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NATO AND THE SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE – POWERLESS OF POWERFULS AND POWER OF WEAKS IN ETHNIC CONFLICTS[**]

Several major interrelated events overshadowed others within the relationships between NATO and the countries of the South-eastern Europe last few years. Among them seems to be on the top of the list the NATO enlargement process, the NATO engagement in the Kosovo conflict, and the transformation of NATO's role or mission.

The NATO enlargement

Within the group of South-eastern European countries (Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Moldavia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Yugoslavia, Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey) for NATO full-fledged membership applied Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria, and only Hungary became the NATO member. This changed not only Hungary's relations with NATO, but also with the other countries which did or did not applied for that status within the group and outside of it (Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania). Croatia became member for Partnership for Peace (PfP) 2000, and Macedonia and Albania participated in some of PfP activities (see more detailed Vukadinovic, 2000: 26). One could expect that they will follow the path of Croatia when the political and security situations in these countries will be estimated as satisfactory (at least according to NATO criteria).

Although the door to NATO membership under Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty remained open, one can not guess with accuracy which countries from the South-eastern Europe and/or elsewhere will become next new members. Decisions to invite

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aspirants to begin accession talks with the Alliance will be made on a case-by-case basis by Allies in accordance with paragraph 8 of the Madrid Summit Declaration and the Washington Summit Declaration. Participation in the Membership Action Plan (MAP), based of self-differentiation, does not imply any timeframe for any such decision nor any guarantee of eventual membership, and the programme cannot be considered as a list of criteria for membership. MAP, which is considered as a practical manifestation of the open door, is divided into chapters on political and economic issues, defence/military issues, resource, security and legal issues.

Within the field of the political and economic issues, "future members must conform to basic principles embodied in the Washington Treaty such as democracy, individual liberty and other relevant provisions set out in its Preamble." Aspirants will also be expected, first, to settle their international disputes by peaceful means; second, to demonstrate commitment to the rule of law and human rights; third, to settle ethnic disputes or external territorial disputes including irredentist claims or internal jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means in accordance with OSCE principles and to pursue good neighbourly relations; forth, to establish appropriate democratic and civilian control of their armed forces; fifth, to refrain from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the UN; sixth, to contribute to the development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions and by promoting stability and well-being; seven, to continue fully to support and be engaged in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace; and eight, to show a commitment to promoting stability and well-being by economic liberty, social justice and environmental responsibility.

In addition, aspirants would be expected upon accession to unite their efforts for collective defence and for the preservation of peace and security. The aspirants should also maintain the effectiveness of NATO through the sharing of responsibilities, costs and benefits, to commit themselves to good faith efforts to build consensus on all issues. Third, they are supposed to undertake to participate fully in the Alliance consultation and decision-making process on political and security issues of concern to the Alliance. Fourth, the aspirants should commit themselves to the continued openness of NATO in accordance with the Washington Treaty and the Madrid and Washington Summit Declarations.

Within defence/military issues "the ability of aspiring countries to contribute militarily to collective defence and to the Alliance's new missions and their willingness to commit to gradual improvements in their military capabilities will be factors to be considered in determining their suitability for NATO membership." Full participation in operational PfP is considered as "an essential component, as it will further deepen aspirants' political and military ties with the Alliance, helping them prepare for participation in the full range of new missions."

Aspirants would be expected upon accession to accept the approach to security outlined in the Strategic Concept. Second, the same countries will be expected to provide forces and capabilities for collective defence and other NATO missions. Third, they will be obliged to participate, as appropriate, in the military structure. Fourth, they should participate, as appropriate, in the NATO's collective defence planning. Fifth, the same countries should participate, as appropriate, in NATO agencies. Sixth, the countries will be expected to continue fully to support PfP and the development of cooperative relations with non-NATO Partners. Finally, seven, they are expected to pursue standardization and/or interoperability.

Within resource issues "new Alliance members would be expected to commit sufficient budget resources to allow themselves to meet the commitments entailed by possible membership. National programmes of aspirants must put in place the necessary structures to plan and implement defence budgets that meet established defence priorities and make provision for training schemes to familiarise staff with NATO practices and procedures in order to prepare for possible future participation in Alliance structures."

Aspirants would be expected upon accession to allocate sufficient budget resources for the implementation of NATO commitments. Second, they should have the national structures in place to deal with those budget resources. Third, they will be supposed to participate in the NATO's common-funded activities at agreed cost shares. Finally, fourth, their duty will be to participate in Alliance structures (permanent representation at the NATO headquarters; military representation in the NATO command structure; participation, as appropriate, in NATO Agencies).

Economic expenditures of joining NATO itself are still hardly possible to be determined in Hungary and probably even less in those countries that wish to do it. The situation in this regards is very

similar to that during procedure of admission through which passed Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia (more details Isakovic, 1988a). However, it seems that these questions could become more important with growth of relative economic backwardness of future aspirants in comparison with previous ones.

Within security issues "aspirants would be expected upon accession to have in place sufficient safeguards and procedures to ensure the security of the most sensitive information as laid down in NATO security policy." Implementation of this issue assumes that "appropriate courses may be made available, on request, to aspiring countries on Personnel, Physical, Document, Industrial Security and INFOSEC. Individual programmes for aspirants may be developed as warranted. The NATO Security and Special Committees may wish to meet with aspirants, whenever they judge it necessary or useful."

Within legal issues "in order to be able to undertake the commitments of membership, aspirants should examine and become acquainted with the appropriate legal arrangements and agreements which govern cooperation within NATO. This should enable aspirants to scrutinize domestic law for compatibility with those NATO rules and regulations. In addition, aspirants should be properly informed about the formal legal process leading to membership."

New members, upon completion of the relevant procedures, will accede to The North Atlantic Treaty of 1949. Upon invitation, new members should accede to several other agreements, a protocol, etc. (more details: Membership Action Plan, 1999).

The NATO engagement in the Kosovo conflict
As the new NATO member, during the NATO bombardment of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) Hungary – along with other neighbouring states of FRY – has been expected to put on NATO's disposition Hungarian air space and ground installations, despite Hungarian intentions to keep relatively stable and developed relationships with FRY and in that way to protect Hungarian minority in FRY. In that way, Hungary became involved in Kosovo conflict, which itself was hardly possible to expect that could endanger Hungary's security. Many of the South-eastern European countries that intend to take part in the NATO enlargement also participated in (in)direct ways in the NATO engagement in the Kosovo crisis, probably wishing to improve their chances to join NATO. This

happens despite expectations that present ruling parties or coalitions in the countries will probably face obstacles and problems on the next elections to a degree in which public opinions of their countries have been negative oriented towards the NATO engagement in the Kosovo crisis (the best example seems to be the situation in Romania). In addition, it seemed that political relationships within NATO itself were at least partly disturbed in general by political differences over some questions related to the NATO engagement in the Kosovo crisis, and in the first place in the bombardment of FRY.

The situation could has been become even much more delicate in those countries that could have permitted sending ground troops over their territories to FRY territory. Among immediate candidates were Albania (on whose border with FRY fighting between KLA-NATO-Albanian government and Yugoslavia forces started), Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Macedonia (even despite its refusal).

According to some estimates, material damages caused by the NATO bombardment of FRY territory were some several tens of billions of American dollars, and expenses and damages caused by the fighting and flow of refuges outside of Kosovo and displaced persons in it and elsewhere could be hardly estimated. It is even much harder to estimate and predict political, economic, environmental and other damages of the bombardment. However, it could have been be predicted that the ground attack would have been made additional material and other damages and mass of causalities along with huge waves of refugees from FRY to the Republika Srpska, West and elsewhere. It is considered, "the uncontrolled movement of large numbers of people, particularly as a consequence of armed conflicts, can … pose problems for security and stability affecting the Alliance" (The Alliance's Strategic Concept…, 1999: point 24). As the main political damage could be expected a longer-term rise of role of military and other actors whose task and role is at the first place applying repression. In that way along with mentioned including to the PfP (and via it becoming parts in ethnic and other conflicts), the countries of South-eastern Europe will acquire less instead of aimed more security.

Due to many internal problems (primarily economic underdevelopment, social, ethnic and religious fragmentation, weak or broken state traditions and a lack of democratic ethos), many states in Eastern and South-eastern Europe can be qualified as weak ones in the sense in which this notion is elaborated by Barry

Buzan and other authors (see Buzan, 1991: 96-112; Holsti, 1996: 104-108). The impossibility to create completely 'pure' national states in the territory of Eastern and South-eastern Europe, and it seems particularly in the Balkans, condemns the members of two or more ethnic groups to live in one state, namely to share these states in a certain way. Therefore, the most important task of the states is to acquire such knowledge that is necessary for life in circumstances in which exist ethnic conflicts, and to face them without using violence. The elimination of ethnic conflicts in the Balkans will probably be a long lasting process. The danger is the establishment of undemocratic rule with the aim to maintain state sovereignty at any cost. In this regard, however, the 2000 elections in Croatia, parts of FRY and Bosnia and Herzegovina could represent bases for some optimism.

The endeavour to increase security by expanding NATO deserves attention primarily because membership in NATO is possible only if the potential member had prior disengaged from conflicts with the neighbours. However, conflicts in the territory of the ex-Yugoslavia and elsewhere in the South-eastern Europe (like the conflict in Cyprus, Romania, Bulgaria, the Greek-Turkish conflict, etc.) could not be eliminated in the short run either by using domestic armies, police and similar forces (even during the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia), or by humanitarian activities of UNPROFOR units, or by actions for establishing peace by force, or those for preserving peace by IFOR and SFOR units. In this regard, the most promising seems to be just partially similar activities of UNPREDEP in Macedonia. The new states have undergone a process in which they perpetuated their weaknesses, as illustrated by tensions within the political system. By their consequences – i.e. a general weakening of the respective societies and states (except, maybe, in the military sense) – the consequences of wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and FRY can be compared only with the consequences of the Second World War in this region. They showed how inadequate the military is when it comes to the solution of the three key groups of problems of the Yugoslav state, and her "new" neighbors: ethnic conflicts, perpetuation of state weaknesses (which is underlined by participation in conflicts), as well as the problems which emerge due to intensification of ethnic identification.

This conclusion can, at least partly, be drawn from the analysis of the state schemes, as presented by Barry Buzan. In the view of

the author, namely, the first element of this scheme is the very notion of state – when firmly planted in the minds of the populations, it creates a firm basis for the state as a whole, and if firmly planted in other states, it creates a safe environment for the state in question (Buzan, 1991: 78). The second element is the institutional dimension of the state, and its monopoly in the use of force. Nowadays, there are two trends in this development: first, the rise in number of institutions and, second, the field of their activity becomes broader and broader.

It seems that for a theoretical handling of the issues pertaining to FRY and some neighboring countries (and maybe some other states in Eastern and South-eastern Europe) it is significant to understand that the lack of social consensus in regard to the state idea was frequently compensated by a strengthening of the mentioned institutional element. However, one of the most significant characteristics of weak states is exactly the fact that they most frequently make an attempt to strengthen the institutional element by strengthening the repressive and some other related segments of their apparatus. On the other hand, stressing the significance of the institutions that exercise repressive and similar functions does rather weaken and not strengthen the respective state. In such states, security related discussions give priority to internal threats, and the lack of legitimacy of the regime is 'solved' only by a temporary alleviation of social conflicts, while the roots of the problem remain almost or completely aside.

The basic problem is that a weak state cannot be strengthened by repression (as the case of Kosovo showed), so that the circle is being closed: more repression brings more weakness and - this weakness "asks" for more repression... Therefore, none of the states that fit into the descriptions of weak states can easily solve their problems that stem from ethnic conflicts and identification, and from weaknesses in their sovereignty and security; they cannot even be significantly alleviated by (non)admission to membership of any military-political alliance. What they need is the establishment of stable and legitimate institutions.

Finally, one should mention that the institutionalization of politics, establishing of the rules of the political 'game' and establishing the rule of law (instead of rule of parties, and even individuals) should remain the basic mechanisms for solving (which is hard or even impossible to be achieved), or mitigating ethnic and

other conflicts. It is only in such a case that the state itself also becomes a mechanism for limiting conflicts.

It seems that regional security (defined as freedom of threats) has been worsened by NATO engagement in the Kosovo crisis since 1988. More or less and in different regards were endangered not only FRY, but all its neighbours (Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania, Macedonia, and Bulgaria) and even Greece and Turkey. In addition, these and many other countries have been involved in the escalated Kosovo conflict even if they have not been in touch with it before. As in the Balkans threats usually born threats, that what one state gains in relations with the super and/or great powers it looses in relationships with neighbouring countries and/or other states in the region that are in conflicting relations with the powers and *vice versa*.

There is an open question of the future position of FRY and maybe particularly the Republika Srpska: will they join the PfP in due course, be "permanently neutral"? As FRY's position seems to be very important in geostrategic and economic regard, the country could play an important role in any effort oriented to future regional cooperation as well as conflicts. The USA policy in the region will probably focus on its continual military presence in Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo and a cautious policy towards Greece and Turkey. In the Eastern Balkan region, the USA could also rely on pro-Western orientated political forces in Romania and Bulgaria.

The parties involved in the Kosovo conflict, including NATO, had at their disposition ways in which the conflict and its escalation could have been avoided. It could have been achieved by getting Kosovo on the agenda in Brioni in 1991 (as the disintegration of the Second Yugoslavia started actually in Kosovo one decade ago), the Vance plan, the Bosnian peace plans including Dayton and/or later opportunities (for example, Carl Bildt was attempting for years to get NATO powers interested in negotiations with Belgrade government). It could have been achieved by NATO's not supporting the KLA and/or making it clear to them that they could not utilise escalation of the conflict for getting support for independence or other less ambitious political as well as military goals. Some authors consider that displaced persons, refugees and civilian victims were at least to some degree the result of Serbs' efforts along with KLA's skilful use of a tactic that made it difficult for the other side to distinguish non-fighters from fighters, etc. The tactic had been used during the Vietnam war by the Viet Minh guerilla soldiers (the Viet Cong) in

their campaigns of assassination, ambush, proselytizing and sabotage.

Second, NATO's chance was in sticking to Rugova as the legitimate representative instead of the KLA. NATO powers also did not use the chance of not including last-minute conditions in Rambouillet that - according to some opinions - can only have been made to make sure to get a Belgrade's refusal and thus a pretext for war. The conditions were, however, withdrawn to get the Kumanovo June 1999 agreement with the Belgrade government.

The existing, past (particularly at the beginning and the end of 20 century) and probably future situation in the Balkans and the rest of the South-eastern Europe could be observed, researched and taught using several pairs or sets of theoretical concepts or analytical lens (which are able to give an insight into problems, giving a partial view, and making some things clearer while pushing others in to the background): (1) secession and national liberation struggles, movements, etc.; (2) stability and instability in the region and particular countries; (3) security and insecurty (societal, state, military, environmental, etc); (4) peace or war, violence, etc.; (5) human rights and/or peace (in those cases in which they exclude each other or at least it seams so[1]); (6) globalisation and state suvereignty (konwn so-called Waldheim effect, for example); (7) developing, stagnation or declination; (8) various forms of democracy, authocracy, dictatorship (caused or at least conditioned, for example, by conflict escalation or other phenomena), etc. (9) terror and/or terrorism in some countries; (10) chauvinism, nationalism and internationalism and/or globalisation; (11) conflict and/or cooperation; (12) conflict generation and/or resolution; (13) conflict escalation and deescalation; (14) differences and similarities of identities and individual or collective features and attitudes, etc. Mentioned concepts have economic, political, territorial (world, Europe, EU, South-eastern Europe, Balkans), cultural, internal, external, international and other aspects.

As most of mentioned phenomena have multidimensional natures, research and teaching could have and utilise complex methodologies composed of groups of methods usually used in political sciences, anthropology, sociology, social psychology, ethnology, linguistic studies, philosophy, religion studies, (modern) history, theory of international relations, economy, theory of law and

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[1] In addition, both peace and human rights are violated and jeopardized by domestic regimes along with the governments of some Western powers.

certain law disciplines as well as some other more or less related disciplines. A chosen methodological conglomeration could be used to define possible solutions for problems related to an observed set, group or pair of theoretical concepts.

Present-day situation seems maybe most stable in Greece, Romania, Bulgaria and Slovenia, and worst in Serbia and the rest of the present Yugoslavia. Director of the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute Prof. Håkan Wiberg considers that the general situation in the Balkans is grim, and predictions could be described as bleak. The Kosovo war has made the situation worse in the Balkans in many different regards (ethnic relations, political legitimacy of governments, economy, etc.). It seems that most of the Balkan governments were more or less united against Milosevic during the war, but, as each of the states has own potential or actual secessionist movement(s)/organisation(s), they are afraid of getting own secession of the Kosovo, Slovenia, Croatia and/or Bosnia type in the future.

Most of the states, i.e., governments around the former and present Yugoslavia were fearing of spilling over the wars in the former Yugoslav republics. Within these conditions and as the secessionists are mostly ethno-nationaly linked with neighbouring states, the situation in the Balkans just l o o k s calm at the surface. A careful examination, however, gives to some degree different results, which actually varies at least to some degree from case to case.

The West cannot afford to make Kosovo formally independent (because of Herceg-Bosna and Republika Srpska and in some way western Macedonia, southern parts of Montenegro and some parts of Greece, populated also by relatively numerous Albanian minority, as next possible candidates) and hardly Montenegro either.

Moreover, if Montenegro becomes independent, as the ethnic Montenegrins are split on the issue, it may provoke a civil war among them involving not only Yugoslav Army, Montenegro police and NATO, but maybe also Albanians in Montenegro, Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania, Serbs in Republika Srpska, etc. Prof. Wiberg considers that, in addition, so it may well be that NATO manages to put itself in prison there too, to stand guard over a peaceful coexistence between the clientelist international aid industry and the ethnically based mafia economy. An open question whether the NATO – in case of a civil war in Montenegro – would undertake another bombing of Serbia or/and Serbia will be ready to take that

risk again. However, during the Yugoslav crisis actors were undertaking many moves, which were considered by scholars as at least partly irational, damaging and even counterproductive for the actors themselves.

It seems that the international community will soon face the dilemma whether human rights or peace is of greater importance and which of them has priority if one has to choose between them. Moreover, a problem can occur in finding the boundary between them because of the fact that they may become aspects of the same thing tended to be protected by a part of the international community. Second dilemma could be the human rights or state sovereignty (more details: Isakovic, 2000).

(3) The transformation of the role or mission of NATO
The historical reasons of the Balkans instability have been the results of its economic underdevelopment, the unfinished process of the formation of the Balkan nations and the national states and the weakness of its democratic institutions. The crisis and the wars in the former SFRY has shown once again that the Balkans remains a "European powder keg" and a powerful generator of instability in Europe. Numerous territorial and ethnic disputes that have been dormant in the Balkans during the cold war appeared again after the end of the Cold War. The United States and the European Union helped to stabilise the Western Balkans and keeping the Dayton Peace Agreement alive, but new conflict escalations emerged in the Southern Balkans as it was the case in the collapse of the state in Albania and the civil, and also later international war in the FRY. As many of the countries in the region have been burdened with unresolved economic, social and minority problems, their transition to stable democracies and functional market economies will be difficult. The collapse of the ex-Yugoslavia and the wars in Croatia, Bosnia and FRY have highlighted the high correlation between European and Balkan security and underscored the folly of the belief that Europe and the rest of the world could isolate itself from the conflicts in the Balkans. For these and some other reasons, the new role of NATO in peace enforcement and keeping has emerged first and foremost in the Balkans, because of which the outcome of the crisis and the war in ex-Yugoslavia and developments in the Balkans over the past eight years have in numerous ways been influenced by the policy of the USA, GB and other NATO members

towards South-eastern Europe, Middle East, Russia and the Mediterranean.

Unresolved ethnic and territorial conflicts have been now even threatening many countries of the region, including NATO members Greece and Turkey being many times on the brink of armed conflict. Cultural, religious and other differences have polarised the countries of the region, especially after the beginning of the wars in the former Yugoslavia, and created powerful political and psychological resistance in some of them toward the attempts being made at cooperation and coordination in the Balkans.

The escalation of Yugoslav conflicts seriously affected the credibility of international institutions and organisations that were expected to become the pillars of the new international order in Europe after the end of the cold war. The Kosovo crisis showed clearly, however, that NATO – at the first place thanks to the USA and some other members' efforts – changed its role or mission without changing its own rules on that matter. The engagement in the war in FRY was out of NATO's area and, moreover, it started, as a war which was considered as just by its main actors, without the UN Security Council authorisation (more details Isakovic, 1999). In this regard, the situation seems to be at least to some degree similar to numerous military interventions during the Cold War (for example, Soviet interventions in Hungary, in Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan or American intervention in Vietnam) and some other periods of development of international relations.

It was concluded that "a 'New World Order' had been coined as a phrase, but with little clear content: it might mean American hegemonic leadership or an American position as *primus inter pares*, but in either cases it remained unclear when and how the United States desired and was inclined to act in 'European affairs'. (Russia was initially treated as largely negligible, but later become more assertive about its own national interests in Europe.)" (Wiberg, 1994: 237).

After the end of the Cold War efforts to establish a new international order on the continent, based on the development of democracy and right of nations to self-determination, have started to occupy a central place in the policy of Western countries. It seems that the problems with democracy in FRY, Albania and several other Balkan and South-eastern European states were generated by various factors including the relative lack of democratic traditions not

only during the communist era but also in previous times; the wars in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina with simultaneous UN sanctions against FRY; and the conflict escalation in Kosovo, which brought UN and EU sanctions again. Generally, democratization has a potential to help mitigate ethnic conflict. However, in the case of FRY and other mentioned states such a potential was wasted, as the transition towards democracy produced a fertile ground for ethnic hatred, animosity and the political demands of both internal and external power-thirsty political forces and leaders. The democratic turnabout allowed many ethnic tensions including the Kosovo conflict to surface, but because the same democracy was still young and fragile it had not been able to manage them properly and peacefully. It seems that this thesis has a wider validity in the South-eastern Europe, which is known as a focal point of ethnic conflict and which have been often (at least, temporarily) 'resolved' through both morally and legally extremely unacceptable options, such as forced expulsion and ethnic cleansing.

Successful democratization needs national unity as a basic precondition, which can hardly be fulfilled due to the existing ethnic conflict, particularly in multiethnic societies. Even in societies that can be considered as democratic ones and with long democratic traditions, escalated ethnic conflicts have lead their parties to restrain democracy and/or reduce democratic principles and human rights, and limit the functioning power of their democratic institutions and processes. South-eastern European states are no exceptions in such a situation. On the contrary, restrictions and suspensions seem to be more severe and more durable there. As a rule, ethnic conflicts, and especially escalated ones, have negative impacts on democracy, and at least partly disable the development of the democratization process. The more conflicts, the harder it is to achieve democracy and even more so to experience it (cf. de Nevers, 1993: 31-48).

A fearful situation – which within conditions of ethnic conflicts stimulates ethnonational mobilisation, i.e. division – cannot be observed as favourable for the development of democracy. The kind of democracy which might occur within such conditions could be to some degree similar to that which used to exist in some of the old Greek city-states and which was exclusively reserved for the ruling class of citizens, and not accessible for slaves. In the South-eastern Europe there are no slaves any more but there are other, national

divisions which as a rule does not match with territorial divisions. Within these circumstances, threats – as they generate fears and the "rally-round-the-flag" effect which is also characteristically created by economic sanctions – could be qualified as counterproductive from the point of view of actors who use them as a tool in international relations, and whose purpose might nevertheless be the democratization of threatened states.

Unacceptable options can become acceptable and *vice versa* during the bargaining process. The respective diplomacies and politicians of some of the participants use more arguments and some use more force as an argument. In some situations at least a fragile peace could be achieved by force (as in Bosnia and Herzegovina or Croatia), but it seems to be a more efficient way when even illusory arguments in the narrow or proper meaning of that term are used to resolve ethnic conflicts. *"Conflict-resolution is not about harming or killing people. It is about killing problems and harnessing the human and circumstantial attraction to violence. Violence is always part of the problem, never the solution"* (Øberg, 1994: 140).

It seems that to the extent to which NATO armament alone was not able to stop communism (without a parallel activity of the civil society) on the European continent, it is equally not capable (alone) of eliminating ethnic conflicts (that determine the sovereignty and security of practically all states in South-eastern Europe and in the Balkans, where relatively large stocks of armaments and big armies do not represent new phenomena after the end of the Cold War.

Not long after they began to produce the atomic weapons, the Americans have made an unpleasant discovery – that such a gigantic quantum of military force, did in itself not bring lasting greater security. Since the Soviets managed to achieve a rough military parity, the whole concept of armament build-up entered an impasse. In other words, it can be concluded that the increase in quality and quantity of military force, i.e. power that is at an actor's disposal does not necessarily bring more security.

The ex-Yugoslavia is an illustration to this point: the Yugoslav People's Army was counted among the strongest in Europe and yet, the conflict and war could not have been avoided by the presence of military stocks. Security-related studies show that the Balkans became an even more dangerous area than before. This is accentuated by a lack of continued communication and cooperation

(and primarily of tolerance) between nations and states. Instead of relying upon communication, patience and readiness for cooperation, the Balkan states rely upon well equipped armies; their populations seem to be ready to make great sacrifices in order to achieve political aims that were designed by the political elites of the respective countries. Therefore, the question is whether NATO soldiers and weapons can bring them more security.

The greatest dangers for peace is that states posses huge military power which some leaders are tempted to use rather than enter political dialogue; these dangers can also be generated by systematic behaviour that is in accordance with a narrow understanding of an old Roman maxim *si vis pacem, para bellum.* However, this proverb does not say anything about what preparations for war should look like. It seems that a modern interpretation of the mentioned principle should include a few more elements aimed towards a non-violent preservation or establishment of peace: peace-oriented diplomacy, peace-oriented politics and communications, economy and - one would say, in the first place - peace education.

Deterrence by military weakness (and not strength) is compatible with communications that do not aim at demonizing one nation in the minds of the other; they tend rather toward promoting mutual understanding and particularly toward communications that contribute to the transparency of the world in general.

In other words, deterrence by military weakness is in accordance with the politics that does not lead countries and nations into wars, but rather inhibits them in this regard; it's compatible with diplomacy that does not use military power as an 'argument' but relies much more upon diplomatic skills, wisdom, creativity, ability, education and inventiveness. Finally, deterrence by military weakness is in favour of economic prosperity (more details: Isakovic, 1988).

(4) The future transformation of NATO

The heads of states and governments of the member countries during the celebration of the 50th anniversary of NATO set forth their vision of the Alliance of the 21st century. They stated that NATO, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law, remains the basis of their states' collective defence; "it embodies the transatlantic link that binds North America and Europe in a unique defence and security partnership." In Washington they

have paid tribute to the achievements of the past and shaped a new NATO to meet the future challenges. "This new Alliance will be larger, more capable and more flexible, committed to collective defence and able to undertake new missions including contributing to effective conflict prevention and engaging actively in crisis management, including crisis response operations. The Alliance will work with other nations and organisations to advance security, prosperity and democracy throughout the Euro-Atlantic region." They concluded that the presence today of the three new members demonstrates that they have overcome the division of Europe."

They have (1) approved an updated Strategic Concept; (2) reaffirmed their commitment to the enlargement process of NATO and approved MAP; (3) completed the work on key elements of the Berlin Decisions on building the European Security and Defence Identity within NATO and decided to further enhance its effectiveness; (4) launched the Defence Capabilities Initiative; (5) intensified their relations with Partners through an enhanced and more operational PfP and strengthened our consultations and co-operation within the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council; (6) enhanced the Mediterranean Dialogue; and (7) decided to increase NATO efforts against weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

To achieve its essential purpose NATO performs the following fundamental security tasks: 1) Providing "one of the indispensable foundations for a stable Euro-Atlantic security environment, based on the growth of democratic institutions and commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes, in which no country would be able to intimidate or coerce any other through the threat or use of force." 2) Serving "as an essential transatlantic forum for Allied consultations on any issues that affect their vital interests, including possible developments posing risks for members' security, and for appropriate co-ordination of their efforts in fields of common concern." 3) Deterring and defending "against any threat of aggression against any NATO member state as provided for in Articles 5 and 6 of the Washington Treaty."

In order to enhance the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area NATO will perform crisis management (standing ready, case-by-case and by consensus, in conformity with Article 7 of the Washington Treaty, to contribute to effective conflict prevention and to engage actively in crisis management, including crisis response operations) and partnership (promoting wide-ranging partnership,

cooperation, and dialogue with other countries in the Euro-Atlantic area, with the aim of increasing transparency, mutual confidence and the capacity for joint action with the Alliance).

The heads of states and governments welcomed the impetus given to the strengthening of a common European policy in security and defence by the Amsterdam Treaty and the reflections launched since then in the WEU and – following the St. Malo Declaration - in the EU, including the Vienna European Council Conclusions. It was confirmed that a stronger European role will help contribute to the vitality of our Alliance for the 21st century, which is the foundation of the collective defence of its members.

It was concluded that "the continuing crisis in and around Kosovo threatens to further destabilise areas beyond … FRY. The potential for wider instability underscores the need for a comprehensive approach to the stabilisation of the crisis region in South-eastern Europe. We recognise and endorse the crucial importance of making South-eastern Europe a region free from violence and instability. A new level of international engagement is thus needed to build security, prosperity and democratic civil society, leading in time to full integration into the wider European family."

NATO is determined "to play its full part in this process by contributing to the building of a more secure and co-operative relationship with and between the countries of the region. Given the differences in economic development and the diversity and complexity of the problems of each country in the region, international efforts to develop and stabilise the region must be comprehensive, coherent and well co-ordinated. To achieve these ends, NATO, the WEU, the EU, the OSCE and the UN must work closely together. The international financial institutions also have a crucial role to play. The Alliance's efforts to enhance regional security and stability in South-eastern Europe and to help resolve humanitarian problems, and the efforts by other international organisations, as well as those by the countries of the region, should be mutually reinforcing."

NATO's "efforts to enhance regional security in South-eastern Europe complement those by other international organisations, as well as those by the countries of the region." The forthcoming European Union conference on the Stability Pact for South-eastern Europe (whose member became FRY next month after the October 2000 elections) on 27th May 1999, and the South-eastern Europe

Co-operation process, as well as other regional efforts were welcomed. It was concluded, "coherence and co-ordination between the various initiatives will be of great importance."

The security of the Balkan region was perceived as essential to achieving lasting stability throughout the Euro-Atlantic area. NATO's goal is "to see the integration of the countries of the region into the Euro-Atlantic community. We want all the countries and peoples of South-Eastern Europe to enjoy peace and security and establish normal relations with one another, based on respect of human rights, democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law." However, the presidential elections in the leading power of NATO – USA – late 2000 and a few others demonstrated that nobody is perfect as far as democracy is concerned.

It was stressed that "the Alliance and the European Union share common strategic interests. Our respective efforts in building peace in the former Yugoslavia are complementary. Both organisations make decisive contributions to peace and stability on the European continent. Co-operation between the two organisations on topics of common concern, to be decided on a case-by-case basis, could be developed when it enhances the effectiveness of action by NATO and the EU" (more details: An Alliance for the 21st Century…, 1999).

NATO's "essential and enduring purpose, set out in the Washington Treaty, is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means. Alliance has striven since its inception to secure a just and lasting peaceful order in Europe. It will continue to do so. The achievement of this aim can be put at risk by crisis and conflict affecting the security of the Euro-Atlantic area. The Alliance therefore not only ensures the defence of its members but contributes to peace and stability in this region."

NATO's "growing political role; its increased political and military partnership, cooperation and dialogue with other states, including with Russia, Ukraine and Mediterranean Dialogue countries; its continuing openness to the accession of new members; its collaboration with other international organisations; its commitment, exemplified in the Balkans, to conflict prevention and crisis management, including through peace support operations: *all reflect its determination to shape its security environment and enhance the peace and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area* (Italic, ZI).

Notwithstanding positive developments in the strategic environment and the fact that large-scale conventional aggression

against the Alliance is highly unlikely, the possibility of such a threat emerging over the longer term exists. The security of the Alliance remains subject to a wide variety of military and non-military risks which are multi-directional and often difficult to predict. These risks include uncertainty and instability in and around the Euro-Atlantic area and the possibility of regional crises at the periphery of the Alliance, which could evolve rapidly. Some countries in and around the Euro-Atlantic area face serious economic, social and political difficulties. Ethnic and religious rivalries, territorial disputes, inadequate or failed efforts at reform, the abuse of human rights, and the dissolution of states can lead to local and even regional instability. The resulting tensions could lead to crises affecting Euro-Atlantic stability, to human suffering, and to armed conflicts. Such conflicts could affect the security of the Alliance by spilling over into neighbouring countries, including NATO countries, or in other ways, and could also affect the security of other states" (The Alliance's Strategic Concept…, 1999).

Mentioned economic difficulties and their results and implications were taken by some authors and politicians as the main reason for initiating an effort which could be compared with the Marshal Plan applied after the Second World War in the Western Europe. The establishment of institutionalised and efficient economic and political cooperation between NATO and the European Union and the South-eastern European countries could be of mutual interest. There are indications that exists the need for redefining the EU's policy, programme, activities and measures, which should be endorsed in the region. Maybe the main features of the region, where the NATO and EU are concerned, is in its weaknesses and ethnic and other conflicts, with its destabilising potential that can endanger peace, security and stability in Europe and the world. Beside that, closeness of the Middle East region, which has its own at least partly similar conflicts, makes the danger even greater. The strategic significance of the countries of the region in the creation of a new European structure with NATO and European Union as its bearers, follows from this.

In the mentioned document it was warned that "NATO forces may be called upon to operate beyond NATO's borders", but without indicating that the UN SC authorisation will be needed as a legal base for operations. In several places are used terms "Euro-Atlantic peace and stability", "Euro-Atlantic strategic landscape", "Euro-Atlantic area", "Euro-Atlantic security environment", "Euro-Atlantic

region", etc., without defining what does "Euro" means. Is it composed by territories of NATO full-fledged members maybe enlarged by territories of PfP members or the whole Europe (including Asian parts of some countries that belong to the both continents).

Some authors consider that NATO has been started to try to establish a new order in Europe (whatever it means in political and geographical regard) in which local wars will not be allowed at all, and NATO armed actions aimed to prevent or stop such developments would not be perceived and qualified as wars, i.e. aggressions. Although it was stated that NATO recognises "the primary responsibility of the United Nations Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security" (The Alliance's Strategic Concept…, 1999), Europe would be excluded from the regime established by the UN Charter, which will remain applicable for other continents. The main NATO bodies will replace the UN Security Council in protecting international peace and security in Europe. The main reason for this change would be, at least rhetorically, the two world wars which started within Europe thanks to the divisions which occurred in the first place between European powers. Thus, the military treatment of FRY should serve as an example for other countries. Prof. Robin Alison Remington created warning that, however, "inevitably efforts to make NATO the morality cop of Western civilization are far more likely to balkanize NATO than put out ethnonational fires in Eastern Europe" (forthcoming).

One could conclude the more NATO will engage itself in ethnic and similar conflicts transforming its role or mission the more problems will occur in its internal relationships and enlargement to South-eastern Europe and particularly Balkans. The more politically and particularly militarily powerful actors (or at least those who consider themselves as such) posses and (mis)use their power the more weak sides (or at least those who consider themselves as such) in ethnic and similar conflicts are tempted to ally with the powerfuls considering that in that way could use the power themselves for defeating the opposite conflict sides. However, the conflict resolution and security (in the sense of freedom of threats) cannot be achieved in that way as the opposite sides – becoming weaker in comparison with the allies – would probably try to follow the pattern, i.e. to acquire more political and particularly military power in present or future time. In that way, however, the present and future powerfuls could become weak thanks to the fact that the

political and particularly military power cannot represent, or create a solution for ethnic and similar conflicts.

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