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Contents

- 2 Secretary General's visit to Kyiv
- 3-5 Interview with Ambassador Erdmann
- 6-8 Focus on NUC defence ministers' meeting; Operation Active Endeavour; military exercise; scientific and environmental cooperation; disposal of melange



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Ukraine News

Intensified Dialogue is launched

- Initial discussion paper for the Intensified Dialogue is presented during NATO Secretary General's visit to Kyiv
- The Intensified Dialogue is explained in an interview with Assistant Secretary General Erdmann

→ First step taken in Intensified Dialogue with Ukraine

NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer visited Kyiv, Ukraine, on 27 June. He had meetings with President Viktor Yushchenko, Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, Foreign Minister Borys Tarasyuk, Defence Minister Anatoliy Grytsenko and other senior government officials, as well as with the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada (parliament), Volodymyr Lytvyn. During his visit, the Ukrainian government formally presented the discussion paper for Ukraine's Intensified Dialogue with NATO, which is now being considered by the NATO Allies and will be used as the basis for structured expert discussions.

The discussion paper represents the first concrete step in the Intensified Dialogue process since it was launched at the informal meeting of Allied and Ukrainian foreign

ministers in April. It addresses key issues set out in the 1995 Study on Enlargement – such as domestic and foreign policy, defence and security sector reform, as well as legal and security issues – and includes questions Ukraine has regarding the implications of NATO membership.

Beyond Ukraine's aspirations to NATO membership, another key theme of the visit was the government's determination to press ahead with its broad and ambitious reform agenda. The Secretary General reconfirmed the Allies' willingness to assist Ukraine in its reform process, in particular reforms related to the defence and security sector, which will be the subject of high-level NATO-Ukraine consultations scheduled to take place in Vilnius, Lithuania, in October. Preparations for the upcoming visit of the North Atlantic Council to Kyiv in October were also discussed.

The meetings also provided the opportunity to discuss Ukraine's substantial contributions and support to ongoing NATO-led operations, including preparations for Ukraine's assistance to the maritime counter-terrorist operation in the Mediterranean (see p. 6) and its potential contribution to NATO's support to the African Union's mission in Darfur. Views were also exchanged on Ukraine's efforts to help find a solution to the "frozen conflict" in Moldova. Moreover, the Secretary General outlined developments in NATO's cooperation with Russia, which is a key partner for both the Alliance and Ukraine.

While in Kyiv, the Secretary General addressed representatives of civil society at an event organised by the NATO-Ukraine Civic League. He said that "there is a new spirit of hope in the air" in Ukraine and in its relations with NATO, since the dramatic events surrounding the presidential elections at the end of last year. But he also emphasised that "to make certain that democracy is fully consolidated and firmly rooted, it will be necessary to press ahead with crucial, often difficult, reforms. The 'Orange Revolution' must not become a treasured memory of a few courageous weeks. It must remain a living project on which all of you, both inside and outside of government, continue to work each day."



NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer (front right) discusses NATO-Ukraine cooperation with President Viktor Yushchenko in Kyiv on 27 June

→ Interview with Ambassador Martin Erdmann



When Ukraine's newly elected President Victor Yushchenko attended a summit meeting in Brussels on 22 February, NATO leaders expressed support for Ukraine's ambitious reform agenda and agreed to sharpen and refocus NATO-Ukraine cooperation in line with the new government's priorities. Two months later, at the NATO-Ukraine Commission meeting of foreign ministers in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 21 April, the Allies and Ukraine launched an Intensified Dialogue on Ukraine's aspirations to NATO membership and announced a package of short-term actions designed to enhance NATO-Ukraine cooperation in high-priority reform areas. NATO's newly appointed Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Security Policy, Ambassador Martin Erdmann, will be deeply involved in taking forward the NATO-Ukraine relationship over the next few years. *Novyny NATO* asked him to explain what these recent initiatives will mean in practice for Ukraine.

Novyny NATO (NN): *What is an Intensified Dialogue?*

Martin Erdmann (ME): Intensified Dialogues were first launched with the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland in early 1997, in the run-up to NATO's first post-Cold War round of enlargement in 1999. The process of conducting Intensified Dialogues with these countries, which had declared their interest in joining the Alliance, allowed us to explore with each of them issues that had been raised in a 1995 Study on NATO Enlargement. This Study was carried out by the Alliance to consider the merits of admitting new members and how they should be brought in. It concluded that the end of the Cold War provided a unique opportunity to build improved security in the entire Euro-Atlantic area. It also highlighted that countries seeking membership would have to be able to demonstrate that they had fulfilled certain requirements. The Intensified Dialogue process aimed to provide these countries with concrete information regarding the rights and obligations inherent to NATO membership. Once admitted, a new member country would enjoy all of these rights, and assume all of these obligations.

According to the Study, any country seeking to join the Alliance must meet key requirements, which include a functioning democratic political system based on a market economy; treatment of minority populations in

accordance with guidelines established by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe; commitment to peaceful resolution of disputes with neighbours; the ability and willingness to make a military contribution to the Alliance and to achieve interoperability with other members' forces; and commitment to democratic civil-military relations and institutional structures.

The launch of the Intensified Dialogue with Ukraine marks a real milestone in NATO-Ukraine relations and in Ukraine's pursuit of Euro-Atlantic integration. It is a clear signal from NATO Allies that they support Ukraine's aspirations. Nonetheless, this process does not guarantee an invitation to join the Alliance. As the NATO Secretary General has made clear many times, such an invitation would be based on Ukraine's performance in the implementation of key reform goals. NATO and individual Allies are committed to providing assistance and advice all along the way, but the pace of progress remains in Ukraine's hands.

NN: *What will this process mean in practice for Ukraine?*

ME: The first concrete step in the Intensified Dialogue with Ukraine was taken on 27 June, during the Secretary General's visit to Kyiv, when the Ukrainian government formally presented an initial discussion paper to establish the basis for the Intensified Dialogue. This paper addresses key issues set out in the 1995 Study – domestic and

foreign policy, defence and security sector reform as well as legal and security issues – and highlights in specific terms those areas where progress will need to be made to bring Ukraine’s aspirations closer to reality. This paper has since been forwarded to NATO Allies for consideration and will be used as the basis for structured expert discussions. We intend to conduct the first of these discussions in September, when a high-ranking delegation of Ukrainian officials representing ministries involved in the Intensified Dialogue will visit Brussels. These expert discussions will in turn provide an opportunity for Ukrainian officials to learn more about what will be expected from Ukraine in the years to come, and for NATO officials, like myself, to examine in greater detail Ukrainian policy and capabilities.

NN: *What is the aim of the package of short-term actions that was launched at Vilnius?*

ME: The paper issued at Vilnius on “Enhancing NATO-Ukraine Cooperation: Short-term Actions” sets out a series of near-term priorities – areas where NATO and Ukraine will work together to help accomplish the most urgent reform goals. It also records the agreement between Allies and Ukraine to launch the Intensified Dialogue.

The short-term measures focus on five areas: strengthening democratic institutions, enhancing political dialogue, intensifying defence and security sector reform, improving public information, and managing the social and economic consequences of reform. These are high priorities for the new Ukrainian government, as they are vital to the success of the democratic transformation that the Ukrainian people demanded last December. They are also areas where NATO can offer specific expertise and, in some cases, material assistance.

Already, a number of steps have been taken to implement these actions. We have broadened the scope of our cooperation on defence and security sector reform, including by responding to a Ukrainian request to assist in the reform of Ukraine’s intelligence services according to European standards. We have expanded our consultations on issues like the situation in Moldova, where Ukraine has played a more active role in the effort to find a political settlement. We have launched the largest-ever trust fund in the framework of the Partnership for Peace

in order to fund the destruction of large stockpiles of outdated and unstable munitions. And we have increased our support to the retraining of Ukrainian officers and servicemen who will need to make the transition to the private economy in the context of the ongoing downsizing and modernisation of the Ukrainian armed forces. Allies are also considering how to work together to provide additional support to the training of civilian personnel in Ukrainian defence and security institutions. We will have a chance to review progress in these and other areas at a meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission at the level of ambassadors in Kyiv in October.

NN: *How do the initiatives taken at Vilnius relate to ongoing cooperation in the framework of the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan?*

ME: The Intensified Dialogue addresses issues specifically related to Ukraine’s possible NATO membership. The package of short-term measures is designed to focus on practical cooperation in support of urgent reform goals. Both of these initiatives are intended to complement and reinforce existing cooperation in the framework of the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan. The Action Plan, launched at the Prague Summit in November 2002, identifies a set of long-term strategic objectives designed to bring Ukraine closer to her Euro-Atlantic integration goals. It is implemented through Annual Target Plans, which identify specific benchmarks to be reached and activities to be carried out in the course of each calendar year. It also contains a built-in mechanism to assess progress. This mechanism will continue to serve as the backbone for NATO-Ukraine cooperation as we proceed with the Intensified Dialogue. From the NATO perspective, we believe we should be using all of the tools at our disposal in order to work toward the ultimate goal of a more prosperous, more democratic Ukraine with a modern, accountable security sector, fully capable of integrating into the North Atlantic Alliance. We should not lose sight of this goal as we make adjustments to the mechanisms designed to get us there.

NN: *If Ukraine makes sufficient progress in implementing relevant reforms, the next step on the road to realising the country’s membership aspirations would be an*

invitation to join the Membership Action Plan (MAP). Realistically, when is the earliest Ukraine could expect to be invited to join the MAP and what would this entail for Ukraine?

ME: As I said, there is no point in trying to guess at timetables. The Intensified Dialogue is a serious process aimed at helping Ukraine better understand and, more importantly, to implement many of the standards she will need to meet as a candidate for NATO membership. As the Intensified Dialogue process runs its course, our focus needs to remain on the underlying goal – the implementation of necessary reforms. The Ukrainian authorities need to concentrate their efforts on practical substance and on achieving the implementation of commitments already undertaken. NATO will provide advice and support in areas where it has expertise.

At some point, once Allies have had the chance to review Ukraine's progress in the framework of the Intensified Dialogue, they might decide to invite the country to join the Membership Action Plan (MAP) process. The MAP is a programme of advice, assistance and practical support, designed to help countries wishing to join the Alliance in their preparations for potential membership and in their drive to meet NATO standards. While MAP participation in general helps prepare candidate countries for Alliance membership, it does not provide a guarantee of future membership. In any decision on NATO enlargement, each country is assessed according to its performance and based on the Allies' judgement as to whether its membership would contribute to stability in the Euro-Atlantic area.

NN: *While the Ukrainian leadership has openly declared Ukraine's aspirations to join the Alliance, it would appear from recent opinion polls that if the Ukrainian people were invited to exercise their democratic rights tomorrow in a referendum on NATO membership, the answer would be "No". Do you have any comments?*

ME: It is principally the responsibility of the Ukrainian administration to convince the Ukrainian people that its ambitious reform programme, and its integration goals, are in Ukraine's interest. We do, however, share a common interest in ensuring that the Ukrainian public is properly informed about NATO and about Ukraine's aspirations, and that they are able to form their own opinions

based on facts. For years, we have sought to heighten awareness of what NATO is and what it stands for, and to stimulate debate about Euro-Atlantic security issues more generally among Ukrainian academics, opinion formers and the general public. That is why we established the NATO Information and Documentation Centre in Kyiv and launched a publications programme in the Ukrainian and Russian languages.

We are not in the propaganda business. In the framework of the short-term actions launched at Vilnius, the Allies offered to cooperate with Ukraine in making available accurate information about the Alliance and the NATO-Ukraine relationship. We know that many people in Ukraine are still suspicious of NATO, and still associate the Alliance with old Cold War stereotypes. From NATO's perspective, quite apart from the question of Ukraine's possible future membership, it is in our interest to encourage people to take a fresh look at the Alliance, so that they discover how NATO has transformed itself since the end of the Cold War and developed partnerships throughout the Euro-Atlantic area to meet new security challenges. They would also discover that NATO's strategic partnerships with both Ukraine and Russia are an essential part of this transformation – and would, hopefully, then also understand that Ukraine's membership aspirations and its desire to maintain a strong relationship with Russia are not mutually exclusive policies.

Many Ukrainians also seem unaware of the benefits of existing NATO-Ukraine cooperation. The fact is that NATO and Ukraine already cooperate in concrete and mutually beneficial ways. We work together to bring peace and stability to the Balkans and to fight terrorism. We also cooperate in developing programmes to address Ukraine's specific needs, such as the modernisation of its armed forces, the disposal of stockpiles of dangerous, obsolete arms and munitions, and the retraining of military personnel to ease their transition into civilian life. I am confident that this shared experience of cooperation will provide us with a solid foundation as we intensify the NATO-Ukraine relationship even further in the years to come.

→ NUC defence ministers meet



Defence Minister Anatolii Gritsenko (left) attends his first meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission on 9 June

NATO defence ministers met their Ukrainian counterpart at a meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, in Brussels on 9 June. Talks focused on NATO assistance to Ukraine in the area of defence and security sector reform as well as on Ukraine's contribution to NATO-led operations. All ministers welcomed the launch of the Intensified Dialogue on Ukraine's membership aspirations and relevant reforms. In this context, they underscored the importance of defence and security sector reform and agreed to intensify practical cooperation in support of Ukraine's reform agenda.

This was the first meeting of the NUC to be attended by the new Defence Minister Anatolii Gritsenko. He outlined plans for the reform of the Ukrainian armed forces by 2011. Allied ministers emphasised the need for a comprehensive approach, not limited to the military alone but including other parts of the defence and security sector. Key elements of reform are institution building, democratic oversight of armed forces, defence planning, downsizing and modernising the armed forces, and taking appropriate action to address

the social consequences of defence reform. These issues are being followed up in the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defence Reform.

Ministers reviewed Ukraine's continued involvement in NATO-led operations in the Balkans and welcomed the signature of an exchange of letters on Ukraine's support to NATO's Operation Active Endeavour (see *next item*). They also discussed the Ukrainian government's recent decision to consider ways to support NATO's Training Mission in Iraq as well as possible assistance to NATO in providing logistical support to the African Union as it expands its mission in Darfur.

→ Support for Operation Active Endeavour

The North Atlantic Council has welcomed Ukraine's offer to support NATO's maritime operation in the Mediterranean Sea, Operation Active Endeavour. An exchange of letters signed by NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer and Minister of Foreign Affairs Borys Tarasyuk in Vilnius on 21 April 2005, sets out agreed procedures for Ukraine's support. Since then, contacts at the working level at NATO Headquarters and Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe have intensified to discuss the way ahead. From 8 to 9 June, a NATO team conducted a fact-finding visit to the Ukrainian Naval Headquarters in Sevastopol to designate points of contact and outline plans to integrate Ukraine's contribution into the operation.

Operation Active Endeavour is a concrete demonstration of NATO's engagement in the fight against terrorism. The operation was launched in 2001 in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks against the United States and is carried out under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. Under this operation, NATO ships monitor shipping and patrol the Mediterranean to deter, defend, disrupt and protect against terrorism. To date, NATO ships have monitored more than 65,000 vessels and boarded some 90 suspect ships. Ukraine is the second non-NATO state

associated with this operation, the other being the Russian Federation.

Ukraine's contribution is in line with the objectives set by the 2002 NATO-Ukraine Action Plan, in particular on the enhancement of Ukraine's participation in the international fight against terrorism. It will further enhance NATO-Ukraine cooperation against terrorism and interoperability between NATO and Ukrainian military forces, as well as adding another concrete dimension to Ukraine's already impressive array of contributions to Euro-Atlantic security.

→ Exercise Cooperative Best Effort



An Armenian soldier checks his radio during Exercise "Cooperative Best Effort" in Lviv in June

The Yavoriv training centre in Lviv hosted a major Partnership for Peace live, field-training exercise, Cooperative Best Effort 2005, from 19 to 30 June. The event exercised light infantry skills across a variety of settings for peace-support operations, seeking to improve military interoperability. Personnel from ten NATO member countries, eleven Partner countries and two Mediterranean Dialogue countries took part. The International Red Cross and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees also participated.

→ Scientific and environmental cooperation

The annual meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group for Scientific and Environmental Cooperation took place in Kyiv on 27 May 2005. The meeting was co-chaired by Professor Andriy Gurzhiy, Ukraine's First Deputy Minister for Education and Science, and NATO Assistant Secretary General for Public Diplomacy Jean Fournet. Participants included representatives from several Ukrainian ministries, including those for education and science, defence, environment and natural resources, and health. The Working Group reviewed activities initiated in 2004 and 2005 under the NATO Security through Science (STS) programme and the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society (CCMS), and new ideas for cooperative projects for 2006, which will be drafted in the coming months.

In 2004, 46 NATO-sponsored STS and CCMS events took place with financial support of over € 1.5 million. For 2005, NATO has already granted support to ten workshops on security-related topics, which will take place in different cities throughout Ukraine. Moreover, 20 applied research and development Science for Peace projects have been sponsored since 1999, of which seven have been completed.

Most cooperative activities for 2005 are on track, such as the development of the Ukrainian National Research and Educational Network (UNREN), which is providing institutions throughout Ukraine with access to the Internet. The workshop "From Science to Business", which is being jointly organised by NATO and the Science and Technology Centre in Ukraine and was originally scheduled for May 2005, has been postponed until 2006.

During the meeting, participants showed particular interest in projects addressing environmental security issues. Ukraine – which has already participated in different CCMS activities, such as a study related to the Chernobyl accident – has been invited by NATO to join a new CCMS project dealing with the environmental impact of military activities. The Working Group looked forward to a workshop on melange (rocket fuel) disposal, due to take place

in Kyiv from 6 to 8 July 2005 (*see next item*). Plans to extend the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) to Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine were also welcomed. The ENVSEC Initiative, launched by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme was joined by NATO in 2004. Given Ukraine's interest in the initiative, NATO will consider participating in the ENVSEC assessment phase, during which governmental representatives, non-governmental organisations and local as well as foreign experts work together to establish a map of environmental "hot spots" that are a threat to security. This will be the basis for the fundraising phase, aimed at initiating projects dealing with identified environmental security issues.

The day before this meeting, Jean Fournet met the Minister for Education and Science, Stanislav Nikolaienko. The minister expressed his appreciation for NATO's support for scientific cooperation and welcomed the fact that Ukraine is second only to Russia in terms of NATO grants. He highlighted in particular the valuable contribution NATO is making to Ukraine's scientific and academic community through the UNREN networking project. The minister also said that he felt perceptions of NATO among the younger generation were becoming more positive, and that he was willing to support projects that would help explain what NATO is today to Ukrainian society.

→ Safe disposal of melange

NATO and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) organised a joint workshop in Kyiv, from 6 to 8 July, to pool experience to tackle the threat posed by melange. This component of rocket fuel, used in the past by former Warsaw Pact countries, is a highly complex mixture of chemical substances which evaporates easily and is highly toxic. In many countries, the storage containers for melange have deteriorated and now present a danger for the environment and public health.

Both NATO and the OSCE have considerable experience in destroying this substance safely. NATO has helped Moldova destroy 350 tons through incineration and is



Used in rocket fuel, melange is a highly complex mixture of chemical substances which evaporates easily and is highly toxic

currently developing a project for the construction of a mobile melange treatment plant as well as conducting a survey of industrial melange-conversion capabilities. The OSCE has recently assisted Georgia in transforming some 450 tons of melange into fertilizer and is conducting a similar project in Armenia for the destruction of some 880 tons.

The aim of the workshop was to identify best practices and develop a cooperative framework to be able to offer joint NATO-OSCE assistance for the implementation of such projects in countries that request assistance, which to date include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

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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