NEWCOMERS NO MORE?

Contemporary NATO and the Future of the Enlargement from the Perspective of "Post–Cold War" Members

2015

Edited by
Robert Czulda
Marek Madej

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NATO's members and joining dates to organisation

1	United States	04.04.1949
2	Canada	04.04.1949
3	United Kingdom	04.04.1949
4	France	04.04.1949
5	Italy	04.04.1949
6	Belgium	04.04.1949
7	Netherlands	04.04.1949
8	Luxembourg	04.04.1949
9	Denmark	04.04.1949
10	Norway	04.04.1949
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15	Germany	09.05.1955
16	Spain	30.05.1982
17	Czech Republic	12.03.1999
18	Poland	12.03.1999
19	Hungary	12.03.1999
20	Bulgaria	29.03.2004
21	Estonia	29.03.2004
22	Lithuania	29.03.2004
23	Latvia	29.03.2004
24	Romania	29.03.2004
25	Slovakia	29.03.2004
26	Slovenia	29.03.2004
27	Albania	01.04.2009
28	Croatia	01.04.2009

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Montenegro
Macedonia

Ambassador Alexander Vershbow (Deputy Secretary General of NATO)

NATO's Open Door - A Continuing Success Story

Article 10 of NATO's founding Treaty affirms that the Alliance is open to the inclusion of European states which share our values, which are able to assume the responsibilities of membership, and which can contribute to security in the Euro-Atlantic area. Together with Hungary and the Czech Republic, Poland formed the first wave of post-Cold War enlargement in 1999. Since then, a further nine countries have joined. And NATO's current 28 Allies are determined to keep the Alliance's door open for additional new members to walk through.

Our Open Door policy is one of the Alliance's great success stories. By joining NATO, our new members have returned to the family of Western nations from which they were tragically separated in the wake of the Second World War. By choosing to adopt NATO's standards and principles, they have given their democracies the strongest possible security anchor. And by pledging to defend and protect NATO, they have received the pledge that NATO will defend and protect them.

As an Alliance, NATO has been strengthened by the commitment of our new Allies to our defining values: freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. We have also benefitted from their capabilities, their significant contributions to our operations and exercises, as well as from the wealth of experience and insights that they have brought to the table.

But the positive effects of NATO enlargement have been visible beyond the Alliance. Alongside the widening of the European Union's membership, NATO enlargement has helped to erase many of the painful dividing lines in Europe. It has helped to spread freedom, democracy and stability all across the continent. And it has brought us significantly closer to a Europe whole, free and at peace, which has been a longstanding goal of our Alliance.

Today, the prospect of joining NATO continues to act as a strong incentive for interested nations to demonstrate responsibility and commitment, to stay on the path of democratic reform and reconciliation, and to find new solutions to old disputes. This process of individual nations working to meet the obligations and responsibilities of NATO membership is in itself contributing to greater stability in Europe.

Russian politicians and officials have long claimed that the enlargement of NATO's membership poses a threat to the security of their country. They have portrayed NATO's Open Door policy as a deliberate attempt to weaken Russia and to "encircle" it. And they have argued that the prospect of additional neigh-

bouring countries joining NATO left Russia no other choice than to occupy parts of Georgia in 1998 and Crimea at the beginning of 2014.

The reality is that we have gone out of our way to reach out and reassure Russia. We made unilateral commitments not to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of our new members; not to permanently station substantial combat forces; and not to build NATO infrastructure beyond that which might be required for reinforcement. And we worked hard to engage Russia in dialogue and cooperation on issues of common concern, such as counter-terrorism and counter-piracy, and with some considerable success.

Moreover, thanks to the stability which NATO and European Union enlargement has brought, Russia's western borders have never been more secure. Large parts of Central and Eastern Europe have seen unprecedented economic development and cross-border trade and investment, from which Russia has also benefitted.

Regrettably, all that progress has been put at risk by Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its readiness to use force to create new dividing lines, destabilise its neighbours, and deprive sovereign states of the right to chart their own future.

The Alliance has stood firm in the face of this challenge. At our NATO Summit in Wales in September, Allies demonstrated an unbreakable commitment to protect and defend each other against any attack. But they showed a similarly strong commitment to our positive vision of a Europe whole, free and at peace, and to keeping our NATO door open to help make that vision a reality. And they reaffirmed that any decisions on enlargement are for NATO itself.

The Open Door policy under Article 10 of the Washington Treaty is one of NATO's great successes, and we want that success to continue. We will continue to support the territorial integrity and sovereignty of our partners.

We will continue to respect their security choices. And we will continue to work with those countries that wish to move from partnership to membership.

Introduction

The year 2014 for NATO was definitely "a year to be remembered". Obviously, what decides most the unique character of the last year for the Alliance is the conflict, which has erupted in Eastern Ukraine. It started after the victory of the Maidan protesters against the decision of the Ukrainian President Victor Yanukovych - unquestionably Russia-inspired or induced - to refuse to sign an association agreement with the European Union and his escape from Ukraine in February. What followed was the Russian annexation of the Crimea in the name of the "necessity to protect[sic] [the] Russian-speaking minority" - which constitutes the first change in the borders of Europe by force since the collapse of the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall - and an even more profound and ominous eruption of Russian-backed separatism in the eastern provinces of the country.

The result is tragic violent conflict between the Ukrainian authorities in Kiev and separatists from the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic and other ephemeral entities, generously supported in various ways by the government in Moscow. This hybrid war, with acts of indirect aggression by "little green men", the actions of non-state actors and some kind of (artificially created) ambiguity of the legal status of the fighting parties, has already taken thousands of lives, including the almost 300 passengers of the Malaysia Airlines flight MH17, mistakenly shot down in July near Donetsk. The conflict has ravaged large parts of Ukraine's territory, ruining the country's economy. What is worse, it is still far from being solved or even stopped.

The war in Ukraine definitely changes the NATO perception on European security, threatening the fundaments of regional stability. The Alliance has to adapt to a new reality, in which European security and stability cannot be treated any longer as "finished business", anchored in norms and principles, commonly accepted by all states from the Euro-Atlantic area, and guaranteed by a network of multilateral institutions, with NATO serving as a central hub. Somewhat surprisingly for transatlantic governments and societies, we had to realize that the use of force to solve political disputes had not been fully eradicated from international relations on our continent, as well as thinking in categories of "special political rights" or "spheres of influences". Moreover, as the Ukrainian case shows brutally but clearly, aggression and armed activities have transformed significantly from the forms typical for Cold War times, when NATO had been preparing itself for massive confrontations of armoured divisions. Now they have evolved into a much more hybrid, ambiguous and protean form, in which insurgent tactics are mixed with regular military operations, the use of non-military pressure, and psychological warfare and propaganda operations that are large in scale and intensity.

All that means that NATO as such, as well as its members, has to rethink again its priorities and threat perceptions, focusing imminently (even if temporarily) more on regional issues and problems, as well as to reorganize its assets, plans and ways of cooperating with partners and outsiders. Unfortunately, all those changes and accommodations would have to be done when the NATO states and their closest partners and neighbours have still not fully recovered after the deep economic crisis and the world outside Europe seems to be volatile and unstable probably more than in any time after the Cold War. The bloody civil war in Syria and the quick rise in power of the Islamic State, extremely radical and hostile to the West, the constant tensions in Palestinian-Israeli relations and in other parts of Middle East and North Africa, unrest in the Sahel, Afghanistan and its neighbourhood on the verge of a slide into another armed conflict and an increasingly tense security situation in the East Asia - yes, there is a lot to be worried about and for which to prepare for the Allies.

However, despite that gloomy picture, 2014 still could be justifiably also called "a year of anniversaries", even if celebrated in a less enthusiastic way due to the difficult and ominous realities of today's world. Nevertheless, we should remember also the success stories of the last two decades. Fifteen years ago, in 1999, three post-Communist states, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, joined the Alliance, confirming its transformation from a primarily collective defence institution of the West to a pivotal element of the European security system, as well as a powerful instrument for democratization and stabilization in the region. Five years later, in the second "big-bang" wave of NATO enlargement, seven more Central and South - Eastern European countries followed suit, extending the zone of democracy and stability deep into the east of the continent. Then, in 2009, Albania and Croatia also joined the Alliance, increasing the number of members to 28. Although this year this "five year scheme" has been broken, and at the Newport summit in September there were no new invitations issued, the Alliance remains an attractive club for many European states, which would like to join in the future. Recent events in Ukraine definitely will complicate that process, but at the same time they could spur enthusiasm towards NATO membership in some European states and stimulate them to take efforts to join. So, it is still possible that we will witness another round of enlargement in the future, and reports of the death of the enlargement process, until now one of the defining features of NATO history in the last 20 years, could be an exaggeration.

Meanwhile, the so-called "new" members - those who joined the Alliance after the end of the Cold War - have matured as allies and are not so new any longer. Their accession has transformed NATO, and they themselves have also been transformed. The 12 members from Central and South - Eastern Europe have brought into the Alliance a variety of perspectives and opinions regarding the

tasks, functions and roles of the organization, which have not been always identical - for obvious reasons - with the ideas of the Western Allies. At the same time they have also profoundly transformed their own perceptions of their security needs and interests, as well as their views on their role in regional and global affairs. In addition, "newcomers" have offered NATO certain assets - even if often limited, especially initially. They have created new opportunities and introduced new issues and partners, but also - inevitably - brought to the table new problems and challenges. All this has transformed internal debates among the Allies, as well as NATO strategies and ways of functioning.

Therefore, in the opinion of the editors of this volume, it seems to be a very valuable exercise for NATO to survey the views emerging from Central and South - Eastern Europe on two broad groups of issues. The first is to look at how they see their experience as a NATO member, how they evolved after joining that "club" and how they assess their impact on the Alliance and their position in the NATO burden-sharing scheme or, in other words, their role in the organization. Second are their views on the current shape and condition of the Alliance, how it works, what it should and could do for security and stability in the region and the wider world, and in which direction it should or could develop. NATO enlargement certainly constitutes one of the most fundamental questions of such an analysis, not only because of these countries' own experiences in preparing for accession and functioning as a "newcomer" in the club, but also because of the fact that support for further enlargement is still - despite the diversity of the newcomers - a rather common characteristic in these countries' position on the future of NATO, even if the crisis in the Ukraine has most probably changed in some respect their perspective on the issue.

The main purpose of this book is to look thoroughly at these simultaneous transformations of "newcomers" and the Alliance as such, which were the results of enlargement. We wish to present a variety of views on NATO from member states "formerly known as new", and to assess in this context the prospects for NATO enlargement. The idea was to show the diversity of strategies of functioning within the Alliance, which were adopted by "newcomers" after their accessions. The intention was also to establish what kind of roles "new" members wanted to play in NATO, what functions they tried to perform, the intensity of their involvement in the cooperation among the Allies and the depth of their internal transformations induced by membership. Equally important was to find out how countries from Central and Eastern Europe who joined NATO after the Cold War perceived the Alliance as such - how they assess its current shapes or condition, how they understand its central missions such as collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security and how they define the hierarchy of NATO tasks and functions, what they list as the main challenges and threats to the

security of NATO and its members and what kind of future of cooperation between the Allies and partners they predict. Of particular significance was determining how the issue of enlargement - its impact on NATO and accessing states, as well as the future of the whole process in current turbulent conditions - is perceived and assessed among the Central and Eastern European members of NATO.

Obviously, not all of these issues were discussed by every author and every article in this volume. However, we hope that by giving a collection of opinions from various experts from different countries on such a broad spectrum of issues, we would be able to present views on NATO in Central, South - Eastern and Eastern Europe that reveal diversity as well as commonalities. The ambition was to present in the book voices both from the academic and think tank communities, and from practitioners such as diplomats and officials from various nations, as well as international staff, with the goal of formulating a nuanced, but at the same time accurate picture on the issue.

Therefore, the book consists of three parts. The first is a collection of personal remarks, views and reflections on NATO enlargement and the functioning of the Alliance offered by policy makers from "newcomer" or candidate states. The main purpose of this part is to give some kind of "first-hand relations" on the issues discussed in the book, something undoubtedly of extreme importance for understanding the reasons, challenges and results of the development of NATO after the Cold War as well as the transformation of its "new" members after accession. Among those who agreed to share their views here were both some high-ranking officials from Central and Eastern European states who were directly engaged in negotiations on NATO accession, as well as those who are currently involved in formulating and implementing "new" members' policies in the Alliance, including, something which constitutes a great honour for the editors and readers of this volume, Mr. Martin Stropnický, Minister of Defence of the Czech Republic, Mr. Csaba Hende, Minister of Defence of Hungary, and Mr. Titus Corlăţean, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania (till November 2014). The "Brussels perspective" is also represented in the book thanks to the preface to the book generously provided by Ambassador Alexander Vershbow, Deputy Secretary General of NATO.

Articles collected in the second part could be roughly divided into two groups. Those in the first group focus on the experience in NATO of particular "newcomer" states like Hungary, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Estonia or Poland. These papers discuss how the militaries and societies of such countries have been transformed by the accession, how the worldviews of both political elites and the wider public have evolved since becoming an Ally, what were their expectations towards NATO as such and its particular members - as well as what kind of expec-

tations were put on them by "older" members - and, last but not least, to what degree these expectations were met. The remaining articles in this part deal primarily with the (former) newcomers' perspectives on the current condition and the future roles and problems of the Alliance, showing their current fears, hopes and expectations towards NATO, still perceived as the most fundamental pillar of their security.

The last part of the book is devoted directly to the issues of enlargement and cooperation with the partners. One could find here articles written from the perspective of candidate states like FYROM/Republic of Macedonia, in which both obstacles and opportunities in the process of their accession to NATO are discussed. A couple of other papers here analyse thoroughly the current shape and future prospects of NATO cooperation with partners, with special attention given to the relations with the Russian Federation and other countries from the post-Soviet space, as well as the impact on these relations of the violent crisis in Eastern Ukraine. In addition, in this part the question of the potential NATO membership of Sweden and Finland is also analysed. Although these countries continue to pursue a policy of neutrality, they are among the closest partners of the Alliance in Europe, so especially recently, in light of the current evolution of the security environment on the continent, the issue of their possible accession has definitely grown in importance and is discussed much more intensively than in previous years. Hence, omitting that topic here would be a mistake.

The editors of the volume would like to express their greatest gratitude to all authors of this collection who decided to share with us their views and devoted their time - in all cases really precious - to work on this book. Having the possibility to work with them on the book was a great and educative experience, and a real pleasure at the same time. We have learned a lot thanks to this endeavour and hope that the benefits to readers of this volume will be of similar proportions.

Robert Czulda
Marek Madej
Warsaw - January 2015

PART I

Martin Stropnický (Minister of Defense, the Czech Republic)

Czech Republic in NATO: From Admiration to Reliable Partner

It is my great pleasure to introduce this book entitled *"Newcomers No More? Contemporary NATO and the Future of the Enlargement from the Perspective of 'Post-Cold War' Members"*, which addresses the vital question of how NATO is now perceived in Central and South East Europe.

When the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary eventually became members of NATO in March 1999, it marked the end of the transitional period that followed after the fall of Communism. For a large portion of the population, as well as for the political elite, NATO membership also became part of their new identity, as being embedded in Western civilization. On a practical level, it brought security guarantees unrivalled in the past and is thus regarded as one of the most important achievements of our security politics since the fall of communism. Without doubt, membership of NATO has also had a huge impact on the transformation of our military. Since joining, we have continually aimed at developing even more modern and mobile armed forces, capable of achieving an adequate level of interoperability with new allies.

However, that was 15 years ago and a lot has changed since then. Most importantly, there was the second "Big-Bang" wave of NATO enlargement five years on as seven additional Central and South East European countries followed suit, extending the zone of democracy and stability deep into the east of the continent. Then, in 2009, Albania and Croatia also joined the NATO Alliance, increasing the number of members to 28. Thus, NATO brought stability to the Balkans - the very source of the most serious security challenges for my country and, indeed, for Europe as a whole after the end of the Cold War.

While some regions stabilized, other, newer regions became unstable, thus confirming the indispensability of NATO in the current security environment. This may apply both to Ukraine and the Middle East, which appear to be the key regions for NATO to focus on in the years ahead.

Enlargement in terms of quantitative progress has been successful. However, in order to cope with future tasks, we also need to see vital qualitative development, which means that neglecting defence expenditures is no longer an option. We in the Czech Republic have been feeling the impact of low defence appropriations very strongly, and have drawn up an agreement with the ruling coalition parties on defence spending with the aim of reaching 1.4% GDP spending on defence in 2020. I believe that stability in this respect is the most important factor. Besides enhancing the whole spectrum of military capabilities, increased financing is also crucial for maintaining a strong transatlantic link, and keeping our US Allies

involved in European security is the only way forward. I am proud to say that the newer Central and Eastern European members of NATO, in particular the Czech Republic have been especially active in this regard.

I hope that readers will find here a whole range of ideas on these subjects and much more, and I would personally like to extend my admiration to all those who contributed to this extraordinary book.

Csaba Hende (Minister of Defense, Hungary)

The Door Should Remain Open

Accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on 12 March, 1999 marked a significant milestone in Hungary's history. For my country, it was one of the most important events since the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989. Joining an Alliance based on shared democratic values and common interests was fundamental to Hungary's strategic objective of being reunited with the "West". At the end of a turbulent century, Hungary was eventually able to retake its rightful place among Western democracies. In addition to the symbolic importance of NATO membership, enlargement extended the zone of stability to Central and Eastern Europe. It is reassuring that our security and shared values are effectively safeguarded and guaranteed by the most successful military organization in the world. As a member of NATO, Hungary is not only a consumer of security, but also actively contributes to the security and stability of the entire transatlantic region.

The accession of Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic in 1999 was a milestone in the history of the Alliance, as well. Since the end of the Cold War, there had been an intense debate about whether NATO should invite countries from the former Communist Bloc. Finally, all NATO nations understood and accepted the need, which emerged from the new political and security context. The first round of enlargement after the fall of the Berlin Wall was a historic step in itself, but also opened the way for further rounds of accession in the following years.

The three rounds of enlargement of the Alliance constituted significant steps toward the unification of Europe, and had remarkable effects on the security and stability of the "Old Continent". The "newcomers" have proved to be constructive members of the Alliance, providing added value to NATO's efforts to contribute to enhancing international security. We may therefore state that enlargement enhanced NATO's ability to adapt to the ever evolving security conditions in the Euro-Atlantic region and beyond, and thus to effectively counter the traditional and emerging challenges to security.

We may also state that decision making in the North Atlantic Council, that is, reaching consensus on issues of paramount importance to security in the Euro-Atlantic region and beyond, has not become more difficult than before. On the contrary, new members brought in new inputs, additional experience and expertise, especially with regard to regions neighbouring the Alliance. It should also be added that no sharp dividing lines have emerged between the "old" and "new" Allies.

There is no doubt that NATO has to maintain its "open door" policy, which is a matter of credibility for the Alliance. Every European country that aspires to join

NATO should have the chance to do so if it meets the required standards. We should also reiterate that enlargement is not directed against any country. Its objective is to promote stability and cooperation on the basis of shared democratic values.

As a neighbour, Hungary has a special interest in the NATO membership of the countries in the Western Balkans, since one of the strategic objectives of Hungarian foreign policy is promoting security and stability there. This is the reason why almost 500 Hungarian troops are currently deployed in Kosovo and Bosnia-Hercegovina, and why we have been among the strongest proponents of further enlargement. Since joining NATO, we have constantly argued that the stability and security of the Balkans can be best ensured if nations from that region are given the opportunity to join NATO and the European Union. We consider the membership of Albania and Croatia a great success from the point of view of Hungarian foreign and security policy.

Further enlargement of the Alliance must remain a strategic priority. At the Wales Summit, the Allies committed themselves to the continuation of the enlargement process. We have a strong interest in helping Montenegro, the frontrunner among aspirants for membership, receive an invitation by the end of 2015. Both Georgia and Macedonia have proven their commitment to transatlantic security and have taken important steps to join NATO. We are convinced that the substantial package adopted at this year's summit will also help Georgia further advance towards future membership. As for Macedonia, we urge them and Greece to solve the name issue, the only obstacle to invitation. Bosnia and Herzegovina still has a lot to do, and Hungary, for its part, remains ready to provide the necessary assistance and advancement to all the aspiring countries, especially by sharing its own experiences of NATO accession with all countries interested.

In summary, it is critical to the security and stability of Europe to keep the door of NATO open. All rounds of enlargement since 1952 have strengthened NATO and the security of Europe and the entire transatlantic region, and have helped to effectively defend our shared democratic values.

Titus Corlăţean (Minister of Foreign Affairs 2012 - 2014, Romania)

An Indispensable Alliance. A View from Romania

It is 25 years since the fall of the Iron Curtain, when many thought that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization would be dissolved, as the Warsaw Pact did. Today, as then, NATO's raison d'être is unquestioned by anyone, with the notable exception of the Russian Federation.

Today, the Alliance continues to provide the necessary security umbrella for its members, to deal with out-of-area crises and to enhance international security through an important and relevant network of partnerships. It continues to uphold the shared vision of a Europe whole, free and at peace, and to reflect the engagement to common democratic values and principles.

2014 is a year of many celebrations: 65 years since NATO's foundation - and we see that the Alliance maintains both its relevance, in terms of contributing to international peace and security, and its power of attraction; 20 years since the creation of the Partnership for Peace - Romania being the first former communist country to sign it; 15 years since the first enlargement of the Alliance after 1990 with Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary; 10 years since its largest enlargement, when Romania alongside Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Slovenia joined the Alliance; and five years since its most recent enlargement, with Albania and Croatia.

Since joining NATO 10 years ago, Romania has enjoyed the highest level of security and defence since the foundation of the modern state, with major benefits at the political, military, and economic level. NATO membership, with the security guarantees of the Treaty of Washington, allowed my country to develop in accordance with the Euro-Atlantic system of values. During this period, and even before joining the Alliance, when it acted as a de facto NATO member, Romania constantly consolidated its profile as a staunch ally, assumed responsibilities and coped with threats to Allied security. Romanian armed forces have fought shoulder to shoulder with Allied forces and have always and efficiently completed their missions, including by paying the ultimate sacrifice.

Romania takes pride in continuing to bring its added value to the Alliance. One of the strategic endeavours currently under development is Romania's participation in the US European Phased Adaptive Approach on Missile Defence. Making the Aegis Ashore Facility operational at the Deveselu Military Base in Romania, in the 2015 timeframe, will be a significant part of the NATO Ballistic Missile Defence Capability. This purely defensive enterprise is a contribution to international peace and security, and particularly to legitimate Allied self defence and security, in line with the United Nations Charter.

Furthermore, as the Alliance phases out its longest mission abroad, the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, under the framework of the NATO SOFA Agreement and of the Romania - United States Defence Cooperation Agreement, Romania supports the transit of the United States, the Allied and their partners' forces and equipment from Afghanistan, through the Mihail Kogalniceanu Airbase - an important regional transportation hub.

By hosting the NATO HUMINT Centre of Excellence in Oradea, Romania contributes towards developing Allied operational intelligence capabilities and policies.

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Today, NATO - and all of us - is facing a very complex strategic climate, marked by the resurgence of geopolitical ambitions, of unconventional warfare, of large scale terrorism, as well as of other emergent risks.

Romania considers of crucial importance the consolidation of the Alliance's collective defence, the solidity of transatlantic relations, a renewed relation with partners, and the continuation of the "open door" policy.

The recent 2014 NATO Summit in Wales reaffirmed the strong political vision and the will of the Allies to continuously adapt the Alliance to the new challenges in the regional and global security environment.

It is the security crisis in Ukraine, the gravest since the end of the Cold War, that highlighted the need to focus on collective defence, without neglecting NATO's two other core tasks.

The Russian Federation's aggressive actions against Ukraine this year, including the illegal annexation of the Crimea, reminded the Allies of a type of international conduct that had for long been considered gone. These actions negatively impact Euro-Atlantic security, as well as the regional balance, as they are just the latest of a ring of conflicts over the years in the Black Sea region.

The decisions adopted at the NATO Summit in Wales were a response to Russia's aggressive actions, which generated understandable concerns, especially for the Eastern Allies.

Short-term measures to reassure the Eastern Allies, adopted as early as April 2014, in a visible and balanced way, demonstrated our common determination towards safeguarding NATO's Eastern flank and our will to send strong signals that the Alliance takes the security of its members seriously.

Romania welcomed the reassurance measures, in terms of a more intensive programme of military training and exercises, together with other Allies and, especially, the United States, port calls and exercises of Allied ships to the Black Sea, NATO AWACS flights, deployments of United States F-16s and Canadian F-18s to train with Romanian air forces.

The Alliance adopted its Readiness Action Plan to provide a long-term reconfiguration of the Alliance's posture and enhance its collective defence. Measures, such as the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force and the establishment of NATO Command and Control structures in the territories of the Eastern Allies, including Romania, are ways both to deter potential aggression, and to have the right forces and means in place to act in self-defence, if necessary.

A regional focus was equally important. Thus, the strategic relevance of the Black Sea was duly reflected in the NATO Wales Summit Declaration, as an important component of the Euro-Atlantic security. It is a confirmation that this region is part of our joint security, an aspect demonstrating future Allied engagement for security developments in the area.

Developments in other regions are also a source of concern for the Euro-Atlantic security: the Syrian situation, the destabilization in Iraq, Libya and the Sahel region are the more troubling as they include humanitarian crises as well. A terrorist state in the Middle East, an objective followed by the so-called Islamic State, generates huge risks for the region and beyond.

Before such developments occur, the Alliance needs to be ready. Steps were taken in this direction, as mentioned above, and Romania will firmly look forward to their implementation. However, this needs to be done in unity across the Atlantic, a unity which is reflected by the solidity of the transatlantic link.

In my view, the transatlantic bond that has united North America and Europe represents the bedrock of our collective security. Romania firmly supported the decision towards a more equitable sharing of the burdens of costs and responsibilities, of increasing defence budgets to 2% of GDP over a decade, as we see it as an investment in collective defence, towards the consolidation of Allied defence capabilities.

On partnerships, the summit brought important decisions for Ukraine and for the Republic of Moldova. In relation to the NATO Trust Funds for Ukraine, Romania expressed its intention to act as lead nation on cyber defence, thus contributing to enhancing Ukrainian capabilities in this field. At the same time, the Republic of Moldova was included in NATO's Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative, as well as in the Interoperability Platform Initiative. Romania was at the forefront of promoting greater NATO engagement with the Republic of Moldova, to help it strengthen its defence and security sectors.

The continuation of the "open door" policy was important at the recent NATO Summit, although it did not bring invitations to aspirants. The Allies showed their determination to continue to engage significantly with all aspirants, based on their merits. An important package was adopted for Georgia, and a consistent declaration on Montenegro's future accession steps was put forward. Similarly, there are steps forward regarding Macedonia/FYROM and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

These are important steps to ensure the progress of NATO's enlargement, as a concrete way to promote stability and security.

Complementing the NATO framework, Romania values security initiatives on NATO's Eastern flank: trilateral security dialogue with Poland and Turkey takes place frequently, and bilateral security consultations in the framework of the strategic partnerships with Poland and Turkey as well. This reinforces regional consultations, with a view towards a unified approach along the Eastern flank.

An important aspect for all the Allies is to bring NATO closer to the people. Present and future generations need to know that our security is not to be taken for granted: all of us should be aware of risks and threats to our security, as obvious or subtle as they can be, and all of us need to contribute to it. As statespersons, our task is to better communicate what NATO does for the security of each of our citizens.

For Romania, rejoining the free world, which it was forced to leave at the end of the Second World War, rejoining the community of values, democracy, and rule of law, was a major foreign policy objective, which has now been accomplished.

Sharing responsibilities, the consolidation of defence capabilities, and bringing added value to Allied core tasks in the face of ever growing and emergent threats are Romania's contribution to our transatlantic community.

Salomon Passy (President of the Atlantic Club of Bulgaria)

NATO Out-of-the-Box vs. the BRICS - SCO System. The Rising World Order (An Open Letter to NATO's Secretary General and Heads of States)

The previous version of this out-of-the-box strategy (OoB) contributed to the brainstorming of the 2010 NATO Strategic Concept. The 10 or so suggestions for an upgrade to NATO's political and global socialization leading to its adaptation to the next two decades remained, however, a mere academic exercise for various transatlantic conferences. In 2014, the Ukrainian - Russian crisis overlapped with the emergence of what became known as Islamic State in the Middle East following the wave of Arab Spring revolutions, proving thereby the adequacy of this pre-emptive OoB action plan. The good news today, five years later, is that these ideas are still updatable, applicable and even more topical to enhance and reinforce NATO, and the Euro-Atlantic community in general. NATO enlargement was based on the broader vision to extend - according to the contemporary modalities - the area of Atlantic values and the global security structure. Since World War II, extensive efforts have prepared NATO for its future role in the shockingly fast-evolving world. Today we need the most forward-looking, ambitious and - above all - OoB framework, united not under the lowest common denominator of the member states, but under the highest imaginable standards of the most visionary among their leaders.

The three to five-year electoral cycle presses governments to address urgent, not strategic, issues and thus to follow events instead of shaping them. The opposite, proactive approach should be pursued, to empower NATO for a response to the challenges that we can reasonably expect to become urgent in a mid-term perspective of five to 20 years, as well as to those, currently beyond our limited imagination. These should not be allowed to catch us unprepared or unarmed, as has happened more than once since 1989.

9/11 might not have happened if we had expected it, which could have been the case, had we possessed OoB thinking which transforms the unbelievable into the imaginable. Twenty-five years ago (let alone in 1949!) it would have been inconceivable to expand the number of NATO founding members from 12 to 28, adding an extensive range of wider partnerships; or that NATO would be successfully operating to stabilize and pacify regions even well out-of-area. What surprises await us in the next couple of decades and how should we prepare ourselves to meet them? I hereby offer some provocative yet hopefully exciting and stimulating ideas for the Atlantic Club of Bulgaria (ACB) which continues to influence the debate on the future of NATO, as it has since 1990.

The Alliance's unique nature, success and sensational geopolitical evolution prove it is by far the best among all similar in the history of humanity. Yet it is far from being a non-upgradable divine creation. Overcoming all the differences within it and the obstacles outside it, NATO has proved it is capable of upgrading, and must upgrade in order to undertake its new leading mission in managing peace across the globe.

Many would oppose ACB's *bigger is better* philosophy for NATO. The right question is, however, not *whether* but *how* to expand, at *any particular moment*, NATO's network and influence in order to catch up with the modern world, which is being digitalized and globalized at the speed of lightning. Therefore, we *must* examine future relationships between a much wider range of geopolitical forces and influences than in the past. We should not shy away from inviting criticism and launching ideas that are too challenging for the *status quo* of today. Assume that today is already yesterday, or - much better - the day before yesterday. Until 1989, the *dividing line* between East and West was defined primarily by the values represented by the Atlantic Alliance and those that confronted it, or in OSCE terminology - it was between the countries to the East and the West of Vienna. The then so-called *Third World*, symbolically represented by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), was politically closer to the Eastern orbit and therefore Cold War confrontation was close to a dichotomy: the West vs. the rest. After 1989, Atlantic values became the glue that reunited the West with New Europe.

Those values continue to spread as much and deep as time permitted to the East and the South and gradually lead to a coherent security structure stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok, and almost across the Tropic of Cancer and the Equator to the South. This centrifugal spread of values should go hand in hand with building and strengthening global networks with reliable partners in various endeavours in politics, security, economy, environment or culture.

Comparing 2014 with 1989, we observe at least three major transformations of the geometry of the West - East dividing line. **The first** shows that the existing line has moved eastwards from Vienna to the middle of the Black Sea, clearly dividing Europe into countries to the East and the West of it.

The second is in the new projections of the Russia - China axis, opposing the West, as traditionally manifested on the UN Security Council. Today we have much more than that. On the one hand, we have the rise of the giant BRICS, including Brazil, India, and South Africa. BRICS today claims about 40% of the world's population (the West only has 13%), 30% of the world's territory (NATO/European Union has 18%) and 20% (yet to grow) of the world's GDP (while 45% belongs to the Euro-Atlantic West). BRICS is a unique composition of the Russia - China axis, enlarged with three impressive democracies, each of which is much more than "a leader" on its respective continent. BRICS has the potential

to become the backbone of the second geopolitical pole missing after 1989. The more so if - as expected - BRICS succeeds in developing and spreading around its own financial architecture and internal economic rules, along with an expected boost of its economic indices and political influence. The global reach of BRICS results partially from the frozen UN reform and the natural expectations of Brazil, India and South Africa to obtain a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, but also from the capsulation of the West and its sometimes short-sighted clinging to the post World War II *status quo* world order.

On the other hand, we have the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) including, along with Russia and China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is intended to play, with all the conditionalities of such comparisons, a sort of a role of a non-Western (for the time being, not anti-West) version of NATO. What energizes the BRICS - Shanghai Cooperation Organisation system as the potential new geopolitical pole in the world is the application of India (as of September 2014) to membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, which seriously reshapes India's decades-built profile of a non-aligned country. The fact that the United States' application for observer's status was rejected in 2006 just proves the non-inclusive character of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and clearly draws the new dividing line on the globe. Ironically, we may remember that the Soviet Union had its application to membership in NATO rejected in 1954, after which she created the Warsaw Pact in 1955.

A founding pillar of the BRICS - Shanghai Cooperation Organisation system is the colossal growth of Russia - China neighbourly economic cooperation which benefits from any form of Western sanctions to either of the two.

The third big transformation - and rather scary - of the world's security architecture is the emergence of a third dividing line between pragmatism and irrational fundamentalism. In the second camp we also have religious extremism and ruthless terrorism. Today's terrorism, whose embryonic manifestation was probably the 1972 Munich massacre of the Israeli Olympic team, has recently become a well-digested political doctrine amalgamated with religious fanaticism which its carriers continuously try to constitutionalize over various territories labelled as "failing states". There is good news, too. In the camp of pragmatism we have all five permanent members of the UN Security Council as well as all the BRICS countries, despite the differences, gaps even, in their opinions on a variety of other issues of global security or of democracy in general.

This third dividing line makes our world much more complex and nuanced than the black and white picture the Cold War suggested. Therefore, in this new complicated globe the West should be aiming to achieve a significant balance between the East - South expansion of Atlantic values and cooperation with its

pragmatic partners against the fundamentalism emerging from the South - East. To put it bluntly, in the vocabulary of real politics, we have to manoeuvre between the support we wish to extend to Ukraine and the support we need from Russia in other spheres, and in other challenges for humanity.

Speaking of the Allies, since its creation, NATO has always been lacking in public support and proper understanding of its role and policies. NATO has been publicly condemned when in action and ignored when in inaction. However, in order to triumph, evil needs nothing more but a lack of action by good. The development of working policies in the next 20 years will rely more than ever on popular approval, based on innovative approaches to public opinion in the digital era. If we underestimate the importance of NATO's image we shall have only ourselves to blame if our reputation turns out to be our worst enemy. Changing the Alliance's image will be the game changer!

"Classic" enlargement: time for changing rules

NATO enlargement has been quite successful in the relatively benign atmosphere of the 20 or so years after the fall of the Berlin Wall. It followed the logic and principles which formed the basis of the enhanced dialogue and later the Membership Action Plan. A key assumption was that the Alliance would succeed in convincing all major stakeholders that enlargement does not threaten any decent democracy or non-aggressive country, and is a key asset for security and stability projection. It seemed adequate to restrict membership to well-prepared, reliable aspirants with no border or other similar disputes.

The central idea was that acceding countries should not bring their existing or potential problems into the organization. This approach was working well until the process reached regions perceived as spheres of influence or "red lines" of forces acting in a Cold War style and, irrespective of well-developed partnership mechanisms, continued treating NATO as a threat and even as a potential enemy. They started using the accession criteria as an instrument to torpedo the enlargement process and undermine the fundamental right of nations to choose the alliances they wish to join, and their means to seek collective guarantees for their defence and security. A telling example was the military aggression of Russia against Georgia in 2008 which, left without a proper response, paved the way to the current Ukraine - Russian crisis and the annexation of Crimea in 2014. The result is a basically stalled enlargement process which made 2014 the end of the first post-1989 five-year period without a NATO enlargement or a new major outreach project.

It became, however, obvious that keeping problems out of our borders does not keep them out of our agenda. In other words, NATO capsulation against new members with problems is a motivation for NATO opponents to provoke these

problems. **NATO needs to break this vicious circle** which makes it a victim of its own idealistic vision that unfortunately has proven to be divorced from reality. For that, the Alliance has to reassess the accession requirements and adapt them to the strategic purpose of enlargement. NATO should not veto aspirants with frozen territorial problems, exactly as the European Union did when it invited Cyprus to join before the expected unification. This should be a working model for Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova and a possibility - albeit distant - for Azerbaijan.

NATO and the European Union: reinforcing Europe

The NATO-European Union relationship continues to fall short of its potential and even provides ground for counterproductive competition. This can now change. The return of France to the NATO integrated military structure, the Lisbon Treaty, the sobering effect of the Ukrainian crisis, the refreshed leaderships of the European Union and NATO in 2014, along with the TTIP free trade agreement between the European Union and the United States provide a new and welcome environment to re-launch this process and to set it on a new and altogether more positive course.

The setting up of a high level **NATO - European Union Synergy Commission** would be helpful to take the process forward with clear goals and benchmarks, and a fixed-target timetable. An integral part of the desired synergy should be the formulation of a genuinely unified security policy of the European Union. Its purpose would not be to emulate the appearance of rivalry that has bedevilled the relationship in the past but rather specifically to strengthen Europe's contribution to NATO while simultaneously enhancing the European Union's own potential both politically and military. European defence expenditures and its participation in burden-sharing should increase dramatically, both in quantity and in efficiency. Efficiency saves money, after all! European Allies cannot do that individually, but only within the framework of the EU Common Security and Defence Policy, potentially open to other Europeans states including Turkey. Symbolically, the European Union should ask for a *permanent EU seat on the North Atlantic Council*, which sounds natural against the background of similar European aspirations vis-à-vis the United Nations.

The responsibility for NATO - European Union relations rests almost 100% in the camp of the 22 EU members of NATO, which represent almost 94% of the entire population of the European Union. The six EU non-NATO members (Ireland, Austria, Finland, Sweden, Cyprus and Malta) will for sure benefit from major NATO - European Union cohesion which, as a side effect, may catalyse their own relations with NATO. The road to fulfilling the Lisbon Treaty of 2009's

vision for the role of the European Union in the world goes via strategic NATO - European Union arrangements, delayed for so many decades.

The leaders of the European Union should take the responsibility to reform the Euro-Atlantic community into a global power (the declarations of the Lisbon Treaty are not enough for that) and a meaningful co-player of the BRICS - Shanghai Cooperation Organization system over the global terrain. The NATO - European Union grouping still has the advantage of being a community, not just a system, but this advantage will not last forever.

NATO and Russia: rivalry, partnership, membership

Though the determination of the West to interact positively with Russia on a global scale has recently been seriously undermined, it has not vanished. We have had and still do have fruitful cooperation with Russia at various points around the world: in Afghanistan, Iran, Syria, North Korea, against terrorism and even in the cosmic space. Therefore, any serious strategic examination of what Russia and NATO stand to gain by working together, and how much they stand to lose by allowing misperceptions and hostile attitudes to poison their future cooperation, clearly shows the direction in which they have to go.

The high hopes for close and increasingly constructive NATO - Russia relations have suffered a heavy blow from the Ukrainian crisis of 2014 and the role of the Russian leadership in the dramatic events there. The interpretation of the enlargement of the European Union and NATO as a threat not only to the interests of Russia but even to its very existence is wrong and tactically comfortable for the current Kremlin leadership.

NATO and the Russian people have the same goals, which include democracy in Russia. This explains why NATO is the needed enemy for the Kremlin of today. The Lenin - Stalin - Brezhnev tradition has been proven counterproductive for the Russian people. The Gorbachev - Yeltsin tradition, though of a shorter life, is the one to reintegrate Russia with the West and the one to prevail in Russia, as the post-World War II history of Europe proves. The Russian nation is our cultural twin and it should be regarded as a country which could be a future member of NATO. Therefore, Russia needs to be regarded as a future NATO member, and encouraged to reform in order to become one in the long run, hopefully in the first half of the 21st century.

De facto allies: the NATO extended family

In trying to confront the challenges of globalization in a five to 20 year projection we should prioritize our relations with countries which have been our de facto

allies for so long, namely **Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Korea**. Contacts and strategic partnerships between them and NATO (and its leading nations) have been in place for a considerable amount of time but have yet to evolve. We have solid ground for offering all four countries the prospect of cementing these alliances through de jure membership in the new NATO. Once this goal is agreed upon, the action plan to implement it will naturally follow.

The Islamic world: developing a uniform dialogue with the West

In Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya and many more Islamic countries in the Middle East and Africa we frequently face the same challenges, which need the same treatment. In many of these cases we make the same mistakes. It is these countries which are transformed into a permanent battle ground or launching sites for fundamentalists when attacking the Euro-Atlantic world and values. Therefore, if these countries would be approached as a community, the individual dialogue with each of them would benefit a lot.

The specific essence of Islamic tradition requires special sensitivity; a deeper and coherent understanding which the West does not always possess. Moreover, the West is frequently unable to offer a digestible form of its own views and values. This results in failures - past and present - of the West in its endeavours to handle security in the region. The recent emergence of the Islamic State, as that of Al Qaeda in the past, has proved that the task is now of some urgency. Something broader and more comprehensive than the existing limited formats is both desirable and achievable. It could take the form of a structured dialogue between the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and NATO to find joint solutions for those common threats to security and the goals of civilization.

Global Outreach: China, India and Asia

The evolution of China's global influence is so vast and significant that it seems too much to comprehend. China is getting much closer - sometimes imperceptibly - closer and closer to the Euro-Atlantic community, even physically, and on a daily basis. A simple glance at the map shows that the longest geo-political border on Earth is the one between China and the Euro-Atlantic community (i.e., the OSCE) - approx. 11,200 km (after Mongolia joined the OSCE in 2004 - 2012)

China is already de facto in touch with NATO in different regions and this indicates a trend and need to establish a mechanism to steer those unavoidable relationships on the basis of common pragmatic interests.

A **NATO - China Council (NCC)** designed to provide trust, a basis for dialogue and mutual understanding - overcoming bitterness from the past - would

have both immediate and strategic benefits. A NATO - China Council will have the beneficial side effect of easing West - Russia relations which frequently become complicated, because of the Chinese support for Russia, institutionalized via BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. Therefore, the entire United Nations system will benefit a lot from the very existence of a NATO - China Council which would have the potential to reshape the world order. Chinese leaders plan to transform their country into a democracy by 2050 and we must be prepared for this perspective and do our best to support it, starting from now. As a preparatory step for a NATO - China Council, China should be invited as a privileged partner of the OSCE, for which I have had some encouraging discussions with Chinese leaders in the past.

NATO should be inventive in approaching **India** - the world's most populous democracy, one of the first space powers. The growing influence of India in Asia, Africa, BRICS, as expected in future in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, in what remains of the Non-Aligned Movement, and in the world in general makes her an attractive, predictable and strategic - if not unavoidable - partner for any alliance of democracies ready to support peace on a global scale.

On India we have had at least one more strategic talk. India is a nuclear power. Perhaps the time has come for this to be underpinned by NATO - India practical and stability-oriented cooperation in the nuclear and general security fields. Of course, universality of the existing international nuclear agreements would be highly desirable. However, they are not sacred cows. Pragmatism requires their smart upgrading and adaptation to the realities of the new millennium. A pragmatic NATO - India - Pakistan dialogue may lead to new solutions. If the West is not flexible and visionary enough, this role may well be played by the BRICS - Shanghai Cooperation Organisation system in future.

Mongolia joined the Euro-Atlantic community in 2004 as the newest (and she still is) Asian partner of the OSCE. Since 2012 she has had full membership in the OCSE and an Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (IPCP) with NATO. To follow are a Partnership for Peace and full NATO membership. The ball is in our court - Mongolia wants it and she desperately expects her third neighbour to emerge, but in a geo-political manner, not just in terms of geography. On **North Korea** and the unification of the **Korean Peninsula**, both NATO and the EU could do a lot. The European Union should stop turning away from the Korean conflict. The European Union could contribute a lot to the democratization of North Korea, as it did in the 1990s to Eastern Europe. The know-how of importing food and commodities together with information to North Korea will trigger the democratization of that country. At the same time, NATO troops could replace some of the US troops in South Korea which will send a strong message to North Korea, bring fresh dynamics to the Six-Party Talks on North Korea and

speed up the unification of the Korean Peninsula. Each dictatorship is a pillar for all dictatorships, so one dictatorship less makes a difference, sometimes a big difference.

While our global journey is still in Asia, we cannot help but creating a Joint **NATO - ASEAN Commission** which will be a long-term investment in the political and economic well-being of the two regions and will help bridge the Euro-Atlantic and Asia - Pacific areas, two worlds with common goals and interests.

Africa, the South Atlantic and Latin America: broader socializing

With its Mediterranean Dialogue, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative and ad-hoc limited support for the African Union, NATO has edged, albeit timidly, towards the African continent. As for Latin America, the results from some limited NATO operations seem negligible bearing in mind the absence of any structure or mechanism to anchor relations and strengthen them further. Several gateways are possible, to start with, relating to Africa, the South Atlantic and Latin America - each for entirely different reasons and entirely different sets of implications.

In the South Atlantic area we have two more BRICS members with whom partnership for NATO so far seems a self-imposed taboo: **Brazil** and **South Africa**. The time has come for the North Atlantic to meet the South. The pattern is there. Let's just do it!

Cape Verde is a stable and remarkably outward-looking democracy which punches above her weight politically and economically in the region. She benefits from being a crossroad of two strategic routes: Europe - Latin America and North America - Africa. NATO carries out military exercises off her shores and the European Union has a Special Partnership Agreement with her. An invitation to Cape Verde to participate gradually in the Mediterranean Dialogue of NATO (and why not, since Mauritania is there!), in the Partnership for Peace, and to move towards a suitable MAP process may not be an obvious choice but it makes utmost good sense, particularly as a pivotal project with a possible impact on and benefits for the African continent and the Portuguese speaking countries.

An offer for a special Cooperation Agreement to the **African Union** would achieve important psychological goals as well as practical objectives. The former include the development of a more adequate perception of NATO's role in the modern world. The latter include facilitating a broad spectrum of crisis response and humanitarian operations and missions. Security challenges like terrorist, fundamentalist or piracy groups in Nigeria (including affiliates of the Islamic State), Mali, Somalia, Yemen and elsewhere, as well as the outbreak of Ebola in West

Africa should force NATO to engage in broader and deeper cooperation with the African Union on various security matters of concern for all of humanity.

What steps of relevance could be undertaken with respect to **Latin America**, in addition to liaising with Brazil?

A very much needed and expected democratic U-turn could make **Cuba** the Euro-Atlantic gateway for Latin America and - much more - *the* third North-American pillar of the transatlantic link. The reforms in Cuba today remind us of the reforms in Eastern Europe in the 1980s and some friendly help from Europe may catalyse them. We can therefore readily foresee a specific form of MAP designed for Cuba linked to her democratization and providing a tool to boost it.

In parallel, expanding relations with **Chile** and **Argentina** (not excluding Mexico or other Latin American stakeholders) will also be an essential and a natural part of the globalization process but in view of their size and continental importance, cooperation agreements as opposed to integration efforts will be the order of the day.

Israel, Palestine and the Mediterranean Partners - helping to address the world's oldest conflict

NATO Mediterranean Partners (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia) must be drawn closer to the centre of the action of the Alliance, both in terms of bilateral initiatives and multilateral measures along the lines indicated above. When Palestine becomes an independent state - as she must and will - she will also have to naturally become part of the Mediterranean Dialogue and in those circumstances developments that have previously been unthinkable become much more realistic. Israeli as well as Palestinian participation in the Partnership for Peace programme is entirely possible. We raise also the prospect of joint Israeli-Palestinian defence units, trained and assisted by NATO - is that going too far? If we break the taboos of NATO membership for Israel and Morocco (to start with), is that going too far? Maybe it is today. However, in a 10 to 20 year timeframe is it? I do not think so.

Our greatest challenge: NATO's image problem

Part of the solution of the problem of transforming NATO's worldwide image is to be found in following the different paths outlined in this OoB strategy. To achieve that we need an in-depth programme of activities aimed at gradually creating acceptance, enthusiasm and support for the work that the Alliance needs to undertake, in order to fulfil its new mandate. The primary responsibility to address and win the trust of our respective public belongs first of all to our own governments.

Two daring initiatives could be taken promptly. Firstly, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (PA) and ATA branches - with the strong support of NATO - should take the lead in developing new contacts with new partners both on a regional and global basis, inviting them to explore ways in which NATO could and should develop its OoB relationships.

Secondly, NATO leaders can launch a major initiative aimed at supporting and upgrading the NATO Parliamentary Assembly's and ATA's networks via a broad-based and inter-linked web of energetic non-governmental bodies - not necessarily uniform in structure or character - with a mandate to address the world public on issues of security and unexpected threats, and to do so on a new level.

A task force network of newly energized NGOs and media, along with old Atlantic hands concentrically expanding around NATO could make a difference. Of course this will cost some money. However, any 1 USD invested in informing the public may save 1,000 USD from a war it would prevent in that way. NATO deserves a Nobel Peace Prize for having prevented major wars in Europe. The time has come for NATO to really get this prize and invest these political dividends into the prevention of other world conflicts through information technologies and activities. In doing that, world public opinion will be our strongest, most efficient and sustainable ally.

Expect the unexpected in order to prevent it

This OoB approach for NATO does not forecast any specific new threats, currently unexpected or seemingly improbable. There are many of this sort and they require a separate study. For the sake of illustration: space piracy or space terrorism, currently underestimated, are a probable source of future bad surprises. The super powers of Information and Communication Technologies and genetic engineering make mankind a serious threat to itself. We should not take it for granted that meetings with extra-terrestrials will not happen or would be pleasant, as two Nobel laureates (for physics and peace) have warned us in the 2010's - Stephen Hawking and the Dalai Lama.

Our enemy is carefully studying our tool box and he thinks out of it, as 9/11 tragically proved. To deter an OoB enemy, one needs OoB tools. Before the enemy starts studying our new tool box, we need to start thinking out of it, otherwise we shall most probably regret not having done so.

The OoB approach suggested here would create an environment capable of counterbalancing a huge variety of new threats (I am cautious and do not say *all threats*!). Even if a small part of what has been suggested here were to be launched in the next few years, the Euro-Atlantic community would be elevated to a much higher orbit.

Some may argue - and rightly so! - that so many new formats would require ample time and manpower to be maintained. Here is the solution: NATO leaders and officials, and especially the European Union segment of them, could dramatically optimize their colossal working time, presently invested in ministerials, summits and other forms of personalized meetings. Video-conference communications, including summits - taking into account some deficiencies this may create - would save unimaginable amounts of time, money, logistic and security arrangements, as well as CO_2 emissions.

The digitalization of NATO's political, military and administrative work is currently lagging behind (this is also the case for the major national security agencies). The digital capacity of NATO and its members is probably the most urgent of all OoB efforts we need to invest in. Now.

Conclusion

This paper - published simultaneously with the inauguration of NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg - has a long pre-history. Its ancestor is the 2009 NATO OoB ACB strategy, which came to upgrade *"NATO's Global Mission in the 21st century"* prepared by ACB under NATO's 1998 Manfred Wörner Fellowship. That one was an upgrade of the 1990 vision of the ACB's founders who anticipated and contributed to the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the unification of New Europe with NATO and European Union.

Some of the ideas expressed above were brainstormed by ACB in 1990-2005, along with our efforts to achieve the accession of Bulgaria and New Europe to NATO and the European Union, and during my mandates as Bulgarian Foreign Minister, OSCE Chairman-in-Office and on the UN Security Council. After 2005, in my capacity as Chairman of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee and once again President of ACB, I tried to share our specific experience as New Europe in other parts of the world.

Mine and my wife Gergana's visits abroad after 2005 encouraged us to see how realistic, albeit self-tabooed, the global enlargement of the Euro-Atlantic community is. Visits to China and Tibet, North and South Korea, Mongolia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Iran, Nepal, Bhutan, the Philippines, Palau, Israel, Cuba, Ecuador, Belize and wider Latin America, Cape Verde, Morocco, Libya, and Sub-Saharan and Southern Africa enlightened us that we, in the West, can and must do much more - and do it much faster - to reach out to the rest of the World in order to exchange best practices and to counteract the rapid exchange of the world's worst practices.

Taken together, the ideas expressed in this paper have a common purpose. They take the Euro-Atlantic enlargement process as a stepping stone and a source

of inspiration for an effort to go much farther. They are designed to boost humanity's striving to discover its potential to move beyond a world of conflict to a world uniquely focused on securing the sustainable growth of human's quality of life - both, on earth and in space - irrespective of any regional, cultural, religious, ideological or philosophical differences. These may be difficult to achieve and are undoubtedly ambitious, but they are not unrealistic: just look outside of the box!

Vasil Sikharulidze (President of the Atlantic Council of Georgia)

Toward Europe Whole, Free and at Peace

The West's vision and solution for post-World War II Europe proved to be far wiser, bolder and truly longer-lasting than the simplistic and short-sighted zero sum approach to security that had been largely practiced before in world politics. The Marshall Plan for the economic rehabilitation of Europe and the creation of NATO for its collective defence provided two essential pillars for security and stability, stable democratic development, and economic growth. Enemies who fought the bloodiest war in the history of mankind became allies and partners. Simultaneously, the Soviet Union's expansionistic surge against freedom and liberty was contained, thus creating a solid foundation for what today is known as a prosperous and a free Europe. Allies on the other side of the Atlantic, the United States and Canada, have also benefited vastly from this policy. They acquired strong, economically prosperous and reliable European allies, as well as greater security and stability on the European continent, which turned out to be imperative in ending the Cold War without a major military confrontation.

NATO is perhaps the most successful international organization. It has managed to maintain and project security and stability on the European continent for more than six decades. NATO was created to counter Soviet expansion after World War II and to protect the freedom of European democracies to lead the lives of their choice. The principle of common defence gave Western European nations the opportunity to build economic prosperity and consolidate their democracies. It would be a mistake to assume that NATO's role lessened with the end of the Cold War. The Alliance was and continues to be a success chiefly because its members share the values of liberty and freedom and, therefore, the vision of a peaceful world guaranteed by international security and order.

After the Cold War, NATO membership became one of the strongest incentives for carrying out swift political, economic and security sector reforms in Eastern and Central European countries. NATO partnership and cooperation mechanisms, in great part, contributed to the success of these reforms. Every single wave of NATO enlargement validated success. The NATO membership of Central and Eastern European countries strengthened their security and stability, thus creating conditions for economic growth and democratic consolidation that benefited Europe and the democratic world at large.

Today, the principle of collective defence that is based on shared values is more relevant to democracies than ever. With rapidly changing security environments, the diverse nature of threats and challenges, and the technological advancements of the modern world, an effective defence system is hard to imagine outside of

a collective defence approach. If NATO had not existed it should have been invented. As a hugely legitimate political venue, with unique capabilities and a shared burden, NATO provides its members with the essential elements to deal with conventional, as well as non-conventional, threats and challenges.

Despite the colossal progress toward a Europe that is whole, free and at peace that has been made in last two decades, it still remains unaccomplished business. Moreover, in the last several years, this momentum toward a Europe that is whole, free and at peace has been hindered. Reasons abound, including military and financial exhaustion in the West, economic crises and problems with the economic growth in the Eurozone, and the Iraq war that troubled transatlantic unity. The United States and Europe have become more inward looking. All these encouraged autocratic propensities and discouraged reformers in emerging democracies.

Signs of a lack of strategic vision for the Euro-Atlantic future and a sense of disunity within the Alliance partially contributed to the reinvigorated revisionism in Russia. After destroying the embryonic components of a democratic system and establishing an authoritarian regime at home, the Russian Government has started to exert its power externally by hindering democratic and economic development in neighbouring countries to expand its influence over them. To achieve its objectives, Russia has used various means at its disposal from finances and trade, to energy and energy infrastructure, to military and special services covert (and not so covert) operations. One of the most challenging Russian actions to European security as well as to the widely recognized principles of international relations was the Georgia - Russia War of 2008 that ended with the occupation of two Georgian provinces and the Ukraine - Russia conflict that is currently underway. In both cases Russia used so-called hybrid warfare that together with a purely military component includes intensive special services operations, paramilitary troops, cyber-attacks as well as information, energy and finance as weapons of war. If in 2008, the Russia military component of hybrid warfare was more visible than other components (even though they were present), in 2014 in Ukraine all these components are vivid.

Russia's positions on issues of international security such as the Syrian conflict and Iran's nuclear programme, and its relations with neighbours are just a few examples of Russia's anachronistic approach to international security. What the free world sees as a challenge to international security, Russia considers as an opportunity to extract concessions. The occupation of Georgian territories, the occupation and annexation of Crimea, and military aggression in Eastern Ukraine reveal the revisionist nature of the Russian regime that is attempting to challenge an idea of Europe that is whole, free and at peace. Russia is trying to redraw the boundaries of Europe by force. Recent developments show that Russia relies on a combination of military, paramilitary, special services penetration and informa-

tional warfare coupled with economic and financial tools, to undermine European security and stability. Western initiatives and attempts to build a partnership with Russia on issues of international security, including President Barack Obama's Reset Policy, have not been met with reciprocity. If undeterred, the world may yet see Russia taking similar actions in other European countries.

Russia always opposed NATO and resisted its enlargement under the pretext that NATO's enlargement poses a threat to its national security. In fact, NATO does not represent a security threat to Russia. On the contrary, Russia actually benefits from the security and stability that NATO brings to its borders. Russia's most secured and stable borders are with NATO countries including its Eastern European allies. The European Union is its largest trade partner. What NATO does is limit Russia's ability to impose pressure on its neighbours - members of the Alliance. This is the primary reason why Russia disapproves of NATO's enlargement.

Georgia on the path to NATO

NATO enlargement has been beneficial to international security. Each wave of enlargement has strengthened the security and the stability of the wider transatlantic area. The Alliance's "open door" policy remains one of the strongest incentives for aspiring nations to foster reforms and to contribute to international security. One of NATO's aspirant countries is Georgia. The NATO Summit in Bucharest in 2008 made a political decision and commitment that Georgia and Ukraine would become members of NATO. That pledge has been confirmed by all the following summits.

Georgia has been a commendable partner to NATO and has achieved serious progress in integration, both in terms of democratic development and military interoperability. Georgian troops, together with the Allies, took part in operations in Kosovo and Iraq. Its troops have been fighting in Helmand province of Afghanistan shoulder to shoulder with NATO troops. The small country of Georgia is the largest non-NATO and second biggest per capita contributor to the NATO operation in Afghanistan.

Without a doubt, Georgia still has a way to go before obtaining full membership of NATO. It will need to further consolidate its democracy, strengthen democratic institutions and refine procedures, and further reforms in the security sector. Over the past two years, through its free and fair parliamentary and presidential elections, Georgia has experienced a peaceful transfer of power. The Georgian government has confirmed that NATO integration remains the top priority of the nation's foreign and security policy. However, declarations are not enough. In order to move toward NATO membership, the current government should

demonstrate its strong commitment to democratic principles and the rule of law, as well as its ability and willingness to continue reforms. It should focus on strengthening the pluralistic political system and encouraging political stability, the promotion of institutional checks and balances, fostering economic development as well as on further reforms in the security sector. Engagement with the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions is the best way to improve the Georgian Government's performance and to support reforms.

To support all these reforms, NATO can provide institutionalized tools that will foster the process. In Wales, Georgia received a substantial defence cooperation package that created new opportunities to strengthen defence cooperation with the Allies in order to improve its territorial defence capabilities as well as its interoperability. However, the Allies did not decide to grant Georgia a NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP). Holding up the decision to give Georgia institutional mechanisms to achieve membership, regardless of the reasons particular Allies may have for it, sends the wrong signals about the Alliance. Russia reads it as a sign of disunity among the Allies and proves that the aggressive policies it pursues are an effective tool to stop NATO enlargement and thus, as an invitation to openly expand its spheres of influence in Europe.

After the August 2008 Georgia - Russia War, Russia continued its occupation of the Georgian provinces of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. It still violates the EU-brokered ceasefire agreement. The Georgian strategy for the de-occupation and reintegration of these provinces is strictly peaceful. Occupation of these territories should not become an obstacle on its road to NATO membership. It will only strengthen Russia's incentives to pursue belligerent policies. When the day of addressing the question of full NATO membership for Georgia arrives, to secure the Allies' consensus, proper legal and political arrangements can be worked out with regard to the Article 5 obligations in relation to the occupied territories without any concessions regarding Georgia's territorial integrity. At the same time, Georgia's democratic and economic development, and further progress in reforms will surely contribute to the success of the reintegration process of the occupied territories.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine, the rise of radical, militant groups such as ISIS, and instability near the Alliance's borders influenced the outcomes of the NATO Summit of Wales. In the Summit Declaration, the Allies demonstrated a clear awareness of the challenges to Euro-Atlantic security and stability. The decisions of the summit among other issues included not only a reaffirmation of adherence by the Allies to the founding values, a confirmation of the "open door" policy and a reassurance of their commitment to collective defence, but also very practical steps to strengthening the capabilities of the Alliance as well as those of its close partners to improve their ability to deal with emerging threats and

challenges. All that creates the hope that more strategic vision and decisive moves can be expected from next summits on practical issues of NATO expansion which is so necessary now. It will add to the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area and bring us closer to the dream of generations of Europeans - a Europe whole, free and at peace.

Arian Starova (President of the Atlantic Council of Albania)

NATO's Enlargement as a Great Contribution to International Freedom, Peace and Security

At the Summit of Wales in 2014, the "open door" policy under Article 10 of the Washington Treaty was considered as "one of the great successes" of the North Atlantic Alliance. Twenty five years after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, this Alliance has 12 new members (1999: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland; 2004: Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia; 2009: Albania, Croatia) and a number of aspirant countries of Eastern Europe are advancing towards full membership. This is a great development towards a Europe that is whole, free and at peace. Sixty five years after its foundation, NATO is a political-military organization composed of 28 member-countries united together by common Euro-Atlantic democratic values and their own strong will to defend them to the benefit of their own populations. NATO's enlargement policy had a direct impact on the consolidation of the new-born democratic regimes of its new members from Eastern Europe and the establishment of new cooperative relations among them free of any form of previous conflicts. Therefore, the enlargement policy of NATO also had a direct positive impact on the security environment in all of Europe as well. The recent history of the Alliance provides sound evidence of its great contribution to peace and security in the Balkans.

Today, NATO not only is an outstanding island of democracies which successfully defends itself but also increasingly projects security outside its Euro-Atlantic geopolitical space. There have been deep changes in the international security environment and the fundamental values of the Washington Treaty which have kept NATO very actively committed to contributing to international peace and security. On the other hand, its enlargement policy has been contributing to the development of NATO's vision of its own role in international security. In the final declaration of the Summit of Wales, it was very wisely written that NATO "remains an essential source of stability in this unpredictable world".[1] In that summit, its commitment to collective defence was reaffirmed for its allies, but also to crisis management and cooperation for security with partner countries and organizations around the globe. The North Atlantic Alliance's authority has grown widely as a global source of security and it is facing increasing interest in and demand for cooperation from outside the Euro-Atlantic geopolitical space. Again, the recent

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[1] *Wales Summit Declaration. Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 5 September 2014, [www.nato.int, access: 27 September 2014].

history of the Alliance clearly shows its contribution to the international peace, stability and security in the Middle East, North Africa, Mediterranean, etc.

In the course of about 15 years since the first round of its enlargement, NATO successfully faced a number of security challenges which also both proved and further developed its incomparable defence capacities by consolidating it as a world security asset. These challenges made NATO stronger politically and militarily, as more and more international actors supported its missions for peace, stability and security.

Looking deeper into NATO's enlargement policy as a success, I would like to refer to Albania's common experience and perspective. In general, NATO's enlargement policy is considered by the Albanians as a major contribution to the freedom and security of peoples across the world, which brought about a growing role for international security. The intervention of NATO in Bosnia and Herzegovina and later in Kosovo will remain for a long time bright examples of a successful alliance in action in defence of freedom and human rights. In more concrete terms, for the Albanians, the accession of their country to NATO has been crucial for the consolidation of the inherent democratic values of their country, as thereafter the Albanian political elite's policymaking would be more and more in coherence with the Alliance.

The five years after this accession proved to be very fruitful for Albania for its foreign investments and economic development as the country was considered more secure than before. Even the number of visits of foreign tourists in Albania changed quickly into a large flow right after the country received an invitation to join NATO at the Bucharest Summit, in 2008. For the Albanians, this feeling of security was felt even deeper because it guaranteed the security of their long-cherished democratic society, which was particularly important for Albanian society which was for almost five decades under the harshest and most isolated communist regime in Eastern Europe. Albania also substantially benefits from concrete allied cooperation in the area of defence. Albania's NATO membership was also viewed as an accelerator of its ability to approach the European Union. Consequently, being so beneficial to Albania and its other new member countries, the enlargement policy is a major political and military success for NATO.

On the other side, NATO has also benefited from its new members, meaning that the new members have successfully contributed to the North Atlantic Alliance. First, all of them offered significant geopolitical space to NATO in form of the availability of their territories. Second, the new members extended political and military support to Allied international missions by contributing with people, experts, suggestions and specific viewpoints. In the case of Albania, as a country with various religious communities, its membership in NATO reinforces the universal significance of its core values enshrined in the Washington Treaty and the

UN Charter. The enlargement policy has increased the range of security interests of NATO from 16 countries to 28 and many more international actors on a global scale.

Despite the evident success of NATO's enlargement policy over the past 15 years, a number of events have taken place that have posed a number of questions with regard to possible new members of NATO in the coming years. The events of Russian aggression in Georgia in the year 2008, and Ukraine in the year 2014, the Macedonia-Greece stalemate over the latter's NATO membership, the slow-down in the Bosnia and Herzegovina NATO membership process, Russia's anti-NATO attitude versus the ballistic missile umbrella, etc. have in a way created some pessimism among various experts, analysts, or decision-makers about the further enlargement of NATO. It is interesting to note that there seems to be no such pessimism among the former communist countries which have already joined the Alliance. However, the current situation of security in Europe is very complicated compared to some years ago and a new decision with respect to the further enlargement of NATO is not so easy.

The case of NATO membership for Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine is definitely different from the case of Montenegro, Macedonia or Bosnia and Herzegovina. Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine are facing serious pressures from Russia on their way to NATO membership. On the other side, other countries which do not face any external threat are making efforts at various rates of success to fulfil NATO membership criteria. So, the question arises as to whether or not NATO should invite all these countries to join. And if so, when?

In principle, NATO's enlargement policy is based upon the Washington Treaty and the open door principle is unchangeable. Moreover, it has increasingly proved to be a success for the Alliance. Thus, in principle, NATO should invite all the European countries which meet the criteria and, hence, the enlargement process is unstoppable. It is the normal right of any country which meets the criteria to demand by its free will to join NATO. So, in principle, Russia's behaviour with regard to Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine must not impede the enlargement policy of NATO. This was clearly articulated in the Wales Summit Declaration: "NATO's door will remain open to all European democracies which share the values of our Alliance, which are willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership, which are in a position to further the principles of the Treaty, and whose inclusion will contribute to the security of the North Atlantic Area".[2]

When it comes to considering concrete countries for NATO membership, of course Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine are difficult cases. However arbitrary, vio-

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[2] *Ibidem.*

lent and rule-breaching the international behaviour of Russia is, it is taken for granted that without a settlement of the disputes that the three above-mentioned countries have with Russia, they could not be invited to join NATO. This seems likely to take a rather long time, especially considering the security situation in the Middle East which prevents NATO from placing a special focus on its enlargement. Under the conditions of Russia's related recent or past violations of international law in these three countries and the current suspension of NATO - Russia cooperation, the perspective of their NATO membership is capriciously and blatantly spoiled by Russia which does not allow them to choose their own way by free will and, hence, their membership depends on both diplomatic efforts and domestic political changes in Russia. In the long run, Russia's policy can only be temporary and it cannot force any of these countries to abandon their NATO membership aspirations. Essentially, Putin seems to be trying to unconsciously or bluffly repeat the old mistake of his communist predecessors who wanted to make Russia a superpower by creating military power at the expense of the living standards of Russian citizens. The further development of close relations and cooperation between these countries with NATO remains the most realistic option for the time being.

From among the other aspirant countries, Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina, only Montenegro seems to be nearing NATO membership. It would have been a right and timely decision if Montenegro had already taken the invitation to join NATO in the last Summit of Wales. In some aspects that would have been a retort to Russia's international aggressive behaviour and an encouragement for other countries aspiring to join NATO.

While Bosnia and Herzegovina has complicated domestic problems linked with the relations between its ethnic communities and is stuck in its NATO accession process through its own fault, Macedonia's case is very much delayed. Macedonia should have already been a NATO member country by now. The dispute between Greece and Macedonia over the name of the latter seems very irrelevant and the longer it lasts the more NATO's authority and interests are put at risk, taking for granted the bad impact it has on the domestic situation in Macedonia. From a historic point of view, the long debate over the name of Macedonia is wrong for both countries, Macedonia and Greece. Maybe there is no need at all to say it, but Greece cannot pretend that Macedonia might, someday, claim territories from Greece, nor can Macedonia pretend to be the successor-country of Alexander the Great. Moreover, this kind of debate generally seems pointless to regional public opinion. In the same way, Greece cannot demand that Macedonia accept a completely different name from its current one, nor can Macedonia expect not to have to change its name at all. In addition to this latter point, Macedonia is a multi-ethnic country, with a population that is about 30% Albanian. It is in the interest

of NATO to include the issue of Macedonia's name in its agenda and try to find a quick solution alongside the efforts of the United Nations.

For Montenegro and Macedonia, invitations to join NATO should be extended in the next NATO Summit.

Looking further, the entire Balkans should one day be in NATO, namely including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia. This is a vital geopolitical space for NATO.

In a long-term perspective, going further with the NATO enlargement should not be considered as something confined within the borders of Europe alone, as in a global world the traditional division lines between continents are not the same. This is especially the case when peace, stability and security are at stake, and security risks become more and more global. In this perspective, the Mediterranean Dialogue countries take a special place and they might be considered as special NATO partners. Countries like Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia with their NATO partnerships can contribute to world security in a large way, can enhance NATO's authority and capacities as a global actor, and would be very important for the United Nations and its efforts towards ensuring global security.

PART II

Tamás Csiki (Centre for Strategic and Defence Studies in Budapest, Hungary)

Lessons learnt and unlearnt. Hungary's 15 years in NATO

Hungarian security and defence policy has experienced a fundamental transformation in the past two decades leading towards and following the country's accession to NATO in 1999. This transformation has meant more than a shift, much more a fundamental change right from its founding values and core aims. During the 1990s, leading to Hungary's NATO membership, the country - its political and economic systems, as well as its society - strived to leave behind the legacy of the Soviet Eastern Block and the Warsaw Pact. Three parallel processes have been underway in this regard: Hungarian security and threat perception, the scope and characteristics of the international role Hungary desires to play, and the corresponding institutional framework have been transformed. Thus, 15 years of NATO membership has had an all-encompassing effect on Hungary's security, including the country's defence policy and its institutions, the country's involvement in international crisis management efforts, the development of national defence capabilities and Hungarian society's relation to the armed forces. In spite of this, the relevant literature in English on the country's lessons learnt in these fields is rather limited, not to mention the practical lack of analyses on "lessons unlearnt", some deficiencies that might serve as guidelines for prospective members of NATO on what to do differently. The aim of this brief study is to draw the most significant conclusions of Hungary's 15 years within NATO from a critical but understanding point of view.

In this chapter, first an overview of the evolution of Hungarian strategic culture sets the wider scene for mapping up transformative processes leading to the birth and naturalization of a truly "transatlantic" Hungarian defence policy. Then the conclusions of Hungary's NATO membership are drawn and the most important lessons learnt, as well as obstacles and prevailing deficiencies as "lessons unlearnt" are pointed out at the strategic level.

Changes in Hungarian strategic culture brought about by Euro-Atlantic integration

Throughout and after the 1989 transition period, military and strategic thinkers were primarily preoccupied with the dilemma of how to define sovereign foreign and defence policy[1] and how to provide a sustainable financial and organi-

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[1] J. L. Kiss, *European Security: Hungarian Interpretations, Perception and Foreign Policy,* [in:] O. Wæver, O. Lemaitre, E. Tromer (eds.), *European Polyphony. Perspectives Beyond East - West Confrontation*, Macmillan: London 1989, pp. 141-154; P. Dunay, *Adversaries all around?: (Re)Nationalization of Security*

zational background for the Hungarian Armed Forces.[2] Later on the evolving strategic trends (the growing number of international peace support, crisis management and stabilizing operations) and NATO (and to a lesser extent EU) enlargement in Eastern Central Europe moved strategic thinking towards new features of strategic culture necessary for participation in such frameworks: multinational cooperation, interoperability and joint missions.[3] The non-military toolbox and geographical focus of international action have accordingly been broadened.[4]

The gradual move to the path of Euro-Atlantic integration has significantly transformed the Hungarian understanding of security. The perception of security in Hungary took on a multi-dimensional feature quite early, already from the beginning of the 1980s, opening up economic, societal, political and environmental aspects besides the contemporarily predominant military aspect. This approach has been further strengthened since the transition period, and non-military aspects have been defined both by Hungarian society and political elites as being determinant. Even though the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the Balkan Wars were interpreted in the military security domain in the 1990s, as well as the fact that accession to NATO was a predominantly military issue and was understood in the wider context of national and international peace, stability and security in the second place only, empirical research has revealed that the security perception of Hungarian society is primarily non-military: it is focused on internal, existential issues, such as employment, social welfare and public safety.[5]

As Hungarian security and threat perception identifies predominantly internal, existential and social issues as matters of concern, all of them being non-military issues, not only the country's international ambitions are tailored to this tight scope of national concern and popular support, but also the means and resources available for foreign and security policy action (as well as homeland defence and

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and Defence Policies in Central and Eastern Europe, Netherlands Institute of International Relations: Hague 1994; H. Vincze (ed.), *Hungary's Security in the New Regional and International Context,* "Defence Studies", No. 42., Institute for Strategic and Defence Studies: Budapest 2000.

[2] P. Tálas, *Biztonságpolitikai kihívások és haderőreform az ezredfordulón.* "Magyar Tudomány", 2000/7, pp. 933-937; J. Szabó, *Haderőváltás Magyarországon 1989-2001, A rendszerváltás konfliktusa, kezelésük története és perspektívái a védelmi szektorban,* PolgART: Budapest 2003.

[3] P. Tálas, *Az európai integrációs szervezetekhez való magyar csatlakozás előnyei - a távolmaradás kockázatai.* [in:] *Társadalompolitikai kérdések.* Magyar Honvédség Tájékoztatási és Médiaközpont: Budapest 1998, pp. 43-71; Z. Szenes, *10 éves NATO - tagság és a haderő átalakítása,* "Honvédségi Szemle" 2009/2, pp. 6-9.

[4] Z. Szenes, *A békefenntartás hatása a magyar haderőre.* "Hadtudomány", 2006/3, pp. 3-14; Z. Szenes, *Conceptual change in Hungarian peacekeeping?* "Nemzet és Biztonság" Special Issue, Winter 2009, pp. 43-55.

[5] L. Radványi, *A magyar lakosság biztonságfelfogása és értékpreferenciái, 1999-2008*, "Nemzet és Biztonság", 2009/2. pp. 9-22; P. Tálas, *Tatárszentgyörgy után... Széljegyzet a biztonság szubjektív percepciójának veszélyeiről,* "Nemzet és Biztonság", 2009/2, pp. 3-8.

the armed forces) are very limited. This limitation - further exacerbated by repeated economic crises[6] - has regularly been echoed by international partners as Hungary performing as a security consumer, thus not contributing proportionately to the ratio of the benefits enjoyed.

The Hungarian professional political sphere shows similar tendencies to those of public perceptions: depicting security and defence policy as being of lesser importance and initiating very limited public debate have been common features of the political and societal discourse. Strategic debate on foreign and security policy issues beyond current problems is rarely held in the Hungarian Parliament, despite the fact that subsequent governments and parliaments have adopted strategic documents on foreign and security policy (the last time being in 2012). The drafting and adoption of these strategies have rarely been preceded or followed by professional and political debate invoking a wide-based national consensus, but have been limited to the participation of a small number of advisors and members of the central administration. Thus, Hungarian foreign and security policy has developed a dichotomy, over which a vaguely defined national consensus has also been reached. On the one hand military aspects of security were pushed back on the agenda (signalled by shrinking military expenditures, the prolonged reform of the armed forces and the strong limitations on participation in crisis management operations). On the other hand, a constant endeavour has been developed to meet the expectations of burden-sharing from Allied and great powers that might improve the negative balance brought about by fading military capabilities, and might buffer international criticism towards Hungary.

At the same time, some mutually reinforcing historical features have also prevailed: the inability to significantly transform the broader security environment (something which can be called a 'small state syndrome'), an adaptive and pacifist foreign policy orientation, strong limitations on the use of military force and a general risk-limiting behaviour on the international scene. National interests therefore are always articulated with regard to the spheres of influence the country can maintain: regarding neighbouring countries (where also Hungarian ethnic minorities reside) and the wider Central European region and the neighbouring Balkans, and to some extent, Eastern Europe. However, experience has shown in previous years that even in these geographically proximate regions exerting influence through political, diplomatic and economic soft power tools has strong

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[6] Hungarian society has faced repeated economic crises that have gravely effected its security perception: in 1989/90 it was the direct economic consequence of the change of regime, followed by another crisis in 1994/95 due to the mismanagement of the economic transformation; 2006 already brought another economic crisis as the Hungarian economy underperformed and this was further exacerbated by the 2008 European financial and then economic crisis. Lately, 2012 meant another backslide, with somewhat more promising performance since 2013.

limitations and national interests are best channelled through international institutions.

Membership in international institutions also means that Hungary shares their burdens and contributes to the pursuit of their agenda, as in the case of NATO. Unilateral action regarding international security policy is strictly out of reach for the country, both in terms of willingness and capabilities. Peace support/crisis management/humanitarian operations are only possible as a member of a larger coalition, whether be it institutionalized (NATO, EU, OSCE, UN) or ad hoc (as in the case of the 2003 Iraq war), usually in support roles only. These strong limitations on the use of military force can be attributed to a risk-limiting behaviour that seeks to avoid casualties.[7]

The participation in crisis management operations carried out in the wider security environment of the Euro-Atlantic region is justified and is always carefully judged on a case-by-case basis with regard to national interests and capabilities. Accordingly, as one quantifiable measure of international ambitions, in 2007 Hungary set its level of ambition for all types of simultaneous international missions within any organization at a maximum of 1000 troops (including observers, advisors, etc.).[8] This level was maintained until recently: before the drawdown of ISAF forces began in 2013, about two thirds of Hungarian troops had been deployed in NATO missions, less than 20% in EU and less than 10% in UN missions.

In sum, as argued by Csiki and Tálas, based on the assessment of the transformative processes of the 1990s in Hungary that moved the country towards full Euro-Atlantic integration and developed a definite transatlantic bond, we cannot definitely state that a well-defined, coherent Hungarian strategic culture has evolved. "Instead, contemporary strategic culture in Hungary has remained in a state of transformation, stuck between outdated structural-institutional remains of the (post) Cold War era and the pressing need [for] modernization within a multinational Euro-Atlantic security framework."[9]

The direct effects of Hungary's accession to NATO and the lessons learnt

Hungarian security and foreign policy has followed a relatively consistent Euro-Atlantic path since soon after the period of regime change. Not only internal political and institutional transitions, but the favourable transformation of the

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[7] F. Molnár, *Napjaink domináns katonai konfliktusa és az adaptív haderő*, "Nemzet és Biztonság", 2011/1, pp. 48-57.

[8] Appendix to the 85/2007 MoD Directive for long-term defense planning, 2009 - 2018.

[9] T. Csiki, P. Tálas, *Can we identify a coherent strategic culture in Hungary?*, [in:] H. Biehl, B. Giegerich, A. Jonas (eds.) *Strategic Cultures in Europe. Security and Defence Policies Across the Continent*. Springer: Wiesbaden 2013, pp. 165-180.

international security environment and the open approach of Euro-Atlantic organizations have significantly contributed to this process. As a result, the country's foreign and security policy can be described as oriented towards the Euro-Atlantic community, within the wider value-based framework of international institutions (Council of Europe, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, United Nations Organization).

However, it is important to note that Hungary has experienced two decades of continuous transformation and it was due to these simultaneous and parallel favourable processes that the country gradually moved towards Euro-Atlantic integration. NATO's Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation (1991) and the launch of the Partnership for Peace (1994) made for significant positive drivers in this process and opened up the way for Euro-Atlantic integration - and along with the Balkan Wars resulting from the dissolution of Yugoslavia this external transition was the key strategic issue addressed in Hungary throughout the decade. The adoption of new defence policy guidelines in 1998 reflected this shift in priorities, clearly targeting accession to NATO and the European Union after fulfilling the respective political, economic and military accession criteria. Meanwhile, internal transition continued and the democratic control of the armed forces was completed, whilst facing the double challenge of continuously cutting down on defence expenditures both in terms of resources and manpower, and the urgent need to adopt the new institutional culture of NATO for the military in terms of interoperability.

The role the North Atlantic Alliance played in Hungary's foreign and security policy agenda then became fundamental and has remained so since then. The threatening military conflict in the Balkans and the crisis management role NATO decided to take on drove Hungary faster and closer to the Alliance than many would have expected even in 1994. The first major foreign deployment of Hungarian armed forces (military engineers) took place within the framework of the Implementation Force (IFOR) in 1996 also providing host nation support for NATO forces in Hungary, and continued within the Stabilization Force (SFOR) from 1997 (later under EUFOR Althea since 2004). These engagements already pawed the way for the interoperable development of the national armed forces. Following Hungary's NATO-accession, further engagement followed in the Alliance's Kosovo (KFOR) and Afghanistan (ISAF) operations showing allied solidarity and commitment to international peace.[10]

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[10] For an overview of Hungary's contribution to NATO in the period 2010 - 2014 see: C. Törő, P. Wagner, *NATO feladataink, vállalásaink és eredményeink a magyar külpolitika szemszögéből az elmúlt négy évben*, Manuscript, Budapest 2014.

Interestingly, the first fully developed National Military Strategy was only first adopted in 2009, showing the secondary role military strategy had played for the political elite on the one hand, and a somewhat belated adoption of the practice of drafting long-term strategic documents for the Hungarian Defence Forces on the other. Even in 2012 when the effects of the financial crisis forced the adoption of both a new National Security Strategy and a National Military Strategy, these documents showed to some extent the lack of executable long-term planning, providing mostly a "global vision"[11] and not a functional implementation as the required resources and modernization schedule had not been identified.[12] As repeatedly mentioned, the Hungarian military has continuously been underfinanced since the change of regime and after an initial increase around NATO-accession it has mostly shown a decreasing trend in the past 10 years.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Hungarian GDP (billion HUF)	20665.0	22018.3	23675.0	24989.9	25643.3
Defence budget (billion HUF)	346.9	288.1	283.1	278.2	319.7
Defence budget as share of GDP (%)	1.68	1.31	1.20	1.11	1.25
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Hungarian GDP (billion HUF)	25626.5	26.513.0	27635.4	28048.0	29144*
Defence budget (billion HUF)	320.6	308.2	248.9	234.8	241.4
Defence budget as share of GDP (%)	1.25	1.16	0.90	0.83	0.83

Table: The Hungarian defence budget, 2004-2013[13]
(* - Estimated)

Despite some obvious shortcomings, NATO has clearly been identified in these strategic documents as the cornerstone of Euro-Atlantic security, stability

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[11] T. Csiki, P. Tálas, *Az új Nemzeti Katonai Stratégia a nemzetközi tapasztalatok tükrében,* "Nemzet és Biztonság", 2014/2, pp. 45-61.

[12] T. Csiki, P. Tálas, *Stratégiától stratégiáig. A 2009-es és a 2012-es magyar katonai stratégia összehasonlító elemzése,* "Nemzet és Biztonság", 2014/2, pp. 36-76.

[13] Source: *Respective annual Budget Acts' provision for defense (without implemented sequestrations),* Central Statistics Agency statistics for Gross National Product.

and prosperity whose international agenda means primary commitments for Hungary. Still, we can see two opposing trends: on the one hand the 'strategic vocabulary' of the transatlantic community has been successfully adopted and Hungarian defence policy has been deeply embedded in NATO's security agenda, while on the other hand, serious deficiencies have prevailed regarding funding and modernization (see the next subchapter as a determining lesson unlearnt).

As for the military tools of foreign and security policy and possible military action, decision making was brought under strict civilian control during the 1990s in accordance with the democratic requirements also formulated by NATO.[14] Command structures evolved further by 1996 when the Joint Forces Command of the Hungarian Defence Forces was created in order to meet NATO requirements, and in 2001 when the Joint Forces Command was integrated into the Ministry of Defence, achieving a fully transparent civilian command and control structure in this field.

The strict authorization rule concerning the foreign deployment of the armed forces also became somewhat looser as a consequence of the decision to create the NATO Response Forces at the 2002 Prague Summit, because a potential deployment required rapid decision making schemes. Previously, 21 days of foreign deployment for a maximum of 100 troops could be authorized by the Ministry of Defence, while after the December 2003 modification of the Constitution and the Homeland Defence Act, any international engagement invoked upon the consensus of NATO member states became possible based on a government decision while also informing the parliament.

The direct effects of NATO membership can be identified in three areas: in the transformed Hungarian security and defence policy that can be traced in strategic documents; in terms of compatibility with NATO institutional structures and systems, and interoperability with other NATO members' armed forces; and the contribution of the Hungarian Defence Forces to the Alliance's collective defence tasks and crisis management operations. Lessons learnt in these respects include learning the institutional culture of NATO and participating fully in decision making, also ensuring the democratic control of the defence sector as well as effectively contributing to Allied defence and operations through NATO structures.[15]

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[14] F. Molnár, *Civil - Military Relations in Hungary: From Competition to Co-operation*, [in:] H. Born, M. Caparini, K. Haltiner, J. Kuhlmann (eds.) *Civil - Military Relations in Europe: Learning From Crisis and Institutional Change,* Routledge: New York 2007, pp. 114-129.

[15] For an insight of what results are identified by current political and military leaders, defense policy experts and diplomats with regard to Hungary's NATO membership, see the interview series *"15 Years - 15 Voices. Lessons Learnt from Hungary's 15 Years within NATO"* compiled throughout 2014. *15 Év - 15 Hang. Magyarország 15 éves NATO-tagságának tapasztalatai,* [www.nit.uni-nke.hu, access: 7 September 2014].

Regarding lessons unlearnt, there are three broad topics in which Hungary needs to learn from the experiences of the past 15 years: the underdeveloped security culture of Hungarian society and the political elite; unfinished and fragmented attempts at "reform and modernization"; and a lack of understanding of the true potential of deep and intense multinational defence cooperation.

The broadest set of problems is that both Hungarian society and the political elite have an underdeveloped security culture that is based on their primarily non-military security perception briefly discussed earlier. This in practice means that issues beyond economic and societal security rarely become subjects of interest or concern for Hungarian people. Unfortunately, subsequent governments have also followed a very limited, self-constrained information policy, providing only superficial information on Hungarian security and defence policy or the Hungarian Defence Forces.[16] Critically speaking, one might also raise questions about transparency and accountability issues taking into account the fact that no detailed information is dispersed in public about the specificities of the budgetary resources used for defence. The negative effects of this restrained stand have been reinforced by the vanishing representation of foreign and security policy issues both in public and commercial media - TV, radio and internet news portals - in recent years, leading to a general disinterest and indifference across wide strata of Hungarian society. Thus, besides being uninterested, people have to a significant extent become uninformed about defence issues, as well as institutions such as NATO.

Thus, 15 years after NATO-accession we can conclude that the Hungarian people in general have very limited contact to defence issues and this trend has been reinforced by the suspension of conscription in 2004, effectively abolishing this direct, practical tie between society and the Hungarian Armed Forces. Since then, the Hungarian Defence Forces has remained visible in everyday life only through their crisis management role in natural disaster relief (floods) and through HDF bomb squads tasked with ordnance disposal which is still a frequent issue due to the large number of ammunitions left behind from World War II.

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[16] If we want to contrast this policy approach, we can easily point out German and British examples where both the Bundeswehr and the British Armed Forces provide detailed and up-to-date, easily accessible online information on their international engagement, missions and presence, including force levels and mission tasks, while the Hungarian Ministry of Defense rarely provides such information directly, while the HDF mostly distributes promotional material via online and social media. For MoD-related information see: "Honvédelmi Minisztérium" [www.kormany.hu, access: 1 September 2014], for information released for the wider public see: "Honvedelem.hu" [www.honvedelem.hu, access: 1 September 2014] and related social media sites.

Meanwhile, civic (NGO), governmental (Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and media activities that could improve the situation have also largely been lacking or have remained ineffective. Public engagement is very weak and only a surprisingly low number of actors carry out activities - such as information campaigns, public outreach programmes - with limited visibility and practical effect. This is particularly true for NATO.[17]

These, coupled with the perception on the part of the population that peace and security can be taken for granted without further effort, have resulted in a lack of ownership and a lack of feeling of responsibility on the part of the population for their own defence. Similar problems have recently been studied by NATO through think tanks in a number of member states with the aim of finding out how much defence in fact 'matters'.[18] Even though Hungary was not included in the project, and no thorough studies have been carried out in this respect, similarities can be observed in this respect highlighting a general, abstract support for the armed forces and defence, but coupled with a disinterest in particular single issues. The following conclusions identified in eight member states by the Defence Matters Project also count for Hungary: "Defence spending has some general support, but other (social) issues are seen as more pressing. But there is also a lack of interest in the specifics and details of defense among the wider public." "There is a lack of strategic debate (…) The strategic community is often detached from the general public."[19]

The lesson identified and so far unlearnt in this regard in Hungary is that there is an ongoing need to continually keep society engaged and informed. Besides, it is also advisable to keep members of the political elite aware of their role and duty to address defence issues effectively and manage them responsibly.[20] In order

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[17] In principle, NGOs with a strong focus on the Euro-Atlantic policy agenda do function in NATO member and partner countries, such as national chapters of the Atlantic Treaty Association (ATA) or its youth organization (YATA). In contrast, very few organizations are active in this field in Hungary: the Hungarian Atlantic Council and its youth organization are hardly functioning and currently no other NGO has tried to fill this 'gap' in the NGO sector. With regard to think tanks, only two institutions can be found to be active in the foreign, security and defence policy field: the Hungarian Institute of International Affairs and the MoD-affiliated think tank, the Centre for Strategic and Defence Studies.

[18] See the *Defense Matters* project's concluding conference and related reports at Carnegie Europe, 26 November, 2013, [www.carnegieeurope.eu, access: 1 September 2014].

[19] *Defense Matters - Discussion Paper*, p. 3. "Carnegie Europe" [www.carnegieendowment.org, access: 1 September 2014.]

[20] Unlike in Poland, for example, members of the Hungarian Parliament - even of the Committee on Defence and Law Enforcement - in Hungary receive no formal in-advance education, training or briefing on national and international security and defence policy or foreign policy issues before they take their offices. This might be problematic in various respects when informed decision making and well-established professional debates would be necessary regarding the budget, moderniza-

to achieve this, the developing of permanent contacts and regular meetings of relevant parties - members of the political and military elite, think tanks, media representatives and various groups within society, especially the young - would be necessary, triggering their active participation and deepening their involvement.

The second set of lessons unlearnt can be seen with regard to the 'reform and transformation' of the armed forces. As mentioned before, the most fundamental challenges to the Hungarian Defence Forces have been their being underfinanced and being in a constant process of being in unfinished and incomplete waves of reform, transformation or attempts at modernization.

The fluid conditions and unaccomplished targets resulted in various problems already before NATO accession but there have been even more since 1999. The Hungarian Ministry of Defence had to carry out two strategic and defence reviews within a couple of years (1999 and 2003) in an attempt to align policy and planning mechanisms and have them fully interoperable with NATO standards and processes. Recommendations drafted in 1999, first and foremost about streamlining Hungarian command and control processes with those of NATO, were achieved by 2001. As a next step, the recommendations drafted in 2003 on a NATO-compatible defence planning system were fulfilled in the following years, and eventually a new system for the evaluation and assessment of the external and internal security environment and resulting military tasks was been developed and introduced based on the strategic foresight analysis methodology applied by NATO.[21]

However, most conclusions of these strategic reviews regarding military capabilities (or their shortcomings) and the repeated calls for technological modernization have been neglected and no other strategic review has been carried out since 2003 despite the adoption of new National Military Strategies in 2009 and 2012. The negative consequences of this 'modernization gap' have been summarized by the current Minister of Defence, Csaba Hende in June 2013 as follows: "The Hungarian Defense Forces have not procured any major equipment since the change of regime period with the sole exception of the *Gripen* program.[22] The equipment that is still in service [was] mostly [sic] manufactured in the Warsaw Pact era, 30 - 40 years ago. Within 10-years time all of these will have to be scrapped and we

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tion or deployment of the Hungarian Defence Forces. Instead, discussion and debates - if they take place at all - mainly follow the dynamics of party politics even in defence issues.

[21] B. Németh, *A PESTEM és PMESII stratégiai elemző rendszerek összehasonlítása: A Honvédelmi Minisztérium új stratégiai értékelő rendszere*, "Felderítő Szemle", March 2014, pp. 126-141.

[22] Based on repeatedly altered negotiation targets and contractual commitments, Hungary has been leasing 14 JAS-39A/B *Gripen* planes, in service since 2008. Even though the exact costs of fulfilling the leasing contract have not been disclosed, it is estimated to be beyond 10% of the total annual defence budget.

[will] need to carry out [a] full rearmament of the HDF."[23] By 2014, the unsustainable situation regarding the financial and modernization gap had been acknowledged at the top political level as well.[24] Going beyond the 2012 government decision to maintain the nominal level of the Hungarian defence budget at the 2012 level until 2016 and then to increase it by an annual 0.1% until 2022 (thus reaching 1.39% of the GDP),[25] Prime Minister Viktor Orbán declared at the 2014 Wales Summit that the increase in defence spending will be brought forward to 2015 in accordance with the growing demand on behalf of NATO. However, no specificities have been announced and the concrete measures to be undertaken will be decided by the Hungarian Parliament, most likely during the debate of the 2015 fiscal budget in late 2014.

Without elaborating upon the current defence capabilities and readiness of the Hungarian Defence Forces, it is indicative in this respect that the general level of technological modernization regarding major equipment is still at the level of the 1970s-1980s (T-72 tanks, BTR-80A armoured personnel carriers, An-26 transport aircraft, Mi-8 transport helicopter etc.) or with modernizations the 1990s at best, with the exceptions of the JAS-39 *Gripen* multirole aircraft and some equipment provided for the land forces deployed in peace operations in Afghanistan and the Balkans. As Tamás Kern has pointed out, subsequent Hungarian governments have tended to design and launch "military reforms" and 'modernization programmes' in such a way that cost saving and cutback measures were achieved during their election period while increased investment and procurement measures were always scheduled or postponed to the next or later election periods.[26] Unfortunately, incoming governments again tended to redesign or simply further postpone modernization, thus by 2013 the Hungarian Defence Forces came to the brink of their operational capability. Besides procrastinating on modernization, the alarming amount and sustained trend of cuts of the operation and maintenance budget within the Hungarian defence expenditure have caused considerable capability losses and a decrease in operational readiness. Even though the Hungarian Defence Forces has remained capable of fulfilling its duties and commitments within NATO crisis management operations, the general operability and spectrum

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[23] *Hende: Újrafegyverkezésre van szükség.* "Világgazdaság Online", 6 May 2013, [www.vg.hu, access: 1 September 2014].

[24] *Interjú Orbán Viktorral a NATO csúcs után*, "Hirado.hu", 6 September 2014, [www.hirado.hu, access: 7 September 2014].

[25] T. Csiki: *Az új Nemzeti Katonai Stratégia a nemzetközi tapasztalatok tükrében.* "Nemzet és Biztonság", 2014/2, p. 59.

[26] T. Kern, *A rendszerváltás utáni haderőreform-kísérletek. Eredmények és kudarcok.* Századvég Műhelytanulmányok 7. Századvég Alapítvány: Budapest 2009, p. 43.

of capabilities can be questioned in various fields and these shortcomings require urgent action.

This type of conduct in defence planning and capability development has become a tendency in several NATO member countries that joined the alliance in 1999 and in 2004 from the East Central European region and the Balkans, thus it is imperative to point out this "lesson unlearnt" for prospective members as well.

The third set of lessons unlearnt is related to regional multinational defence cooperation (MDC), more precisely the lack of understanding of how to utilize the full benefits these can bring possibly without engaging in unnecessary pilot projects or developing less functional capability packages only for political gains, sacrificing scarce resources without practical long-lasting effects. Hungary has in the past 15 years participated in various forms of multinational defence cooperation with varying practical results. However, these have mostly been developed outside NATO's capability development framework or the NATO Defence Planning Process with the outstanding examples of two European Union Battle Groups[27] and other cooperative projects within the Central European Defence Cooperation (CEDC).[28]

While following the broader international trend of developing 'clusters of capabilities' within regional frameworks (see the examples of the BENELUX and NORDEFCO co-operations, as well as the French - British bilateral cooperation), what we can see by the end of 2014 in Hungary is that the practical usability of some of the developed high-profile frameworks can hardly be judged. Either driven by the lack of political will, the necessary financial resources or the lack of military capabilities some of these have not fully been developed or if developed, never used (EU BGs for example.) On the one hand, it is positive that the high-level political will to support and participate in such multinational defence co-operative efforts has been strengthening in Hungary as well, as these are often

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[27] The first EU BG Hungary has become part of is the Italian-led Battle Group that had been developed on the basis of the Italian - Hungarian - Slovenian Multinational Land Force (operable since 2002) on standby in 2007 and in 2012 as the crisis management entry force of the European Union. The second Battle Group is to be developed with the participation of the Visegrád Countries by 2016, composed of Czech, Hungarian, Slovak and Polish troops, the latter taking the role of lead nation as well.

[28] Within the CEDC (formerly also known as the Roundtable on Central European Multinational Defence Cooperation, or Central European Defence Initiative), six Central European nations - Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia - began to intensify their defence cooperation in 2011 and various programmes have been implemented since then: a multinational CBRN defence battalion was established, joint Special Operations Forces training, C-IED training and Air Mentor Team training for Afghanistan have been initiated and a Multinational Logistic Coordination Centre was also established. T. Csiki, B. Németh, *Perspectives of Central European Multinational Defence Cooperation: A New Model?,* [in:] *Panorama of the Global Security Environment 2013,* Centre for European and North Atlantic Affairs: Bratislava 2013, pp. 18-19.

seen as a possible solution to the identified capability shortages in Europe.[29] While on the other hand, delivered results, real capability development that would go beyond the pooling of existing capabilities and generate new ones in missing fields through joint procurement and sharing mechanisms are currently missing. The only exception is a NATO-branded project also included among the role models of Smart Defence: Strategic Airlift Capability, where 17 nations procured and have been operating three C-17 *Globemaster* strategic transport aircraft from Pápa Airbase in Hungary. This signals a strong contrast in favour of well-functioning large capability development projects within NATO and smaller, practical cooperative programmes within CEDC. While the use of developing another EU Battle Group that rather provides solutions to the capability needs of the 2000s[30] and not the post-ISAF and post-Crimea security environment can be questioned, it also distracts resources from existing and functioning frameworks for the sake of harvesting the political gains within the Visegrád Group for developing a capability package that may never even be used as experience with EU Battle Groups has demonstrated so far.

Thus, in sum, the significance of multinational defence co-operations has been realized, its short-term political yield has been harvested, yet the real value delivered in terms of usability can be questioned, for example, in the case of the current flagship project of the V4.[31] For the coming years it would be of utmost importance for Hungary to align the current parallel processes of MDCs with its limited financial resources available and to opt for operable, deployable capabilities also within the framework of NATO that are achievable in the mid-term and sustainable in the long term.

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[29] T. Csiki, B. Németh, *On the Multinational Development of Military Capabilities*, "European Geostrategy - Long Post", 13 June 2012, [www.europeangeostrategy.ideasoneurope.eu, access: 7 September 2014].

[30] T. Csiki, B. Németh, *Perspectives of…*, pp. 20-21.

[31] We have seen other examples of this kind as well in the past: the Hungarian - Romanian Joint Peacekeeping Battalion was established in 1998 incorporating 500 troops from both parties, while the Multinational Engineer Battalion *"Tisza"* incorporating troops from Ukraine, Romania and Hungary, each providing a company for the battalion was established in 1998 and became operational in 2002. Despite various occasions when these units could have been used, none of them has ever been deployed - still, they are kept alive, for which building confidence, trust and enhancing interoperability can only be a partial explanation. B. Németh, *Magyarország szerepe a regionális biztonsági-védelmi együttműködésekben*, [in:] *Magyar biztonságpolitika, 1989 - 2014*. Nemzeti Közszolgálati Egyetem, Nemzetközi Intézet, Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont: Budapest 2014, pp. 93-106.

Conclusions

Several controversial characteristics of Hungary's NATO membership as well as the broader Hungarian security and defence policy and Hungarian strategic culture have been examined throughout the chapter, resulting from the continuous, unbalanced and in certain areas unfinished transformation the country has experienced in the past two decades.

The direct effects of NATO membership can be identified in three areas: in the transformed Hungarian security and defence policy that can be traced in strategic documents; in terms of compatibility with NATO institutional structures and systems and interoperability with other NATO members' armed forces; and the contribution of the Hungarian Defence Forces to the Alliance's collective defence tasks and crisis management operations. Lessons learnt in these respects include learning the institutional culture of NATO and participating fully in decision making, also ensuring the democratic control of the defence sector as well as effectively contributing to Allied defence and operations through NATO structures.

Regarding lessons unlearnt, there are three broad topics in which Hungary needs to learn from the experiences of the past 15 years: the underdeveloped security culture of Hungarian society and the political elite that puts restraints on the defence sector, ranking security and defence policy as only one of many tasks and needs; the unfinished and fragmented attempts at 'reform and modernization' leaving the Hungarian Defence Forces with mostly outdated military equipment even 15 years after accession; and lacks in the understanding of the true potential of multinational defence cooperation with some positive signs, and the need to prioritize and align efforts effectively in accordance with the country's resources.

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Lithuania as a Rational Free Rider in NATO

Since the inception of NATO, one of the key political issues among the Allies has been burden-sharing, which can be defined as the "distribution of costs and risks among members of a group in the process of accomplishing a common goal".[1] The United States, as the biggest economic and military power in the Alliance, has always tried to ensure that European countries take on their fair share of the overall burden for maintaining the collective security system.

Meanwhile, the Europeans usually have been quite reluctant to uphold their commitments; their burden-sharing behaviour has even been labelled as "the art of manipulating alliance relationships for political gain".[2] The problem can be traced back to 1949 when the US Secretary of State Dean Acheson, while discussing the ratification of the Washington Treaty, emphasized the need to "ensure that nobody is getting a meal ticket from anybody else so far as their capacity to resist is concerned".[3]

Disagreements about burden-sharing were recently fuelled again by a substantial economic crisis that started in 2008. As a result of the austere economic environment, nations have drastically cut their defence budgets. For example, between 2008 and 2012 such Allies as Greece, Latvia and Bulgaria reduced their defence spending by 44%, 54% and 37%, respectively.[4] This certainly affects their level of ambition and highly restricts their ability to participate in NATO operations, as well as their capability to develop programmes. As warned by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, "unless we Europeans take our security seriously, North Americans will rightly ask why they should. Unless we recommit to our own defense, we risk seeing America disengage - and Europe and America drift apart".[5]

This problem is particularly relevant for the smaller members of NATO which often are not capable, and more importantly, even not willing to contribute pro-

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[1] P. K. Forster, S. J. Cimbala, *The US, NATO and Military Burden-Sharing*, Frank Cass: New York 2005, p. 1.

[2] J. T. Wallace, *Friendly Rivals: Bargaining and Burden Shifting in NATO*, M. E. Sharpe: New York 2003, p. 8.

[3] *Ibidem*, p. 53.

[4] Fina*ncial and Economic Data Relating to NATO Defence. Defence expenditures of NATO Countries (1990 - 2013)*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 24 February 2014, [www.nato.int, access: 30 October 2014].

[5] *Speech by Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen at the European Council*, 19 December 2013, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, [www.nato.int, access: 20 December 2014].

portionally. This is a paradox because the very fundamental interests of small states require a reliance on external security guarantees as the best option for ensuring their national security. In other words, as a result of their military and economic vulnerability, the security of small states can be guaranteed mainly through effective alliance membership rather than building national military capabilities.[6]

These trends have been well illustrated by Lithuanian defence policy since the country became a member of NATO. Lithuania has officially stated that its national security is a constituent part of the indivisible security policy of NATO and the European Union.[7] Collective deterrence ensured by NATO is the main principle of the defence strategy of Lithuania. The reliance on NATO's Article 5 of the Washington Treaty assurances became the *modus operandi* of developing Lithuania's national defence capacity.

At the same time, Lithuania's military spending remains among the lowest in NATO. In 2013 its defence budget declined to 0.78% of its GDP.[8] Only Luxemburg was spending less among all NATO members. Such a situation provides an intriguing research question: why being entirely dependent on NATO's collective defence guarantees, is Lithuania still so unwilling to meet NATO requirements on its own defence spending?

One possible explanation could be found in the economic theory of alliances, which explores burden-sharing behaviour among rational allies. Collective action problems within NATO have received a lot of attention in academic research.[9] This discussion serves as a theoretical background in asking why NATO members, especially small countries like Lithuania, try to minimize their individual burden for collective defence.

The main theoretical premises could be formulated as follows: members of NATO seek to maximize their benefits inside the Alliance (for example, by enhancing the Alliance's military presence in their region) at the lowest possible cost. They are reluctant to increase their expenses as long as there is no risk of losing collective security assurances. If the hegemonic power (the United States) and other key Allies maintain the efficiency and credibility of the collective system, small states are expected to under-contribute, as they have nothing additional to

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[6] J. Ringsmose, *NATO Burden-Sharing Redux: Continuity and Change after the Cold War*, "Contemporary Security Policy" 31:2 2010, p. 325.

[7] *Resolution Amending the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania Resolution on the Approval of the National Security Strategy,* The Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, 26 June 2012, [www.lrs.lt, access: 12 July 2014].

[8] *Defense budget, 2003 - 2014,* The Ministry of National Defense of Republic of Lithuania, 12 December 2013, [www.kam.lt, access: 12 July 2014].

[9] For a review see: T. Sandler, K. Hartley, *Economics of Alliances: Lessons for Collective Action*, "Journal of Economic Literature", XXXIX 2001, p. 869-896.

gain by providing their fair share. A rational calculation leads to a behaviour when contribution to the alliance is expected not to exceed the benefits of membership. In other words, small states are more prone to deliberately become free riders and this could be explained by the nature of the security provided by NATO.

In this article a special quantitative index of NATO burden-sharing is proposed. It allows for the empirical measurement of the investment (input) in a common defence against security benefits (output) provided by the Alliance. This index, based on the theoretical assumptions developed by T. Sandler and K. Hartley, provides an opportunity to evaluate the costs and benefits of every NATO country thus identifying who is overpaying and who is underpaying for collective security. Such an approach is valuable for testing the economic theory of alliances and explaining the variation of free riding behaviour inside NATO. The index of burden-sharing includes 27 NATO members[10] and covers the period between 2007 and 2012.

This article consists of three parts: (a) the first part explores the economic theory of alliances, with a specific focus on a small state's perspective; (b) the second part introduces the methodology and main indicators of the burden-sharing index which is then applied to measure the ratio between the costs and benefits among NATO Allies; (c) the third part examines Lithuania's defence policy as a case study for identifying the main characteristics of its burden-sharing behaviour.

Economic theory of alliances: why is it rational to be a free rider in NATO?

Mancur Olson's seminal study 'The logic of collective action' is an important starting point for studying burden-sharing issues. It emphasizes that although members of the organization have common goals, their individual interests do not necessarily coincide with collective aspirations. In other words, burden-sharing is a collective action problem. All members of the group can enjoy the goods provided by the organization, including those who are under-contributing.[11] M. Olson, along with R. Zeckhauser, applied this theory to international relations by conceptualizing and empirically investigating NATO burden-sharing issues.

In their initial theoretical model, the security (deterrence) provided by the Alliance is considered as a purely public good, which is characterized by two main features. First, it is non-excludable - the access to the good cannot be restricted. Second, it is non-rival - the consumption of the good by one member does not

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[10] Iceland is excluded from the analysis, as it does not have a national armed forces and military budget.
[11] M. Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*, Harvard University Press: Cambridge MA 2002.

reduce the quantity of it to the others, regardless of the group size.[12] These notions derived from Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, which states that a military attack against one state is automatically treated as an attack against all the Allies. Thus NATO's security is seen as indivisible.

According to M. Olson and R. Zeckhauser, the input for maintaining the organization is distributed unevenly. Larger NATO countries naturally bear the greatest burden of ensuring the collective defence, as they have more to lose. It encourages small countries, whose contribution has no significant influence on the overall effectiveness of the alliance, to avoid their commitments. As long as the provision of security cannot be limited and other members of the Alliance continue to maintain its effectiveness, small countries have an incentive to underpay and free ride. M. Olson and R. Zeckhauser called it a phenomenon of "exploitation of the great by the small".

In this respect, a key role is played by the hegemonic state. Without a strong commitment by the United States, the credibility of NATO's collective security system is unthinkable. During the era of "Mutually Assured Destruction"(MAD), nuclear deterrence provided by the US met both essential criteria of the public good: (a) all member states were automatically covered by the nuclear umbrella (non-excludability); (b) deterrence remained valid despite the number of Allies and the expansion of NATO. Empirical studies confirmed that until the late 1960s large NATO countries were inclined to accept higher costs, while the small ones were under-contributing to common security.[13]

The need to adapt the theory emerged as a result of the changing international security situation and NATO's strategy. The principles of a devastating retaliatory response (MAD) were replaced by a doctrine of a 'flexible response'. NATO reduced its overall reliance on nuclear weapons and pledged to respond in a more flexible manner in case of a Soviet aggression, including not only a strategic nuclear arsenal, but also tactical and conventional forces.

Accordingly, T. Sandler and J. Murdoch developed an alternative "Joint Product Model", suggesting that military expenditures and defence activities can provide multiple goods with varying degree of publicness. For example, while conventional capabilities (tanks, armoured vehicles or combat helicopters) contribute to the Alliance's deterrence (public good), they could also be attributed solely to national needs (private good), making them inaccessible to other Allies. The increasing importance of conventional forces and the enhanced level of Ally-

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[12] M. Olson, R. Zeckhauser, *An Economic Theory of Alliances*. "Review of Economics and Statistics" 48 (3) 1966, p. 266-279.
[13] T. Sandler, J. Murdoch, *On Sharing NATO Defence Burdens in the 1990's and Beyond*, *"Fiscal Studies"*, Vol. 21, No. 3, September 2000, p. 297-327.

specific benefits reduces the level of free riding within the organization, since the underpaying countries cannot easily avoid their commitments and have the incentive to strengthen their national defence.

Empirical research confirmed that changes in the NATO doctrine and the declining importance of nuclear deterrence encouraged the Allies to take more responsibility for their national security, thus reducing the overall gap between the benefits received and defence burdens within NATO.[14]

Yet, a greater emphasis on conventional forces has not substantially altered the nature of security as a public good provided by the Alliance. During the Cold War, US commitment and ability, if needed, to ensure an effective response to Soviet aggression remained the essential prerequisite for the credibility of the Alliance. In turn, deterrence and collective defence were maintained as key NATO functions.

Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has transformed from a collective defence to a cooperative security structure. NATO threat assessment is now characterized by a wide spectrum of security challenges. Today's NATO is based on a wide approach to security, including cyber-attacks, terrorism, disruption of energy supplies, ballistic missile attacks, unstable states, etc.[15] Therefore, in practice it has become very difficult to ensure the actual credibility of collective security. In addition, threats in different NATO regions are perceived in different ways. NATO is often seen as a toolbox for addressing the various security problems of different Allies. In the absence of a common existential threat, the security of NATO is divided and unevenly distributed within the Alliance, mostly depending on the political decisions of key NATO members (especially those of hegemonic power).

During the last decade, NATO's agenda has been dominated by international operations. The 2010 NATO Strategic Concept established crisis management as one of the three core tasks of the Alliance. NATO is determined to actively engage to "prevent crises, manage conflicts and stabilize post-conflict situations". [16] In contrast with the Cold War, an emphasis on out-of-area operations fuelled the trend of security as an excludable and rival "club good" within NATO. Crisis management is the key priority for the United States and the main reason for its interest in the Alliance, however, these distant operations are not directly relevant to the majority of the Allies, especially smaller countries, which are more concerned with local and regional security issues.

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[14] *Ibidem*, p. 313-317.
[15] *Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security for the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Adopted by Heads of State and Government at the NATO Summit in Lisbon 19 - 20 November 2010*, "NATO", 23 May 2012, p. 19-20, [www.nato.int, access: 10 September 2014].
[16] *Ibidem*.

As a result of this political configuration within NATO, the system functions on the basis of persistent 'quid pro quo' exchanges within the Alliance. The United States and other major Allies use a variety of tools at their disposal to ensure the protection and to address specific (regional) security issues of smaller countries in exchange for their adequate contribution to crisis management operations.[17] For example, without having participated in the ISAF mission, the Baltic states could hardly expect additional US security guarantees in the region (for example, an enhanced military presence). Thus, for the smaller states security has become a good "earned" by contributing to the activities, which are considered as priority by the hegemonic state and other large Allies.

To sum up the logic of the economic theory of alliances, burden-sharing behaviour within NATO is defined by the nature of the security provided by the Alliance. Over the course of NATO's transformation, this nature has changed as a result of the Alliance's defence strategy and international environment. The notion of security as a public good was eventually replaced by an excludable "club good". The absence of a clear external threat, altered forms of contribution and increased heterogeneity among the Allies mean that security can be unevenly distributed within the organization.. The ability to acquire and maintain NATO's protection depends on the countries' "membership fee", i.e., on their contribution to the organization's key activities. This reduces their incentives to be a pure 'free rider' because without making a proportional contribution smaller states face the risk of being ignored or isolated should they need more support from the Alliance to address their specific security needs.

Index of NATO burden-sharing: what members 'pay' and what they 'get'

A key question in the empirical studies looking at the economic theory of alliances is how to assess whether the contributions of NATO Allies are proportional to their size and national capacity.[18] Theoretically, the burden assumed by the countries could be estimated by assessing the ratio between their (a) contribution (input) and (b) benefits (output). If the benefits of membership exceed the contribution, there is a trend towards free-riding behaviour. The key question is how to operationalize benefits and costs, adapting it for the empirical analysis.

To address this issue, a special quantitative index is designed in this article. It covers the period of 2007 - 2012 and enables the assessment of (a) each Ally's

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[17] J. Ringsmose, *Paying for Protection: Denmark's Military Expenditure during the Cold War*, "Cooperation and Conflict", 44:73 2009, p. 78-80.
[18] T. Sandler, J. Murdoch, *On Sharing NATO Defence Burdens in the 1990's and Beyond*, "Fiscal Studies", Vol. 21, No. 3, September 2000, p. 297-327.

share of NATO's total contribution and (b) each Ally's share of NATO's total benefits. It provides an opportunity to evaluate the input and output results of every NATO country thus identifying who is overpaying and who is underpaying for collective security.

The general NATO burden-sharing index formula can be outlined as follows:

$$\text{Burden-sharing index} = \frac{\text{Contribution to NATO (input)}}{\text{Benefits from NATO (output)}}$$

The operationalization of the input is based on the key NATO priorities and commitments, which are embodied in the main documents of the Alliance. Three main indicators of this are distinguished in the study:

1. The country's defence budget. This is considered to be a key expression of the country's contribution to the Alliance both in the literature of economic theory of alliances, as well as in the political agenda of NATO.

2. The contribution to the NATO operation in Afghanistan. During the last several years, ISAF has been the largest and the most cost-demanding NATO mission, involving the participation of all NATO members. Their commitment to ISAF was repeatedly approved at the highest political level, the operation was seen as a key priority for the Alliance.[19] The contribution of the parties to the operation is an informative indicator that reveals their political will to contribute to collective goals. Three factors are taken into account: (a) the number of troops deployed[20] (weight - 50%); (b) the number of casualties[21] (weight - 25%); (c) their financial and humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan[22] (weight - 25%).[23]

3. Commitment compliance. NATO has established a number of requirements

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[19] *Strasbourg - Kehl Summit Declaration on Afghanistan. Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Strasbourg Kehl on 4 April 2009,* North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 4 April 2009, [www.nato.int, access: 20 July 2014].

[20] Source of data: NATO ISAF, [www.isaf.nato.int, access: 21 July 2014]; The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance,* [www.iiss.org, access: 24 June 2014].

[21] Source of data: iCasualties, [www.icasualties.org, access: 24 June 2014].

[22] Source of data: Financial Tracking Service (FTS), [fts.unocha.org, access: June 25 2014]. On the basis of FTS, the indicator of financial and humanitarian assistance that reflects all the reported international humanitarian aid (including that for NGOs and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, bilateral aid, in-kind aid, and private donations) from 2007 to 2012.

[23] The number of deployed troops (calculated in absolute terms) is considered as the key reflection of states' direct contribution in ISAF operation, therefore its weight is higher in comparison with the two other indicators.

to ensure that the development of Allied armed forces meets NATO priorities. In accordance with this, the following factors (weighted equally) are included in the analysis: (a) the country's defence expenditures (NATO's requirement is 2% of GDP), (b) personnel costs (NATO's requirement is not more than 50% of the defence budget) and (c) investment in new equipment and R&D (NATO's requirement is at least 20% of the defence budget).[24]

These three input indicators are weighted equally and measured as a percentage of the total sum of the input in each category.

NATO's benefits, of course, differ from country to country, depending on their political priorities, threat assessment, etc. The index is based on the premise that countries join the Alliance first and foremost in order to obtain collective defence guarantees. It is also confirmed by NATO's Strategic Concept, which emphasizes that "NATO's fundamental and enduring purpose is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means".[25]

The security provided by NATO can be considered as a common denominator as well as the most significant form of benefits received from membership. It is operationalized by three indicators: (1) the GDP of the country[26] (weight - 25%), (2) population[27] (weight - 25%), and (3) the external (land) borders of the country[28] (weight - 50%).

GDP and population data allows the size of a country to be evaluated. According to the logic of the economic theory of alliances, it is assumed that the benefits from NATO largely depend on the Ally's size. The smaller the country is, the more important the external security guarantees are as a result of its higher vulnerability and lower chances of ensuring its security independently. Therefore, the Alliance's benefits are considered to be inversely proportional to the size of the country, which is defined by the population and GDP figures.

The length of the external land borders is seen as the third element of the received benefits, partly reflecting the country's geopolitical situation. For example, the Allies in Eastern Europe clearly get more benefits from NATO's collective defence in comparison with Central Europeans as they have a direct border with

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[24] Source of data for all three indicators: *Financial and Economic Data Relating to NATO Defence. Defence expenditures of NATO Countries (1990 - 2013)*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 13 April 2012, [www.nato.int, access: 25 June 2014].
[25] *Strategic Concept…*
[26] Source of data: The World Bank, *GDP Database*, [www.data.worldbank.org, access: 25 June 2014].
[27] Source of data: The World Bank, *World Population Database*, [www.data.worldbank.org, access: 25 June 2014].
[28] Source of data: CIA World Factbook, [www.cia.gov, access: June 25 2014].

Russia (including the Kaliningrad region) and Belarus. All land borders with countries outside the Alliance, the European Union and the European Economic Area (EEA) are taken into account.[29]

All three indicators (GDP, population and external borders) are measured as each Ally's share of NATO's total.

A more detailed formula for the index can be illustrated as follows:

$$\text{Index} = \frac{(\text{Defence budget} + \text{ISAF contribution} + \text{commitments})/3}{\dfrac{\text{Size (GDP} + \text{population}/2) + \text{external borders}}{2}}$$

If the estimation is > 1, the country's contribution exceeds its benefits (over-contributor). If the result is < 1, the country shares a disproportionately small burden (free rider).

The methodological basis for such approach is developed from the economic theory of alliances.[30] However, the index, presented in the article, differs from previous empirical research[31] in at least two ways.

First, theoretical assumptions concerning the benefits from NATO are different. Previous studies were based on the view that a bigger country automatically gains more from the collective defence system as it has more to lose (bigger industrial base, population etc.). This study makes the opposite assumption - the smaller the country, the weaker is its ability to ensure national security, which leads to more benefits from NATO and a greater dependence on external security guarantees.

Secondly, in previous NATO-wide studies, the evaluation of the contribution (input) to the Alliance was mainly limited to a single indicator - the country's defence spending, which significantly simplified NATO's political reality. Some Allies have huge defence budgets, however, their contribution to the practical implementation of NATO's priorities (for example, participation in crisis management operations) is very low. Consequently, defence spending cannot be used as the sole indicator for the burden-sharing (membership costs) assumed by the countries. To fill this gap, the index included two additional input indicators:

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[29] The study does not include the borders with Albania and Croatia (these countries became NATO members in 2008) and the border between the United States and Mexico.

[30] See T. Sandler, J. Murdoch, *On Sharing NATO Defence Burdens in the 1990's and Beyond*, "Fiscal Studies", Vol. 21, No. 3, September 2000, p. 297-327.

[31] For a review of previous research see: T. Sandler, H. Shimizu, *NATO Burden Sharing 1999 - 2010: An Altered Alliance*, "Foreign Policy Analysis", Vol. 10, Issue 1, January 2014, p. 43-60.

(a) contribution in Afghanistan reflecting the key operational commitment by the Allies and (b) fulfilling the requirements set by NATO.

Of course, the shortcomings of the model have to be taken into account as well. The index clearly does not include some of the benefits of membership in the Alliance that are difficult to quantify, such as national prestige, international influence or the impact on internal reforms. In addition, the five-year period covered by this index might be not enough to fully reveal the dynamics of burden-sharing behaviour, as the effects of defence budget cuts are usually long term and will continue to emerge in the upcoming years. Finally, the security environment of the Allies is reflected only partially, since the indicator of external borders is not sufficient to assess the geopolitical environment as a whole. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the importance of the Alliance's security guarantees are more significant to those Allies which have common borders with such countries as Russia, Belarus, Syria or Iran.

Lithuania's case: political gain and guilt of being a free rider

The results (Table 1) demonstrate that 14 NATO countries fall into the category of free riders. As expected, in most cases, they are smaller members of the Alliance. Several small Allies (the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, the Czech Republic, Portugal, Norway), however, contribute to the Alliance more than they relatively benefit from the membership. This has more to do with their relatively fewer direct benefits from the Alliance, rather than their significant contribution. With the exception of Norway, all the mentioned states have no external borders, therefore their geopolitical situation can be regarded as relatively safe.

Many other countries with a lower index rank are located on the geographical periphery of NATO and therefore face higher risks of geopolitical insecurity. However, their contributions are not significantly different from the input of other small countries and range between 1% and 2% of the total contribution.

No.	Country	Contribution (% of total input)	Benefit (% of total benefit)	Index
1	United States	48.30	0.02	2560.93
2	United Kingdom	6.66	0.10	67.20
3	Germany	4.29	0.07	57.80
4	France	4.53	0.09	48.05
5	Italy	2.81	0.11	26.37
6	Canada	2.94	0.17	16.89

7	Spain	1.98	0.15	13.53
8	The Netherlands	2.08	0.35	5.91
9	Belgium	1.16	0.55	2.12
10	Denmark	1.83	1.00	1.83
11	Czech Republic	1.39	0.79	1.76
12	Portugal	1.06	0.74	1.44
13	Norway	2.28	2.14	1.07
14	Greece	1.65	1.94	0.85
15	Slovakia	1.15	2.15	0.54
16	Hungary	1.27	2.64	0.48
17	Poland	2.09	6.78	0.31
18	Bulgaria	1.40	5.00	0.28
19	Slovenia	0.97	3.67	0.26
20	Turkey	2.45	12.53	0.20
21	Estonia	1.60	8.62	0.19
22	Croatia	1.13	6.71	0.17
23	Latvia	1.15	7.31	0.16
24	Romania	1.23	8.78	0.14
25	Lithuania	1.05	8.31	0.13
26	Luxembourg	1.15	9.79	0.12
27	Albania	1.10	9.47	0.12

Table 1: NATO burden-sharing index 2007 - 2012[32]

Lithuania's membership in the collective security system is also characterized by the behaviour of free riding. The index reveals that for the 2007 - 2012 period, Lithuania's share of the total benefits reached 8.31%, while its contribution accounts for only 1.05% of the total input. The overall value of the country's burden-sharing index was one of the smallest (0.13), only Luxembourg and Albania have a lower rank.

Lithuania's estimate of benefits provided by NATO is high mostly due to the country's small size (greater vulnerability and the enhanced importance of external security guarantees) and the challenging geopolitical environment (a common border with the Kaliningrad region and Belarus). Meanwhile, the contribution rates

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[32] *Source: prepared by the authors.*

are among the lowest in the Alliance. Lithuania for 2007 - 2012 failed to meet its defence spending pledge of 2% of GDP (Lithuania's average is 0.98%), as well as an obligation to invest at least 20% of its defence budget in new equipment (13.6%), and not to exceed 50% of the total defence budget for personnel costs (61.9%).

As can be seen in Figure 2, Lithuania's rather poor rank remained more or less stable during the period of 2007 - 2012. There has been a trend of decline in defence spending since 2009 among most NATO Allies, which primarily affected their ability to adequately participate in NATO operations and fulfil their capability to fulfil their development requirements.

These quantitative parameters are consistent with Lithuania's political actions for 2007 - 2012. During this period, Lithuania reduced its military commitments to NATO. Particularly remarkable was the cut in defence spending: in 2007, Lithuania's budget was 1.15% of GDP, while in 2012 it only reached 0.78%. This decline was largely attributed to the global economic crisis of 2008 - 2009, yet even during the economic recovery in 2011 - 2012 the country did not increase its military expenditures (see Figure 1).
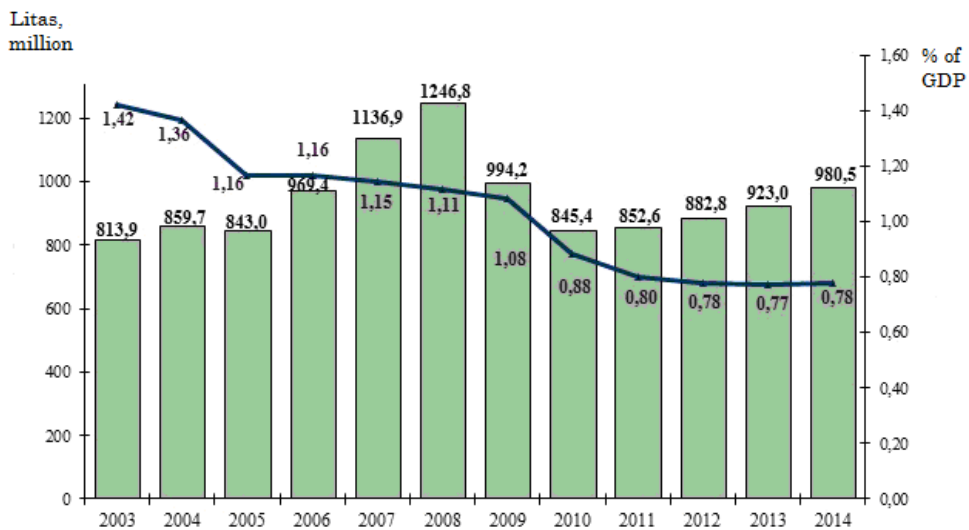
Figure 1: Lithuania's Defence budget for 2003 - 2014[33]

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[33] Source: the Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania.
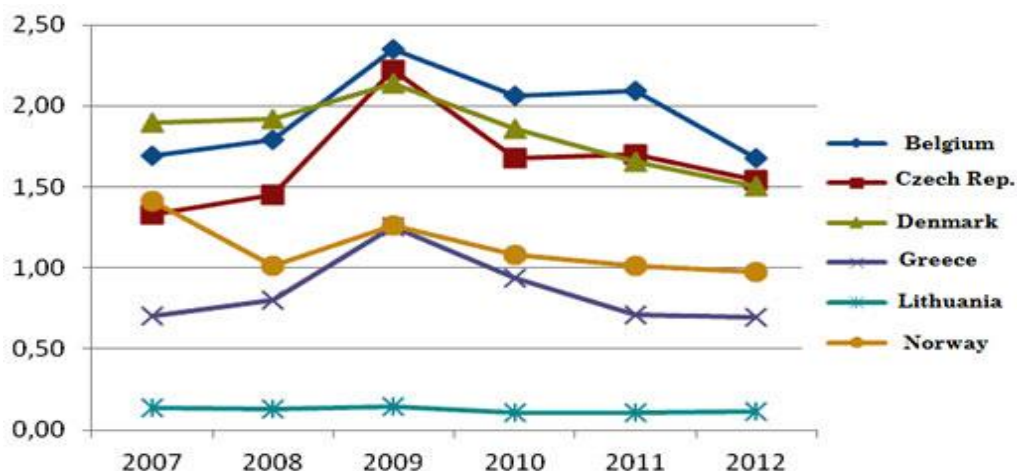
Figure 2: Burden-sharing index rate of several small NATO countries for 2007 - 2012[34]

To compensate for its low defence budget record, Lithuania actively participated in the ISAF mission. This reflected Lithuania's desire to justify the United States' expectations and maintain the relationship. For the period of 2007 - 2012, Lithuania's contribution in Afghanistan was quite significant. For example, in terms of the troops deployed as a share of the country's population, Lithuania takes the 9th position among all the Allies, ahead of such countries as Poland, France or Spain.

In addition, from 2005, Lithuania was in charge of one of NATO's ISAF Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) in Ghor province. Lithuania was the smallest of the NATO countries that took the lead for PRT. This decision was primarily political, considering it as Lithuania's contribution to its NATO obligations.

The PRT activities involved 17 Lithuanian military shifts each including around 150 soldiers. In total, as many as 2,500 Lithuanian soldiers served in the Lithuanian-led PRT. However, Ghor province remained one of the most peaceful areas during the entire period of the NATO mission. Keeping control over it did not require large military forces and the risk of losing troops was low. Only on 22 May 2008, a Lithuanian officer was killed in a shooting near the PRT camp in Chaghcharan.

In financial terms, provincial reconstruction and stabilization efforts in Ghor required relatively small funding. Between 2005 and 2013, the Ministry of National Defence allocated 307 million Litas (89 million Euros) to the activities of the PRT activities, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs allotted 17.9 million Litas

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(5.2 million Euros) for over 200 development cooperation projects in Afghanistan. However, this was not the only contribution to the Lithuanian-led PRT. For example, the US made financial contribution to the projects in Ghor province equivalent to 129.7 million Litas (37.4 million Euros), Japan - 122.2 million Litas (35.3 million Euros).[35]

Paradoxically, despite the drastic reduction in the defence budget and relatively low level of fulfilling its commitments, Lithuania (and other Baltic countries) managed to secure enhanced security guarantees from NATO in the Baltic region. Between 2008 and 2012, joint military exercises with NATO and the United States were regularly organized, regional NATO defence plans were developed, the Alliance's air policing mission in the Baltic states was extended, and an evident political commitment to defend the Baltic countries was expressed.[36] This is mostly related to the Georgia - Russia war in 2008, which strengthened the Alliance's role in the field of collective defence and increased the attention paid to the security of the Eastern European Allies. In other words, even in a very difficult economic situation Lithuania was able to improve its security thanks to its NATO membership and the responsiveness to the needs of the Baltic states from others NATO members.

This confirms the general provision of the economic theory of alliances, emphasizing that under favourable circumstances, small states are likely to use the interest of the hegemonic power in maintaining the effectiveness of the entire organization, thus avoiding taking on their own burden.

On the other hand, the political perception in Lithuania is gaining momentum that the need to enhance its "membership fee" to the Alliance cannot be completely ignored. This is especially evident in the light of the Ukraine crisis in 2013 - 2014. The signs of strengthening Russian aggression, the annexation of the Crimea, and the war in Eastern Ukraine have greatly contributed to public and political concern about the security situation in the region. Political speeches and media discourse repeatedly emphasized the importance of membership in NATO.[37] In public and political discourse, low Lithuanian defence funding was

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[35] T. Urbonas, J. Stanaitis, *Tarptautinės operacijos: nuo Bosnijos iki Afganistano*, "Lietuva ir NATO: 10 metų kartu" LR KAM: Vilnius 2014. p. 136.

[36] For example, since 2009 NATO exercises *"Baltic Host"* are hosted in the Baltic states. The aim of the exercises is to train various staffs and organizations of three Baltic countries in conducting Host Nation Support (HNS), receiving Allied troops and humanitarian support from other countries. See for more: *Lithuania will participate in international host country support exercise "Baltic Host 2010"*, The Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Lithuania, Vilnius 2010, [www.kam.lt, access: 30 October 2014].

[37] *Narystė NATO - istoriškai svarbus Lietuvos žingsnis*, President of the Republic of Lithuania, 29 March 2014, [www.president.lt, access: 21 July 2014].

seen as an inadequate contribution to NATO, stressing that Lithuania's security interests require a sound increase in defence spending.

In 2014, in her annual report to the Parliament, Lithuania's President Dalia Grybauskaitė pointed out that Lithuania's defence spending should reach the level of 2% of GDP. It was an appeal to the fact that the Allies are increasingly emphasizing the need to assume a fair burden-sharing. In March 2014, Lithuanian parliamentary parties reached an agreement on strategic guidance for Lithuania's foreign, security and defence policy for the period of 2014 - 2020, including the pledge to reach the recommended level of 2% of GDP for defence spending by 2020.[38]

Concrete measures taken by the NATO and the United States to enhance the security of the Baltic states also played a key role. In the beginning of 2014, the NATO air policing mission was expanded and several large scale military exercises were conducted in the Baltic region. The President of the United States Barack Obama has pledged $ 1 billion for the "European Reassurance Initiative", and NATO announced plans to upgrade the Baltic defence plans, to strengthen its preparedness to respond to a potential conflict and increase the Alliance's military presence in Eastern Europe.[39]

Lithuanian politicians saw this as adequate proof demonstrating the credibility of NATO and Article 5 guarantees. NATO's actions contributed to the arguments calling for increasing defence spending. However, it remains in question whether a large military presence of NATO Allies in the Baltic countries would be temporary in character, caused by the conflict in Ukraine. Despite strong support for such larger "militarization" by domestic politicians of the Baltic states, it is not clear if it will be sustained in future, even if the regional security environment remains tense. However, the Baltic representatives are underscoring that NATO remains the essential security assurance in the region, given the current threats, while the continued US presence in the region is a real and visible deterrence. Lithuanian officials are also stressing that Lithuania's long-term defence investments would contribute to the enhancement of NATO collective defence, which would be achieved only when one of the key decisions of the NATO Summit in Wales is implemented, i.e., a NATO-led element is established in Lithuania.[40]

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[38] *Accord between the political parties represented in the on strategic guidelines for the foreign, security and defence policy of the Republic of Lithuania for 2014 - 2020*, Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, 29 March 2014, [www.lrs.lt, access: 21 July 2014].

[39] *A Strong Transatlantic Bond for an Unpredictable World. Speech by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen at the Atlantic Council of the United States in Washington*, 8 July 2014, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, [www.nato.int, access: 21 July 2014].

[40] *U.S. forces deployed in Lithuania are a long-term investment into Alliance security, Defence Policy Director of the Ministry of National Defence says,* Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania, 30 October 2014, [www.kam.lt, access: 31 October 2014].

Conclusions

The results of the study confirm the provisions of the economic theory of alliances, highlighting that the contribution of the smaller countries does not have a significant impact on the overall effectiveness of NATO. For example, the results of the burden-sharing index demonstrate that Lithuania's defence spending for the 2007 - 2012 period constituted only 0.04% of the total defence expenditures of NATO, and its contribution in Afghanistan accounted for 0.11% of the total input. This seems to be a symbolic contribution, which has no significant influence on the overall effectiveness of the Alliance. Such a situation creates conditions for smaller countries to practice the behaviour of free-riding trying to pass on the responsibility to bigger Allies, which maintain the overall effectiveness and credibility of the collective system.

On the other hand, dependence on external assistance and limited national capacity motivate them to contribute to the Alliance's activities (in particular, crisis management operations), which helps to maintain the interest of the United States to address their security concerns. Lithuania's defence policy well illustrates the fact that small countries have to boost their "membership fee" when facing the risk of abandonment, or a need for more active involvement of the Alliance. In this regard, NATO operates on the basis of regular internal "quid pro quo" exchanges. Security is an excludable "club good", which has to be earned, it is difficult to expect additional protection from NATO without properly contributing to it.

The re-emergence of a traditional collective defence dimension in NATO's agenda due to the Russian aggression in Ukraine may have opposite effects. On the one hand, it provides an incentive for the countries located in the geopolitical risk zone to assume a fair burden and fulfil their commitments, thus expecting NATO to increase and maintain its military presence in Eastern Europe and the Baltic region. Lithuania, Latvia, Romania and other countries, which pledged to substantially increase their military spending, have already demonstrated this trend. On the other hand, the enhanced attention of the United States to European security and an active reassurance policy encourages smaller countries to free ride trying to take advantage of favourable political circumstances. In the absence of sufficient pressure from the Alliance, the sense of political guilt may eventually be again replaced by the logic of rational calculation.

Ieva Karpavičiūtė (Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania)

Evolution of the North-Atlantic Security Community and the Baltic States

The evolution of regional security structures reveals the continuous process of adaptation, accommodation and mitigation of internal and external challenges. Regional reaction to internally and externally driven changes, that cannot be easily controlled, depends on a certain type and maturity of the region. Scholars define the regional security community as the most stable and mature regional structure that can easily adapt to internally and externally driven challenges and changes.[1] A regional security community is not only a theoretical concept but also a type of the region with developed normative principles and a regional identity. Expectations of peaceful change is the major factor determining the evolution of a regional security community. As countries constituting the security community do not perceive each other as posing potential security threats, regional security cooperation and regional security agendas can be directed towards external security challenges.

Despite the fact that a security community is a purely theoretical concept, the evolution of NATO can be an empirical example, revealing a number of features of a security community, especially the normative elements, flexibility, adaptation to changes, and expectations for peaceful change. Therefore, a number of scholars define the transatlantic region as a security community.[2] "The existing accounts of the transatlantic security community have identified the importance of a renewed emphasis on common values as a factor in preserving and expanding the security community after the Cold War",[3] as well as adapting to the new security realities. This article aims to reveal how the transatlantic security community reacted to external changes after the end of Cold War, how the enlargement process illustrates this process of adaptation, and how the Baltic states have accommodated themselves and shaped their priorities within the transatlantic security community.

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[1] See for example: K. W. Deutsch, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area; International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience,* Princeton University Press: Princeton 1957; E. Adler, M. Barnett, *Security Communities*, Cambridge University Press: New York 1998; A. J. Bellamy, *Security Communities and their Neighbours. Regional Fortresses of Global Integrators?* Palgrave Macmillan 2004; M. C. Williams, I. B. Neumann, *From Alliance to Security Community: NATO, Russia, and the Power of Identity*, "Millennium - Journal of International Studies", Vol. 29, No. 2, 2000; M. Sheehan, *International Security. An Analytical Survey*, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2005, p. 24-42.

[2] For example, K. W. Deutsch, E. Adler, M. Barnett, M. C. Williams, I. Neumann, etc.

[3] V. M. Kitchen, *Argument and Identity Change in the Atlantic Security Community*, "Security Dialogue", Vol. 40, No. 1, p. 95.

A regional security community is conceived as a mature region that can adapt to internally and externally driven challenges, and ensure the continuity of regional cooperation. All those ideas are useful when explaining the changes of mature regional security entities and their adaptation to the major shifts in the international system. According to Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, "the institutionalisation of mutual identification, transnational values, intersubjective understandings, and shared identities[4]" allow for the re-emergence of a sense of regional community among sovereign states. E. Adler and M. Barnett construct an analytical framework in which mutual trust and collective identity within a group of states are the necessary conditions determining the expectations of peaceful change, as the benchmark of a security community.

E. Adler and M. Barnett distinguish factors facilitating the existence of security communities: "the new interpretation of social relations and external threats; factors conductive to mutual trust and the development of the collective identity, such as transactions, organizations and social learning".[5] "Peaceful change, in turn, means the resolution of social problems, normally by institutionalized procedures, without resort to large-scale physical force".[6] Ensuring "dependable expectations of peaceful change" in a security community requires stable collective norms and an identity that are able to transform the behaviour of states from a self-serving approach to one of trust-building.[7] This process can be illustrated by the evolution and renewal of NATO after the end of the Cold War. The Allies developed relations based on trust and predictability aiming to ensure the continuity of those relations. In addition, they have attempted to create a secure and more predictable environment beyond the Alliance's borders.

The transatlantic Alliance is a value-based regional security community with an institutional structure, common identity and political will reflected in the principle of collective defence. As a security community it has developed and successfully adapted itself to major external challenges. NATO forms the institutional core of the Atlantic community - a reflexive political community of states that have, over time, come to see not only their security but also their destiny as intertwined.[8]

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[4] E. Adler, M. Barnett, *Security Communities*, Cambridge University Press: New York 1998, p. 8.

[5] *Ibidem*, p. 8.

[6] V. Pouliot, *The Alive and Well Transatlantic Security Community: A Theoretical Reply to Michael Cox*, "European Journal of International Relations ", Vol. 12, No. 1, 2006, p. 121.

[7] S. Koschut, *Regional Order and Peaceful Change: Security Communities as a via Media in International Relations Theory*, "Cooperation and Conflict", 2014 (online publication), pp. 1-17.

[8] V. M. Kitchen, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

After the end of the Cold War, scholars of political science (mainly neo-realists) were quite pessimistic regarding the continuity of NATO's mission, as the major threat and source of instability had disappeared with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Right after the end of the Cold War, scholars discussed NATO's "identity crisis".[9] The rationale for the existence of the Alliance began to be questioned. Critics claimed that the Alliance had lost its raison d'être.[10] NATO had to justify its existence and adapt itself to the new international system. John Mearsheimer, with the metaphor of the popular movie "Back to the Future", argued that the European Union and NATO were the creations of a bipolar international system and after the Cold War they would lose their relevance and disintegrate,[11] as they will not provide any added value for the new international system.

In opposition to the neo-realist argumentation, social constructivists argued that the value system constructed and pursued by the Alliance would outlive changes within the international system as it ensures the continuity of regional security order and regional stability as such, and helps members adapt to new security realities. According to the "social-constructivist perspective, NATO did not fragment as neo-realists had predicted because the shared democratic norms and identities of the members meant that they did not perceive each other as threats with the end of the Cold War",[12] and they are keen for and open to peaceful change. NATO did not dissolve after the end of the Cold War, on the contrary, the Alliance demonstrated its readiness and ability to adapt its institutional structures, its mindset as well as its political agendas in reaction to the changing international security environment.

From the viewpoint of social constructivism, "NATO's continuation is seen as demonstrating the Alliance's enduring and institutionalised patterns of co-operation, the existence of common "regulative" and "constitutive" norms and values within the organisation, and the continuing impact of the shared democratic identities upon which the Alliance is based".[13] NATO proved itself to be

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[9] E. Lubkemeier, *NATO's Identity Crisis*, "The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists", October 1990, p. 30-33.

[10] *The future of NATO and European defence: Ninth report of session 2007-08,* The UK House of Commons, Defence Committee, Stationary Office Limited: London 2008.

[11] B. Buzan, L. Hansen, *The Evolution of International Studies*, Cambridge University Press 2009, p. 166. [ref. to] J. J. Mearsheimer, *Back to the Future*: Instability in Europe after the Cold War, "International Security", Vol. 15, No. 1, 1990, p. 5-56. "The Soviet Union is the only superpower that can seriously threaten to overrun Europe; it is the Soviet threat that provides the glue that holds NATO together. Take away that offensive threat and the United States is likely to abandon the Continent, whereupon the defensive alliance it has headed for forty years may disintegrate" (J. J. Mearsheimer, p. 52)

[12] M. C. Williams, I. B. Neumann, *From Alliance to Security Community: NATO, Russia, and the Power of Identity*, "Millennium - Journal of International Studies", Vol. 29, No. 2, 2000, p. 358.

[13] *Ibidem,* p. 358.

"a mature security community that thus not solely should be marked, or identified, on the basis of dependable expectations of peaceful change with regard to the use of force, but also a pattern of cooperative endeavours that aim to mitigate the worst effects from the plethora of threats that are classified as non-traditional".[14]

The major process which revealed NATO to be a mature security community and demonstrated its ability for peaceful change was the Alliance's enlargement process. The NATO enlargement policy "may have originally been aimed at strengthening the Alliance's membership with former adversaries, promoting democracy and human rights in Central and Eastern European countries and ensuring its own post-Cold War institutional survival".[15] A study on enlargement, carried out by NATO in 1995, reflects NATO's adaptation to changes in the international system, as well as the aim to strengthen regional security and predictability. This study concluded that "Enlargement would contribute to enhanced stability and security for all countries in the Euro-Atlantic area by encouraging and supporting democratic reforms, including the establishment of civilian and democratic control over military forces; fostering patterns and habits of cooperation, consultation and consensus-building characteristic of relations among members of the Alliance; and promoting good-neighbourly relations. <...> Enlargement would increase transparency in defense planning and military budgets, thereby reinforcing confidence among states, and would reinforce the overall tendency toward closer integration and cooperation in Europe".[16]

In response to externally or internally driven changes, members of the region adapt to the new reality, re-evaluate existing values and norms, and reassess/rethink the region itself. "While discussing NATO enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe, *inter alia* the Baltics, the Western allies have also been discussing themselves",[17] the limits of the enlargement and refined/re-defined political and military agendas of the Alliance in the context of the changing mission, identity and interests. Veronica Kitchen notices that "as the members of the Atlantic community negotiated the boundaries of their action together, they likewise found that their grand designs floundered in the face of not just events on the ground,

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[14] A. Collins, *Bringing Communities Back: Security Communities and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Plural Turn*, "Cooperation and Conflict", Vol. 49, No. 2 (2014), p. 284.
[15] E. Adler, *The Spread of Security Communities: Communities of Practice, Self-Restraint, and NATO's Post-Cold War Transformation*, "European Journal of International Relations", Vol. 14, No. 2 (2008), p. 212-213.
[16] *Study on NATO Enlargement*, 1995, [www.fas.org, access: 31 October 2014].
[17] M. Mälksoo, *Enabling NATO Enlargement: Changing Constructions of the Baltic States*, "Trames", Vol. 5, No. 5 (2004), p. 288.

but also disputes among themselves",[18] it was a process of reassessment of NATO values, principles, priorities, mission as well as identity.

E. Adler underscores that the NATO enlargement policy was the Alliance's "partial adoption of cooperative-security knowledge and practices, and a sense of community and joint enterprise - sustained by a repertoire of ideational and material communal resources - which enabled NATO to transform itself and its mission".[19] The "open door" and partnership policies, developed right after the end of Cold War, signify the expansion of the security area in Europe. "Enlargement, is in this view a natural and innately progressive outgrowth of NATO's essential identity as a "democratic security community".[20]

As NATO's enlargement proceeded, the Allies needed to signal to Russia that the alliance was not hostile[21] to her. Indeed, the Allies had gone through some existential discussions (in the 1990s), focusing on whether the Alliance should maintain the principle of collective territorial defence at the core of its mission,[22] or whether it should develop into a cooperative security organization. That signified a major identity shift process, the re-definition of NATO's mission, as well as the promotion and expansion of security in Europe. NATO attempted to transform itself from a defence/collective security Alliance, based on a power balance and deterrence to a cooperative security organization, but it finally maintained those two principles in balance. "Without losing its initial identity: of collective defence organization interested in promoting stability, democracy and cooperation, NATO started to strengthen the identity of a global actor and started to assume new responsibilities: to contribute to the end of division of Europe and to ensure that both East and West were stable and secure".[23]

With the example of the Baltic states - this article aims to reflect on the evolution of NATO and its impact on the Baltic states security as well as its role in the context of NATO's evolution from a collective defence toward a collective security Alliance.

The Baltic states' security and NATO membership

In 2014 the Baltic states not only celebrated the 10th anniversary of their membership to NATO, they also commemorated the 25th anniversary of the Baltic

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[18] V. Kitchen, *op. cit.,* p. 105.
[19] E. Adler, *op. cit.*, 2008, p. 213.
[20] M C. Williams, I. B. Neumann, *op. cit.,* p. 359.
[21] V. Kitchen, *op. cit.,* p. 105.
[22] T. G. Carpenter, *NATO Enters the 21st Century*, " Journal of Strategic Studies", 2000.
[23] A. Mogos, *NATO - "World's Working Model of Cooperative Security"*, Centre for European Policy Evaluation, 17 July 2014, [www.cepeoffice.com, access: 11 November 2014].

Way,[24] the day when people from Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, in a so-called human chain, demonstrated their unity and desire for freedom. The Baltic Way became a symbol of the unity of the Baltic countries and signified their peaceful strive for independence and sovereignty. As the Estonian President underscored, "the six hundred and seventy kilometres long Baltic Way - [..] not only united Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in their longing for freedom, but it also showed our disdain for the secret pacts of the totalitarian regimes that had divided Europe".[25] It seemed that former adversaries had come together to face challenges, encouraging stronger unity of the Baltic states and providing confirmation that NATO membership was the right and timely decision made by the Baltic countries, "to make sure that we never be alone again".[26]

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Baltic states regained their independence, developed democratic political regimes and strong civil societies. While integrating into the transatlantic security community, the Baltic states highlighted the importance of the continuity of democratic, liberal values and principles, underscored the normative side of the transatlantic security community and spread values to the wider region. The spread of democratic norms and values within the region by the Baltic states was perceived as the means to guarantee regional security and stability. For example, while attempting to promote the cooperation of Central and European countries that integrated into NATO, Lithuania initiated the Vilnius 10 group.[27] The ministers of foreign affairs of nine Central and Eastern European countries met in Vilnius in May 2000, where they stressed that their "desire to integrate into the institutions of the Euro-Atlantic community emanates from readiness to assume [their] fair share of responsibility for the common defense and to add voice to the debate on [their] common future".[28] Two years later in 2002, during the NATO Prague Summit, heads of states and governments invited seven countries of the Vilnius group[29] to join NATO. In this context, the visit of the US President George W. Bush to Vilnius in 2002 was of symbolic importance, and the president's statement at Vilnius Town Hall assuring that Lithuania was a part of transatlantic area, and affirming that "anyone who will

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[24] The Baltic Way was organized on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Ribbentrop - Molotov Pact that symbolizes the loss of Baltic states' sovereignty and their occupation.
[25] T. H. Ilves, *We will never again accept dividing Europe into spheres of influence,* Office of the President of Estonia, 23 August 2014, [www.president.ee, access: 11 September 2014].
[26] *Ibidem.*
[27] Initial group that has met in May 2000, was of nine countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia), Croatia joined this group later.
[28] *Vilnius Group Statement, 18 - 19 May 2000*, Federation of American Scientists, 19 May 2000, [www.fas.org, access: 8 September 2014].
[29] Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia.

choose Lithuania as an enemy would also become the enemy of the US"[30] was a substantial element and sign of external support, assurances and security guarantees for Lithuania as well as for all the Baltic states.

At the beginning of the NATO enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic states, as former Soviet Union republics, were perceived as a red-line, a territory that could lead to tensions between NATO and Russia. Later, "the initial underdogs among the other Central and Eastern European applicants for NATO membership was paradoxically becoming the ultimate litmus test for the Alliance's post-Cold War enlargement project".[31] "NATO's failure to include the Baltic states in the Prague Summit of 2002 would have severely reduced its credibility, damaged the transatlantic relationship and harmed the US prestige around the world."[32] This part of the article aims to elaborate on the Baltic states' role within the Alliance and their impact by balancing NATO's collective defence and cooperative security core tasks.

Cooperative security is crucial for the development of trust and predictability; it can ensure the long-term security in the region. Ideally, with the development of cooperative security, based on strong and predictable partnerships, collective defence could become less important for the Alliance's security. As E. Adler notices, "NATO's potential new members acted instrumentally - initially pursuing NATO membership because of a concern of a future Russian threat - it was their adherence to a security - community institution that relied on cooperative - security practices, rather than to a defensive alliance, that changed their identity and, by extension, European security after the Cold War".[33] For the Baltic states, both the principles of cooperative security, as well as collective defence, were important during the integration process, and naturally the areas that the Baltic countries paid primary and major attention to was collective security and defence.

The normative principles and elements of regional identity played an important role during the Baltic states' integration period and still remain in the rhetoric of the officials of the Baltic states. For example, the speech at the commemorative event designated to the 10th anniversary of Lithuanian membership to NATO, Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė emphasized "We joined the transatlantic community of nations which understands very well that true strength lies in demo-

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[30] *G. W. Bush speech in Vilnius Town Hall Square*, "The New York Times", 22 November 2002, [www.nytimes.com, access: 14 October 2014].
[31] M. Mälksoo, *op. cit.*, p. 293.
[32] *Ibidem*, p. 294.
[33] E. Adler, *The Spread of Security Communities: Communities of Practice, Self-Restraint, and NATO's Post-Cold War Transformation*, "European Journal of International Relations", Vol. 14, No. 2, 2008, p. 197-198.

cratic values, unity, peace and freedom, not the demonstration of military might".[34] The set of values is perceived by the Baltic states as one of the main attributes of transatlantic security community, it strengthens ties among the Allies and ensures the peaceful expectation for changes within the Alliance. Cooperative security was conceived by the Baltic states as the means to build a sound security environment (based on common rules, norms and values), while collective defence was perceived as the major security guarantee to be achieved by membership.

The Baltic states after joining NATO continued to support the expansion of a liberal value-based region, and at the same time they "needed assurance [from NATO] that the defensive nature of the Alliance would continue to prevail in the near future",[35] in this way the Baltic states kept balancing the two major principles of the Alliance.[36] Their initial aim was to avoid and mitigate possible threats coming from Russia. They attempted to preserve their statehood and ensure that the history of Russian occupation would not be repeated. The Baltic states expected that NATO - Russia cooperation would lead to a more secure and predictable environment. The Baltic states were concerned by the Russian idea (developed in the 1990s) of joint Russian and NATO security guarantees for the Baltic states. At the same time, the Baltic countries "hoped that Russia would not be given any role in NATO's decision making process that might affect Baltic security".[37]

As the Baltic states promote the expansion of the security and stability area in Europe based on values of liberal democracy, on the top of their list of priorities are partnership activities (Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova) and strong advocacy for the future enlargement to Eastern Europe, support for Georgia and Ukraine on their way towards NATO membership. Moreover, with their support for partnership activities and the "open door" policy, the Baltic states attempt to preserve and strengthen the collective defence principle/core task defined by Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. They support a sound NATO defence and deterrence policy, and strong transatlantic link.

During their 10 years of membership, the Baltic states have developed their priority areas (areas of specialization) within the Alliance. Estonia specializes in cyber security issues; it has developed expertise and institutional capabilities in this field. The series of cyber-attacks in 2007 directed towards Estonian governmental

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[34] *Speech at the ceremony of raising Lithuanian and NATO Flags to mark the 10th anniversary of Lithuania's membership in NATO*, President of the Republic of Lithuania, 29 March 2014, [www.president.lt, access: 7 September 2014].

[35] L. Ponsard, *Russia, NATO and Cooperative Security. Bridging the Gap*, Routledge 2007, p. 96.

[36] The principles (core tasks) of collective defence, cooperative security and crisis management in 2010 NATO New Strategic Concept were defined as Alliance's core tasks.

[37] L. Ponsard, *op. cit.*, p. 96. See F. Labarre, *NATO - Russia Relations and NATO Enlargement in the Baltic Region*, "Baltic Defence Review", No. 7/2002, p. 48 and 65.

institutions encouraged the development of a more systemic approach to address cyber security threats. As a result, the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence was established in Tallinn in 2008. Estonia seeks for cyber security issues to be properly addressed in NATO's political agenda. The Lithuanian area of priority is energy security; they seek for energy security issues to be reflected in NATO policies, encourage awareness raising within NATO, and promote and develop the activities of the NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence in Vilnius. Recently, Latvian authorities started developing and institutionalizing the idea of a strategic communication centre, as well as encouraging the Allies to address the issues related to strategic communication. The NATO Wales Summit Declaration underscored "the establishment of the NATO-accredited Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence in Latvia as a meaningful contribution to NATO's efforts in this area".[38]

The transatlantic link for the Baltic states is one of the most important attributes of the NATO identity, and feel it has to be preserved and strengthened. Mälksoo and Šešelgytė mention the importance of "the strong transatlantic commitment and the close engagement of the United States in the European security configuration", which "has remained a central element in the security strategies of the Baltic states (National Security Concept of Estonia, 2010; National Security Concept of Latvia, 2012; National Security Strategy of Lithuania, 2012)".[39] The Baltic states are concerned about the US intensions to gradually shift its strategic priorities (refocusing from Europe to Asia - Pacific region) or even to withdraw its military forces from Europe. The Baltic states are concerned about "the US redeployment of its military assets to the Asia - Pacific region on the account of decreasing its presence in Europe, and secondly, drastic reductions of defense expenditures in some core European states".[40] The US political decisions are also related to the burden-sharing issue, as European countries are gradually decreasing their military expenditures and investments. As a reaction to external challenges, NATO European Allies in 2014 demonstrated their intention to revisit their defence spending and investment. In the Wales Summit Declaration, heads of state and governments underscored: "NATO recognizes the importance of a stronger and more capable European defense, which will lead to a stronger NATO, help

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[38] *Wales Summit Declaration. Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales,* North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 5 September 2014, [www.nato.int, access: 13 November 2014].
[39] M. Mälksoo, M. Šešelgytė, *Reinventing 'New' Europe: Baltic Perspectives on Transatlantic Security Reconfigurations,* "Communist and Post-Communist Studies", Vol. 46, No. 3 (2013), p. 399.
[40] *Ibidem.*

enhance the security of all Allies and foster an equitable sharing of the burden, benefits and responsibilities of Alliance membership".[41]

NATO - Russian relations as well as bilateral relations of every Baltic state with Russia are of fundamental importance in the context of their NATO membership. The Baltic countries are sometimes perceived as "single issue states".[42] "Even though the Baltic states are in many ways distancing themselves from Russia, they are not succeeding completely in security terms".[43] Maria Mälksoo argues that it is "partly due to the fact that Russia has not let herself be disturbed by the Baltic states' full-fledged membership of the key Euro-Atlantic organizations, and continuously attempts to discredit the Baltic states in the eyes of their Western partners and allies".[44] From the Baltic perspective, "these troublesome trends have been further aggravated by Russia's strategic re-assertiveness, as exemplified by the Russia - Georgia war in 2008, Russian *"Ladoga"* 2009 and Russia - Belarus *"Zapad"* 2009 large-scale military exercises, which rehearsed countering a NATO-led attack on Belarus in the Baltic space".[45] *"Zapad"* 2009 was the biggest large-scale military exercise in Eastern Europe since the end of Cold War, and was followed by the similar exercise - *"Zapad"* 2013. "Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaite (2012) pointed at the latest military developments in Russia's Kaliningrad oblast as an example of a negative development in the regional security setting at the 2012 NATO Summit. This has led to the active campaigning for the bolstering of the traditional role of NATO, including asking for the Alliance's contingency planning for the Baltic states, as well as NATO's reassurance of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania via increased visibility in the region through military exercises and infrastructure".[46]

The Baltic states are concerned about the intensification of Russian military activities, large-scale military exercises that take place in close vicinity to their borders, military build-ups, as well as aggressive actions in Georgia and Ukraine, including the annexation of the Crimea. The Russian Military Doctrine (2010) defines NATO's "aim to move the military infrastructure of NATO member countries closer to the borders of the Russian Federation, including by expanding

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[41] *Wales Summit Declaration* …

[42] See M. Šešelgytė, *Security Culture of Lithuania*, "Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*"*, No. 24/2010; and M. Mälksoo*, From Existential Politics Towards Normal Politics? The Baltic States in the Enlarged Europe*, "Security Dialogue", Vol. 37, No. 3, 2006.

[43] O. Kværnø, M. Rasmussen, *EU Enlargement and the Baltic Region: A Greater Security Community?*, [in:] A. Kasekamp (ed.), *Estonian Foreign Policy Yearbook 2005*, Estonian Foreign Policy Institute: Tallinn 2005, p. 91.

[44] M. Mälksoo*, From …*, p. 279.

[45] M. Mälksoo, M. Šešelgytė, *op. cit.,* p. 399.

[46] *Ibidem,* p. 400.

the bloc"[47] as one of the main external military dangers to Russia. This principle remains in the Russian security concept and perception as well as in the rhetoric of Russian officials. For example, in April 2014 Russian President Vladimir Putin underscored that "Russia had been forced to respond to NATO enlargement and that its annexation of Crimea, home to its Black Sea Fleet, was partly influenced by the Western military alliance's expansion into Eastern Europe".[48] Russian officials repeatedly mention their intensions to update the military doctrine, in which NATO would most probably be defined as posing a threat to Russian security. The Baltic countries are concerned about Russia's public statements on NATO enlargement and on the deployment of US forces and nuclear weapons in Russia's immediate neighbourhood, as well as Russian military intensified activities and the military modernization process. Obviously, Russia seeks to undermine NATO's role in the European security architecture, which is of major concern for the Baltic states.

Russian aggression in Ukraine served as "a wake-up call after a peaceful snooze". The recent events in Ukraine revealed how fragile European security can be and how crucial for the Baltic states are NATO collective security guarantees.[49] At the same time, with a new perspective on the regional security environment, NATO has to revisit its own defence commitments. The reassurances from the Alliance are vitally important for Central and Eastern European countries, as well as being crucial for the credibility of the Alliance.[50] A significant gesture of reassurance for the Baltic states came in the form of the US President's visit to Tallinn on 3 September 2014 (right before the NATO Summit in Wales) where he met with the presidents of three Baltic Allies.

The Baltic states also received a wake-up call encouraging greater political commitments and some real steps to improving their defence spending, investment, and to review defence systems. In the opening remarks at the NATO Military Committee's Conference held on 19 - 21 September 2014 in Vilnius, Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė underscored the shift in the security environment and the need for NATO military planners to look into the implementation of the Readiness Action Plan, as a form of deterrence: "Sadly [sic] the [cost of

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[47] *The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation Approved by Russian Federation Presidential Edict on 5 February 2010*, The School of Russian and Asian Studies, 20 February 2010, [www.sras.org, access: 5 September 2014].

[48] *Putin says annexation of Crimea partly a response to NATO enlargement*, "Reuters", 17 April 2014, [www.reuters.com, access: 9 September 2014].

[49] *We Trust NATO but Lithuanians are Alarmed and Need Guarantees, Linkevičius Tells CNN*, "Delfi by The Lithuania Tribune", 17 October 2014, [www.en.delfi.lt, access: 24 October 2014] .

[50] See for example: E. Lucas, *Russia is winning*, "The Lithuania Tribune", 4 September 2014, [www.en.delfi.lt, access: 11 September 2014].

opening our eyes] was far too high – [the] occupation of a sovereign [country's] territory, repeated violations of international law and – most important[ly] - many innocent lives. For some of us, it was a big surprise that a country, which we treated as a partner, [would act] beyond agreements, treaties and common values. We cannot allow ourselves to be surprised again – because [the] costs will be higher than ever".[51]

The recent events signify the shift of attention from cooperative security to collective defence in the NATO political agenda. The focus on collective defence dominates the rhetoric of the Baltic states' leaders. All three Baltic states put more emphasis on "hard" security issues such as the collective defence principle as a priority for their security, visible assurance, the importance of the Baltic Air Policing Mission, military exercises, and contingency plans. For example, Estonian President Toomas Ilves, mentioned "Early in my presidency, I urged our Alliance to update our contingency planning for the defense of this region, and additional NATO forces began rotating through the Baltics, including Estonia, for more training and exercises".[52] For the time being, the collective defence priorities and concerns tend to overshadow the cooperative security and crisis management in the Baltic NATO agendas.

Conclusion

The Alliance as a mature security community has smoothly adapted itself to the post-Cold War international security environment. This process ended in material (in terms of territory, enlargement), functional (out-of area operations, partnership politics, etc.) as well as non-material (value system, regional identity, etc.) changes. NATO went through a major identity shift that led to the reformulation/upgrading of its mission and the expansion of the Euro-Atlantic security area. With the enlargement process, NATO demonstrated its readiness and ability to adapt its institutional structures, its mindset as well as its political agenda.

During their first decade of membership, the Baltic states were looking for their place and mission within the transatlantic security community. They have actively participated in NATO-led operations, promoted democratic, liberal values especially in post-soviet countries that aspired to NATO membership, and actively supported NATO partnership politics. The Baltic states attempted to balance their "soft" and "hard" security policy priorities, aimed to maintain and develop their

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[51] *Opening remarks by President Dalia Grybauskaitė at the NATO Military Committee Conference*, President of the Republic of Lithuania, 20 September 2014, [www.president.lt, access: 21 September 2014].
[52] *Remarks by President Obama and President Ilves of Estonia in Joint Press Conference*, The White House, 3 September 2014, [www.whitehouse.gov, access: 14 October 2014].

priority areas - cyber defence, energy security, strategic communication, at the same time emphasizing the importance of collective defence, the transatlantic link, security assurances via the Baltic Air Policing mission, military exercises, and contingency plans.[53]

Both collective defence, as well as cooperative security, were important during the first decade of the Baltic states' membership: cooperative security served as a means to ensure a more predictable and stable security environment, and collective defence was perceived as providing security guarantees, preventing and deterring major external threats. The recent events in Ukraine revealed the significance of the collective defence of the Alliance. It has been observed that "for NATO, the Baltic states present a difficult balancing act involving the credible maintenance of security assurances granted under the North Atlantic Treaty's Article 5 on the one hand, while attempting to facilitate de-escalation of tension with Russia over the Ukraine crisis on the other".[54] Events in Ukraine, served as a wake-up call for the Baltic states to rethink their military security, to invest more on their national defence systems, and to consider more seriously their defence spending, on the other hand, it has also tested the Alliance's responsibilities of reassurance.

[53] For example: *Prezidentė: kolektyvinė gynyba - saugumo garantas šalies žmonėms*, "Delfi by The Lithuania Tribune", 11 June 2012, [www.delfi.lt, access: 24 August 2014].
[54] E. M. McNamara, *Baltic States and NATO Reassurance amid Doubt*, Latvian Institute of International Affairs, 2014, [www.liia.lv, access: 11 September 2014].

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The Future of NATO in the New Security Environment.
A Former Newcomer's View

Only one year after the last wave of NATO enlargement, the Alliance has adopted a new Strategic Concept 2010 which comprehensively defines the path for NATO's evolution in the future. Under the influence of new threats and challenges the environment is constantly changing and for that reason it was more than necessary to develop appropriate mechanisms that would ensure the security of NATO and its member countries. Taking into account the diversity of possible threats, the Alliance has defined collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security as three main tasks relevant for its effective functioning in the period to come.

However, it seems obvious for an alliance that is operating in a very complex strategic environment and that consists of a number of countries with different national interests that being entirely successful in that regard will be easier said than done. This is precisely why this article will attempt to examine the ways in which NATO should develop its policies, trying to respond to detected challenges, how and where to best select the appropriate partners for that endeavour and in which ways "former newcomers" can contribute to that in the most efficient manner. Furthermore, it will try to assess whether and in which way further enlargement would improve or deteriorate the current strategic position and capabilities of the Alliance in the contemporary security environment.

Introduction

Even during ancient Greek times, there was an awareness of the fact that change is the only constant in the world. *Panta rei* - everything flows - is a well-known saying, often accredited to Heraclitus, with exactly the same meaning. This has also become an unwritten rule in the arena of international affairs, to which all relevant subjects have to adjust, alliances included. Therefore, the changing international environment has been constantly "pushing" NATO to adapt and reform itself and its strategic concepts in particular. This was also the case in 2010, slightly more than 10 years after the adoption of the 1999 document that was issued in the period of military intervention related to the Kosovo conflict and NATO's post-conflict engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Meanwhile, there have been numerous issues that have occurred and changed the strategic landscape. Ranging from the terrorist attacks in 2001 that changed the

international arena dramatically, the military engagement in Iraq and Afghanistan in particular, the increase in the leverage of assertive Russia and China, two waves of NATO enlargement, economic crises that have affected the national level of investments in the defence in the Alliance, especially in Europe, conventional threats in the Alliance's close surroundings (Ukraine, North Africa, Middle East and Caucasus), rising unconventional threats, and many others, new developments have created a changed environment in which the Alliance had to find "its place" and confirm its relevance for the stability of the Euro-Atlantic area and beyond.

The afore-mentioned issues have made decision making and policy management much more complicated than in previous periods and hence a necessity for an adapted strategic umbrella document has become more than evident. By defining collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security as three main tasks in the 2010 Strategic Concept, adopted at the Lisbon Summit, the Alliance clearly demonstrated what its focus in the period to come will be. However, while reaching a consensus in the drafting of the Alliance's strategic documents is not always easy, implementing it properly on the ground is even more difficult. This is exactly why this article will try to detect the way in which the new 2010 Strategic Concept will determine the creation of appropriate NATO policies in a contemporary environment. It will also attempt to detect potential partners for the Alliance in its endeavour to respond to today's threats and challenges as well as possible contributions of recent and potential future newcomers to the club.

New challenges for NATO in contemporary security environment

The approximately 10 years since the adoption of the 1999 Strategic Concept have brought various changes in the international arena, stimulating NATO to attempt to adapt and improve its readiness to respond to contemporary threats and challenges. While the Alliance's status as the most successful political - military club in the world obviously remains intact and unquestioned, which is constantly confirmed by the undiminished interest for accession to it from countries at its Eastern and South - Eastern flanks, the success from the past should obviously not represent an excuse for passiveness in the present and a lack of vision for the future. While the relatively high standard of the democratic principles of the Alliance remain relevant for aspirant members and are being spread to them through "the channels of consolidation" within the process of accession, it is obvious that not all subjects of international relations necessarily follow the same path of a "dependable expectation of peaceful change".[1]

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[1] This represents a main characteristic of the well-known and increasingly relevant concept of security communities where communities themselves share cognitive evolution and are informally

There have been many turbulences, challenges and threats, both of a conventional and in particular of an unconventional nature. First of all, the terrorist attacks on the United States (2001), as a tragic display of the connection between modern technologies and terror, dramatically changed the focus of the Alliance's members foreign and security policies, which led to the substantial engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq, with the former growing into a big NATO military mission (ISAF), with a wide spectrum of participation of non-member partners as well.[2] Other global players, such as Russia and China, have had a substantial growth - both in macroeconomic and geostrategic terms - that has changed the outlook of the international arena.

While global macroeconomics seem to be shifting the geostrategic centre of gravity from the Euro-Atlantic to the Pacific, recent developments in Ukraine with assertive Russian actions show that European security is a project that is far from over and given the specific relations of different member states with Russia - mainly related to energy supply and trade relations - it seems obvious that building a common policy in this specific field would be a challenge for the Alliance. The developments in North Africa and Middle East - in particular the growing threat of ISIS - have the potential to directly influence the security of European member states, not to speak about possible negative consequences of uncontrolled immigration from the territories it is conquering, energy supply routes cut-offs and consequential distortions of the global energy market.

Apart from the above-mentioned, both global nuclear non-proliferation and conventional arms control regimes are under increased pressure. There are also increasing concerns about information and environmental security, as well as energy supply risks and single-source dependence with particular importance in Europe.

One has to bear in mind that all of this is happening in an era of economic recession - again especially in Europe - which leads governments to prioritize social spending over defence expenditures, which has a negative impact on their military capabilities. Apart from that, let us not forget that NATO significantly enlarged in the last period to a club of 28 members - with Albania and Croatia being

as well as contextually bound by a shared persuasion and ultimately their rational calculation. Security communities spread by co-evolution of background knowledge and subjectivities of self-restraint are characterized by cooperative security practices. For details on the theoretical concepts of security communities, please see the following sources: K. Deutsch: *Political community and the North Atlantic area: international organization in the light of historical experience*, Princeton University 1957; E. Adler, M. Barnett (eds.), *Security Communities*, Cambridge University Press 1998.

[2] Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Finland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Ireland, Jordan, New Zealand, Sweden, Singapore, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates and Bosnia and Herzegovina. For more details see the official web-site of the North Atlantic Treaty Organizations, www.nato.int/ISAF/ structure/nations/index.html [access: 5 September 2014].

the last to join in 2009 - which obviously complicated the decision making process in the Alliance.

Therefore, one may conclude that it is obviously not an easy environment for the Alliance to redefine itself, introducing necessary changes and at the same time ensuring consistence and continuing abidance to major principles of its founding treaty.

New Strategic Concept - the enhancement of adaptability and challenges of implementation

Any Strategic Concept of the Alliance that has been drafted has a twofold task - to reiterate the commitment to the founding treaty, stressing its essential values and the rights and duties of its member states, and to redefine and reformulate its role and tasks in the contemporary security environment. This is precisely why Trine Flockhart is correct when arguing that "the New Strategic Concept agreed in Lisbon can therefore be seen as simply an updating of NATO's strategic document to create a better fit with the current international environment and follow closely in footsteps of previous strategic concepts".[3] However, since it has been drafted in a significantly different environment than the previous documents, one can conclude that it differs from them in several important segments.

Logically, the new strategic document is characterized by both continuity and adaptations. The core topics that have basically defined the Alliance from its very beginning are visible in the document - the collective defence clause (Article 5 of the Washington Treaty), the deterrence policy that is based both on conventional and nuclear forces, as well as the orientation towards crisis management that has been announced in the previous strategic document from 1999. On the other hand, it is difficult not to notice significant differences in NATO's future orientation as a more globally engaged alliance and therefore less limited by its regional (transatlantic) orientation and considerations of military capabilities for collective defence. In addition to that, the need for a cooperative dimension of security is much more emphasized than before and political consultations with different international partners all around the globe have become one of its priorities.

In its essence, the Alliance's core tasks can be summed up into three groups of activities that NATO is expected to perform in the period to come:

- "**Collective defence.** NATO members will always assist each other against attack, in accordance with Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. That commitment remains firm and binding. NATO will deter and defend against any threat

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[3] T. Flockhart, *After the Strategic Concept - Towards a NATO version 3.0*, Danish Institute for International Studies, 2011:06, [www.en.diis.dk, access: 12 September 2014].

of aggression, and against emerging security challenges where they threaten the fundamental security of individual Allies or the Alliance as a whole.

- **Crisis management.** NATO has a unique and robust set of political and military capabilities to address the full spectrum of crises - before, during and after conflicts. NATO will actively employ an appropriate mix of those political and military tools to help manage developing crises that have the potential to affect Alliance security, before they escalate into conflicts; to stop ongoing conflicts where they affect Alliance security; and to help consolidate stability in post-conflict situations where that contributes to Euroatlantic security.
- **Cooperative security.** The Alliance is affected by, and can affect, political and security developments beyond its borders. The Alliance will engage actively to enhance international security, through partnership with relevant countries and other international organisations; by contributing actively to arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament; and by keeping the door to membership in the Alliance open to all European democracies that meet NATO's standards".[4]

By outlining these three major tasks, unlike in previous strategic concepts, NATO actually equalized the significance of crisis management and cooperative security with collective defence (Article 5), which represents a concrete step forward in making the Alliance "a global player" which is expected to be able to adequately respond to security threats beyond the transatlantic area. While reiterating the importance of collective defence, NATO is "de-territorializing" not only Article 5, but also the other two core tasks (crisis management and cooperative security), departing significantly from the vocabulary of the previous two documents, which operated with the terms "the territory", "armed attack" and others.

As was correctly recognized by Jens Ringmose and Sten Rynning, the section outlining the Alliance's approach to collective defence stresses that NATO must not only "deter and defend against any threat of aggression" - as noted in the 1991 and 1999 Concepts - but also provide collective defence against "emerging security challenges where they threaten the fundamental security of individual allies or the Alliance as a whole". Collective defence thus applies to the whole gamut of security challenges that are laid out in an assessment of the security environment.[5] While it would be difficult to argue that some contemporary threats have not been acknowledged before, this is the first time that the Alliance has recognized them in

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[4] *NATO Strategic Concept - Active Engagement, Modern Defence*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 3 February 2012, [www.nato.int, access: 9 September 2014].
[5] J. Ringmose, S. Rynning, *Taking Stock of NATO's New Strategic Concept*, Danish Institute for International Studies, February 2011, [www.diis.dk, access: 12 September 2014].

its Strategic Concept, defining fighting a wide range of them - and not only those related to the territory of its member states - as a policy in the period to come.

In accordance with its title - *Active Engagement, Modern Defence* - significant attention has been given to the capability of the Alliance to manage a variety of different crises all over the globe and its active engagement with a number of partners - both international organizations and states - with the aim of enhancing operational coherence and functionality. While the document emboldens the partnership with the United Nations, European Union and Russia, somewhat less enthusiastic wording was used to declare further support for enlargement. That may be understood in different ways: as a sign of a change in the focus of the Alliance to subjects other than enlargement, as evidence of the unsatisfactory level of the processes of reforms in the current aspiring countries or even as a manifestation of the desire to comfort potential global partners with opposing interests (Russia, in the case of enlargement to Georgia and Ukraine).

There is another novelty that should not be overseen and underestimated. Namely, the fact that the Alliance's strategic document mentions the financial aspect of its existence and functioning, and commits "NATO to continuous reform towards a more effective, efficient and flexible Alliance, so that our tax payers get the most security for the money they invest in defence".[6] That reveals the fact that the economic crisis, especially in Europe, has left its imprint on the document, which means that it will be relevant also in the policy planning process. Given the fact that active engagement and the possible contribution of former "newcomers", as well as the likeliness and potential effect of further enlargement are the focus of this paper, the vague wording of the enlargement and financial constraints are surely not good news. However, obviously, there are still countries that are aspiring for membership and therefore it would be useful to try to estimate their realistic chances for membership in the foreseeable future and the impact this may have on NATO's position in the contemporary security environment.

Potential contribution of "newcomers" and partners worldwide

Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has been redefining its purpose in order to adjust to the new security environment, and to be able to respond to contemporary threats and challenges. By moving from solely collective territorial defence towards preventive diplomacy, cooperative security and the successful management of conflicts, i.e., obtaining a role as a security provider which has a "unique

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[6] *NATO Strategic Concept - Active Engagement, Modern Defence*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 3 February 2012, [www.nato.int, access: 9 September 2014].

and robust set of political and military capabilities to address the full spectrum of crises",[7] the Alliance has made profound changes in its policy.

However, assuring the security of its members and their territory would not be possible without the proper engagement of member states and cooperation with its partners. As was emphasized in the Strategic Concept from 2010, NATO is and can be affected by events beyond its borders and for that reason it is important to develop the proper level of cooperation with its relevant partners. By comparing strategies from 1999 and 2010, one may notice that when it comes to partnerships, changes were also made. Partnership, which used to be a tool for "increasing transparency, mutual confidence and the capacity for joint action",[8] became something that should enhance international security. However, achieving this is not an easy task and for that reason it is understandable why cooperative security is defined as one of main core tasks of the Alliance. Spreading the area of influence is definitely something that can contribute to this matter, but on the other hand it also brings new challenges for the Alliance.

Even though the post-communist members have been part of NATO for more than a decade, they are still trying to adequately position themselves within the Alliance. The best example of this is the eastern flank of the Alliance which includes Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. The Russian - Ukrainian conflict of 2014 and the suspension of NATO - Russia cooperation mechanisms have put them in the direct vicinity of events that represent a serious challenge to their national security as well, and for that reason these countries are seeking more support from NATO. The fact that they are less-influential members,[9] makes the fulfilment of their demands more difficult. On the other hand, some "newcomers", especially Poland, have shown that their contributions should not be underestimated. Taking into account its allocation of close to 2% of GDP to defence spending and its involvement in missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, Poland is frequently perceived as one of the most valuable - from the Alliance's perspective - "newcomers".[10]

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[7] *Strategic Concept 2010*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 14 February 2012, [www.nato.int access: 9 September 2014].

[8] *Strategic Concept 1999*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 25 June 1999, [www.nato.int, access: 9 September 2014].

[9] Their share size, political and economic capacity, as well as military power, still significantly "trail behind" same parameters of developed "Western" member states, impacting directly their position in the Alliance.

[10] Of course, a realistic comparative estimation of newcomers' contributions has to take into account the size of the country, its geostrategic position, which significantly determines its political will to engage, as well as its overall operating capacity. Poland is the biggest new member state with the largest population and a very sensitive geographic position vis-a-vis the Russian Federation and countries of the Eastern Partnership.

However, there are still countries, such as Croatia, from which the Alliance can expect a more substantial involvement that is proportional to its potentially increasing capacities. The reorganization of the Croatian Armed Forces, which would include the creation of task forces, would definitely improve its capabilities for enhanced engagement within the Alliance. Nonetheless, bearing in mind budget limitations as well as the fact that such a transformation takes time, one may conclude that its implementation is still not within a short-term time range. On the other hand, through engagement in NATO-led missions, Croatia has showed its readiness to be a security provider which is able to contribute to collective defence and cooperative security.[11] Due to the above-mentioned shortcomings, the contribution of "newcomers" can rarely be compared to the main actors in the Alliance, but their role is still important especially when it comes to peace building processes and crisis management.

Facing new global security threats and challenges, such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, cyber-crime or maritime piracy, the Alliance found itself in a position where it cannot operate alone.[12] Furthermore, the fact that most NATO activities took place out of the treaty area leads to the conclusion that partnerships with relevant countries and international organizations became the only way to ensure effectiveness in tackling mentioned threats. The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) are only some of the frameworks through which NATO and its partners are trying to ensure security and stability within and beyond their areas. Each of the mentioned partnerships has different topics in its focus, but what they share is their purpose and direction towards achieving cooperative security. Through consultations, the establishment of bilateral security cooperation and other efforts to enhance mutual understanding, NATO has enlarged the network of its partner countries which undoubtedly contributes to the fulfilment of the earlier-mentioned core task - cooperative security.

When it comes to non-NATO countries, Russia is definitely the most important and difficult strategic partner. After the terroristic attacks in the United States (2001), in 2002 the NATO - Russia Council (NRC) was created as a framework for cooperation between these two global actors. One of the main purposes of the NRC was the common fight against terrorism which was at that time on an upward trajectory. Over the years, NATO and Russia have broadened their areas

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[11] For example, Croatia contributed to ISAF with a significant number of personnel (more than 300) which is comparatively more substantial than the contributions of countries with similar capacities. For more details see the official website of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Croatia, [www.morh.hr, access: 9 September 2014].

[12] *Tackling New Security Challenges*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 27 June 2012, [www.nato.int, access: 9 September 2014].

of common interest by implementing various projects[13] which has made their co-operation more comprehensive. As the strategic priorities of the two differ significantly, the cooperation was always intertwined with difficulties in practical terms and periods of strained relations. Furthermore, because of the disagreement over the Ukraine crisis of 2014, all military and civilian cooperation has been suspended. Even though some see this as the beginning of a new Cold War, it is difficult to expect that these two strategic partners will not try to reach some reasonable compromise. Since the establishment of relations, there have been ups and downs in their cooperation but they have continued it because it is the only way to achieve sustainable development in the long term.

On the other hand, even though NATO has showed aspirations towards enhancing its presence and cooperation with potential partners in the Asia - Pacific region, it still has not established substantial relations with China. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council and one of the main global actors, China definitely has an important place in the international arena and therefore it would be reasonable to expect that in the upcoming period NATO will try to define which areas would be of common interest. Moreover, taking into account the presence of NATO troops in Afghanistan as well as the fact that this symbolically brought the Alliance straight to China's borders, one may conclude that it would be in NATO's interest to move cooperation from the political level towards something more practical. There is enough space for progress but in what direction NATO - China relations will develop in the future again depends on the main actors, NATO and China themselves.

However, even though there is a lack of cooperation between the Alliance and "the number one player" in this region - China - this is not the case when it comes to NATO's traditional Asia-Pacific partners such as South Korea, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. These partnerships are of two-fold importance for the Alliance. First, through their engagement in NATO-led missions, such as International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)[14] in Afghanistan, these countries have made significant contributions to the field of crisis management which is one of the core tasks of the Alliance. On the other hand, various individual agreements and declarations between the above-mentioned actors have further strengthened their cooperation. Taking into account all the above-mentioned facts as well as the dynamics of international relations, which constantly increases the need for new partner-

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[13] Non-proliferation and arms control, theatre missile defence, defence industrial cooperation, logistic, nuclear weapons cooperation, military-to-military cooperation are only some of the areas of cooperation between NATO and Russia which are defined in the NRC Practical Cooperation Fact Sheet.
[14] For example, Australia was the largest non-NATO contributor to ISAF. During the above-mentioned mission approximately 1550 Australian troops were deployed in Afghanistan.

ships, one may conclude that the Alliance will try to enlarge its numbers in the upcoming period, attempting to find a way to overcome new threats and challenges through cooperative security.

Costs and benefits of further enlargement

The NATO enlargement policy, also known as the "open door" policy, is as old as the Alliance itself. Defining it in the Washington Treaty, almost six decades ago, NATO showed its readiness to invite any European country that is willing to adjust to its standards and "contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area".[15] However, meeting the mentioned criteria is not an easy task for aspirant states, while at the same time strategic interests and the current needs of the Alliance are always something that have to be taken into account when it comes to the "open door" policy. For example, in 1995, even before the former members of Warsaw Pact were invited to join the Alliance, NATO carried out a *"Study on Enlargement"*[16] which defined which political, economic and military criteria every candidate should fulfil, but also what benefits the Alliance would receive from it.

Since then there have been three rounds of enlargement that have brought 12 new members to the Alliance. Nevertheless, there are still some countries that show an aspiration to join NATO. Currently, three Western Balkan states - Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro - and one from the Eastern Partnership - Georgia - aspire to NATO membership. Becoming part of the Alliance for them would mean the fulfilment of a strategic foreign policy goal and a further strengthening of their stability and security, while, on the other hand, for the Alliance the enlargement is perceived as a tool which makes a substantial contribution to its security.[17] For that reason, NATO frequently stresses that "new members should not only enjoy the benefits of membership as security consumers, but they should contribute to the overall security by becoming its providers".[18]

Given the fact that all the above-mentioned countries are still facing different obstacles in their accession processes, their membership - besides Montenegro (perhaps) - seems rather unlikely in the short-term period. For example, Bosnia and Herzegovina is facing severe difficulties attempting to function as a sustainable

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[15] *The North Atlantic Treaty*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 9 December 2008, [www.nato.int, access: 5 September 2014].

[16] *Study on Enlargement,* North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 5 November 2008, [www.nato.int, access: 5 September 2014].

[17] *Strategic Concept 2010*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 14 February 2012, [www.nato.int, access: 9 September 2014].

[18] *NATO in Focus*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 7 March 2013, [www.nato.int, access: 5 September 2014].

democratic state, and Montenegro has advanced but is still facing problems related to democratic change,[19] while on the other hand, the issue of its name is still blocking the accession of Macedonia, accompanied by a growing democratic deficit on the part of the current government. Georgia, as with all the above-mentioned countries, has unresolved problems, albeit much more serious. Without the consolidation of its territory, it is hard to expect that Georgia will be able to become part of the Alliance.[20]

It should not be forgotten that these countries have shown a readiness to participate in NATO-led missions which definitely contributed to the fulfilment of the core tasks of the Alliance, but without comprehensive improvements in the specific fields listed above their membership would most probably mean more costs than benefits for the Alliance. The strength of NATO depends on the power of its members and therefore every new member has to have the capabilities and capacities to adjust to the constant transformation of the security environment. On the other hand, even though NATO has strictly defined the path of its accession process, as well as its requirements, in practice the process is sometimes different. While meeting the criteria remains essential for achieving membership, the decision to invite an aspiring state frequently depends also on the current strategic priorities of the Alliance, the ability to reach consensus among the members (the case of Macedonia) and - as in the case of Georgia - relations with other global players.

Taking all the above-mentioned facts into account, one may conclude that before invitations are issued to candidates, NATO will closely analyse what their entry would mean for its position in the contemporary environment. The strengthening of the Southern and Eastern flank would definitely contribute to collective defence and cooperative security in the sense that it would increase the number of countries which would actively participate in the protection of the Alliance and its values against new threats and challenges. On the other hand, possibly, for the crisis management endeavours of the Alliance, this would mean the engagement of

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[19] Even though Montenegro, as a young country, has achieved significant improvements in the last eight years of reforms, it has still not gone through real democratic change in the electoral process. Namely, the same political elite has been in power for 25 years.

[20] An agreement with Russia over Abkhazia and South Ossetia has not been reached and this was the reason why NATO denied a Membership Action Plan to Georgia. Therefore, any new steps towards membership will hardly be achievable without resolving the above-mentioned issue. A simple reason for that is the fact that it is practically impossible to reach consensus within the Alliance about the accession of a state that has no control over its entire territory, even if hypothetically we were to forget about Russian opposition to the issue. In practice, that would be an act of importing of Georgian security problems into the Alliance which would be incapable of applying Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, as a pillar of its existence, in this specific case.

a greater number of disposable powers in conflicts which can, in different ways, represent a threat to Euro-Atlantic security.

Under these new circumstances - the Ukraine crisis and the creation of the Islamic State - NATO's enlargement to three Western Balkan countries and Georgia is not currently the focus of the Alliance. However, from a long-term perspective, at least for the former, it would definitely be of significant importance for obvious strategic reasons. Moreover, given the fact that fulfilling the essential core tasks of the Alliance - collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security - is more likely with a stable Southeast-European backyard, one may conclude that the "open door" policy will not lose its relevance in a long-term sense.

Conclusions

Contemporary NATO, attempting to transform itself into a modern security institution with global relevance, is constantly "forced" to change in order to be able to respond to today's threats and challenges. These changes do not happen in a random manner. While change is permanent and is reflected in regularly updated strategic concepts, its continuation and consistency are secured by the careful inclusion of basic principles from the founding treaty in every strategic document. This is also the case for the Strategic Concept, which was adopted at the Lisbon Summit in 2010.

By defining three core tasks of equal importance - collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security - and "de-territorializing" NATO's field of operations, the new document clearly adds a new dimension to its way of functioning, in an effort to globalize the Alliance. Projecting it as a multifunctional security institution that performs the three above-mentioned main functions, it calls for an enhancement of its capabilities in order to fulfil its new role. On the other hand, for the first time, it warns of financial constraints and the necessity for rational defence spending in an increasingly challenging environment. The desire for a globalized Alliance that was vocalized in the 2010 Strategic Concept, capable of taking action around the globe in complex political and economic circumstances, requires an increased number of contributors within the Alliance and beyond. In that sense, partnerships with states and organizations around the globe, but also further enlargement based on a thorough analysis of the aspirant country in an environment and timing suitable for NATO, will likely remain relevant in the period to come.

Partnerships will obviously range from those with greater capacity for cooperation - mainly with states that share NATO's values and strategic visions - to those with difficult partners - like today's China and Russia in particular. In order to achieve success in these demanding tasks, the Alliance will have to continue

strengthening its internal cohesion, and remain efficient and attractive for the aspiring member states. While it is difficult to compare the strategic relevance of the potential "newcomers" with that of the most influential states, which would be decisive in any further decision making on enlargement, the potential contribution of the former in the contemporary environment for the "new NATO" with increasing roles and responsibilities should not be underestimated.

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NATO Enlargement: Disaster or Success? Evaluation of Worst Case Scenarios[1]

Over the past two decades, NATO enlargement has been an important part of the agenda of this central Western security organization.[2] Robert E. Hunter once aptly pointed out that NATO enlargement is primarily the expression of the United States' commitment to continue with its engagement in providing European security.[3] The main advocate of NATO enlargement was the Clinton administration. At first, the idea of NATO enlargement received lukewarm support within the American administration.[4] Yet the stimulus to NATO enlargement did not come from Washington, but from Central European countries, which at that time saw NATO membership as a security guarantee and symbol of pertinence to the West.

Today, it is possible to identify in public discourse the belief that NATO enlargement had no other alternative. However, this impression is false. As is stated correctly by Robert Rauchhaus, "there is good reason to believe that another administration would have delayed enlargement or prevented it all together".[5] As an alternative to NATO enlargement, there were at least three possible political strategies. The first alternative, favoured above all by Russia, was for Russia and NATO to give security guarantees to the countries in Central and Eastern Europe. The second alternative could be the setting up of a sub-regional security system based, for example, on the Visegrád Group. The third alternative, promoted by Russia as well, would be to establish a pan-European security organization based on the OSCE.[6] The transition states were not interested in such solutions for various reasons, an analysis of which is beyond the topic of this text.

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[1] This paper elaborates in more details some ideas discussed in the conference contribution Z. Kříž, *NATO Enlargement, Fears and Reality* [in:] *Political Science, Law, Finance, Economics and Tourism Conference Proceedings*, Volume I, SGEM: Albena 2014, pp. 261-268.

[2] L. Frank, R. Khol, *Evropské bezpečnostní struktury*, "Defence & Strategy", December 2003, p. 17-27.

[3] R. E. Hunter, *NATO in the 21st Century: A Strategic Vision,* "Parameters", No. 2, Summer 1998, p. 15-16. Compare with: R. D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era*, Columbia University Press: New York 2002, p. 289-291.

[4] R. D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era*, Columbia University Press: New York 2002.

[5] R. W. Rauchhaus, *Explaining NATO Enlargement*, [in:] R. W. Rauchhaus, (ed.) *Explaining NATO Enlargement*, Frank Cass Publishers: New York 2001, p. 191.

[6] T. Pieciukiewicz, *Security in Central and Eastern Europe: A View From Warsaw*, "Parameters", No. 4, Winter 1996/1997, p. 130-131.

To a certain degree, transition states found themselves in a paradoxical situation. One can consider obtaining security guarantees against outside aggression as being their main motive for acceding to NATO. However, they were joining an organization that simultaneously changed its orientation very radically, extended its scope of operation beyond the framework of collective defence and saw Russia as a partner for cooperation, not an opponent. There were very powerful voices in the West projecting the contemporary Russian weakness in the 1990s to the distant future, assuming that Russia would be weak and hence not capable of a confrontational policy against its neighbours for a very long time. They deduced from that there was no point in enlarging NATO.[7]

The NATO enlargement process can be hardly explained by the logic of the "Realpolitik" of the "old type" based on the calculation of the military balance of power and efforts to maximize one's own power. Despite that or perhaps due to that, it prompted harsh criticism, supported by various arguments.[8] The opponents of NATO enlargement were George F. Kennan,[9] Kenneth N. Waltz,[10] John Lewis Gaddis,[11] Bruce Russett, Allan C. Stam,[12] Robert J. Art,[13] Johanna Granville,[14] Michael Mandelbaum,[15] Kent R. Meyer,[16] Amos Perlmutter, Ted Galen Carpenter[17] and many other prominent academics, diplomats and intellectuals.

The aim of this paper is to evaluate to what degree the worst case scenarios that were described by the critics of NATO enlargement have come true. The first group of criticism warned, in general, against the deterioration of NATO's cohesion and that NATO enlargement would be a very costly adventure for NATO members and candidate states. In general, these critics feared of the loss of NATO credibility and cohesion. The second group of criticism drew attention to the risk of deteriorated cooperation in the Central and Eastern European area. This category can be further divided into two subcategories: fears of new division lines in

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[7] R. W. Rauchhaus, *Explaining NATO Enlargement*, [in:] R. W. Rauchhaus, (ed.) *op. cit.*, p. 4.

[8] *The Debate Over NATO Expansion: A Critique of the Clinton Administration's Responses to Key Questions*, Arms Control Association, September 1997, [www.armscontrol.org, access: 8 September 2014].

[9] P. Duignan, *NATO: Its Past, Present and Future*, Stanford University Press: Stanford 2000, p. 57.

[10] K. W. Waltz, *NATO's Expansion: A Realist's View*, [in:] R. W. Rauchhaus, (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 23-38.

[11] J. L. Gaddis, *We Know Now: Rethinking Cold War History*, Clarendon Press: Oxford, p. 28.

[12] B. Russet, A. C. Stam, *Courting Disaster: An Expand NATO vs. Russia and China*, "Political Science Quarterly", No. 3, Fall 1998, p. 361-382.

[13] R. J. Art, *Creating a Disaster: NATO's Open Door Policy*, "Political Science Quarterly", No. 3, Fall 1998, p. 383-403.

[14] J. Granville, *The Many Paradoxes of NATO Enlargement*, "Current History", April 1999, p. 165-170.

[15] M. Mandelbaum, *Don't expand NATO*, "Newsweek", 23 December 1996, p. 33.

[16] K. R. Meyer, *US Support for Baltic Membership in NATO: What Ends, What Risks?* "Parameters", No. 4, Winter 2000/2001, p. 67-82.

[17] A. Perlmutter, T. G. Carpenter, *NATO's Expensive Trip East. The Folly of Enlargement*, "Foreign Affairs", January/February, p. 3-6.

Europe between countries admitted to NATO and other countries, and fears of worsening cooperation with Russia and undermining Russian willingness to cooperate with the West.

Against the background of the disputes regarding the burden-sharing in NATO, the consumption of the "peace dividend", "free riding", and the limited length of this paper, it does not appear necessary to analyse whether NATO enlargement has caused an unaccepted increase of military expenditures in NATO or candidate states. It has obviously not happened as only a few NATO members spend 2% of their GDP or more on defence. In terms of military expenditures, the "new" NATO members face the same problems as the Cold War NATO states. Almost all European NATO countries should allocate more resources to defence and this conclusion does not apply only for newcomers. On the other hand, the NATO cohesion and the level of cooperation in Europe are to be examined properly.

Worst case scenarios coming true?

The available empirical evidence can hardly be used to support the belief that NATO enlargement has undermined this organization's ability to act. The disputes within NATO were not caused by the qualitatively different nature of the "newcomers" and disputes in forming the Alliance policy did not arise only between "old" and "new" members. Due to the limited length of this paper, we can illustrate this conclusion with the example of the very controversial debates on the Alliance's policy regarding the 1999 Kosovo crises, the Lisbon Strategic Concept of NATO and the intervention in Libya in 2011. In these debates NATO was used as the main platform for forming Western policy.

<u>NATO military intervention in Kosovo in 1999</u>

At the time of the Kosovo crisis, the main debate about the form of the response and a potential NATO military intervention took place between the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Italy. At the beginning of the campaign, the United States was against ground operations. A similar attitude was adopted by Germany. On the other hand, from April 1999 the United Kingdom had started to push forward the idea of deploying ground forces. Its attitude was supported by Canada as well. France was also willing to support the British attitude under certain conditions. Italy, divided on this issue, sceptical to the efficiency of aerial bombing and hesitant to use any military force, tried to ter-

minate air operations as soon as possible.[18] As the air campaign became protracted and did not bring the desired political or military results, the NATO military command started to plan a ground operation in April 1999. Moreover, also in the United States by the beginning of the third week of the campaign there were growing voices that a ground operation might be inevitable.[19] In mid-May 1999, the United States started to openly admit the need for a ground invasion, as the preceding air attacks had not been successful and it was important to increase pressure on Belgrade.[20] When planning, reaching a consensus over the operation was preferred to military efficiency.[21]

The newcomers' attitude was not unanimous. The debate was actively participated in by Hungary fearing for the fate of the Hungarian minority in Vojvodina.[22] Hungary refused to provide territory for a prospective ground invasion. However, it agreed to open its airspace and air base for the needs of the air campaign.[23] The Czech Republic did not adopt an absolutely unanimous attitude with NATO either, because Czech politicians were divided and the country did not speak with a single voice. The Prime Minister Miloš Zeman proceeded very ambiguously and hypocritically. He ostensibly expressed a critical detachment from the Alliance operation, provoking NATO's outrage and disenchantment.[24] Yet in fact, on 20 March 1999, the Czech Republic approved an air operation and gave NATO its full cooperation.[25] A discrepancy between the Allies was caused by Kavan's diplomatic initiative (prepared together with Greece). This plan anticipated terminating

[18] D. P. Auerswald, *Explaining Wars of Choice: An Integrated Decision Model of NATO Policy in Kosovo*, "International Studies Quarterly", September 2004, p. 648-659; M. Manulak, *Canada and the Kosovo crisis: A 'golden moment' in Canadian foreign policy*, "International Journal", No. 2, Spring 2009, p. 575; M. Clark, *Italian Perceptions*. M. Buckley, S. N. Cummings (ed.), *Kosovo: perceptions of war and its aftermath*. Continuum: New York and London 2001, p. 122-128.

[19] B. S. Lambeth, *NATO's Air War for Kosovo. A Strategic and Operational Assessment*, RAND: Santa Monica 2001, pp. 45, 72-75.

[20] M. Manulak, *Forceful persuasion or half-hearted diplomacy?* "International Journal", No. 2, Summer 2011, p. 365.

[21] W. K. Clark, *Waging Modern War: Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Future of Combat*, Public Affairs: New York 2001, p. xxv, 188, 201, 233.

[22] S. Wolff, *The Limits of Non-Military International Intervention: A Case Study of the Kosovo Conflict*, [in:] F. Bieber, Z. Daskalovski (ed.), *Understanding the war in Kosovo*, Frank Cass Publishers: Portland 2003, p. 86.

[23] K. Donfried (ed.), *Kosovo: International Reactions to NATO Air Strikes*, "CRS Report for Congress", 21 April 1999, p. 4-5, [www.au.af.mil, access: 8 September 2014].

[24] W. Drozdiak, *NATO's Newcomers Are Shaken by Airstrikes; Czechs, Hungarians Express Greatest Dismay*, "The Washington Post", 12 April 1999; R. C. Hendrickson, *NATO's Open Door Policy and the Next Round of Enlargement*, "Parameters", Winter 2000/2001, p. 53-66.

[25] *O souhlasu rozhodl Kavan se Zemanem*, "Mladá fronta Dnes", 30 March 1999, [www.zpravy.idnes.cz, access: 8 September 2014].

air attacks before Yugoslavia accepted NATO's conditions.[26] On the contrary, President Václav Havel tried to obtain public support for NATO's policy, even though he saw war as the ultimate tool.[27] Among the newcomers, it was only Poland that absolutely unanimously supported the Alliance's policy.[28]

The debate that took place in these states did not differ substantially from the debate held among the old member states and it primarily dealt with the question of whether it was suitable in the given situation to use military force even without a UN Security Council mandate and whether this step could really help to solve the conflict. They were less concerned with the question of what impacts on the functioning of the international community a potential military action would have. It was essential for NATO's cohesion that many new members, after the termination of the air campaign, actively participated in the KFOR.

The new members' attitude led to disappointment in NATO at that time.[29] However, in the light of what was mentioned above, these events cannot be used to support the argument of NATO's undermined cohesion and ability of newcomers to act. The new members did not prevent NATO from carrying out its operation and gave the intervening states the most collaboration possible.

NATO 2010 Strategic Concept

A very intense debate took place with respect to the contemporary NATO Strategic Concept. In the 2010 Strategic Concept, NATO reaffirms as its main goals and tasks its commitment to collective defence. As regards the ways of dealing with security threats, there were some controversial issues.

In particular, the issue of tactical nuclear weapons was discussed. Five NATO states - Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Germany, and Norway - decided to publish a declaration on the removal of the rest of the American nuclear weap-

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[26] *Kavan svůj plán neprozradil*, "Mladá fronta Dnes", 12 May 1999, [www.zpravy.idnes.cz, access: 8 September 2014].
[27] P. Latawski, *The Kosovo crisis and the evolution of post-Cold War European security*, Manchester University Press: New York 2003, p. 163.
[28] E. Fawn, *Perceptions in Central and South - Eastern Europe*, [in:] M. Buckley, S. N. Cummings (ed.), *Kosovo: perceptions of war and its aftermath*, Continuum: New York and London 2001, p. 136-137.
[29] M. Bartkowski, *Impact of NATO on Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic: the Case of Unfulfilled Commitments and Broken Promises*, "Rubikon", February 2004, [www.maciejbartkowski.com, access: 8 September 2014]; E. Fawn, *Perceptions in Central and South - Eastern Europe*, [in:] M. Buckley, S. N. Cummings (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 138-139.

ons from their territories.[30] However, it was not welcomed by France and some other allies. Finally, a compromise was made.[31]

Ballistic missile defence was another controversial topic as there were long term differing opinions among NATO members.[32] Besides the United States, Denmark is the most active and long-term proponent of missile defence. A zealous proponent of missile defence was Lithuania; Estonia and Latvia adopted a lukewarm approach.[33] On the contrary, France had a reserved approach for a long time, but it finally conceded to missile defence.[34] Canada, too, is one of the countries that view this project with scepticism and there are suggestions that it changed its attitude only in order not to block other states and not to become isolated within the Alliance.[35]

Great emphasis was placed on out-of-area crisis management operations.[36] Three groups of states established themselves in the Alliance. First, there are states that place primary emphasis on collective defence, i.e., on Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. This group included above all Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Norway, Iceland, Luxembourg and Bulgaria. They regard crisis management operations more as an act of solidarity with their allies. On the contrary, the second group believes in NATO being involving in crisis management outside the transatlantic area on the global scale. This group mainly includes the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Denmark, and partly also the Netherlands. Finally, the third group was formed by other member states that see collective security and out-of-area operations on the same level or that regard them as mutually complementary. It includes especially three influential European members, France, Germany, Italy, and furthermore, Spain, Portugal, Slovenia, and Turkey.[37]

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[30] See J. Borger, *Five NATO states to urge removal of US nuclear arms in Europe*, "The Guardian", 22 February 2010, [www.theguardian.com, access: 9 September 2014].

[31] T. Noetzel - B. Schreer, *More flexible, less coherent: NATO after Lisbon*, "Australian Journal of International Affairs", No. 1, 19 January 2012, p. 27.

[32] See R. Khol - F. Šulc (ed.), *Protiraketová obrana*, ÚMV Praha: Praha 2004; P. Suchý, *Americká protiraketová obrana a ruský pocit nejistoty*, "Defence & Strategy", No. 1, 19 July 2007, p. 20-44.

[33] N. Greenhalgh, *Mixed Baltic reaction to dropped missile shield*, "Baltic Reports", 18 September 2009, [www.balticreports.com, access: 9 September 2014].

[34] *France backs NATO missile defence system: source*, "Reuters", 15 October 2010, [www.reuters.com, access: 9 September 2014].

[35] See J. O'Neill, *Canada backs European missile defence program,* "The Star Phoenix", 21 October 2010, [www.canada.com, access: 9 September 2014].

[36] *Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security for the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Adopted by Heads of State and Government at the NATO Summit in Lisbon 19 - 20 November 2010*, "NATO", 23 May 2012, p. 19-20, [www.nato.int, access: 9 September 2014].

[37] See B. Górka - Winter, M. Madej, *NATO Member States and the New Strategic Concept: An Overview*, "The Polish Institute of International Affairs", May 2010, [www.pism.pl, access: 9 September 2014].

The debate revealed the clear-cut priorities of the "newcomers", i.e., an emphasis on collective defence in a traditional fashion and a certain reservation about the vision of the Alliance as a global policeman; however, there was not a cleavage exclusively along the line of the "old" versus the "new" here either. Central and Eastern European states played an active and constructive role in these debates; they asserted some of their visions and some they did not, and they were ready to make compromises. Their behaviour did not deviate in any way from the common practice within NATO and did not threaten NATO's ability to make decisions. Moreover, all "new" NATO members have participated in various NATO expeditionary operations since the end of the Cold War.

<u>NATO intervention in Libya</u>

The recent crisis in Libya gives us a space to assess whether NATO enlargement put at risk this organization's cohesion and ability to act. The crisis in Libya escalated in 2011 and culminated in the toppling of Gaddafi against the background of the NATO military intervention. Initially, NATO also denied that the Alliance as an organization had had plans for military intervention in the Libyan conflict.[38] Yet by early March, the NATO policy had changed.[39] This change of the Alliance's approach took place approximately at the same time as forces loyal to Gaddafi started to win over the rebels.

The United States was willing to be engaged as a part of a broad coalition of NATO and Muslim countries, yet not as the leading force. Germany and Poland were openly against the intervention. The role of leaders was then naturally left to France and the United Kingdom. France started its operations in Libya before NATO decided to act.[40] Finally, only eight members participated militarily in this operation (the United States, France, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Norway, Canada, Denmark and Italy).[41] On 22 June, 2011, Italy even wanted to put an end to the whole operation, supposedly due to civilian casualties. Turkey, too, caused problems since it felt humiliated by not being involved enough in the process of conflict resolution and blocked the use of Alliance capacities for a certain period of time. Tomáš Valášek, against the background of the 2011 Libya crisis, reached

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[38] *Secretary General's statement on the situation in Libya*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 25 February 2011, [www.nato.int, access: 9 September 2014].
[39] *Statement by NATO Secretary General following the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 18 March 2011, [www.nato.int, access: 9 September 2014].
[40] E. Hallams, B. Chreer, *Towards a 'post-American' alliance? NATO burden-sharing after Libya*, "International Affairs", 20 March 2012, p. 322-323.
[41] T. Noetzel, B. Schreer, *More flexible, less coherent: NATO after Lisbon*, "Australian Journal of International Affairs", No. 1, 19 January 2012, p. 31.

the conclusion that NATO still had the institutional capacity at its disposal to carry out a military operation.[42]

From the perspective of the topic of this article, it is important to note that the line of dispute in this cause did not lie along the boundary between old and new members either, and hence we can hardly use it to substantiate the argument that NATO enlargement has threatened its ability to act. On the other hand the fact that all the "new" NATO members stood back and did not participate in the NATO framework, could have damaged their position in NATO, if the NATO military intervention in Libya had been successful. However, it is highly disputable that "given NATO's ultimate victory in protecting human rights in Libya and the removal of Muammar Qaddafi, a case can be made that the Visegrads damaged themselves within the alliance given their bystander role(s)".[43] This conclusion is definitely not substantiated against the background of the ongoing fighting in Libya. On the contrary, it is possible to claim that NATO with its ill-considered intervention created a disaster with a negative long-term security impact for Europe.

Undermining cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe

<u>Relations between countries of Central and Eastern Europe</u>

The NATO enlargement definitely did not result in weakened cooperation between the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, as many critics had feared. The newcomers did not want to "close NATO's door". They became advocates of further enlargement. The vision of NATO membership and conditionality of enlargement was another impulse to intensify the already existing cooperation in the region. In 1994, the Good Neighbourly Relations and Military Cooperation Agreement was concluded between Poland and Lithuania, in 1996 the Treaty on Good Neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation between Hungary and Slovakia was signed, as was the Bilateral Defence Cooperation Agreement between Hungary and Slovenia and Bilateral Friendship Treaty between Hungary and Romania, and in 1997 the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between Romania and Ukraine was concluded.[44]

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[42] T. Valasek, *What Libya says about Future NATO Operations*, "Centre for European Reform", 26 August 2011, [www.centreforeuropeanreform.blogspot.com, access: 9 September 2014].

[43] J. P. Bell, R. C. Hendrickson, *NATO's Visegrad Allies and the Bombing of Qaddafi: The Consequence of Alliance Free-Riders*, "Journal of Slavic Military Studies", 25 May 2012, p. 159.

[44] *The Debate Over NATO Expansion: A Critique of the Clinton Administration's Responses to Key Questions*, Arms Control Association, September 1997, [www.armscontrol.org, access: 9 September 2014].

Furthermore, cooperation among the new members with the candidates for the second round of enlargement was deepened from 1999 onwards, as well as among the second round candidates. Poland continued to intensify its strategic partnership with Lithuania and Ukraine, and thus contributed to stability in the region.[45] Hungary tried to help Romania and Slovakia obtain NATO membership during the negotiations of the first round of enlargement by pursuing a policy of ensuring the rights of the Hungarian minority in both countries. Hungary promised to support the Slovak integration effort and their mutual relations, affected especially by the problem of the Hungarian minority's status in Slovakia, became much better.[46] The accession of Slovakia was also broadly supported by the Czech Republic within the development of the so-called above-standard cooperation.[47] Relations between Slovakia and Hungary improved especially after the 1998 elections after which Slovakia started to come out of its foreign-political isolation. On the other hand, some promising opportunities for cooperation among "new" NATO members were not used. This is especially true for air force modernization.[48]

Last but not least, NATO enlargement contributed to the reform of the defence sector in candidate states.[49] It is important to point out that even though cooperation in non-military spheres is mostly related to NATO enlargement indirectly, while these states wanted to cooperate for many reasons, the development of cooperation among Central and Eastern European countries on military issues was facilitated by their preparations for NATO membership. It means that a very intensive cooperation developed among transition states with each other and between transition states and NATO members resulting in the creation of multinational units.[50]

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[45] B. Dančák, *Geneze spolupráce ve střední Evropě*, [in:] B. Dančák (ed.), *Integrační pokusy ve středoevropském prostoru II*, Mezinárodní politologický ústav Masarykovy univerzity: Brno 1999, p. 38-39.

[46] E. Irmanová, *Maďarská menšina na Slovensku a její místo v zahraniční politice Slovenska a Maďarska pro roce 1989*, Albis International: Ústí nad Labem 2005, p. 204-207.

[47] L. Kopeček, *Polská republika*, [in:] B. Dančák (ed.), *Integrační pokusy ve středoevropském prostoru II.*, Mezinárodní politologický ústav Masarykovy univerzity: Brno 1999, p. 150.

[48] L. Dyčka - M. Mareš, *The Development and Future of Fighter Panes Acquisitions in Countries of the Visegrad Group*, "Journal of Slavic Military Studies", 21 November 2012, p. 533-557.

[49] J. Simon, *Road Map to NATO Accession: Preparing for Membership*, "Hampton Roads International Security Quarterly", October 2001, p. 27-43; R. C. Hendrickson - J. Campbell, N. Mullikin, *Albania and NATO'S "Open Door" Policy: Alliance Enlargement and Military Transformaton*, "Journal of Slavic Military Studies", 21 September 2006, p. 243-257; Z. Kříž, M. Stixová, *Does NATO Enlargement Spread Democracy? The Democratic Stabilization of Western Balkan Countries*, "Central European Political Studies Review", January 2012, p. 24-26.

[50] G. Hauser, *Sicherheit in Mitteleuropa. Politik. Kooperation. Ethnizität*, Landesverteidigungsakademie: Wien 2003, p. 34-49.

NATO enlargement and cooperation with Russia

Hence while the predictions about the loss of NATO's cohesion due to its enlargement will hardly find substantiation in the empirical evidence, its "open door" policy has had another indisputable impact on NATO, i.e., the pressure on a different perception of Russia, which is absolutely evident from Central and Eastern European countries having negative historical experiences with this Eurasian power.[51] When appraising NATO - Russia relations in the post-Cold War period, Tuomos Forsberg reached the conclusion that a frail friendship had been formed.[52] Despite this achievement, NATO enlargement was perceived very negatively in Russia and this negative perception was definitely not typical only of political and military elites, but were authentic attitudes of a majority of the Russian population.[53] This overreaction of the Russian political elite was caused by the fact that

NATO's image as an aggressor is much more deeply rooted in Russia than in other states of the region.[54] Moreover, the Russian and Soviet (Gorbatchev) elite of that time, supported by some researchers in the West (e.g., McGwire), claimed that when negotiating about the re-integration of Germany, the Soviet Union was promised NATO would not be enlarged further into the East.[55] However, Kramer persuasively proved that negotiations between the Soviet Union and the West in 1990 regarding German re-integration pertained only to the fact that no Alliance infrastructure would be built within the territory of the former East Germany. The Soviet Union had no claims in 1990 concerning the non-expansion of the Alliance into further countries of Central and Eastern Europe and it was not given such guarantees by the West.[56]

The first wave of the NATO enlargement did not significantly harm NATO - Russia relations. The unexpected events in Warsaw on 25 August 1993 paved the

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[51] F. S. Larrabee, *'Old Europe' and the New NATO*, "The RAND blog", 18 February 2003, [www.rand.org, access: 9 September 2014].

[52] T. Forsberg, 2005. *Russia's Relationship with NATO: A Qualitative Change or Old Wine in New Bottles?* "Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics", No. 3, Autumn 2005, p. 334.

[53] L. A. Karabeshkin, D. R. Spechler, *EU and NATO Enlargement: Russia's Expectations, Responses and Options for the Future*, "European Security", 3 December 2007, p. 314; L. Ratti, *Back to the future? International relations theory and NATO - Russia relation since the end of the Cold War*, "International Journal", Spring 2009, p. 402.

[54] S. Glebov, *Concerning Strange Relations. Extensive Perceptions of Security Spaces Within the Ukraine - Russia - NATO triangle*, "Russian Politics and Law", September 2009, p. 54-55.

[55] See M. McGwire, *NATO enlargement: a policy error of historic importance*, "Review of International Studies", January 1998, p. 23-42.

[56] M. Kramer, 2009. *The Myth of a No-NATO-Enlargement Pledge to Russia*, "The Washington Quarterly", April 2009, p. 39-61.

way for Russian consent with the first round of the NATO enlargement.[57] The Russian reconciliatory approach towards the Alliance temporarily changed due to the Kosovo crisis. Nevertheless, cooperation went on after 1999. Russia took part in KFOR and Russian participation in Bosnia and Herzegovina continued up to 2003. After the terrorist attacks of 11 September, 2001, Russia declared its solidarity with the United States and, what is even more important, provided Washington with valuable intelligence information and logistic support. At that time, the new Putin administration in Russia decided to re-establish and encourage cooperation with NATO in many areas including military exercises, the exchange of intelligence information, anti-ballistic missile defence and the fight against international terrorism.[58] Simultaneously, Russia for many reasons vehemently opposed NATO enlargement in the Baltic states.[59] Due to the fact that Russia opposed the second wave of NATO enlargement and at the same time - despite these controversies - improved its relations with the West damaged during the Kosovo crisis, one can conclude that the "2004 Big Bang" was not responsible for the worsening of NATO - Russia relations at all. Some senior Russian political analysts and advisers (Karaganov, Trenin, and Iavlinskii) admitted that Russia did not fear the military but symbolic and psychological impacts of the NATO "open door" policy at that time.[60]

In particular, it was the issue of a potential accession of Ukraine and Georgia to NATO after the Colour Revolutions that was perceived very negatively in Russia as an obstacle to restoring the Soviet Union in a new form.[61] In this respect, Bruce P. Jackson spoke of the so-called "soft war" between the West and Russia over Eastern Europe. Western goals were in contradiction with Russian interests to build a network of autocratic regimes in the area befriended with Russia and hence eliminate the influence of Western countries. Jackson states that the political strategy of the West does not endanger Russian vital interests, it is only in contradiction with its imperial ambitions, which grew under the Putin administration.[62]

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[57] J. Surovell, *Deception and Farce in Post-Soviet Russian Policy vis-à-vis NATO's Expansion*, "Journal of Slavic Military Studies", May 2012, p. 164-165.

[58] R. Khol, *Protiraketová obrana a Česká republika. Argumenty namísto mýtů a emocí. Policy Paper*, ÚMV: Praha 2006; K. Khudoley, D. Lanko, *Russia, NATO Enlargement and the Baltic States*, "Baltic Defence Review", No. 11/2004, p. 117-128; A. Kelin, *Spolupráce NATO - Rusko v boji proti terorismu*, "NATO Review", Autumn 2005, [www.nato.int, access: 9 September 2014]; S. Ivanov, *Zrající partnerství*, "NATO Review", Winter 2005, [www.nato.int, access: 9 September 2014].

[59] S. Blank, *Russia, NATO Enlargement and the Baltic States*, "World Affairs", January 1998, p. 115-125.

[60] J. Surovell, *Deception and Farce in Post-Soviet Russian Policy vis-à-vis NATO's Expansion*, "Journal of Slavic Military Studies", May 2012, p. 180-181.

[61] A. Makarychev, *Russia, NATO, and the Colour Revolutions. Discursive Traps*, "Russian Politics and Law", September/October 2009, p. 45.

[62] B. P. Jackson, *The "Soft War" For Europe's East*, "Policy Review", June/July 2006, p. 3-14.

Russia had also already been using its soft power for a long period of time.[63] Until the 2014 Ukraine crisis, the most severe deterioration of mutual relations between NATO and Russia undoubtedly occurred in connection to the Kosovo crisis and not to NATO enlargement. Even the infamous 2008 Russian war against Georgia only had a short-term negative impact on NATO - Russia relations. After Obama's inauguration and his policy of resetting relations with Russia, a new form of relationship between NATO and the Russian Federation was sought. At the Lisbon 2010 NATO Summit, the NATO - Russia Council Joint Statement was signed and relations basically returned to normal.[64] From the Russian perspective, the 2009 NATO enlargement into Croatia and Albania was not controversial either.

At this stage of access to Russian archives it is premature to argue that the ongoing deterioration of relations between NATO and Russia has been caused just by NATO enlargement. Paper documents of Russian provenance proving, by the process of the tracing method, the causal relations between NATO enlargement and deteriorated relations between NATO and Russia are currently unavailable to scholars researching this issue, if they will ever be accessible. Nevertheless, the main and quite fundamental problem of this line of argumentation lies in chronology. Despite all the Russian reservations to the process of NATO enlargement (and many other controversial issues), relations between NATO and Russia had been generally cooperative up until the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2014 (the degree of cooperation, however, differed over the course of time and fluctuated). Paradoxically, NATO - Russia relations worsened after the 2008 NATO summit in Bucharest when Ukraine and Georgia had not obtained consent for the intensification of integration with NATO and the prospect of early NATO membership. It was caused mainly by the resistance of Germany and France to the invitation of Georgia and Ukraine to NATO. Both countries made it public that maintaining good relations with Russia had a higher priority.[65] Moreover, Ukraine had already stopped seeking NATO membership in 2010 and its attitude only changed against the background of the 2014 Ukrainian crises. Nowadays, NATO reacts to these new geopolitical realities (the Crimea annexation and the insurgency in East Ukraine) and is engaged in Ukraine.[66]

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[63] J. Gedmin, *Beyond Crimea. What Vladimir Putin Really Wants*, "World Affairs", July/August 2014, p. 8-16.

[64] *NATO - Russia Council Joint Statement at the meeting of the NATO - Russia Council held in Lisbon on 20 November 2010*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 20 November 2010, [www.nato.int, access: 9 September 2014].

[65] B. Schreer, *A new pragmatism. Germany's NATO Policy*, "International Journal", June 2009, p. 385-386.

[66] J. Gedmin, *Beyond Crimea. What Vladimir Putin Really Wants*, "World Affairs", July/August 2014, p. 8-16.

The time sequence shows that it was only after it had become evident that neither of the countries would obtain NATO membership in the near future, Georgia and Ukraine became the target of Russian aggression resulting in an unprecedented deterioration of relations with NATO. The impulse towards the current Russian aggression against Ukraine was not this country's effort to accede to NATO. The impulse was Ukraine's effort to intensify relations with the European Union and launch a process of integration into this organization, which is militarily irrelevant. In autumn 2013, it was the Association Agreement with the European Union that was on the table and not accession to NATO. When taking into account the sequence of NATO's steps and Russia's reaction, it could be said that NATO's closing the doors to Ukraine and Georgia in 2008 created a window of opportunity, making it rather complicated for these countries' integration into Western structures, which was used by Putin in full. Russian nationalism and revanchism have been a very important factor in Russian domestic policy and the NATO enlargement should not be blamed on it.[67]

On the other hand, the previous rounds of NATO enlargement, the ongoing "open door" policy and many other controversial issues between the West and Russia could have made the Russian political elite believe that the accession of Georgia and Ukraine to Western institutions, regarded by Russia as undesirable for itself on a long-term basis, would be only a matter of time and that this must be prevented by all possible means in the given period of time. However, considering the current limited access to necessary primary resources, it would be appropriate to avoid making authoritative conclusions for the time being.

Conclusion

In sum, despite the strong criticism against the NATO enlargement policy, we can conclude that the enlargement has not caused any significant damage to the Alliance. NATO's internal cohesion did not suffer a great loss, as seeking a consensus between members is just as difficult as it was in the Cold War period. The dividing lines between members on controversial issues are not drawn on the grounds of the length of membership. Moreover, no new iron curtains have been dropped, as the "new" member states further support the NATO "open door" policy. Last but not least, almost all NATO members, not only "the newcomers", should increase their military expenditures.

The only exception is an obvious deterioration of relations with Russia, which occurred after Russia had launched the war with Georgia in 2008, and especially

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[67] H. Bering, *The New, Bigger NATO: Fears v. Facts*, "Policy Review", April/May 2001, p. 5-6.

when it annexed Crimea and started a "hybrid war" against Ukraine in 2014. Paradoxically, this happened after the 2008 NATO summit in Bucharest when Ukraine and Georgia had not obtained the MAP nor prospects for an early NATO membership. However, the responsibility lies on Russia and its imperial policy ignoring the security interests of its neighbours, which it regards as the object of its own superpower policy and not equal partners. After all, it was Russia that over the past years has initiated two wars against its neighbours and in fact annexed Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Crimea. The NATO non-enlargement after the Bucharest summit just opened a window of opportunity for such a policy.

Marek Madej (University of Warsaw, Poland)

Poland and NATO's Future - Let's Get Serious About the Basics[1]

In October 2014 Anders Fogh Rasmussen was replaced as NATO Secretary General by former Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg. The choice of Mr. Stoltenberg was welcomed in Poland. In fact, he was perceived as *"the best option available"*. This was partially due to his unquestionable personal merits - as an economist, experienced politician and parliamentarian. In addition, as head of government in times when the Norwegian defence budget was stable and spent wisely and responsibly, he proved to be a skilful diplomat and negotiator, who can treat security issues seriously, and hence a good candidate for NATO chair, especially in times of austerity. Equally important was the fact that he is from Norway - one of the Alliance's founders, a staunch ally during the Cold War and a state truly engaged in NATO's new "global" missions like fighting terrorism and stabilizing zones of crisis, but at the same time quite attached - as Norwegian military investments and public declarations of their authorities show - to the traditional tasks of territorial defence and concerns about its Russian neighbour. Hence, Norway (and its political leaders) seemed to be wholly credible as allies with a more 'globalist' outlook on NATO tasks (US or UK), but simultaneously a country with largely convergent (despite differences) views on the security environment and the hierarchy of challenges with members who think - like Poland - about the Alliance in a more traditional way. The diplomat from such a country should be sympathetic to Polish concerns, but nevertheless able to balance the interests of all the allies.

However, it is not the change of the Secretary's post that is most responsible for shaping Polish expectations on NATO's future. Far more important is, unsurprisingly, the recent Russian - Ukrainian crisis and the evolution of Russia's attitude towards European security in general. These changes are perceived by Polish leaders as the gravest challenge for European stability in the post-Cold War period. Nevertheless, they did not cause an abrupt, dramatic redefinition of the Polish position on NATO. However, by confirming doubts over Russia's aggressiveness and therefore reliability as a partner truly interested in cooperation and strengthening European stability, they have simply stimulated Polish leaders to formulate

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their former views on the Alliance's mission in a more clear-cut and resolute manner.

In short, Polish expectations on NATO's future evolution can be summarized as *going back to roots*, both geographically and functionally. Polish political elites (from all sides of the political scene, albeit with various intensity), as well as large sections of Polish society, believe that after more than a decade of prioritizing in fact "new: tasks like fighting terrorism or piracy, and engaging in nation-building in faraway regions, NATO should focus on its traditional role - deterrence and defence against aggression on allies' territories - and its original geographical region of interest - Europe. Obviously, these traditional tasks should be understood broadly, according to the current complex reality and include countering such hybrid forms of aggression like the intrusion of "*little green people*" with weapons but no national insignia, urban- or cyber-warfare and potentially even economic pressure (supply cuts etc.). Nevertheless, readiness to protect and defend members, their territory and population should be for NATO the highest priority.

Such a switch from a concentration on crisis management and global engagement to a more traditional, Europe-oriented posture could be implemented through several steps which Poland will strive for.

Firstly, increase NATO presence in Central and Eastern Europe. The most desirable option will be the permanent deployment of allied troops and equipment in Poland and/or other countries (the Baltics, Romania), in significant numbers. Since currently, in fact, of all NATO members only the United States maintain substantial permanent military bases on the territory of allies, such troops would most probably be American (hopes that after the Ukrainian - Russian crisis Washington will abandon the *Pacific pivot* in their grand strategy and return to be *the leader at the front*, not *from behind*, as in Libya in 2011, are surprisingly strong in both Polish society and among political elites). However, the rotational presence of foreign units - from the United States or other allies (assuming their willingness and ability to offer that) - or building additional NATO equipment depots in the Eastern part of the treaty area would also be welcomed. Although the deterrent effect of the latter - crucial for Poland - is perceived as somewhat weaker, it is still (far) better than none.

Secondly, intensify NATO training and exercise practices. Preferably such exercises should be focused on readiness to defend the treaty area and conducted more frequently and on a bigger scale than in the past, but any intensification in common and joint exercises would be welcomed. That is why Poland is satisfied with NATO's recently declared attachment to programs like the Connected Forces Initiative or revitalization of the NATO Response Force.

Thirdly, update NATO contingency plans (CPs). This could be achieved by reviewing and elaborating details of current CPs, broadening their scope (to

include hybrid, irregular forms of aggression) and introducing mechanisms of their mandatory periodical review and update. Obviously, such adjustments of CPs should be strictly coordinated with the activities discussed above.

Fourthly, be serious about defence. All actions mentioned will have a cost, often substantial one. Hence, the allies need to not only stop the cuts in their defence budgets, but to also spend that money more effectively, be it thanks to further development of the Smart Defence initiative and pooling and sharing practices, deepening of European Union - NATO cooperation or progressing with sub-regional defence integration in such frameworks as the Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO) or the Visegrád Group (V4). Poland will adopt a truly pragmatic approach here, supporting and engaging in any projects of that kind if they offer the chance of real improvement in NATO's ability to act. Simultaneously, however, it will be fully aware of the complexities and risks associated with such a "*variable geometry*" model of capability-building in the context of burden-sharing, decision-making processes or the access to rights to assets developed this way.

The focus on deterrence and defence that Warsaw postulates neither means opposition to NATO involvement in building international stability by countering piracy, terrorism or state-failures nor is based on some *"Polish Russophobia"* and willingness to confront Russia constantly, anytime and anywhere. However, according to the position rather commonly shared by Polish citizens, before starting any engagement in faraway regions, all allies have to be assured about their own defence and stability in the neighbourhood. *First things first,* as the proverb goes, and the Alliance which has justifiably been called the mightiest in the world's history, irrespectively of its constant readiness to develop friendly cooperation with all relevant partners and stakeholders, has to be able to fulfil its basic duties properly.

Such a vision of NATO might seem to be too narrowly defined, somewhat parochial, maybe even naïve or anachronistic, as well as formulated without sufficiently taking into account the interests and aims of other members. Nevertheless, there are reasons behind the Polish position. NATO remains a community of values, but no longer based on the same level of threats perceptions and interests among all allies. Hence, the logic of bargaining, the *quid-pro-quo* mechanism, is present in relations among them. Formulating its own position in an unequivocal, although radical form, enables Poland to inform other members about Polish needs and priorities, and to manifest the country's determination in achieving them - but this does not exclude finding common ground. Poland is aware of NATO's centrality regarding its own security and will be flexible in searching for an agreement acceptable and beneficial for all members. Hopefully other members will be equally serious about improving NATO's ability to respond to members' security

needs of all kinds, not excluding those which are costly and difficult to satisfy, as well as finding reasonable compromises.

Looking at the results of the Welsh Summit in September 2014, the Polish authorities should be optimistic about the willingness of the Alliance to move regarding its overall strategy and development in the direction preferred by Warsaw. In fact, the majority of Polish requirements and expectations signalled before the meeting found acceptance and recognition from the Alliance's members and were met fully or at least to a large extent. It seems that in Newport the allies made a sincere decision to focus on reassuring members currently most concerned about their security that both NATO's traditional missions (deterrence and defence) and its original area of interest (Europe) are at the core of the Organization's attention. Importantly, they have not limited themselves to solemn declarations of good intentions, but agreed on a quite ambitious set of measures, which will complement the firm rhetoric adopted recently by NATO on its tasks with real substance.

Specifically, they agreed on the rapid development of a rather ambitious Readiness Action Plan (RAP), using two sets of instruments - assurance and adaptation measures - to improve NATO's readiness to act in the current and future security environment, in particular in the European context. To reassure most concerned allies, NATO has decided to maintain and enhance the continuous rotational, but nevertheless meaningful presence in the Eastern part of the Alliance's territory. However, much longer is a list of the second set of measures: so called adaptation measures. It includes, among others, establishing, as a part of already fully operational since 2006 (although not particularly efficient) NATO's Response Force (NRF), a new, highly responsive force: the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF). That new formation will be able (at least it is allies' intention) to react to challenges particularly in the "periphery of NATO territory". Another way of NATO's adaptation to new realities is the pledge to ensure the agility and robustness of its command structure (which includes raising the capabilities of and the readiness level of the Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast in Szczecin). Similar pledge has also been made regarding equipment and supplies prepositioning in the Eastern part of the treaty area to enable quick reinforcement of NATO forces in the region.

The allies agreed also on enhancing exercise programmes and to further develop Connected Forces Initiative (introduced in 2012) and on addressing specific challenges posed by hybrid warfare threats, what should form the basis for an effective NATO response to them. In addition, members stressed the central position of deterrence in NATO's overall strategy, based on an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional and missile defence capabilities (elements of which are currently deployed or will be deployed on some Eastern allies' territories, including Poland). Last but not least, all allies agreed to halt the decline in defence spending

and to aim to increase such expenditures to a minimum level of 2% GDP within a decade, as well as to spend 20% of their defence expenditures on new equipment and research and development activities.

Obviously, even the most elaborate plans and programmes are worthless if NATO members do not have enough determination to make them a reality. However, actions taken just after the Newport meeting give some grounds for (cautious) optimism. Although with various levels of enthusiasm, members have initiated the implementation of the main decisions committed to at Wales, going into discussions on the details of RAP and other recent initiatives and therefore moving from the "conceptual" to the "operational" phase of the process. Hopefully Poland (as well as other countries concerned) will also rise to the occasion, remembering constantly that being an ally means not only persuading others to help us with our problems, but to be ready to bear the appropriate burden and costs of NATO activities, and to think sympathetically and openly about others' security needs and priorities. Fortunately, with Mr Stoltenberg behind NATO's steering wheel, the Alliance as such - and its particular members as well - seem to be ready to succeed on this difficult, but not impossible task of finding common ground and reviving the Organization, which still constitutes the central instrument of their security.

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The Impact of Hungary's NATO Membership. Intra-Alliance Adaptation Between Soft Constraints and Soft Subversion[2]

This chapter will review NATO's impact on the institutional development of defence in Hungary, with special regard to developments within the military, to see to what extent forces of institutional isomorphism may have operated in this respect. Capability development is also assessed as part of this. Subsequently, the chapter will seek to present perceptions and other cognitive aspects of the way the political elite, the public and the military approach the Alliance, to explain deficiencies identified in the first part of the chapter. Based on this overview, we will finally offer a strategic assessment of how NATO membership has impacted Hungarian foreign and security policy.

The Hungarian military in NATO: institutional change and capability development

To offer an assessment of Hungary's record of adaptation within NATO, this section provides an overview of the impact of a decade and a half of NATO membership, and the preceding years of preparation for membership, on the Hungarian Defence Forces' modernization.

Using a theoretical benchmark, we are interested in seeing to what extent institutional isomorphism may have operated in this respect in the case of Hungary. As a theory, the concept of institutional isomorphism suggests that homogenization among competing units takes place especially under circumstances when the number of actors is large, all experience largely the same structural constraints, and at the same time there is uncertainty as to what brings survival advantages and success.[3]

NATO's membership cannot be directly viewed as such a pool of actors but there is some incentive to perform well within the Alliance even as there are major

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[1] Péter Marton benefited in the conduct of the research for this article from the Bolyai János Research Scholarship of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

[2] The authors have drawn in this study on research they did for the following two previous publications: P. Marton, P. Wagner, *Hungary in Afghanistan: A Default Narrative For a Particularly Prudent Public*, [in:] G. Dimitriu, B. van der Graaf, J. Ringsmose (eds.), *Strategic Narratives, Public Opinion and War: Winning Domestic Support for the Afghan War*, Routledge, London - New York, 2015 (forthcoming); and P. Marton, P. Wagner, *The Hungarian Military in the War on Terror*, "Polish Quarterly of International Affairs," Vol. 23, No. 2, 2014, pp. 107-120.

[3] P. J. DiMaggio, W. Powell, *The iron cage revisited: institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields*, "American Sociological Review," Vol. 48 (1983), pp. 147-60.

differences in terms of structural constraints (such as geographical location and the resulting geopolitical constraints, for instance). Due to these and other factors, members may not equally strive to compete well - to say the least. We will seek to make use of our theoretical benchmark accordingly, conscious of these limitations on how much it may apply to the case we are investigating. Reversing this, we operate with the parsimonious assumption that the more institutional imitations we find, the more competitive pressure must have been felt and accepted in Hungary - and this, in turn, may be one measure of the quality of intra-alliance adaptation in its case.

Preparing for membership

Hungary was one of the Central Eastern European countries that at the end of the Cold War showed the most promising political trajectory in its transformation from a state socialist to a liberal democratic system, among the rest of the countries belonging to the post-socialist camp. The Hungarian political elite not only expressed from the beginning its intention to dissolve the Warsaw Pact and the intention to integrate into transatlantic structures but was, in line with this, ready to take proactive and concrete policy measures, including in military matters.

A case in point is crisis management and post-conflict stabilization in the former Yugoslavia. At the time of the outbreak of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the United States asked for permission from Hungary to conduct NATO's AWACS flights in Hungarian airspace. The Hungarian political leadership feared that if they were to allow these, otherwise unarmed, aircraft to use Hungarian airspace, Hungary may suffer retaliation in some form, and that there may be a backlash against ethnic Hungarians in Voivodina, Serbia. In the beginning of 1993, Budapest nevertheless went ahead in giving the green light to NATO, effectively without any security guarantees as to the perceived dangers of this. NATO and the United States interpreted this as an indication of a serious commitment and general trust.[4] In NATO's Interim Force/Stabilisation Force (IFOR/SFOR) mission following the Dayton Accords, from January 1996, Hungary took part with a unit of combat engineers, at battalion strength. It was a proportionally significant contribution even compared to the contributions of countries that were then NATO members, unlike Hungary.

Active participation in the NATO-initiated Partnership for Peace programme in the meantime, starting as early as in 1993, showed the same commitment. Howev-

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[4] *Washingtoni látószög: Amerika a világban, Magyarország Washingtonban* [*A Washington perspective: America in the world, Hungary in America*], *a talk by Ambassador András Simonyi*, 7 May 2009, at the Hungarian Institute of International Affairs, Budapest.

er, this commitment to cooperate with NATO and the inclination to conform to its expectations decreased after its accession in 1999, and Hungary's allies eventually took note of this.[5] Whilst preparing for accession, the country was a part of the vanguard pursuing membership, upon joining, successive Hungarian governments have felt less of a desire to perform well.

Even though Hungary, like other countries waiting for accession at the time, promised that its defence budget would eventually reach 2% of GDP, between 2000 and 2004, the Hungarian Defence Forces' (HDF) share of the budget remained at around 1.7%. It subsequently fell to 1%, in part, as Hungary regularly explained this in the period of 1999 to 2004, due to cost implications of Hungary's EU accession. However, the trends have not been reversed, and the defence budget is currently at 0.8% of GDP, with a budgetary commitment in place to start raising expenditure from 2016.

Until it joined NATO, Hungary's defence budget was able to remain at a relatively high level given that the modernization of the Hungarian military in the 1990s was almost one and the same with continuous reductions in the number of military personnel. This meant that resources were freed up by the resulting reductions in personnel costs.

The problems that became acute upon NATO accession required a solution, and thus a strategic defence review process followed in 1999 as a result of which a 10-year programme of measures was adopted for the modernization of the Hungarian military. Ret. Lt. Gen. Zoltán Szenes' assessment of the situation in the wake of the Kosovo crisis is quite telling as to why there was a need for this:

"The Hungarian military had practically no combat unit at its disposal that could have, without the devotion of additional resources, been capable of executing its tasks".[6]

The attacks of 11 September, 2001 in New York and Washington DC and the subsequent actions of NATO thus came in a context in which Hungary began to display a somewhat decreasing enthusiasm to fulfil intra-alliance expectations, which held some significance with respect to how the following years' developments played out.

When it came to military operations in Afghanistan, Hungary, for two important reasons, did not take part in the first stage of these. First of all, the

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[5] *Sikerült Budapestet bevinnünk a NATO-köztudatba* [*Success in putting Hungary on NATO's agenda*], interview with State Secretary for Defence Policy József Bali, "Honvedelem.hu", date not indicated, [www.honvedelem.hu, access: 12 September 2014].
[6] Z. Szenes, *Magyar haderő-átalakítás a NATO-tagság idején.* "Nemzet és Biztonság", Vol. 2, No. 3 (2009), p. 35.

Hungarian military lacked the capability (including special operations forces) to perform expeditionary operations thousands of kilometres from the country's territory. In the past, the Hungarian People's Army was geared to conduct military operations in Central and Western Europe in a conventional conflict between NATO forces and the Warsaw Pact. The entire organization, its command and control, its armament and its equipment reflected these constraints and to some extent they still do, even today. On the other hand, the Hungarian political elite worried about the reaction by the public to the potential exposure of the Hungarian Defence Forces' soldiers to danger in a faraway country - to such an extent that even if it had had a capable unit it likely would have been disinclined to deploy it, with a view to not risk casualties.

At the same time, in the course of 2000 - 2001, there were certain changes on the regional level that prompted Hungary to launch yet another round of defence reviews. Romania and Slovakia's (then) prospective membership in NATO meant that the two neighbours which traditionally played a role in Hungary's threat perceptions were able to become formal allies of the country. This change was compounded by the fall of the regime of Slobodan Milošević in Serbia in October 2000, and the start of the democratic transition there along with a very different relationship between Serbia and NATO in general compared to the antagonistic relationship in the past. In a sense, ironically, NATO was too successful, and Hungary's sensitivity to the competitive pressure to perform well within the alliance decreased as a result of the NATO enlargement process actually providing it with security.

Thus, Hungary's participation in Afghanistan came only in the phase of stabilization operations, and even then only grudgingly, gradually, and with an awareness of the contributions other Allies were making. The alliance's mobilization left Hungary in a position in which it could not afford to stay away from involvement in Afghanistan. Belatedly, it thus, in other words, acted under the competitive pressure of institutional isomorphism.

Hungary's first military contributions in Afghanistan were in the form of staff officers deployed to the International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF) Kabul HQ, and a few medical officers, in the course of 2003. It was only as a result of the transforming international security landscape that certain required tasks came to be identified related to which work on a new round of modernization began.

The Hungarian defence review[7] prepared for 2003 specified in 10 points the Hungarian military's key tasks for the years ahead. One of these was tasks related to the war on terrorism, and another listed peace enforcement-related tasks in the framework of international crisis management and peace support operations. Doctrinally, and in terms of its existing level of preparedness, these two sets of tasks posed a new challenge for the Hungarian armed forces even with the Hungarian Defence Forces' past experience in stabilization operations in Bosnia. The 10 points mentioned above subsequently also appeared in Act CV (2004) of the Hungarian military which, in Section 1 of Paragraph 70, under point "c", specifically says that the Hungarian Defence Forces can participate in counter-terrorism operations, with units that are assigned and trained for that specific purpose.[8]

As a result of the 2001-2003 review, one of the new capabilities that Hungary thus committed to create was a special operations capability. From the start, in the operations that began in Afghanistan post-2001 a chief role was played by US special forces units. The ability to catch up with those countries that were able to participate in such operations, alongside the United States, was thus, effectively, a crucial dimension of intra-alliance adaptation.

Among the Hungarian Defence Forces' active manoeuvre units, the 34th Bercsényi László Reconnaissance Battalion was selected to be the new special operations unit through reorganization and additional training. As a result of the transformation, it had to become capable of direct action (including seek and destroy, and snatch operations), and special reconnaissance and military assistance missions in support of national and multinational military operations. The operational training and mentoring of foreign military forces, as part of so-called Foreign Internal Defence (FID) tasks, was, however, an immediate item on the agenda, given the need for this in the then active Iraqi and Afghan theatres of operations. This proved somewhat convenient in terms of politics, too, as the political elite was not entirely enthusiastic about the prospect of operations involving direct action and always favoured restricting the use of any special forces capability to the area of FID.

The manpower needs for the first rotations of the different Hungarian mission elements in Afghanistan were usually provided by the 34th Bercsényi Battalion. The most recent mission of the Special Operations Battalion was the one that

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[7] *Shaping the Armed Forces for the 21st Century*, Ministry of Defence, Hungary 2003.
[8] Colonel L. Forray, *A Különleges Műveleti Zászlóalj kiképzésének, felkészítésének és felszerelésének fejlesztési lehetőségei* [*Opportunities to develop the training, preparation and equipment of the Special Operations Battalion*], doctoral dissertation, Zrínyi Miklós Nemzetvédelmi Egyetem, Budapest 2009., pp. 13-14.

most closely reflected its core (new) capability set - in Eastern Afghanistan, in Wardak province. In 2009, a 12-man strong Special Operations Task Unit's (SOTU) was deployed there by Hungary with the task of training a special unit of the provincial police force (the so-called Provincial Response Company, or PRC) and to execute tasks jointly together with them. In an unprecedented manner, the HDF SOTU was provided to NATO without national caveats restricting their activity.

The role of US assistance

As can be noted on the basis of the above, to get to where it was by the last years of ISAF operations, Hungary received significant assistance from the United States throughout the post-2001 period in its foreign missions. Hungary has been a recipient of US Military Grant programmes since 1993, but never before focused to this extent on one particular area, as in the case of the post-2001 build-up of special forces.

A less spectacular factor but one that also played an important role in the modernization of the Hungarian military were studies Hungarian soldiers had the chance to conduct in US military education institutions over the last 20 years. By 2013, over 2,600 officers and NCOs (Non-Commissioned Officers) had received some kind of training or education overseas and in US institutions worldwide over a period of 23 years.[9] Beyond these forms of assistance, the US provided much direct assistance in areas of operations, including MRAP (Mine Resistant, Ambush Protected) vehicles when the situation in Afghanistan deteriorated.

In return for this, even as the country's GDP-proportionate defence spending remained well below the required 2%, Hungary was, most importantly, able to offer to the Alliance its readiness for an active participation in the alliance's foreign missions. In these missions its contribution was marginally very useful to both NATO in general and the United States in particular (i.e., its context-specific value may have been higher than that of Hungary's general defence spending in the alliance). Hungary, in the decade after 2004, consistently kept to its declared ambition level according to which its capacity was to be able to be present with up to 1,000 troops in international missions at any given time.

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[9] Interview with a Ministry of Defense official, 13 December 2013. To get a sense of the proportions of this, please refer to the section of the chapter on force levels.

What drastically changed in the meantime, however, questioning the sustainability of this ambition level, was the overall personnel numbers of the Hungarian Defence Forces. By 2010, there remained only 26,000 personnel in the field of defence altogether (of these about 3,500 worked in the MoD and its background institutions).[10] Only half the HDF's 22,500-strong personnel is made up of active duty ground forces, and 3,000 positions are not actually filled. This means that precisely in the segment of the Hungarian Defence Forces (in its seven infantry battalions) from the ranks of which the 1,000 soldiers making up Hungary's contribution to international missions can be deployed there is an absence of personnel.

The lack of a sufficient number of solders volunteering to participate in international operations proved to be a very hard problem to overcome. The solution to the problem had to lie in financial incentives: the monthly allowance in a foreign mission is now four to five times more than the national minimal wage and some additional benefits are provided as well. One implication of this is that today the average soldier in his/her years of service typically serves in more than one foreign mission. The soldiers who served in these missions have typically, more often than not, been exposed to some kind of combat experience.

Yet in the HDF's case, initially even the combat use of live ammunition posed a peculiar problem, which for years went unresolved. In peacetime (from which what was officially designated as "peace-keeping" in a country with which Hungary was not at war could constitute no deviation in a formal sense) troops could only use live ammunition for the purposes of shooting practice. In Afghanistan, in various engagements a large amount of ammunition was used, however, and thus, initially, whenever Hungarian troops exchanged fire with insurgent forces they had to report on the spent ammunition as they would have had to in a live fire exercise.[11] The example may show that to certain challenges the Hungarian Defence Forces reacted only in a very cumbersome manner. A positive aspect of this case is that a nagging bureaucratic challenge has nevertheless been overcome.

Furthermore, Afghanistan lies more than 4,000 kilometres from Hungary. To resupply and help more than 550 troops operate there (the peak number of personnel in the case of the Hungarian contingent) was no small task, and it paved the way for important innovations. Hungary cooperated with 11 other nations in creating the Strategic Airlift Capability to make up for the collective shortfall of required long-range logistical capacities, and importantly became a main base

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[10] *Tények és adatok a Magyar Honvédségről - 2011*, Ministry of Defence, Zrínyi Média: Budapest 2010.

[11] B. Szlankó*, Maximum nulla áldozattal*, Atheneum: Budapest 2011.

of the consortium, with the multi-national Heavy Airlift Wing using Pápa airport for its operations. An important organizational innovation was the creation for the first time of a National Support Element (NSE) based in-theatre (in Mazar-i-Sharif in this case) for the better coordination of logistical support to the different elements of the Hungarian contingent and, related to this, the setting up of armoured intra-theatre transport capabilities. Initially, some complaints arose about the NSE suffering from red tape,[12] but at the end of the day it once again represents a form of organizational learning which may be sustained for improved use in the future. Notably, the creation of the NSE came again as a part of learning from others, i.e., as a part of an imitation or institutional isomorphism in a context where strengths and weaknesses were meaningfully imposed, with meaningful consequences.

The main source of concern may be not so much the performance of the Hungarian military. Instead, the problem lies in the broader institutional context in which the Hungarian Defence Forces has to function. Inasmuch as a specific Hungarian strategic culture may be said to exist, it is one of avoiding critical political debates, and keeping to a "follower" role vis-à-vis other actors in the country's strategic environment (such as the US in the case of Afghanistan and also within NATO in general).

The Ministry of Defence may itself carry a part of the blame for this in the specific case of the mission in Afghanistan, in that it was happy to "own" the Afghan mission, i.e., take it away from others as its very own. This was apparent in the domination by the MoD of the domestic communication of the Baghlan Provincial Reconstruction Team's (PRT) activities and in its less than pro-active liaising with the other ministries that were involved in the PRT's work. In the MoD's defence, however, it may be said that these other institutions were not very receptive to the idea of working in Afghanistan themselves. They only briefly came to be involved in projects in Afghanistan, doing so more out of a nominal commitment to the "whole-of-government" approach propagated within the alliance as a key to success on the ground, and not out of a genuine interest in putting means and ends together there. Inasmuch as that is the case, it shows how the institutional imitation of others may be hollow in terms of strategic implications: if it does not constitute more than going through the motions or an attempt to be accepted by minimum standards.

By 2010, the human and technical resources of the military were so depleted, as a result of the lack of resources for new acquisitions and the maintenance of exist-

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[12] *Beszélgetés a PRT-ről [A conversation about the PRT], interview with former Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) commander Col. Péter Lippai (commander of PRT-9),* "Seregszemle" Vol. 9, No. 3-4, July/December 2011, pp. 23-27.

ing assets and capabilities, that even the fundamental role of defending the territorial integrity of Hungary could not have been satisfactorily performed.

The going-through-the-motions approach mentioned above in the context of Afghanistan may thus also hold for the way Hungary relates to NATO and the issue of defence overall. To determine the reasons for this strategic disconnect, and its extent, the following section seeks to contextualize the problems identified here.

The human terrain of Hungary's participation in NATO: the political elite and the public

The central, historically informed consideration in Hungary's foreign policy is the need to take into account Hungary's security interests as those of a small country which has in the past and now again found maintaining its autonomy, at times even its independence, difficult. At the same time, Hungary is relatively poor compared to Western European countries, and this informs its calculations, too. The monthly net average wage in Hungary amounted to $683 (nominal value) at the end of 2013.[13] Given a need for cost-efficiency as well as the country's small power status, Hungary's obvious choice to provide for its basic security needs is NATO membership. Credible neutrality, seen as requiring full-spectrum military capabilities, has long been regarded as cost-prohibitive, if not impossible.[14]

For over a decade, the public consistently, albeit rather half-heartedly, supported NATO membership (see poll data from TÁRKI; Szonda - Ipsos; and HABE (the latter showing a mere 47% relative majority considering NATO membership "advantageous" and 47% being indifferent),[15] and from NOL [non-representative data]).[16] Notably, even Hungary's NATO accession was able to go ahead only as a result of a referendum with relaxed validity criteria.[17]

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[13] *Average gross earnings amounted to HUF 227,800 - Earnings, January - October 2013*, Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, 19 December 2013, [www.ksh.hu, access: 10 January 2014].

[14] Z. Szenes, P. Tálas, *Tíz éve a NATO-ban - "Biztonságpolitikai opciók,* Zrínyi Kiadó: Budapest, 2009, p. 11-12.

[15] *Közép-európai közvélemény: Lakossági vélemények a NATO-tagsággal kapcsolatban három visegrádi országban. Magyarország, Csehország és Lengyelország*, TÁRKI, February 2000, [www.tarki.hu, access: 18 May 2013]; *Közvélekedés biztonsági kérdésekről*, a presentation at the international conference *"Biztonságtudat és közvélekedések: A biztonsági fenyegetésekről Magyarországon"*, 1 - 2 February 2008, Budapest, by Szonda - Ipsos; Interview with dr. Zoltán Vámosi, President of the association HABE, date not indicated, [www.honvedelem.hu, access: 2 September 2014].

[16] *A magyarok többsége kivonulna Afganisztánból*, "NOL" 18 September 2010, [www.nol.hu, access: 10 January 2014].

[17] The referendum took place in November 1997. Prior to this, in summer 1997, a new referendum law was accepted by the Hungarian Parliament which specified that for a referendum's results to be valid it requires only a minimum of 25% of the electorate to vote in favour of one or another of the available options.

Given Hungary's generally policy-taking (as opposed to policy-making) approach to international affairs, governments tend to approach policy issues in an elitist manner, and the public does not easily become directly relevant in the field of foreign policy.

As to the public's preferences, there is generally little interest in foreign policy. In one relatively recent poll, 36% declared that they are not interested in foreign and security policy matters. While this may not be particularly remarkable in a comparative perspective, more telling of an inward-looking mentality is how in the same poll 92% rated domestic flood protection and disaster relief to be an important task of the Hungarian military as opposed to (only) 72% rating Hungary's participation in NATO-related peace support operations as important.[18] That there is a lack of deep interest in foreign policy may be true even for polling agencies, judging by how rarely they carry out polling relevant to foreign policy issues.

In Hungary, there is no ambiguous inter-institutional balance of power (as in the case of the United States, between the president and congress) or a regular pattern of fragile coalitions and vulnerable minority governments (unlike a number of parliamentary democracies, Hungary's political and electoral system tends to produce governments that fully serve their mandate). These factors further limit the day-to-day significance of the popularity of individual politicians, governments, governing parties and specific policies. Typically, civil society organization is weak, and cannot plausibly be expected to launch movements capable of re-setting the foreign policy agenda and/or the most important foreign policy preferences of a government.

The reason why the public may still have an effect on foreign policy, and why communicating with citizens remains - in a strategic sense - relevant, specifically in the context of foreign military operations, is the public's sensitivity to military casualties abroad. This is capable of evoking a strong historical sense of vulnerability in society. The loss of up to 100,000 Hungarian troops in operations in and around the Bend of the river Don, in the course of 1942 - 1943 in World War II, is a problematic memory in the context of contemporary foreign military missions which are widely framed as similar undertakings in favour of foreign powers and their, as opposed to Hungary's own, interests. This reinforces the idea of Hungary as a powerless entity caught in the drift of irresistible currents, as a toy of the great powers.

This sentiment makes adapting to the needs of an alliance such as NATO, including burden-sharing therein, challenging.[19] Especially given a generally domes-

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[18] Szonda - Ipsos , *op. cit.*

[19] P. Marton, *Hungary's Post-2001 Ratification Challenges: Lessons Concerning the V4 - Nato Relationship*, "CEJISS" Vol. 6, No. 2 (2012), pp. 187-208.

tically focused public that regards its welfare needs as largely unfulfilled.[20] With respect to this, in a 2008 survey, the majority declared "existential security" to be their most important security-related concern, as compared to military and other aspects of security.[21]

This can turn foreign military missions, strategically necessary as part of Hungary's alliance policy, into hostages of partisan politics.

To get a sense of where public opinion generally stands on the issue of foreign military missions, one may refer to the consistently strong Hungarian opposition to involvement in Iraq from January 2003 to April 2004, in a 2004 poll by Gallup,[22] and (only) weak relative majority support (at 50%) for Hungary's involvement in peacekeeping in Bosnia in the 1990s and for Hungary's involvement in Afghanistan in 2003 in various polls by Gallup (in 1997 and 2003, respectively).[23] Notably, as early as in 2003, 73% thought that Hungary did not have to be in Afghanistan - neither in a combat nor in a non-combat role.[24] Unfortunately, similar poll results related to Afghanistan are not available post-2003. However, in a 2010 non-representative internet-based poll 52% opposed involvement in Afghanistan, 43% thought that the mission was endangering Hungary's security, and 66% deemed the government's efforts to inform the public about it insufficient.[25] Paraphrasing Jentleson, the Hungarian public may thus well qualify as a "Particularly Prudent Public", in light of the above.[26] Hence there was always a preference on the part of successive governments to avoid a deep and especially a more persistent discussion of the reasons for Hungary's involvement in Afghanistan.

This policy or governmental attitude seems to have affected successive governments' lack of desire to publicize poll results about support levels. Internal polls were not shared in a forthcoming manner with researchers and are almost never referenced in public discourse. An exceptional occasion was when Minister of Defence Imre Szekeres referred to support for "participation in NATO operations" standing at 69% (Szonda - Ipsos was commissioned to carry out the poll

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[20] *Hivatalosan is a magyar a legboldogtalanabb nemzet*, "!!444!!!," 6 August 2013, [www.444.hu, access: 10 January 2014].

[21] *Interview with dr. Zoltán Vámosi…*

[22] *A magyarok háromnegyede visszahívná a katonákat Irakból*, Magyar Gallup Intézet, 11 May 2004, [www.gallup.hu, access: 19 May 2013].

[23] *A közvélemény a Magyarországon állomásozó IFOR csapatokról és a boszniai békefenntartásban való magyar részvételről 1996. decemberében*, Magyar Gallup Intézet, Hírlevél - No. 6, 28 February 1997, [www.parlament.hu, access: 19 May 2013]; *Kis többségben vannak a katonai orvoscsoport kiküldését támogatók*, Magyar Gallup Intézet, 31 January 2003, [www.gallup.hu, access: 19 May 2013].

[24] Gallup, 2003, *op. cit.*

[25] NOL, 2010, *op. cit.*

[26] B. Jentleson, *The Pretty Prudent Public: Post Post-Vietnam Public Opinion on the Use of Military Force*, "International Studies Quarterly", Vol. 36, 1992, pp. 49-74.

referenced on the occasion; it is unclear, however, whether respondents supported the Afghanistan mission in specific, rather than only NATO operations in general).[27]

This approach may have been warranted if public opinion data are anything to go by. In 2006, 82% thought it is a "legitimate" demand from Hungary's NATO partners that the country partake in NATO's foreign operations, showing little change by 2007 when this ratio stood at 81%.[28] This indirectly supportive attitude may have made the avoidance of directly discussing the Afghanistan mission feasible.

Beyond this, decision-makers themselves were never particularly intrigued by the details of how the West may win in Afghanistan. This was seen as removed from the direct Hungarian interest, and therefore received wisdom in this respect sufficed for those involved in policy matters. The key aim in Afghanistan, openly stated by various political figures in Hungary in the past, was to be there for the Alliance when (and as long as) it needed this. As former Minister of Defence Ferenc Juhász (Socialist) opined in an interview, "This is about NATO, not Afghanistan. What else would we have to do there other than taking responsibility together with our allies?"[29]

That NATO provides for Hungary's security itself has not been questioned in official government discourse and it has only been questioned, or denied rather, by the far right Jobbik party. The overall public discourse at times does reflect less than a genuine conviction of Hungary's being a part of the West, or even the strategic importance of the relationship with the West. Inasmuch as governments shy away from a higher defence spending or from supporting alliance undertakings (such as was the case in Libya), it may be seen as a result of compensating for these public sentiments (even if governments do not openly accommodate these sentiments). Thus, the inhibiting role of said public attitudes can be observed to have importance.

A key part of the ongoing defence modernization, the European Union's concept of the Visegrád Battle Group (BG), is a case in point in this respect. The vision behind the BG is to create a joint, on-call crisis management force with Hungary's Visegrád partners (Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia) that would be operational by 2016, for use in European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) missions. With each of the participating countries offering different contributions, the main force component is set to be provided by Poland, whereas

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[27] *A magyarok szeretik a véres afgán missziót*, "Index," 1 July 2008, [www.index.hu, access: 11 December 2013].

[28] Szonda - Ipsos, *op. cit.*

[29] B. Szlankó, *op. cit.*

Hungary offered primarily combat engineers in support of the BG. In principle, that the BG may serve in the framework of a NATO operation cannot be ruled out, given the existing NATO - ESDP framework of cooperation.

Whilst this goal seems realistic, and the Battle Group may have been formed by this date, its functionality (and hence its strategic value) may be questioned. Moreover, many in Hungary see the BG as the kind of cooperative effort that fulfils even NATO's call for Smart Defence, i.e., for pooling and sharing, and spending on defence collectively. Smart Defence in fact may call for much more, and if the BG is not really functional, it would in fact not represent any improvement in this respect. Hungarian decision-makers seem to have spent some thought on this in light of the Ukraine - Russia conflict, and in the spring of 2014 it was announced that Hungary would be looking to make use of its JAS 39 *Gripen* aircraft in a Close Air Support (CAS) role, going beyond the original concept of a Hungarian BG contribution which was intended to be limited to combat engineering and logistics. It is exactly the Ukrainian crisis, however, where differences in Visegrád countries' positions make actual utilization of the BG in a strategic context highly unlikely, given the diverse, even divergent, trajectories these countries have taken in response to Russia's foreign policy behaviour - differing even on how they interpret said behaviour.

Alliance exploitation and soft subversion in response to soft imposition

In interpreting how Hungary, once a prominent vanguard state in search of being accepted to join NATO, ended up consistently underperforming in the alliance in terms of its defence budget, and its defence-related research and development and acquisitions spending, as well as, to some extent, in terms of its strategic adaptation to the alliance's future needs, we posit a simple, two-fold explanation. A part of this explanation pertains to general intra-alliance dynamics as they can be observed from the now long-time record within NATO, whilst the second part of the argument concerns factors peculiar to Hungary's case in recent times.

The literature specifically on coalition and alliance burden-sharing may offer some basic clues as to why Hungary, along with many other NATO countries, behaves as it does. This field of the literature was profoundly informed by Olson and Zeckhauser's classic 1966 study of burden-sharing within NATO,[30] for its part influenced by a realist perspective of international relations, i.e., one emphasizing states' need to rely primarily on self-help, requiring from them selfishness and utility maximization for the sake of survival. From this perspective, Olson and

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[30] M. Olson, Jr., R. Zeckhauser, *An Economic Theory of Alliances*, RAND Corporation: Santa Monica 1966.

Zeckhauser asked why Allies spent a different percentage of their GDP on defence, and why collectively the Alliance was regularly falling short of what it itself deemed necessary in terms of defence expenditure, at various points during the Cold War. In their assessment, a consideration of different countries' peculiar marginal utility curves was included, and the significance of this in shaping countries' indifference curves was pointed out (for defence spending vs. other spending, or "guns vs. butter").

Somewhat disconnected to this, there developed, within the long-term discourse generated by Olson and Zeckhauser's study, an understanding of smaller Alliance member countries' behaviour in the framework of what is often referred to as the "exploitation" hypothesis. Ringsmose's work on Denmark's long-term performance within NATO is a good example of this,[31] as it points out how it is sometimes useful but generally rather difficult to exclude an under-performing country from the consumption of Alliance public goods (as is the nature of public goods per definition) and how consequently it is hard to pressure it to perform on par with other contributors. Kimball's abstract analysis of the guns vs. butter dilemma in terms of a production possibilities frontier[32] similarly leads to the conclusion that certain countries may exploit alliances by outsourcing or "contracting out" defence to them, thus allowing them a higher level of welfare (higher at least than what they enjoyed prior to the Alliance, even if the country in question is comparatively poor). Even the paradoxically (if only nominally) high contributions of countries such as Denmark or Hungary to operations in Afghanistan can be explained in this framework, as Marton and Hynek and Marton and Wagner show: outstanding nominal contributions (in terms of troop numbers compared to GDP and population data) in the Alliance's foreign missions may in many cases be marginal compensation for what is under-performing by the more general standard of defence budget size.[33]

At the same time, there also seem to be factors specific to Hungary playing a role in determining the country's approach to defence matters, as may transpire from the previous section dealing with the human terrain (i.e., the elite and the public) in this respect. Whereas NATO is only capable of soft-imposing its

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[31] J. Ringsmose, *Paying for Protection: Denmark's Military Expenditure during the Cold War*, "Cooperation and Conflict," Vol. 44, No. 1 (2009), pp. 73-97.

[32] A. L. Kimball, *Political survival, policy distribution, and alliance formation*. "Journal of Peace Research," Vol. 47, No. 4 (2010), pp. 407-419.

[33] P. Marton, N. Hynek, *Introduction: What Makes Coalitions Stick?*, [in:] P. Marton, N. Hynek (eds.) *Statebuilding in Afghanistan: Multinational Contributions to Reconstruction*, Routledge: London - New York 2011, pp. 1-26; P. Marton, P. Wagner, *Hungary's Involvement in Afghanistan: Proudly Going Through the Motions?*, [in:] P. Marton, N. Hynek (eds.) *Statebuilding in Afghanistan: Multinational Contributions to Reconstruction*, Routledge: London - New York, pp. 192-211.

requirements on member states (as Ringsmose, cited above, concludes, too), a country such as Hungary utilizes what in many of its manifestations may be referred to as an approach of soft subversion. Hungary does participate in NATO's foreign missions when perceived as a must[34] and does spend on maintaining a military force but does not do more than that. At the same time, it cannot be easily pressured into doing more given the disinclination of the Hungarian public, and to some extent its elite, too, to see specific demands to do more as illegitimate.

This may be indicative of a generally rather shallow vision as to NATO's role. Hungary's political elite takes the security guarantee provided by the Alliance seriously but does not ponder the implications of this in depth. Hungary's basic preference is to have a peaceful milieu in its region, including a none-too-confrontative relationship with Russia. As Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán stated, his understanding of the imperatives evolved in the Ukrainian context: "we will be doves in the field of the economy [i.e., on the issue of economic sanctions vis-à-vis Russia] but we will be hawks when it comes to security policy [i.e., on the issue of reinforcing NATO's commitment to providing for the collective security of its members]".[35]

It remains to be seen as to whether the public's attitudes and threat perceptions have transformed as a result of events in Ukraine - and it will be equally interesting to see *how* they may have changed. The government has at least, in the present context, reaffirmed its commitment to start spending more on defence, with a view to the aforementioned developments.

Conclusion

A preliminary conclusion is that NATO membership (and already the prospect thereof) fundamentally contributed to defence modernization and structured capability development according to the Alliance's needs. In the post-2001 setting, institutional imitation went further, and, largely reflecting the needs of US-led operations in Afghanistan and with major US assistance, Hungary built up its own special operations forces.

However, whereas Hungary's adaptation in this respect is noteworthy, in other areas there is a more mixed record, as detailed in this study. Defence spending is remarkably low and this is as much an indication of the importance of cognitive aspects of the way key actors and the public relate to NATO membership in Hun-

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[34] P. Marton, J. Eichler, *Between willing and reluctant entrapment: CEE countries in NATO's non-European missions*, "Journal of Communist and Post-Communist Studies," Vol. 46, No. 3 (2013), pp. 351-362.
[35] J. Spirk, *Szokatlanul keveset beszélt Orbán a zárt Fidesz-ülésen*, "Index", 11 September 2014, [www.index.hu, access: 14 September 2014].

gary as much as it is a reflection of general trends within military alliances, predicted by the theory of alliance burden-sharing. Related to this, we conclude that Hungary has a rather shallow vision of what the fundamental role of the Alliance is. The Hungarian political elite sees the security guarantee of NATO membership as important but does not ponder the implications of this in depth.

Overall, we thus find that whilst NATO membership "soft-imposed" certain normative constraints on Hungarian foreign policy, the country's elite has been, at the same time, "soft-challenging" these constraints through their practice, due to rather persistent attitudes and beliefs on the part of both governing elites and the public.

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When Contributions Abroad Mean Security at Home? The Baltic States and NATO Burden-Sharing in Afghanistan

Afghanistan's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), coming under NATO's command in 2003, proved, in earnest, the first challenge for the three Baltic states - Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania - as NATO allies following their accession in 2004. Participating in this operation provided opportunities but it also brought difficulties and dilemmas. While the initial difficulty included a doubtful choice in favour of, at times, developing a military posture for out-of-area security provision ahead of one for territorial defence, ISAF nonetheless provided the Baltic states with a major platform to demonstrate themselves as integral NATO Allies as well as opportunities to build diplomatic capital which could be later utilized to enhance NATO's Baltic security assurances. This chapter will outline the Baltic states' performance in attempting to provide security goods perceived as being of value for ISAF's mission.

The chapter will first examine the territorial security predicament which serves as the basis for Baltic security policy formation, before discussing the opportunities and difficulties an operation of ISAF's type held for small allies simultaneously seeking territorial security. Moving to the evaluation of the individual burden-sharing policy of each Baltic state, the arguments as to why the main security goods contributed (Estonia's deployment of combat troops, Latvia's security capacity-building/coordination within the Northern Distribution Network - NDN, and Lithuania's Provincial Reconstruction Team - PRT) may have held varying premiums in the eyes of NATO's hegemonic allies will be analysed. Lastly, it will be concluded that while an uncomfortable division of labour existed among the Baltic states, the burden-sharing of each state nonetheless served to increase its diplomatic capital with the United States in particular, this plausibly serving to enhance their transatlantic link and, as the Baltic states themselves would see it, benefit thereafter their territorial security.

The Baltic security predicament

While the precedent of Russia's 2014 annexation of the Crimea has brought an international focus back to the Baltic security situation, since the end of the Cold War and persisting beyond European Union and NATO accession in 2004, West-

ern policy-makers have largely seen the Baltic position on territorial defence as over-exaggerated by excessive nationalism or paranoia.[1] Whether perseverance with this threat perception has been vindicated or otherwise is not a matter for this chapter, nonetheless, although it should not be seen as the full picture, it should be no surprise that the Russian threat also played a central role in framing the out-of-area burden-sharing policies of the Baltic states during the 2000s. As Hans Mouritzen argues, like many other participating states, politics and power relations much closer to home were crucial in the Baltic states' decision to support George W. Bush's controversial 2003 war in Iraq.[2]

Indeed, under a pessimistic prognosis, the Baltic states reside in a challenging neighbourhood. From a conventional military perspective, in the analysis of former Estonian Chief of Staff, Ants Laaneots, the Baltic states comprise an isolated "peninsula" within the wider NATO alliance system and thus its weakest link in terms of territorial defence.[3] Lithuania perceives the Russian threat from the east and west, bordering the highly militarized Kaliningrad Oblast said to host the 9K720 *Iskander* mobile theatre ballistic missile systems.[4] From an unconventional viewpoint, with both containing Russian speaking minorities of approximately 25% among their populations, Estonia and Latvia see the threat that Russian propaganda might have in agitating sections of these groups in order to mobilize them against the states within which they reside. This threat also involves manipulations by Russian special forces and has been described in previous Estonian defence concepts as a "coup attack".[5]

Given these circumstances, a Baltic "discourse of danger" has long been present, advocating the best protection against resurgent Russian power is the presence of well-maintained NATO-sponsored security guarantees.[6] The most direct expression of this logic has come from the Lithuanian president, Dalia Grybauskaitė, who has described NATO as an "insurance policy" against any irre-

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[1] This is best illustrated by a Wikileaks cable from 2009, where Tallinn's US ambassador argued that Estonia's defence policy is *"based on an almost paranoid perception of an imminent Russian attack".* See *09 Tallinn 114, Estonia's Pessimistic Approach to Russia,* "Wikileaks", 27 April 2009, [www.wikileaks.org, access: 10 September 2014].

[2] H. Mouritzen, *The Nordic-Baltic Area: Divisive Geopolitics at Work*, "Cambridge Review of International Affairs", Vol. 19, No. 3 (2006), p. 504.

[3] *Retired General Speaks on Baltic Isolation, Russian Fears*, "Eesti Rahvusringhääling", 14 January 2014, [www.news.err.ee, access: 6 September 2014].

[4] *Seimas' Committee to be Briefed on Missile Deployment in Kaliningrad,* "The Lithuanian Tribune", 18 December 2013, [www.lithuaniatribune.com, access: 6 September 2014].

[5] E. Männik, *Small States: Invited to NATO - Able to Contribute?*, "Defense & Security Analysis", Vol. 20, No.1 (2003), p. 29.

[6] Ø. Jæger, *Securitizing Russia: Discursive Practices of the Baltic States*, "Peace and Conflict Studies", Vol. 7, No. 2 (2000), p. 23.

dentist intentions Moscow may hold for the future.[7] Regarding specific security guarantee maintenance strategies during the ISAF era, the respective Baltic policies were clear in emphasizing the enhancement of their transatlantic link as the prime objective. The hegemonic United States was, unquestionably, the principal ally from which to seek recognition. This was explicit in many Baltic statements, an illuminating example being former Lithuanian Minister for National Defence, Rasa Juknevičienė, who has stated: "the partnership with the US in the field of defense is the basis of Lithuanian statehood".[8]

Among the other NATO powers, albeit to a more minor extent, the Baltic states perceived the United Kingdom as a key partner ally, factoring in London's long-held role as the European power anchoring the transatlantic partnership, together with its role as the main deputy for the United States in leading the coordination for both ISAF and Iraq's Multi-National Force. A perhaps inevitable drawback arising from this highly Atlanticist focus was less Baltic attention towards the positions of France and Germany, two Allies whose influence over contemporary NATO policy should not be underestimated. Franco-German indifference to the Baltic viewpoint originates from their occasional desire to soften the rigours of United States hegemony in Europe and their often more sympathetic position towards Russia. This, at times, has led Paris and Berlin to view the Baltic states as "awkward" partners within the wider scheme of foreign policy.[9]

ISAF burden-sharing: difficulties and opportunities

At first glance, the Baltic states fit squarely within Stephen Walt's neorealist "balance-of-threat" alliance theory, in that their vulnerability in light of potential Russian aggression motivates support for NATO initiatives due to its security guarantees under the Washington Treaty's Article 5.[10] However, an explanation based purely on this approach would be too monochrome, as Walt's theory would omit other ideational factors underlying Baltic support for NATO and the United States, such as gratitude derived from the vision of the United States as the "absentee liberator" enabling the Soviet collapse and the subsequent restoration of

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[7] D. Grybauskaitė cited in N. Adomaitis, *Lithuania Awaits NATO "Insurance Plan" on Russia*, "Reuters", 11 March 2010, [www.in.reuters.com, access: 6 September 2014].

[8] R. Juknevičienė cited in M. Mälksoo and M. Šešelgytė, *Reinventing "New" Europe: Baltic Perspectives on Transatlantic Security Reconfigurations*, "Communist and Post-Communist Studies", Vol. 46, No. 3 (2013), p. 400.

[9] B. Ljung, T. Malmlöf, K. Neretnieks and M. Winnerstig (eds.), *The Security and Defensibility of the Baltic States: A Comprehensive Analysis of a Security Complex in the Making*, Swedish Defence Research Agency: Stockholm 2012, p. 45.

[10] S. M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, Cornell University Press: Ithaca - New Jersey 1987.

sovereignty after 1991,[11] or what Maria Mälksoo calls "missionary obligations" originating from the Baltic states' own experience under oppression and fostering a will to prevent others from suffering a similar fate.[12] Moreover, this theory cannot provide insight into another key feature of Baltic NATO burden-sharing during the ISAF era, namely the question as to how proficient were these allies in generating contributions of value within the context of core Alliance objectives and, consequently, how did these contributions aid in maintaining their transatlantic security link?

While the former question will be examined further as this chapter progresses, the latter question first requires a brief explanation of the term "diplomatic capital". In this context, Rebecca Adler-Nissen explains capital as a form of "currency" which can be traded in diplomatic negotiations, gathered through the portrayal of positive "social competences, reputation and personal authority".[13] Linking the idea of diplomatic capital to Allied behaviour during the ISAF years, Nik Hynek and Péter Marton identify four main roles taken up by contributing Allies:

- the "owner" of the mission, the United States, as securing Afghanistan was a direct objective within its security policy;
- the "strivers", those reliant on NATO's security provision, which as a consequence motivated them to make contributions of more arduously generated goods judged as at a premium by the mission's "owner" and NATO's prime hegemonic ally, the United States;
- the "servants", those contributing goods deemed of lower demand by the "owner", but wishing to retain NATO for a miscellany of reasons short of alliance dependence; and, finally,
- the "onlookers", those with weak motivation who contributed superficially.[14]

Thus, in the context of Baltic hopes and fears, the optimum opportunity presented by ISAF was a chance to enhance diplomatic capital through "striving". The ultimate benefit of which being increased access to hegemonic allies and, in

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[11] R. Fawn, *Alliance Behaviour, the Absentee Liberator and the Influence of Soft Power: Postcommunist State Positions over the Iraq War in 2003*, "Cambridge Review of International Affairs", Vol. 19, No. 3 (2006), pp. 465-480.

[12] M. Mälksoo, *The Politics of Becoming European. A Study of Polish and Baltic Post-Cold War Security Imaginaries*, Routledge: London 2009, p. 137.

[13] R. Adler - Nissen, *The Diplomacy of Opting Out: A Bourdieudian Approach to National Integration Strategies*, "Journal of Common Market Studies", Vol. 46, No. 3 (2008), pp. 670-671.

[14] N. Hynek and P. Marton, *Introduction: What Makes Coalitions Stick?,* [in:] N. Hynek and P. Marton (eds.), *Statebuilding in Afghanistan: Multinational Contributions to Reconstruction*, Routledge: London 2011, pp. 5-6.

turn, a greater platform to influence NATO policy in the Baltic Sea region. On the other hand, as the goods seen as at a premium by ISAF's leadership required strenuous efforts to produce, the risks of ISAF for the Baltic states consisted in a worry over domestic political, resource or expertise constraints preventing them from generating contributions of premium demand. This in turn could lead to negative diplomatic capital, with fledgling reputations damaged and the label of "onlooker" designated within the Alliance.

In terms of which contributions were seen as of premium demand relative to others, NATO never outlined a neat linear scale. Where generic metrics such as defence spending relative to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) remain important measures, within the more defined ISAF context, the United States often gave strong indications as to what was required, a case was unmistakeably documented in Robert Gates' 2011 speech as outgoing Secretary of Defence: "In the past, I've worried openly about NATO turning into a two-tiered alliance: between members who specialize in 'soft' humanitarian, development, peacekeeping, and talking tasks, and those conducting the 'hard' combat missions".[15]

Thus, the often politically difficult task of deploying troops without caveats to Afghan regions where intensive combat was required for security provision was undoubtedly placed at a premium by Washington. However, ISAF was conducted under the Comprehensive Approach which emphasizes both the civilian and military aspects of security provision.[16] Hence, "softer" goods including: financing and expertise for infrastructural reconstruction projects, peacekeeping, the provision of humanitarian aid and mentorship in the Security Sector Reform (SSR) were also valued within ISAF's division of labour. Albeit, the value of these contributions was likely seen arbitrarily by the hegemonic allies depending on supply sequences and when and where the contributions were made.

For the Baltic states, ISAF burden-sharing expectations brought a number of interesting trade-offs between difficulties and opportunities. On one hand, it has been argued that significant resources have been spent on the development of peacekeeping units, meaning greater investment in territorial defence capabilities related to allied force hosting, anti-tank and anti-aircraft functions has had to be shelved.[17] However, on the other hand, in the Latvian and Lithuanian cases, it has been argued that their resiliently strong commitment to ISAF assisted in shielding

[15] R. Gates, *The Security and Defence Agenda (Future of NATO),* US Department of Defence, 10 June 2011, [www.defense.gov, access: 11 September 2014].

[16] *A "Comprehensive Approach" to Crises*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 21 August 2014, [www.nato.int, access: 6 September 2014].

[17] A. Kasekamp and V. Veebel, *Overcoming Doubts: The Baltic States and the European Security and Defence Policy*, [in:] A. Kasekamp (ed.), *The Estonian Foreign Policy Yearbook 2007*, Estonian Foreign Policy Institute: Tallinn 2007, p. 23.

them from NATO criticism over their overall low defence spending ratios.[18] Moreover, going by the logic of former Latvian defence minister, Artis Pabriks, with much of NATO's Baltic air policing implemented by other allies, ISAF gave the Baltic states an opportunity to compensate through the exchange of security goods, remarking in 2012 that "It's much easier if someone else is doing air policing in our airspace, and at the same time we contribute our forces and capabilities somewhere else".[19]

Finally, given their intra-NATO pursuit of diplomatic capital with utility to aid their territorial security situation, such posturing can become a difficulty if sought too vigorously. Albeit a different case, Poland pursued a similar ISAF strategy. Differentiating the Poles from the more altruistic Danish approach, one US diplomat expressed Poland as treating ISAF as a "bazaar" as far as what Warsaw sought to acquire in return for contributions. A further US official emphasized that over-zealous reward-seeking had the propensity to "backfire".[20] Hence, to succeed, the Baltic strategy faced a difficult diplomatic balancing act in making NATO aware of Baltic territorial security concerns while, at the same time, not pushing this too far.

Having discussed the wider difficulties and opportunities that partaking in out-of-area burden-sharing has brought for the Baltic states, the individual contribution policies for ISAF employed by each state will now be examined within this context in order to establish the utility of each contribution for the accumulation of diplomatic capital. Going in geographic order from north to south, Estonia shall be examined first.

Estonia: the burdens of striving

Concerning NATO's most quoted defence spending metrics, Estonia has been in the alliance's top performing echelon, achieving the NATO obligated 2% of GDP spending on defence in 2012, progress which was retained into 2013. For this reason, Estonia drew particular praise from former NATO Secretary-General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, as an example for other allies to follow.[21] Moreover, in

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[18] T. Rostoks, *Baltic States and NATO*, "The Lithuanian Tribune", 1 October 2012, [www.lithuaniatribune.com, access: 6 September 2014].

[19] A. Pabriks cited in *NATO Extends Baltic Air Policing Mission to 2018*, "DefenseNews", 8 February 2012, [www.defensenews.com, access: 6 September 2014].

[20] Cited in A. Henriksen and J. Ringsmose, *What Did Denmark Gain? Iraq, Afghanistan and the Relationship with Washington*, [in:] N. Hvidt and H. Mouritzen (eds.), *The Danish Foreign Policy Yearbook 2012*, Danish Institute of International Studies: Copenhagen 2012, p. 161.

[21] *NATO Secretary General Praises Estonia's Commitment to Smart Defence,* "NATO News", 19 January 2012, [www.nato.int, access: 6 September 2014].

recent years, Estonia has been NATO's most economical ally when it comes to spending on military personnel costs, with statistics between approximately 32% and 43% of its defence budget from 2011 to 2013. This is an important metric as it indicates the remainder potentially available for modernization, procurement and capability development. Estonia has not followed other Central and Eastern European allies such as Slovenia and Romania whose percentages in this category have been somewhat bloated, ranging between the mid-70s and mid-80s over the same time period.[22] It is worth noting that in alliance politics, size undoubtedly matters in terms of maximizing the effect a particular operation hopes to achieve, and while these Estonian contributions have been significant considering the country's size, they remain small. In 2012, Estonia's total military expenditure was 340 million EUR.[23] Nevertheless, from a political standpoint, these contributions are important. As discussed, political gains aid the accumulation of diplomatic capital, a valuable commodity among Baltic allies.

While size is important, with casualties at stake in combat intensive theatres, even a relatively small number of troops can prove significant for aggregate alliance objectives. In direct connection to Estonia's military contribution in Helmand, an unexpected case of possible larger ally thinking in this respect came with the 2011 publication of Toby Harnden's *"Dead Men Risen"*,[24] of which the first batch of copies were purchased by the UK Ministry of Defence (MoD) and destroyed, which, according to Harnden, aimed to ensure elements of the book's content would not influence Estonian public opinion and hence risk pressuring Tallinn's decision-makers to withdraw their troops from the hostile Afghan province.[25] These panicked reflexes from the United Kingdom perhaps credit the aggregate value seen in the 150 or so Estonian troops who fought alongside British and American forces in Helmand. Martial Foucault and Frédéric Mérand have stated that the premium for a troop deployment in a benign Afghan province is hardly equal to a troop deployment in a more violent, risk intensive region where a greater combat reaction is demanded.[26] Hence, deployment in the latter

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[22] *Financial and Economic Data Relating to NATO Defence,* North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 24 February 2014, [www.nato.int, access: 6 September 2014].

[23] *Ibidem.*

[24] T. Harnden, *Dead Men Risen: The Welsh Guards and the Defining Story of Britain's War in Afghanistan*, Quercus: London 2011.

[25] With the book sometimes descriptively depicting the suffering and death of soldiers fighting in Helmand, in Harnden's account, the MoD's concern was that these details could negatively influence Estonian public opinion at a sensitive stage just before a general election in March 2011, see T. Harnden, *MoD Tried to Stop Dead Men Risen Book "To Prevent Ally Withdrawing from Afghanistan"*, "The Telegraph", 15 March 2011, [www.telegraph.co.uk, access: 6 September 2014].

[26] M. Foucault and F. Mérand, *The Challenge of Burden-Sharing*, "International Journal", Vol. 67, No. 2 (2011), p. 427.

context is likely to generate greater contribution value which in turn may increase diplomatic capital moving into the future. This logic has been well heeded by the Estonian defence policy establishment.

In terms of the dilemma of dual engagement, ISAF was prioritized above Iraq's Multi-National Force. With the latter, the Estonian troop contingent never exceeded 40-55.[27] As the Obama administration itself prioritized Afghanistan as "the right war" from 2009, this preference perhaps contrived to facilitate the best opportunities for gains in diplomatic capital over a longer time period. Indications of these gains can be identified in the statements of a number of officials. Speaking in Tallinn in 2012, NATO's Anders Fogh Rasmussen praised Estonia's policy of providing its troops to ISAF without caveats restricting combat exposure as an alliance asset: "I particularly welcome the fact that Estonian forces are operating in Afghanistan without restrictions. Because that means they can be deployed quickly whenever, and wherever extra troops are needed to improve security".[28]

Whereas Estonia's British ambassador, Chris Holtby, has outlined that ISAF served to confirm Estonia's credentials as a proficient NATO ally which in turn fosters positive future repercussions, writing that, "Fundamentally, the UK military wants to work closely in the future with Estonian forces because we know they are capable and effective. This has been proved in Afghanistan".[29] Meanwhile, the perceived benefits of ISAF participation have already been counted by Estonian policy-makers, addressing his country's troops in Afghanistan in 2013, defence minister, Urmas Reinsalu, stated unequivocally, "Thanks to your contribution to our relations with allies, our international ties, credibility and visibility are greater than ever before. Everyone knows how good Estonian soldiers are in battle".[30]

While the troop deployment in Helmand will stand as Estonia's principal contribution to ISAF, the development of a number of niche capabilities in parallel to this further highlight an Estonian policy pivoted towards the accumulation of diplomatic capital. In Afghanistan, Estonia's combat capabilities were augmented by efficiency in improvised explosive device (IED) and mine retrieval.[31] It has also

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[27] R. Carroll, *Estonian Troops Relish Iraqi Patrols*, "The Guardian", 3 September 2005, [www.theguardian.com, access: 9 September 2014].

[28] A. Fogh Rasmussen, *NATO's Baltic Allies: Punching Above Their Weight*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 19 January 2012, [www.nato.int, access: 6 September 2014].

[29] C. Holtby, *UK - Estonian Defence Cooperation in NATO*, "Estonian World", 1 April 2014, [www.estonianworld.com, access: 21 October 2014].

[30] *Reinsalu: Next 12 Months in Afghanistan are Critical*, Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Estonia, 28 June 2013, [www.kmin.ee, access: 6 September 2014].

[31] This capability too received an honourable mention from US officials, see *Estonian Troops Make Afghanistan Highway Safer*, US Embassy in Estonia, 20 January 2012, [www.estonia.usembassy.gov, access: 8 September 2014]. For a full break-down of smaller Estonian contributions to ISAF, see

been noted that, while Estonia remained an unattractive target for terrorist groups, the security policy establishment nonetheless invested considerably in acquiring counter-terrorism capabilities as this was an aptitude in demand during the first decade of Estonia's NATO membership.[32] Beyond the capability itself, this action perhaps carried an implicit political message to the effect that Estonia stood ready and willing to develop and deploy capabilities suited to NATO's common interests regardless of its own security situation, an investment in alliance solidarity perhaps paradoxically attempting to prove Tallinn's worthiness for reciprocation should Estonian territorial security be threatened.

Latvia: burdens of dual engagement

Latvia's role as a principal coordinator within the Northern Distribution Network (NDN) has been argued by some as being Riga's most substantial contribution to ISAF. With the implementation of the comprehensive approach requiring a multitude of material commodities, established as an alternative to riskier supply routes via Pakistan, the NDN came as a stable supply channel spanning a large swath of the Eurasian land mass. As Māris Andžāns argues, together with provision of its ports and air, road and rail links, Latvia was also able to contribute significant expertise due to its experience with pre-existing commercial transit links for Central Asia. For cargo delivery, US transit was handled by Washington-appointed contractors, however, cargo for other states using the NDN was organized under the "Latvian Lead Nation Concept", whereby, under Riga's coordination, ISAF's remaining participants could access contracts allowing them to pool their cargos, enabling faster delivery and greater cost efficiency.[33] Latvian leadership in this area can be credited as important in facilitating the transit links required for improved implementation of the comprehensive approach.

In conventional military terms, together with Lithuania, Latvia has sometimes been billed in the international media as a NATO weak-link due to its low defence spending ratios. For instance, while quoting a US official describing Estonia as "a model alliance member", a 2011 article in "*The Economist*" pours scorn upon Latvia's and Lithuania's comparatively lower military spending percentages, ending with a disparaging proposition: "why should outsiders bother to protect countries

H. Mölder, *Estonia and ISAF: Lessons Learned and Future Prospects*, "The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs", No. 2/2014, p. 63.

[32] M. Omelicheva, *Reference Group Perspective on State Behaviour: A Case Study of Estonia's Counterterrorism Policies*, "Europe-Asia Studies", Vol. 61, No. 3 (2009), pp. 483-504.

[33] M. Andžāns, *The Northern Distribution Network and its Implications for Latvia*, [in:] A. Sprūds, D. Potjomkina (eds.), *Northern Distribution Network: Redefining Partnerships in NATO and Beyond*, Latvian Institute of International Affairs: Riga 2013, pp. 23-24.

that won't take their own defence seriously?".[34] Similar rhetoric has also been taken up by the Estonian media, a November 2012 article by journalist Mikk Salu in the country's most popular daily, "*Postimees*", led with a sensationalist headline carrying the message that Latvia was then the largest vulnerability to Estonian security, an audacious claim deducting its prognosis on the basis that an attack on one Baltic state would by default acutely weaken the security prospects of the other two.[35] Under this logic, by not investing in its military deterrent, Latvia was indirectly jeopardizing the security of its neighbours.

A flaw in this article was its omission of NATO contribution activity abroad. As elaborated upon in this chapter, alongside raw military expenditure, contributions to out-of-area missions have also been seen as crucial as the Baltic states seek to strengthen security at home. Thus, debating the accuracy of such criticism requires an analysis that takes place within the wider context of transatlantic burden-sharing. It must be stated that Latvian defence spending data would not impress NATO officials as much as Estonia's statistics. While Latvia has not allowed its military budget to be overwhelmed by personnel costs, with proportional outlay ranging between 46 - 59% since NATO accession, Latvia's defence spending has never climbed beyond 1.4% of its GDP since 2005, and in 2012 and 2013 the figure dipped to 0.9%.[36]

However, Riga's military burden-sharing policy beyond these numerical metrics provides clarification that Latvia is far from a laggard within the transatlantic alliance system. Confronted with the problems of dual engagement between ISAF and the US-led Multi-National Force in Iraq, Latvia perhaps over-prioritized the latter. While Iraq initially stood as a tempting opportunity to enhance the security partnership with the United States, it was not a NATO mission. Hence, broader possibilities to translate contributions into diplomatic capital within NATO were constrained.

With Afghanistan ultimately presenting a greater opportunity to contribute and thus to generate diplomatic capital over a longer time period, in allocating between 120 - 136 troops with each rotation to areas including the hostile conflict zones surrounding the Iraqi capital Baghdad between 2003 and 2008,[37] a Machiavellian

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[34] *Defence Spending in Eastern Europe: Scars, Scares and Scarcity*, "The Economist", 12 May 2011, [www.economist.com, access: 8 September 2014].

[35] M. Salu, *Eesti suurim julgeolekuoht on Läti,* [*Estonia's Biggest Security Vulnerability is Latvia*], "Postimees", 6 November 2012, [www.postimees.ee, access: 8 September 2014].

[36] *Financial and Economic Data Relating to NATO Defence,* North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 24 February 2014, [www.nato.int, access: 6 September 2014].

[37] Figures on Latvian troop deployments in Iraq cited from P. G. Pierpoali Jr., *Multinational Force, Iraq*, [in:] T. R. Mockaitis (ed.), *The Iraq War Encyclopaedia*, ABC-Clio: Santa Barbara 2013, p. 285. The location for deployment of Latvian troops cited from D.J. Galbreath, *Latvian Foreign Policy after Enlargement: Continuity and Change*, "Cooperation and Conflict", Vol. 41, No. 4 (2006), p. 452.

criticism of Latvian policy could be that it chose this course of action under the wrong mission. Nonetheless, in terms of Baltic security interdependence, Latvia's Iraq effort aimed to deliver the same benefits as Estonia's and Lithuania's participations in Helmand and Ghor respectively, in that it attempted to create an opening for the diplomatic networking required to persuade the hegemonic US of the need to retain a focus on the Baltic Sea region. This was outlined by Latvian foreign policy commentator, Atis Lejiņš, as the country's participation in Iraq was questioned by some as two Latvian casualties were mourned in 2007, explaining bluntly that "Everyone knows that we [Latvians] need America. We've got to participate in Iraq for the United States, for our allies" and "We die for America in hope that they will die for us".[38] Latvian contributions in Iraq presented opportunities to build diplomatic capital with Washington standing to be transferred to the US-led NATO environment. However, considering the scepticism of France and Germany towards operations in Iraq, this aspect of Latvian burden-sharing policy can nonetheless be critiqued as hedging too heavily on US influence as far as the wider NATO context is concerned.

In terms of contributions to Afghan security through ISAF, Latvia has been active in the area of security capacity-building. In late 2008, a team of 175 military personnel were dispatched to the comparatively stable Kunar and Nurestan provinces in Eastern Afghanistan tasked with the training and mentorship of Afghan National Army (ANA) personnel.[39] Later on, in 2012, as ISAF was winding down, Latvia also deployed 140 personnel to the Nordic Transition Support Unit (NTSU), a body founded both to build capacity within the ANA charged with securing the country as the quantity of ISAF troops reduces sharply after 2014, and to implement Allied cooperation to ensure an orderly logistical withdrawal from Afghanistan.[40]

Attempting to judge the value of defence/security capacity-building within NATO unveils one of the core contradictions of the ISAF burden-sharing debate. On the one hand, there are the sentiments of Robert Gates to the effect that valuable combat capabilities and the ability to wage war were in steep scarcity. Whereas, from the remark of NATO's Deputy Assistant Secretary-General for Emerging Security Challenges, Jamie Shea, that defence capacity-building is "something everyone wants to do", stems the inference that the latter has been in plentiful

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[38] Cited in E. Celms, *Latvia Honors Fallen Soldiers, Maintains Policy on Iraq*, "The Baltic Times", 10 January 2007, [www.baltictimes.com, access: 9 September 2014].

[39] *Participation in International Operations*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, [www.mfa.gov.lv, access: 9 September 2014].

[40] *Nordic Military Alliance with Latvia in Afghanistan*, "DefenceNews", 13 September 2012, [www.defensenews.com, access: 9 September 2014].

supply.[41]On the other hand, were there not allies to undertake provincial reconstruction and security capacity-building in the far less combat-intensive areas of East and North Afghanistan, then those willing to undertake intensive combat in the Afghan south would have been burdened considerably further. Nevertheless, it is likely given the premium the United States places on combat deployments together with the opportunities for alliance network enhancement granted to Estonia in fighting alongside the United States and United Kingdom in the thick of what the latter two leading allies saw as the most crucial part of the ISAF mission that Estonian combat may have been of higher value than Latvia's security capacity-building as far as diplomatic capital and the enhancement of the transatlantic link are concerned.

Of the Baltic states, Latvia was the worst affected by the global financial crisis beginning in late 2007, with Riga ultimately requiring emergency support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to shore up its state finances. Despite this, while the Latvian defence budget was cut by more than a third in 2009, spending on out-of-area missions continued to increase year-on-year, with the exception of a small decrease in 2010, thus a firm indicator of solidarity with its allies fighting abroad. This choice meant that other areas of the defence sector concerned with territorial security took the brunt of the cuts,[42] leaving the ironic situation whereby Latvia is now exposed to criticism from its allies for not spending more in this area given the onset of the Ukraine crisis. Nonetheless, if the description of Latvia as a "stalwart ally" in one White House document is anything to go by, then ISAF participation may well have acted as a vehicle for the accumulation of diplomatic capital likely to be crucial should Latvia require the assistance of NATO's hegemonic allies in facing down threats to its territorial security.[43]

Lithuania: burdens of over-ambition

While its defence spending percentages roughly mirror those of Latvia, Lithuania's two most significant contributions to ISAF were its leadership of the PRT for Ghor province and the deployment of special forces alongside those of the United States in Zabul and Kandahar, two southern provinces among Afghanistan's most inhospitable. Dealing first with the allocation of special forces, Lithuania first sanc-

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[41] J. Shea, *Plenary Lecture: Emerging Security Challenges - A NATO Perspective,* 13th Annual Conference of the Transatlantic Studies Association, University of Ghent, Belgium, 8 July 2014.

[42] P. Paljak, *Participation in International Military Operations*, [in:] T. Lawrence, T. Jermalavičius (eds.), *Apprenticeship, Partnership, Membership: Twenty Years of Defence Development in the Baltic States,* International Centre for Defence Studies: Tallinn 2013, p. 224.

[43] *Fact Sheet: The United States and Latvia - NATO Allies and Global Partners*, The White House: Office of the Press Secretary, 30 August 2013, [www.whitehouse.gov, access: 9 September 2013].

tioned this type of deployment to ISAF in 2007; each rotation consisted of about 100 commandos.[44] While the majority of information regarding the activities of this deployment has been concealed for security reasons, it has been argued in the Lithuanian media that the request presented to Vilnius from NATO for a contribution of this kind originated from the positive reputation these forces achieved within US military circles through preliminary participation in joint training exercises and subsequently within the Afghan theatre during the early 2000s.[45] Similar to Estonia's deployment in Helmand, this was a Lithuanian response with a capability of high demand within NATO, thus increasing the scope for the accumulation of diplomatic capital.

Lithuania's leadership of the PRT for Ghor represented its flagship contribution to ISAF. By 2005, the US had found itself fighting wars in two arduous theatres and thus was keen to persuade its allies to contribute more to these efforts. Washington initially proposed a jointly managed PRT handled by all three Baltic states. However, with no agreement forthcoming, Lithuania signalled that it could lead a PRT alone. With Washington's blessing to begin ceasing its operations in the torrid Iraqi theatre in order to focus on Ghor, the PRT allowed Vilnius the pleasant opportunity to terminate a strenuous coalition task while still keeping its reputation with the United States intact.[46]

In terms of the initial Lithuanian government perspectives, Egdūnas Račius argues there were three further benefits perceived as originating from this mode of contribution. First, as Ghor was not seen as a particularly dangerous location for political violence, considering the alternative contribution options, leading a PRT was perceived as an opportunity to accumulate diplomatic capital within NATO without being exposed to significant casualty risks. Second, the PRT was seen as an opportunity to boost Lithuania's prestige, with the civilian and military staff deployed "intended as envoys" within the fold of a major international operation. Third, the Lithuanian military would be exposed to the tactical and technological acumen of other allies, thus a pedagogical experience helpful for force development.[47]

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[44] E. Račius, *Trials and Tribulations of the Lithuanian Participation in the NATO ISAF Mission*, [in:] N. Hynek and P. Marton (eds.), *Statebuilding in Afghanistan: Multinational Contributions to Reconstruction*, Routledge: London 2011, p. 261.

[45] *The Aitvaras (Kite) Has Been in Afghanistan for 10 Years Now But the Squadron's Activity Is Still Classified*, "The Lithuanian Tribune", 4 January 2012, [www.lithuaniatribune.com, access: 9 September 2014].

[46] S. Becker, *Troops Lead in Ghor*, "The Baltic Times", 15 February 2006, [www.baltictimes.com, access: 9 September 2014].

[47] E. Račius, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

Gauging where the Ghor PRT fits among the Baltic contributions, Holger Mölder makes the assessment that Estonia's contribution of combat-ready forces stationed in Helmand and Lithuania's coordination of Ghor's reconstruction should both be seen as valid contributions to NATO objectives.[48] The equivalence of both contributions is not discussed, but given the premium attached to the provision of combat troops, Estonia's Helmand contribution might hold sway. However, in terms of risks and the reputational issues associated with the accumulation or loss of diplomatic capital, the comparison is less clear-cut. With casualties inevitably undertaking intensive combat, one estimate could be that combat troop deployments are likely to bring greater political risks given the effect causalities might have on public opinion, and thus to potentially stall the ability of decision-makers to persist with this contribution, in turn leading to negative reputational consequences within the alliance. However, this problem may nonetheless have been over-exaggerated, as Sarah Kreps argues, such risks were lessened for many ISAF participants, as the presence of elite consensus within many troop deploying countries significantly reduced the impact negative public opinion could have in stalling contributions.[49] This was the case with Estonian domestic politics.

The intra-alliance reputational risks attached to leading a PRT differ slightly from this logic. The task is arduously resource and labour-intensive, inability to provide the substantial amount of resources required can potentially lead to political pressure at home, local pressure within the post-conflict area, and intra-alliance pressure, all putting the PRT leader at risk of demotion and with it a reduction in credibility within NATO. This was arguably a scenario narrowly avoided with Lithuania's PRT in Ghor. While being the only Ally from the first two rounds of NATO's post-Cold War enlargements bold enough to lead a PRT, Lithuania had little or no previously attained expertise of how to coordinate such an arduous multi-faceted project. Unable to provide the same level of financing as counterpart Western Allies heading PRTs, with the global financial crisis affecting Lithuania sharply by 2009, the early ambition was replaced by disillusion, with defence officials describing the initial decision to coordinate in Ghor as a short-sighted move designed to score points within NATO when Vilnius may never have been properly prepared.[50] A persistent concern being that Lithuania could well emerge as the weak-link among those charged with PRTs, this pressure was intensified by two separate local Governors of Ghor, who in 2007 and 2009 respectively, stated

[48] H. Mölder, *The Development of Military Culture*, [in:] T. Lawrence and T. Jermalavičius, *Apprenticeship, Partnership, Membership: Twenty Years of Defence Development in the Baltic States,* International Centre for Defence Studies: Tallinn 2013, p. 102.
[49] S. Kreps, *Elite Consensus as a Determinant of Alliance Cohesion: Why Public Opinion Hardly Matters for NATO-led Operations in Afghanistan,* "Foreign Policy Analysis", Vol. 6, No. 3 (2010), pp. 191-215.
[50] From a quote in E. Račius, *op. cit.,* p. 286.

their dissatisfaction with the Lithuanian effort before declaring the transfer of Ghor's security provision duties to other states as an inevitability.[51]

While these predictions proved partially correct, with the United States and Japan proceeding to fund Ghor's civilian projects as the PRT's lifespan wound on, Vilnius showed resilience in its leadership, seeing the PRT through to its termination in August 2013. Speaking at the ceremony marking withdrawal, Lithuanian Minister of National Defence, Juozas Oleka, saw the positives: "It [PRT] has been of tremendous value for us as we have tested co-operation with the Alliance's partners. Our troops are now much better prepared to defend Lithuania, if needed".[52]

Moreover, resilience in managing the PRT has most likely been a point of facilitation for gathering greater diplomatic capital with the US in particular. Speaking as the three Baltic presidents met with Barack Obama in 2013, Vice-President Joe Biden indicated that, due to the contributions of the Baltic states over the past decade, relations with the US had changed from a conversation about what the United States could do for the Baltic states to a discussion centring on the Baltic states themselves producing security in partnership with the United States to alleviate problems of global importance. The PRT was highlighted as a proving point, with Biden saying: "In Ghor province, Lithuania stood up and led a Provincial Reconstruction Team - taking on a big job, and doing it well".[53]

Conclusion

Let us reaffirm the points of inquiry stressed at the outset: how proficient were the Baltic Allies in generating contributions of value within the context of the core ISAF objectives and, consequently, how did these contributions aid in maintaining the transatlantic security link? Addressing the former, relative to other small Western Allies, given the circumstances of the Baltic territorial security predicament, limited experience with out-of-area operations as fledgling NATO Allies at ISAF's beginning, and scant financial resources, the Baltic performance in burden-sharing proved quite impressive. For the Baltic states, emerging from ISAF was a fairly orderly, if uncomfortable, division of labour across the "hard" and "soft" security goods required under the comprehensive approach, with flagship contributions including Estonia's ability to take up the combat mantle in Helmand, as many

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[51] R. Kuokštytė, *Lithuania's Participation in the Reconstruction Process of Afghanistan: A Case of a Small State's Engagement in the International Area*, "Baltic Journal of Law & Politics", Vol. 4, No. 1 (2011), p. 226.

[52] Cited in *Lithuania Withdrawing from Afghanistan's Ghor Province*, "The Lithuanian Tribune", 27 August 2013, [www.lithuaniatribune.com, access: 10 September 2014].

[53] *Op-Ed By Vice President of the US Joe Biden*, Embassy of the United States in Vilnius, Lithuania, 30 August 2013, [www.vilnius.usembassy.gov, access: 10 September 2014].

long-established allies shied away; Latvia's coordination within the NDN and its activity in security capacity-building despite enduring its worst domestic economic crisis since the early 1990s after 2007, and Lithuania's management of the PRT for Ghor, albeit less strenuous in terms of casualties, an arduous task in terms of labour and resources.

Despite serious pressures which could have tempted abandonment, Vilnius saw it through to the end. Considering the security interdependence of the three states, a negative flip-side for inter-Baltic relations does however come through the risk of minor discord over who contributed at a larger premium and hence did more to enhance transatlantic ties. As illustrated, sections of the Baltic media have, in the past, not held back in bluntly criticizing their neighbours' defence policy.

Moving to the second question, just how did ISAF participation serve to enhance the Baltic states' transatlantic link, the prime motor of which being NATO? It is first worth striking a note of caution. The Baltic ISAF policy had a clear blind-spot with respect to Paris and Berlin. As the ISAF era fades, this flaw will have to be rectified in order for the Baltic states to advantageously adapt to reconfigurations in European defence politics.[54] Nonetheless, while having a narrow concentration, ISAF participation brought significant benefits.

Of course, NATO's security guarantees are, on the surface, not decided by fluctuations in alliance contributions but by Article 5 laid down in the Washington Treaty. However, in the scheme of wider alliance politics, holding positive diplomatic capital has been a valued supplement serving to enhance Allied focus on the Baltic territorial security situation while opening better access to two hegemonic allies, the United Kingdom and United States, as part of the accumulation process. Seen from Washington, the ISAF years have brought a transformed perspective of the Baltic states from one of potential security consumers to one of facilitators of transatlantic security provision. While the lead-in logic is ultimately paradoxical, this has unquestionably improved the stature of the Baltic states within the alliance, enhancing the forum they have in NATO for making sure their case is credibly heard.

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[54] Indeed, during the twilight between ISAF's completion and Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea, Estonia had already adjusted its emphasis towards the enhancement of its defence links with France in light of Paris' leadership on a number of European defence matters since its reintegration with NATO's High Command in 2009. France was also a major contributor to the NATO exercise *"Steadfast Jazz"* designed to rehearse allied defence manoeuvres in Poland and the Baltic states in 2013. Estonia was hence among the first states to offer contributions to the French-led operation in the Central African Republic as it began in December 2013. Drawing a parallel with ISAF, while the leading state may have changed, Estonian justifications for participation did not, with Prime Minister Taavi Rõivas later welcoming the return of his country's troops from Africa by saying, "Estonia gave a clear promise and started fulfilling it. Our determination gives Estonia a moral right to expect immediate help from others should we ever need it". T. Rõivas cited in *Estonian Soldiers Return From Central African Republic Mission*, "Delfi Online", 1 September 2014, [www.delfi.ee, access: October 29 2014].

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NATO's Transformation and Energy Security: The Perceptions and Role of a "Newcomer"

Since its establishment in 1949 NATO has evolved significantly. First, by enlarging its membership, the Alliance expanded its borders to Eastern and Southern Europe. Second, the functional range of NATO's activities has changed: the geographical boundaries of the Alliance's activities were expanded with a focus on NATO missions outside the transatlantic region. Third and most importantly, the Alliance has been transforming itself to adapt to the new conditions in the international arena: soft security threats and non-conventional security issues (terrorism, cyber security, energy security) have become parts of NATO's agenda.

Today NATO members apply different mechanisms to deal with soft-security issues. They have developed diverse approaches, often based on national interests and bilateral relations with non-member states but that are still applicable and functional. As a consequence, not only NATO's role in soft security was more clearly defined but also its authorities, institutions and mechanisms, responsible for strategic planning, training, consulting, the organization of research in the field of soft security and enforcement have been set. Nevertheless, seven new members then joined NATO in 2004, who not only accepted traditional commitments (in the areas of defence funding, participation in the formulation and implementation of NATO's agenda), but also added new dynamics to NATO's transformation process. Strengthening NATO's role in the area of conventional security after acts of aggression in Europe in 2008 and 2014 but also defining responsibilities in such areas as cyber and energy security, strategic communication, etc., establishing the right balance between the Alliance's responsibilities in those two areas became questions of key importance for the new NATO member states.

This article aims to explore how the newcomer of the Alliance (Lithuania) perceives NATO's role in the domain of soft security, what roles in this context does it take, what challenges it faces and what future developments in this regard may be expected. As the line between hard security and soft security is not always clear, in this article the widely accepted perception of soft security is used to claim that soft security means all the security issues outside a military conflict, or the threat of a military conflict.[1] Thus, the soft security concept contains such issues

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[1] M. Crandall, *Soft Security Threats and Small States: the Case of Estonia,* "Defence Studies", March 2014.

as cyber security, energy security, climate change, human rights abuses, humanitarian emergencies, etc.

NATO names a number of factors that influence the growth in the importance of energy security in NATO's agenda: the growing consumption in the civilian and military domains, the weak protection of critical energy infrastructure objects from physical, cyber, informational attacks, the dependence of European countries on the supply of oil and gas, unsuccessful debates on climate change, etc. As a consequence, energy related aspects negatively affect NATO's effectiveness: the creation of stability and security inside and outside NATO borders is hardly possible without ensuring the safety and security of energy supply lines, without having alternative electricity supply options, and without lessening consumption by making it more effective. The Baltic states with their focus on hybrid and soft security threats represent a very good example of how not only to notice but also jointly to respond this type of threat: three NATO Centres of Excellence created in Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn respectively on energy, strategic communication and cyber security issues focus precisely on how to deal with the afore-mentioned soft security challenges. In other words, since the re-establishment of their independence, the Baltic states were challenged with soft security risks which of course had an impact on governments' priorities. As a consequence, national awareness reached a level where response strategies and instruments (structures) could be developed, and necessary projects implemented. Today this experience can be offered for NATO.

The article consists of four parts. The first part presents theoretical aspects of alliances, threats and soft security, focusing on instruments that alliances have at their disposal to respond to non-conventional threats. The second part examines the evolution of the energy security dimension in the Alliance: the official position towards energy security issues within NATO and its regulation, factors that brought about the inclusion of energy security in NATO's agenda, and the process of inclusion and practical initiatives that were taken and the questions that remain unsolved. The third part analyses the role of Lithuania in the soft security domain within the Alliance: Lithuania's perception of NATO's role in soft security, the roles Lithuania itself is taking within the domain and the contribution it is offering, the instruments it is using and the motives of the chosen roles at different levels of analysis. The fourth part identifies current and future challenges Lithuania is facing while developing the energy security agenda of the Alliance.

The role of alliances in soft security: theoretical aspects

The emergence and functioning of alliances are explained by a number of theories. For instance, the balance of power theory perceives alliances as a tool for maintaining dominance in the international system and to ensure security, military,

in particular. The balance of threat theory emphasizes the impact of threats on the formation and functioning of alliances and the balance of interests theory talks about the voluntary formation of alliances and the pursuit of profit.[2] For the analysis of NATO's role in energy security, the balance of threat theory is the most relevant since this theory claims that the state creates and maintains alliances to balance threats, not only power, and allows us to include not only military but also soft security threats into the field of analysis.

Experts of international relations stress the rise of new threats in the 21st century such as climate change, the lack of natural resources, migration, and human trafficking. New kinds of threats affect many actors in international relations, including NATO. According to Ugur Ziyal, all threats emerging in the 21st century can be divided into two groups: hard security (terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, etc.) and soft security (poverty, climate change, epidemics, illegal migration, human trafficking) threats. Soft security policy is defined as an instrument which aims to create an environment which is safe and conducive to economic and social progress. Energy security[3] is perceived as part of soft security: firstly, energy security is not related to the use of military force, secondly, energy security might have social and economic as well as political impacts (might lead to the destabilization of the political sector).[4] In this context, the necessity of including "soft security" issues on the agenda of alliances is increasing. Energy security is of course not the primary goal of NATO, however, it influences other security domains, the military domain among them (that is the main priority of NATO). Therefore, energy security is becoming an important topic in NATO's agenda.

Contemporary alliances comprise members that have different power capabilities: great powers, middle powers, small powers (small states).[5] Small powers in this context cannot determine their fate by their own actions: they must seek external support. However, small powers can try to influence decisions and processes within an alliance to increase their own security and to steer that alliance in their desired direction. According to Robert Rothstein, small powers have some instruments at their disposal to cast influence within an alliance.[6] Firstly, they can emphasize their qualitative virtues. Secondly, they can provide proof of their de-

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[2] G. Jasutis, *Karinio aljanso patvarumo tyrimas: Rusijos Ir Baltarusijos atvejis*, Vilnius 2011, p. 20-32.

[3] The objective of energy security is to assure adequate, reliable supplies of energy at reasonable prices and in ways that do not jeopardize major national values and objectives (D. Yergin, *Ensuring Energy Security*, "Foreign Affairs", 2006, Vol. 85, No 2).

[4] U. Ziyal, *Re-Conceptualization of Soft Security and Turkey's Civilian Contributions To International Security*, "Turkish Policy Quarterly", 2004, Vol. 3, No 2.

[5] Small power (small state) is a state with limited power components in difficult position for withstanding external pressure (J. Goldstein, *International Relations*, Pevehouse 2012, p. 54-55).

[6] R. Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers*, Columbia University Press 1968, p. 36-37.

termination to implement a certain direction of policy. Thirdly, they can constantly raise certain security issues to put them on the agenda of the alliance. Small powers can influence the process of decision making, participate in the implementation of decisions taken, and try to steer it in their desired direction. The following sections of the article provide an analysis of Lithuania's position and actions concerning energy security within NATO.

The evolution of the energy security domain in NATO

Although the idea of NATO's possible role in energy security was regularly raised in discussions within the Alliance, the energy security issue has not been on NATO's agenda for a long time. After the Cold War, when NATO's agenda expanded both functionally and geographically, energy security for the most part was still left off NATO's agenda and became part of it only after 2006. Before that, NATO documents and the remarks of NATO officials were limited to laconic phrases concerning energy security. For instance, the NATO Strategic Concept of 1999 contains only one sentence directly addressing energy security issues: the document claims that energy supply disruption poses a threat to NATO members.[7] Joint consultations and collective response are indicated as possible measures. However, the document does not specify the details and, in principle, excludes military measures. Thus, NATO members did not reach an agreement on how to respond to an energy security crisis and this has been caused by a number of factors. Firstly, NATO members were convinced that the energy security issue in the agenda of the Alliance will serve as "distracting" factor and therefore might become an obstacle to performing NATO's functions properly. Secondly, NATO members did not have a common understanding of the energy security concept itself. Finally, NATO members did not want the issue of energy security to be militarized.

Nevertheless, due to the rise of unconventional threats in international relations and the energy crisis in Europe (the Russian - Ukrainian dispute over transit rents for Russian gas to Europe that caused supply disruptions for many European countries), the Alliance could no longer continue to ignore the issue of energy security on its agenda. In 2006 energy security issues became part of it as NATO Deputy Secretary General stated that the Alliance will consider how to contribute to the security of energy resources for NATO members.[8] The NATO Riga Sum-

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[7] *The Alliance's Strategic Concept*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 24 April 1999, [www.nato.int, access: 2 September 2014].
[8] R. Wielaard, *NATO Plans Tighter Energy Security*, "The St. Petersburg Times", 2 May 2006, [www.sptimes.ru, access: 2 September 2014].

mit Declaration named disruption of the flow of energy resources as a threat to NATO members and emphasized the necessity of promoting energy infrastructure security (Article 45).[9] In 2007 more specific discussions about energy security issues were started: NATO's role in the protection of critical energy infrastructure, the integration of energy security policy into NATO policy and others. Despite opposition from some allies towards the linkage of military and energy security, the NATO Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council's (EAPC) Industrial Planning Committee in its report of 14 December, 2007, entitled, *Report on the IPC work on the protection of energy critical infrastructure*, identified electricity, gas and oil infrastructure as targets of possible attacks and discussed the minimal military requirements for securing this infrastructure.

A particularly important step in explaining and defining NATO's role in energy security was made at the NATO Bucharest Summit (April 2008). There, NATO members finally came to an agreement on the specific roles the Alliance could take to ensure energy security. These included the sharing of information and intelligence, the maintenance of stability, international and regional cooperation, and support for the security of strategic energy objects. The NATO Lisbon Summit (2010) related the energy security domain to the broader tasks of the Alliance:

- collective defence requires joint exercises, the success of which depends on the interoperability of forces - unified standards are needed, including standards for energy resources;
- for crisis management operations it is important to be more energy efficient and less dependent on the long and often unsafe support and supply lines;
- in the partnership building domain it is important to assure the Alliance partners' support for the transportation of energy resources, and vice versa - the Alliance partners to support new technologies for harnessing the resources of production and supply, and infrastructure protection.

Eventually, energy security tasks were related to the "smart defence" idea (NATO Chicago Summit, 2012): to operate more efficiently with fewer resources.[10] Thus, energy efficiency has become one of the strategic goals of NATO (in addition to the need to strengthen critical energy infrastructure protection and to develop relations with partners).

In general, the declarations of the Bucharest, Lisbon and Chicago Summits reveal the changing understanding of the energy security problems within the

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[9] *Riga Summit Declaration*, 29 November 2006, [www.nato.int, access: 2 September 2014].
[10] M. Rühle, *NATO and Energy Security: from Philosophy to Implementation*, "Journal of Transatlantic Studies", Vol. 10, Issue 4 (2012).

Alliance. Today, NATO members consult with each other and with partner countries on energy security issues, organize workshops, where think tanks and representatives of the private sector share experiences on best practices. It is worth noting that energy security issues had an impact not only on the agenda of NATO on the internal changes of the NATO structure as well. For instance, in 2010 the Emerging Security Challenges Division was established in the Alliance with Energy security section within it. The NATO Energy security Centre of Excellence has also been established, which facilitates not only the better management of consumption and the progress in applying energy innovations for military needs, but also triggers a change in attitude towards energy consumption in general. On operational and tactical levels, the armed forces protect critical infrastructure (by monitoring sea routes and carrying out anti-piracy operations), use renewable sources and count the costs of energy resources. Thus, although NATO's energy security agenda is still directed first of all by the member states and the consensus-based decision making may prevent the Alliance from moving in one or another direction faster, it also sometimes allows controversial initiatives of the member states to be heard and not completely vetoed in the early stages.

The role of the newcomer in the dimension of soft security: the case of Lithuania and energy security

The role of Lithuania in the dimension of soft security within NATO is described here by analysing a few key documents: the State of the Nation Addresses by Lithuania's president, programming documents of the Lithuanian government, reports on annual achievements provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Energy of Lithuania. The research into these indicates that Lithuania's possibilities to influence NATO's involvement in energy security were not very high since the agenda of the Alliance was limited mostly to the protection of critical energy infrastructure, the issue was very controversial at that time and Lithuania did not enjoy significant power in the decision making process. In short, there was no platform for breaking the ice at that moment. Nevertheless, given the evolving nature of NATO's agenda on energy security and its limited scope, Lithuania took a risk and concentrated on active engagement and rational policy proposals. The newcomer's strategy proved to be successful and therefore worth approaching in greater detail.

Lithuania's perception of NATO's role in energy security

While energy security has been declared as being one of Lithuania's main security priorities, at the same time NATO is perceived as the main security guarantor.

However, the provision of soft security (in this context - energy security) on the official level is more associated with such international organizations as the European Union, IAEA, and the OSCE, rather than NATO. Thus, according to official representatives of Lithuania, the main mission of NATO is always to assure the hard security of the Allies (the traditional perception of NATO's purpose). Nevertheless, Lithuania from the very beginning of its membership in NATO was ready to participate in the process of broadening the traditional perception of NATO's purpose placing more attention on soft security issues: both forming new concepts and implementing new goals of NATO.

The President of Lithuania and the government of Lithuania (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Energy as the leading institutions here) have paid significant attention to soft security issues and energy security in particular for at least the last five to 10 years. For instance, the National Energy Strategy (2007), prepared by the Lithuanian Ministry of Industry in cooperation with the Lithuanian Energy Institute defines Lithuania as insecure in terms of energy independence.[11] This document sets the aim of solving the isolation of Lithuania's energy infrastructure and the absence of any diversification of its energy supply. The energy security issue is frequently discussed in the State of the Nation Addresses by Lithuania's president, programmes of the government, reports of annual achievements provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Energy. In short, Lithuania's political institutions have declared energy security as an important dimension of Lithuania's security.

However, the perception of the potential role of NATO as an instrument to ensure energy security differs. The National Energy Independence Strategy (2012) does not relate Lithuania's energy security to active membership inside NATO. The only international organization mentioned in the document in the context of Lithuania's soft security is the European Union (which is perceived as the main instrument in this context).[12] The Ministry of Energy also does not see NATO as a useful platform for pursuing Lithuania's energy security interests. Documents from the government only mention "international organizations" in general where Lithuania could raise issues related to energy security. NATO is not mentioned among such potential international organizations as the European Union or IAEA.

An analysis of official documents of the Lithuanian government indicates that NATO is primarily perceived as a guarantor of hard security by Lithuanian officials naming it "the main security guarantor". Soft security issues (energy security

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[11] *Nacionalinė energetikos strategija*, Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, 18 January 2007, [www.lrs.lt, access: 2 September 2014].

[12] *National Energy Independence Strategy*, Lietuvos Respublikos energetikos ministerija, 26 June 2012, [www.enmin.lt, access: 2 September 2014].

among them) are not discussed in the context of NATO. The infrastructure of the Alliance is discussed only in terms of the deployment of NATO military forces. Energy security issues are discussed only in the domestic context. Therefore, the government of Lithuania does not declare that it sees there being a possibility of pursuing Lithuania's energy security interests through NATO. The President of Lithuania locates the energy security issue in a broader context, discussing it in relation to other international organizations. However, the principal international organization for pursuing Lithuania's interests in the energy security domain, according to the president, is the European Union. [13]

An analysis of documents provided by the Ministry of Foreign affairs, on the contrary, reveals that NATO is perceived as a useful platform through which Lithuania could try to pursue its energy security interests. The institutions of Lithuania (government) within NATO raise the following goals for 2013: "to strengthen the capabilities to respond to new kinds of threats (incorporating important statements into international agreements)". [14] Energy security is not distinguished as a threat separately in this context but falls into the category of new threats. In general, the political discourse of Lithuania expresses the perception of energy security as that of economic security. Put differently, various economic aspects and consequences of energy security are stressed (while NATO has never been an international organization that deals with economic issues and has never raised economic priorities).

Thus, the research indicates that Lithuania officially does not declare its intentions to pursue soft security in NATO in its strategic documents since NATO is perceived as an organization that provides hard security first of all. However, certain notions about energy security within the agenda of NATO might be noticed (especially in the documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Political institutions of Lithuania have declared several goals in NATO in terms of energy security: to broaden the agenda of the Alliance, to transform the Energy Security Centre under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs into a NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence (see the following section of the article for more information). Despite that, NATO is not perceived as an instrument for pursuing Lithuania's energy security interests since Lithuania's officials do not relate changes in NATO's agenda in terms of energy security to benefits that Lithuania might obtain from them (the benefit that Lithuania might obtain is not specified).

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[13] *Lietuvos Respublikos Prezidentės Dalios Grybauskaitės metinis pranešimas*, Lietuvos Respublikos Prezidentė, 18 June 2013, [www.president.lt, access: 2 September 2014].
[14] *Lietuvos Respublikos Užsienio reikalų mnisterijos 2013 m. veiklos ataskaita*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, 27 February 2013, p. 22. [www.urm.lt, access: 2 September 2014].

Despite the dominant perception of NATO as a hard security provider, Lithuania is active in the soft security dimension within the Alliance as well. It purposefully pursued the objectives raised by its political institutions: to include energy security issues in the agenda of NATO and to transform the Energy Security Centre under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs into a fully recognized (i.e., accredited) NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence. On his visit to Lithuania in November 2011, NATO's Assistant Secretary General, Gábor Iklódy, expressed his support for Lithuania's position, asserting that today the issues of energy security are not a matter of concern of individual countries, but of the Alliance in general. According to him, "solidarity on the issue of energy security is severely needed in the Alliance". As a consequence, energy security notions that are important for Lithuania were finally included into the texts of NATO documents: the Chicago Summit (2012) confirmed the importance of energy security for NATO and welcomed Vilnius' offer to establish a NATO-accredited Energy Security Centre of Excellence in Lithuania "as a contribution to NATO's efforts in this area".

Created on 10 July, 2012, accredited on 12 October the same year and officially inaugurated on 6 September, 2013, the NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence (ENSEC COE) currently operates as a widely recognized international military organization with the aim of providing qualified and appropriate expert advice on questions related to operational energy security. The road to the creation and accreditation of the Centre was not easy but at the same time it was the shortest in the history of all NATO's Centres of Excellence: after creating the national Energy Security Centre under the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in January 2011, it obtained NATO recognition in less than two years (it is worth noticing that the President of Lithuania, Dalia Grybauskaite, and the Minister of Defence, Rasa Jukneviciene, were the people behind the idea of hosting such an institution in Vilnius).

It is worth noting in this regard that Centres of Excellence (COEs) are nationally or multi-nationally funded institutions that train and educate leaders and specialists from NATO member and partner countries, assist in doctrine development, identify lessons learned, improve interoperability, and capabilities, and test and validate concepts through experimentation.[15] At the moment there are almost 20 NATO accredited Centres of Excellence that specialize in the areas of cyber defence, defence against terrorism, military engineering and others. NATO Centres of Excellence offer recognized expertise and experience that is of benefit to the

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[15] *Centre of Excellence*, NATO Energy Security Centre for Excellence, 1 February 2013, [www.ensecoe.org, access: 2 September 2014].

Alliance and supports the transformation of NATO, while avoiding the duplication of assets, resources and capabilities already present within the NATO command structure.[16]

The mission of the NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence is to assist Strategic Commands, other NATO bodies, nations, partners, and other civil and military bodies by supporting NATO's capability development process, mission effectiveness, and interoperability in the near, mid and long terms by providing comprehensive and timely subject matter expertise on all aspects of energy security. The mission includes searching for and developing cost effective solutions to supporting military requirements and energy efficiency in the operational field, as well as interactions with academia and industry.[17] The NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence has the opportunity to contribute to NATO's goal of developing the energy security dimension inside the organization. It was mandated to develop concrete projects, which involve state institutions, industry and academics. All in all it could be said that NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence today focuses on "operational" energy security subjects: promoting energy innovations in the military by testing its innovative technologies in military units, trying to affect the "culture" of energy consumption in the military and proposing tools for a better energy consumption management. An important task is to encourage NATO institutions to include provisions concerning the usage of renewables and energy saving into NATO documents.

The concrete achievements of this Centre are most visible in the areas of awareness raising (conferences, seminars, and exhibitions), analysis, research, individual and collective training. These activities were started even before the NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence was created, i.e., by its predecessor, the Energy Security Centre, under the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For instance, under the supervision of the national Energy Security Centre and in cooperation with the Lithuanian Armed Forces local experts prepared a study called the "*Energy Efficiency of the National Defence System*". It marked an important step in changing the approach to the methods of managing traditional energy resources. The study proposed a model of efficient energy consumption management suitable for the Lithuanian National Defence System and based on the international standard ISO 50001:2011. An extensive detailed analysis of energy consumption efficiency in the National Defence System has been accomplished under the umbrella of this study and this paved a way to creating an energy consumption management model. If it proves to be efficient, this model could serve as an example to follow for the national defence systems of other countries with similar challenges of

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[16] *Ibidem.*
[17] *Ibidem.*

inefficient consumption and lack of energy consumption management. In any case, Lithuania with this study successfully joined a wide range of similar energy efficiency initiatives, such as the European Union's *"Military Green"* and *"Go Green"* initiatives, also *"Net Zero"* and other projects implemented by the United States and other nations.

Another good example is a remarkable Training Landscape Development (TLD) conference organized in September 2013. It was followed by the Energy Security Training Requirements Analysis Workshop (TRA WS) organized by the NATO Allied Command Transformation (ACT) headquarters with the support of the International Staff Emerging Security Challenges Division and hosted by NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence in December 2013. The TLD conference gathered various actors from NATO and its partner nations, both the military and academia. The participants had the opportunity to exchange their thoughts and ideas regarding the current status and future prospects of E&T in the area of energy security. It was commonly agreed that there is a vast demand for the raising of awareness on energy security issues and it was stated that in order to curb the full range of energy related challenges, education and training are required at all levels possible. This conference provided initial insights into the requirements for E&T in the area of military energy security which made it possible for the first time to identify NATO Energy Security training requirements and to organize the first NATO Table top exercise (TTX) on energy security in October 2014 in Vilnius.

Thus, Lithuania's efforts in the dimension of energy security within NATO should be considered in general as having been successful: so far, despite being "a newcomer", Lithuania has achieved the majority of its goals. Moreover, this has been done in such a way that added additional value to the Alliance is also evident: the expanded agenda of NATO and the creation of NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence to assist member states in dealing with important security challenges, NATO's engagement with energy security provides an instrument for deeper engagement with NATO partner countries. Considering its practical contributions to enhancing NATO's capabilities in the area of energy security, Lithuania's contribution has been the biggest of among the NATO members so far.

Instead of conclusions: challenges for future involvement in the energy domain

At the same time that limiting consumption and achieving success in energy efficiency have become key factors in the development of a sustainable power economy, fuel and electricity are being perceived as indispensable elements to the sustainment of military operations. In other words, military forces use large quantities of fossil fuels during operations and a substantial proportion of this consump-

tion is dedicated to electrical power generation for deployed forces' infrastructure. Consequently, the Allies' militaries have the opportunity to contribute to a more efficient use of energy resources by introducing smart technologies, investing in the application of vehicles that rely to a lesser extent on traditional fuel, renovating buildings, adapting military machinery and relying on renewable energy sources. On the other hand, the technological improvements do not solely guarantee the desired results: a more efficient control of consumption (i.e., an improvement of the energy consumption management system) coupled with a facilitation of changes in the cultural or behavioural domains of energy consumption are also required.

The demand for energy during military operations has been increasing in part because camps and soldiers have been equipped with additional energy-demanding equipment that provides both increased safety and quality of life. The inefficient use of generators in camps, poor insulation of shelters, and a lack of desire or awareness of the requirements to moderate energy consumption are the factors that Lithuania is taking into account when arguing for the improvement of the energy efficiency of military forces. To achieve this, Lithuania has offered other NATO countries the possibility of developing three key principles in the area of energy security, which are modularity, interoperability and sustainability. To successfully implement these principles, it was necessary to adopt a holistic approach, including power generation and management, infrastructure design and management, and command and control, training, and awareness. This means that the planning and coordination of power requirements, comprising all levels from individual and tactical combat systems up to power generation for a large NATO camp have to be considered as key elements contributing to the increasing effectiveness of existing energy systems and reducing liquid fuel demand.

NATO's role in energy security is related to ensuring the security of supply and includes elements of logistics, political consultations and cooperation with partner countries. Some of these areas require considerable investments in sophisticated technologies that allow for the consumed sources to be diversified or the traditional energy sources to be used in a more efficient way. These goals generate a need for resources and research but also require substantial additional training. As a consequence, it is crucially important to ensure that the various research, development, training and education support programmes are easily updated inside the Alliance. In addition to that, enhancing strategic awareness which would contribute to the protection of critical energy infrastructure and other aspects of operational energy security requires the identification of perceptions and a focus on behavioural aspects. The key in this regard are the ones that resist or promote an efficient use of energy resources within military entities.

Institutions like NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence are suitable in this context for formulating further actions which would focus on the preparation

of tailor-made education, training courses and exercises, enabling the development of common standards, a common language and common procedures. In other words, an important precondition for the better use of energy efficiency related technologies is a change of the current understanding and perceptions of cultural aspects: the way in which consumption and saving are done, the acceptance of innovations, etc. A glossary or a manual related to behavioural changes in the military domain could be a concrete result produced by the responsible institutions in this regard. All in all, refining cultural changes such as mind-sets and behavioural schemes which ensure a successful joining of efforts from both the civil and military domain perfectly supplement the key tasks of NATO as a whole and of the member states which consider the strengthening of the energy domain inside the Alliance as their key priorities.

Jaromír Novotný (Diplomatic Academy, Czech Republic)

NATO's "New" Mission: Back to its Roots

At the Madrid Summit in 1997 - the Czech Republic was invited to start negotiations to join NATO and in Independence (Missouri) at its accession ceremony, 15 years ago on 12 March 1999 - the Czech Republic, after hard and complicated negotiations, was admitted to NATO in the first wave of enlargement, together with Poland and Hungary. At the Washington Summit on 24-25 April 1999, the Czech Republic was able to participate as a member of the Alliance.

We have joined the club, the main purpose of which was to defend its member states against any attack by a possible aggressor. In other words, the purpose of NATO in that time was the defence of its own territory.

However, only 12 days later, on 24 March 1997, the Alliance launched an air attack on Yugoslavia. It was the first time in NATO history that the Alliance had used armed forces outside of its own territory. This was a fundamental change of its doctrine and the beginning of a process of the transformation of Alliance. Four years later, there followed the unexpected terrorist attack by Al-Qaida on the Twin Towers in New York City on 11 September 2001. Since it was a direct attack on one of the member of the Alliance, at the request of the United States, NATO used for the first time in its history, Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. NATO supported the operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, which started on 7 October, 2001. The coalition of the willing, in which some NATO members joined the United States, attacked the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. After two years, again the coalition of the willing, in which some NATO members joined the United States, began a war against the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq in March of 2003. NATO itself started its direct involvement in Iraq in 2004. I can say that NATO has been more and more engaged outside of its territory.

At that time, in 1999, the West, a winner of the Cold War on one side, and Russia (the Soviet Union had collapsed) on the other side, were not equal partners. The balance of power, so common in the period of the Cold War, disappeared. Russia was weak in that time and the political elites in the West, as well as in the post-communist states, had lost their sense of danger, or in other words, they had lost the basic instinct of self-preservation/survival. In these "relatively" calm years, the second wave of NATO enlargement began. On 29 March 2004, another seven post-communist countries were welcomed into the NATO club, (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania) and five years later, followed, so far, the most recent wave of enlargement. Albania and Croatia were welcomed into the NATO club in April 2009. Since then the enthusiasm for further enlargement has slightly weakened and it looks like a further round of enlargement has

been postponed for an indefinite period. At all NATO summits since 2008, the sentence "we (NATO) agree to further strengthen cooperation with our partners and to keep the door of the Alliance open" is regularly repeated. In these beautiful times, newcomers, with the exception of Poland, as well as the majority of Western European members, with the exception of the United Kingdom, Greece and Turkey, after some time began to reduce their defence budgets. For instance, the Czech Republic's defence budget was gradually reduced, from 2% of GDP in the year 2005 to only 1.07% of GDP in this year (2014). At the same time, the United States' share of financing the NATO budget, has been permanently growing, from, roughly 50% share in 1999, to more than 70%, this year (2014).

After these relatively splendid years of power superiority (1991 - 2009), when NATO's position has been unassailable, came a time of errors.

Kosovo

Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence of 17 February 2008, unfortunately, was acknowledged as legal by the decision of the International Court of Justice in the Hague on 22 July, 2008. The majority of the member countries of NATO and the European Union, with the exception of Slovakia, Romania, Greece, Spain and Cyprus, recognized Kosovo's independence. Russia at that time, drew the attention of the international community to the fact that this was the first time since the end of the World War II in Europe, when a change to the existing borders in Europe by force was accepted. The previous breakups of the Soviet Union (1991), Yugoslavia (1991 - 1995) and Czechoslovakia (1993), in the process of the formation of new states, respected the boundaries of individual federal units, constituting the federal states, mentioned above.

However, Kosovo was an autonomous region of Serbia, not a republic within Yugoslavia. Moreover, in the meantime, the right to self-determination was interpreted in the sense that the nation has the right to one national state. Ethnic minorities have the opportunity to move to the national state, where they will form the majority, or remain in the state, where they make up the ethnic minority. The national state of Albanians already exists, it is Albania.

In case of Kosovo, NATO did not respect the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 1 August, 1975 - Helsinki Declaration. Article 4 (Territorial Integrity of States) says:

"The participating States will respect the territorial integrity of each of the participating States.

Accordingly, they will refrain from any action inconsistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations against the territorial integrity, political independence or the unity

of any participating State, and in particular from any such action constituting a threat or use of force.

The participating states will likewise refrain from making each other's territory the object of military occupation or other direct or indirect measures of force in contravention of international law, or the object of acquisition by means of such measures or the threat of them. No such occupation or acquisition will be recognised as legal".

Russia also has pointed out that it is a precedent for resolving several of the so-called frozen conflicts - South Ossetia and Abkhazia in Georgia, Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan and Transdniestria in Moldova. From 1995 (12th Workshop) until 2011 (28th Workshop), I regularly participated at The International Workshop on Global Security organized by an American think tank (Center for Strategic Decision Research) in cooperation with NATO. Already in 2007 on 24th International Workshop in Paris, in the discussion I said: "I think that we are not back in the Cold War period, but we are starting a period of Cold Peace. I think that Russia is trying to be a power (maybe a superpower) again. Russia has paid all its debts, and the country is getting back its pride. Russia is also trying to build a "near abroad", for example in Ukraine, where the "Orange Revolution" was lost. Russia is also trying to put pressure on Georgia again, as well as vetoing the decision about Kosovo, so we are right back, to where we were with Russia previously". In 2008 in June at the 25th International Workshop in Rome, I warned that our (NATO) recognition of Kosovo's independence, will be paid by Georgia, which will definitively lose South Ossetia and Abkhazia. In August 2008 war broke out between Georgia and Russia, when the Georgian Army attempted to enter the capital of South Ossetia (Cchinvali) by force. The result of this short war? It looks like Georgia definitively lost South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

NATO and the European Union somehow did not notice that Russia is no longer that "weak giant" and that under the reign of President Putin, Russia has passed through a process of fundamental changes. Even this short war in the Caucasus was not a wake-up call for the countries of NATO and the European Union that it should have been. The decline in defence spending continued steadily and I am afraid that not only due to the economic crisis.

The "Arab Spring" and our support for "democratic forces"

The series of protests and demonstrations across the Middle East and North Africa that commenced in December 2010 in Tunisia has become known as the "Arab Spring". This indication should evoke memories of the "Prague Spring" in 1968 and stressed that this is a democratic process. In fact the "Arab Spring" had

no similarity with the "Prague Spring". It was a revolt by frustrated, unemployed young people who could not find jobs and had no future. When a CNN reporter asked demonstrating people what they expect from the revolution, one answer was: "a job, an apartment and a woman". From Tunisia the protests spread to other countries. As of September 2012, governments had been overthrown in four countries. The Tunisian president fled to Saudi Arabia on 14 January 2011, in Egypt, President Mubarak resigned on 11 February 2011. The Libyan leader Gaddafi was overthrown on 23 August 2011. The Yemeni President was replaced on 27 February 2012. Protests in Syria started on 26 January 2011. On 12 June 2012, the UN peacekeeping chief in Syria stated that in his view, Syria had entered a period of civil war.

As far as Libya is concerned, on 17 March 2011 the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973 was adopted, authorizing a no-fly zone over Libya, and "all necessary measures" to protect civilians. Two days later, France, the United Kingdom and the United States intervened in Libya with a bombing campaign against pro-Gaddafi forces. A coalition of 27 states from Europe and the Middle East soon joined the intervention. However, the Libyan bombing campaign surprisingly revealed some shortages in the arsenals of NATO members. The Air Forces of France and the United Kingdom, after two months of the campaign, had run out of ammunition and aviation gasoline. The United States had to bail out the air campaign with supplies of laser-guided bombs, air-to-ground missiles, aviation gasoline and UAVs.

And what we have achieved? Libya is today on the way to becoming a failed state and a civil war is in progress. There are more than a thousand different armed militias active in the country. In Egypt, Mubarak was overthrown and his successor Morsi was sworn in as Egypt's first democratically elected president. Regrettably he represented the society of the Muslim Brothers, an organization which has nothing to do with democracy in our sense. New protests erupted in Egypt on 22 November 2012 and on 3 July 2013, the military overthrew the government and Morsi was removed from power. Power was transferred to the Armed Forces of Egypt. Today's president is General Sisi. In Syria, the civil war still rages and against Assad regime is fighting the "Islamist Internationale" of the most brutal fanatics.

Iraq

After the war in 2003 and the replacement of the regime of Saddam Hussain, followed by six years of stabilization, the United States and the Allies left Iraq in 2011. The new government has predominantly contained representatives of the Shia majority. After five years of their government, today we have an Iraq that is

deeply divided into three parts. Shia and partly Sunni provinces controlled by the Baghdad government, Sunni territories under the control of extremists from "Islamic State" and provinces in the north under the control of the autonomous government of Kurdistan. The future of Iraq in today's form is uncertain.

In addition, in these conflicts in Iraq and Syria citizens of European Union and NATO countries are fighting, who are from families of second or third generation immigrants. They are very radical and brutal, and they are infected with the virus of hate against Western societies. After some time, they will return back to France, the United Kingdom, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Canada or the United States. Moreover, Islamists are urging Muslims in Western countries to bring the "battlefield" home.

The Middle East has never been so disrupted, as it is today. There is no doubt that the "Arab Spring" has become an "Arab Fever". A short war in the Gaza Strip, between Hamas and Israel, added another portion of instability to the region and the creation of an Islamic State that links the territory of Syria and Iraq was the proverbial icing on the cake. The European Union and NATO should prepare for a coming ideological clash, in which the Islamic State poses a challenge for the Western way of life and liberty.

A large part of Africa is unstable (Libya, Mali, Central African Republic, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia) and the result of this is a phenomenon of a massive wave of migration. It is a question of time as to when the Italians, the Greeks or Spaniards will say that enough is enough. We are not in control of this situation. In the near future we will have to admit that we will not be able to accept all the immigrants who knock on the door of the European Union. The results of the last elections, for instance in France, indicate that society is more and more sensitive as far as immigrants from outside of Europe are concerned. The problems of the European members of NATO will have an influence on NATO as such.

Afghanistan has been NATO's longest and most expensive mission. After a long 14 years, the ISAF mission will soon be finished. NATO will quite possibly have to go through a so-called "post-afghan syndrome", but who knows? Let us face the truth. It seems that we have not won the war against the Taliban. Who is willing to bet on how long the government in Kabul can survive after the departure of ISAF forces from Afghanistan?

In addition to the above-mentioned problems, in the last six months, we have seen the Russian annexation of the Crimea and the explosion of the civil war in the East of Ukraine. The fact that the country is now engaging in hybrid warfare against its neighbour, covertly supporting terrorist activities in Eastern Ukraine and is a permanent member of the Security Council and a nuclear power, which moreover guaranteed the security and territorial integrity of Ukraine, when Ukraine gave up nuclear weapons in 1994 (Budapest Memorandum on Security

Assurances, signed by Russia, the United States and the United Kingdom), should be of utmost concern to us. It is clearly seen that an armed conflict is a brutal reality even in Europe. In Europe it is possible to provide military assistance to the separatists. Even a civil aircraft with 298 passengers, including children, on board, could be shot down. Russian President Vladimir Putin has claimed the right to intervene on behalf of Russian speakers if Moscow believes their rights are under threat. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania - all former Soviet republics that are now NATO members - have significant Russian minorities. I should note that since the Georgia - Russia War, the newcomers, in particular the Baltics and Poland, have constantly warned of changes in Russia's approach to NATO. As today's situation confirms, they were right.

The biggest victim of all above-mentioned events, in diplomatic language, is "the loss of potential for mutual trust". That is why we have to stop lying to ourselves. Violence is still a method of achieving political goals. We live in a world where might is sometimes stronger than right.

In light of a number of events taking place in the contemporary world, it seems that it is necessary to go back to the basic goal of NATO, namely the defence of the territory of its members. If you look at a map of NATO territory, then you see that NATO is surrounded by a wide belt of instability and violence ranging from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus to the Middle East and to North Africa. Europe now finds itself in the most turbulent security environment since 1989. The conflict in Ukraine and the Russian action means a shift in geopolitical balance throughout the entire Euro-Atlantic area with wider implications for international law and global order.

The first NATO Secretary General, Lord Ismay (1952 - 1957), once stated that the organization's goal was "to keep the Russians out, the Americans in and the Germans down". During the last 15 years NATO has moved away from its core values (the protection of the territories of its members) via its missions outside its own territory (the Balkans, Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, Iraq, Libya) and then back to its original task, of protecting the territory of its members. In these days, the mission could be paraphrased as "to keep extreme Islam as well as the Russians out, and the Americans and the Germans in".

The time has come to go back to the roots.

Henrik Praks (Baltic Defence College, Estonia)

Estonia and NATO: Back to Basics After a Decade of Membership

With respect to their security policy choice, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania took a firm course towards NATO membership soon after regaining their independence in 1991. Initially, Baltic NATO membership seemed rather unrealistic. However, a decade later it turned from a dream to reality as at its Prague Summit in November 2002 NATO decided to invite the three Baltic states to accede to the Alliance. Their accession process was completed in 2004, thereby bringing to conclusion one of the most contentious and keenly debated issues in the process of Alliance's opening.

It is true that while the Baltic states are in many ways very different countries with distinctive identities and historical backgrounds, they share the same geopolitical space and similar security concerns which has resulted in a general uniformity in their strategic outlook, priorities and views towards key security issues. At the same time, there have been certain significant differences between the specific steps the countries have taken as NATO members, especially with regard to their armed forces development choices and levels of defence financing. Therefore, this article concentrates only on the case of Estonia, while acknowledging that to a large extent its conclusions can similarly apply also to Latvia and Lithuania.[1]

Quest for membership

The Estonian quest for NATO membership stemmed from its historical experiences from the years 1939 to 1940. Finding itself in a difficult security policy setting completely alone and without any allies it lost its independence. From this legacy a lesson was drawn to never again be in a situation where it had no allies and the country would have to stand up to an assertive great power on its own.[2] For a small state bordering Russia, guaranteeing security with only its own means is basically impossible. Therefore, Estonia made a conscious choice to strive for membership in international security arrangements which strengthen their members' security. NATO was seen as the only security organization which has the

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[1] In addition to the sources referred to, the article is based on the author's personal experiences and recollections, including from those serving in the Estonian MoD, and on various encounters and conversations with members of Estonia's defence and security elite.

[2] M. Laar, *Esimesed sammud NATO poole (First steps towards NATO)*, [in:] L. Lindström, H. Praks (ed.), *Eesti NATO lugu 1991 - 2004 (Estonia - NATO: the Story 1991 - 2004)*, Estonian Atlantic Treaty Association: Tallinn 2014, p. 64-68.

political and military means required to ensure its security against the resurgence of the Russian threat, therefore, membership in this alliance was a logical choice in Estonian security policy.[3]

Alongside overcoming this sense of insecurity, achieving NATO membership was also seen in Estonia as part of a broader "return to Europe". This notion of being reunited with Europe encompassed becoming a member of the all key European political, security and economic organizations, and turned into a national consensus. President Lennart Meri (1992 - 2001) said: "For us becoming a member of NATO means first and foremost reuniting with Europe, instability replaced by stability, inseparable union with countries that respect values".[4]

Estonia and its Baltic neighbours had to overcome deeply sceptical Western attitudes on the benefits of Baltic NATO membership. As Russia vehemently opposed NATO's enlargement involving Baltic states, the Allies feared offending Russia's sensitivities.[5] Widespread was the view that Baltic membership would be a provocation which could destroy the efforts to create a partnership between NATO and Russia. Another argument claimed that there could never be credible Article 5 guarantees for the Baltic countries.[6] Geopolitical arguments behind the Allies' reluctance to admit the Baltic states were often disguised behind claims that the Baltic states, and especially their armed forces, were not ready for membership and to shoulder the military burdens of the Alliance. The states were judged as having poor national defence capabilities and seen as having little or no valuable assets for the Alliance as whole.[7] Their accession would simply further increase the burden on other Allies without providing any particular benefit.

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[3] "First and foremost, NATO for Estonia is a security issue. We've been trying different options during previous century, they didn't work. So now, we are trying to get all the security guarantees we can find, and NATO is definitely the only hard security guarantee available" said Estonian Ambassador Harri Tiido. Video interview with Ambassador Harri Tiido, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 27 October 2003, [www.nato.int, access: 28 September 2014].

[4] L. Meri, *Speech on the Occasion of the Meeting of European Members of Trilateral Commission*, Helsinki, 12 October 1996, [www.vp1992-2001.president.ee, access: 24 September 2014].

[5] For a description of Russian arguments and their influence in the West see S. Blank, *Russia, NATO Enlargement, and the Baltic States*, "World Affairs", Vol. 160, No. 3 (Winter 1998), pp. 115-125.

[6] Well-known *"The New York Times"* columnist Thomas L. Friedman argued that "it will be the end of NATO as a mutual defense alliance because there's no way the U.S. Army is going to guarantee the Estonia - Russia border", T. Friedman, *Bye-bye NATO*, "The New York Times", 14 April, 1997, [www.nytimes.com, access: 28 September 2014]. Similarly Professor Michael Mandelbaum called the possibility of extending the Article 5 guarantee to the Baltic states "a Baltic iceberg" for US foreign policy; "Congressional Record - Senate", Washington, 29 April, 1998, p. 3-4.

[7] The "not yet ready argument" was most famously made by US Secretary of Defense William Perry in autumn 1996; L. Kozarin, *Perry Says Baltic Nations Not Yet Ready for NATO Membership,* "American Forces Press Service", 3 October 1996, [www.defense.gov, access: 14 September 2014].

In order to overcome the latter argument, the Baltic states had to work hard in the framework of the Membership Action Plan process, which they joined in 1999, both on political and military issues, to prove to the Alliance sceptics their worth as future Allies. More broadly this included changing the image of the Baltic states in the "mental map" of the Western allies from being former Soviet republics ("them") to a part of a family of European nations ("us").[8] In the end, the Baltic states were ready to assume full membership responsibilities without significant problems.

NATO's eastern enlargement in general, and the accession of the Baltic states in particular, was eased by the fact that it coincided with a significant evolution of NATO's role. A formerly purely military defensive alliance was transformed into an anchor of stability in the continent and its surroundings. This change was enabled by Russia's very much concentrating on managing its internal problems and especially after the 11 September, 2001 (9/11) attacks temporarily orienting itself in the international arena towards cooperation with the West, which included rapprochement with NATO.

NATO went to great lengths to forge trust and cooperation with Russia, and as the enlargement process focused more on the political nature of the expansion, the Article 5 guarantee itself receded to the background. As a result the military aspects of NATO's enlargement were minimized in order to smooth the objections of Russia and acquiesce it to enlargement. In 1997 the Alliance promised Russia that it would not deploy to the territories of new members "in the current and foreseeable security environment" substantial conventional combat forces,[9] thereby setting politically driven limits to the implementation of the Alliance's security guarantees.

The 11 September, 2001 attacks and the following start of operations in areas far from Europe further accelerated NATO's trend of moving away from its original core mission of the collective defence of the Alliance's territory. As a result, when Estonia joined NATO the organization had substantially redefined its mission and had entered a "new era" or - in the words of Secretary General Lord Robertson - "This ain't your daddy's NATO".[10] The defence planning guidance refocused the Alliance's priorities from fighting large-scale wars in defence of its

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[8] M. Mälksoo, *Enabling NATO Enlargement: Changing Constructions of the Baltic states*, "Trames", 2004, 8 (58/83), p. 284-298.

[9] *Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation*, signed in Paris, France on 27 May 1997, Chapter IV.

[10] *This ain´t Your Daddy´s NATO, speech by NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson in Washington D.C.*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 12 November 2003, [www.nato.int, access: 1 October 2014].

territory to conducting multiple simultaneous smaller operations for stabilization, peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance missions.[11]

The effects of a decade of membership

Estonia's membership in the world's most powerful military alliance, coupled with its accession to the European Union, undoubtedly brought a sense of security unparalleled in the country's history. While the Baltic countries were seen as a contested space and potential sources of tension in 1990s, the successful consolidation of democracy and subsequent European and Euro-Atlantic integration seemed to have removed this threat. As a result, the Estonian National Defence Strategy could rather confidently declare "Today, thanks to NATO and EU membership, Estonia is more secure than ever".[12]

Achieving NATO membership at a time when the Alliance was confronted with global challenges meant that Estonia was now responsible not only for its national defence, but also shared responsibility for the overall Euro-Atlantic security environment. It had to abandon its narrow national perceptions of security and to adapt its security and defence strategies to take into account a considerably more global outlook.[13]

Estonia's policy within NATO has been guided by a goal of being a responsible and reliable Alliance member. Instead of being seen as a net consumer of security, it wants to be seen as a net contributor, a kind of model Alliance member which punches above its weight. As a result Estonia has consistently shown a willingness to contribute to a variety of the Alliance's missions and initiatives.

Estonia has been steadfastly among the top contributors to military operations in proportion to its population and the size of its armed forces. The latest available data from the European Defence Agency (EDA)[14] show that in 2012 Estonia had 7.1% of its troops deployed to international operations under the aegis of NATO and other organizations, thereby having the largest percentage of all the EDA member states.[15]

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[11] Julianne Smith (ed.), *Transforming NATO (...again). A Primer for the NATO Summit in Riga 2006*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, November 2006, p. 15-17, [www.csis.org, access: 24 September 2014].

[12] *National Defence Strategy*, *Estonia*, Estonian Ministry of Defense, 2010, p. 6. See also: *Estonia Is Now More Secure Than Ever Before Says Prime Minister Ansip*, "E-Gov Monitor", 2 June 2010, [www.eata.ee, access: 24 September 2014].

[13] See: E. Männik, *The Evolution of Baltic Security and Defence Strategies*, [in:] T. Lawrence, T. Jermalavičius (ed.), *Apprenticeship, Partnership, Membership: Twenty Years of Defence Development in the Baltic states,* International Centre for Defence Studies, Tallinn 2013, p. 30-33.

[14] The figures NATO collects for the usability of its member states troops are not made public.

[15] *National Defence Data 2012 of the EDA participating Member States*, Brussels, February 2014, [www.eda.europa.eu, access: 28 August 2014].

Moreover, it has focussed on types of operations where troops have been sent to areas where they are exposed to high-intensity warfighting. In the US-led coalition operation in Iraq, Estonia was one of the longest serving contributing nations with troops deployed until 2009 in some of the most difficult areas of the Sunni Triangle. From 2006 the Estonian efforts focused on NATO's ISAF mission in Afghanistan. Estonia deployed an infantry company and additional support elements to Helmand province where the troops remained until the end of the mission in mid-2014. At one period, during the 2009 Afghan elections, the country had 289 servicemen in Afghanistan, thereby being the largest per capita contributor among the whole ISAF family of nations.[16] Participating in dangerous operations also inevitably involves sacrifices. With nine servicemen killed and close to 100 wounded Estonia has also had to suffer one of the highest per-capita casualty rates among the ISAF participating nations.[17]

Unlike the majority of the other Allies, Estonia has also assigned its troops without caveats,[18] thereby providing the commanders with flexibility as to their use. Estonia has preferred to deploy together with large allied nations, like the United States (Iraq and Afghanistan) and the United Kingdom (Afghanistan). This has enabled the country to develop close relationships with its key NATO Allies and create mutual trust and interoperability between the armed forces which could be useful in future operational engagements, including closer to home.

At the same time the country has never been entirely comfortable with the post-modern perception of threats. For both historical and geographic reasons, relations with Russia inevitably remain central to the Estonia's security thinking, both in the context of hard and soft security. Therefore, the primary security concern remained Russia, whether it was recognized as such in its security- and defence-related documents and statements or not. There was widespread suspicion that a peaceful security environment may again change and that tumultuous times may lay ahead. In fact, a few years after NATO accession Russian - Estonian relations had already started to become increasingly tense and reached a low point during the 2007 spring Bronze Soldier riots[19] in Tallinn and the subsequent cyber-attacks on Estonia's electronic infrastructure which were considered to be inspired

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[16] *Estonia to double the number of soldiers in Afghanistan*, Estonian Ministry of Defense press release, June 11 2009, [www.kmin.ee, access: 24 September 2014].

[17] In addition, in Iraq the Estonian Defence Forces lost two servicemen. Data taken from website www.icasualties.org, see also S. Coll, *Burden sharing*, "The New Yorker", 11 March 2010, [www.newyorker.com, access: 28 August 2014].

[18] *Transparency initiative input to NATO website - ESTONIA*, 2008, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, [www.nato.int, access: 27 September 2014].

[19] The Estonian authorities' decision to relocate a Soviet-era World War II monument from central Tallinn to a military cemetery led to protest from part of the Russian-speaking population which turned into a confrontation with police and looting.

and directed from Russia. This crisis dissolved any feeling that with accession to NATO, Estonia would have overcome its security vulnerabilities vis-à-vis its eastern neighbour and would from then on be sheltered from external challenges.

In the post-Cold War NATO, territorial defence concepts have been declared obsolete and the focus has totally shifted to the development of smaller, professional and deployable forces which could be used for a variety of the Alliance's expeditionary missions. In line with this trend, Latvia and Lithuania as well, once safely NATO members, ended the use of conscription and shifted to professional armed forces.

Estonia chooses a different course. The country has become one of the few European nations to retain a defence model which emphasizes the territorial defence of the country and has as its cornerstone the maintenance of a conscription system for male citizens in order to prepare a large number of reserves for mobilization. This approach was to a great degree inspired by the defence systems of the Nordic countries during the Cold War. The Finnish influence on Estonian military thinking in particular has traditionally been strong with a lot of Estonian officers having been trained in Finland and the society as a whole admiring Finland's resistance to the Soviet Union in the period of the Second World War.[20]

The basics of this concept of national defence have been supported by both political forces and the Estonian population.[21] Although the liberal Reform Party, which has held the post of Prime Minister since 2005, at times toyed with the idea of abolishing mandatory conscription, none of the other significant political parties supported the change. The retaining of conscription has always enjoyed overwhelming popular support.[22] Today the present defence model enjoys widespread consensus in society. It is considered as enabling the involvement of the whole society in the defence of the country and as the only means to ensure the availability of the necessary numbers of manpower in the context of a very small state.

The current *"National Defence Development Plan 2013 - 2022"* foresees a significant increase in the capability of defence forces. This includes both numerical increases and the development of new capabilities, such as an armoured manoeuvring

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[20] See H. Mölder, *The Development of Military Cultures,* [in:] T. Lawrence and T. Jermalavičius (ed.), *Apprenticeship, Partnership, Membership: Twenty Years of Defence Development in the Baltic states,* International Centre for Defence Studies, Tallinn 2013, p. 85-121.

[21] For some of the debates see M. Kolga, *New Challenges to the Estonian Defence System after accession to the Alliance*, [in:] H. Tiirmaa - Klaar and T. Marques (ed.), *Global and Regional Security Challenges: A Baltic Outlook*, Tallinn University, Tallinn University Press 2006, p. 42-62

[22] A stable majority of over 90% of respondents continuously support the retention of conscription. For summaries of different public opinion polls see www.eata.ee/en/estonia-in-nato/public-opinion.

capability.[23] It also acknowledges that modern threat scenarios require the development of higher-readiness units. Still Russia's actions in the Crimea caused some experts to openly question whether the present Estonian defence model would be able to cope with such scenarios.[24]

The present Chief of Defence, Major General Riho Terras, likes to refer to Article 3 of the Washington Treaty which commits member states to "maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack".[25] The most visible indication of a political will to develop these defence capabilities is a high level of defence expenditures. On joining the Alliance, all acceding nations made varying commitments either to maintain defence spending at the NATO target level of 2% of GDP or to reach it within the next few years.[26] The reality has turned out to be, however, rather different. Estonia, having reached the 2% benchmark in 2012, is currently the only country in all of Central and Eastern Europe meeting this target and one of the few states in the whole Alliance which is fulfilling its spending commitments.[27] While reaching 2% took longer than originally anticipated, various Estonian governments retained it as a priority and even the severe economic and financial crisis of 2008-2009 did not affect this commitment. The former NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen used the Estonian example as a proof that if there is a will the achievement of this NATO benchmark is possible despite all the conflicting budgetary requirements.[28]

While initially the 2% level was presented by the Estonian leadership internally mostly as an external NATO requirement, over the years it has been widely accepted as a necessary element in strengthening national security.[29] Doubts about the sustainability of this 2% commitment vanished after Russia's actions in Ukraine. The draft state budget for 2015 contains a further increase of expendi-

[23] M. Steketee, *Estonia to buy Dutch CV 90s*, "IHS Jane's Defence Weekly", 2 October 2014, [www.janes.com, access: 4 October 2014].

[24] M. Hurt, *Lessons Identified in Crimea: Does Estonia's national defence model meet our needs?*, "ICDS Policy Paper", April 2014, [www.icds.ee, access: 29 August 2014].

[25] I. Jõesaar, *Reforms will make our Defence Forces stronger*, interview with Major General Riho Terras, "Sõdur (Soldier)", 1/2013, English translation [www.mil.ee, access: 2 October 2014].

[26] See: *Statement by Ian Brzezinski, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for European and NATO Affairs*, House International Relations Committee Subcommitee on Europe, 29 April, 2003, [www.dod.mil, access: 24 September 2014].

[27] *Financial and Economic Data Relating to NATO Defence*, NATO Public Diplomacy Division Press Release PR/CP (2014) 028, published on 24 February 2014, [www.nato.int, access: 14 September 2014]. Poland has come very close to also having 2% of the GDP committed to spending.

[28] See for example: *A Strong Transatlantic Bond for an Unpredictable World*, *speech by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen at the Atlantic Council of the United States in*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization 8 July 2014, [www.nato.int, access: 30 September 2014].

[29] *Estonian PM: Two percent of GDP for national defence is imperative*, "Postimees", 18 May 2013, [www.news.postimees.ee, access: 3 October 2014].

tures planned to reach now 2.05% of GDP.[30] The country has also been among those Allies which have constantly argued for firmer Alliance-wide commitments to increase defence expenditures.[31]

One area where Estonia's role within the Alliance has been particularly significant has been in tackling the issue of responding to cyber threats. Since the 2007 cyber-attacks, Estonia has been at the forefront of various NATO cyber defence-related activities. It hosts in Tallinn the Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence, hosts and organizes various cyber activities and exercises for the Alliance, and contributes significantly to the work on cyber concepts and doctrine.

NATO and Russia in the Baltic region

While NATO considered Russia as a strategic partner and constantly sought to build up a cooperative relationship based on areas of mutual security interests, Russia increasingly started to see itself as a counterweight to Western civilization. The speech by President Putin at the Munich Security Conference in 2007 gave warning of a change of attitude in Moscow towards relations with the West and a gradual shift to increased confrontation. In 2008 the conflict in Georgia's break-away region of South Ossetia grew to a Russian-Georgian war which directly showed Russia's capabilities and willingness to employ military force against its neighbours to achieve political objectives. For many nations bordering Russia, the war was a wake-up call, which showed clearly that the old anxieties may return. While the Alliance took certain steps to reemphasize the role of collective defence, there was still no general reassessment of policies towards Russia.

Given their geographic location, the Baltic states have always been interested in having a visible NATO military presence in their territory. However, during the first decade of their membership, NATO's military planning and its force posture largely neglected the region. The only permanent NATO military presence in the region was in the form of rotating deployments of groups of typically four fighter aircraft from various NATO member states' air forces to the Šiauliai Air Base in Lithuania. This Baltic Air Policing mission has been an extremely important political signal of Allied solidarity with the Baltic nations. However, in practical terms in the case of Estonia, considering the distances from Šiauliai to Estonian airspace, it is of rather limited value. However, even that mission was for years under con-

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[30] A. Einmann, *Eesti kulutab tuleval aastal riigikaitsele 2,05 protsenti SKTst (Next year Estonia will spend 2,05 percentage of the GDP on National Defence)*, "Postimees", 23 September 2014, [www.postimees.ee, access: 24 September 2014]. In numerical terms the planned defence budget for 2015 is 412 million EUR.
[31] *Estonia´s five requests at NATO summit*, "Delfi", 1 September 2014, [www.delfi.ee, access: 30 September 2014].

stant threat of termination as several member states argued during internal NATO discussions in favour of switching to an over-the-horizon presence.[32] Only in 2012 did the Alliance finally agree at the Chicago summit to prolong the Baltic Air Policing mission indefinitely.

One result of the Russian - Georgian war was that NATO finally developed a contingency plan for the defence of the Baltic states. However, reaching a political agreement to prepare that plan was a long and arduous process with certain member states afraid of hurting Russian sensitivities.[33] The development of the plan was followed by the start of NATO military exercises in the Baltic region, most notable of which being a collective defence exercise *"Steadfast Jazz"* of 2013.

At the same time the security and military situation around the Baltic states was rapidly changing. The security of the region cannot be seen separately from the overall developments within the European and transatlantic space. The age of austerity has meant a growing scarcity of resources among the Western powers. Faced with the worsening economic and financial situation most of European Allies started to implement extensive defence cuts. As a result, the European Allies' military capabilities have been rapidly decreasing. At the same time, the multiple security challenges the sole global superpower United States is facing have led to a further decrease in the US military presence in Europe. While due to Europe's increasing de-militarization and re-balancing to Asia-Pacific by the United States, NATO's ability to undertake a high-intensity conventional military operations has been eroding, an increase of military power is a key priority for Russia's political leadership. After the Georgian war, Russia launched an ambitious military reform and modernization programme and the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, pledged 755 billion USD to completely modernize the Russian armed forces.[34]

Russia's military activities and overall capabilities in the Baltic Sea region have been recently expanded. Russia's Western Military District[35] seems to have received the highest priority when it comes to receiving new equipment. This has included the deployment of its most advanced weapon systems - the *Iskander*, S-400 - which would allow Russia to complicate and slow down the arrival of NATO reinforcement troops in the event of a conflict.[36] As part of Russia's

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[32] Author's personal recollections from his service in Estonian Ministry of Defense.

[33] I. Traynor, *Wikileaks cables reveal secret Nato plans to defend Baltics from Russia*, "the Guardian", 6 December 2010, [www.theguardian.com, access: 27 September 2014].

[34] N. Gvosdev *Russia´s Military is Back,* "National Interest", 4 October 2013, [www.nationalinterest.org, access: 27 September 2014].

[35] The Western Military District is one of the four operational strategic commands of the Russian Armed Forces. It encompasses the westernmost and northwesternmost regions of the Russian Federation, including areas bordering the Baltic Sea region.

[36] K. Kaas, *Russian Armed Forces in the Baltic Sea Region*, "Diplomaatia", June/July 2014, [www.diplomaatia.ee, access: 28 August 2014].

flexing of its military muscles, its armed forces have conducted both large scale military manoeuvres, like *"Zapad"* of 2009 and 2013, and numerous snap exercises which have been clearly aimed at NATO and its member states, and have included attacks on their territories. These exercises with massive deployments of forces over a strategic distance have involved a full-scale military operation against a conventional enemy in the Baltic operational theatre and a cutting off of the Baltic states from the rest of the NATO countries. The scale of the *"Zapad"* exercise of 2013 was particularly noteworthy. Various estimates put the number of Russian troops involved at over 70,000.[37] Simultaneously, incidents involving Russian military aircraft infringing Baltic airspace have become more common. For example, Estonia's airspace was violated in the first nine months of 2014 five times, nearing the total of seven over the previous eight years. Similar increases in airspace violations by Russian aircraft have been witnessed in non-aligned Finland and Sweden.[38]

As a result, the Baltic Sea region is the only region in the NATO area where NATO does not have superiority in conventional military capabilities in peacetime. Instead, the regional imbalance of forces between Russia and NATO could leave Russia here with considerable room for manoeuvre, both politically and militarily.

Russian aggression in Ukraine: a game changer?

Russia's aggression against Ukraine, which violated the entire system of post-Cold War international norms, has brought Europe to its most serious security crisis since the end of the Cold War. It has recreated a notable sense of vulnerability among the allies on the Eastern borderlands of NATO, including Estonia. The belief that a major war on the European continent is impossible has been shattered.

Estonia has been profoundly affected by what has and is happening in Ukraine. There is a feeling in Estonia that without membership in NATO and the European Union, something similar to the Ukrainian scenario could have also happened here.[39] The country has a large ethnic Russian population which constitutes around one-quarter of the inhabitants and Russia has proclaimed it has the right not only to protect its citizens, but also what Moscow calls its "compatriots" abroad.[40] The

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[37] P. Järvenpää, *Zapad-2013: A View from Helsinki*, The Jamestown Foundation, Washington DC, August 2014, [www.jamestown.org, access: 28 August 2014].

[38] R. Milne, S. Jones, K. Hille, *Russian air incursions rattle Baltic states*, "Financial Times", 24 September 2014, [www.ft.com, access: 25 September 2014].

[39] S. Sakkov, *Is This the Kind of NATO We Wanted*, "Diplomaatia", March 2014, [www.diplomaatia.ee, access: 28 August 2014].

[40] *Moscow to Continue Protecting Rights of Compatriots Abroad - Putin*, "RIA Novosti", 1 July 2014, [www.en.ria.ru, access: 29 September 2014].

Estonian authorities have gone to great lengths to dismiss among the general public any comparisons between the situation in Eastern Ukraine and in North - East Estonia,[41] the area which has a majority of Russian speakers. In reality there must be little doubt that Russia has the means to instigate at least some level of internal trouble in Estonia through subversive actions and information operations.

Russia is seen as using various political, military, economic and informational means to create uncertainty and insecurity among its neighbours. The abduction by Russia's FSB security service of an Estonian security official at the Estonian - Russian border on 5 September, during the NATO summit and just two days after President Obama's visit to Tallinn,[42] is widely considered in Estonia as falling into this pattern.

In response to what has been happening in Ukraine, NATO and individual Allies, in particular the United States, have taken a variety of steps to provide visible reassurance to the easternmost members, including to Estonia. In the Baltic region the Alliance has significantly increased its military presence as part of the ad hoc immediate reassurance measures agreed in spring 2014. It has sent extra aircraft to NATO's Air Policing mission and started also to utilize Estonia's Ämari airbase as a second air policing station in the region. American company-sized land forces units have been deployed to each of the Baltic states and significantly more exercises and joint training aimed at testing NATO's ability to repel an attack against an Ally have started being conducted as well. Before the Russian intrusion into Ukraine, these steps would have been unthinkable. When the Estonian Defence Minister, Urmas Reinsalu, called in January 2014 during a visit to Washington for the stationing of US troops in Estonia, this was criticized even in Estonia as premature and potentially provocative.[43] The annexation of the Crimea brought along a paradigm change and less than four months after Reinsalu's statement, US boots were on the ground in Estonia.

The Alliance plans to continue and further develop these reassurance measures as part of the implementation of the Readiness Action Plan approved at the Wales summit in September 2014. The summit declaration states that there will be a "continuous air, land and maritime presence and meaningful military activity in

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[41] President Ilves said in an interview to *Slate* online magazine "The average Russian miner in Donetsk gets 200 euros a month. The average Russian miner in Estonia gets 2,000 euros a month"; L. Waymouth, *The West Has Been in a State of Shock*, "Slate.com", 29 September 2014, [www.slate.com, access: 27 September 2014].

[42] *EU urges Russia to immediately release Estonian security officer*, "Reuters", 11 September 2014, [www.af.reuters.com, access: 27 September 2014].

[43] *Defense Officials Making Push for More Muscular US Presence*, "ERR", 9 January 2014, [www.news.err.ee, access: 2 October 2014].

the eastern part of the Alliance, both on a rotational basis".[44] These practical steps have been complemented by a number of high-level visits and statements designed to reassure concerned nations. Most notable was the visit to Estonia by US President Barack Obama immediately before the Wales summit during which he pledged that in case of attack, the NATO Alliance, including the military of the United States of America, will come to help and the Baltic states will never lose their independence again.[45]

From the general Estonian viewpoint, the initial steps already taken and further decisions made at the Wales Summit have certainly been positive, but more is expected to be done to implement the agreed measures and thereby solidify this new baseline of a continuous NATO presence. Everything should start from an awareness inside the Alliance that what has been happening in Ukraine is not a one-off event, but part of a larger long-term trend of Russia unilaterally redrawing its borders in Europe. It would be a mistake to consider that the issue is just about the security of NATO's borderline states. Instead it poses a real threat to European security as a whole. It requires abandoning illusions and wishful thinking, and realizing that this new situation will continue and be with us for a long time. Prime Minister Taavi Rõivas characterized it at the Wales Summit as "not a mere change of weather but a long-term climate change".[46]

Although the chance of an outright Russian invasion against NATO territory may be low, one should not fall into a state of self-deception by assuming that the Russian leadership always acts rationally. The possibility cannot be excluded that in a misguided calculation, collective defence would fail to activate, and Moscow would try to test NATO's resolve by undertaking military adventurism in the Baltics. Russia has the capability of launching military operations at short notice and the Crimea has shown its ability to rapidly create facts on the ground. Of particular concern is Russia's frequent use of snap exercises to test its forces.[47] These can be used to mass forces for incursion with very little warning time.

From this changed environment stems the fact that for NATO from now on the clear top priority must again be its fundamental task of providing collective defence for its member states. Alliance-wide there has to be the realization that

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[44] *Wales Summit Declaration, para 7*, North Atlantic Council, 5 September 2014.
[45] *Remarks by President Obama to the People of Estonia*, Tallinn - Estonia, 3 September 2014, [www.whitehouse.gov, access: 2 October 2014].
[46] *Prime Minister Rõivas: From today´s meeting we expect decisions on the continuation of the presence of Allies*, Government Press Office, 5 September 2014, [www.valitsus.ee, access: 5 September 2014].
[47] Russia´s military takeover of Crimea coincided with one such snap exercise in the western and central regions of Russia. *Russian Armed Forces Hold Combat Readiness Snap Check*, "RIA Novosti", 26 February 2014, [www.en.ria.ru, access: 19 October 2014].

NATO is back to territorial defence with the aim of deterring possible outside aggression. This requires a huge mental change after more than a decade of almost exclusive concentrating on out-of-area operations. However, the end of the ISAF mission conveniently puts the Alliance in a better position to implement this sea change.

The Alliance needs to further tailor its response to send an unequivocal signal to Moscow not to consider an act of aggression against any Alliance member. For deterrence to work it is imperative that political statements about the rock solid nature of Article 5 commitments are backed up with robust military force on the ground in frontline states. While NATO has significant air force assets that can be contributed rather quickly, they would not suffice. Due to its small size and exposed location, a country like Estonia does not have any strategic depth. Therefore, effective deterrence requires both pre-emptive deployments of ground forces and the pre-positioning of additional equipment for follow-on forces on the ground. A continuous cycle of exercises and training has to be developed to ensure the readiness and interoperability of different types of forces. If implemented, these measures would provide reassurance to the allies most immediately threatened, show resolve and thereby enhance deterrence.

From the Estonian view, the role of the United States is crucial as it is considered the only country with both the sufficient means and resolve to act if there should be some kind of serious military crisis involving Russia. Therefore, the continuous presence of US troops in the country is considered essential. As the Alliance is based on the principle of burden-sharing, American troops on the ground should also be accompanied also by contributions from European allies. None of the measures undertaken should remain symbolic or fall into oblivion in case the situation in Ukraine should somehow stabilize. The Alliance has to recognize that it will be a new normality, a new baseline for NATO's presence in the region.

An additional challenge that NATO has to cope with is that the events in Ukraine have brought to light Russia's tactic of power-projection through the use of irregular forces or covert military activities to maintain ambiguity and a degree of deniability. The Alliance does not appear to be adequately prepared for this kind of covert warfare which combines traditional military actions with other means, such as simultaneous information and cyber campaigns. Therefore, work within NATO on how to better prepare for this kind of hybrid scenario is crucial.

All the above does not mean that NATO as a whole would be returning to its Cold War era posture and one-dimensional focus on one threat. Indeed there is no possibility of this as the situation in this globalized world is different. The multitude of different threats and challenges facing the Alliance, including violent politi-

cal extremism in areas to the south and south - east of NATO territory, in any case ensure that the Alliance will not become one-dimensional. For the first time in its history the Alliance has to look both to the east and south, while keeping an eye also on more distant challenges. Therefore, NATO's north - eastern members, including Estonia, will also need to understand the security concerns of Allies with different geopolitical outlooks and remain ready to contribute to alleviating them. Only through this kind of mutual understanding can the Alliance remain cohesive and resilient to tackle the various crises it encounters.

Conclusion

Estonia seems to have come full circle. It took the road to NATO membership in order to secure itself against Russian revanchism. After achieving membership a relatively fair weather ensued, but now its historical concerns have returned. While NATO membership has sheltered Estonia from developments which have been witnessed in Georgia and Ukraine, the resurgence of an assertive Russia has again focused its security thinking firmly on its eastern neighbour.

Estonia feels that by joining NATO it signed up to a bargain, thereby it commits to being a credible ally in helping the Alliance to tackle common security challenges while expecting other Allies also to listen to Estonia's concerns and stand with it when the going gets tough. While, with very significant contributions to NATO's efforts - in relative terms, taking into account the country's size - Estonia has certainly lived up to its part of the bargain, there is a feeling that the Alliance often has not paid enough attention to Estonia's growing concerns about its eastern neighbour. The question of the credibility of the collective defence commitment has always merited the attention of the public in Estonia. Can the NATO Allies be relied upon to come to the defence of the country if it faced aggression from the east? Now when the issue of an aggressive Russia cannot anymore be overlooked, the Alliance is standing up to provide reassurance to one of its member states most exposed to Russia's intimidation and pressure.

For its part, there is a clear understanding in Estonia that the Article 5 guarantee would work only in a case where the nation which requires assistance is also able and willing to contribute to its defence. Moreover, the experience of hybrid warfare in Ukraine has highlighted the importance that the role the targeted country itself has to perform to ensure its internal security and stability, and the cohesion of its society. Estonia will certainly continue to take its defence responsibilities seriously. This involves sustaining high levels, by European standards, of defence expenditures, but also a model of national defence, which although being

quite different from that which is practiced by the vast majority of the other Allies, enjoys widespread support within Estonian society.

Finally, from Estonia's perspective, one cannot fail to notice that Russia's actions have repeatedly been counterproductive and instead of weakening have strengthened Allied resolve. For example, the 2007 cyber-attacks in Estonia catalysed the development of the cyber domain within the Alliance. Now through its actions, Putin's Russia has experienced a strategic backlash by creating a post-Crimean NATO, which is starting to return to its roots, which made NATO the most successful military alliance in history. While there are lingering concerns about Euro-fatigue in the United States and a lack of leadership in Europe, NATO today is definitely a different alliance from the one it was just a year ago. Therefore, one can also conclude that in a sense Russia's actions have paradoxically strengthened Estonia's security because the country is now feeling the fruits of its membership in the world's most powerful collective defence organization.

PART III

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Russia and NATO: Looking For the Less Pessimistic Scenario

In the course of the preparation for the next summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization scheduled for July 1990 to take place in London, then NATO Secretary General Manfred Wörner attended a meeting with the President of the United States George H.W. Bush at the White House. Wörner outlined a new task for his organization to transmit a message that the Alliance was "a force for peace and European security, in cooperation with the Soviet Union",[1] seeking partnership with the latter "in [a] cooperative structure".[2] President Bush suggested that the organization could probably change its name. The NATO Secretary General objected that the real issue was not the name, but the substance of the organization.[3]

As the North Atlantic Alliance was a well-established "brand" in European security, boasting a long history of effective transatlantic cooperation whose scope even in the times of the Cold War superseded countering the threat of Soviet invasion, the name of the organization stayed intact. However, during the historic summit in London in 1990 the heads of state and government of NATO countries issued a Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance, highly emphasizing the need to develop a political agenda of bridge building with the countries of the East.[4] For more than two decades after the end of the Cold War NATO was trying to prove itself a truly universal organization in the realm of security.

The Soviet Union collapsed, and Russia, proclaimed its heir, seemed to take the path towards market economy, democratization and a cooperative relationship with the West. In 1991 Russia became one of the co-founders of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), in 1994 she joined the Alliance's PfP (Partnership for Peace) programme. With the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security signed on 27 May, 1997 in Paris, the parties assumed mutual obligations to "build together a lasting and enduring peace in the Euro-Atlantic

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[1] *Memorandum of Conversation. Meeting with Manfred Woerner, Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization,* George Bush Presidential Library and Museum, 7 May 1990, [www.bushlibrary.tamu.edu, access: 20 October 2014] .

[2] *Ibidem.*

[3] *Ibidem.*

[4] *Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance. Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating at the Meeting of the North Atlantic Alliance*, The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 5 - 6 July 1990, [www.nato.int, access: 20 October 2014].

area on the principles of democracy and cooperative security."[5] Later on, the permanent NRC (NATO - Russia Council), designed as a more effective and flexible mechanism for joint decision making and implementation, was established. During the short periods when the relations between the two were at their peak, some leading political experts in both NATO countries and Russia speculated on the possibility - and expediency - of the Russian Federation one day becoming an effective member of the North Atlantic Alliance.[6]

Now, after more than two decades of searching for an appropriate *modus vivendi*, all the masks of pretence are gone from Russia's relationship with the Alliance. The relationship between NATO and Russia appears to have slid back to some Cold War "normalcy" of a confrontational and distrustful mood, being poisoned by each "partner's" disillusionment with the other.[7] For many NATO states, Russia is a country that failed (or deliberately refused) to become a democracy, a good and trusted member of the European family of nations. It descended to the use of military force to achieve its foreign policy ends, a practice widely seen as inappropriate and anachronistic for today's Europe, and attempts to dictate its own rules for the European order, not to mention posing a direct military threat to some parts of Europe. For Russia, the North Atlantic Alliance used to be an arrogant partner, who refused to treat it as an equal and a deceptive one when it comes to the commitment that was given to Mikhail Gorbachev, not to enlarge NATO. Now it is more often than not perceived as a geopolitical rival and a menace to Russia's national security.

One can clearly draw a line under the uncertain period of a failed 'reset' in Russia's relations with the West. As the North Atlantic Alliance officially suspended its cooperation with Russia, it made the task of evaluating this cooperation a little easier for the analyst.

NATO - Russia Relationship: Any 'Added Value'?

The view that Russia's relationship with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was highly dependent on the state of US - Russian relations and also somewhat secondary to this, has become commonplace and hardly requires any lengthy

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[5] *Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Russian Federation*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 27 May 1997, [www.nato.int, access: 20 October 2014] .

[6] C. A. Kupchan. *NATO`s Final Frontier: Why Russia Should Join the Atlantic Alliance,* "Foreign Affairs", May - June 2010, p. 100. F. A. Lukyanov, *Zachem Rossii NATO?*, "Rossiya v Global`noy Politike", 15 December 2010, [www.globalaffairs.ru, access: 20 October 2014].

[7] A. G. Arbatov, *Bystro razriadka ne nastupit*, "Kommersant.ru Ogoniok", 15 September 2014, [www.kommersant.ru, access: 20 October 2014].

arguments to prove. The very fact that during the last two crises in European security (the Georgia - Russia War of the August 2008 and the political crisis in Ukraine in 2014) the work of the NRC was disrupted and the alliance had no role to play in providing for multilateral consultations, perfectly testifies to this view. However, it would be misleading to downplay the obvious fact that NATO is an influential multilateral institution made up of 28 member states, where all the decisions are taken on a consensual basis.

Previously, the plurality of members in the North Atlantic Alliance was regarded as an advantage to Russia in its search for political support for its international initiatives. According to Dmitriy Rogozin, the head of the Russian permanent mission to NATO headquarters (2008 - 2011), the NRC was initially supposed to become a compensation to Russia for the Alliance's so-called 'big bang' enlargement, announced at the Prague summit in 2002. There was a view that the organization would not be present in that institution as a single body, but rather the NRC would become a place for discussions with the individual members.[8] This institutional arrangement seemed likely to give Moscow an opportunity to conduct even some light version of a *divide et impera* policy inside NATO. Soon Russia to its disappointment found that those hopes were in vain, and that she had to deal with the Alliance's consolidated position. That led Dmitriy Rogozin, known to be rather a hawk in Russian politics, to the conclusion that the NRC was largely dysfunctional.[9]

Though the NRC was frequently criticized in Russia for the lack of mutual trust inside this institution and the failure to develop a meaningful decision making process, it is hard for many to deny the positive role it used to play in the security environment of Europe.[10] The NRC provided a useful forum for the discussion of many important issues outlined in the NATO - Russia Founding Act of 1997, which Moscow considered vital to its national security, and contributed to the shared understanding of threats and the development of mutually beneficial military cooperation.[11]

Following Russia's acquisition of Crimea, on 1 April 2014 NATO announced its decision to suspend all practical military and civil cooperation with Russia, based on the view that the latter "had breached its commitments, as well as violat-

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[8] I. Gushchin, *Dmitriy Rogozin: "Sovet Rossiya-NATO ne vypolniayet svoih funkciy"*, "Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn", 4 October 2010, [www.interaffairs.ru, access: 20 October 2014].

[9] *Ibidem.*

[10] V. S. Belous, *Problemy povysheniya effektivnosti uchastiya Rossii v sovete Roossiya - NATO*, "Mirovaya ekonomika I mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya", No. 4 (2012), p. 7.

[11] *Ibidem.* pp. 5-6.

ed international law".[12] The decision was subject to review in June 2014, but NATO chose to maintain the suspension, as Russia was providing support to the insurgents in Eastern Ukraine.

According to the text of the Wales Summit Declaration, the relations between the North Atlantic Alliance and the Russian Federation will remain contingent on the latter's willingness to demonstrate "compliance with international law, and its obligations and responsibilities".[13] The wording of the declaration leaves doubts about the possibility of resuming cooperation any time soon, as the authors of the document qualified the violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity on the part of Russia as "a serious breach of international law",[14] demanding it to end its "illegitimate occupation of Crimea".[15] For Russia, the acquisition of Crimea is a fait accompli, admitted even by the opposition movement leaders like Aleksei Navalniy and Mikhail Khodorkhovskiy, and a decision enjoying wide public support. Thus, it is hardly possible to expect a new start in NATO - Russia cooperation.

When commenting on the freeze in cooperation with NATO, Russian officials predictably tended to present the idea of the low significance of the issue for Russia. The official representative of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Aleksandr Lukashevich in his remarks recalled the situation following the Georgian War of 2008, when the Alliance itself initiated the resumption of cooperation with Russia.[16] In his interview with Interfax News Agency, Ambassador Alexander Grushko, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to NATO, stated that by "having suspended cooperation with Russia, NATO has damaged first and foremost the international efforts to neutralize common security risks and threats, and thus, its own security".[17] By saying this, Mr Grushko portrayed the Alliance`s decision as counter-productive and capable of having a strong negative impact. Anatoliy Antonov, Russian Deputy Minister of Defence stressed the superficial character of NATO - Russia cooperation. "After all the positive gains of the last several years, the relationship with NATO collapsed like a house of cards after the

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[12] *NATO`s Relations with Russia*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 16 September 2014, [www.nato.int, access: 21 October 2014].

[13] *Wales Summit Declaration. Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating at the Meeting of North Atlantic council in Wales*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 5 September 2014, [www.nato.int, access: 21 October 2014].

[14] *Ibidem.*

[15] *Ibidem.*

[16] *Moskva ne ispugalas` prekrashcheniya sotrudnichestva s NATO.* "BBC", 2 April 2014, [www.bbc.co.uk, access: 21 October 2014].

[17] *Interview with Ambassador Alexander Grushko, Permanent Representative to NATO, Interfax News Agency, "Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to NATO"*, 26 May 2014, [www.missiontonato.ru, access: 21 October 2014].

first shock",[18] - he said in his interview to a leading Russian newspaper. The Russian Parliamentarian Aleksandr Pushkov, the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the State Duma was even more critical of the value of Russia's relations with the Alliance. "Mr Rasmussen will not frighten Russia by stopping cooperation because we have never had any practical benefits from this cooperation save for the purely symbolic Russia-NATO Council",[19] he said. We have to note that the political environment in summer 2014 may have influenced the above assessment.

As for Russian experts, Aleksandr Sharavin, the Director of the Institute for Political and Military Analysis, expressed deep concern about the disruption in military-to-military contacts between the Russian Federation and NATO countries that would have a strong negative impact on their relations.[20] In contrast, Vladimir Dvorkin of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations said that the Alliance's decision would not significantly affect European security as he doubted whether there were any threats to European security at all.[21] His colleague from the same institute, known to be the leading Russian think tank in international relations, Nadezhda Arbatova described NATO's decision as highly symbolic, except for the two areas that she found rather significant for both - the stabilizing efforts in Afghanistan and the fight against terrorism.[22]

Several times Russia indicated its commitment to the NRC. On 6 March 2014 Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov referred to the NRC as something that constitutes a common good for the international community, which is interested in a normal dialogue between Russia and the West.[23] Amid the rising tensions in Eastern Ukraine, Russia initiated a meeting at NRC, which took place on 2 June 2014, to hold discussions on the political crisis in the neighbouring country.[24]

Amid the rising suspicions that the North Atlantic Alliance was extending its military presence in proximity to Russian borders, Russia is concerned about the

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[18] Y. Gavrilov, *Rossiya - ne NATO. Minoborony peresmatrivayet otnosheniya s Severoatlanticheskim blokom*, "Rossiyskaya gazeta", 22 April 2014, [www.rg.ru, access: 21 October 2014].

[19] *Pushkov: NATO Will Be Affected More by the Suspension of Cooperation with Russia*, "ITAR - TASS", 7 August 2014, [www.itar-tass.com, access: 21 October 2014].

[20] V. Vasiliyev, *Rossiya - NATO: chem chrevato prekrashcheniye sotrudnichestva? Rossiyskiye eksperty po-raznomu ocenivayut riski*, "Golos Ameriki", 4 April 2014, [www.golos-ameriki.ru, access: 21 October 2014].

[21] *Ibidem.*

[22] N. Arbatova, *Top 3 Geopolitical Challenges for Russia and NATO*. "Russia Direct", 10 April 2014, [www.russia-direct.org, access: 21 October 2014].

[23] *Kommentarii dlia SMI ministra inostrannyh del Rossii S.V. Lavrova po itogam vstrechi s Gossekretariom SShA Dzh. Kerry, Rim, 6 marta 2014*, "Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs", 6 March 2014, [www.mid.ru, access: 23 November 2014].

[24] Y. Paniyev, *Russia Decries NATO Activity in Eastern Europe at Brussels Meeting* "Russia Beyond the Headlines", 3 June 2014, [www.rbth.com, access: 23 November 2014].

fate of the NATO - Russia Founding Act. According to the text of the document, NATO pledged to develop interoperability, integration, and capability for reinforcement rather than to rely on the additional permanent stationing of substantial combat forces. That became an issue during the crisis in Ukraine, when Poland, Estonia and Latvia demanded an increased NATO military presence on their territory to provide further assurances of their security.[25] The supporters of this proposal pointed to the fact that Russia had already breached its obligations under the Founding Act by violating the territorial integrity of Ukraine, and thus changing dramatically the substance of the treaty.

During a joint press conference in Tallinn in September 2014, which US President Barack Obama visited on his way to the Alliance's summit in Wales, while giving his remarks on the NATO - Russia Founding Act Obama admitted that the "circumstances [of the Act] clearly have changed"[26] and that it would be "a topic of discussion in Wales".[27] In response to the US President, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Lavrov contended that no state could change the Act unilaterally, but only upon the approval of all signatories,[28] thus, giving support to the treaty.

Russia hardly welcomes the interpretation given to the NATO - Russia Founding Act that made possible the stationing of Allied troops on a rotational basis on NATO's eastern periphery, but it is interested in keeping the Act in force. The history of her interaction with the North Atlantic Alliance, especially when it comes to the pledge not to expand NATO presumably given to Mikhail Gorbachev, clearly shows that a legal instrument stipulating the obligations of each side is much better than any oral assurances given by high-ranking US officials.[29]

Nowadays, when Russia finds itself relatively weaker than NATO in military, political and economic terms, it is more interested than ever in preserving the institutional framework, and so the relationship with the West is more predictable. However, as recent events show, it is ready, when it deems necessary, to accept the damage, produced in retaliation to her actions, and it clearly tends to avoid or at least to postpone any open competition and direct collision with the West. In fact, as I will further show in the next chapter, like any other state, Russia thrives to

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[25] *Baltic States Seek NATO Boots on the Ground*, "Deutsche Welle", 28 March 2014, [www.dw.de, access: 23 November 2014].
[26] *Remarks by President Obama and President Ilves of Estonia in Joint Press Conference*, "The White House", 3 September 2014, [www.whitehouse.gov, access: 21 October 2014].
[27] *Ibidem*.
[28] *Lavrov: zayavleniye Obamy ob izmenenii akta Rossiya-NATO nekorrektno*, "Rianovosti", 4 September 2014, [www.ria.ru, access: 21 October 2014].
[29] M. E. Sarotte, *Not One Inch Eastward? Bush, Baker, Kohl, Genscher, Gorbachev, and the Origin of Russian Resentment Toward NATO Enlargement in February 1990*, "Diplomatic History", January 2010. pp. 119-140.

save its reputation as a reliable partner. Thus, one can conclude that institutions matter even for the states that sometimes feel forced to break established rules. This holds true for Russia, which views itself as defending its economic interests in Ukraine and its perceived sphere of influence.

Afghanistan and NATO - Russia Cooperation

As there is an abundance of literature on NATO - Russia relationship, here I focus only on the issues related to Afghanistan. I pick this area, because it gives an instance of tangible cooperation between the two, which for some time continued to follow the inertia in the aftermath of the diplomatic crisis. Furthermore, according to the estimates of Dr. Nadezhda Arbatova, the Head of the Department of European Political Studies at the Institute of World Economy and International Relations, 90% of Russia's interactions with the North Atlantic Alliance were related to Afghanistan.[30]

Moscow was always concerned about the possible destabilization in Afghanistan which could trigger a proliferation of security threats, including terrorism and radical Islam, to the whole region of Central Asia. Though it was reported that drug addiction had been in slight decline in Russia since 2008,[31] the country remains the world's largest consumer of Afghan heroin. More than eight million drug addicts are registered today in Russia, with more than 1.5 million people consuming heroin.[32] In 2010, Victor Ivanov, the Chief of Russia's Federal Service for the Control of Narcotics described the situation as follows: "Afghan drug traffic is like a tsunami constantly breaking over Russia - we are sinking in it".[33] NATO's stabilizing efforts in Afghanistan - though sometimes treated with a mix of suspicion and scepticism, especially by conservative politicians, - were generally viewed in Russia as contributing to its security. Moreover, Moscow's cooperation with the North Atlantic Alliance on issues related to Afghanistan which was considered more in the interests of the US and NATO could possibly become political clout to be used to gain from Washington some concessions on anti-missile defence or even a broader compromise on European security.

Russia supported the stabilizing efforts of the ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) countries in Afghanistan by providing air and land routes across

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[30] N. Arbatova. *Top 3 Geopolitical Challenges for Russia and NATO*. "Russia Direct", 10 April 2014, [www.russia-direct.org, access: 21 October 2014].

[31] V. Bogdanov. *Dozy smerti. Rastiot proizvodstvo afganskogo geroina, postupayuschego v Rossiyu*, "Rossiyskaya gazeta", 5 March 2014, [www.rg.ru, access: 27 October 2014].

[32] *Ibidem.*

[33] A. Nemtsova. *Russia`s War on Drugs: Tackling Heroin Problem Means Going Back to Afghanistan*. "The Telegraph", 28 April 2010, [www.telegraph.co.uk, access: 27 October 2014].

her territory for the transit of their cargo. First, bilateral arrangements were made with individual NATO countries; later cooperation on the issue was brought to the NRC. In 2008, NATO and Russia agreed on a simplified procedure for the ground transit of non-lethal equipment of the countries contributing to ISAF through Russian territory; in 2010, the same provisions were made to facilitate the reverse transit of cargo from Afghanistan. Thus, Russian territory became a part of the NDN (Northern Distribution Network). In 2012, more than 60 per cent of the cargo of the ISAF countries was transported through the NDN. Later on, Russia also allowed the multi-modal reverse transit of ISAF equipment across her territory, using the facilities of Ulyanovsk airport.

In Russia, the provision of transit routes to NATO was presented as a lucrative commercial project, yielding significant profit to operating companies. The northern route, advertised as 'fast and safe' by Moscow, turned out to be, according to the estimates of US experts, at least two times as expensive as the southern route across Pakistani territory.[34] However, one should not underestimate the significance of the alternative supply line, when Pakistan for several months closed its borders to NATO and ISAF cargo in November 2011. With the NATO pull out from Afghanistan announced for the end of 2014, the flow of cargo was expected to increase for both routes.

JSC TransContainer, the subsidiary company of the government-owned Russian Railways, carried out the land transportation of NATO cargo through Russian territory. Reportedly, in the first three quarters of 2012 the company earned 450 million roubles (approximately 15 million dollars) with the monthly rail traffic of cargo to Afghanistan averaging 500 twenty-foot equivalent units.[35] Vladimir Yakunin, the president of Russian Railways, described the profit gained by his company from the transit of NATO equipment as "not so insignificant to be easily refused".[36]

The provision by Russia of the facilities of the cargo airport at Ulyanovsk to use as a trans-shipment hub was probably the most controversial issue in the cooperation on transit. The decision, promising notable economic benefits to the country, was heavily criticized by conservative politicians, mainly from the Russian Communist Party, and provoked protests in the city of Ulyanovsk. Though there were numerous speculations that the operation of the hub would facilitate the smuggling of drugs from Afghanistan, the public outcry was apparently a negative emo-

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[34] A. de Nesnera, *Northern Route A Key Supply Network for NATO Troops in Afghanistan*, "Voice of America", 16 July 2012, [www.voanews.com, access: 28 October 2014].

[35] *"Dochka" RZD zarabotala na NATO polmilliarda*, "RosBiznesKonsalting", 19 December 2012, [www.top.rbc.ru, access: 28 October 2014].

[36] *Yakunin ocenil uroven` pribyli RZD ot tranzita gruzov NATO*, "Vzgliad", 9 July 2012, [www.vz.ru, access: 28 October 2014].

tional feedback to the offensive idea of making a "base of NATO in the home town of Vladimir Lenin". Needless to say, the top officials continued to reiterate that the presence of NATO military personnel in Ulyanovsk was not allowed and that there was no way to qualify the transit hub as a military base. Thus, the intent of Russian authorities to develop mutually beneficial cooperation with the Alliance quite unexpectedly provoked an explosion of deep-seated anti-NATO sentiments.

Later on, the North Atlantic Alliance found the fees quoted by Russian freight-forwarders to be too high;[37] cooperation in that area stalled and the transportation hub in Ulyanovsk reportedly remained idle.[38]

After the announcement of NATO's decision to suspend all practical cooperation with Russia, doubts arouse about the future of transit routes through Russian territory. Most recently, in early October 2014, Vladimir Komoyedov, the Chairman of the Defence Committee at the State Duma, proposed to repeal the Federal Law 99 on the ratification of PFP Status of Forces Agreement, passed on 7 June 2007.[39] The above-mentioned legislation allowed for the transit of NATO equipment. However, Frants Klintsevich, the Deputy Chairman of the Defence Committee from the United Russia faction claimed that a repeal of the law at a time of heightened tensions in the relationship with NATO could be seen as a provocative gesture from the part of Russia.[40]

Currently, Russia is seeking to demonstrate that she is trying to avoid taking a narrow tit-for-tat approach in her relationship with the West. Russian President Vladimir Putin underlined that the country would not take any measures to her own detriment in response to the sanctions imposed by the United States and its allies.[41] This might be true relating to the issue of the transit route across the Russian territory used by NATO countries. Even the staunch supporters of the denunciation of Federal Law 99 do not believe that it can happen soon. The initiation of the debate on the fate of the PfP Status of Forces Agreement is most likely to be a populist measure with some intention of putting pressure on Russia's NATO partners. Even if economic benefits from operating the transit route are out of the equation, Moscow has a hard choice to make between meeting the domestic demand, largely fuelled by state propaganda, for harsh measures against

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[37] Y. Chernenko, Y. Kuznetsova, *NATO - Russia Cooperation Stalls at Ulynovsk Reverse Transit Hub*, "Russia Beyond the Headlines", 16 August 2013, [www.rbth.com, access: 28 October 2014].

[38] *Putin: aeroport v Ulyanovske ne ispol`zuyetsia dlia tranzita gruzov NATO*, "Vzgliad", 14 August 2014, [www.vz.ru, access: 28 October 2014].

[39] *V Gosdume predlozhili denonsirovat` dogovor o tranzite voysk NATO*, "Lenta", 8 October 2014, [www.lenta.ru, access: 28 October 2014].

[40] *Klintsevich: RF ne nado speshit`s otmenoy zakona o statuse NATO*, "RIANovosti", 8 October 2014, [www.ria.ru, access: 28 October 2014].

[41] K. Latukhina, *Ne po adresu. Vladimir Putin nazval novyye sankcii ES strannymi*, "Rossiyskaya gazeta", 15 September 2014, [www.rg.ru, access: 29 October 2014].

the North Atlantic Alliance, which embodies the hostile intentions of the 'collective West' towards Russia, and the persisting necessity to cooperate on the highly complex issue of providing for the regional security of Central Asia. While voicing suspicions about the continuing US military presence in Afghanistan after the end of 2014 without a clear schedule and mandate from the United Nations Security Council,[42] Russia is seeking to maintain its reputation as a reliable partner when it comes to the issue of the transit route. Furthermore, without any doubt, Moscow does not want the North Atlantic Alliance to stay in Afghanistan forever.

We should also note that now NATO is looking for alternative ways out from Afghanistan around Russian territory. The railway route Baku - Tbilisi - Kars is the likely option reportedly lobbied by Georgia and Turkey.[43] That further complicates the issue for Moscow which is concerned about the possibility of NATO weapons and equipment being handled by the Georgian authorities.

As Russia always tended to prioritize bilateral ties with Afghanistan, the losses from disrupted cooperation with NATO, which has almost finished its stabilizing mission in the country, might not be very high. Meanwhile, the lack of coordination with the NATO countries is likely to lead to a questioning of the success of Russia's efforts in Afghanistan.

The continuing tensions with the West make the prospects of the participation of Russia's Volga-Dnepr company, the owner freight-carriers AN-124-100 *Ruslan*, in the operation of air transit from Afghanistan elusive.

By the end of October 2014, Russia completed a deal with the United States on the delivery of Mi-17 helicopters, well-suited for the climatic environment of Afghanistan, for the Afghan security forces[44] as part of joint counter-terrorist efforts. In whole, 63 helicopters have been supplied since 2001 with the cost of the contract exceeding 1.3 billion dollars.[45] There is no doubt that Russia is interested in continuing cooperation in this area. It used to be an active participant in an NRC Helicopter Maintenance Trust Fund and carried out the training for Afghan Air Force helicopter maintenance staff at its OAO Novosibirsk Aircraft Repair Plant. However, ISAF announced that Afghanistan was no longer interested in additional supplies.

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[42] Y. Gavrilov, *Rossiya - ne NATO. Minoborony peresmatrivayet otnosheniya s Severoatlanticheskim blokom*, "Rossiyskaya gazeta", 22 April 2014, [www.rg.ru, access: 21 October 2014].

[43] S. Mamedov, *Kavkazskiy koridor dlia afghanskogo tranzita*, "Nezavisimaya gazeta", 10 July 2014, [www.ng.ru, access: 29 October 2014].

[44] *Afghanistan Has Not Requested Additional Russian Mi-17 Helicopters: ISAF*, "RIA Novosti", 30 October 2014, [www.ria.ru, access: 31 October 2014].

[45] *Rossiya postavila v Afghanistan 12 vertoliotov Mi-17B-5 po kontraktu c SShA*, "ITAR - TASS", 29 April 2014, [www.itar-tass.com, access: 31 October 2014].

Moscow always tended to prioritize bilateral cooperation with Afghanistan. Russian authorities might not consider its disrupted interactions with NATO and the US on this matter to be a great loss for the country. Nevertheless, the lack of coordination on such a complex issue as the stability in Afghanistan is likely to negatively influence the regional security.

NATO and Russia: Prospects for the Future

The political crisis in Ukraine still seems far from being over. We cannot totally exclude the possibility of a sudden escalation of the conflict in the east of the country, which will certainly have a tremendous effect on Russia's relations with the West. While it is hardly possible to predict events in the near future, we can instead take a closer look on some larger trends that will most likely influence the NATO - Russia relationship.

The announced post-Cold war "transformation" of the North Atlantic Alliance, if we mean by it shifting away from a territorial defence towards the broader vision of the Alliance's role that implies operating almost globally in order to provide for the security of its members, turned out to be a rather difficult undertaking. NATO's experience of integrating the efforts of numerous countries with different interests, ambitions and capabilities while conducting its mission in Afghanistan was at least very controversial. The crisis in the European periphery was a good reason for the Alliance to return to performing the old tasks it was established for. Emphasizing the threats emanating from Russia's unpredictable rule-breaching behaviour and stressing its commitment to the security of its members in Central and Eastern Europe was a long awaited reply to the question, ever more complicated since the termination of NATO`s raison d'être in the Cold War. Previously, the United States struggled to try to convince its European allies to spend more on defence. Now Washington will be likely to do everything to show it is serious on the Russian menace in order to make the allied states review their decisions on defence cuts. As the developments of the last several months prove, the US and NATO authorities will certainly use the momentum for the consolidation and strengthening of the Alliance.

For Russia, this new long awaited clarity in her relations with the West, with President Putin blaming the United States for all the wrongs in current international affairs, is a good opportunity to get people to rally around the leader despite the country's relatively weak economic performance. Russia might be tired of its foreign policy adventures of 2014 and with no appetite for any unpredictable actions, but there are no visible signs that its authorities will soon attenuate their stance towards the West.

The present security environment in Europe is highly influenced by the spirit of confrontation in Russia's relations with the West. That hardly leaves any ground for optimism, but instead makes the main actors look for possible less pessimistic scenarios. Long ago, NATO's institutional framework based on multilateralism was created to give the European countries a greater say on fundamental issues related to their security, that would otherwise be decided bilaterally by the two superpowers. Some see the times of the Cold War, as a period of the "long peace",[46] but that may not be the case for present day Europe, as too many issues remain unsettled. It is especially true for the states like Georgia and Ukraine, whose territories lie strategically 'in-between' NATO and Russia, where a potential conflict may arise. As many in Russia fear the risk of the uncontrollable escalation in such a conflict, the multilateralism in the North Atlantic Alliance leaves some hopes for a diplomatic solution.

It seems in many respects true that the simplistic metaphor of the Cold War became rather misguiding for the scholar of international relations long before 1989, as it failed to explain too many significant processes in different realms of international life. The complex realities of present day world politics with untraditional threats and new rising centres of power can be easily misinterpreted if we indiscriminately apply reanimated metaphors of the old days. The experience of the past two and a half decades shows that Russia cannot be easily integrated into the European security system; it would be rather marginalized. However, with too many issues, meaningful for the security of the whole continent, left unsettled, this decision may prove counter-productive. As the security environment in Europe is highly institutionalized and there is a certain competition among the international institutions, NATO risks losing the upper hand to other organizations and mechanisms, if it quits trying to engage Russia.

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[46] J. L. Gaddis, *The Long Peace. Elements of Stability in the Postwar International System*, "International Security", Spring 1986, pp. 99-142.

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Slovakia's Perspective on NATO Enlargement

NATO enlargement is a controversial process. For some, it evokes the military and political expansion of the West, by the United States in particular. The same group perceives NATO enlargement as a continuation of the Cold War or rather the post-Cold War policy of provoking Russia. Russian leaders often expressed their negative views on NATO enlargement in Central and Eastern Europe, including the controversial pledge made by the United States government to a new established Russian Federation that NATO would leave neutral Germany alone.

The second group, that is a pro-enlargement group, sees NATO as a firm and stable alliance established on common ideas and values, such as democracy, a market economy, and the rule of law. They therefore see NATO enlargement as a natural process of states' right to voluntarily join the Alliance without feeling threatened by any other country, but still feeling threatened by common international enemies, such as terrorism and WMD proliferation.

In its first part, the following article will describe Slovakia's accession process, its turmoils and reforms. It will look at the current position of Slovakia within NATO and what it can do to help other countries seeking NATO membership and the crucial reforms these countries have to undergo. The second part will then focus on enlargement as such. It will map the current debate on enlargement within NATO and in the countries that it is potentially considered will become members in the near future. The enumeration of these countries purposely excludes Ukraine since its current situation is very changeable and therefore far less predictable than the situation in other candidate countries.

Waiting at the door

The strategy of Euro-Atlanticism was the theme of more or less each government ruling in Slovakia after 1993. There were very few other options. The new country focused on the Euro-Atlantic direction from its very beginnings. Plus, there was a natural development in the region in which the Alliance was interested in expanding a joint defence space. Slovak neutrality was a distant future and an impossible goal, at least for three reasons. Slovakia is not as strong financially or politically as Switzerland or as independent as Austria or Finland. Moreover, the geographical location of Slovakia, today a part of the eastern border of the European Union and NATO makes it impossible to remain a completely neutral edge of the former Soviet Union. "The geopolitical situation of Slovakia in Central Europe predetermines its security policy", stated the Security Strategy of 2005.

Thus, Slovakia had to take into account its geographical position.[1] The Alliance did too. Another reason was history. Lessons learned in Slovakia, as well as in the whole region of V4 that may try to proclaim neutrality, but this step often led to subjection from both sides, the East and the West. Thus, the outcome of the conversations was, therefore, to join NATO.

The end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, followed by the dissolution of the Soviet Union represented a period when NATO was not too inclined to enlarge the territory of the Alliance, therefore, the territory of the common defence area. As the largest contributor to the common budget, the United States took the lead on the NATO enlargement debate. President George H. W. Bush helped Germany to reunify and join NATO after the end of the Cold War. Other countries were waiting their turn patiently or sometimes less patiently. Since there were also former Soviet countries, such as Lithuania or Latvia, among the potential candidates, the West feared the reaction of the Russian Federation in case of further NATO enlargement to the east. There are still speculations about the covenants and agreements on non-proliferation, NATO, and the Russian response to the prospective enlargement. After long discussions and diplomatic assurances between the United States (NATO) and the Russian side, the latter agreed to a further expansion.[2] The potential candidate countries were off to a long process.

The path to membership began with the Partnership for Peace programme. NATO introduced the Partnership for Peace in 1993. This action was rather divisive, among the potential candidates as well as in the Russian Federation. It was unclear whether the Partnership for Peace represented a further step in the enlargement process or whether it existed to replace membership, and although it was established to engage with the Russian Federation, it was often perceived as harmful to the NATO - Russia relationship. In the year of its formal launch, Slovakia entered the Partnership for Peace programme. There has since been a permanent cooperation with the Allies in order to fulfil the criteria and later to join the Alliance. Joining the Partnership for Peace programme, however, was not the end of the story for Slovakia. It was obvious to Slovakia that it would receive an invitation to the Alliance later than the other V4 countries. There were several reasons why Slovakia was invited later than V4. Slovakia became the receiver of harsh diplomatic reproofs from the Alliance and the United States. They were mainly concerned with the principle of the rule of law, lacking in the government of Vladimír Mečiar. Although Mečiar declared openly that he would seek NATO

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[1] *Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic*, September 27, 2005, p. 4.
[2] J. Perelez, *Yeltsin 'Understands' Polish Bid for a Role in NATO*", "The New York Times", 26 August 1993, [www.nytimes.com, access: 30 June 2014].

membership for Slovakia, his practices towards his political rivals were often illegal.[3]

As mentioned in the introduction, Slovakia had to be willing primarily on two fronts. It was the will of governments to meet their obligations, and further it was the will of the Slovaks to join NATO. Just like with today's candidates, even then the Alliance put a great emphasis on public opinion before even starting the membership procedures.

The first stress tests of Slovakia's commitments proclaimed in the Partnership for Peace 1994 were the domestic parliamentary elections of 1998, in which the majority of voters opted for a broad coalition that had significantly promoted the Euro-Atlantic orientation. The National Council of the Slovak Republic after the election of 1998 was composed of the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK) with a gain of 26% of the votes in the election which put together a group of democratic parties from left to right, including the Christian movement, the Hungarian minority party, and the centre-left party to tackle the government of Vladimir Mečiar and his party, Movement for a Democratic Slovakia, with 27% of the votes.

The stress test of Slovakia's foreign policy commitments came in place in 1999, when NATO started a campaign in the region of the former Yugoslavia. The bombardment was to prevent a great humanitarian crisis that took place in the region. Slovakia was faced with the question of whether to provide assistance to the Alliance and thus to confirm its commitment. Public opinion, however, was against the bombing operations. More than 64% of all respondents in Slovakia's population disagreed with this decision and just over 32% saw the opening of the airspace for military aircraft of NATO as a good step. This operation still raises debates among the Slovak public. However, the Slovak government then decided to open the air space and prove its intentions of joining the Alliance. [4]

The second foreign policy agenda was on the table in 2003. It came with the ISAF operation in Afghanistan, which developed under a UN mandate, namely under the UN Security Crisis Resolution 1386/2001. In 2003, NATO took over the command of the operation. Slovakia has been involved in operations since 2002, then as a non-member of the Alliance. It has sent a 40-member engineering unit which carried out its work at Bagram airport in the northeast of Afghanistan. At its peak, Slovakia's Armed Forces had 371 soldiers in Afghanistan. The last contingent left Afghanistan in autumn of 2014 with a pledge to support the training and assisting mission *"Resolute Support"* which started in January 2014. Foreign

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[3] The biggest being Mečiar's involvement in the 1995 kidnapping of Michal Kováč Jr., son of then president Michal Kováč, organized by the Slovak Intelligence Service.
[4] Institute of Political Affairs, Slovakia, April 1999.

policy commitments were vital and visible, and domestic support for NATO was overwhelming in comparison with earlier years. It was time to persuade other countries to accept Slovakia into NATO structures, according to Article 10 of the Washington Treaty.

Three NATO Summits represented milestones in Slovakia's integration into NATO. In 1997, at the NATO Summit in Madrid, Slovakia was denied Alliance membership and its political and diplomatic representation was left only with the depressing sight of the three other V4 countries being invited to join NATO in 1999, during the Alliance's fourth enlargement cycle. Two years later, during the 1999 Summit in Washington, NATO approved the Membership Action Plan for Slovakia which is a programme suited to advise and assist candidate countries. The plan was strictly tailored to Slovakia's needs and challenges.

Following the NATO Summit in Washington, in September 2000 members of the parliamentary group of the National Council of the Slovak Republic called for a rapid integration of the Slovak Republic to NATO. They stressed that Slovakia's accession to NATO was "the only real path to lasting security of the country". Since that time Slovakia has intensified the debate about the pros and cons of the membership. Public perception of NATO was not high, mostly due to a lack of information, but opinion polls have been conducted regularly.

The NATO Summit in Prague of 2002 was the most important summit for Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, and Slovenia, including three countries which used to be a part of the Soviet Union, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The Alliance acknowledged the beginning of the accession talks with them, put in place in order to join the Alliance. In the Summit Declaration, all Allies congratulated the new candidates for 2004. It stressed the importance of the moment when the declaration was signed in Prague and pointed out that the "accession of new members will strengthen security for all in the Euro-Atlantic area". [5] Europe was on the path to becoming "whole, free, and at peace", as George H. W. Bush proclaimed at the beginning of the new era after the Soviet Union collapsed. The declaration also promised to keep the "open door" policy available for others. Any state at that moment, fulfilling the criteria of the rule of law, a market economy, and human rights should be accepted according to Article 10.

"They have", Slovakia included,

"demonstrated their commitment to the basic principles and values set out in the Washington Treaty, the ability to contribute to the Alliance's full range of missions, including collective

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[5] *Prague Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Prague*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 21 November 2002, [www.nato.int, access: 30 June 2014].

defense, and a firm commitment to contribute to stability and security, especially in regions of crisis and conflict".[6]

Nevertheless, the road for Slovakia was thornier than described in the summit declaration, particularly given its domestic situation.

Slovakia and enlargement

Article 10 of the Washington Treaty states:

"The Parties may, by unanimous agreement, invite any other European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area to accede to this Treaty. Any State so invited may become a Party to the Treaty by depositing its instrument of accession with the Government of the United States of America. The Government of the United States of America will inform each of the Parties of the deposit of each such instrument of accession".[7]

Article 10 mentions three important parts. First, a "European State". At first glance it should be easy to define what a European state is. However, when we look at some of the states that are currently being considered for NATO membership, very few people would label them "European". Second, the article binds the members to contributing to security in terms of real commitments to the North Atlantic area. Third, the depositing of a state's instrument of accession is proof that the state has implemented all the necessary reforms in achieving high standards in terms of democracy, market economy, and the rule of law.

In 1997, almost 20 years ago, "*The Nation*" ran a very timely article by Sherle R. Schwenninger who, during a debate in the Senate on US policy towards NATO enlargement, claimed there are three issues to consider when talking about the enlargement. First, the Alliance and the US itself should be focusing on:

- Dilution - whether enlargement will reduce NATO's effectiveness as a military defence alliance;
- Costs - how much expansion will cost and who will pay for it;
- United States - Russian relations - in particular, whether efforts at strategic arms reduction will be jeopardized.[8]

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[6] *Ibidem.*
[7] *The North Atlantic Treaty*, Article 10.
[8] S. R. Schwenninger. *The Case Against NATO Enlargement: Clinton's Fateful Gamble*, "The Nation", 20 October 1997, pp. 21-30.

Arguments against enlargement mainly include the notion that the transatlantic area will stretch and the population that would be covered and secured by Article 5 of the Washington Treaty will expand. It is true that by accepting Georgia, Macedonia, Moldova, and Montenegro the NATO area will increase by 132,000 square kilometres which is the size of Greece. However, Article 5 of the Washington Treaty does not say anything about the military of all the Allies helping the other Allies if they are attacked.

Another argument against NATO enlargement works with the premise that with so many member states it will be almost impossible to achieve political consensus. According to Michael Clarke of RUSI, "at twenty-eight member states, NATO could hardly be said to be nearly twice as strong a military alliance as it was at sixteen, however; quite the reverse in fact. The political consensus is considerably more difficult to achieve and average defence spending among European members has drifted inexorably down to around 1.3 per cent of national GDPs".[9]

In conversations about NATO enlargement people often claim that the addition of any other NATO ally would cause damage to NATO - Russia cooperation or relations, as if that relation were not damaged enough already today. There persists the feeling that somehow had NATO not expanded after the end of the Cold War Russians would have made an excellent and cooperative partner to deal with. The opposite is true. Russia has always seen NATO as an adversary and never had the ambition of closely engaging with the allies, despite Vladimir Putin's claim about Russia becoming a NATO ally in the early 2000s.

Europe - V4 - Slovakia

26 out of 28 NATO allies are in Europe, and despite the United States being the biggest contributor as far as NATO budget and military capabilities and personnel are concerned the enlargement in Europe should be a business for European countries and they should be the most pro-active advisors and advocates of an "open door" policy.

Slovakia should present a firm "open door" policy and be specific about that. Every government in the last 10 years promoted NATO's "open door" policy and expressed its positive attitude toward further enlargement. This is not enough. Slovakia should engage in advisory projects which support the domestic and foreign relations of the Partnership for Peace countries. Furthermore, it should promote a civic society that is often lacking support from abroad. Moreover, Slovakia should also focus on being factual and straightforward. It should not be

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[9] M. Clarke. *The NATO Summit: The Long Agenda of One Item*, "RUSI Newsbrief", 2 September 2014, [www.rusi.org, access: 30 June 2014].

untruthful on NATO enlargement. It has had its own experience with the process and it should tell other countries about it and help them get on the path. Slovakia and similar countries should be able to explain to the candidate countries in the Partnership for Peace that the path might be longer than they expected. The areas of cooperation include security sector reform, political stability and economic projects.

Finally, Slovakia is included in and should be more present at the V4 meetings. V4 countries already pledged they would support NATO enlargement.[10] However, the position of Slovakia is not clear and comprehensive in terms of its future engagement in NATO's process of enlargement for other countries.

NATO allies cannot approach Partnership for Peace countries as a big homogeneous group. They are all individual entities and they have their own problems. Although some of them are in the same region, have a common history, speak similar languages, have similar cultures, their political, economic and social situations differ. One example is the NATO enlargement in the Visgrad region. Three out of the four countries, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland joined NATO five years earlier than the fourth country, Slovakia. Slovakia and the Czech Republic had been one state for most of the 20th century. However, their differences started to show up after the peaceful dissolution of the Soviet Union. Each country headed in different directions which caused the process of enlargement to be postponed in Slovakia.

One of the first premises in NATO enlargement is for a candidate country to have all its border security issues solved. The cases of Moldova and Georgia and their regional disputes with the Russian minority living in Transnistria (Moldova) or Abkhazia and South Ossetia (Georgia) mean that those two candidate countries are not "safe" to join NATO. The long-term solution for both countries is to try to solve the situation. This should be a place where both NATO and the above-mentioned states re-evaluate their capabilities and priorities. If NATO is really committed to agree with Moldova and Georgia their entry into NATO, it should work tirelessly and closely with both governments on building a stronger consensus in helping those countries either fulfil their desires or to help them to get them on the right track.

However, this is also a mission for both countries. One solution, possibly radical, may be giving up those areas. In terms of statehood, there are few things that can ruin the self-esteem of a country more than losing its area and people. Nevertheless, if the long-term strategy of both countries is to join NATO, they should have to think about this option.

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[10] *V4 podporuje ďalšie rozširovanie NATO a snahu krajín o integráciu*, "TA3", 12 April 2014, [www.ta3.com, access: 30 June 2014].

In 2008 after a period of institutional reforms in the country, Georgia was on the path to joining NATO. "We welcome the democratic reforms in Ukraine and Georgia and look forward to free and fair parliamentary elections in Georgia in May. MAP is the next step for Ukraine and Georgia on their direct way to membership".[11] This statement was issued by the heads of governments after the NATO summit in Bucharest in 2008. It was impossible to imagine then that in just four months Russia would invade Georgia and take South Ossetia and Abkhazia, a step which has corrupted Georgian territorial integrity probably for decades to come. As Henrik B.L. Larsen wrote "the Georgian war effectively put a stop to further NATO enlargements".[12] In order to keep cooperation between Georgia and NATO intact, the NATO-Georgia Commission was established in September 2008. The purpose of the commission was "to serve as a forum for both political consultations and practical cooperation to help Georgia achieve its goal of membership in NATO".[13]

According to NATO officials in charge of enlargement issues, the MAP process with Georgia is already in place, although it is not officially acknowledged.[14] One reason for not declaring it publicly is the apprehension of a possible Russian reaction to such a revelation. The other reason would be making a commitment towards incoming member states that could not be fulfilled. Just before the Ukrainian crisis escalated to today's state, Georgia had certain expectations, as the date for the 2014 NATO summit was approaching. However, the Alliance's focus is elsewhere. Today, the situation is uncertain. With 755 soldiers deployed Georgia is the largest non-NATO contributor to the ISAF mission and the fifth largest in total.[15] The Alliance should reflect the proof of Georgia's commitment properly. Slovakia supports Georgian membership in NATO. Nevertheless, it is aware of the political issues the country faces today. In April 2014 the Slovak Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Miroslav Lajčák said that Georgia is militarily ready, but there are two obstacles to its membership. The first obstacle is the fact that the country has no control over two of its regions. The second is

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[11] *NATO Bucharest Summit Declaration*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 3 April 2008, [www.nato.int, access: 30 June 2014].

[12] H. Boesen, L. Larsen. *The Russo - Georgian War and Beyond: Towards a European Great Power Concert*, "European Security" , Vol. 21, No. 1, March 2012, p. 102-121, [www.cddrl.fsi.stanford.edu, access: 30 June 2014].

[13] *NATO - Georgia Commission*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, [www.nato.int, access: 30 June 2014].

[14] Personal interview with the author.

[15] *ISAF: Key Facts and Figures*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, [www.isaf.nato.int, access: 30 June 2014].

that its relationship with Russia is still fragile. Lajčák stated that the Georgian government is partially to blame for the Russian-Georgian war in 2008.[16]

FYROM yes, Macedonia no

The problem of the other potential candidate, the Republic of Macedonia or the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia and NATO membership does not lie in its preparedness or lack of cooperation with NATO. Today, Macedonia acts like an ally and has contributed to almost every single NATO-led mission since 1999, including ISAF and KFOR. The main reason why Macedonia is still outside of the Alliance is its dispute with Greece over its name. The name issue, however, is not entirely Greece's fault. To be frank, the first step in this dispute was the recognition and later the admission of Macedonia in the U.N. under the name "Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia". On 7 April, 1993 all five permanent members and 10 non-permanent members of the UN Security Council, including such countries like Hungary or Spain voted for the UN Security Council Resolution 817 and thereby commenced Macedonia's roller-coaster-like following years. Since Macedonians do not want to accept any other name than they have on their bank notes and in their constitution, and Greece is ready to veto every attempt by Macedonia to join NATO under any other name than FYROM, there is not much room for debate. Nevertheless, some limited possibilities to solving the problem still exist. One thing that needs to be taken into consideration is that the overwhelming majority of Macedonians are in favour of NATO.

One solution to the problem may be an internal discussion within the Republic of Macedonia led by political authorities, favourably supported by a wide-state referendum, which would support the idea of Macedonia joining the Alliance as FYROM. For each country in the post-Cold War enlargements the decision on joining the Alliance was one of the most important defining foreign and domestic policy moments. The Republic of Macedonia should decide on its priorities and choose which position for them is stronger. The Slovak position addressed by its Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, Lajčák, is that NATO membership was the main priority for Slovakia until 2004 and everything else was secondary. He stated that if Macedonia is also serious about membership it should provide concrete steps, not only declaratory positions.[17] There is also an opportunity for

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[16] *Gruzínsko nie je na vstup do NATO politicky pripravené, povedal Lajčák*, "Teraz.sk", 8 April 2014, [www.teraz.sk, access: 15 October 2014].

[17] *Je najvyšší čas uzavrieť tému sporu o názov Macedónska, tvrdí Lajčák*, "Teraz.sk", 27 February 2014, [www.teraz.sk, access: 15 October 2014].

NATO to place pressure on Greece to support Macedonian's path to membership and to cooperate closer on solving the name issue.[18]

Macedonia is on the right track. The country has implemented crucial reforms in the security and civil sectors, and stands today as a full-fledged candidate country. It contributes to the ISAF mission and has declared it will continue to further cooperate with the post-2014 operation *"Resolute Support"*.[19]

Montenegro

Montenegro is among the most prosperous NATO candidate countries. The Chicago Summit Declaration in 2012 confirmed that NATO recognized the "significant progress that Montenegro has made towards NATO membership and its contribution to security in the Western Balkans region and beyond, including through its active role in regional cooperation activities and its participation in ISAF".[20] Montenegro implemented important internal reforms, including security sector reform, although the public opinion in support of NATO membership is between 31 per cent and 38 per cent.[21] As far as Slovak opinion on Montenegro is concerned, the Slovak Foreign Minister supported the idea of Montenegro joining the Alliance and sharing the necessary capabilities and experiences from the Slovak transformation period.[22]

The 2014 Wales Summit Declaration claimed that "the Alliance has agreed to pen intensified and focused talks with Montenegro". More importantly, NATO foreign ministers will assess Montenegro's progress in the process of integration "no later than 2015". Today, the focus is on Montenegrins and their government. NATO's position in this regard is firm. Once they see a commitment from the government of Montenegro, NATO will be able to enlarge by 2016.

NATO Summit in Wales and the road for 2016

Even before the Summit, the question of enlargement was not on the list of priorities. Particularly, it was not as high on the list as it could have been had

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[18] *Resolution 817 (1993) Adopted by the Security Council at its 3196th meeting*, UNHCR - The UN Refugee Agency, 7 April 1993, [www.refworld.org, access: 30 June 2014].
[19] *Defense Minister: Macedonia Supports NATO in Afghanistan*, "Independent", 4 June 2014, [www.independent.mk, access: 30 June 2014].
[20] *NATO Chicago Summit Declaration*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 20 May 2012, [www.nato.int, access: 30 June 2014].
[21] M. Nič, D. Bartha, *NATO Holds the Door Open for Montenegro*, Central European Policy Institute, 4 February 2013, [www.cepolicy.org, access: 30 June 2014].
[22] *Minister M. Lajčák podporil ambície Čiernej Hory na členstvo v NATO*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Slovakia, 4 September 2014, [www.mzv.sk, access: 30 June 2014].

Russia not escalated tensions in Ukraine at the beginning of 2014. In light of the hot and open, yet not officially declared war in Ukraine, NATO had to adapt to the situation and adjust its priorities accordingly. Therefore, the top items on the menu were the assurance commitments to NATO countries which make up the eastern border of the Alliance, particularly Poland and the Baltics which also have their own issues with Russian minorities.

The final declaration of the Summit did however address some of the key issues the candidate countries are facing today. The declaration stated that the next NATO Summit will be in Poland. It will be the first summit in the V4 country for 14 years, after the 2002 Summit in Prague. It was a great gesture to let Poland host the next summit. This will be a good opportunity to address the enlargement question again. Furthermore, it will allow and push the V4 group to start sketching a common strategy and a common vision for further NATO enlargement.

Conclusion

NATO countries, the United States in particular, have invested a lot of effort and resources in getting Central and Eastern European countries into NATO. There have been costs on each side. Both old NATO countries as well as the incoming countries should share the burden of membership. However, the candidate countries should not be lied to about their prospects unless there is a serious commitment from the NATO side to include them in the Alliance. On the other hand, the candidate countries should present their proactive determination to undertake every reform that needs to be fulfilled before joining the alliance.

In the process of further enlargement, the position of the newcomers of 1999, 2004 and 2009 is very unique. The second and the third enlargement came five years apart. The first post-Cold War enlargement, however, took place after 17 years, if we do not include the joining of unified Germany in 1990.

NATO is powerful but it is not almighty. When strong and unanimous it can push candidate countries to implement important reforms, and provide expertise and training on the issues of enlargement. However, when everything is taken into consideration, it is really up to the countries themselves to take the first step and persuade other allies of the importance of their commitment and willingness to join the Alliance and hence accept and fulfil its criteria, welcome what it offers and, at the same time, show an assuring will to provide the necessary synergy to the Alliance.

Ryszard M. Machnikowski (University of Lodz, Poland)

NATO and the Ukraine - Russian Armed Conflict

The ongoing "Ukraine - Russia crisis", i.e., Russian military intervention in Ukraine that has (so far) resulted in the Russian annexation of Crimea and the "destabilization" of Eastern Ukraine poses the most severe challenge for NATO in the post-Cold War period. After the collapse of the Soviet Union NATO as an organization suffered a heavy "identity crisis", and struggled desperately to find new tasks in the absence of the Soviet threat. Initially it found it in peace-making, peacekeeping and "humanitarian interventions" (Balkan wars in the 90s) and then counter-terrorism (the first decade of the 21st century). Most recently, Russia decided to provide some assistance to NATO's dilemma through its military involvement in Ukrainian internal affairs which was a blatant violation of international law and the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances, signed by Russia and two NATO-members: the United States and the United Kingdom. Russia's actions pose a serious security threat for all the neighbours of Russia, both members and non-members of NATO.

The "Ukraine crisis", as it is widely known, bears potentially devastating consequences for Central and Eastern Europe security and NATO as the sole "security provider" for its "new" Central and Eastern European members, so it seems this organization should undergo significant changes in order to maintain this role, or perish. In my paper I try to analyse the course of events leading to an unfolding during the "Ukraine crisis", the reactions and (in)actions of NATO members, visible and invisible divisions among them, as well as potential consequences for the future of this organization.

Introduction

As I noted in a publication written in late 2000, a year after first post-Cold War NATO enlargement:

"After almost half a century of confrontation, the West was the Victor. [The] Eastern Bloc collapsed, former S[oviet] U[nion] satellites regained independence, along with some Soviet republics. [A] Total military attack from the East was inconceivable. The day the SU disappeared, NATO lost its mortal enemy - it was both the [day of] victory and [a] tragedy for this defence alliance, causing its dramatic fight for survival in a new environment. As Andrew Cottey notes: "In short, the end of the Cold War posed fundamental questions not only about NATO's future direction but also about its very existence. As one observer put it, not only whither NATO but also whether NATO" (A. Cottey, NATO transformed …, Longman: London 1998, p. 44)

(…) Fortunately for this organization, some of [the] th[reats] re-emerged on the horizon: they were the Islamic terrorists, Saddam Hussein (ironically American's former closest ally in its fight against Iran) and, finally, the Serbs and their notorious leader - Slobodan Milosevic. However, all these enemies had rather limited capabilities - they did not [represent a threat comparable] to that posed by the Soviets. (…) Hence, the necessity to change both political and military tasks emerged. NATO remained an important institution maintaining security in Europe, but it had to transform itself and its duties. So, [since] its glorious victory over the Communist Bloc, NATO has faced three important, and to a large degree intertwined, problems:

1. *To seek a new identity, which should justify the role of this organization in the transforming world, and secure its existence;*
2. *To regulate its internal relations, as different countries had different concepts of the future of NATO;*
3. *To enlarge itself, providing a sense of security for the CEECs".*[1]

Today, now that the situation seems totally different, the pendulum is swinging slowly to another extreme as Russia tries to revise the post-Cold War order and is a step closer to achieving its prime goal - to marginalize NATO if not destroy it. After France returned to the Alliance's military structure, a process starting in 1995 and leading to its final return to full membership on 4 April 2009, the second task was relatively easy to complete. Most of the Central and Eastern European countries, including Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia also received their long awaited membership, though due to the limitations stemming from the "NATO - Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security" signed in Paris on 27 May, 1997, they might have felt they were members of the second category. As long as Russia was not considered to be a real threat, the fact that there were no significant NATO military installations and troops east of the Oder was not perceived as a problem.

So the first task was seemingly the core difficulty - what was the need for the existence of a Western military alliance in the absence of any serious threat to Western security? September 11, 2001 was a temporary "relief" for this dilemma - immediately after the terrorist attacks on Washington D.C. and New York, the NATO members referred to Article 5 offering the United States their support, but the "Global War on Terror", soon to be announced by the American President George W. Bush, instead of providing cohesiveness to this organization eventually led to even more rows and divisions among the "core" members, already visible

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[1] R. M. Machnikowski, *NATO: Seeking a New Identity in the Post-Cold War Era*, [in:] A. Haglund, S. Hojelid, R. M. Machnikowski, M. Nilsson, H. Ring, D. Silander, A. Szewczyński, C. Wallin (eds.), *Political Change and the European Union*, Łódź University Press: Łódź 2001, pp. 174-175.

during the NATO intervention in Kosovo in 1999. The 2003 US military invasion of Iraq, supported by the so-called "coalition of the willing" (including "new" members like Poland) provided Germany and France with a perfect opportunity to forward their anti-American stance.[2] So today, when the Russians are back with a vengeance as a major European threat, many may think that NATO may reappear once more as a firm and united military alliance ready to cope effectively with this challenge.

Unfortunately, that seems extremely doubtful. The Russian - Ukrainian crisis, or actually the Russian - Ukrainian war is not a case of going "back to the future". The Cold War will not be revisited, as the situation in the year 2014 is fundamentally different in comparison to the post-World War II period - Russia no longer poses an "existential" threat to the whole West, as the Soviets did until the late 80s. Instead of bullying the whole West it tries to divide it, offering rewards for pro-Russian attitudes. Hence, the "West" is no longer unified by the Russian threat, neither is it united - vice versa - it is weak and demobilized by internal rows. We should focus on these crucial weakness and differences to understand better the present course of recent events and to try to predict the future.

Ukrainian - Russian "crisis" or "war"?

The Ukraine - Russian "crisis" started in spring 2013 and was caused by the Ukrainian attempt to integrate into the economic structures of Western Europe - the European Union. On 21 November, 2013, the Maidan ("square") in Kiev was witness to the first mass public protests, sparked by a decision of the then president of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovych, to abandon the signing of the Ukraine - EU Association Agreement. That signing was planned to take place during the upcoming Summit of the European Union focused on Eastern Partnership, to be held on 28 - 29 November, 2013 in Vilnius. It had been a huge surprise and disappointment for the pro-European part of the Ukrainian population, eagerly awaiting this move toward the West. However, the summer of 2013 brought increasingly brutal economic and psychological pressure from Russia aimed at changing the Ukraine's pro-European course. The Ukraine - European Union deal had been long perceived by the Kremlin elite as an existential threat for Russia - an incursion into Russia's exclusive "sphere of interest".

Hence, Ukraine was threatened with a trade war - the first "shots" were already fired on 14 August, 2013 when the Russian Customs Service stopped all imports

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[2] R. M. Machnikowski, *Globalization of European Culture: An Anti-American Dimension*, [in:] K. Kujawińska Courtney, M. Łukowska, E. Williams (eds.), *European Culture in Diversity*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing: Newcastle upon Tyne 2011.

coming from Ukraine. At the same time Kremlin officials warned Ukrainian authorities against integration with the European Union - this move was perceived as a competition to the Eurasian Union (EAU) project forwarded at the same time by the Russian Federation. This increasing Russian pressure on the Ukrainian power elite should have come as no surprise - Russian officials had issued warnings against "crossing the red lines" addressed to the West many times in the past.[3]

In this way, the Ukrainian oligarchical ruling class found themselves between the *Scylla* of the pro-European expectations of a large part of their own population (located mostly in the Western part of this country) and the *Charybdis* of the power play of the increasingly "assertive" Kremlin elites, prone to ruthlessly defending their interests. President Yanukovych, facing this "devil's alternative", ultimately chose to follow the pro-Russian path and disappointed many Ukrainians who were ready to defend their dreams and aspirations. Since the very beginning of this "Ukrainian crisis", Russian involvement has been obvious and crucial to properly understanding the course of events. Kremlin elites had never respected the sovereign will of their neighbouring nations if this ever stood in opposition to their plans. When the Ukrainian government announced its decision to suspend preparations for the signing of the Association Agreement, it was met with immediate public protests. Thousands of Ukrainians started to fill *Maidan Nezalezhnosti* (Independence Square) in Kiev, first demanding the cancellation of Yanukovych's decision and, finally, his resignation. On 30 November, 2013 events in Kiev entered a violent phase when government forces started a brutal crackdown on the demonstrators. Violence was met with violence from the protesters who attacked the Berkut riot police forces in reprisal.

After that, protests spread out across Ukraine reaching Eastern parts of this country. They were countered with pro-government rallies and the establishment of the anti-Maidan movement, supported mainly in the East, inhabited by a huge Russian minority, as well as the Russian-speaking Ukrainians who hold pro-Russian attitudes. The first deaths occurred on Unity Day, 22 January, 2014, in Kiev, when three Euromaidan activists were shot dead. On the same day, a dead body of another Euromaidan activist, who had been kidnapped by "unknown perpetrators", was found on the outskirts of the city. This was the result of violence directed at protesters who were inflamed by the government decision in mid-

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[3] For an insightful if not prophetic analysis of "expansionist" and "revisionist" Russian policy see: M. Kaczmarski, *Russia's Revisionist Policy Towards the West*, OSW Studies, Warsaw 2009 [www.osw.waw.pl]. This publication provides the reader with a large bibliography of Russian officials' utterances as well as documents openly presenting the Russian "revisionist" and "expansionist" position towards the West. See also: E. Lucas, *The New Cold War. Putin's Russia and the Threat to the West*, Palgrave Macmillan: New York 2007; E. Lucas, *Deception. The Untold Story of East - West Espionage Today*, Bloomsbury: London 2012.

January 2014 to introduce new powers enabling it to crush demonstrations with the use of extensive force. They were labelled "dictatorial powers" and perceived as a proof that Ukraine was sliding into Belarus-style authoritarianism.

However, president Yanukovych apparently was not strong enough to bear the responsibility for firing at his own nation and when the street violence reached its climax he fled - initially the capital, and ultimately the country. He was followed by the Ukraine's Prime Minister Mykola Azarov and some other government officials. Suddenly, power lay in the streets of Kiev and the pro-Russian forces lost their leaders. Kremlin perceived this situation as a severe danger for Russia and decided to act independently - dependence on the Ukrainian government was no longer an option as there was simply no government in Kiev, and the new one was likely to consist of a staunch Ukrainian opposition, ready to forward a pro-European rather than pro-Russian policy.

Thus, the Russians invaded Crimea from within with the use of tactics which were a blatant violation of the international law of armed conflicts. So-called "little green men", i.e., Russian soldiers without state distinctions, appeared on the streets of Crimean towns and cities, quickly taking control of them. The Russian annexation of the Crimean Peninsula was achieved swiftly and almost without a single shot - there was hardly any resistance from the Ukrainian armed forces, and the reaction of the international community was limited to diplomatic condemnation. It is worth remembering that the annexation was a violation of the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances, signed by both Ukraine and Russia but also by two major NATO-members: the United States and the United Kingdom.[4]

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[4] They all signed six agreements for Ukraine, the agreements are:

1. **The Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America reaffirm their commitment to Ukraine**, in accordance with the principles of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, to **respect the independence and sovereignty and the existing borders of Ukraine**;

2. The Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America **reaffirm their obligation to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine, and that none of their weapons will ever be used against Ukraine except in self-defence** or otherwise in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;

3. The Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America reaffirm their commitment to Ukraine, in accordance with the principles of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, to **refrain from economic coercion designed to subordinate to their own interest the exercise by Ukraine of the rights inherent in its sovereignty and thus to secure advantages of any kind**;

4. The Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America reaffirm their commitment to seek immediate United Nations Security Council action to provide assistance to Ukraine, as a non-nuclear-weapon State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, **if Ukraine should become a victim of an act of aggression or an object of a threat of aggression in which nuclear weapons are used**;

In fact, not only the annexation, but also the preceding huge Russian economic pressure used to stop Ukraine entering the path towards closer integration with the West was a violation of this document. However, Russia not only did not want to cease military action - it was prepared to engage in further "destabilization" of its neighbouring country. After the prompt annexation of the Crimea, Russia moved to organize and use a Russian "popular resistance" movement, based on the Russian population in the East of Ukraine. Armed "militants", or "terrorists", as the government in Kiev describes them, were local "militia" - "volunteers" drafted for this occasion, including criminals - but guided and controlled by Russian special services and special forces officers, who took the lead of this "popular separatist insurgency". The lands conquered by this "rebellion" were named "Novorossiya" (*Newrussia*).[5]

After the initial breakdown of any Ukrainian counter-action, in April, 2014 the new government announced the start of an "antiterrorist" operation in the eastern part of the country. It was spearheaded by the newly created National Guard troops, backed by some army units, including artillery and airpower, and followed by Western Ukraine "volunteers" drafted mostly from Ukraine's nationalist movement (Right Sector). These Ukrainian forces started to regain ground which led to a significant retreat of the "Novorossiya" forces, pushing "separatists" towards the border zone by the end of July 2014. This retreat provoked the intervention of regular Russian military units flooding Eastern Ukraine in August 2014.[6] They were mainly *spetsnaz* FSB and GRU units as well as troops from the elite 76th Guards Air-Assault Division, supported by tanks, heavy artillery and anti-aircraft missile units, controlled entirely by the Russians. As a result, Russian troops not only regained all the land formerly seized by the "insurgents" but threatened to go

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5. The Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America reaffirm, in the case of Ukraine, their commitment not to use nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear weapon State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, except in the case of an attack on themselves, their territories or dependent territories, their armed forces, or their allies, by such a State in association or alliance with a nuclear-weapon State;

6. **Ukraine, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America will consult in the event a situation arises that raises a question concerning these commitments**.

emphasis added by R. Machnikowski, [www.en.wikipedia.org or www.cfr.org, access: 23 September 2014].

[5] B. Bidder, M. Feldenkirchen, M. Hujer, M. Schepp, *Putin's New Russia: What the Future May Hold for Eastern Ukraine*, "Spiegel Online - International", 8 September 2014, [www.spiegel.de, access: 23 September 2014].

[6] B. Bidder, M. Gathmann, C. Neef, M. Schepp, *Undeclared War: Putin's Covert Invasion of Eastern Ukraine*, "Spiegel Online - International", 2 September 2014, [www.spiegel.de, access: 23 September 2014].

further towards the southern coastal city of Mariupol. This Russian military advancement led the newly elected Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko to propose a permanent ceasefire agreement, which included the withdrawal of all heavy weapons on both sides and the establishment of a "buffer zone" between Ukrainian military forces and pro-Russian "separatists".

The result of the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine, at least seen at the end of September 2014, is the loss of sovereign Ukrainian state control over a substantial part of the country in the east. Today, the ultimate status of this land remains vague, but "separatists" tend to ignore any Ukrainian political initiatives and claim independence from the president and government in Kiev. Though the legal status of "Newrussia" is doubtful, Russia has de facto managed to carry out a partitioning of its neighbour - with the annexation of the Crimea and the detachment of the eastern regions of Ukraine Russia has deprived Kiev of control over a large part of the country and its population. It is worth stressing that Russia has done this so far at a relatively low cost - Russian war casualties have remained at a low level and economic sanctions from the "international community" have remained relatively painless from the point of view of an average Russian consumer.

Through the skilful use of its military might, Russia has managed to achieve its major strategic goal - to contain Ukraine from any deeper integration with the West. Once again, as after the Moldavian, Chechen and Georgia "crises", it has gone unpunished. Huge damage has been done once more - in the beginning of the 21st century, as in the past, the West passively stood by and watched the brutal partition of a sovereign country with the use of military force, and did not react in any serious form. Western security institutions seemed to be completely irrelevant and did not play any role in an attempt to solve this conflict. Clear associations with the 1938 case of the Munich conference, allowing Adolf Hitler first the seizure of a part, and next, the partition and occupation of Czechoslovakia were frequently drawn by commentators. It comes as no surprise that Russian actions, and Western inaction, provoked a flood of important questions - is Russia to repeat the "Ukrainian scenario", and if yes - when and where? The obvious suggestion is that the next possible victim of Russian "revisionism" and "expansionism" could be Latvia and/or Estonia - small Baltic states lacking any significant military power, though inhabited, like Ukraine, by a huge Russian minority, which could be easily used in the same way to create a local "self-defence militia".[7]

The only but crucial difference between the Baltic states and Ukraine is that they are members of both the European Union and NATO. So the next important questions are: is Russia ready to test NATO on its own ground and is NATO

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[7] S. Pifer, *Opinion: Watch Out for Little Green Men*, "Spiegel Online - International", 7 July 2014, [www.spiegel.de, access: 23 September 2014].

ready to deter Russia or even defend its "new" members in case this proves to be necessary? Has the fate of the new NATO members been sealed by the NATO - Russia Founding Act of 1997, which Russia interprets as "no NATO troops, arms or installations" on the territory of the "new" members? This interpretation, as we have seen after the NATO Summit in Newport, Wales in September 2014, is widely shared by Germany and France, major European tenets of this organization. This may provide a temptation for Russia to cross-check the political cohesiveness of this alliance and military prowess of its armed forces. So is NATO still a genuine security "provider" in Europe, or does it only create an illusion of security? Will Baltic NATO members be abandoned when the time of trial comes?

Is Russia ready to "test the West"?

In order to answer this crucial question we should refer to the motives and goals of the Kremlin elite. Together with their past behaviour, these goals suggest that certainly Russia is not only ready, but also increasingly well-prepared to continue its policy of "testing the West", as it has already done this for quite a long time. Russia's action in Ukraine should not come as a surprise for all those who carefully follow Russian discourse addressed not only to the West, but also to the Russian public, as well as Russian policy towards Moldova and especially Georgia. These two smaller countries have already been partitioned, like Ukraine today, much earlier following a similar pattern, and the Russian - Georgian war of 2008 should have been a final warning that Russia is ready to use military force if it is necessary to achieve its goals.[8] These Russian goals have a twofold nature - they are on the one hand "defensive" and "offensive" on the other, unfortunately, the latter are rarely acknowledged by Western analysts. "Defensive" actions stem from the fact that Russia perceives the territory of the former Soviet Union as its "exclusive sphere of interest".

The approaching of this sphere by a foreign entity, whether it is a state or an international organization like the European Union, is perceived in Moscow as an existential threat. Whether it is Georgia forwarding its plans to join NATO, or Moldova attempting to associate itself with the European Union, these aims are perceived as a violation of the "red line" which Kremlin outlined in its speeches and documents.[9] Russian leaders tend not to differentiate between NATO and the

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[8] R. Asmus, *A Little War that Shook the World*, Palgrave Macmillan: New York 2010.
[9] For example: *Koncepcyja wnieszniej politiki Rossijskoj Fiedieracyi, utwierżdiena priezidientom D.A. Miedwiediewym*, 12 July 2008; *Stratiegija nacyonalnoj biezopasnosti Rossijskoj Fiedieracyi, utwierżdiena ukazom Priezidienta Rossijskoj Fiedieracyi*, 12 May 2009; Wladimir Putin, *Wystuplenije i diskussija na Miunchienskoj konfieriencyi po woprosam politiki biezopasnosti*, Munich, 10 February 2007; *Obzor wniesznieij politiki Rossijskoj Fiedieracyi*, 27 March 2007; *Wnieszniepoliticzeskaja i diplomaticzeskaja diejatielnost' Rossijskoj*

European Union - they claim that membership in one of these organizations automatically results in joining the other, and NATO is always treated as a "hostile alliance". Russia cannot allow the "West" to cross these presumed lines and when challenged reacts with the use of all necessary means, including military. European politicians might have managed to convince themselves that the Association Agreement offered to Ukraine is just another "technical" deal focused on economic relations, but the Russian ruling power elite (*siloviki*) perceived it as a hostile incursion into a "forbidden zone" and the implementation of a competitive geopolitical initiative at Russia's cost.

Hence, Russia "defended" its sphere of influence in Georgia and repeated this, with the use of appropriate military means, called "hybrid war" in Ukraine, trying to "deter" the West from its own land. The belief in this right to "self-defence" is widely shared by many politicians, experts and corporate executives not only in Russia, but also in the West,[10] most notably in Germany and France, i.e., "core"

Fiedieracyi w 2007 godu, Obzor MID Rossii, Moscow, March 200; Wnieszniepoliticzeskaja i diplomaticzeskaja diejatielnost' Rossijskoj Fiedieracyi w 2008 godu. Obzor MID Rossii, Moscow, March 2009; Siergiej Ławrow, *Wystuplenije Ministra inostrannych dieł Rossii S. W. Ławrowa na XV Assambleje Sowieta po wniesznіej i oboronnoj politike*, 17 March 2007; Dmitrij Miedwiediew, *Interwju rossijskim tielekanałam "Pierwyj", «Rossija»*, NTW, 31 August 2008; Siergiej Ławrow, *Wystuplenije Ministra inostrannych dieł Rossii S. W. Ławrowa w MGIMO(U) po słuczaju naczała nowogo uczebnogo goda*, 3 September 2007; *Stienogramma wystuplenija Ministra inostrannych dieł Rossii S. W. Ławrowa w MGIMO(U) MID Rossii po słuczaju naczała nowogo uczebnogo goda,* 1 September 2008; Siergiej Ławrow, *Nastojaszczeje i buduszczeje głobalnoj politiki: wzglad iz Moskwy*, "Rossija w Głobalnoj Politike", No. 2 (March/April) 2007, p. 8-20; S. Lavrov, *Kak okonczatielno zawierszyt' chołodnuju wojnu?*, "Mieżdunarodnaja myśl", No. 5 (May) 2007; V. Putin, *Wystuplenije na sowieszczanii s posłami i postojannymi priedstawitielami Rossijskoj Fiedieracyi*, 27 June 2006; *Dokład Władimira Putina w Dawosie. Połnaja wiersija*, 28 January 2009, "RIA Novosti", [www.rian.ru, access: 3 September 2014]; V. Putin, *Wystuplenije na rasszyriennom zasiedanii Gosudar stwiennogo sowieta "O stratiegii razwitija Rossii do 2020 goda"*, 8 February 2008; *Tieziзy wystuplenija Ministra inostrannych dieł Rossii S. W. Ławrowa w MGIMO(U) MID Rossii*, 1 September 2009; English version available at www.mid.ru and some in English at www.archive.kremlin.ru.

[10] Most recently John Mearsheimer neatly shared this Russian "narration": *Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault. The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin*, "Foreign Affairs" September/October 2014; *Niemcy: Były kanclerz Helmut Schmidt broni polityki Putina wobec Krymu*, "Interia", 26 March 2014, [www.fakty.interia.pl, access: 26 March 2014]; *"Die Zeit" ostrzega przed kandydatem na szefa dyplomacji. "Niech trzyma się z dala od MSZ"*, "TVN24", 2 October 2013, [www.tvn24.pl, access: 2 October 2014]; *Niemiecki polityk: Działania Rosji skutkiem przyjęcia Polski do NATO*, "Gazeta.pl", 11 March 2014, [www.wiadomosci.gazeta.pl, access: 11 March 2014]; *„Handelsblatt": Krym należy do Rosji tak jak Vermont do USA*, "Onet.pl", 13 March 2014, [www.wiadomosci.onet.pl, access: 16 March 2014]; D. Heinrich, A. Wojnarowska, *Niemieccy eksperci: „Demonizowanie Putina nie jest polityką, tylko alibi wobec jej braku"*, "Deutsche Welle", 20 March 2014, [www.dw.de, access: 20 March 2014]; *Niemcy: Eurosceptycy z AfD przeciw sankcjom wobec Rosji*, "Interia", 23 March 2014, [www.fakty.interia.pl, access: 23 March 2014]; *Berlusconi broni Putina. „Niweczy się zbliżenie z Rosją"*, "Dziennik.pl", 26 March 2014, [www.wiadomosci.dziennik.pl, access: 26 March 2014]; *Polityk Zielonych przeciwko rozlokowaniu oddziałów w Polsce. „Pobrzękiwanie szabelką"*, "TVN24", 3 April 2014, [www.tvn24.pl, access: 3 April 2014]; *Impreza Schroedera z Putinem oburza prasę, ale nie Niemców. "To najbardziej przerażające"*, "TVN24", 30 April 2014, [www.tvn24.pl, access: 30 April 2014]; *Schroeder dla "Die Welt": Nie izolować Putina*, "Inte-

European states. They have a sympathy towards Russian actions and tacitly admit they are justified.

Moreover, the Russian goal of building a "multipolar" world necessitates a fundamental reduction of the role of the United States in European affairs. This idea is in tune with a similar Franco - German desire, shared by numerous trendsetters both in Paris and Berlin. Anti-Americanism has a long and deep tradition in both of these countries, and is connected to their *folie grandiose* - diminishing the United States' role in the contemporary world is perceived as a proper way to embolden their position. Some of the most vocal examples of this attitude include the Franco-German opposition towards the US intervention in Iraq in 2003, or the recent deportation of the highest CIA official in Germany[11] in connection with revelations of the wiretapping of Chancellor Angela Merkel and other German officials by the American National Security Agency.[12] These have been spread by Edward Snowden,[13] whose relation with Russian intelligence is still unclear. The "core" European states delude themselves that it might be possible to make a deal with Russia and get rid of American influence in Europe at no cost.[14] They are obviously wrong.

They are wrong because their line of reasoning is based on a principal and false tenet - that Russian motives are stable and limited to the presumed "defence" of vital Russian interests in Central and Eastern Europe. This "understanding" for Russian actions, visible during both wars in Georgia and Ukraine, stems from the assumption that Russia would never cross the line and challenge the West on its own ground. The situation now is very similar to a pre-World War II Western perception of the upcoming events - Western politicians then assumed that Adolf Hitler, like Vladimir Putin today, was a "reasonable" man they could do business with and that he could be persuaded to "expand" to the East but not touch the West. So his "actions" in Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland were met with no

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ria", 11 May 2014, [www.fakty.interia.pl, access: 11 May 2014]; *Wpływowy niemiecki dziennik o natowskich „jastrzębiach" i „dolewaniu oliwy do ognia"*, "TVN24", 8 May 2014, [www.tvn24.pl, access: 11 May 2014]; M. Pawlak, *„Tylko żadnych gestów militarnych". Niemiecki ekspert o polityce NATO wobec Rosji*, "Deutsche Welle", 23 May 2014, [www.dw.de, access: 23 May 2014]; *Francuska ultraprawica mówi głosem Rosji. Marine Le Pen popiera federalizację Ukrainy*, "TVN24", 12 April 2014, [www.tvn24.pl, access: 14 April 2014]; *Niemiecka Lewica broni Rosji*, "TVN24", 11 May 2014, [www.tvn24.pl, access: 11 May 2014];

[11] *Retaliation for Spying: Germany Asks CIA Official to Leave Country*, "Spiegel Online - International", 10 July 2014, [www.spiegel.de, access: 10 July 2014].

[12] M. Gude, J. Schindler, F Schmid, *Merkel's Mobile: Germany Launches Investigation into NSA Spying*, "Spiegel Online - International", 4 June 2014, [www.spiegel.de, access: 4 June 2014].

[13] *NSA in Germany: Why We Are Posting Secret Documents*, "Spiegel Online - International", 18 June 2014, [www.spiegel.de, access: 18 June 2014].

[14] M. Feldenkirchen, C. Hoffmann. R. Pfister, *Germany's Choice: Will It Be America or Russia?*, "Spiegel Online - International", 10 July 2014, [www.spiegel.de, access: 11 July 2014].

resistance. Unfortunately, before heading to Moscow, Hitler took Paris, Brussels, Copenhagen, Oslo and Amsterdam, which ultimately shattered the Western illusions. Respectively, when Putin, as president or prime minister of Russia, "defended" the interests of the Russian "people" first in Chechnya, then in Georgia and now in Ukraine, the West decided not to react decisively to stop him because this illusion, that Russia is going to limit itself to the territory of the former Soviet Union, is still pretty widely shared. However, the Kremlin's appetite has neither a limit nor is it stable - on the contrary, it is growing with more consumption. When Russia is met with indecisiveness and weakness, it answers with more pressure and ambition.

It is worth stressing that Russia skilfully uses a "mix" of various instruments including military, diplomatic means, supported by "information warfare" - propaganda and disinformation, and employs a huge number of its "assets" in the West. The case of the "Ukrainian crisis" provides us with an interesting lesson into Russian tricks: a smear campaign against the new "fascist" Ukrainian government, flooding the internet with a mass of pro-Russian commentaries, using pro-Russian activists, like for example, the former German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder to forward the Russian agenda. This is combined with the military pressure - provocative flights of military airplanes including long distance bombers carrying nuclear weapons close to NATO-controlled airspace, challenging NATO with large scale military manoeuvres employing thousands of soldiers and nuclear ballistic missiles of all ranges.

All these forms of psychological warfare are aimed at creating an impression that Russia is strong, determined and ready to do whatever is necessary, including engaging in a full scale war, to achieve its goals. It can be compared with cautious statements by Western politicians and commentators as well as media leaks unveiling alleged weakness of the Western military[15] - it is hard to avoid the impression that Russia actually IS a much stronger side, better prepared to prevail in this confrontation. In all these ways, Russia instils fear among its opponents and wins this manipulative game. So far, the West has not found appropriate tools to deal with all military and non-military means used by Russia and seems defenceless and impotent.

The Russian ruling class obviously does not want to limit itself to this alleged "defensive" aim of protecting its own "sphere of interest". They perceive a proper window of opportunity has just opened for a much more ambitious task - to transform the whole international security system according to its vision. Their idea of a new, truly "multipolar" world includes the final limitation of the United States

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[15] *Germany's Disarmed Forces: Ramshackle Military at Odds with Global Aspirations*, "Spiegel Online - International", 30 September 2014, [www.spiegel.de, access: 30 September 2014].

role in European and world politics, which should lead to a significant increase of Russia's position and weight. Furthermore, because NATO still remains the main vehicle of American influence in Europe, it must be skilfully destroyed. However, this certainly cannot be done by provoking a "third world war", which is an "unwinnable" enterprise, but by a much more cunning strategy aimed at the "neutralization" of this organization. This strategy includes the punishment, humiliation and isolation of all major pro-American allies in Europe, and the drawing of a significant number of European states onto Russia's side, by offering them rewards. Hence, the Russian "grand strategy" uses many different means, among them two are the most significant: to threaten and punish those who oppose Russia, and to corrupt and "reward" those who are forwarding the pro-Russian course. This "carrot and stick" behaviour is typical of the KGB alumni, and so far has worked well - a notable group of European leaders, politicians and executives claim that it is time to withdraw economic sanctions directed against Russia and do business as if nothing inappropriate had happened. Military power, skilfully used to forward Russia's plans, is barely an "instrument" in this "red orchestra" repertoire. This Russian policy of removing America from Europe by the neutralization of NATO is going to be continued until it is stopped by a decisive Western action, which is highly unlikely today.

The perfect test-ground for challenging NATO lies in the Baltic states - this "soft underbelly" of the organization, where Russia can easily repeat its fully successful "Ukrainian scenario", but in a much "quicker" mode. These countries border Russia, have significant Russian minorities prone to being manipulated with ease, do not have the required defence capabilities, and are still not perceived as "core" European states in the West. Rewriting the "Ukrainian scenario" there is very likely, and may happen sooner than the Westerners may expect. Even when NATO forces start to react, if there is a political consensus they should react, Russia might achieve its aim there - proving the military irrelevance of NATO. Russian action in Ukraine is marked by an important factor - "plausible deniability".

Despite the obvious presence of Russian troops in Ukraine, Russia steadfastly claims it is not a "side" in this conflict, which is accepted by both Russian and Western official public discourse, full of statements on "little green men", "separatists", "rebels" rather than "Russian terrorists" or "Russian bandits". If the United States and the "coalition of the willing" finally react to stop likely Russian "provocation" in the Baltic states, this country can easily say that it was not a "side" in that conflict as well. If the United States decides not to react, it would be perfect proof that the Washington Treaty of 1949 is not worth the piece of paper it is printed on. That would mean the factual nullification of this organization. It is highly unlikely that after such a demonstration anyone in Europe would see NATO as a security provider. Surely, knowing Moscow's "creativeness" one

can easily imagine other scenarios of alternative Russian military actions and other places when Russia might attempt to achieve precisely this effect. There should be no doubt that Russia has the will, the capacity and would try to seize new opportunities to execute this plan.

A by-product of this policy should be a restoration of the "Soviet Union bis" under the guise of the Eurasian Union, which should prospectively "integrate" all the former Soviet republics under Moscow rule, and create a buffer zone between Russia and the "core" European states in Central Europe. This is the nature of the "deal" that the Moscow ruling class is trying to tacitly tempt the European "core" states with - together we can dispose of the Americans, and then we will decide, in a revisited "concert of a few European powers" the new *status quo* in the region. That presumably includes sharing "responsibility" for events in respective spheres of interests. In this way, Russia is attempting to transform relations in Europe and model it on a pattern known as the 19th century status quo after the Vienna Congress (1814 - 1815). As Lord Ismay once neatly described NATO as an alliance, the primary task of which was "to keep the Americans in, the Germans down and the Russians out", the Russian vision proposes to the "European partners" to "bring the Russians in, the Germans up and the Americans out". As a "bonus" the Russians may reverse the "major geopolitical disaster of the [20th] century", as Vladimir Putin has described the collapse of the Soviet Union some time ago,[16] and secure the long-awaited revenge for "losing" the Cold War.

This Russian offer may seem tempting but it is risky too. First of all, contrary to Russian expectations, America is not a "dead tiger" yet - truly, Obama's administration is doing its best to help Russia carry out these plans. The Americans decided to withdraw their heavy military units from Europe, but this was done on the condition that the security situation there would remain relatively stable and that they would not face any significant challenge in Europe. Russian actions in Ukraine are the ultimate proof that this is simply not the case. So we can expect that the next American president would stiffen the United States' position and would not allow a further weakening of the position of this country in Europe. Moreover, Germany is definitely an economic heavyweight but a military dwarf, and German society is not ready to pay the price for this increased "responsibility" for both European and world affairs, with its pacifist attitudes and aversion to suffering any sacrifices. The events in East Ukraine are good proof of the thesis that this prospective Russian co-made "New European Order" could likely be brutish and bloody.

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[16] *Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation*, President of Russia, 25 April 2005, [www.archive.kremlin.ru, access: 20 June 2014].

Finally, there is also the danger that the Russians, encouraged by their "successes" in subjugating Ukraine, and provoked by this fundamental weakness of Western Europe, can reformulate their plans and will not stop their actions in Ukraine and the *Pribaltica*. Without NATO and US involvement in European affairs, there would simply be no power in a disunited Western Europe which could be a match for Russian military machinery and be able to constrain prospective Russian ambitions.

So, is the "West" ready to stop Russia?

The answer to this question is: "it's hard and too early to say". Certainly, the lack of any serious Western attempt to raise the costs of Russian military aggression in Ukraine does not allow for much optimism, but still this is a matter of time and decisions are to be made both in Washington and Berlin. If the United States finally decides that it is too early to "quit the stage" and will defend its position in European affairs, it may resort to adequate political and military countermeasures to successfully deter Russia. In this case Berlin will not decide to switch sides and even if it is not going to directly support US actions it is neither going to block the deployment of American troops to new locations in Europe which is necessary to halt further Russian actions. If the United States decides that it is unable to keep its forces in Europe, the worst case scenario, including a series of "hybrid wars" waged by Russia, may become a reality.

When Russia succeeds in proving that NATO is a "paper tiger" unable to react appropriately even when its members are threatened, Moscow might ultimately dominate Central and Eastern Europe. In this case, Germany could have no other option other than to negotiate a new order in Europe. The contemporary "architecture" of European security based on NATO would be superseded with bilateral agreements between Moscow and Berlin, defining their "zones of responsibility", with some minor role to be played by Paris. The funeral of NATO should entail the marginalization of the European Union as well - it is hard to believe that a fundamental decomposition of the security and political situation in Europe would not affect the economic order there. The new era of European relations could be open then but it is extremely doubtful that it would result in an increase in the level of both the liberties as well as the well-being of the citizens of the central and eastern part of this continent. On the contrary - it could deprive them of their most recent achievements in these respects.

Conclusions

The Russian - Ukraine armed conflict and the Western response to it clearly show the changing nature of the security situation in Europe, and is a grave threat for NATO as an effective and useful security provider in this region. It shows the fundamental weakness and disunity of European states, stemming from the increasing divergence of their interests. Western states no longer form a unified and solid alliance glued together by shared perceptions and interests, on the contrary, they follow their own "national interests" which advise them to "appease" Russia in order to get back to "business as usual" with this country at the price of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. However, they should not be surprised - after a short break devoted to the "normalization" of relations with Russia, this country ultimately will challenge NATO on its own ground, be it in Estonia, Latvia or somewhere else.

In the meantime, Russia may procure some other conflict in the Caucasus or Central Asia, solved by military means to show its military might and prowess, as well as its determination to forward its vital interests. These interests are not limited to the presumed defence of the Russian "sphere of interest", but are aimed at the neutralization of NATO as a main vehicle of American presence and influence in Europe. It is up to the United States as to whether this aim will be stopped by a decisive action focused on an effective deterrence of Russia. This task demands the deployment of significant military means to the countries of the so-called "Eastern flank" of NATO: Poland and the Baltic states, regardless of Germany's position on this problem.

The decisions taken at the NATO summit in Newport in September 2014 were simply not enough to stop the Russians. Without a solid enhancement of military might in Central and Eastern European countries NATO is unlikely to survive the next decade and would definitely loose the next round of confrontation with Russia. The current fate of Ukraine should be the final warning and a memento of the kind of events we might expect, but much closer, in the nearest future.

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Macedonian Membership of NATO: From a Clear Perspective to an Uncertain Anticipation

The enlargement of NATO is an active and complex process that is very important both for the integrity of the European security area and the transatlantic link. The incomplete integration of the Balkans into the NATO system of collective defence leaves Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Serbia outside NATO as partners, and not full NATO members. The reasons for this are quite different for each country: subjective (sometimes internal, political turmoil and the slow process of fulfilling NATO requirements), but also objective, like the Alliance's internal lack of cohesion regarding the policy of NATO enlargement. The "big players" in NATO are looking to engage in further NATO enlargement in the Balkans, but the enlargement is also affected by other new security challenges. Some of these challenges affect the achievement of those goals in line with NATO's strategy of NATO's three core tasks (collective security, crises management and partnership).

In the case of Macedonia, NATO membership is an important part of the Macedonian national security strategy and is included in the agenda of all relevant political parties. Macedonians overall strongly support membership in NATO. Public support for Macedonian membership in NATO has varied in the past, due mostly to the events which marked the NATO summit in Bucharest in 2008 and the lack of a NATO mechanism to find a solution to overcome the deadlock, but it has never dropped under 70% since 2006.

This paper uses empirical data from several Macedonian state institutions, domestic and foreign agencies and (from other sources) researching public support for NATO membership conducted in the period between 2005 and 2014. Based on the conclusions and outcomes of a specially targeted research study focusing on the Ministry of Defense and the army, the paper explains the NATO membership perceptions of the employees. Generally, membership of NATO is seen as the most appropriate way to preserve security and stability in Macedonia, a way to attract economic investment in Macedonia and, as a consequence, increasing the population's living standards. In addition, membership is seen as conducive to decreasing corruption and organized crime, ethnic tensions and political instability. This paper also incorporates the attitudes of the security system's employees, (predominately the Army of the Republic of Macedonia), who have a greater vested interest in the opportunities and possibilities of working inside the Alliance, as a full NATO member state.

Along with the changes in world politics that have happened after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union at the beginning of nineties, the world's security paradigm has substantially changed. Federal states either split (Czechoslovakia), or imploded (Yugoslavia) and new states were created, some of them gaining independence for the very first time in their history (Macedonia and Kosovo). These newly-constituted states had to restructure their political systems and economies, and also had to deal with both internal and external security challenges. In those circumstances, the European Union was the "promised land" and the direction to take in order to develop into a democratic and free market society. At the same time, NATO was the only viable option for filling in the security vacuum for many states, especially for the newly-constituted small states with security risks inside, or just outside their borders. The phrase "Euro-Atlantic integration" became the mantra of politicians in the post-Cold War states.

In those years NATO itself was going through a change trying to get over Lord Ismay's maxim "Keeping the Americans in, the Russians out and the Germans down". NATO was engaged for the first time in its history outside the traditional North Atlantic area of the member states (in Bosnia and Herzegovina). The new NATO Strategic Concept of 1991 departed from being a carefully prepared document for deterrence and defence, and became an open public document for the first time, containing many elements of public diplomacy. A set of partnerships with non-NATO states started: the North Atlantic Cooperation Council[1] (NACC) was created in December 1991 (succeeded by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council [EAPC] in 1997). Finally, the Partnership for Peace programme created in January 1994 was also serving the purpose of preparing some of the partner states and their armed forces for potential NATO accession. The transformation of NATO was complete: NATO found a new "raison d'être" in the enlargement process.

The Republic of Macedonia gained independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, without bloodshed or a civil war. From the very beginning, accession to the European Union and NATO were set as clear objectives. In November 1993 the

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[1] The North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) was established by the Allies on 20 December 1991 as a forum for dialogue and cooperation with NATO's former Warsaw Pact adversaries. The 11 former Soviet republics of the newly formed Commonwealth of Independent States were invited to participate in the NACC. Georgia and Azerbaijan joined the NACC in 1992 along with Albania, and the Central Asian republics soon followed suit. *The North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC)*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 20 October 2011, [www.nato.int, access: 14 August 2014].

Macedonian Parliament voted in favour of a decision to join NATO,[2] articulating previous public discourses and overall public opinion. Macedonia previously was not a part of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council and joined the Partnership for Peace programme in November 1995. The following year Macedonia became a member of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. The first and the second enlargement of NATO in 1999 and 2004 omitted Macedonia. During the NATO summit in Prague in 2002 when formal invitations were sent to most members of the "Vilnius" group[3] for NATO membership, an initiative for a closer cooperation between Albania, Croatia and Macedonia was created - the Adriatic group. The Adriatic Charter was signed in May 2003 in Tirana, under the aegis of the United States.

The defence strategy of the Republic of Macedonia, in line with the National Security Strategy, is already adjusted to future NATO membership. It is clearly stated that the defence policy of the Republic of Macedonia fully accepts the principles, goals and responsibilities of the NATO Strategic Concept and it is consistent with the duties and obligations of NATO and European Union membership.[4] Furthermore, it is of vital national interest to integrate within NATO, the European Union and to actively participate in other forums of international cooperation. Finally, since the Republic of Macedonia is part of the Euro-Atlantic region, the security of Macedonia is an integral part of the NATO region and global security, political and military integration into NATO is "a strategic goal for the country".[5]

The most important obstacle preventing Macedonia from membership, but also at the same time the Alliance from consensus, is the name dispute between Macedonia and Greece. On 5 December, 2011, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, delivered its judgment in the

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[2] *Stenografski beleški od 68-ta sednica na Sobranieto na Republika Makedonija* [*Shorthand notes of the 68th session of Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia*], Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia, 4 November 1993, [www.sobranie.mk, access: 18 August 2014]; and *Registar za 1993 godina* [*Register for 1993*], "Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia", January 1994, [www.slvesnik.com.mk, access: 9 September 2014].

[3] The Vilnius group was created in May 2000 by the NATO candidate countries Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia (joined in 2001), Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. It had regular high level meetings and it achieved strengthened practical cooperation and exchange of information as well as practical and political support to NATO in strengthening European security and stability. In 2002 an invitation for membership in NATO was sent to Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. *Vilnius group*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, 2014, [www.mfa.gov.lv, access: 10 September 2014].

[4] *Strategija za odbrana na Republika Makedonija* [*Defense Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia*], "Official gazette of the Republic of Macedonia", No. 30, Year LXVI, 1 March 2010, p. 3, [www.slvesnik.com.mk, access: 13 September 2014].

[5] *Ibidem*, p. 4.

case concerning the Application of the Interim Accord of 13 September 1995 between Macedonia and Greece.[6] Macedonia claimed that its NATO candidacy was considered at the Bucharest Summit on 2 and 3 April 2008, but that it was not invited to begin talks on accession to the organization. Also, Macedonia claimed that with that Greece violated the interim's provision[7] and prevented Macedonia from NATO membership. The judgment was in favour of Macedonia.

After the NATO summit in Wales (2014), Macedonia is again outside NATO, despite its long-standing contribution to NATO operations in ISAF (International Security Assistance Force)[8] and its active role in regional cooperation. It was stated in the summit declaration that Macedonia can "join the Alliance as soon as a mutually acceptable solution to the name issue has been reached within the framework of the UN".[9]

Review and analysis of public support for NATO membership

Macedonia's membership in NATO is a key objective of the political agendas of almost all influential political parties in the country. The need for Macedonian membership in NATO is also supported by the majority of the general public and is a part of a widely agreed consensus.

According to data from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs contained in the Annual National Programmes[10] for NATO membership (whose submission is part of NATO's Membership Action Plan), public support for NATO membership is permanently affirmative and has never been below 70%.

The level of public support for NATO membership grew steadily during the nineties, from 60% in 1995, 47% in 2001, and 53.7% in 2005 up to 89% in 2006.[11]

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[6] *Interim Accord between Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, "UN Peacemaker", 13 September 1995, [www.peacemaker.un.org, access: 14 September 2014]; *Application of the Interim Accord of 13 September 1995 (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* v. *Greece): Judgment of 5 December 2011,* International Court of Justice, 5 September 2011, p. 644, [www.icj-cij.org, access: 14 September 2014].

[7] *Interim Accord between Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, "UN Peacemaker", 13 September 1995, [www.peacemaker.un.org, access: 14 September 2014].

[8] The contribution started with only two staff officers in 2002, increasing to 152 soldiers (one mechanized infantry company and several staff officers and members of OMLT) in 2014.

[9] *Wales Summit Declaration. Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales,* North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 5 September 2014, [www.nato.int, access: 14 September 2014].

[10] First Annual National Programs for NATO membership was submitted in 1999.

[11] T. Gocevski, *Realnost i perspektivi* [*Reality and Perspectives*], [in:] T. Gocevski (ed.), *Republika Makedonija pomegju samitot vo Riga i členstvoto vo NATO* [*Republic of Macedonia between Riga Summit and NATO*], Ministry of Defense: Skopje 2007, p. 23.

The main reason for the steady growth in support for NATO membership is due to the overall wide multi-ethnic and political support.
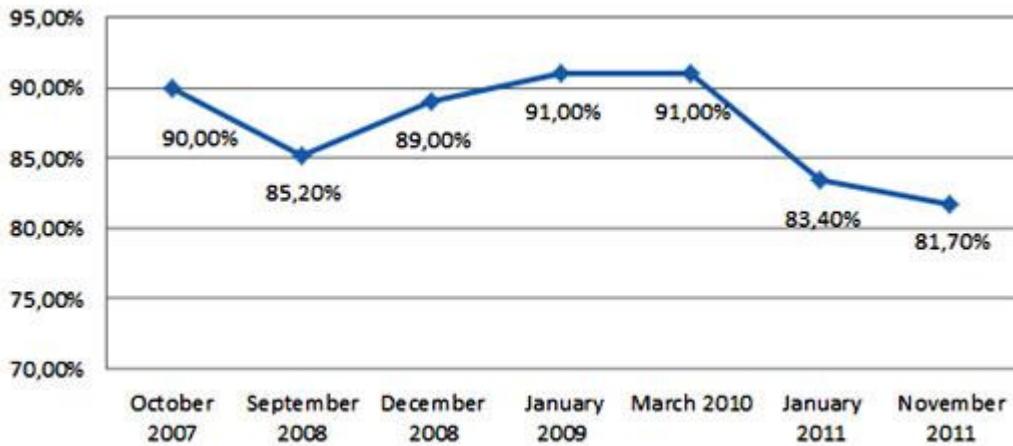

Figure 1: Public support for membership of the Republic of Macedonia in NATO[12]

Public support ranged between 92% and 90% before the NATO Bucharest Summit (April 2008) and between 85.2% and 89% soon after the summit - a moment that was perceived as the key stage for Macedonia's membership campaign in NATO. The NATO summit held in Bucharest represents a key moment of disappointment for the citizens and official authorities in the Republic of Macedonia due to NATO member states lack of consensus for Macedonian membership in the Alliance, perceived as a rejection or veto in Macedonia. Applying for NATO membership was and is taking place concurrently with an application for membership in the European Union and under similar circumstances. These two processes are influenced by many processes and milestones. Macedonian citizens are well

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[12] K. Rękawek, *The Western Balkans and the Alliance: All Is Not Well on NATO's Southern Flank?*, "PISM Policy Paper", Vol. 14 (62), June 2013, p. 5; M. Jovanovski, *Mediumite i javnoto mislenje vo potkrepa na NATO* [*The media and public opinion in support of NATO*], 15 October 2010, [www.dw.de, access: 10 September 2010], P. R., *Golema podrška za vlez vo NATO, no ne po cena na imeto* [*Great support for NATO membership, but without a change of the name*], "Utrinski vesnik", 18 September 2008, [www.utrinski.mk, access: 10 September 2014]; *Macedonia elects new President, Mayors, and Municipal Councils*, The International Republican Institute, 16 April 2009, [www.iri.org, access: 10 September 2014]; *Vladata i VMRO - DPMNE imaat ubedliva poddrška od gragjanite* [*Government and VMRO - DPMNE have a convincing support of the citizens*], "Dnevnik", 4 November 2011, [www.dnevnik.mk, access: 10 September 2014]; *Vo Makedonija ima konstantna poddrška za vlez vo NATO* [*In Macedonia there is constant support for NATO*], "VOA", 5 March 2010, [www.m.mk.voanews.com, access: 11 September 2014].

aware that NATO membership criteria are less complex than those demanded for European Union membership.

Most of the criteria are related to the reforms and development required in the security sector, predominately in the Ministry of Defense and the army. Macedonia fulfilled all these necessary conditions and was ready for membership in 2008.

Over the last five years, enquiries about Macedonia's progress towards NATO membership have rarely been conducted by official government agencies or bodies;[13] it is NGOs and various foreign and domestic research agencies that have conducted them. For example, the last two Annual National Programmes for NATO membership[14] did not contain data concerning the level of public support except for the statement that the political parties have a wide consensus for NATO and European Union integration. Additionally, since there is a wide perception among the population that the only way to become a NATO and European Union member is by changing the country's constitutional name, research agencies in the last three to four years have connected the membership of NATO (and European Union) support with the additional condition of changing the name. In multi-ethnic Macedonian society, the reasons for the support for NATO membership among the Macedonians and Macedonian Albanians (the biggest ethnic minority in the country) are very different.

The results of a research study in 2010 show that on the question of what is more important, the name of the country or NATO and European Union membership, 66.5% opted for the name, and 26.2% chose membership of NATO and the European Union. When the results are separated according to the ethnic origin of the interviewees, the results are drastically different: 82.1% of ethnic Macedonians questioned chose the name before membership of NATO and the European Union, only 18.1% of Macedonian Albanians prioritized the name, while 77.8% chose membership of NATO and the European Union instead. A further survey in 2014[15] showed that 77% of ethnic Macedonians would support NATO and European Union membership if there was no concession about the name, and 75% of Macedonian Albanians opted for NATO and European Union membership regardless of whether there was a need for a concession in the name dispute. Finally, a research study in 2014 shows that the support for membership dropped

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[13] The last research on this topic was done in 2009 according to officials from the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

[14] *Annual National Programme for NATO Membership of the Republic of Macedonia (2013 - 2014)*, Government of the Republic of Macedonia: Skopje 2013, p. 10; *Annual National Programme for NATO Membership of the Republic of Macedonia (2012 - 2013)*, Government of the Republic of Macedonia: Skopje 2012, p. 8.

[15] *Makedoncite sakaat vo EU i NATO so nepromeneto ime!* [*Macedonians want the EU and NATO with unchanged name!*], "Press24", 23 May 2014, [www.press24.mk, access: 10 September 2014].

to around 70%, but it is still greater than most of the countries that became members after the fall of the Berlin wall.[16]

Internally, the uncertainty of NATO accession has been reflected in several areas of society and in the political scene. The deadlock is a key element between the position of the government and the opposition political parties; it is seen as an obstacle to improving inter-ethnic relations between ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians and has implications for the security and stability of the state. Even more, in the past six years (2008 - 2014) the accession to NATO and the European Union has become entangled and burdened with additional bilateral issues with neighbouring states - most of whom are members of NATO. Some of the disputed issues can be traced back more than 100 years into the past and involve the identity of the Macedonian people, the unique nature of their history, the supposed irredentism and so on, and that could also be interpreted as a wish-list of countries with vested interests. These difficulties are not compatible with the NATO treaty principles of the stability, well-being and the contribution to security of the Balkans as part of the North Atlantic area.

Public opinion is slowly changing, and support for NATO membership is in slow decline. This is perhaps connected to the consequences of the NATO Bucharest Summit rather than to a shift in Macedonian international political goals. In the last 20 years Macedonia failed to acquire a true European strategic partner with a capacity to finalize the membership process,[17] and NATO itself has been unable to come up with a mechanism to solve or overcome the conditions created by the bilateral dispute(s), even in the light of the obvious changes of the unipolar world order. Leaving Macedonia outside NATO does not mean that the security vacuum will be filled by other global players' political presences (Russia or China), but it is certainly to their benefit for Macedonia to be outside NATO while their economic presence in the country is slowly growing.[18] Macedonia failed to collect a dividend

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[16] A. Zilberman, S. Webber, *Public Attitudes toward NATO Membership in Aspirant Countries*, [in:] M. Vlachova (ed.), *The Public Image of Defence and the Military in Central and Eastern Europe*, DCAF and CCMR: Geneva 2003.

[17] R. Rajkovčevski, *Gradenje bezbednosna politika: Slucajot na Republika Makedonija* [*Security Policy Building: The Case of the Republic of Macedonia*], Konrad Adenauer Stiftung - Macedonia Office & Faculty of Security: Skopje 2013, pp. 202-206.

[18] In the first eight months, Macedonia-Russia trade exchange reached a total of 75 million USD [www.macedoniaonline.eu, access: 14 September 2014]. Macedonia took a loan from Chinese Export Import [EXIM] Bank at a value of 582 million EUR to build two important sections of the state highway. *Prateniciteodlučija - so kredit od Kina ke se gradatavtopatite Skopje - ŠtipiKičevo - Ohrid* [*MPs decided - with a loan from China to build highway Skopje-Stip and Kicevo-Ohrid*], "Faktor", 25 October 2013, [www.faktor.mk, access: 11 September 2014; *Staven kamen temelnik na avtopatot Kičevo-Ohrid* [*Placed cornerstone of Highway Kicevo-Ohrid*], "Public Enterprise for State Roads", 22 February 2014, [www.roads.org.mk, access: 11 September 2014]; *Se menuva slikata za makedonskite patišta!* [*Changing image of the Macedonian roads!*], "Lider", 29 July 2014, [www.lider.mk, access: 11 September, 2014].

from cooperation with NATO in the Kosovo crisis in 1999 and participation in ISAF.[19] Hence, the decrease in public support is a result of the emergence of a bitterness related to Macedonia being outside NATO.

Practitioners' point of view

The perceptions of the "practitioners", mostly the MoD and the army, regarding the gains for the country, the army and themselves in NATO are a little bit different from those of the general population. This is due to possibilities for close cooperation with their counterparts in NATO-led missions, NATO/Partnership for Peace training and overall the military-political cooperation at different levels where the Republic of Macedonia is already participating.
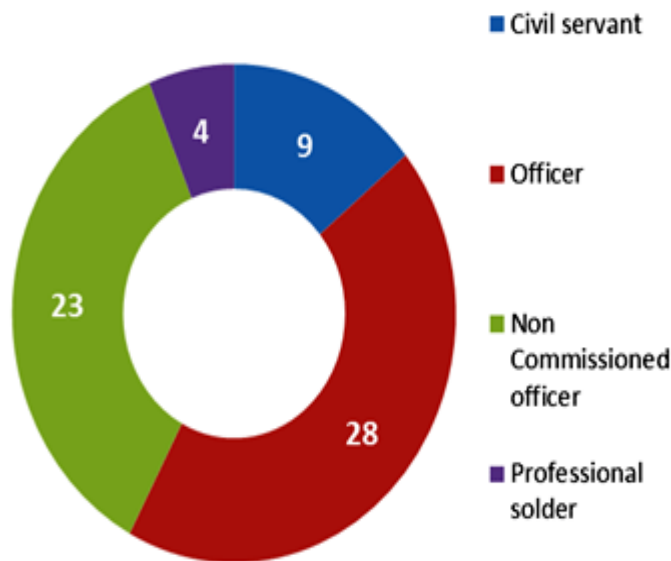

Figure 2: Category of employees from the MoD and the army participating in the research

The research conducted for the purpose of this paper included 64 participants/employees of the Ministry of Defense and army.[20]

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[19] Within its capacities, the Republic of Macedonia has contributed with the deployment of around 3% of its military personnel in NATO-led mission (ISAF) and will continue to do so in the *"Resolute Support"* NATO mission in Afghanistan.
[20] The e-questionnaire was distributed via Google Drive to the participants and was published on Facebook. It contained an introduction part (with the purpose of the research and the paper as well as an explanation of how to complete the questionnaire).
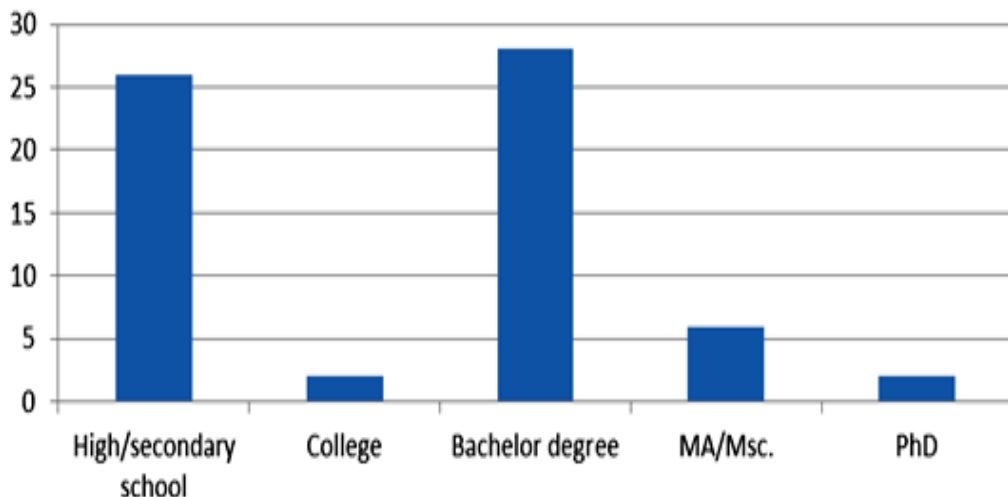
Figure 3: Education structure of interviewees

Most of the interviewees (89.1% or 57) think that the Republic of Macedonia should be a NATO member. Of these, 92.9% (or 26) of the officers and 82.6% (or 19) of the non-commissioned officers, 94.9% (or 37) of the employees with 11 to 20 years effective length of service believe that the Republic of Macedonia should be a NATO member and there is unanimous support from interviewees who have served two or three missions abroad (100%).

Almost a third of the interviewees (32.8%) think that the name dispute, as the main precondition for NATO membership, has no implication on the security and stability of the Republic of Macedonia.

In answer to the question: "What are the benefits for the country from NATO integration?", 37.5% of all participants in the research chose increasing the security and internal stability of the country, 25% think that it is the increase in living standards, i.e., increasing investments and decreasing unemployment, and 20.3% think that in that way Macedonia will achieve durable security. A very small number chose decreasing corruption and organized crime, ethnic tensions or political instability (1.6% - 3.1%). These responses suggest that most of the practitioners see NATO membership primarily as a security and economic benefit for the country, but not as an instant remedy for the current difficulties in Macedonian society.

			8. What are the country's benefits of NATO membership?						
			Economic benefits, increase of living standard, i.e. increasing in the investments and decreasing	Decreasing corruption and organized crime.	Decreasing ethnic tensions.	Decreasing political instability.	Increasing the security and internal stability of the country.	Achieving durable security of the country.	No opinion.	Total
Category of employees within the MoD and the Army of the Republic of Macedonia (ARM):		Civil servant	3	1	0	0	2	1	2	9
			33.3%	11.1%	0%	0%	22.2%	11.1%	22.2%	100.0%
		Officer	6	0	2	1	14	4	1	28
			21.4%	.0%	7.1%	3.6%	50.0%	14.3%	3.6%	100.0%
		Non-commissioned officer	6	0	0	0	7	7	3	23
			26.1%	.0%	.0%	.0%	30.4%	30.4%	13.0%	100.0%
		Professional soldier	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	4
			25.0%	0%	0%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0%	100.0%
Total			16	1	2	2	24	13	6	64
			25.0%	1.6%	3.1%	3.1%	37.5%	20.3%	9.4%	100.0%

Table 1: What are the country's benefits from NATO membership?

Almost half of the officers (46.4%) and non-commissioned officers (56.5%) believed that increasing the living standards of Ministry of Defense and the Army of the Republic of Macedonia personnel in line with the NATO standards as the most significant benefit for them from NATO membership. The same number of officers (46.4%) stated that the opportunity to work in NATO HQs as their best personal benefit, while non-commissioned officers chose three options equally (with 26.1%):

- Possibilities for participation in NATO-led operations;
- Possibilities to work in NATO HQs;

- Possibilities to participate in different NATO programmes at different levels (more than the Partnership for Peace levels).

The conclusion is that the officers, based on their experience participating in missions, training events and courses, and all the opportunities to work together with their NATO colleagues, focus their ambitions on managerial or leadership positions in HQs and see themselves as competent and skilful enough to work side by side with their NATO countries' counterparts.

With respect to the interviewees' length of service, the largest group (60.9%) has 11 - 20 years of service. This group of all categories (civilians, officers, NCOs and soldiers) thinks that:

- Increasing the security and internal stability of the country is the biggest benefit for the country of NATO membership (43.6%);
- 51.3% of them think that increasing the living standards of Ministry of Defense and the Army of the Republic of Macedonia personnel in line with NATO standards is the main benefit for the MoD and the army;
- A third of them thought that the possibility of working in NATO HQs was their personal benefit from NATO membership.

In an interview with Ljube Dukoski, State Advisor for Policy, Planning and Finance in the Ministry of Defense, he explained his professional and personal view of the national and military gains from NATO membership. He believes that membership in NATO will enhance the citizen's trust in institutions, it will increase the perceived level of security and will open new possibilities for foreign investments. With security integration in NATO, a gradual integration in all spheres of society will follow, with security integration being paramount. The army will benefit from NATO membership with the enhancement and increased growth of national military capacities, including the process of learning (better military education), specialization and training.

The "compatibility" of national military capacities will be replaced with "interoperability", based on modernization and human resources development. The personal gains, from the perspective of the higher echelon of the professionals/practitioners of the Ministry of Defense and the army, mean that Macedonian representatives can be a part of NATO committees as well as an integral part of the Alliance decision making process and planning (within NATO entities), based on the criteria for the selection wider than the national ones (again, on a meritocratic basis). That means that in fulfilling the responsibilities of the state, there has to be a good selection of personnel, a special attention to education, equipping and

their training, and timely and periodic evaluation of the security and national interests as well as NATO requirements.

Conclusion

NATO membership for the Republic of Macedonia is considered paramount for the security of the country. However, one should not overstress the importance security over economic wellbeing and development, since there cannot be security without a good economy, just as there can be no economy at all without effective security in place. Right now, Macedonia is a NATO partner striving to be a NATO member. Macedonia holds a record of being engaged for years in Membership Action Plan as a preparation for membership. The wait has been too long.

The support for NATO membership in the country is quite high among the political parties and the general population. After the NATO Bucharest Summit (in 2009), the percentages started dropping, but there is still overall support among the population. A commonly held view is that the percentages will not drop below 50% and that maintaining the high level of support could not be a problem (as in the case of Croatia just before accession in 2008). However, if changing the name of the country is required for membership, it is unlikely that there will be public support, and there is statistical evidence to support this. The commonly held view is that in that case, Macedonia will be better off outside NATO. Even though politicians continue to repeat that there is no alternative to membership in NATO and the European Union, the current situation is an alternative: being a NATO partner instead of a NATO member.

The alternative situation of a partnership with Russia (or China) based on historical sentiment is unimaginable. In reality, with NATO members surrounding the country from the east, west and south (and the NATO presence in Kosovo, and the north - west of Macedonia), as well as the United States and Turkey as strategic partners, the perception is that Macedonian territorial integrity is not at stake. The security of Macedonia is in danger far more from extreme nationalism, ethnical and religious intolerance, international terrorism, organized crime and illegal weapons, as well as the unfinished system of the effective rule of law, corruption, an independent judicial system, unemployment and social disturbances. Cyber security and energy security are also a risk.

The perception of the way the international community implements the decision of the International Court of Justice has had a significant effect on the public support for NATO membership. The name dispute amplified the perception (among ethnic Macedonians) that Macedonia should not make any more concessions in the name dispute, even at the cost of NATO and European Union mem-

bership. The Macedonian Albanians, the biggest ethnic minority have a diametrically opposite opinion, leaving a possibility for a further division among the population in Macedonia, and even more, a possibility for future internal instability.

According to the results, the perception of the employees of the Ministry of Defense and the army is only a little bit different from the general population's perception. The support for NATO membership is very high (almost 90%, with 100% of personnel with two or three mission experiences), but although closely connected with the security of the country, almost a third of the interviewees think that the name dispute (being the main precondition for NATO membership), has no implications on the security and stability of the Republic of Macedonia. More than 58% found that the biggest benefit for the country is strictly the improvement of the security of the country. These perceptions are perceptions from a professional, credible force with experience from various missions (NATO-led, United Nations, European Union and the "coalition of the willing"), recognized as a valuable partner.

The army will continue to be a driving force of all the reform processes in the defence sector and in NATO integration, applying all the knowledge and lessons learned from the missions to the everyday work. Perhaps the greatest benefit is the international experience of the personnel, when they served as the best ambassadors of the country. Therefore, their level of support for NATO means that they have an understanding of how undivided the security of the country from the region and the Euro-Atlantic region (NATO) is.

Macedonian membership in NATO is uncertain at the moment; it is conditional with the solution of the name issue (between Macedonia and a NATO and EU member country) that looks indefinite at the moment. However, the country is dedicated and committed to membership in NATO and it is a valuable and respectable partner of NATO missions. From a Macedonian perspective, the objective is clear: NATO membership, but not at all costs.

Karl Salum (Estonian National Defence College, Estonia)

Finland and Sweden in NATO: Implications on NATO - Russia relations

After World War II, Finland and Sweden remained neutral and avoided joining either of the blocs that polarized Europe during the Cold War, even if Finland's politics of appeasement towards the Soviet Union may not have been perceived as a sign of complete neutrality. The case of Sweden is equally interesting - a rare example of a European country that has not fought a war in almost 200 years.

Today, both countries have committed themselves to Europe politically by becoming members of the European Union but continue to maintain their independence in military affairs and place emphasis on their individual self defence capabilities rather than joining NATO. However, just like other European states, Finland and Sweden have trimmed down their militaries since the end of the Cold War, which has raised questions about their ability to defend their territories without external assistance. This might be one of the reasons why Finland and Sweden have initiated practical cooperation with NATO, starting from participation in the Balkans peacekeeping operations in the 1990s to contributing troops to the NATO-led International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan and the NATO Response Force (NRF).[1] All this has intensified the debate about their potential accession to NATO as full members. Both Finland and Sweden already participate in the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and have had troops deployed under the EU mandate in the Balkans and Africa,[2] meaning that they can no longer be viewed as purely non-aligned.

After three successful waves of post-Cold War enlargement and the effect NATO membership has had on the new member states, especially in national security affairs, there is little doubt that Finland and Sweden would similarly benefit from additional security guarantees offered by Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. In return, Finland and Sweden also have the potential to make valuable military and political contributions to NATO, due to their technologically advanced armed forces and abundant experience from peace operations.

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[1] Finland and Sweden both contributed battalions to SFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as to KFOR in Kosovo. Recently, Finland has contributed between 100 and 200 soldiers per rotation to ISAF and has participated in NRF since 2008. Sweden has led the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan and joined the NRF in 2013.

[2] In Africa, Finland has contributed rotations of up to 60 troops to EU-led operations in the Central African Republic and Chad. Sweden is currently providing 15 troops to the EU Training Mission in Mali.

Main themes concerning NATO enlargement

Since the idea of expanding NATO first became public in the early 1990s, the following perceptions prevailed before and during the first two rounds of enlargement among the general public in both Europe and Russia:

Scenario 1: NATO enlargement will antagonize Russia and increase the risk of a major war in Europe. This belief was especially strong during the road to the second enlargement, which included the Baltic states. Sergeyev suggested that Russia would have faced a "prisoner's dilemma" (partially also caused by the changes in Russian domestic politics) in the case of the three Baltic states joining NATO: whether to appease the domestic constituencies and play hardball against NATO enlargement or opt for a peaceful solution in the hopes of becoming closer to the West.[3] This idea supports Knudsen's theory about small states' security orientation. Using the specific example of the Baltic states and Russia, Knudsen claims that a small state bandwagoning with its neighbouring great power's enemy will be considered a direct challenge or threat.[4] Summarily, Baltic states membership in NATO would directly affect Russian "national" interests in these states as listed by Sergeyev which could lead to spiralling, "self-supporting" conflicts.

Scenario 2: NATO enlargement will isolate Russia and increase the risk of radical forces ascending to power, thus again increasing the risk of a major war in Europe. This argument is echoed by Susan Eisenhower who argues that the decision to expand the Alliance has "marginaliz[ed] pro-Western, pro-reform intellectuals [in Russia]… inflam[ed] nationalist feelings [and given] a platform to the 'bad guys' who would use the growing mistrust against the West for the re-establishment of a garrison state".[5] Irena Kobrinskaya supports this argument by stating that "the majority of the political establishment … believe that NATO enlargement will lead to Russian isolationism, and this, in turn, is thought to pose a danger to Russia's future". Hence, Kobrinskaya says, "Russian political leaders and analysts used the threat of isolation as an effective lever in relations with the West".[6]

Scenario 3: NATO enlargement will be financially too costly. Financial aspects have been well analysed by Ronald Asmus, Richard Kugler and F. Stephen Larrabee

[3] V. M. Sergeyev. *Historical Structure of Conflicts in the Baltic Area*, [in:] O. F. Knudsen (ed.), *Stability and Security in the Baltic Sea Region*, Frank Cass Publishers: Portland 1999, pp. 25-27.
[4] O. F. Knudsen, *Security on the Great Power Fringe*, [in:], O. F. Knudsen (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.
[5] S. Eisenhower. *Russian Perspectives on the Expansion of NATO*, [in:] C. Clemens (ed.), *NATO and the quest for post-Cold War security*, St. Martin's Press: New York 1997, p. 143.
[6] I. Kobrinskaya, *Russia: Facing the Facts*, [in:] G. Mattox, A. Rachwald (eds.) *Enlarging NATO: The National Debates*, Lienne Rienner Publishers: Boulder 2001, p. 178.

who quoted a price tag of 10 USD to 110 billion USD, based on the force posture that NATO would deem it necessary to adapt.[7] They also quoted a March 1996 US Congressional Budget Office study[8] on the same subject, which set the price tag even higher, due to the methodology being based on the potential threat from Russia. However, Asmus, Kugler and Larrabee have based their calculations on different goals and capabilities that NATO may decide to have regarding the Central and Eastern Europe states which seems to having been a more likely approach at that time.[9] The main concerns were the large militaries of the aspirant states and the surplus of often outdated Soviet military equipment that they possessed. In addition to modernizing and replacing military technology, the costs of restructuring the militaries and the re-education and retraining the troops to NATO standards must also be considered.[10]

Scenario 4: NATO enlargement will reduce the credibility of the security guarantees the Alliance offers to its members. At the time, the main arguments promoting this claim cited the declining defence budgets and armed forces of most NATO members in the 1990s. The second concern was geography, especially the increasing and more distant land mass that had to be covered by Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. The Central and Eastern Europe states in both enlargements were either bordered by NATO members or geographically located as a rather consolidated group, making it easier to project power in their defence. The Baltic states, on the other hand, lied on the outskirts of Europe, not bordered by any NATO members. Further, the Baltic states do not possess any significant geographic obstacles for a potential Russian invasion and can be easily isolated from the rest of Europe by Russia establishing a blocking zone between the Kaliningrad Oblast and Belarus along the 91 km border between Poland and Lithuania (approximately 77 km directly or line-of-sight).

Therefore, it was argued that a different defensive strategy by NATO would have been required to defend the new member states. A study by RAND outlined three potential options:

1. "New member self-defense" with NATO providing strategic support and few combat troops;
2. "Power projection" with NATO providing larger rapid-reaction forces if the need arises;

[7] R. Asmus, R. Kugler, F. S. Larrabee, *What Will NATO Enlargement Cost?*, "Survival", Vol. 38, No. 3, Autumn 1996, pp. 5-26.

[8] Available at www.cbo.gov.

[9] R. Asmus, R. Kugler, F. S. Larrabee, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

[10] R. L. Kugler, M. V. Kozintseva, *Enlarging NATO: The Russia Factor*, RAND: Santa Monica 1996, pp. 235-237.

3. "Forward presence" with large NATO forces stationed in new member states.[11]

At the time (1996), the most favoured solution seemed to be option 1 both to alleviate Russian concerns and appease NATO budgetary concerns. However, this has always been viewed by the new members as half-hearted security guarantees and by Russia as a lack of commitment on behalf of NATO, therefore increasing the potential for Russian meddling. In retrospect, these two attitudes were quite obvious until the 2008 war in Georgia. The war appeared to be a suitable catalyst for the establishing and rehearsal of the contingency plans to conduct the Allied defence of the Baltic states' territory, starting in 2010.

Research question and assessment method

This article seeks to assess the first two perceptions on NATO enlargement by offering a critical look at the factors that could have contributed to the validity of these ideas in the past. Based on the experiences from the first two rounds of enlargement, we can analyse these factors in the hypothetical case of Finland and Sweden joining NATO. The first two rounds of post-Cold War enlargement seem to have not increased the risk of a direct external threat for NATO or its members. The question arises, would such a risk increase if Finland and Sweden were to join the Alliance? Would this mean crossing the red line for Russia and cause them to commence direct or indirect hostilities against NATO members?

Since hostilities and even threats are usually preceded by a certain friction in bilateral or multilateral relations, it is vital to identify, whether NATO enlargement in the vicinity of Russia could cause such a friction to emerge. There are two sources of friction (and consequent courses of action) that are most likely in NATO - Russia relations concerning enlargement:

- Russia perceives its neighbouring countries joining NATO as an increase in its external threats.
- Russia employs countermeasures to NATO enlargement.

It should be noted, that the second course of action may not necessarily occur, depending on the extent of the increase in external threat perceived by Russia. However, the second course of action cannot emerge without any indications of the first one. In other words, if the first two enlargements show that such frictions have emerged, that they proved to have had an adverse effect on NATO - Russia

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[11] *Ibidem*, pp. 239-243.

relations and resulted in an increased Russian military posture, Finland and Sweden joining NATO should have a similar effect, too.

Methodology

By comparing the first two NATO enlargements into regions perceived by Russia as its zone of influence to a hypothetical enlargement into other non-aligned states we can better assess Russia's reactions to being gradually surrounded by NATO member states on its western flank. Data on NATO - Russian relations and cooperation activities, especially its changes over time can show if these relations are directly correlated to and adversely affected by NATO enlargement.[12]

The majority of the theoretical literature on NATO enlargement tends to focus on positive issues such as post-Cold War European security architecture and the potential role of Russia in it. More practical literature such as research projects by think tanks usually analyses financial aspects, force projection scenarios and the military readiness of the new members. The project at hand seeks to analyse NATO enlargement through the prism of military threats that Russia may perceive from the enlarged NATO.

The reason for concentrating on the potential military threat posed to Russia by NATO (and its enlargement) is that it is the most advocated popular reason for opposing the enlargement.[13] While there are other potential reasons for Russian opposition such as the loss of its former area of influence, isolation from Europe, or dynamics in Russian domestic politics, all these remain outside the scope of this paper, as these are harder to measure and their influence more ambiguous to assess. Clarifying the military threat aspect of NATO enlargement helps future researchers to focus on these more difficult variables affecting Russian perceptions towards NATO enlargement.

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[12] For a comprehensive overview of various aspects of NATO - Russia relations and cooperation, see *"NATO - RUSSIA COUNCIL PRACTICAL COOPERATION FACT SHEET OCTOBER 2013"*, available at www.nato-russia-council.info and *"NATO - Russia: a pragmatic partnership"* (2007), available at www.nato.int. Both, accessed: 18 October 2014.

[13] In 1997, Zbigniew Brzezinski implied that Russian political elite was trying to instil a fear of NATO troops and weapons being stationed near Russia in the Russian people. See L. van Metre, *Managing NATO,* United States Institute of Peace, April 1997, [www.usip.org, access: 30 August 2014]. The creation of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) consisting of various former Soviet republics in 2002 can be viewed as a counterbalance to NATO enlargement. While the "fear factor" towards NATO among the common people in Russia is somewhat questionable even today, the creation of the Collective Security Treaty Organization solidified the regional security structures in most of the former Soviet space. Today, Russia suggests establishing formal ties between the Collective Security Treaty Organization and NATO, attempting to recreate the balance between the Warsaw Pact and NATO that kept stability in Europe throughout the Cold War.

The essence of the perceived military threat can be explained based on the following factors:

- *Do the new members have a common border with Russia?* Geographic proximity can have an influence on threat perception as described below.
- *Did the new members once belong to the former Soviet Union or Warsaw Pact?* Such states possess a more detailed knowledge of and have more experience in dealing with Russia (former Soviet Union), especially its military and other state instruments of power. Having these states join a formerly opposing security alliance is also deemed as a psychological loss of great power status.
- *What is/was the new members' bilateral relationship with Russia before accession?* If the relationship was tense, Russia will likely perceive that this may worsen its bilateral relations with NATO, once the new members are fully integrated into the Alliance's command and control structure and can potentially launch anti-Russian propaganda, thereby potentially affecting the Alliance's decision making process.
- *Were there other major unilateral activities taken by NATO or Russia at the time of enlargement?* This helps us to determine other factors that may have additionally aggravated NATO - Russia relations such as the Kosovo crisis (1999), for example.[14]
- *Did NATO station a large level of troops or military equipment (especially nuclear weapons) in the territory of new members after enlargement?* This would have implications on successive enlargements; as such deployments would most definitely heighten the Russian sense of threat, triggering likely counter-deployments by Russia.
- *Did NATO conduct large-scale exercises in the territory of new members after enlargement?* Although a logical measure for a security alliance, conducting such exercises right after an enlargement round would nevertheless add tensions to NATO - Russia relations, especially if conducted in a member state that had historically tense bilateral relations with Russia.

In the case of Finland and Sweden, we must consider, in addition to the above factors, also the increased level of Russian self-confidence and assertiveness today, due to increased oil and natural gas revenue over the last several years.[15] All these

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[14] In response to the commencement of operation "*Allied Force*" in March 1999 during the Kosovo crisis, Russia broke formal contacts with NATO until February 2000.

[15] Russia's economic standing was much worse during the previous two enlargements, especially during the first one. Putin's presidency coincided with the boom in the oil and natural gas prices in the early 2000s, bringing more hard currency wealth to Russia and increasing the assertiveness of its foreign and security policy. Today, despite the current sanctions regime which will undoubtedly have a significant impact on the Russian economy, it appears that Russian foreign policy remains

can provide Russia today a greater variety of options to handle NATO enlarge-ment and best adapt to it, compared to the previous enlargements. On the other hand, if Finland and Sweden are found to be capable of militarily contributing significantly more to the Alliance than previous new members, it may cause Russia to evaluate the potential threat posed by either these two or the whole Alliance differently than during the previous enlargements. This may result in different behaviour than Russia has so far demonstrated in response to the first two en-largements.

In order to better understand the term *threat* and calculate the extent to which Russia could perceive it, I will use here Stephen Walt's threat typology. Specifically, Walt lists four separate factors that shape the threat output by a state:

- Aggregate power
- Geographic proximity
- Offensive power
- Aggressive intentions.[16]

In order to simplify the analysis, we can combine the factors of aggregate and offensive power under a common label of "capabilities", since these two powers normally occur together with very few exceptions.[17] This leaves us with three cate-gories for assessment in the case studies: capabilities, geography, and intentions.

Since NATO's vicinity to Russian borders is one of Russia's chief complaints related to enlargement, we can consider Walt's second factor, geographic proximi-ty, to be a constant factor in all three rounds of enlargement analysed and thus leave it out of the comparison.[18] Variance in "geographic proximity" is somewhat difficult to measure and entails too many factors that may affect this factor's influ-ence on the overall threat posture. For example, in the case of a more comprehen-sive and detailed analysis of geographic proximity, we would measure the follow-ing aspects: length of the border, terrain traversibility in the border regions, dis-tance of important assets (military facilities, critical infrastructure etc.) from the border, however, such an analysis would go outside the scope of the thesis.

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largely unaffected and has maintained the same tone as during the peak of its oil and natural gas wealth.

[16] S. M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, Cornell University Press: Ithaca 1990, p. 22.

[17] Such exceptions normally involve dictatorships or autocracies with large militaries but little eco-nomic or other subcategories of aggregate power, for example, North Korea or Iran.

[18] It is constant in a sense that the first two enlargements brought NATO close to highly valued areas for Russia: enlargement 1 to Kaliningrad (Poland) and enlargement 2 to St. Petersburg as well as Kaliningrad (Baltic states). In case of Finland and Sweden, Finland is also close to St. Petersburg but Russia's main concern would be the Kola Peninsula with all the strategic assets located there (nuclear submarine bases, for example).

The underlying question in analysing NATO enlargements in the context of Russian perceived threat is therefore as follows: which affects the alleged threat more: capabilities posed by aspirants near Russian borders or their intents vis-à-vis Russia?

The capabilities are assessed by comparing the statistics on the aspirant militaries' troops and equipment immediately before the enlargement to the numbers of forces and equipment in the Russian Military Districts that the aspirant countries were/are bordering. The main reason for choosing such a method and units for analysis is that in the case of a hypothetical attack by NATO forces, Russian units stationed in the former Leningrad and Moscow Military Districts as well as in the Kaliningrad Special Region (all three were combined into the new Western Military District in 2010) would be the main parts of Russian territory enduring the most of the fighting.

The question of intent

Intent in this context can be defined as anti-Russian statements at the time of enlargement and can be tied to the first source of friction mentioned previously. Due to the lack of such statements at the time of enlargement by any of the aspirants, we can presume that none of them wished to initiate hostilities with Russia then and are in a similar position today. Quite to the contrary, the main desire for all new NATO members bordering Russia has in fact been to acquire maximum protection from Russian negative influence.[19] Since Finland and Sweden have been officially neutral since World War II, this eliminates the fourth factor suggested by Walt since aggressive intentions towards Russia do not seem to play a role in NATO enlargement in any of the three cases.

Therefore, in the context of posing a threat to Russia, we can concentrate just on the new members' military capabilities that could additionally be used if the Alliance and Russia would engage in hostilities. If these capabilities can be deemed as a significant benefit for offensive NATO military operations, we could anticipate Russian threat perception to increase accordingly. We can tie the capabilities to the second source of friction mentioned previously as higher capabilities are likely to evoke stronger countermeasures.

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[19] For example, Carpenter argues that the key goal of NATO membership for the Central and Eastern European countries is "unambiguous: they want the protection of the Alliance's security guarantees … [and] regard NATO as a lifeline to secure their independence from powerful adversaries - especially a revanchist Russia" and would not accept anything less. See T. G. Carpenter, *Wishful Thinking and Strategic Evasions: The Campaign for NATO Enlargement*, [in:] C. Clemens (ed.), *NATO And the Quest for Post-Cold War Security*, St. Martin's Press: New York 1997, pp. 163-165.

Unlike the countries in the previous enlargements, Finland and Sweden have not actively sought NATO membership. Instead, their public statements have often voiced caution towards such prospects, emphasizing their historical neutrality policies. In 1996, both countries stated their opposition to NATO enlargement into the Central and Eastern Europe states, citing concerns about potential Russian reactions and likely adverse effects on the Baltic states.[20] This is a major difference in attitudes, potentially causing Russia to view Finland and Sweden differently from the CEE states or the Baltic states prior to their accession to NATO. However, similar to the previous new members, Finland and Sweden seem to lack any offensive intent towards Russia.

At the same time, neither Finland nor Sweden has completely ruled out NATO membership. The domestic debates, less in Sweden and more in Finland, have been going on since the mid-90s and have intensified since the war in Georgia. It appears that again, similar to the previous enlargements, their main rationale for applying for membership would be to seek increased protection from Russia. As the then Finnish Minister of Defence Jyri Häkämies defined in 2007, "the three main security challenges for Finland today are Russia, Russia, and Russia", at the same time emphasizing that unlike for most other European countries, NATO would not be "an answer to [Finland's] defense prayers".[21] However, it is widely expected that if Finland or Sweden did decide to join NATO, it would occur simultaneously since the one that would not join, would be in a security limbo, thus also reducing the security gain of the other.[22]

Similar to the first two enlargements, Russia is actively opposing NATO enlargement into Finland and Sweden. For example, in 2004, soon after the Baltic states had formally joined NATO, former Russian Ambassador to Finland Yuri Deryabin publicly cautioned Finland and Sweden against joining the Alliance, stating that "it would transform the power balance in the region [as well as] prompt Russia to increase the number of its armed forces in the Leningrad military district".[23] In 2009, Deryabin again emphasized this caution, most likely caused by the increased NATO-related discussions in both countries after the 2008 August

[20] I. Dörfer, *The Nordic nations in the New Western Security Regime*, Woodrow Wilson Center Press: Washington 1997, pp. 59, 61.

[21] Speech given during an event called *Statesmen's Forum: "Finland: Similar Yet Different"*, held by CSIS on 6 September 2007. Transcript is available at www.csis.org, access: 24 August 2014.

[22] I. Dörfer, *op. cit.*, p. 65. In theory, the security limbo may cause an outside major power to seek dominance over it, in order to prevent it from bandwagoning with another major power.

[23] See *Voice from the Past Warns Finns*, "Yle.fi", 18 May 2014, [www.yle.fi, access: 5 September 2014].

war in Georgia.[24] In 2012, then Chief of the Russian General Staff General Nikolai Makarov openly cautioned Finland against harbouring any ideas of joining NATO during an official visit to Helsinki. Later that year, Russian President Vladimir Putin echoed these warnings during a meeting with Finnish President Sauli Niinistö.

Most recently, in June 2014, Putin's personal envoy Sergei Markov directly stated that "Russia recommends Finland not to join NATO", warning that "Finland is one of the most russiphobian [sic!] countries in Europe, together with Sweden and the Baltic States".[25] It appears that Russia views Finland as the key target to dissuade or deter from taking concrete steps towards attaining NATO membership. The latest development in this matter is that Finland and Sweden both signed a memorandum of understanding with NATO concerning host nation support between the Alliance and the respective countries during the Wales Summit in September 2014. However, it should be noted that the Finnish decision was already announced in April 2014, which partially helps to explain the unexpectedly strong rhetoric by Markov.

Assessment of two main sources of friction in NATO - Russia relations concerning enlargement

Friction 1: Russia perceives Finland and Sweden joining NATO as an increase in external threat. Neither Finland nor Sweden has demonstrated hostile intent towards Russia in politics or by provocative military activities. Both countries have a solid history of neutrality and Finland has traditionally maintained a friendly relationship with Russia. This cannot be said for Russia, given the recent events of Finnish airspace violations by Russian military aircraft, three times in the last week of August 2014. An even better example is the mock demonstration attack conducted by two Russian Tu-22M3 bombers in the vicinity of Swedish airspace on 29 March, 2013.

Militarily, Finland and Sweden may not have the large numbers of offensive military equipment that the Central and Eastern Europe states possessed before the first enlargement. When we compare the numbers of troops and equipment, Finland and Sweden can be ranked as being between the first which had higher numbers and the second round of enlargement which had lower numbers. However, in 1997 the lack of serious concern for Russia was partially caused by the fact that the Polish, Hungarian and Czech armed forces were all equipped with Soviet

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[24] In 2009, Deryabin's concerns seem to have increased, due to more NATO-minded politicians holding key positions in the Finnish government. See *Finnish paper says Russia preparing for Scandinavia allied to NATO*, "BBC Monitoring Europe - Political", 21 January 2009, downloaded from Proquest International Newswires on 17 February 2009. The original Finnish source is E. Seppänen, *Venäjä ennakoi Nato-Pohjolaa*, "Hs.fi Uutiset", 19 January 2009, [www.hs.fi, access: 5 September 2014].
[25] T. Nilsen, *Putin envoy warns Finland against joining NATO*, "Barents Observer", 9 June 2014, [www.barentsobserver.com, access: 9 September 2014].

technology. Russia was well aware of its capabilities and limitations and enjoyed the status of the potential key source for repair parts and modernizations.

Unlike members of the first enlargement, Finland and Sweden possess advanced combat aircraft and other modern offensive military equipment based on Western technology.[26] It is more difficult for Russia to gain a complete understanding of Finnish or Swedish military strengths and weaknesses. Presumably, the degree of unfamiliarity or uncertainness about the other side's capabilities raises concerns and may increase threat perceptions.

Russian anti-enlargement rhetoric was more intense during the second enlargement when the Baltic states with their tiny and poorly equipped militaries were invited to join NATO. This may have been caused by the fact that the Baltic states at the time were not a party to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, which the members of the first enlargement had been. However, massive deployments of additional troops and equipment to support a hypothetical military offensive against Russia launched from the Baltic states would take a long time and could be easily detected and disturbed by Russia.

This is not the case with Finland and Sweden whose troop and equipment figures (albeit mostly reserve-based) are much higher than those of the Baltic states. Nevertheless, considering the respective troop and equipment levels in the neighbouring Russian Western Military District, the advantage still appears to be on the Russian side. This holds true even if we do not consider the conventional force multipliers which Finland and Sweden lack but Russia has: namely tactical ballistic missiles and strategic bomber aircraft which can project combat power from greater distances than technology used by Finland or Sweden.

Regardless of apparent Russian superiority in numbers, the Finnish and Swedish militaries can still pose a concern for Russia. Firstly, if Finland and Sweden were to join NATO, it would make the Baltic Sea almost completely a NATO backyard and corner the Russian Baltic Fleet into their bases in Baltiysk and Kronstadt, rendering it essentially ineffective in conflict or war. In light of the Nord Stream gas pipeline, which the Russian Baltic Fleet has been tasked to protect, it is hard to believe that Russia would enjoy NATO navies completely dominating the Baltic Sea.

Secondly, Russia would be more concerned about the security of their strategic nuclear deterrence facilities in the Kola Peninsula.[27] In a comparative perspective, these concerns are similar to the first enlargement when the question of Kaliningrad arose with regard to Poland's accession. Further, when the second enlargement was set to include the Baltic states, Russia again was concerned, as Kalinin-

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[26] Finland also possesses certain Soviet weapon systems (for example, the *Buk*-M1 surface-to-air missile system) but is in the process of swapping some of them out with Western technology.
[27] I. Dörfer, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23.

grad was in that case that it was going to be completely surrounded by NATO members. In the case of the Baltic states, Russia's second concern was that in both World Wars, German forces used their territory to stage and launch attacks into Russia.[28] As stated in the second enlargement's overview, the fact that the Baltic states were not part of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe further contributed to Russia's concerns about their territory potentially being used for similar purposes.

Friction 2: Russian potential countermeasures to NATO enlargement. The first question in this matter is if Russia will perceive NATO enlargement as a reason to advance its own defence and foreign policy goals. The answer to this question is obvious, but twofold. In addition to designating NATO as its biggest threat, Russia has other solid reasons and justifications for increasing its defence budget and modernizing its military equipment. The conflict in Georgia and the continuing tensions in the Northern Caucasus provide plenty of reasons for Russia to continue improving its armed forces and seeking control over its restive border regions or neighbours. It is not a coincidence, that the Russian Southern Military District is the busiest and thus receiving the most resources, compared to other Military Districts.[29]

It is clear that Russian political and military thinkers have considered Finland and Sweden potentially joining NATO before and continue to do so today. As mentioned previously, several high-level Russian officials, the President among them, have voiced their concerns about the prospects of such developments. It could be argued that Russia's suspension of its participation in the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe may partially have been motivated by the need to augment the forces in the northern part of the Western Military District, especially in the Kola Peninsula. The flank restrictions prescribed by the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe were always a sensitive topic for Russia who claimed these to be excessive.

The three most likely reasons for why Russia did not increase its force posture to counter the first two NATO enlargements are as follows. First, Russia probably did not want to exceed limits set by the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. Second, it could have been due to a lack of sufficient resources and third, the lack of a serious enough threat. Since Russia has historically always been preoccupied with external security, it is safe to assume that in case of an increasing threat, necessary resources would have been allocated to handle it. This leads us to conclude that the first two NATO enlargements did not pose a sufficient military threat for Russia. The hypothetical case of Finland and Sweden joining NATO,

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[28] C. M. Perry, M. J. Sweeney, A. C. Winner, *Strategic Dynamics in the Nordic-Baltic Region*, Brassey's, Fidelity Press: Everett 2000, p. 63.

[29] J. Hedenskog, C. V. Pallin (eds.), *Russian Military Capability in a Ten-Year Perspective - 2013,* Stockholm: 2013, p. 56.

on the other hand, may force Russia to adjust its defence posture and increase its forces in the Western Military District, due to the perceived threat emanating from such changes in the Northern European security architecture. Data on the force levels and military technology in the Western Military District seems to support this idea.[30]

Conclusions

The debate about joining NATO has been a part of national security-related discussions in Finland and Sweden since the end of the Cold War. For mostly domestic political reasons, these discussions have never been pursued further and the proponents of the idea have always been a minority. Within the last couple of years, the discussions have intensified and become more serious. This process started during the conflict between Russia and Georgia in August, 2008 which caused fears of a Russian resurgence in all the countries bordering it. The current crisis in Ukraine and newly emerged Russian tactics have brought the potential of threats emanating from Russia into official discussions and resulted in concrete steps being taken by the Alliance to reassure its members bordering Russia.

The current Finnish government has been careful in keeping the subject of NATO membership in the picture. The Swedish government has traditionally maintained an even more cautious perspective, due to its historic neutrality (recently redefined as "non-alignment") policy that is deeply ingrained in its population and leaders. However, both countries have agreed that if one of them joins NATO, the other one should follow suit, in order to avoid becoming the lone neutral.

Instead of membership, both Finland and Sweden have currently opted for increased cooperation with NATO. Both acknowledge NATO's supremacy in European external security and strive for compatibility with NATO structures and standards in order to be ready for full cooperation, should the need arise in the case of an overwhelming threat which the Finnish or Swedish armed forces could not handle by themselves. In light of the reductions that have occurred in their military forces after the end of the Cold War, the prospect of seeking NATO help is in fact becoming a viable option.

Since any overtures towards NATO require a public consensus in both countries, it is essential to avoid any outside pressure on the Finnish or Swedish governments to seek membership. This would likely create a public backlash and hinder the prospects of Finland and Sweden joining the Alliance. Currently, it can

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[30] Significant improvements in the quantity of troops and new technology (for example, the 9K720 *Iskander* mobile theatre ballistic missile systems) can be seen in *The Military Balance* by the International Institute of Strategic Studies, starting from 2009.

be assessed that public opinion in Finland and Sweden regarding NATO membership will remain neutral or even negative, unless a major threat to their national security arises. At the same time, Finland and Sweden will most likely continue their participation in and support of the Common Security and Defence Policy, thus contributing to European security through the European Union structures.

Russia will continue to maintain relations with Finland and Sweden at the current level as long as their overtures towards NATO do not signal a potential accession to the Alliance. It is safe to assume that Russia has, however, considered the potential implications of such an event to its relationship with Finland and Sweden. Should Finland and Sweden seek NATO membership, Russia will likely increase its force posture in the regions bordering Finland and Sweden, in anticipation of increased NATO military activities and the rehearsal of contingency plans for new members' defence. This could create a security dilemma for Finland and Sweden: should they seek more protection by joining NATO and thus risk increased hostility from Russia (which could mean an overall net loss of security) or should they instead maintain the status quo and rely on their self defence capabilities?

The question of net gain or net loss of security is the key aspect for Finland and Sweden in the debate on whether to join NATO. In the hypothetical enlargement case, based on the current assessment of military capabilities, Finland and Sweden joining NATO could in theory aggravate Russia's sense of external threat more than during the first two enlargements, mainly because the overall quality of their armed forces clearly surpasses that of the previous aspirants. However, it is necessary to take into account other systemic factors, mainly the historical neutrality of Finland and Sweden. If they were to join NATO, Russia would lose (at least in the case of Finland) a reliable backdoor for communicating with the West in times of crisis. Another reason for Russia to oppose Finland and Sweden joining NATO is the resulting change of a currently stable status quo in Northwest Russia and the Scandinavian Peninsula. In the end, it appears that the "zero-sum game" attitude is still prevailing in Russia, as any neighbouring state joining NATO would appear to be a net loss for Russia.

If we leave the Russia factor aside, it is clear that both Finland and Sweden as well as NATO would clearly benefit from these two acceding to the Alliance for two reasons. First, due to the state of their militaries, there would be no significant costs in bringing Finland and Sweden up to NATO standards. Second, Finland and Sweden are much more security providers than consumers which cannot be said about all new NATO members. The condition of their militaries allows them to provide quite a lot of troops and equipment for NATO operations. A potential problem could be that with Finland and Sweden behind the Alliance's table, the number of decision-makers in the North Atlantic Council would increase to 30, making it even harder to achieve unanimity in sensitive or difficult policy issues.

Hanna Shelest (National Institute for Strategic Studies, Ukraine)

Transformation of the NATO Partnership Concept in the Post-Soviet Space: Is Membership the Only Option?

For the last several years, NATO has mostly being concentrated on security challenges emerging from the Middle East and Afghanistan along with the search for new partnerships, including the African Union and Brazil. By thinking that Europe is "finished business" and postponing the enlargement process for the remaining states in the post-Soviet space after the Bucharest Summit 2008, it almost lost the feeling of importance and sense of partnership on its immediate borders.

As a de facto consequence, NATO perceived its relations with the post-Soviet space only through the prism of the possible future membership or potential involvement of the states in its operations (Kosovo, Afghanistan, anti-piracy, etc.). However, the Ukrainian crisis of 2014 brought to the agenda the question of NATO's ability to react in such crises and to assist its partners in spheres other than security sector reform. In terms of its current priorities of collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security - NATO member-states de facto confirmed adherence only to the collective defence principle for its own members, as numerous statements were made that Alliance was not able to help Ukraine because the latter is not a member.[1] When the partner countries need assistance when facing a security crisis, NATO does not have mechanisms and sometimes the goodwill to assist.

Nevertheless, the Crimean crisis of 2014 has "inspired" not only Ukraine and Georgia (seeking membership) but also pro-Russian Armenia and neutral Moldova to look for closer cooperation with NATO to guarantee their national security and military transformation. Still, NATO needs to explain to its partners around the world why partnership is necessary and what added value it can bring if more security is not guaranteed.

The main goal of the article is to analyse how the Ukrainian crisis has influenced NATO's partnership framework, future membership perspectives and visions of the post-Soviet space and to answer the question as to whether NATO is ready for the transformation of its views towards the region, and possible mechanisms of cooperation and security guarantees.

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[1] *Transcript: President Obama's Aug. 28 remarks on Ukraine, Syria and the economy*, "Washington Post", 28 August 2014, [www.washingtonpost.com, access: 10 October 2014].

Since 1991 NATO has been engaged in a partnership strategy, which introduced the principles of democratic peace to its neighbouring areas, and promoted cooperation and security interdependence between Allies and their security partners.[2] Such cooperation could still be divided into two different groups - one in a post-Soviet space (more limited and accurate) and interaction with the Central and Eastern European states, which from the very beginning announced their desire to join NATO.

If until 1999 NATO had mostly concentrated on the partnership approach both on a bilateral level (Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Ukraine 1997 or the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation signed in Paris, France 1997) or a multilateral level (Partnership for Peace programme initiated 1994), so 1999-2008 period was mostly focused on the membership of the post-communist states of Central and Eastern Europe, and the first membership aspirations of the post-Soviet states of Ukraine and Georgia. Since 2008 and the NATO Bucharest Summit, the partnership concept almost became stuck in search of a new paradigm and an approach towards its realization. Holger Mölder writes: "After NATO enlargement in 2004, when "the core of PfP nations" became members, NATO's partnership strategy suddenly found itself in [sic] crisis. It was difficult to find common strategy for still left PfP partners because these countries were too different".[3]

2010 demonstrated a two-fold tendency in partnership development. While spreading the partnership concept to the Asia-Pacific region, first of all Japan, Australia and South Korea, the Strategic Concept 2010 pays much less attention to the core principles and effects of partnership than the Strategic Concept 1999. In the NATO Strategic Concept 2010, adopted in Lisbon, partnership issues were emphasized in a separate section. However, in this section one can witness a certain misbalance and misperception of the current situation, whereby significant attention is paid to Russia in two separate points, and cooperation with all other post-Soviet states is limited to the Partnership for Peace point together with the Mediterranean Dialogue, Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, Western Balkans and Arab states from the Persian Gulf, with a small subpoint paying attention to Ukraine and Georgia: "We will aim to continue and develop the partnerships with

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[2] H. Mölder, *The Evolution of NATO's Partnerships Strategy - Democratic Peace or Clash of Civilizations?,* Paper prepared for the 6th Pan-European Conference on International Relations in Turin (Session 1-23: *Cooperation and Conflict in Transatlantic Relations*), 2007, p. 7.

[3] *Ibidem*, p. 8.

Ukraine and Georgia within the NATO - Ukraine and NATO - Georgia Commissions, based on the NATO decision at the Bucharest summit 2008, and taking into account the Euro-Atlantic orientation or aspiration of each of the countries".[4]

No attention is paid to other partners, such as Azerbaijan, for example. In this case, the Alliance Strategic Concept 1999 was more adequate and accurate, even starting from the section title - *"Partnership, Cooperation and Dialogue"* and placing *"Enlargement"* issues in a separate section. Among others, this section emphasized the Partnership for Peace as "the principal mechanism for forging practical security links between the Alliance and its Partners and for enhancing interoperability".[5] Furthermore, it focused on the individual interests of partners, and stressed such spheres as "work towards transparency in national defence planning and budgeting; democratic control of defence forces; preparedness for civil disasters and other emergencies; and the development of the ability to work together, including in NATO-led PfP operations as a possible domain of cooperation".[6] At the same time, one of the points was mostly left only on paper, namely where the Alliance expressed its commitments "to consult with any active participant in the Partnership if that Partner perceives a direct threat to its territorial integrity, political independence, or security".[7]

Russia was almost the only example of an active partnership without any official aspirations to membership. Even more in some periods of NATO - Russia relations, it was a country with high-intensity relations, which saw its partner as a threat or a risk.

Despite the NATO perception of relations with Russia as a new partnership, the highest level of interconnection without membership aspirations, - the Strategy of the National Security of the Russian Federation till 2020, adopted in 2009, clearly identifies that "the defining factor in relations with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is the unacceptability for Russia of plans to advance the Alliance's military infrastructure closer to its borders and attempts to attribute to it global functions that are inconsistent with international law".[8]

The military doctrine of Russia, adopted in 2010, goes even further. In the whole document, NATO is mentioned only twice - among other organizations

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[4] *Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (2010),* North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 19 - 20 November 2010, [www.nato.int, access: 30 August 2014].

[5] *The Alliance's Strategic Concept*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 24 April 1999, [www.nato.int, access: 15 August 2014].

[6] *Ibidem.*

[7] *Ibidem.*

[8] *Стратегия национальной безопасности Российской Федерации до 2020 года* (*Strategy of the National Security of the Russian Federation till 2020*), National Security Council of the Russian Federation, 2009 [www.scrf.gov.ru, access: 15 July 2014].

with which relations can be developed for conflict prevention, and in a part dedicated to the main military dangers (they do not define it as a threat), describing it as a "desire to endow the power potential of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) with global functions carried out in violation of international law, to bring the military infrastructure of NATO members-states to the borders of the Russian Federation, including by the bloc enlargement".[9]

At the same time in NATO Strategic Concept of 2010, relations with Russia are defined in a partnerships section - "NATO - Russia cooperation is of strategic importance as it contributes to creating a common space of peace, stability and security. NATO poses no threat to Russia. On the contrary: we want to see a true strategic partnership between NATO and Russia, and we will act accordingly, with the expectation of reciprocity from Russia".[10]

For many years, the Partnership for Peace framework was the main symbol of the partnership concept. Some experts[11] and even some of the first documents[12] on the Partnership for Peace described, among others, the programme's aim as to bring participants closer to NATO membership, either as a precondition or as a first step. However, the Partnership for Peace has never had this as a goal, as it could limit countries' participation. Such states as Armenia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan - members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) or Moldova - a neutral state - would not participate in the Partnership for Peace if it is perceived as a membership perspective.

For the last 20 years, NATO has mostly been involved in security sector reform, surplus ammunition demolishing and trainings for better interoperability, leaving other spheres without proper attention, including maritime security, conflict resolution, cyber security, science and technology programmes, safe navigation and shipping, etc. Many of these spheres were not seeking to become a part of the future Membership Action Plan. For example, one of the prioritized directions of Armenia - NATO cooperation was establishing and developing Armenian peacekeeping brigade focusing on reaching interoperability with its NATO partners to use its advantages to advance the Armenian Armed Forces' own internal experience, as well as for cooperative security practice within NATO-led interna-

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[9] *Военная доктрина Российской Федерации* (*Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation*), President of Russia, 2010, [www.news.kremlin.ru, access: 15 July 2014].

[10] *Strategic Concept for…*

[11] See in D. J. Betz, *Civil - Military Relations in Russia and Eastern Europe*, 2004, p. 32; J. P. Kaufman, *NATO and the Former Yugoslavia: crisis, conflict and the Atlantic Alliance*, 2002, p. 34.

[12] *The Future NATO and European Defence*, Ninth Report of Session 2007 - 2008 House of Commons Defence Committee, 2008, p. 126; *Partnership for Peace: Invitation Document,* North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 1999, [www.nato.int, access: 10 October 2014].

tional peacekeeping missions.[13] Such cooperation became possible, even considering Armenian membership in the contradicting Collective Security Treaty Organization led by Russia, which was perceived as an attempt to create an alternative to NATO.

It is also worth mentioning, that Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Moldova did not become members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, however, it is not conclusive evidence that they made a choice between two rival organizations - military alliances. The choice between partnership and possible membership in NATO for some of them and immediate membership in the Collective Security Treaty Organization for all, was more at a pragmatic level. With the partnership they were guaranteed freedom of decisions, financial and expert support for reform, training and expertise, and to some extent the guarantee of the development of positive relations with separate NATO member states. At the same time, membership in the Collective Security Treaty Organization was perceived partially as a return to the Soviet constructions, and rivalry between the West and the East.

What challenges does Ukrainian crisis bring to the partnership concept and enlargement perspectives in Eastern Europe?

The winter 2013-2014 events raised new questions concerning the future of Ukrainian - NATO cooperation, but also about the future of NATO itself. What does partnership really mean and can it guarantee the security of a non-member state? Should NATO return to Europe? These are just a few questions which the current crisis brought.

The Ukraine crisis has highlighted a question which had been papered over for a long time: does NATO partnership, particularly a privileged one, imply any form of NATO security guarantee for the partner country? In the case of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, NATO refused to make any kind of commitment, implicitly arguing that Ukraine was not a NATO member state and could, therefore, not hope for Alliance solidarity according to Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. Since 2008 there has been limited strategic interest in Ukraine on the part of the majority of NATO members, so such an explanation was quite acceptable for many politicians. However, this excuse was not fully accurate. The Partnership for Peace Framework Document, the basis of the NATO Partnership for Peace, which has also, being signed by Ukraine, states that every Partnership for

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[13] H. Kotanjian, *Keynote Speech on "Armenia-NATO: New Partnership Based On Cooperative Security Enhancement"*, Seminar On NATO's Partnership Policy: *"Enhancing Cooperative Security: The Added Value of NATO New Partnership Policy"*, 5 - 6 November 2012, [www.harvard-bssp.org, access: 1 August 2014].

Peace member can call for individual consultations with NATO in the event of an immediate security threat. Such a mechanism was offered by NATO back in 1994, partly because the creation of the Partnership for Peace was also a way to postpone the enlargement process and buy time for further deliberations on which countries should join NATO and on how to soothe Russia's concerns.[14]

However, despite all the statements on membership and Article 5, one point is missing in this discussion. Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, assumes a direct military aggression, an invasion. In the case of Ukraine, both in the Crimea and especially in Donbass, Russia is not recognized as a party to the conflict, and regardless of the evidence of the Russian military's involvement, the international community still perceives it only as a supporter, but not as a direct aggressor. So the maximum Ukraine could use is Article 4, which proposes consultations in case of a potential threat. The question rises as to whether Article 5 of the Washington Treaty would be used in case of a hybrid war such as this? Could NATO membership help with respect to intelligence warfare, energy pressure, subversive activities, control of the media, changing the social situation by issuing foreign passports (as happened in South Ossetia), etc.

The Crimean crisis of 2014 has brought the necessity of reconsidering the NATO partnership concept. The inability or lack of will to use any of the existing legal frameworks to secure Ukrainian territorial integrity and security raised questions about the real payback from the partnership. While Ukraine was able to join NATO-led operations, when the Alliance needed support, in exchange it got only concerned statements. If during the Euromaidan events (November 2013 - February 2014) there was no place for NATO in Ukraine, Crimean events and further destabilization of the situation in Ukraine shifted the risks from soft security to the hard security sphere. Many NATO countries neighbouring Ukraine or Russia, first of all Poland, Romania,[15] Lithuania,[16] Latvia and Estonia[17] expressed not only deep concern but perceived the situation as a direct threat to their own security and called for an increase of security on their Eastern borders.

To some extent the Ukrainian crisis and NATO's reaction to it demonstrate that partnership has been perceived only from the point of view of common pos-

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[14] K. H Kamp, *Five Long-Term Challenges for NATO beyond the Ukraine Crisis,* "NATO Defence College Report", July 2014, [www.ndc.nato.int, access: 1 August 2014].

[15] *NATO land, air, sea military presence to increase in Alliance eastern part, Romania included*, "Actmedia - Romanian News Agency", 9 September 2014, [www.actmedia.eu, access: 9 October 2014].

[16] *Statement On Measures To Stop Russia's Aggression Against Ukraine* Committee On Foreign Affairs Committee On National Security And Defence, Seimas Of The Republic Of Lithuania, 3 March 2014 [www.lrs.lt, access: 15 October 2014].

[17] *Estonian President: Russia's Actions Threaten International System* International Peace Institute, 25 September 2014, [www.ipinst.org, access: 16 October 2014].

sibilities, but not - shared threats and risks, while membership assumes both, as articles 4 and 5 of the Washington Treaty confirm.

Regardless of the fact that Ukrainian membership in NATO was not on the agenda, public opinion in Ukraine in support of it has been rising dramatically and a search for new options for cooperation is timely. The Crimean annexation in 2014 turned attention to the NATO security mechanisms, and the public support rose from 13% in autumn 2013 to 34% in May 20l4,[18] going up to 52% in September 2014.[19] Such a rise was explained by the impossibility of using the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances (1994) to guarantee the territorial integrity of Ukraine, and numerous statements from NATO officials that they are not able to intervene, as Ukraine is not a member. This crisis also intensified NATO's dialogue with other partners, including Finland, Sweden and Moldova, which have started to search for a possible closer cooperation to prevent potential risks. If until recently, enlargement seemed to be an issue of minor relevance, dealing primarily with the leftovers of previous rounds of accession,[20] now, this question may come to NATO's agenda again with a new impulse but harder decisions.

Can NATO as a partner be a provider of security for the post-Soviet space, or can it only accept cooperation?

De facto, Ukrainian crisis has confirmed that the relevance of NATO remains the same as during the Cold War, however only for those who are already its members. The partnership concept still remains vague and voluntary, not placing any obligations on the partners. Such a perception was reciprocal, as NATO was not able to present a clear partnership strategy, except of the Partnership for Peace programme, and partner-countries were not able to express what their interests were beyond membership and anti-Russian guarantees.

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that many of the post-Soviet as well as Central and Eastern European states perceived NATO partnership and further membership as a first step towards integration with the European Union. The examples of the six Eastern European states (Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Romania and Bulgaria), plus the Baltic states were clear evidence of this. Thus, it was presented to the public in Ukraine and Georgia that European

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[18] *Ставлення громадян до вступу в НАТО й інших питань безпеки,* Democratic Initiatives Foundation, 2 July 2014, [www.dif.org.ua, access: 2 September 2014].

[19] *Більше половини ймовірних виборців за вступ України до НАТО та проти миру на умовах передачі територій під контроль Росії,* "GfK Ukraine" [www.gfk.ua, access: 29 September 2014].

[20] K. H. Kamp, *Five Long-Term Challenges for NATO beyond the Ukraine Crisis,* "NATO Defence College Report", July 2014 [www.ndc.nato.int, access: 1 August 2014].

integration would not be possible without NATO membership.[21] Moldova is the only one to escape such an internal political discourse by announcing its neutral status officially. So the misperception was created that the post-Soviet states have only two options - either neutrality or full NATO membership as a precondition for European Union integration. From this misperception we came to the situation where the partnership with the Alliance was not perceived as something self-sufficient, but as having as its ultimate goal quick integration, without the use of all the benefits it could give to the partners.

After Viktor Yanukovytch's victory in the presidential elections in Ukraine in 2010, and the dramatic shift away from Euro-Atlantic integration, as a priority in foreign policy, towards the so-called "non-bloc" status, another tendency appeared - an attempt to present European Union cooperation in a security sphere or possible European collective security (based on the European Union, with Russia in and the United States out) as possibilities and even alternatives to NATO membership.

For quite a long time, the partnership concept, despite its name, was not perceived as a cooperation of equals. Non-member states were mostly perceived as security importers, rather than exporters. However, at the NATO Summit in Wales in September 2014 the Secretary General recognized, in the case of Georgia, that "As one of the largest non-NATO troop contributors to ISAF in Afghanistan, Georgia demonstrated itself as a security exporter".[22]

NATO Summit 2014 showed that by improving partnerships, the Alliance still understands the parallel process of actions, what these are for NATO, and what these are for partner-states, rather than the development of interconnections. For example, it was agreed to extend the Defence Capacity Building Initiative to Georgia and Moldova. NATO sees itself more as a supervisor rather than a partner to the post-Soviet states. The question is how to find a balance between the parallelism and the interconnection of membership aspirations and the necessity to concentrate on cooperation for guaranteeing, for example, regional security. In case of most of the post-Soviet states we may witness a problem of exaggerated expectations from the NATO partnership, namely that it could guarantee a higher level of security than being in the security vacuum which appeared after the end of the Cold War.

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[21] *Accession to EU impossible without NATO membership,* "New Europe", 10 February 2007, [www.neurope.eu, access: 15 September 2014]; *Аргументи за вступ України до НАТО,* "Вісник Центру міжнародної безпеки та євроатлантичної співпраці", No. 2 (6), 2007 [www.intsecurity.dn.ua, access: 14 October 2014].
[22] *Anders Fogh Rasmussen Official Tweeter,* 4 September 2014 [www.twitter.com, access: 9 September 2014].

There is a perception that without a membership perspective, NATO and its partners cannot be actively involved in cooperation. Such an approach is ill-structured. There is a number of practical spheres where NATO can be involved. For example, to plan and conduct multilateral education and training exercises aimed at preventing attacks against critical energy and related infrastructure,[23] to co-ordinate science and technology programmes for energy infrastructure security with a view to maximizing synergies and minimizing duplications, training coastal guards and the organization of safe navigation and shipping in the Black Sea region. Furthermore, the NATO Cyber Defence Policy considers cooperation with partners and international organizations as one of its areas, so it should be used for greater cooperation with the post-Soviet states. Cyber exercises need to be developed and executed addressing all critical infrastructures including public agencies.

One of the issues which are not usually discussed in terms of partnership is the possibility of smart defence concept implementation in relations with neighbouring countries. The use of smart defence principles, for example for Ukraine-Poland or Romania - Moldova cooperation, could lead to greater involvement and joint security enhancement without membership. Furthermore, it could promote better interoperability between NATO and its partners, one of the main tasks of the Alliance's partnership agreements.

Many non-NATO states and other institutions have similar interests to those of members.[24] When we analyse the Afghanistan operation and the withdrawal of forces, one will not be able to say who is a security provider, and who is a security consumer in this case - NATO member-states or partner states, such as Georgia, which sent its forces, or Azerbaijan, which provided its territory for transit. Such operations and interoperability are the best examples of the mutual interests and possibilities within the partnership.

At the same time, every state in the Caucasus region has different tasks in guaranteeing its own security or security sector reform, as well as aspiration for membership, so it can be difficult to unify such cooperation. Moreover, as Georgia maintains membership as a priority, Azerbaijan continues its close cooperation with NATO, consequently Armenia will stay a member of the Collective Security Treaty Organization. However, regional security systems do not consist only of countries' membership in security organizations. These are just instruments, which can be either useful or useless. Security systems should include bilateral and multi-

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[23] *International Conference New Security Challenges in the Black Sea Area: Towards a Cooperative Agenda Policy Recommendations And Conference Report,* Kadir Has University, 27 - 30 May 2012.

[24] X. Wickett, K. J. McInnis, *NATO: Charting the Way Forward,* "US Project Research Paper Chatham House", July 2014.

lateral cooperation, collective security measures, information exchange, the coordination of activities, etc.

Conclusions: is NATO membership the only option for the post-Soviet space to guarantee their security?

The NATO Wales Summit 2014 demonstrated a tendency of returning to the basics of the organization, and of focusing more attention on its primary goals and members. If NATO member states decide to go "back to basics", will that mean less attention and less involvement for its partners?

The time has come for NATO to separate in its approaches the ideas of partnership and membership (as a next step of partnership) in its relations with the post-Soviet states. While it can be an added component, a pre-requisite for assisting countries in their adaptation, it should not be seen purely as a first step for states' membership in NATO, as it limits spheres of possible cooperation, and undermines the level of possible cooperation with those states, which are eager for cooperation but not planning membership, such as Moldova or Armenia.

What can be a priority of this new type of partnership? The Alliance does not need a new programme similar to the Partnership for Peace, but it needs a concrete strategy towards the region. It is time to understand that the NATO's strategy should go far beyond membership issues, because it is the main obstacle in the way of complex visioning.

Furthermore, NATO needs to explain to its partners around the world, why partnership is necessary and what added value it can bring if more security is not guaranteed. Is NATO ready to revise its partnership concept? It is already understandable that NATO was not able to create a single policy towards the post-Soviet space and a model for a relationship. Moreover, after the Ukrainian crisis it became even more clear that the Alliance policy and perception of its relations east of its borders should be split into two dimensions - one being relations with pro-Russian members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the other its partnership with neutral or pro-NATO states, all of which are part of the Black Sea region, so the policy towards them can become a part of the greater NATO Black Sea Strategy. In such a case, when these states are included into the general Black Sea strategy we can separate the membership issue from practical cooperation, which can go further than the Partnership for Peace. Such issues as maritime security or drug trafficking are not political so will not get the same reaction as the Alliance's enlargement.

The Ukrainian crisis brings NATO back to Europe. Over the last years, the Alliance has concentrated too much on new global partnerships, and almost neglected a situation on its immediate borders. One of the reasons for this is that

many inside of NATO thought that all European issues had been resolved and the chances of the eruption of a crisis were minimal. However, this return will be successful only if past experience is analysed and approaches improved.

The difference between the Cold War's military alliances and the post-modern security communities lies in the distinct principles for accession, among others. We may also define security communities as value-centred international bodies.[25] In such a case, NATO membership will definitely presume the sharing of common values, not only common threats, when partnership can ignore to a certain level the values sphere, not asking the partner to adjust to a certain level of democracy or economic development, but to focus on a joint perception of threats or possibilities of cooperation. Such dichotomies can work well with those partners, who are not eager for future membership in the organization. However, with those aiming in the future to join the Alliance, even at the preliminary stage, adherence to certain values and norms will make a solid basis on which future cooperation can be developed.

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[25] H. Mölder, *The Evolution of NATO's Partnerships Strategy - Democratic Peace or Clash of Civilizations?,* Paper prepared for the 6th Pan-European Conference on International Relations in Turin, 2007 (Session 1-23: *Cooperation and Conflict in Transatlantic Relations*), 2007, p. 7.

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The Impact and the Role of NATO on Political and Security Situation in Macedonia: "Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow"

The basic idea guiding this paper is to explore whether and how Macedonia's path towards NATO and all the events accompanying this "journey", in some sense/to some extent, could affect/have affected the general political and security situation in the country. Moreover, as inextricably interconnected vessels, citizens' perceptions and changes in their perception of NATO, and its role in promoting and ensuring security and stability in the region will be analysed. The paper will analyse the general political and security situation, as well as the perception of NATO in Macedonia since its independence until now.

For greater clarity and coherence, the structure of the analysis of the post-socialist transition period is separated into three parts, corresponding to the three periods since 1991, thus, covering major social and political developments. The information presented here will provide relevant conclusions and assumptions about what the future impact and role of the Alliance in the country and the region will be, in terms of political stability and security, and specifically as to what direction citizens' assessment of the Alliance could "move", as well as their "desire" to become the Allies.

Introduction

After having obtained independence by peaceful means (1991), the Republic of Macedonia (RM) has started the process of building its national security policy, in order to cover all aspects of the wider security concept.

In 1991, Macedonia was faced with the challenge of building a security system that reflects and responds to the social and political circumstances, bearing in mind the challenges of the "new" era and the severe security problems in its immediate neighbourhood.[1] Hence, the country had a few alternatives, each with potential positive and negative effects:

- to build its own armed forces and, at the same time, to depend on the United Nations collective security system;

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[1] The war in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina and tension in Kosovo at that time.

- to declare a policy of "neutrality" and to require that great powers and neighbours adhere to this position;
- to sign defence agreements with other states;
- to enter into the Euro-Atlantic integration process;
- a combination of some of the aforementioned alternatives.

The political leadership of the country, striving to use the positives of the above-mentioned options, determined to build a security system based on the following features and components:

- to establish its own armed forces and to apply the preventive mechanisms of the global organization (UN);
- to practice a policy of "neutrality" regarding the war in the former Yugoslavia;
- to show a clear commitment to cooperation on equal grounds with all neighbouring countries and
- a strong willingness to enter into the Euro-Atlantic integration process, with emphasized and clear steps for EU[2] and NATO[3] membership.

The following reasons led to these commitments: the intention to avoid a spill over of the conflict from the territory of the former Yugoslavia into the country; the military inferiority of the country; the desire to become a part of the new European security architecture, as a possibility for further economic integration; the opportunity to immediate influence the decision making process of the European Union and NATO, and the understanding that only NATO can successfully provide defence from external threats.

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[2] The Republic of Macedonia applied for EU membership on 22 March, 2004, thus expressing its readiness to cross over from the stabilization into the association process. Subsequently, the country has answered the Questionnaire of the Commission and received a positive response with a recommendation from the Commission to the Council to grant the country "candidate status". In December 2005, the highest officials of EU members made the decision to grant "candidate status" to the Republic of Macedonia. Four years later, the Commission recommended to the Council to open negotiations with the country, as well as to move to the second phase of the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA). Since then, although Macedonia has received five recommendations in a row, the Council of EU has not yet approved the Commission's proposal due to the Greek blockade.
[3] The "journey" to NATO started in December 1993 when the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia decided to join the Alliance. As an aspirant country for NATO membership, it joined the Partnership for Peace (PfP) initiative on 15 December, 1995 thus officially becoming the 27th member of the initiative. Furthermore, Macedonia is a member of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) since its establishment in 1997 and a part of the Membership Action Plan (MAP) process since 1999. Although R. Macedonia had a very legitimate reason to expect an invitation to join the Alliance at the NATO summit in Bucharest 2008, Greece blocked its accession because of the "name issue".

The National Security and Defence Concept[4] is the basic document of the Republic of Macedonia in the area of security and defence. It has its roots in the "national values and the ensuing interests" of RM, emphasizing the strategic objective of the country to become "a part of the European family and a member of NATO and EU". Membership of NATO, in the vocabulary of the Macedonian national concept for security and defence, provides conditions "to preserve and strengthen the democracy, to protect the independency, as well as unlimited opportunities for economic advancement".[5] The advantage of its membership in NATO could be seen through the experiences and achievements of the "new" members. On the foundations of the successfulness of the countries in transition, regardless of whether it is a question of the indicators of economic growth, respect for human rights and freedoms, or development and stability of democratic practice and democratic institutions, all "new" countries have improved their regional positions.

The benefits of NATO membership will be great for the Republic of Macedonia. Aside from the guarantees for national security, NATO membership will mean support for the democratic and economic development of the country, and a reinforcement of the capabilities and capacities of the national security system. Nowadays, Alliance membership represents privilege, which at the same time, strengthens the country's position in the international community and international institutions, and offers to a "small country" an opportunity to participate in decision making processes, thus affecting regional and wider international policy.

Periods in the development of Macedonian security policy

Our paper will deal with the general political and security context, which has marked the years since independence to date, and in that sense, the major trends and events that have shaped political developments and progress in security sector reforms in Macedonia. For greater clarity and coherence, the structure of the analysis of the post-socialist transition period is separated into three parts, thus, covering major social and political developments. Following the analysis, each period is evaluated through its specific nature, whether post-authoritarian, post-conflict or integrationist and post-veto nationalism.

The first period (since the declaration of independence in 1991 until Macedonia's inclusion in the Membership Action Plan 1999 at the Washington Summit) proclaimed the Euro-Atlantic orientation of the country, expressed through an

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[4] *National Security and Defence Concept of the Republic of Macedonia*, Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, Skopje, 2003.

[5] *Ibidem*, p. 4.

implicit consensus of all parliamentary and non-parliamentary parties and the vast support of the citizens.[6] This period was particularly important, since it followed on from the establishment of the independent state, armed forces, and democratic and legislative institutions, which shaped the country's trajectory of progression in the years to come. The context is recognized as predominantly that of state-building, a transition from a socialist to a democratic political system and the dominance of transitional issues on the political agenda.

The second period (since 1999 until the NATO Summit in Bucharest 2008), marked by the 2001 war conflict,[7] culminated in a deep constitutional reform and the institutional set-up of Macedonian democracy, which had a profound impact on the political and security climate in Macedonia. Therefore, it indicated a new period of Macedonian politics, denoted by the dominant issues of post-conflict reconstruction concerns, disarmament and demobilization, war crimes, as well as ethnic issues - thus making deep constitutional, public administration and legal reforms inevitable. The dominant political context in this period was post-conflict. Still, it witnessed an intensified activity towards NATO integration, efforts to fulfil the necessary requirements in order to join the organization, so it would be appropriate to point out the reformist nature of the political context during this period.

The last period (after the Bucharest Summit in 2008), when the Allies agreed that, although Macedonia had fulfilled the necessary requirements to join the Alliance, an invitation to join would be extended to the country as soon as a mutually acceptable solution to the issue over its name had been reached with Greece. The Bucharest Summit and its conclusions are important for Macedonian politics for two reasons: first, it marks the successful efforts to reform the security sector after the 2001 conflict to an extent sufficient to become a member of NATO, thus

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[6] Since July 1996, the Republic of Macedonia has had military representatives in the NATO headquarters in Brussels and in the PfP Coordinating Cell in Mons, followed by the active participation of the country in the PfP Working Programme and the beginning of the realization of the Individual Partnership Programme (IPP) of the Republic of Macedonia and NATO. In January 1997, the Republic of Macedonia joined the NATO Planning and Review Process (PARP), as a biennial process that is open to all Partnership for Peace (PfP) partners. A year later, in 1998, the Republic of Macedonia opened its own NATO mission in Brussels. At the Washington Summit in April 1999, the Republic of Macedonia, together with Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia expressed its interest in NATO membership.

[7] On the 2001 conflict and post-conflict, see papers by James Pettifer at www.csrc.ac.uk: G98, *Former Yugoslav Macedonia - The Shades of Night?*, July 2001; G106, *FYROM after Ochrid*, March 2002; For an helpful analysis of the situation in Macedonia see International Crisis Group papers: *Macedonia's Ethnic Albanians: Bridging the Gulf,* "ICG Balkans Report", No. 98, August 2000), Brussels; *The Macedonian Question: Reform or Rebellion,* "ICG Balkans Report", No. 109, April 2001), Brussels; *Macedonia: the Last Chance for Peace,* "ICG Balkans Report", No. 113, June 2001), Brussels; *Macedonia's Name: Why the Dispute Matters and How to Resolve It,* "ICG Balkans Report", No. 122, December 2001), Brussels, [www.crisisweb.org].

pointing to a successful managing of post-conflict challenges, and therefore marks the end of the previous period of analysis; second, it did not result in Macedonian membership in the Alliance, as was the case with other post-socialist states. This event indicates the different trajectory that Macedonia has taken when compared with other states in the region, having not resolved its problems with Greece six years after the Bucharest Summit. It is rather distinct from the other two periods in that, namely, this period is characterized by the birth of post-veto nationalism, the label which is used for the dominant political context in this period.

The "name issue" on the road to joining the Alliance

The name issue has been plaguing the country's relations with Greece (and, consequently, with NATO) since the early 1990s.[8] Macedonia has already made it clear that it agrees to join NATO under the provisional name "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" as was settled in the Interim Agreement.[9] Moreover, in the run-up to the NATO Summit in Bucharest, under US pressure to come to a solution, the country agreed to another name, different from its constitutional one, for international use. It accepted UN mediator Matthew Nimitz's "final proposal": "Republic of Macedonia (Skopje)" as a reference to international use. However, Greece flatly rejected it and broke down the Interim Agreement. As a result, Macedonia sued Greece at the International Court of Justice, which confirmed that Greece, by objecting to the admission of Macedonia to NATO, breached its obligation under Article 11, paragraph 1, of the Interim Agreement of 13 September

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[8] For further details, see: V. Roudometof, *Collective Memory, National Identity, and Ethnic Conflict: Greece, Bulgaria, and the Macedonian Question*, Praeger Publishers: Westport 2002.

[9] Since the declaration of independence of the Republic of Macedonia in 1991, Greece has persistently objected to the name of the state and its membership in international organizations. The Interim Accord (IA) concluded between the Republic of Macedonia and Greece on 13 September 1995 is the key legal framework for normalizing bilateral relations. The IA sets an explicit obligation for Greece, contained in Article 11, not to object to the application by or the membership of the Republic of Macedonia to international organizations under the provisional reference "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" as stipulated by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 817 (1993). In the process of acquiring invitation for NATO membership, the Republic of Macedonia respected this provision, agreeing that the process of accession to NATO proceed under the reference contained in paragraph 2 of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 817 (1993). In spite of this, in April 2008 at the NATO Summit in Bucharest, Greece objected to the admission of the Republic of Macedonia into NATO. It objects as well in relation to the country's EU accession process. The Republic of Macedonia on 17 November 2008 initiated proceedings before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) requesting the court to adjudge and declare that Greece objected to Macedonia's invitation to NATO and thus violated its obligations under the IA. The judgment of the court of 5 December, 2011 is binding on the parties and no legal remedies are allowed.

1995, and has broken international law.[10] However, so far, NATO has effectively ignored the ruling, stating that "NATO took a decision at the NATO Summit in Bucharest in 2008. The decision was that we are prepared to extend an invitation to accession talks once a mutually agreeable solution to the name issue has been found. Now, we stand by that decision. The ruling by the International Court of Justice doesn't change the NATO position".[11]

The conditioning of the state by changing the constitutional name, as a precondition for joining the Alliance, actually represents a violation of the principle of the sovereign equality of states, a core value of all international organizations, which presupposes equal conditions for admission for any state.[12]

Greece's veto broke with the NATO approach that bilateral disputes do not prevent an aspiring country's membership in the Alliance. As found by the International Court of Justice, Greece's veto was in obvious violation of the 1995 United Nations-brokered Interim Accord, in which Athens agreed not to bloc Macedonia's integration into Europe.[13] The setback is damaging to all parties and undermines the Alliance's stated objective: "to enhance peace and stability in Europe".[14] So, NATO unwittingly strengthened the Greek position.[15]

The long-term support for the Greek attitude towards Macedonia in the NATO - EU integration process brings the danger of changing public opinion in Macedonia, in the direction of reducing the confidence and desire to join NATO and the European Union.[16] In addition, it encourages the rise of nationalism and ethnocentrism, which, in a country of diverse ethnic composition such as Macedonia, can

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[10] By a 15 to 1 majority, judges in The Hague rebuked Greece for preventing Republic of Macedonia from joining the Alliance. The only judge who voted against the violation finding was a Greek, Emmanuel Roucounas. See: *International Court of Justice Press Release No. 2011/37,* 5 December 2011, [www.icj-cij.org, access: 14 June 2014].

[11] *Joint Press Point with NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Macedonia Nikola Gruevski*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 12 February 2014, [www.nato.int, access: 17 June 2014].

[12] See more: L. Pendaroska, I. Djugumanov, *The Relationship and Mutual Influence Between Sovereign Equality of States, Integration and Human Rights and Freedoms,* International Scientific Conference Proceedings *"The Balkans between past and future: Security, Conflict Resolution and Euro-Atlantic Integration"*, University "St. Kliment Ohridski" Bitola, Faculty of Security - Skopje, June 2013, Ohrid, pp. 172-182.

[13] M. L. Roach, L. Coffey, *NATO Enlargement Should Top Obama Agenda in Chicago*, "Heritage Foundation Issue Brief", no. 3542, 19 March 2012, p. 2.

[14] *The Alliance's Strategic Concept*, Washington Summit, April 1999, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, [www.nato.int, access: 18 June 2014].

[15] E. Joseph, *Averting the Next Balkan War*, "Internationale Politik", Summer 2008, p. 78.

[16] Results of a survey conducted in 2009 and 2013 indicate the significant reduction of citizens' inclination to NATO, but the alliance is still considered as a basic guarantee for peace and stability in the country. See: R. Rajkovcevski, *Градење безбедносна политика: случајот на РепубликаМакедонија* (*Security Policy Building: The Case of the Republic of Macedonia*), Konrad Adenauer Stiftung - Macedonia Office & Faculty of Security - Skopje: Skopje 2014, p. 68, [www.kas.de, access: 1 July 2014].

be a serious threat to internal and wider regional security. Moreover, the issue is misused as a political issue by all political parties during election campaigns. In such circumstances, citizens who are ethnic Macedonians and citizens who are ethnic Albanians have quite different views on this crucial question for the future of the country.[17] The willingness of citizens to join the Alliance, must be considered in correlation with the issue of the name dispute (there are evidently different stands among citizens, depending on their ethnicity), considering it was imposed as a condition for membership.

Decisions taken at the Bucharest Summit 2008 created a huge disappointment among Macedonian citizens of all ethnic groups. The failure to enter into NATO was a disappointment especially for Albanians, for whom the American-led Alliance holds both a security and emotive attraction. Many now do not like having to pay the cost of protecting the name of the country that means "nothing to them, but mean[s] everything to the country's majority".[18] A disappointment that the country was faced with on the NATO accession path, has had an immediate impact on the credibility of the country's EU perspective as well, leading to the "disintegration of the Euro-Atlantic integration myth" that has sustained the "shaky Ohrid peace".

Furthermore, the problem is that with NATO and the EU's support for Greece's stance regarding the name dispute, their influence on Macedonian politics will decrease, and the possibilities for further soft mediation of Macedonian-Albanian political disputes will be diminished. Now, both Macedonian and Albanian nationalism in the country are growing. Radicals among the ethnic Albanians have anyway been encouraged by the recognition of Kosovo's independence in 2008. NATO's support of the Greek position, signals to nationalists around the Balkans that Macedonia is not yet a "normal" country, a state that has a secure and prosperous future in the European Union.

In the past, the shared goal of NATO membership has helped to bind Macedonia's ethnic Macedonian majority and ethnic Albanian minority together. Relations between the two ethnic communities have improved in recent years,[19] but ethnic tensions have resurfaced recently, in the form of street fights between

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[17] As in most of the researches so far, the survey of newspaper *"Дневник"* conducted by a specialized agency "Rating", showed that citizens-ethnic Albanians have far more confidence in the EU - NATO policies toward Macedonia, compared with citizens-ethnic Macedonians. Thus, 39% of respondents - ethnic Macedonians expressed confidence in NATO, while the percentage of respondents - ethnic Albanians is significantly higher-82%. [www.mkd.mk, access: 8 July 2014].

[18] E. Joseph, *Averting the Next Balkan War*, "Internationale Politik", Summer 2008, p. 83.

[19] U. Brunnbauer, *The Implementation of the Ohrid Agreement: Ethnic Macedonian Resentments*, Centre for the Studies of the Balkan Societies and Cultures, Vol. 1, University of Graz 2002, p. 5.

groups of youths. In October 2011, a census was suspended due to political disagreements on how to count the ethnic Albanian population.

Inter-ethnic tensions are still "floating" in the air, so it will take additional measures in order to offset the high ethnic polarization of Macedonian society. These would have to centre on coining strategies for the strengthening of Macedonia's fundamental attributes of statehood and engaging the country's political élites from both ethnic groups in the grand Euro-Atlantic integration processes. The fact that Macedonia has not still received an invitation to join NATO affects the internal cohesion of the country and may, also, affect regional stability, given the easy spill over of volatility between the Balkan states. In short, any trend toward the disintegration of Macedonia would have direct and unavoidable consequences for Kosovo. If Macedonia descends again into conflict, it would almost certainly not remain confined to its current borders.

Macedonian stability is crucial as any new conflict there could cause a wider conflict involving Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria, Turkey, and Albania.[20] Denying the existence of Macedonians, the negation of the country's constitutional name as such, did not help solve the Macedonian problem and did not contribute to Balkan stability in the past, and it will not do so in the future. Only a settlement that recognizes the Macedonians and respects their national rights will be of lasting value and contribute to stability in South - Eastern Europe.[21]

There is a genuine convergence of interests in the region, but also a danger of destabilization if a solution to the dispute between the Republic of Macedonia and Greece is not found soon. Since at the Wales Summit 2014 enlargement was not on the agenda, Macedonia is in danger of missing the membership boat.[22] The NATO decision once again to postpone Macedonian's admission will expose the country to "Russia's opportunism, risking potential regional instability".[23] In this sense, recent developments related to the Ukrainian situation, have stimulated the belief that the crisis will accelerate accession to NATO, so Macedonia should expect an invitation to join at the September summit.[24] So the question is: does the Republic of Macedonia have realistic prospects of joining NATO soon?

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[20] Policy Recommendations, *Meeting the Challenges of EU Membershipand NATO Accession - Macedonia and her Neighbours,* Study Group Regional Stability in South East Europe, Skopje, Macedonia, 27 - 29 September 2012.

[21] Z. Kosanic, *Obstacles to FYROM's membership of NATO: a tougher agenda than expected*, "NATO Defence College Research Paper", No. 44 (2009), p. 5.

[22] K. H. Kamp, *NATO's Summit Agenda*, "NATO Defense Colleague Research Paper", No. 97, September 2013, p. 5.

[23] E. Josephand, J. Bugajski, *Long March to Brussels,* "Foreign Affairs", 26 June 2014, [www.foreignaffairs.com, access: 1 July 2014].

[24] However, the little hope that still remains that this part of the Balkans is on the "agenda" of NATO and the European Union, was confirmed by the high profile conference dedicated to the

Another issue, which is closely related to the stability of the state, the name dispute and integration processes, is the recognition of the ethnic identity of Macedonians. Namely, when ethno-nationalism is on the rise as a response to a perceived external threat in a particular state, the ethnic identity of the groups in that state will also rise to counteract the "loss" of identity space. The greater the intensity of the external threat, the greater the intensity of ethno-nationalism and the stronger the mobilization of ethnic groups will be. The Ohrid Framework Agreement lacks instruments for "societal peace-building", in particular for addressing the societal security needs of the ethnic Macedonians.[25] In addition, at the international level, the identity of the ethnic Macedonians has also been challenged, especially since the initiation of the name dispute.

So far, both Macedonia and Greece have behaved irresponsibly, with Athens resorting to what the Greek scholar Anna Triandafyllidou calls "the strategic manipulation of nationalist feelings by Greek politicians".[26] It is more than evident that, no matter which political provenience is in power in Athens, their position is remarkably constant regarding the name issue. On the other hand, in Macedonia, the centre-right government was and is still "playing" on the card of national sentiment, while taking the "provocative step" of re-naming the airport and the main highway after Alexander the Great.[27] However, there is a fundamental difference in the approaches of the two countries: while Greece objects to the Macedonian claims to the legacy of Alexander the Great, Macedonia does not object to corresponding Greek claims.[28]

Furthermore, Greece requires a change of the constitutional name of the country even for internal use, and, at the same time challenges the existence of the

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Western Balkans' integration in the signing of support to the "forgotten" EU enlargement process, which will be organized under the patronage of German Chancellor Merkel. In addition to this is also a statement of Merkel given in Dubrovnik on 15 July 2014, in front of the participants of the "Brdo - Brioni Process": "I think we can and must solve the issue somehow. I've been personally engaged in the matter contemplating about all the possible combinations of the name, but sometimes I think that there's nothing more that can be invented….Macedonia has to join NATO and the EU in some way". [www.independent.mk, access: 8 August 2014].

[25] The results of the above-mentioned surveys, show that the contract is seen as illegitimate and unsustainable for Macedonian respondents, so 82.7% believe that the agreement is not a solution for establishing trust and equality between citizens.

[26] See more: A. Triandafyllidou, M. Calloni, A. Mikrakis, *New Greek Nationalism*, "Sociological Research Online", Vol. 2, No. 1 (1997), [www.socresonline.org.uk, access: 16 May 2008].

[27] It is very important to emphasize that the International Court of Justice judgment notes that "the renaming of an airport could not itself constitute a breach" in the negotiations between the two states.

[28] E. Joseph, *Averting the Next Balkan War*, "Internationale Politik", Summer 2008, p. 85.

Macedonian nation and its societal security requirements (such as the Macedonian language, Macedonian culture, etc.). The name of the country is considered by the majority of ethnic Macedonians as essential to preserving their national identity and its continuity. In addition, the regional context regarding the "Albanian question" (Kosovo's independence and Albania's invitation to join NATO), makes Macedonian Albanians impatient concerning the name dispute and more demanding for a faster solution of the problem. In sum, the name dispute is largely asymmetrical, with Greece claiming its exclusivity to Macedonian identity and legacy. Exacerbating the problem is another asymmetry: Greece, as an EU and NATO member, is substantially richer and more powerful than Macedonia, even during the worst financial crisis that "hit" Greece.[29]

The theory of ethnic relations indicate that, if an identity is under any kind of threat, then, as a logical response, the group will strengthen its "societal security".[30] This can be done by using cultural means to reinforce social cohesion and distinctiveness among the group and to ensure that the society reproduces itself effectively. In this sense, consequently, culture becomes security policy. That has been precisely the "starting point" of the new Macedonian strategy, since 2008, to preserve the endangered national identity of ethnic Macedonians. This policy can be seen in the speech of Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski in Rome: "We cannot give up our identity, culture and language as they are among [the] crucial prerequisites for [the] prosperous, lasting future of each nation… there is no administrative mechanism for erasing the memory about who and what we are… there is no substitute for [sic] identity…therefore we shall join Europe in no other way but as Macedonians…although one EU, NATO member state has been making attempts to prevent our Euro-Atlantic integration by denying our national identity and uniqueness, we are firmly committed to join[ing] these institutions in a dignified manner, as a nation whose culture and language are one of the pillars of [sic] European culture".[31]

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[29] The problem is asymmetrical, both in terms of the Greek objection to Macedonian identity, and Greece's power relative to Macedonia. Only by introducing the full dimension of the problem, including the question of the Macedonian minority in Greece, will Athens have a motivation to compromise - and more instability will be prevented.

[30] Wæver defines societal security as "the ability of society to persist in its essential character under changing conditions and possible or actual threats". See more: Ole Wæver, Barry Buzan, Morten Kelstrup and Pierre Lemaitre: *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, London 1993.

[31] *Speech by the Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski at the Italian Ministry of Culture, as the patron of the Year of Macedonian Language, "Culture, literacy - prerequisites for lasting, prosperous future"*, Government of the Republic of Macedonia, 25 May 2008, [www.vlada.mk, access: 5 June 2008].

Thus, in such circumstances, "Macedonian nationalism grows not so much from pride, but from desperation to survive".[32] The Albanian insurgency of 2001 could not but intensify among Macedonians the feeling that their national existence is threatened, further strengthened by Greek's blockade for the integration of the country into NATO. Few had ever engaged in an open debate on Macedonian identity and Macedonian nationalism. Under these conditions, some kind of repercussion was to be expected, as indeed it now is in the form of a renewed search for self-confidence and pride. However, the real question is for how long, can Macedonians maintain this position? What consequences can produce this policy, integration or isolation of the country? Macedonia is facing strategic choices and changes in its strategic goals.[33] Whether it will be "fine tuning", compromise and integration in Euro-Atlantic structures or a "fundamental change" in security policy goals, remains tentative.

Instead of a conclusion

There is no doubt that the Republic of Macedonia and its citizens see their future as an integral part of the Euro-Atlantic family, sharing a common civilization and democratic values. Towards achieving the target, a serious barrier obstructs the path: the name dispute. In this respect, being aware that the indicated obstacle has grown in membership requirements, there are three possible outcomes for the dispute: a real Greek willingness to compromise, Macedonian "capitulation" or a continued deadlock. A continued stalemate is the most likely outcome, because Greece faces no "external, side-cost" to maintaining its position.

Athens' approach suggests that it sees little incompatibility with its substantial private investment in Macedonia and that country's continued limbo status. A continued stand-off could, potentially, lead to a deterioration in inter-ethnic relations. Furthermore, with Albania progressing much faster towards the European Union, unlike ethnic Macedonians, Macedonia's ethnic Albanians are becoming less interested in the name issue - thus, beginning to increasingly push "their political leadership" to accept a compromise that would open the way for Macedonia's Euro-Atlantic integration process in the fastest time-frame.[34] This, in turn, heats

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[32] A. Loomis, L. Davis, S. Broughton, *Politics & Identity in Macedonia. Intrinsic versus Extrinsic Understandings,* Conference *"Macedonia - Macedonians: Changing Contexts in the Changing Balkans"*, London, 14 - 16 June, 2001, p. 12.

[33] S. Slaveski, *Macedonia at Crossroads: between NATO Membership and "Defending the National Identity",* Yearbook Sipan 2012, The Atlantic Council of Croatia, Center for International Studies, Zagreb 2013, p. 132.

[34] So far, the main achievement with the European Union has been the liberalization of the visa regime between the European Union and Macedonia that came into force in December 2009.

the nationalism among ethnic Macedonians. If no such deal were to be found, Macedonia risks not only remaining a candidate forever, but also putting its fragile stability in a situation of possible implode - a tragedy for the country and for the entire region.

Macedonian "capitulation" to the Greek position would mean negating Macedonian identity. As described above, this would pose serious complications to advancing the peace arrangement with ethnic Albanians. It would also only encourage other assaults from neighbouring countries on Macedonian identity, which would further impair the cohesion of the country.

Only a fair compromise,[35] one that protects Macedonian identity while addressing the Greek demand for a name for international use, would serves European stability. Given the inequality in power between Macedonia and Greece, only UN mediation is likely to resolve the dispute and to achieve a fair compromise. Given the unwillingness of European powers to take on the burden of confronting Athens, American leadership is once again essential. Therefore, it is urgent that the Obama Administration insist that NATO include R. Macedonia into the Alliance under the provisional name "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" as it was stated in the Interim Agreement.

In other words, the solution of the name dispute is to recognize both the seriousness of the problem and its root causes, and urgently devise a transatlantic strategy that addresses them. The urgent task for Europe and the United States is to devise a strategy to deal with the name dispute.[36] Hence, many experts urge for "close EU involvement, including mediation between the parties".[37] Some even argue that "Macedonia's future is essential to the European security architecture…. Macedonia may represent the greatest challenge as well as the last best hope for the Balkans".[38] The answer to whether the future Europe will be characterized as

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[35] Citizens' opinion on this question have drastically changed compared to the views they expressed before the NATO Summit at Bucharest, when 83% of the citizens were against changes to the name of the country in order to get NATO membership. The later survey reveals that the Macedonian Albanians have changed their opinion. While before the Summit 52% of ethnic Albanians agreed to changes of the name of the country so that Macedonia would get NATO membership, now 94% of them agree to such a change. In fact, two thirds of the respondents that would agree with changing the name of the country for Macedonian NATO membership are ethnic Albanians. Meanwhile, the number of ethnic Macedonians who are against changing the name in return for NATO membership decreased from 95% to 80% [www.crpm.org.mk, access: 20 May 2008].

[36] E. Joseph, *Incidents in Macedonia - Reminder that NATO Needs to Unblock Membership Invitation*, "Independent", 10 July 2014, [www.independent.mk, access: 10 July 2014].

[37] J. Batt, *Is the EU losing the Western Balkans?*, Seminar held at the EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris, 17 March 2008, p. 2.

[38] P. N. Liotta, C. R. Jebb, *Macedonia: End of the beginning or Beginning of the End?*, "Parameters", Spring 2002, p. 112.

one of constant security dilemmas or a palace of integrating security identities ties, may well lie within the fate of Macedonia.

There is a pressing need to link Macedonian identity with other European identities and organizations. Membership in NATO, for instance, now appears to be a cultural marker of inclusion and economic attractiveness as much as a security guarantee.[39] Macedonia cannot achieve success on its own. If the major players, who will most affect the outcomes in the Balkan region (the European Union, NATO and the United States) cannot find some means of mutual accommodation and agree to a strategy to help the country, then the future of Macedonia will be uncertain in many directions.

The policy of the Macedonian government has arguably intensified the name dispute, and this has the potential to delay NATO accession indefinitely. Despite renewed UN efforts to re-launch talks on the issue, neither Greece nor Macedonia have so far shown a willingness to real talks and compromise. Therefore, it is likely that a mutually acceptable settlement will not be found in the short term, and that the name dispute will prevent Macedonia from joining western institutions, including NATO, soon.

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[39] *Collective Defence and Common Security (Twin Pillars of the Atlantic Alliance)*, Group of Policy Experts report to the NATO Secretary General, June 2014, p. 3.

APPENDIXES

Contributors

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About Us

International Relations Research Institute in Warsaw

(Instytut Badań nad Stosunkami Międzynarodowymi w Warszawie)

A think tank founded in 1999. It houses experts in the fields of international relations, international security, foreign policy and diplomacy. The Institute's main work is the publication of the nationwide journal *"Stosunki Międzynarodowe" ("International Relations")*.

The Institute is also involved in monitoring the current global situation, preparing special studies, promoting knowledge of the modern world with its commentary in the media, publications, conferences and seminars. In 2013 we published an edited book entitled *"NATO Towards the Challenges of a Contemporary World 2013"*.

The Atlantic Treaty Association

An organization which acts as a network facilitator in the Euro-Atlantic and beyond. The ATA draws together political leaders, academics and diplomats in an effort to further the values set forth in the North Atlantic Treaty.

Since the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, the role of the Atlantic Treaty Association has changed considerably. Given the shifting nature of security politics, and NATO's continued transformation, the ATA now works beyond the borders of the Euro-Atlantic - promoting new initiatives in Central and Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean, and the South Caucasus. Following the ascension of the new NATO countries in 1999, 2004 and 2009, the ATA membership expanded considerably and naturally its security focus has shifted eastward.

The Atlantic Treaty Association seeks, through discussion and political channels, to support the values set forth in the North Atlantic Treaty: freedom, liberty, peace, security, and the rule of law. As such, the ATA acts as a forum for debate in which member associations can achieve common interests and democratic goals in the ever-changing security environment of the 21st century.

The Atlantic Treaty Association firmly believes in the strength of the transatlantic relationship - one which is fundamental to the stability of the international system in the 21st century. As such, the ATA remains instrumental in bridging values from both sides of the Atlantic in its effort to underpin the broader goals of the NATO Alliance.

Jagello 2000 - NATO Information Center in Prague

A leading Czech non-governmental organization in the field of public and defence diplomacy. The main purpose of Jagello 2000 is to inform the public about security policy, transatlantic relations and NATO, keeping in mind that our security is not given forever. We can be reached at www.jagello.org.

Latvian Institute of International Affairs

Established in 1992 in Riga as a non-profit foundation charged with the task of providing Latvia's decision-makers, experts, and the wider public with analysis, recommendations, and information about international developments, regional security issues, and foreign policy strategy and choices.

It is an independent research institute that conducts research, publishes publications, as well as organizes lectures, seminars and conferences related to international affairs. Among Latvian think tanks, the LIIA is the oldest and one of the most well-known and internationally recognized institutions, in particular as the leading think tank that specializes in international affairs.