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The Republic of Moldova and NATO – an Ambiguous Relationship

By: Dr. Anneli Ute Gabanyi

When the NATO member states discussed the possibility of a new round of enlargement at the recent summit of the alliance held in Bucharest this spring, the Republic of Moldova, accounting for almost 500 km of the Eastern border of NATO and EU, was not among the applicants for membership. In order to cope with its precarious security environment and the continuing presence of Russian (formerly Soviet) troops on its territory and struggling for autonomy inside the Community of Independent States CIS, Moldova opted for the constitutional status of permanent neutrality. As a member of NATO's Partnership for Peace program and working on the implementation of an Individual Partnership Plan Action, the country has opted for enhanced relations with the Alliance and for a security sector reform based on Euro-Atlantic standards. At the present stage, a debate is being waged inside Moldova and with its partners in NATO on the compatibility between neutrality and Euro-Atlantic integration.

Weak State at Strategic Crossroads

The Republic of Moldova, stretching over an area of 33,8 square km, and inhabited by a population of 3,93 million (out of which 537,000 in Transnistria) - is the successor state of the former Moldovan Socialist Soviet Republic which declared its independence on 27 August 1991 from the Soviet Union. Having formed a part of the Romanian principality of Moldova for many centuries, the territory of the present Republic of Moldova was occupied by tsarist Russia in 1812. Following the collapse of Tsarist Russia the territory called "Bessarabia" joined the Romanian Kingdom in 1918. Once more occupied and annexed by the Soviet Union in 1940 under the secret protocol to the Molotov-Ribbentrop-Pact, Bessarabia was re-conquered by the Romanian troops in June 1941, but re-integrated into the Soviet Union under the 1947 Paris Peace Treaty.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Socialist Soviet Republic of Moldova declared its independence on 27 August 1991.

To date, the Republic of Moldova is considered a weak state with arbitrarily drawn frontiers and a defective national identity. Devoid of energy resources and with an economic structure highly dependent on Russian deliveries and export markets, Moldova has been exposed to strong economic and political pressure from Moscow since achieving independence in 1991. Following initial efforts at reform which had earned it membership in the WTO (in 2001), Moldova was adversely affected by the 1998 economic crisis in Russia; it is currently leading the list of the poorest nations in Europe. Poverty and the collapse of the state welfare systems have caused a severe social crisis, prompting a considerable number of able-bodied citizens to leave the country in search of labour abroad. However, the presence of the Russian troops stationed in Transnistria represents the main threat to Moldova's independence, its territorial integrity and its freedom of manoeuvre in international affairs. Russia continues to use its military presence in the eastern region of Moldova to put pressure on - and gain control over Moldova's domestic and foreign policy and to prevent it from drawing closer to EU and NATO.

Transnistria – a Russian Conflict by Proxy

Despite its important geo-strategic location close to the mouths of the Danube and to the Black Sea, on a historic fault-line between Europe and Asia, East and West, the Euro-Atlantic community treated the newly independent Republic of Moldova with "benign neglect". It was not until the 1999 Kosovo crisis and the subsequent worsening of NATO-Russian relations that the geo-strategic importance of South-Eastern Europe was recognized by Western politicians. Moldova has since become an important piece in the geopolitical rivalry between of Russia's neo-hegemonial strategy, aimed at regaining influence in it's "near abroad", and EU and NATO policies designed to project stability and security into their immediate neighbourhood. For Nicolae Chirtoaca, Moldova's ambassador to the US and a prestigious political-military analyst, letting the situation in Moldova deteriorate further bears considerable security risks for the Euro Atlantic community: "Over the past years with little

international notice and even less action, the situation in the Transnistrian part of Moldova controlled by the pro-Russian separatists has degraded to the point of challenging the security interests and democratic values of the enlarged Euro-Atlantic community" .

Other than the Western powers, Russia has traditionally attributed a great geo-strategic importance to the Danube-Black Sea region. Since the end of World War II, the 14th Army of the Soviet Union was stationed there to conduct possible military actions in the South-Western theatre of war. According to the former commanding General of the 14th army Alexander Lebed, Transnistria is "Russia's key to the Balkans" and "a strategic crossroad between Ukraine, Romania and the Black Sea. If Russia were to leave this area, it would lose its influence in the entire region ." In order to preserve this important military foothold and to maintain political control over the area, the Soviet (and later the Russian) leadership resorted to the classical strategies of military occupation and separatism.

In Moldova as well as in other strategically important former Soviet republics, the new independent government got under pressure from separatists in its eastern province of Transnistria. During the brief war of secession that broke in March 1992 the Transnistrian paramilitary forces, supported by troops and military infrastructure provided by the 14th Army prevailed . The conflict in Transnistria was not, as claimed by the Russian leadership, an ethnic conflict, but a political conflict "by proxy" triggered and instrumentalized by Moscow in its attempt to forego a withdrawal of its military forces from this strategically important "flank" area on former Soviet territory. Despite pressure from Western CSCE/OSCE member states urging Russia to withdraw its forces from Transnistria, and a temporary commitment by Russia to do so, it has now become obvious that the Moscow leadership was never willing to accept a negotiated solution that would have meant giving up its hold on Transnistria. Instead, by the end of 2007, Russia suspended its obligations on the CFE treaty.

Moldova's Relations with NATO

Despite its commitment to permanent neutrality, the Republic of Moldova joined the NATO Partnership for Peace Program on 16 March 1994. Its

Individual Partnership Program (IPP) was drafted in 1995, focussing on disarmament and arms control, civil protection, crisis prevention and management, peacekeeping, and personnel training. Moldova's avowed interest in participating in the PfP process was the strengthening of political dialogue and practical cooperation with NATO as a means of enhancing Moldova's security, modernizing and reforming the country's defence system in keeping with Euro Atlantic standards and enhancing Moldovan capacities for participation in peacekeeping operations.

In May 2005, shortly after having been elected for a second term at the parliamentary elections, the initiative of concluding an Individual Partnership Action Plan IPAP with NATO was launched. The plan was adopted by the Moldovan government in June 2006. Over its implementation, however, relations between NATO and Moldova - once called "ambiguous" by NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer - seem to be deteriorating. There seems to dissatisfaction on both sides. NATO officials have problems with Moldova's "neutrality status and the hostility of the ruling Communist party vis-à-vis the Alliance" , whereas Moldovan public opinion seems disappointed about the low level of NATO involvement in the solution on the Transnistrian conflict.

Moldova's Neutrality Concept

Moldova's neutrality concept is basically defensive, conceived as an instrument to be used against the presence of Russian troops on its territory. Moreover, it has served the country as an argument against greater involvement into the military structures of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) which Moldova had officially joined in 1994. When the Moldovan President signed the Alma Ata Declaration on the formation of the CIS in December 1991, he did so upon Western "recommendations". According to Moldova's President Mircea Snegur, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank promised economic assistance to Moldova in exchange for the government's signing the CIS document. Moreover, when visiting the Republic of Moldova in February 1992, US Secretary of State James Baker made it clear that: "We all want to see the Republic of Moldova as a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States."

The text of the Moldovan Constitution adopted in July 1994 stipulates the country's "permanent neutrality" (Article 11/1). It can only be revised by referendum based on the majority of registered voting citizens" (Article 142). The constitutional text does not provide a precise definition of the Moldovan concept of permanent neutrality, insisting on one single aspect of it – Moldova's "not admitting the stationing of any foreign troops on its territory" (Article 1/2). In 1995, the Chisinau Parliament adopted the Foreign Policy Concept, the National Security Concept and the Military Doctrine providing further details on the Moldovan neutrality concept. According to these acts, Moldova permanent neutrality means that the country will not get involved in armed conflicts, not participate in political, military or economic alliances having as a goal to prepare for war, not permit the use of its territory for aggressive actions or for the stationing of foreign troops (with the exception of peacekeeping contingents envisaged in international agreements), not produce or store weapons of mass destruction or permit the deployment, transport and storage of on its territory and not be the first to initiate hostilities. Moreover, Moldova's concept of permanent neutrality upholds the principle of maintaining armed forces safeguarding defence sufficiency.

2008 – a Crucial Year for NATO-Moldovan Relations?

Among the decisions facing NATO over the months to come is not only the possible option for a new round of enlargement, but also the threat posed by Russia's linking Kosovo's secession from Serbia with the separatist conflicts in Transnistria and Abkhazia. What if Moscow were to rekindle the temporarily frozen conflict in Transnistria? How would NATO react, what is it prepared to do? What if the illegal Transnistrian decides to secede from Moldova following the Kosovo model? A use of force by Moldova in such an event would be extremely unlikely, since the Moldovan armed forces are clearly inferior to those of the Trans-Dniester Republic, which—as in 1992—can rely on Russian support. The government in Chisinau would be confronted with a fateful decision: either to accept the territorial loss and continue its policies of gradual rapprochement to the Euro-Atlantic organizations — or to reunite with the breakaway Trans-Dniester Republic and return to the Russian sphere of influence.

In 2006 Moldova's President Vladimir Voronin, acting upon EU advice, sought to resume the political dialogue with Moscow which was interrupted in 2003. He presented Russia's President Vladimir Putin with a plan for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. In exchange for Russian withdrawal of troops from Transnistria, Voronin offered to grant broad autonomy to the breakaway Republic, stick to the country's neutrality status and renounce the NATO option for Moldova as a whole. By doing so, the Moldovan President, who cannot serve a third term, is trying to position his communist party for the 2009 elections, presenting it as "the only party fighting for the country's reintegration and independence and for solving the Transnistrian conflict ." As opposed to the Communists, Christian Democrats and Liberals in Moldova support NATO integration. Moreover, a considerable segment of the new Moldovan generation shows awareness of the negative consequences of neutrality in the present security environment and are also pleading for a closer association with NATO.

By the end of 2007, the implementation of the Individual Partnership Action Plan and its main objectives - security sector reform, democratic control of the armed forces, the fight against terrorism and organized crime – by the Moldovan authorities, met with thinly veiled criticism from NATO Headquarters and harsh reactions at home. Radu Gorincioi, the director of the new NATO Information and Documentation Centre opened in Chisinau in June 2007, called on the Moldovan authorities to end their "foreign policy balancing acts" between the CSI and the Euro—Atlantic organizations". He openly questioned the strategic value of Moldova's neutrality concept which, he argued, has enhanced neither Moldova's security nor its credibility abroad, in particular as long as Russia does not withdraw its troops from its territory.

In November 2007 a public opinion poll revealed that a majority of those questioned were in favour of Moldova's neutrality (up from 29% in November 2006) as compared to a mere 20% (down from 24,6% in 2006) supporting NATO accession as the best means of safeguarding Moldova's security. This means that for a considerable majority of Moldovan citizens, preserving the country's territorial integrity, solving the Transnistrian

conflict and achieving the withdrawal of Russian troops from its territory are priority issues. For NATO (and the EU, by the way), however, the Transnistrian conflict is viewed as a problem concerning Moldova which prevents this country from drawing closer, or even acceding to these organizations. Until now, while occasionally working "around" this conflict posing major "hard" risks to NATO and the EU, neither organization has made any serious attempt to solve it.

Israel-NATO: Where to?

By: Dr. Eugene Kogan

Undoubtedly, the year 2006 has seen the largest number of scholarly and press articles related to the issue of Israel-NATO. Interestingly enough, most articles tended to deal with two out of three Israel-NATO aspects: political and military. The issue that has been barely addressed was, and still is, pertained to the defence industrial agenda. The author can only assume that since most of the articles on the issue have been written by political scientists, politicians, and/or political or military correspondents the latter tended to disregard the third issue. See for instance online version of the Riga Papers edited by Ronald D. Asmus, "NATO and Global Partners: View from the Outside" (www.gmfus.org).

The topic of Israel-NATO has become pivotal for discussion because military to military relations have expanded beyond recognition, and Israel for the first time-ever participated fully (and no longer as observer) in a NATO naval exercise dubbed `Co-operation Mako´ in the Black Sea. In addition to that factor, on October 16th 2006 a new milestone in the relationship between Israel and NATO was reached. On that day the International Co-operation Programme (ICP) agreement, which created a formal framework for co-operation between Israel and the alliance in twenty-seven areas, was concluded, including the following issues: response to terrorism, intelligence-sharing, weapons of mass destruction (WMD), defence and civilian emergency preparedness, airspace management control, military exercises and arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, to mention just a few. It is, however, too early to pass any judgment on the implementation of the programme. The months ahead will show the strengths and the weaknesses of the ICP. It is clear, however, that the ICP, or what can be called `the twenty-six plus one´ in the Mediterranean Region has largely marginalised the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) initiative, which since its inception in December 1994 has failed to produce results.

And the year ahead looks also very promising. So far, NATO has offered Israel participation in seven military exercises and the Israeli military is currently evaluating NATO's offer.

In addition to expanded military relations and the ICP agreement, Tsipi Livni, Minister of Foreign Affairs, broke a long term taboo by mentioning the phrase `multilateral diplomacy´ three times in her address to a conference on the transformation of NATO and NATO-Israel relations organized by the Institute of Policy and Strategy at the Interdisciplinary Centre in Herzliya in mid-October 2006. Until now multilateral diplomacy has been perceived as a dirty word by the Israeli political and military echelons. However, the continued threat from Iran combined with the recent Lebanon war and its aftermath has created a different environment where multilateral approach has become a key policy initiative. Lebanon is the first test case for the multilateral approach in the Middle East and its repercussions will have an important impact for and on Israel and the region.

At the same time multilateral approach does not necessarily mean that Israel has forsaken its right to defend itself independently and/or to launch unilateral operations, but the international military environment has changed to such an extent that very often single states are no longer capable of waging an asymmetrical war and successfully defend themselves. A Coalition of the Willing and/or a Partnership of the Strong have become the modus operandi of a new international military operations.

In a sign of growing ties between Israel and NATO and in an effort to create better interoperability (a word one very often hears from NATO commanders) between countries in the global war on terrorism, the Israel Defence Force's (IDF) Military Intelligence plans to establish an intelligence-sharing mechanism with NATO. The mechanism will enable an exchange of intelligence information between the countries regarding events in the Larger Middle East and in other regions. Both sides can also utilise their recent military experience in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Kosovo and Lebanon. One issue of particular interest to NATO was Israel's handling

of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED), namely homemade bombs used against coalition and NATO forces in Iraq and Afghanistan and a threat to IDF troops in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

With the NATO standards of military inventory codification being applied in Israel (under an agreement that would give Israel full association with the NATO system in three years from 2006), an important step was taken toward military interoperability in the future.

The rapid progress on the military issues has brought both sides to a better understanding as well as opened up a new world of multinational relations and co-operation for Israel. The Israeli active contribution to NATO in form of search-and-rescue (SAR) forces on standby and availability of Home Front Command rescue teams has turned Israel into an important partner but not yet member of the alliance. The step-by-step approach between Israel and NATO requires a long-term strategic thinking on behalf of the State of Israel as well as an open public debate in Israel related to the issue of the feasible, but not yet visible, Israeli membership at the alliance. It is evident that the military dialogue is full of content and will continue to be the driving force behind co-operation of both sides.

At the same time, both sides do understand that although political dialogue between Israel and NATO will continue, its result, however, will not be seen in the next five to ten years. There is a clear understanding in Tel Aviv and the alliance headquarters in Brussels that as long as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues political dialogue between the sides will be kept at a low profile, and the issue of membership will remain off the agenda. Nevertheless, the last two years of real co-operation which began after the Istanbul Summit in the summer of 2004 have shown how fast co-operation can accelerate and to what results it may lead. As a result, it can be said that NATO's Deputy Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Security Policy Patrick Hardouin's statement to Israeli officials at the same conference in Herzliya, that `the ups and downs of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict must not limit Israel-NATO co-operation´, should not surprise us. It is rather a clear statement that political realities in the Middle East have changed, NATO is fully aware of these changes and is doing its best to grapple with them.

Co-operation in the defence industrial realm is certainly very important to the alliance. First and foremost both sides are well aware of the mutual benefits, such as developing new modern technologies which have proven their effectiveness in the battlefield, as well as joining efforts in military research and development (R&D) for a new generation of weapon systems. For instance, as Sharon Sadeh noted in the September 2006 issue of Policy Forecast online, in 2004 Elbit Systems Limited (also known as Elbit Systems) formed a successful joint venture with the French company Thales, which was selected in July 2004 by the British MoD as the prime contractor for a major unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) programme, called Watchkeeper (see www.policyforecast.com). In the last decade NATO as a military force has been engaged in actual operations and, as a result, evaluated first hand its military capabilities. Israel, on the other hand, as a state involved in almost permanent warfare, needed to develop an extensive defence industrial infrastructure to support its actions and to maintain its capabilities. The last six years starting from 2000 have seen an expansion of co-operation in the defence industrial realm between Israel and NATO. What is also important to note, that this is co-operation of equal partners who enjoy working together and learning about and/or from each other. The future of co-operation appears to be promising, although budgetary trends in the European Union (EU) member states who are also members of NATO are not very rosy. At the same time Sharon Sadeh noted that Israel anticipates a significant worldwide growth in budgets for homeland security, counter-terrorism, and asymmetric warfare, especially in the areas of installation protection, border systems, bio-terror prevention, data security, and access control (through biometric screening). This is an area where the interests of both sides coincide.

To conclude, the picture presented above may indeed appear very promising and the future of twenty-six plus one in the Mediterranean Region looks more positive than it used to be in the 1990s. There are, however, several points for the future that the government of Israel will have to ponder:

What kind of role Israel would like to play in the alliance: of a partner and/or of a full member with duties attached to it such as for instance,

carrying the burdens of mutual defence commitments? They are many pros and cons that the government of Israel, experts in the field both in Israel and outside of Israel, and the Israeli public at large will have to consider and debate.

As a suggestion, the government of Israel will be well advised to assess the experiences of the new members of the alliance. To see whether they gained and/or lost by joining the alliance and to evaluate carefully the gains and losses of the Baltic States in particular. To analyse the reaction of the population in these countries prior to and ten years after joining the alliance. Furthermore, the experience of Turkey as the only Middle Eastern member of the alliance ten years after the new members joined the alliance will be valuable. In a matter of speaking, has Turkey remained an important asset or has its importance eroded for the alliance ten years after the new members joined NATO? Has the interests of Turkey in the alliance been marginalised on the expense of new members? Has the role of Turkey increased or decreased during the last decade? Will the role of Turkey be increasing as a result of a policy shift at NATO Headquarters towards engagement in the Middle East?

Perhaps as the interim step, prior to even considering to join the alliance, the government of Israel might consider sending troops to actively serve in the NATO peacekeeping operations. As a result, it is worthwhile to evaluate carefully the experience of Finland and Sweden in the NATO peacekeeping operations. Whether the issue of participation in the NATO peacekeeping operations has been discussed by the political and military officials in Israel remains unknown.

If Israel wishes ultimately to join the alliance as a full member, can the government of Israel and its military conceive a situation that the IDF will be sent to participate in military mission in for instance, Poland and/or the Baltic States? It may sound as a far-fetched scenario but every scenario should be considered and thoroughly evaluated.

Can the government of Israel and its military join forces with the NATO member states to intercept immigrants on their way from Africa towards

the shores of the EU? Although in early April 2007 ambassadors of the NATO alliance ended the meeting with representatives of the Mediterranean Dialogue-participants Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia with pledges to expand co-operation in fighting terrorism, illegal migration and the proliferation of the WMD, nothing of substance has been actually done since then.

Ukraine–NATO military cooperation

By: Vitaliy Begma, Doctor of Economic Sciences
Igor Taburets, Candidate of science degree

The key directions of cooperation between the Armed Forces of Ukraine and NATO, among other, are to create effective systems of civil-military relations; to improve democratic control of armed forces; to implement the decisions of the Ukraine-NATO Joint Working Group on Defense Reform (JWGDR) and a Joint Working Group on Armaments; to achieve interoperability of the Armed Forces of Ukraine with NATO forces to be able to participate in NATO-led peace-support operations; to implement the activities within the framework of the Ukraine-NATO Action Plan and Annual Target Plans and its likes.

During 2006, in accordance with the Ukraine-NATO Annual Target Plan (ATP-2006) the Armed Forces of Ukraine executed 189 measures.

The basic results of the Ukraine-NATO Annual Target Plan for 2006 are:

- an improvement of the organization and establishment of military management organs;
- update of Partnership Goals for the Ukrainian Armed Forces for 2006-07 within the framework of the Planning and Estimation Process of forces, clarification of forces and facilities of the Armed Forces of Ukrainedeclared in the complement of Operative Possibilities Common Fund within the framework of Conception of operative possibilities;
- consultations with the experts of the Allied Command Transformation and member states of the Alliance on creation of the Joint Operations Command (JOC) in the Armed Forces of Ukraine;
- Current Operations Center creation and normative settlement of JCO establishment;
- providing of contingents and personnel of the Ukrainian Armed Forces participation in the NATO, EU and UN-led operations;
- equipment of the primary national Contact point of Ukraine within

the framework of participation in the NATO "Active Endeavor" counter-terrorism operation and its certification;
- preparation of the Presidential Decree „On the decision of the Natio nal Security and Defense Council of Ukraine from 17.11.06" on the sending of "Lutsk" and "Ternopil" corvettes and the Ukrainian Navy flagship-frigate "Getman Sagaydachnyi" to participate in the naval operations in the Mediterranean sea within the framework of "Active Endeavor" operation;
- practical support of NATO in the African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur, Sudan, by transporting Ghanaian peacekeepers to the province;
- introduction of the continuous stepped preparation system for military specialists, courses on skill-raising of military management organ officers of operative-strategic link from brigade and higher, preparation of intensive language courses for personnel from the Amed Forces of Ukraine in English, German, Arabic, Turkish at higher educational military establishments, creation of additional educational groups for the advanced English level during 12 weeks for the Planning and Review Process (PARP) and Joint Rapid Reaction Forces (JRRF) subunits and units officers;
- conducting of the sixth International week at the Ukrainian National Defence Academy with the participation of representatives from the NATO Defense College in Rome, Italy, headquarters and other Alliance structures;
- development and improvement of preparation, retraining and skill-raising order of civil workers for the Armed Forces of Ukraine;
- holding the scientific and practical conference „Topical problems of terrorism and criminality counteraction in the context of Europe an and Euro-Atlantic integration", improvement of the activity of the Military law and order service of the Armed Forces of Ukraine educational center to prepare personnel to counteract diversions and terrorism and to participate in counter-terror and peacemaking operations;
- introduction of the Complex program of social and professional adaptation of discharged and retired servicemen in connection with reform of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, improvement of

preparation, retraining and skill-raising of civil servants of Department of Defense of Ukraine and in the military management organs of the Armed Forces of Ukraine;
- realization of the NATO/PfP Trust fund demilitarization project on utilization of surplus ammunitions, small weapons and portable anti-aircraft complexes (in relation to utilization of 1 thousand units of por table anti-aircraft complexes and 500 units of starting devices);
- development of Program of stage-by-stage introduction of the NATO normative documents on safe storage of ammunitions, small weapons;
- providing the functioning of the Public Council at Department of Defense of Ukraine.

NATO civil activity in Ukraine

In spite of a widespread stereotype that NATO is a military-political block, it is first of all a political organization, which has necessary military possibilities. And like any political organization, it gives consideration to the civil aspects of cooperation both between the member states and the partner states engaged in NATO activity through the program Partnership for Peace (PfP) of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC).

Cooperation in the field of civil emergency planning is the most non-military component within the PfP framework. One of the most noticeable NATO initiatives in the civil sphere is the opening of the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Center (EADRCC) in June 1998. Due to the Center activity the flood victims in Ukraine's Trans-Carpathian region in 1998 and 2001, in Albania and Czechia in 2002, in Azerbaijan in 2003, in Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania and Kirghizia in 2005, were able to get operative international help. The Center was also a central link in the process of providing international humanitarian assistance to people who suffered in the earthquake in Pakistan in the autumn of 2005.

Another important element of NATO civil activity is its scientific program "Security through Science" which started at the beginning of 2004. NATO granted more than 1,5 million euros in 2004 for Ukraine to conduct and realize 46 scientific measures and projects. In 2005 there were 36 new

scientific and environmental projects between the Ukrainian scientists and proper NATO structures. In 2006 NATO granted almost 2 millions euros to science development in Ukraine, from which 500 000 euros will be used to upgrade Ukrainian universities' IT systems.

In this connection it is necessary to remember the project of the scientific and educational network URAN (Ukrainian Research and Academic Network) initiated by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine funded by NATO grants. Ukrainian higher educational establishments and research institutes get high-speed access to the Internet through connecting to URAN. In June 2006 the National Technical University of Ukraine „Kyiv Polytechnic Institute" got 200 000 euros to purchase additional equipment to develop the network.

One of the most known initiatives in the field of scientific cooperation between the Ukraine and NATO is a joint project of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and NATO scientific program on development and creation of a unique x-ray generator on the basis of reverse kompton dispersion in the National Scientific Center „Kharkov Physical and Technical Institute" of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. It is planned to use this unique device jointly with the researchers of different countries in the fields of medicine, judicial examination, exposure to explosives and ecological security.

Within the framework of the Environmental and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) involving the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Ukraine is participating in a real-time monitoring project of the Prut and Dniester Rivers. Moldova and Romania are also involved in the project. Due to NATO financing 4 automatic stations for monitoring the quality and amount of water in the above-mentioned rivers are already in place.

Ukraine also takes part in a joint NATO-OSCE project on the creation of a mobile factory for utilization and processing of rocket fuel.

Ukrainian defense-industrial complex prospects in the event of Ukrainian NATO membership

There is a widespread myth that Ukraine's NATO membership will ruin the Ukrainian defense-industrial complex by the introduction of new NATO military standards and requirements of rearmament for our army, will necessary result in the break of military-technical cooperation with Russia. The following arguments testify against this.

At first, NATO requires neither reduction, nor rearmament of our Armed Forces, there is no obligatory introduction of new weapon standards, nor prohibition of military-technical cooperation with Russia. The necessary condition is interoperability with NATO forces; i.e. ability to operate jointly during operations, instead of requirement to have the same cannons of the same caliber on an armament as well as in other countries. The former socialist countries that are now NATO members can exemplify this. They have standard Soviet armament technique and weapons. On the whole up to 40% of the new NATO members' arsenals consist of Soviet and Russian weapons.

Secondly, NATO standards for separate types of armaments do in fact exist. However, they are as a rule more progressive, than those we use from Soviet times. At the same time, NATO membership opens the way to new markets of armament of NATO and EU member countries, access to the newest technologies at a joint production, additional possibilities to modernize own armaments and diversify the military arsenal.

Thirdly, the reorientation of the Ukrainian defense-industrial complex production to NATO standards does not neccesarily imply a breach of the long-term joint production agreements with Russia of already existent or new weapon standards. At the same time, the fact remains that Ukrainian-Russian cooperation within the defense-industrial complex is mainly for old, Soviet, standards of armaments.

Regardless of Ukraine's NATO membership, the Ukrainian defense-industrial complex must develop to reach new markets, create new types of armaments both for sale and for the Armed Forces of Ukraine, and

Ukraine's NATO membership will only be an instrument in this work. Passing to NATO standards in the field of armaments must substantially extend the possibilities and markets for the Ukrainian military technique and armaments. Models in this connection are the quite successful examples of Ukraine-Greece (hovercrafts) or Czech Republic (artillery systems) cooperation.

NATO membership has given new possibilities for national defense-industrial complexes of the countries of the last wave of expansion to attract foreign investment, conducting production modernization and diversification and increase in trading volumes.

The tendencies in the export of Polish and Czech weapons, military technique and equipments testify this. Poland and the Czech Republic became NATO members in 1999. In 1997 Poland sold military equipment of a total value of 20 million USD in the world armaments market. In 1999 (membership year) the volume of this export grew to 67 million, in 2001 it reached 93 million, and in 2003 Polish arms worth 89 million USD were exported. A similar situation concerns the development of weapon export in the Czech Republic: in 1997 – 28 million USD, in 1998 – 23 million, in 1999 – 65 million, in 2000 - 81 million, in 2001 – 95 millions, in 2002 – 85 million. These numbers testify eloquently the development and growth of production and trading of the military-defense complex of these countries (SIPRI Yearbooks 2000-2004).

Eloquent is also the export figures of military goods and services of Slovakia which became a NATO member in 2004. In 2002 it exported armaments of a total value of a 37 million USD, in 2003 – 46 million, in 2004 – 77 million, and in 2005, - 205 million.

Financial aspect of Ukraine's NATO membership

Ukraine's NATO membership foresees annual payments to the Civil and Military Budgets of the Alliance, and also the NATO Security Investment Programme (NSIP).

The size of contributions that are paid three times per year depends on the

country's economic development level and participation or abstention in the programs carried out within the framework of the NATO Military Budget.

The NATO Civil Budget payments are funded from all member countries without an exception. Instead, the NATO Military Budget payment is divided into the common-funded total budget and the Airborne Early Warning budget and is funded from member countries engaged in proper military programs. The contributions to the NATO Security Investment Programme are paid by all countries except for Iceland.

Payments to the three abovementioned budgets for every state do not exceed 0,5-1% of its general defensive costs. For example, in accordance with NATO recommendations the most powerful European economies with high gross national product and defensive costs must contribute about 2% of the gross national product, - Great Britain, France and Germany – annually contribute with approximately 200 million USD to the NATO budget. At the same time the total payment of Poland to NATO budgets in 2001 was about 26,1 million USD. So, there are reasons to consider that Ukraine's membership dues will be even less than these amounts.

Except these payments to the mentioned NATO budgets, Alliance membership foresees covering the operating costs of diplomatic representatives at the NATO Headquarters and of military representatives at the NATO international staff structures. Such costs are ordinary diplomatic practice for any country membership in international organizations, for example in the UN, OSCE and EU.

The possible drawbacks of NATO membership

The possible negative consequences of any decision must be weighed against its advantages. In this connection there are much more advantages to Ukraine's NATO membership than potential losses.

The experience of at least 9 countries in Central and East Europe that became NATO members during the last years testify to this. They either belonged to the former socialist countries or were a part of the USSR, such as the Baltic countries.

At the same time, during the transformation processes on the way to NATO membership, certain negative aspects remain, for example a reduction of personnel due to a reform of the Ukrainian Armed Forces in accordance with the demands of NATO. It can result in negative consequences of i.e. a temporary escalation of social military problems. But the appropriate eventual result of the Ukrainian Armed Forces reformation will be a modern, mobile, professional, highly-paid and efficient Ukrainian Army, capable to protect our country effectively. It is positive and the Ukraine needs it regardless of possible NATO membership. Besides this, for a few years NATO has been helping the Ukraine to work out how to socially adapt and retrain discharged military personnel.

A characteristic example in this context is the Ukrainian defense-industrial complex. A possible Ukrainian NATO membership will open new investment opportunities, prospects and armament markets for Ukrainian enterprises in the NATO member countries. The experiences of NATO member countries from Eastern Europe testify it eloquently. Possibly, some enterprises will not be able to take advantage operatively and in the conditions of hard competition of defense-industrial complexes of highly developed market economy countries will be forced to close. It is a negative. However, enterprises redirection on creation of hi-tech and competitive armaments in the world markets will benefit both the domestic defenders and the Ukrainian economy on the whole.

As for Ukraine-Russia cooperation it is important to take into account that from the beginning of the 90's Moscow conducts a purposeful policy of creation of closed cycle of armament production regardless of Ukranian Euro-Atlantic aspirations. The primary objective of such a policy is support and development of Russian defense-industrial complex enterprises and also a removal of Ukraine as a competitor from the armament market by excluding Ukrainian made units from Russian military products.

Instead, in the international military-technical cooperation Russia is oriented towards partnership with the leading companies of NATO countries. The NATO standards are officially considered a priority of Russian defense-industrial complex development.

It is important to take into account that in 2004 the total commodity turnover between Ukraine and Russia on the product nomenclatures of Industrial Policy Ministry was an estimated 2 billion dollars and in 2005 within the framework of co-operation it reached 330 million dollars. The increase of weapons trade in both countries in overseas markets testifies that a considerable reduction of bilateral cooperation has not yet influenced substantially on their export potentials.

So, regardless of old production connections with Russia, the Ukrainian defense-industrial complex must develop independently, to search for new markets and create modern armaments both for sale and for the Armed Forces of Ukraine. This process will have positive result if it is conditioned, foremost, by market expedience instead of political situation reasons. It is important that Ukraine's NATO membership does not foresee to tear production connections with Russian defense-industrial complex, which develops and increases successfully its military and technical cooperation with many NATO member countries.

The question of financial consequences of Ukraine's NATO membership is the basis for another discussion.

Conclusions

Preparation of Ukraine's NATO membership has a deep civilizing value. This process, foremost, stimulates achieving high democratic, socio-economic and defensives standards used in the NATO member countries. As history shows the number of members of this organization grows constantly. Some Balkan countries and Georgia are on their way to Alliance membership. None of the mentioned countries are sorry for that and the old member countries do not consider an exit from NATO.

Ukraine has a high level of cooperation with NATO. The Armed Forces of Ukraine are the most ready to integrate into the Alliance structures. The Armed Forces of Ukraine actually already satisfy the NATO requirements in the reform and modernization process.

The analysis of advantages and disadvantages of a future Ukrainian

NATO membership testifies that Alliance integration will allow first of all increasing safety and defense level of the Ukraine, taking into account the prospects for development in the Ukrainian economy.

The main problems of Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine are:

- „multivectorial" vagueness of state foreign policy management (from the point of view of the President and Cabinet opposition);
- absence of consensus between leading political forces in determination of state foreign-policy priorities;
- ineffective policy of public awareness on the essence of Euro-Atlantic integration;
- using the NATO question in political and PR-campaigns to achieve political goals.

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