There are obviously several objective factors influencing such standpoint. The predominant one is that the security environment has changed dramatically since the times NATO was looking for its first external partners. In the early nineties when the Alliance was somewhat nervously searching for its new identity by going beyond the traditional areas of its interests, the process of building the network of partners was intended to facilitate its existence in the new geopolitical reality. “Partnership for Peace” or Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council were some examples of such an approach. These formulas of cooperation were not established only as a “waiting room” for the prospective new members from the former Eastern bloc and a mechanism for adjusting their security sectors to the western standards, but also it was treated as an instrument facilitating NATO contacts with partners not foreseen as potential candidates for membership. At that time NATO was showing an ambition to democratize the security sectors of countries in its immediate vicinity not only for the sake of its own security but also to manifest its new role in the world. The Alliance was undeniably seeking new challenges as its existence was somehow questionable by the mere fact that its main opponent has simply ceased to exist.

Very soon this approach was challenged by the escalation of the crises in the Balkans (in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo), and then in Afghanistan. It turned out that NATO does have a role of a global stabilizer and there are many continuous demands for the Alliance’s assistance in different parts of the globe. One of the best examples of such pleas is Afghanistan. Not many people remember today that at the



time the ISAF operation was launched, the Afghan authorities criticized very openly the “light footprint approach” as the main barrier to fulfilling the basic security needs of the Afghan society. As we approach to the end of this operation, one must admit that this task was rather poorly performed by NATO and not enough engagement or coordination with other partners (including institutional ones, such as the UN, the EU, but also regional, such as India) was undoubtedly among the reasons of this failure. Especially this particular mission shows that it was NATO which was in a critical need of establishing a network of reliable partners to be more efficient in its role of “peacemaker” by using political and military, but also financial potential of different countries including such distant ones as Australia, Japan, New Zealand and others.

One must admit that the cooperation with NATO was also somehow attractive for these countries since aligning with the Alliance in different operations allowed proving their role as “security providers” and promoters of such values as democracy, human rights, or rule of law. For countries such as Japan, which have to deal with many historical constraints concerning its security and defence policy, cooperation with the Alliance legitimizes its actions. Yet, still it was NATO which contributed most from these engagements as its burden, especially in Afghanistan, very quickly turned out to be almost unbearable. The best example of it was the Alliance seeking closer links with such difficult partners as Russia and India, who finally decided to engage more proactively in the security sector reform in Afghanistan and share the responsibility for the future of this war-torn country – even if at the beginning their role in the Afghan transformation was by many considered more than controversial.

These mixed experiences undoubtedly provoked the Alliance to rethink its partnership policy in the future. Firstly, after NATO withdraws from Afghanistan, the question of its relevance, this time in the “post-ISAF” environment, will be back on the table. Secondly, there is a growing demand for the Alliance to act not only as a defence alliance and crisis manager but also as an organization of cooperative security, which was confirmed in the new NATO “Strategic Concept” adopted in Lisbon in 2010. It basically means that the Alliance sees its mission far beyond its borders and is showing the willingness to play an active role in such processes as arms control, non-proliferation, democratization etc. And thirdly, newly emerging challenges, such as terrorism, including cyber-terrorism, maritime security and others will demand that NATO cooperates with partners “across the globe” to address them effectively. This article is intended to



explore the future challenges for NATO global partnership policies, its current premises, the most desired course and formulas for this cooperation which could be accepted by both sides. Undoubtedly, the Alliance must also answer the question of how to incentivize partners to keep them on board.

### **NATO in the Post-ISAF Environment**

Without any doubts, in the nearest future NATO partnership policies will be, as previously, shaped mainly by the internal developments within the Alliance, which must specify, in which future tasks will cooperation with partners bring a real value added. In the incoming years the four most important trends will shape NATO's general approach to external partnership: the economic crisis in the Eurozone and the necessity to adjust defence budgets to harsh reality of economic conditions; the unwillingness of the Allies to engage in ambitious and complex tasks of nation-building in failed states (post-Afghan trauma); inevitable "detachment" of the United States that insists on redirecting its defence posture towards Asia and the Pacific and the necessity to focus on non-traditional threats to security such as terrorism, piracy, cyber-terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the dangers generated by the process of state failure in many different parts of the globe etc.

In the short term the biggest challenge for NATO will undoubtedly be reconciling the requirements of maintaining a credible level of military capabilities with the need to impose significant savings that have already affected the defence spending in Europe - including such European military leaders as the United Kingdom or France but also the United States, a country with the biggest capabilities in terms of power projection. Only in 2012 the cuts in the U.S. defence spending reached \$30 billion (6% comparing to the latest DoD budget) and in 2013 it will rise to \$46 billion (9%) with the overall aim to achieve \$490 billion in savings by 2021. Some solutions to this challenge have already emerged under the label of "smart defence" which is aimed at enhanced cooperation, pooling and sharing and closer coordination between member states of their procurement policies (NATO 2012b). To date, NATO has already managed to identify many areas of possible cooperation but there is a permanent fear among some member states that uncoordinated cuts of some capabilities and slim-



downs in the command structure will have a negative effect on interoperability and the Alliance's capability to fulfil some of its core tasks, especially in terms of territorial defence. These trends will also challenge the R&D spending, deepening the already existing gap between Europe and the U.S. At the same time both Robert Gates, the outgoing Defence Secretary in the administration of Barack Obama, who sharply scored European countries for failing to meet their obligations in the area of defence spending, as well as Leon Panetta, who replaced Gates in that position, warned that the lack of interest in solving the problems of the European NATO allies, and lack of coordination of policies and defence expenditures can have fatal consequences for the cohesion and credibility of the organization.

The fear related to the future European Allies' military posture within NATO is additionally exacerbated by the fact that the current U.S. administration is more determined than ever to redirect its interest outside the Euro-Atlantic area towards the Asia and Pacific, which may make Europe even more vulnerable to possible threats it may face in the near future (Piotrowski and Wiśniewski 2012). The planned withdrawal of two of four combat brigades stationed in Europe is also seen by many countries as a tangible proof of the U.S. determination to stick to its new priorities in security and defence policy.

There is also an obvious trend of limiting the scale of NATO ambition to undertake such complex task as the peace-building project in Afghanistan where NATO was engaged both in fighting the growing and more aggressive Taliban rebellion against the Afghan central authorities and the security sector reform (Górka-Winter 2012). The limited effect of this effort and heavy casualties for NATO-ISAF countries brought much frustration both to European governments and its societies which strongly advocated a serious scaling-down of the operation. The final NATO decision of eventually ending it by 2014 was received by them with great relief. Even in the United Kingdom, a country with an established tradition of engaging in operations in distant theatres it was admitted that the engagement in Afghanistan for so many years led to serious overstretching of British military forces (Chappell 2012)<sup>1</sup>. Still, Afghanistan is not over. NATO has already accepted the responsibility for sustaining the efforts in the security sector reform after 2014, which means that the Alliance will have to be engaged in the process beyond this date.



And last but not least, the “New Strategic Concept” from 2010 suggests that there is a growing need to focus on a plethora of so-called “non-traditional threats” defined as terrorism, cyber-terrorism, piracy, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, assuring the safety of energy infrastructure, coping with the consequences of natural disasters and the growing competition for natural resources etc. The importance of these issues for NATO was underlined by creating a new ‘Emerging Security Challenges Division,’ which means that without any doubt the Allies are more and more inclined to address these challenges using NATO’s already existing instruments as well as by creating new capabilities.

All these trends outlined above will create very specific conditions in which the future of NATO’s partnerships with the different countries around the globe may emerge. The complexity of the security environment coupled with NATO’s current and future deficits in some capabilities make the strong quest for deepened cooperation inevitable and may even result in sort of “exotic” alliances with so-called emerging powers which are not traditional NATO partners, such as India, China, Vietnam or countries from Latin America. The important difference compared to the “pre-Lisbon” times is that currently NATO has at its disposal far more flexible instruments to adjust partnerships to its own needs and to the needs of the partners. Already the new “Strategic Concept” states that the Alliance must rely on the wide network of partnerships to achieve its goal of being a collective security organization. As many as 13 NATO partners were then invited to the Chicago Summit in appreciation of their role and contribution to different operations, with ISAF being treated as the most important one. This approach was further elaborated in the ministerial meeting in Berlin (April 2011) when also the need to increase the effectiveness and flexibility of partnerships was further addressed (NATO 2011). It is foreseen that NATO partners may consult issues vital to their security within the Alliance using different formulas (not only existing institutions, such as EAPC or MD) and their influence on the decision-making process shall be much stronger than it is now. The need for flexibility and pragmatic approach to cooperation was also underlined.



### **In Search of Possibilities**

First of all, the necessity of defence cuts resulting in diminishing military capabilities should trigger among the Allies a greater willingness to cooperate with external partners who sustain their defence spending at a decent level. It is also a good idea to take a fresh look at what these countries have to offer in terms of military but also non-military instruments to cope with the unpredictable environment of the XXI century. In this particular area the potential of cooperation is unlimited and the new approach toward the partners is already taking shape. Only during the last couple of months NATO signed two new agreements to strengthen the ties with New Zealand and Australia. On June 4, NATO and New Zealand formalized their cooperation in a form of Individual Partnership Cooperation Programme which assumes common actions in the sphere of: cyber-defence, disaster relief, crisis management and joint education and training (NATO 2012c). In addition, in June, the agreement with the Australian government on mutual collaboration was concluded in the document “NATO-Australia Joint Political Declaration” which provides for common training of a range of military forces, cooperation in the area of conflict management, post-conflict peace-building, humanitarian actions, and other areas (NATO 2012d). The signed document is the first of this kind NATO entered into with the country under its new approach to the partnership policy. Both initiatives will have a great impact on the partners’ abilities to cope with the above-mentioned threats as they will share their best practices in combating them, exchanging data, developing common standards in creating programs for coping with new challenges, organizing common trainings of forces etc.

The challenges emerging from the complex security environment should also trigger NATO’s interest in moving beyond its traditional ties with other countries around the globe. The list of NATO current partners is impressive as it includes over 40 countries dealing with the Alliance in different endeavours including such extremely difficult missions as Afghanistan. Yet there is still room for new possibilities to initiate cooperation with countries like China, India or Vietnam. Contrary to the trend in NATO members, the defence spending in Asia is on the rise and these countries, even though undergoing a bit of an economic cool-down, present a great potential for cooperation in different areas. A case in point -China’s defence budget accounts for more than \$106 billion, which is twice as much as this country’s 2006 military expenditures. India’s military spending, although much more modest compared to its northern neighbour is also on the rise –



with \$41 billion allocated for 2012-2013 – which means a 17 % rise year-to-year. These trends are in stark contrast to European countries, many of which have nothing more to offer the Alliance than military spending below 1% of their GDP.

It should not come as a surprise that NATO decision-makers look forward to possibilities of cooperation with partners, which were not to date considered a “natural choice.” Such “rapprochement” has been already initiated by NATO towards India. In 2011 the Alliance approached this country with the proposal for cooperation on missile defence. At the Chicago Summit in May 2012 NATO declared the interim operational capability of its own system, confirming the determination of the Allies to pursue this capability. There are, however, many obstacles which NATO has to overcome in its further effort to develop the missile defence program. Apart from some political hesitation coming from different European governments, the issue of scarce financial resources may block the dynamics of creating MD which ultimately aims at secure NATO territories and populations. In searching for possible avenues of scientific cooperation, NATO offered India to cooperate in developing and sharing some technological solutions in this specific area – a move seen by some experts as being driven by political rather than practical reasons. (Braganca 2011). What is even more important, India has also declared its rising engagement in security sector reform in Afghanistan, a move which may release at least some of NATO future responsibilities in this volatile country. Although it may today seem quite improbable, some experts also suggest that future cooperation of NATO with China is not such an “odd” idea as it may have been considered a couple of years ago. There is a wide range of issues, such as the situation in Afghanistan, the problem of North Korean nuclear and missile program or maritime security – all of which are of interest for both sides and may incentivize them to expand on the already-existing links. The mutual shared interests may even overshadow China’s non-compliance with the western standards and values.

### **What Agenda for NATO in Africa?**

Notwithstanding NATO’s reluctance to undertake the difficult task of stabilizing different regions around the globe, the need for the Alliance’s actions will persist. Only in Afghanistan NATO declared its “enduring commitment” meaning that it will keep its presence (in terms of financial and mentoring support) to assure the sustainability of the



security sector reform. In the nearest future the Alliance may also face many challenges originating in its closer vicinity including threats generated indirectly by the so-called Arab Spring. In the region of Sahel for example the failure of such countries like Mali has already begun and resulted in rapid expansion of radical terrorist networks, which may soon threaten Europe, trigger an even stronger immigration pressure, and put many local societies at risk of social and economic backwardness. As it was already mentioned, there is little probability that NATO as such would engage in a serious military intervention in the region but nevertheless, the growing need for assisting in the security sector reform in many African countries persists. In recent years NATO has been an active supporter of the African Union, but it lacked focus on promoting the idea of security sector reform in spite of the fact that NATO has amassed experience in this area from the Balkans and from Afghanistan which may be offered to different countries in this region. For some years already NATO has been establishing links with some African countries and organizations, yet greater NATO involvement would demand more political will expressed by NAC, more political acceptance for the Alliance's engagement from local establishments and more resources.

NATO further "expansion" in this region will, thus, demand forming a closer partnership with different stakeholders, including regional security organizations, but also individual players, such as China and India, which both have a good record of collaboration with different African countries, not only economically, but also in the sphere of defence. Indian experience in cooperation with different African countries is especially worth noting as it combines "soft power" instruments with economic and security means (Mawdsley – McCann 2011). India is the third largest "provider" of UN peacekeepers to the missions in Africa (van Rooyen 2010) (presently to countries like Côte d'Ivoire, the DRC, Liberia, and Sudan), including involvement of the Indian navy in fighting piracy along the Somali coastline. India is also engaged in donorship, investments in infrastructure and other activities. Equally important is the growing Indian defence engagement in the security sector in Africa - India is maintaining close relationship with some African governments and political establishments by signing defence agreements (with for example Madagascar, Kenya, Mozambique). India follows its strategic interest of securing the Indian Ocean littoral in terms of economic interests but also pursues a strategy of fighting military threats posed by state and non-state actors like piracy, terrorism etc. As far as the security sector reform is concerned, India has a noticeable



record in this domain, with such undertakings, such as training the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) for peacekeeping tasks or training thousands of African officers and military staff in Indian military academies.

This multi-sectoral engagement pays off since India is perceived by many African societies as responsible, not a predatory, power and reliable stakeholder. These factors place India on an extremely high position of desired partners for NATO cooperation with different African countries.

### **NATO and Latin America. Deficit of Trust and Surplus of Incompatibilities**

There is no Latin American country in NATO's global partnership (NATO 2012a) and the prospects to establish such formalised relations still remain constrained by factors such as: general distrust towards the U.S. involvement in the region, diverse security interests, and diverging perception of threats.

The long-standing U.S. engagement in Latin America has been always eliciting negative reactions among the countries of the region. In the last few years such reactions were fuelled by U.S. agreements on establishing military bases in Colombia and Mexico, as well as, by a 2008 decision to reconstitute the 4<sup>th</sup> U.S. Fleet operating on the Caribbean Sea. More importantly, the U.S. increasing military presence in Latin America is often equated to NATO's engagement in the region. The controversies were amplified even more with the 2010 NATO Strategic Concept. The Brazilian government was the most vocal in criticising the document claiming that it has given NATO the possibility to engage everywhere in the world and on the basis of various motives. The largest Latin American country objects that only the UN Security Council (UNSC) has the legitimacy to decide on the use of force (Jobim 2010; Brandão Ferreira 2010). Such a position is derived from the fact that subsequent Brazilian governments aspired to be the main guarantor of regional stability. Additionally, Brazil wants to safeguard its economic interests related to petroleum exploration in the vast offshore fields called Pre-Salt, hence, its opposition to any NATO/U.S. mandate to operate on South Atlantic. To some extent, the U.K military base in Falkland/Malvinas Islands is seen as the point of access for NATO to that part of the ocean. Argentina, which has long claimed the territory, has had support from regional partners on this issue (Znojek 2010; Chappell 2012).



The critical views of the Alliance's engagement in Latin America also have their basis in specific security concepts present in the region. The leading theme in the rhetoric of Latin American governments is the cult of the region as an area of peace which has not seen a major military conflict since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, relations based on diplomacy, dialogue, respect for sovereignty and the rule of non-intervention are seen as the means that bring about peaceful relations. The key security threats affecting Latin America have mostly internal character and concern issues such as organised crime, drug and arms trafficking, border security and urban violence (Molano-Rojas 2012). There are two important processes, however, which are not gaining enough resonance in regional security cooperation. One is terrorism, related for example to the activity in the region of such groups as Hamas and Hezbollah. Second, the other is the increasing involvement in the region of non-hemispheric actors such as China, Russia and Iran (Molano-Rojas 2012; Wojna 2011).

In this complexity of interests and perceptions of threats it is not easy to identify partners for developing closer cooperation with NATO. Potential partners could be Argentina and Chile, as they are the only Latin American countries to contribute to NATO-led missions –both participated in KFOR, and Argentina also in SFOR (Garrido Rebolledo 2007, 40). Additionally, since 1990's Argentina has enjoyed the status of non-NATO major ally (the only such ally in Latin America). Chile also aspires for similar distinction (Fraga 2012). Other group of potential partners includes countries, which cooperate with the U.S. in fighting drug and arms trafficking, namely Colombia, Mexico, and countries of Central America (Moreno Izquierdo 2009). Some of the mentioned countries also partake on such enterprises as the U.S.-led biannual RIMPAC maritime exercises. In the 2012 edition, army units of Chile and Mexico, as well as the military personnel of Colombia and Peru were present (Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet 2012).

NATO may also consider seeking bloc-to-bloc relations, but here the choice for potential partners may be more difficult. There are, however, a few multilateral bodies in the pan-American framework of cooperation which deal with security issues. The oldest one is Inter-American Defence Board (JID), a consultation forum established in 1942 and merged into the Organisation of American States (OAS) in 2006. In addition in 1947, Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (TIAR) was established as an institution of collective defence, originally with goals similar to those of NATO. TIAR



failed however with the Falkland/Malvinas War in 1982 and has not recovered since. In 2002 Mexico withdrew from the treaty, followed by Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Venezuela, in 2012 (Otálvora 2007, 4–5; Malamud Rickles 2007, 22–24). The most recent initiative of significance has been the Conference of Defence Ministers of the Americas (CDMA) established in 1995 meeting every two years.

The last decade has shown, however a relative decrease in importance of hemispheric framework as new regional cooperation schemes in Latin America developed, deliberately excluding the U.S. a good example is the Union of the South American Nations (Unasur) established in 2008 as a forum for political dialogue. The same year Council for Defence (CDS) was created as part of Unasur and a forum for consultations and coordination on security matters. The format of CDS followed Brazil's concept, which prevailed over Venezuela's idea to create a collective defence organisation with South American joint forces (Brigagão 2011; Serbin 2009). Nevertheless, an important example of CDS cooperation is the commitment to exchange information on military spending and arms acquisition.

In practice, there have been attempts by NATO to establish cooperation of with Latin American partners, but without any success. The U.S. officials declared Brazil as the main prospective partner of choice for the Alliance in the region (Grupo de Estudos de Defesa e Segurança 2007, 3; Stavridis 2012, 16), although, such an idea was received rather negatively by Brazilian government (Hyde-Price 2011, 50; Jobim 2010; Mercopress 2010). Chile was another potential ally that came up in discussions (Marshall 2008). Even countries historically and traditionally linked to Latin America, namely Spain (Batista González 2007) and Portugal (Seabra 2010) were not effective in playing a role of brokers of NATO's partnership with Latin American countries.

The dynamics in security cooperation in the region, and the nature of emerging security challenges require further attempts of NATO to seek closer relations with Latin American countries. The basic task for the Alliance is to find the ways and means of building mutual trust. What need to be done, in first place, is to attempt for a high level dialogue where such topics as peacekeeping operations, conflict resolutions or role of the UN could be discussed. Unasur/CDS seems to be the most adequate collective partner in Latin America for seeking block-to-block cooperation, although it is uncertain if diversity of its member states and their respective positions on security cooperation may not pose an obstacle to establishing a dialogue. A more viable op-



tion could be partnering with individual countries, which already have close security cooperation with NATO/U.S. Despite being among the most vocal Alliance's critics, it is Brazil which should be considered as the indispensable partner for NATO in Latin America. A future NATO-Brazil dialogue could be based on the model of NATO-Russia relationship.

### **Instead of Conclusions**

As Anders Fogh Rasmussen put it bluntly “NATO must adopt a global perspective. This does not mean expanding our footprint into other parts of the world, nor does it involve NATO assuming global responsibilities. A global perspective means that we are constantly aware how global challenges affect our security at home and always prepared to cooperate with partners across the globe to protect our populations and ensure peace and stability” (Fogh Rasmussen 2012). It means that although some suggest NATO should make a shift in its policy and consider how to meet the partners half-way, it is clear that the focus of decision-makers within the Alliance will be on the Alliance's own interests. One must note, however, that it should not be taken for granted that some of the countries, especially non-European allies, which now express the willingness to cooperate with NATO will be still interested in endeavours NATO will likely undertake in the future. One of the problems is that their contributions to date have not exactly materialized into influence on the Alliance's decision-making process, as is declared in new NATO documents concerning its partnership policy. One may ask a rhetorical question what is the impact of Australia, one of the largest non-NATO contributor to ISAF as well as to the ANA Trust Fund, on e.g. the program of security sector reform in Afghanistan.

As a consequence, NATO will undoubtedly have to address this problem in the nearest future. Some proposals were laid out in the Atlantic Council Report entitled “Anchoring the Alliance” (Burns, Wilson, and Lightfoot 2012, 10). As authors propose, NATO should consider for example building Pacific Peace Partnership (PPP) with partners such as Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan, and Singapore. To make the partnership durable and meaningful for both sides, the Alliance must not only concentrate on how to use the assets and capabilities at their partners' disposal but also how to



secure their participation in shaping NATO policies towards different issues of common interests. PPP could potentially extend towards Chile, Colombia Peru and Mexico – Latin American countries, which border the Pacific Ocean and are interested in closer relations with Asia-Pacific countries.

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