

SMART DEFENSE: AN EMPOWERED AND UNITED NATO PLAYING A STRATEGIC ROLE

*Iulian CHIFU**

Between the 20th and the 21st May this year the NATO summit took place in Chicago, in the presence of heads of states or governments of over 50 countries and international organizations. The summit took place in the framework of three official meetings with distinct formations – The North-Atlantic Council (28 member states with the participation of the Chairman of the European Council Van Rompuy and of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso), the ISAF format (with the main contributors and transit states for the withdrawal from theatre, with the participation of ISAF non-NATO contributors, i.e., Afghanistan, Japan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, the UN Secretary General, the Chairman of the European Council, the Chairman of the European Commission and the President of the World Bank) and the NATO and relevant partners formula. The latter was also in an ad hoc format, with the participation of heads of states or governments from Australia, Austria, Finland, Georgia, Japan, Jordan, the Korean Republic, Morocco, New Zealand, Qatar, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Arab Emirates. In addition, the ministers of foreign affairs and the ministers of defense had distinct meeting formats on specific topics. For instance, the NATO ministers of foreign affairs met their counterparts from the 4 partner nations aspiring to become full members of the Alliance, i.e., Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Macedonia and Montenegro.

Five documents were officially published, as follows: the Chicago Summit Declaration, the Chicago Summit Declaration on Afghanistan, the Summit Declaration on Defense Capabilities, the Deterrence and Defense Posture Review and NATO's Policy Guidelines on Counter-Terrorism.

* Iulian Chifu is an Associate Professor at NSPAS Bucharest, specialized in conflict analysis and crisis decision-making, founding Chairman of the Center for Conflict Prevention and Early Warning in Bucharest and a presidential counselor for Strategic Affairs and International Security.

Towards the New NATO 2012

Innovative solutions

NATO succeeded to record, on the occasion of the Chicago Summit, a series of continuity elements of the Alliance, and also to introduce new, innovative elements with the aim of achieving the NATO objectives and to accomplish the Alliance's missions. Hence, until this summit, the defense capacity of the Alliance increased through the introduction of the technologies and new Alliance capabilities of its members and through the enlargement by new members that brought added value. Also, the defense capacity increased through the adding of capabilities offered by those NATO partners who had participated in NATO missions. This year there have been three development directions of the Alliance's capabilities, namely missile defense, smart defense and the system of NATO partnerships. The adoption and implementation of this direction open the gateway to the identification of NATO as an actor in the future international system. The developments allow us to state that after Chicago we may already talk about a new NATO, more capable, more united and strong, with increasing global relevance and the capacity to intervene anywhere in the world where a direct threat is predicted to emerge against the NATO territory or population.

Missile Defense

The Alliance added a third pillar to its defense posture. If until today NATO was based on two pillars, i.e., **Nuclear Deterrence** (against the nuclear components of other international actors and deterring any conventional attack against the Alliance), and **Conventional Defense** (sufficient capabilities in order to defend the Alliance's territory and to conduct the convened out-of-area, crisis management or strategic distance threat combat missions). Starting with the Chicago Summit, a third pillar has been added, that is **Missile Defense**. Its aim is to protect the NATO territory and the member states' citizens against (potential) ballistic missile threats.

The Summit Declaration¹ insists in 5 paragraphs (paragraphs 58-62) on this third pillar in connection to the Lisbon Strategic Concept², which defined the responsibility of collective defense against these very threats (p. 58). The purely

¹ Chicago Summit Declaration, 20 May 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_87593.htm?mode=pressrelease.

² NATO Lisbon Strategic Concept, Active Engagement, Modern Defense http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_68828.htm?selectedLocale=en.

defensive character of the capability is mentioned alongside with the fact that it does not replace nuclear deterrence, as long as nuclear arms exist (p. 59). Reaching the missile defense interim capability is announced within the document (p. 60), offering the maximum coverage with the existing means, through the extension of the shield into the theatre, which previously existed for the protection of the deployed forces. The declaration introduces a commitment that maintains the political control of the military capability, and also the short term intervention's efficiency in case of ballistic missile attacks (p. 61). The openness regarding talks and cooperation with Russia is reasserted without, however, affecting efficiency, but with all necessary transparency. In this context, the common exercise that took place at the end of March with the Russian Federation is mentioned, as well as the principles guiding the cooperation within the Centre for the mutual exchange of data and the Centre for common planning in Germany. The defensive character, not oriented against Russia, is reasserted too, i.e., political guarantees offered to Moscow by the Alliance, and regret is stressed out by NATO over a series of Russian officials' declarations concerning possible actions aimed at components of the missile defense. The capability is aimed against third partners, with negotiation formulas on a case-by-case formula.

The missile defense is a component forecasted and announced as a future prospect in the Lisbon Strategic Concept³ and is found on p. 19 (in which the need for a capability is stipulated, a capability with the function of defending the Alliance against ballistic missile defense threats and the option to cooperate with Russia and other partners against this very threat). Also, on p. 34, under 'Partnerships', it is stated as the openness towards negotiations with Russia. Of course, the topic is also present in the Declaration regarding the NATO Defense Capabilities, and in NATO Force 2020⁴, in the first paragraph, where the interim capability is declared.

Naturally, the longest description of the Missile Defense can be found in the Deterrence and Defense Posture Review, that integrated the new capability as the third pillar, along with the conventional defense forces and the nuclear deterrence ones (p. 8) and dedicates title IV – on the contribution of missile defense – and pp. 18-21 to the detailed description of the new project.

³ Idem.

⁴ Summit Declaration on Defence Capabilities: Toward NATO Forces 2020, 20 May 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_87594.htm?mode=pressrelease.

Through the way in which it is defined and developed, Missile Defense proves to be not only the third NATO defense and deterrence pillar, but also a smart defense project.

Smart Defense

Perhaps the most interesting contribution to the increase of the Alliance's capabilities in the context of the economic crisis and the reduced investments, especially at the European military level, is the concept of 'smart defense'. The concept was introduced and supported by the NATO Secretary General⁵ and presupposes the common use of capabilities by their acquisitions at the Alliance's level through joint programs. A series of 25 such programs have been launched and are aimed at covering NATO's need for capabilities.

The concept of **smart defense** is an elaborated one, with a solid theoretical basis. It cognates with the concept of **smart power**, introduced by Joseph Nye Jr.⁶, after he discovered that the initial division formula between **hard power** – the power that may be applied through direct military, diplomatic or security actions – and **soft power** – the symbolic power, attractiveness, influence on a profoundly cultural basis – is not an accurate one. It has been demonstrated that an actor who does not also hold the component of hard power, of deterrence and strengthened direct capacities, is gradually losing its soft elements and influence, in the light of some image alterations, through the lack of coherence, image crisis, decrease of prestige due to different internal or external events, due to unfortunate or insufficiently explained decisions at the international level. In this regard, Joseph Nye Jr. proposed the idea of a combination of hard and soft instruments, which should be used simultaneously in one case or another, according to the situation. This mixture was named **smart power**⁷. Given this background and the wish to obtain the optimal combination of instruments in order to carry out the Alliance's objectives, Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen chose the formula of **smart defense**.

The Chicago Summit Declaration mentions the smart defense concept in two instances. First, smart defense is named in order to place it in a complementary

⁵ Chicago Summit Declaration, ...

⁶ Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Understanding International Conflicts: An Introduction to Theory and History* (Longman Classics Series) / *Descifrarea Conflictelor Internaționale. Teorie și istorie* / *Understanding International Conflicts. An Introduction to Theory and History*, Editura Antet, București, 2005.

⁷ Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Viitorul puterii* / *The Future of Power*, Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 2012.

format with the European concept of **pooling and sharing**⁸ (p. 20). Moreover, p. 56 describes a smart defense case, i.e., the airspace police of the Baltic States, ensured by turnover of the NATO members.

The concept of smart defense is not to be found, of course, in the Strategic Concept of the Alliance. It was elaborated after the NATO Lisbon Summit and represents the novelty of the Chicago Summit. Instead, the concept is studied in detail in the framework of the Chicago Summit Declaration on Defense Capabilities⁹ (pp. 7-9). The document focuses on the description of the new concept's contribution to the development of the Alliance's capabilities and on the relationship of the new capabilities with NATO's sovereign member states. The smart defense concept's relevance is acknowledged with regard to the changing nature of the cooperation culture in connection with the development of critical NATO capabilities, with major relevance for the strengthening of the transatlantic relationship and the even burden sharing of the common costs.

In fact, the concept of smart defense heralds the emergence, within the Alliance, of joint capabilities, practically owned by NATO – such as the missile shield – and for which the member states cover the costs, be they flight hours and transport distances, pilot training, aircraft maintenance or military intelligence officer's training for operations in hostile environment. It is an innovation which heralds the development of consistency *per se*, i.e., the use of these capabilities has to be approved by the Council or the sovereign states, and marks a major turning point in the development of the Alliance and the consolidation of cohesion, unity and efficiency.

Partnerships

The Alliance has managed to strengthen upon the Chicago summit a large partnership system. Thus functions the consecrated format of relationships with NATO partner nations within the Partnership for Peace, with its own developments and individual partnerships, the distinct partnerships with Russia, with Georgia and with Ukraine, the **Mediterranean Dialogue** with states from the Middle East and Northern Africa, the Partnership with the Gulf States within the **Istanbul Initiative**, as well as the **partnership with the so-called global actors**, contributors to NATO missions: Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan, etc. Along with these

⁸ Chicago Summit Declaration, ...

⁹ Summit Declaration on Defence Capabilities, ...

instruments, NATO has developed a **platform for global partnerships**, a partnership hub, based mainly on the **bilateral principle** with third countries. The most recently saluted partnership is the one with Mongolia. To this we should add the partnerships with international organizations, e.g. the strategic partnership with the EU and the partnerships with the UN and OSCE, and partnerships with categories of actors with a differing institutional culture than the political-military one, such as the **international humanitarian organizations** – UNOCHA – and the **non-governmental organizations**, with **reflection groups** and **companies** of diverse manufacturers and private security and defense contractors.

This new capability, the global partnership hub with any type of actor, integrator of intercultural, inter-institutional dialogue, is a NATO attribute that can be found in the concept launched by the predecessor of the Alliance's Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, as the **comprehensive approach**¹⁰. The capability can be found in the continuity of NATO's documents, today being fully capitalized.

The concept of comprehensive approach comes from the theory of International Relations and designates two realities. Firstly, the need for mutual support of the cease-fire processes agreement, normalization, negotiation, reconciliation. At the same time there is the possibility to initiate all these processes simultaneously, once the security conditions allow it on the theatre of operations, according to the Galtung conflict model¹¹. Secondly, it is about the cooperation between different institutions with a distinct cultural basis, which are located on the theatre of operations and the performance of all these operations and actions reserved to the post-conflict period, respectively the capacity of their collaboration. This collaboration can be within the framework of the Red Cross actions, humanitarian action, post-conflict reconstruction or institutional in theatre construction. The theoretical concept shapes the reality introduced through the launching of PRTs – Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan and the utilization of the action model simultaneously in all directions and with all categories of actors.

The Chicago Summit declaration¹² recognizes (p. 5) the importance of the **comprehensive approach**, of the improvements to its application in governance

¹⁰ NATO Lisbon Strategic Concept, Active Engagement, Modern Defence,...

¹¹ Johan Galtung, *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization*, London, Sage, 1996.

¹² Summit Declaration on Defence Capabilities, ...

and development, to reconciliation and integration. On p. 18, NATO's commitment to cooperate with the other actors according to the provisions and guidelines of the Lisbon Strategic Concept of stabilization and reconciliation is restated.

The Alliance's Strategic Concept refers to the **comprehensive approach** on p. 21, with regard to the lessons learned on the theatres of operation of the Western Balkans and Afghanistan that claim "the need of a **comprehensive political, military and civil approach**" for effective management of crises. In Chicago, the concept is mentioned in the Summit Declaration on Afghanistan (p. 7). The importance of the concept and the improvements brought to its application are recognized in the areas of governance and development and can be found in the document regarding NATO's counter-terrorist policies, in the context of cooperation with international and global organizations such as the UNO, EU and OSCE, according to the **Action Plan for the Comprehensive Approach**. The latter promotes mutual understanding of each actor involved in the global counter-terrorist effort.

The Problem of Defense Investment in Defense and the Smart Defense Method

The **Smart Defense method** is a comprehensive formula that presupposes unity and strengthens the Alliance's capabilities, but is not a panacea. The method is rather oriented toward making **resource spending more efficient** and investing in the defense area without bringing new resources into the process of covering the financial deficit. From this point of view, we think it is necessary to discuss the following points:

- **The commitment** by the European member states to the **responsibilities** that come from the European defense and security formula. We do not want to plunge into the dichotomy "Europeans are from Venus, and Americans from Mars"¹³, a dichotomy that has been considerably dimmed since it was first launched, 10 years ago. However, it is only natural that the European **level of ambition** – to get involved in global issues, to play a global role – must fit the level of responsibility assumed. **The allocation of budgets close to the informal engagement of 2% of the GDP and the channeling of the sums towards joint programs and niche capabilities that the Alliance lacks** is mandatory in order to be present in the global reorganization of the world in turbulent periods and

¹³ Robert Kagan, *Power and Weakness*, Policy Review June-July 2002.

excessive tectonic movements we are going through and we will continue to do so for the years to come¹⁴. We have to get used to this reality.

- **Smart defense** offers the instruments for this perspective, the concept being much more advanced than the European one of **pooling and sharing** – a rather mechanistic concept, consisting in solutions such as joint acquisition and common use of capabilities – purchased or preexisting, the joint use of instruction and training infrastructure, the development of areas adjacent to new threats, joint use of available logistic and support capabilities, common training of forces designated to participate in joint operations, in NATO excellence centers and efforts to avoid duplication.

- Here we would like to insist on the **need to consolidate the transatlantic relationship, to avoid NATO-EU duplications and rivalries and to solve the political differences between Turkey and Cyprus** or to convene on engagement rules between the two actors in order to avoid mutual blockages.

- Because of the economic crisis period at the European level, a crisis of sovereign debts, it is normal to discuss the impossibility to increase the defense budgets, and even the impossibility to maintain them at the same level. This is why it is of utmost necessity **to revise the level of ambition** of each country and **to assume a higher risk level** for our citizens, **compensating**, however, for a **drastic increase of the risk level** through joint capabilities of the Alliance, capabilities that can address a part of this deficit through the **Smart Defense method**.

Smart Defense and Not-So-Smart defense

Last but not least we would like to refer to an increasingly important element with regard to the augmentation of the Alliance's joint defense capacity and of the spending efficiency. Therefore, solidarity calls for the connection of actions, armament and technology transfers of the NATO member states towards third countries, on the one hand, to be correlated to the Alliance's policies and the planning of the state's defense at NATO's borders, on the other.

We may find that momentary solutions for the economy of some states or the formulas qualified as "confidence building" between - on the one hand, NATO member states, and on the other, countries from outside the Alliance - may be qualified as being part of the formula of **not-so-smart defense**. Each **capabilities**

¹⁴ Tod Lindberg, Mars and Venus, Ten Years Later, Policy Review, April-May 2012, nr. 172, Special Edition.

delivery that can be used against member states¹⁵ and that reflects the NATO **contingency plans** within different areas reveals the need for compensation of the new imbalances with a rescheduling and an installation/acquisition of new defense capabilities, which are as well supported by the Alliance.

The tendency towards **exceptionalism** of some member states **affects the security degree** of others and of NATO as a whole. Also, these tendencies have **direct effects on the need for capabilities** and on the **shouldering by other NATO member states**, from their citizens, of **a much higher risk level**, up to the compensation of imbalances created through new joint capabilities. We believe that the Secretary General needs to assume, **under the same idea of smart defense**, the strict regulation of technology and capability exports out of NATO, in order to justify and strengthen the solidarity between allied states and the Alliance's prospects of accomplishing the capability formation processes as strengthened in 2020.



¹⁵ Congressional Research Service, Recent Sales of Military Equipment and Technology by European NATO Allies to Russia, 26 April 2012, Memorandum to Senator Richard G. Lugar, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate.