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Ukraine News

Concrete, measurable progress needed

- Foreign ministers focus on achievements and prospects for the future evolution of the NATO-Ukraine relationship
- Assistant Secretary General Colston assesses NATO-Ukraine cooperation in defence and security sector reform
- Trust Fund project is launched for the resettlement of military personnel
- A new professional development programme for civilians working in defence and security institutions is agreed

→ Interview with John Colston



High-level informal consultations on defence reform and defence policy involving ministers from Ukraine and NATO countries, as well as key defence and security experts, took place in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 23 and 24 October. Such meetings are organised once a year by the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defence Reform (JWGDR). Since its establishment in 1998, the JWGDR has been the primary focus for cooperation between Ukraine and NATO in defence and security sector reform. John Colston, Assistant Secretary General for Defence Policy and Planning, steers the work of the JWGDR from NATO's side. Here, he offers an insight into the recent consultations at Vilnius and an assessment of NATO-Ukraine cooperation in defence and security sector reform.

Novyny NATO (NN): *What is the significance of the Vilnius meeting? What key issues were discussed there?*

John Colston (JC): The annual high-level NATO-Ukraine consultations are one of the most important events in the NATO-Ukraine calendar. Chaired by the NATO Secretary General, they serve in practice as annual informal meetings of NATO-Ukraine defence ministers, allowing for an open exchange of views. Before Vilnius, meetings were held in Berlin, Washington D.C. and Warsaw.

The consultations aim to address the most topical issues on the NATO-Ukraine defence and security agenda. Among the issues discussed in Vilnius were the implementation of Ukraine's defence reform plans; defence-related aspects of the Intensified Dialogue; and wider security sector reforms including the preparations for a national security sector review in Ukraine which should address all the structures and policies related to the security of the state. Discussions at the meeting were very frank, demonstrating the current dynamics of NATO-Ukraine relations.

It was also important that NATO member states were prepared to announce various forms of assistance to Ukraine. As an example, in the margins of the meeting, 15 Allies and Ukraine signed a letter of intent

confirming their support for a programme for the professional development of civilian personnel employed in the Ukrainian security institutions (see p. 7). In view of the importance of the human factor for the ability of every government to introduce systemic changes, the launch of this programme is one of the most important actions initiated by the Allies and Ukraine in 2005.

NN: *In parallel with the launch of the Intensified Dialogue on Ukraine's membership aspirations and related reforms in April 2005, a package of short-term actions was announced, which seeks to focus practical cooperation in support of urgent reform goals in five key areas. Among the priorities identified was defence and security sector reform. Why is it so important for cooperation in this area to be intensified?*

JC: There are two major reasons for intensifying NATO-Ukraine cooperation in implementing defence and security sector reforms. Achieving reforms in these sectors is important both for Ukraine itself and to support Ukraine's ambitions to join the Alliance.

These ideas are complex. I will try to explain them and will start by addressing the long-term impact of our cooperation on the Euro-Atlantic integration plans of Ukraine.

NATO is a political, security and defence Alliance which Ukraine has set itself the goal of joining. Being an Alliance member requires nations to share common values and apply similar standards, especially in the area of security sector governance. Our cooperation in implementing defence and security sector reforms brings Ukraine closer to these values.

What are these standards? In any country which aspires to NATO membership, security sector reform should aim to transform the security sector into a democratically-controlled and democratically-accountable mechanism. For example, a range of new laws and regulations should be adopted to ensure that an aspirant country's national legislative framework is in conformity with NATO and European norms. This requirement extends principally to the area of civil and democratic control of the national security forces, which is one of those critically important values which is reflected in the national policies and practices of NATO countries.

But security sector reform is not just about adapting the legislative framework in which the security sector operates. Nor is the transformation of a security sector solely about exerting organisational and policy control over the armed forces, paramilitary formations and intelligence services. The "Euro-Atlantic security culture" is about philosophies, values and everyday ways of working. These values include strengthening the role of civil society in providing effective oversight of internal and external security activities.

The transformation of Ukraine's security sector is vital to the further development of Ukrainian democracy and its future prospects. The way in which a security sector is governed reflects the philosophy behind the state and the quality of its democratic system, be it in Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada or Poland. Therefore, security sector reform in and by a democratic state must provide a link between security sector governance and democratic principles. The Allies attach great importance to this aspect of the reform process.

It is therefore no coincidence that defence and security sector reform has been on the NATO-Ukraine agenda for a long time – the Allies are determined to assist Ukraine in strengthening the democratic credentials of its secu-

riety sector. Nor is it a surprise that NATO and Ukraine foreign ministers put a particular emphasis on this area of reform when they launched the package of short-term actions in support of Ukraine's reform priorities. In brief, defence and security sector reform is about democracy.

NN: *Cooperation with Ukraine in the area of defence and security sector reform is more extensive than with any other of NATO's Partner countries. What have been the key achievements of cooperation in this area under the JWGDR?*

JC: I believe that the biggest achievement of the JWGDR has been its success as a forum for working-level interaction between experts from NATO member states and Ukraine, where issues relevant to implementing defence and security sector reforms can be discussed. In turn, this helps develop a specific working culture through which NATO and Ukraine can *jointly* address concrete problems and come up with *joint* solutions. This aspect of "joint work and consultation" is of great importance.

The JWGDR also allows Ukraine to draw on an Allied expertise, and serves as a channel through which NATO countries can provide and coordinate concrete support to Ukraine. Moreover, the JWGDR is a mutually beneficial endeavour – it helps the Allies better understand the complexity of the situation in Ukraine and the region.

What does this mean in practice? When the JWGDR was established back in 1998, its activities focused initially on information exchange between national experts on topics such as democratic control over armed forces, professionalisation, and reservist concepts and defence budgeting.

As the group evolved, it expanded the scope of its activities to include wider security sector reforms in Ukraine. Today, the JWGDR is implementing several activities including support to the implementation of Ukraine's defence policy review; preparations for a comprehensive national security sector review; specific activities aimed at supporting Ukraine in strengthening civil control over security and defence structures, including the intelligence agencies (*see p. 8*); assisting Ukraine in demilitarising its security sector, including in the framework of our cooperation with the troops of the Ministry of the



Ukrainian Defence Minister Anatoliy Grytsenko (left) and NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer speak to the press after the high-level NATO-Ukraine defence consultations in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 24 October

Interior and with the Ministry of Emergencies; and managing the consequences of defence reform.

NN: *What key challenges remain and where should Ukraine's current priorities lie?*

JC: Let me first stress that defence and security sector reform should not be regarded as a one-off problem. Any country's defence and security posture must continue to transform to meet the requirements of the evolving security environment. Today's policies and ideas may need to be further adapted to meet tomorrow's security landscape. Flexibility in the way we shape our security postures is therefore critical to the success of security sector reform.

The need for effective defence and security sector reforms is not exclusive to Ukraine. All NATO member states and several Partner countries face the challenge of transformation. The uniqueness of the situation in Ukraine is the magnitude of the problem. We tend to forget that when Ukraine gained its independence in 1991, it inherited a significant part of the Soviet Union's armed forces. At that time, Ukraine was faced not with the task of merely *transforming* its security forces – it had to establish its *national* security sector almost from scratch. Since then Ukraine has achieved much and

we should not underestimate the extent of this progress. As an example, Ukraine's ability to contribute to NATO-led operations and missions, in the Balkans and elsewhere, testifies to how professional the Ukrainian security forces are.

Turning to the priorities for the future, I think that the major challenge faced by Ukraine is the need for a comprehensive transformation of its security sector to align it more closely with the Euro-Atlantic and European standards. In other words, for Ukraine's security sector reform efforts to be successful, they should cover not only the Ministry of Defence and the Ukrainian armed forces but also all other security forces or law-enforcement institutions including the internal security forces. At the moment, we observe a degree of fragmentation of reform efforts, with some of the components of Ukraine's security sector appearing to be more advanced in pursuing the reform agenda than others.

In my view, there are two major factors which will be critical to the ultimate success of security sector reform in Ukraine: first, the ability of Ukraine's government to formulate a comprehensive national security sector reform policy, which would ensure high-level policy guidance for the reforming elements in Ukraine's security sector; and second, the determination of the Ukrainian authorities to sustain and adequately resource the reforms, once they have been launched. The national security sector review which Ukraine is preparing for should address both factors.

Needless to say, NATO and individual Allies remain ready to assist Ukraine in these difficult endeavours, including through the JWGDR. Ukraine will not be left alone to face the challenges of defence and security sector reform and I am fully convinced that we will achieve the results which we all hope for.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to say that it is always a pleasure to work with my Ukrainian colleagues and friends, whose determination and hard work have been instrumental in taking forward the NATO-Ukraine defence and security agenda. Ukraine has a great human potential, which is one of the most important aspects of Ukraine's democratic transformation.

→ NATO-Ukraine foreign ministers meet

“The Intensified Dialogue is already paying off,” said NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, at a press conference after the meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, at NATO Headquarters on 8 December, which focused on prospects for the future evolution of the NATO-Ukraine relationship. “Our experts are having discussions on the political, economic, defence, military and legal aspects of membership obligations.” However, he emphasised that there was plenty of work to do and that the Allies “expect Ukraine to up the pace of necessary reforms: strengthening democratic institutions, fighting corruption and modernising the whole of the defence and security sector.”



Ukrainian Foreign Minister Borys Tarasyuk (left) and NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer take part in friendly but frank discussions, during the meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, on 8 December

During the meeting, Allied ministers stressed that further progress towards achieving Ukraine’s Euro-Atlantic integration goals, including possible participation in NATO’s Membership Action Plan, would primarily depend on concrete, measurable

progress in the implementation of key reforms and policies. The discussions focused mainly on reviewing progress made in 2005 in strengthening Ukraine’s democratic institutions and reforming the defence and security sectors. Allied ministers pointed to the upcoming parliamentary elections in March 2006 as an important opportunity for Ukraine to demonstrate the permanent character of democratic reforms. They also welcomed the government’s willingness to conduct a comprehensive review of Ukraine’s security sector. Ukraine was encouraged to continue the implementation of judicial and administrative reforms, including in the fight against corruption, as well as to further pursue its efforts to contribute to regional security. Finally, ministers looked forward to the prompt adoption and timely and determined implementation of an ambitious NATO-Ukraine Annual Target Plan for 2006, which is currently being developed.

Speaking to the press, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Borys Tarasyuk said he had heard his Allied counterparts message that Ukraine needs to focus on the concrete implementation of reforms and on putting the ideas of the Orange Revolution into practice. He stressed that “the Ukrainian government will do its best to meet the expectations of the Ukrainian people – those who stood up and protested non-violently for democracy. We will ensure fair, free and democratic elections. And we will meet the expectations of our friends in NATO.”

→ Intensified Dialogue talks

Following on from the staff talks under the Intensified Dialogue that started in September (see *NATO-Ukraine News 3/05*), two more rounds of constructive talks took place in November. These focused on issues related to security and intelligence sector reform, and economic affairs.

On 9 November, a Ukrainian team led by Ihor Drizhchanyi, Chairman of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), and Mykola Malomuzh, Chairman of the Foreign Intelligence Service of Ukraine (FIS), came to NATO Headquarters for talks. John Colston, NATO Assistant Secretary General for Defence Policy and Planning, outlined Allied expectations with regard to security sector reform. Thomas McKeever, Director of the NATO Office of Security, discussed requirements for the protection and exchange of classified information. The Allied team stressed that thorough reform of the Ukrainian security/intelligence sector, which remains burdened by Soviet legacies of infrastructure, personnel levels and mentalities, is essential if Ukraine is to complete its democratic transition and achieve its Euro-Atlantic integration goals. The Ukrainian team leaders underscored their firm commitment to depoliticise their country's security/intelligence sector, ensure adequate democratic, civilian oversight (*see also p. 8*) and implement all applicable standards.

Intensified Dialogue staff talks with Ukraine on economic issues took place on 23 November. The meeting was chaired by NATO's Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Regional, Economic and Security Affairs, Patrick Hardouin. The Ukrainian team was led by Deputy Minister of the Economy Volodymyr Ignaschenko. Participants exchanged views on Allied expectations of a potential candidate member in the economic field: the three central issues are ensuring the rule of law, the development of a market economy and economic reforms for prosperity and stability. Deputy Minister Ignaschenko was asked to elaborate on structural problems in the Ukrainian economy that have an impact on the country's Euro-Atlantic integration goals. The discussion focused mainly on much-needed reforms to tackle corruption, reform public procurement practices and improve the overall business climate, as well as the importance of a transparent and independent judiciary. Other issues addressed included the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, reform of the healthcare and financial sectors, the sustainability of the pension system, and foreign trade.

NATO and Ukraine after the Orange Revolution

Where does Ukraine stand one year after the revolution? The current government wants Ukraine to join NATO, but do the people agree? What issues need to be addressed in order for Ukraine to meet membership criteria?

These questions and more were addressed during an online debate on NATO's web site on 22 November. Three experts took part: Oleksandr Sushko, Director of the Centre for Peace Conversion and Foreign Policy of Ukraine; James Sherr, Fellow of the Conflict Studies Research Centre at the UK Defence Academy; and Michel Duray, Director of the NATO Information and Documentation Centre in Kyiv. The debate was moderated by Jamie Shea, Director of Policy Planning at NATO.

The debate can be heard in English, and the transcript of the discussions is available at:
www.nato.int/multi/video/stopwatch2/051121/v051121e.htm



→ Professional development programme

On 24 October, during the high-level NATO-Ukraine defence consultations in Vilnius, 15 NATO countries and Ukraine signed a letter of intent confirming their support for a programme for the professional development of civilians working in the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence, the National Security and Defence Council and, as the programme develops, the wider security sector. The United Kingdom has agreed to take the lead in the delivery and coordination of the programme, which will be conducted under the auspices of the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defence Reform.



Polish Defence Minister, Jerzy Szmajdziński, signs the letter of intent expressing support for a new programme for the professional development of civilian personnel employed in Ukrainian security institutions

Strengthening civil and democratic control over security and defence structures and improving the capacities of these structures is of fundamental importance for Ukraine's development as a democratic country and its progress towards further Euro-Atlantic integration. As such, it is a key priority for reform in the context of Ukraine's aspirations to NATO membership. Ukraine had already stated its intention to develop the expertise of civilian personnel employed in security institutions in the 2002 NATO-Ukraine Action Plan.

Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, the United Kingdom and the United States will offer practical support to Ukraine for the implementation of the programme for professional development. This will include financial support and the provision of direct training and development assistance, as well as the use of bilateral assistance to support the objectives of the programme.

These countries will also lend political support to efforts to seek further support for this initiative from other NATO countries and Partner countries, as well as from appropriate international institutions such as the European Union.

→ Supporting former military personnel

The Ukrainian armed forces are being downsized progressively as part of wider defence reforms and plans to move towards an all-volunteer service by 2011. Following cuts of 40 000 servicemen in 2004 and similar reductions in 2005, the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence currently plans further gradual reductions of 102 000 personnel by 2011. It is estimated that about 25 per cent of these people will require some retraining. Ukraine has asked for international assistance both in the development of effective policy and the sponsorship of retraining programmes.

NATO-Ukraine cooperation in the field of retraining and resettlement of former military personnel is being developed along three main axes: a NATO-funded retraining programme, a Partnership for Peace Trust Fund project, and expert help for Ukraine in developing a comprehensive resettlement programme.

Over the past five years, NATO has financed and helped Ukraine manage a retraining programme that focuses on linguistic and specialised professional courses for some 100 former military personnel per year. Since 1999, 37 language courses (English, French, German or Italian) and 14 business courses have been organised

in Kyiv and several regional cities. A proposal is currently being considered to double the funding for this programme in 2006, bringing it to €300 000.

In September 2005, the Netherlands agreed to lead a NATO/Partnership for Peace Trust Fund project for the retraining and resettlement of 600 redundant military personnel at a centre in Kmelnitsky, western Ukraine. The project will ensure the continuation of an existing programme initiated in 2003 by the United Kingdom. The Kmelnitsky Retraining Centre runs courses in the areas of management, marketing, computer systems and computer technology. Following graduation, the Centre provides support for job placement, through maintenance of a database of vacancies, job fairs and individual support. As of May 2005, 77 per cent of graduates had found employment. Due to start in 2006, the Trust Fund project will run over three years with an estimated cost of €430 000. The Netherlands has committed itself to funding €132 000; Bulgaria and Latvia are both contributing around €15 000; and Finland, one of Ukraine's fellow partner countries in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, has agreed to support the project with €25 000. The United Kingdom will continue to support the programme by making available equipment previously purchased for the project. Finland, one of Ukraine's fellow partner countries in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, has also agreed to contribute to the project.

In response to a letter from Ukraine's Defence Minister in May 2005 requesting increased assistance in the resettlement of former military personnel, NATO's Secretary General has expressed NATO's readiness to provide expert support to help Ukraine's Ministry of Defence develop a comprehensive resettlement programme. For this to go ahead, the Ukrainian authorities first need to provide an assessment of their needs and present their vision for future policy in this field.

These three axes of complementary activities are aimed at helping Ukraine manage the social and economic consequences of defence reform. Cooperation in this area was highlighted as a priority in the package of short-term actions that was launched in April 2005, in parallel with the Intensified Dialogue on Ukraine's aspirations to NATO membership.

→ Civilian oversight of the intelligence sector

Establishing civilian oversight of the intelligence sector is one of the Ukrainian government's declared objectives as part of its wider security sector reform efforts. The importance of progress in this area as part of the strengthening of democracy in Ukraine has been emphasised during several recent NATO-Ukraine meetings in the context of the Intensified Dialogue process on the country's aspirations to join NATO. The need for effective mechanisms for civilian oversight is particularly urgent to support the Ukrainian parliament in exercising its expanded roles in this area, which are part of the constitutional reforms that go into effect at the beginning of 2006.

A roundtable discussion took place in Kyiv on 18 and 19 December, aimed at engaging the leadership of the Ukrainian intelligence community, senior executive officials and Ukrainian parliamentarians in discussion with counterparts from NATO and Allied countries on a number of key issues related to civilian and democratic oversight of the intelligence sector. These included the role of executive authorities in providing effective oversight of intelligence structures, legislative and public oversight mechanisms, and the concept of secrecy. The aim of the discussions was to provide detailed and substantive feedback in these areas in support of the Intensified Dialogue process, and to act as a catalyst for further expert-level work under the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defence Reform (JWGDR).

The event was organised under the auspices of the JWGDR in cooperation with the Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF). It was co-chaired by the JWGDR's co-chairmen, NATO Assistant Secretary General for Defence Policy and Planning John Colston and the Deputy Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, Serhiy Pyrozkhov.

→ Destroying surplus missiles → Military cooperation

Ukraine's Deputy Defence Minister Volodymyr Tereshenko signed the Implementing Agreement for the NATO/ Partnership for Peace Trust Fund project for the destruction of Ukraine's stockpiles of surplus and dangerous munitions and small and light weapons, during a visit to NATO Headquarters on 23 November.



A man-portable air-defence missile is dismantled at the Balakleya arsenal near Kharkiv

This agreement allowed work to start under the project. The first stage of scrapping surplus man-portable air-defence missiles (MANPADS) began at an arsenal in Balakleya in the Kharkiv region, on 1 December.

The United States is leading the first three-year phase of the 12-year demilitarisation effort, which aims to destroy 15 000 tons of munitions, 400 000 small arms and 1000 MANPADS. The total cost of the first phase of the project will amount to about eight million euros. In addition to improving security for Ukraine and its neighbours, the safe destruction of these stockpiles provides practical support to Ukraine's defence reforms and builds capacity in Ukraine to tackle such problems in future. (See also *NATO-Ukraine News* 1/05.)

The Ukrainian Chief of Defence Staff, Colonel General Serh iy Kyrychenko, briefed his Allied counterparts on progress under the "State Programme of the Ukrainian Armed Forces Development for 2006-2011", at a meeting of the Military Committee with Ukraine at NATO Headquarters on 15 November. The Allied chiefs of defence staff expressed their support for the Ukrainian transformation process, while emphasising that ensuring adequate funding would be crucial for successful implementation.

A work plan for military cooperation in 2006 was also approved at the meeting. This plan is the means to achieve the defence-related and military objectives included in the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan and Annual Target Plans as well as goals developed under the Partnership Review Process (PARP). With the launch of the Intensified Dialogue in early 2005, the plan for 2006 reflects a higher level of ambition than in the past. A particular emphasis has been placed on supporting and assessing the implementation of Ukraine's defence reform and transformation efforts, and activities aimed at developing greater interoperability between Ukrainian and Allied forces.



(Second left to right) Ukrainian Chief of Staff General Serhiy Kyrychenko and General Volodymyr Shkidchenko of the Ukrainian Mission to NATO speak to General Raymond Henault, Chairman of NATO's Military Committee, at a meeting of NATO and Ukrainian chiefs of defence staff on 15 November

→ Ukrainian celebrities visit NATO

As part of a public diplomacy effort to raise the visibility of the Alliance among Ukrainians, a group of Ukrainian celebrities, including well-known singers, writers and film-makers, were invited to visit NATO Headquarters on 17 November.



(Front, centre and right) Ruslana and Svyatoslav Vakarchuk take charge at a very informal meeting in the North Atlantic Council's conference room

The group included the winner of the Eurovision song contest, Ruslana, and fellow singers Oleh Skypka and Svyatoslav Vakarchuk, as well as member of parliament and writer Volodymyr Tsybulko and member of parliament Leonid Taniuk, head of the parliamentary committee on culture and spirituality.

The visitors showed they care a lot about their country's future and are keen to get involved in the debate on developing a culture of security in a challenging world. In a meeting with NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, they expressed their support for their country's aspirations to Euro-Atlantic integration and exchanged views on the reasons for which Ukraine is seeking NATO membership.

NATO-Ukraine News aims to highlight different aspects of NATO's cooperation with Ukraine. It is based on *Novyny NATO*, a quarterly newsletter for audiences in Ukraine, which is published in both Ukrainian and Russian versions.

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Further information on NATO-Ukraine relations is available at:
(in English) www.nato.int/issues/nato-ukraine
(in Ukrainian) www.nato.int/ukraine

In Ukraine, further information and publications are available from:

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