

NATO IN CONDITIONS OF UNPREDICTABILITY

1. Present international situation – crisis of the post-cold war system (from 2014 we are living in a situation of “a disorder in order”; post-cold-war system ceased to exist in many areas);

Chaos and unpredictability is prevailing in most of the sectors of international relations: loss of control of the financial sector, weakness of international organizations and international law (R2P), intensification of terrorism (ISIS and its failure in Syria), immigration and **refugees crisis** and pressure on Western Europe, **raise of China** (Thucydides trap) and its effort to find itself a better space – conflict with the US; **Russian regional challenge** – role in destruction of the post-cold war system, Crimea annexation and hybrid war in the Eastern Ukraine, general **weakening of the Western World, in particular of the EU** - return to the ideas of national state; role of NATO as stabilizer – not anachronism (Donald Trump).

2. Some encyclopedic reminders on NATO:

Unique classical politico-military alliance (not just military), exclusive international defense club, considered the most successful – won the Cold War without one shot, **high level of homogeneity** due to relative homogeneity and common values and aims (Lord Ismay: *Americans in, Russians out, Germans down*), basis – North-Atlantic Treaty of 1949. Basis of collective defense action – Art. 5 of the Treaty - based on principle: “one for all, all for one”; the article was enacted only once in 2001 after attack on the WTC in New York).

Three priorities in the Strategic Concept: collective defense, stabilization operations, building collective security. USA offered its nuclear potential to the NATO disposal as its “*nuclear umbrella*”.

29 members plus Northern Macedonia (12 original), developed structures in the Brussels and Mons Headquarters, headed by North-Atlantic Council & Secretary General (Actually Jens Stoltenberg – Norwegian).

Formally regional but with “global outreach” (Reykjavik 2003), **specific US position** – hegemony or leadership (75% of financing), no separate army, but common defense commands; ministerial meetings 4 times per year (defense – 2, foreign affairs – 2), summit meetings once per two years.

Specific decision making; enlargement (problem with Russia); developed **system of partnership**: strategic, distinctive, EAPC, Mediterranean Dialogue, Istanbul initiative, contact states, large structural machinery. Anecdote on telephone reply from the NATO HQ

3. Some basic historic stages.

General Hodges: there are 3 basic stages in NATO development: Cold War time (1949 – 1989), enlargement, partnership & out of area actions time (1990 – 2014), confronting Russia and strengthening eastern flank (2014 -).

After 1989: future of NATO was matter of consideration in the Western capitals (enemy ceased to exist – Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact). After **YANAYEV** coup d'état in 1991 and ethnic disturbances in the territory of the former USSR, the decision was: to recognize Russia as **strategic** partner and Ukraine as **distinctive** one and continue the Alliance, but making it more like a stabilizing Instrument. This required constant reforms and transformation.

4. Dynamic changes and reforms as important NATO characteristic.

First, was to **develop partnership**: Russia (NRC), Ukraine (NUC), EAPC, etc. This embraced also partnership with the EU and cooperation with the OSCE and the United Nations.

Second, was to develop **crisis management**, relative **global outreach**,

Third, to increase interest in **cooperative security** matters.

Forth, was to increase expeditionary capabilities, which later was manifested in particular in Afghanistan, patrolling Baltic states skies and Mediterranean Sea, combating terrorism capabilities, actions against pirates in the Red Sea, military training assistance to some partners etc.

Fifth, enlargement in 3 stages, given Russia strategic satisfaction (“3 No”: to nuclear weapons, **significant** military presence and significant military installation stationing).

5. How military transformation looked like?

Priority – collective defense (*usability, smart defense, pooling&sharing, mobility*), **second** – crisis management and prevention (*expected results: military action, stabilization, reconstruction, advisory and training functions*), financing –

minimum 2% of GDP, attention to disarmament and arms control (*anecdote on telephone to HQ*), **third**, contribution to building cooperative security – relations with the EU, OSCE, UN.

6.Changes after 2014 (Crimea annexation and Russian hybrid aggression on Eastern Ukraine). Before that President Putin gave to understand in 21007 (Munich Conference) that Russia was dissatisfied with the post-Cold war system, demanded more Russia's decisions in international relations, rejected liberal democracy and common values (OSCE); in 2008 engaged in war with Georgia. Moscow was trying to divide West, practiced brinkmanship, demonstrated increasing military might in the East, produced military incidents.

NATO responded showing more determination – strengthening eastern flank, mainly by putting forward a concept called – “*from deployed NATO into prepared NATO*”, **more deterrence and containment** (Newport and Warsaw Summits– 2014, 2016), return to **contingency plans**, RAP - *Readiness Action Plan*, development of NRF - *NATO Response Force*, strengthening of the Eastern Flank – *permanent rotational presence*. promise of American Brigade and 3,4 billion US \$. Effort to increase rapid response and automaticity (except full scale war).

Problem of **balance between Russian challenge and Southern challenge**. Obligations with Russia of 1997 – “3 no” – still in force?). Resumption of the NRC in Brussels – April 2016: **double track in relations with Russia – deterrence and dialogue**.

7. In 2018 as tensions with Russia went high up: the US wants to step up readiness and ensure that at least 30.000 troops, plus additional aircraft and naval ships can reach a trouble spot within 30 days. This means to commit 30 battalions, 30 fighter squadrons and 30 naval ships ready to deploy. NATO has also a 5.000 spearhead force to serve as quick-reaction team to come to the aid of those troops within 10 days.

Difficult problem raised by Trump: long declining European military budgets. NATO target is 2% of gross domestic product (GDP).

Questions is NATO ability to deploy rapidly **4.600 troops on forward deployment in Baltic States and Poland**. Reinforcements are indispensable

element (nightmare scenarios for the Alliance: Russia attempt creeping annexation of NATO territory and US forces engaged in a crisis in Asia). Cooperation with the EU: military mobility, tanks, artillery and other equipment to travel on European roads, bridges and railways (upgrading)

Some weaknesses: Greece and Turkey armies are not trained to deploy out of the region. Belgium 7 Romania cut their land forces, Germany lacks some necessary equipment, France is overstretched in Africa, British army has been shrinking, Central Europe, in particular Baltic States are exposed. However, policy of deterrence and containment is progressively strengthened..

8, Questions and perspectives

The main question: will NATO effectively defend it allies in case of aggression (historical experience is not encouraging: 75 % of alliances failed, 10% allies turned back)? NATO specialty – securing peace without war. Problems of obligations with Russia and how to reply to Russian nuclear threat. Major challenges:

- **Develop two track policy with Russia and in parallel with deterrence & capabilities and increased readiness (quick response);**
- **Manage the crisis phenomena in relations with USA (Trump),** it increasing European military share – rather on the basis of European pillar within NATO; **question of relations with EU – labor sharing (soft power) and NATO (hard power);**
- **Contribute to building a new security order** – considering China challenge to balance of military and security power;
- **Protect Ukraine** – constituting element of European security;
- **Develop defense measures against ISIS and terrorism** (*no world gendarme*);
- **Engage in building new security order (system),** once conditions permit.