

## Euro-Atlantic Security Issues in the 21st century

It is true that multidimensional NATO's activity imposes a variety of challenges to the organisation. In this this essay it is focused on three main issues. Describing the first one, it is claimed, paradoxically, that uncertainty makes it difficult to project long-term NATO's strategy. Secondly, it is presumed that transatlantic link will demand a determined effort. Finally, relations with strategically important partner, still being major NATO's 'headache' — Russia — will remain the 'axis' of relations with other countries.

The first security issue which NATO will have to face is uncertainty. From 1991 Strategic Concept when additional security dimensions — political, economic, social, environmental — were included (§25), the Alliance's strategy has become orientated towards the management of risks which allowed to define organisation as a risk society.<sup>1</sup> In contrast to traditional threats, risks are endless; their management becomes permanent, and uncertainty is understood as a primary threat.<sup>2</sup> Even the analysis of conventional threats cannot be based on the traditional threat structure, composed of the subject, intention, and potential.<sup>3</sup> On the one hand, they are not related to the traditional „Other“. In the New Strategic Concept it is only mentioned that „*Many regions and countries* around the world are witnessing the acquisition of substantial, modern military capabilities with consequences for international stability and Euro-Atlantic security that are *difficult to predict*“. Besides, terrorism, which is described as a direct threat (§10), should be also typed as a risk, as according to M. J. Williams, separate individuals could be identified, but they are linked to wider structures<sup>4</sup>. On the other hand, when concrete subjects which could pose a threat are unknown, other elements cannot be described, too. Indetermination could also be applied to instability and conflicts, cyber attacks, energy security, technology developments, et cetera (§1-15). *Presumed* potential threats, and damage determine NATO's activity which is projected toward long-term period, and causes greater insecurity perceptions. As General Secretary A. F. Rasmussen said in 48 th Munich Conference, it is necessary to invest in defense '*more than ever*'.<sup>5</sup>

The second major difficulty will be the reassurance of the cohesion of the Alliance. It is true that the division between America and Europe is becoming more and more noticeable. As the cases of Iraq,

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<sup>1</sup> For instance, Beck, U. *Risk Society — Towards a New Modernity*. London: *Sage Publications*, 1992; Beck, U. *World Risk Society*. Cambridge: *Polity Press*, 1999; Beck, U. *World at Risk*. Cambridge: *Polity Press*, 2009; Vanaga, N. *Risk Societies: A Call for NATO and EU Cooperation*. // Ozolina, Ž. (ed.) *Rethinking Security*. Riga: Zinātne, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Williams, M. J. *NATO, Security and Risk Management— From Kosovo to Khandahar*. New York: Routledge. 2009. P. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Williams. Op. cit. P. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Williams, Op. cit. P.19.

<sup>5</sup> Remarks by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen at the Munich Security Conference plenary session on “Building Euro-Atlantic Security”, 2013 02 04.

Afghanistan show, that essential part of Post-Cold War story was the reformulation and renew of the NATO's core — transatlantic link. Different contributions and defense spend; the debates about 'hard' *versus* 'soft' power are also good cases of point to illustrate changing political priorities and the strategy of action. Moreover, the constructed narrative of NATO, such as the proud of being globe's most successful *political*-military Alliance (NSC, §38) and the 'commitment to keep the door to NATO open to all European *democracies*'(NSC, preface) means that 'Venus', as R. Cahan wrote, is dominating in the Alliance. Despite that Atlantic Community proved being able act peacefully as a security community<sup>6</sup>, nowadays, it is not a particular characteristic of NATO which binds all the members together, since diplomatic practices are also applied even to antagonistic subjects. European countries will have to define their role *vis-à-vis* United States which will have the implications on the military strategy, and debates about regional *versus* global NATO.

Finally, the completion of 'unfinished business' and the inclusion of Russia in Euro-Atlantic security architecture will remain a core task. To NATO, whose mission after the Cold War was mainly civilizational, orientated toward the *spread* of universal values, a united continent, including Russia, continues to be an essential mission of NATO's project. As General Secretary A. F. Rasmussen once said: 'The end of the Cold War has given us an enormous opportunity: to achieve our goal of a Europe whole, free and at peace. We are not quite there yet, but we are very close. <...> We must now lock in this positive change, and make the European project *complete*. <...> We must make it clear that *we welcome Russia* into the fold <...>'.<sup>7</sup> However, in contrast to the Alliance, which emphasizes the importance of strategic partnership with Russia, and pledge *never* to attack Russia<sup>8</sup>, Moscow expresses a critical position towards NATO. For example, in the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation the West is understood as a region which attempts to spread its influence and might enhance instability and competition (§6); providing implicit references to NATO, traditional military and political blocs are described as ineffective (§9). Moreover, the major problems of conventional and nuclear forces near the territory of NATO members prevail. Even though it is formally declared that their relations are based upon NATO-Russia Founding Act and Rome Declaration, which includes the respect for democratic values (SC, §34), before the Lisbon summit the latter ones were recognised as limited.<sup>9</sup> Interestingly, 'declarative' values are replaced by common threats that become the main

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<sup>6</sup> Pouliot, V. The Alive and Well Transatlantic Security Community: A Theoretical Reply to Michael Cox. *European Journal of International Relations*, 2006, 12 (1). P. 120-121.

<sup>7</sup> Building a Euro-Atlantic Security Architecture. Speech by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen at the Brussels Forum, 27 Mar. 2010.

<sup>8</sup> NATO: We will never attack Russia, 12 03 2010.

<sup>9</sup> *NATO and Russia: A New Beginning*. Speech by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen at the Carnegie Endowment, Brussels. 18 09 2009.

platform on which NATO-Russia relations are being grounded currently. The continual NATO's task to overcome still alive traditional antagonism, find new strategies, and strengthen Atlantic community by the 'socialisation' of Moscow will remain.

In sum, the Alliance will remain engaged in efforts to find the solutions both to internal and external problems. Hopefully, the found answers will strengthen NATO and assure that the Euro-Atlantic area politically, military, and culturally will be attractive not only to 'Other(s)', but will remain appealing to its members as well.

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