

THE NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT NATO 2010

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NATO (The North Atlantic Treaty Organization) – OTAN (Organisation du Traité de l’Atlantique Nord) has been, since its establishment, outstandingly receptive to the international security environment developments and has always altered its strategy and strategic concepts in order to meet the afferent challenges, with an emphasis on its purely defensive character. The most favorable moment of this kind have been its summits: Rome (1991), Washington (1999) and Lisbon (2010), on which our paper will focus. The great mutations in the last decade have called for the creation of the new strategic concept NATO 2010, developed in the Lisbon summit declaration of 19-20 November 2010.

Key words: concept, strategic, declaration, defensive, summit, evolution, international security environment.

Eversince its establishment, in the aftermath of signing the North Atlantic Treaty on 4 April 1949, NATO has been permanently preoccupied with aligning its strategy and strategic concepts with the international security environment development without neglecting the Treaty’s fundamental provision of remaining a puerly defensive organization.

The need for adapting the concepts and strategies to the new realities has bee sustained by reputable Romanian and foreign experts, among which

the French professor Hervé Coutau-Bégarie [1] examined these aspects in his Traite de strategie published in Paris, in 1999.

One of the first aspects we have examined was that of concepts globalization in NATO and worldwide. In this respect, one should consider what professor Begarie (Sorbonne) said:

“We can notice a general trend towards concepts globalization, which results from the problems interdependence: security is no longer military, but global (the UN

human security) and must take into account all types of threats, including the environmental ones, or the ones resulting from discrimination...”.[2]

On the other hand, theorists cannot help noticing a tendency to adapting military culture to the new developments. The aforementioned professor argues: “The art of warfare cannot be reduced to an immutable catalogue; instead, it permanently adapts to means or culture exchanges”.[3]

In our opinion, the main arguments underpinning the need for a new strategic concept are the following: a transatlantic consensus of NATO roles and missions regarding its strategy to face these challenges is critical for the well being of this organization. The strategic Concept is NATO’s fundamental document that regulates and reflects this transatlantic consensus; the security environment has altered, therefore the Alliance must update the current Concept of 1999, when the Alliance had 19 members compared to its 28 members of today; NATO must focus on European challenges; the new strategic concept must be developed and approved by all the 28 member states; it must take into consideration both the way in which the security challenges have emerged (e.g., energy supply, terrorism, climate changes etc.) and the way in which NATO has adapted and transformed in order to better address these issues; the new Strategic Concept will be more than an analysis document. Instead, it will have to provide specific guidance to the member states in terms of further alliance transformation as well as the transformation of their own national defense structures and capabilities in order to meet NATO’s main tasks.

The elaboration of the New Concept is an example of

seriousness and professionalism considering that this document is of paramount importance for the life of the organization and the entire world. Thus, during the summit of Strasbourg / Kehl (3-4 April 2009) the state and government heads of the NATO members delegated the Secretary General, Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, to develop a new NATO strategic concept. The Secretary General summoned and led a large group of experts, who set out the main provisions of the New Strategic Concept with the active involvement of NATO’s highest decision body – the North Atlantic Council (NAC). The concept was completed and approved at the Lisbon NATO summit of 19-20 November and was detailed in the declaration adopted at the end of this important event.

Prior to any considerations regarding the aforementioned document, it is necessary to briefly review some of the main provisions of the summits that preceded the 2010 event. Thus, the Rome Strategic Concept of 1991 established the following: the strictly defensive role of the Alliance; the indivisible character of security that makes any attack on a NATO member state an attack against all member states; the NATO security policy built upon the concepts of collective security and on an integrated military structure, as well as on cooperation and coordination agreements; the necessity of an equilibrium between nuclear and conventional power on the European territory in order to ensure a predictable future.

The 1999 Strategic Concept set out in the Washington Summit Declaration not only preserves NATO’s defensive character, but also introduces major changes to NATO’s outlook. Thus, besides the

Alliance's major focus on collective defense, the document underlines: the organization's concern for ensuring peace and stability in the extended Euro-Atlantic region and **its increased contribution to interstate relationship consolidation and conflict prevention**; the necessity to maintain adequate structures and procedures for conflict prevention and crises management; the need for dialogue and cooperation with non-NATO members; the Alliance's enlargement through an open-door policy for prospective members; the need to undertake on a continuous basis disarmament and non-proliferation efforts in order to ensure Euro-Atlantic stability, to consolidate democratic institutions and to peacefully settle disputes; the Alliance's role as a consultative forum with regard to problems affecting its member states' vital interests and as a defender of these states against any threats or aggressions; the promotion of an extended partnership, cooperation and dialogue with states from the Euro-Atlantic region in order to ensure transparency, mutual trust and joint action capability within the Alliance; a strong commitment to the transatlantic relationship; the Alliance's military capability maintenance with a view to undertaking more efficient military operations; a broader outlook on security that includes political, economic, social and environmental factors.

Moreover, this summit is a landmark for the Alliance due its stance on two core military operations commonly known as "out of area actions" and "non Article 5 actions" – in this respect, the relationship between Article 5 of the Alliance Treaty and "non Article 5 actions".

The adoption of a new strategic concept is approached in the first part

of the Lisbon summit declaration, which is natural considering that this summit's main mission was to develop the concept required by the world's new physiognomy, that is, the late 90's and the early 21st century.

As far as the 2010 Strategic Concept is concerned, Article 2 of the Lisbon Summit Declaration sets out the following:

"We have adopted a new Strategic Concept that lays out our vision for the Alliance for the next decade: able to defend its members against the full range of threats; capable of managing even the most challenging crises; and better able to work with other organizations and nations to promote international stability. NATO will be more agile, more capable and more cost-effective, and it will continue to serve as an essential instrument for peace".[4]

Thus, NATO's vision for the next 10 years was actually the focus of the Lisbon reunion. In this respect, the opinion expressed by Romania's president during his meeting with mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, NATO Secretary General is that the new strategic concept is an excellent one.

Given the complexity of this concept and the constraints with which any research paper must comply, this article will focus only on those aspects that are novel to NATO's strategy and that add up to the latter's provisions, namely: the reaffirmation of NATO's commitment to collective defense; NATO's role in unconventional threats defense; examining the likelihood of new operational actions outside the Alliance's borders; creating conditions for achieving success in Afghanistan; consultations concerning crises situations prevention or management; a new partnership age; involvement in complex problems; NATO-Russia

relationship; the open doors policy; new capabilities for a new age; nuclear weapons policy; solidarity with a view to bringing peace; missile defense as a new mission; countering cyber attacks; implementing reforms in order to maintain a more agile Alliance.

In this respect, one of the aspects worth mentioning is NATO's commitment to accepting new members in line with its policy in this domain set out during the Bucharest Summit. Such keenness on following and reinforcing policy objectives established during previous summits is a telltale of NATO's credibility and coherence. Thus, the Lisbon Summit Declaration mentions:

"In accordance with Article 10 of the Washington Treaty, NATO's door will remain open to all European democracies which share the values of our Alliance, which are willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership, which are in a position to further the principles of the Treaty, and whose inclusion can contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area. [...] We reiterate the agreement at our 2008 Bucharest Summit to extend an invitation to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine."[5]

Another aspect of concern for the organization the Romanian military is part of is the nuclear threat and its capacity to tackle it:

"Our Strategic Concept underscores our commitment to ensuring that NATO has the full range of capabilities necessary to deter and defend against any threat to the safety of our populations and the security of our territory. To that end, NATO will maintain an appropriate mix of conventional, nuclear, and

missile defense forces. Missile defense will become an integral part of our overall defense posture. Our goal is to bolster deterrence as a core element of our collective defense and contribute to the indivisible security of the Alliance. We have tasked the Council to continue to review NATO's overall posture in deterring and defending against the full range of threats to the Alliance, taking into account changes in the evolving international security environment. This comprehensive review should be undertaken by all Allies on the basis of deterrence and defense posture principles agreed in the Strategic Concept, taking into account WMD and ballistic missile proliferation. Essential elements of the review would include the range of NATO's strategic capabilities required, including NATO's nuclear posture, and missile defense and other means of strategic deterrence and defense. This only applies to nuclear weapons assigned to NATO."[6]

A ballistic missile threat on behalf of Iran has led to an essential military mission for NATO. From this point of view the USA's decision to set a Missile Defense Shield in Europe is an efficient, rapid and trustworthy commitment to supporting NATO's anti-missile policy. Moreover, such an action requires an equal and open participation on behalf of all the Alliance's members. It is only through joint efforts, through cooperation among Alliance' members and between NATO and Russia that such an allegiance is possible. In this context, the Missile Defense Shield is no longer a USA objective, but a mutual one shared at the level of NATO. As a result, the NATO-Russia relationship becomes of great importance. Thus, besides actions concerning the establishment

of such a shield, this relationship involves a set of joint actions.

“NATO-Russia cooperation is of strategic importance, as reflected by today’s meeting of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) at the level of Heads of State and Government in Lisbon. In light of common security interests, we are determined to build a lasting and inclusive peace, together with Russia, in the Euro-Atlantic Area. We need to share responsibility in facing up to common challenges, jointly identified. We want to see a true strategic partnership between NATO and Russia, and we will act accordingly, with the expectation of reciprocity from Russia. We recommit ourselves to the goals, principles and commitments which underpin the NRC. On this firm basis, we urge Russia to meet its commitments with respect to Georgia, as mediated by the European Union on 12 August and 8 September 2008. Over the past year, NATO-Russia cooperation has progressed and produced notable results. We welcome, in particular, the completion of the Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges, which has identified practical cooperation projects on Afghanistan, including counter-narcotics; non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery; counter-piracy; counter-terrorism; and disaster response. We also welcome the new extended arrangements offered by Russia to facilitate ISAF transit to and from Afghanistan. We are actively pursuing cooperation with Russia on missile defense, including through the resumption of theatre missile defense exercises. We will also want to discuss in the NRC a range of other topics, including Afghanistan; implementing OSCE principles; military deployments,

including any that could be perceived as threatening; information sharing and transparency on military doctrine and posture, as well as the overall disparity in short-range nuclear weapons; arms control; and other security issues. We look forward to discussing all these matters in the NRC, which is a forum for political dialogue at all times and on all issues, including where we disagree. Our dialogue and cooperation with Russia also help us to resolve differences by building trust, mutual confidence, transparency, predictability and mutual understanding.”[7]

Another contemporary threat facing NATO is cyber attacks against international organizations, banks, military and diplomatic structures, etc. Therefore, NATO’s task in this respect is to accelerate its efforts to counter this threat by protecting its command and communications systems, by training its members to deter or mitigate the effects of such attacks, and by developing capabilities in this field. In this respect, the Lisbon Summit Declaration sets out:

“Cyber threats are rapidly increasing and evolving in sophistication. In order to ensure NATO’s permanent and unfettered access to cyberspace and integrity of its critical systems, we will take into account the cyber dimension of modern conflicts in NATO’s doctrine and improve its capabilities to detect, assess, prevent, defend and recover in case of a cyber attack against systems of critical importance to the Alliance. We will strive in particular to accelerate NATO Computer Incident Response Capability (NCIRC) to Full Operational Capability (FOC) by 2012 and the bringing of all NATO bodies under centralized cyber protection. We will use NATO’s defense planning processes in order

to promote the development of Allies' cyber defense capabilities, to assist individual Allies upon request, and to optimize information sharing, collaboration and interoperability. To address the security risks emanating from cyberspace, we will work closely with other actors, such as the UN and the EU, as agreed. We have tasked the Council to develop, drawing notably on existing international structures and on the basis of a review of our current policy, a NATO in-depth cyber defense policy by June 2011 and to prepare an action plan for its implementation”[8]

In conclusion, the new Strategic Concept elaborated during the Lisbon Summit of 2010 and included in the Lisbon Summit Declaration will bring essential changes to NATO's Strategy not only from a textual point of view, but also in terms of the Alliance's future actions. An axiomatic truth underlying this topic of research is that, regardless of the complexity characterizing this new Concept, the former does not impede upon the basic tenets of the Washington Treaty, nor on NATO's fundamental role. Therefore, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization will always preserve its defensive character and will observe universal values such as democracy, freedom and human rights.

ENDNOTES

[1] Hervé Coutau-Bégarie, né le 22 novembre 1956 à Angers (Maine-et-Loire), est un écrivain et stratège naval français; directeur de recherches en stratégie au Collège interarmées de défense (CID), président de la Commission française d'histoire militaire, professeur au Cours Supérieur d'Etat-major (CSEM)

- [2] Hervé Coutau-Bégarie, Traite de strategie, Economic publishing house, Paris, 1999, p.12
 [3] Hervé Coutau-Bégarie, op. cit., p. 32
 [4] Lisbon Summit Declaration, article 2.
 [5] Lisbon Summit Declaration, Art. 13
 [6] Lisbon Summit Declaration, Art. 30
 [7] Lisbon Summit Declaration, Art.23
 [8] Lisbon Summit Declaration, Art. 40

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 [3] Rome Summit Declaration
 [4] Washington Summit Declaration
 [5] Bucharest Summit Declaration
 [6] Lisbon Summit Declaration
 [7] NATO Summit – Rome, 7-8 November, 1991
 [8] NATO Summit – Washington, 3-4 April 1999
 [9] NATO Summit- Prague 21-22, November 2002
 [10] NATO Summit- Istanbul, 28-29, June 2004
 [11] NATO Summit- Riga. 28-29 November 2006
 [12] NATO Summit- Bucharest, 2-4 April 2008
 [13] NATO Summit - Strasbourg, France/ Kehl, Germany, 3-4 April 2009
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