Changing security dynamics of Black Sea and Caspian Basin countries in light of their Partnership policy with NATO and other international players
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Istanbul 2019
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This book is based on the presentations of the conference held in Istanbul and reflects different perspectives of Caspian basin and Black sea countries foreign, security and energy policies. It has the selected perspectives of the participants and could be fruitful source for the interested agencies.

Acknowledgements:

The book is sponsored by Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation of the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

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Foreword

This book contains the materials of a conference held in Istanbul under the umbrella of ATA (Atlantic Treaty Association) devoted partly to NATO’s 25th year of partnership with former soviet bloc countries. One of the objectives was to analyze and assess NATO’s cooperation directions with partner nations and identify “which factors matter for further promotion of integrated relations with NATO and other western institutions”. Alongside with Black Sea countries, Central Asian countries partnership programs with NATO both in Afghanistan and on bilateral basis have been addressed.

The conference has much focused on the related development in the Black Sea within the context of Russian-Ukrainian hostile relations, perspectives of peace and war in a separatist driven violent conflicts in Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and Azerbaijan. Energy security issues running through the region to Europe have taken important part of the conference as well.

This conference had a large Women, Peace and Security panel where women activists across the region and OSCE ODIR office addressed gender equality, human rights, peace building activities, opportunities and challenges for women civil society organizations in their interaction with the security sector.

Transitions experiences of former soviet and current NATO members’ have also been addressed as a better expertise for partner nations. From this perspective, the conference was rich in discussing and debating the outstanding issues in the wider area of Black Sea and Caspian basin.

Some articles presented for this book, are purely research-based academic papers but at the same time some are the result of observations of the authors. And not all the participants expressed their desire their papers to be published but the majority of presented papers are included into this book. I believe the book can serve as an additional source for better understanding the ongoing development in the entire region.

I thank once again the authors of the articles and contributors to the conference.

Elkhan Mehdiyev
Editor
Project director
CHAPTER I
Changing security dynamics of Black Sea and Caspian Basin countries in light of their 25 years of Partnership with NATO

PFP is a projection of stability outside the NATO space

Ambassador Gabriele Checchia*

Over the last 25 years, NATO has greatly contributed in projecting stability and it is evident for all the countries involved in the many NATO partnership programs. In this regard, NATO has been able to navigate the new security dimension emerged after the fall of the Berlin Wall, 30 years ago.

Among the International Security Organization, NATO is the one that better and faster adapted its complex political-military structure and programs to the changed security environment of the post-Cold War era. In spite of its decision-making process by consensus (which is by the way a precious asset…), and the complex military structure, NATO responded quickly and effectively after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

To address this new international situation Organization started a transformation process, actively pursued an open-door policy (on the basis of article 10 of the Treaty: last example the accession of Montenegro on June 5, 2017) and created flexibles, tailored, holistic programs, able to respond to the new demands of cooperation from the countries of the Central-Eastern Europe and the Caucasus region.

The flexibility of these programs gave the opportunity to adapt the programs to the different realities on the ground. In the meantime, the security concept has changed – and it is still in evolution – since the end of the Cold War. It has become more comprehensive, moving more and more away from the static concept of the Cold War toward a “dynamic” concept that incorporate politics, economics, ethics, religious and immigration problems.

Many partnership programs - like the Partnership for Peace since 1994 - are key examples of programs that paved the way to the enlargement of NATO and the projection of stability outside the NATO space.

The Caspian region has benefited from the PfP program, for instance, since 1994. The importance of the region in strategic terms stems from simple consideration: immediate challenges such as the continuing peace-operations in Afghanistan, as well as more long-term strategic considerations make Central Asia and the South Caucasus crucial area of concern for the Alliance.

In more general terms, the participation in the PfP resulted in an increased stability for the region and strengthened the security cooperation between the NATO and non-member countries in the Euro-Atlantic area. The PfP put together a great number of countries and built confidence among NATO member and partner countries. In particular, the new programs guided the partner countries in the adoption of STANAGS and NATO values. Since the democratic control of the State was and is one of the most important criteria to enter a NATO partnership program, this pushed democratic standards forward across

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the whole Euro-Atlantic region.

As result, the modernization efforts helped the Black Sea/Caspian region to become more attractive to foreign investment, contributing in the economic development of the area and, consequently, improved its stability.

In this regard, one of the most relevant successes of the last 25 years of partnership, it is in the field of the Security Sector Reform. Despite SSR is a relatively recent concept, emerged in the ‘90s after the fall of the Berlin Wall, it has greatly contributed enhancing the cooperation between NATO and partner countries and to address effectively the changing geopolitical scenario.

Indeed, as you know, the concept is not built on a strict definition of security, but encompasses a large variety of dimensions: political, economic, social and institutional. For this reason, many sectors and institutions have been affected by the SSR: governmental institution, armed forces, intelligence, ministries, judiciary, and political parties.

This wider concept is crucially influenced by a broader idea of “human security”, putting at the first place the protection of the individuals instead than merely provide military assistance to states, involving also other international institutions such as the OECD and the EU.

The SSR promoted by NATO has been and is a great tool for cooperation. In the last 25 years it provided external support for reorganizing the security sector in line with democratic values and the rule of law, ensuring the security and the development of the populations involved. The stability that originates from the SSR initiatives it is crucial to create and preserve a secure and stable environment, vital for a sustainable development.

However, together with good results, the SSR brought on the table many challenges and problems:

1) the holistic approach of the SSR it is hardly conceivable during bipolar moments or when the competition among the great powers is strong. In these scenarios, indeed, the SSR could be seen as an ideologically driven realpolitik instrument rather than a mechanism to advance development and peacebuilding. This approach, therefore, could have not been effectively introduced during the Cold War and the risk is that, with the growing rivalries among great powers it will become more difficult to effectively implement the SSR in the near future, especially in the regions that could become contended by the great powers.

2) In any case, the risk exists that the SSR, if nor properly agreed upon, may be perceived as an externally imposed concept: in other terms one that does not respond to the real needs of human security in the partner countries. Therefore, the program should be based on local demands and driven by local stakeholders, involving also the civil societies to understand local realities and perceptions of security.

This approach, however, is not shared by everyone. Indeed, despite there is a consensus on the role of SSR, there are two main approaches to the SSR.

a) the “orthodox” school considers the State as the only actor capable of meeting the human security needs of the population. Thus, SSR should focus on this, reframing the relations between state and society.

b) the second school believes that the SSR programs should originate by local dynamics, perceptions and needs of security. This second school, as seen before, could mitigate the risk that the SSR will be considered as an externally imposed concept. Anyway, the two models are not irreconcilable and, above all, the SSR needs a compromise between ambition and realism.

This last concept appears even truer, analyzing the impact of the SSR in the short and in the long terms. The often-essential reforms promoted in the frame of SSR bring stability in the long term, but instability in the
short term. This danger has guided NATO and EU moves both in the Eastern Europe and in the MENA region, often producing partnership programs less ambitious than what would have been appropriate.

Despite SSR is one of the most successful NATO programs, in the last 25 years NATO introduced many other different partnership programs, aimed at increasing the regional stability, and interoperability and interconnection between countries. In these programs, each partner determines scope, pace, intensity of the partnership. There are different formulas, for instance the Individual Partnership and Cooperation Program – that is a standard document, reviewed every two years and approved by the NAC for all partners – or the Individual Partnership Action Plan – the same of the (IPCP) plus an enhanced political dialogue and the SSR (for instance, with Azerbaijan). Relevant are also the Annual National Program, the Partnership Action Plan and the Partnership Interoperability Initiative.

There are also other programs that are used for the Black Sea/Caspian Region. For instance, the Defense and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative (Georgia), that is focused on capabilities and SSR, the Building Integrity Initiative (Armenia, Georgia), focused on fight against corruption and good governance; the Professional Development Program (Georgia), focused on the formation of the civilian personnel and on improvements for legislative and executives branches; and the Defense Education Enhancement Program, a vehicle for reform that provide tailored practical support to individual countries in developing and reforming their professional military education institutions.

Undoubtedly, the last 25 years of partnerships between NATO and the countries of the Black Sea/Caspian Region have strongly enhanced their relationship and the security in the region, accelerated the pace of security sector reforms and speeded the integration of these countries in the NATO framework. However, the security deficit in the region is still present.

Moreover, in the increasingly complex scenario, the Black Sea/Caspian region is crucial for the stability of the whole Euro-Atlantic area. In the last years, for instance, the concept of energy security has become more and more a relevant challenge for NATO. Protection of critical infrastructures, energy prices, diversification of sources and transit routes, rising energy demands: NATO must cope with these problems, and the Black Sea/Caspian region is vulnerable on this point of view.

A stronger partnership with the EU could help reach NATO aims: the two Organizations have common goals in the area but not a common strategy. If NATO and the EU will be able to effectively work together for the well being of the region, their complementary approaches could reinforce the commitment of the Euro-Atlantic countries to the stability and the prosperity of the region, creating a new model for SSR and partnerships able to overcome the problems above outlined.

Clearly, this path should be strongly encouraged also by the countries of the region that, as in the past, have to show interest in reinforcing the partnership with the West. In the present security environment, with hybrid threats and the return of the great power game, a strong cooperation between the Black Sea/Caspian countries and NATO is increasingly crucial to preserve the security of the whole Euro-Atlantic area. In this regard, strengthening and improving the successful partnerships already created and possibly introducing new and more ambitious programs is one of the best ways to reach our common security, economic and political goals.

A final point, which may appear obvious to most of you, but which I consider worth remembering, having in mind Russia’s often repeated concerns: NATO’S ACTIVITIES IN CENTRAL ASIA AND the South Caucasus are not directed against anyone being simply aimed at increasing regional security in this complex area, to benefit of all...
NATO’s Engagement with the Central Asian States within its Partnership Policy

Beishenbek TOKTOGULOV

Introduction

NATO’s partnership policy has emerged as one of the main responses to the post-Cold War era. It has served as a bridge or a tool for NATO’s engagement, especially with the former Warsaw Pact members and former Soviet republics. NATO’s partnership policy, with its cooperation programmes and partnership mechanisms, has offered these countries a multilateral framework for security dialogue and opportunities for practical cooperation in a wide range of areas with NATO member states and other partner countries. Partnership for Peace (PfP), which is the main component of this policy, offered the participating states the possibility of strengthening their relations with NATO in accordance with their own individual interests and capabilities. The Alliance has also developed a wide range of partnership mechanisms to support cooperation with the PfP countries through a mix of policies, programs, action plans and other arrangements.

NATO has been engaging with the Central Asian states since the end of the Cold War. Although NATO’s formal relations with these countries began with their participation in the NACC in the early 1990s, these relations came into new phase after these countries joined the PfP program and began cooperating through other partnership mechanisms. In this sense, this study examines the evolution of NATO’s engagement with Central Asian states through its partnership policy. The purpose of this study is to clarify how NATO’s partnership policy has affected its relations with the Central Asian partners. The first part of the study explores the rationale behind the Alliance’s engagement with these countries, focusing on its transformation process started right after the end of the Cold War. The second part examines NATO’s engagement with the Central Asian states through its partnership policy and discusses how NATO’s cooperation with each Central Asian partner has evolved since these countries joined the PfP program. The third part analyzes NATO’s cooperation with these partners in Afghanistan after the September 11. The last part discusses NATO’s engagement with the Central Asian partners in terms of its prospects and challenges experiencing so far. The study used the data drawn from both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources such as official documents, declarations, statements, speeches and news are mostly accessed from NATO’s official websites. Secondary sources including books, academic journals and newspaper archives are used to enrich the contents of the study.

1) The Rationale behind NATO’s Engagement with the Central Asian States

NATO was established to protect Western Europe from a perceived imminent attack by the Soviet Union and its allies from the Warsaw Pact. However, with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, there seemed little to expect NATO to remain in business as the core factors which contributed to NATO’s creation were gone. This uncertainty posed a major challenge to the Alliance’s future. Many observers expected that NATO’s demise would soon follow in the absence of its ‘founding’ enemy. Even if it did not disappear altogether, it would no longer perform any useful functions and there would emerge other European security institutions that are better suited to the needs of the post-Cold War environment to replace it. From IR theory perspective, realists also forecast that the end of the Cold War would result in the demise of the Alliance. As Kenneth Waltz asserted “NATO’s days are not numbered, but its years
are.”1 However, contrary to such expectations, the Alliance had not become moribund. Instead, its complex transformation in response to the challenges of the post-Cold War era ensured its viability as international security actor.

NATO’s transformation, which has also led to its engagement with Central Asian states, was initiated at the 1990 London Summit where the Heads of State and Government, stating that “the Alliance must and will adapt” and that “it begins a major transformation”2, set the scene for the transformation of the Cold War NATO and laid the foundations for what NATO has become today. First, London declaration stated that NATO’s principal new political mission was the construction of a new security order in Europe – an order grounded on the liberal democratic values embodied in the preamble to the 1949 Washington Treaty.3 As Secretary General George Lord Robertson later put forth, the Alliance’s task was now “to build the Euro-Atlantic security environment of the future – where all states share peace and democracy, and uphold basic human rights.”4

As part of NATO’s transformation, the Alliance sees itself as more than just a military organization and has taken an increasing interest in the promotion of democracy, fundamental freedoms, human rights and the rule of law.5 In this sense, to encourage the growth of their values outside of NATO territory, the allies had effectively committed themselves to develop necessary tools such as the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program, and special arrangements with Russia and Ukraine. Within this framework, NATO’s formal relations with Central Asian states began with their participation in the NACC, a forum for dialogue established by the Alliance in 1991 as a first step to reach out former Warsaw Pact members. These relations came into new phase in 1994 when four out of the five countries joined the PfP program, a major program which could help these countries with democratic reform and the establishment of effective institutions, including the difficult task of bringing security services and military establishments under effective democratic control.

Second, London declaration implicitly put forth that NATO’s transformation would be expansion of its task from exclusively providing collective defense for its members to the wider task of possibly implementing collective security. Its new and broader approach to security was enshrined in a new Strategic Concept issued at the 1991 Rome Summit which stated that the Alliance must be capable of responding to the post-Cold War risks and challenges that may arise from the serious economic, social and political difficulties faced by Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). It also stated that the allies could contribute to global stability and peace by providing military forces for UN missions and reinforce actions to contribute to the management of crisis and their peaceful resolution.6 Thus, the transformed NATO would be a collective security alliance to meet the emerging security challenges in the post-Cold War era. From this point of view, the Alliance’s involvement in Central Asia can be explained through its willingness to defend the normative underpinnings of the Euro-Atlantic space from the strategic threats emanating from the region.7 Similarly, since it took over International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in 2003, NATO had cooperated with Central Asian states on the stabilization of Afghanistan, a country which had threatened the Euro-Atlantic space and where NATO still faces a real test as a security organization with a global role.

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2 Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance (The London Declaration), 5 July 1990
4 Speech by NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson at the Annual Session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Amsterdam, 15 November 1999
2) Engagement through Partnership Policy

Partnership for Peace

NATO, recognizing the need to upgrade its relations with non-member countries, launched the PfP program at its Brussels Summit in January 1994. It paved the way for practical cooperation between NATO and the states of CEE, as well as those of the former Soviet Republics of Caucasus and Central Asia. The main purpose of the PfP, a program which helps transform the relationship between NATO and participating states, is to increase stability, diminish threats to peace and build strengthened relationships by promoting the spirit of practical cooperation. In this sense, if Central Asian states aspired to cooperate with NATO within the PfP, first, they would need to sign the PfP Framework Document by which they would reaffirm their commitment to Partnership values. Then, they were expected to prepare Presentation Document identifying the areas of cooperation and other activities consistent with the partnership objectives. Finally, based on this program and its Presentation Document, each Central Asian partner would develop with NATO an Individual Partnership Program (IPP), which would be assisted by the Alliance in its formulation and execution. If they subscribed to the PfP, Central Asian partners could cooperate with the Alliance in a number of areas including defense reform, defense policy and planning, civil-military relations, education and training, military-to-military cooperation and exercises, civil emergency planning and disaster response as well as in the scientific sphere. Moreover, they would establish their own liaison office to facilitate their participation in NACC/Partnership meetings and activities at NATO Headquarters in Belgium.

Four Central Asian states, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan were among the states to join the PfP program shortly after its launch in 1994, while Tajikistan joined only in 2002. They proposed their Presentation Documents which included each partner’s priorities in joining PfP. Since they joined, the Central Asian partners have cooperated in a number of areas ranging from developing interoperability with NATO forces to official dialogue. An example could be that of the Central Asian Peacekeeping Battalion (Centrasbat), one of the seven regional units organized under the PfP. The Centrasbat was formed by the Central Asian Economic Cooperation (CAEC) Council of Defense Ministers with the support of NATO’s PfP and the USA in 1996. The tasks were supposed to keep the fragile peace in Tajikistan and prevent the Afghan conflict from spreading into Central Asia as well as strengthening the military-to-military relationship and improving regional security in Central Asia. The Centrasbat exercises, which took place within the framework of the PfP between 1997 and 2000, had greatly contributed to the militaries of the Central Asian partners. The other example could be the Alliance’s help to regional states to cope with the consequences of defense reform financing.

By signing the PfP Framework, Central Asian states would reaffirm their commitment to fulfil in good faith the obligation of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights; specifically, to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, to respect existing borders and to settle disputes by peaceful means. They would also reaffirm their commitment to the Helsinki Final Act and all subsequent CSCE documents and to the fulfilment of the commitments and obligations they had undertaken in the field of disarmament and arms control.

Central Asian partners subscribing to the PfP Framework Document would cooperate with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in pursuing the following objectives: facilitation of transparency in national defense planning and budgeting processes; ensuring democratic control of defense forces; maintenance of the capability and readiness to contribute (subject to constitutional considerations) to operations under the authority of the UN and/or the responsibility of the OSCE; the development of cooperative military relations with NATO, for the purpose of joint planning, training, and exercises in order to strengthen their ability to undertake missions in the fields of peacekeeping, search and rescue, humanitarian operations, and others as may subsequently be agreed; the development, over the longer term, of forces that are better able to operate with those of the members of the North Atlantic Alliance.


through PfP Trust Fund. A General Accounting Office (GAO)’s study on the PfP program noted that between 1994 and 2000 less than 12% of the more than $590 million appropriated to assist foreign military went to Central Asian nations.\textsuperscript{12}

PfP Invitation Document clearly indicates that active participation by any partner country in the program will play an important role in its accession to NATO. Moreover, Secretary General Manfred Worner also remarked that, PfP can and will lead to NATO membership for some countries, though this need not be a goal for all those who participate.\textsuperscript{13} In this sense, it can be expressed that PfP has reached one of its important goals since all CEE partners became the member of the NATO in 1999 and 2004. However, for the Central Asian partners, NATO membership has never been a final goal behind their participation in PfP. More importantly, no NATO and Central Asian officials have ever commented on the possible membership of the Central Asian states to the Alliance.

NATO’s engagement with Central Asian states within the PfP had been opposed by regional powers, namely by China and Russia. China had not clearly expressed why it opposed NATO’s PfP program but viewed Centrasbat as inimical to Chinese interests. One of the Beijing foreign policy think tanks had argued that “NATO’s move eastwards was an example of Christian expansion which was psychologically threatening to China and which could lead eventually to the clash of civilizations.”\textsuperscript{14} Russia had been concerned with the security cooperation developed between NATO and Central Asian states first of all within the PfP program and later through bilateral agreements between the Central Asian partners and individual NATO members.

For Russian officials, NATO activities of any type were simply against Russian interests. For PfP supporters, contrary to Russian argument, NATO’s mission in this context was to drive home the point that its activities were not directed against anyone; furthermore, that by increasing regional security in Central Asia and other former Soviet regions, NATO’s programs actually would increase rather than decrease Russia’s security.\textsuperscript{15} However, this point was unlikely to be accepted easily in Moscow. While it only watched NATO’s PfP Centrasbat exercises in the late 1990s, it responded to US and NATO’s increased military presence in the region in the aftermath of September 11 by enhancing its relations with Central Asian nations both within the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

Other Mechanisms of Partnership

In order to promote and deepen cooperation with partner countries, NATO created wide range of practical mechanisms like Planning and Review Process (PARP), Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP), Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism (PAP-T) and Partnership Action Plan on Defense Institution Building (PAP-DIB). PARP provides a basis for identifying and evaluating forces and capabilities that might be available for multinational training, exercises and operations with the Alliance.\textsuperscript{16} Partners whose cooperation with the Alliance is more advanced participate in PARP during which their security forces also undergo defense review procedures similar to those of the NATO member states. This process, developing effective, affordable and sustainable armed forces and promoting wider reform in defense issues, helps partner countries prepare them to participate in multinational peacekeeping operations. With the exception of Turkmenistan, other four Central Asian partners joined

\textsuperscript{12} Lyle J. Goldstein, “Making the Most of Central Asian Partnerships”, \textit{Joint Force Quarterly}, Summer 2002, p.87


\textsuperscript{15} Svante Cornel, “NATO after Enlargement: PfP Shifts Emphasis to Central Asia and the Caucasus”, \textit{NIA/Report}, 2004, p. 11

PARP as the later participants; Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in 2002 and Kyrgyzstan in 2007. For Nursultan, participation in PARP would help make selected units interoperable with those of Allied countries and increase mutual understanding. In this sense, it was eager to expand participation in PARP to include its counter terrorism capabilities and wider equipment interoperability. Uzbekistan had benefited from PARP though it lasted from 2002 until 2005. For instance, NATO PARP experts had assisted Uzbekistan to reform Uzbek Defense Ministry’s top command structure. For Bishkek, PARP would improve its interoperability with the allies and in turn this would enhance its ability to take part in NATO peacekeeping operations.

At the Prague Summit in 2002, NATO member states launched the IPAP which is open to partner countries with the political will and ability to deepen cooperation with the Alliance that has already been achieved within the framework of the PfP program. Those Partners who express their desire for closer cooperation but are not ready for participation in the Membership Action Plan (MAP) are eligible for an IPAP.

While IPAP provides an opportunity for the partner states to address their particular circumstances and interests, it serves as another mechanism for the Alliance to support and advise interested partners. The Plans are developed on a bi-annual basis and NATO will provide its focused, country-specific assistance and advice on reform objectives that interested partners might wish to pursue in consultation with the Alliance. Among Central Asian partners, Kazakhstan is the only country which has agreed on an IPAP with the Alliance. Uzbekistan had also launched developing IPAP with NATO but it further were interrupted after NATO allies called for an independent investigation over the Andijan events in 2005.

At the 2002 Prague Summit, NATO member states also introduced PAP-T through which EAPC States will identify, organize, and systematize ongoing and new EAPC/PfP activities, which are of particular relevance to the international fight against terrorism. It is designed to improve cooperation in areas such as political consultations, information sharing, civil-emergency planning, force planning, air defense and air management, border control and training exercises related to terrorism. Indeed, the Central Asian partners have contributed to the fight against terrorism through their participation in the PAP-T. NATO and its partners in the region have cooperated in the areas of information exchange, training exercises and civil preparedness.

At the Istanbul Summit in 2004, NATO member states launched PAP-DIB, another partnership mechanism aimed at offering partners common political and conceptual platform for bilateral and multilateral cooperation in developing efficient and democratically responsible defense institutions. They also agreed that the Alliance would give priority to the countries in Central Asia (and in Caucasus) in implementing the existing and new cooperative programmes, in particular IPAP, PAP-DIB, PARP and PAP-T. The Alliance would pay special attention to the individual needs of the those Central Asian Partners (and in Caucasus) who had demonstrated the willingness and commitment to participate in these
programs, would provide enhanced training and education, and would strive to help them manage the consequences of defense reform, including through the PfP Trust Fund mechanism. More importantly, the allies decided to put ‘special focus’ in engaging partners in Central Asia (and in Caucasus) and to appoint Special Representative of the NATO Secretary General to the region to improve communication and promote activities with Central Asian partners. Decisions taken in Istanbul have had positive impact on the cooperation and relations between NATO and Central Asian partners in the following years.

Country by Country Overview

Kazakhstan has been the most active partner among the Central Asian partners since it joined the PfP program in 1994. It is the only country to have agreed on IPAP with NATO in 2006. It was then called by some NATO representatives as the best IPAP among the Alliance partner countries. Since then, it had agreed for three consecutive IPAPs with NATO. Kazakhstan has attempted to share its experiences it had obtained through cooperation through the PARP to other Central Asian states. It had regularly participated in Centrasbat exercises together with Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan and, drawing experiences from Centrasbat exercises, Kazakhstan formed its own battalion Kazbat in 2000, which was interoperable with NATO troops. Later in 2006, it was expanded to brigade level (Kazbrig) which was fully equipped with NATO standards and ready to take part in greater international peacekeeping responsibilities. A leading expert claimed that NATO-Kazak relations had deepened considerably as a result of the 9/11, Kazakhstan’s role in peace support operations in Iraq and due to rupture in NATO-Uzbek relations. Nурсultan had supported US-led coalition and NATO-led ISAF in Afghanistan since the September 11 and 2003 respectively and in 2003 deployed its Kazbat to Iraq to support ongoing stabilization and humanitarian operations. It had taken part in PAP-T, which provided the exchange of information with the members of NATO. In 2009, Kazakhstan hosted the EAPC Security Forum which focused on Afghanistan, energy security and Central Asian security. It was the first time the forum was held outside Europe. Nursultan approved its third IPAP in 2012 and was in the process of discussing the fourth one in 2014. Kazakhst’s active cooperation with the Alliance has never prevented Nursultan from being an ally of Moscow and Beijing or supporting Russian proposals for strengthened integration in Eurasia. Kazakhstan has been very adept at extracting exactly what it wants from regional powers in the regions, while at the same time not upsetting any of them in a way that would risk ongoing relations. In this sense, it can be argued that there is no reason which will alter NATO-Kazakhstan relationship in the near future. Indeed, the Alliance is also aware of the Kazakhstan’s proximity to Russia and does not take steps that might damage its relationship with Kazakhstan which might result in country’s close relations with Russia.

Like Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan had been one of the active Central Asian partners until the Andijan events in 2005. It was the first country to reach an IPP agreement and one of the first participants in PARP. It participated in PfP exercises of ‘Cooperative Nugget’ (1995), ‘Cooperative Osprey’ (1996) and ‘Balance Ultra’ (1996). In addition to Centrasbat exercises, Uzbekistan hosted the first EAPC exercise ever held in Central Asia – Ferghana 2003 – a simulation of an earthquake. Tashkent sent its military officers to the NATO’s PfP Center in Ankara, Turkey, where they received advice on developing counter-insurgency

doctrine, crisis management procedures and modernization of military logistics and medical services. Following the September 11, Uzbekistan indeed played crucial role in supporting military campaign and ISAF in Afghanistan. However, Uzbekistan sharply reduced its participation in PfP after NATO raised concerns over Uzbek side’s excessive and disproportionate use of force during the Andijan events. Following the Andijan events, Uzbekistan pursued an empty seat policy at most of the NATO meetings and refused to appoint NATO liaison officer. The Alliance had described its relationship with Tashkent as “virtually non-existent or at least on standby”. Here, it can be claimed that the Andijan events tested NATO-Uzbekistan relations which were established under NATO principles of support and promotion of democracy. Although NATO and Uzbekistan resumed their cooperation after Uzbek President Islam Karimov attended NATO Bucharest Summit in 2008, their cooperation had continued to remain very limited. In recent years, especially after Shavkat Mirziyoyev became the new President of Uzbekistan in 2016, NATO-Uzbekistan relations have improved leading to cooperation on joint projects within the IPP.

Kyrgyzstan was one of the Central Asian countries to sign the PfP Framework Document in 1994 and since then NATO and Kyrgyzstan has cooperated using the IPP’s guidelines approved in the framework of the PfP. It had actively participated in various activities, especially PfP peacekeeping exercises with regional countries of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. In addition to Centrasbat exercises, Kyrgyzstan enhanced its cooperation with the Alliance on civilian relief efforts and expanded its cooperation in antiterrorism military exercises in the aftermath of the incursions of extremist groups to Batken region in 1999 and 2000. After the incursions, the allies had provided Kyrgyz military and financial assistance. Kyrgyzstan had been very supportive of US-led coalition and NATO’s stabilization efforts in Afghanistan.

Bishkek provided units for PfP operations, which had been especially active in counter terrorism through the PAP-T. In 2007, Kyrgyz side stated its interest in the creation of peacekeeping squadron, which would fully consist of Kyrgyz military officers. In the same year, as a result of five-year-long political and expert consultations, Kyrgyzstan agreed a PARP with the Alliance and by agreeing PARP, Kyrgyzstan would get evaluations and recommendations from international experts in the spheres of defense and security, construction of defense institutions and strengthening operational combinability between Kyrgyz military forces and international peacekeeping forces. It should be noted that Kyrgyzstan’s active cooperation with the Alliance both before and after the 2005 Tulip revolution have been acutely driven by financial incentives. On the other hand, as the interference perceived in the demands for robust liberal democratic reforms, it is argued that Western support for this revolution has caused other Central Asian regimes to shrink away from any cooperation with the Alliance. Following the second revolution, the new government reaffirmed Kyrgyzstan’s commitment to deepening its relationship with NATO and with Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambayev’s visit to NATO Headquarters in 2013 Kyrgyz side somehow proved its commitment. As NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen stated at this Joint Press Point, NATO’s cooperation with Kyrgyzstan have lately expanded as

Kyrgyz side participated in programs and courses such as NATO Building Integrity and NATO-funded English language course for serving military personnel.  

Turkmenistan joined PfP in 1994, but NATO’s cooperation with Turkmenistan has been more limited than with other Central Asian partners. In line with its position of ‘permanent neutrality’ recognized by the United Nations, Turkmenistan did not engage in cooperation through the PfP programs concerning interoperability and security sector reform. Although its ‘permanent neutrality’ limits its deeper cooperation with the Alliance, Turkmen officials had participated in a range of courses provided by NATO and NATO member states and there had been some cooperation in the fields of civil emergency planning, scientific and environmental affairs. For instance, after NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson’s visit to Turkmenistan in 2001, during which he emphasized that the cooperation within the PfP in the areas of non-military areas would not threaten Turkmenistan’s neutral status. In 2002, NATO and Turkmenistan conducted civil emergency planning and civil-military cooperation seminar in Ashgabat.

Through Science for Peace (SFP), NATO and Turkmenistan collaborated in the safe handling of radioactive waste, which was a by-product iodine and bromine production facilities nearby the Caspian Sea. In the post-9/11 period, its long border with Afghanistan had given Afghanistan an incentive to work with NATO on border security issues. Right after 9/11 events, Ashkhabad had also cooperated with the US on Afghan issue. Turkmenistan, under the new President Gurbangulu Berdymukhamedov, maintains a more cooperative attitude towards NATO. This is evident in Turkmenistan’s participation in a NATO-Russia Council (NRC) pilot project for counter-narcotics training of Afghan and Central Asian personnel. While in 2014 Ashgabat responded to an urgent request for assistance by NATO’s Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC), in 2015 it hosted a landmark forum on NATO-Central Asian relations. However, although there are some signs that Turkmenistan is willing to develop closer relationship with the Alliance, its insistence on its formal neutrality still prevent NATO’s involvement in its security sector reform.

NATO’s practical cooperation with Tajikistan within the PfP began only in 2002. The internal unstable situation, civil war between 1992 and 1997 and the instability after the coalition government came to the power, made Tajikistan join the program very lately. Since then, Tajik President Rahmon visited NATO Headquarters three times and reaffirmed each time his country’s willingness to expand its cooperation with the Alliance. During his trip in 2009, he expressed his country’s tangible interest to develop deeper cooperation, allegedly even within IPAP. Dushanbe has expanded its partnership activities in many areas such as crisis management and civil preparedness, security and peacekeeping cooperation, fight against terrorism and border security. Tajikistan has worked with NATO to reform its armed forces and have participated in a number of PfP exercises with NATO allies and other partner countries.

Being the weakest state in the region and having 1200-km long border with Afghanistan, Tajikistan is very conducive to threats emanating from Afghanistan. In this sense, NATO and Tajikistan had focused on strengthening the country’s border security and countering cross-border crime, especially drug trafficking. Like other Central Asian countries, Tajikistan had also been a key actor in NATO’s mission in Afghanistan. Tajikistan hosts annual NATO-sponsored Summer Academy in Dushanbe with the

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participans coming across the region. In Tajikistan, two NATO Trust Fund projects were aimed to support the destruction of over 1000 anti-personnel landmines and eliminate stockpiles of large munitions and assess the security of weapon storage facilities. These projects were implemented between 2004 and 2015 respectively.

3) Cooperation on Afghan Issue

Geographical proximity of Central Asian countries to Afghanistan had prompted the Alliance to devote greater attention to these countries in the post-9/11 period. The Central Asian partners had provided various forms of assistance that were critical to NATO’s ability to operate in Afghanistan. What is important here is that the ties established with Central Asian states through partnership policy facilitated NATO’s cooperation with these countries on Afghan issue. On the other hand, Central Asian states also appeared to be ready to cooperate with the Alliance in creating stable environment in the wider region, in Central Asia and Afghanistan. Earlier terrorist incursions in the region and the concern of the spillover effects of the unstable situation in Afghanistan to the region were the main reasons why regional states had supported both US-led military campaign and NATO-led ISAF in Afghanistan.

In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, Central Asian states jointly with the EAPC members unconditionally condemned the attacks pledging to undertake all efforts to combat the scourge of terrorism. All Central Asian states offered their cooperation to the US-led military operations in Afghanistan, including providing overflight rights, bases and other assets. For instance, while Uzbekistan offered the US and its allies to station their ground forces and equipment at Karshi-Khanabad air base, Kyrgyzstan provided its Manas airport to the US and other coalition members.

NATO’s involvement in Central Asia had deepened after it took the command of ISAF which was a multinational force whose purpose was to assist the Afghan government in extending its authority across the country and establishing a stable and secure environment in which sustainable reconstruction, development, and good governance could take place. Having stated in his several speeches the importance of partner countries in battling with new threats like terrorism, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer was seeking for their contribution to ISAF operations in Afghanistan. Central Asian partners responded his calls and provided various forms of support to the NATO-led ISAF operations in Afghanistan.

Indeed, the relationships developed between NATO and Central Asian partners through the PfP had laid the basis for Allies to draw up bilateral agreements for the transit of materials across these states and stationing of forces and supplies on their territory. While Germany concluded an agreement with Uzbekistan which provided the use of military air field in Termez located near the border with Afghanistan and helped ensure an air bridge to Kabul and northern parts of Afghanistan, Netherlands concluded an agreement with Kyrgyzstan which allowed Dutch F-16 fighter aircraft to operate from the Manas airport in Bishkek. The agreement between France and Tajikistan allowed French logistic hub in Dushanbe. Central Asian partners had also been critical to the supply of cargo for ISAF troops in Afghanistan.

In 2009, the Alliance reached an agreement with Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan on the use of rail and/or road networks through which non-lethal supplies could be transported to and from Afghanistan. The Alliance has also been engaged with regional partners in a political dialogue on developments in Afghanistan and the wider region. The dialogue included both NATO’s ISAF mission and NATO’s post-2014 mission to train, advice and assist Afghan security forces. Moreover, partners in

41 ‘Security through Partnership’, NATO Review, 2005, p.21
Central Asia have been making important contribution to the stabilization and development of Afghanistan. For instance, besides expressing its interest in supporting one of ISAF’s Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), Kazakhstan sponsored $3 million package for investments, agriculutural aid and infrastructure building. Uzbekistan had assisted with a number of infrastructure projects including construction of Afghanistan’s first railroad from Hairaton to Mazar-i-Sharif. Not only this project had increased the speed of freight deliveries across the Uzbek border, but also had contributed to regional partners’ national economies, increasing Uzbekistan and Tajikistan’s trade with Afghanistan.

Here, two points should be mentioned in the context of Central Asian partners’ contribution to NATO’s mission in Afghanistan and NATO’s engagement with these partners after September 11. First, regional countries’ support to NATO’s mission in Afghanistan was the consequences of the partnership relations that NATO and Central Asian partners developed in the 1990s. The agreements forged in the 1990s had important influences on these countries’ decisions to allow forces and supplies to station in their territories and to grant overflight rights. It would not be easy to secure these benefits if there had not already been a partnership relationship between NATO and Central Asian states. This demonstrated the strategic value of partnership programmes for the Alliance. On the other hand, this has demonstrated that by encouraging interoperability and providing mechanisms for participation in NATO operations, the burden of managing Euro-Atlantic security can be shared. Second, it can be concluded that NATO’s engagement with the Central Asian states in the post-9/11 period had been mainly motivated by its own global security priorities. Although NATO had continued to cooperate within its partnership programs, its engagement with Central Asian states had been focused more on the cooperation against terrorism and establishment of the secure and stable Afghanistan.

4) Prospects and Problems in NATO’s Engagement with Central Asian States

NATO expects all of its partners to do their efforts to achieve active cooperation within the PfP and other partnership mechanisms. However, NATO’s engagement with the Central Asian partners has been at the low level and demand driven. This can be seen by comparing their level of cooperation with other former Soviet republics’ level of cooperation with the Alliance. For instance, while all NATO partners in Caucasus as a result of their active cooperation have implemented different stages of IPAP, in Central Asia, so far, only Kazakhstan has signed to this program yet. Baltic States’ accession to NATO in 2004 is another example in this regard.

There are several reasons why NATO’s cooperation with the Central Asian partners has been more limited than other former Soviet republics. First, the fact that the Central Asian partners have not been willing to become members of NATO consequently has limited NATO’s both cooperation with and its influence on these countries. Second, the fact that these states have been interested in NATO’s PfP primarily for military reasons has limited NATO’s cooperation in other areas. Militarily, they wanted to gain experience, advice and assistance from NATO member countries to improve the capabilities of their armed forces and they were eager to build up the military infrastructure necessary to combat terrorism, religious extremism and drug trafficking. This demonstrates that the Central Asian partners are interested in NATO’s partnership policy just to benefit from the import of know-how and expertise from NATO. Lastly, to certain degree, political reasons have influenced NATO’s cooperation with the Central Asian partners.

These countries have seen their cooperation with NATO as a way of keeping a balance between their various security arrangements, and hence of preserving their strategic independence from Russian and Chinese influences. This shows that while these countries have used their cooperation with NATO as a tool to balance external powers, their partnership with NATO in real sense has remained as their secondary purpose. The Secretary General, who was aware of these problems, stated in 2004 that the Central Asian partners “have to show the necessary political will, to press ahead with political and economic reforms, to streamline their military establishments, and to work together with their neighbors to address regional problems such as drug smuggling and human trafficking.”

It is clear that while there has been close cooperation in technical areas and the global security issues have become priority, the basic common values underpinning the partnership itself have not been all implemented in Central Asian states. In this sense, perhaps the reason why Central Asian partners do not actively cooperate with NATO in these areas is NATO itself. For instance, because of the need for cooperation in Afghanistan, the Alliance had not insisted on its normative agenda which was implemented in the process of granting membership to the CEE countries.

The Alliance cannot act effectively in the region where there is limited progress towards democracy and the rule of law. Uzbekistan’s attitude towards NATO after the Anjian events in 2005 clearly demonstrated this fact. Perhaps Tashkent would not act in this way if the Alliance had continued to express clearly its concerns on democracy and rule of law before the Andijan events. In fact, even after the Andijan events, the Alliance has not explicitly expressed its concerns over these issues or insisted on the reforms in Central Asian countries.

Conclusion

The study demonstrated that NATO’s engagement with the Central Asian partners through partnership policy have evolved differently depending on the respective interests of each country. While Kazakhshtan has been the most advanced state of Central Asia in terms of cooperation with the Alliance, other states in the region have less cooperation. The main factor that has hampered NATO to develop a deeper partnership is limited interests of the Central Asian republics to work together with NATO. Their primary interests in a closer partnership with NATO has been improving their military capabilities and balancing against regional powers. In this sense, these countries’ failure to cooperate with the Alliance in the true sense of partnership policy has both limited NATO’s cooperation with and its influence on these partners. Therefore, except for certain effect, it can be concluded that the partnership policy has not really contributed to the improvement of relations between NATO and the Central Asian states.

In addition to the Central Asian partners’ limited interests, generally, the fact that they do not share the same values as the member states of the Alliance have also made it difficult for the Alliance to engage in closer cooperation. From now on, as the need to provide supply routes for its ISAF mission in Afghanistan is over, the Alliance has to insist on partnership values albeit for the sake of losing them. These countries, by signing the PIP Framework Document, already expressed their commitment to liberal democratic values. In this sense, NATO should work to establish more comprehensive cooperation with the Central Asian partners based on its fundamental principles. However, recently, it seems NATO’s ability to deepen partnership with the Central Asian partners has been affected by the involvement of other actors in the region. Russia and China have proven to offer viable alternatives. Here, the fundamental question is how the Alliance will improve its relationship with the Central Asian partners while pursuing its long term objective of promoting fundamental political reform in the region.

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The Western Direction
of the Multi-Vector Foreign Policy of Kazakhstan

Dinmuhammed AMETBEK*

Abstract

Kazakhstan’s foreign policy is defined as multi-vector which means that Kazakhstan develops balanced relations with global and regional powers. This foreign policy understanding provides Kazakhstan with independency and elevates it to the rank of actors who can pursue equal relations with others. In this regard Western direction of Kazakh foreign policy is significant in order to balance against Russia and China. However, the balancing is based on trust and confidence which Kazakhstan succeeded to establish with Russia, China, and the western countries. The paper examines the multi-vector foreign policy of Kazakhstan with special focus on the western direction.

Keywords: Eurasia, Russia, China, US, NATO.

Introduction

Kazakhstan is located at the center of Eurasian continent. Due to this location, the country geopolitically is influenced by the four civilizations and power centers. The first one is Russian Federation and the Slavic World. None of the decision makers in Kazakhstan can ignore this reality. Beside the fact that there are large ethnic Russian minority in Kazakhstan, almost half of the population see themselves as the part of Russian cultural and linguistic world. The second power center and civilization are the West. The United States of America (USA) and European Union liberal values are shaping the worldview of millions of people including new generation in Kazakhstan. Geopolitically, Kazakhstan needs the West in order to balance Russian influence. The third power center is China which is defined as a rising power in the twenty first century. Especially the economic power of China is influencing whole world and firstly Eurasian continent by Belt and Road Initiative. Kazakhstan as the first stop of this new era Silk Road cannot ignore Chinese dimension in its foreign policy. The third civilization which influences Kazakhstan is Turkic and Islamic World. In regional level, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Pakistan as power centers are influencing the country.47

Within this framework, the first President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev introduced Eurasianism in order to provide Kazakhstan with central position in the region and whole continent. In other words, by locating the country in the center Nazarbayev argues that Kazakhstan is not extension of certain power centers, but is center by itself. In this respect it is useful to refer to the debate on the models of development discussed in the Strategy 2030 of Kazakhstan:48

Today we face a strategic alternative - which way to choose. There is no consensus on this score in the society. We are a small, but nevertheless, part of Europe and historically we gravitate to the Western civilization - that's what some say. Others argue that we are predominantly an Asian country and consequently have to stick to the experience gained by the “Tigers”, Japan and Korea. The third would say, however, that we are deeply imbued with Russian mentality and principles of collectivism and our choice must largely coincide with the perspective model of Russia. The fourth would object to it maintaining that Muslim population is predominant with us and we must make our choice in favor of the

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New-Turkic model. However paradoxical but all of them are right and wrong at the same time. We are a Eurasian country having its own specific history and specific future. That’s why our model would bear likeness to neither model.

As it is understood from this statement, Nazarbayev wants to see Kazakhstan as an actor which develops its own way. In geopolitical understanding, it means that Kazakhstan as a Eurasian country does not see itself as passive object of International Politics who just imitate others, but define itself as center who has its own place in the world and own view based on that location. In this context, Eurasianism is providing Kazakhstan with centrality in world politics which became the basis of multi-vector foreign policy.

In this paper we will analyze multi-vector foreign policy of Kazakhstan with special emphasis on the western direction. It means that Kazakhstan’s relations with the western countries and especially USA will be taken into account.

**The Multi-Vector Foreign Policy of Kazakhstan**

Multi-vector foreign policy of Kazakhstan means seeking equally, good relations with its two large neighbors, Russia and China, as well as with the United States and the rest of the Western world.49 This understanding of foreign policy is reflected in all strategic documents such as “Kazakhstan Strategy 2030”, “Kazakhstan Strategy 2050” and annual addresses of the first president of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev to the nation. The directions of foreign policy are displayed in “Foreign Policy Concept for 2014 – 2020 Republic of Kazakhstan” in following way, under the subtitle “Country and Regional Priorities”.

“The Republic of Kazakhstan will continue to strengthen its relations with Russia in all spheres of political, economic, trade and cultural cooperation on the basis of The Treaty on Good-Neighborhood and Alliance in the XXI century.

The Republic of Kazakhstan will deepen the comprehensive strategic partnership with China within the framework of high-level political dialogue to develop energy, investment, technology, trade and economic, cultural and humanitarian cooperation, and promote interaction in transit and agricultural sectors, as well as on ecological and environmental issues, including the common use of trans-boundary water resources.

The development of multifaceted relations of the Republic of Kazakhstan with the Central Asian states – the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan – will focus on strengthening regional efforts to jointly counter internal and external challenges and threats, enhancing political, economic and cultural cooperation on a mutually beneficial and parity basis.

The Republic of Kazakhstan will continue to strengthen strategic partnership with the United States, aimed at development of political, trade and economic, investment, energy, science and technology, and humanitarian cooperation, and addressing urgent issues on the international agenda.

The Republic of Kazakhstan will strengthen strategic partnerships with European countries, based on the signed treaties or the treaties under negotiation, as well as relations with European institutions and associations.”

50 Mehmet Seyfettin EROL, “Büyük Kazakistan Projesi ve 2050 Stratejisi”, Yeni Türkiye, Cilt 9, Sayı: 54, p. 566.
Although it is not stated explicitly, it is obvious that the possible security threat is perceived from China. The “China threat theory” in Kazakhstan is more prominent than in other states of Central Asia. The move of the Capital of the country from southeast which is close to Chinese border to the north is related to this threat perception. This evaluation leads Kazakhstan to inevitable cooperation with Russia. From Kazakhstan’s perspective, the Collective Security Treaty Organization led by Russia is first of all security shields against possible aggression of China.

The Collective Security Treaty Organization was founded in 2002 on the basis of the Collective Security Treaty of May 15, 1992. The main activity of the Organization is a military cooperation. However, during the formation of the CSTO the fight against new challenges and threats, as well as foreign policy coordination have also been included to its functional responsibilities. Kazakhstan is one of the most active member states of this Organization. At the initiative of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Collective Rapid Reaction Force (CRRF) has been established and is systematically developing. Currently, the CRRF is the most effective military unit created in the framework of the CSTO and employs more than 25,000 personnel. In order to improve the mobility of the CRRF, in 2015 again at Kazakhstan's initiative the CSTO created its Collective air forces. The activities and mechanisms conducted and established within the Organization help to make a significant contribution to the national security of Kazakhstan and the region as a whole.

Nevertheless, Kazakhstan is against confrontation and insecurity between China and post-Soviet states. Kazakhstan as a neighbor of China is interested in confidence building measures between China and the regional countries. The worse scenario for Kazakhstan is a conflict between Russia and China, and the ideal condition for Kazakh interests is cooperation between Russia and China. Therefore, Kazakh leader Nazarbayev after delimitation of the borders between China and the post-Soviet states proposed to continue the cooperation and transform the negotiations on border issues to negotiations on economic integration. Thus, the idea of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization emerged. China supported the idea. From Chinese perspective, the SCO could well be dubbed “China in Central Asia.”

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was established in 2001 on the basis of the “Shanghai Five” mechanism, after signing by the heads of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, China, Russia and Tajikistan the Agreement on strengthening of measures of trust in military area around border (1996, Shanghai) and Agreement on mutual reduction of armed forces around border (1997, Moscow). According to the SCO Charter (2002), the main goals of the Organization are strengthening of mutual trust, friendship and neighborliness, encouragement of effective cooperation in political, trade and economic, scientific and technical, cultural, educational, power, transport, ecological and other areas. From Kazakhstan’s view, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is not a closed alliance or military block against any other state; it is an open organization, focused on broad international cooperation, including possibility of enlargement.

As it is seen, Kazakhstan is against to define the SCO as an anti-American organization. That is why

Kazakhstan is supporting Turkey’s cooperation with the SCO. The Kazakh decision makers are aware of the fact that its relations with Russia and China should be balanced by the cooperation with the West. In this context, the western direction of multi-vector Kazakh foreign policy becomes important.

**The Western Direction of Multi-Vector Kazakh Foreign Policy**

The western direction of multi-vector Kazakh foreign policy has two priorities. One is to make Kazakhstan integrated into the global economy and draw investment. The second is to cooperate in the realm of security. While in economic sphere Kazakhstan cooperates with European Union and the US, in the sphere of security the main framework is North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

**Kazakhstan-EU Relations**

The legal basis of relations between Kazakhstan and EU is Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) signed in 1999. On 21 December 2015 Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement was signed in Astana. Kazakhstan and EU achieved high volume of trade-economic relations. The EU is major trade and investment partner of Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan’s trade with EU takes more than half of general volume of foreign trade. 49% of foreign capital into economy of Kazakhstan comes from EU states. Kazakhstan’s foreign trade turnover with EU countries in 2015 amounted 31 billion US dollars. From 2005 till September 2015 the inflow of direct investment from the EU to Kazakhstan’s economy amounted to about 107,4 billion USD. Main investors are the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Italy and France.

During the years of independence, Kazakhstan has established itself as a reliable and responsible energy partner of the EU. Kazakhstan is third largest supplier of energy to Europe among non-member states of OPEC—after Russia and Norway. In some European countries the share of supply of Kazakh oil is high enough. Thus, in Austria it is 25%, Romania - 30%. Kazakhstan is fourth energy supplier to Germany. Kazakhstan is interested in further strengthening of strategic energy dialogue with EU, the legal basis of which is a Memorandum of Understanding in the field of energy and an Agreement on cooperation in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

In regional terms, parties cooperate within the framework of the EU Strategy for Central Asia (introduced in 2007). Annual dialogue in the format of “European Union - Central Asia” at the level of Foreign Ministers installed. Kazakhstan has also supported initiative of the EU on launching of High-level dialogue on security issues between the EU and Central Asia.

**Kazakhstan-US Relations**

The United States of America was the one of the first countries to recognize Kazakhstan’s independence. This was the signal that US is interested in the sovereign and independent Kazakhstan. At the current stage, the Kazakh-American cooperation is determined by the agreements reached as a result of the official visit of first President Nazarbayev to the United States (January 15-18, 2018), during which the two leaders adopted the Joint Statement called “Kazakhstan and United States: An Enhanced Strategic Partnership for the 21st Century.” The Strategic Partnership Dialogue (SPD) has been operating under the chairmanship of the heads of foreign offices since 2012.

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60 Ibid.
61 Ibid.
62 Kasymjomart Tokayev, Vneshnyaya politika Kazakhstana s usloviyakh globalizatsii, Gauhar, Almaty 2000, p. 486.
Concerning economic cooperation, according to the National Bank of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the gross inflow of foreign direct investment from the United States into Kazakhstan’s economy amounted to 30.6 billion dollars between 2005 and September 31, 2017. The main investment sectors are mining, real estate, lease and services to enterprises, financial activities, activities of professional organizations, associations and alliances. The U.S. is the second largest investor in Kazakhstan after the Netherlands. Furthermore, the announcement in July 2016 that TengizChevrOil plans to reinvest 36.8 billion dollars into the Future Growth Project and Wellhead Pressure Management Project in the Tengiz field contributed to the increase of trust of the U.S. and international investors in Kazakhstan’s economy. There are approximately 500 companies involving U.S. capital in Kazakhstan, of which 443 are small, 23 medium and 30 larges. 141 companies are joint ventures, 41 companies are engaged in the goods production and 37 companies export products to other countries.64

A key issue in the bilateral relations is energy cooperation. The two countries closely cooperate in the energy field. In 2001, Kazakhstan and the United States established the U.S.-Kazakhstan Energy Partnership.65 Within the framework of the visit of the presidential delegation to the EXPO-2017, headed by the Deputy Secretary of Energy Dan Brouillette on August 28, 2017, a meeting was held with the Minister of Energy Kanat Bozumbayev. The Joint Statement by Co-Chairs of the Kazakhstan - U.S. Energy Partnership was signed at the meeting. According to the document, the sides agreed to raise the level of engagement to the Strategic Energy Dialogue and outlined specific areas of cooperation, such as renewable energy, nuclear energy and energy security.66

Kazakhstan-NATO Cooperation

Kazakhstan although is not the member of NATO, it is actively participating in different programs of the organization. This cooperation is sensitively calculated in order not to trigger the reaction of Russia and China. Thanks to the multi-vector policy, Kazakhstan succeeded to build balanced relations with NATO.

Cooperation of the Republic of Kazakhstan with NATO is based on the Frame document of the Partnership for Peace (PFP) signed in 1994. It includes positions directed for achievement of the following purposes: development of transparency in processes of military planning and formation of the military budget; ensuring democratic control over Armed forces; maintenance of potential and fighting capacity of forces for enuring of its contribution into operations under the aegis of the United Nations and/or under the direction of NATO; development of the military cooperation with NATO with a view of joint planning of educational, combat training and carrying out doctrines to increase ability to carry out peacekeeping, humanitarian, and other operations; creation of forces which are capable to cooperate with forces of NATO in the long term.67

Realization of tasks, the purposes and ideas of PFP Alliance is carried out within the following main programs: Individual plan of action of partnership (IPAP), Process of planning and analysis (PAP), Individual program of partnership (IPP), Concept of operative potential (COP). The individual plan of action of partnership was accepted on January 31, 2006 for the purpose of harmonization of all aspects of interaction and their coordination with NATO. Kazakhstan participates in the «Planning and analysis process» (PAP) program since 2002. PAP is focused on definition of structure and an assessment of forces and means, which can be presented for carrying out trainings, doctrines and operations at

66 “Kazakhstan-United States relations”.
multinational level in interaction with forces of NATO, including peacekeeping operations. In January, 2004 Kazakhstan joined the program «Concept of operative potential» (COP). The program itself presents the mechanism of an assessment of degree of readiness of peacekeeping divisions of the partner countries to interaction with armed forces of the countries of NATO. COP supplements the assessment which is carried out within PAP and promotes increase of military efficiency of estimated forces.\(^{68}\)

On July 1, 2008 in the Central Asian region, for the first time within the framework of IPAP of Kazakhstan with NATO, on the basis of Military institute of Land forces the Training center “Partnership for Peace” was created. Main objective of the center is preparation of the military personnel of AF of RK, the countries of NATO and partners for participation in peacekeeping operations. On December 20, 2010 KAZTSENT was recognized as the 19th educational center of PFP/NATO by North Atlantic Alliance. During 2011 on the basis of KAZTSENT more than 20 activities with the participation of the military personnel and servicemen of AF RK, the countries of NATO and partner countries had been carried out.\(^{69}\)

Concerning the NATO’s operation in Afghanistan, Kazakhstan has rendered its assistance to the international anti-terrorist coalition and the International security assistance force in Afghanistan (ISAF), operating under the direction of NATO. The Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “About Agreement signed in the form of an exchange of notes between the Republic of Kazakhstan and NATO about participation of the military personnel of Armed forces of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the activities of the International forces of assistance of safety in Afghanistan” is signed.\(^{70}\)

Since 2003 through air space of Kazakhstan more than 13 thousand planes of the NATO member states made flight, more than 150 – permission for emergency landing in Kazakhstani airfields was provided. The Agreement between the Republic of Kazakhstan and NATO about providing railway transit through the territory of Kazakhstan for non- military cargoes of NATO in favor of ISAF is signed at the end of December 2009 and in January, 2010.

To sum up, the priority directions of cooperation with NATO in the defensive sphere can be summarized as following:

- cooperation deepening within the Individual plan of action of partnership (IPAP);
- further expansion of cooperation in a framework of «Planning and analysis process» (PAP), usage of this program as the instrument of defensive planning, consultation and assistance in development of doctrine documents;
- improvement of quality of activities of the Individual program of partnership for the most effective realization of the Purposes of partnership;
- cooperation between military educational institutions of Kazakhstan and NATO countries (and partners), consultations from NATO in the field of vocational training and education. Consultations on system reform of military training, taking into account the standards of NATO countries, assistance in preparation of military trainings;
- carrying out the doctrine «Steppe eagle» in the spirit of "Partnership for Peace";
- accreditation of KAZTSENT courses;
- preparation of "Kazbrig" according to Concept mechanisms of operative potential, the invitation of groups of experts for an assessment of extent of its preparedness with the subsequent participation in NATO doctrines, for practical working of the theoretical skills and increase of operative compatibility with the Alliance divisions;
- modern samples of equipment and equipment of Airmobile armies, engineering armies.


\(^{69}\)Ibid.

\(^{70}\)Ibid.
Conclusion

In conclusion, the western direction is one of the important directions of the multi-vector Kazakh foreign policy. The importance stems from the fact that the western countries are dominating the world. Kazakhstan’s cooperation with US and EU is balancing the country’s dependency on Russia and China. Although Kazakhstan is a member of CSTO led by Russia, this doesn’t prevent Kazakhstan from cooperation with NATO. Kazakh diplomacy tried to build trust between Russia and the West. The fact that, Kazakhstan hosted the OSCE (The Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe) Summit in 2010, which was the last such gathering since that time, revealed that Kazakhstani interests are better ensured when Russia and United States cooperate with each as other.

Due to the geographical location, that is 7 thousand km of border with Russia which is the longest land border in the world and 1700 km of border with China, Kazakhstan cannot ignore the interests of these neighboring great powers. Any miscalculation in foreign policy of Kazakhstan can return with catastrophic effects. Therefore, Kazakhstan’s decision makers since the first year of independence make effort to earn the trust of Russia and China and build reliable and predictable cooperation. Only if these reliable relations are established, Kazakhstan could pursue active policy towards the West.

Under these circumstances, Kazakhstan’s first priority was to build confidence with Russia. The common integration projects such as the Commonwealth of Independent States, Collective Security Treaty Organization, and the Eurasian Economic Union are serving this purpose. Kazakhstan’s first president Nazarbayev is initiator of many of such projects. It can be said that Kazakhstan’s active policy for post-Soviet integration has served for trust and confidence between Russia and Kazakhstan.

In Chinese direction, Kazakhstan understands that the geopolitical competition between Russia and China is inevitable. Such competition can harm Kazakh interest in Asia. Therefore, Kazakhstan is supporting confidence building measures between Russia and China. The SCO is the result of such policy. Moreover, the enlargement of the SCO is important to balance the Beijing-Moscow domination in the organization. In addition, Kazakhstan is supporting China’s Belt and Road Initiative.

Having built reliable relations with Russia and China, Kazakhstan was able to actively cooperate with western countries. In other words, Moscow and Beijing were confident that Kazakhstan would not act against their interests. In this context, Kazakhstan succeeded to establish strong cooperation with US, EU and NATO. In the final analysis, Kazakhstan’s balanced multi-vector foreign policy understanding is appreciated by all major and regional powers. It can be concluded that, Kazakhstan within a quarter century emerged as a balancer in the region.
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Foreign and security policy of Uzbekistan in the context of Uzbekistan-NATO relations

Olimjon SOBIR

On April 6, 2018 President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev tasked the Institute of Strategic and Regional Studies to develop an updated Draft Foreign Policy Concept in collaboration with relevant ministries and submit it by October 1, 2018. Accordingly, the document had to include articles based on the medium and long-term interests of the country in socio-political, socio-economic and other fields.

On December 14, 2018, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan Ilkhom Nematov announced at the Parliamentary meeting that the renewed draft of the Concept was ready, but the information placed on the website of the Foreign Ministry on the same day said that the Concept was at the last stage. But until today, no disclosure of the document has been made after this announcement.

This silence has raised various questions around the topic. “What changes are going to be included in the new foreign policy concept of the republic?”, “Will Uzbekistan keep its military neutrality and resign military cooperation agreement with the US?”, “Or will it rejoin the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and/or become a member of the Eurasian Economic Union?”

Answering the above-mentioned questions, as well as providing general forecast on the possible changes is significant in order to understand the foreign policy discourse of Uzbekistan including its relations with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

BACKGROUND

Western Direction of the Foreign Policy of Uzbekistan

The Republic of Uzbekistan joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) in December 1991 a few months later after declaring its independence on 31 August, 1991.

On July 13, 1994, Uzbekistan signed the Partnership for Peace (PfP) framework document and, on its basis, began to develop practical cooperation with the alliance in a number of areas, including in the field of military training, countering terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and other international threats. In 1996, Tashkent and NATO approved the first Individual Partnership Program (PIP), which allowed Uzbekistan to develop cooperation with the alliance on a substantive basis.

The year 2002 was the richest in terms of Tashkent’s cooperation with NATO. This year, Uzbekistan joined the Process Planning and Analysis Program (PAP), which is considered a higher level of cooperation with the Alliance. Since then, Tashkent has been playing a key role in supporting the actions of the Alliance in Afghanistan. Uzbekistan has provided its airspace and territory for the transit of non-military goods to the coalition forces of the Alliance in Afghanistan. It also allowed German military aircraft to use an airfield in Termez, and the deployment of US contingent in Khanabad.

It should be noted that until 2005, relations between Uzbekistan and NATO developed quite actively. However, the relations escalated after the tragic events when Uzbek Interior Ministry (MVD) and National Security Service (SNB) troops fired a crowd of protesters in Andijan on 13 May 2005.

Tashkent insisted on the withdrawal of the American contingent from the Khanabad airfield, as well as the Bundeswehr base near Termez.

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Only three years after that, when the EU lifted the last sanctions and embargo on the supply of military technology to Uzbekistan, cooperation between the alliance and Tashkent resumed fully.

The most important event in the development of NATO-Uzbekistan relations in the “post-crisis” period was the achievement in 2009 of an agreement to join the so-called “northern route” for the delivery of goods to international forces in Afghanistan (ISAF).

Relations with Post-Soviet Bloc

Uzbekistan became a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Collective Security Agreement in 1994 but left the organization in 1999. After a while, the former President Islam Karimov decided to get closer to the Kremlin again and joined the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in 2001.

Following the September 11 terror attacks, Uzbekistan became a strategic ally of the US and moved politically away from the Russia. Andijan events of 2005 brought the US and Uzbekistan into conflict and prompted, among other things, a certain convergence between Tashkent and Moscow. Uzbekistan renewed its membership in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) in 2006. However, it left the organization second time in 2012.

IMPLICATIONS

It is often considered that Islam Karimov pursued the multi-vector foreign policy and tried to maintain balanced relations with competing powers. For much of the duration of Karimov’s rule, Uzbekistan allegedly strove for balanced relations with external powers, successfully playing big states against each other, and resisted cooperation with its neighbors. Despite maneuverability, Karimov’s foreign policy has been called as the “attractive” balance of power policy but it did not serve for a solution of the conceptual problems in foreign policy formulation of the country. It is due to the fact that Uzbekistan’s foreign policy remained uncertain during these years.

For instance, Uzbekistan joined and withdrew from the Russian-led CSTO twice, joined and withdrew from the American-led GUAM (regional organization of four post-Soviet states: Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova), and suspended its membership from the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) in 2008.

One can assume this behavior of Uzbekistan as a struggle for recognition by the international community. However, it is more appropriate to consider all these efforts as a sign of getting recognition from Moscow as an equal partner. Because even before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, there was a sense of humiliation and deep resentment among the republic’s elites toward Moscow. Uzbekistan was seeking a counterweight to Russia. The US as the sole remaining superpower was an ideal choice for this alternative and the international partner, not only as a counterforce to Russia but as a source of financial aid and investment in Uzbekistan’s economy. So, it was more likely changing the foreign policy direction towards the West rather than balancing strategy between global powers.

Since its formation in 1991, Uzbekistan has aligned itself with US foreign policy on a range of global issues. In the words of first deputy foreign minister then Sadyk Safaev: “Uzbekistan has voted 100 percent for the United States in the United Nations on controversial issues”. On the sensitive question of Palestine, for example, Uzbekistan has diligently distanced itself from other Muslim states by abstaining or absenting itself from UN votes. Instead Tashkent made an expression of interest in establishing diplomatic relations with Israel, a move that was warmly welcomed in Tel Aviv and Washington - but caused dismay in Iran.

The second area that Uzbekistan sought to align its foreign policy with that of the US, has been the

policy of expansion of NATO towards former Soviet satellite states. Tashkent presented itself as Washington’s natural ally in the process of de-Sovietization. It rejected Moscow's objections to the admission of East European states to NATO as misguided and dangerous. In the same vein, Tashkent dismissed Russian ambitions to turn the CIS into a military alliance as a counterweight to NATO. During the meeting of the heads of the five Central Asian Republics on January 5, 1998 in Ashgabat Karimov said: “we are categorically against turning the CIS into a military-political bloc, within the framework of which it is possible to consider the issues such as NATO expansion.”

Therefore, it can be concluded that Uzbekistan’s efforts to intensify the relations with NATO in this period were derived from two factors:

**First**, attempts to reduce Russian influence on Uzbekistan.

**Second**, strengthening relations with the US as an alternative to Russia.

The US-Uzbek relationship reached a peak following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States. Tashkent provided its military bases and transit corridors for the US and NATO forces to launch operations in Afghanistan.

Prior to Andijan events in 2005, Uzbekistan had courted the US, EU and NATO as it sought to assert its position in the post-Soviet era and distance itself from the sphere of influence of Russia. But difficulties in the relationship appeared largely and proved to be more challenging than the Uzbek leadership had expected. This can be explained by some interrelated factors which made the US and NATO to wary of developments in Uzbekistan. These concerned the absence of a strategy for democratic reforms and economic liberalization and poor human rights record of Uzbekistan. Accordingly, the tragic events in Andijan in May 2005 ended the period of close ties between Uzbekistan and West.

Uzbekistan has always sought to establish relations with NATO and the United States on a security basis rather than human rights and democracy. But the Alliance of democratic states committed not merely to mutual defense but also to the promotion of core democratic values. So the military operations in Afghanistan present a challenge to NATO’s political promise, one that has been inadequately explored. This does not mean that there has not been controversy over NATO states’ reluctance to engage more forcefully on human rights issues and the cost of Uzbekistan’s logistical support. According to the International Crisis Group, Germany maintained a relationship with Uzbekistan even in the face of the EU sanctions which followed the Andijan events, providing military training and hosting an Uzbek minister at a clinic in Hanover despite being in the list of proscribed persons. Germany’s cooperation has ensured that its use of an air base at Termez has continued.

The warming of Uzbekistan’s relations with NATO/US began in April 2008 when the Alliance invited I. Karimov to visit the NATO Summit in Bucharest. At the summit, Karimov confirmed his readiness to restore relations, saying that Uzbekistan would support NATO in its efforts to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan. At a meeting of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, Karimov proposed to the Alliance a corridor for transporting non-military goods to Afghanistan through the Termez-Hairaton border - the only railway link with this country.

Recognizing the important role of Uzbekistan in the region, the US and its NATO allies invited Tashkent to participate in promising infrastructure projects in Afghanistan, such as the construction of railways, the reconstruction of bridges connecting the north of the country with Kabul, the construction of new power lines to supply Uzbek electricity, and the creation of Navoi Airport Free Economic Zone.

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The 2012 Foreign Policy Concept became a cornerstone of Uzbekistan’s new foreign policy direction by establishing two important principles. First, the concept was based on the principle of neutrality. It prohibited Uzbekistan from joining military blocs, hosting foreign military bases, and participating in peacekeeping and other military operations abroad. Second, and most important, it gave greater priority to Central Asia. From this period, it can be said that the foreign policy of Uzbekistan shifted from the Western direction to the balancing strategy. So, the current foreign policy discourse has its roots not in Shavkat Mirziyoyev’s new vision, but a strategy change developed under Islam Karimov. But unlike Karimov, who was overly cautious about regime security, Mirziyoyev has pursued it much more aggressively.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned above, although Uzbekistan’s new foreign policy concept has not been disclosed to date, the new Military Doctrine of Uzbekistan, adopted on 9 January 2018, reinforced the principle of neutrality expressed in 2012 Foreign Policy Concept. Similarly, the doctrine prohibited Uzbekistan from joining military blocs, hosting foreign military bases, and participating in peacekeeping and other military operations abroad.

Two important factors can be mentioned influencing Uzbekistan’s decision on military neutrality in foreign policy:

Geographical factor. Uzbekistan is located in the area of intersection of interests of Russia, China and the US. In terms of historical, cultural and economic ties, Russia sees Central Asia as its domain of influence, while the US has increased its influence in the region through its presence in Afghanistan. Following the abolition of the sanctions imposed on Uzbekistan after the 2005 Andijan events, US efforts to cooperate with Uzbekistan and build friendly relations have accelerated. On the other hand, China remains the largest economic player in Central Asia. The trade and infrastructure projects initiated by China have led to a certain increase in its effectiveness in the countries of the region. It can be said that Uzbekistan’s military neutrality decision is an attempt or even a measure to balance the interests and ambitions of world powers and pursue multi-vector foreign policy.

Economic factor. The policy of military neutrality is in line with the economic interests of Uzbekistan. Good relations with neighbors need to be maintained for the economic development of the country. Assuming that Uzbekistan is the only double land locked country in the World if we don’t count the Kingdom of Lichtenstein which is in the middle of Europe it needs to benefit from transport networks of neighboring countries in order to reach foreign markets. Russia and China are the two biggest trading partners of Uzbekistan. However, none of them has a common border with Uzbekistan and they have a major impact on other Central Asian countries neighboring Uzbekistan. Likewise, the route extending from Afghanistan to Iran’s sea ports is the closest way for Uzbekistan to reach international waters. For this reason, Uzbekistan needs to settle a good relationship with the US, which has a strong influence in Afghanistan. In this sense, Uzbekistan has ensured its economic interests by carrying out a policy of military neutrality.

Iranian Security Policy in the Caspian Sea:  
Confrontation vs. Cooperation

Mehmet Seyfettin EROL *

Abstract

The Caspian Sea is at the center of geopolitical rivalry in the Eurasian continent. Iran who is one of the five littoral states of the Caspian Sea has vital interests in the sea. Therefore, it is important to understand security policy of Iran in the Caspian region. In this article we argue that Iranian decision makers have two approaches towards the sea in terms of security. Firstly, Iran is concerned with the possibility of cooperation of the coastal states with the USA and NATO. On this basis, Iran pursues opposing policy in the sea. Secondly, Iranian statesmen calculate that the opposing stand cannot solve security issues in the sea. Here this group supports the cooperation with littoral states.

Keywords: Iran, Caspian Sea, Security, Littoral States, Eurasia, Fleet.

Introduction

Iran is one of the five littoral states of the Caspian Sea. Its relations with neighbors were not always friendly. This is because history, geopolitics and security concerns shape the Iranian attitude towards the sea and littoral states. Historically speaking, all states established within the territory of modern Iran were under the influence of the Caspian region. Most of the states formed in Iranian territory were established by the nomads who came from the east of the sea. Geopolitically speaking, Iran is in rivalry with the states established in the north of the sea on energy and transit issues. It means that although Iran shares certain common values with other states of Caspian region, it generally has its own vital interests with regard to Caspian nations.

Taking into account these interactions of Iran with its Caspian neighbors, in this article we analyze the Iranian Security Policy in the Caspian Sea. The article argues that there are two approaches which dominate the decision making in Iran. On the one hand, Iranian statesmen are concerned with the opening up of the region to the outside world. Tehran is feared that the integration of landlocked Caspian region with international community can be used by the USA and NATO to increase its military existence in the sea. On the other hand, Iranians understand that it is unrealistic to prevent the cooperation of Caspian states with third countries. On this regard, Iranian decision makers are trying to benefit from the cooperation among littoral states.

The Importance of the Caspian Sea

The Caspian Sea which is located at the center of the continent can be defined as the border between Northern Eurasia, Southern Eurasia on the one hand, and between Eastern Eurasia and Western Eurasia. From this point of view, the side that controls the sea becomes dominant in the region. It is not coincident that the name of the sea is called Khazar in Arabic, Persian and Turkish languages. As it is known Khazar was so powerful state, that its southern neighbors called the sea after its name. This case displays the importance of the control over the sea.

When it came to the modern times, Tsarist Russian Empire became dominant power in the region. By the way, the name “Caspi” was given by the Russian geographers as the extension of the colonization policy. In this way the name “Caspian” was reintroduced to the Western World. With the emergence of Russia as the dominant power in the region, Iran lost its influence both in the west of the sea, which is Caucasus, and east of the sea, that is Central Asia. It can be said that the sea became inner lake of the Russia.

The replacement of the Russian Empire with the Soviet Union gave Iran certain advantages in the sea.

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The Agreement between the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and the Persian State of 1921 can be considered as the basis of bilateral relations. The discourse of Soviet Russia against imperialism was reflected in this agreement and the basis for the establishment of more equal relations between the two countries was prepared. According to the treaty, the Soviet side annuls all those agreements, conventions and treaties made between the former Tsarist Government and Iran, which “led to the seizure of the rights of the Persian people, and declared that it had lost all powers.”

We can say that the Caspian Sea policy of Soviet Russia had a positive effect on the bilateral relations of the two countries. According to the agreement, the Soviet side refused Article 8 of the Turkmanchay Treaty of 10 February 1828 between Iran and Russia, which deprived Iran of its right to have a fleet in the Caspian Sea. In short, under the Soviet-Iran Agreement, the parties are equally entitled to free movement with their own flags. According to Article 19 of the Agreement, the parties restart their commercial relations. According to Article 20, the parties mutually recognize the right of transit without imposing taxes on each other’s property.

In this way, during the Soviet Union, the sea was divided into two parts. Although 88% of the sea was controlled by the USSR, while Iran controlled only 12%, the two sides were considered as equals. From the October Revolution to the beginning of 1990, because of the isolation policy of the Soviet Union, the route through the Caspian Sea and the Volga was closed for international transportation. Based on agreements between the USSR and Iran, all ships not flying the flag of the USSR or Iran were excluded from operating in the Caspian Sea. Because of this situation the sea lost its importance.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the discovery of new oil and gas fields in the region, the Caspian Sea gained major geopolitical and economic importance. The region has become interesting to European countries as a potential source of raw materials. China expressed its interests in order to support its economy with energy. The interest of the USA is rather about expanding their sphere of influence in the post-Soviet space and pushing back Russia and Iran from the region. In this way, the entire Central Asia and the Caspian Sea have got into the focus of international attention.

**Iranian Attitude to the Sea**

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, besides Iran and Russia, three more littoral states Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan emerged in the sea. The latter two share common land borders with Iran as well. In this point Tehran lost its advantageous position and had to renegotiate the new legal status of the sea with other littoral states. In this article we will not go into details of the sea status and Iranian position, but we will analyze the how Iranian statesmen perceived the new circumstances in the region in terms of security.

In our opinion, in terms of security concerning the Caspian Sea, Tehran had two choices. One is to cooperate with other four states and mutually benefit from the sea. The second is to resist any cooperation in the sea. The main argument of the first choice is economic interest; the paramount concern in the second choice is geopolitics. These considerations were determinant in Iranian security policy towards the Caspian Sea. It can be claimed that these two views are still under consideration of Iranian decision makers. To understand the significance of these two stands, we have to analyze them separately.

**Stage of Confrontation**

Although the Soviet Union posed threat to the survival of Iran, the strategic importance of the latter forced Moscow and Washington to come to implicit agreement that it is better for both sides if Iran is free

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83 Ibid.
84 Ibid.
from influence of USSR and USA. The matter is that before the Islamic Revolution, Iran, as an ally of the West was the source of concern for the Soviets. It is because Iran was a part of containment policy of the US against the USSR. The Islamic Revolution freed Iran from the sphere of influence of the West. From this point of view, the revolution was welcomed by Moscow. Although now the Soviets had an opportunity to invade Iran as there was no Western shelter, any such invasion could lead to the collapse of Islamic regime and replacement of it by pro-western government. Due to these considerations, the Soviets tried to develop balanced policy towards Iran.

The Soviet policy towards Iran provided the security of its northern borders. Tehran was pleased with this status quo. However, the disintegration of the Soviet Union destroyed this status quo, now northern borders of Iran were open to any interference of the Western powers, namely the US and the UK. The main reason why Tehran was against any compromise regarding the status of the sea was somehow to stop the cooperation of littoral states with the West.

Within these circumstances, Turkey with its Turkish identity and as an ally of the West began actively penetrate the region. No doubt this activism of Ankara made not only Iran but also Russia to pursue a policy which could stop this penetration. For Turkey to reach the region of Turkistan with which it shared common culture and similar language, it has three alternatives. One is to use Russian territories, the other is to use Iranian territories and the third is to pass through the Caspian Sea. Taking into account these routes, it can be said that Iran and Russia played a common game against the expansion of the influence of Turkey in the region. This geopolitical rivalry led to the uncompromised stand of Iran in terms of the legal status of the sea.

Tehran in order to impose its position on littoral states began to increase its military capacity in the Caspian. With the dissolution of the USSR, the Soviet navy in the Caspian Sea was divided among five countries. No doubt, Russia ranked first in the Caspian power ranking. Iran ranks second. Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan follow them. Turkmenistan is the weakest navy state. Thus, Iran has become superior to all the Caspian neighbors except Russia.

Undoubtedly, the most powerful navy in terms of number and quality is the navy of Russia. The total number of ships is over thirty. In particular, the 11661 Gepart model ships “Dagestan” and “Tatarstan” with artillery, torpedo and missile weapons are the largest ships in the Caspian Sea. In addition, there are 20 anti-aircraft missiles of the RBU-6000 bomber against submarines and the Osa-MA complex for air defense. In the Russian navy there are “Buran” model artillery ships “Astrakhan” and “Volgodon”. Except large ships, in the Russian navy there are small boats equipped with different weapons.86

The range of Russian naval missiles in the Caspian Sea covers Central Asia, the Middle East and the Caucasus. When Russia began its operations in Syria in the autumn of 2015, Russian ships in the Caspian hit the ISIS targets in Syria on October 6, 2015.87 With this shot, Russia reminded of who was superior in the Caspian region. Therefore, it is clear that no riparian country, including Iran, can resist Russia in the Caspian Sea. Thus, the fact that one side is very strong prevents the armament race at sea.

Nevertheless, Iran’s aim in the Caspian is not to compete with Russia. Its priority is to exercise power on Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, maybe on Kazakhstan in order to prevent their activities in the sea. As for Iran’s military presence in the Caspian Sea, there are four ports with military bases on the Caspian coast of Iran. One base is in Anzali which is in the southwestern ends of the Caspian Sea. There are 12 patrol ships, 25 speedboats and 11 assault boats equipped with machine guns. The second base is located in the city of Noushehr on the southeastern ends of the Iranian coast. With the 400 military personnel, there are 4 patrol ships and 12 boats equipped with light machine guns in this port. Bender-Gez, Iran’s third base on the Caspian coast has 280 soldiers, 12 patrol ships and 30 boats, while Bender Khomeini military port has 10 patrol ships and 25 boats.88

A characteristic feature of the Iranian fleet in the Caspian is the absence of large ships. The basis of the

military power of the Iranian fleet in the Caspian is the Chinese-made Houdong missile boats, the German-made Kaman missile boats and the Sinai missile boats produced by Iranians themselves. The main weapon of all these boats is the Chinese ship missiles YJ-82. In addition, several dozen light boats and motor boats, equipped with machine guns and medium-caliber weapons, serve at Iran’s Caspian bases.

The aim of the Iranian fleet in the Caspian Sea is not to balance Russia, because Tehran expects a possible attack not from the north but from the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea in the south. In Iranian perspective, the Caspian Sea is more secure. Nevertheless, its Caspian navy should be ready to protect Iranian interests in the sea. Therefore, Iran is training its naval forces in the sea. For example, every year the Iranian Navy regularly performs exercises in the Caspian.

As it is known, the Iranian Navy is divided into the Navy of the Revolutionary Guard Corps (RGC) and the Navy of the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI). The RGC Navy is responsible for the Persian Gulf, while the IRI Navy is responsible for the Gulf of Oman (Arabian Sea) and the Caspian Sea. In other words, the RGC Navy operates in the area with a high risk of conflict. The fact that the Caspian Sea is under the control of the IRI Navy indicates that Tehran’s perception of threat is not high in the Caspian Sea.

However, Iran is gradually strengthening the Caspian fleet. In May 2014, 50-meter submarine, jointly built with China, was added to the Caspian fleet. It is also important that the submarine is under the control of the RGC Navy, not the IRI Navy. According to Churkin, the IRI Navy uses Anzali port as a base, while the RGC Navy uses Noushahr. In 2015, Iran added its largest ship in the Caspian Sea to the navy, which is called Demavend. This is the second largest ship produced in Iranian history. In 2007, the first ship, which was named Jamaran, entered the Persian Gulf. In 2017, a corvette equipped with weapons against submarines “Separ” was added to the Caspian Navy. Although Iran’s strengthening in the Caspian fleet does not disturb the balance in the sea, it increases the distrust of the Caspian countries to Iran.

In the final analysis, according to the first view, Iranian statesmen are concerned with the dynamic change in the Caspian. This concern prevents them from cooperation with littoral states. In other words, Iran prefers confrontation to cooperation. The general perception of Iranians about the legal status of the sea is that if Tehran goes to compromise in this issue, Iran will lose its rights in the sea. From this point of view, Iranian decision makers come to conclusion that Iran has to strengthen its navy to protect its interests.

**Stages of Cooperation**

Iran’s opposing stand cannot be continued for forever. Tehran is aware that other Caspian Sea countries perceive Iran as a potential challenge and rival to their interests. At least the fleets of the former Soviet countries speak the same language, Russian. Because of its historical and ideological identity, Iran is seen as a potential threat even though it is not explicitly pointed out as such by the other Caspian countries. Considering this situation, Tehran aims to develop cooperation, not competition with Russia and other countries.

Especially when it came to early 2010s, the international economic sanctions began to affect deeply on Iranian people. Tehran had to change its priorities in the Caspian Sea. In addition, besides economic

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89 Ryabov, Ibid.
conditions, several factors were determinant in this reconsideration. Firstly, the expansion of NATO was stopped in the Eastern Europe. After the Georgian War in 2008, both the western countries and the post-Soviet states understood the danger of this issue. Russia was ready to stop the expansion with all means. This situation shifted the security concern of Iran in the Caspian to the second place.

Secondly, Iranian resistance to stop cooperation in the sea has not given any result. Azerbaijan was exporting oil through Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline. Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan were exporting their gas and oil to China. Moreover, Moscow was benefiting from Kazakh and Turkmen gas and oil pipelines which passed through Russian territories. The sea has De-facto been divided and all littoral states were benefiting from the existed status-quo. It was not in the interest of Iranians to continue confrontational stand over the disputed areas.

Thirdly, cooperation was much more beneficial than opposition. As Admiral Khabibullah Sayyari, the commander of the Navy stated, “the security of the Caspian Sea is ensured by cooperation with neighboring countries. In this context, the third forces will not be allowed in this region.” 95 Therefore, to overcome the distrust between Iran and other Caspian countries, Iran is developing “Navy Diplomacy”96 which includes joint confidence building measures such as mutual visits, joint exercises and joint sea games.

The Iranian Navy visits the Caspian countries and tries to build mutual trust. In 2013, 2015 and 2017, the ship Damavand, which was part of the Iranian fleet, visited the ports of Astrakhan and Makhachkala of Russia. With these visits, not only the command levels but also the crew melds together. They even visit each other’s ships.97 Iran is trying to develop the same traditions with the other Caspian countries. For example, on April 12, 2017, the Damavand ship and the Paykan corvette of the Iranian Navy visited the Aktau port of Kazakhstan for the first time. In 2016, the Iranian Navy paid a visit to Baku.98 In September 2017, the Kazakh Navy came to Iran for the first time in its history. On 12 October 2017, two outposts belonging to the Azerbaijani Navy visited Bender Anzali for the first time in history.99 As for the joint exercises, since 2009, Iran and Russia have been carrying out the exercises in the Caspian.100 In addition, the Military International Games are organized with the participation of the navies of all Caspian countries.101 In short, Iran has been conducting an effective Navy Diplomacy since 2015.

Fourthly, President Hasan Rouhani and the Iranian reformist government factor should be taken into account. Rouhani who was elected as the President of Iran promised to improve the economy of Iran. For this purpose, Iran had to improve relations with neighbors. Regarding Rouhani’s policy towards the Caspian region, three priorities are emphasized. The first of them is to accelerate the North-South Transportation Corridor. The second is to solve the problem of legal status of the Caspian. The third is to build economic cooperation with Caspian states and the Eurasian Economic Union. If these projects are realized, Iran would be a dominant power in the sea. The economic domination would solve security problems as well.

Indeed, Iran has geo-economic potential to dominate the sea. Iran’s agriculture, pharmaceutical, chemical, bio-technology sectors are more developed than other countries. It provides a solid basis for the transformation of Iran into economic power in the Caspian Basin. In addition, there are numerous

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settlements of various sizes with industrial basis on the Caspian coast of Iran. To compare, there are 13 port cities of Azerbaijan, 6 cities of Russia, three cities of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, while Iran has 27 cities on the Caspian coast and 12 of them are modernized ports. In these circumstances, if Iran realizes above mentioned projects, then it can easily dominate the sea.

To sum up the pro-cooperation stand of Iran in Caspian Sea, the groups of Iranian politicians who support this line are determined that cooperation in the sea will serve the Iranian interests. This group led by Rouhani reached certain achievements. Although it needs to be ratified in the Iranian Parliament, the Convention on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea was signed on 12 August 2018. Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union signed agreement on free trade on 18 May 2018. Azerbaijan-Iran-Russian tripartite summits became regular since 2016.

**Conclusion**

To conclude Iranian security policy in the Caspian Sea, firstly Tehran’s priority was to restrict the activities of Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan and to some extent of Kazakhstan in the sea. Iran was especially concerned with the possibility of emergence of the Western military presence in the sea. It is because the eastern borders of NATO were expanding to the Caucasus. In addition, the post-Soviet states are cooperating with NATO Partnership for Peace Program. In this context, Iran and Russia developed the similar stand in the Caspian. In this period, Iran pursued confrontational stand in the issue of the legal status of the sea. The main reason of this stand was to sabotage the cooperation of Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan with the Western countries.

However, Iran began to change its policy in the sea beginning from early 2010s. This trend was accelerated by President Hasan Rouhani who prioritized cooperation with littoral states for the sake of economic benefit. It can be called as Rouhani’s Eurasian opening up in Iranian foreign and security policy. The achievements made in terms of the North-South Transportation Corridor, Eurasian Economic Union, and Caspian Convention are the parts of this Eurasian policy of Iran. It is observed that since 2015, Iranian perception of the Caspian Sea is changing. While security concerns are moving to the second plan, economic cooperation becoming more important. There is no doubt that such shift will be improving the Iranian perception in other Caspian countries.

Nevertheless, the debate between those Iranian statesmen who support oppositional stand and those who are for cooperation are continuing. In this context, Iranian National Gas Company Spokesman Behruz Namdari, speaking at the Caspian Economic Forum on 12 August 2019, expressed Tehran’s position as following:

> "The construction of a natural gas pipeline from the east to the west of the Caspian Sea can severely damage the ecology of the region. Iran opposes this structure. We offer our neighbors who want to bring their underground resources to global markets, to benefit from Iran’s infrastructure, pipelines and terminals."

This statement is the signal that it will be difficult to continue cooperation spirit held by Rouhani. It means that while analyzing Tehran’s security policy in the sea one should take into account these two views dominated in Iran on the Caspian Sea.

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Bibliography


Since Christianity took the root in the country, Georgia has always been westward looking. Despite the complicated relationship, for many centuries it looked up to Constantinople. After the downfall of the Byzantine Empire, as mighty Ottoman and Persian empires divided the country between themselves, Georgia sought the protection of and the alliance with the Western European powers. But multiple diplomatic efforts seeking to generate tangible support from the West proved futile, and Georgian kings increasingly pinned their hopes on emerging Christian power in the neighborhood, Russia.

Voluntary political-military alliance signed in 1783 with Russian Empire soon turned into the forcible integration in it; as pogroms and Russification policy intensified, it became increasingly clear to the Georgian elite that backward Russian Empire aimed at the full assimilation of Georgia; and that it was the poor surrogate and not the door, but only a window to enlightened Europe.

Additional historical lessons learned from the country’s short-lived independence terminated by Red Army intervention in 1921, and also later on, during a decade following the collapse of the Soviet Union, further strengthened Georgia’s view of Europe as an only harbor for country’s secure and rapid development.

History of NATO-Georgia relations begins in 1992 when Georgia became a member of the North-Atlantic Cooperation Council, which five years later was renamed into the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council.

Georgia eagerly got on board of the first available western integration vehicle and together with Moldova and Ukraine was among the first former Soviet republics to join NATO’s Partnership for Peace Program. Via establishing the formal format of cooperation between the Alliance and non-NATO countries in the Euro-Atlantic area, this visionary initiative practically removed the Huntingtonian fault line in Europe and rekindled Georgia’s European integration hopes.

Nevertheless, having lost the wars with Russian supported separatists in Abkhazian and Tskhinvali regions of Georgia, and scared of losing the internal power struggle with deposed president Gamsakhurdia, in 1994, acting head of state Eduard Shevardnadze chose the policy of Russian appeasement. Under his leadership, Georgia joined basically an anti-NATO military alliance initiated by Moscow and titled today Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO).

Having consolidated his power internally and being disillusioned by Moscow’s unhelpfulness in restoring Georgia’s territorial integrity, already in 1999 President Shevardnadze not only withdrew from the CSTO but also declared that “Georgia will be knocking on NATO's door in 2005”.

1999 was also a year of historical Istanbul OSCE Summit, where the Final Act of the Conference on the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty was signed. It was here, in Istanbul, where following the insistence of Georgia and Moldova Russia was forced to sign the bilateral documents with them, based on which Moscow undertook the obligation to withdraw its military bases from Georgia and Moldova.

I want here to briefly come back to the Partnership for Peace Program. In 1994, during his meeting with President Havel, President Clinton straightforwardly put the cardinal reason behind conceiving PfP,
which, I quote, was the establishment of “a track that will lead to NATO membership”, and the prevention of drawing “another line dividing Europe a few hundred miles east.”

But for Georgia, the significance of this historic initiative went beyond that. In 1994, being in a grave economic and political crisis and well below the western radars, with its foreign and security policy almost completely subordinated to Moscow, there were very little internal resources or external assistance available for state institution or personnel capacity building in the country.

Thus, the various trainings, exercises and educational initiatives implemented under the PfP Program were God’s blessing for Georgian governmental agencies and civil servants, and for quite some years almost the only opportunity to break away from the post-soviet thinking and acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for developing the modern, rule-of-law based state.

It would not be an overstatement to say that PfP Program contributed immensely to building Georgia’s state and democratic institutions, as well as its modern, effective bureaucracy.

Having taken firmly a pro-western course, at NATO’s Prague Summit in 2002 Georgia officially declared its decision to seek NATO membership.

Since 2004, after the Rose Revolution and coming to the power of Mikheil Saakashvili, Georgia’s cooperation with NATO, as well as state institution-building and defense reforms have quickly intensified. Already in October of 2004, Georgia became the first NATO partner country which started cooperation with the Alliance for the realization of the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) that aimed at the approximation of Georgian armed forces with NATO standards and fostering of implementation of the democratic reforms.

It’s also important to underline that until starting the US “Train and Equip” program in 2002, which was designed to assist in building the Georgian modern armed forces, the situation was pretty chaotic in the defence sector. In 2002, the Georgian defense budget was only around 75 million Georgian Lari and the defense agency lacked institutionalized defense planning and management processes; military training and education management systems barely functioned, nothing to say about proper military equipment.

It will be accurate to state that the “Train and Equip” program together with its successor, the “Sustainment and Stability Operations Program” (SSOP), established the core of Georgia’s modern armed forces and cardinally increased their NATO interoperability.

Georgia’s achievements had not been unnoticed by the Alliance. In October of 2006, the country advanced further in the Euro-Atlantic integration process and NATO launched with Georgia the Intensified Dialogue on Membership Issues.

As defense reforms successfully continued and were fully recognized by all allies, enjoying the exceptional support from the President Bush’s Administration, Georgia together with Ukraine started to entertain strong hopes for achieving a critical milestone on the NATO Bucharest Summit in April of 2008, which was obtaining the Membership Action Plan (MAP) country status.

Allies in Bucharest made a historical promise that Georgia and Ukraine will become NATO members if all necessary requirements are met. But, regrettably, following the rationale of not irritating the Kremlin, France and Germany refused to agree on granting the MAP to Georgia and Ukraine and in regards to Georgia justified their decision with insufficient democratic progress in the country.

As former Secretary-General of NATO Anders Fogh Rasmussen put it last month in his comments on Tbilisi International Conference, unfortunately, in Bucharest allies “did a wrong thing”, “sent the wrong message to Putin, a message of hesitation, lack of decisiveness, and he exploited that situation”; Rasmussen also added that he sees “a clear link between that NATO hesitation at the April Summit in 2008 and his [Putin’s] attack against Georgia in August 2008”.

Indeed, sensing the window of opportunity for stopping the process of NATO and democratic enlargement further into post-soviet space, in the August of 2008, Putin launched well-prepared military
aggression against Georgia and attempted to overthrow the democratically elected government. Fortunately, the fierce resistance of Georgian armed forces lingered Russian military advance long enough for International Community to mobilize and intervene.

Active diplomatic involvement of Nicolas Sarkozy, president of France, the EU chairing country at the time, and stern warnings from the Bush administration stopped Russian aggression and forced Moscow to sign the ceasefire agreement with Tbilisi. Still, today, Russia continues to occupy 20% of Georgian territory and violate most of its obligations under this agreement.

One has to note here that, unfortunately, it took Putin only another six years to do the same in Ukraine after a public uprising overthrew a pro-Russian, extremely corrupt and criminal government of President Yanukovych.

Having realized the urgent necessity to support young Georgian democracy weakened by the Russian aggression, NATO was quick to respond and offer its political support to Tbilisi. Already on the 19th of August, the special meeting of the NATO foreign ministers was held in Brussels, which decided to establish NATO-Georgia Commission and conduct the North-Atlantic Council visit in Georgia in the following month.

In December of the same year, NATO Foreign Ministers Meeting decided to further deepen cooperation with Georgia and use for this purpose the annual national program format, a NATO membership preparation instrument similar to the one offered by MAP.

The landmark event in NATO-Georgia relations was the NATO Secretary General’s visit to Georgia in October of 2010 when he officially inaugurated the NATO Liaison Office in Tbilisi.

Another milestone that significantly deepened bilateral cooperation was the adoption of the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package (SNGP) at the Wales NATO Summit in 2014, which focused on assisting Georgia in developing the national defence capabilities and advancement of its membership preparation process. Among the important initiatives, SNGP encompassed was launching of a NATO-Georgia Joint Training and Evaluation Centre in Georgia.

At the Wales Summit, Georgia was also invited to join the Partnership Interoperability Initiative and Enhanced Opportunity Partners group.

In 2015, Georgia started to participate in the NATO Response Force.

It should be underlined that stemming from the continuous, unremitting aggressive behavior of Russia demonstrated daily in the Black Sea region, NATO’s increased presence in the Black Sea is of significant importance. Such a presence underscores Alliance’s commitment to deepening the engagement in this region and deters Russia from escalating the situation even farther.

Finally, a couple of words about Georgia’s participation in NATO peacekeeping operations: Georgia has learned well from its experience that while underdog can attract a lot of sympathies, bets are always made on a strong horse. To be highly valued and considered as an indispensable ally by the West, one has to contribute significantly to international security.

Being a contributor to Kosovo Force (KFOR) from 1999 to 2008, Georgia’s participation in NATO-led peacekeeping operations went to a completely different level after it offered its significant, caveat free contribution to the ISAF in Afghanistan.

Currently, with two infantry battalions deployed, it continues to be one of the largest troop contributors to the NATO’s follow-on Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan.

Having proven to be an actor that is capable of delivering the added value to the strengthening of the Euro-Atlantic security, Georgia hopes that expediency and appeasement will not reign on the Euro-Atlantic space and that Europe whole, free and at peace will not remain for long a business unfinished.
Moldova – NATO Relations in 25 Years – a brief overview

Dr. Viorel Cibotaru*

The first contacts of the Republic of Moldova with the North Atlantic Alliance were established after the country’s independence. On December 20, 1991 the meeting of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) was held in Brussels established following the decision of NATO Rome Summit in 7-8 November 1991. The purpose of creating the NACC was to establish a permanent body for consultations between the former opponents about the primary European security issues. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Moldova attended the first meeting of the NACC, thus our country became a Member State of this Council.

At January 1994 Summit of NATO, American initiative "Partnership for Peace" program initiated and Moldova joined this program on March 16, 1994 being the 12th country to join the Program as a partner and it had demonstrated its commitment to NATO’s struggle for peace and security in Europe. Relations have been developed gradually, being marked by a spirit of practical cooperation, trust and further development. Moldova participated in a series of military activities such as within the military program of “International Military Education and Training” (IMET) in 1993.

On May 29, 1997 at Sintra (Portugal) meeting of NACC Foreign Ministers, due to the need to establish new relations with the cooperation partners, NATO proposed the transformation of the NACC into a more appropriate structure - the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC).

For effective coordination of Moldova’s activities with NATO, the Mission of the Republic of Moldova to NATO was established in December 16, 1997 and Moldova’s Ambassador to the United Kingdom headed this Mission. Also since 1997, the Republic of Moldova has expanded its cooperation with NATO in the scientific area.

The international situation at that time required from the Republic of Moldova an active behavior, responsive to the events that had been taking place on the political arena. Such a behavior was conditioned by the national interests of the country. NATO enlargement would have an important impact on the security problems of Moldova. Chisinau’s attitude towards NATO enlargement has been favorable on the assumption of the fact that this may contribute to the spread of stability area in Europe corresponding to the interests of Moldova.

During the first governance of the Party of Communists (April 2001 – April 2005), some of its representatives expressed reserved opinions with regard to NATO approach on Moldova’s borders. Along with NATO’s image as an enemy, cultivated by the Soviet Union, it was possible that the Russian mass-media dominated in the Republic’s information sector which vehemently opposed to NATO enlargement, could have had some effects on public opinion regarding the attitude towards NATO. In this respect, it is important to promote Moldova’s own vision on European security, taking into account the Republic’s security interests and not of other states. Moldovan political elites accepted the fact that NATO seeks to support and promote democracy, to contribute to prosperity and progress, to strengthen partnership relations among all the democratic states in the Euro-Atlantic zone in order to enhance their security.

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The security perception of NATO members is no longer connected with that of military threat towards a member state, but is more inclusive, extended outside of member states and resulted largely from the perception of nonconventional threats to overall security: Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) proliferation, arms and drugs trafficking, regional conflicts with an ethnic, religious or social background, flows of refugees, human rights violation, the failure of reforms, environmental problems, or even the failed states on the periphery of NATO. It is being considered that if we admit a sustainable democratic development, the respect for human rights, good relationships with all European states, an eventual European integration corresponds to Moldova’s interests, then NATO enlargement might be a beneficial process for the future of Moldova. In this regard, some analysts believed that the formulation of Moldova’s security interests should take into account the positive effects of NATO and European Union enlargement:

a) The prospects for NATO and European Union accession is a factor that encourages positive transformations in the candidate states, while the criteria for membership are rather political than military:

- functional democratic political system (including free and fair elections, the respect for individual liberty and the supremacy of law) and a market economy;
- civilian control of the military;
- the treatment of minorities under the principles of OSCE;
- resolving the disputes with neighbor states and the obligation to solve international disputes peacefully;
- military contribution and the desire to achieve interoperability with other NATO members.

b) European states, incorporated in European structures are more stable and credible dialogue partners (for Moldova) than non-integrated states. Generally, Moldova is interested in the eastward expansion of the “big vs. small states” behavior model, a model specific for the Western Europe; The model of cooperative security promoted by NATO contributes not only to the stabilization of member states, but also to the “export” of security and values beyond its borders, which is true for the European Union as well;

c) NATO will also enlarge as an instrument of preventing, managing and overcoming the crisis in Europe, having available a sufficient spectrum of political, financial and military mechanisms to contribute to the overcoming of internal crisis of states, including the Republic of Moldova;

d) NATO and its initiatives or affiliated institutions are important elements that facilitate the process of European integration and implement the models of cooperative international behavior.

The breaking events in the current context of the international system, when interstate relations develop both in form and content, demonstrate that their development gain an increasing development. Therefore, the signing of the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) between Moldova and NATO on July 6, 2006 constitutes the best way of joining the international efforts in creating a common security system in the Euro-Atlantic zone and consolidating security in the world. Of course the neighborhood status of the Republic of Moldova, a country that faces real problems like aggressive and intransigent separatism, organized crime, human trafficking, corruption, smuggling, presented a threat to the essence
of Western democracies. The elaboration of the Individual Partnership Action Plan and its implementation in parallel with the accomplishment of the European Union – Moldova Action Plan became evident that NATO and EU countries supported Moldova during the process of democratization and solving internal problems which it faced.

At the same time, the signing of such a document as IPAP Republic of Moldova – NATO, does not yet imply the accession of Moldova to a military/political bloc, but according to some, such a possibility should not be excluded. This fact remains the centre of attention for the country’s future, civil society and especially political elite which must draw the European policy of the Republic of Moldova. Hence, there is the belief that from the perspective of Moldova’s accession to the European Union, NATO integration will facilitate EU integration, especially in the domain of democracy and security sector reforms. Politically speaking, no post-communist state from central Europe has joined the Union without going through the process of NATO accession.

The political dialogue has continued through the working visit of the President of the Republic of Moldova in Brussels (25-27 January 1998), in which the head of state had meetings with the NATO Secretary General and the WEU Secretary General.

The working visit to Chisinau of the NATO Secretary General during 28-29 January 1998 constituted a new stage in the development of the Moldova – NATO relationship. The visit had several purposes, including the assessment of the cooperation prospects of the Republic of Moldova in the Partnership for Peace program.

Also important was the visit of the President Vladimir Voronin to the NATO Headquarters on 28 June 2001, where the Memorandum of Understanding with NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA) on cooperation in the logistical area was signed.

Following this memorandum, it was possible to create in 2002 a fund with special affectation, financed by NATO countries and intended for the destruction of ammunition and anti-personnel mines and a significant quantity of mélange rocket fuel. The project was implemented by the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA). Through this project a huge environmental danger was avoided and this was achieved before the deadline of the basic provisions of the Ottawa Convention on banning anti-personnel mines. The Republic of Moldova was among the first countries in the region excluding this type of weapons from its arsenals.

Since 2002, the Republic of Moldova is party to the South East Europe Security Cooperation Steering Group (SEEGROUP), part of the South East Europe Initiative (SEEI), which currently comprises 20 member states and 14 partner states.

A delegation led by the Head of state attended June 2004 EAPC / NATO Summit in Istanbul. The Forum of the Alliance adopted a new strategy of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership based on refocusing and renewing gave priority of assistance to the countries implementing the following Action Plans: Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP), Partnership Action Plan on Defense Institution Building (PAP-DIB), Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism (PAP - T), etc. The strategy contains positive references for Moldova. NATO's commitment towards cooperation with Moldova was reiterated in the Final Statement of the Summit of the North Atlantic Council (NAC) (p. 32).

On 7 June 2005, the President of Moldova, Vladimir Voronin, visited the Headquarters of the Alliance attending the meetings of the NAC. Within this visit, it was declared to adopt an Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP). As a result, the Individual Partnership Action Plan which marks a qualitatively new
stage of cooperation between the two parties, was adopted by the North Atlantic Council and by the Government of Moldova accordingly May 19 and May 24, 2006. This document sets a number of important goals, such as deepening of Moldova’s cooperation with the European and Euro-Atlantic structures and institutions, promoting democratic reforms in various fields, reform and modernization of the defense and security areas, strengthening democratic control over armed forces, etc.

Moldovan President Vladimir Voronin took part at NATO’s Bucharest summit in April 2008 and in October the same year NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer made a working visit to Chișinău meeting with high military and political leaders. The program also included a lecture at the State University of Moldova and a visit to the NATO Information and Documentation Center.

The review process of IPAP was launched in November 2009. Moreover, the National Commission for IPAP Implementation, presided by the Deputy Prime-minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration was also established. The members of Commission have acknowledged the need to update the provisions of the Action Plan and to adjust them to the existing realities. The final consolidated version of IPAP was approved by the Government of Moldova and also by NATO in August 2010.

NATO evaluation mission visited Moldova on May 2011 and had several meetings with the national experts from various ministries involved in the implementation of the IPAP, with the goal to assess the achievements and the encountered difficulties. On June 2011, an EAPC meeting in the APAG format took place for the first time in Chisinau. More than 59 participants from the NATO member countries as well as partner countries participated at this event. On July 13, 2011 the North Atlantic Council (NAC) meeting, the 28 members + Republic of Moldova format took place in Bruxelles discussing the issues related with the implementation of the IPAP as well as the bilateral cooperation of RM-NATO. At the meeting, NATO approved the Final evaluation Report 2010 on the IPAP implementation.

The participation in the PfP has offered to Moldova a real opportunity to strengthen its national security and defense capabilities. Thus, the PfP framework allowed us to use the experience of military construction of NATO and partner countries in order to continuously improve our armed forces, the staff training, the language training for the officers of the National Army, provided access to information, statistics, sources of political, technical and financial support. A unique aspect is the acquaintance of Moldovan soldiers with the proceeding of peacekeeping operations.

Moldova’s accession to the PfP can be divided into several stages. The first is by signing the Framework Document, Moldova became the 12th signatory country and the second within the CIS countries after Ukraine. The next stage was the drafting of the presentation document, under which the Individual Partnership Program (IPP) was developed in 1995- the last stage of accession. The IPP included the following areas of collaboration: control over armaments and disarmament, civil protection, prevention and resolution of crisis situations, joint planning and carrying out of peacekeeping operations, staff training and other aspects of military activities. To achieve and coordinate these activities, the Ministry of Defense of Moldova has delegated a liaison officer at the Partnership Coordination Cell (now, the Military Cooperation Division, MCD), based in Mons (Belgium). With the adoption of the IPAP, IPP areas of cooperation were subordinated to the structure of the Action Plan.

The Planning and Review Process (PARP) of the Partnership for Peace was started to increase the level of practical interoperability of partner countries, provide them with a methodology for identifying and evaluating military forces and capabilities. The essence of the process is establishing transparency, official and truthful information and mutual aid between the Alliance and partners in all aspects of security and defense fields, by achieving the goals of general interoperability. Moldova joined the PARP in 1997.
According to its Constitution, the Republic of Moldova has proclaimed “permanent neutrality” (Article 11). The same article also prohibits stationing of any foreign military troops on its territory. Thus, the declaration of neutrality in the Constitution is a very strong assertion of security policy, from which it is difficult to step back, both politically and technically. The young Moldovan state hoped that the principle of permanent neutrality, fixed in the Constitution and main strategic documents, would reassure both Russia and Transnistria and help to minimize the threats to Moldova’s security. At that time, neutrality appeared to have been a wise option for at least two reasons. The first reason was that, as the new state had to establish its own armed forces from scratch following independence, permanent neutrality was seen as a substitute for a strong army.

Permanent neutrality became the cheapest and most convenient means to defend the sovereignty and independence of Moldova. It can also be seen as a strategy to survive between two stronger neighbors and as a response to Russia’s pressures to include Moldova in various security designs. The second reason for state neutrality was the presence of Russian troops on the left bank of the Nistru river. The constitutional provision served as an additional argument in favor of the conflict settlement.

Today, however, more than two decades later, the Transnistrian conflict is still unresolved and Moldova encounters the same threats to its national security. The Russian military in Transnistria and the Russian support for its military forces show clear disregard for and represent an infringement on Moldova’s permanent neutrality. Nevertheless, permanent neutrality still has rather broad public support – 41 percent of the population supported it, in a poll in April 2015 (25 percent wanted to join the Collective Security Treaty Organization, CSTO, and 21 percent to NATO). But critics point out that Moldova does not have even the minimal requirements for upholding the national security as a neutral country. Since neutrality has not been guaranteed by any other external power, nor recognized by the international community, these critics call Moldova’s neutrality strategy not so much a strategy of “balancing” as a strategy of “inaction.” Some even say that Moldova’s “guaranteed neutrality” seems more an invention of the Russian Federation, which would like to have guarantees that Moldova would never join NATO.

The permanent neutrality of Moldova is mentioned in the National Security Strategy, from 2011, which says that this status will be taken into account in the process of promoting the national interests of Moldova. The strategy also says that Moldova’s cooperation with NATO complies with the limits of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and Partnership for Peace, which does not affect the constitutional status of permanent neutrality of the country and does not exceed the rules inherent in the Constitution. In contrast, the 2016 draft of the new National Security Strategy does not mention the permanent neutrality of Moldova. However, the 2016 draft of the new National Defense Strategy does mention permanent neutrality when mentioning the country’s intensifying and deepening relations with NATO, but states that this cooperation exists “while respecting the status of neutrality stipulated in the Constitution” (Article 2).

The 2016 draft of the new National Security Strategy (NSS) stresses that Moldova is a European country with deep historical ties to Europe. The draft mentions both NATO’s importance as the political and military alliance with the most powerful military and technological capabilities, and the common values and the close ties between Moldova and the EU, established by the Association Agreement. The draft distinguishes external, transnational and internal risks and threats of the Republic of Moldova. The primary external risks and threats are connected to the instability and conflict in Ukraine and the risks of spreading the consequences of the conflict to Moldova.

Likewise, the 2016 draft of the new National Defence Strategy, which is based on the NSS and the Action Program of the Government of the Republic of Moldova for 2016-2018, is more explicit about the threats and risks to Moldova. First and foremost, the significant military potential of separatist armed
forces in the Transnistrian region is highlighted, as “multilaterally supported from the outside” and with “the military formations of the Russian Federation, illegally stationed in the territory of the Republic of Moldova”, which together “can create an interventional capacity.” The use of tools of information propaganda, attacks on the information and communication infrastructure, instability and conflict in the territory of Ukraine, illegal migration, illicit traffic of arms and terrorist activity are also mentioned as the most prioritized threats and risks to Moldova.

The IPAP Moldova-NATO for 2017-2019 states that the Republic of Moldova is committed to further deepening the cooperation with NATO, the main instrument of which is the Individual Partnership Action Plan. In the process of updating that document, the authorities took into account all practical measures mutually agreed by the Republic of Moldova and the Allies in order to enhance bilateral cooperation. Political association and economic integration into the European Union by implementing the Association Agreement as well as deepening political dialogue and practical cooperation with the Euro-Atlantic structures continue to stand as the main strategic objectives for the development of the country.

The Republic of Moldova – NATO cooperation is based on the respect for the Republic of Moldova’s constitutional neutrality. As a neutral country, the Republic of Moldova does not pursue the implementation of IPAP with the objective of becoming a NATO member, but intends to implement this plan in order to advance the process of reforms and modernization of its national security and defense sector in accordance with the new developments and requirements of the security environment. To this end, the Republic of Moldova will make use of the legal and political basis, including relevant institutional mechanisms, which were set up during the previous phases of IPAP implementation. In the same regard, in the process of IPAP implementation the authorities of the Republic of Moldova will conduct their activities in line with the decision nr. 14 of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Moldova of May 2, 2017 concerning the interpretation of the article 11 of the Constitution on the permanent neutrality of the country, which states that „the participation of the Republic of Moldova to the collective security systems, such as United Nations security system, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian operations, those which seek to impose collective sanctions against the aggressors and against those who violate the international law, does not contradict the neutrality status of the country”.

Establishing the NATO Liaison Office (NLO) in the Republic of Moldova provides new possibilities to enhance the dialogue and practical cooperation in the process of the implementation of reforms in the security and defense sector, implementation of assistance projects, public diplomacy activities. The Republic of Moldova will take actions to develop a consistent cooperation with NLO in the areas of interest.

At the same time, the Republic of Moldova will capitalize the cooperation possibilities within the Defense and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative and Interoperability Platform (IP). While implementing the IPAP, the Republic of Moldova will closely work with the EU and other international organizations with the aim to ensure the complementarity of the IPAP with the Republic of Moldova-EU Association Agreement and the National Development Strategy.

According to the Plan, the development of capacities to contribute to the regional and international security continues to stand as an important objective for the Republic of Moldova. To this end, the Republic of Moldova will increase the dialogue with international structures and institutions and will consolidate the cooperation with its partners. The Republic of Moldova aims to increase its participation in international missions and operations under UN, EU and OSCE mandates, with experts (civilian and military) and military contingents up to the battalion level.
Training capabilities for personnel assigned to be deployed in international missions and operations will be developed at the national level in accordance with interoperability standards of similar forces from Euro-Atlantic area. The deployment of its national contingents to international operations will be conducted according to the provisions of the Law on the participation of the Republic of Moldova in the international missions and operations and will be realized with the support of the international development partners. The Republic of Moldova will participate further in the NATO-led operation in Kosovo KFOR with the aim to strengthen the interoperability of National Armed Forces and bring its contribution to the promotion of security and stability in Europe.

NATO has been an important partner in supporting Moldovan defense reform efforts. Reform projects specifically outlined in the PARP include training, management, logistics, and improving command and control structures. Moldovan defense reform objectives outlined in the PARP are updated every two years in the IPAP and through the PARP Partnership Goals (PGs). The latest IPAP (2017-2019) and the latest PGs emphasize that efforts will be taken to implement reform objectives outlined in the NSS, and that special attention will be placed on increasing the role of the SSC in its role of coordinating security and defense sector-related affairs. Another important aspect mentioned in the IPAP is the need to continue developing the framework and strategic planning document. The IPAP also has ambitions to establish a defense planning framework, amongst other initiatives. A new IPAP plan is in the process of being revised.

Following a request from Moldova, it was decided at the NATO Summit in Wales in 2014, that the country should become a recipient of assistance, advice and support through the Defense and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative. This NATO program seeks to support recipient nations with defense capacity building, and focuses on providing primarily advisory assistance on defense reform. Some financial assistance may also be available through a DCB Initiative Trust Fund, to which NATO member and partner countries contribute on a voluntary basis. NATO views the DCB Initiative as “key tool[s] to contribute to the international community’s efforts to project stability beyond the territory of NATO.” Moldova is one of four countries that is receiving DCB Initiative packages (the others are Georgia, Iraq, and Jordan), which are tailored to fit the specific needs of the recipient country.

In June 2015 a specifically tailored package of assistance based on Moldovan requests was endorsed by NATO defense ministers. The package is meant to assist Moldova in “strengthening and modernizing the country’s armed forces and reforming its national security structures.” In addition, NATO will assist Moldova in its efforts to create “modern, mobile, high-readiness, well-equipped and cost-effective” NATO-interoperable forces.

There are two phases to the DCB Initiative. Phase one, currently underway, focuses on NATO assisting with the “establishment of a national security strategy, defense plans, force structures and capability requirements.” This assistance primarily takes the form of expert advisors who work together with Moldovan counterparts to assist in the reform effort in different areas.

The MoD describes its four focus areas as: 1) development of land and air forces; 2) education (which also includes training courses and peacekeeping); 3) cyber security; and 4) United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, which focuses on women, peace and security. There is no particular timeline listed for the program; there is no stated end date for the program; nor is it clear exactly which NATO member or partner countries will assist Moldova in the focus area. The overall goal of phase one is to come up with an appropriate force structure suitable to Moldova’s national security needs and defense budget. According to NATO, phase two of the program will continue to provide advice and assist with specific elements of the transformation of Moldova’s AF and relevant institutions."
This potential problem is especially important given Moldova’s low defense budget, which means that Moldova is largely dependent on foreign donors to make progress towards reform. Hence, whereas the MoD made very clear that the implementation of the DCB Initiative is a central part of their defense reform agenda, suggesting that the political will within this ministry is there, little headway will be possible without substantial foreign donor assistance. Several experts emphasized the extent to which security is not at all a priority for the government, however, a fact apparent by the very low funding directed towards national defense. The government’s lack of political will to invest and prioritize the defense sector is likely to influence international donors’ willingness to provide funds to defense reform. This is because without political will at the highest political level and a subsequent decision to provide more national resources to remedy the underfunding of the defense sector, international donors are unlikely to believe that Moldova is serious about defense reform. Such perceptions among donors are likely to make it harder to motivate providing funds to Moldovan defense reform, since they suggest such assistance will not yield the intended effect.

As a conclusion, we consider that the United States and EU must develop a long-term strategy in the Eastern European and Caucasian region to fortify defenses, prevent democratic backsliding, and encourage reforms. Separately, the United States should enter into bilateral cooperation with regional countries to help resolve issues that the EU is not prepared to address due to a lack of political unity or other reasons. A diversified approach is necessary to consider each country’s specifics and ambitions, with full deference to their sovereign right to make foreign policy choices without external pressure.

Countries that seek NATO and EU membership in accordance with Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty and Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union should be given a fair opportunity to join. Existing mechanisms of cooperation between NATO and the Eastern European and Caucasian countries, such as the Annual National Programs (ANP) of cooperation, should be implemented more effectively. Given that Ukraine and Georgia are not being provided with NATO Membership Action Plans (MAP) for political reasons, ANPs should assume the role of MAPs and actually prepare these countries to meet the membership criteria. Each ANP should focus on clear goals for achieving concrete NATO standards and interoperability with verifiable annual indicators of fulfillment, instead of obscure wording such as “to continue studying experience,” “to extend opportunities,” and “to establish the proper conditions for effective cooperation.” NATO working groups on defense reforms and NATO Trust Fund projects and programs that address issues such as professional development, building integrity, defense education enhancement program, and dedicated trust funds for Ukraine, which were established after the NATO 2014 Wales summit, should continue working until NATO standards are met in the recipient countries.

Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova should be invited to cooperate closely with the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats established in 2017 in Helsinki for EU and NATO member states. Eastern European and Caucasian countries need support to counter hybrid attacks, and in return their considerable experience in facing such threats could be useful for EU and NATO countries. The Individual Partnership Action Plans and NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) programs should help Moldova, Azerbaijan, and Armenia to establish democratic control of their armed forces and develop a regional framework to support NATO-led operations. The work of NATO information centers in these countries should be intensified to help inform local populations and debunk myths of Russian propaganda. Until Russia withdraws its military and restores Ukraine’s sovereignty, current sanctions should remain in effect and additional sanctions should be explored.
"The PfP and NATO integration process
– from Romania's experience"

Major General Cristian Eremia

Let me talk about how we met, understood and used during the complex process of integration in the North Atlantic Alliance through the special NATO initiative launched in 1994, called as the Partnership for Peace. As a way of an introduction, during the period from 1994 to 2005, I experienced the special professional position as military diplomat of my country in three European capitals. So I will try to select some of the most important issues I consider not only from books, so from the historical perspective or from lessons learned, but also from my modest experience in the processes of pre-accession of Romania to NATO.

So how was it possible to pave Romania's road to NATO? How PfP helped us to achieve this paramount objective of our foreign and security policy.

The first condition of enormous importance was to have unconditional support from the Romanian population itself. Fortunately, the Romanian society that has traditionally had the orientation for belonging to the West despite decades of hard communism, that tried to change its fundamental orientations to the western values, realized that the stake of such a foreign policy options is high for Romania's future, for Romanian (re)Westernization. And the Romanian society has consistently supported this proposed orientation without hesitation. Revisiting the public surveys of those times we can see that starting from the second part of the 90s and until 2004 when Romania joined NATO, respectively until 2007, the moment when it marked the entry of the Romanian state into the EU, Romanian favorable public opinion for NATO integration has steadily increased from over 60 percent to about 85 percent, the level which was maintained at the plus / minus 5 percent margin during the incoming years.

So, the Romanians accepted without hesitation all the financial-economic efforts and costs occasioned by the participation in the PfP and implementing the Membership Action Plan - MAP for the preparation for full accession and integration to NATO. Despite the socio-economic difficulties of those years, when the Romanians considered that in parallel with the integration in the Euro-Atlantic structures, three major internal problems had to be solved: poverty, unemployment and joblessness, respectively the quality of life.

Please allow me to briefly remind realities of the security situation in Central and Eastern Europe and Romania's relationship with NATO. Romania was the first country to respond positively to the US-launched NATO initiative and joined PfP in 1994. We had realized that the West wanted to prevent a security vacuum in the region and implement a concrete mechanism to prepare new democratic states, that they were increasingly asking, for NATO membership. Some former Communist bloc countries were initially unhappy with the PfP initiative, considering it a "surrogate" initiative, as an alternative to NATO membership.

At home, in Romania, the political forces were somewhat polarized, some political parties criticizing the ruling political power that it did not proceed politically correct accepting PfP. But, as we realized later, there were some mistakes, but certainly joining PfP was not a mistake.

Another distinct moment: Romania's failure in Madrid 1997 was in itself a great national tragedy. But

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NATO partners, of course the US, had been determined to go ahead with us through the NATO built up mechanisms, including PfP, to prepare Romania for the next enlargement of the Alliance. And we have learned that we must trust the advice and the recommendations received from our future allies.

Another lesson was then learned by the Romanian political forces. Without internal political cohesion, nothing could be done. So, the second condition was also a matter of great importance, that all new Romanian political forces had to have a common foreign and security policy objective characterized in unconditionally supporting the integration of the Romanian state in the European and Transatlantic organizations, i.e. the EU and NATO.

Under these conditions, the race for NATO was launched. The firm policy of joining NATO was consistently implemented by the Romanian MoND - Ministry of National Defense. In a relatively short time, profound transformations at the level of all military structures were produced. The pace of progress towards membership of the Alliance has been accelerated. PfP and subsequent MAP cycles have guided and helped the achievement of a very precisely defined set of objectives. The regular evaluations of the national achievements as a PfP and candidate state for NATO membership ensured the completion of the process of restructuring and modernization of the military organization and the establishment of armed forces more and more close to the level of Western standards.

The complicated process of developing a new armed forces with stronger operational capabilities and interoperable with NATO armies has reached a sufficiently advanced stage even before NATO accession. The Armed Forces could already be engaged in external exercises operations under NATO, including PfP and then under NATO Command, fulfilling a wider range of missions, including peacekeeping or local conflict management functions.

Actually, the things had become clear even before accessing the PfP and of course, before starting the NATO-recommended domestic military transformations: the process of reforming and modernizing the armed forces was inevitable and had to be accomplished in a very short time (the first level of ambition indicated 3-4 years, but the second option was much more realistic - ten years, from 1992 to 2002. With the inherited structure from the communist regime, we would not be able to face a larger external aggression and enter into any serious combination of defence or regional cooperative security in our area of strategic interest.

Therefore, with the available resources, the MoND decided to focus its efforts on several key priority directions, in close correlation with the available budgetary resources. In short, the priority objectives were the followings:

- establishing civilian political control over the armed forces and strengthening the defence policy,
- implementation of the new integrated defence planning system,
- solving the military personnel problems and reconversion of the personnel, made available by reducing the number of the armed forces,
- creation of a new military education system and a new training system for the corps of officers and non-commissioned officers;
- new system of military career management;
- large language preparation - emphasis on English, but also French and German;
- a new system for using the military budget and other resources;
- establishing a new structure of forces;
• development of forces for NATO / PfP exercises and missions;
• active participation in PfP programs and activities;
• new conception and procedures for public military procurement, in parallel with a coherent strategy in the field of military endowment.

The expected results indicated a lot of performances, which were otherwise regularly visible. We, both at home in MoND and in Brussels did not minimize but also did not exaggerate the evaluation of the results of the military reform and modernization. Nor do we do this now, because it is not the Romanian style. Our aim was to convey to the partners and future allies the true and real levels of preparation we reached. This is extremely important not only from the point of increasing mutual trust between partners, but also for a pragmatic reason. It is necessary to have a real assessment on what we are doing with our military affairs, especially when we are destroying an old inoperative army and want to build up a different, smaller but stronger and well-trained army that could engage in defence and security operations both within NATO format and individually in the national formula.

Of course, no great national security objective can be achieved without overcoming difficult problems. In the beginning, we had problems with financial resources. The big reduction of military personnel meant that a lot of money was directed to cover the problems related with the personnel (compensation, financial assistance for reconversion, etc.). The financial resources were consumed mainly by the military personnel, limiting the expenses with the education, military training and so on. About major new military equipment acquisitions was not possible to discuss. It was an extremely complicated period. However, gradually a rational balance between the chapters of the military budget was possible, so as to redirect a greater part of the financial resources towards education, training and endowment. The Romanian army has obtained a more compact structure of forces, and the numbers of these more powerful forces are located somewhere at the level of 75,000 military and 15,000 civilians.

There were great military demands, but the insistence of the MoND and of course the positive developments of the national economy changed the paradigm. Today, our military budget has been politically guaranteed 2 percent of GDP for the next ten years. This allows the financing of new purchases of new major military equipment. Also, this allows us to build robust capabilities for all three services - ground forces, air and navy, a training program and complex military exercises, adequate equipment for the forces deployed in the external theater of operations.

Basically, there was practically no area of reforms and transformations of the Romanian Armed Forces in which the tools and mechanisms of PfP and then those of the MAP cycles, much more dedicated and focused, had not been used and not been helpful for us. In joke but of course seriously, after some time of hard works during the military transformations, there was saying in our military environment that if it didn't exist, NATO PfP had to be invented anyway, even under another name.

I would like to conclude with the general assessment that NATO PfP was a success story for my country. PfP has been and it is a political option for any state in our region, whether it wants to become a NATO member or not.

Each state that chooses such an option must develop a working program, specifying the extent of its participation. But these plans must include joint military exercises with NATO forces, commitments to have budgetary transparency in the defense, reform practice in the defense sector, enhancing the interoperability with NATO forces. In this regard, the good news is that NATO PfP instruments are still valid and can help the states concerned to meet the aforementioned challenges.
Transatlantic Security After the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty

Robertas Šapronas

In Europe the issue of the INF Treaty is a highly sensitive subject. The memories of massive protests in the 1980s against the deployment US missiles are still alive. It may take time before all Europeans fully come to terms with the demise of the INF Treaty.

On the other hand, it would be very hard to argue against the logic of the US and NATO position - we should not allow Russia to get away with yet another treaty violation. Instead, the United States and Europe should face the challenge together by building coherent political and military responses. NATO has just started its work on countermeasures after issuing its Joint Declaration on the INF in December 2018.

We should also to keep a broader perspective in mind. With China and a growing number of regional contenders developing intermediate range missiles (plus Russia cheating) - there is hardly any justification for the US to continue living under the INF Treaty constraints.

* * *

The INF Treaty was a product of its times. It is, indeed, a symbol of a bygone moment in history.

At the time of signing of the INF Treaty in 1987, the world was bipolar, dominated by two superpowers and Europe was at the epicentre of their global competition.

However, the Soviet Union was in a rapid decline under the combined pressure of its flawed political and economic model as well as military overstretches in Afghanistan. Moscow’s situation was further aggravated by the fall of oil prices in the 1980s.

Gorbachev understood the gravity of the situation better than most of his comrades in the Soviet leadership. He started withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, held a series of bilateral meetings with President Ronald Reagan, and tried to improve the functioning of the Soviet model through his notorious perestroika and glasnost policies.

On the military side, unable to keep up in the arms race, the Soviets were ready to discuss de-escalation and disarmament. All key arms control agreements and confidence building measures in Europe - like the INF, the CFE, Vienna Document – have their roots in the late 1980s.

* * *

Unfortunately, the collapse of the Soviet empire provides no cause for celebration to Russia’s president Putin. On a contrary, in his worldview, it was the greatest geopolitical tragedy. All those post-Cold War changes in Europe, which we in Lithuania rejoice – such as the fall of the Berlin Wall or our accession to the European Union and NATO - are perceived in Kremlin as the story of Russia’s post-Cold War humiliation.

Over the past decade, the world has learned what Putin’s longing for those Soviet glory days means in

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practice. We witnessed how Russia repeatedly violated international law, breached its international commitments, grabbed territory of its neighbours and used chemical weapons on the streets of foreign countries. Given this pattern of behaviour, the discovery of the SSC-8 missiles and Russian cheating on its commitments should not really surprise anyone.

What is important, however, is to understand the reasons why Russia has decided to secretly develop and deploy INF-prohibited missiles.

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First of all, intermediate range, dual capable missiles provide Russia with a flexible set of strategic options to dominate any military conflict in Europe.

The SSC-8 missile, as part of Russia’s strategic arsenal has been developed for a major military conflict with NATO. The estimated range of the missile (about 2000 km) covers almost entire European continent. Most likely, these missiles are designated to conduct conventional precision strikes against NATO’s critical infrastructure and command centres, if necessary, in tandem with nuclear blackmail.

On the basis of Russian military exercises - Zapad series and others – one can conclude that Russia’s nuclear forces are fully integrated into its military planning. The nukes are not a weapon of last resort but an integral part of Russia’s war-fighting options. In training, non-nuclear strategic weapons are employed instrumentally, at the early stages of crisis or conflict, while nuclear options are reserved for escalation dominance at the final “de-escalatory” - phase.

Also, Russia demonstrates its strategy to prevail in local or regional conflicts by threatening a full-fledged world war, including with nuclear weapons. In the Russian documentary dedicated to the annexation of Crimea, Putin himself boasted that he ordered nuclear forces to be on high alert during this operation - just in case the West decides to intervene.

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The deployment of medium range missiles means that almost all NATO Allies in Europe are within Russia’s striking distance.

This makes the distinction between NATO’s “Frontline States” and those, which are at a “safe distance” somewhat artificial. There is no safe distance or strategic depth left in Europe – all countries are vulnerable to Russia’s conventional and nuclear missile strikes.

This “equality”, however, should not provide any comfort to Russia’s neighbours.

The medium range missiles are there primarily to undermine collective defence – the core function of NATO. These missiles will pose danger to Allied reinforcements long before they arrive to the theatre of operations. This is probably the most menacing implication of the Russian medium range missiles and will therefore require special attention from NATO military planners.

Last but not least, by its dual capable missiles and demonstrated readiness to escalate, Russia is creating psychological effect even before the start of crisis or conflict. Russia is signalling to its adversaries that she is always prepared to move the hostilities beyond the “acceptable level”. Thus, Russia’s SSC-8 missiles are there to target our minds, our will to fight as well as NATO’s ability to take decisions at the time of crisis.

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Finding and fielding military responses to the Russian breach of the INF will pose a complex and highly demanding set of challenges. As a first step, NATO will have to re-assess its vulnerabilities and re-evaluate its defence plans in the light of Russian medium range missile capabilities. Significant investments may be needed to harden NATO’s critical infrastructure.

Restoring missile parity with Russia on the European theatre also looks like a natural step in answering Russian violations. NATO pursued its “dual track policy” (deployment of missiles while conducting negotiation with the Soviet Union) in the 1980s. It will have to be re-examined, once the United States has reintroduced medium range missile capability into its arsenal.

The issue of medium range missiles may be highly divisive both within Europe and between Europe and the United States. Given all the sensitivities involved, it would be wise for NATO to start discussing missile deployment options well in advance.

It would be naïve to expect Russia to sit idle while NATO is developing a military response to Russia’s violation of the INF. Indeed, political developments in many European countries are of major concern. We observe populist parties gaining ground in a number of European countries – many with proven links to and financial support from Russia. This is a highly worrying trend, which will present another test to our unity vis-à-vis Russia.

NATO also needs to enhance its theatre missile defence capabilities. These defences will never be sufficient to eliminate the Russian missile threat. But even a limited missile defense could narrow Russian options of flexible use of its dual-capable missiles.

Last but not least, NATO has to review its defence and deterrence posture on the Eastern Flank. As mentioned before, the Russian SSC-8 missile will present major threat to Allied reinforcements in the Baltics. NATO will need therefore more and better prepared forces stationed on the ground in the Baltic region.

The size and combat readiness of NATO’s Enhanced Forward Presence battle groups should be improved. They should become truly combined arms forces to include the full set of combat, combat support and combat service support units. Immediately available firepower and rapid decision-making are of the essence to avoid “fait accompli” in the Baltics. Deployment of US forces to Poland and their regular rotations to the Baltic countries would provide additional deterrent effect.

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There can be no easy or risk-free answers, when facing an adversary who is technologically advanced, who is determined to undermine the post-Cold War order in Europe, and who is taking advantage of the openness and pluralism of our democratic societies. This makes Trans-Atlantic unity and joint action ever-more important.
Executive summary

In Kyrgyzstan, the State Committee of National Security (SCNS), successor to the Committee of State Security (KGB) of the Kyrgyz Soviet Republic, has been remaining unreformed since the country became independent in 1991. While other security sector agencies (e.g., police, army or border services) were partly exposed to institutional changes, the SCNS was not restructured. This agency was often used by presidents to coerce their political rivals, a function it was prescribed during the Soviet period. As of today, it remains a closed, undemocratic institution being of direct and full subordination to the president with parliament enjoying limited authority to oversee it. The Soviet legacy did not spur citizens’ demands to reform it while public oversight is still absent due to the secret nature of the most information. The SCNS’s functions were largely broadened; it now deals with intelligence, counterintelligence, military intelligence, anti-corruption, drug-trafficking, violent extremism, inter-ethnic hate crimes, mass unrest and other crimes. There is a need to reform this service first by de-politicizing it, a reform that should have taken place far earlier in 1991.

Prelude

Kyrgyzstan declared its independence from the Soviet Union on August 31, 1991. Since then, it experienced two so-called color revolutions in 2005 and 2010 that ousted two authoritarian presidents, Askar Akayev in 2005 and Kurmanbek Bakiyev in 2010. After the last so-called April Revolution in 2010 that overthrew authoritarian President Bakiev, Kyrgyzstan attempted to build a parliamentary democracy. It was the first country in Central Asia experiencing a parliamentary system of government. The Constitution grants significant power to parliament. For example, parliament exercises authority to form and dismiss a cabinet. Yet, president still has considerable levers of influence by controlling security sector and judicial system. In fact, the Constitution laid the groundwork for a mixed system, but not pure parliamentary one.

Although the Constitution outlines that executive government implements policies to ensure national security, president formally governs the security sector by acting as the Chairman of the Security Council and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. President’s powers in the security sector were expanded by the Law on National Security. Pursuant to this law, president approves the National Security Concept as well as Military Doctrine, approves the short-term and long-term national security programs and oversees their implementation. These policies are mainly developed for the President by the Security Council that now functions under the President’s office. The Security Council analyzes threats to the national security and elaborates measures to address them as well as recommends ways to reform the security sector. Members of the Security Council include 17 senior government officials, including Parliamentary Speaker, Prime-Minister, Chairman of Armed Forces, leaders of both parliamentary majority and minority, Ministers of Internal and Foreign Affairs, Finance Minister, Head of State Committee on National Security and other ministers, and is led by President.

Parliament carries out legislative and oversight functions in the security sector as well as approves
budget for the national security system. Executive government implements national security policies.

The State Committee on National Security (SCNS) is a government body performing the state security and intelligence service in Kyrgyzstan. The SCNS represents one of the security sector bodies. Other security sector agencies include the Armed Forces represented by the General Staff of the Armed Forces, State Committee on Defense and National Guard; Ministry of Internal Affairs, including its Internal Troops; State Border Agency, State Financial Intelligence Service; State Service for Combating Economic Crimes; State Penitentiary Service, State Customs Agency, State Tax Service and Ministry of Emergency Situations.


Pursuant to the national legislation, the State Committee of National Security represents one unified service of national security bodies. It means that this agency fulfils functions related to the state security and intelligence in the country. The SCNS was established in October 1991 when the State Council of Soviet Union (Gosudarstvennyi Sovet USSR), a supreme transitional body set up after the August 1991 Soviet coup d’état attempt, decided to transfer the national KGB offices to the full subordination of the newly created sovereign countries. Following this decision, President Askar Akayev adopted a decree in November 1991 to dissolve the KGB office in Kyrgyzstan and create the State Committee on National Security.

In the post-Soviet period, the State Committee on National Security was re-modeled by former presidents and later by parliaments from the committee to the ministry, from the ministry to the commission and later back to the committee. The following table shows these modifications:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Decision-maker:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>State Committee on National Security</td>
<td>President Askar Akayev</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Ministry of National Security</td>
<td>President Askar Akayev</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>National Security Service</td>
<td>President Askar Akayev</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>State Committee on National Security</td>
<td>Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>State National Security Service</td>
<td>President Kurmanbek Bakiev</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>State Committee on National Security</td>
<td>Parliament</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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In 1996, President Akayev adopted a decree to transform the State Committee on National Security into the Ministry of National Security, upgrading it to the ministerial level. Yet, this decree was targeted at a cabinet reshuffle, but not reforming this service. In 2000, the same president made a decision to re-organize this Ministry into the National Security Service. As ministries were under the executive government structure and thus, formally subordinate to the prime-minister, President Akayev intended to reconfigure this Ministry to the National Security Service with a goal to make it reportable directly to

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112 Ibid.
him. The political environment in early 2000s became competitive and President Akayev attempted to reinforce his regime by controlling the security and intelligence services.

Later, in 2007, for the first time the parliament was elected based on the proportional party-based system. This parliament adopted a new Law on Executive Government Structure placing the state security and intelligence service back under the executive government structure. By this law, the original name of the State Committee on National Security was returned to the intelligence service. Yet, in October 2009, the second president Kurmanbek Bakiev issued a decree to withdraw this service from the executive government control and make it accountable directly to him. In his decree, Bakiev also renamed the service as the State Service for National Security. Lastly, in December 2010, following the so-called April Revolution, a new parliament was elected having a mandate for the first time to form a cabinet. In a parliamentary decree of December 2010, legislature again named this agency as the State Committee on National Security, a name that has not been changed until now.

Actually, these reconfigurations were not aimed at the intelligence reform, but only at changing the name of this service. There were several reasons that prevented from the intelligence reform. First, Kyrgyzstan lacked expertise how to destruct (e.g., ex-Soviet Baltic countries) or fully reconstruct the intelligence service (e.g. Czechoslovakia). Second, government’s priorities at the early independence period were different - economy revitalization, its transition to market-based principals as well as recovery of social security system as the break-up with Soviet Union paralyzed the national economy and resulted in mass poverty. Indeed, the country suffered one of the worst economic declines in the region. In 1995, gross domestic product (GDP) declined to 50% of the 1990s level, and all economic indicators deteriorated: hyperinflation, high unemployment, and a rise in poverty. Hence, security sector reform, including the intelligence reform was neglected by political elite at the beginning of the post-Soviet period. Third, internally there were no reform-minded intra-service transformers in the SCNS, who could demand changes. When the former Kyrgyz KGB office was reorganized into the SCNS in 1991, its personnel were not replaced by new officers. Hence, this service was dependent much on the cadre trained in the Soviet Union. Another reason is that Kyrgyzstan is a neo-patrimonial country where presidents appoint loyal people to senior government positions, including security sector. The appointees, in turn, are inclined first to serve the interests of their patron, i.e. President, less thinking of reformist ideas. As a result, there were no ‘charismatic leaders of the SCNS’, who could launch the intelligence transformation. Fourth, there was no public demand to reform the intelligence agency. Due to the Soviet legacy, the intelligence agency was publicly thought to remain an isolated service. The lack of public will to transform the intelligence service cemented a no-reformist intelligence agenda in Kyrgyzstan within the first post-Soviet decade.

No public information is available on the organisational chart of the State Committee on National Security at the beginning of the post-Soviet time as this information is unclassified. Yet, mandates and functions of this

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117 Ibid.
118 Presidential Decree #425 dated October 26, 2009.
122 Ibid.
service were known; they were specified in the new Law on National Security Bodies. This law was adopted by parliament in 1994. Pursuant to it, the SCNS was commissioned with the following tasks:

- intelligence and counterintelligence, including military intelligence;
- terrorism;
- state secret;
- public corruption;
- smuggling and drug-trafficking;
- defense of territorial integrity, sovereignty and constitutional order;
- mass unrest and inter-ethnic conflicts;
- state guard service.\(^{123}\)

Many clauses of this Law mirrored the Soviet Law on State Security Bodies, including investigative functions.\(^{124}\) Investigation, including initial inquires and pre-trial investigation, were incorporated as primary responsibility of the newly created SCNS.

To re-train its officers, the SCNS opened its Training Unit in April 1993.\(^{125}\) Seven years later, the Training Center was established in 2010, which was extended to the Institute for Professional Retraining in 2011. Yet, the SCNS sends around twenty of its officers to study in the Academy of the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) annually, a higher education institute of the Russian intelligence body based in Moscow.\(^{126}\) The Russian side covers all costs related to the study (tuition, accommodation and meal).\(^{127}\) The ex-head of the SCNS indicated that the Russian Academy of the FSB provides the knowledge and competences that cannot be attained in Kyrgyzstan.\(^{128}\) Hence, the country sends its students to Russia.\(^{129}\) Such a training policy also demonstrates that the national intelligence sector was still dependent on Russian resources, i.e. inputs of a foreign country. This casts shadow over the independence of Kyrgyz intelligence service.

As a whole, during the first post-Soviet decade, the state security and intelligence service in Kyrgyzstan continued to function as undemocratic institution. The intelligence reform was not in the agenda of ruling elite with economy and social sector recovery being regarded as critical government priorities. The public will to reconstruct the SCNS was also absent. Although the new intelligence legislation was formulated by parliament, it echoed the Soviet principals.

### State Security and Intelligence Service during 2000 - 2018

From 2000, mandates of the State Committee on National Security were largely expanded. For example, the following new functions were added:

- In 2005, the Border Service became an integral unit of the SCNS; it earlier functioned as a separate government body. In 2012, the Border Service again disunited from the SCNS;

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\(^{125}\) Nazgul Asanalieva, Novaya Smena Chekistov, Slovo Kyrgyzstan


\(^{127}\) Ibid.

\(^{128}\) Ibid.

\(^{129}\) Ibid.
In 2008, the SCNS was commissioned to provide security to the witnesses or victims if their life was under a threat\textsuperscript{130};

In 2008, the Anti-Terrorism Center was established at the SCNS to coordinate the efforts of all national law enforcement bodies in fight against terrorism\textsuperscript{131};

In 2009, anti-extremism, including religious one, was added as the new focus area\textsuperscript{132};

In 2009, the SCNS was tasked to oversee the implementation of secrecy requirements in transmitting encrypted information by government and non-government entities\textsuperscript{133};

In 2011, guarding the citizens being under the state protection was assigned\textsuperscript{134};

In 2011, the provision on prevention, detection and investigation of public corruption against senior government and municipal officials, including parliamentarians was added. For this purpose, a new Anti-Corruption Center was established under the SCNS;

In 2014, the SCNS started to issue license for import and export, production and purchase of encryption equipment\textsuperscript{135};

In 2014, the SCNS was authorized to have detention centers\textsuperscript{136};

In 2016, the new Constitution specified that the General-Prosecutor’s Office cannot investigate public corruption cases. This function has been so far assigned to the SCNS\textsuperscript{137}.

Overall, the SCNS has been delegated with a number of non-intelligence police functions. For example, the SCNS’ police functions included prevention, combating and investigation of smuggling and drug-trafficking, mass unrest, religious extremism, including hate religious offenses, public corruption and economic crimes\textsuperscript{138}. At the same time, the Internal Ministry also deals with these crimes. Local legislation still allows the SCNS, like the police, to detect citizens, open a criminal case and carry out pre-trial investigation. The SCNS has its own detention center like the police. Overall, there is no a clear distribution of functions between the SCNS and the Internal Ministry as well as other law enforcement bodies. This leads to the duplication of their work and competition between them that ultimately impedes cooperation.

Starting from early 2000s, when political environment in the country became competitive, the intelligence service started to be used by incumbents, presidents, as an instrument of intimidation and repression of their political rivalries. Former presidents, Askar Akayev and Kurmanbek Bakiev, who established semi-authoritarian regimes, relied much on the security sector, including intelligence service, to stabilize their power\textsuperscript{139}. For example, Felix Kulov, one of the main political opponents of President Akayev, was arrested by the Ministry of National Security in February 2000. Kulov was planning to run

\textsuperscript{130} Law on the National Security Bodies, Initial version amended in 2008.
\textsuperscript{131} Presidential Decree #23 dated January 28, 2011.
\textsuperscript{132} Law on the National Security Bodies in 2009.
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{134} Law on the National Security Bodies in 2011.
\textsuperscript{135} Law on the National Security Bodies in 2014.
\textsuperscript{136} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{137} Article 104, Constitution adopted in 2016.
\textsuperscript{138} The SCNS often deal with economic crimes. In publicly available legal acts, economic crime has not been found as the SCNS’S function.
\textsuperscript{139} The first president Askar Akayev ruled the country from 1991 to 2005 and second president Kurmanbek Bakiev from 2005 to 2010.
for the presidential elections in 2000. Kurmanbek Bakiev, second president, arrested his political opponents such as Omurbek Tekebayev, Temir Sariev and Almazbek Atambayev on April 6, 2010 that also triggered the April Revolution in 2010. Consequently, actions of these presidents politicized the intelligence service.

In 2010, the so-called April Revolution resulted in ousting of authoritarian president Kurmanbek Bakiev and adoption of a new Constitution designed to build a parliamentary democracy. Yet, the new Constitution grants president with a number of levers that enabled him to dominate policy-making. Although the new Constitution authorizes parliament to form and dismiss a cabinet, president is mandated to directly appoint the heads of state security and intelligence service (SCNS), as well as army without consultation with parliament. Hence, the State Committee on National Security is fully subordinate and reportable to the president.

When President has no other law enforcement body under his control, he is inclined to expand the police functions of the intelligence service for enhancing his power. This has been the case with the last two presidents, Almazbek Atambayev and Sooronbay Jeenbekov. These two presidents did not stop using the SCNS as an instrument to coerce their political opponents. For example, previous President Atambayev, who served during 2010-2016, exploited the SCNS to repress his political competitors, such as parliament faction leader Omurbek Tekebayev, ex-parliamentarian Cholpon Dzhakupova as well as journalists criticizing him. Moreover, the SCNS opened criminal cases against 14 parliament members served during 2010-2014, the last convocation. Current president, Sooronbai Jeenbekov, who came to power in November 2017, is no exception. During his presidency, allies of former president Atambayev are also prisoned, including among others ex-Prime-Minister Sapar Isakov and ex-Mayor of Bishkek Albek Ibraimov. Subsequently, the intelligence service still lacks its political neutrality.

In addition to politicization, corruption represents another serious problem in intelligence service. Corruption in government institutions, including the security sector is endemic. According to the latest 2017 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index, Kyrgyzstan ranked 135th out of 180 countries, placed among the bottom 50 countries with the highest perception of corruption. Nepotism exacerbated the situation. Recruitment strategy of Kyrgyz presidents often relies on informal networks, including nepotism. For example, President Bakiev appointed his son as the Deputy Chairman of the National Security Service in 2009 and his brother as the Head of State Guard Service. Informal networks are common in neo-patrimonial country of Kyrgyzstan, when president as the patron builds his base of loyal subordinates, who share with him identical bonds like the same kinship, place of birth (e.g., region) or other affiliations.

During semi-authoritarian regimes created by presidents Akayev and Bakiev within 2000-2010, the state security and intelligence services became too politicized. Later, the next president Atambayev expanded police functions of the SCNS to reinforce his power. During Atambayev’s ruling, competition between him and other political actors became too intense. Thus, he turned to the SCNS as a whip to pressure opposition forces. The last president Jeenbekov is preserving status quo by continuing using the SCNS for his narrow interests. Meanwhile, other ruling elite such as members of cabinet and parliament do not advocate for the intelligence reform due to their personal security. They fear that the SCNS could

141 Article 64, Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic.
open a criminal case against them if transformation is demanded. Furthermore, many current parliament members are business oligarchs that makes them more vulnerable to criticize the SCNS. Previous experience, when the SCNS opened criminal cases against 14 legislators during 2010-2014, reminds lawmakers about the value of criticism. Meanwhile, there was no public demand to reform the SCNS yet. The Soviet legacy still impels citizens to think that the secret service should be out of public control. As a whole, while other security sector agencies partly undergone institutional changes (e.g., Army, Police or Border Service), the SCNS continued to remain unreformed within 2000-2018.

**Parliamentary and civic oversight**

National legislation and namely, the Law on Parliamentary Rules & Regulations as well as Law on Parliament’s Oversight Procedures ascribe legislators with broad powers to oversee the executive government, including security sector. Parliamentary oversight mechanisms include investigations, hearings, budget control, inspections, and review of government reports, using Auditing and Ombudsman Offices resources, inquiries and other tools. Despite the extensive list of instruments that parliamentarians can use, they do not oversee the SCNS in a systematic and full manner. The constraints are mostly political, legal and institutional. The first and foremost political barrier is that parliament cannot dismiss and appoint the chairperson of the state security service, who is reportable to the president. Its direct subordination to the President creates superiority of President over parliament. Another reason is that legislators lack a political will to control the SCNS due to the fear that criminal proceedings can be initiated against them by this agency.

The legal weakness is that there is a conflict of law; Constitution specifies that parliament chooses a cabinet and approves its program with state security being its integral part, but it does not appoint a chairperson of the SCNS. Moreover, the executive government is responsible for implementation of security policies, but prime-minister is in no position to ask parliament to dismiss head of the SCNS if security policies are not executed adequately. Moreover, local legislation does not specify reporting requirements of the intelligence service to the parliament or parliamentary committees, including its annual report. Prime-minister covers the intelligence agency’s activities in his annual progress report submitted to parliament.

Parliament faces institutional constraints as well. First, oversight function is not regarded as the priority for Kyrgyz law-makers. Legislative function is given preference instead. Consequently, parliament lacks adequate oversight planning and strategy. Moreover, legislators are not always competent enough to assess the work of intelligence service. There is no expert group under a respective parliamentary committee(s) to assist legislators in analyzing reports of intelligence service or reviewing relevant bills. Another constraint is the limited or often no access to information about the SCNS, its internal rules, budget expenses and activities. In most cases, this service does not provide information to parliamentarians referring to the secrecy of information. Parliamentarians criticize the SCNS for clustering most of its data as unclassified. Moreover, lawmakers approve a budget allotted for the intelligence agency, but are unaware of their purposes and details. The problem is that many budget lines are unclassified. Hence, parliamentary members are not involved in budget formation for the intelligence service. The same is true for the budget executing and auditing. The National Auditing Office is not regarded by parliament as its primary oversight arm. As a result, parliament does not often task the

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143 Part 3, Article 74, Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic.
144 Clause 4, Part 1, Article 88, Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic.
145 Interview with Iskhak Masaliev, parliament member, May 2017.
National Auditing Office to inspect the intelligence budget. Without proper parliamentary oversight, it is unclear if state security agency fully ensures public interests while citizens are unaware if there are unjustified expenses in this field.

Collaboration of parliament with the Ombudsman Office in monitoring the intelligence service was not fruitful as well. Compared with other Central Asian countries, Ombudsman in Kyrgyzstan is more vocal in criticizing the law enforcement agencies. However, Ombudsman Office focuses on other security sector agencies, but not on intelligence agency yet. For example, four out of seven special reports of the Ombudsman Office were devoted to other law enforcement bodies, but none of them covered the intelligence agency. Moreover, this human rights institution faces a number of institutional constraints such as weak personnel capacity and its high turnover as well as low awareness of citizens about this institution.

Civic oversight over the intelligence service is null in Kyrgyzstan. Overall, the number of civil society organizations working in the security sector is very limited; human rights organizations are only active in this area. However, they have limited access to the intelligence agency as the latter clusters almost all of its information as secret. In 2011, a Public Council, a civil society oversight body set up at every ministry in Kyrgyzstan, was also launched at the SCNS. Yet, this Council functioned only for year; it discontinued its activity due to the lack of collaboration with the SCNS146. Meanwhile, the media seldom covers intelligence body while investigative journalism is hardly possible in this field due to the prevalence of confidential information. Another great hindrance is that there is no demand from citizens to oversee the intelligence service yet.

**Conclusion:**

The state security and intelligence services in Kyrgyzstan remain unreformed. Compared with other security sector agencies, it was not exposed to institutional transformation over the last 25 years. At early years of independence, competing priorities like mass privatization, economy and social sector recovery had diverted attention of ruling elite from intelligence reform. Later, semi-authoritarian regimes launched by presidents Askar Akayev and Kurmanbek Bakiev politicized this service. At that period, intelligence reform was hardly possible to be put in the policy agenda. Currently, the state security and intelligence service continues to be an instrument of power-holders to pressure their political opponents. Hence, this service failed to get rid of its intimidation function, a role it was ascribed in the Soviet times. In this context, it is tasked with many non-intelligence police functions such as detention of citizens, initiation and pursuit of criminal proceedings and pretrial investigation. Perspectives for intelligence reform are not blurred yet as the public will can drive for changes in Kyrgyzstan where weak government is often dependent on citizens’ opinion.

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146 Interview with Kairat Osmonaliev, former Chairman, Public Council at the SCNS, March 2018.
Police reform in Ukraine. Brief report

Olha Yuskevych*

I would like to focus on police reform in Ukraine and my experience in it. The Maidan and the Revolution of Dignity (November 2013 - February 2014) proved that the country needed change. Ukrainians were ready to fight for these changes, to defend their right for a free choice, to be governed by democratic values for a better future.

The long-term Russian threat, other fundamental changes in Ukraine's external and internal security environment necessitated the creation of a new Ukrainian law enforcement system.

Police reform, which began in spring 2015, is a significant part of a nationwide law enforcement reform project. An important stage was the creation of a new team of reformers, comprehensive support for reform by international partners, and the use of the experience of other countries.

Most important is the ardent desire of ordinary citizens to actively participate in change, the willingness to join the ranks of the newly created unit.

I have the honor to represent the Kyiv Police and Ukrainian Association of Women in Law Enforcement, as a representative of the leadership. I have relatively long but rich and extensive police experience. To me, this is another sign of the changes that have taken place in Ukraine. It is difficult, almost impossible for me to imagine myself in the ranks of the Soviet or post-Soviet militias.

I started my path to law enforcement in 2015. I was one of the first to respond to the call to change the country. I became a patrol officer, and my management appreciated my work fairly quickly. At the time, it was hard to talk about the experience - it was gone, but there was a legal education and a strong desire to work, learn, share, be energetic and result-oriented. In 2016, I headed the Kharkov Patrol Police with a staff of one thousand two hundred (1,200) officers. Today, I am the Assistant Chief of the Police of Kyiv, the capital of our country, which has about nine thousand (9,000) officers.

Together with my colleagues from all units of the National Police, every day I make an effort to implement and extend the fundamental changes that began in 2015. I want to emphasize that the main value for every Ukrainian police officer was, is and will be - citizens' safety.

The basic principles of reforming the national law enforcement system had been the creation of the updated Ministry of Internal Affairs as a civilian body, a multi-agency, service-oriented civilian European model that forms law enforcement agency with appropriate security policy.

Priorities for reforming the law enforcement system in Ukraine are the following:
• creating a safe environment,
• combating crime,
• respect for human rights and freedoms,
• the quality and efficiency of assistance,
• transparency and accountability,
• development of human resources and social protection of employees.

In 2015, the militsia stopped to exist. On November 7, a new unit, called the National Police of Ukraine started its work.

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**The National Police of Ukraine** is the central executive body within the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which implements policies in the field of public security and order, as well as combating crime.

In the first stages of reform, considerable attention was paid to the following questions:

- improvement of the functional structure of the National Police of Ukraine,
- differentiation of competence,
- eliminating duplication of authority,
- clear definition of functions and numbers;
- introduction of a new system of personnel selection and certification of police officers, taking into account the best achievements of the leading countries of Europe and the world.

**OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

**Community oriented.** Today, community-oriented policing is part of the public's mandate: monitoring the situation in the city, communication with the people, training, joint security projects. Regarding the experience of the militsia, it must be noted that it had focused on process and statistics, with its minimal impact on the public. It did not even try to build partnerships with people.

Conceptual tasks of the National Police of Ukraine are the following: cooperation, communication, service delivery, improvement and development. The basic principles are to serve and to protect people.

**Effective management.** In times of militia, an imperfect and slow management decision-making system did not facilitate the flexible management of units, the effective response to the situation and the responsible attitude of local leaders to fulfill their responsibilities as managers.

**Reputation.** Today, we see that a great deal of attention is paid to the police by "reputation", the evaluation of the activities of employees, where the main criterion is - the trust of the population. The trained young police force is interested, first and foremost, in restoring public confidence in law enforcement.

**Initiatives and improvement**. In the police, everyone tried to avoid initiatives, responsibilities, innovations, tried to maintain stability. Today, National Police personnel can express their thoughts on improving the body, ideas for change and influence.

**Frame updates**. One of the main goals are to change the system, the selection process, the promotion, the dismissal - all processes must be as open as possible to the public. The conceptual difference between militsia and police is the transition from post-Soviet management to European one. Competency-based approach is result-oriented. Policemen of Ukraine are internally free people who are not afraid to take responsibility, make their own decisions, while complying with the law and instructions.

Finally, I would like to point out that any reform is a complex process that takes time. And most importantly, in my opinion, what made it possible to overcome the old system that would make the reform successful in the future? So my answer will be simple - it's people!

I am grateful to the fortune that I have met so many people who have shown me the courage and loyalty of the oath. For them, as for me, freedom, equality, democratic values and the security of everyone are not empty words, but a goal that we are moving towards every day.
CHAPTER II
Military and political aspects of Black Sea security
in light of recent developments in the region

Turkey’s Perspectives on the Black Sea Security after Russian annexation of Crimea

Dr. Oktay Bingöl*

Introduction

Russia’s illegal annexation of Crimea in March 2014 attracted the global attention to the strategic significance of the Black Sea Region and the risks emanating from the following developments. It raised concerns on the stability and posed challenges for all actors. “The Black Sea” has two meanings in academic writings and political discussions. First usage deals with only maritime surface and coastal areas. This relatively narrow region includes coastal states such as Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russia, Turkey, and Ukraine. Second usage is wider Black Sea Basin/region. This is the region that includes the Balkan Peninsula, the Caucasus and the northern and southern shores of the Black Sea linking the Caspian and Mediterranean Seas as well as the Middle East and Southeastern Europe. The countries which are included in wider Black Sea are Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Greece, Moldova, and Serbia in addition to coastal states.

History shows that while the several conflicts occurred in wider Black Sea region, the maritime surface has remained relatively stable and peaceful during the consecutive periods following the Second World War (WWII) although there had been some tensions after the WWII to control the gateway to Open Seas-Turkish Straits. During the Cold War era, NATO and Warsaw Pact countries shared borders in this region. However, any big military exercise by either side did not take place on the Black Sea maritime surface. Turkey also has not performed any military exercise in the Black Sea during this period. The underlying factors for this are the semi-closed sea character of the Black Sea and the fact that the only access to open seas is through the Turkish Straits. The Montreux Convention of 1936, precluded extra-regional powers from establishing permanent naval forces in the Black Sea. It imposes limits on battleships with regard to their tonnage, number and the duration of their stay in the Black Sea.

As far as Turkish foreign policy is concerned, regional cooperation and search for peace have roots in the early years of the Republic of Turkey. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk laid down the peace and good

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147 Black Sea, https://www.britannica.com/place/Black-Sea
149 “Member States”, BSEC, http://www.bsec-organization.org/member-states
relations with neighbors as the cornerstone of Turkish foreign policy (TFP). Just after the Turkish War of Independence he declared the main principle of TFP as “Peace at Home, Peace in the World”. It should be noted that “in line with this understanding, ever since the inception of the Turkish Republic, initiatives for regional cooperation and solidarity have come to guide Turkish foreign policy. In this context, Turkey played a leading role in the formation of the Balkan and Sadabad Pacts during the Atatürk era, and the establishment of Baghdad and Balkan Pacts during 1950’s”.

With the end of the Cold War, Turkey also initiated several confidence building measures in wider and narrow Black Sea Region by aiming at cooperation among the states and promoting stability, prosperity and peace in the region. Such initiatives had continued and become successful until Russian intervention in Georgia in 2008 and later the annexation of Crimea in 2014. Since then Turkey security concerns increased and its perceptive changed due to several interrelated dynamics.

This study aims to examine the military and political aspects of Black Sea Security in the light of Russian annexation of Crimea, Turkey’s perspectives on the recent developments and way ahead. In this line, changing strategic balance and increased military build-up in the region, future of Black Sea Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), instabilities in neighboring areas such as de facto states and increased risk of inter-state conflicts and Turkish decision makers’ dilemmas are discussed in the following chapters.

**Historical background**

After Mehmed the Conqueror captured Istanbul, the critical parts of the Crimean Peninsula were under control of Genoese colonies and Venetians, thus the Ottomans still didn’t have full control of the Black Sea Basin although they were able to control the Straits. On the other hand Trebizond Empire was ruling Trabzon which was one of the most important port city of Anatolia.

The Black Sea Region had always been important for the empires controlling Istanbul which depended mostly on the resources of Black Sea region. As Fernand Braudel has put, “the Black Sea was supplying region without which the mighty capital couldn’t survive”. It was a center of international trade and lay at the crossroads of major international highways such as Silk routes. In coming periods, the Ottomans succeeded to conquer the critical ports and places such as Amasra, Sinop and Trabzon in 1461, Kefe (the southeastern part of Crimea Peninsula) in 1475 and Moldavia in 1476.

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152 Çelik, ibid, p.19.
With the full control of Crimea in 1477, the Black Sea became an Ottoman Lake. Thus Ottomans established strong defensive positions around the Black Sea and closed it to all foreign ships until the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca agreement in 1774 after Ottoman army was defeated by Russian army in 6 years war between 1768-1774. Russia had direct access to the Black Sea region (via the Kerch and Azov ports) with this agreement. It was also given the right to protect Christian minorities in the Ottoman territory, and then Russia started to rule Crimean Khanate. In 1783, Crimea was annexed to Russian Empire and Sevastopol was established in the same year. From this date Russia emerged as a growing Black Sea power and entered into rivalry with the Ottoman Empire, later with Turkish Republic.

As Ottoman power was declining in the 19th century, it could not be able to balance Russian Empire with its own capabilities. Consequently, European powers intervened in Black sea politics and conflicts. Facing defeat by the insurgent Muḥammad Ali Pasha of Egypt, the Ottoman sultan Mahmud II accepted Russian military aid early in 1833. In return he concluded, at the village of Hünkâr İskelesi, near Istanbul, an eight-year treaty. The real significance of the treaty lay in a secret article that defined Ottoman aid to Russia to the closing of the Strait of the Dardanelles to any foreign vessels of war except those of Russia. The treaty aroused the suspicion of other powers, particularly Great Britain; after long negotiations and tensions, Russia abandoned the privileges when it signed the London Straits Convention of 1841.

During 1853–1856 Crimean War between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, France and Britain supported Ottomans to prevent Russia to be hegemon in the region. Consequently, Russia was defeated. It, however, never gave up to gain the full control of Black Sea and to seize the Bosporus and Dardanelles from the Ottoman Empire.

During the WWI, the Black Sea and Turkish straits became one of the hot points. In 1915 naval and land campaigns were launched by Allied forces to seize the control of the straits, access to the Black Sea and provide support to Russian Empire. After intensified conflicts and heavy casualties from both sides, Turks defeated the attackers thus paving the way to Russian Empire collapse.

With the defeat of Ottoman Empire in WWI, the straits were occupied and controlled by British forces. However, with the end of Turkish War of Independence, Turkey regained the control of the straits. In Lausanne treaty, Turkish full control of the straits was limited since an international commission was established to manage the passages, and the straits and surrounding areas were demilitarized.

In 1936, three years before WWII, the Montreux Convention was signed and it established Turkish control over the straits and guaranteed free passage of warships belonging to Black Sea states not at war.

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with Turkey. Non–Black Sea powers were restricted in sending their military vessels to the Black Sea. Thus, the arrangements of this treaty are assessed as regulating principles of the straits and the Black Sea.

Russian ambitions on the straits and Black Sea continued after the end of WWII as the Soviet Union pressured Turkey to renegotiate the Montreux Convention so that the Soviets could share control over the Bosphorus and Dardanelles with Turkey and demanded the military bases on Turkish soil. On Turkey’s request, the U.S. sent warships to the region and declared the 1947 Truman Doctrine to contain Soviet threat in the Mediterranean by supporting Turkey and Greece economically and militarily. Turkey became NATO member in 1952 and the straits and some parts of Black Sea were included in NATO’s area of responsibility. While Turkey became a party to the competition between two blocks it adhered the article of the Montreux Convention by showing respect to the coastal states’ rights and security concerns.

Following the end of the Cold War and the dismemberments of the Soviet Union, the Black Sea’s importance for Western states declined. However, new security threats such as transnational trafficking, criminal networks and terrorism among others emerged. At the same period, Russian Federation and Ukraine began to compete for the control of Crimea and sea port of Sevastopol, and sharing Soviet Black Sea Fleet. After a long bargaining and experiencing tensions, 1997 the Ukraine-Russia Friendship Treaty was signed, and the Soviet Black Sea Fleet was split between Russia and Ukraine. Russia was given the right to lease the Sevastopol base for 20 years, a term extended until 2042 in 2010.

After Bulgaria and Romania became NATO members in 2004, Ukraine and Georgia’s aspirations for membership, NATO and consequently the US increased their influence in the Black Sea. On the contrary, Russia felt more isolated and threatened by these developments in its near abroad and tried to protect its influence. Russia has started to use its natural gas as a leverage over Ukraine and Europe since 2006 and ceased the supply of natural gas to Europe through Ukraine and increased Russian energy prices on several occasions.

In August 2008, Russia invaded Georgia and recognized the independence of both South Ossetia and Abkhazia separatist regimes creating two mini-states under its control. Finally, Russia’s annexation of Crimea in March 2014 changed overall balance in wider Black sea region.

**Turkey’s Black Sea Policy**

Historically Turkey did not perceive a great threat from the Black Sea to its territory because of its semi-closed characteristics preventing the foreign powers from projecting force to invade Anatolia. Regarding wider Black Sea basin, however, Turkey’s biggest threat perception before the WWII was from Balkans. Such a threat had also been felt during the Cold War since Turkey was surrounded by Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact countries (Bulgaria and Romania).

Turkey historically aimed to build a robust security and stability architecture in the Black Sea. In Turkey’s security concept of the Black Sea the maritime domain and the land of the countries in the region are treated separately. In a broader sense, twelve countries form the Organization of the BSEC,
but only six of these countries are littoral states.\textsuperscript{161} The problems and challenges these two areas (land and maritime) harbor are distinct from each other in nature; hence, they each require separate frameworks for solution.

After the Cold War, Turkish foreign policy making elites perceived the Black Sea region as a hub of several transportations, trade and energy lines. In this understanding, several economic, political and security related project were launched. The Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) was created in 1999 by Turkey’s sponsorships.\textsuperscript{162} In the beginning, Turkey was an enthusiastic participant in BSEC. However, 2008 Russian-Georgia conflict and other problems between Turkey and other members of BSEC, made the possibility of the route's realization doubtful.\textsuperscript{163}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|}
\hline
\textbf{Initiative} & \textbf{Countries} \\
\hline
Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) & Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine \\
\hline
Blackseafor & Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine \\
\hline
Blacksea Harmony & Turkey, Russian Federation, Ukraine, Romania \\
\hline
The Black Sea Littoral State Border/Coast Guard Cooperation Forum (BSCF) & Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, Georgia, and Turkey \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Turkey sponsored initiatives in the Black Sea}
\end{table}

Turkey attached special importance to the effective performance of bilateral or multilateral regional cooperation initiatives and mechanisms with littoral states.\textsuperscript{164}

In this regard, Blackseafor and Black Sea Harmony were initiated by Turkey (Table-1). The Agreement on Participation was signed by Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, Georgia, and Turkey. Since 2006 the Russian Navy has taken part in the Black Sea Harmony exercises, which are organized by Turkey. Corresponding intergovernmental documentation regarding this collaboration was later signed.\textsuperscript{165}

Turkey’s initiatives concerning the security arrangements on the Black Sea maritime domain are not limited only to Blackseafor and Operation Black Sea Harmony. In 2003, Turkish Coast Guard Command pioneered the establishment of “The Black Sea Littoral State Border/Coast Guard Cooperation Forum (BSCF)” among the littoral states’ border/coast guard authorities. The BSCF functions as a multi-

\textsuperscript{161} Karadeniz, ibid, p.97.
\textsuperscript{163} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{164} Karadeniz, ibid, p.99.
\textsuperscript{165} Vasiliev, ibid, p.4.
national regional cooperation platform to attain a wide range of objectives including collective provision of maritime safety and security, execution of joint search and rescue operations, protection of marine environment, prevention of illegal fishing, joint training on the issues related with coast guard missions and development of common communication channels for exchange of relevant information. It is doubtful if these initiatives are still efficient.

Changes in Black Sea Geopolitics after annexation and Military Buildup in Black Sea

For Russia, the geostrategic factors of the Black Sea region have not changed since 1853 Crimean war, with NATO and the United States replacing individual European states as Russia’s main geopolitical competitors: Crimea is the military source, Turkey is the pivot, and the Turkish Straits are the strategic throughput; and the end goal is access to and military presence in the Eastern Mediterranean as a counterbalance to U.S. and NATO expansion eastward and its presence in the Aegean and Central Mediterranean.

The seizure of Crimea changed the balance of power between Russia and Turkey in the Black Sea toward Moscow. After March 2014, Russia’s de facto coastline grew from 475km to 1,200km or about 25 per cent of the sea’s total shorefront. The Crimean port of Sevastopol, parts of which Moscow previously leased from Ukraine, has long provided Russia with a natural deep-water port centrally located in the Black Sea basin. Major littoral cities, including Istanbul, Samsun, Trabzon, Constanta (Romania) and Varna (Bulgaria), are within easy reach, less than 1,000km away. Since 2013, Sevastopol has been a springboard for Russian forays through the Bosporus into the Mediterranean and for the so-called Syria Express, which supplies Russian forces in Syria.

Russia’s Military Buildup

Russia’s remilitarization of Crimean Peninsula and military intervention in eastern Ukraine paved the way for several military reinforcements in the region, with the deployment of S300 and S400, Bastion-P coastal defense units, and other anti-air and anti-surface-missile systems. Crimea became a Russian platform for power projection. Russia also used nuclear rhetoric, and retained the nuclear option to defend Crimea if necessary.

After the Crimea annexation, Russia has further boosted its military presence on the peninsula – not only in Sevastopol but also at the port of Feodosia and in Soviet era facilities scattered around the peninsula.

Russia’s central and western military districts were a renewed focus in 2016, with units being

167 Toucas, ibid.
reequipped with modern systems and readiness tests continuing. Snap exercises were held across all the military regions in the year.\textsuperscript{169} Russia’s Black Sea Fleet is primarily based in Crimea, at Sevastopol, Karantinnaya Bay and Streletska Bay.\textsuperscript{170} Moscow added 15 to 18 new vessels to its Black Sea Fleet by 2020 (including multipurpose frigates and advanced submarines equipped with high-precision cruise missiles). Submarines increased by 3 and totaled to 7. Surface ships such as frigates, gunboats, patrol and coastal combatants also increased totaling around 30. The Black Sea Fleet has 10 amphibious ships. Naval aviation capacity includes anti surface, anti-submarine, maritime patrol and transport aircrafts and helicopters. Russia also reinforced naval infantry capability.\textsuperscript{171}

Regarding air defense, Russia deployed S-300 and S-400 SAMs on the peninsula. In addition, it has built a strong anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) capability in the Black Sea. It is argued that essentially their anti-ship cruise missiles range the entire Black Sea, and their air defense missiles range over about 40 to 50 per cent of the Black Sea.\textsuperscript{172}

\textbf{The US and NATO}

After the Russian annexation of Crimea, the US took a number of considerable measures to deter Russia’s further moves. In this context, President Obama announced the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI) on 3 June 2014 as a direct response to Russia's intervention in Ukraine and invasion of Crimea. In fact, this initiative meant increased US military presence in Eastern Europe. The 2017 US National Defense Authorization Act changed the name of the program to European Deterrence Initiative (EDI).\textsuperscript{173} Funding for the EDI has increased every year, reaching US$6.5 billion in the budget request for fiscal year (FY) 2019.

The initiative focuses its efforts on boosting the US presence in Europe in the following five key areas: 1) increasing the presence of US rotational forces (but not US permanent forces), 2) committing more resources to increase the breadth and depth of military exercises to improve interoperability and readiness, 3) enhancing pre-positioning of equipment and material to facilitate rapid deployment, 4) investing in the improvement of infrastructure in key strategic locations to support deterrence requirements and contingency operations, 5) dedicating resources to enhancing the allies' military forces (building partnership capacity) to boost deterrence.\textsuperscript{174} As a result, the US increased its presence in Eastern European countries with bases and military facilities (Table-2), rotational forces and exercises.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{169}] Military Balance 2018, p.210-211.
\item[\textsuperscript{170}] Ibid, p.221.
\item[\textsuperscript{171}] Ibid, p.221.
\item[\textsuperscript{172}] Military Balance.
\item[\textsuperscript{173}] International Crisis Group, p.13.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Table 2: US Military Presence in Eastern European countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>US military presence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>1 air base, 1 army base, 2 airfields, 1 military training field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>1 military base, 1 air force base, 1 air field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>1 air force base, 2 military training field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>1 missile defense base, 2 military base, 1 air base, 1 training center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>5 military bases, 1 training field, 1 missile defense base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>1 training base, 2 military base, 1 airfield</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The US presence in these facilities include seven Brigade Combat Teams (permanently and rotational), a combat aviation brigade, cyber security efforts, missile defense. Exercises and training activities are doubled after 2014.

With regard to NATO military buildup, it is known that prior to the Ukraine crisis, NATO focused its Black Sea strategy on non-traditional security threats, such as terrorism and illegal trafficking. After the Crimea annexation, however, its prime concern has become Russia’s expansionist policy. During the 2014 Wales Summit, NATO leaders agreed on the establishment of eight (initially six) NATO Force Integration Units (NFIUs) in Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to strengthen NATO's presence in the eastern flank. The concept of the NFIU was developed by ensuring the capacity of host nations to serve the “Receipt, Staging and Onward Movement” phase of military operations and the deployment of NATO’s high readiness forces.

At the July 2016 NATO summit in Warsaw, the Alliance leaders adopted the Enhanced Forward Presence (EFP) in Poland and the Baltic States and the Tailored Forward Presence (TFP) in the Black Sea region. The EFP consists of four multinational rotational battle groups: in Estonia - led by the UK, in Latvia - led by Canada, in Lithuania - led by Germany, and in Poland - led by the United States. Each battle group includes forces from 17 NATO member states. The EFP today can deploy roughly 4,400 troops at any given time; whether this is sufficient in the event of a crisis is still disputed by experts. The TFP covers the land, air and maritime domains. The land component relies on the Romanian multinational 2nd Infantry Brigade of up to 4,000 troops, the maritime element focuses on integrated training in the Black Sea, and the air component engages in air policing missions across south-eastern European airspace.

On 16 February 2017, NATO defense ministers endorsed an enhanced presence on land, at sea and in the air, and authorized the Standing Naval Forces, the allied immediate response unit, to deepen links with allies in the Black Sea.

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175 Ibid.
176 Ibid, p.5.
NATO’s presence rests on, first, frequent exercises and visits by U.S. and other allies’ naval ships from outside the region; and, second, the deployment of a multinational brigade in Romania. “In 2014 alone, as part of NATO’s Atlantic Resolve operation, U.S. warships spent a total of 207 days in the Black Sea, compared to two short visits in 2013. In 2017, the U.S. led eighteen exercises in the area, including the Sea Breeze multinational exercise co-led with the Ukrainian navy and Saber, a massive land-based drill involving some 25,000 soldiers from 23 allied and partner countries, including Georgia and Ukraine. These developments occurred in a timing of NATO’s Black Sea exercise, Sea Shield 2017. Russia reacted to these developments and attempted to counter NATO’s buildup”. 178 Russia’s actions and NATO’s response raise the risk of some form of confrontation.

**Present Turkish Policy on Black Sea: Challenges and dilemmas**

After the Cold war, the Black Sea Region has been assessed as being crucial to avoiding new security threats (NSTs) such as terrorism, illegal migration, illegal trade of arms, drug trafficking because of the three features of the Region as being a source of NSTs, a barrier to NSTs, a target and a transit for NSTs. 179 The regional dynamics, however, have become volatile following the start of Russia’s influence in the region early 1990s. Immediately four separatist entities emerged in the region—within Moldova, Georgian and Azerbaijani borders like Pridnestrovya, South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Nagorno-Karabakh accordingly. 180 All of them are supported by Russian Federation. Furthermore, after Russian intervention in Ukraine, the self-declared Donetsk and Luhansk People’s Republics emerged. 181 Turkey has perceived risks from the possibility of interstate and intra state conflicts.

In the South Caucasus, for instance, Russian and Turkish interests collide. Both support opposing parties in the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. While Russia has historical and religious ties with Armenia, Turkey and Azerbaijan define themselves as “two states and one nation”. They have a strategic partnership based on not only common interests but also common culture and values. The conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia in April 2016 coincided with continuing the Su-24 shot-down crisis, and further deteriorated Russian-Turkish relations. Fortunately, both states succeeded to deescalate and a ceasefire was brokered between conflicting parties. However, this event showed that Nagorno-Karabakh issue may destabilize the region easily. Turkey is also worried about instabilities in Georgia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia since it has good relations with Georgia and support territorial unity of this country.

178 Toucas, ibid.
In fact, Turkey seems being encircled with the Russian intervention in Ukraine, Georgia, by its influence on Armenia and recent intervention in Syria. The annexation of Crimea fuels Turkish fears of encirclement. It is certain that Turkey perceives risks and threats from such desperate situation.

Russia’s 2014 annexation of Crimea has enabled it to expand its naval capability, project power south and shift the strategic balance in its favor. The annexation has also raised Turkey’s concerns about the plight of the Crimean Tatars, who enjoy historically close ties to Turkey. Turkey has responded with its own military build-up and balancing actions. Turkey has encouraged NATO to deploy into the Black Sea, reversing a decades-old policy of keeping the alliance out. Despite Ankara’s strained links with Western capitals, NATO is seen as critical leverage to Turkey’s strategic calculations in the Black Sea.

Turkey faces dilemmas in its Black Sea and Russian foreign policies. First of all, it needs Western alliance (the U.S, NATO, EU) to balance Russia in the wider Black Sea area. Paradoxically it needs Russia to meet challenges and risks of Syrian crisis, for energy dependency, and to balance the U.S. While Turkey has a strategic partnership with Russia (S-400, nuclear energy cooperation and Sochi-Astana process), it is NATO member and the US ally at the regional level.

Despite Turkey’s rejection of Moscow’s annexation of Crimea, Ankara has been reluctant to let the Crimea annexation overshadow its relations with Russia. It refuses to join Western sanctions and keeps a clear distance not only from the EU’s strategy toward Moscow but also, in rhetoric if not substance, even from that of the West as a whole, notwithstanding its membership in NATO.

The Russia-Turkey rapprochement largely reflects the two states’ evolving strategic calculations away from the Black Sea and South Caucasus. In Syria, Turkey’s determination to contain the Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG), a Syrian Kurdish armed group with close operational ties to Kurdish insurgents in Turkey, requires it to cooperate with Russia. Turkish frustration at Western powers – fed by U.S. backing for the YPG; the weak U.S. support for Erdogan during the 2016 coup attempt; the U.S.’s refusal to hand over Fethullah Gulen; and Western criticism of Erdoğan’s domestic policies – also nudges Ankara toward Moscow. Economic interdependence, illustrated by the heavy toll of Russian sanctions on Turkey in 2015-2016, provides further impetus for closer Moscow-Ankara ties.

**Conclusion**

In spite of growing tensions between Turkey and Europe/NATO/the US over Turkish-Russian rapprochement, Turkey supports a limited NATO reinforcement in the Black Sea region, within the limits of the Montreux Convention.

It could be concluded that Turkish government takes Crimean issue as a problem between Russia and West. Turkey is transcending the issue to the others to deal with.
Regarding the future of Crimean question, it seems that Russia will not willingly give up Crimea since it asserts a historical claim to the Peninsula. Retaining Crimea is especially important to Putin since he gained a significant public popularity from annexation of the peninsula. Moreover, it offers a vehicle for Russia to keep NATO, EU and the US out of its near abroad.

Ukraine at present lacks the political, economic, and military leverage to force a return. The most rational and feasible option is to create a condition in which Ukraine economically and democratically develops, and then attract the people in Crimea to make judgment that that their future will be better if they become part of Ukraine. To achieve this, Ukraine needs a new comprehensive reconstruction and rebuilding focus and a XXI “Century Marshall Plan”.
Some military and political aspects of Black Sea security in the light of the Russian annexation of Crimea

Dr. Iulian Chifu *

Black Sea security has changed dramatically after the annexation of Crimea by Russia, in March 2014. All bases for cooperation in the Black Sea Region were called into question after the August 2008 Russian-Georgian war, but the real dramatic change came after the annexation of Crimea and the militarization of the peninsula and of the Wider Black Sea Region as a whole. Most importantly, the level of trust fell dramatically and Russia was seen as, if not a direct enemy, a current threat for all neighboring countries in the post-soviet space. The post imperial syndrome was visible and undeniable, as was the level of ambition to control the Black Sea and have a strong foothold for projecting the force via the largest land aircraft carrier ever, Crimea itself.

“We’ve told you!” Russia’s revisionism and revanchism in the Wider Black Sea Region.

The evolution of the relations between Russia and the West, considered to be the enemy - US, NATO and the EU, in that particular order, on different concrete grounds, but without exceptions – was marked by numerous warning moments for each of the steps that came afterwards. In 2002-2003, the Arbatov Group and a number of institutional think-tanks wrote the Putin Doctrine, extracting Russia from the perspective of integration in EU and NATO, from the liberal democratic choice. Instead, it proposed the “vertical of power”, the “sovereign democracy” and the rebirth of the Big Power Policy approach of the Russian Federation.

The main aim of such policies was to discipline the Russian public space and especially the Russian economy and the harsh capitalism, as well as rebuild the post-soviet space, integrated in a different fashion, with the protection of Russians, Russian speaking people and compatriots, assumed unilaterally by the Russian Federation as a new form of interventionism and basis for its claimed sphere of influence. That was the origin of the reactions of Russia during the Russian-Georgian War, the annexation of Crimea and the military aggression of hybrid nature in Ukraine, in the Eastern regions of Luhansk and Donetsk.

We also should not forget the 2007 moment when the Russian Federation formally withdrew from the CFE Treaty. That prompted the announcement of the militarization of the flanks, the halting of retreat of the Russian forces from the Caucasus and Transnistria, according to the Annex of the OSCE final declaration of the summit in Istanbul, 1999 on the adapted CFE Treaty. That was an early warning signal for the August 2008 Russian-Georgian war, the de facto annexation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the unilateral recognition of the independence of the Georgian regions and their following militarization and inclusion in Russia’s military assets and responsibilities.

The year 2014 didn’t came only with the annexation and militarization of Crimea and with the military aggression in Eastern Ukraine, but also with the de facto annexation of the Kerch Strait, and the creeping annexation of the Azov Sea as a whole, beginning with 2018. That changed dramatically the situation in the Wider Black Sea Region and the balance of power in the Black Sea. We may add the operations that took over Ukrainian offshore drilling platforms and the military exercises announced periodically that blocked up to a quarter of the Black Sea, including the routes for transport in and out of the Odessa port, the only important waterway of Ukraine where trade fell dramatically.

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NATO - capacity to adapt and transformation power

NATO proved to have a very important capacity to adapt. Today we are still referring to the Washington Treaty in 1949, completely valid even now – just some de-colonization changes and amendments – applying it to the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, including the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. Mikhail Gorbachev announced that he is going to do the worst thing possible by leaving NATO without an enemy and claiming that NATO should dissolve too, since it doesn’t have an enemy anymore.

But the Alliance adapted, first by opening the door to the former socialist countries in Eastern Europe, introducing the Partnership for Peace in 1994 and beginning the enlargement with the former socialist states, in 1997 and 2004, including with the Baltic States. By developing a high capacity of learning assisted the member states in their effort to improve the security of their citizens and countries. In 1991, at the Rome Summit, the new Strategic Concept adopted the definition of security of the European Copenhagen School, with its five dimensions – military, political, social, economic and environmental – and three objects of securitization – the state and its institutions, the individual - the citizen, and the society.

Afterwards, in 2010, a new division emerged inside NATO- the emerging threats versus emerging challenges division. Threats coming from energy security and disruption of supply routes and the cyber space began to be studied by the group. In 2018, at the NATO summit in Warsaw, the agreement between the EU and NATO established the Center of Excellence for emerging threats in Helsinki as a main subject of cooperation along with the new Command and Control Center for Infrastructure in Germany. And nowadays, the non-conventional or unconventional threats are studied. They are related to the changes and impact of the technology on society and democracy. The main principles and values of the liberal democratic world are considered to be vulnerabilities, which could be explored and exploited through specific weapons, build by those who want to challenge the societal security and the political security using the new technologies.

This potential for adaptation and finding the new tasks helped NATO adapt and be able to face the pressure regarding its effectiveness and purpose. Member countries appreciated this development and adaptation, as well as the support given to countries beyond its border, first and foremost to partner countries, from PfP, with the DCBI – Defense Capacity Building Initiative that refers to Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia and Jordan.

The same assistance offered to different partner countries increased the profile and importance of the Alliance as well as its capacity for interoperability and operations at a strategic distance, e.g. Afghanistan, integrating in its operations the Global Partners from outside the Alliance as well as institutional partners with different structures and aims for the PRT- Provincial Reconstruction Teams, such as humanitarian institutions, NGO’s dealing with administration, police and private military companies.

Thus NATO adapted and didn’t disappear because of the acute need for defense and security assistance of the member states and of the partner countries as well as its capacity to integrate in the operation theater different categories of institutions. Nowadays, the new type of threats and NATO’s acquired know how, as well as the revival of the classical military threats maintains the utility of the Alliance and the need for its existence and further adaptation in spite of the pressure coming from different member states who want different solutions for the defense and security of Europe or the level of ambition of the Alliance.

Wider Black Sea Region: border, bridge or test case for Russia’s aggressive policies

The Wider Black Sea Region – as a strategic regional concept – has always been in the middle of a debate if we are talking about a place where we can see a bridge between different communities cultural
backgrounds and political approaches – the post-soviet space, the Russian World, the Greater Middle East and Islamic tradition and the European/NATO, Western liberal democratic values – or to the contrary, a border between the three blocks (or, at the NATO level, between the two blocks).

Now, after the Russian-Georgian War and the annexation of Crimea, we could add to this dilemma a new description, a test case for Russia’s aggressive policies. This means it’s no longer a matter of two track policy – cooperation and competition – with NATO and EU as integrative institutions, that have relations with all littoral countries and the nine countries members of the Wider Black Sea Region – three NATO countries (2 EU members and one in the accession process) Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey, three Caucasian countries, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, and three countries from Europe’s East, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and the Russian Federation. It means now three track relations between different actors - cooperation, competition and conflict, including war per se.

The test of convergence failed with the withdrawal from the CFE Treaty – which is the basis of the Russia-NATO relations, together with Helsinki principles, as is the case with the Russia-EU relations. The result is far more complicated and the system of convergence between Russia and EU/NATO and the only solution for harmonizing the positions and avoiding direct confrontation in the Black Sea and the Wider Black Sea Region comes down to the need for compromise and cohabitation.

At this point, the most important objective of Russia – besides rebuilding its former empire on different grounds and controlling the area, as well as to be recognized as a Big Power, by using power politics and military means – is the constant strategic aim to get access to the warm seas. Prompting military operations in the West and the perspective of any type of hybrid operation targeting a NATO member state could lead to a denial of passage through the straights for Russian ships. This doesn’t prevent any such operation, just offers Russia a limited capacity of action, meaning a choice between a territorial land operation and the capacity to move towards the Aegean and Mediterranean Sea.

The militarization of the Black Sea as a whole and especially Crimea led to very complicated relations between NATO/EU countries and Russia in the Black Sea. We witnessed exercises involving strategic bombers that rehearsed a scenario of bombing and blocking all NATO countries’ ports at the Black Sea, an extensive capacity building in the Black Sea and an ambitious program for rearmament with new types of weaponry. Moreover, the modern electronic warfare capabilities have been used and developed here. This included GPS jamming and GPS spoofing or harassment of NATO naval and air capabilities present in the international waters of the Black Sea.

The Black Sea - Mediterranean Sea conundrum

We also have to mention an important capacity of projecting the force in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea from a militarized Crimea which is far more militarized than what is necessary for balancing the capabilities of NATO countries in the region. Therefore we need to look at the region more and more from the angle of a conundrum Black Sea - East Mediterranean Sea in terms of balance of power, since Turkish capabilities are also spread in the three directions: Black Sea, Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean Sea.

This also leads us to the position of Turkey in the Wider Black Sea Region, as well as to the balance, or rather imbalance, of power in the space between Russia and Turkey. Turkey is a NATO ally, Romania and Turkey developed a Strategic partnership together and any reference to article 5 of the NATO treaty will find Romania as a first country to respond, to assist, and to help Turkey. Turkey has always benefited from a special status inside NATO, being a country in the forefront of the Alliance, neighbor of the Middle East and its complicated conflict-ridden evolution, Iran and the Soviet Union, now the Russian Federation.

This exceptionalism has been recognized and the support Turkey benefited from over time was important. Now, there is an excessive exploitation of this exceptionalism inside NATO and in the
relations of Turkey with the EU. This maximum exploitation of the exceptionalism it enjoys made Turkey to push the limits a little bit too far (some could claim that red lines have been crossed and ignored) and there are raising doubts whether there is no breach of the common values of the Alliance.

The relations between Russia and Turkey were characterized by a balance of power in the Black Sea, in terms Turkish and Russian capabilities in the region, but this balance shifted dramatically in Russia’s favor. The Alliance, the EU and the member states find it more and more difficult to cope with Turkey’s exceptionalism and actions, including the relations with Russia, Astana format on Syria and Turkey’s operations in North-Eastern Syria.

In spite of the 1936 Montreux Convention regarding the ships that can enter the Black Sea, there are time and time again moments when Russia is trying to revise this agreement and Turkey refuses. And since Turkey at one point shot down a Russian airplane crossing its sovereign territorial air space, and Russia’s Ambassador to Ankara was unfortunately shot and killed by a former member of Turkey’s security institutions, the complexity of the relation between Russia and Turkey also moved to the three dimensions: cooperation, competition and confrontation.

Now the conundrum Black Sea - East Mediterranean Sea is linked to military capabilities and capacity to act in the region. It refers to Russia which has build in Crimea a real “land aircraft carrier,” militarizing the annexed peninsula and using it for the projection of force in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. The same is true for Turkey, which uses its maritime forces in those two directions, Black Sea and the East Mediterranean Sea. It is also similar for the West, NATO and EU.

In fact, the strategic conundrum Black Sea - Caspian Sea refers first and foremost to the rotational presence in the Black Sea of the NATO forces, considering the provisions of the Montreux Convention which are preventing foreign troops that do not belong to littoral countries to stay more than 21 days in the waters of the Black Sea. In these conditions, the number of days that an aircraft carrier or a cruiser and a NATO naval force is present in the Black Sea has increased to about 180 days per year.

Moreover, any time that such a naval force ends its exercises and its stay in the Black Sea waters and exit the straights, in the northern Aegean Sea an aircraft carrier of the US 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean Sea takes position to offset the capabilities in the region. From there it has the capacity to take down targets in Novorossiysk, in all the parts of the Black Sea and Wider Black Sea Area. Therefore it is natural that any debate about the balance of power in the Black Sea area should refer to a larger region, hence the Black Sea - East Mediterranean Sea conundrum.

This development, as well as the balanced presence in the two tiers of the Eastern Flank, the northern part which enjoys an EFP - Enhanced Forward Presence, and the Southern part, with just a TFP - tailored forward presence, may also generate the need for a different planning in the Black Sea Area. Balance is desperately needed in the Black Sea since the new capabilities have been deployed by Russia in the region: electronic warfare, drones, hybrid and informational warfare.
CHAPTER III


Azerbaijan's contribution to the energy security of the region and Europe: expected trends

Sabit Bagirov

My report is devoted to the analysis of the contribution of Azerbaijani oil and gas resources to the energy security of the European Union. To assess the current level of this contribution, as well as possible trends in the future, it is obvious that the EU needs for hydrocarbon resources should be compared with the current and potential export opportunities of Azerbaijan.

I think that there is a reason to talk about 4 aspects of Azerbaijan's contribution in the energy security of the EU:

1) The contribution of a country exporting its oil resources to the world oil market;
2) The contribution of the country through which the transit of oil resources of other countries to the world oil market;
3) Contribution of a country exporting its gas resources to regional gas markets, including countries of the European Union;
4) The contribution of the country through which the gas resources of other countries are transited to regional gas markets, including the countries of the European Union.

To assess the current level of Azerbaijan’s contribution in each of these aspects, as well as possible future trends, it is obvious that the EU demands for hydrocarbon resources should be compared with the current and potential export opportunities of Azerbaijan, as well as potential exports of neighboring countries. We begin our analysis with the level of oil production in Azerbaijan and in neighboring countries and its surplus after deducting own consumption. Table 1 presents data on oil production and consumption in Azerbaijan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Production per day</th>
<th>Consumption per day</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>795</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>1570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>11438</td>
<td>3228</td>
<td>8210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkmenistan</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>1533</td>
<td>13302</td>
<td>-11769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>94718</td>
<td>99843</td>
<td>-5125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Mr. Sabit Bagirov is Chairman of Entrepreneurship Development Foundation in Baku. Former head of SOCAR.
As can be seen from this table, the daily average oil production in 2018 in Azerbaijan amounted to 795 thousand barrels. This table also presents oil production data from Kazakhstan, Russia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan as well as in the EU and generally in the world. Comparing these data, we can say that Azerbaijani oil production is about 2 times less than in the EU and less than 1% of world production. For Russia, this figure is above 8%. In recent years, the oil resources of Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan are being transited through the territory of Azerbaijan by a railway to the terminals on the Black Sea, as well as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline.

I should say that exactly 120 years ago, at the end of the 19th century, Azerbaijan produced half of the world's oil. Today, the scale of Azerbaijani oil reserves and its role in the global oil market is not significant. The reason, of course, is the discovery of huge oil reserves over the past 120 years in other countries as well.

Table 1 presents data on proved oil and gas reserves in Azerbaijan and in the countries of the region for 2018.

### Table 2. Total proved oil and gas reserves at end 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Oil, billion</th>
<th>Gas, trillion cubic metres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkmenistan</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>244.1</td>
<td>196.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proven oil reserves in Azerbaijan today are approximately 1 billion tons. Compared to proven world reserves, this is very small (0.41%), but nevertheless almost twice as high as in the EU. The possibility of the discovery of new large oil reserves in Azerbaijan is not great, but not equal to zero.

Proven natural gas reserves account for approximately 1.07% of global reserves, but exceed European reserves. The proven oil reserves of Azerbaijan will allow to export the excessive oil for at least another 10 years. After this period, would be difficult to predict oil exports from Azerbaijan. However, this can happen if new oil reserves are not explored.

Proven natural gas reserves account for approximately 2% of global reserves, but 54% of European reserves. Azerbaijan’s proven natural gas reserves can ensure its own gas consumption over the next at least one hundred years. Therefore, the export potential of natural gas is much higher than to oil exports. Moreover, the probability of exploring significant new gas reserves is very high than any oil reserves.

Chart 1 shows the dynamics of oil production in Azerbaijan over the past 11 years. From this graph, we can see a weak tendency of decreasing oil production. Weak dynamics of decline is explained by the fact that we recently passed peak production at the Azeri-Chirag-Gunesli (ACG) field. It can be expected that in the future the rate of decline in production will increase due to the gradual depletion of reserves in this field.
Here must be noted that the oil reserves and production in Azerbaijan before Azerbaijani independence were significantly lower than current ones. The signing of oil contracts with foreign companies has significantly increased proven reserves and oil production. The first contract with foreign companies was signed 25 years ago, on September 20, 1994. To date, the Azerbaijani government has signed 36 production sharing contracts. 17 of them are mining today. The largest contracts were signed for the Azeri-Chirag-Guneshli oil field and the Shah-Deniz gas field. Thanks to the signing of the ACG contract, the peak oil production in Azerbaijan reached almost 1 million barrels per day in 2010.

The next Table presents data on the production and consumption of natural gas in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, as well as in the EU and in the whole world.

### Table 3. Natural gas production and consumption in billion cubic meters (2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Consumption</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>18,8</td>
<td>10,8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>24,4</td>
<td>19,4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>669,5</td>
<td>454,5</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkmenistan</td>
<td>61,5</td>
<td>28,4</td>
<td>33,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>56,6</td>
<td>42,6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>109,2</td>
<td>458,5</td>
<td>-349,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>3867,9</td>
<td>3848,9</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from this table, the surplus of natural gas production in Azerbaijan in 2018 amounted to about 8 billion cubic meters. These surpluses were exported mainly to Georgia and Turkey via the South Caucasus gas pipeline extracted from the Shah Deniz field.

Russia and Turkmenistan have more significant gas export opportunities. If the project of the Trans-Caspian gas pipeline was implemented, it would be possible to export large volumes of Turkmen gas through Azerbaijan-Georgia-Turkey to the EU countries.

Chart 2 shows the dynamics of gas production in Azerbaijan over the past 10 years.
Chart 2. Gas production in Azerbaijan

Let me now remind you of a project to extract natural gas from the Shah Deniz field. Thanks to the first phase of the development of the Shah Deniz field, in recent years we have witnessed a positive trend in the production of natural gas. This slide shows the data on natural gas production over the past 11 years. If in 2008 the production amounted to 23 billion, then in 2018 it has been increased to 30.5 billion cubic meters.

Gas production growth will continue in subsequent years. This will be possible thanks to the second phase of the development of the Shah Deniz field. The reserves of this field are huge - over 1 trillion cubic meters. However, so far the real buyers of Azerbaijani gas are mainly in Turkey and partially in Georgia.

Azerbaijan also needs other buyers to sell surplus natural gas. There are no potential buyers in the south, east and north of Azerbaijan. Countries in these areas: Iran, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Russia themselves have huge reserves of natural gas. Potential buyers are only in the west of Azerbaijan. Today, Azerbaijan has reached to potential buyers in southern Italy and Greece. Also, Albania and Bulgaria show a desire to purchase Azerbaijani gas. But let's pay attention to the EU gas market. Chart 3 shows the Natural gas consumption in EU and world market.
As can be seen from this graph, over the past 10 years there has been a tendency of increased gas consumption in the world. But in Europe the opposite is true. While during these years, world gas consumption increased by 28%, in the EU it decreased by 11%. The reason for this is the result of the EU’s more than 20-year-old European policy on energy security.

Chart 4 shows the Oil consumption in EU and world market.

![Chart 4. Oil Consumption per day](image)

As can be seen from this graph, over the past 10 years, there has been a tendency of increased oil consumption in the world. But in Europe the opposite is true. While in these years oil consumption in the world has grown by 15%, in the EU oil consumption has decreased by 10%. The reason is again the result of the EU’s the same policy of enhancing the energy security in Europe.

As you know, a decrease in oil and gas consumption in Europe has become possible thanks to the use of renewable energy sources. Chart 5 shows the Renewable Consumption in EU and the World.

![Chart 5. Renewable Consumption in EU and the World.](image)

As can be seen from this slide, part of the oil and gas resources in the EU and the world are gradually being replaced by renewable energy sources. The consumption of renewable energy sources over the past 10 years in the world has grown by 2 times and in Europe by 3.5 times.

We can see a different picture (Chart 6) in countries of the region such as Turkey, Greece and Italy.
Chart 6. Natural Gas Consumption in Turkey, Greece and Italy

As can be seen from this slide, in the past 10 years, there is increased tendency of gas consumption in Turkey. In the same years, there has been a tendency of declining natural gas consumption in Italy. In Greece, consumption remains almost unchanged. There is a slight upward trend.

Azerbaijan is implementing Southern Gas Corridor Project to sell its gas to these countries, and possibly also to Albania, Bulgaria and other Balkan countries.

The Southern Gas Corridor consists of four projects:

1) Operation of Shah Deniz gas condensate field (SD1 project) and full-scale development (SD2 project);
2) Exploitation of the existing South Caucasus Pipeline (SCP) and the extension of the Azerbaijan-Georgia pipeline through the new parallel pipeline (“SCPX”);
3) Trans-Anatolian Pipeline (TANAP project) and future Shah Deniz gas transportation via Turkey;
4) The construction of the Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) and future Shah Deniz gas transportation through Greece, Albania, and the Adriatic Sea to Italy.

The sale of gas from the Shah Deniz field as part of the SD1 project began in 2006. About 11 billion cubic meters of natural gas and 50 thousand barrels of condensate per day are produced under this project. SD2 will additionally produce 16 billion cubic meters of gas and 105 thousand barrels of condensate daily. Of these 16 billion cubic meters, 6 billion will be sold in the Turkish market, the remaining 10 billion will be delivered to European consumers by TANAP-TAP pipeline.

The route of the TANAP-TAP gas pipeline is presented on the next figure.
As part of the SD2 project, gas supply to Turkey began at the end of June 2018. Gas from the Shah Deniz field will be supplied to Europe in 2020.

Thus, as a result of the full implementation of the Southern Gas Corridor project, Azerbaijan will supply 10 billion cubic meters of natural gas to the EU at the first stage and with further expansion of the project it will reach to 31 billion cubic meters (2030?), which is approximately 8% of European natural gas consumption. An additional 10-20 billion from Turkmenistan can be added to this volume in case of the implementation of the trans-Caspian gas pipeline.

Sources:

5. https://www.google.com/search?q=tap+pipeline&sa=X&biw=1536&bih=722&source=iu&ictx=1&usg=AI4_-kSML9cV-SnjTHuw4iv5cS81jMi_Kiln_jg:1570510772915&tbnid=Y_oRndSiXpu6M%252C_YoRndSiXpu6M%252C&ved=2ahUKEwjf3vDF81vIAhVB26QKHUgNAkAQ_h0wDnoECAoQCi_mgdii=nn67bNPgrr4cSpM&imgref=k4hdg1qi0WIEmM:&vet=1
Russia’s Technology of Squeezing NATO out of the Black Sea

Mykhailo Gonchar

The Black Sea Geodynamics

Three Black Sea countries are members of NATO - Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania. Their coast is 2,310 km, or 68% of the total length of the coastline of 3400 km. However, this figure does not suggest that NATO dominates or controls the Black Sea. The realities are completely different.

Having occupied and annexed the Crimean Peninsula in 2014, Russia has obtained a dominant geopolitical position in the Azov-Black Sea region. Crimea with Sevastopol, located almost in the center of the sea, is the most important zone of control of the regional space after the Black Sea straits, the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. To 333 km of its Black Sea coast (Taman-Adler), which is less than 10%, Russia has added 867 km of the Crimean peninsula. It is also necessary to take into account 210 km of the Georgian coast in the zone of Abkhazia, which is under the actual control of the Russian Federation. Thus, a total of 1,410 km of the Black Sea coast, or 41.5%, are under Russian control. Only Turkey has a greater percentage of the total length of the coastline - 50%, which moreover de facto controls the main connection of the Black Sea with the Mediterranean and World Ocean across the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles.

Against the background of internal Turkish evolution away from the democratic model of development, the Kurdish issue, as well as external problems related to Syria, Iraq, the Middle East as a whole, the Eastern Mediterranean with the development of offshore gas fields in the region, cooling-down in relationships with the US, Erdogan and Putin regimes are in dynamic rapprochement process. And it is not just that Turkey, despite US warnings, has purchased Russian S-400 air defense systems or is considering a possibility of buying Su-35 and Su-57 fighter jets. Russian-Turkish relations are much deeper and are based on long-term and prospective energy and infrastructure cooperation, an algorithm of which was set by the Putin's Russia: export traffic of oil and petroleum products from Russian ports to the Mediterranean Sea through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, the Blue Stream and TurkStream gas pipelines, Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant. Thus, in fact, the Black Sea is dominated by an informal Russian-Turkish tandem of two autocratic regimes. The Montreux Convention (The Montreux Convention Regarding the Regime of the Straits) of 1936, with its restrictions on the presence in the Black Sea of the navies of the non-Black Sea states, also contributes to the Moscow’s and Ankara’s interests, but is of concern to Tbilisi, Kyiv and Bucharest, who feel unprotected against Russian aggression against neighbors - Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014.

In the Russian-Turkish tandem, Russia plays a leading role, setting the tone for bilateral relations and influencing Turkey's relations with the US and NATO. Another NATO member, Bulgaria, has actually taken a strike-breaker stance to the Alliance and is loyal to Russia. In 2016, the Bulgarian veto effectively prevented the creation of a NATO flotilla in the Black Sea, which automatically strengthened Russian dominance. The second line of the TurkStream pipeline to Central Europe through Bulgaria has effectively become a bribe to Sofia for its loyalty to Moscow, which automatically increases Russian dominance and weakens NATO's position in the region. Thus, the geopolitical dynamics of change within the Black Sea region in recent years is not in favor of NATO and partner countries - Ukraine and Georgia. Through geopolitically motivated energy corrupt projects, Russia has effectively neutralized two NATO members - Turkey and Bulgaria.

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Provocations in the Course of Sea Breeze-2019

The chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Gen Joseph Dunford, summarizing deliberations from the September 15 NATO military committee's meeting in Slovenia, stated: "Russia is a competitor, and the NATO advantage over a resurgent Russia has eroded." [1] A striking illustration of the US General's thesis is the situation in the region of the Black Sea, where not only the advantage of NATO has declined, but Russia's advantage has occurred.

In July-August 2019, Russia imposed an unprecedented number of restrictions on the freedom of navigation in the Black Sea, an indicator of its far-reaching intentions to single-handedly control regional space. But before that, a bold and demonstrative step was taken during the traditional Sea Breeze-2019 multinational exercises, held July 1-12, in the north-western sector of the Black Sea. Before the exercises, Russia had closed an area of 8 thousand square km (see Fig. 1) and sent a vessels group there for maneuvers [2]. The Russian Defence Ministry called the actions of its ships as "a control over NATO ships" [3]. The Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation engaged for this purpose ten ships and vessels, in particular, Orekhovo-Zuevo, Mirage, Ivanovets, Naberezhnye Chelny and R-60 rocket boats, Azov and Caesar Kunikov large amphibious ships.

![Fig. 1. Map of Sea Breeze-2019 exercises taking into account the unilateral "cutting" by the Russian Federation](https://censor.net.ua/ua/n3135236)

On July 10, Smetlivy Kashin-class guided missile destroyer of the Russian Black Sea Fleet entered the closed area for navigation, where firing within the Sea Breeze-2019 exercises took place. According to the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, despite the coastal warnings for seafarers about the closure of the area for conducting international exercises, Smetlivy provoked a dangerous accident, while entering the closed area for navigation, where maritime artillery firing of the naval group of the international coalition took place (see. Fig. 2). [4]
Fig. 2. Map of the Russian Smetlivy guided missile destroyer penetration in the closed area of marine artillery firing during Sea Breeze-2019 exercises

Thus, Russia resorted to demonstrative and provocative actions to show who was a master of the Black Sea waters. It practically succeeded, because the Sea Breeze-2019 maneuver was territorially replaced, taking into account the restrictions imposed by Russia.

Control Through Restrictions

After the episode with Smetlivy, new demonstrations of power have surfaced and numerous restrictions have been imposed on the Black Sea by the Russian side. As of the third decade of July 2019, a number of navigation warnings were simultaneously issued for areas where navigation was prohibited (restricted) or danger for sailing was declared. These areas accounted for more than 24% of the Black Sea water space and covered much of the recommended maritime routes in the exclusive maritime economic zones of Ukraine and the countries of the region (see Figs. 3 and 4).

Fig. 3. Image of the traditional commercial traffic in the Black Sea
Source: http://www.shiptraffic.net/2001/04/black-sea-ship-traffic.html

Fig. 4. Image of the Black Sea with limited navigation areas imposed by Russia as of July 26, 2019
Source: Ukrainian Navy.

Initially, the focus of these restrictions was not fully understood, although the Russian side explained
them with the war games accompanied by artillery and rocket firing, as well as military training in a number of areas of the Black Sea. During the navigation monitoring in the area of responsibility of Ukrainian Naval Forces, the cases of unjustified initiation of the closure or dangerous areas for navigation by Russia were detected under the pretext of conducting military measures.

It was found that, contrary to the requirements of the 1974 International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, SOLAS-74\(^\text{185}\), the planned activities were not published in advance on the official website of the Navigation Area Coordinator, NAVAREA III\(^\text{186}\), which is the Hydrographic Institute of the Spanish Navy (Instituto Hidrográfico de la Marina)\(^\text{187}\). Namely, on the basis of information of the Coordinator, the areas are declared dangerous for navigation. At the same time, the Coordinator's position regarding the proper implementation of the SOLAS-74 norms regarding the verification of the reliability of information from the Russian Federation, timeliness of its provision, availability of factual grounds for information dissemination are of concern. For example, despite the 14 closed training and firing areas of the Black Sea Fleet (see Figure 4), there is information reported only about four of them, which were real events during the month (on the third decade of July – first and second decades of August) on the site of the press office of the Russian South Military District. However, these events were short-run:

— On July 20, the ships and coastal units of the Black Sea Fleet conducted training to combat unmanned aerial vehicles;
— On July 25, Dmitry Rogachev patrol ship carried out artillery firing in the sea area;
— On August 8, Muromets small anti-submarine ship carried out artillery firing at the air target;
— On August 9, combat units of the Black Sea Fleet missile complexes conducted training on missile strikes on naval targets\(^\text{5}\).

Therefore, the rest of the announced warnings about artillery firing, rocket launches and fleet maneuvers in the designated closed areas were merely intentions for which no appropriate action was envisaged. Therefore, information was not always sent to the NAVAREA III Navigation Area Coordinator.

It can be stated that Russia abuses the obligation of a SOLAS-74 to report potential and actual danger at sea, in particular in areas outside of its area of responsibility or beyond its jurisdiction. This demonstrates the use of this duty as a hybrid influence tool aimed at both obstructing the freedom of navigation in the Black Sea and demonstrating its ability to single-handedly set A2 / AD zones.

The consequence of the described actions could be the creation of significant obstacles to commercial navigation, fishing, use of sovereign rights of the state in the exclusive maritime economic zone, which in turn negatively affects the economy of Ukraine and its rights as a maritime nation. Such actions could also demonstrate the effect of Russia's domination on regional space. The formula for establishing control over navigation restrictions is being worked out by Russia to act on the scenario of the blockade of the north-western sector of the Black Sea, in its actions against Ukraine and Romania at a certain D-Day.

**The infrastructural basis of military expansion**

To the abovementioned, one should add another interesting feature of Russian restrictions in the Black Sea. If you combine the map of the forbidden zones with the routes of passage of the Blue Stream and TurkStream offshore gas pipelines, they largely coincide (see Figure 5)\(^\text{6}\).

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\(^{185}\) Rule 5 of Chapter 5 of Convention; of Chapter 4.2 of the Joint guidance on maritime safety information implemented under International Maritime Organization Resolution A705 (17).

\(^{186}\) NAVAREA III includes the waters of the Mediterranean, Black and Azov Seas: [http://www.armada.mde.es/ihm/Aplicaciones/Navareas/Index_radioavisos.html](http://www.armada.mde.es/ihm/Aplicaciones/Navareas/Index_radioavisos.html)

\(^{187}\) Instituto Hidrográfico de la Marina, IHM: [http://www.armada.mde.es/ihm/Aplicaciones/Navareas/Index_radioavisos.html](http://www.armada.mde.es/ihm/Aplicaciones/Navareas/Index_radioavisos.html)
The route of a potential White Stream project by which Caspian gas could enter the EU market via the Black Sea and Romania, should also be added. The project is still hypothetical, although it has been endorsed by the European Commission as a project of common interest, but has lately been updated as a part of the intercontinental route of Turkmen gas to the EU market (see Figure 6).

It should be noted that the original White Stream route had a different design - from the Georgian coast to Crimea through the shortest sea area (see Fig. 7) and the possibility to use Ukrainian gas transmission system with the prospect of its integration into the European gas market. But after Romania joined the EU in 2007 and Russia’s braking of Georgia’s and Ukraine's rapprochement with NATO and the EU, the route was adjusted to enter the EU market via Romania directly [7].
This project is considered by Russia as competitive with its "streams" (first South Stream and later TurkStream), which should bring to the European market competitive Russian gas volumes from Central Asia and the Eastern Caspian. Russia has been blocking the construction of White Stream for more than a decade, preventing the construction of the Trans-Caspian gas pipeline in the Caspian Sea. After the occupation and annexation of Crimea, it improved its ability to block alternative projects in the Black Sea. The Crimean design of the gas pipeline became impossible.

All these mean that Russia is preparing to transform the Black Sea into a zone of its own total control under the pretext of neutralizing threats to the strategically important for the Russian Federation, Turkey and Bulgaria energy infrastructure and preventing the implementation of competitive projects.

And this is not an idea coming out of today. In Russia, this is being done systematically and consistently, combining military and energy strategies. As an example, we recall an article dated back more than 20 years from now in the Independent Military Observation of Dec. 10, 1999, with the eloquent title “Fleet protecting the Blue Stream”. In particular, it emphasized that at a November 23, 1999 Security Council meeting of the Russian Federation, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin noted that “Russia is being squeezed out of the oceans” and pointed to a "deterioration of the Russian Navy's position on the Black Sea and Baltic directions” [8]. The article also stated that "the US Navy is increasingly striving to master the Black Sea Theater of War". Since Russia has begun construction of the Blue Stream gas pipeline to Turkey, it is necessary to take care of its security, as it can also be influenced by external forces, including international terrorists. The conclusion of the author of this article was that only the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation, which needs to be strengthened, can ensure the safety of the underwater gas pipeline.

To ensure the protection of critical energy and transport infrastructure in the Black Sea, in addition to the Black Sea Fleet, the Federal Guard Service of the National Guard (Rosgvardia) was involved. Thus, on June 26, 2019, a special meeting of representatives of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, ministries and agencies was held under the leadership of V. Zolotov, the Commander-in-Chief of the Troops of the Russian Guard. The meeting was devoted to the issue of ensuring the safety of the bridge over the Kerch Strait, as well as the energy bridge and the gas pipeline at the bottom of the Strait, which were laid from the Krasnodar Region to the occupied Crimea. It was determined that by the end of this year, all legislative issues should be resolved in order to "give Rosgvardia all the necessary powers." "There must be a firm belief that no craft, no unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), no swimmer or saboteur will be able to pass through the waters ..." - the meeting said, according to media reports [9]. Russia already has an excessive concentration of forces and resources not only in the Kerch Strait, but in general in the Azov-Black Sea basin. Force protection by the various Russian agencies in the area occupied by the Russian Kerch Strait is demonstrated in the media (see Figure 8).
That is, Russian security agencies are complementary in protecting critical energy and transport infrastructure, which is understandable. Obviously, this is related to the possibility of obtaining additional budget financing, but not only. Practically, this is a legal way in Moscow, a way to exert force expansion in the region under the pretext of protecting critical infrastructure “on the outskirts”.

**Dual purposes of the captured civilian marine infrastructure**

The drilling rigs of the Ukrainian state-owned company ChornomorNaftoGaz (a subsidiary of Naftogaz of Ukraine, 100% of shares), captured by the Russian Special Forces in March 2014, during the process of occupation of Crimea, became a proper playground for the Black Sea Fleet of Russian Federation to practice intelligence based signals in civilian marine infrastructure located in the north-western part of the Black Sea. Thus, as shown in the Figure 2, deployment of the surveillance systems for surface environment on the Naftogaz’s objects, captured in the exclusive maritime economic zone of Ukraine, provides Russia with almost complete control over the traffic of commercial ships and warships that head to the ports of Ukraine and in the opposite direction.
It means additional capabilities for Russia’s Black Sea Fleet of the Southern Military District to accomplish in real time following tasks:

- integrated surveillance for surface and air conditions on the line Cape Tarkhankut – Snake Island;
- control of international shipping;
- reconnaissance support for operational decisions to conduct hostilities in accordance with the tasks of the higher military command authorities.

Extractive platforms were equipped by sonar systems. Sonar system for underwater environment surveillance is designed to control the underwater environment in the area around facilities and timely detect moving underwater objects, identify their coordinates by bearing of movement parameters, convoy in the area of seized technical extraction structures in gas and gas condensate fields. This system has an ability to connect, in accordance with the information and logistics protocol, with the system for surface environment surveillance.

We can conclude that, enhancing the potential of the surveillance system for surface and underwater environment by placing the navigation radars on the fixed and floating maritime civil infrastructure objects allows not only to increase the radar field and ensure protection of these objects, but also to monitor international navigation and operations of naval vessels of other countries in north-western part of the Black Sea and provide critical information to the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation for conducting combat actions in case of setting combat tasks.

**Factor of Alexandroupolis**

Since the beginning of the 2000s, Moscow has not been wasting time both in terms of increasing its resources and strengthening its economic and political influence in the countries of the Black Sea region. Among the main tasks of the Black Sea Fleet, formulated by the Russian Ministry of Defense, are not only traditionally protecting of the exclusive maritime economic zone, ensuring the safety of navigation, but also the execution of foreign policy activities of the Russian government in economically important areas of the World Ocean.
As a result of Russia's systematic efforts, Moscow now makes the United States and NATO feel that it can not only control them but also squeeze them out of the Black Sea, which it already considers as its lake. But the biggest achievement in Russia is the neutralization of two US allies in NATO - Turkey and Bulgaria - through joint energy projects. It is practically a blurring technology, a NATO erosion by Russian efforts, both from the outside and from within the individual Allies.

By the above described actions, the Kremlin continues to examine the response of NATO and, above all, the United States, to restriction of freedom of navigation in the Azov-Black Sea basin. After all, the act of aggression against the Ukrainian vessels group in the Black Sea near the Kerch Strait on November 25, 2018 did not lead to any serious consequences for Russia. Moreover, it ignored the verdict of the United Nations International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea on the return of captured seamen and ships to Ukraine. And it was tolerated. Therefore, the Kremlin believes that it is possible and necessary to move on. At least in Putin's logic, they are demonstrating the United States and NATO that they are the host of the Black Sea, and at the very least they will be able to finally "recruit" Turkey and Bulgaria into Russia's allies in the region.

Under the pretext of protecting critical infrastructure in the Black Sea, the threats to which have been greatly exaggerated, as there has been no incident in the 17 years of the Blue Stream's operation, Russia is stepping up its capabilities. At a conceptual level, the need to strengthen protection was identified in a new document, "Doctrine of Energy Security of the Russian Federation", adopted by the decree of the President of the Russian Federation on May 13, 2019. Among other things, the Doctrine recognizes the military and political threats to energy security, for instance a sharp exacerbation of interstate relations and the creation of conditions for the use of military force [9]. In this context, the September hysteria of the Russian propagandist media about the threat, posed by the US to the TurkStream and other energy communications was not accidental [10], in case if the Greek port of Alexandroupolis after the privatization become American and American troops move there to fight against Russia.

According to Russian estimates, this will allow the United States to control maritime traffic through the Dardanelles strait to / from the Black Sea, which means at any time the opportunity to interrupt the "Syrian express" and limit the capabilities of the Russian Naval Task Force in the Mediterranean (actually the former 5th Navy Squadron, which ceased to exist after the collapse of the USSR, has been revived since 2013). “Having mastered Alexandroupolis, the US wants to put under control the Dardanelles to lock Russia in the Black Sea,” “with the acquisition of this port, NATO and the US Armed Forces can break into the Balkans within hours and easily stop Russia's trade through the Black Sea with the rest of the world, blocking the Dardanelles,” – to such conclusions came the Russian Fund for Strategic Culture after statements by the current US Ambassador to Greece and former US Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey R. Pyatt on American interest in the Greek port, after visiting Alexandroupolis together with Defence Minister of Greece Nikos Panagiotopoulos on 13 September, as was stated in the Greek newspaper interview Thraki.Net [11, 12].

It is obvious that the ambassador's emphasis on the importance of Alexandroupolis amid privatization by investors from the Russian Federation and China of two major Greek ports (controlled by the Russians, port in Thessaloniki and port of Piraeus controlled by the Chinese) could only provoke a reaction in Russia. Geoffrey Pyatt points to the critical geopolitical importance of Alexandroupolis as a gateway to the Black Sea and the Balkan region, the importance of the port as a link to European energy security, regional stability and economic growth [13]. It is important to note that, in addition to the existing Aegean LNG terminal, a floating mobile LNG reception facility (FSRU) from the United States should be available in Alexandroupolis. According to experts, US LNG and existing gas infrastructure open a window of opportunity for Southeastern Europe to use LNG and transport it in re-gasified form through the Trans-Balkan Gas Pipeline. The latter connects Greece, Turkey with Ukraine and has been the main artery for gas supplied from Russia to Bulgaria, Greece, Northern Macedonia and Turkey via Ukraine, Moldova and Romania for decades and will soon be emptied after Russia's launch of the TurkStream (see Fig. 9) [14].
Conclusions

We should have no false expectation about the Kremlin's further intentions and actions to squeeze NATO wherever possible. Therefore, while there is time, Russia should be stopped in the Baltic and the Black Seas. By stopping Nord Stream 2 and the second line of the TurkStream due to sanctions against contracting companies, the US will be able to avert a negative scenario of transforming the Baltic and Black Seas into domination areas of Russia, if there is enough political will in Washington and London. Obviously, the US has found, in a privatization deal with the port of Alexandroupolis, an adequate response to Russia's actions in Venezuela, which Moscow is trying to turn into a foothold in the American "soft subaltern" by analogy with Cuba during the Cold War.

With its permanent presence in the Eastern Mediterranean, the United States will create an umbrella for multilateral cooperation in implementation of Israel-initiated natural gas production and export projects in cooperation with Cyprus for the Leviathan and Afrodite gas fields; in cooperation with Greece and Italy - for the construction of the East Med gas pipeline to export gas to the EU, as well as for the supply of LNG from the United States for diversification of energy supplies to the Black Sea and Balkan countries. The United States are well aware that Russia will act to neutralize projects that bring competitive gas streams to the European market, and therefore acts ahead.

Washington does not seem to lack political will, despite Trump's political pirouettes. If Alexandroupolis becomes the base of the US Armed Forces, including the Navy, Russia will not be able to block the Ukrainian ports in the Azov and Black Seas and the Kerch Strait without risking the blockade of its maritime trade and "Syrian express" from the Black Sea ports. The north-eastern Aegean sector is also convenient for operating cruise missiles for targets in the Black Sea area without entering it.
Sources:
2. Sea Breeze-2019: Росія перекрила один із районів навчань. 02.07.19. Джерело: https://censor.net.ua/ua/n3135236
Current State of Transit of Oil and Gas across South Caucasus, 
Security Dimension of Caspian and Black Sea Regions

Liana Jervalidze

There are expectations that after 2025 some additional volumes of Caspian oil and significant volumes of Turkmen gas will potentially be transported through South Caucasus corridor to the market in the West. With this development, the security of this route will become critical for producers in the East as well as consumers in the West. South Caucasus and Central Asia are located in a narrow strip between south part of Russia (instable North Caucasus) and increasingly instable Middle East (Iran, Iraq and Syria) and south East Asia (instable Afghanistan and Pakistan). Who will be in charge of security of critical energy infrastructure transporting oil and gas to consumers: Regional countries themselves or regional or international multilateral security organizations such as NATO, CSTO, Shanghai Organization or US on bilateral basis?

Further deterioration of relations between US and NATO countries on the one hand and Russia and China on the other may have heavy stability and security implications on the Caspian region and wider Central Asia. It will also depend on the regional countries political elites’ wisdom and ability to conduct a well balanced regional and international policy, avoid confrontation, develop their huge resources and ship them through stable and predictable transit routes to the most advanced and wealthy world markets.

Georgia’s Position on Transit

Georgia is located on the shore of the Black Sea and together with Azerbaijan and Turkey plays a natural Bridge for transportation of oil and gas between consumers in the West (EU and US) and producers in Azerbaijan, Central Asia and Iran. Georgia has no significant oil, gas, metal or other resources and considers its transit position as a driver for economic development and warrant for stability and security. Georgia is an associated member and has signed DCFTA with the EU. In addition Georgia has signed a free trade Agreement with China and has been engaged in negotiations to conclude free trade agreement with its main strategic partner - the United States as well. These agreements are expected to improve Georgia’s trade balance and contribute to increased transit of goods and commodities from China and wider South East Asia to the West and vice versa across Georgia –Azerbaijan, Black and Caspian Sea transportation network. Georgia is a stable, open democracy and has a good record of fighting mismanagement and corruption. Furthermore Georgia is a leader country in the region in WB and other institutions ratings for freedom of start up and doing business in the country.

Georgia is a close NATO partner country, hosts military drills on a regular bases and participates in NATO PFP operations. Thus, Georgia from a security recipient has evolved into security contributor country. What are the implications of these achievements on Georgia’s transit positioning and regional security?

Current State of Georgia-Azerbaijan-Turkey Transit Bridge

Oil

Georgia hosts two oil pipelines transporting Azerbaijani oil:

- Baku-Supsa pipeline with outlet on the Black Sea - operational since 1998 and with a capacity of 5 mln tons pa
- Baku-Tbilisi-Jeyhan pipeline with outlet on Turkey’s port Jeihan on the Mediterranean Sea and with a capacity of 50 mln tons pa.

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Attempts to attract oil from Kazakhstan and other producers on the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea failed. BTC and Baku-Supsa oil pipelines have never reached the designed capacity loads as investors in the eastern Caspian prefer to use the Russian route to Novorossiysk instead. Georgia has no provision of use or pay on these pipelines and losses projected income as a result of defected transit fees. Hopes for attracting some Kazakh oil after 2022 still exist, pending on market conditions (demand) indeed.

**Natural Gas**

Unlike oil, reserves of which are significant but not as large as those of ME, the Caspian and wider Central Asia possess huge gas resources: Azerbaijan – 2, 2 trillion m3, Turkmenistan – 19,5 trillion m3, Iran- 31,9 trillion m3.

Gas resources of Azerbaijan have limited access to EU market while Iranian and Turkmen gas is excluded from EU market at all. In Azerbaijan, Shakh Deniz consortium and SOCAR have invested US $40 bln in upstream (SD 2), midstream projects- SCP expansion and TANAP, that have been completed in 2018. However, there are some questions whether TAP will be commissioned in 2020 as scheduled due to the delay of permissions and constructions works in Italy. Designed capacity of SCP, TANAP and TAP is about 24 bln m3 expendable to 30 bcm, while current purchase agreements have been signed only with Turkey for 6 bcm, and the companies in EU for 10 bcm. If no new purchase contracts signed South Caucasus Corridor load will be limited to about half of its designed capacity to 16 bcm, porting projected income losses to producers in Azerbaijan and Georgia as a transit country.

Furthermore, fines may be imposed on TAP consortium if the gas pipeline construction works are not completed according to the timeline.

**Sources of Load of South Caucasus Gas Corridor**

**Azerbaijan and Iran:** South Caucasus gas corridor can be loaded to its designed capacity 24-30 bcm pa by additional Azerbaijani gas, produced in deep water offshore on the fields of Absheron, Shafag-Asiman, Unid-Babek, Karabakh as others, or Turkmen and Iranian gas. Producers in deep water Azerbaijan need gas purchase agreements with consumers as incentives to invest more in above mentioned fields, produce gas and load South Caucasus gas corridor. There are no such agreements seen yet.

Given sanctions pressure re-imposed on Iran by Trump administration Iranian gas will find it extremely difficult to reach the market in EU in the medium term. The Turkmen gas has better prospects in this regard.

**Turkmenistan:** Turkmenistan possesses huge gas resources. It has been large gas producer under USSR and continues to be so after independence. Turkmenistan inherited a well developed gas transport network from USSR and has built three new gas pipelines to China and two to Iran after independence. Despite huge resources and well developed gas transport infrastructure Turkmenistan’s major gas exports
go to China (reached 36 bcm pa in 2018), small to Russia (about 3-5 bcm through a midterm contract) and about the same volumes to Iran through gas to product swaps arrangement. In addition to it, Turkmenistan potentially could export more than 60 bcm (EU- 30 bcm via Trans-Caspian pipeline) towards the west and the east (TAPI- Afghanistan-Pakistan-India-33 bcm) if the market available. However TAPI is delayed due to instability in Afghanistan and the building of Trans-Caspian continues to depend on domestic gas regulations in Turkmenistan as well as the market access conditions to EU. Turkmenistan has reiterated its full support to Trans-Caspian gas pipeline and has been participating in the Ministerial Advisory Committee Meetings from the very beginning. The EU commission, on its part, has been very actively engaged in assisting the partners- Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan - to find mutually acceptable solution to the problems on the way of building the Trans-Caspian gas pipeline. Indeed, the EU commission itself cannot build the pipeline but can offer framework for its building. And most importantly, the commission is a better than any other source for gas demand and market access conditions in EU in the coming years (third energy package).

**EU Gas Market**: currently the gas market in EU is oversupplied and over contracted until 2025. There are historical suppliers like Algeria, Norway, Russia and Qatar, and new suppliers like West and East Africa and US LNG. After 2025, the gas demand is expected to increase pending on a number of conditions, namely: declining indigenous gas production in Holland and North Sea, climate policy and the gradual phase out of coal and outdated nuclear power generation in Germany, France, Belgium, Sweden and other EU countries. Thus, if the countries decide to reduce the share of coal and nuclear in power generation due to reason of climate and problems of nuclear waste disposal and management, there will be a significant resurgence of gas demand in the EU market. And the Caspian and Central Asia including Iran shall have to be ready to fill the supply gap. For this to happen all blockages on the way of Trans-Caspian and Turkmen (and possibly Iranian) gas exports through South Caucasus corridor should be removed.

Good news in this regard is recent rapprochement between Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan. In November 2018, during President Aliyev’s visit to Turkmenistan, Azerbaijani and Turkmen presidents have signed a strategic partnership agreement. In October 2019, Azerbaijani state oil company SOCAR and its trading branch have opened an office in Ashgabat. This step demonstrated the parties’ will to develop joint projects and increase trade turnover in the coming years. SOCAR has already been the main buyer and seller of Turkmen oil products through its Khulevi terminal on the Black Sea in Georgia.

**Turkmenistan’s Position on Gas Production and Export**: In the context of market driven conditions (oversupplied, over contracted market) transnational oil and gas companies have many different options in terms of where to go, invest, produce and sell its gas. Turkmenistan’s domestic gas

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**188** Fifth Ministerial Advisory Committee Meeting was held in Baku in February 2019
regulations do not allow access of these companies in gas production – upstream. Instead of PSAs, the majors have been offered service or risk service contracts that failed to attract majors so far. Furthermore, Turkmenistan is reluctant to take gas transit risk beyond its territory and offers potential consumers in the west (Majors) to buy gas at the border on the Caspian Sea. Both positions of Turkmen authorities (on access to upstream and sell gas on the country’s border), have controversial implications on the building of Trans-Caspian gas pipeline.

Until recently the absence of the Convention on the Status of Caspian Sea was viewed as a major problem for building the Trans-Caspian gas pipeline (in addition to Turkmen position on access to upstream and transit). On August 12, 2018 in the Kazakh city of Aktau five Caspian littoral countries have signed the convention on the Status of the Caspian Sea that is designed to fill the legal gap. Currently, four Caspian littoral countries have already ratified the convention. Recently Iran has started the ratification procedure, when the last ratification certificate submitted to the depositary in Kazakhstan, the Convention will enter into force.

The Convention on the Status of the Caspian Sea

What does the Convention say about the building of Trans-Caspian oil and gas pipelines?

Article 14 of the Convention stipulates that: “opposite to each other littoral countries can build export pipelines linking their respective networks across the Caspian Sea, subject to international environment standards. They agree between themselves and inform other littoral countries on the route of such pipelines. But all littoral countries’ respective authorities shall have to be engaged in defining, issuing and supervision of environmental impact assessment during the process of the building such pipelines”.

The Convention does not address the issue of delimitation in the south of the Caspian Sea and leaves it at discretion of Azerbaijan, Iran and Turkmenistan to resolve their differences. Thus, the agreements on delimitation in southern Caspian Sea have yet to come. Also the Convention suggests that disputed fields in the offshore of the Caspian Sea be developed jointly in accordance to international experience and practice.

Thus, the main obstacle for the building of Trans-Caspian gas pipeline is removed. Now it depends on Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, the EU Commission and transnational energy companies how quick and efficient they will be in agreeing on mutually acceptable production, transit and marketing modalities.

There are expectations that after 2025 some additional volumes of Caspian oil and significant volumes of Turkmen gas will potentially be transported through South Caucasus corridor to the market in the West. With this, the security of this route will become critical for producers in the East as well as for consumers in the West. South Caucasus and Central Asia are located in a narrow strip between south part of Russia (instable North Caucasus) and increasingly instable Middle East (Iran, Iraq and Syria) and south East Asia (instable Afghanistan and Pakistan). Who will be in charge of security of critical energy infrastructure transporting oil and gas to consumers: Regional countries themselves? Regional or international multilateral security organizations NATO, CSTO, Shanghai Organization or US on bilateral basis?
Security of Critical Infrastructure Initiative

Security of critical infrastructure has become a major issue of international politics after 9/11 terrorist attack in the US. In 2002, the US Department of Defense initiated critical infrastructure information program under Critical Infrastructure Information Act. This initiative was upheld by NATO members in 2006 Riga Summit when they initiated the program on energy security which included security of supplies as well as infrastructure security.

At the Riga summit, Heads of States and Governments called for a “coordinated, international effort to assess risks to energy infrastructures and promote energy infrastructure security”. The North Atlantic Council, NATO’s governing body, was tasked with “defining those areas where NATO may add value to safeguard the security interests of the Allies and, upon request, assist national and international efforts”. A Task Force has been appointed to deal with these matters. The issue of defense of critical infrastructure has become especially urgent in 2014 when Russia occupied Crimea and intensified Russia military activities in Eastern Mediterranean and Syria.

Regional Security Modalities in the Caspian Sea and Wider Central Asia

The Convention on the Caspian Sea - Regional Security Implications of the convention: The Convention on the Caspian Sea prohibits the emergence and presence of military forces of non- littoral countries on the land, in the air and on the sea in the Caspian region. Fourfold security arrangements, namely US led NATO PfP program, Russia led CSTO, Shanghai Organization and US bilateral cooperation with five Central Asia countries on security and defense building overlap in the Caspian region and wider Central Asia and sometimes contradict each other.

1. NATO PfP Program: All FSU countries are members of NATO PfP and maintain various level of cooperation with the alliance. The PfP is a program of practical bilateral cooperation between NATO and its partners. It allows the partners to choose their own priorities for cooperation. Partners from Central Asia cooperate on defense planning and reforms while Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia contribute to RSM and related Trust Fund in Afghanistan. Georgia is one of the alliance’s closest partners and aspires to join NATO. The country actively contributes to NATO-led operations worldwide. Georgia’s contribution to RSM is second largest after that of US.

2. Russia led Collective Security Treaty Organization: regional defense and security organization with Armenia, Byelorussia, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Russia and Tajikistan (Uzbekistan a founding member suspended membership in 2012) as members. CSTO have physical presence in the region and conduct military drills on a regular basis to increase interoperability among member states.

3. Shanghai Organization led by Russia, China and India with members Kazakhstan,

\[^{189}^1\] In 2019 Wayne A. Schroeder has published a research study on the role of NATO in filling the gap in the defense of critical energy infrastructure.
Kirgizstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Recently started conducting military drills in the region covering southern part of Russia and Central Asia.

4. Bilateral security and defense cooperation with US: In July 2017 Kazakhstan has signed a new five year military cooperation agreement with US for 2018-2022. US have been assisting with security and defense building to other Central Asian countries as well, especially in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

Thus the countries of Central Asia and Caucasus have been driven by various bilateral and multilateral regional and international security and defense organizations involving such controversial regional and international players as US, Russia, NATO and China (as a main economic power in the region).

Further deterioration of relations between US and NATO countries on the one hand and Russia and China on the other may have heavy stability and security implications on the Caspian region and wider Central Asia. It will also depend on the regional countries political elites’ wisdom and ability to conduct a well balanced regional and international policy, avoid confrontation, develop their huge resources and ship them through stable and predictable transit routes to the most advanced and wealthy world markets.
PERMANENT monitoring mission

In the Black sea, the Kerch strait and the Sea of Azov (BlackSeaMoM)

The security situation in the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov and Kerch Strait has deteriorated sharply as a consequence of Russia’s actions in the region, with effect from early 2018. This has resulted in an economic and transport blockade of Ukraine’s Azov maritime coast. The situation reached a crisis point on 25 November 2018 when Russian forces attacked Ukrainian ships in the Black Sea during their peaceful return from the Kerch Strait area to the port of Odesa. In this unprovoked and unlawful attack, Ukraine’s vessels were seized and 24 Ukrainian servicemen were captured and further detained in violation of the customary international law and UN Law of the Sea Convention, namely Russia disregarded the basic principle of the immunity of warships and servicemen onboard. The captured servicemen are now unlawfully incarcerated in Russian prisons where we consider them to be Prisoners of War (POWs).

This flagrant act of aggression calls for an urgent and robust international response that will

- restore freedom of navigation through the Kerch Strait and which will
- discourage Russia from pursuing new, opportunistic actions in the wider waters of the Black Sea which risk conflagration of the situation across a broader region.

These two goals would constitute a core mandate for a permanent international monitoring mission - BlackSeaMoM.

The objectives of BlackSeaMoM would be to:

- continuously monitor the situation in the Kerch Strait, the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea (security and freedom of navigation), establishing facts and assessing the adherence of UNCLOS and the 2003 Ukrainian-Russian Treaty on the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait;
- provide recommendations aimed at de-escalation, halting and preventing Russia’s violations and intimidation practices, and monitor their implementation (including in the context of updating of the sanctions policy).

Given the inadmissibility of monitors to the Kerch Strait and Ukraine’s territorial sea around Russian-occupied Crimea, the naval component of the Mission might be deployed outside the 12-mile zone from the Crimean coastline in the Black Sea and the Azov Sea.

Mr. Volodymyr Dziub is first secretary at the Embassy of Ukraine in Ankara.
The Mission would likely have at its disposal the following: OSINT, satellite imagery, vessel tracking; information from captains, vessel owners, flag state authorities; information from Ukraine and other maritime states; direct deployment of monitors (NATO/EU/Ukrainian/media) on Ukrainian and foreign vessels during their passage through the Kerch Strait.

The Mission’s ability to provide first-hand reporting and fact-based evidence would be a valuable source of information that can positively feed into a range of relevant fora including the Normandy Four, EU Foreign Affairs Council, North Atlantic Council, NATO-Ukraine Commission and OSCE Permanent Council.

The Mission would act with due respect to the status of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, recognizing these as Ukrainian territory according to international law, UNGA Resolutions and Ukrainian legislation.

Any proposed Russian participation in monitoring as a Mission Member would be inappropriate due to its aggressive actions to date, its persistent policy of discrediting all de-escalation initiatives and its continuous violations of international law in the region. We must avoid jeopardizing the Mission’s capacity to collect and analyze credible and objective information and its ability to propose evidence-based recommendations. These objectives would not be viable if Russia participated in the Mission.

Possible modalities and contributors: the mission would be initiated by the EU/NATO or the group of Black Sea maritime states. Vessels with monitors onboard would be deployed on a rotation basis in the Black Sea international waters and in the Sea of Azov. During rotation, vessels would pass through the Western part of the Black Sea, adjacent to the occupied Crimea, to monitor the situation there.

Plans on strengthening NATO’s naval presence in the Black Sea might be considered at the same time.

A network of contact points under Naval Forces of the relevant maritime states (Ukraine, Georgia, Romania, Turkey, Bulgaria) with headquarters in Odesa could be established.
Russia’s hybrid war in Ukraine

Serhii Dzherdzh*

Russia violated numerous international agreements, covertly attacked Ukraine and occupied a part of Ukrainian territory. It is a new hybrid type of war with the following features:

- Artificially created ideological problems, the necessity to protect allegedly oppressed Russian-speaking population of Ukraine from attacks of mythical Bandera which are used as an excuse for military intervention.
- People’s consciousness is distorted by Russian propaganda. Fed by Russian money, these people consequently are being used as a living shield for Russia during their combat operations.
- On the east part of Donetsk and Luhansk regions there are special commando units, armed terrorist groups which were formed from Russian citizens and local collaborators and handled by the Russian military.
- Russian cynical and brutal war against Ukraine is based on deception, on the invasion of troops without a declaration of war, on the use of Special Forces of the army. However, such multi-vector aggression is denied by Russia officially.

Russia has deployed on the occupied areas more tanks and APCs than Germany, Italy and Greece have in their arsenal. More than 13,000 Ukrainians killed, tens of thousands injured. 1 million 400 thousand IDPs left the occupied territories for other parts of Ukraine. 700 hectares of land are mined. According to the UN, it will take about $800 million and up to 50 years for demining efforts.

In our opinion the biggest problem of Russia’s invasion in the Crimea, Luhansk and Donetsk is a threat of a nuclear war and the nuclear armament. It must be noted that in accordance to the Budapest Memorandum, Russia, USA, UK as well as France and China acted as the guarantors of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. But Russia's aggression has clearly demonstrated how international guarantees work. Unless the United States, Britain, France and China ensure the territorial integrity of Ukraine, it will be a clear message to all the countries of the world that the idea of nuclear disarmament is a unilateral act with disastrous consequences for a country. In other words, all treaties, agreements and principles of international cooperation, which have been concluded for decades by the UN, OSCE, EU and NATO, could be totally discredited. There could be only one valid principle – the use of force. Therefore, nowadays the numbers of previously hesitant countries believing in the expediency of nuclear weapons development are increasing. Russia’s actions in Ukraine convinced many countries of the necessity to develop nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction. Thus, we will soon witness the increased number of nuclear powers in the world. It is quite obvious that if conflicts are not resolved

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by political means, respectively, there will be a significant rise of possibility for the use of nuclear weapons. And that can lead to all-out nuclear war, the destruction of life in our planet. The way what Russia, Kremlin is doing today is a risk of leading our planet to a destructive direction.

The very meaning of the war is changed. Roar of cannons and bombs is replaced by informational and psychological warfare. Russian media is deliberately poisoning the minds of Russian and Ukrainian peoples, using deception, manipulation and pressure on the subconscious mind. Taking into consideration the previous historical experiences in Europe on the eve of Second World War, it is vital for all the countries to promote democratic values, to cooperate in order to resist Russia’s ambitions.

Information warfare and hot war are two sides of the same coin. It is not yet clear, which side is more important. In Russia, the whole information strategy has been subjected to one intention and one decision-making centre, and it acts in combination with other factors including military power, economic pressure and energy blackmail of Russia.

Almost all the rhetoric in the Russian media is anti-Ukrainian and the propaganda machine is using new techniques and in some cases successfully. Ukraine is never mentioned as a subject of international law in Russia. Calls for extermination of Ukrainians are being broadcasted by Russian TV channels by selected propagandists close to the ruling elite. Their main theses are the following: all post-Soviet countries are not able to survive on their own, and they cannot live without the help of Russian Federation.

Some European politicians, including French President Macron, claim to build Europe from Lisbon to Vladivostok. However, Russia is building its own Europe from Vladivostok to Lisbon. Imposing their own mentality, disrespect for the individual rights, totalitarian thinking and despotism, it conducts wars, intimidation and blackmailing. It interferes in elections, finances radical right and left parties, bribes politicians, creates problems with migrants, using energy resources for blackmailing.

Today, President Zelensky is reassessing the importance of the Normandy meeting. The Frank-Walter Steinmeier formula is also controversial and there are different interpretations for peace process in the region. We, first see the de-occupation, the withdrawal of Russian troops, the control of the Russian-Ukrainian border by Ukraine, the establishment of a peaceful life and then conducting elections to local councils. Russia wants to hold elections first in the presence of Russian fighters and then to consider the possibility for withdrawal of troops.

It is obvious that Russia wants here the scenario of Crimea 2. The Kremlin is planning to hold legitimate elections in the rebel held area and then to incorporate the Donbas into Russia, using the “legitimate” local councils. If such plans fail then the next scenario would be influencing on Ukrainian policy of integration into European and Euro-Atlantic institutions via these enclaves.

Ukraine believes that no elections in the presence of Russian troops and terrorists elements are
possible and could be free as they have only spread hatred to Ukraine to keep these territories under their control. These forces financed and armed by Russia killed civilians, tortured patriots, rob and intimidated the local population in Crimea, Luhansk and Donetsk. Ukraine, as a country that respects itself and cares about its safety should cooperate with NATO in order to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Nowadays the process of Ukrainian NATO integration is supported by a huge amount of the population.

We are destined to fight for our freedom and independence as our ancestors did before. Realizing what is happening in Ukraine now, we can better understand what happened in Georgia, Azerbaijan and Moldova over the past years with their violent separatist elements supported by Russia.

In order to resist Russia, we are in the process of transformation and intensification of special services and military forces. The country is mobilized. Citizens are resisting. The occupiers will be swept away from the Ukrainian lands.
Ensuring gender equality in the security and defense sector and in law enforcement agencies is an important element for achieving peace and security. Ukraine has signed several international documents on gender equality, in particular Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Declaration, and UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (so called Istanbul Convention) was signed in 2011 but not ratified yet by Ukrainian parliament.

At the national level, gender equality is guaranteed by the Constitution of Ukraine, The Labour Code and several specific laws. In addition, Ukraine adopted the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, Security based on UN SCR1325 implementation, State Social Program on ensuring equal rights and opportunities for men and women, and National Action Plan to implement CEDAW Committee Concluding Observations. Moreover, Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine has put together Action Plan on Gender Policy Implementation.

EU-Ukraine Association Agreement gave a new impetus to the Ukrainian gender policy development. Promoting a more active involvement of women in the security and defense sector and peacekeeping activities became one of the priorities. Thereby, restrictions to hold 63 combat staff positions were lifted for female military personnel serving under contracts, and access to education in military lyceums was opened for girls. Shortly after, another 450 positions in construction, oil and gas production, chemical production were made accessible for women. Among others, women got an opportunity to be employed as firefighters and divers.

In 2015, a serious reform process was launched within the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine. The law enforcement system was significantly reconfigured, and for the first time a comprehensive gender-based approach was included in the ongoing security sector reform. As a person who began her career in law enforcement in 2011, I witnessed how women’s contribution to policing, rescuing, conflict prevention, and peacekeeping was recognized step by step. As a result, women comprise up to 25% of personnel in various law enforcement agencies in Ukraine.

Empowering women in security and defense sector and increasing their participation at all levels is a must for every country that seeks sustainability. It is obvious now that gender inequality and discrimination lead to a gender-based violence. Here, in Ukraine, there is a demand for gender equality as an integral human rights component. However, we still lack a coherent mechanism of a large-scale gender equality implementation which impacts all levels.

Meanwhile, the NGO sector became an important actor of gender policy shaping. In 2017, Ukrainian Association of Women in Law Enforcement (UAWLE) was launched. I have an honor to be one of its board members.

The Association brings together women and men from various law enforcement agencies and institutions of higher education under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Our mission is to promote equal rights and opportunities for women and men within law enforcement agencies of Ukraine. One of Association’s main functions is to create a network of law enforcement representatives throughout

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Ukraine for establishing a dialogue and sharing ideas. Together we strive to create a supportive environment for everyone in law enforcement.

We also seek to strengthen the voice of women in law enforcement agencies, promoting their credibility and increasing trust in their capabilities. We want as many women as possible in law enforcement agencies to develop their leadership skills and grow professionally.

To conclude, my deepest belief is that everyone needs to be seen and heard. Gender-based approach can be a useful tool to meet these needs by making people visible.
Changing security dynamics of Black Sea and Caspian Basin countries in light of their Partnership policy with NATO and other international players