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NATO-Ukraine Commission defence ministers discuss Ukraine's defence policy and the transformation of its armed forces

Kyiv hosts three senior-level meetings on defence and security-sector reform

Major demilitarisation project is launched in Ukraine

Ukraine hosts meeting on air traffic management

Defence Minister Anatoliy Grytsenko outlines to his Allied counterparts the practical efforts being undertaken to help Ukraine's forces achieve NATO standards

NATO-Ukraine defence ministers meet

A meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission at the level of defence ministers took place at NATO Headquarters on 9 June. Ministers addressed Ukraine's defence policy in an evolving security environment and the transformation of its armed forces, as well as the country's ongoing support for NATO-led operations.

Opening the meeting, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer said that over the past year "Ukraine has shown a new determination in carrying forward an ambitious programme of political, economic, legal, defence and security sector reform."

Defence Minister Anatoliy Grytsenko presented his Allied counterparts with copies of the first annual White Book on the Defence Policy of Ukraine, which aims to explain defence reform objectives to Ukrainian society. The White Book demonstrates the Defence Ministry's desire to develop an "unprecedented level of transparency" with the Ukrainian public, said the Minister. He also outlined the practical efforts being undertaken to help Ukraine's armed forces achieve NATO standards and indicated Ukraine's readiness to further intensify these efforts.

Allied ministers stressed the continuing importance of effective reforms in the security sector for the realisation of Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration aspirations. They welcomed progress achieved in implementing the National Security Sector Review, which aims to align Ukraine's complete security sector with Euro-Atlantic standards and values, and promised to support this process through the Joint Working Group on Defence Reform. Allied ministers also reiterated their readiness to continue to assist Ukraine in strengthening civil and democratic control over security and defence structures, in particular through the JWGDR programme for professional development of civilian personnel employed in Ukrainian security institutions (*see also next article and NATO-Ukraine News 4/05*).

The importance of managing the consequences of defence and security reforms was also emphasized. In this context, ministers were satisfied that work had finally started on the safe destruction of stockpiles of surplus munitions, small arms and light weapons, and man-portable air defence systems through a Partnership for Peace Trust Fund (*see p. 4*). They also expressed their continuing support for retraining programmes for released military personnel.

Senior-level meetings in Kyiv on defence and security sector reform

Three key events gathered senior-level officials from Ukraine, NATO and Allied countries in Kyiv on 18 and 19 May. First, a conference on security sector reform was held on 18 May. This was followed the next day by the 2006 senior-level meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defence Reform (JWGDR), and then by staff talks on defence reform in the framework of Ukraine's Intensified Dialogue with NATO.

The conference on 18 May was organised jointly by NATO, the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF). It addressed a number of important issues on the NATO-Ukraine defence and security agenda. These included the evolution of Ukraine's security; experiences in managing transformations in the defence and security sectors; and lessons learned from developing and implementing national security strategies. The event also served to provide more detailed substantive feedback in all these areas in support of the NATO-Ukraine Intensified Dialogue as well as a catalyst for further expert-level work to be conducted in support of the Work Programme of the JWGDR.

The senior-level meeting of the JWGDR was co-chaired by the NATO Assistant Secretary General for Defence Policy and Planning, John Colston, and the Deputy Secretary of Ukraine's National Security and Defence Council, Serhiy Pyrozhkov. Participants reviewed the ongoing implementation of the 2006 Work Programme. They also launched a number of new initiatives aimed at further supporting Ukraine in implementing defence and security sector reforms. A NATO-Ukraine Cooperation Plan for the National Security Sector Review will aim to assist Ukraine in developing a National Security Strategy and in formulating and implementing guidance on the future of Ukraine's security sector. Cooperation in delivering bilateral assistance to Ukraine will be extended to address Ukraine's security structures outside the Ministry of Defence. And a new NATO-Ukraine Working Group on Civil Control of the Intelligence Sector was established. The meeting also took stock of progress achieved in implementing the JWGDR Programme for Professional Development of Civilian Personnel employed in Ukrainian security institutions. The total estimated value of this programme for 2006, including direct financial contributions and contributions in kind, is €720,000.

The staff talks under the Intensified Dialogue were chaired by the NATO Assistant Secretary General for Defence Policy and Planning and attended, on the Ukrainian side, by the First Deputy Defence Minister Leonid Polyakov. The talks focused on defence and security sector reform-related aspects of the Intensified Dialogue with Ukraine. Areas discussed included the relationship between reforms in the Ministry of Defence and the Ukrainian Armed Forces to the wider security sector review that the Ukrainian National Security and Defence Council has launched; progress made in ongoing reform in Ukraine's defence sector; Ukraine's 2005 White Book on Defence Policy; and inter-agency cooperation in implementing defence and security sector reforms. Ukraine's participation in ongoing NATO-led operations was also considered. The staff talks were one of a series of meetings that have been held since the launching of the Intensified Dialogue on Ukraine's membership aspirations and related reforms in April 2005.

What role for civil society?

In a democratic state, representatives of a civil society usually play a very important role in ensuring the effectiveness of civil and democratic oversight of a security sector. Civil society groups can inform and influence policy-making and monitor security sector activities. Ukraine has begun efforts to plan the transformation of its security sector into a democratically-controlled, accountable, and non-duplicative set of institutions, including through a national security sector review. It is particularly important to involve representatives of Ukraine's civil society in this effort. Civil society actors, be they think-tanks, academic institutions, or non-governmental organisations, can also be instrumental in generating the internal support necessary for reforms. Non-governmental organisations can, for example, launch awareness campaigns about the importance of reforms in security forces, which, in turn, can help achieve security sector reform objectives.

For these reasons, "Defence and Security Affairs: What Role for Civil Society?" was the theme of a recent meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defence Reform (JWGDR) reinforced by representatives of Allied and Ukrainian non-governmental organisations. The event, which took place in Krakow, Poland, from 28 to 30 June 2006, was jointly organised by NATO, the Polish Ministry of National Defence, the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, and the Institute for Strategic Studies in Krakow.

The meeting provided an opportunity to launch a discussion about the role of civil society expertise in defence and security issues. In keynote speeches offered by the Polish and Ukrainian Defence Ministers, the critical value of non-governmental input to stimulating better policy development as well as greater public support for them, was emphasised. Participants from a wide range of civil society organisations in both Ukraine and Allied countries exchanged views about their experiences in contributing to the development of national security and defence policies, and addressed ways in which civil society groups could be involved in national debates on reform issues. Some participants suggested that the Alliance consider ways in which NATO and the non-governmental organisations in Allied countries could support the further development of non-governmental organisations in Ukraine. One idea was to establish a "partnership network" of these organisations to serve as an open forum for the exchange of ideas on security and defence.

(Left to right) First Secretary of the US Embassy in Ukraine Michael Uyehara, NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency Programme Manager Bülent Tüdes, Ukraine's Deputy Minister of Defence Vladimir Tereschchenko, and the director of the charity and scientific centre "Friendship", Alexander Bukhalo, celebrate the signing of the contract launching implementation of the world's largest demilitarisation project of its kind

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Major demilitarisation project launched

A contract was signed between Ukraine's Ministry of Defence and the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency on 19 June, which cleared the way to start the world's largest demilitarisation project of its kind. Its aim is to safely destroy 1.5 million small arms and light weapons and 133 000 tons of munitions in Ukraine. As the first practical step, the destruction of 1000 man-portable air defence missiles in Ukraine began the same week.

The first phase of this ground-breaking project is being led by the United States, which in addition to making a large financial contribution has encouraged another 13 NATO and Partner countries to provide funding for this important project. It will make a significant and permanent contribution to helping Ukraine address the problem of huge stockpiles of obsolete and surplus weapons and munitions, which have long represented a danger to Ukrainians residing near such stockpiles. (*see NATO-Ukraine News 4/05*)

Partnership Goals

A generally positive assessment was made of Ukraine's progress in achieving targets set under the Planning and Review Process (PARP), during a visit to Kyiv at the beginning of April of a NATO team of military analysts and civilian defence and policy experts. "There is no question how seriously Ukraine is taking both PARP and defence reform in general - the various ministries are fully involved," says Brendan Wilson, the desk

officer at NATO Headquarters responsible for managing the PARP process with Ukraine.

The PARP mechanism has played a central role in Ukraine's ongoing comprehensive defence reforms. Modelled on NATO's own force-planning system, the PARP is offered on an optional basis to countries participating in NATO's Partnership for Peace programme. It provides guidance to participating countries on interoperability or capability requirements to ensure that their forces are better able to operate with NATO militaries in peacekeeping operations. It is also used by Partners to develop effective, affordable and sustainable armed forces and to promote wider defence reform efforts. Planning targets, or Partnership Goals, are negotiated with each participating country and extensive reviews measure progress.

During three days of meetings, the NATO team met a wide range of Ukrainian representatives. First Deputy Minister of Defence Leonid Polyakov chaired the opening plenary session and Vladislav Yasnyuk, Deputy Director of NATO Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, chaired the overall meeting. Participants at the opening plenary included representatives of the Ministry of Defence, General Staff and the military services, as well as the Ministries of Interior, Emergencies, Finance, Justice, the Border Guard, the Security Service, and the National Security and Defence Council.

"At the level of the Ministry of Defence and General Staff, the basic planning mechanisms are in place," says Brendan Wilson. "At this level there is good visibility on the budget for defence out to 2011 as covered under their current State

Programme." He welcomed the publication of Ukraine's first annual White Book on Defence. "It does an admirable job of explaining the objectives, history, status, and goals for the defence sector, including ongoing defence reform. It also shows the thought process that planners have had to go through, beginning with national objectives for foreign policy; going on to defence policy, missions and tasks, and analysis of the strategic environment; through to structures, resources, and training. Ukraine has had to weigh competing priorities, make difficult choices and apply effort and resources in a way that allows them to reach governmental objectives." Partnership Goals have been set for capabilities and interoperability requirements, which reflect both new NATO procedures as well as Ukraine's own needs.

In the case of the Ministries of Interior and Emergencies, Partnership Goals were set for the first time in December 2005. Despite their relatively small number, these targets are important in terms of substance, requiring a review of structures, programmes, training curricula and resources.

"Much work has been done and there is clarity of purpose, direction and an understanding of the size of the tasks ahead," says Brendan Wilson. Overall plans now need to be translated into specific implementation plans for the staffs and services concerned. More rigorous resource management and inter-ministerial coordination are also required. The development of mid-term budget plans will be essential for ministries other than the Ministry of Defence (which is on good ground due the approval of the State Programme through to 2011). It is for this reason that this year, for the first time, a Partnership Goal was proposed for the Ministry of Finance, seeking greater transparency in budget predictions for individual ministries to assist in their short to medium-term planning.

The outcome of the NATO team visit was a draft Partnership Goal report, which was discussed at a meeting of NATO's Political Military Steering Committee with Ukraine, at NATO Headquarters on 22 May. The final report will be available to Allied leaders in the run-up to NATO's summit meeting in Riga, Latvia, in November. It will provide a significant and substantial assessment and record of current progress by Ukraine in the field of defence reform and will help to identify areas for further assistance and cooperation.

Informal foreign ministers' talks

At an informal meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission in Sofia in April, foreign ministers took stock of the Intensified Dialogue on Ukraine's membership aspirations and related reforms, which was launched a year ago. Allied ministers reiterated their support for Ukraine's reform efforts and their readiness to provide assistance.

They welcomed the adoption of Ukraine's Annual Target Plan for 2006, which outlines specific reform commitments. They also congratulated Ukraine on the conduct of free and fair parliamentary elections in March. Ukrainian Foreign Minster Borys Tarasyuk briefed his Allied counterparts on political developments in the country.

Speaking to the press afterwards about Ukraine's membership aspirations, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer stressed that this is a "performance-based process", which depends on the progress of reforms in Ukraine.

Foreign Minister Borys Tarasyuk and NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer chat during the informal meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission in Sofia

Soldiers of the Ukrainian Fleet take part in Exercise Brilliant Mariner in Denmark

Ukraine participates in major naval exercise

Over 6000 maritime personnel from 18 NATO countries and three Partner countries (Sweden, Finland and Ukraine) participated in Exercise Brilliant Mariner, which was hosted by Denmark from 24 March to 6 April.

Some 60 ships, five submarines and 13 aircraft were involved in the exercise, which aimed to provide combat readiness and certification training for naval elements of the NATO Response Force (NRF). It served as the final preparation for the NRF live exercise, involving air, land and naval elements, which took place a couple of months later in the Cape Verde Islands.

It was the most complex maritime exercise that NATO has ever planned. "Exercise Brilliant Mariner has been a true demonstration of modern NATO maritime operations. It has embodied the latest thinking on interoperability, maritime security operations and civilian evacuation techniques, as well as traditional war-fighting training," said Admiral Sir James Burnell-Nugent, the Commander of the Allied Maritime Component Command based at Northwood in the United Kingdom.

Ukraine hosts meeting on air traffic management

Ukraine hosted a plenary session of the NATO Air Traffic Management Committee (NATMC) with Partner countries and Mediterranean Dialogue countries in Kyiv from 10 to 12 May. Participants included representatives from 36 countries as well as from the International Civil Aviation

Organization, the European Commission and Eurocontrol.

The NATMC is a senior advisory body on matters related to civil/military coordination of air traffic management. It is responsible for ensuring that all civil and military airspace requirements over the territory of NATO countries are fully coordinated. Partner countries have been invited to take part in plenary sessions of the Committee since November 1992, in order to address the civil/military dimension of the integration of central and eastern Europe in western European air traffic management strategies. This established the Committee as a unique forum for coordination between civil and military users of the entire continental European airspace. Countries participating in NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue have been invited to take part in its plenary sessions since November 2005.

The recent meeting in Kyiv featured informative briefings on a range of important topics, which stimulated fruitful discussion and enhanced mutual understanding of key international aviation issues and their implications for NATO and its Partners. Topics discussed included the proposed NATO deployable air traffic management capability, air security, and an appraisal of the impact of developments in communications, navigation and surveillance as well as air traffic management on NATO's operational capability.

The programme for participants included meetings with Ukraine's air defence and civil aviation authorities and visits to Ukrainian air traffic management and other aviation-related facilities. During a visit to the Boryspil Area Control Centre, participants were briefed by the Ukraine State Air Traffic Service Enterprise about the centre's tasks and responsibilities and were

able to tour the centre's operations room and training facilities. Participants also visited the Antonov Design Bureau for a briefing on its activities and an opportunity to inspect selected transport aircraft.

After the plenary session and the programme of visits, the NATMC Chairman, Javier Criado, was invited for a private meeting with the Chief of Staff of Ukraine's Armed Forces, General Serhiy Kyrychenko. They discussed various aspects of NATO-Ukraine cooperation in the field of air traffic management and air defence. Three possible areas for enhanced cooperation, which are highlighted in the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan, are currently being explored. These are a joint NATO-Ukraine analytical study on Ukrainian air defence (surveillance, ground-based and air assets); a joint NATO-Ukraine Kolchuga system study; and Ukrainian involvement in the NATO Air Situation Data Exchange Programme.

Academy in Odessa

The Center for International Studies at the National Mechnikov University organised its first NATO Academy for junior faculty members and PhD students from 22 to 24 May 2006 in the port city of Odessa, with the support of the NATO Information and Documentation Centre in Ukraine. The event focused on the theme of "Security Challenges and Opportunities in the Mediterranean, Black and Caspian Seas".

Participants exchanged views with NATO officials, academics and experts on security issues in person and by videoconference between Odessa and Brussels. Topics of discussion included "The European Component of Euro-Atlantic Security", "Democracy, Stability and Security", "NATO Cooperation with Partners: Aims and Benefits", "The Transatlantic Component of Euro-Atlantic Security", "Security in the Black and Caspian Seas: Role of NATO and Regional Initiatives" and "Upcoming Challenges and Regional Security".

The event brought together faculty members and PhD students of political studies, international relations and security studies from all regions of Ukraine. Participants from neighbouring countries were also invited to take part in the three-day event.

Two more regional Academies are planned in 2006, with the support of the NATO Information and Documentation Centre.

Promoting networks

Members of the Information and Communications Security panel of NATO's Science Committee and staff from the

NATO Public Diplomacy Division visited Kyiv at the end of May 2006. They held a panel meeting on 29 May and the next day made presentations to students at the city's main universities and research institutes.

During their panel meeting, which was hosted by the Kyiv Polytechnic Institute (KPI), applications for support under the Security through Science Programme were reviewed. Ukrainian practitioners gave presentations on computer networking activities, including on the Ukrainian Research and Academic Network (URAN), the largest Ukrainian telecommunications network, which connects users from the research and development sector by providing Internet connectivity to universities and research institutes. URAN was created by the Ministry of Education of Ukraine with the help of four NATO Networking Infrastructure Grants over the period 1997-2006.

On 30 May, panel members split into four groups to give presentations to students and faculty staff at the KPI, the Institute of Cybernetics, the Kyiv National University, and the Institute for Information Regulation Problems.

NATO staff also met the Ukrainian Deputy Minister for Science and Education, Professor Andriy Gurzhiy, to take stock of NATO-Ukraine science cooperation. He highlighted the value that Ukraine attaches to scientific cooperation with NATO as a means to further strengthen ties between NATO and Ukraine.