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**PROBLEMS OF N A T O EXPANSION:  
UKRAINIAN PROSPECTIVE ON OPTIONS  
FOR GUARANTEEING OF EUROPEAN SECURITY**

Final Report

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## INTRODUCTION

In May 1945 the Act on the Capitulation of Fascist Germany was signed which marked the end of the most disastrous war in the history of Europe.

In May 1997 NATO, Ukraine and Russia have signed a number of international documents to legitimize the termination of a lasting ambiguity which appeared after the end of the „Cold War“. This ambiguity evoked following the break-up of the Warsaw Pact and the USSR. It was characterized by the following issues:

- What role will be played by the post-Communist countries on the continent?
- What way will these countries choose: the one oriented towards the newly created Russian democracy, or towards the West, or their own way?

According the Act on the Relations between NATO and Russia, as well as to the Charter on Cooperation of NATO and Ukraine, the last barrier was lifted for the Central and East European countries on their way towards joining the North-Atlantic Alliance and for the post-Communist countries, including Ukraine, the doors remain open.

Ukraine has not reached this result in one day, it was caused by a number of internal and external circumstances to be discussed hereinafter.

We will make an attempt to show that both May agreements and Madrid summit decisions are only an interim result and that achievement of the final goal - to ensure stability, democracy and prosperity all around the continent - will require great attempts to be made from the part of both the Western countries and new democracies.

From the very beginning of the research, we decided to not investigate a complex of the already solved, still existing and potential problems related to NATO expansion, as well as not to propose the ways of their settlement solely and exclusively in the context of the interests of Ukraine. Rather, we defined our task as an attempt to make this, first of all, with regard to general European interests („Europe“ is used in a broad sense here).

It is worth mentioning that, while seeking the ways of combining these interests, we faced no difficulties, since, as the events for the last six years have shown, both Ukraine and Europe have the only objective interest of paramount importance: to be together.

Ukraine is the largest East European country in terms of territory and population which occupies the strategic position between Central Europe and Russia. The Secretary General of NATO, Javier Solana noted that Ukraine is a corner-stone in the processes of European integration and achieving stability [1]. Strengthening Ukraine's independence and ensuring its integrity is closely connected with two factors: planned expansion of NATO and stabilization of Russia as nonexpansionist power. NATO expansion will undoubtedly happen while democratization of Russia has no guarantees, especially with regard for recent deviation of Russian policy towards nationalism, communism and protectionism. Ukraine's vital state and national interests depend from settlement of three key issues: consequences of NATO expansion, contents of Russian-Ukrainian relations and development of Ukrainian-European links.

# I. NATO EXPANSION: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL IMPELLERS AND DETERRENTS

The decisive stimulus and, simultaneously, the main obstacle within the process of NATO expansion has been Russia.

One of the main problems causing tension in the relations between NATO and Ukraine is that the majority of Western analysts, including the leading research institutions (except, probably, Z. Brzezinski and H. Kissinger) sometimes fail to understand the situation in and around Russia. They try to analyze this country, evaluate its internal and foreign policy according to the criteria, generally recognized in the XX century, without taking into consideration the Russian mentality which for six centuries had been forming under the conditions of absolute despotism.

A quotation from the paper of RAND Corporation senior researchers - R. Asmus (presently, the US Secretary of State Assistant), R. Kugler and S. Larrabi - is a vivid example of the above mentioned [2]:

„NATO expansion, because of a number of important reasons, does not conflict with Russian interests. Nobody, and especially Moscow, wants to see Central Europe unbalanced by national extremism, geopolitical rivalry and increasing political and economic instability. If Russia considers Germany's close links with NATO profitable for itself, the same considerations are absolutely appropriate for Poland and other Central and East European countries. Feeling itself in security, Poland will probably be less anti-Russia-oriented and more interested in cooperation and bridge-building than the Poland which is not confident in its own future and which finds itself in a new geopolitical pitfall between Russia and Germany.

Though some Russian scientists agree with this logic, the major part of the Russian elite, including both democrats and nationalists opposes NATO expansion. This viewpoint is caused by four factors. First, Moscow is concerned with a prospect of possible isolation at the periphery of global politics. Second, Russian democrats are afraid that such expansion can undermine the reform process, and nationalists will benefit from this. Third, Russian military circles are concerned with appearance of a new „NATO threat“ near the very Russian borders. And finally, fourth, many Russian strategists and politicians still have an instinctive feeling that NATO expansion will definitely result in creation of such European security system where there will be neither place for, nor recognition of Russia's status and influence as superpower.

These researchers have not seen the difference in Russia's considerations as to Germany and Poland, though any Russian politician, or analyst will define this difference with utmost clarity: "After Yalta, Germany belonged to the West and Poland belonged to us". The mistake made by the authors of the research in respect of the reasons has led to the mistake in conclusions, when the authors did not see the main reason of both inconsistency of NATO expansion with Russian interests and, as a result, a tight lasting confrontation of Moscow with Brussels: expansion is held at the expense of narrowing the Russian sphere of influence and makes it forever impossible for Russia to return to the territories where it had been ruling during the last decades.

It is not correct to speak about the things which the abstract Moscow may want or not want abroad. Its foreign political wishes will depend on the country's nature -imperial or democratic. The democratic Russia will indeed be interested in stable development of its neighbours. The imperial Russia will be characterized with polar interests: the more unstable is the neighbor's position, the easier it will be to interfere into its internal affairs through the mediation of

this or that political force. The examples in the territory of the former Soviet Union are more than sufficient - Georgia, Tadjikistan, Belarus.

An excessively simplified approach to Russia from the part of the West has led to two great mistakes made by the latter in 1991-1994.

The first is that in 1991-1992 the West lost a real possibility to quickly and relatively smoothly expand NATO to the East when the entrance of new members to the Alliance could look merely as a stage of their democratization.

The second mistake included a wrong strategy of expansion and it must be discussed more deeply.

The analysis of „The US National Security Strategy Regarding Europe and NATO“ and „Study on NATO Enlargement“ proves that there is some controversy between the goal and the ways of its achievement.

The expansion was aimed at „existing of peaceful, democratic, prospering and integrate Europe“ through cooperation „with our trans-Atlantic partners to expand the stability zone throughout the region“ [3]. The main element of such cooperation and, probably, the only way to ensure stability in Europe is, in the opinion of the authors of both documents, NATO expansion.

This strategy had a great disadvantage - simplified and purely mechanical approach to the expansion concept development. It was a priori stated that accession of new countries to NATO „will promote strengthening of stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic region“ [4]. However, the question was not discussed how, against Moscow's will, the transformation of its recent satellites into strategic opponents would strengthen the general European

security. There were no forecasts of the possible events after expansion, especially in relations between NATO and Russia, Russia and its former allies.

Meanwhile, in 1995-1996 the developments went in the direction, contrary to stability and security.

*At the beginning of 1997 the analysis of the situation and optimum variants of solving the existing problems, related to NATO expansion, were as follows.*

The policy aimed at prompt admission of former Warsaw Pact members to NATO has significantly deteriorated the relations of Russia with its neighbours and the West . Ignoring (because of the quite understandable reasons) the statements of US and NATO top officials asserting that „expansion is not directed against Russia“, Moscow made its counterblow - it announced the beginning of a tight course as to the ex-USSR republics. In his Decree of September 1995, Boris Eltsin entrusted the executive structures to seek from the CIS members:

- to allow the presence of the Russian army in their territory;
- to declare the rouble the joint currency;
- to hold a coordinated foreign policy;
- to unite into a military alliance [5].

In addition, „NATO expansion“ has negatively influenced the internal political situation in Russia. As it had been predicted by many analysts, anti-Western rhetoric dominated in the course of both pre-election campaign to the State Duma and the „Presidential race“. It is enough to mention that, among several dozens election blocs and parties, none stands for NATO expansion. The idea of „dishonesty of the West which, in response to the Warsaw Pact disbandment, is surrounding Russia by enrolling our former allies“, finds more and more understanding and support even in the liberal circles of the Russian



public, and it can become a real foundation for creation of a broad, force-based, chauvinistic bloc.

Staff transformations in the Russian Government after elections held in December 1995 prove that such a bloc is being created „from the top“, in particular by Eltsin´s team.

Few analysts are surprised by the fact that during the whole post-Soviet period, in spite of obvious controversies, Zhirinovsky and Eltsin have never allowed direct mutual criticism. But quite often it looks like the policy of both President Eltsin and Russia as a whole is formed in the head-quarters of Liberal-Democratic and Communist Parties. Massive bombing of Pervomayske village from all kinds of heavy artillery occurred on the third day after emotional TV appeal made by the leader of Russian nationalists to Boris Eltsin „to destroy this Chechenian den with napalm“. The Russian President nominated to the post of the Minister of Foreign Relations Evgeny Primakov who can compete with Zhirinovsky in anti-Western feelings and sympathy for Saddam Hussein. V. Chernomyrdin had „surrendered“ the democratically elected Belorussian Parliament to Oleksandr Lukashenko the day before it was suspended from the power. Elected to the post of the Speaker of the State Duma, G. Seleznyov, a member of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, declared that the Communists would not raise the question about the vote of nonconfidence to the Government as far as „we noticed that the President and the Government started to accomplish our goals“ [6].

As a result, a paradoxical situation originates when the West and the Central European countries actively stimulate Russia to further fall away into the dictatorship and restoration of the empire, rather than to continue democratic processes.

Was it possible to not only prevent such transformation of Russia, but also to effectively stimulate this country to deepen democratic reforms and to voluntarily recognize the good style rules during communication with other members of the world community and, first of all, with its neighbours? The answer to this question could be positive, unless the authors of the expansion concept would have not only ascertained the necessity „to develop cooperation between NATO and Russia with the purpose to strengthen mutual trust and openness“, but would have proposed concrete ways of such strengthening. Instead, NATO bluntly ignored Russia's opposition towards expansion and it was rather clearly framed by, for instance, Aleksey Arbatov, famous political scientist, presently, the State Duma Deputy: „Independently of all talks about NATO's defensive nature, Russia will inevitably understand its expansion as something oriented against it. If it is not invited to join the bloc on the equal terms, Russia will undertake measures to develop its defensive perimeter to the East and the South. It will result in new division of Europe into the influence spheres, and at their borders, as history proves, there always are some tensions and confrontation. Ukraine may become the principal apple of discord - with regard to its role in Europe, CIS, Black Sea region, and because of its own problems“.

The last phrase also explains why forced NATO expansion has just recently been inconsistent with Ukraine's interests: the edge between the two inevitably hostile blocs - independently of Ukraine's membership in any of them - will pass along one of its boundaries.

Moreover, in my opinion, a graduate and prolonged accession of post-Socialist countries to Washington Treaty hardly meets their own long-term interests, since, when joining NATO, they initiate a strong rise of nationalist moods in Russia, which certainly and very quickly will bring purely imperial forces to power, or will in this way transform the existing Government. As a

result, the pressure from the part of the Kremlin on the countries of Central and Eastern Europe will essentially increase and a real threat to their independence will appear. Thus, instead of the ephemeral guarantees of their security, they will be given absolutely real „insecurity guarantees“ (I am using the word „ephemeral“ with regard to the inter-war experience of Poland and Czechoslovakia as well as to West’s current hesitations in cases involving its participation in military actions).

In order to avoid the outbreak of a new „Cold War“, NATO should find the compromise between the interests of Central and East European countries (to join NATO as soon as possible which will be a guarantee of security against potential pressure of Russia), the West (not to disturb Russia, but simultaneously not to allow it to renew the old influence sphere) and Russia (not to allow NATO to come to Russia’s boundaries).

Such a compromise may include „a provisional nonexpansion of NATO“ according to either of the following two variants.

### **Variant I.**

At its session, NATO declares that, taking into account the importance of preserving a general peace in Euro and around the world, with a due regard to the interests of NATO as well as separate countries - both NATO members and partners, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization:

- a) **shall not expand in the Eastern direction under current conditions;**
- b) shall deepen and develop cooperation in the field of defense among the partner countries within the Partnership for Peace Program;
- c) shall grant to the partner countries all the rights enjoyed by NATO members, except the rights which result from Article 5 of the Treaty (where aggression

against one member of the bloc is qualified as an aggression against the entire bloc);

- d) **will consider the coming to power in Russia** (through constitutional or any other ways) **of forces that bear a direct or indirect threat to independence or territorial integrity of partner countries as a necessary and sufficient reason for immediate admission of the latter to NATO** as members to enjoy full rights.

## Variant II

- a) at its session, NATO declares and makes it clear to the nonaligned European countries that, taking into account the importance of preserving the atmosphere of partnership and cooperation, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization shall not expand in the Eastern direction;
- b) Central and East European countries which belong to neither NATO, nor Tashkent Treaty, conclude an agreement on creation of a new, **independent from both blocs** structure named, for example, Budapest Treaty, European Nuclear-Free Zone, Neutral European States Organization or something similar;
- c) the new structure concludes two absolutely identical agreements with NATO and Tashkent Treaty, each necessarily including an article analogous to Article 5 of the North-Atlantic Treaty. Therefore, each member country of this structure is given security guarantees simultaneously from the two sides.

*As a result, these agreements:*

- a) without depriving the countries of Eastern and Central Europe of their non-bloc status, would provide them with the same security guarantees which

they would get in case they joined either of the two blocs existing on the continent;

- b) would make it impossible to accuse the new structure of its one-sided orientation;
- c) would significantly increase the chances to reach a lasting peace in Europe, since the potential aggressor will be aware that its attacking even the smallest country belonging to the „middle organization“ will automatically result in its confrontation with the whole opposing bloc.

The „provisional nonexpansion of NATO“ would allow to combine the interests of the West, the Center and the East, would make any one-sided advantages impossible, and would enable to create a new flexible security system in Europe, within which:

- a) there will be much less reasons (at least at the European arena) for confrontation between Moscow and Washington;
- b) the interests and ambitions of both the West and Russia will not suffer;
- c) Central European countries will remain free from the pressure of superpowers, foreign troops and nuclear weapons.

As it was mentioned above, these propositions were developed by the author with regard to the situation which existed at the beginning of 1997, i.e. by the moment when there was no confidence whether the Alliance would resist Moscow's pressure and would keep its word concerning the admission of new members.

However, in spring these doubts disappeared when NATO dotted its „i's“ and crossed its „t's“ in the question of enlargement: in spite of Russia's resistance, the expansion will take place and will on the first stage involve 3-5 countries to be announced at Madrid Summit in July.

A new situation caused the necessity to review the prospects of the European security system transformation, search of new variants based on new reality.

These issues will be discussed in Chapter 4 of this research.

## **2. RELATIONS BETWEEN NATO AND UKRAINE: INFLUENCE FACTORS**

### **a) Transformation of relations in 1991-1997**

The place of Ukraine in the process of NATO expansion is quite peculiar. It has never officially declared its wish to join NATO. Simultaneously, it has always tried to keep away from Tashkent Treaty.

The main reason of that is the fact that in the Declaration of Independence and some other official instruments Ukraine announced its intention to become a non-bloc and nuclear-free state in the future [7]. However, as it often happens, good intentions have come into objective conflict with severe reality. In the modern world, a country with Ukraine's geopolitical situation and potential can ensure its national security by only two means. Either, relying upon its own forces as well as upon its military and technological potential, to create an adequate deterrence system (desirably, a nuclear one), or to join any powerful

alliance (again, desirably, with nuclear possibilities). According to the words of Dr. O Goncharenko (the Institute of the World Economy and International Relations of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine), „having declared a nuclear-free status together with a non-bloc one, Ukraine actually cut the head and the tail of its national security“ [8].

Theoretically, there is a third option too - official neutrality under the guarantees of the great powers or the UN Security Council. However, this variant is too problematic since, firstly, in historic aspect neutrality has always been a rather doubtful status and it was frequently violated and, secondly, Ukraine has already got a sad experience of trying to receive the guarantees from the great powers. Let us remember that all attempts made by Ukraine to get firm guarantees in exchange for a full nuclear disarmament failed. The general assurances received by Ukraine from three depositary states of Nuclear Weapons Non-Proliferation Treaty at the OSCE summit in Budapest in October 1994 are of little importance and have nothing in common with the really firm guarantees (no matter what the state officials say trying to conceal their failure). They cannot be recognized as sufficient in the aspect of the country's national security.

Thus, the necessity of reviewing the non-bloc status has become absolutely obvious not only for analysts, but also for the majority of nationally conscious political figures and MPs of Ukraine. The position of the leading persons in country's political life has changed greatly too. At the end of 1995 the President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma stated: „Ukraine shouldn't be an apple of discord between NATO and Russia. Ukraine wants to be a bridge uniting the sides. It must be a non-bloc country“ [9]. Volodymyr Gorbulin, the Secretary of the Council of National Security and Defense explained that Ukraine would rather be the cross-roads with two-way traffic than the buffer between the two blocs [10].

However, starting from the spring of 1996 the priorities have changed. Speaking in Geneva in March 1996, L. Kuchma underlined that Ukraine's future does not obligatory have to be of a non-bloc nature. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine started to regularly emphasize the possibility of reviewing a non-bloc status according to the changes in the international situation and the desirability of establishing new forms of special relations with NATO. In June 1996 Kuchma announced about Ukraine's intention to become an associate member to the Western European Union (WEU) [11].

Of course, this is not the reason to make conclusions that Ukraine may join NATO or WEU right tomorrow. The problem exists not only because so far nobody has officially invited Ukraine to join NATO or WEU (we do not consider here unofficial hints and remarks like a statement made by Malcolm Rifkind, the Minister of Defense of Great Britain about the desirability of NATO expansion to Ukraine's Eastern borders [12]), but rather because for numerous economic, political, technical and other reasons Ukraine is merely not ready to a full membership in Euro-Atlantic military and political structures (see Chapter 2c).

Sometimes some politicians and analysts still recall certain discrepancies between Ukraine and NATO in specific aspects of expansion. In this case they, of course, refer to the questions related to the placement of nuclear weapons in the territory of new NATO members. Moreover one can hear that it is the only aspect of NATO expansion where the interests of Ukraine and NATO fully coincide (the latter is, in principle, possible, but for different reasons).

Indeed, the official position of NATO in the questions of nuclear weapons placement in the territory of the new members is very vague and controversial.



The above mentioned NATO Research on the Issues of Expansion stresses that the terms of nuclear weapons placement result from Article 5 of Washington Treaty and refer to all NATO members. Gebhardt von Moltke, NATO Assistant Secretary General, explained that there is no obligatory requirement to place foreign troops or nuclear weapons in the territory of new members [13].

At the end of 1996 NATO developed a statement saying that the expansion process does not envisage the nuclear weapons placement in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. However, as it was repeatedly underlined by the official representatives of the Alliance, provided certain changes happen in the international situation, these guidelines can be revised. The attempts made by Moscow during Helsinki Summit and negotiations on the Russia-NATO Charter text with the purpose to obtain a legally binding refusal of nuclear weapons placement in the territory of the new members did not lead to any positive result. And, let us hope, would not.

The NATO countries hold a very advantageous position and have no intention to change it. Moreover, the countries applying for NATO membership completely support it. Poland went even further and officially announced that in case of its joining NATO it agrees to place nuclear weapons on its territory [14].

It is necessary to clearly understand: nuclear weapons placement in the territory of the new NATO members is not Ukraine's business. It can concern only Russia as a nuclear power and Alliance member countries. If somebody is afraid of the possibility of placing nuclear weapons close the Ukraine's borders, we should first of all look at our next-door neighbours and in an opposite direction (see Chapter 3). In addition, there is a suspicion: all this „fuss“ around nuclear weapons in the process of expansion is a part of an

ordinary “trading“ process and political game between Russia and NATO, where Russia, having realized its strategic defeat, is trying to get as many scores as possible and, if it is lucky, to score a „prestige goal“.

In any case, this question should not influence on either rising cooperation between Ukraine and NATO, nor on the cooperation of NATO with the Baltic states.

Ukraine is one of the first countries of Central and Eastern Europe which joined the Partnership for Peace Program. IN 1995-1996 a new broad cooperation program was developed and introduced. It included regular consultations between the Alliance top officials and Ukraine’s official representatives on the key aspects of regional and global security, in particular, on the issues of peace-keeping activities, arms control and non-proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction. An agreement was reached on the spheres and areas of cooperation in political, military, scientific and technical fields, in prevention and management of emergency situations.

The success of political and democratic reforms in Ukraine, broad consultations held within the format 16 + 1 as well as Ukraine’s contribution into implementation of peaceful settlement in Bosnia and Herzegovina were highly appreciated at the meeting of the North-Atlantic Council Ministers on 10 December 1996. In particular, the representatives of the NATO countries stressed in the Final Communiqué: „We support Ukraine in its development as a democratic country with market economy. Preserving of Ukraine’s independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty is a decisive factor of stability and security in Europe. Ukraine’s developing stable relations with NATO is an important aspect of the European security structure. We highly appreciate Ukraine’s active participation in the Partnership for Peace Program, its cooperation with European institutions, such as EU and WEU“. Javier

Solana characterized the relations with Ukraine as „broadened and very specific“. In his speech at London Institute of International Relations in March 1997, he emphasized: „Ukraine holds a prominent place in Europe. Independent, stable and democratic Ukraine is strategically important for the development of Europe as a whole. We are developing special and effective relations between NATO and Ukraine in order to facilitate Ukraine’s participation in ensuring of stability in Europe. We work together with Ukrainian officials at institutionalization of relations in the sphere of security before the beginning of Madrid Summit. At the active support of Ukrainian Government, NATO opened its informational center in Kyiv. Such initiatives reflect a new NATO which puts rhetoric into reality“ [15].

In a broader sense, rapprochement of Ukraine and NATO can be viewed in the context of strategic interaction within the triangle NATO - Ukraine - Russia. Russia’s participation in creation of a comprehensive European security system is extremely important. It is hard to imagine the building-up of such a system without Russia, with regard to its status as a nuclear power in the region and a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Broad partnership with Russia, noted Karsten Voight, the President of the North-Atlantic Assembly, should be based on the fact that NATO expansion is aimed at growth of stability and not of the level of threats [16].

The processes of expansion, large-scaled troops redislocation or transformation of military infrastructure should be implemented with regard for absolutely legitimate interests of the security of Russia and other countries of the region. However, the latter does not mean that Russia, or any other country should receive the power of veto, or „droit de regard“ as for the processes in the region. Prohibition of the power of veto in the questions affecting the sovereignty of other countries should be absolute and

unreserved, while the attempts to revise this principle should be categorically condemned and rejected.

In this respect, Russia's attempts to relate the signing of the Charter of Relations With NATO with agreements providing that NATO and Russia must „jointly“ guarantee stability and security in the region were rather provocative. Such agreements, as it was rightly noted by the representatives of the Baltic states, would practically mean Russia's obtaining „droit de regard“ in the region [17].

The reservations of Russian leaders as to signing of the Charter are very disturbing. They, in particular, include the demands to NATO to give up the placement of military infrastructures in the territories of the new members, as well as attempts to receive from the West an explicit or implicit recognition of the former Soviet Union's territory as „Russia's sphere of interests“. Such intentions are too dangerous with regard for a sad story of „division of Europe into the spheres of influence“ and general events inside Russia.

The decision of Russian State Duma on denunciation of Agreement on the USSR break-up, direct territorial claims of both Parliament Chambers and top officials of the Russian Federation towards Ukraine, „operative“ creation of a „new Union“ between Belarus and Russia, Russia's attempts, under the guise of integration processes and military cooperation, to expand the zone of its domination and to develop the military bases network along the periphery of ex-USSR's Western boundaries from the Caucasus, Ukraine and Moldova to Belarus, the Baltic region and the North theatre of war operations together with significant growth of influence and activity of nationalistic and neo-imperialistic forces in Russia can cause rather serious consequences at the regional and global levels.

We should realize that in front there is an uneasy way and many problems. The main one, as it was stressed by Javier Solana, is the necessity to persuade Russia that the „privileged relations with expanded NATO are by far more reasonable than any other alternative“ [18]. However, attempts made by NATO countries in order to placate Russia are very controversial and pose many questions both in the West and in the East. A number of influential political figures think that the Administration of the President Clinton and NATO Secretariat have gone too far in their concessions to Russia. In this respect, H. Kissinger's recent article in „Washington Post“ is quite symptomatic. In H. Kissinger's opinion, the concessions made by B. Clinton in Helsinki for the sake of achieving a compromise with Russia can undermine the fundamentals of NATO functioning as an effective defensive structure. Russia sought its actual intrusion into the sanctum - internal NATO discussions. And though Russia's powers will be limited by the rights of advisory vote, it can give her large possibilities for political manoeuvring and shattering the Alliance's integrity from inside.

The Central and East European countries - the first candidates for joining NATO - are not less concerned about this, since at least 2-3 years will pass from the formal invitation to join NATO at 1997 Madrid Summit during which they will not be full-fledged organization members till real membership while Russia will already have the possibility to make a real influence on the Alliance's policy. Thus, the problems of the transition period acquire an extremely important meaning, require serious analysis and relevant conclusions made by the experts from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and NATO. Otherwise, as it was marked by A. Kwaszniewski, the President of Poland, after negotiations between B. Eltsin and H. Kohl in April 1997, under conditions when Russia has a vote in NATO decision-making structures, a question may arise on the expediency of Poland's joining this organization.

And finally, we would like to mention serious concerns of Ukraine and the Baltic states about a steadfast tendency shown by the leaders of some NATO countries to hold negotiations with Russia through the heads of other peoples. With all the delicacy peculiar to these negotiations, a veil of mist and secrecy around them is too large. It is important to get something more than unofficial statements of some Western politicians (even so influential as Z. Brzezinski, the former Advisor to the President G. Carter on the affairs of national security) about the fact that during Helsinki negotiations there were no secret agreements and that, in spite of the pressure of Russian diplomacy, neither Ukraine, nor the Baltic states became a small change in the “trade” between Russia and the West.

Undoubtedly, when Ukraine and the Baltic states understand that the attempts are made to conduct a new division of the spheres of influence and that their destiny is decided in Moscow, one can expect very undesirable consequences for the general system of European security.

The process of institutionalization of relations between Ukraine and NATO, in spite of its being uncompleted, causes much less concerns. Ukraine’s attempts to make an agreement on special partnership legally binding are hardly justified, especially when taking into consideration inevitable problems with its ratification by both parties. It would be enough if this document is signed by the representatives of Ukraine and NATO countries. Ukraine’s official statement about its wish to join NATO can be much more useful for Ukraine in its attempts to strengthen the links with the Alliance and to receive political and economic support of NATO countries. The representatives of NATO countries have repeatedly hinted Ukraine about the expediency of such a clear statement and the necessity to, finally, choose its geopolitical orientation. However, careful remarks of some state officials and the Secretary

of the Council of National Security and Defense of Ukraine about the potential possibility of joining NATO before 2010 hardly were an adequate reaction to the expectations of the West.

As it was already mentioned, many factors impede Ukraine to become a full-fledged member of NATO. And this is understood not only in Ukraine. Our country must clearly define its foreign political orientations and priorities, as well as steadfastly develop and deepen special relations with the Alliance for the sake of further integration into NATO political structures. We should not exclude the possibilities of concluding bilateral agreements (including legally binding ones) with the leading NATO countries, first of all with the USA. It completely meets Ukraine's main priority - comprehensive integration into European and Euro-Atlantic political and economic organizations, as well as security structures.

Moreover, the French or Spanish variants of NATO membership, special relations, bilateral and multilateral agreements are not an exhaustive list of all possible forms of integration into European security structures. New types and forms of integration can and, surely, will be developed. They will become an integral part of a comprehensive European architecture based on the principles of collective defense and collective security for all countries in the region.

#### **b) The influence made by the „third party“**

The nature of relations between Ukraine and NATO is to some extent influenced by the relations with other countries, first of all, with the USA, Russia and other neighbours of Ukraine.

Speaking about the neighbours, it is worth mentioning that in its relations with Hungary and Poland Ukraine has had no problems from the very beginning. Polish Sejm was one of the first (31 August, 1991) to recognize Ukraine's independence. Ukraine soon signed the treaties of good-neighbourliness with both countries, as well as agreements on ensuring the national minorities' rights.

Also, we have established good-neighbourly relations with Moldova, though they are impeded by the existence of the de facto self-declared Prydnistrovska Republic. Lately, both Moldova and Transdnister region have been making active attempts to ensure Kyiv's political and military participation in the conflict settlement.

The contacts with Belarus, after O. Lukashenko became its President, have rather been of a protocular nature. And though the Treaty of Friendship has been concluded with its and the joint border has been delimited, there is a problem of violating the rights of Ukrainian national minority in the West of the country. The same problem to some extent cools Kyiv's relations with Bratislava and Bucharest.

Still, the main problem in relations with Romania was its veiled striving to revise the borders existing between the two countries. Each pre-election campaign in Romania is accompanied by territorial claims to Ukraine. It especially refers to the National-Liberal Party, Republican Party of Romania, the Party of Romanian Freedom and Democracy and United Democratic Convention. Finally, four-year negotiations ended by initiation, in May 1997, of a bilateral treaty where the Parties have fixed an existing status-quo concerning the borders. One can hardly doubt that Romania has relinquished its claims with regard to a potential opportunity to be enlisted among the countries which will be invited in Madrid to join NATO.



At the same time - in May - one more agreement, important for Ukraine, was signed - the one with Russia which scuttled it for more than six years. For the first time since Kyiv became a capital of an independent state it was visited by the Russian President. Before, according to the words of Leonid Kuchma, there was a game into one gate: intensive pressure of Moscow on Kyiv. I am not going to discuss here all the problems which have appeared during this time - Sevastopol, Black Sea Fleet, Russian minority and Russian language in Ukraine, informational war, „Gazprom“'s expansion attempts.... I would just like to mention that in May 1994 Ukraine and Russia were very close to the edge at which the war could start [19]. Then, at the expense of unimaginable attempts, it became possible to prevent military operations in the Crimea between the subdivisions of the National Guard of Ukraine and the naval infantry of the Russian Black Sea Fleet which were ready to begin after provokative speech of the Crimean President where he announced that Kyiv allegedly wanted to dismiss the Crimean Parliament.

It looks like the Kremlin in May of 1997 finally understood that it had made a mistake having chosen in 1991 a mentor's tone in its relations with Ukraine: by doing this, it only pushed towards the West both the population (including ethnic Russians) and the political elite of its South-Western neighbour (for more details see Chapter 3).

The relations between Ukraine and the USA were rather complicated, especially in 1991-1993. An insignificant dialogue can not be compared with a great number of American-Russian contacts. The major part of aid to the Soviet Union was going to Russia, while the US Government strived to limit its dialogue with Kyiv to one question - Ukraine's denuclearization.

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, after his trip to Ukraine in July 1993, became convinced that such situation requires immediate interference, and, without excessive fuss, organized an endeavour which in one year radically changed the nature of relations between Kyiv and Washington.

At his initiative and at the support of the Center of International and Security Studies three years ago in order to expand bilateral relations a group of leading citizens of the U.S. and Ukraine, acting in a private capacity, established a joint Ukrainian-American Consultative Committee. As a chairman of the working group of that Committee, I can affirm that its activities have proved to be rather effective. It is enough to say, for example, that it gave birth to the idea of multilateral guarantees of security for nuclear-free Ukraine, and the text of the respective agreement signed in Budapest by Great Britain, Russia, the USA and Ukraine during the past year is practically identical to the project that was prepared at a UACC session nine months earlier. The proposals of the Committee contributed to the package that the leaders of the G-7 worked out for international economic aid to Ukraine and the removal of restrictions for the admission of certain Ukrainian goods to Western markets. The Committee continues to look for opportunities for closer economic and political cooperation between the USA and Ukraine.

I would like to separately and briefly review the position of political parties. As mentioned before, none of political forces in Russia does not support NATO expansion and neither do the left in Ukraine. Being more or less precise, one can say that the position of parties and some politicians in both Russia and Ukraine in this question is identical to their attitude towards the USSR's break-up: those condemning the collapse of the Soviet Union have a negative attitude to NATO expansion.

### **c) The influence made by the internal situation in Ukraine**

There is a number of internal factors which, in one way or another, influence the process of deepening the relations between Ukraine and NATO.

#### 1. Economic crisis which:

- does not allow to hold an effective renovation of the Armed Forces in accordance with Western standards;
- promotes the growth of unemployment, delays in paying the salaries, liquidation of the social services system which strengthens the positions of the political forces opposing Ukraine's integration into Western structures, in particular into NATO.
- weakens Ukraine's positions in its international relations.

2. Non-bloc status which was declared simultaneously with Ukraine's independence aimed at Ukraine's withdrawal from Russian defensive orbit. This obstacle was lifted at the beginning of 1997 when a new National Security Concept was adopted according to which Ukraine can participate in the international security systems.

3. A significant number of pro-Communist members of the Supreme Rada, trying in all possible ways to impede cooperation with the Alliance. Thus, by the present time, there is no separate item in the budget which would envisage financing of Ukraine's participation in the Partnership for Peace Program. In this connection, the Ministry of Defense has to take appropriate funds from its own budget, extremely limited following the economic crisis. As a result, in 1996 Ukraine fulfilled the Individual Partnership Program only by 38%.

4. A long-standing confrontation with Russia characterized by unsettled problem of the Black Sea Fleet division, absence of a comprehensive Treaty

between the two countries, territorial claims to Ukraine, attempts to undertake an economic pressure on it.

5. The absence of the system of democratic-civil control of defense. In comparison with the Soviet period, some progress has been made. For example, an alternative military service has been introduced, inspectors of the Ministry of Environmental Protection can supervise military objects. But the fact that in 1994-1996 a civil person, who had worked in the industrial sphere before, was a Minister of Defense has not promoted the Army's democratization and only brought to it the spirit of corruption which was then flourishing in civil spheres.

### **3. NATO IN THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF UKRAINIANS**

The deepness of relations with NATO, their prospects in the democratic Ukraine depend to a great extent from the voters' sympathies and antipathies.

When analyzing the changes of NATO's image in the consciousness of Ukrainians for the last 10 years, it is worth mentioning that it was changing according to three main factors:

- changes in country's foreign political orientation;
- tension in relations with Russia;
- development of cooperation with NATO

For a significant part of people of middle and elderly age the acronym „NATO“ has a negative context as far as the image of this organization during the decades had been formed by the state and existed as an image of something hostile. In the past, it was always presented in black colours since the Alliance was on the opposite side of the world split during the Cold War. The second pole was Warsaw treaty, and people from these age groups were its elements, members of its structures - soldiers, officers of Soviet Army and repressive organs, workers of the military and industrial complex, the members of their families. At the psychological level, they were „we“, and those belonging to NATO were „they“. That is why it is not surprising that the first relatively independent sociological research held by the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in summer 1991 provided the following results:

- over 65% of the population viewed NATO as hostile and aggressive organization;
- nearly 23% called the Alliance the factor of ensuring peace in Europe and Ukraine should be neutral towards it;
- 8% thought it reasonable for Ukraine to be a NATO member in the future.

In a while, when Ukraine's independence became more firm and NATO announced the course to expansion and cooperation with the post-Communist countries which resulted in Ukraine's participation in the Partnership for Peace Program, joint with NATO manoeuvres and operations in the former

Yugoslavia, the image of NATO both in state authorities and in the mass media has significantly changed and a bigger number of respondents have started to view it as positive. Such transformations stimulated unfriendly acts from the part of Russian leadership towards Ukraine. The polls held at the end of 1994 showed that now 37% respondents supported Ukraine's Western orientation.

In May 1996 „Socis-Gallup“ Service, at the request of UCIA, conducted a broad research of the public opinion concerning the main problems facing Ukraine. One of such problems was attitude to NATO. The results obtained during research [20] allow to make a number of conclusions.

1. NATO expansion is not a reason for the majority of the population to be anxious. Only each sixth respondent has a negative impression about the Alliance and considers NATO a remnant of the Cold War which is no more needed under modern conditions. Instead, approximately a half views it as a defensive union and peace-keeping organization. 40% of the population support the idea of Ukraine's full-scale joining to NATO and approximately the same number supported its participation in the Partnership for Peace Program.
2. Nearly one third think that none of the countries poses a threat to Ukraine. A very small number of respondents (less than 3%) indicate the USA, Romania, Germany, or any other country, except Russia, as a source of threat.
3. The country which poses the most serious threat to Ukraine, in the opinion of the respondents from all regions (including the Crimea), is Russia. This idea is supported by each fourth respondent.

At the end of 1996 the Democratic Initiatives Foundation carried out an expert evaluation of the attitude to problems related to relations between Ukraine and

NATO. The officials of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense, state research institutes, higher personnel of the Armed Forces, teachers of military educational establishments, Deputies of the Supreme Rada and leading journalists concentrating in international affairs were polled as experts.

The results of the poll indicate a great concealed potential of the political elite regarding its inclination to move towards joining the Alliance. In general, 83% of the polled experts supported the idea of Ukraine's joining NATO.

Based on the answers to the question „If it were up to you to decide whether or not Ukraine was to become a member of NATO, what would you decide?“ four types of orientations were found among the surveyed elite:

1. 23.8% = „**Alarmists**“ (Ukraine to become a member immediately, i.e. despite the current absence of prerequisites for such a step)

Among the arguments for such a view, these elites especially referred to the need to ensure Ukraine's national security, its territorial integrity, and the threat from Russia (one of the experts also mentioned Romania and Belarus). Also noted were the needs of joining a collective security system and of European integration, the improbability of the USSR being restored, i.e. arguments peculiar to all pro-NATO groups. At the same time, this group is characterized by a sense of optimism in its evaluation of NATO's tasks and opportunities and by an incomplete understanding of the nature of this organization and of its current policy. One of the adherents of the position to immediately join NATO is willing to do it „together with Russia in order to restrain the expansion of Western civilization while working with it (the West);“

2. 26.2% = „**Hard NATO adherents**“ (Ukraine to become a member within 3-4 years, i.e. to proclaim NATO membership as a strategic goal of Ukraine and consistently move towards achieving it)

The adherents of this orientation reasonably stress that, due to many reasons, Ukraine today is not ready to become a member of NATO and, therefore, „it is first necessary to adopt a proper military doctrine, to work out in preparation for NATO membership a program of activities including infrastructure development, raising the security standard of military objectives, improving the domestic and international legal basis, resolution of controversial territorial issues with Russia and Romania,“ etc. Also noted as necessary was time to change the mentality of the people and to make NATO membership more acceptable to them. Of interest is the view of an expert that „in 3-4 years Ukraine will have as its lobby in NATO the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland“;

3. 33.3% = „**Soft NATO adherents**“ (Ukraine to become a member within 5-10 years, i.e. to allow for flexibility and to act in accordance with the status of relations between NATO and Russia, Russia and Ukraine, etc.)

Elites in this category considered that „a shorter time frame is not realistic due to very difficult economic and social conditions, an unstructured economy, an incomplete state-building process, an unreformed army“. Also noted was the requirement of „the stabilization of the geopolitical situation in Eastern Europe. Until this occurs, Ukraine could be an equal partner.“

External factors may influence the rapprochement of adherents of this standpoint with „hard NATO adherents“. This group's motivations differ from those of the next group (NATO opponents); therefore, this group could potentially evolve toward the second group;



4. 16.7% = „**NATO opponents**“ ( no membership under any circumstances)

The left wing deputies of the Supreme Rada form the basis of this orientation. Adherents of this orientation emphasize relations with Russia, which may worsen if Ukraine joins NATO. It follows that „our economic and spiritual interests lie with Russia - we would be oriented toward it.“

It is interesting that almost none from this group completely rejected cooperation with NATO, except a Supreme Rada deputy who proclaimed that NATO is an „enemy structure“. In fact, some of them, considering themselves patriots, were not prepared at the time to repeat even the statement of their leader, O. Moroz: „I do not care whether the doors to NATO are open or if they even exist“ (Kievskie Vedomosti: 20.11.1996, p.3). On the other hand, a statement by an adherent of this orientation testifies to its essential aspect: „Now it is impossible, later it will be unnecessary.“

IN June 1997 the poll among the experts was held by the Independent Experts' Foundation. Only one question was put: „What is the main threat for Ukraine's security now?“. The amount of threat was evaluated with 5 points („1“ - no threat at all; „5“ - significantly threatens). The answers were divided in the following way:

– failure of economic reforms in Ukraine	4.54
– a great catastrophe (like the Chernobyl one)	4.50
– terrorism	3.50
– problems related to Russia	3.25
– expansion of Islam influence	2.45
– NATO expansion	2.00

As we can see, within several years the attitude of Ukrainians towards NATO has radically changed. The polls show a clear pro-Western dominant idea which is increasing. It is especially peculiar to the state political elite which gives the reasons to be confident that relations between Ukraine and NATO will be further developed.

It is worth saying that the consciousness of Ukrainians during the years of „perestroika“ was already prepared for the change of priorities and when the independence was obtained a prompt transformation occurred. At the same time, the Western society needs time to completely understand the changes which have happened in Central and Eastern Europe. That is, in this relation it can be said that presently the East is more ready for rapprochement and closer cooperation than the West.

#### **4. NATO EXPANSION: WHO AND WHEN?**

Thus, the decision on expansion has been made and in the nearest future they will start to implement it. It is important that the process should not stop and should be conducted in such a manner that a triune task could be solved:

- new members should be inherently included into the structure of the North-Atlantic Alliance;
- NATO's effectiveness and equilibrium should be preserved;
- the expansion should promote maximum stabilization of the Eastern Europe and, first of all, of Russia.

When talking about the possibility of the expansion process suspension, I mean the threat which will be the main one for NATO in the nearest future and will have the same nature as the one Ukraine presently faces - the threat from inside. With the absence of a joint and serious external enemy, the Alliance

can lose the solidity which ensured its victory in the „Cold War“ and simultaneously can drop the consensus when solving the destiny-bearing questions for itself and for Europe. Turkey has already announced that it will possibly block the decisions on admission of new members if it is not allowed to join the European Union. It is still unknown what will be France's position during voting as it is trying (so far - with no success) to keep the post of the NATO Southern Flank Chief Commander for its representative and lobbies joining of Romania and Slovenia into the Alliance.

So far it is hard to say how the position of „newcomers“ will agree with the views of „veterans“ in two years, in particular, in the process of voting as to the „applicants of a new wave“.

In order for the new members to smoothly integrate to the Alliance's structure it is necessary, first, that their admission should be carried out after they meet all the necessary criteria (see page     ).

Second, these countries should make their own appropriate preparations to the joining and create the necessary legislative, military, technical and psychological basis.

And third, the economy of new members should be stable. Andriy Sobolev, senior consultant of the National Strategic Research Institute (Kyiv) marked that „from the very beginning NATO included the countries with almost equal social, political and economic level of development. For the last 30 years the Alliance has not actually changed. Within this period, clear interrelations have been formed inside NATO between its members in all fields of cooperation“. In order for the new members to feel confident, they should be the same as those admitting them not only in military and political, but also in economic sense.

But for this a new, promptly developed and introduced Marshall Plan is needed where the donor will be the countries of Western Europe, rather than the USA.

From the other hand, this first transformation since the Western bloc was founded, connected with its enlarged membership, founding of the partnership institute, changes in the nature of the threats, first military operations beyond the responsibility zone should not lead to “washing out” or “softening” of NATO’s structure, its gradual transforming into one more (in addition to the UN and OSCE) permanent organ for diplomatic debate which will lose its main feature: to make and fulfill decisions on support of international peace in a quick and effective manner. Undoubtedly, Russia will try to transform the Alliance in this very direction as far as, in accordance with the Act, it gained the opportunity to influence NATO’s policy.

And, finally, about the last danger - the possibility to lose stability in Eastern Europe. The likelihood of such a loss will significantly decrease if Russia’s democratic development is ensured. The West has enough levers by means of which, without interfering into Russia’s internal affairs, it will be able to help it become a sustainable democratic state.

Firstly, the West should not make cessions to Russia in cases when imperial or non-democratic ambitions are obvious in its position. The example of the West’s having not behaved in the best way is the absence of reaction to the tank shooting of the Russian Parliament which took place in autumn 1993, murder of dozens of thousands civilian persons in Chechnya in 1994-1996 by Russian troops.

Secondly, “if” must be the key word in all political and economic agreements with Russia: all this will happen if you continue moving towards democratization and market reforms, if you do not pose a military threat to

Central and Eastern Europe. Such approach is characteristic not only to the author of this research (see Chapter 1), but also to some Western politicians, for example, to Michael E. Brown.

And, thirdly, in my opinion, one of the main ways of ensuring stability in Europe is to admit to NATO as soon as possible all post-Socialist countries, as well as Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Ukraine (Moldova is not included in this list only because, according to its Constitution, it cannot be a participant to any military or political bloc).

This idea does not conflict with either the stated above proposition on “provisional nonexpansion”, or with the intentions to help Russia become a really civilized country. No matter how strange it may seem at a first glance, both provisional nonexpansion under the conditions which existed before Madrid Summit and the prompt admission of all former European satellites of Moscow to NATO has one aim: to prevent the existence of a “gray zone” between the Alliance and Moscow since the latter, with regard to its still imperial nature, will have a tempting object for pressure and even for expansion.

Russia will be able to become a really open democratic society as soon as it will start to solve its numerous internal problems. And it will be able to focus on its internal problems, to solve them when the factors that can provoke its imperial ambitions disappear, i.e. existence, from Russia’s point of view, of “nobody’s zone” between itself and NATO, and when a military and political map of the new Europe is stipulated and legally regulated.

With regard to this, it can be ascertained: Ukraine’s prompt joining NATO is in the interests of both Europe and democratic Russia. But to do this, Ukraine and the Alliance have to overcome a number of problems discussed in

Chapter 2. And finally, their joint interest will be a success, as there are only two alternatives for the nearest future: either Eastern and Northern borders of Ukraine will coincide with NATO's borders, or Russia will again fall into a usual for it imperialistic direction with all following consequences for it and for the whole world. The third variant - Ukraine's "Finlandization" is impossible. While Finland is psychologically alien for the Russians, in their consciousness, a Slavonic, mainly Orthodox Ukraine where almost a half of the population speaks Russian, merely cannot be nobody's, that is neutral. The existence of such a Ukraine will be a permanent disturbing factor for Russia, a source of constant instability in Europe.

It is clear that Ukraine cannot claim for a membership in NATO right tomorrow. But it is moving in this very direction. It was the first to sign a framework agreement with the Alliance on participation in the Partnership for Peace Program, opened the first NATO Informational Center in the East. This idea is also proven by the fact that, in the author's view, one of the most promising Ukrainian politicians was appointed Ambassador in Brussels. Step by step, in spite of the crisis in Ukraine and Russia's opposition, Kyiv and Brussels continue to move towards each other in joint expectation of the meeting.

The meeting is sure to take place.

If the West is firm and Ukraine - successive.

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Since the beginning of my work over the topic I have written and published about thirty articles in Ukrainian and American media; took part and spoke at seventeen international seminars and conferences in Kyiv, Donetsk, Moscow, Minsk, Brussels, Istanbul, Rome, Tbilissi and New York; have submitted fourteen memoranda to the highest authorities of the Supreme Rada of Ukraine, Presidential Administration, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of

Defense; established an independent Center for International Security Studies, organized three international seminars: “European Security Architecture” (Kyiv 20-21 June, 1996), “Threat to Peace and Security in the Black Sea Region” (Tbilissi, 2-4 August 1997), “Regional Conflicts: the Problem of Settlement” (Kyiv, November 1997).

In spite of the termination of the Fellowship granted to me by NATO, I will keep working at this subject and I am ready to inform you of my further activities, ideas and proposals.

Pavlo ZHOVNIRENKO  
26.06.1997

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