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# NATO AND THE EU IN THE NORTH: WHAT IS AT STAKE IN CURRENT STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT?

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## *Abstract*

Security for European states is now defined as covering a wide range of fields, in all of which the group of Nordic and Baltic states show significant national variations. NATO is still Europe's only 'hard' security provider but is reduced in that role by its new focus on remote crisis missions and by gradual US disengagement. The EU could intervene in new ways, in non-military emergencies, under new Lisbon Treaty clauses on 'solidarity'. If Nordic states were more united in their demands and proposals, they might have a better chance of gaining a decisive hearing in the EU than in NATO's current strategy debate. The EU has a potential, growing role in Russia-handling, and Finland is at least interested in exploring the 'solidarity' route to a perhaps stronger EU umbrella over members' territorial security.

## **Introduction**

In an Icelandic university course during 2009, students were asked in their final examination as to whether NATO or the European Union (EU) was more important for the security of countries in the Nordic/Baltic region. Roughly equal numbers of them answered 'NATO', 'EU', and 'Both' – and none of them was marked wrong. The logical reason for the varying answers was, of course, the way that each student chose to define 'security' at the outset. That same choice is crucial for providing an answer to the question posed in this article: how important is the evolution of NATO's and the European Union's institutional strategy, respectively, for the future safety of Northern Europe – and why? What do countries in the region have to hope for, or to fear, from the possible outcomes to each institution's current major efforts of self-examination and self-transformation: namely, the implementation of the EU's new Treaty of Lisbon<sup>1</sup> and NATO's ongoing debate on a new Strategic Concept?

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<sup>1</sup> The Lisbon Treaty entered into force on 1 December 2009 – text at [http://europa.eu/lisbon\\_treaty/full\\_text/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/full_text/index_en.htm).

The subject is large and the space here limited, so a line of argument will be followed that cannot do full justice to all the relevant concerns. First, the modern European definition of security and its application to the Nordic/Baltic region will be discussed, with a focus on national perceptions and variations. Secondly, the evolving role division between NATO and the EU will be sketched. Third, and last, there will be a brief speculative discussion of issues and possible outcomes in each institution's strategy-building work, as seen from the Northern European angle(s) earlier defined.

## **1. What is 'Security' for Europeans – and for the North?**

In principle, it should be easier than ever to answer the above question, since as many as 27 European states belong to the EU and the EU has possessed its own European Security Strategy (ESS) since December 2003.<sup>2</sup> At the end of 2008, moreover, Ministers noted a report from High Representative Javier Solana updating and extending the original strategy's analysis.<sup>3</sup>

However, even leaving aside the rather generalized nature of the ESS, which does not translate easily into day-to-day policies, there are at least two large reasons why it fails to settle all open questions. First, the 2003 document and 2008 update cannot be seen as an objective and complete statement of Europe's risks and concerns, even if the latter ranges more widely than the former. Being drafted within the EU's Council Secretariat, they had to steer clear in practice both of the 'hardest' defence issues and risks that most EU states saw as the province of NATO, and of the 'softest' issues – such as economic and social security – that largely fell within the competence of the Commission. On top of this, the contemporary political climate and related fashions in security thinking led in the 2003 document to a probably quite excessive focus on terrorism and WMD proliferation, but had a part also in pushing climate change to the fore in 2008. As a result of all these and other constraints, both in 2003 and 2008, the ESS's drafters signally underplayed the obvious strategic challenges posed by Russia for Europe and said

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<sup>2</sup> *A Secure Europe in a Better World*, adopted by the European Council on 12-13 December 2003, text at <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Text at <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=266&lang=en>.

even less that was meaningful about China. In December 2008, they could not even start to depict the possible security consequences, external and internal, of Europe's plight in the global financial and economic crash.

The second problem with a collective EU 'strategy' is one that even the most skilful drafting will not overcome. Europe is an extremely diverse continent, and more so since post-Cold War enlargement: not just in political and cultural traditions, but also in the objective geo-strategic circumstances of different states. Variation in national outlook exists along many axes – between large states and small states, those global in vision or more regionally attuned, close to potentially threatening 'others' or far away and well cushioned, land-locked or maritime, central or peripheral, and so on. These factors are central to traditional, military security, but under a wider modern definition of security that includes internal, functional, and human dimensions, an almost infinite range of further variables would have to be added. A nation's comprehensive security agenda will be shaped by its degree of internal homogeneity or division (with risks of civil violence or terrorism at the extreme), the strength or lack of everyday law-and-order, strong or weak border control, exposure to and sensitivity to migration, energy self-sufficiency or dependence, exposure to different natural hazards and climate shifts, heavier or lighter dependence on various large-scale infrastructures, and many more.

Finally and not least, national threat and risk perceptions are strongly influenced by subjective and cultural or traditional elements, as are national views on the 'right' way to tackle a given defence or security problem. Attitudes to the use of force are key, and show a wide range of variation across Europe: but so do the perceived standing and legitimacy of armed forces and other security services, the nature of civil-military relations, the strength of democratic institutions and public debate in shaping security policy, and broader features such as individuals' preparedness for risk, natural solidarity or lack of it, and resilience after traumatic events.

Where can Europe's Nordic/Baltic region be placed along this spectrum of variation? First, it is a largely *peripheral* space: in the double sense that *geographically* the countries North of the Baltic Sea and Iceland lie at the edge of Europe's landmass, and *politically* they border on a region beyond the EU and NATO where sharply different systems and values may prevail. In some parts of Europe, strategic pressure may tail off towards the periphery - *vide* Ireland or Portugal - but the North since the early 20th century has never been free from some degree of strategic tension. It is partly that the Soviet/Russian 'other' lies directly to the East and indeed, since 1990 has had its only direct land borders here with integrated Europe; and partly

that modern technology has opened up the uninhabited High North as an arena of strategic confrontation. Throughout the Cold War the main US and Soviet nuclear arsenals faced each other across, and underneath, the polar ice. Even if their numbers and the perceived risk of war both declined after 1990, the prospects of Arctic militarization are now under discussion again because of the likely opening up of new sea passages and access to new natural resources due to climate change.<sup>4</sup>

Secondly, in face of the Eastern neighbour but also compared with the resources deployed for East-West balance the nations of the Nordic/Baltic space are in a profoundly *asymmetrical* strategic position. As small-medium states with limited populations (Sweden, the largest, does not exceed nine million), they are dwarfed both by the historic Russian adversary and by the friend – the USA – best qualified to protect them. Norway, Sweden, and Finland are especially exposed in their thinly populated Northern provinces, while Finland and the Baltic States possess only modest means of resistance in the easternmost corner of the Baltic which has been a Russian breakout point since the time of Peter the Great. They are anyway outflanked by the sovereign exclave that Russia has retained in Kaliningrad.

The third and most idiosyncratic feature of the Nordic/Baltic space is that in modern history its nation-states have opted to counter these dangers through a kind of *disaggregation, variety, and balance* in their strategic postures, rather than seeking strength through unity. Sweden, the region's largest and once hegemonic power, has been neutral or (as it is expressed today) non-allied for more than two centuries. Together with Finland it has so far stayed out of NATO, while Norway and Iceland remain outside the EU; and Denmark's EU membership is still subject to four opt-outs including defence and internal security cooperation negotiated at the time of the Maastricht Treaty. The Nordic Cooperation that developed after World War Two between the five Nordic states and their sovereign territories steered well clear of defence issues, and has only recently opened up to a debate on non-warlike security collaboration. The newly independent Baltic States after 1990 were denied entry to that group and had to form their own Baltic Council. The two sub-regional cooperation frameworks that include both the Baltic and Nordic states, namely the Council of Baltic Sea States and Barents Euro-Arctic Council, are active in fields of 'soft' security but also have the Russian Federation as a member. That is also the case for the EU's Northern Dimension, created in

<sup>4</sup> Holtsmark, S.G. and Smith-Windsor, B.A., *Security prospects in the High North: geostrategic thaw or freeze?*, NDC Forum Paper No 7, NATO Defence College: Rome, May 2009

1999 and renewed in 2006 as a framework primarily for economic cooperation and development.

During Cold War times, the dividing line of Alliance membership between Norway and Sweden was the fulcrum of a 'Nordic balance' that denied full control of the Baltic space to either NATO or the Warsaw Pact. Both in theory and practice, the absence of face-to-face confrontation lowered the military temperature in Northern Europe and left space for peaceful interchange, trade, and cooperation with Eastern neighbours. It also liberated Nordic energies that could be turned towards efforts for a general détente – like Finland's role in creating the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) or towards global aid and peacekeeping. Iceland aside, all the Nordic states began a still continuing tradition of 'punching above their weight' in services to world security.

However, to explain Nordic and Nordic/Baltic disunity purely in terms of high-minded services to Europe's peace would be missing much of the point. If the Nordic balance had been only a Cold War construct it would be difficult to understand why, in twenty years since the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, the countries north of the Baltic have been so slow and cautious in exploring the scope for changes of status. Aside from Sweden and Finland's entry to the EU in 1995 (the strategic meaning of which the Swedes played down at the time),<sup>5</sup> Nordic institutional alignments remain basically the same today as in the 1950s. The difference is that Nordic non-members can now exploit numerous 'half-way house' arrangements to get closer to NATO and the EU, respectively – Partnership for Peace, the European Economic Area, and Schengen – while the case for greater inter-Nordic military and security cooperation can at least be publicly addressed, as in the Stoltenberg Report of February 2009.<sup>6</sup> Iceland also applied in July 2009 for full EU membership, but that decision came in exceptional political conditions and may well be negated by a popular vote in the eventual referendum to be held on membership. Overall, this 'Nordic syndrome' of limited institutional liability forms a marked contrast with the unanimous and strenuous efforts made by all

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<sup>5</sup> EU membership was more openly portrayed in Finland as providing a kind of 'soft deterrence', as well as economic security.

<sup>6</sup> Report presented at the request of the Nordic Foreign Ministers by ex-Norwegian Foreign Minister Thorvald Stoltenberg, text at [http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/ud/Whats-new/news/2009/nordic\\_report.html?id=545258](http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/ud/Whats-new/news/2009/nordic_report.html?id=545258). Of 13 proposals put forward in this document, the quickest to be sidelined in official discussions were one for a Nordic pledge of mutual defence assistance and an idea for all Nordics to help police the airspace of Iceland.

three Baltic States to get into *both* the EU and NATO as soon as they could: a campaign in which they consciously sought to suppress their mutual differences,<sup>7</sup> and which was crowned with success for all three in 2004.

The fact is that national differences of security outlook and culture, of the kind sketched above for Europe as a whole, also create complex divisions between the five Nordic states and between them and the three Baltic nations. Taking concrete factors first, in *geo-strategic* terms there is a huge distance from Finland's long Russian frontier to Iceland's mid-Atlantic site, or from the exposed Russia-Norway border down to Denmark with its continental setting as many as five Allies now cushioning it from the Russian front. The range of climatic conditions, topography, population size, and population density is equally wide. Historical experiences diverge between the long-standing Swedish and Danish kingdoms and the six other Nordic and Baltic nations that attained modern statehood only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Every state had a different fate in World War Two with the Baltics' *de facto* subjugation to Soviet rule at the extreme. Turning to functional aspects of security, the one thing that at least the five Nordic states hold closely in common is their social welfare tradition: but that makes only a limited impact on other security features aside perhaps from a shared high level of dependency on IT and other modern infrastructures to guarantee quality of life.<sup>8</sup> In other dimensions, such as energy dependence, there is again a wide gap from Iceland and Norway, with their near self-sufficiency thanks to geo-thermal, hydroelectric, or hydrocarbon sources, to the Baltic States and Finland with their high – though still varied – levels of dependence on Russian imports. Norway has been one of the least damaged and Iceland possibly the most damaged European state in the recent global economic crash. None of the region's states has seen serious internal violence in recent history, but ethnic divisions loom larger for Estonia and Latvia, and latterly Denmark, than the others, and Denmark has been the most exposed to Islamic extremism and terrorism.

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<sup>7</sup> In the late 1990s, some Westerners thought it would be easier for NATO to accept Lithuania than the others and for the EU to accept Estonia than the others. While events in 2001-2 (notably the aftermath of 9/11) largely explain why all three Baltic States were included in the 'Big Bang' enlargements of 2004, credit should also be given to the initiatives taken by Baltic governments to avoid negative competition among themselves and among other candidates. These included the formation of the 'Vilnius 10' group of applicants who worked together notably to influence US opinion.

<sup>8</sup> It is no doubt also one the factors accounting for the limited scale of Nordic national defence spending.

Even more striking, given the widespread belief in a common Nordic ‘model’ or identity, are the differences in North European states’ internal political systems and cultures, and the variety of solutions that they have found for broadly comparable security challenges. To start with the more obvious strategic features,<sup>9</sup> Finland maintains one of Europe’s largest conscript armies while Iceland has never had armed forces. Norway’s default strategy, clearly expressed under the present government, is to concentrate military efforts on its Northern provinces while Denmark since the early 2000s has virtually stopped making any effort for territorial defence at all. Sweden has one of Europe’s larger arms industries but has reduced its standing forces below 18,000 and is moving to an all-volunteer army with the primary focus on peace missions. It is very reluctant to use force personnel for internal security tasks, while both Finland and Denmark in their different ways rely heavily on this solution. General approaches to security governance, or ‘security cultures’, also cover almost as wide a spectrum as one could find across all Europe, ranging from Finland’s close civil-military and public-private relations and acceptance of strong leadership, through differences of regional outlook within Norway, to many Swedes’ still visceral attachment to a civil-dominated ‘peace’ culture and the open anti-militarism of the Icelandic Left.

Moving to general external policy, Russia is clearly still the dominant and defining strategic factor for Finland, Norway, and the three Baltic States – producing in each case a subtly different balance of military readiness and efforts at détente but plays a far less central role in Swedish, Danish, and Icelandic thinking. Attitudes towards balancing Western power, the USA, are partly but not entirely a mirror image of this pattern of concern. The newly independent Baltic States, as the most ‘asymmetrically’ exposed, quickly made up their minds to work (and pay as necessary) for bilateral US support over and above formal NATO membership; but Denmark in the last decade has also aligned itself closely with Washington, for reasons linked more with non-European and global than territorial threats. Sweden’s relative disengagement from the Eastern threat can explain its default position of disapproval towards US power excesses, but Finland also distanced itself from George W Bush’s invasion of Iraq, and Norway had some trouble swallowing both this adventure and NATO’s earlier activism in Kosovo. Iceland, furthest from

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<sup>9</sup> For a fuller discussion of points in this section see Bailes, A.J.K., *Does a Small State need a Strategy?*, Occasional Paper of the Centre for Small State Studies at the University of Iceland: Reykjavik, 2009, text at [http://stofnanir.hi.is/ams/sites/files/ams/Bailes\\_Final\\_1.pdf](http://stofnanir.hi.is/ams/sites/files/ams/Bailes_Final_1.pdf).

the Eastern front, had the most complete strategic dependence on the USA up to 2006 when American forces were unilaterally withdrawn, leaving the Icelanders divided and uncertain over their future alignment. A complete, further article could be written about the subtleties of external-political alignments as between the three Baltic nations, where Estonia's claims to a 'Nordic' identity and Lithuania's closer kinship to the Visegrad states<sup>10</sup> offer just two of the salient examples.

Against this background, the lack of a unitary Nordic or Nordic-Baltic 'bloc' in the European security architecture hardly needs explanation. Variety is the default regional tradition, grounded in a now-peaceful but robust and unabashed sense of national identity on every side. The activities of Nordic Cooperation and the inclusive sub-regional organizations are better seen as ways to compensate for and cushion the range of national idiosyncrasies, than as harbingers of any serious, organic, or willed move towards convergence. Does it make any sense at all, then, to think in terms of a general 'Nordic', 'Baltic', or 'regional' agenda vis-à-vis NATO and the EU as institutions, or on the issues bound up with their future strategies? Before returning to this question, it is time to consider what NATO and the EU can offer to Europe's North, and Europe as a whole, under the widely defined heading of 'security'.

## **2. NATO and the EU as European Security Providers**

It has often been remarked that many of the Central European applicants to NATO, including the Baltic States, would have liked to join the NATO of around the 1970s rather than the one actually on offer in 2004. One of the features of Cold War arrangements that could understandably provoke nostalgia is that the roles of the two strongest Europe-based organizations, NATO, and the EU (or earlier: the European Communities, EC), were clearly demarcated and perfectly complementary. The territorial security and physical survival of member states was entrusted to NATO, providing the protective umbrella under which Western Europe could attain unique heights of inner peace and prosperity. The EC/EU brought a deeper political reconciliation and economic interdependence that

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<sup>10</sup> These states are the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia. Lithuania is also the Baltic State that has most energetically promoted cross-border and sub-regional cooperation, even with its most difficult neighbour – Belarus.



doubly underpinned this peace, while making states rich enough to afford large standing forces combined with social progress. NATO did not venture (at least operationally) outside its prescribed Euro-Atlantic defence area; the EC from its earliest days conducted European trade relations across the globe, but was far from venturing into military or even overt security issues.

Many would date the final breakdown of this duality to December 1999 when the EU adopted the first version of a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) allowing military missions to be carried out anywhere in the world under independent European command. Certainly, the USA at the time and some others (notably Turkey) ever since have been concerned that the EU's rival operational role could undermine and confuse NATO's primacy, weaken trans-Atlantic solidarity, confront participating states with dual capability standards, and so on. In any event, not only the EU's capacities and competence but also its rationale for selecting missions have turned out to be quite different from NATO's,<sup>11</sup> and the only serious cases of overlap or confusion between the two have related to relatively low-key missions involving assistance to third parties.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, the great majority of studies on NATO/EU relations and role divisions have so far focused on this rather narrow field of expeditionary missions and on the related military and civilian capabilities. Bearing in mind that neither institution had such tasks originally at its core, it could be more interesting to look at the broader pattern of their present and prospective contributions to security, in its wider sense, for European states and for the Euro-Atlantic region as a whole.

The large canvas this opens up may be simplified by considering areas of governance where the institutions have moved in parallel; those where they share tasks in complementary style; and whether or how leadership is shifting between them across the remaining dimensions. The clearest general parallel between NATO and the EU is the way they have adapted to changed conditions since 1989/90, a) through geographical enlargement, b) through the creation of wider partnership networks and c) by changes of direction and balance in their security-related agendas. Future historians will probably find the similarities of timing and scope in the NATO and EU enlargement processes more striking than the divergences between them, of which Norden's pattern of split membership is actually the largest example

<sup>11</sup> Bailes, A.J.K., What role for the European Security and Defence Policy? *International Affairs* Vol. 84 No.1 January 2008 pp 115-130.

<sup>12</sup> E.g. support for African Union operations in Sudan, protection for shipping against Somali pirates.

and Cyprus and Malta's non-membership of NATO perhaps the second. Both institutions had similar underlying motives, ranging from the applicants' demands, through persistent US advocacy, to European members' own appreciation of the need to bolster stability by eliminating a potential strategic 'grey area' to their East (of a sort that brought fatal results as recently as the 1920s and 1930s). It is interesting to recall, however, that in NATO's case a broader argument was sometimes made for enlargement as a way to retrieve the Alliance's very *raison d'être*, while for the EU – whose rationale had never been so Cold War-dependent – the debate was more about whether integration's gains might be diluted and damaged by expansion. At any rate, in retrospect, both institutions carried off the process more smoothly than many would have predicted and have suffered less than expected from trouble digesting the new members. This is clear if contrasted with the almost insoluble problems confronting both institutions over the question of where (if at all) to enlarge next, aside from the relatively uncontroversial case of the Western Balkans.

The strategic watershed of 1989/90 also created a whole set of new challenges in Europe-Russia and Europe-US relations. In these two fields, up to now, the complementarity between NATO and the EU's roles has perhaps been clearer than any close parallels, or conflicts, between them. If there is still a 'hard' security threat from Russia it is clearly the responsibility of NATO, if anyone, to deal with it and the same applies (at least so far) to the obverse issue of pursuing military arms control and confidence building. If there is a problem of constructing a framework for sustainable, mutually profitable coexistence with Russia in the fields of trade, finance and migration, and for tackling soft-security dimensions like energy relations, pollution control, nuclear *safety*, disease and so forth, that can only be the EU's task. Whether either institution has yet risen fully to its responsibilities is another question, and the continuing confusions and inadequacy of Russia strategies on both sides have doubtless been aggravated by the procedural blocks in the way of direct, frank, NATO-EU discussion on such overarching issues. Even so, it is clear that divisions *within* each body have been far more important in this context than possible crossed wires between institutional approaches.

Much the same is true of the relations with the USA, which split both the EU and NATO's members along similar lines at the sharpest point of the Iraq crisis in the spring of 2003. The difference is that while European policies on Russia have been hampered not least by a collective failure to take the issue seriously enough or invest major resources in it, both NATO and the EU have carried out very significant adaptations of their agendas in response to US needs and demands to keep

Atlantic partnership alive. Since 2001, NATO has shifted its entire conceptual and operational agenda towards dealing with non-traditional, transnational threats such as terrorism, proliferation, and weak states, and is now conducting by far its largest operation ever in a non-European theatre, Afghanistan. The EU meanwhile has developed far more extensive and for its citizens – burdensome policies and actions against terrorism and proliferation, and on transport safety, travel control, money laundering and a host of connected issues, than it would have done in pursuit of its own security needs alone. On one of the hottest individual challenges, Iran's nuclear plans, it started tackling the problem in a complementary way to the USA only to end up now in complete alignment. Considering that these results were achieved during a period when many European leaders and publics in both institutions were profoundly out of sympathy with George W Bush's Administration, and were having to withhold cooperation from it in some further, legally or ethically sensitive fields, what is most striking is how well the transatlantic relationship survived as a result right up to the turning-point of President Barack Obama's election.

As commentators have not been slow to point out, the new President has eased some problems of Atlantic relations but thrown others more clearly into focus. He seems free of misgivings about the EU's emerging strategic role and, if anything, keen to encourage more self-driven European activism in military affairs and security generally. In part, this reflects his greater affinity with the 'European values' highlighted during tussles with his predecessor, in matters such as legality, the value of multilateralism, cross-cultural understanding, and arms control. The other component is, however, an increasingly open element of *distance* from Europe's home-grown agenda, bred by the same shifts in the USA's own existential interests that gained a sharper unilateralist expression under George W Bush. The Obama Administration has tried to 'reset' relations with Russia not primarily in order to make Europe safer, or even to bind Russia closer into Western institutions, but for its own reasons including a drive for strategic nuclear cuts – negotiated, of course, bilaterally; the familiar need for Russian help on other regional crises such as Iran; and a general interest in reducing national liabilities by allaying risks. It has re-planned its forward missile defence deployments in a way that still protects against Iran and mollifies Russia, but no longer gives any physical reassurance to the Europeans, who are the most nervous about Russian proximity.

The fact is that the real threats to the USA itself for two years now have all been economic, and they have pushed the issues of co-dependence and co-existence with a rising China – or with the BRICs more generally – to the top of Washington's

external priorities. True, in the short- and medium-term, the need to cope with the global economic crash has kept Europe visible as the USA's main economic/financial partner and co-owner of the Bretton Woods inheritance. However, this is another aspect of European affairs where the EU has all the competence and NATO none at all, and at times even the EU's profile has suffered from scene-stealing efforts by national politicians. While the US recovery is gathering strength, the latest Greek crisis has distinctly tarnished the euro. In addition, as has been pointed out *ad nauseam*, at the Copenhagen Conference of December 2009, the EU was shut out of Obama's final horse-trading for a bargain with other national powers – not because European policies were wrong, but because they were too 'right' (i.e. advanced) to have any hope of providing a solution with which others could live.

One lesson that this suggests is somewhat of a cliché by now, namely that Europe is intrinsically of less strategic importance to the USA following two historic successes in pushing back earlier threats, at the end of the Cold War and with the Big Bang enlargement. The other is also simple, albeit harder for many to accept: that the circumstances of this US shift threaten the continued rationale of the EU much less than that they do that of NATO. For one thing, the EU has its independent *raison d'être* and stands on so many different legs of competence. For another, the EU has a residual and not necessarily shrinking relevance for Washington in the economic and functional field, including many specialized areas important for transnational Western security. To the extent that US ties are still a component of security from Europe's own point of view – in the double sense that Europe wants to get certain things from America and at certain times to restrain it – this in itself would be reason to take the EU's significance as a strategic actor more seriously. Can the same point be made about the institutions' relative importance as direct purveyors of security to their European members?

Here, the question which aspects of security matter most must be posed again. In just about every dimension other than state-to-state military security relations, including quite 'hard' aspects of border and migration control, crime fighting, and anti-terrorism, Europe is protected by the EU and/or by global frameworks of regulation and cooperation, not by NATO. The limited exceptions include NATO's ability to safeguard energy and other trade routes by military (mainly naval) means, its NBC expertise, which could also be used in civilian accidents, its input to the understanding of cyber-threats, and its remaining competence in civil emergency operations (although Europeans seemed less keen to resort to these than to the EU's corresponding 'Community mechanism' that has solid funds

behind it). Some would argue, of course, that NATO's fight in Afghanistan is defending its home territories against Islamic extremism; but to this author at least the claim rings increasingly hollow, not least because of statistics showing how the Iraq and Afghanistan interventions have actually increased the world's total of terrorism. More mundanely it can be noted that only a minority of NATO members have been attacked by Islamists on their home soil up to now.

Even the strongest apologists for Afghanistan would find it difficult, in any case, to show that Europe's homeland has gained as much from NATO's new pattern of activity as it has lost through the last two decades' downgrading of territorial defence cooperation within the Alliance, seen most clearly perhaps in the sharp reduction of foreign troop stationing. NATO's historic decision not to extend such a presence, or nuclear weapon deployment, into any new member state after 1989 has left a large part of Allied territory almost devoid of the physical evidence of the Alliance, and even such exercises as are held have had non-home-defence scenarios. Politically, individual Allies who have felt themselves pressured by Russia have been unimpressed by NATO's responses, up to and including the quite serious attacks experienced by Estonia in 2007 over the Soviet statue dispute. All of this explains why a group of leading Central European individuals sent President Obama a letter in July 2009 calling for NATO to turn more attention back to 'East-West' issues and to the basic defence of its homeland.<sup>13</sup> Alongside the aspects needing refinement in NATO's new expeditionary policies and the shortfall in related capacities, this growing pressure for the Alliance to 'come home' has been and will remain a central theme in NATO's ongoing Strategic Concept debate.

Whether this gap in traditional defence cooperation matters or not – a question raised again from a Northern perspective below – it is clear that the EU is not in a position to fill it. Despite some highly qualified language about mutual military assistance in the Lisbon Treaty,<sup>14</sup> there is no political basis in the Union today for exchanging guarantees among all its members and still less for building a real mutual defence mechanism parallel to NATO. Even if the Europeans wished to attempt this, British and French nuclear capacity is patently inadequate to maintain the larger framework of deterrence against Russia (or others), and important EU states including Germany are opposed to taking co-responsibility for a nuclear

<sup>13</sup> Text at <http://www.opendemocracy.net/article/east-central-europe-to-barack-obama-an-open-letter>.

<sup>14</sup> Article 47.2 of the Treaty requires states to assist each other if requested in the case of military attack, but it defers both to NATO's primacy for its members and to the special policies of non-allied states.

defence anyway. More generally, the 21 EU members who also belong to NATO cannot wish to hasten the weakening of Alliance credibility, and of US national engagement, by suggesting they have an easy alternative up their sleeve.

It would thus be surprising if the EU made any early moves even to explore the substantial conditions for a 'common defence policy'. What it has resolved to do is to raise to a new level its common approach to non-warlike contingencies, now enshrined in Article 222 of the Lisbon Treaty regarding 'solidarity' in the event of major terrorist attacks, natural disasters, and their consequences.<sup>15</sup> The Article commits member states to answer each other's call for help in such cases with all the 'means at their disposal', not excluding the use of military personnel and assets in a civil support mode. Moreover, as the Treaty language includes obligations to help forestall such contingencies and prepare 'joint' reactions, the Brussels organs will have to consider how to develop their own structures, capacities, and procedures to underpin and coordinate possible member-state inputs. This together with other aspects of Lisbon follow-up<sup>16</sup> could presage a step change in the EU's self-awareness and operational readiness as an *internal* security provider. The range of roles it may play could also be described in a real, and partly new, sense as *territorial* protection – albeit against different risks and 'enemies' from the kind once linked with that concept in NATO.

### **3. Northern Agendas**

If these issues and choices are looked at through Northern European eyes, the one option that does not really arise for anyone in the region<sup>17</sup> is to 'adopt' one European institution as sole protector and reject the other. In Southern Europe, nations such as Turkey and Cyprus may leverage their favoured institution against the one they are locked out of or have a grievance against; while the UK and some

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<sup>15</sup> For more detail see Quille, G., *The Lisbon Treaty and its implications for CFSP/ESDP*, European Parliament Briefing Paper (2009), at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/document/activities/cont/200805/20080513ATT28796/20080513ATT28796EN.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> Including a new EU Committee (of high officials) on Internal Security (COSI), and changes in security-relevant Commission portfolios.

<sup>17</sup> Iceland has been an exception since internal polarization tends to make its strongest NATO supporters anti-EU, and EU supporters sometimes sceptical about NATO. Younger thinkers are, however, starting to see the value of multi-institutional support for such a small and isolated nation.

other more 'Atlanticist' members of both institutions have sometimes openly tried to cut EU ambitions down to size to protect NATO.<sup>18</sup> In Europe's north, by contrast, the small size and asymmetrical plight of all Nordic and Baltic states gives them all a basic stake in the *multilateralization* of regional security governance. Whether they articulate this as a policy principle or not,<sup>19</sup> their natural strategy is to explore every institutional framework for maximum profit, either as full members or partners: provided of course – and here the other Northern peculiarity comes in – that the price to be paid is not too high in terms of sovereign freedom and national identity. Thus, Norway has exploited all forms of security relationship with the EU short of membership, including contributing to peace missions under the European Security and Defence Policy (now the Common Security and Defence Policy, CSDP)<sup>20</sup>, and Finland and Sweden do the same with NATO. All three of these countries have, moreover, supported EU-NATO compatibility and worked for positive synergy and the defusing of institutional tensions wherever they could. The Baltic States may initially have been less impressed by the EU as a security player, but they have never tried to obstruct the CSDP or abstain from its missions, and have recently been given a harsh insight into the importance of economic security where the EU was their most obvious front-line protector.

The deep strategic reality is that all the states of the region have relied, and still rely for their survival and comfort, on the more vulnerable Northern territories getting the protection they need. Sweden and Finland benefited as much as anyone did from NATO's success in maintaining regional balance and deterrence throughout the Cold War. Nowadays, the Baltics' alliance status protects the Eastern Baltic basin just as surely as Sweden and Finland's abstaining from NATO membership has helped to keep tensions low – and indirectly, to limit the strain on national defence resources – throughout the region. These are pointers to the fact that lack of Nordic unity may be not only compatible with, but perhaps integral to the way the region's security is assured – in 21st century conditions no

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<sup>18</sup> The only nearby state recently behaving this way is Poland, which – for instance – tried hard in 2007–2008 to give NATO a lead role in energy security. Denmark made EU defence one of its four opt-outs from the Maastricht Treaty, but Danish elite and popular opinion has turned round since and hopes to scrap the optouts to allow deeper engagement in EU security work.

<sup>19</sup> In Finland and Norway, while the elite see the need for multilateral back-up clearly, there is also a cultural disposition to stress self-reliance and favour a bilateral adjustment to 'living with' the Eastern challenge. Sweden is also more sincerely multilateralist on global issues than in its choices at home.

<sup>20</sup> This change of nomenclature was contained in the Treaty of Lisbon.

less than in the Cold War. To take a further example, in the mid-1990s when the Nordic States declined to create a defence community themselves with the three Baltic States but settled into a common policy of promoting the latter's entry into NATO,<sup>21</sup> this could be seen as a lack of neighbourliness and a step back from regional unity. It can also and more correctly be read as a pragmatic recognition that only big-power guarantees could shield the newfound independence of the South-East Baltic coast, and that securing this new potential grey zone was vital for the whole region's accustomed balance and stability.

It seems safe to conclude, then, that no one in this region could want NATO to fail in its strategy-writing exercise, or to decline too fast in relative status, within the European architecture or globally. Furthermore, the Nordics would like to see aspirations for closer NATO-EU dialogue and cooperation written into policy manifestos from both sides, and the Baltics should not strongly disagree. Secondly, and more substantially, it would seem to be an objective interest for the entire region that NATO's future policies should be strong, united, and shrewd enough to hold at bay whatever residual strategic threat exists from Russia as a consequence either of Russia's aggressive self-assertion of or of its weaknesses and possible collapse. If US *military* inputs and assurances are needed to this end, it is through renewal and adjustment of NATO's fundamental mutual defence agenda that these must be secured.

It is here, however, that the problems and complications start. First, the Nordic/Baltic community cannot lobby in NATO as a bloc because of Swedish and Finnish non-membership. It is telling that the one official seminar these states were allowed to host during the Strategic Concept consultation process was on peace missions and crisis management, free of any reference to Europe's own needs.<sup>22</sup> The region's countries that do have a 'vote' in NATO are among the Alliance's smallest members in population terms. They do not have any intrinsic means of leverage over the USA, *when and if* Washington has decided that the boundary between them and Russia is not a point of keen strategic concern for itself. At the moment, the USA is taking a relatively relaxed approach even to the issue of future control of an ice-free Arctic where Norway, at the least, has an influential part to

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<sup>21</sup> The idea of a Nordic/Baltic pact had been mooted by the British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd and the US analyst Ron Asmus (who later changed his view and helped to guide the Baltics into NATO).

<sup>22</sup> The event was held in Helsinki on 4 March 2010, see [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/events\\_61864.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/events_61864.htm).



play.<sup>23</sup> After 9/11, the Bush Administration offered a new chance for Europeans to gain its favour – and they might hope, some extra strategic protection – by joining its ‘coalitions’ to attack Afghanistan and Iraq at a time when their neighbours were reluctant or hostile. The three Baltic States and Denmark duly made full use of this, and Norway and Iceland on a lesser scale. Today, however, what Washington wants most urgently in Afghanistan are substantial counter-insurgency troops that no one from Northern Europe can supply, while in the medium term it is clear that Obama’s team are neither likely to start another controversial invasion nor particularly interested in splitting Europe again. If the Alliance’s leading power neither worries much about the North *per se* nor has cause to pay the region’s states for *ad hoc* political favours, the laws of politics make it unlikely that Northern voices will dominate in strategy debates.

Where Northern demands are similar to those of larger Central European members – notably Poland – there is more chance of their being heard; and this is why the revised NATO Concept is more likely than not to include agreement on measures to signal concern and solidarity towards the Alliance’s new peripheries. Clearer guidelines on consultation in national/local crises, more exercises (with local defence relevance), continued cooperative monitoring, updated reinforcement plans, and perhaps more infrastructure currently seem to be within the range of the possible. They are unlikely to satisfy the most nervous local states, but equally cannot be pushed too far without meeting objections from those Nordics who are more concerned about non-provocation and stability. For the fact is that the local states’ underlying stake in each others’ safety is far from leading them to agree on the best way to assure it. Rather, their prescriptions on individual policy choices differ according to their general security cultures as well as variables in their risk calculations. Even in the Cold War, the three Nordic Allies imposed limitations on the way NATO was allowed to defend them – no local nuclear or foreign force stationing, no exercises in Norway’s extreme north. Today, Norway is among the NATO states calling the loudest for a disarmament solution to the quandary over NATO’s tactical nuclear weapons, while Sweden would make this conditional on Russia’s also disarming, and the Baltic States want to keep the nuclear deterrent

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<sup>23</sup> The US Arctic strategy adopted in late 2009 calls for peaceful exploitation and multilateral governance in the High North and discounts any imminent military competition. The USA has not yet signed the Law of the Sea Convention that would allow it to make territorial claims in polar seas, and would have only modest claims in connection with Alaska anyway.

posture unchanged.<sup>24</sup> On the Arctic, Sweden's analysis has tended to highlight new Russian threats while Norway and Iceland would like the Alliance to keep a non-provocative posture there and to show its 'softer' side (supporting search and rescue, etc). In short, the second weakness of any putative Northern lobby in the Alliance's current debates is that it is rarely united – with the usual fault lines running between the Baltics and the rest, or if the whole Baltic is included, between Poland and Germany.

It would not be hard to find similar cases during security-relevant debates in the EU. The limited success of the EU's Northern Dimension in its first incarnation (from 1999) has been ascribed to Finland's wanting to manipulate it too much for bilateral purposes. Poland stood alone in holding up an EU-Russia agreement in 2006 in protest against Russian behaviour over its meat exports. The above-mentioned regional variations in energy security have led the Baltic States to join Poland in strong protest against a Russian 'Nordstream' gas pipeline bypassing them to supply Germany, while Finland has been calm on the issue and Sweden – after debate – recently chose not to oppose it. Denmark more often than not agrees to disagree with Sweden and Finland on intra-EU issues including security-related ones.

Even so, the calculus of Northern interests and influence is interestingly different from the NATO case, starting with the fact that in the EU the US is absent and the range of alignment options correspondingly changed. There is a clearer North-South dialectic on several issues including the agricultural policy, transparency, budget control, foreign aid, gender policy and more. All countries do have the veto in foreign and security policy matters – as the cited Polish case shows – and two or more Northern states acting together have managed to visibly shape common policies in areas such as environmental governance or the civilian side of crisis management. In terms of influencing the EU's strategic development Swedish and Finnish non-alliance has not so far proved a handicap, while if anything the Baltic States have sometimes marginalized themselves through a too aggressive pro-US stance. Even Norway, as a non-member, appears to have made a real impact on the framing of the EU's Arctic strategies in a Commission paper of 2008 and Council of Ministers guidelines from December 2009.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Chalmers, M., and Lunn, S., *NATO's Tactical Nuclear Dilemma*, RUSI Occasional Paper: London, March 2010.

<sup>25</sup> Texts at [http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/press/press\\_rel201108\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/press/press_rel201108_en.html) and <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/App/NewsRoom/loadDocument.aspx?id=1850&lang=EN&directory=EN/foraff/&fileName=111814.pdf>.

Greater openings for North European influence can, of course, only help the region's security if the EU has something to offer in that respect. The Union's non-military strengths are arguably less fully applicable in the Nordic/Baltic space than some other parts since levels of crime, terrorism, and other lawlessness are low, natural disasters and disease rarely (so far) cause such national disruption as in the Mediterranean, rich Northern societies need less subsidy from structural funds, and border control problems are mainly unidirectional with the old enemy – Russia and to some extent Belarus – as the culprit. As has been noted, stricter EU internal security rules can actually be felt as oppressive in Northern communities that feel less vulnerable and are keener on their liberties. EU support for nuclear safety improvements and the disposal of NBC waste in Russia's north has helped with a more existential Nordic concern but is not much known outside expert circles. EMU as a framework for financial and economic security has proved its worth to Finland but is not yet acceptable to Swedes or open to Baltic accession. Finally, while the EU has been a participant and supporter of the Baltic and Barents sub-regional groupings as well as the Northern Dimension's owner, this cuts both ways in terms of perception as any valuable EU inputs to these processes can be seen as helping Russia as much as or more than the Western members. The new Baltic Strategy that the EU is now working on is not likely to evade these contradictions even if it succeeds – as it should – in improving the definition of a 'soft security' agenda that can be shared by all Baltic neighbours, and for which the Union can bring real added value.

The reality is that despite Northern enthusiasm for some more modern discourses such as environmental security, the true strategic agendas of Nordic and Baltic states remain viscerally focused on national territorial survival. Just as the EU would struggle to replace NATO as a protector for all Europe in this sense, it could only start to be taken more seriously by its Northern members if it could show ability to act as a real restraint and transformative influence on Russia, and/or come to nations' aid in response to new forms of Eastern aggression. It cannot do either thing today, but does that mean it never will?

Aside from its internal policy divergences, the EU's problems in handling Russia are a compound of obvious military/strategic weakness and of its *sui generis* strength as a post-modern, in part genuinely supranational entity. Russia is even further along the scale than the Nordics in clinging to national identity and autonomy, with more reason (if shrinking evidence) to believe it can preserve them in a globalized world. It has been argued that the great bulk of its elite are simply

incapable of seeing what the EU is.<sup>26</sup> While that may not change soon or ever, the obvious way forward is for the EU to speak more in a language that Russia can understand, i.e. to define and protect its strategic interests almost as a nation might do, and then find ways of using its idiosyncratic strengths for leverage on disputed issues. The tactic has not been without success in some limited areas, e.g. in negotiations with Russia over Kaliningrad access before the 2004 enlargement, or when the Polish stance did actually drive Moscow to withdraw its meat embargo. Meanwhile, the EU may serve Europe and the North's stability in two other ways not open to NATO: through the much greater range of practical business it does daily with Russia in non-controversial fields, and through its ability to pose as mediator as seen in the Georgia ceasefire negotiations of 2008 and more recent interventions in Russia-Ukraine pipeline disputes.

## **Conclusions**

It follows that if the Nordic/Baltic states could reach more common positions on their Russia-related security concerns, the EU might offer not only a more open ear than NATO, but real capacity to promote the goals in question - not by force but with its money-bags, functional assets, and non-zero-sum diplomacy. It is too early to write it off as a potential actor and defender of its members' interests in the Arctic, even if Russia currently hopes to keep it out.<sup>27</sup> Finally, and perhaps most intriguingly, could the Lisbon Treaty's new 'solidarity' obligations develop into something tangibly underpinning local states' security? Against military attack, the answer for the moment is No; and if a Baltic state (for instance) called on EU partners to respond forcibly to a non-military emergency that it saw as Russia-provoked, it is doubtful whether Europe's larger, agenda-setting powers would want to face the evident escalatory risks involved. However, if the usually shrewd Finns are calling for Brussels to work seriously on Article 222 (non-military) 'solidarity' contingencies,<sup>28</sup> they must have some sense that building a habit of and capacity for mutual aid in more innocuous cases - say, natural disasters - might gradually

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<sup>26</sup> Haukkala, H., *The EU-Russia Strategic Partnership: The limits of post-sovereignty in international relations*, Routledge: London, 2010.

<sup>27</sup> Bailes, A.J.K., Potential roles of NATO and the EU in High Northern Security, *Polar Law Yearbook 2010*, publication pending.

<sup>28</sup> Speech by Foreign Minister Stubb, 1 March 2010, at <http://formin.finland.fi/Public/Print.aspx?contentid=187846&nodeid=15145&culture=en-US&contentlan=2>

lead the EU towards a deeper sense of common responsibility for its members' survival against all hazards. At the least, showing a common readiness to explore the new clauses could be a way to raise useful new questions in Russian minds. Finally, if it were possible for any Nordic or Baltic elite to look unemotionally at the relative probability of threats and risks to their territory – as the students mentioned at the start were asked to do, but as is rarely possible in real politics – they would have to concede that the kind of crises the EU deals with (especially after Lisbon) are more likely and frequent than the direct armed threats still covered by NATO. However, they cannot be expected to cut NATO out of their answers until the latter have gone for good.

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## THE RELUCTANT ALLY

Janusz Bugajski\*

Gone are the favoured days of the Bush administration when virtually any European country that was willing to send troops to join Washington's coalition of the willing in Iraq or Afghanistan would be courted and placed on track for NATO membership. Instead of a confident America, an undecided Europe, and an ineffectual Russia, we are now witnessing the emergence of a new "correlation of forces" on the old continent between a reluctant America, an undecided Europe, and a reenergized Russia.

Barack Obama's meeting with eleven government leaders from Central Europe during his trip to Prague to sign a new START nuclear weapons treaty with Dmitry Medvedev in early April was intended to demonstrate that relations with the new NATO allies have not been reset. In other words, despite attempts to upgrade relations with Russia, the U.S. will not downgrade its ties with the new democracies. However, the fact that Obama needs to periodically reassure the new allies indicates that several capitals remain troubled, not just about Russia's aspirations but also about U.S. and NATO policies.

Bordering states are concerned about Russia's ambitions in countries such as Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and Georgia, and the pressure that this can exert on their own security. As proof of NATO's Article 5 defence guarantees, they are pushing the Alliance to prepare full contingency plans for their own defence, to stage regular exercises in the eastern part of NATO, and to position NATO infrastructure on their territories. They also want greater clarity as to how NATO countries interpret Article 5 of the Washington Treaty together with proof that the Alliance has an effective deterrence policy.

Although it is cited as a pledge of protection by all NATO allies, Article 5 is highly ambiguous. It states that if one ally were attacked, NATO would take actions "deemed necessary", which may or may not include the use of armed force. Moreover, each ally would be at liberty to interpret the article in any way it chooses. The NATO treaty also fails to specify the appropriate reactions against non-traditional

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attacks, such as the use of irregular forces, minority proxies, or cyber assaults. Clarifications are urgently needed.

NATO's fifth annual air exercises over the three Baltic States were held in March. More significantly, NATO is planning to organize military manoeuvres in Latvia in October, which are styled as "Sabre Strike 2010." Over 2,000 American, Lithuania, Latvian, and Estonian troops are due to participate as well as transport ships in the first ground exercises in the Baltic countries since they joined the Alliance in 2004. Governments in the region want to transform these exercises into more regular events with a broader array of NATO members. They point out that Russia regularly stages military manoeuvres close to their borders without any NATO response. However, they face an uphill in this case primarily because of the reluctance of West European capitals to upset Moscow.

Anxieties about NATO's defence commitments have been reflected in its operational limitations. Despite incorporating ten new members over the past decade, there has been little growth in military capabilities among European allies. Of the approximately 2.5 million soldiers available to NATO, only 300,000 are deployable, with half available at any one time because of rotation requirements. In the view of many new allies, the core reason for NATO membership was to protect their national independence especially from possible Russian encroachments. However, a perplexing problem confronting the Alliance is the inability to reach consensus on defining and prioritizing threats. For instance, several CEE capitals interpreted the Russo-Georgia war of August 2008 as a direct challenge to NATO's security but failed to galvanize the Alliance against Russia's partition of Georgia. There are fears that this will encourage further Muscovite adventures, particularly at a time when Washington has adopted a low profile approach throughout the Black Sea and South Caucasus regions.

Despite its reassurances that it will not support the delineation of "spheres of interest," in practice the Obama administration concluded that it would not vigorously challenge Moscow in its immediate neighbourhood. It evidently calculated that even if Ukraine, Moldova, and other countries slip under closer Russian control, this will not damage U.S interests, which center on much more vital concerns such as Afghanistan, Iran, counter-terrorism, and nuclear proliferation.

Indeed, closer Russian supervision over many of the post-Soviet republics may even be considered beneficial by some members of the Obama team, as there will be fewer conflicts with Moscow as a result. This approach has been reinforced by the staunch opposition of the West Europeans to NATO enlargement eastward

and the election in Ukraine of a Moscow-friendly President, Viktor Yanukovych. In effect, Washington's approach constitutes an informal concordat with Moscow in agreeing on respective spheres of interest and some sort of nascent "balance of power" in Europe and Eurasia.

However, the longevity and effectiveness of any such agreement is likely to be tested, as balance has no permanence and Russia's appetite will grow with new acquisitions. In particular, resistance to Moscow's pressures and encroachments may result in violent conflict or it may more directly affect one of the new NATO members. Given this inauspicious and potentially unstable international environment, the Central Europeans will continue to seek Obama's commitment to five strategic "Nos:" no weakening of NATO's security guarantees; no U.S. military withdrawal from Europe; no redivision of the continent into spheres of influence; no closing of doors to further NATO enlargement eastwards; and no grand bargains with Moscow over the heads of former Soviet satellites.

For this reason, there are several significant landmarks in the coming months as the new democracies seek an upgrading of NATO's security commitments. First, the content of NATO's new Strategic Concept is important for defining the role of the Alliance. In particular, how Russia is depicted in the document, as a partner or a threat, will be vital. Second, NATO's Summit in Lisbon in November will be key, especially as to what commitments are made to mutual defence.

Third, the contours of the new Missile Defence (MD) system will need to be fleshed out as well as whether Russia is to be included in the planned system. The main reason Warsaw and Prague signed on to the original Bush MD version and why several states remain open to the Obama alternative is that it forges closer bilateral links with the U.S. at a time of doubt over NATO solidarity, as several West European states have reset their relations with Moscow to an even warmer setting than Washington.

President Obama's decision in September 2009 to scuttle the planned U.S. anti-ballistic missile defence shield raised security fears among America's new allies. In reality, missile defence against an Iranian threat has never been the burning issue for Warsaw, Prague, or other capitals in the region. It is the content of the security relationship with Washington that is of primary concern. The change of policy on missile defence opened up charges of American unpredictability. Governments in Poland, the Czech Republic, Romania, and the Baltic States view themselves as loyal allies, regardless of the identity of the U.S. administration. Rightly or wrongly, they joined the "coalition of the willing" in Iraq during the



Bush administration despite damaging their relations with several West European partners in order to assist Washington.

Although President Obama and his cabinet have underscored that the decision to shelve the missile shield was not dictated by Russia's opposition, Central Europeans remain sceptical and are not easily reassured by invocations of NATO's Article 5 defence guarantees. Warsaw, Prague, and other capitals will be closely watching Washington's subsequent moves. In the worst case scenario, the U.S. will mute its support for the future inclusion of Ukraine and Georgia in the NATO alliance, and will accede to signing a new European or Eurasian security charter as proposed by President Dmitry Medvedev, which is essentially designed to gut NATO, will not offer Georgia or other threatened states any meaningful self-defence assistance, and will ignore Russia's provocative actions against Estonia, Latvia, and other former satellites.

In Moscow's calculations, the decision on missile defence was a U.S. concession that could lead to more significant American capitulation in the former Soviet empire. The Kremlin is intent on re-establishing and expanding its zones of "privileged interests" – a concept that assumes Russia's right to determine its neighbours' foreign policies and security orientations and create counterparts to NATO and the European Union. Instead of establishing a strategic partnership between the U.S. and Russia, the "resetting" of relations risks missing the threat that Russia poses to its neighbours. The Kremlin's energy blackmail, military threats, and the persistent manipulation of ethnic and territorial disputes are intended to create dependent states along Russia's borders and to prevent them from developing into America's partners.

If the Obama administration is to effectively reassure Europe's new democracies and resist Russia's imperial impulses, then it must enhance the security of vulnerable countries. There are several concrete steps that it could take, such as formulating detailed NATO defence plans for all Alliance members bordering Russia, accelerating assistance in military modernization, and buttressing the territorial defence capabilities and military deterrents of the new allies. Without such measures, the Obama administration will be perceived as weak and wavering and Moscow may be tempted to further test its pliability by manufacturing conflicts with pro-American neighbours or more intensely interfering in their domestic politics.

## THE NEXT STEPS IN U.S.-LITHUANIA RELATIONS

Anne E. Derse\*

Presidential elections in the United States in 2008 and Lithuania in 2009, along with the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009, marked major shifts in the political landscape on both sides of the Atlantic. Therefore, this is an opportune time to take stock of U.S.-Lithuanian relations and to take a look at their future direction.

The United States considers Lithuania to be one of its strongest friends and allies. The two countries have close, cooperative, productive, and mutually beneficial relations. There are well-founded reasons for this friendship, the most important of which is its roots in shared values, as well as in mutual respect and shared interests.

Both the United States and Lithuania were born in struggles against oppression, struggles fuelled by strong commitment to freedom, democratic principles and values, and human rights. Even in its darkest years of Soviet occupation, Lithuania has been able to count on the United States to defend and advance those values on its behalf. Seventy years ago this summer, on 23 July, 1940, then-Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles stated categorically that the United States rejected the forcible incorporation of Lithuania and the other Baltic States into the Soviet Union. The United States stood firmly by this policy of non-recognition and continued to support the Baltic countries' independence for the next half-century, until that independence was once again secure and the last occupying soldiers had departed.

The United States steadfastly opposed the oppression and repression of captive and satellite states by the USSR throughout the long years of the Cold War. That opposition was perhaps best epitomized by Ronald Reagan's demand to Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev in 1987 to "tear down this wall," but it was both those public proclamations and 50 years of tough diplomacy that helped create the conditions that allowed courageous Lithuanian patriots to be the first to reclaim their freedom from the Soviet Union, and to show others the way.

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Americans rejoiced when Lithuania regained its independence. The United States then strongly supported the efforts to secure this freedom for all future generations through accession to the EU and NATO, the bulwarks of European security, stability, and prosperity. Lithuania, this year, celebrates 20 years as a sovereign and independent nation once again, and for more than half a decade as an increasingly influential member of NATO and the EU. This is a great achievement, and as a partner in making it a reality, the United States can take pride in it along with Lithuania.

As much as some had hoped that the end of the Cold War would represent “the end of history” and introduce a new era of peace, the international environment today is once again complex and challenging. A new era of transnational, multi-polar threats has dawned, and the emergence of these new threats demands new approaches to ensure national, regional, and global security. On the economic front, we are just beginning to emerge from the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s, with a great deal of work still to do to promote and sustain recovery and make it real in people’s lives, both at home and globally. The hard work of securing freedom and democratic values throughout Europe is not yet complete. New vision and energy are required to sustain and expand the spectacular progress that Europe achieved in the post-war period. The EU itself is undergoing historic, transformative changes. The United States supports these changes, which it believes will make Europe an even stronger American partner, but they will require adaptability on both sides of the Atlantic.

In both Lithuania and the United States, new leaders are developing and implementing their policies to meet these new challenges. New generations of young people who do not have direct, personal experience of the Cold War are moving towards leadership positions in both countries. The goals that guided cooperation under the Baltic Charter after Lithuania regained independence – to support Lithuania and the other Baltic countries’ path to full Euro-Atlantic integration – have largely been achieved. Therefore, bilaterally, as well, relations have moved into an important new phase. Vice President Biden said in Bucharest last autumn that the question for the United States and its democratic partners in this region, such as Lithuania, is no longer what the United States can do for you, but what we can do together, as full partners ready to meet common challenges.

Therefore, how, in this new era, should these two countries further deepen and widen their cooperation? What new vision should guide them? I will focus on three key areas of the relationship: our security and political partnership;

strengthening ties, including commercial ties, between our people; and our joint commitment to promoting democracy and human rights at home and abroad.

The question of security is often the first to arise in discussions with Lithuanian colleagues about relations with the U.S, and it is a question with a simple and straightforward answer: as a NATO ally, the United States is unequivocally committed to Lithuania's defence. Lithuania and the United States have a superb security partnership, and the United States is committed to maintaining and strengthening that partnership. Secretary of State Hillary R. Clinton recently told the Atlantic Council: "I want to reaffirm as strongly as I can the United States' commitment to honour Article 5 of the NATO Treaty. No Ally – or adversary – should ever question our determination on this point. It is the bedrock of the alliance and an obligation that time will not erode."

The United States backs up those words not only with its strong national commitment to maintain defence forces second to none, but with a drive to strengthen NATO itself. President Obama set out U.S. policy in April 2009, when he said, "We must ensure that NATO is equipped and capable of facing down the threats and challenges of this new era." Secretary of Defence Robert Gates elaborated in Washington on 23 February 2010, calling for serious operational and institutional reform of NATO and significantly enhanced resources for NATO. Speaking at a NATO Strategic Concept Seminar, he said. "NATO is not now nor should it ever be a talk shop...it is a military alliance with real world obligations that have life-or-death consequences." Secretary Gates also said that NATO must have the means to back up its commitments, and that the new NATO Strategic Concept, which is to be completed this year, "must be clear that Article 5 means what it says: an attack on one is an attack on all." Then, he added: "The concept also must go further, to strengthen Article 5's credibility with a firm commitment to enhance deterrence through appropriate contingency planning, military exercises and force development."

It is in the context of this shared effort to enhance deterrence that the United States proposed a new phased and adaptive approach to missile defence last summer. Using proven technology and mobile platforms, this new approach will provide significant defensive capabilities against the current threat in a much shorter period of time, over a much broader geographic area, than the previous plan. It is a tangible U.S. contribution to NATO's mission of collective defence, and a concrete manifestation of American commitment to fulfil Article 5 obligations.

Lithuania also takes NATO's commitment to collective defence seriously, as it has demonstrated so clearly in Afghanistan. As a proportion of population and GDP,

Lithuania's contribution in Afghanistan is one of the most impressive in NATO. The United States is grateful to all Lithuanians for their country's significant contribution to restoring peace and securing freedom in Afghanistan. I was honoured to visit Afghanistan with a Lithuanian team shortly after taking up my duties in Vilnius, and to see for myself the contribution Lithuania is making. I was pleased to see that U.S. personnel, both military and civilian, were serving side by side with Lithuanian forces in the Ghor Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT). In addition, the partnership in Ghor Province is being strengthened. The United States has assigned a new agriculture expert to the PRT, and under the Partnership Program between the Pennsylvania National Guard and Lithuanian military, a joint U.S.-Lithuanian police training team is preparing to deploy to Ghor Province. As the situation in Afghanistan develops, the United States and Lithuania will look for even more ways to strengthen their cooperation to support common goals.

In a security issue that is closer to home for Lithuania, the United States also strongly supports the continuation of NATO's Baltic Air Policing mission for as long as necessary. That mission is another concrete manifestation of NATO's commitment to Lithuanian and Baltic security. In addition, it is also a concrete manifestation of American commitment – in late 2010, American fighter jets and personnel will take on the air policing mission for the third time.

The United States and Lithuania are strong security partners not just in NATO, but bilaterally as well. The two countries engage in a range of regional and bilateral training events and exercises, including four in 2010. The United States has provided Lithuania with more than \$75 million of equipment, training, and sales of advanced weapons systems, including Javelin antitank and Stinger antiaircraft systems. U.S. naval vessels regularly enjoy port visits to Klaipeda. Four ships – the frigates USS Doyle and USS Hall, Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS Bobo, and the 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet Flagship USS Mt. Whitney – made such visits in 2009, and the USS Vicksburg visited Klaipeda this May.

Active dialogue and regular contact between the American and Lithuanian military leadership are ongoing, with visits to Lithuania by the commanders of U.S. Army Europe and the Special Operations Command Europe, the Assistant Secretary of Defence for International Affairs and others just in the past year. The Lithuanian Defence Minister and Chief of Defence met their counterparts for comprehensive discussions in Washington in 2009 and 2010. I was with Minister Juknevičienė in Washington for her meeting with Secretary Gates, and I know the respect in which the Lithuanian military is held by the U.S. military.

All of these are tangible contributions that the United States is making, and will continue to make, to ensure Lithuania's security.

U.S. relations with other countries can also affect Lithuania's sense of security. Not surprisingly, Lithuanians are intensely interested in the Obama administration's approach to relations with Russia.

President Obama has underscored his commitment to engagement with Russia – not as an end in itself, but as a means to an end: to achieve concrete results in areas in which joint efforts will benefit the participating countries, and the world.

We are convinced that this engagement is yielding results. The New START Treaty signed on 8 April in Prague was a historic achievement, cementing the new atmosphere between the U.S. and Russia in which the two sides can cooperate in areas of mutual interest while also engaging in constructive and respectful dialog in areas where our interests diverge. We are cooperating to stabilize Afghanistan, confronting the Iranian threat, combating piracy in the Indian Ocean, promoting disarmament and strengthening nuclear security, and fighting trafficking in narcotics and persons. We have created a new Bilateral Presidential Commission, to further all these important global goals, and also to broaden bilateral ties in culture, science, and security. In addition, the United States is seeking to establish a NATO-Russia relationship that produces concrete results and draws NATO and Russia closer together, including on missile defence and arms control.

At the same time, Americans are realists. Given their different histories, experiences, and perspectives, the United States and Russia do not always have overlapping interests, and there will not always be agreement. The United States has real differences with Russia on important matters of principle. For example, the U.S. supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states and rejects the notion of spheres of influence. The U.S. will continue to press Russia to live up to its commitments on Georgia. Russia's new military doctrine states that NATO's enlargement and global actions constitute a military danger to Russia. On the contrary, the U.S. strongly believes that the enlargement of both the EU and NATO – extending peace, stability, and prosperity across the European continent – has increased security and prosperity for Russia as well. Moreover, all states have the right to determine their own future and decide which alliances to join, and NATO's door remains open to those who are willing and able to meet its conditions. The United States believes that the Treaty of Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) has been a cornerstone of conventional arms control, transparency, and confidence building, and believes it should remain so in the future.

The United States believes that Russia's proposals on European security contain constructive ideas, and is prepared to engage seriously with Russia on this important topic. However, the U.S. is prepared to do that in the fora that exist for that purpose: the OSCE and the NATO-Russia Council. New treaties are not needed. In addition, Russia must live up to the principles and values on human rights and individual liberties that it committed to uphold when it accepted the NATO-Russia Founding Act.

The United States is committed to engaging with Russia to promote global peace and stability. In areas of disagreement with Russia, however, the U.S. will also continue to constructively manage the differences while not conceding on its principles.

Russia is not the only external factor affecting the U.S.-Lithuanian relationship. Many people wonder whether Lithuania's growing stature as an active and influential member of the European Union is coming at a cost to the relationship with the United States. Not only is that not the case, but the opposite is true. Lithuania's membership in the EU enhances relations with the United States. The European Union is a key global partner for the U.S. We share history, common values, and the richest network of commercial ties and people-to-people connections of any two entities on earth, and the United States wants to strengthen those relations as much as possible. Working together, the U.S. and the EU have enormous power to act for good on a global scale. Lithuania's presence enriches the EU and makes it a better partner for America, and the U.S. engages more intensively now than ever with representatives of Lithuania – not only on matters of bilateral concern to Washington and Vilnius, but also on the full range of issues on the agenda between the U.S. and the EU in Brussels and Strasbourg.

This new level of engagement between the U.S. and Lithuania provides a host of new opportunities to bring Americans and Lithuanians together. It also presents new challenges in maintaining the historically strong links that the two countries have already established. How can those ties between Lithuanians and Americans be maintained and strengthened even further?

One giant step in that direction came when Lithuania joined the U.S. Visa Waiver Program in 2008, making travel easier for Lithuanians and promoting stronger connections between them and Americans. Moreover, the people of Lithuania have seized the opportunity. Travel to the U.S. for business and tourism has boomed, growing by 40% in 2009 alone. As economic recovery gains speed in both countries, the number of travellers will climb even higher.

The United States has also sought to build closer people-to-people ties with Lithuania through programs for studying in the U.S., university partnerships, and teacher exchanges, including the prestigious Fulbright Program. Twenty years after independence, these important programs deserve to be reviewed, revitalized, and expanded to bring them up to the level that the United States enjoys with other key EU partners. University partnerships can only be effective through committed efforts by citizens and faculty, but they pay invaluable dividends when successful, in increased exchanges, joint research, and long-term relationships. The United States is working and will continue to work to build these partnerships, as well as to build, together with interested Lithuanians, a strong network of alumni of U.S. exchange programs in Lithuania.

On exchanges, there is one area, in particular, where I want to focus my first efforts: student exchanges at the high school level. One of the best investments we can make in the long-term health of our bilateral relationship, and a proven way to build lasting cooperation between U.S. and Lithuanian schools, communities, and a generation of young people in both countries, is to increase the number of high school students studying in each other's country. Exchange experiences during the high school years have the highest positive, long-term impact in terms of promoting mutual understanding and common values. They change lives for participants in remarkable and fundamental ways. I am now exploring some promising avenues to increase high school student exchanges and am seeking assistance from American and Lithuanian partners who share my belief and are willing to support increased high school exchanges as an important investment in the future of our relationship.

In addition, as evidence grows that we are beginning to emerge from the global economic crisis, what about commercial ties? The U.S. and Lithuania are both working rather hard to recover. Both have recently launched important new programs to boost investment, exports, growth and jobs, and to reform and transform their economies in fundamental ways for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These programs present significant new commercial opportunities.

As longstanding strategic partners, Lithuania and the United States will work together proactively to explore ways to increase trade and investment, binding their economies, and their people, more closely together. Working with my counterparts in Vilnius and Washington, we will identify promising new commercial prospects, bring them to the attention of our companies, and facilitate businesses and entrepreneurs' efforts to increase bilateral trade and investment. Prime Minister



Kubilius launched this process with his visits to the United States in February and again in May 2010. In between those two trips, U.S. Department of Commerce Deputy Assistant Secretary Juan Verde, responsible for U.S. commercial relations with Europe and Eurasia, visited Vilnius. Given the opportunities he observed, he offered support for the first-ever Commerce Department-certified trade mission to Lithuania. Planning is now underway.

The bilateral Science and Technology Agreement that was ratified by the Seimas in April provides another opportunity, and can be a new framework to strengthen research, education, and commercial cooperation to benefit both the United States and Lithuania.

Even more than shared commercial, educational, or other interests, however, what binds Lithuania and the United States together most strongly, now and for the future, are the shared values of democracy and human rights. The United States' strongest relationships are with those countries with which it shares not only interests, but values. Lithuania's love of liberty makes it the perfect example.

Everyone knows Winston Churchill's famous quote about democracy being the worst form of government – except for all the others. He was right; democracy is often a messy, slow, fractious, and difficult way to govern. However, because democracy reflects the people's will, is based on the rule of law rather than the whims of fallible human beings, and requires leaders to be accountable to the people, it is the best guarantor of individual freedom that exists.

Democracy is a demanding form of government for another reason, as well. Democratic values and respect for human rights are not naturally occurring phenomena. The work of sustaining them, even in mature democracies, is never done. To succeed, democracy requires strong, enlightened governmental and societal leaders, along with informed citizens, to engage every day in order to support and expand democratic values and human rights. Democratic values must regularly be taught at school and reinforced at home, and supported by a strong legal framework and strong democratic institutions. Democratic governments and societies must work actively to fulfil the promise of human rights, of equal rights, for everyone.

In the segregationist Alabama of 1965, 45 years ago, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., led thousands of people from Selma to Montgomery in a march in support of civil rights. Just a few months later, Congress passed and President Johnson signed the historic Voting Rights Act. Many Americans worked for many years to correct one of the darkest stains on America's democracy: the legacy of slavery and racism.

From the time that the nation was founded, many Americans committed to freedom, like Dr. King, worked to correct this wrong. Others stood against them. The American nation and American society were torn apart for many decades on this issue. The struggle was sometimes violent, and Americans died because of it, and not only during the Civil War. Through the steady work of ordinary citizens and the principled stands taken by leaders that they elected, in the end, America succeeded. On the night that he was elected in 2008 as the first African-American President of the United States, Barack Obama said, “If there is anyone who still doubts that America is a place where all things are possible, who still wonders if the dream of our founders is alive in our time, who still questions the power of our democracy, tonight is your answer ... that is the true genius of America ... America can change. Our union can be perfected.”

Americans are proud, as a nation, of this historic step. However, they are under no illusions that the work of perfecting American democracy is complete. They continue their efforts at home to make the promise of human rights, equal rights, for everyone real. In addition, the United States wants to work closely with democratic partners – like Lithuania – to expand the benefits of freedom abroad as well.

For example, in both foreign and domestic affairs, President Obama and Secretary Clinton have put women’s rights – the rights to education, health, equal employment and pay, and to lives free from fear, discrimination and violence, including domestic violence – high on their agenda. Empowering women and girls to develop and employ their potential is crucial for the future of both our countries. The countries that succeed best are those that make full use of the talents of all their citizens – women and girls as well as men and boys. I have had the honour of meeting with representatives of women’s organizations from throughout Lithuania who are carrying out crucial work in this regard, and I look forward to working with them even more in the future.

The United States was also honoured that Lithuania, as the current chair of the Community of Democracies, asked it to co-chair an important new working group on gender equality and women’s rights. The United States’ first Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women’s Issues Melanne Verveer visited Vilnius in April to help launch the working group and to meet with Lithuania’s many women leaders and activists for women’s rights. This partnership will also continue.

President Obama has also highlighted the importance of progress to fulfil the promise of universal human rights for America’s lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans-

gender communities. In 2009, proclaiming June to be Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month in the United States, President Obama called on all Americans to “work together to promote equal rights for all, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity...and to turn back prejudice and discrimination, wherever it exists.”

President Obama took this step with the recognition that social, religious, and other issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity are sensitive issues in the United States, as they are in Lithuania. Reasonable people hold differing views. However, as modern democracies, we can all agree that every citizen has the right to choose his or her own path, and to live free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. Every citizen has the right to peacefully associate and assemble, and express his or her views, although others may not agree with them. For this reason, the United States applauded the decision by the Vilnius city government to permit the Baltic Pride Parade this year. That decision was a notable illustration of respect for tolerance, diversity, and human rights.

The United States and Lithuania are also partners in the fight against anti-Semitism and in efforts to address the legacy of the Holocaust. Through engagement in the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research (ITF), and in the process launched by the 1997 London Conference on Nazi Gold, the U.S. and Lithuania are working to fulfil their commitments on restitution and compensation, as well as on research, education, and remembrance, to ensure that future generations understand the history of what occurred and the terrible consequences of intolerance and hate, and to guarantee such a tragedy never occurs again. We will intensify our joint efforts in this area; the ITF has awarded the U.S. Embassy in Lithuania a grant to create a teacher-training program on Holocaust education, and we will implement that program in partnership with the Ministry of Education, the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania, the Jewish Community of Lithuania, and the Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum’s Tolerance Center, as well as with American and other international partners. The United States Special Envoy for Monitoring and Combating Anti-Semitism, Hannah Rosenthal, made a very successful visit to Lithuania in April, setting the stage for further cooperation on education and tolerance issues.

Finally, Lithuania is well recognized globally for the importance it gives to questions of fundamental human rights in its foreign policy. Lithuania has been steadfast in its support of those seeking freedom and democracy in the Eastern

neighbourhood, including in Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, and Belarus. Lithuania is making a commendable effort to give new momentum to the Community of Democracies, including establishing a new Parliamentary Assembly for the organization. The United States will continue to support Lithuania's efforts, and looks forward to progress on human rights and democracy, including tolerance, at home and abroad, as Lithuania assumes important positions of international leadership in coming years – the Community of Democracies now, the OSCE in 2011, and the Presidency of the EU in 2013.

The United States and Lithuania have a valuable, and valued, relationship. The United States has ideas on how to make it even stronger in the future, and welcomes Lithuania's ideas as well. Our relationship is strong and growing, and we will take the next steps in U.S.-Lithuanian relations together, as partners.

## WASHINGTON'S CHANGED TONE AND GEORGIA'S NATO HOPES

Maia Edilashvili\*

### *Abstract*

Long before the new administration appeared in the White House, Tbilisi had been in anticipation of the post-Bush era: would the US continue to support Georgia in the face of Moscow's growing determination to stop it from going West? Now, a year into Obama's presidency, a worldwide discourse provides diverging opinions on this tricky question. While some feel that Georgia's momentum has been lost for many years to come due to the "reset", optimists say that it is only the style, rather than the contents, that has been changed in the US-Georgia relations and that the new style may prove even more efficient in the long-term. This article studies the challenge faced by the Georgian government to keep the country pro-NATO but out of NATO, and examines Washington's approach to the Georgia issue under President Obama.

### **Introduction**

Since the early 1990s, as Georgia became an independent state, its key priority has been to be accepted by the international community as its full-fledged member, both politically and economically. In order to attain this goal a long way of democratization and economic reforms were ahead. In the first place, Georgia had to get rid of rampant corruption and create an attractive business environment to invite much-needed foreign capital and escape poverty. This was critical because without domestic peace and national consensus it would be impossible to start destroying the Soviet-type governing bodies and build new political institutions.

On this hard road, the US has been one of the staunchest supporters for Georgia both politically and financially. Being the second biggest per capita recipient of the American financial aid, Georgia continues to enjoy Washington's non-recognition policy for breakaway Abkhazia and South Ossetia despite the growing pressure from Moscow. This important friendship, while inspiring hopes among

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the Georgian people for the prospects of NATO membership - a major foreign policy goal of the Saakashvili administration - has served as a catalyst for Russia's increasing aggression as well. Moscow has never conceived its ambitions to maintain or regain influence in the former Soviet space and never allow NATO to enter its "backyard."

It was during the tenure of George W. Bush that the US-Russia relations hit rock bottom. Back then, Bush's freedom and democratization agenda was at its height. And Georgia, being an exemplary country for the White House, was becoming an apple of discord between Washington and Moscow. Following the August war as well as the change in the US administration and subsequent "reset", the picture grew cloudier for Tbilisi.

As Obama tries to build good relations with Russia to settle the issues of Iran, energy, and non-proliferation, his handling of the anti-missile system in Central and Eastern European countries remains in the balance. Given this, many are increasingly concerned of the fact that all over the world's contested areas, an American tilt towards autocratic foes inevitably comes at the expense of freedom-loving friends. This calls into question Washington's future strategy on the Eurasian continent, including in Georgia. Given the fact that there is both a rational and moral dimension in the relationship of the United States and Georgia, the task for the Obama administration seems quite controversial and challenging.

Since the purpose of the given article is to analyze Washington's current attitude towards Georgia, the article explores the latest developments in the bilateral ties and their consequences at local, regional, and international level. Chapter 1 of this article gives insight into the present and previous nature of US-Georgia relations and focuses on their most outstanding achievements and failures. The same chapter introduces the NATO issue – perhaps the central point of US-Georgia relations at the time – and puts it under the scrutiny. Chapter 2 includes two sections: Section 1 offers highlights on Georgia's cooperation with the alliance, while the next one examines Georgia's chances as a candidate country in both contexts – together with Ukraine and without Ukraine. This chapter also discusses whether there are chances for repeating the Ukrainian scenario in Georgia – which is doing a U-turn on NATO -membership aspirations. Chapter 3, being the final one, attempts to show the political and security challenges that Georgia is facing at the time in the backdrop of developments in the former Soviet Union countries. Additionally, it illustrates why these challenges should matter for the White House and what should be done to respond to those challenges successfully.

## 1. The New Dimension in US-Georgia Relations under Obama

Opponents of the new administration lambaste President Obama for pursuing the role of “a disinterested promoter” in the international politics rather than overtly favouring democracies in their disputes with the great-power autocracies.<sup>1</sup> For instance, some think that the Obama administration’s strategy of advocating a “win-win” game in global politics instead of the post-cold war time “zero-sum” game, is doomed to failure. As to why this is so, Robert Kagan, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace writes: “either Russian influence grows, and the ability of neighbouring powers to resist it weakens. Or Russian ambitions for a sphere of special interest are checked, and Russia is unhappy.”

Signs of pessimism are shown in some local experts’ assessments. In his article “Obama and Georgia: A Year-Long Awkward Silence” young Georgian scholar George Khelashvili argues that since the change of the administration, US support has not gone further than just making statements.<sup>2</sup> Keeping things low-key, he explains, served a dual purpose – to shun Moscow’s annoyance and to make it clear that Washington did not betray Saakashvili.

“With the absence of a comprehensible American “grand strategy” towards the post-Soviet space, Georgia has been left out in the cold,” he writes. He also makes a gloomy conclusion: “From the perceived potential provider of security in the turbulent region of the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Middle East, Georgia quickly turned into a strategic liability after the war with Russia in August 2008.”

However, there is a contrasting view that the substance of the US-Georgia relations remains quite dynamic. This group of experts and commentators contends that President Obama must offer a strong stand with regard to Georgia, or Tbilisi will be unable to stand up to the pressure from Moscow.

The report prepared by the Center for American Progress, which looks into the achievements and remaining challenges of the reset’s first year, is focused on this very accomplishment: “The new atmosphere of diminished antagonism played an important role in preventing several potentially damaging outcomes from occur-

<sup>1</sup> Kagan R., “Obama’s Year One: Contra”, *World Affairs Journal*, Jan-Feb 2010, <http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/articles/2010-JanFeb/full-Kagan-JF-2010.html>, 10/4/2010.

<sup>2</sup> Khelashvili G., “Obama and Georgia: A Year-Long Awkward Silence,” *Caucasus Analytical Digest*, no.13, 15 Feb 2010, p. 9.

ring, including a repeat of the conflict in Georgia on the anniversary of the August 2008 war.”<sup>3</sup>

Aleksander Rondeli, President of the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies (GFSIS), the leading think tank in Tbilisi, is among the optimists and describes the current US-Georgia relations as being “more studious, more concentrated, less personified, less irritating for Russia and most importantly, productive.”<sup>4</sup>

A key change in US-Georgia relations is that they no longer have a personal nature, which they enjoyed in the previous years. Amid the growing unpopularity of President George W. Bush, this could have worked against Georgia at some point. Due to the low rating of President Bush, his “beacon of liberty” compliment for Georgia coined in 2005 would raise doubts among influential politicians and think tank figures. The 2007 crackdown of opposition demonstrators by the Saakashvili government, the announcement of the state of emergency, and shutting down the opposition’s key mouthpiece Imedi TV station only strengthened those doubts. By this time, Saakashvili had been perhaps the single leader worldwide who named a highway in his capital after President Bush.

“Saakashvili may be the last neoconservative – a twenty-first century Icarus who flew too close to the sun that was George W. Bush,” says Lincoln Mitchel, the Assistant Professor at Columbia University.<sup>5</sup> His point is that personal factor has been as important as political issues in forming Washington’s relationship towards Georgia. This made Georgia a partisan issue in US politics, which is never good for any country.

For Rondeli too, the excessive personal factor in the bilateral relations could have been really harmful. “In the relationship between the United States and Russia Georgia has become a kind of third angle, which is not good for us. Georgia should not be used as a change in their relations. So the new administration’s [reserved] policy is a very wise choice for it serves as a cover for Georgia.” In the interview, Rondeli did not elaborate further but this is apparently a valuable point and speaks for itself once put in a wider context.

<sup>3</sup> Charap S., “Assessing the “Reset” and the Next Steps for U.S. Russia Policy”, Center for American Progress, 14 April 2010, [http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/04/assessing\\_reset.html](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/04/assessing_reset.html), 25/4/2010.

<sup>4</sup> Personal interview with Rondeli A., Tbilisi, 20/4/2010.

<sup>5</sup> Mitchel L., “Georgia’s Story: Competing Narratives since the War,” *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, vol. 51, no. 4, Washington: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2009, p. 96.



A good illustration is the NATO angle of the US-Georgia relations: the US, while vehemently advocating granting MAP by NATO to Georgia, should have been aware that this was a risky gamble for Tbilisi and that it would take all the measures possible to prevent the worst from happening (MAP was a tool launched in 1999 by the NATO to assist countries seeking the membership. Even though participation in the MAP does not guarantee eventual membership, it is still seen as a precondition for finally joining the alliance).<sup>6</sup>

Since the international recognition of Kosovo in February 2008, Moscow has been threatening that “a domino effect” should be expected, referring to Georgia’s breakaway Abkhazia and South Ossetia. However, in order to go ahead with its plans, the Kremlin needed to find a pretext. To add strain to the situation, two months later came the NATO Bucharest Summit. The Summit refused to grant MAP to Ukraine and Georgia but the 50-point document’s Article 23 announced: “We agreed today that these countries [Ukraine and Georgia] will become members of NATO.”<sup>7</sup> This unprecedented announcement - never before had NATO stated it so overtly that a country would become a member – made Moscow realize that until the accession course became irreversible for Georgia and Ukraine, the process should be stopped somehow. Hence, Moscow decided to take advantage of this “window of opportunity:” By provoking Tbilisi to engage in an armed conflict in South Ossetia, the Kremlin was killing two birds with one stone - bringing an end to Georgia’s NATO prospects and finding a good pretext to recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states. The subsequent recognition of the breakaway republics gave Russia a green light to start building military bases in both regions as well as extend the Russian presence deep into the South Caucasus. Most importantly, taking into account NATO’s unwillingness to embrace countries that have military conflicts on their territory, by recognizing Abkhazia and South Ossetia officially, Moscow was making the conflict settlement “a mission impossible” for Georgia, thus creating a stumble block in the accession talks.

The above-described threats have been underestimated by the US administration, which was clearly demonstrated at the Bucharest Summit and that some months later resulted in the military conflict.

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<sup>6</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *NATO press release: Membership Action Plan (MAP)*, 24 April 1999, <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-066e.htm>, 10/4/2010.

<sup>7</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *Bucharest Summit Declaration*, Bucharest, 3 April 2008, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_8443.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_8443.htm), 15/3/2010.

“The only deterrent to Russia [not to attack Georgia] would have been a unified and powerful signal of NATO commitment that enlargement was indeed inevitable. ... I doubt that granting MAP in Bucharest by itself would not have sent that signal,” Ronald Asmus, Executive Director of the Brussels-based Transatlantic Center, an early and prominent advocate of NATO’s Open Door Policy, writes in his book “A little War that Shook the World.”<sup>8</sup>

In fact, there have been three choices for the US to support Georgian membership during the Bucharest Summit: relentless lobbying for MAP, concrete steps to further deepen bilateral cooperation without granting MAP, and just verbal assurance. The US opted for the worst one – empty words rather than actions. For instance, an account of the Summit discussions suggests that in the run up to the summit a different compromise so called “MAP without MAP” was under discussion. That was a package that would have granted Georgia and Ukraine the practical benefits of the MAP program but with a different label: either the National Action Plan (NAP) or even the Georgian Action Plan (GAP). This option would have allowed Georgia to embark on a higher level of relations with NATO without having to further irritate Russia. On the contrary, Russia would have been feeling satisfied – it achieved the veto of the MAP issue.

It was not until after the war that Georgia received “MAP without MAP” benefits – the NAP as well as NATO-Georgia Commission and NATO Liaison Office in Tbilisi.<sup>9</sup>

## 2. NATO Membership versus Neutrality

### 2. 1. Georgia’s way to NATO: highlights

The present tool for NATO to regulate its relationship with Georgia is the NATO-Georgia Commission (NGC),<sup>10</sup> a body set up in September 2008 with the aim to oversee NATO assistance to Georgia in the aftermath of the August conflict with Russia as well as to oversee the process launched at the Bucharest Summit. In December 2008, the foreign ministers of the alliance agreed that, under the auspices

<sup>8</sup> Asmus R, *A Little War that Shook the World*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p. 138.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

<sup>10</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *Nato's Relations with Georgia*, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_38988.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_38988.htm), 16/4/2010.

of the NGC, Georgia should develop an Annual National Programme. The latter replaced the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP), which had guided NATO-Georgia partnership since 2004. Apart from the IPAP covering political, security, military, economic, social, and administrative fields, Georgia received the Intensified Dialogue (ID) format with the Alliance in 2006. In the framework of ID, Georgia started political consultations with the alliance on a number of priority issues including the ongoing reforms.

By that time, it had been more than a decade that Georgia started cooperation with the alliance. The highlights of the chronology are quite lengthy and intensive:

- In 1992, Georgia became a member of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC). Two years later, Georgia joined Partnership for Peace (PfP).
- Since 1995, cooperation has been underway in the education field under which Georgian experts undergo annual trainings in the NATO School in Oberammergau (Germany) and NATO Defence College in Rome (Italy).<sup>11</sup>
- In 1996, Georgia submitted to NATO the first Individual Partnership Programme (IPP).
- In 1997, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) was created and Georgia was among the founding members.
- In 1998, a diplomatic mission of Georgia to NATO was opened.
- In 1999, Georgia joined the Planning and Review Process (PARP) of the Partnership for Peace Programme, which helped Georgia to achieve interoperability with NATO and insure successful participation in the NATO-led peacekeeping operations.
- The year 2001 saw the launch of high-level regular political consultations with the NATO International Agency. The consultations were held between the Georgian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Head of the Political Directorate of NATO. High-level meetings are organized on a regular basis on the issues of arms control and disarmament within 26+1 format (26 member states of NATO plus Georgia). In 2001 and 2002, Georgia hosted large-scale multinational military trainings organized by NATO and the partner countries.
- At the 2002 NATO Summit in Prague, Georgia officially announced its aspiration to NATO membership and expressed its desire to participate in the IPAP.

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<sup>11</sup> Information Centre on NATO, *Chronology of NATO-Georgia Relations*, <http://www.natoinfo.ge/?action=231&lang=eng>, 16/4/2010.

A significant area of cooperation is the assistance in NATO-led operations. Georgia is actively contributing to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, and also supports Operation Active Endeavour, NATO's anti-terrorist operation in the Mediterranean Sea.

Since 1999, Georgia has been participating in KFOR, a NATO-led international force responsible for peace and security in Kosovo. In 2004, a Georgian contingent took part in an ISAF operation in Afghanistan, where the Georgian troops' task was to ensure security during the election period.<sup>12</sup> In spring 2010, Georgia sent additional soldiers to Afghanistan – an infantry battalion without national caveats, who will be deployed together with the U.S. Marines in the province of Helmand. After sending the battalion, the number of Georgian troops in Afghanistan increased to 950, making Georgia the largest per capita contributor to the Afghan operation.<sup>13</sup>

## **2.2. With and without Ukraine: how strong is Georgia's standing?**

The first stage of Georgia's way to NATO has been a play in duet with Ukraine. The change of power in Ukraine in early 2010 and new president Viktor Yanukovich's pledge to keep his country out of any alliance including the NATO, has left Georgia as a solo performer. Kiev's decision left many wondering whether Georgia's standing would remain unchanged. Taking into account all the valuable factors, obviously there are many pros and cons over the issue.

According to sceptics, Georgia's position has been corroded. Once discussed in a single context, all the Ukrainian advantages coupled with its own boons would help Georgia be viewed as a country capable of not only becoming a consumer of NATO-membership benefits but also a producer of those benefits. The idea is that a big and strategically located Ukraine with its Black Sea port and pipeline routes could have been a cogent argument for pro-enlargement members in convincing more hesitating countries in accepting Ukraine and Georgia in a group like it happened during the previous waves of enlargement. On the other hand, knowing that

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<sup>12</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, *A Brief on the NATO-Georgia Relations*, Tbilisi, [http://www.mfa.gov.ge/index.php?lang\\_id=ENG&tsec\\_id=453](http://www.mfa.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&tsec_id=453), 14/4/2010.

<sup>13</sup> *Civil Georgia*, Holbrooke: Georgian Afghan Deployment 'Extremely Important', 3 March 2010, <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=22046>, 14/4/2010.

NATO's two core principles when welcoming a new member is the willingness of the candidate country's population to be accepted as well as the government's record of democratization reforms, sailing in the same boat with Ukraine may prove fatal for Georgia. This is to say that popular support for NATO membership has never exceeded 20% in Ukraine, while the 2008 national referendum showed that 77% of Georgian population is in favour of joining the alliance.

Despite the former Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko's pro-Western orientation, he failed to carry out decisive political or economic reforms, curb corruption, and improve people's living standards. In contrast, Georgia had achieved considerable success in the transformation process. For instance, a big gap is illustrated by the latest available data of Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI), which is seen as the most trusted barometer measuring corruption in the public sector in 180 countries.

According to TI's 2009 report, Georgia improved its ranking to 4.1 from 3.9, placing it in the 66<sup>th</sup> position ahead of NATO and EU members Greece and Bulgaria, which both came in 71<sup>st</sup>.<sup>14</sup> In comparison, Ukraine ended up far behind at 146<sup>th</sup> as it moved down to 2.2 from 2.5 in the previous ranking, thus sharing its position with Russia presently. At the same time, Georgia's performance was impressive compared with the other South Caucasus countries with Armenia and Azerbaijan ranking lower at 2.7 and 2.3, respectively.

Another example of success: between 2004 and 2010 Georgia moved from 112<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> place in an annual survey co-authored by the World Bank and International Finance Corporation (IFC), which rates countries on regulations that affect business climate from starting a business to closing it.<sup>15</sup> This puts Georgia very close to the top ten, which includes countries such as Singapore, the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Norway, etc. In contrast, Ukraine ranks 142<sup>nd</sup> in the rating, far behind not only Georgia but also Armenia and Azerbaijan, which came in 43<sup>rd</sup> and 38<sup>th</sup>, respectively. Critics of the Saakashvili government's economic policy are cautious about estimating the success on Doing Business, thinking the ranking is excessively focused on the façade of the reforms rather than the contents. However, while for them the progress on the rating may seem

<sup>14</sup> Transparency International, *Corruption Perception Index 2009*, [http://www.transparency.org/policy\\_research/surveys\\_indices/cpi/2009/regional\\_highlights](http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2009/regional_highlights), 20/3/2010.

<sup>15</sup> Doing Business- the World Bank Group, *Doing Business 2010*, <http://www.doingbusiness.org/documents/fullreport/2010/DB10-full-report.pdf>, 20/3/2010.

overestimated, the growth dynamics of the Georgian economy confirms the positive trend: thanks to the corruption-free environment and business-friendly regulations, Georgia's GDP growth had reached a two-digit figure by 2008 versus 5% before the Rose Revolution.

Having these disparities in mind, it looks like Yanukovich has lifted a heavy burden off Georgia's shoulders. Now, when qualifying for NATO membership, Georgia will be responsible solely for its own shortcomings rather than for Ukraine's as well.

Another central point is Russia: losing both Ukraine and Georgia simultaneously and eventually as its sphere of influence would have been too much for Kremlin. After Ukraine gave up the idea to join, Russia will have relatively fewer reasons for aggression towards the enlargement concept. On the other hand, there might be a greater temptation for Moscow to keep feeding the anti-NATO sentiment in the South Caucasus as well.

How big are the chances for Russia to achieve this? During recent years there have been attempts by some political forces in Georgia to put the neutrality slogan on the agenda – saying no to NATO membership and making closer ties with Russia.<sup>16</sup> However, as those forces never enjoyed substantial public support, the proposal never became an issue. For instance, Irina Sarishvili, who is affiliated with Georgia's wanted ex-security chief Igor Giorgadze, was the only presidential candidate opposing NATO accession in favour of the neutrality during the 2008 presidential elections and she garnered less than 1 % of votes.

“Russia wants to see Georgia be an independent, sovereign and neutral state with neighbourly relations with Russia,” Russian Ambassador to Georgia Vyacheslav Kovalenko said at the news conference in Tbilisi on 7 February 2007. However, back then, opposition groups did not embrace the message. It was only in 2009 that some formerly pro-NATO opposition figures started to call for neutrality and friendlier links with Russia. In fact, the August war gave momentum to this new rhetoric in Georgia.

Interestingly, this trend was observed not at the grassroots level but just among those radical and increasingly fragmented anti-government forces that refused to enter Parliament following the May 2008 election, instead calling for the unconditional resignation of Saakashvili and his government through street protests.

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<sup>16</sup> Civil Georgia, Russian Diplomat Outlines Conditions for Improving Ties, 6 Feb 2007, <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=14575>, 24/4/2010.

They argue that the Saakashvili government's hostile attitude towards Moscow is to be blamed for the war and the occupation of Georgian territories. These politicians believe that Georgia's territorial integrity concerns can only be solved if Russia shows its kind will. This team includes Ex-PM Zurab Nogaideli, the leader of the opposition party Movement for Fair Georgia, who is a frequent guest of the Kremlin, has met with Putin and struck a cooperation deal with Russia's ruling United Russia Party. Another heavyweight is ex-parliamentary spokesperson Nino Burjanadze, as the leader of the opposition Democratic Movement-United Georgia party, who became the second Georgian politician to meet with the Russian PM following the August war.

Those Northern tours have not sparked a division in the nation. Among many Georgians these developments have only reinforced the government's earlier assumptions that Russia was behind the moral, if not financial, support for radical opposition appeals in Georgia. With all the diplomatic links broken with Moscow, Russia's occupying forces still on the Georgian territory and Moscow permanently breaching the 2008 ceasefire agreement, it is no surprise that the above-mentioned politicians have been labelled as losers, avengers, or simply traitors domestically.

Gia Nodia, an influential NGO personality, who joined the Saakashvili government as a Minister of Education for a while in 2008 said in his column in the Georgian magazine *Tabula* that he belongs to those people who sees signs of betrayal in the behaviour of Nogaideli and Burjanadze." He writes: "Both Nogaideli and Burjanadze play Russia's game consciously."<sup>17</sup>

Russian, as a language, is becoming increasingly rarely spoken among the young generation, while the role and level of English language skills has been on the rise over time. Young and middle age Georgians who are decision makers in the public, private, and civil sectors have already taken opportunity to be educated either in the United States or in Europe. For them, liberal ideas and democratic values are paramount and they would never compromise on them. Returning under the Russian influence would mean a quick farewell to the democratic change and future westernization prospects in Georgia.

Still, how irreversible Georgia's western choice will be is highly reliant on the local elite's performance in state building and pushing the economy ahead. It will

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<sup>17</sup> Nodia G., "What is a betrayal?" [*translated from Georgian*], *Tabula*, Tbilisi, 29 March-4 April 2010, p. 50-51.

be equally pressing as to whether the government succeeds in achieving a smooth recovery from the August war consequences and regain the occupied territories back under its sway. In addition, Georgia's ability to accomplish a peaceful transfer of power will play a critical role in increasing social and political cohesion domestically and shaping the country's image internationally.

### **3. Why Georgia's Challenges Matter**

Georgia's future success is performance-based and at the same time it largely depends on the global geopolitical landscape. However, given the role of the US in international politics, the most important question will be whether Georgia really makes sense for the White House from a strategic point of view: Georgia is important in transportation of Caspian energy to western markets; it is a participant in the EU-initiated program called TRACECA or the "New Silk Road" (Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia), which is a key rival to the Russian transit network; Georgia lies in between two highly explosive territories such as the North Caucasus – Southern part of Russia as well as Iran and Afghanistan to Georgia's South-East border. Hence, whoever has control of Georgia and the South Caucasus, can receive valuable information in a timely manner on international terrorism, smuggling, nuclear proliferation, etc.

Another equally important factor is ideological, and it has a moral dimension: Georgia is one of the successful states in the Caucasus pursuing the pro-democratic change. In order to secure its political sovereignty and independent choice Georgia crucially needs protection by the international community; NATO, whose policy is largely shaped by the US, has promised to keep its door open for those who are willing and eligible to enter.

"In 2009, a great power does not show strength by dominating or demonizing other countries. The days when empires could treat sovereign states as pieces on a chessboard are over," Obama said in his 2009 address to Moscow's New Economic School audience.<sup>18</sup> "State sovereignty must be a cornerstone of international order. Just as all states should have the right to choose their leaders, states must have the

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<sup>18</sup> *RFE/RL*, On Second Day of Visit, Obama Addresses Civil Society Issues in Russia, 7 July 2009, [http://www.rferl.org/content/On\\_Second\\_Day\\_Of\\_Visit\\_Obama\\_Addresses\\_Civil\\_Society\\_Issues\\_In\\_Russia/1771673.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/On_Second_Day_Of_Visit_Obama_Addresses_Civil_Society_Issues_In_Russia/1771673.html), 10/4/2010.



right to borders that are secure, and to their own foreign policies. That is true for Russia, just as it is true for the United States. Any system that cedes those rights will lead to anarchy. That is why we must apply this principle to all nations – and that includes nations like Georgia and Ukraine.”

This address seen as Washington’s key foreign-policy speech in Russia clearly demonstrated that while the White House planned “the reset” of relations with Russia, no green light should be expected for the Kremlin’s “sphere of influence” policy.

An unfolding reality in some of the former SU countries, however, shows that a promise for the newly independent states is on the wane. The recent political developments in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, which brought Moscow-friendly governments to power, has made it clear that the Kremlin obviously sees little resistance to give up meddling with its neighbours’ internal politics.

Kiev has struck a deal with the Kremlin to extend the lease term for Russia’s naval base on the Black Sea port of Sevastopol in exchange for cheaper gas, something that the previous Ukrainian government had harshly resisted. On the other front, Kyrgyzstan’s interim leadership has received a pledge of 50 million dollars in aid from Moscow, which will guarantee the pro-Moscow policy in the country.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, commenting on the ouster of the Kyrgyz President Kurmanbek Bakiyev, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev predicted “the possibility of similar scenarios in ex-Soviet states or other countries.”<sup>20</sup> In Tbilisi, this claim has been widely interpreted as the Kremlin’s hint to its covert role in the developments in Kyrgyzstan.<sup>21</sup>

Now, as leaders of Colour Revolutions – the Orange Revolution in Ukraine and the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan – have been ousted and former Polish President Lech Kaczynski, the most steadfast supporter of the new democracies in Europe is no longer alive, Saakashvili has all the reasons to feel lonelier than ever before.

When it comes to either Georgia’s NATO aspirations or establishing closer ties with the European Union, the Baltic States and Poland have a critical role

<sup>19</sup> *Reuters*, Russia pledges \$50 mln to Replenish Kyrgyz Coiffers, 14 April 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSLDE63D1YH20100414>, 21/4/2010.

<sup>20</sup> *RIA Novosti*, Kyrgyz scenario may repeat in other states – Medvedev, 16 April 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100416/158603097.html>, 22/4/2010.

<sup>21</sup> *RFE/RL*, Kyrgyz Interim Government Slams Saakashvili Spokesperson’s Statement [translated from Georgian], 2 May 2010, <http://www.tavisupleba.org/archive/geo-news/20100412/1001/1001.html?id=2009647>, 22/4/2010.

in helping Georgia to win the old Europe's heart. In recent years, Warsaw and Moscow have been at odds over a number of issues including NATO enlargement, anti-missile shield, and gas pipelines. However, now media is speculating about the possible rapprochement. Those speculations make sense in the following context: Poland's centrist Prime Minister Donald Tusk, an opponent of the late president's conservative politics, favours cooperative relations with Russia. Given the country's impressive economic performance under him, the PM's presidential candidate the acting President Bronislaw Komorowski has real chances to win the race. Whether the next Polish president will be as supportive of Georgia as his predecessor is an open question.

Taking all the above-described political developments into account, Russia is celebrating a sheer triumph.

"It's not just about abandoning your ally Georgia. No, Russia is asking the U.S. to give back the Soviet sphere of influence," Saakashvili said in an interview with TIME.<sup>22</sup>

International analysts, too, taking in mind the recent developments on the Eurasian continent, say Georgia has been left all alone, while mentioning that Russia is becoming a priority issue for Washington. For them, a classic example of this trend is President Obama's May 10 message to the Congress requesting support for a nuclear cooperation pact with Russia. Obama said: "the situation in Georgia need no longer be considered an obstacle to proceeding with the proposed Agreement."<sup>23</sup> In the aftermath of the August war, the Bush administration froze the treaty, explaining that Russia's actions were "incompatible with peaceful relations with its sovereign and democratic neighbour, Georgia."

However, this estimation is exaggerated because the nuclear issue is quite a different question. It is indeed only the style that has been changed in the bilateral relations. The strongest argument for this is an op-ed by Vice President Joe Biden, published before his European trip.<sup>24</sup> In the op-ed, Biden touches upon the ongoing US-EU dialog on the future of the European security. The peace is actually a

<sup>22</sup> *Time*, Russia Reclaims Influence, U.S. does not Object, 23 April 2010, <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1983785,00.html?xid=rss-topstories>, 21/4/2010.

<sup>23</sup> The White House, Message from the President Regarding a Peaceful Nuclear Agreement with Russia, 10 May 2010, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/message-president-regarding-a-peaceful-nuclear-agreement-with-russia> 15/5/2010

<sup>24</sup> The White House Blog, *Advancing Europe's Security*, 5 May 2010, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2010/05/05/advancing-europes-security> 8/5/2010.

late response to the Russian concept of a new European security concept voiced in 2008. The latter's key idea was to veto NATO's enlargement and legalize Russia's spheres of influence. Now, while reaching the nuclear cooperation pact with Russia, the White House is warning Russia that it has to abide by "certain shared rules." Biden's op-ed reads: "The threat or use of force has no place in relations among European powers. Nor can we allow large countries to have vetoes over the decisions of smaller ones. And most importantly, we cannot permit the re-establishment of spheres of influence in Europe."<sup>25</sup>

Therefore, there is the "reset" along with its positive outcomes for the US and Russia, including the nuclear pact, but at the same time, there is the promise for Georgia that Washington will not compromise at the expense of Georgia. It is not ruled out that it will be Moscow rather than Washington, which will have to make a compromise during the dialog on the future European security.

Influential experts' policy recommendations for the Obama administration are other promising signs in this regard. Those recommendations show that the White House is in the process of shaping a revised approach to the Georgia issue, which can prove more efficient in the changed environment. For instance, even a think tank that favours the "reset" - the Center for American Progress - has recognized the Obama administration's failure to hold Russia abide by its international commitments. Offering advice to address the lingering challenges between the US and Russia, the think tank recommends that the administration should "Develop an action plan for Russian compliance with the August 2008 cease-fire agreement with Georgia."<sup>26</sup>

The need for developing "a long-term policy for moving Georgia towards Euro-Atlantic Institutions" is also a key recommendation for Senator Richard Lugar's Report to the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.<sup>27</sup> According to Lugar, the US must raise the profile of diplomatic efforts to alleviate the deep tensions remaining between Georgia and Russia. He points to the need to strengthen Georgia's military capacity, noting that while Russia has threatened to sanction entities involved in arms deals with Georgia, Moscow has reached an "unprecedented"

<sup>25</sup> The White House Blog (note 25)

<sup>26</sup> Charap, (note 4).

<sup>27</sup> Lugar R., *A Report to the Committee of Foreign Relations "Striking the Balance: U.S. Policy and Stability in Georgia,"* Washington, 22 Dec 2009, <http://lugar.senate.gov/sfrc/pdf/Georgia.pdf>, 25/4/2010.

deal with the NATO member France over the purchase of a Mistral-class assault ship. Interestingly, Russian Navy commander Admiral Vladimir Vysotskiy has boasted that during the August 2008 conflict “a ship like that would have allowed the Black Sea Fleet to accomplish its mission in 40 minutes, not 26 hours, which is how long it took us.”<sup>28</sup>

It has to be taken into account that the new Russian military doctrine, which sees NATO's eastward enlargement as the key external military hazard facing Russia, announces Russia's right to “promptly” use military force beyond its borders “for the purpose of the protection of the interests of the Russian Federation and its citizens as well as for the preservation of international peace and security.”<sup>29</sup>

The number of Russian citizens on the vulnerable territories beyond the Russian frontiers is quite big. Ever since Russia helped South Ossetia and Abkhazia to secede from Georgia in the early 1990s, Kremlin has been desperate in distributing Russian passports to the people living on those territories, a far-reaching strategy for future political manoeuvring.

Therefore, Abkhazia and South Ossetia as well as the newly occupied territories of Georgia continue to be highly explosive areas: international observers or non-governmental organizations have no access to South Ossetia, which is only a 45 minute drive from the capital Tbilisi; the Russian troops, instead of pulling back to pre-war positions and cutting the number of troops to pre-war levels in compliance with the French-brokered 2008 ceasefire, are building permanent military bases in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. While Georgia's lethal defence weaponry were damaged during the August war, the US has not provided any new supply under Russian diplomatic pressure.

Presently, Georgia lacks fundamental power for territorial defence, and stability along the administrative border with South Ossetia. The continuation of the status quo, according to Lugar's document, appears to ensure that Georgia will not only have difficulty providing for its own territorial defence needs, but “remain susceptible to the internal strife and external manipulation that often accompany such national insecurity.”<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> David J. Smith, “Stop France Arming Russia,” *Georgian Daily*, 10 January 2010, [http://georgiandaily.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&cid=16381&Itemid=132](http://georgiandaily.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&cid=16381&Itemid=132) 10/4/2010.

<sup>29</sup> The Administration of President of Russian Federation, *Military Doctrine of Russian Federation*, Moscow, 5 Feb 2010, [http://news.kremlin.ru/ref\\_notes/461](http://news.kremlin.ru/ref_notes/461), 10/4/2010.

<sup>30</sup> Lugar R., (note 28)

The importance of a “strong, independent, sovereign and democratic Georgia, capable of responsible self-defence” is also outlined in the United States-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership. Such a Georgia, according to the document, “contributes to the security and prosperity not only of all Georgians, but of a Europe whole, free and at peace.”<sup>31</sup>

### **Conclusions**

A year into the Obama era, even though doubts linger about Washington’s strategy regarding Georgia, the recent developments show that the US maintains both political and economic support for Tbilisi.

Obviously, there are signs that Washington will try to engage Russia in creating new European security institutions and mechanisms but the red lines have been already drawn – a compromise will not be made at the expense of Georgia. This suggests that once the United States and Europe show concentrated efforts to support sovereign nations, including Georgia, Moscow will have to make concessions. In the first place, this concerns Georgia’s NATO membership aspirations. Therefore, it is highly recommended that United States show a stronger determination to help Georgia receive MAP.

On its part, Russia will keep trying to help change the Saakashvili administration and support a friendlier regime to take the power. However, regardless of how robust Moscow’s resolve is to see regime change and the subsequent change of foreign policy priorities in Georgia, a u-turn on this issue is hardly imaginable.

However, the Georgian government should make all efforts to insure internal peace and stability, showing a firm determination to strengthen democratic institutions because this is the key to joining the western alliances. Ensuring that free and fair elections, rather than violence or street demonstrations, are the prime tool for changing the government is paramount.

The poor reality that personal factor is dominant on the foreign policy front is due to the fragility of Georgia’s political institutions and political parties. However, given how challenging the way is ahead for Georgia, the next leader’s personality will again have a major influence on the country’s future strategic choice and

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<sup>31</sup> U.S. Department of State, *United States-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership*, 9 Jan 2009, <http://www.america.gov/st/texttransenglish/2009/January/20090109145313eafas0.2139093.html#ixzz0mcMincSM>, 20/3/2010.

international support for the country. For this reason, both the ruling party and opposition forces should be very careful in nominating their candidates for the 2013 presidential elections, the time when President Saakashvili's term in office will expire.

What is most important for Georgia is that it needs an umbrella of external democratic forces in order to stand up to domineering Russia, thereby being capable of continuing to build fully functional democratic institutions, advancing economic reforms, and maintaining national security. Therefore, apart from continuing the non-recognition policy, the US should develop a long-term policy to help Georgia move towards Euro-Atlantic Institutions.

# UNDERSTANDING TURKEY'S SECURITY DISCOURSE

Şeyda Hanbay\*

## *Abstract*

This article aims at analyzing the main parameters of Turkey's security understanding. Special reference is made to its geographical location, as one of the main determiners of the country's security policy. It also focuses on Turkey's position in the European security architecture after the Cold War. This article discusses the reasons behind the increasing strategic importance of Turkey in the existing security environment, through giving examples of the current security challenges in Turkey's surrounding.

## **Introduction**

As a country that is located at one of the most strategic places in the world, Turkey has always played a key role in contributing to the efforts of generating peace and stability not only in its region, but also on a global scale. Turkey's geographic location, historical background, long lasting ties with the West and relations with its neighbours necessitate a comprehensive approach in understanding Turkey's security discourse.

With the entry of the concept of security to a new phase at the end of the Cold War through the diversification of the risks and threats, the security agendas of the states have been affected in order to give better responses. This article attempts to analyze Turkey's official security discourse in the face of this new security environment, by making special reference to its geographical location and its enduring ties with the West concentrating on its relations with the security institutions in Europe. It argues that Turkey's strategic importance has increased after the end of the Cold War, through its multilateral and multifaceted approaches in security policy preferences. It also emphasizes the fact that Turkey's increasing strategic importance in the wake of the September 11 terror attacks has become even more visible.

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This article comprises three chapters. The first chapter analyzes the general parameters of Turkey's security perceptions. The second chapter is dedicated to its geographical location, as an important determiner of Turkey's security perceptions, and there Turkey's position with regard to the situation in Iraq, Iran's nuclear program and the relations with the Southern Caucasian countries are touched upon. Finally, the last chapter covers Turkey's position in the European security architecture and it also covers Turkey's position towards NATO's new Strategic Concept.

The main task of this analysis is to reveal the major factors shaping Turkey's security policies after the Cold War and to emphasize the fact that Turkey's security agenda and its responsibilities as a country located at the conflux of the issues concerning the entire international community, have broadened. It also discusses whether new features are appearing in the country's security understanding. This analysis is deemed important, right now, since Turkey is one of the countries that have come to the centre stage by the current global challenges and Turkish policies have been the focus of attention. As this article concentrates on Turkey's official security policies, the methodology applied here is to make use of official statements and notes of the relevant Turkish official institutions, press releases, the scholarly works of Turkish diplomats and statesmen, and to concentrate on the language practices of the state actors. The academic works of mainly Turkish scholars and others have also been benefited.

## **1. General Parameters of Turkish Security Perceptions**

This section will attempt to shed light on the general aspects of security policy of the Republic of Turkey. Established in 1923, following a costly war of independence against the occupying powers, the security of the Republic of Turkey has been shaped by two main elements: geography and longstanding ties with the countries in its region. These two determinants make Turkey a key security player in Europe, the Balkans, the Caucasus, the Middle East, the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions all at once. Turkey has faced the challenge of being located at the confluence of such conflict areas by basing its foreign policy on the motto: "Peace at home, Peace in the world" as laid down by Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Turkey's Security Perspective, Historical and Conceptual Background*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/i\\_-turkey\\_s-security-perspective\\_-historical-and-conceptual-background\\_-turkey\\_s-contributions.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/i_-turkey_s-security-perspective_-historical-and-conceptual-background_-turkey_s-contributions.en.mfa). Accessed on 24 December 2009



The Turkish General Staff summarizes the defence policy of Turkey, as preserving and protecting the national independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and vital interests of the country. Accordingly, in its National Defence Policy, Turkey considers the following targets:

- To be an element of power and stabilization in its region,
- To form a “peace and security zone” in its surroundings,
- To contribute to peace and security in its region and to spread it to a broader range,
- To be a nation that produces strategies and security that can influence all strategies regarding its region and beyond,
- To make use of every opportunity to be engaged in initiatives to develop cooperation aimed at having close and positive relations.

Turkish officials focus on terrorism, the threat of long-range missiles and weapons of mass destruction, religious extremism and regional conflicts when analyzing the country’s basic security concerns.<sup>2</sup> In response to the uncertainty and instability of the new era, the Turkish armed forces plan to reorganize in order to add new capabilities by paying the utmost attention to the establishment of multifunctional units capable of conducting different tasks. Priority is given to small but flexible units that have sufficient capability, equipped with hi-tech weapons and systems, comprising sufficient command-control assets, precise and advance ammunition, early warning tools, and to also be able to conduct operations under any weather conditions<sup>3</sup>.

Establishing and maintaining friendly relations with other countries; promoting regional and international cooperation through bilateral as well as multilateral schemes; resolving conflicts through peaceful means and enhancing regional and international peace, stability, and prosperity are the guiding principles of Turkish security and foreign policy. Developing good neighbourly relations; respect for sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity are its salient features.<sup>4</sup> Turkish

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<sup>2</sup>Turkish General Staff, [http://www.tsk.tr/eng/genel\\_konular/savunmapolitikasi.htm](http://www.tsk.tr/eng/genel_konular/savunmapolitikasi.htm). Accessed on 24 December 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Turkish General Staff [http://www.tsk.tr/eng/genel\\_konular/gorevi.htm](http://www.tsk.tr/eng/genel_konular/gorevi.htm) Accessed on 24 December 2009.

<sup>4</sup>Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/i\\_-turkey\\_s-security-perspective\\_-historical-and-conceptual-background\\_-turkey\\_s-contributions.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/i_-turkey_s-security-perspective_-historical-and-conceptual-background_-turkey_s-contributions.en.mfa), Accessed on 24 December 2009.

security discourse makes frequent references to cooperation and partnership and importance of sustainable peace and stability. Ankara shows strong preference for multilateral approach in handling crises of all sorts.

Turkey's geographic location, historical background, being adjacent to very volatile regions, effects of domestic factors, its long lasting ties with the West and relations with its neighbours necessitate a very comprehensive approach in terms of the country's security policy. Turkish decision makers concentrate on all factors while establishing security strategies and foreign policy priorities. Placing self-preservation and the protection of territorial integrity at the very core of its security strategy, Turkey pursues a very active diplomacy.

Ambassador Turan Morali, the then Director General of International Security Affairs at the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, analyzes Turkey's security perspectives in terms of concentric circles. He places the Turkish domestic scene at the nucleus, followed by its immediate security environment comprised of its neighbours. The third circle is the broader geography consisting of regions and countries that Turkey has historical, cultural, or ethnic affinities. The fourth circle is the Euro-Atlantic and wider frameworks of security including NATO and EU. Finally, the UN completes the picture.<sup>5</sup> Morali's building-blocks approach to security issues, starting at the immediate environment and moving on to a wider geo-strategic context through effective multilateralism well explains Turkey's security approach. A founding member of the UN, member of NATO, and all the leading European and Euro-Atlantic institutions, and a negotiating country for membership of the European Union, Turkey actively pursues a policy geared towards enhancing cooperation in its region and beyond.<sup>6</sup>

Ambassador Ugur Ziyal, the then Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, emphasizes that as a country with significant military capabilities and a growing civilian sector that is active in humanitarian efforts, Turkey is a net contributor to international peace and security. In addition to its activities in key international organizations, Turkey also makes considerable efforts through bilateral contributions. Turkey has always been committed to upholding the universal principles enshrined in the UN Charter. It has a formidable record in active con-

<sup>5</sup> Morali T., *Turkey's Security Perspectives and Perceptions*, Turkish Policy Quarterly, Vol.1, No:4, Winter 2002, p.1-12

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/i\\_-turkey\\_s-security-perspective\\_-historical-and-conceptual-background\\_-turkey\\_s-contributions.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/i_-turkey_s-security-perspective_-historical-and-conceptual-background_-turkey_s-contributions.en.mfa). Accessed on 26 December 2009.

tributions to the preservation of regional and global peace and stability. Turkey's commitment to international stabilization efforts dates back to the Korean War, where the services of Turkish troops are commemorated to this day. Currently, Turkey takes part in several UN peacekeeping operations.<sup>7</sup>

Having set a course towards the West, Turkey became an integral part of the Western alliance, a member of NATO, and a frontline state against the Soviet Union during the Cold War. In the aftermath of the Second World War, Turkey chose to be a part of Western Alliance and since the accession to NATO in 1952 the North Atlantic Alliance has become the main pillar of Turkish security policy.

Turkey's membership of NATO constituted a reconfirmation of Turkey's Western orientation. Turkey, with the second largest armed forces in the Alliance, has played a crucial role in the defence of the West even in the most delicate moments.<sup>8</sup> Turkey remained a staunch member of NATO even at the height of the Cold War in a volatile region bordering the Eastern Bloc. It made a substantial contribution to the security and defence of the Alliance in general and of Western Europe in particular by guarding the Alliance's southern flank. Turkey, having the longest border with the former Soviet Union, was responsible for defending one-third of the Alliance's land frontiers against the Warsaw Pact. For a country with limited resources, this came at the expense of great sacrifices.<sup>9</sup>

In the aftermath of the Cold War, Turkey's security responsibilities have considerably increased. Accordingly, with a view to fulfilling its responsibilities and standing up to the challenges of our times, Turkey has significantly broadened its contributions, both in hard and soft terms, in a vast geography ranging from the Balkans to Afghanistan. In this sense, Turkey's contributions to NATO's operations have been remarkable. Turkey has played a very active role in international peacekeeping operations. Turkey has participated in all operations led by NATO in the Balkans since 1995. It contributed to IFOR and SFOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina, KFOR in Kosovo and Essential Harvest, Amber Fox, and Allied Harmony in Macedonia. Since NATO took over the International Security Assistance Force

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<sup>7</sup> Ziyal U., "Re-conceptualization of Soft Security and Turkey's Civilian Contributions to International Security", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, 2004, 3(2), p. 31-40.

<sup>8</sup> Demirel S., *Turkey and NATO At the Threshold of A New Century*, Perceptions. March-May 1999, Vol. IV. No:1

<sup>9</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/i\\_-turkey\\_s-security-perspective\\_-historical-and-conceptual-background\\_-turkey\\_s-contributions.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/i_-turkey_s-security-perspective_-historical-and-conceptual-background_-turkey_s-contributions.en.mfa), accessed on 25 January 2010.

(ISAF) Operation on 10 August 2003, Turkey assumed the command of the operation twice and has continuously contributed troops since the beginning of ISAF. Historical ties with Afghanistan and the importance attached to NATO's eventual success are the primary drivers of Turkish contributions. H.E. the then Minister Hikmet Çetin served as a NATO Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan (Jan 2004–Aug 2006) and through its Provincial Reconstruction Team in Wardak province on 12 November 2006, Turkey has further extended the scope of its contributions to reconstruction and development in Afghanistan.<sup>10</sup>

Contrary to initial and premature arguments levelled by some circles that Turkey's geo-strategic relevance would diminish, Turkey has found itself at the epicentre of international security issues after the Cold War. The conflicts of the 1990s in the Balkans, as well as both Gulf crises had direct implications for Turkey. However, it constructively cooperated with relevant security organizations and third parties in order to re-institute peace and stability. Through its proactive and cooperative approach, Turkey has emerged as a key actor in the international era. This approach required to deal with security issues, as well as the horrible spectre of terrorism, present new obligations and duties for every responsible member of the international community. Turkey has been a net contributor to efforts in this vein within the UN, NATO, the EU, and the OSCE, and will continue to do so within its means and capabilities.<sup>11</sup>

Traditionally, the analysis of national security has concentrated on the hard security dimension and, therefore, has been criticized as limited in focus and 'too narrowly founded'. The end of the Cold War has brought a new state of affairs in terms of security. Issues such as economic and social conditions, environmental damage, ethnic and religious based communal conflict, terrorism, organized crime, and drug trafficking have increasingly gained importance alongside the more familiar matters of military attack and defence capabilities. As Drorian argues, it is clear that the end of the Cold War has brought about a significant modification in national security agendas, especially in western states.<sup>12</sup> In this new uncertain security environment, the nature of the "threat" has also been subject to dramatic changes, including, inter alia, international terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, human and weapons trafficking, illegal immigration, illicit drug trafficking, money launder-

<sup>10</sup> Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations, <http://www.un.int/turkey/page198.html>

<sup>11</sup> Ziyal, op.cit.p.40

<sup>12</sup> Drorian S., *Security, State and Society in Troubled Times*, European Security, Vol. 14, No. 2, June 2005, p.255-275

ing, and cyber terror. Turkey also has responded to this new security environment by adopting its security discourse to be able to meet the new challenges. Keeping the national independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and vital interests of the country as main pillars of the defence policy, the new threats such as terrorism, the threat of long-range missiles and weapons of mass destruction, religious extremism, and regional conflicts have been focused on. New actors such as media and non-state actors have been more vocal regarding the security and foreign policy making process. Media and public opinion have occupied bigger roles in the current Turkish security discourse. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is at the moment in the process of reconstructing the public diplomacy mechanism and a more effective communication strategy. While geography and ties with the countries in its region have still been the main determiners of Turkey's security policy, Turkey's security agenda has broadened by globalised security challenges. The process of accession to the European Union was also another factor influencing Turkey's security thinking.

## **2. Turkey's Geographical Location as One the Determiners of its Security Perceptions**

The Turkish Ministry of Defence summarizes the geographical location of Turkey as the follows:

- 'The Middle East and the Caspian Basin, which have the most important oil reserves in the world,
- The Mediterranean Basin, which is at the intersection of important sea lines of communication,
- The Black Sea Basin and the Turkish Straits, which have always maintained their importance in history,
- The Balkans, which have undergone structural changes as the result of the breakup of the USSR and Yugoslavia, and
- The centre of the geography composed of Caucasia, which has abundant natural resources, as well as ethnic conflicts, and Central Asia.'<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Ministry of National Defence of Turkey, <http://www.msb.gov.tr/Birimler/GNPP/html/pdf/p1c2.pdf>. Accessed on 26 December 2009

Its geographical position makes Turkey a Balkan, Mediterranean, Caucasian, and Middle Eastern country, all at the same time. Today, most of the conflicts on the top of the international agenda are taking place around Turkey.

Turkey controls the only seaway joining the Black Sea with the Mediterranean. Referred to as Bosphorus and the Dardanelles in international terminology, the Turkish Straits geographically separate the Asian and European continents but bind them together politically and increase Turkey's geo-political and geo-strategic importance. The Turkish straits are the main entry and exit door of not only the littorals of the Black sea but also the whole of the Black Sea basin. The Turkish Straits connect the Black Sea to the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. Surrounded completely by Turkish territories and regulated by what is known as the territorial sea regime, the Turkish Straits are exclusively national and used in international transport in line with the Montreux Convention.<sup>14</sup>

In the Middle East and the Caucasus, regions that are in the immediate vicinity of Turkey, deep-rooted conflicts may at any moment lead to wide-ranging military confrontations, despite all the efforts made to attain lasting peace and stability. Similarly, the situation in the Balkans remains fragile. Therefore, the proactive and positive approach of Turkish foreign policy is both a choice and a necessity brought about by regional challenges.<sup>15</sup>

Turkey is geographically also located in close proximity to 72% of the world's proven gas and 73% of the oil reserves, in particular those in the Middle East and the Caspian basin. It, therefore, forms a natural energy bridge between the source countries and consumer markets and stands as a key country in ensuring energy security through the diversification of supply sources and routes, considerations that have gained increased significance in Europe today. From the energy security perspective, the Turkish Straits are of particular importance at around 3.7% of the world's daily oil consumption is shipped through the Turkish Straits.<sup>16</sup> Large energy consumers such as the EU seek to secure supplies through diversifying their energy suppliers. If Turkey became a major energy transit corridor into the EU, the Union would be able to increase the diversification of its energy suppliers and

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.trtenglish.com/trtinternational/en/newsDetail.aspx?HaberKodu=41c5b326-22f1-463f-a357-9d5e8f3a5434>. Accessed on 26 December 2009.

<sup>15</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/synopsis-of-the-turkish-foreign-policy.en.mfa>, Accessed on 10 December 2009.

<sup>16</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/data/DISPOLITIKA/EnerjiPolitikasi/Turkey's%20Energy%20Strategy%20\(Ocak%202009\).pdf](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/data/DISPOLITIKA/EnerjiPolitikasi/Turkey's%20Energy%20Strategy%20(Ocak%202009).pdf). Accessed on 26 December 2009.

transit countries to a certain extent. To this end, Turkey could become a partner of the EU in terms of energy. Moreover, with the implementation of its energy projects (oil and natural gas pipelines, LNG terminals, refineries, underground gas storage facilities), Turkey will have the potential to make significant contributions to the regional as well as global energy supply security.

Water also represents one of the most important items on Turkey's agenda. Despite its geographical location on the headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, Turkey is not a water rich country. The Tigris and Euphrates provide an important source of water supply to Turkey, Syria, and Iraq. Water, an essential need for human beings, is growing scarcer and, therefore, water policy should be handled with cooperation. Turkey views water as a catalyst for cooperation rather than a source of conflict. Its policy is based on the premise that transboundary waters should be used in an equitable, reasonable, and optimum manner.

Touching upon the major aspects of Turkey's geographic location, we could easily draw the conclusion that the security thinking of the country has been intensively influenced by geography. All the issues handled above require a very detailed examination and the literature in this sense is very extensive. However, the main aim of this article is to give a brief outlook on the security preferences of Turkey that stem from its location. The starting point for scholars analyzing Turkey's security discourse is the country's geographical location. Without drawing a clear picture of the geographical realities, the big picture cannot be completed. The fact that Turkey is the only state that is at the same time a member of NATO, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Cooperation and Development, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, the G-20 and the Islamic Conference Organization, is striking evidence of the influence of geography on its security and foreign policy preferences, while making it a unique international actor.

During the Cold War years, for the Western Block, Turkey was considered as a geopolitical asset having an important function of containing the USSR in NATO's southern region. However, with the fall of the Warsaw Pact, the picture has changed. The strategic importance of Turkey has been revisited with the start of a new era in world politics. This article argues that the importance of the country has been even more visible after the Cold War, due to the realities of the new system. In fact, Turkey has never lost its geopolitical importance; on the contrary, it was able to strengthen its importance by applying multilateral and multifaceted approaches in its security and foreign policy preferences.

Traditionally, Turkey has been considered an important country because of its geographic location between Europe, the Middle East, and Asia, which gives it easy access to strategically important regions and major energy resources. The conventional importance attributed to Turkey's strategic value became more visible following the events of September 11, and consequently Turkey has come under the spotlight. As a result, Turkey and its foreign policy increasingly became a centre of interest. As Huseyin Bagci and Saban Kardas rightly point out, the dominant view is that post September 11 events have contributed to Turkey's strategic importance.<sup>17</sup>

At this point, we would like to cover the Iraq issue, which constitutes an example emphasizing Turkey's increasing strategic importance in world politics. Turkey's priority with regard to its neighbour is Iraq's preservation of its territorial integrity and national unity that, according to Turkey, political reconciliation is the key for Iraq to emerge as a secure and stable country and, therefore, it gives full support to the efforts of the Iraqi Government to stabilize Iraq through political dialogue. Turkey enjoys a privileged network of communication with all the political groups and community leaders in Iraq without any exception. Turkey supports the political process on the way to democracy in Iraq, and the parliamentary elections held on 7 March 2010, was considered to be decisive for the success of democratization and stabilization efforts in Iraq as well as on the resolution of ongoing problems in the country on the basis of political reconciliation.<sup>18</sup> Turkish officials stress the importance of the reconstruction efforts and economic development, enabling all Iraqi people to benefit from Iraq's natural resources in a fair manner and determination of a special status for Kirkuk Province that will reflect the consensus of all parties. Another very important item is the PKK terror organizations' presence in Iraq. The elimination of the PKK presence from Iraq and from the agenda of Turkish-Iraqi bilateral relations is one of Turkey's major security objectives. With a proactive approach, Turkey initiated neighbouring countries process regarding Iraq and this platform has developed into a unique international forum.

<sup>17</sup> Bagci H. and Kardas S., *Post September 11 Impact: The Strategic Importance of Turkey Revisited*, Prepared for the CEPS/IISS European Security Forum, Brussels, 12 May 2003, available at <http://www.eusec.org/bagci.htm>

<sup>18</sup> Press Release of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the Parliamentary elections in Iraq, 5 March 2010, available at [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no\\_50\\_5-march-2010\\_-press-release-regarding-the-parliamentary-elections-to-be-held-in-iraq.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_50_5-march-2010_-press-release-regarding-the-parliamentary-elections-to-be-held-in-iraq.en.mfa)



The Iraq issue had ramifications on Turkey-US relations as well. Before the Iraq war broke out, Turkey, on the one hand, tried to contribute to the solution of the crisis in both bilateral and multilateral fora, and on the other hand, entered into negotiations with the US on political, economic, and military issues in order to eliminate the possible negative impacts of a possible war. In accordance with Article 92 of the Turkish Constitution, the motion that would have allowed the opening of a northern front through Turkey was rejected by the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) on 1 March 2003. The rejection of the motions created a bitter atmosphere in bilateral relations. However, the TGNA adopted a decision to open Turkish airspace to US forces.

Following the rejection of the motion, regular contacts and reciprocal high-level visits helped consolidate the Turkish-US friendship. The two sides reiterated the mutual commitment to extend the cooperation further. The momentum created by these visits and the developments that led to the U.S. intervention in Iraq revealed the need to conduct more frequent and structured political consultations. Both parties agreed on the necessity to establish an institutional mechanism to allow these consultations to be held on a regular and structured basis. As a result, the then Secretary of State Dr. Condoleezza Rice and the then Minister of Foreign Affairs HE. Abdullah Gül agreed upon the “Shared Vision and Structured Dialogue to Advance the Strategic Partnership” in July 2006, that specifies the areas of cooperation on issues of common interest that allow structured consultations on those issues.<sup>19</sup> Despite occasional difficulties in bilateral relations, the US and Turkey share a sound and deep rooted partnership.

Another important issue is Iran’s nuclear file. Turkey and Iran have deep-rooted relations based on centuries of interaction. Political bilateral relations rest on the principles of non-interference in internal affairs, good neighbourliness, common interests, and respect for mutual sensitivities. The controversy between Iran and the international community regarding Iran’s nuclear program is still ongoing. Turkey holds the view that Iran has the right to develop peaceful nuclear technology on an equal footing with the other countries, and this is valid for all countries. Turkey is against nuclear weapons and attaches importance to the non-existence of nuclear weapons in its region. Turkish officials strongly emphasize that the only way to solve this problem is to recourse diplomacy. On this matter, diplomacy

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<sup>19</sup> Turkish-US Political Relations, available at [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkish-u\\_s\\_-political-relations.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkish-u_s_-political-relations.en.mfa)

still has ample room to manoeuvre and Turkey is actively trying to prepare the groundwork for diplomatic means. The stance of the Turkish government was reiterated by Minister of Foreign Affairs H.E. Ahmet Davutoglu during a joint press conference on the occasion of Iranian Minister for Foreign Affairs H.E. Manucehr Muttaki's recent visit to Ankara on 3 February 2010. There is a consensus in Ankara that Iran's nuclear program issue could only be solved through diplomatic and peaceful means.

Another major area that reflects Turkey's contributions to peace and stability is the Southern Caucasus. The main aspects of Turkish policy vis-à-vis Southern Caucasus is the existence of independent, sovereign, stable states that adopt contemporary values and realize their democratic transformation and, thereby, providing political and economic support to them. Stability and peace in the Southern Caucasus is of particular importance for Turkey since it enjoys deep-rooted historical and economic ties with those countries. Turkey wishes to establish comprehensive cooperation with South Caucasian countries and supports their integration with international and regional organizations such as NATO, the OSCE, the Council of Europe, and Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization. Turkey is one of the first countries that recognized the independence of South Caucasian countries, and established diplomatic ties with the exception of Armenia. Ill-disposed policies pursued by Yerevan towards its neighbours have discouraged Turkey to establish diplomatic relations with Armenia. However, Turkey is determined to continue the process of dialogue by engaging with Armenia and is willing to normalize its relations with this country to promote regional cooperation and contribute to the security of the region.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, with the new administration in Armenia, it was considered to be an opportunity to open a new phase in the relations. President Gul paid an official visit to Armenia in September 2008, upon the invitation of President Sargsyan, and accompanied by Foreign Minister Davutoglu. In the aftermath of this visit Foreign Ministers have met several times with a view to discussing the means that will bring peace and security to the region. The two countries signed the "Protocol on the establishment of diplomatic relations" and the "Protocol on the development of bilateral relations" on 20 October 2009 that constitute a major step on the way to the normalization of relations. Turkey holds the view that the normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey will contribute to regional

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<sup>20</sup> Turkey's political relations with Armenia, available at [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey\\_s-political-relations-with-armenia.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey_s-political-relations-with-armenia.en.mfa)

peace, but finding a peaceful solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is also very essential for the entire region. Therefore, a peaceful solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict will facilitate the approval by the Turkish Parliamentarians of the said protocols. The Constitutional Court of Armenia has declared its decision of constitutional conformity with the Protocols with a short statement on 12 January 2010. The Constitutional Court has recently published its grounds for the decision. However, the decision containing preconditions and restrictive provisions that impair the letter and spirit of the Protocols are considered to have the potential to undermine the very reason for negotiating these Protocols as well as their fundamental objective by Turkish authorities.<sup>21</sup> This approach is not acceptable to Turkey, since it maintains its adherence to the primary provisions of these Protocols and expects the same attitude from the Armenian government. As the normalization efforts continue, the adoption of resolutions by some parliaments regarding historical events with domestic political motives does not benefit anyone and carry the potential to damage the ongoing efforts towards establishing peace and stability in the South Caucasus. The passage of the decision H.RES. 252 in the US House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs regarding the 1915 events on 4 March 2010 and the adoption of a resolution by the Parliament of Sweden on 11 March 2010 pertaining to the claim that certain peoples were subjected to genocide during the final period of the Ottoman Empire constitute two recent examples of such decisions. Turkish officials strongly condemned these acts and recalled the Turkish Ambassador in Washington and Stockholm to Turkey for consultations.

The Turkish foreign and security policy elites are sometimes criticized by some circles as being very sceptical and extremely cautious. It is true that Turkish decision makers act very cautiously in designing their policies. However, this behaviour does not stem from a lack of trust *vis-à-vis* their counterparts. It is mainly the result of seeking the best course of action that could contribute initially to the stability of the country itself, than the regional and global peace and welfare. Turkey manages very well to cope with the challenges of this new era with a correct strategic vision and active diplomacy in all fields. It does not turn a blind eye to any crises or instability, especially in its neighbourhood and also elsewhere, being cognizant of the fact that any sort of instability can reach a global dimension through a spillover effect.

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<sup>21</sup> Press Release by Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Regarding the Recently Published Grounds of the Decision of the Armenian Constitutional Court on the Protocols Between Turkey and Armenia, 18 January 2010, available at [www.mfa.gov.tr](http://www.mfa.gov.tr)

### 3. Westernization of the Turkish Security Discourse

As the Turkish nation state was founded in 1923, it was surrounded by a new international environment that was no longer identical to the one that had existed prior to World War I. Most of the new actors were politically unstable and economically weak compared to the victorious powers of World War I and the international system had ceased to be a "European system" in which Europe was no longer predominant. To this end, the new Turkish Republic was in need of a new, realistically sound foreign policy that could respond to the challenges of the new international system without endangering the existence of the state. One of the fundamental features of the new Republic's foreign policy has been its western orientation. This was expressed first in cultural and, after World War II, in political and military terms. This orientation has been continuous.<sup>22</sup> Westernization had its roots in the Ottoman Empire period.

The history of westernization in the Turkish State dates back to the 'Tanzimat' (regulation) period, which began in 1839. The mentioned period was characterized by various attempts to modernize the Ottoman Empire with a view to securing the territorial integrity of the Empire. The Ottoman Empire adopted westernized policies mainly in the technology, education, and military fields. Tanzimat period's main aim was to "save the state" and bring the Empire back to its victorious days. The Ottomans were aware of the fact that that one of the most important reasons for European political strength was the organizational basis of the European nation-states. This led them to organize the government through a rational division of tasks and the creation of effective enforcement mechanisms.<sup>23</sup>

The Turkish Republic consolidated the modernization of political structures and the secularization process of the 19th century. Founding a new state modelled on the European examples of nation-state was, in the logic of the Republic, intended to realize a complete westernization of the social, cultural, and political spheres in Turkey.<sup>24</sup> As the founder of the Turkish Republic, Atatürk's theory and

<sup>22</sup> Aydın M., *Turkish Foreign Policy Framework and Analysis*, Centre For Strategic Research Papers, December 2004, Ankara

<sup>23</sup> Ulusoy K., *The Changing Challenge of Europeanization to Politics And Governance in Turkey*, International Political Science Review 2009, p. 363, available at <http://ips.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/30/4/363>

<sup>24</sup> Ulusoy, op.cit., p.371

practice of foreign policy have been the most important factors in shaping Turkish foreign policy. Atatürk did not want to see the Turkish nation as a foreign or hostile community set apart from the nations of the world and did not want the nation to belong to any group holding such views. Atatürk wanted Turkey to be a part of the civilized world. He was aware that a successful foreign policy was necessary in order to achieve his far-reaching reforms inside Turkey. Between 1920 and 1955, Turkey entered a number of pacts and alliances, as well as signing friendship declarations with all its neighbours and bilateral security treaties with the United States.<sup>25</sup> However, as far as Turkey's security was concerned, Turkey's adherence to NATO in 1952 has constituted a milestone.

Since the institutionalization of European Affairs after the end of the World War II, Turkey attempted to take part in the picture, mainly because of the 'western element' in its foreign policy. Be it organizations such as NATO or the Council of Europe, or the European Economic Community in the early 1960s, Turkey has consistently attempted to locate itself in the western sphere of political activity.<sup>26</sup>

Since Republican times, Turkey has sought security through alliances and devoted persistent efforts to embrace the West. NATO membership in 1952 solidified Ankara's western orientation by establishing a long lasting institutional and functional link with the West. Turkey regards the North Atlantic Alliance as the linchpin of Euro-Atlantic security and stability. As for security policy, Turkey has defined the concepts of strategic cooperation and strategic partnership that could affect its new geopolitical axis in the post-Cold War period.<sup>27</sup>

Turkey joined the Council of Europe in 1949. It has been a member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe since 1975. It has also taken place in the European security architecture through its associate membership status in the Western European Union in 1992.

In the post-cold war period NATO membership has remained the cornerstone of Turkish security policy. Contrary to the belief that post Cold War security structure has diminished Turkey's strategic importance, Turkey's importance has increased and it has continued to assume a leading role in dealing with the security

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<sup>25</sup> Aydın, op. cit.

<sup>26</sup> Bronstone A., *European Security into the Twenty-First Century, Beyond traditional theories of international relations, Euro-Turkish Relations: The Saga*, Chapter 7, (England, Ashgate Publishing, 2000) p. 188

<sup>27</sup> Udum S., *Turkey and the Emerging European Security Framework*, Turkish Studies, Vol. 3, No. 2, (Autumn 2002), p. 69-103

threats facing Europe. Thirteen out of the 16 'hotspots' of concern to European security determined by NATO experts, are situated on Turkey's immediate periphery.<sup>28</sup> The world faced an escalation of tensions to a great extent in some of these areas during the 1990s. An eruption of a crisis in any of these 13 spots has carried potential security risks for Turkey.

Turkey has continued to be a crucial strategic member of the Atlantic Alliance after the end of the Cold War, through its strategic geographical location and its valuable contributions to the Alliance's political and military transformation. It has added great value to the Euro-Atlantic security. The dynamics of post September 11, has affected Turkey much more than any other European ally. During the time of the discussions regarding military intervention in Iraq, Turkey's key role in the security area has once again been very visible. In February 2003, Turkey requested NATO assistance under Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty. The Alliance undertook a number of precautionary defensive measures to ensure Turkey's security in the event of a potential threat to its territory or population as a consequence of the crisis. The decision to assist Turkey was the culmination of formal and informal consultations on a possible NATO role in Iraq, which began in 2002. This decision reflected the Alliance's commitment to the security of its member states and policy of making its assets and experience available wherever and whenever they are needed, in accordance with NATO's founding treaty.<sup>29</sup> Even this particular example of NATO's decision in the framework of Article 4 about Turkey's defence was clear evidence of Turkey's key role when it comes to global security issues. In fact, Turkey's strategic importance has never diminished after the Cold War.

Turkey's role in NATO has also become more visible in this new security environment. As a country covering the southern flank of the Alliance during the Cold War years and it has contributed to a great extent to the Euro-Atlantic security. Turkish General Staff summarizes the main elements of the Turkish Defence Policy as determination and will for National Defence, NATO solidarity, and the Turkish Armed Forces.<sup>30</sup>

Turkey's contributions to NATO's transformation efforts have been remarkable. Currently, the work to prepare a new Strategic Concept is underway and

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid. p. 73

<sup>29</sup> NATO and the 2003 campaign against Iraq, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_51977.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_51977.htm), accessed on 1 February 2010

<sup>30</sup> Turkish General Staff Web Page, [http://www.tsk.tr/eng/genel\\_konular/tarihce.htm](http://www.tsk.tr/eng/genel_konular/tarihce.htm)

Turkey is also actively taking part in ongoing work for the drafting of new Concept. Turkey believes that the 1999 Strategic Concept is still relevant and collective defence should continue to be reaffirmed as the core purpose of the Alliance. According to Turkey, it is not necessary to redefine the Article 5 responsibilities and the new Concept should provide the necessary flexibility. The indivisibility of the Alliance's security, continuation of Transatlantic link, and solidarity should be preserved in the new Concept. A delicate balance should be established between defence and crisis management operations. For Turkey, the principle of 'consensus' is an indispensable element of preserving Alliance's solidarity and any concession on this principle is unacceptable. According to Turkey partnerships and NATO-Russia Council should be considered among the main elements, continuation of open door policy should be emphasized, and the agreed framework of NATO-EU strategic cooperation as established in March 2003 should continue to provide the modalities of this cooperation. Terrorism is another important issue that should occupy an important place in the new Strategic Concept.

Turkey regards with the utmost importance the notion of solidarity and considers that it is directly linked to the credibility of the Alliance. To this end, consensus is the key element to maintain the solidarity of Allies. Turkey also believes that a more politically involved NATO is needed. New global actors such as China, India, Pakistan, and Japan should be included in the network of partnerships. Therefore, the continuation of the Alliance's open door policy is vital.

Turkey's EU membership bid dates back to the late 1950s. The Association Agreement was concluded between Turkey and the European Economic Community in 1963.<sup>31</sup> Through the Customs Union arrangement established in 1995 between the EU and Turkey, the relations reached an advanced stage economically. From 1994 onwards, the EU policy makers concentrated on Eastern enlargement. The EU's new agenda, meaning enlargement, has also opened a new era in Turkey-EU relations. The 1999 Helsinki Summit officially declared Turkey a candidate country for accession to the EU. Turkey's candidacy status can be regarded as a crucial turning point concerning the transformation of Turkish politics in every aspect. Since December 1999, Turkey's security and foreign policy environment has been diversified.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p.75

<sup>32</sup> Durmuşlar T., *Europeanization of Turkish Foreign Policy: 1999-2007 Period*, draft work, <http://www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/events/graduateconference/barcelona/papers/477.pdf>

The European Union's quest for playing a major role in security and defence affairs, has been very closely followed by Turkey. It has supported the development of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) of the EU from its outset. Turkey's efforts to render ESDP more inclusive have contributed to the effective development of the project from its very beginning. These efforts were based on the vested rights and status that Turkey has enjoyed in the Western European Union (WEU).<sup>33</sup>

Turkey shares the same values as the Euro-Atlantic community. A significant number of Turks live in Europe and the Turkish economy is essentially tied to Europe. One can easily assert that peace and security in Europe is of significant importance to Turkey. The new risks and threats give us a good reason for common concern.<sup>34</sup> As a key component of its foreign policy, Turkey reaffirms its primary role in European security and defence affairs. From the beginning of the Cold War, it has played a vital part in the West's defence structure thanks to its geographic position providing common borders with the Balkans, Syria, Iraq, and the former Soviet Union.<sup>35</sup> Any security initiative in Europe needs Turkey's effective participation in order to achieve sustainable peace.

According to Meltem Muftuler-Bac, there are three assets that make Turkey an indispensable actor in the European security system in the post Cold War era: its membership of NATO, its military capabilities, and its geostrategic position. First, by exercising its veto in the North Atlantic Council Turkey has an institutional lever that can affect the EU's defence aspirations. Second, Turkish military capabilities are essential for operations in the European Security area. Finally, Turkey's geostrategic position that allows it to be a major player in its surroundings.<sup>36</sup> We also suggest adding Turkish contributions to ESDP, as another important asset for the European security architecture. Cognizant of the fact that there is still ample room for enhancing the cooperation between Turkey and the EU on security matters, Turkey makes every effort to be able to partake actively and support EU on this very important initiative. Not being a full member of the European Union has brought along some complications for Turkey's full participation in the security

<sup>33</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/iv\\_-european-security-and-defence-identity\\_policy-\\_esdi\\_p\\_.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/iv_-european-security-and-defence-identity_policy-_esdi_p_.en.mfa), accessed on 25 January 2010

<sup>34</sup> Erguvenc S., *Turkey's Security Perceptions*, Perceptions, Vol.3, No.2, June-August 1998

<sup>35</sup> Oymen O., *Turkey's European Foreign Policy*, Perceptions, Vol.2, March-May 1997

<sup>36</sup> Muftuler Bac M., *Turkey's Role in the EU's Security and Foreign Policies*, Security Dialogue, Vol.31, No 4, December 2000, p. 490



and defence policies of European Union. Despite the existence of some unfavourable conditions, Turkey did its best to contribute to the ESDP activities. Turkey is the biggest non-EU contributor to the ESDP missions and operations, the third biggest contributor to Operation Althea in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and a significant contributor to civilian and military capability development efforts.<sup>37</sup>

### Conclusions

Turkey's unique geographical location, historical experience, and relations with its neighbours are the main factors in shaping its security policies. While these determiners are still very relevant, Turkey's security policies have broadened by the challenges of globalised security agenda. Non-state actors such as media and public opinion have been more vocal in the security and foreign policy making process. The process of accession to the European Union was also another factor influencing Turkey's security thinking. As a result of the fact that in the aftermath of the Cold War, Turkey's security responsibilities have considerably increased, Turkey has significantly broadened its contributions to international and regional security efforts, both in hard and soft terms in a vast geography.

NATO membership still constitutes the backbone of Turkey's security policy. Turkey is actively taking part in the Alliance's political and military transformation and providing substantial contributions to the operations. The European Union's quest for playing a major role in security and defence affairs has also been very closely followed by Turkey. Despite the existence of some unfavourable conditions regarding Turkey's participation, ESDP has been actively supported by Turkey from the beginning. While the European dimension of Turkish security policy remains essential, Turkey has been following a multi-dimensional approach. Turkey's active involvement in the European initiatives does not prevent it from establishing close cooperation with the US, Middle East, the Balkans, the Caucasus, or Russia. Turkey regards all these dimensions as complementing each other. This multi-dimensional approach makes Turkey a key actor that should be included in any kind of security cooperation, mainly in its region. Therefore, any security initiative in Europe should take into consideration the value of this very important strategic actor and exert every effort to benefit from the opportunities that Turkey

<sup>37</sup> Davutoglu A., *Bridging an Unnecessary Divide: NATO and the EU*, Issues, EUISS, October 2009, Vol.30 ,available at [http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/ISSues30\\_web.pdf](http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/ISSues30_web.pdf)

could provide. This approach will best serve to the interest of the continent as a whole.

Contrary to the belief that the post Cold War security structure has diminished Turkey's strategic importance, Turkey's importance has increased. The September 11 terror attacks have also added to Turkey's strategic importance and it has come to the centre of the international scene. The dynamics of 9/11 have affected Turkey much more than any European Ally, and the importance attributed to Turkey's strategic value has become more visible. Currently, most of the conflicts on the top of the international agenda are taking place around Turkey. It is responding to these challenges with a proactive approach. This approach is both a choice and a necessity brought about by regional and global challenges.

Among other examples, the election of Turkey for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council for the term 2009–2010 by a record of 153 votes is a striking evidence of Turkey's prominent role in the international scene and it proves the confidence that the international community has placed in the foreign and security policies pursued by Turkey.

## THE LITHUANIAN–AMERICAN ASSOCIATION: WHY DO WE NEED THE U.S.?

Raimundas Lopata\*

Historically, the last six decades Lithuanians have been constantly complaining – now America shows no attention, now it shows too much attention and it disturbs Lithuania's relationship with Europe and Russia.

However, the principal characteristics of Lithuania-U.S. relations would be as follows. The United States of America was the determinant for the restoration of the State of Lithuania. The U.S. is still the main factor ensuring Lithuania's independent action. Such situation is determined by the following circumstances:

*Ideological.* The U.S. is constantly and consistently promoting and supporting the principle of democratic self-determination and its implementation. The impact of such position is proved by the fact that the U.S. did not recognise the illegal and non-democratic incorporation of Lithuania into the USSR in 1940 for five decades.

*Geopolitical.* The U.S. is the only state that objectively is able to offset the Russia's impact in the Eastern Baltic. The U.S. guarantees NATO and EU structures, which, in their turn, currently ensure Lithuania's military and economic security.

*Political.* a) The U.S. is interested in the existence of Lithuania (and other Baltic States) because with them the U.S. may affect the transatlantic relations, Russia and other aspects eventually; b) The U.S. has a big community of Lithuanians which during different elections become a valid political factor.

On the other hand, it is also clear that the U.S. interest in Lithuania is limited. The said historical discourse suggests that the U.S. recognised Lithuania's independence (in 1922) factually rather than continuously. The refusal to recognise the annexation of 1940 is also considered temporary. Economically, the U.S. capital does not have any significant economic interests. Socially-politically, visa waiver is still burdened by various clauses. Finally, geopolitically Lithuania is still outside the area of interest of the U.S. as the sea state. America is interested in the existence

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of not only Lithuania but also of other two Baltic States as a single regional factor. This tendency is proved by the U.S.-Baltic Charter, which was signed on 16 January 1998.

This Charter officially documented the strategic necessity of real and long-term America's participation in European matters and recognised the significance of the Baltic States in ensuring these so-called transatlantic relations. However, it should be noted that in addition to the multilateral consultation mechanism it provides for bilateral consultation mechanism as well: "The Partners will consult together, as well as with other countries, in the event that a Partner perceives that its territorial integrity, independence, or security is threatened or at risk". As a matter of fact, Lithuania tried to use this clause at the end of August 2008.

It is also important that the Charter covers not only security issues but also the promotion of socio-economic welfare. Unfortunately, Lithuania's efforts to follow this direction were not successful due to the lack of coordination and strategic political will in general. This fact allowed manipulation of anti-American feelings in the country, while the offset mechanism was not created.

As a result, on 8 October 2009 representatives of political, business and academic areas convened a Constitutive Assembly and established the Lithuanian-American Association. On 3 December 2009, the Association was registered in the Register of Legal Entities as a non-profit organisation, the aim of which is to strengthen bilateral relations with a help of economic, social-cultural, educational programmes and to become a place of political discussions of bilateral relations, international security and Atlantic *acqui*. The founders of the Lithuanian-American Association elected Raimundas Lopata, professor of the Institute of International Relations and Political Science of the Vilnius University, as the President of the Association. President Valdas Adamkus agreed to become the Chairman of the Council of Trustees.

On 1 March 2010, the founders of the Lithuanian-American Association and the Chairman of the Council of Trustees met the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Lithuania Anne Elizabeth Derse. The participants of the meeting agreed with the opinion that bilateral relations of the Republic of Lithuania and the U.S. had entered a new phase. As a result, the Lithuanian-American Association established at the social initiative and mobilising intellectual and financial resources can highly contribute to the development of bilateral relations in various areas.

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## THE COMMUNITY OF DEMOCRACIES – A NEW INSTRUMENT OF TRANSATLANTIC EFFORTS TO ENHANCE DEMOCRACY BUILDING?

**Žygmantas Pavilionis\***

In July 2009, Lithuania assumed the presidency of the Community of Democracies (CoD), comprising over 100 countries worldwide, for a two-year period ending in 2011.

For the beginning, some words about the history of this organization. The CoD is an intergovernmental structure. The goal of the CoD is to strengthen and deepen democratic norms and practices worldwide as well as to consolidate and expand democracy around the world. The idea of the CoD was conceived in the United States of America in 1999. The Community itself was inaugurated at the first biennial ministerial conference that was held in Warsaw on 25-27 June 2000 – over 100 democratic countries met to affirm their governments' commitment to strengthening and promoting democratic values and practices. The Warsaw Declaration spells out a series of core democratic rights, among others the right to free and fair elections, freedom of expression, equal access to education, rule of law, and freedom of peaceful assembly. Ten countries convened the first ministerial meeting in Warsaw: Poland, Portugal, the United States, Chile, the Czech Republic, India, Mali, Mexico, the Republic of Korea, and South Africa. The initiative of establishing the Community was spearheaded by the then Polish Foreign Minister Bronisław Geremek and the US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. In 2006, the Convening group was expanded by adding Cape Verde, El Salvador, Italy, Mongolia, Morocco, and the Philippines. In July 2009, Lithuania was proposed to assume the presidency of the CoD and to become de facto its 17th convening member. The Convening Group of 17 governments is an executive institution of the CoD. It meets in Washington at the level of ambassadors of the represented countries. Decisions are made by consensus. The presidency rotates on a biennial basis.

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The Community has already been chaired by Poland, South Korea, Chile, Mali, and Portugal. In 2003, in Seoul, the Seoul Plan of Action was adopted. It foresees actions for strengthening democracy. In 2005, the Santiago Ministerial Commitment of the CoD affirmed the commitments of the Community to promote the participation of citizens in the democratic process, to reduce poverty, support regional and interregional cooperation, and respond to the threats to democracy, especially terrorism. In order to implement these commitments, four working groups were established: Working Group on Democratic Governance and Civil Society; Working Group on Poverty, Development, and Democratic Governance; Working Group on Regional and Interregional Cooperation for Democratic Governance; Working Group on Promoting Democracy and Responding to National and Transnational Threats to Democracy. In 2007, during the ministerial conference in Bamako (Mali), a decision was made to establish a Permanent Secretariat<sup>1</sup> with headquarters in Poland. At the end of 2008, the Secretariat started its activities in Warsaw. In 2009, during the ministerial conference in Lisbon (Portugal), the Final Declaration, the declaration on Honduras, and the decisions of a procedural nature were adopted. The first ever Bronisław Geremek Award was conferred on famous anti-apartheid activist Nelson Mandela for his merits towards democracy.

In addition to the governmental process, the Community of Democracies also has a non-governmental process, which is represented by civil society organizations and serves as a source of information and advice to the respective governments. The NGOs that participate in the activities of the CoD have established the International Steering Committee (ISC), which comprises 20 representatives of civil society organizations from five regions of the world and a representative of the Executive Secretariat, representing the NGOS of the chairing country. The Council for a Community of Democracies<sup>2</sup> serves as the Secretariat of the ISC. CCD is the only nongovernmental organization in the world with an exclusive focus on the Community of Democracies.

What was the general rationale to create the Community? First and foremost because we believe in democracy and because we also know that we may not take our liberty and democracy for granted. The current Polish Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski at the panel “What Future for Democracy” organized by the CoD at the 19th Krynica Forum (10 September 2009) explained it in the following

<sup>1</sup> For more information see: <http://www.community-democracies.org/>

<sup>2</sup> For more information see: <http://www.ccd21.org/index.htm>

way: “while democracy was well established in a part of the world, various countries have either experimented with less democratic forms of management or have completely abandoned democracy for an authoritarian type of power structure ... There is also a democracy deficit, which means that several societies strive for more democratic measures but the governments do not deliver it ... With the ongoing and profound economic crisis that is affecting large parts of the globe there is also a phenomenon of the enemies of democracy, which produces authoritarian leaders and economic systems that favour compulsory political measures rather than democratic procedures”.

What is the benefit of the Community? First of all, the CoD involves and interfaces with grass root democracy proponents (identification of the appropriate actors, reach out, establishing communication lines, ongoing training, empowering, on the ground intel); the CoD transmits non-governmental actions and voices into governmental responses and policies; the CoD identifies region specific threats to democracy and concentrates democracy assistance on target areas; the CoD creates a synergy between different democracy stakeholders – it is the only cross-continent organization for democracy in the world, smaller than the United Nations, but bigger than any other regional organization and capable of creating a synergy for democracy among countries with very different institutional, cultural, and geographic backgrounds.

Lithuania’s Presidency of the Community of Democracies 2009–2011 coincides with the important anniversaries of the history of independence and democracy in the country. In 2010, Lithuania commemorates the loss of its independence 70 years ago. 20 years ago, on 11 March 1990 Lithuania was the first Republic that declared the reestablishment of independence from the Soviet Union. The history of democracy in Lithuania, as well as in all of Central and Eastern Europe, is full of impressive examples of unity of civil society and civil endeavour: from the Hungarian Revolution to the Prague Spring, from the Baltic Way to the January Events in Vilnius in 1991, when thousands of unarmed people defended their independence against brutal Soviet military forces. These events became living examples of the culture of peace and a non-violent way towards democracy that was chosen by the civilian, ordinary people in our countries. The last two decades demonstrated that the delivery of democracy (or democracy promotion) requires the concerted action of the entire international community. The ascent of the “colour revolutions” in Central Europe marked a remarkable success of democracy in those countries where civil societies were already nascent. As a result, the

expertise accumulated by the countries must be used in democracy building efforts on a global scale. Current international institutions have grown increasingly bureaucratic and the process of their responding to the challenges produced by the dynamics of international relations is slow. The CoD is a coalition of forces that seek to make democracy attractive and applicable to all players, small and big, rich and poor, to those societies that already have a thick texture of civic institutions and to those that are starting from scratch and that are trying to find their own way to a more prosperous future.

According to various reports, 40% of the world's population still lives under authoritarian rule, while only 13% live in fully developed democracies. From the year 2006, global democracy retreat is perceived in different regions of the world as well as international organizations – autocratic states are growing in numbers and democratic countries face increasing hurdles while promoting their agenda at multilateral fora; while the economic crisis has added risks to democracy worldwide. Our task is to help reverse these trends.

In 2009, the following goals and priorities of Lithuania's presidency of the Community of Democracies were approved by the Democracy Caucus at the United Nations<sup>3</sup>: discussing the implications of the current financial and economic crisis for democratic governance in order to expand and improve democratic governance at the local, national, and global levels; revitalizing the CoD, welcoming new partners to the CoD; achieving maximum synergy between CoD and relevant international organizations, initiatives and stakeholders for the strengthening of democracy. Among the priorities, the following actions were emphasized: strengthening the role of CoD in the United Nations, including the Human Rights Council, initiating UNGA resolution on democracy education; initiating regional CD meetings; encouraging regional and local initiatives, including constructive input by non-governmental partners, aimed at promoting democracy, transparency, social inclusion, women's and youth empowerment; strengthening synergies and cooperation with relevant international and regional organizations and fora (including the European Union, OSCE, Council of Europe, Council of the Baltic Sea States, Union for the Mediterranean, Community of Democratic Choice, ASEAN, African Union); initiating CD missions to countries that seek assistance

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<sup>3</sup> *Democracy Caucus at the United Nations* - informal meetings of the CoD at the ministerial level, organized each September, annually on the margins of ministerial week of the United Nations General Assembly.



in dealing with threats to democracy or the consolidation of democracy; crystalizing the mandate of the Community of Democracies, adjusting it to the current realities; by making efficient use of the Permanent Secretariat and reviewing the structure and working methods of CD working groups, creating CD capitals Contact Group, encouraging better burden sharing in CD activities.

Building on the experience of the Chilean Presidency the Lithuanian Presidency established a new system of six working groups covering the following issues: Working Group on Poverty, Development, and Democracy (Italy and Chile has agreed to co-chair the working group), Working Group on Promoting Democracy and Responding to National and Transnational Threats to Democracy (Hungary leading the group), Working Group on Gender Equality and the Promotion of the Rights of Women (the United States and Lithuania co-chairing the working group), Working Group on Regional Cooperation (Republic of Korea and Romania co-chairing the group); Working Group on Enabling and Protecting Civil Society (Canada leading); Friends of Presidency Working Group on the Reform of the CoD (Sweden leading the group). Currently, international consultations are being held within the CoD on the establishment of the Working Group on Education for Democracy. The main objective of the working groups is to come up with practical initiatives to promote and support democracy at all levels – national, regional, and international.

During the Lithuanian Presidency, the voice of the CoD has started to be heard on different important issues for democracy globally. During its Presidency, Lithuania has initiated CoD statements on International Democracy Day, Afghanistan elections, the situation in Honduras, on 2010 Presidential Elections in Ukraine, Burma (release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi), Kyrgyzstan, Haiti, and Thailand. During this period, the International Steering Committee of the CoD has also issued statements on Iran as well as on the Imprisonment of Singapore Democratic Party Leaders.

At the United Nations the CoD operates through Democracy Caucus (or the “democracy lobby group”) that was established in June 2000 that aims at promoting the principles of democracy and human rights embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Warsaw Declaration of the Community of Democracies. In September 2009, Lithuania convened a special informal meeting of the CoD foreign ministers to discuss the efficiency and relevance of the Community worldwide, creating synergies between the Community and other stakeholders of democracy building as well as the situation in Honduras.

Lithuania's efforts in New York are currently concentrated on drafting a UN resolution on education for democracy. Lithuania has also initiated a similar "lobby group" in the framework of the Geneva based Human Rights Council – e.g. the Convening Group Statement on the Draft UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training statement was delivered by Ambassador Jonas Rudalevičius in Geneva at the 13th session of the UN Human Rights Council on 2 March 2010.

Under the initiative of Lithuania, the first ever dialog between the Community of Democracies and the European Union started with the first consultations of both organizations (Informal Round Table Meeting "New Partnerships in Democracy Building: EU and the Community of Democracies was organized in Brussels on 16 November 2009). On this occasion, EU Foreign Ministers approved conclusions on Democracy Support, including the EU Agenda on support for Democracy-Building Processes, and naming CoD as an EU partner in this endeavour (alongside the United Nations and the OSCE). Creating synergies and pragmatic cooperation between various global democracy actors, including the EU and the Community of Democracies, is especially important when democracy is challenged by such trends as the emergence of "sovereign democracies".

The important highlight of the concretized CoD activities was women and the democracy agenda. The International Conference Women Solidarity for Democracy gathered women in Warsaw on 13 September 2009 from different countries, including Poland, the United States, Ireland, Belarus, Lebanon, Russia, France, Israel, and Lithuania. It was also attended by Iranian women intellectuals living outside their homeland. The participants met to discuss and analyze the challenges confronting women in the rapidly changing world. Conference participants wanted to express their solidarity and show their support for those actions that are intended to develop democracy and modernize societies throughout the world (including in Iran). As a follow-up, on 12 April 2010, the Working Group on Gender Equality and Women's Rights of the CoD was created in Vilnius as a joint initiative of Melanne S. Vermeer, the United States' Ambassador-At-Large for Global Women's Issues, and Evaldas Ignatavičius, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, as co-chairs of the group. President Grybauskaitė welcomed the working group. Senior officials and representatives from Lithuania, the United States, Denmark, Iceland, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, and the European Institute of Gender Equality, and the Nordic Council of Ministers all took part in this meeting. The group stated: "the status of the world's women is not only a matter of morality and justice, but also a political,

economic, and social imperative. When women are free to develop their talents and contribute fully to their societies, everyone benefits. Most of the world is now in agreement that women's rights are human rights. We say a further step is needed: women's progress is human progress". The main focus areas of this group will be women and governance; women and economic development; women and violence; women, peace, and security. The working group proposed for the September 2010 Democracy Caucus meeting at the fall session of the United Nations General Assembly to be dedicated to the issues of women's equality and the role of women in implementing the Millennium Development Goals. In addition, concrete projects were agreed that fit our priority areas, e.g. leadership training for women in Afghanistan; training and mentoring courses for women in Iran; an entrepreneurship conference to provide leadership training and business skills to women in Eastern Europe and the three Caucasus countries; mentoring projects to help women in Belarus, Russia's Kaliningrad region and Georgia to develop business and entrepreneurship skills; program against human trafficking in Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine; leadership training in Moldova, Azerbaijan, and Ukraine; training in gender studies at the university level for the representatives of Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia; conference on women's leadership issues in Central Asia and Afghanistan. Finally, the United States and Lithuania as well as other participants of the meeting have expressed appreciation of the commitment by the Lithuanian presidency of the Community of Democracies to convene in 2011 a high-level meeting dedicated to the issue of women and democracy within the framework of the Vilnius ministerial meeting with reference to a similar meeting that was organized by the United States and Lithuania in 2001.

The Working Group on Enabling and Protecting Civil Society concentrates its efforts on developing recommendations for governments in this area, because non-governmental organizations are being put at increased threat globally. The working group develops tools for diplomats to assess and respond to regulatory threats, disseminates materials that have been developed by civil society organizations, encourages CD member states to include a component on protecting civil society in their foreign service training program, is considering the possibility to establish a joint-action protocol so that states can collaborate more effectively in dissuading states in adopting and implementing restrictive legal frameworks, supports and strengthens the worldwide network of non-governmental organizations working on restrictive legal frameworks, develops funding to support advocacy on this issue, and considers the development of a CoD mechanism that would

facilitate the provision of technical advice to states in the process of developing legislation that may impact civil society.

Diplomat's Handbook is another interesting initiative of the CoD in the worldwide training of diplomats. This flag project includes a wide variety of case studies documenting and explaining specific country experiences in winning democracy. It also identifies the creative, human, and material resources available to Missions, the ways in which Missions and diplomats have supported requests in the past, and describes how such support has been applied. Strategic workshops on democracy and democratization for young/mid-career diplomats from Central, Southern, and Eastern Europe (at the Natolin-Warsaw campus) are launched. It aims at building both a network of diplomats and experts with a thorough understanding of democracy and democratization as well as a sustainable platform for the exchange of professional experience and knowledge. The project consists of a series of workshops that are aimed at educating the representatives of the countries where democracy is threatened and countries where it is young and developing. Diplomat's Handbook – Democracy Support Workshops – will be organized in all regions where the Community of Democracies is present, with workshops following in Latin America, Asia, and Africa.

In the framework of the Working Group Threats to Democracy, the Community will also highlight the current challenges, such as Internet freedom. The Internet provides new opportunities and poses new challenges to democracies in the digital age. Therefore, Lithuania in cooperation with Hungary is initiating a special workshop on the new opportunities and challenges for democracies in the digital age during the Internet Global Forum 2010 in Vilnius.

An important new dimension of the Community was launched by Lithuania – the Parliamentary Forum of the CoD was created on 11 March 2010, celebrating the 20th anniversary of the reestablishment of Lithuania's state. It is stated in the convening declaration that a Parliamentary Forum is a coalition of like-minded parliamentarians from the states' participants of the CoD who are determined to work together to strengthen democracy where it is weak and invigorate even where it is longstanding, to promote peace, development, human rights and freedoms, gender equality, and equal opportunities in their respective countries and around the world. Parliamentarians or former parliamentarians representing 18 countries (Lithuania, the United States, Belarus, Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Georgia, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, Norway, Poland, Ukraine, and Turkey) agreed to cooperate in strengthening dem-

ocratic institutions, primarily the parliaments, in the transition and pre-transition countries. They expressed their commitment to engage in the experience and best practice sharing projects with the parliamentarians as well as the pro-democracy activists from the CoD participating countries or countries where the CoD is engaged in democracy building activities. The Parliamentary Forum agreed to meet at least twice a year. It is important to emphasize that March 11 will remain the permanent date of the annual informal meeting in Lithuania. Emanuelis Zingeris, a signatory to the declaration on the re-establishment of Lithuania's independence as well as the current chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, is elected as the President of the Parliamentary Forum. Patron of this event, Speaker of the Seimas (Parliament) Irena Degutienė, U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, and President of the European Parliament Jerzy Buzek all welcomed the Forum meeting. Long-time member of the United States House of Representatives Lincoln Diaz-Balart, one of the most active of Canada's fighters for human rights and democracy David Kilgour, German representative in the European Parliament Michael Gahler, who significantly contributed to Lithuania's Euro-Atlantic integration, leader of the European Conservatives and Reformists group in the European Parliament Michał Tomasz Kamiński, one of the most active participants in the Prague Spring and former Czech Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Vondra, Speaker of the Georgian Parliament David Bakradze and Mexican Senator Adriana González Carrillo were all elected as Vice-Presidents of the Forum. The Forum on the occasion of its establishment in Vilnius issued several resolutions: *Resolution Calling for the Support of Cuba's Pro-Democracy Movement*<sup>4</sup>, *Resolution on the Situation in Georgia*<sup>5</sup>, and *Resolution on the Nomination of Liu Xiaobo for the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize*<sup>6</sup>. It was agreed that in 2010 this forum is going to arrange a session of training for democratic Moldovan Parliamentarians in Vilnius, a fact-finding mission to Georgia, a high level meeting in Krakow on 2-4 July 2010 as well as in Washington DC on the occasion of International Democracy Day on 15 September 2010.

<sup>4</sup> The Community of Democracies Parliamentary Forum, *Resolution Calling for support of Cuba's pro-democracy movement*, 12 March 2010 <[http://community-democracies.org/images/stories/Cuba\\_resolution\\_12032010.pdf](http://community-democracies.org/images/stories/Cuba_resolution_12032010.pdf)>

<sup>5</sup> The Community of Democracies Parliamentary Forum, *Resolution on the Situation in Georgia*, 12 March 2010 <[http://community-democracies.org/images/stories/Georgia\\_resolution\\_Parliamentary\\_Forum\\_\\_2\\_.pdf](http://community-democracies.org/images/stories/Georgia_resolution_Parliamentary_Forum__2_.pdf)>

<sup>6</sup> The Community of Democracies Parliamentary Forum, *Resolution on the Nomination of Liu Xiaobo for the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize*, 12 March 2010 <<http://community-democracies.org/images/stories/LiuXiaobo.pdf>>

Youth dimension of the Community is also “under construction” as a part of the preparations for the high level Krakow meeting.

Over 100 countries are invited to the upcoming meeting of the Community in Krakow. The event will also be attended by democratic leaders and activists from all over the world, as well as by representatives of the world of business, media, international non-governmental organizations, and academics. The purpose of the meeting will be to renew the Warsaw Declaration that was signed in the year 2000 and to develop a program of the international community actions supporting democracy in the coming years. In one year, in July 2011, a similar meeting will be held in Vilnius. This will be the biggest diplomatic event by share numbers of governments attending that Lithuania has ever organized on its soil.

In conclusion, the Community could become an effective tool of new transatlantic as well global agenda of democracy building that is being established by the current Lithuanian Presidency of the Community of Democracies. The Community can serve as an effective tool of strengthening the synergies and democratic outreach on a global scale. As stated above, the Community comprises countries with different institutional, regional, and cultural backgrounds. This diversity adds to the unique character of the Community. Inside the Community, we also have a unique interface between governments, parliamentarians, and civil society activists. Such a cross-institutional nature as well as the synergies between the governmental, non-governmental, and political community are the future of international efforts on democracy building of the post-modern world.

## STRATEGIC POWERS IN EUROPE: WHO IS IN AND WHO IS OUT?

**Jovita Pranevičiūtė\***

In the years when the Cold War was referred to as a reality in Europe, particularly in the first decades after WWII, the agenda was defined in simple terms: “To keep the Americans in, the Russians out, and the Germans down.” All global chess games were played according to this rule. The reason was clear: the only faithful allies that the United States had in the bipolar world of those days were the Europeans. Europe felt indebted to and dependent on the United States. On the one hand, victory in WWII would not have been so convincing, and the rebuilding of Europe in the post-war years would not have been so fast, if America had not become involved in the war, which started in Europe but soon became global. On the other hand, the United States, through the Marshall Plan, helped not only Western European nations, but also some Warsaw Pact countries to recover.

### **Are old terms and expressions still valid?**

During the Cold War, the restriction of German influence was guaranteed by its partition, the presence of US Armed Forces on its territory and, of course, by all the possible international forums, organizations, and other forms of international obligations in which the Germans took part.

More than twenty years have passed since the fall of the Berlin Wall. Now, Germany is united. It is one of the most influential countries in Europe. Together with its historic rival France, it has the lead in decision-making. Behind the scenes in the European Union it is said that whenever a working dinner of the leaders of these countries takes place before an upcoming European meeting, the decisions

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can be guessed in advance. The European socialization makes thinking about revisionism in the centre of Europe utopian and irrational.

The relations of the United States and Russia towards the EU as well as their role in Europe are also changing. Other than seven decades ago, the USA is almost invisible in Europe and EU politics, while Europe is unimaginable without Russia. Europe for Russia means wealthy markets, and in the meantime Russia for Europe is the largest source of minerals.

### **What determines the withdrawal of the US from Europe?**

The US President Barack Obama throughout his pre-electoral campaign and in times of crisis has been for some time more popular in Europe than in his own country. Obama could enjoy European acceptance at times when he was struggling with the economic crisis or the healthcare reform. However, for the US President himself, European opinion was important only during the pre-electoral campaign. European disappointment in the Republican foreign policy and especially in George W. Bush was a perfect reason to assert that after becoming president, Obama is going to bring back dialogue to US foreign policy, and will renounce its unilateralism, etc.

When looking from the European perspective, these promises do not seem to have come true. Obama refused to participate in the EU-US summit. If this decision can be explained and understood on the diplomatic level, in the public it seemed to be a disappointment in the new Democrat administration. European leaders rarely visit the White House and in case they do visit, they expect much more attention. Therefore, the relations have begun cooling.

Why is that the case? There can be a couple of answers to this. First of all, the US administration does not have as many members with good European contacts as was the case in Republican times. There are no emigrants from East European countries in the highest levels of the US government or those who would guarantee the continuity of foreign policy even with the change of parties in the administration. Many analysts emphasize that Obama, because of his origin, better understands the problems of Africa and not Europe.

Secondly, despite promises to include Europeans in multilateral dialogues and to coordinate actions in “hotspots”, up to now one can notice a more pragmatic



goal to fulfil the electoral promises in foreign policy. To end wars, to ensure optimal conditions for the oil supply, and to end the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Multilateralism manifests itself via American requests to actively engage in the operation in Afghanistan – to undertake new development projects and to send more soldiers. However, Iran is still seen not as a matter of joint efforts but rather as the result of US–Russian negotiations. Without the support of Russia and, of course, China, no additional sanctions can be applied on the Iranian government, which are so thirsty for nuclear weapons.

Thirdly, the opinion that Europe is safe, stable, and no threats could arise in the short or mid-term is increasingly more widespread in the US. That is why the Europeans could and should take matters into their own hands – care for the wealth of their citizens, catch up with America and Japan in the field of innovation and high-tech and, finally, secure the supply of energy resources that come not from the “hot” Middle East but from Russia.

### **Who should be blamed for the changes in the US approach?**

First, the Americans are pragmatic, which is particularly true of the current US administration. Foreign policy issues are less interesting to US politicians and the human resources that they are given have considerably declined. Moreover, these are distributed more pragmatically as the Middle East is now top priority. It is easily explainable to the domestic audience and also in terms of global stability.

Second, the Americans may have become disappointed in the Europeans. Many European political leaders and public figures are very persistent in their demand that the United States should respect human rights and shut down the Guantánamo Bay detention camp. Most Americans see it as a slogan, and not as a wish to help the new administration, because only several European countries have agreed, for this or that reason, to accept Guantánamo detainees.

On the other hand, during the Cold War and in the period of challenges that followed, the United States allocated the largest amounts for Europe’s defence compared to the European countries themselves. Even during the economic crisis, the approach taken by the United States and Europe to defence expenditures is visibly different: the US continues increasing defence allocations or at least tries to

keep them from declining, while the Europeans are initiating their first cutbacks in the defence sector.

The third aspect of the American disappointment in the Europeans may seem to have a subjective tinge, but it is most clearly seen in person-to-person contacts. The anti-American sentiment that became strong in Europe during the Bush presidency did not go unnoticed in the United States. The European leaders, although mostly those representing center left positions, described the Americans as one-sided and tending to overrate capitalism. Similar views were also expressed by public figures. The spread of anti-American feeling did not stop even after changes took place in the ruling coalitions. Since around 2004, European daily newspapers and the popular media have been highlighting stereotypes on America and Americans on their front pages. Arguments that two-thirds of all Nobel Prize winners are Americans, that the former US president is a Yale graduate, and that Barack Obama graduated from Harvard do not seem to be convincing.

### **Can America be brought back to Europe?**

The realistic answer would be “hardly”. If the United States still wants to play the role of a global policeman, there is actually nothing for it to do in the major part of Europe. Moreover, the EU or its dominant member states have sufficient negotiating power to solve their own problems. Finally, Europeans are not yet prepared to contribute either financially or through human resources to dealing with issues of urgency to the United States in other regions, while their strategic location is not so important as to make the US interested in engaging Europe. The Europeans have nothing to offer America at this point in time.

Meanwhile, the influence of such countries as Russia and China in global processes is constantly growing. Because of its geo-strategic position, Russia – even though exhausted by the crisis – is among the main actors that want to end the conflict in Afghanistan, persuade Iran to renounce its nuclear ambitions, ensure that Pakistan does not become a revisionist state, etc. For this reason, the United States announced its reset policy towards Russia. Differently than Bush, who looked into Putin’s soul and saw a good man and an ally, the Democratic Administration did not need to do the same with the Russian leaders: START, Iran, and Afghanistan are the issues that will reveal the “true friends” of the US.

However, we cannot assert that the Americans have left Europe for good, of course. Traditional transatlantic ties are also built on pragmatic and economic interests: Europe and the United States are still the largest trading partners. However, the pressure felt by the Americans in these turbulent times of crisis to transfer business to less secure but higher-profit countries is strong.

### **What are the possible consequences of American indifference towards Europe?**

First, it encourages some European countries to play the same game of relationship improvement with Russia hoping that after having found a niche of cooperation with Russia, or at least having demonstrated a capability to speak with Russia, one can expect US attention for own endeavours. That is why even the dislocation of the American anti-missile shield in Central and Eastern Europe is proposed to be coordinated with Russia.

Second, the other part of countries, who believe in a decreased American attentiveness towards Europe suggest going even further and hope that the Europeans can take care of themselves. From this belief comes the suggestion to withdraw all US tactical nuclear weapons from European soil. The truth is that they do not have a suitable replacement, unless, as the incumbent NATO secretary general suggests, with some sort of NATO forces.

Third, it is these countries that do not want or cannot believe that the geopolitical situation has changed and by having nothing to offer in return to the pragmatic Americans, they still want at least a symbolic declaration of an American presence in Europe. And they get it.

According to an optimistic scenario after having experienced decreasing US attention, the Europeans are going to launch initiatives that guarantee their safety and stability not only in the military but also in the political and economic sense. The realistic scenario presupposes that because of natural internal competition European states will seek to defend their bilateral interests and not go for a common European outcome. Finally, the pessimistic scenario suggests that the vacuum of a strategic player will be filled by someone else, most likely by none other than Russia.

## **US – in, Russia – out or vice versa?**

Almost all EU countries are dependent on Russian gas. The project “Nord Stream” will even more so increase the interdependence of the German and Russian energy system. Putin had personally invited the leaders of Germany to take an active part in the privatization process, which is planned to be renewed. French relations with Russia is another example. Two Mistral is probably not going to change the military balance in Europe, but on the regional level some changes can be expected. Moreover, a Mistral is not only a barge for transporting helicopters and fighters, but also military technology.

The Russian President Medvedev has initiated an international discussion about a new security architecture in Europe as well as an attempt to persuade Europeans to renew negotiations on conventional forces. A European reaction is expected – with the support of the US or without. However, the reaction of strategic issues highly depends on the location of the states – how close certain European countries are to Russia, on the country’s historical experience, as well on its negotiation power vis-à-vis Russia. There is no unity in the development of the EU-Russian relations. This increases the Russian opportunities to be a part of European policy and, moreover, in certain situations – even to influence the formation of the European agenda.

At this moment, the existing formats – the EU and NATO – ensure that Russia does not participate in the decision-making. Still, more and more often the questions of Russia’s membership in these organizations are raised. Even rhetorical questions testify that Russia is present in Europe already. How successful will Europeans be in balancing this presence? This will probably depend on Russia’s intention to become “civilized Europeans” as well as on the EU leaders’ intentions and potential to remind their Eastern neighbour as to what “civilized Europeans” truly means.

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# REDEFINING THE EURO-ATLANTIC SECURITY AGENDA: WHAT IS THE ROLE FOR THE NEW NATO STRATEGIC CONCEPT?

Martynas Zapolskis\*

## *Abstract*

This article examines the ongoing preparation of the new NATO Strategic Concept (SC), which is expected to have substantial implications for the Euro-Atlantic security agenda. The analysis is aimed at identifying and exploring opportunities and challenges, which will have to be addressed in the new SC. Firstly, the main characteristics of current strategic environment, which highly influences the preparation of the SC, are examined. Secondly, analysis focuses on eventual roles of the new SC, thus revealing the main challenges to be reflected in the new strategy and assessing their implications to further transformation of the Alliance. Thirdly, the crucial dilemma of the balance between NATO's commitment to collective defence and its increasing global ambitions is addressed.

## **Introduction: A New Start for the Euro-Atlantic Security Dialogue**

The decision to develop a new NATO Strategic Concept<sup>1</sup> (SC) has highly increased the intensity of academic and political discussion about the challenges and developments of the Euro-Atlantic security architecture. The process of preparing the new SC is often seen as an opportunity to foster strategic dialogue at the highest political level and reach consensus on the most pressing issues of transatlantic security cooperation, such as defining the *raison d'être* of NATO in

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<sup>1</sup> Strategic Concept is the key political document of NATO, which defines the objectives of the Alliance, assesses strategic environment, and provides the highest level of guidance on the political and military means to implement NATO's tasks. At the summit in Strasbourg-Kehl on 4 April 2009, NATO leaders decided to prepare the new NATO's Strategic Concept, which is expected to be adopted at the Lisbon summit (November 2010). It will be the seventh Strategic Concept in the history of NATO. The currently valid Strategic Concept was adopted in 1999.

the 21st century; eliminating obstacles in NATO-EU relations and ensuring true strategic partnership between these organizations; identifying the basic principles of NATO-Russia relations; finding ways to increase solidarity within the Alliance and ensure legitimate financial and operational burden sharing between the allies; defining the role NATO should play in the field of various non-traditional security challenges, such as climate change or energy security, etc.

Some analysts also emphasize the need to use the SC for providing new dynamism to the transatlantic partnership: as the centre of economic and strategic gravity is shifting from the Atlantic to the Pacific, there is a need to revitalize the partnership between the United States and Europe.<sup>2</sup> There is a call for a renewed Euro-Atlantic security framework, founded “on a strong U.S. involvement in NATO, NATO-EU relations aimed at promoting and projecting effective civil-military security beyond the Euro-Atlantic area and an EU-U.S. security relationship that assures the protection of the home base.”<sup>3</sup>

On the one hand, the need to develop a new SC is evident: the security environment has changed dramatically since the last SC was adopted in 1999. Terrorist attacks in the U.S. and Europe, operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, the development of the European security and defence policy, the proliferation of nuclear technology, NATO enlargement, emergence of the new security challenges, the war in Georgia and many other crucial developments clearly have fundamental implications, which need to be properly reflected in the strategy of the Alliance.

On the other hand, despite the emergence of the new international security landscape, the definition of NATO’s role, as stated in the current SC, might be regarded as still relevant. According to the current SC, “NATO’s essential and enduring purpose, set out in the Washington Treaty, is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means.”<sup>4</sup> In order to achieve this purpose, three fundamental security tasks of the Alliance are identified: (1) security – “to provide one of the indispensable foundations for a stable Euro-Atlantic security environment”; (2)

<sup>2</sup> Hamilton D., Barry C., “Alliance Reborn: An Atlantic Compact for the 21st Century”, *Atlantic Council of The United States*, 2009, p. 4. <[http://www.acus.org/files/publication\\_pdfs/65/NATO-AllianceReborn.pdf](http://www.acus.org/files/publication_pdfs/65/NATO-AllianceReborn.pdf)>, 26/4/2010.

<sup>3</sup> Larrabee F., Lindley-French J., “Revitalizing the Transatlantic Security Partnership: An Agenda for Action”, *Venusberg Group and Rand Corporation*, 2009, p. 8. <[http://www.rand.org/pubs/reprints/2009/RAND\\_RP1382.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/reprints/2009/RAND_RP1382.pdf)>, 22/4/2010.

<sup>4</sup> NATO, “The Alliance’s Strategic Concept, approved by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council.” Washington D.C., 23-24 April 1999. <<http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-065e.htm>>, 16/4/2010.

consultation – “to serve as an essential transatlantic forum for Allied consultations on any issues that affect their vital interests”; (3) deterrence and defence – “to deter and defend against any threat of aggression against any NATO member state as provided for in Articles 5 and 6 of the Washington Treaty”. Crisis management and partnerships are also identified as supporting tasks, needed for enhancing “the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area”.<sup>5</sup> All these tasks can be considered as still relevant, as they are reflected in various forms of practical activities of the Alliance.

In order to identify and explore opportunities and challenges, which will have to be addressed in the new SC, this article focuses on three main issues:

1. Firstly, there is a need to take into account the main characteristics of the current strategic environment, which define the potential of the actors and will highly influence the content of the new SC. Four main elements of the current strategic landscape are identified and examined: (i) new generation of security challenges; (ii) high operational intensity; (iii) reengagement with Russia; (iv) increasing gap between Europe and the U.S.

2. Secondly, the analysis focuses on the eventual roles of the new SC, thus revealing the main challenges to be reflected in the new strategy and assessing their implications to further transformation of the Alliance. Four different roles are identified: (i) SC as a continuation of the Harmel Report; (ii) SC as a definition of NATO’s ambitions; (iii) SC as guidance for reforms and capabilities; (iv) SC as a message to publics and outside world.

3. Thirdly, the crucial dilemma of the balance between NATO’s commitment to collective defence and its increasing global ambitions is addressed. The balance between protection vs. projection is analyzed by revealing the changing perception of Article 5 and collective defence.

## **1. Strategic Context of Developing the New Strategic Concept**

It is obvious that NATO is closely interrelated with other international institutions and structures. Its functions and security measures are defined by various characteristics of international security environment. The evolution of NATO

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

after the Cold War shows that the Alliance is a flexible international structure, capable of adapting its instruments to changing security landscape. Accordingly, the identification of NATO's future directions in the new SC will also be highly influenced by various external as well as internal strategic factors.

### 1.1. New generation of security challenges

The current international security landscape is characterized by a complex set of various asymmetric security challenges (terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction-WMD, cyber security challenges), socio-economic problems, transnational organized crime, ethnic tensions, fragile and failed states, environmental destruction, problems generated by climate change, competition over resources, etc.

Such a transnational pattern of security environment obviously is a challenge for the Alliance, which still considers "armed attack" as the main trigger for collective defence.<sup>6</sup> It is not clear whether Article 5 could be invoked in case of large-scale cyber attack, major disruption of the flow of energy resources, or a chemical attack. Moreover, only a small part of current security challenges can be regarded as military. Accordingly, they cannot be addressed by military means.

The issue of pre-emptive action is also very relevant in the light of current security landscape. According to Karl-Heinz Kamp, "in an age of missile technology proliferation, vital threats may materialize before troops are sent in, for instance when long range missiles tipped with weapons of mass destruction are prepared for launch by potentially hostile regimes. To await the proof of aggressive intention would mean to wait for the launch of the missile – with hardly any chance to avoiding the deadly consequences"<sup>7</sup>.

The increasing missile threat to NATO's territory is evident, especially in light of Iran's nuclear ambitions. According to NATO Secretary General A. F. Rasmussen, "proliferation threat is real and growing – over 30 countries have or are developing missile capabilities, with greater and greater ranges. In many cases, these missiles

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<sup>6</sup> NATO, "The North Atlantic Treaty" Washington D.C., 4 April 1949. <<http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/treaty.htm>>, 25/4/2010.

<sup>7</sup> Kamp K., "The Way to NATO's New Strategic Concept", *NATO Defence College*, Research Paper 46, June 2009, p. 6.



could eventually threaten our populations and territories”.<sup>8</sup> The architects of the new SC definitely will have to consider sensitive issues of pre-emptive action.

In addition to the various effects of the “dark side of globalization”, international relations are increasingly characterized by geopolitical rivalry and revived nationalism. Resurgent Russia (resuming various Soviet-era practices), rising powers in Eastern and South Asia, increasing power of alternative political-military structures (Collective Security Treaty Organization, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, etc.), intense geopolitical competition in various strategically important regions (for example, Central Asia) characterize current external environment of NATO. These tendencies certainly affect NATO’s attitude towards collective defence and conventional military capabilities.

Such a mix of various security challenges is a headache for NATO. The new SC will have to assess NATO’s security environment and enhance the ability to adapt to complex and unforeseeable circumstances. Theoretically, in order to maintain the ability to “safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means”, NATO would have to develop a very broad spectrum of security measures. Practically, however, the problem of limited resources and different opinions of member states often hamper the consensus within the Alliance.

## **1.2. High operational intensity and Afghanistan**

From the operational point of view, NATO currently is busier than ever before. More than 40 countries have their military contribution in Afghanistan (ISAF) under NATO command, more than 100,000 troops are currently deployed in this remote country. The Alliance is also conducting a stabilization operation in Kosovo (KFOR), anti-terrorist operation in the Mediterranean Sea (Active Endeavour), anti-piracy mission off the Horn of Africa (Ocean Shield), training mission in Iraq (NTM-I) and supporting African union in its peacekeeping missions.<sup>10</sup> According to prominent NATO expert K. Wittmann, “the variety of NATO missions in the last years is breathtaking: maritime interdiction, peace enforcement,

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<sup>8</sup> NATO, speech by NATO Secretary General A.F. Rasmussen “Building a Euro-Atlantic Security Architecture”, 27/3/2010. <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-75DD486E-684A6251/natolive/opinions\\_62395.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-75DD486E-684A6251/natolive/opinions_62395.htm?selectedLocale=en)>, 18/4/2010.

<sup>9</sup> NATO, “The Alliance’s Strategic Concept”.

<sup>10</sup> NATO, Alliance’s operations and missions. <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_52060.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_52060.htm)>, 14/4/2010.

security assistance, training support, capacity building, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief”.<sup>11</sup> Such a broad spectrum of activities raises many questions about the coherence of NATO’s strategy and the increasing role of the Alliance as a toolbox for peacemaking and peace enforcement.

NATO’s mission in Afghanistan is considered to be the “key priority” of the Alliance for the past several years.<sup>12</sup> Engagement in this operation has greatly influenced the strategic thinking and military transformation in the member states. Many analysts and politicians even claim that the failure in Afghanistan would potentially mean the end of NATO.<sup>13</sup> Nonetheless, in light of preparing the new NATO SC, it is not clear whether this kind of large-scale reconstruction and stabilization mission should be regarded as a rule or as an exception of NATO’s business. SC is a long-term document, which provides a medium-term (10 years) strategic guidance for the development of the Alliance and, therefore, nations might try to avoid Afghan-centric document and leave more room for the “exit strategy”. At the same time, the new strategy might be used for reflection of the most important lessons-learned from the operations in the Middle East and the Balkans.

### **1.3. Reengagement with Russia**

The Obama administration has taken a new “reset” course towards Russia and it might have considerable influence on the way NATO will define security environment and relations with Russia in the new SC. Improving relations with Russia is also one of the key priorities of NATO Secretary General A.F. Rasmussen, who is seeking to enhance NATO-Russia cooperation in various fields – missile defence, Afghanistan, non-proliferation, anti-piracy, combating terrorism and drug-trafficking, arms control, etc.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Wittmann K., “Towards a new Strategic Concept for NATO”, *NATO Defence College*, 2009, 58.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example: NATO, “Strasbourg/Kehl Declaration issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council”, Strasbourg/Kehl, 4 April 2009. <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news\\_52837.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_52837.htm)>, 14/4/2010.

<sup>13</sup> Vicenzino M., “The Public in the West has to buy into Afghanistan – and soon”, *NATO Review*, September 2008. <[http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2008/06/SUMMER\\_ART3/EN/index.htm](http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2008/06/SUMMER_ART3/EN/index.htm)>, 25/4/2010.

<sup>14</sup> See: NATO, speech by Secretary General A.F. Rasmussen “NATO and Russia: a New Beginning”, 18 09 2009. <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions\\_57640.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_57640.htm)>, 18/4/2010; NATO, speech by Secretary General A.F. Rasmussen “NATO and Russia, Partners for the Future”, 17/12/2009. <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions\\_60223.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_60223.htm)>, 18/4/2010.

Pressing the “reset” button between Moscow and Washington and the enthusiasm of the NATO Secretary General is a historical opportunity for substantial improvement of relations with Russia. At the same time, the rapprochement with Moscow cannot infringe the solidarity of the Alliance, as many members still view NATO’s collective defence as directed against Russia<sup>15</sup> and repeatedly express concerns about Russia’s foreign policy, including the disproportionate use of military force in Georgia, declaration of the spheres of influence, non-compliance with international commitments, etc.<sup>16</sup>

Finding the way to improve relations with Russia without sacrificing values and solidarity within the Alliance, therefore, will remain one of the central dilemmas for the architects of new the SC.

#### **1.4. Increasing the gap between Europe and the U.S.**

The problem of the declining defence budgets of the European countries is increasing. It is particularly evident in comparison with the United States, as the U.S. military spending accounts for over 70% of NATO’s total defence expenditures.<sup>17</sup> Only six European states have reached the agreed target of 2% of GDP for defence.<sup>18</sup>

The defence technology gap between the U.S. and European forces is another obvious fact – European countries lack of investment in the technologies of command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR), which are considered as essential elements of modern war fighting.<sup>19</sup> A disproportionately large part of European defence budgets are consumed by personnel expenditures. The U.S. spends several times more on R&D

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<sup>15</sup> Kamp, (note 7) p. 6.

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, “An Open Letter to the Obama Administration from Central and Eastern Europe”, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 19/7/2009. <[http://wyborcza.pl/1,75477,6825987,An\\_Open\\_Letter\\_to\\_the\\_Obama\\_Administration\\_from\\_Central.html](http://wyborcza.pl/1,75477,6825987,An_Open_Letter_to_the_Obama_Administration_from_Central.html)>, 18/4/2010.

<sup>17</sup> Billingslea M., “The Impact of Economic Crises on European Defence Budgets”, speech in the conference “New Challenges, Better Capabilities, Bratislava, October 2009. <<http://www.ata-sac.org/ncbc/highlights-news/ncbc-4th-panel-speeches-the-impact-of-economic-crises-on-european-defence-budgets/>>, 18/4/2010.

<sup>18</sup> NATO, “NATO 2020: Assured Security, Dynamic Engagement”, analysis and recommendations of the Group of Experts on a new Strategic Concept for NATO, 17/5/2010, p. 38.

<sup>19</sup> Adams G., Logsdon J., “European C4ISR Capabilities and Transatlantic Interoperability”, The George Washington University, October 2004, p. 2-4.

and investment in new military technologies than all European countries combined.<sup>20</sup> As a result, serious problems of operational interoperability are inevitable in the long-term perspective. Such disproportion might also decrease U.S. interest in NATO and stimulate unilateral tendencies in U.S. foreign policy.<sup>21</sup>

This problem is even more amplified by the global economic recession. As a result of financial pressures, many European governments have made substantial cuts of their defence budgets. However, they still feel pressure from publics and politicians. Frequent casualties make the operation in Afghanistan very unpopular. Accordingly, expenditures for operations are seen as a waste of money in light of pressing socioeconomic problems. The lack of public support highly complicates the possibility for the governments to increase defence budgets.

The architects of the new SC, therefore, not only have to think about addressing the gap between European countries and the U.S., but they also need to find ways of “selling” the Alliance to the publics.

## 2. Four Roles for the New Strategic Concept

The new NATO SC is often expected to “articulate a grand vision” and provide “new strategic guidelines” for the coming decade.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, NATO faces a problem of “shopping list”, as each member state tries to “export” its own security problems to the new SC. The strategy, which is suitable for everyone, might be worthless in practice. Therefore, the prioritization of NATO’s tasks is a necessity.<sup>23</sup>

The role(s), which will be assigned for the new SC, might meaningfully influence the transatlantic security agenda in the upcoming years. In this article, four eventual roles of the new SC are identified and examined: 1. SC as a continuation of the Harmel Report; 2. SC as a definition of NATO’s ambitions; 3. SC as guidance for reforms and capabilities; 4. SC as a message to publics and the outside world.

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<sup>20</sup> European Defence Agency, “European - United States Defence Expenditure in 2008”, December 2009.

<sup>21</sup> Billingslea, (note 17).

<sup>22</sup> See, for example, Aybet G., Moore R. (eds.), *NATO: in Search of a Vision*, Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2010.

<sup>23</sup> Kamp, (note 7) p. 4.

## **2.1. Strategic Concept as a continuation of the Harmel Report**

In 1967, the North Atlantic Council of NATO approved a report “Future tasks of the Alliance”, which was prepared by a special group lead by Belgian minister of foreign affairs Pierre Harmel. The report identified two main functions of the Alliance:

1) “Maintain adequate military strength and political solidarity to deter aggression and other forms of pressure and to defend the territory of member countries if aggression should occur”;

2) “Pursue the search for progress towards a more stable relationship in which the underlying political issues can be solved. Military security and a policy of détente are not contradictory but complementary. ... The participation of the USSR and the USA will be necessary to achieve a settlement of the political problems in Europe.”<sup>24</sup>

The Harmel Report is often considered as a background for fundamental shift in Western attitude towards the Soviet Union and its satellites. The report challenged the strategy of isolation and suggested cooperation with adversaries as an alternative approach. The group led by Harmel believed that détente is possible without sacrificing the ability to deter and defend aggression. The Harmel doctrine is often considered as one of the turning points in the history of the Cold War, which revitalized détente between the Eastern and Western blocs and laid the foundations for the Helsinki process.

Today, the dynamics of NATO-Russia relations are very much dependent on the U.S. administration and NATO’s Secretary General, who insists that NATO’s “ultimate goal is a relationship that allows us to pursue common interests even when we disagree in other areas”.<sup>25</sup> However, the suggestion for real conceptual changes in European security came from Russia. President Medvedev has proposed a new European security treaty, which is aimed at creating a new institutional framework in Europe. Medvedev claims that the “European security treaty is designed to draw the line under the Cold War era and codify the principle of indivisibility of security in international law. In practice this means that states and international organizations cannot strengthen their own security at the expense of security of other states and organizations”.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> NATO, “The Future Tasks of the Alliance”, Report of the Council – ‘the Harmel Report’, 13/12/1967. <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_26700.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_26700.htm)>, 25/4/2010.

<sup>25</sup> NATO, speech by Secretary General A.F. Rasmussen “NATO and Russia: a New Beginning”.

<sup>26</sup> Medvedev D., “Mission: Partnership”, article published in the Slovak newspaper Pravda, 1/4/2010. <[http://eng.kremlin.ru/speeches/2010/04/06/0800\\_type104017\\_225137.shtml](http://eng.kremlin.ru/speeches/2010/04/06/0800_type104017_225137.shtml)>, 18/4/2010.

In light of these proposals and the positive attitude towards Russia by the current leadership of the Alliance, the new SC could be regarded as an opportunity to re-conceptualize relations with Moscow. Various options of reforming the current international security framework in Europe could be considered based on Medvedev's proposals. However, the U.S. has rejected the idea of a new European security pact: U.S. Secretary of State Clinton was very sceptical about negotiating new treaties, saying that Russian ideas should be "pursued in the context of existing institutions, such as the OSCE and the NATO-Russia Council".<sup>27</sup> Even the report prepared by the Group of Experts, which was appointed by the NATO Secretary General to provide analysis and recommendations for the new SC,<sup>28</sup> emphasizes that "Russia has sent conflicting signals about its openness to further cooperation with NATO, and its proposals for an alternative security order in Europe seem designed in part to constrain NATO's activities".<sup>29</sup>

Regardless of fundamental changes in international security landscape, it seems that the main ideas of the Harmel Report are still very relevant and might be reaffirmed in the new SC as the key elements of strategy towards Russia. The period of increased geopolitical tension between NATO-Russia, which can be well illustrated by Putin's speech at the Munich security conference 2007, is over. The cooperation with Russia was switched "on" once again even despite the war in Georgia, which is now considered as just one of the disagreements, which should not disturb pragmatic diplomacy based on mutual interests.

The chair of the Group of Experts Albright has emphasized two basic assumptions of the report: "First, the Alliance has an ongoing duty to guarantee the safety and security of its members. Second, it can achieve that objective only if it engages dynamically with countries and organizations that are outside its boundaries."<sup>30</sup> It is perfectly in line with the main suggestions of the Harmel Report.

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<sup>27</sup> US Department of State, speech by Secretary of State H. Clinton "Remarks on the Future of European Security", 29/1/2020. <<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/01/136273.htm>>, 25/4/2010.

<sup>28</sup> The report "NATO 2020: Assured Security, Dynamic Engagement", prepared by the Group of Experts, is expected to become a basis for the intergovernmental negotiations about new NATO Strategic Concept.

<sup>29</sup> "NATO 2020: Assured Security, Dynamic Engagement", report prepared by the Group of Experts, p. 26.

<sup>30</sup> NATO, remarks by M. Albright at the meeting of the North Atlantic Council with the Group of Experts on NATO's New Strategic Concept, 17/5/2010. <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions\\_63678.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_63678.htm)>, 17/5/2010.

Harmel emphasized the importance of communication channels as a means to address disagreements. The current debate within the transatlantic community shows that the same approach is going to be applied in the new SC. It seems that NATO will re-emphasize the need to improve relations with Russia based on openness for cooperation, pragmatic relations, and shared interests.

## **2.2. Strategic Concept as a definition of NATO's ambitions**

Sixty years after the foundation, the traditional functions of NATO are still relevant: 1) ensuring collective defence for NATO members; 2) embodying transatlantic link and functioning as a forum for allied discussions on security; 3) offering a framework that eliminates balance of power in Europe and allows for focusing on common challenges.<sup>31</sup>

NATO has already rejected a “fortress mentality” and engaged in various out of area activities. However, in light of rapidly changing international security landscape, the question “what NATO should *not* do” is not answered completely. It is not clear as to whether the Alliance should assume new roles in such fields as proliferation, biological attacks, organized crime, maritime security, food, water and resource scarcity, climate change, etc.<sup>32</sup>

The new SC, naturally, is seen as an opportunity to identify primary and secondary roles of the Alliance. Many suggestions defining NATO's level of ambition can be found in the academic literature. For example, the prominent think tank RAND recently completed a study “Recasting NATO's Strategic Concept”, which identifies five main directions for NATO<sup>33</sup>: 1) re-focus on Europe (renewing NATO's concentration on the needs for collective defence and homeland security); 2) new focus on the Greater Middle East (fighting against al Qaeda, addressing the problem of Iran's nuclear ambitions and ensuring success in Afghanistan/Pakistan); 3) focus on fragile states (concentrating effort on such countries as Somalia, Sudan, Yemen, etc.); 4) focus on non-state actors (non-state actors as a key factor in order to address the problems of terrorism and proliferation of the WMD);

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<sup>31</sup> Hamilton D., Barry C., (note 2) p. 4.

<sup>32</sup> Wittmann, (note 11), p. 64.

<sup>33</sup> These five directions are identified according to RAND study “Recasting NATO's Strategic Concept: Possible Directions for the United States”, 2009. <[www.rand.org/pubs/occasional\\_papers/2009/RAND\\_OP280.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/occasional_papers/2009/RAND_OP280.pdf)>, 18/4/2010.

5) global Alliance of liberal democracies (the enlargement of NATO based on liberal democratic values).

Compared to such academic proposals, the political discussions within NATO are less ambitious. According to the report of the Group of Experts, “NATO is strong and versatile, but it is by no means well-suited to every task. ... Depending on the needs in any particular case, NATO may serve as the principal organizer of a collaborative effort, or as a source of specialized assistance, or in some other complementary role.”<sup>34</sup> The report is also rather clear about the geographical spectrum of NATO’s activities: “NATO is a regional, not a global organisation; its authority and resources are limited and it has no desire to take on missions that other institutions and countries can handle successfully”.<sup>35</sup> NATO’s role in the fields of energy security and climate change is considered rather limited.<sup>36</sup>

Moreover, it seems that the new SC is not likely to be very innovative in terms of defining the main tasks of NATO. The report of the Group of Experts identifies four “core tasks” for the Alliance: 1) maintaining the ability to deter and defend member states against any threat of aggression; 2) contributing to the broader security of the entire Euro-Atlantic region; 3) serving as a transatlantic means for security consultations and crisis management along the entire continuum of issues facing the Alliance; 4) enhancing the scope and management of partnerships.<sup>37</sup> These tasks basically reiterate the “fundamental security tasks” (security, consultation, deterrence and defence, crisis management, partnerships), named in the 1999 SC.

The only considerably new functional element of the Alliance is a growing consensus about the importance of civilian capabilities. Back in 2006, Comprehensive Political Guidance, adopted by the leaders of the Alliance, stated that “NATO has no requirement to develop capabilities strictly for civilian purposes”.<sup>38</sup> In 2010, the report of the Group of Experts emphasized that operational reality in Afghanistan spotlighted the need to be prepared for integrated civilian missions at all levels. According to the report, NATO needs “a small civilian planning unit within NATO

<sup>34</sup> “NATO 2020: Assured Security, Dynamic Engagement”, report prepared by the Group of Experts, p. 10.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19-21.

<sup>38</sup> NATO, “Comprehensive Political Guidance Endorsed by NATO Heads of State and Government”. 29 November 2006. <<http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b061129e.htm>>, 18/4/2010.



to maintain points of contact, share information, and engage in joint planning with partner countries and organisations”.<sup>39</sup> It also stated that “NATO’s Defence Planning Process should identify civilian capabilities ... to be deployed along with initial combat forces for immediate post-conflict stability operations”.<sup>40</sup> The need for integration of civilian and military capabilities was also highlighted in many other strategic documents of the Alliance.<sup>41</sup>

It can be predicted that NATO’s functions in the new SC will be defined without suggesting any fundamental innovations and will remain based on the principles that were the driving force of the Alliance during the last decade.

### **2.3. Strategic Concept as practical guidance for reforms and capabilities**

What needs to be done to ensure the practical value of the new Strategic Concept? This is one of the central questions for the strategists and policy makers of NATO. The new SC has the potential to become a real strategy, i.e. to provide practical guidelines for the development of NATO capabilities.

According to the NATO defence planning process, namely the SC is the main strategic document, providing an overall assessment of the strategic environment and the highest level of guidance on political and military means, which should be used in achieving NATO’s fundamental security tasks.<sup>42</sup>

U.S. Secretary of Defence Gates recently emphasized that the new SC has to be more than “just words on paper” and should actually reflect “NATO’s operational and institutional structures”.<sup>43</sup> Secretary Gates called for more action in such fields as missile defence, cooperation with partners and non-military multinational organizations. According to him, “despite the need to spend more on vital equipment for ongoing missions, the alliance has been unwilling to fun-

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<sup>39</sup> “NATO 2020: Assured Security, Dynamic Engagement”, report prepared by the Group of Experts, p. 42

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> See, for example, NATO, “Declaration on Alliance Security, issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council”, Strasbourg/Kehl, 4 April 2009. <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news\\_52838.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_52838.htm)>, 18/4/2010.

<sup>42</sup> *NATO Handbook*, Brussels: NATO Public Diplomacy Division, 2006, p. 18; 52-53.

<sup>43</sup> U.S. Department of Defence, remarks delivered by Secretary of Defence Robert M. Gates, 23/2/2010. <<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1423>>, 18/4/2010.

damentally change how it sets priorities and allocates resources”.<sup>44</sup> The progress can be achieved by ensuring political commitment of NATO leaders and by “developing new ways to maintain capabilities through multinational procurement, more common funding, or reallocating resources based on collective rather than national priorities”.<sup>45</sup>

NATO Secretary General is also repeatedly calling for the prioritization of resource projects, collective solutions to capability development (multinational defence acquisitions), more common funding, specializations of tasks, pooling resources and avoiding the duplication of capabilities and structures.<sup>46</sup>

Besides for the problem of building capabilities, the question of reforming NATO is very relevant. R. Gates has harshly criticized NATO’s institutional machinery and shrinking defence budgets of the European states: “the Alliance faces very serious, long-term, systemic problems. ... We also have to acknowledge and address excess infrastructure and outdated command structures that bear little resemblance to NATO’s real-world needs. ... The demilitarization of Europe has gone from a blessing in the 20th century to an impediment to achieving real security and lasting peace.”<sup>47</sup>

The current SC is rather explicit about capabilities – it provides guidelines for the development of NATO’s forces, describes missions and requirements of Alliance’s military forces, provides the main characteristics of NATO’s conventional and nuclear forces, etc.<sup>48</sup>

The new SC could provide directions for NATO transformation in various fields: 1) optimizing decision making (qualified majority could be used at some decision-making levels instead of the consensus rule, which is still applied to all NATO decisions); 2) improving early warning systems (intelligence sharing, planning, and information power); 3) enhancing multinational military formations; 4) operationalizing comprehensive approach (ensuring that civil-military cooperation exists at various levels of the command chain; preparing for hybrid operations); 5) creating new mechanisms of sharing operational costs (searching alternatives for the current principle “costs lie where they fall”); 6) promoting defence industrial

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<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> See, for example: NATO, speech by Secretary General A.F. Rasmussen at the Belgian Royal High Institute for Defence, 26/4/2010. <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions\\_62923.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_62923.htm)>, 29/4/2010.

<sup>47</sup> U.S. Department of Defence, remarks delivered by Secretary of Defence Robert M. Gates (note 43).

<sup>48</sup> NATO, “The Alliance’s Strategic Concept”.

cooperation (enhanced NATO-EU coordination in the field of defence acquisitions); 7) focusing on deployable conventional forces and commonly funded force enablers (strategic and theatre lift, C4ISR),<sup>49</sup> etc.

#### **2.4. Strategic concept as a message to publics and the outside world**

Political support from the governments of member states is absolutely essential for the efficiency of NATO. Notably, political support for the defence spending can be highly influenced by public opinion. In light of the current economic recession, defence expenditures are often seen as unfair waste of money, which could be reallocated for various social needs and invested in economic development. These tendencies are particularly relevant in Europe. Shrinking defence budgets in many Central and Eastern European countries during the last few years is a good illustration of this problem. Economic downturn has distracted attention from security problems.

At the same time, the Alliance is suffering from various misperceptions and stereotypes. In the eyes of public, NATO it is often seen as an old-fashioned institution. The mission in Afghanistan is often considered as having nothing to do with the primary interests of participating countries. Some politicians are constantly complaining about diverting resources to Afghanistan, instead of funding education or social programs.

In this context, the new SC can be seen as an opportunity to explain and justify the relevance of the Alliance to society. To this end, the adoption of the new SC needs to be supported by intensive campaign of public relations. Effective public diplomacy and the use of media are key elements of rebuilding the relevance of NATO in the eyes of the citizens. According to former NATO Secretary General Scheffer, the new SC has to “ensure that NATO remains understood by our publics, and relevant to their security needs”.<sup>50</sup>

The preparation for a new strategy is even more important in terms of explaining the role of NATO to the outside world. The transformation of the Alliance after the Cold War from a regional alliance of collective defence to a global cooperative

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<sup>49</sup> Atlantic Council, “Stratcon 2010: An Alliance for a Global Century”, April 2010; <[http://www.acus.org/files/publication\\_pdfs/3/STRATCON%202010%20REPORT\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.acus.org/files/publication_pdfs/3/STRATCON%202010%20REPORT_FINAL.pdf)>, p. 10-13; Hamilton D., Barry C., (note 2), p. 43-49.

<sup>50</sup> Scheffer J. de Hoop, “Bucharest: a milestone in NATO’s transformation”, NATO Review, March 2008. <<http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2008/03/ART3/EN/index.htm>>, 26/4/2010.

security system<sup>51</sup> has raised many questions and suspicions among other international players. NATO's engagement in Afghanistan and active development of partnerships is seen a challenge in such countries as Russia and China. The role of the Alliance is not entirely evident even to some partner countries. According to the conclusions of the special seminar, which was specifically devoted to examine the issue of partnerships in the context of the new SC, "many partners have the sense that NATO is actively seeking their contributions to current operations, but they don't see a clear strategic direction in the relationships."<sup>52</sup> For example, although the Alliance is cooperating with the Persian Gulf countries through Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, it is not clear as to whether NATO is seeking to ensure its own security interests in the region, promote regional security or strengthen security of particular regimes.<sup>53</sup>

The misperceptions of NATO's role can be well observed in Russia's foreign policy. Russia still considers NATO as one of the main external military dangers (*основная военная опасность*) for Russia's security in its military doctrine.<sup>54</sup> Other major powers also might be confused about NATO's global outreach. Accordingly, the new SC gives a chance to send a clear message about NATO's ambitions and its attitude towards other international players.

### 3. Protecting and Projecting

After the end of the Cold War, the absence of direct military threat to the territory of the Alliance led to the expeditionary operations as a new organizing principle. Accordingly, capability building and defence planning became directed towards the ability to "fight a distant war in difficult territory, a process accelerated by the demands of the ongoing operation in Afghanistan".<sup>55</sup>

<sup>51</sup> See: R. Cohen, "From Individual Security to International Stability". R. Cohen and M. Mihalka (eds.), *Cooperative Security: New Horizons for International Order*. Garmisch: The George C. Marshall European Centre for Security Studies, 2001.

<sup>52</sup> NATO, "Highlights of Strategic Concept Seminar 3", Oslo, 14 January 2010. <[http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/pdf/highlights\\_of\\_the\\_strategic\\_concept\\_seminar3.pdf](http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/pdf/highlights_of_the_strategic_concept_seminar3.pdf)>, 26/4/2010.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> Russian military doctrine approved in February 2010, <[http://news.kremlin.ru/ref\\_notes/461](http://news.kremlin.ru/ref_notes/461)>, 14/4/2010.

<sup>55</sup> NATO Parliamentary Assembly, "Protecting To Project: NATO's Territorial Defence and Deterrence Needs", <<http://www.nato-pa.int/default.asp?SHORTCUT=1781>>, 20/4/2010.

The war between Russia and Georgia in August 2008 worked as a reminder of the importance of collective defence. According to the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) General J. Craddock: “For years there’s been an assumption that no nation ... had to worry nor should fear an invasion of their sovereign territory ... there’s change now. ... There are nations who are concerned. We should be responsive and understand that there are indeed legitimate issues here.”<sup>56</sup>

After the Georgian events, many prominent analysts and officials have repeatedly emphasized the need to strike a proper balance between homeland defence and out-of-area activities.<sup>57</sup> According to Norway’s former minister of defence, “the Alliance has a mission ‘at home’ as well as ‘away’. For understandable reasons, the ‘away’ mission has dominated the agenda, not least because it has been perceived as more urgent than the long-standing commitment to collective defence. We think the time is ripe to readdress this balance.” The idea of striking a better balance between protection and projection is mainly based on the assumption that out-of-area efforts can be sustained only based on reassurance and real sense of security among the Allies.<sup>58</sup>

### **3.1. Changing meaning of collective defence**

The importance of collective defence was reflected at the highest political level of the Alliance – in Strasbourg/Kehl Summit Heads of State and Government agreed that “A strong collective defence of our populations, territory and forces is the core purpose of our Alliance and remains our most important security task.” They also committed “to improve and demonstrate more clearly our ability to meet emerging challenges on and beyond Alliance territory, including on its periphery, inter alia by ensuring adequate planning, exercises and training.”<sup>59</sup>

Some prominent think tanks have further developed the concept of reassurance for the Allies and neighbours of NATO. According to the paper prepared by the Centre for European Reform, NATO needs to “boost political solidarity and make visible military preparations to deter all potential conflicts, not just from Russia.

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<sup>56</sup> Roberts K., “NATO reviewing security post Georgia war”, interview with the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) General J. Craddock, Reuters, 10 October 2008; <<http://uk.reuters.com/article/idUKTRE4992P320081010>>, 23/4/2010.

<sup>57</sup> See, for example: Wittmann, (note 11), p. 80-81.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> NATO, “Strasbourg/Kehl Summit Declaration”.

The response – reassurance – should consist of political, economic and military measures.”<sup>60</sup> The authors suggest to: 1) improve NATO’s crisis management mechanisms (credible response measures, regular planning, continuous monitoring of strategic developments, real time intelligence and early warning capabilities); 2) ensure engagement of the EU and national governments (enhancing EU’s role in diversification of energy resources, increasing crisis response coordination between NATO and the EU); 3) strengthen the defence dimension (conducting exercises in order to test the readiness of forces and command structure, improving NATO’s strategic communications).<sup>61</sup>

Such proposals have been reflected in the official level – NATO Secretary General, during his visit in Estonia, has highlighted the need of “a visible presence of NATO across the entire territory of our Alliance”.<sup>62</sup> These ideas are also reiterated by the report of the Group of Experts, which calls for “reassurance on Article 5 commitment”, development of “adequate military readiness criteria to meet Article 5 commitments”, as well as “better contingency planning, preparations for crisis management, equipment assessments, and appropriate military exercises.”<sup>63</sup>

At the same time, despite remaining importance of the collective defence, its perception is transforming.

Firstly, it is vital to understand that NATO needs mobile expeditionary capabilities not only for the distant out of area operations, but also for the needs of collective defence in the enlarged area of the Alliance. From the U.S., Canadian or U.K. point of view, the defence of Poland or the Baltic states would be an expeditionary mission.<sup>64</sup>

Secondly, the difference between Article 5 and non-Article 5 operations is dwindling. NATO’s engagement in Afghanistan, which originated from Article 5 situation, well illustrates the tendencies of the “deterritorialization” of collective defence. According to NATO’s Secretary General A. F. Rasmussen, “we must also realize that territorial defence very often starts far from our own borders, like in

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<sup>60</sup> Centre for European Reform, “NATO, new allies and reassurance”, 16/5/2010, <[http://www.cer.org.uk/pdf/pb\\_nato\\_12may10.pdf](http://www.cer.org.uk/pdf/pb_nato_12may10.pdf)>, 17/5/2010, p. 3.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, p. 5.

<sup>62</sup> NATO, speech by Secretary General A.F. Rasmussen “On Alliance Solidarity in the 21st Century”, 22/4/2010. <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions\\_62699.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_62699.htm)>, 27/4/2010.

<sup>63</sup> “NATO 2020: Assured Security, Dynamic Engagement”, report prepared by the Group of Experts, p. 32.

<sup>64</sup> Yost D., “NATO’s evolving purposes and the new Strategic Concept”, *International Affairs* 86: 2 (2010), p. 496.

Afghanistan.”<sup>65</sup> NATO has shifted from a static, reactive, and territorial concept of the collective defence to a functional approach. The operations in Afghanistan, as well as many other activities of the Alliance, are seen as a way to prevent a new Article 5 attack.<sup>66</sup>

Thirdly, the nature of Article 5 threats is also changing, especially in light of increasing cyber threats. According to R. Gates, “it is not clear, what level of cyber-attack might be considered an act of war – and what type of military response is appropriate”<sup>67</sup>. NATO has several times expressed its commitment to strengthen capabilities to defend against cyber attacks<sup>68</sup> and started creating institutional capacity to address this issue. The report of the Group of Experts states that “the risk of a large-scale [cyber] attack on NATO’s command and control systems or energy grids could ... possibly lead to collective defence measures under Article 5.”<sup>69</sup> It very well illustrates the changing perception of Article 5. The new SC will also face a challenge of increasing NATO’s ability to cope with various non-Article 5 challenges, such as piracy or climate change.

### **3.2. Call for a globally connected NATO**

Despite continuous emphasis on defence and security as the core of NATO, the Alliance is increasingly emphasizing the need to develop its global agenda.

NATO’s Secretary General Rasmussen’s speech at the Munich security conference 2010 is a good example of the increasing global ambitions of the Alliance. Rasmussen proposed the idea of NATO as a hub of international security structure: “We cannot meet today’s security requirements effectively without engaging much more actively and systematically with other important players on the international scene. ... It has to be the way we do business. That is why, to carry out NATO’s job effectively today, the Alliance should become the hub of a network

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<sup>65</sup> NATO, speech by Secretary General A.F. Rasmussen “New Challenges - Better Capabilities”, 22/10/2009. <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions\\_58248.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_58248.htm)>, 3/5/2010.

<sup>66</sup> Yost, (note 64), p. 507.

<sup>67</sup> U.S. Department of Defence, speech by Secretary of Defence Robert M. Gates, Washington DC, 28 Oct. 2008. <<http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1305>>, 16/4/2010.

<sup>68</sup> See: NATO, Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Bucharest on 3 April 2008, Bucharest, Romania, 3 April 2008. <<http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2008/p08-049e.html>>, 16/4/2010.

<sup>69</sup> “NATO 2020: Assured Security, Dynamic Engagement”, report prepared by the Group of Experts, p. 45.

of security partnerships and a centre for consultation on international security issues – even issues on which the Alliance might never take action.”<sup>70</sup>

Rasmussen presented a vision of NATO as a principal framework for security discussions among various countries, including China, India, and Pakistan. Making the Alliance “a clearing house for global security issues” and “globally connected security institution” would mean pooling various NATO partnerships in Northern Africa, the Gulf, Central Asia and the Pacific into one framework.<sup>71</sup> The need to ensure NATO’s connectivity with other actors of international community was also reiterated by U.S. Secretary of State Clinton: “In an interconnected world, we cannot defend our people by crouching behind the geographic boundaries of the Alliance”.<sup>72</sup>

However, it seems that the idea of global NATO should be seen only as a long-term declaratory political vision. Some allies, for example, Germany, have clearly stated that they do not see a global NATO.<sup>73</sup> Moving towards this direction is also complicated in the light of operational and financial overstretch in Afghanistan. Many allies consider NATO as a regional organization, which, instead of focusing on global agenda, should concentrate on the direct security interests of its members.

Moreover, other international players (most notably Russia) might oppose the idea of a globally connected NATO as it can be viewed as the ambition to expand Western influence throughout the world and subordinate other international organizations to NATO’s interests.

### **Conclusions: No New Beginning?**

It is obvious that the new SC will not become a magic solution for all of NATO’s problems. No document itself can generate the missing capabilities or fill the shortfalls of defence budgets. The implementation of the new SC will be

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<sup>70</sup> NATO, speech by Secretary General A.F. Rasmussen “NATO in the 21st Century: Towards Global Connectivity”, 17/2/2010. <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions\\_61395.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_61395.htm)>, 16/4/2010.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> US Department of State, speech by Secretary of State H. Clinton “Remarks on the Future of European Security” (note 27).

<sup>73</sup> Gehmlich K., “Germany’s Merkel wants NATO to focus on Russia ties”, Reuters, 6/3/2009. <[http://www.upi.com/Top\\_News/Special/2009/03/27/Merkel-No-global-NATO/UPI-29571238184011/](http://www.upi.com/Top_News/Special/2009/03/27/Merkel-No-global-NATO/UPI-29571238184011/)>, 16/4/2010.



determined by the political will of the member countries and level of solidarity within the Alliance.

The analysis has shown that the new SC is likely to play several different roles:

1. In terms of the strategy towards Russia, NATO seems to have chosen an active engagement based on pragmatic cooperation and shared interests. Presumably, the new SC will try to combine reassurance for the allies with the intention to enhance cooperation with Russia, without changing institutional framework of European security architecture.

2. Providing or not providing guidelines for real action will substantially define the added value of the new SC. In the words of U.S. Secretary of Defence R. Gates, “unless the Strategic Concept spurs operational and institutional changes ..., it will not be worth the paper it is printed on.”<sup>74</sup> The Alliance faces urgent need for reform in the fields of developing necessary capabilities, ensuring effective military and civilian machinery of NATO and addressing the financial and technological gap between the U.S. and Europe. Of course, the new SC should not become a guide for micro-management issues. However, it has to be more than another political declaration.

3. The new SC could play a substantial role as a message to publics and external international actors. The relevance and importance of NATO have to be explained to the society, thus ensuring public, and in turn, political support for the Alliance. It is, therefore, important to ensure that the development and adoption of the new SC is strongly supported by active public diplomacy. NATO’s new strategy also gives a chance to dispel the misperceptions and stereotypes in the eyes of other major powers in the international arena, as well as clarify NATO’s intentions, goals, and expectations from various partner-countries.

4. The new SC is an opportunity to identify primary and supportive roles of the Alliance. It is obvious that NATO cannot do everything and has to share responsibilities with other actors. Defining NATO’s missions will be a challenging task for the new SC because of complex, unpredictable, and rapidly changing security environment.

The recommendations prepared by the Group of Experts can be regarded as an indication showing that the new SC is not likely to become a fundamental turning point in the history of the Alliance. NATO is likely to remain a structure of cooperative security based on the same principles, which have been the driving force

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<sup>74</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, remarks delivered by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates (note 43).

of the Alliance for the past decade. The main elements of the current SC, such as collective defence, the importance of transatlantic link or indivisibility of security are regarded as still relevant.

The core tasks of the Alliance, identified in the report of Group of Experts (deter and defend, contribute to broader regional security, serve as a transatlantic structure of consultations, enhance and strengthen partnerships) only slightly differ from the tasks in the current SC. Safety and security “at home” is still seen as a fundamental prerequisite for success of any external action. Therefore, reassurance on the Article 5 commitment is likely to be one of the crucial topics while preparing the new SC.

At the same time, NATO is facing the challenges of the deterritorialization of collective defence (Afghanistan as the most prominent example) and the changing nature of the Article 5 threats (increasing cyber insecurity). Though the new SC cannot change the wording of the Washington treaty, “armed attack” as the main trigger of Article 5 is going to be adapted to changing security environment. Accordingly, the Alliance is likely to further strengthen its ability to counter various asymmetric challenges, such as terrorism, proliferation of the WMD or cyber attacks.

The most important change, reflecting shifts in the international security landscape and driven by the operational experience in Afghanistan, is the increased NATO focus on a comprehensive civilian/military approach and cooperation with partners. In the long-term perspective, focusing on civilian (stabilization and reconstruction) capabilities might be a crucially important step in the evolution of NATO as a cooperative security structure. In this respect, the level of NATO-EU cooperation will be of key importance.

It does not seem, however, that NATO is on a track of becoming an international “Swiss knife”, i.e. multifunctional institution, capable of implementing very wide range of civilian and military tasks. Though NATO might have to use its instruments in such fields as climate change or humanitarian emergencies, its role is more likely to be supportive versus primary.

In terms of the debate about the global vs. regional character of NATO, it seems that Euro-Atlantic region remains the backbone of the Alliance. NATO enlargement to other regions is not likely in the upcoming years. At the same time, the new SC will have to reflect increasing importance of partnerships. Close

cooperation is a necessity in the era of global interconnectivity and transnational security threats. It is not likely, however, that NATO could soon become “the hub of a network of security partnerships”<sup>75</sup> – such an ambition might be opposed by other international actors, as well as some allies. The new SC will also have to make sure that NATO’s ambitions are compatible with the resources.

NATO remains in a sentiment of permanent adaptation to the changing security environment. The new SC will be just one more step in the process of ongoing transformation. On the one hand, the discussion about the new SC can be seen as the opening of a Pandora’s box, because many fundamental issues will have to be re-examined. On the other hand, it is a unique opportunity to forge a strategic consensus on the further directions of Euro-Atlantic security cooperation.

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<sup>75</sup> NATO, speech by Secretary General A. F. Rasmussen “NATO in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Towards Global Connectivity”, (note 70).