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Ukrainian Foreign Minister Borys Tarasyuk meets NATO Secretary General at NATO Headquarters on 1 February

Intensified Dialogue continues

Almost a year since the Intensified Dialogue on Ukraine's aspirations to NATO membership and related reforms was launched, a second full round of staff talks under the Dialogue took place at NATO Headquarters on 23 March.

The objective of the day-long set of talks was to have another informal exchange on the Allies' expectations of Ukraine as a potential candidate for NATO membership, and to review progress in Ukraine's reform efforts since the first round of staff talks in September 2005 (see *NATO-Ukraine News 2/05*). Four sessions of talks addressed foreign policy issues, legal issues, domestic policy issues, and defence and security sector reform.

First Deputy Foreign Minister Anton Buteiko headed a robust Ukrainian delegation, of 17 officials, including the First Deputy Minister of Defence, the Deputy Minister of Justice and the Deputy Head of the Security Service of Ukraine. Other senior and working-level officials included representatives of the Cabinet of Ministers, the presidential secretariat and the ministries of foreign affairs, defence, the interior, justice, economy and finance, as well as the National Security and Defence Council, the armed forces, the Security Service, the National Centre for Euro-Atlantic Integration, and the State Committee on Television and Radio Broadcasting.

The foreign policy issues discussed related to Ukraine's efforts to pursue good-neighbourly

relations and settle outstanding disputes with neighbouring countries through peaceful means. Security and stability in the wider region was also discussed, including attempts to help resolve the frozen conflict in Moldova. Discussion of domestic issues focused on the preparations for Ukraine's parliamentary elections, the fight against corruption and economic developments. The legal issues raised addressed various aspects of agreements between Ukraine and NATO, as well as technical issues affecting NATO-Ukraine cooperation, including the provision of technical assistance to Ukraine.

The successful implementation of reforms is essential for Euro-Atlantic integration

Defence and security sector reform has been on the NATO-Ukraine agenda for a long time, since well before the launch of the Intensified Dialogue. The successful implementation of reforms in this area is also essential for Ukraine's pursuit of the objective of Euro-Atlantic integration. The staff talks focused on the status of the recently published annual Ukrainian White Book on Defence, Ukraine's defence budget, and lessons learned from the ongoing reorganisation of the defence ministry and the General Staff, as well as wider reforms in the security sector, including Security Service of Ukraine intelligence agencies and the Ministry of the Interior troops.

Earlier this year, also in the framework of the Intensified Dialogue, two meetings of NATO's Political Committee with Ukraine were held. The first, in January, was dedicated to various foreign policy issues; the second, in February, provided an opportunity to discuss legal issues and Ukraine's constitutional reforms. Progress in the Intensified Dialogue was also one of many subjects of discussion of Foreign Minister Borys Tarasyuk's meeting with NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer on 1 February at NATO Headquarters.

Ukrainian support for Operation Active Endeavour

Rear Admiral Kabaneko, Deputy Commander of the Ukrainian Navy, led a Ukrainian delegation in a visit to NATO Headquarters on 23 February. They briefed members of NATO's Military Committee and had working-level discussions with NATO military staff on preparations for Ukrainian ships to support Operation Active Endeavour, the Alliance's maritime counter-terrorist operation in the Mediterranean.

An exchange of letters established the legal framework for Ukrainian support to Operation Active Endeavour in April 2005. Since that time, several groups of experts from Allied military commands have visited the Ukrainian Black Sea Fleet Headquarters at Sevastopol to establish good communications at the working level and to work out practical issues to facilitate Ukraine's efforts. Ukraine is currently preparing a frigate, an amphibious landing ship, a corvette and boarding teams (to be deployed on a rotational basis) in support of the operation. While the target date for the participation of the first Ukrainian ship was originally early 2007, the intention is to bring this forward to as early as this autumn, once all pre-deployment training and preparations are completed successfully.

Training and certification are the two main elements of pre-deployment preparations. NATO is sending mobile training teams to Ukraine to help develop familiarise Ukrainian navy personnel with NATO standard procedures and communications. There is also a need for training at sea with Allied ships participating in Operating Active Endeavour to practise joint manoeuvring and the boarding of suspect ships.

President signs Annual Target Plan

Ukraine's Annual Target Plan for 2006 was signed by President Viktor Yushchenko on 6 April. The NATO-Ukraine Commission had previously endorsed the joint NATO-Ukraine actions included in the Plan.

The Annual Target Plan sets targets in different areas including internal political issues, foreign and security policy, defence and security sector reform, public information, information security and economic and legal issues. In some areas, the targets are to be met through internal actions by Ukraine and, in others, joint NATO-Ukraine actions have also been agreed. Meeting these targets will be a step towards achieving the long-term strategic objectives that were identified in the 2002 NATO-Ukraine Action Plan with a view to bringing Ukraine closer to its Euro-Atlantic integration goals.

The full text of the Annual Target Plan has been published online at: www.nato.int/ukraine



By monitoring shipping and providing escorts to non-military shipping through the Straits of Gibraltar, Operation Active Endeavour helps detect, deter and protect against terrorist activity in the Mediterranean

A couple of key concerns will need to be addressed for Ukrainian ships to be able to participate effectively. The most significant is the lack of English language skills among Ukrainian navy personnel. It will also take some time for all the documents related to the operation to be translated, distributed, reviewed and fully understood. Various issues related to logistics and administration also have to be addressed.

In addition, prior to their actual integration into Operation Active Endeavour, the Ukrainian ships must be assessed for operational readiness in the same certification process that is used to evaluate NATO ships.

Strategic airlift agreement signed

Thanks to a multinational contract, Russian and Ukrainian Antonov aircraft are to be used as an interim solution to meet shortfalls in European strategic airlift capabilities, pending deliveries of Airbus A400M aircraft, expected to start in 2010.

On 23 January, 15 NATO countries signed a contract with Ruslan SALIS GmbH, a subsidiary of the Russian company Volga-Dnepr, based in Leipzig, Germany. The 15 original signatories — Canada, the Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Finland, France, Hungary, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and the United Kingdom — were joined by Sweden on 23 March.

The contract provides for two AN-124-100 aircraft on full-time charter, two more on six days notice and another two on nine days notice. This multinational arrangement allows the countries participating in the Strategic Airlift Interim Solution (SALIS) programme to meet commitments to strengthen capabilities in both the NATO and EU frameworks.

The contract's initial duration is for three years with a possibility to extend it further. The aircraft, which will become available from the beginning of February, will be drawn from the Russian company, Volga-Dnepr, and Ukraine's ADB. The contract is administered by the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency and its operation will be managed by the SALIS Coordination Centre in Eindhoven, the Netherlands. The countries concerned have committed to using the aircraft for a minimum of 2000 flying hours per year. The SALIS plan evolved from the signing of a letter of intent to develop a multinational consortium to arrange for strategic airlift by NATO defence ministers in June 2003. Strategic airlift is a key capability enabling the rapid deployment of troops and equipment to where they are needed. In recent years, NATO's ongoing operation in Afghanistan, its logistical support to the African Union's mission in Darfur, and the earthquake disaster-relief operation for Pakistan have highlighted the need for strategic airlift which can handle outsized cargo. A single AN-124-100 can transport up to 120 tons of cargo.



Antonov aircraft were used for NATO's Pakistan earthquake relief operation

Volga-Dnepr and ADB already provide AN-124-100 aircraft to support the Afghanistan mission, with weekly sorties from Germany to Afghanistan and back, under contractual arrangements with the Allied Movement Coordination Center at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe. Moreover, a memorandum of understanding on strategic airlift between NATO and Ukraine is pending ratification with the Ukrainian parliament. Similarly, a framework agreement on air transport and the necessary implementing arrangements is being developed with Russia. Progress on the air transport agreement with Russia is dependent on the ratification by the Russian parliament of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), signed by the Russian foreign minister in April 2004. The SOFA provides a reciprocal legal framework for the treatment of NATO and Partner troops, including Russian troops, operating in or transiting through one another's territory, covering issues related to documentation, juridical questions, taxation, customs and other technical details.

Defence ministry works on Euro-Atlantic integration issues

The NATO-Ukraine Intensified Dialogue is based on a series of bilateral and multilateral meetings between Ukraine, NATO staff, and Allied representatives on Ukraine's aspirations to NATO membership and the related reforms required to achieve this objective. However, this effort can only be considered successful if it promotes an effective self-analysis by Ukraine regarding the current state of its reforms, the remaining shortfalls, and the additional efforts required to meet NATO standards.

At the NATO-Ukraine high-level consultations on defence reform and defence policy in Vilnius in October 2005, Ukrainian Defence Minister Anatoliy Grytsenko announced that his ministry would begin an intensive effort to conduct such an analysis regarding defence. He also indicated his interest in receiving assistance from Allied experts and the NATO Liaison Office (NLO) in Kyiv to support this work.

Inauguration of retraining centre

A NATO-supported Resettlement and Retraining Centre was inaugurated in Khmelnytskyi on 15 February. Thanks to NATO's active support, the Centre is the single largest provider of such assistance to retiring military personnel in Ukraine. The aim of the project, which is financed through a Partnership for Peace Trust Fund, is to help Ukraine deal with the consequences of defence reform and the downsizing of its armed forces. Retiring military personnel from across Ukraine will benefit from various courses offered by the Centre, such as marketing and computer systems and technologies. Help in job placement is also being provided through employment fairs and individual counselling. The project is due to be completed over three years with a budget of some €430 000.

The ceremony was attended by Ronald Keller, the Ambassador of the Netherlands, which is the lead nation for the project, and by Ukraine's Deputy Defence Minister, Volodymyr Pasko, who expressed appreciation for NATO's assistance.

(For more information on NATO-Ukraine cooperation in the field of retraining and resettlement of former military personnel see NATO-Ukraine News 4/05.)



Helping Ukraine deal with the consequences of downsizing is a priority

The defence ministry undertook a major analytic exercise in November 2005, under the leadership of the ministry's department of defence policy and strategic planning, but involving all major defence ministry departments and General Staff directorates. The result was an initial assessment of the current situation and plans in the defence ministry as measured against information gained through the Intensified Dialogue, the experience of NATO's newest members, and Ukraine's own considerable experience in working with NATO on interoperability and capability requirements to improve the ability of the Ukrainian military to operate with NATO forces in peacekeeping missions.

In January of this year, the process moved into a second phase. A one-day seminar at the NLO brought NATO and Allied experts together with the leadership of the relevant defence ministry and General Staff departments. The NATO team, led by the Director of NATO's Force Planning Directorate, included representatives of the defence ministries of Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania and Poland with relevant experience in preparing for NATO membership. Issues discussed included:

- strengthening civilian defence management and oversight;
- improving the defence ministry's resource management and planning system;
- restructuring defence forces in line with missions and available resources;
- developing deployable forces capable of participation in NATO-led operations;
- participation in current NATO-led operations; and
- strengthening internal mechanisms for NATO cooperation.

The open discussions provided considerable feedback to the Ukrainian participants and established direct permanent contacts with relevant Allied experts.

Similar consultations were held on 21 March with experts of the "Visegrad Four" countries (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia). And, on 16 February, the NLO hosted a workshop, where experts from Estonia's defence ministry shared their experience with experts from 15 Ukrainian ministries on adapting the

Estonian legal framework in order to meet NATO requirements.

The NLO continues to support Ukraine's ministries of defence, foreign affairs and justice in analysing and incorporating the feedback provided by these and other such expert events.

Democratic oversight of intelligence

Cooperation in the area of intelligence plays an increasingly important role in NATO's efforts to help its member states and Partners jointly meet today's security challenges. As a community of democratic nations, the North Atlantic Alliance is also committed to the principle and practice of effective democratic oversight of the powerful tool that intelligence provides. This oversight is important not only to ensure that intelligence services serve the interests of citizens; it is also important for the services themselves, in order to help them maintain the public support on which their budgets and operational support depend.

It is important to ensure that the intelligence services serve the interests of citizens

At the foreign ministers' meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission in April 2005, NATO undertook to work more closely with Ukraine's intelligence sector in the struggle against terrorism. It also agreed to provide advice to Ukraine on reforming its intelligence sector in accordance with Euro-Atlantic standards, including the strengthening of civil democratic oversight.

To move ahead on that commitment, almost one hundred officials and experts from Ukraine and NATO countries gathered in Kyiv on 19 December 2005 at a NATO-Ukraine roundtable on "Civil and Democratic Oversight of the Intelligence Sector" (see *NATO-Ukraine News 4/05*). The event, symbolically held in the Verkhovna Rada building, was the first time that the issue of strengthening effective civil democratic oversight had been so openly discussed in Kyiv, with the full participation



The Dutch Ambassador to Ukraine, the Commandant of the National Defence Academy and the Commandant of the NATO Defense College address Ukrainian officers during International Week in February

of Ukrainian parliamentarians and senior officials from the National Security and Defence Council, Presidential Administration, and intelligence and law-enforcement services. Discussions covered issues related to the role of parliament and central executive agencies in ensuring oversight of the intelligence services, as well as how to balance oversight with the secrecy required for operational effectiveness. A number of specific issues were identified for future expert-level follow-up.

The first follow-up step occurred already on 24 January 2006, with a seminar co-sponsored by the George C. Marshall Center for Security Studies and the NATO Liaison Office in Ukraine. Speakers included the former director of German Foreign Intelligence and the former Assistant to the US Secretary of Defence for Intelligence Oversight. Over 30 government officials, parliamentary staff, and intelligence professionals discussed oversight of intelligence activity in more detail. A key element in the discussions was the role and responsibilities of the intelligence community itself in the oversight process, as well as lessons learned by countries that have recently become NATO members.

International Week

The Ukrainian National Defence Academy and the NATO Defense College organised the International Week in Kyiv from 6 to 10 February. The purpose of this annual event is to familiarise Ukrainian officers with NATO and its policies, to discuss the challenges facing the Atlantic Alliance and its partners in today's security environment, and to highlight the value of the increasingly strong ties between Ukraine and NATO.

The event was inaugurated by the Commandant of the Ukrainian National Defence Academy, General Vitaliy Hryhorovych Radetskiy, the Commandant of the NATO Defense College, Lieutenant General Marc Vankeirsbilck, and Ambassador Ronald Keller of the Netherlands (the Dutch embassy is currently NATO's contact point embassy to Ukraine).

The course offered during International Week is designed to meet the requirements of the Ukrainian National Defence Academy's curriculum, while also serving to enhance mutual understanding and achieve more fruitful cooperation. Eminent speakers from the NATO Defense College and other international agencies gave lectures on NATO's organisation and working methods as well as on international security issues, such as terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, and the role of religion in some of today's conflicts.



Students discuss security issues with NATO officials, academics and experts during the Winter Academy in Lviv

Winter Academy in Lviv

The National Ivan Franko University of Lviv organised its third yearly Winter Academy for students from 22 to 24 February 2006, with the support of the NATO Information and Documentation Centre in Ukraine. The event focused on the theme of "NATO, Security and New Democracies: Current Cooperation and Future Prospects".

Participants included students from all regions of Ukraine studying international relations and journalism, and who share a particular interest in global security issues. Students from Belarus, Estonia, Poland, Romania and Russia were also invited to take part in the three-day event.

The Academy gave students the opportunity to exchange views with NATO officials and academics and experts on security issues. Topics of discussion included new global security issues; Ukraine's Intensified Dialogue with NATO on its membership aspirations; NATO's cooperation and relationships with Partner countries; the transformation of NATO as demonstrated in current operations and efforts to address today's security challenges; and the importance of public diplomacy efforts as well as the development of civil society.

Three more regional Academies are planned to be held in 2006 with the support of the NATO Information and Documentation Centre.

Better body armour

A team of scientists from the Czech Republic, Russia, Slovakia and Ukraine are working on a NATO Science for Peace project on "Light Weight and Transparent Armours", which aims to develop a new generation of body armour material.

The team intends to develop a technology for the production of an ultra-hard surface layer for such armour (monocrystalline sapphire or high alumina glass), which would shatter the bullet, and absorb the majority of the impact energy. The rest of the bullet's impact energy will be absorbed by a sequence of underlying plastic and glass layers. The thickness, sequence, and materials of these layers will be the object of the studies in this project. The new material will be lighter (about 80 kg/m²) and thinner (25-35 mm) than existing body armour, while providing the same level of protection as material currently being produced (80 mm).

By optimising this technology, the team also aims at achieving mass production of this material with an end-user price that will make it attractive to consumers the world over.

The producer and supplier of the sapphire will be the Institute for Single Crystals in Kharkiv, Ukraine. The completion and production of the underlying layers will be carried out by Saint Gobain Advanced Ceramics in Turnov, Czech Republic.

The project was awarded a grant in November 2005 and is expected to be completed in Spring 2009. NATO's Science for Peace programme supports international collaboration between scientists in order to contribute to security by applying cutting-edge science to problem solving.

Gender and security

Yuri Pavlenko, the Ukrainian Minister for Youth, Family and Sports, opened an international seminar on "The Gender Aspect of National Security and Defence" in Kyiv on 2 March. The event was organised in the framework of the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan by his ministry in cooperation with the NATO Information and Documentation Centre. It was also supported by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the United Nations Development Programme, the Ukrainian ministries of defence and foreign affairs, and Ukrainian parliamentarians.

Discussions centred on gaining a new understanding of security through the prism of gender, as evidence which shows that men and women often have different experiences of conflict situations, and that their often differing security needs must be taken into account when engaging in peace-building, humanitarian assistance as well as in defence and security sector planning. An overview was given of NATO's efforts to mainstream gender issues in its work, whether through the development of behavioural guidelines for NATO peacekeepers, working to achieve gender balance and diversity in NATO structures, or through supporting the recruitment and retention of women in armed forces with the participation of NATO experts by videoconference from Brussels. Participants exchanged views on the definition of gender, the role of women in politics and the armed forces of Ukraine as well as NATO member states.

Considering gender in the security context was unusual for many Ukrainian participants and generated a lot of questions as well as media interest.

NATO-Ukraine: An Intensified Dialogue

An introductory brochure has been published, which explains Ukraine's Intensified Dialogue with NATO on its membership aspirations and highlights the extensive programme of cooperation with Ukraine. It is available in English, French, Ukrainian and Russian.



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

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Further information on NATO-Ukraine relations is available at :
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