Multilateral Operations - NATO

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Abstract

After the breakdown of Eastern-European socialist regimes and the decline of the Warsaw Pact, security structure of Europe, as well as the nature of security issues which NATO members had to confront with, have changed. The new security challenges have inflicted the need for the North Atlantic Alliance to find a new concept of functioning and adequately responding within changed security conditions. In the „Multilateral oprations – NATO" paper, we set forth the development of North Atlantic Alliance after the end of the Cold war, as well as the Alliance's evolution from a traditional defensive military alliance towards a multidimensional-structure organization, engaged in various multilateral operations. The author has payed special attention to the classification of the legal basis of Alliances engagements and types of international operations conducted during the last twenty years, after redefining of NATO's role.

Key words: new role of NATO, partnership network, multilateral operations, peacekeeping operations

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The North Atlantic Alliance – NATO was established in 1949 by the Washington Treaty, primarily as a defence alliance with a mission to defend Europe from the Soviet Union assaults. NATO was mostly passive in military terms, considering that, during the Cold War, none of the Alliance Member States invoked Article 5 of the Washington Treaty that provided for collective cooperation and, possibly, military action, in the event any Member State is assaulted. With the fall of Berlin Wall and final breakdown of Warsaw Pact, the question arose whether NATO would have a purpose in future. The Member States have gradually added to the

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role of the Alliance which, besides defending the Member States, now included the operations ranging from rescue missions to peace maintenance, protection and enforcement operations. Here below we shall discuss the aspects that have influenced the change in security threats, definition of the new role of NATO and its legal framework, creation of specific bilateral programmes for the countries bordering with the NATO spheres of interest, and the way in which this new role was practically implemented through different types of multilateral operations. For the purposes of better visibility and legibility, this paper introduced two new classifications. First classification is based on legal grounds for NATO multilateral operations: operations pursuant to Article 5 of the Washington Charter, operations under the UN mandate, and operations upon the call of a partner. Second classification is based on the type of multilateral operations, to the operations pursuant to Article 5, and peacekeeping and rescue operations.

Change in security threats and new role of NATO

With the disappearance of Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact, there also disappeared the security tensions that have been permeating the pores of international politics ever since the end of the World War II. Victory in the Cold War posed in front of the North Atlantic Alliance the question of the reasonableness of its existence. This, however, did not mean that security threats have vanished. Under the umbrella of all-pervasive ideological conflict, there emerged the problems that will become central in the beginning of 1990s - the so-called security problems of non-military nature (low security issues). In the territory of Europe as such, defined by NATO in its establishment act as the area of its special interest[1], there appeared new challenges that threatened to disturb the fragile stability that has established in new democratic countries. The appearance of different nationalist movements pursuing the change of borders or "ethnic purification" inside them, and growing economic instability, posed the potential security challenges in which NATO found the reason for survival. The basis for future action was found in the Preamble of the Washington Treaty (safeguarding the *democracy, individual freedoms, and rule of law)*, and in Articles 2 and 3 thereof where the role of the Alliance was defined as a kind of political and economic forum. The focus of NATO extended to include the political and economic dimen-

[1] Article 10 of the Washington Treaty underlines that NATO is open for membership to all European countries capable of furthering the principles on which it was established (democracy, individual liberties, rule of law)

sion of the security issue by further defining the new concept of functioning through 1991 and 1999 *Strategic Concepts*. It should be noted here that the challenges did not stem from any ideological conflict but rather from the instability faced by the countries of the Central and Eastern Europe caused by political, economic, social, cultural, ethnic, religious, and other problems (Vukadinović, 2007, p.162). In order to respond to the crisis, the USA and the countries of Western Europe accepted NATO as the main instrument for safeguarding the stability and peace in Europe and wider region, which implied unofficial consent to the extension of NATO competences and its subsequent engagement *outside the zone of responsibility* (out of area), i.e. outside the territory of its Member States. The first challenge to emerge was the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the conflict that followed.

Even though terrorism and proliferation of weapons for mass destruction have been included in the list of modern security challenges ever since the 1991 NATO *Strategic Concept*, it was only after the attack on the World Trade Centre in 2001 that they became main objects of interest and engagement of NATO forces. For the first time ever, NATO took action outside its primary sphere of interest, namely outside Europe or North America. Paradoxically, the threat of terrorism at global level led to the first invocation of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty after the attack of the 11th of September 2001 and joint action of all Member States.

Also, through bilateral agreements with the countries, and agreements with counterpart international organisations, NATO has engaged in peacekeeping, humanitarian and rescue missions.

Theoretical definition of the new role of NATO

The new role of the Alliance and its engagement through multilateral operations has been gradually defined through different documents. The progress and the procedure of its defining can be roughly divided into two periods: from the end of the Cold War to the attack on the World Trade Centre on the 11th of September 2001, and from that attack to this date. The documents starting to redefine the role of NATO were *Rome Declaration* and (new) 1991 *NATO Strategic Concept*. The Strategic Concept put in place the theoretical foundations for the new role of NATO forces in Europe as the main factor in maintaining the *stability and balance in Europe, and durable safeguarding of peace*[2]. This approach was

[2] 1991 NATO Strategic Concept

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defined by NATO as the *Crises Management* concept which will be discussed here below. In the 1991 *Strategic Concept,* NATO advocates that UN activities should be promoted through a wide-range approach that would include supporting the political initiatives and actions in the event of crisis or conflict. The Alliance thus expressed its intention to, in the case of danger at the borders of its Member States, utilise its facilities so as to prevent the conflict overspilling onto their territory.

For the first time as military alliance, NATO offered its forces for peace supporting action in the Declaration from the meeting of the ministers of foreign ministers that was held in Oslo in June 1992 (*Oslo Declaration)*. The representatives of the Alliance have fully supported the Conference on European Security and Cooperation (hereinafter: the CESC) for the actions promoting the maintenance of peace in Europe, by placing the Alliance's resources and expertise at the disposal of this Organisation. More than five months later, at the ministerial meeting in December that same year, NATO made a similar offer to the UN initiatives and actions. In this way, through direct practices of these two international organisations, NATO was for the first time, as a military alliance, beginning to participate in peacekeeping actions.

The 1994 Summit of the NATO Heads of State and Government in Brussels was a new driving force for multilateral operations of this Alliance. The concept of Partnership for Peace was launched as a framework for cooperation at the bilateral level for the European countries other than NATO Members. Moreover, future members of the Partnership for Peace were offered to participate in the peacekeeping, humanitarian, and rescue operations together with NATO forces. With this, the foundations were built for most multilateral operations which will take place under the auspices of NATO in future. It should be mentioned that the **Mediterranean Dialogue** programme was launched that same year as a framework for the establishment of partnership, mostly with non-European and non-NATO countries, which was joined, before 2000, by almost all countries, with the exception of Lebanon, Syria and Libya. Some of them began to participate in NATO multilateral operations through Individual Cooperation Programme (Israel).

The 1999 Strategic Concept, published at the Summit in Washington, once again stressed the need for a broad approach in the international security, repeating all those new challenges faced by the Member States, as mentioned in the preceding Strategic

Concept. This time, the accent was placed on the actions to promote the peace in the Euro-Atlantic zone, with a remark that every country can decide whether to take part in the action or not (this remark was inserted because of the NATO bombing of FRY, which was taking place at the time).

Two years after, however, NATO considerably shifted its focus. The terrorist attack of the 11th September 2001 drew the Alliance's attention to the problem of global terrorism, and that of the proliferation of weapons for mass destruction. Also, it has become clear that the Alliance's focus on the defence of Euro-Atlantic area can no longer be sustained without global engagement, namely without instigation of NATO actions "out of area", and without expanding the partnership network to include the states outside the territory of the Atlantic Axis. At the summit in Prague in November 2002, these new threats were recognised and, accordingly, a new *action plan* was promoted. The Alliance reaffirmed its already established partnership with the EU with regard to the creation of the European Security and Defence Identity, which will later result in the Berlin Plus agreements and engagement of EU forces in Macedonia, B&H and in Kosovo. Also, the programme of cooperation with the members of the Partnership for Peace was established (Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism) within the global fight against terrorism. The two summits that followed further reaffirmed the existing aspects of cooperation and launched a new partnership initiative. At the Istanbul Summit, the *Istanbul Initiative for Cooperation* was launched as a new programme for cooperation between NATO and the countries of Middle East, modelled after the Mediterranean Dialogue.

Legal framework for NATO multilateral engagements

Since 1990 to this date, legal frameworks for NATO engagement varied in character. As the defence alliance of the countries of North America and Europe, NATO engagements were primarily founded on Article 5 of the Washington Charter, namely joint defence action of all members states in case any of them is attacked. Also, NATO implements multilateral actions within the framework set up by the UN Security Council as an organisation capable to, at a given moment, contribute to the peacekeeping initiatives and actions. And, finally, NATO engagement can ensue at the request for help by a member state or a partner country.

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1. Engagement based on Article 5 of the Washington Charter (or the Washington Charter)

Article 5 of the Washington Charter has for more than 40 years implied the assistance of all NATO Member States in the event of open military aggression on any of them. It was in the first place created as a measure to avert any Soviet attacks on the states of Western Europe. However, it was not earlier than 10 years after the end of the Cold War that a Member State first invoked this Article and this was not because the borders were threatened by conventional assault, but because of a terrorist attack. The US Government asked its NATO allies to help in the global war against terrorism at key security sites in the world.

2. Engagement under auspices of the UN:

The signatory states of the Washington Treaty have based their newly-founded alliance on Article 51 and the entire Chapter VIII of the UN Charter concerning the right to self-defence and the right to establish regional security organisations. With this, NATO positioned itself as an alliance that is acting within the framework set by the UN and the Council. As we have seen above, for its first multilateral engagements, NATO first offered its forces to the CESC and the UN, and only after that responded within the boundaries set by these two organisations. This engagement has started with the UN operations in Bosnia in which NATO provided most of military forces, logistics and expertise for resolution of disputes, enforcement and maintenance of peace. NATO engaged in a similar role in Kosovo and Metohia, within the UN mission under the Resolution 1244. The very action of peace enforcement, however, that was implemented through bombing of FR Yugoslavia in 1999 was not formally approved by the UN Security Council, although the Alliance had invoked a number of Resolutions that referred to Kosovo (1160, 1199, and 1203). This gave rise to debates about the obsoleteness of the only global organisation and its peacekeeping operations capacity. However, it soon became clear that some NATO Members are still more inclined to respect the authority of the UN, which was obvious when the American "Coalition of the Willing" attacked Afghanistan and Iraq in 2001 and 2003, respectively. The Alliance continued its engagement under the UN Resolution, namely in

Afghanistan since 2003 (ISAF formations and assistance to the Afghanistan Government), and in the Gulf of Aden, at the request of the UN Secretary-General (2008, 2009-2010).

3. Engagement upon the call of Member States or partner states:

After 2001 NATO has established the practices under which the Alliance takes action upon the call of partner countries or organisations. After the conflict in Macedonia evolved between the armed forces of this country and paramilitary formations of ethnic Albanians, the then Macedonian President (the country is a member of the Partnership for Peace since 1995) called upon NATO to take action so as to prevent the conflict from escalating. This case, and further engagement of the Alliance in Macedonia through three operations in total ("Essential harvest", "Amber Fox", and "Allied Harmony"), created a model for engagement of NATO forces after which several missions have been implemented. The types of missions are different and do not necessarily include peacekeeping missions (which will be discussed below). Other types of missions that were implemented after this model include: operations of providing the Member States' logistics support, or expertise, to partnership countries or partnership organisations, and humanitarian and rescue operations.

Expansion of the partnership network

The participation of partner states is of critical importance for the multilateral operations implemented by NATO. Since first post-Dayton mission in the Balkans, the contingents of partner-states' forces have joined the forces under the auspices of NATO. At the 1994 Summit in Brussels NATO launched a number of regional cooperation programmes that are based on bilateral agreements between NATO and the partner-state. The programmes are drawn up with the aim to establish partnerships with the countries of the region and promote their further stabilisation concurrently with the development through transforming NATO and their engagement beginning with 1990. These programmes vary, however, both with regard to the depth of the partnerships and with regard to their ultimate goal.

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Partnership for Peace

Partnership for Peace was the first partnership programme that was launched. Its primary goal was establishment of partnership with the countries belonging to the Euro-Atlantic axis, with the aim of stabilising the region, preventing any new conflicts caused by the challenges listed in the 1991 Strategic Concept, and treading a path for all those states which are potentially interested to become NATO members. As it is stated in the Brussels Declaration (1994), partner states will be able to participate in NATO missions through Partnership for Peace. The forces of the Partnership for Peace members were thus engaged in the first missions in post-Dayton Bosnia and in Kosovo (IFOR, SFOR i KFOR) already; namely, they accounted for over 10% of the total peacekeeping forces[3]. Partner states have significantly contributed to the global fight against terrorism, through the *Partnership Anti-Terrorism Plan*. When NATO expanded in 1999, 2004, and 2009, its membership was joined by the countries which were previously members of the Partnership for Peace.

Mediterranean Dialogue

In 1994 the North-Atlantic Council launched the Mediterranean Dialogue as a forum between NATO and five Mediterranean countries (further two have joined later). The purpose of this organisation originally was to increase the scope of cooperation and transparency in the relations between NATO and these countries (Janković Eds, 2007, p. 53). This cooperation was practically implemented through the *Working Programme* which envisaged activities in several different areas (crises management included). The Summit in Istanbul launched the *extended* Mediterranean Dialogue with the intention to have this organisation turned into a kind of Mediterranean Partnership for Peace and ensure a much higher level of cooperation than it was previously the case. Since 2006 NATO has implemented *Individual Partnership Programmes* within the Mediterranean Dialogue; these include, inter alia, joint fight against terrorism and active participation in military exercises. To date, such agreements have been signed with Israel, Egypt, and Jordan.

[3] Among the NATO partners, beyond a doubt the largest contribution in the peacekeeping operations in the Balkans was given by Russian troops. Taking into account the Russia – NATO Permanent Joint Council, the level of cooperation with Russia is higher than that with other Member States of the Partnership of Peace.

Istanbul Initiative for Cooperation

At the above mentioned Summit in Istanbul, and based on the Mediterranean Dialogue programme, Istanbul Initiative for Cooperation was launched as a framework programme for establishment of partnership with the countries of Middle East. To date, this programme has been joined by Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arabian Emirates. So far the cooperation has been mostly focused on the assistance in education of personnel, even though the same aspects of cooperation as in the Mediterranean Dialogue were offered.[4]

Multilateral NATO operations

In the integral text of the 1999 NATO Strategic Concept, NATO multilateral operations are classified into „operations pursuant to Article 5 of the Washington Charter", or the operations implying the defence role of NATO, and operations outside that role. For the requirements of this paper, we have classified the actions outside Article 5 of the Washington Charter to two types: peacekeeping operations, and rescue and humanitarian actions. The Chapters below give a short overview of all NATO multilateral operations, since 1991 to this date.

Operations pursuant to Article 5 of the Washington Charter

As it was mentioned above, since NATO was established to this date, only one Member States has invoked Article 5 of the Washington Charter. After the terrorist attack of the 11th of September 2001, the USA called upon their allies to take part in the global fight against terrorism. This call have resulted, among other things, in the multilateral action for controlling suspicious vessels on the Mediterranean Sea by NATO forces with the aim to prevent further terrorist actions (*Active Endeavour* Operation). This control was at first limited to the territory of East Mediterranean, and since 2004 it has covered the entire territory of the Mediterranean Sea. Members of the Partnership for Peace take part in this action (including one Russian cruiser), as well as the forces of some countries of the Mediterranean Dialogue (with the exception of members with the Individual Partnership Programme, this action was joined by Morocco too[5]). The mem-

[4] For integral text of the Istanbul Initiative for Cooperation see- http://www.algerian-embassy. be/otan/intiative%20istanbul.pdf p. 2

[5] See http://www.nato.int/docu/ update/2008/06-june/e0602a. html

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bers of Istanbul Initiative for Cooperation were also invited to take part.

Peacekeeping operations. NATO peacekeeping operations are divided in four types in the official NATO nomenclature: peacekeeping operations, peace enforcement operations, peace making operations, and peace building operations (Manual for NATO, 2009, p.51) NATO missions are further divided according to the places in which they take place

- Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina: In B&H, NATO forces were engaged in four missions based on which the above division was subsequently made. Based on the conclusion from the 1992 meeting of the ministers of foreign affairs, NATO offered its assistance to the UN Security Council. The first mission of NATO forces, *Deny Flight* (1993-1995), based on the UN Security Council Resolutions 781, 786, and 816, implied the prohibition of flight operations within the airspace of Bosnia. Within this peace keeping action, there occurred first fight engagement of NATO forces when, on 28 February 1994, four airplanes of the Republic of Srpska Army were shot down. The second action, *Deliberate Force,* belonging to the force enforcement actions, was implemented based on the UN SC Resolution 836, and the position of the Republic of Srpska forces were bombarded. The third operation – IFOR (International Force), introduced the peace making concept. It was implemented based on the Dayton Peace Treaty and UN SC Resolution 1031. The goal was to ensure full application of Dayton Treaty in the year that followed its signing. The fourth mission - SFOR (Stabilisation Force) that belonged to the group of peace building operations, took place in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the period between the expiry of IFOR mandate and 2004, when it was replaced by the EUFOR mission (based on the Berlin Plus Agreement).
- Kosovo and Metohia: First NATO action that was implemented without formal approval of the UN SC (even though NATO invokes the UN SC Resolution 1160, 1199, 1203) was the *Allied Force* operations during which a peace enforcement action was implemented by bombing FR Yugoslavia in the course of 1999. The operation was finished by the signing of Kumanovo Framework Agreement and adoption of the UN SC Resolution 1244. It was based

on these two documents that the second NATO mission was launched in the territory of Kosovo and Metohia – KFOR, which has been implemented since 1999 to present day. This mission falls under the group of peace making and peace building actions.

- The Republic of Macedonia – After the ethnic Albanians' rebellion in 2000, NATO facilitated the dialogue between the government and the National Liberation Army (hereinafter NLA), which was brought to successful fruition by Ohrid Agreement of 13 August 2003. The first of the three missions, *Esential Harvest* implied the collection of armaments from the NLA members. The second NATO operation in the Republic of Macedonia, "Amber fox", implied the provision of civil observes from the EU and OESCE to monitor implementation of the Ohrid Agreement. The third NATO operation, *Allied Harmony* began in 2002 and its goal was to continue the *Amber Fox* operations and to ensure overall security in the Republic.

- Afghanistan: ISAF is the key part of the international mission in Afghanistan that provides assistance to Afghanistan authorities in the security area; it was set up based on the UN SC Resolutions 1386, 1413, 1444, 1510, 1563, 1623, 1707, 1776, and 1833. In addition to playing its role in peace making and building, ISAF promotes the strengthening of Afghanistan national army and police and provides support for the reconstruction and revitalisations of the regions devastated by war. NATO assumed leadership over this mission in August 2003, to improve operational organisation, and at this moment it is a key engagement of NATO forces globally. Before assuming full responsibility, NATO has assisted the Netherlands and Germany missions within ISAF.

- Iraq: Direct engagement to assist the Iraqi Government started in 2004 with *NATO Training Mission in Iraq* (NTM-I) by which NATO supports the Iraqi security forces training. This mission is based on UN SC Resolution 1546, and on the Agreement between NATO and the Iraqi Government of 26 July 2009[6].

- Sudan and Somalia: At the request of African Union, in June 2005 NATO began to support its missions: first in Sudan (AMIS, and, from 2008, UNAMID), and later in Somalia (AMISOM). The support consisted of offering air traffic

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[6] Its first engagement in Iraq, NATO started by supporting the military mission of Poland, within this country's peacekeeping forces and pursuant to the NATO Council's Decision of May 2003, based on the models previously established by the Netherlands and Germany within ISAF.

logistics, providing the experts in particular fields, and sup-porting the increase of operational readiness of African Stabilisation Forces (the African Union forces in charge of peacekeeping operations) is to start soon.

- Gulf of Aden: At the request of UN Secretary General, and based on the UN SC Resolutions 1814, 1816, and 1838, in the end of 2008 NATO proffered temporary support to the World Food Programme, so as to prevent pirate attacks on cargo ships heading for Somalia. Another two missions of the same content were launched in the course of 2009: the first took place in the period March-August, and the second that started in August is still ongoing.

Rescue and humanitarian actions

NATO has several times engaged in humanitarian and rescue actions. First action of this type was AFOR (Albania Force), NATO mission in Albania in 1999, with the goal to distribute humanitarian aid to the Albanian refugees from Kosovo. The largest NATO action of this type was implemented in Pakistan, in October 2006. After the disastrous earthquake in Pakistan on 8 October 2005, NATO provided the logistics, medical help and food aid, at the request of this country addressed to the NATO Council. The air bridge was established for provision of aid and the units in the field (engineers and medical personnel) directly cooperated with Pakistan services and military.

Conclusion

In the past twenty years, NATO has significantly grown, from a classic defence alliance to a multidimensional structure aspiring to be a political and economic channel for communication between the two sides of the Atlantic Ocean. After the breakdown of the Warsaw Pact, the need for the Alliance has been reaffirmed through different kinds of multilateral operations that have out-grown their pure military character. The strength and the capacity of Atlantic allies have put in place new standards that NATO will probably officially implement through its new strategic concept expected after 2010, which will form a basis for further develop-ment of the competencies of both NATO and the partner coun-tries.

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SOURCES:

UN Security Council Resolutions: 781, 786,816, 836, 1031, 1088, 1386, 1413, 1444, 1510, 1563, 1623, 1707, 1776, 1833, 1546, 1814, 1816, and 1838

Dayton Peace Treaty

Kumanovo Military-Technical Agreement

Washington Treaty Establishing the North Atlantic Alliance – NATO

Ohrid Framework Agreement

1991 NATO Strategic Concept

1999 NATO Strategic Concept

1991 NATO Rome Declaration

Oslo Declaration – 1992 Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs

1994 NATO Brussels Declaration

1999 NATO Washington Declaration

2002 NATO Prague Declaration

2004 NATO Istanbul Declaration

Partnership for Peace – 1994 Invitation Document

Partnership for Peace – 1994 Framework Document

1994 Partnership Anti-Terrorism Action Plan

2004 Istanbul Initiative for Cooperation

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