

EU STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS TO WHICH ROMANIA IS A MEMBER

*Ioana NICA, Ph.D. candidate**

Abstract: *As part of the European Union, Romania is included in a series of strategic partnerships with other states, either in Europe or on other continents. These partnerships are extremely important for all states, regardless of their financial or human resources. Partnerships are the cooperation of the parties to achieve objectives that cover both the area of culture, education and economic development or security and defense.*

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What are strategic partnerships - definition, objectives, necessity

Strategic partnerships are an important part of maintaining relations with other states and are part of the foreign policy of any state. These refer to the opening of a state to cooperation with other states, the creation of deep relations between political actors, lasting relations, bridges, long-term partnerships.

The idea of strategic partnership has existed for a long time in international politics and has some clear characteristics.

1.Sustainability of the strategic partnership

Even if, sometimes, this term was used in the case of close relationships, the strategic partnership does not refer to a short-term relationship, but to long-term relationships. Strategic partnerships must also pursue long-term goals which, in themselves, are a testament to the stability and sustainability of the relationship between the partner states. In essence, these strategic partnerships address the interests and values of each country that signs an agreement. They are involved in solving certain important issues, but also in developing areas without which a country cannot function, such as health, defense, economy, tourism, agriculture, construction, etc.

* National Defense University, Doctoral School, nica.ioana@myunap.net

As mandatory features, a strategic partnership must have a sustainability, be comprehensive, ie cover several areas of cooperation and must have the security and defense component¹.

2 Strategic partnership: security, defense

*"We could not name a relationship between two actors or a partnership as" strategic "if it did not have the security/defense component."*²

Therefore, the question we need to ask ourselves in the case of a strategic partnership is how far this cooperation should go and whether, in fact, we can talk about a strategic partnership between two non-allied political actors, but also whether this type of partnership necessarily implies an alliance relationship.

In fact, many strategic partnerships involve protecting from war, but not giving up preparation for war.

3. Deep relationships

In addition, the acceptance of a strategic partnership marks an acceptance of a deep, lasting relationship that seeks to be developed and deepened.

The very idea of strategic partnership presupposes a deep cooperation, a deep relationship, an interconnection necessary for the creation of a partnership meant to develop.

4. Comprehensive cooperation

Strategic partnerships aim at the existence of cooperation formulas in all areas or at least in as many of them as possible.

Moreover, as we have already pointed out, the depth of relations between political actors participating in a strategic partnership and the need for in-depth mutual understanding will facilitate the creation of relations and cooperation in almost any field.

¹ CHIFU Ioan., *Parteneriat Strategic. Sistemul de Parteneriate Strategice al României*, CPCEW Bucuresti, 2012, p. 2.

² Idem, p. 2.

There are three main directions of such partnerships, namely: security/defense, economic/energy cooperation, educational/cultural.

5. Objectives of a strategic partnership

Last but not least, a strategic partnership has certain objectives that must be achieved. Moreover, the results must be measured and analyzed at certain intervals, in order to ensure continuity and good direction towards achieving the set objectives. States can enter into strategic partnerships with a multitude of other political actors, but their number depends largely on motivation, interests and, most importantly, the level of resources that the state can allocate. Whether we are talking about human, financial or other resources, these resources will be limited.

However, membership of a body such as the EU can help Member States, even those with fewer resources, to become part of and benefit from certain strategic partnerships.

EU STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

NATO-EU partnership

The strategic partnership between NATO and the EU is an agreement between two interstate entities, supranational and with important functions in the security area and covers the following issues³:

- NATO-EU Declaration on European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP);

- Berlin + arrangements

The NATO-EU Declaration on ESDP, signed on 16 December 2002, allowed the EU access to NATO's planning capabilities for its own operations. Also, the signing of the NATO-EU declaration represents the reaffirmation of the principles on which, in fact, this strategic partnership is based:

- concertation;
- equality and respect for the decision-making autonomy of the EU and NATO;
- respecting the interests of EU and NATO member states;
- observance of the principles of the United Nations Charter;

³ MIRCEA MURESAN, Gheorghe VĂDUVA, *Strategia de parteneriat, parteneriatul strategic*, Editura Universității Naționale de Apărare "Carol I", București, 2005, p. 29.

- development of common military capabilities;
- NATO-EU security agreement (this refers to an exchange of classified information for the purpose of mutual protection rules);
- ensuring the access of the European Union to NATO's planning capabilities for military planning of crisis and conflict management operations, led by Europeans;
- availability of NATO capabilities and common means (headquarters or transmission units, etc.)

Therefore, this strategic partnership between NATO and the EU, of which Romania is a part, is based on the political principles that are enshrined in the NATO-EU Declaration of 2002. If the EU needs it, it can draw on NATO's expertise in planning alliance operations, but in the meantime the European Union has acquired its own capacity to manage crises through the Common Security and Defense Policy⁴.

EU - Middle East Strategic Partnership

On 26 March 2004, the European Council approved in Brussels the "Strategic Partnership between the European Union, the Mediterranean Region and the Middle East". This partnership aims at cooperation between the two sides, in order to promote peace, prosperity and progress in the region⁵.

Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Euro-med)

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Euro-med) was created in 1995 with the aim of linking Europe to its immediate neighbors (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Jordan, Egypt, Israel, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinian Authority).

The main goal was to promote political dialogue between these states, but also to increase and streamline the dialogue in terms of security, economic relations, the creation of a free trade area, the development of active and constructive collaboration in social and human relations.

⁴ Parteneriatul Strategic NATO-UE.

⁵ Mircea Muresan, Gheorghe Văduva, *Strategia de parteneriat, parteneriatul strategic*, Editura Universității Naționale de Apărare "Carol I", București, 2005, p. 39.

China - European Union Strategic Partnership

Relations between the two sides, several decades old, have naturally evolved into a global strategic partnership. The aim of this strategic partnership is to achieve the long-term goals of the two sides, to develop cooperation between Asia and Europe, but also to strengthen the peace, stability and progress of the two sides, but worldwide.

Taking into account all the above, it can be said about the EU-China strategic partnership that it has a global value. This is an extremely important aspect.

Romania - initiator and party involved in sustainable national partnerships

In order to be able to achieve all the country's objectives and build a democratic country with efficient public institutions and a remarkable development over time, it is necessary for Romania to be a party involved in strategic partnerships and even to be an initiator in such agreements. Without the help of EU Member States, most of the objectives cannot be achieved, but external respect and appreciation are also very important in this context⁶.

The concept of defense and national security extends beyond the country's borders, Romania being a party involved for the well-being and security of EU member states, especially in the case of concluding strategic partnerships. At the same time, the process of adaptation and modernization to technological processes at all levels must be continued, in line with international reshaping.

Due to the accession to the EU and NATO, but also to the Strategic Partnership with the USA, Romania finds itself in an assumed position, but also with a high degree of strategic credibility and consistent national values⁷. All these premises are favorable for a sustainability in terms of strategic position vis-à-vis to other Member States.

⁶ Administrația Prezidențială, *Strategia națională de apărare a țării pentru perioada 2020-2024*, București, 2020, p. 7.

⁷ Idem, p. 8.

Romania's strategic partnerships

An important first step in concluding strategic partnerships with EU Member States was to join the EU, but also NATO. In order to be able to achieve all the objectives established by the Romanian Constitution and to fulfill the visions and perceptions of the country formulated through the System of Strategic Partnerships of Romania, a strategic partnership is necessary. The strategic directions formulated many years ago perceive the need to strengthen a transatlantic relationship, but also to maintain the American presence that is committed to defending Europe⁸.

All the strategic partnerships that Romania has managed to sign with the EU member countries aim at both Romania's involvement in the well-being of the partner countries, and the help that Romania receives in this regard. Strategic partnerships that Romania has concluded over time with different countries

Romania - Turkey strategic partnership

Romania's strategic partnership with Turkey was signed in 2011, when Romania's president was in Turkey. It is particularly useful for better strengthening bilateral energy and economic relations, but also in other important areas⁹. Romania's involvement is very important in the context in which Turkey was to join the European Union, but even more important in maintaining NATO solidarity and for the transatlantic system.

Following the action plan signed in 2012, it was desired to develop projects in several areas such as energy, domestic affairs, transport, economy, tourism, education and more. Other benefits of this partnership for Romania as well as for Turkey, consisted in a cooperation in situations related to the Middle East, the Black Sea or the Western Balkans¹⁰.

Romania's strategic partnership with Great Britain

In 2003, a cooperation was decided in the form of a strategic partnership between Romania and Great Britain, the document that was its

⁸ CHIFU Ioan., *Parteneriat Strategic. Sistemul de Parteneriate Strategice al României*, CPCEW Bucuresti, 2012, p. 7

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 8.

¹⁰ *Idem*.

basis being called “Great Britain and Romania in Europe: Strategic Partnership”.¹¹ Discussions and collaboration on economic issues beneficial to both parties continued after 2011 following the signing of the Joint Declaration, but also in other areas such as home affairs or justice.

Romania - Poland strategic partnership

Although Romania already had an unwritten partnership with Poland until 2009, then it was decided to sign a written strategic partnership between the presidents of the two countries. This partnership works mainly in the field of security and politics, but it wants to develop it and better collaboration in other areas, which is related to the EU's Eastern Neighborhood.¹²

The strategic partnership between Romania and France

For a very long time, since the '90s, the relations between Romania and France were good in terms of collaboration for mutual benefits, especially in the economic field. This relationship between the two countries was raised to a strategic partnership in 2004.

A very important aspect is that France was one of the main supporters of Romania's accession to the European Union¹³. The fields of interest that help both Romania and France to develop continuously through mutual aid are, in addition to the economic one, also military, educational, scientific and cultural. As a sign of gratitude for the support that France has given to it, Romania organized in 2006 the Francophonie Summit. Although Romania is involved in improving most aspects of France, for Romania this country is a very important partner and investor.¹⁴

One year before the signing of the strategic partnership agreement, in 2003, the Romanian-French Forum of Decentralized Cooperation and the Franco-Romanian Forum of Personalities were established. These two

¹¹ Idem.

¹² Idem.

¹³ Mircea Muresan, Gheorghe Văduva, *Strategia de parteneriat, parteneriatul strategic*, Editura Universității Naționale de Apărare “Carol I”, București, 2005, p. 51.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 52.

forums were helpful for Romania's integration into the EU, but also for promoting the values of Romanian civilization in France.¹⁵

Given this long-term strategic partnership with a lot of involvement from both countries, Romania has regulated a series of agreements in order to facilitate investment activities and economic exchanges. Thus, France has invested in Romania in telecommunications, cars, the food sector, construction materials or the financial-banking sector.

NATO-EU peace partnership

Another particularly important strategic partnership for EU and NATO member states has been the Partnership for Peace, which is considered to be the most important since the end of World War II. Thus, in 1994, Romania signed this agreement, a very important step for Romania's entry into NATO. The Partnership for Peace was conceived by a senior American commander of the Allied Forces in Europe.¹⁶

Strategic partnership between Romania and Italy

Another important and essential strategic partnership for beneficial international relations was the one between Romania and Italy. In 2004, at the Forum Invest Conference, it was emphasized that these two countries have many aspects in common, starting with the historical and cultural ones, being at the same time a strong military, political and economic strategic partnership.¹⁷

A well-known thing about the economic partnership is the large number of Romanians who work in Italy and who are thus involved in the economy of this country. Other priorities of this partnership are about the beneficial development in the automotive, financial-banking, tourism, environmental protection or agriculture sectors.

At the same time, Romania is successfully contributing to peacekeeping missions in the field of defense and security.

¹⁵ Idem, p. 52

¹⁶ Idem, p. 36.

¹⁷ Idem, p. 130.

Strategic partnership for European integration with the Republic of Moldova

Romania's relationship with the Republic of Moldova has always been special, with common identities. Romania is involved to facilitate free movement between the two countries, but also to ensure a high level of security. But the most important is the proactive role to find optimal solutions to resolve the Transnistrian conflict, to respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova.¹⁸

Romania-EU strategic partnership on the current situation of the pandemic

The emergence of the pandemic required new measures and new alliances to manage the situations created. Under the current conditions, new partnerships have been created with the aim of managing the crisis and helping the countries affected by the pandemic to balance.

Thus, throughout the European Union, actions are being taken to help European citizens¹⁹, in various ways:

- Donation of equipment (surgical masks and disposable gloves, overalls or goggles, mechanical ventilation devices)
- Deployment of medical teams in regions with a shortage of qualified staff
- Donation of drugs and vaccines to combat the pandemic
- Repatriation of citizens locked out of their country of origin
- Financing of the actions and needs mentioned above (flights and transport for passengers, specialists and equipment).

Conclusions:

Strategic partnerships must be part of the foreign policy of any country that wants to develop and be safe, regardless of the resources it has. A greater number of partnerships means more opportunities and chances and membership of bodies such as the EU enhances the benefits of European citizens.

¹⁸ CHIFU Ioan., *Parteneriat Strategic. Sistemul de Parteneriate Strategice al României*, CPCEW Bucuresti, 2012, p. 9.

¹⁹ Gestionarea crizei COVID.

Along with the EU, Romania is part of a series of strategic partnerships that target economic development, stability, security and defense, but also education and culture.



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