

DG IMS SPEECH
INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF KYIV TARAS SHEV
SHEVCHENKO NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I appreciate very much the kind introduction and the words of welcome.

First of all, I would like to thank for giving me the opportunity to address this broad academic audience, especially at such a right point of time, because round about one month ago, NATO's Ministers of Foreign Affairs endorsed a set of documents that pave the way for the future of NATO partnerships.

It is really a great pleasure for me to speak to an audience of such talented and promising young students.

For more than two decades, partnerships with various countries and in different frameworks have played an increasing role for NATO. Currently we have 22 countries of the Euro-Atlantic region in the Partnership for Peace Format, seven nations from the southern Mediterranean area in the Mediterranean Dialogue format and four nations from the Gulf region in the format of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative. Many of the newer NATO members started cooperation with the Alliance as PfP partners.

While the Alliance's approach to partnerships at the beginning was primarily aiming at overcoming the cold-war confrontation, NATO's Partnership Policy is now based on the firm belief that Euro-Atlantic security is best assured through a wide network of partner relationships with countries and organizations around the world.

This development is reflected in NATO's new Strategic Concept, adopted by the Heads of State and Government of NATO's member countries at their Summit meeting in Lisbon last year. The concept outlines cooperative security as one of NATO's core tasks by stating that (and I quote) "the Alliance will engage actively to enhance international security, through partnership with relevant countries and other relevant international organizations" (end of quote). It is therefore obvious, that Partnership is a key issue, because it is indispensable for the new NATO to be effective in providing security, mutually, for its members and partners.

For the NATO – Ukraine Partnership it is stated that "the Alliance aims to continue and develop the partnership with Ukraine [...] within the NATO-Ukraine Commission [..] taking into account the Euro-Atlantic orientation or aspiration of each of the countries".

Reflecting on the increased importance of partnerships, NATO's Ministers of Foreign Affairs at their meeting in Berlin in April endorsed the Berlin Package on partnerships. This package, inter alia, lays out priority areas for the cooperation with partners, it puts emphasis on substance rather than structures, it provides the opportunity to work together on matters of interest, it simplifies partnership tools and it puts flesh on the bones of the partners' role in operations. To put it in a nutshell: this package is the backbone for the future of NATO's partnerships, it is aimed at making them broader and more efficient.

But before outlining the different elements of this package in detail, let me turn to the 20 years old partnership between NATO and Ukraine, which during all the time has been mutually beneficial and successful.

NATO-Ukraine relations were launched in 1991, when Ukraine joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. This was followed by Ukraine becoming a member of the Partnership for Peace Programme in 1994.

The NATO-Ukraine Commission where NATO members meet with the Ukraine exclusively was established in 1997 when the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership was signed.

In April 2005 at Vilnius, the Alliance and Ukraine launched an Intensified Dialogue on Ukraine's aspirations to membership and relevant reforms, so that three years later, at the Bucharest Summit in April 2008, NATO member states were able to welcome Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in the Alliance, agreeing that Ukraine would become a member of NATO in the future. Also in 2008, the first Annual National Programme was developed. This document provides a solid framework for NATO – Ukraine cooperation and is also important for a successful implementation of Ukraine's own internal reforms. I congratulate Ukraine for all the reforms it has successfully implemented so far. and would strongly advocate to stay on that promising course.

Over the past 14 years, military cooperation with NATO has been well established and continues to play a significant role in this partnership. NATO remains committed to provide the relevant assistance to Ukraine for the implementation of wide-ranging domestic and defence reforms as well as to pursue fully Ukraine's Distinctive Partnership.

A few words on NATO-UKR military cooperation: NATO and Ukraine Chiefs of Defence and Military Representatives meet on a regular basis throughout the year; the last meeting of the Chief of Defence was actually only last week in Brussels. The NATO-UKR Work Plan is the fundamental document to drive practical military cooperation between NATO and UKR ensuring a coherent support to Ukraine's reforms.

Practical military cooperation for 2011 and 2012 includes improvement of Ukrainian Armed Forces operational capabilities and interoperability with NATO, Cooperation on Ukrainian Armed Forces transformation, reforms and professionalisation, support for sustainability of Ukraine's contributions to NATO-led operations and the NATO Response Force as well as cooperation, liaison and public information mechanisms. These areas comprise cooperation in the traditional domains such as defence reform, operations, the NATO Response Force and civil emergency planning, while also covering new areas such as terrorism, piracy and cyber defence. They therefore follow mutual interests and deliver against the findings of the NATO Secretary General's recent visit to Kyiv as well as aspects entailed in the Joint Statement of the NUC Foreign Minister's meeting in April.

For more than a decade Ukraine has been an active contributor to Euro-Atlantic peace and stability. Your country contributes to four of six of NATO-led operations, and your contributions are highly valued. The Ukrainian Navy patrols the Mediterranean in the framework of Operation Active Endeavour to prevent terrorism, and your army is serving together with Allies in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kosovo.

Additionally the NATO-Ukraine partnership has found its outstanding example in Ukraine's participation in the NATO Response Force 15, Ukraine being the first partner nation to do so. And it meets its continuation in the recent announcement of contributing to the staff of NRF 17 in the second half of this year. As a German General I am particularly pleased about the great success of the Ukrainian participation in NRF 15, as the Ukraine and Germany worked very closely together in the preparation of the Ukrainian NBC Protection forces for the Response Force.

I would now like to take a closer look at the documents of the partnership package agreed in Berlin - let me begin with the Policy for a more efficient and flexible partnership.

NATO's partnerships provide a clear value added to the security of the Alliance in particular, but also to international security in general. They also contribute to the defending and advancing of commonly shared values such as democracy and human rights. Let me mention here that I am happy to say that Ukraine is a very reliable and honored partner in the Euro-Atlantic community of values.

The aim of NATO's new partnership policy is to substantially deepen and broaden existing partnerships, increase their effectiveness and flexibility and thereby enhance their contribution to Euro-Atlantic and international security. Some of the strategic objectives of the policy are the promotion of democratic values and reforms as well as the promotion of regional security and cooperation. I think especially to the latter Ukraine has already contributed a lot with the most useful role it played and still does in the 5+2 format of negotiation on the settlement of the Transdnestrian conflict.

While priority areas for dialogue, consultation and cooperation are identified as, for example, defence reform, interoperability and counter proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, NATO's engagement with partners is not limited to existing partnership formats. The formula 28+n (meaning the 28 NATO members are meeting with a varying number of partner nations) provides the mechanism for consultations and cooperation in flexible formats across and beyond existing frameworks. This allows the Alliance to bring the right audience of nations to the table - topic based or event driven. Together with NATO's general preparedness to establish a dialogue with any nation around the globe this provides the opportunity for cross-cutting, wider engagement.

Finally, there will also be an enhancement of existing partnerships by intensified political consultation on security issues, strengthened practical cooperation or support to defence education, training and capacity building.

This leads me to the next element of the Berlin package - NATO's toolbox for partnerships, a document which aims at the improvement of the management of NATO's partnerships. It was Secretary of State Clinton who recently said that "There are too many acronyms and not enough strategy". I do not want to bother you with all these acronyms and abbreviations, but the essence is, that for every partnership community there is currently a different cooperation menu, including the various activities offered. These menus differ in their processes, which is not justified on any substantial or specificity grounds, but instead results from the bureaucracy that regulates each menu of cooperation. In an attempt to streamline these cooperation menus, a single Partnership Cooperation Menu, will be established. This menu would replace the existing cooperation menus and all the activities offered by it would be open to all partners, in existing and future formats.

Additionally, NATO has a number of individual programmes for its partners which serve specific purposes and objectives. You might be aware of the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) and the Planning and Review Process (PARP), which are even more developed individual programmes. The aim is to replace those individual programmes by an Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (IPCP), which will be developed by all NATO partners as a modular document. Content and structure of the IPCP will vary according to the specific interests of the partner and of NATO, and on the specific cooperation framework to which the partner belongs.

Taking a look at the transition to this new system of partnership tools it is expected that the first single Partnership Cooperation Menu will be started in the 2012 cycle, in order to provide enough time to adopt the existing mechanisms and to communicate this new system to all the actors involved. The Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programmes will be made available as soon as possible, so that when a current individual programme runs out, this new programme will be developed.

Let me finally address the Political-Military Framework, which lays down how NATO works together and shapes decisions together with partner countries on the operations and missions to which they contribute. NATO greatly values these contributions, because they demonstrate the partners' commitment, alongside NATO, to promote international security and stability. Lessons Identified from KFOR and ISAF called for review of this basic document, which will give our operational partners a more substantive role in decision shaping and decision making. I appreciate very much the statement of the Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs that he gave at the meeting in Berlin in April, saying that Ukraine considers a contribution to NATO's mission Unified Protector in support for the civilian population in Libya.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

for the reason of getting into a discussion with you, time dictates that I come to a close.

Let me conclude with the statement that Ukraine has always been a reliable and very active partner to NATO, who consistently sought to be a provider of security rather than a consumer. Ukraine fulfils and deserves to the fullest the prominent role the new Strategic Concept offers to partners.

I am convinced that this cooperation will not only go on undiminished, it will even be strengthened, broadened and become more efficient. NATO's new approach to partnerships will be also be beneficial for Ukraine and contribute to its security.

The implementation of the Berlin Package on Partnerships is a very important step to make NATO's partnerships more flexible and efficient, to discuss any issue in any format. But it is also only the first step and the new mechanisms will have to prove their usability in the future. It is up to NATO and its partners to make these mechanisms a success by actively contributing to them.

The International Military Staff stands firm to support the efforts to deepen and strengthen NATO's partnership with Ukraine. Let's make best use of the existing as well as of the future partnership arrangements, to best face current and upcoming threats to a Europe whole, free and in peace.

Thank you for your attention.