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Central Europe's Security at the Turn of the Millennium

The article is a synthesis concerning the evolution of the geo-strategic conditions of Central Europe's security in the 1990s. A Polish standpoint has been presented. The article largely bases on the three-year-research of the Austrian-Polish-Swedish team, although it also raises issues that have not been highlighted yet, which, from the Polish point of view, however, are of significant importance for the security of the region. Our part of the research focused on the performance and aspirations of countries of Central and Eastern Europe including Germany, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Slovakia and the Baltic Sea countries. Our studies were complementary to the research carried out by the Swedish (National Defence College in Stockholm) and the Austrian team (National Defence Academy in Vienna).

For systematic reasons problems and standpoints have been grouped and presented in four major paragraphs:

1. Poland's new place in the European geo-strategic structure as a result of changes in external environment of Poland's security.
2. Elements of new national security doctrine.
3. Second phase of NATO enlargement – Poland's viewpoint.
4. Polish standpoint and propositions on the CESDP.

The turn of the millennium, beside its chronological and symbolic appeal, has also a geo-strategic dimension. The latter seems yet not to have been properly appreciated and discounted. Almost all hitherto existing superpowers, from the ancient times up to the present, emerged and collapsed in the course of violent events accompanied by war and bloodshed. The downfall of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact took place in a peaceful way and were an unexpected gift of history, which no one in the eighties would even dare to think of. The events created also an enormous chance for the societies of the European continent. For the Polish society, the breakthrough at the turn of the eighties and the nineties was particularly significant. First, because it was the Poles who initiated the dismantling of the Jalta system. Second, the events enabled Poland to determine clearly her attachment to the Occidental cultural sphere. An important issue – as for the past three hundred years – the Polish had to ask themselves questions like: *to fight or to cooperate? with whom to fight? with whom to cooperate?* These were the recurring questions as the history of this country is a good example of unpredictability of developments. Poland in the 16th and the 17th century was one of great European powers. At

the end of the 18th century it disappeared from political maps partitioned by its neighbours.

Poland's place in the European geo-strategic structure

Transformations that took place throughout the decade of the nineties were of epoch-making dimension and went far beyond the sole process most frequently called 'the collapse of communism'. They are manifested by facts within many areas: military, geographical, economic as well as political and cultural.

One has witnessed for instance a particular evolution of geo-strategic designations referring to the region between the Baltic Sea and the Balkan Peninsula, between the Oder and the Bug River. In the late eighties the general term 'Eastern Europe' was used for this area, later the region was spoken of as 'East-Central Europe'. In the mid-nineties the concept of 'Central and East Europe' became widespread. The shift of geographical terminology owed to much deeper-running factors.

For forty-five years Poland was a member of the alliance called the Warsaw Pact while *de facto* it was surrounded by the military forces of her 'allies' – or rather one of the 'allies' – the Soviet Union. First-charge divisions of the Red Army were stationing both in Poland (the North Group of Forces) and also in her nearest environment: East Germany, Czechoslovakia and the Kaliningrad District. Overall, the Soviet forces located in the region of Central Europe amounted to over a hundred divisions. The Polish Army with total of 500.000 soldiers was given secondary and auxiliary tasks.

Now as a member of NATO, Poland is occupying quite a different position within the European security system. Over the years, NATO has developed its own leadership structure and hierarchy. Each member plays a specific role within the alliance, determined by a number of factors among which are:

- Geography;
- The level of contribution to the common effort;
- The general international positions (image, international activism) in the world and the region;
- Allied interests in a given member state;
- National aspirations;
- The ability to use one's assets.

It is essential for Poland to fully realize its geographically determined "natural" role and position in NATO. Namely, Poland is NATO's border, not a periphery. In peacetime it is a bridge, whereas in war – a frontline. Poland is also located in the strategic east-west azimuth of the Alliance.

Analysing those factors, one can discern several options as to the possible roles Poland may play in the Alliance. Each option requires a corresponding makeup of the country's armed forces.

Since 1990 the process of demilitarisation of Central Europe has been in constant progress. It was much desired by all main strategic actors in the region:

- NATO members along with other countries of Western Europe were interested in the reduction of the excessive military arsenal located at their doorstep,
- The Russian Federation, which withdrew from the positions previously occupied by the Soviet Union, was also interested in diminishing the combat power of her former allies hoping that the region of Central Europe would remain a semi-demilitarised buffer zone between NATO and the CIS for a long time. In a short period of time substantial reductions, by some experts estimated to have reached 60% of the Russian Federation armed forces, took place.
- Poland has accepted a considerable reduction of her national armed forces down to the number of 234.000 soldiers. Further reductions are in progress and ultimately the Polish armed forces, as it is estimated, will amount to less than 150.000 soldiers. The defence doctrine was fully revised.
- The societies of the sovereign states of Central Europe were no longer willing to sustain their overgrown, costly and outdated armies.

The power balance system on which the European order and international security were based ceased to exist. In the nineties the new system of national security was founded on the principal of common security. The difference between a power balance system and a system of common security boils down to the thesis that while the former seeks guarantee for peace and security in preserving a power balance between countries and military blocks, the latter vests matters of national and international security in the supremacy of the countries interested in preserving peace over the power of a potential aggressor. In the system of common security the most prominent rules that regulate relations between countries are: restraining from or limiting the use of force, solving conflicts in a peaceful way and commitment to unite forces against any country that wants to violate these rules.

Polish Security Policy

The problems of peace and security research are given a lot of attention in Poland. In academic discussions on the European security models, one can point at several conceptions. In general, three to six different models are mentioned; the following three, however, seem to be the most common:

- Euro-Atlantic (with reformed and enlarged NATO);
- Europe-wide (EU and WEU);
- A common security model based on OSCE.

The optimal model is regarded to be a model that would incorporate efforts of the two first from the three above-mentioned theoretical models in practice.

These models of European security were grounds for marking directions for Polish security policy in the past ten years. Components of this policy are:

- Ever-closer co-operation with Western security structures – NATO and the European Union – with full membership in these organizations as the ultimate goal;
- Reinforcement and enlargement of Europe-wide arrangements;
- Developing friendly bilateral relations, especially with neighbouring nations, and building sub-regional co-operation in Poland's immediate environment.

These three basic directions in Poland's European policy are treated not as three different options but as elements which, though performing different functions, are interlocking and complementary.

The principal direction of our security policy is an as-broad-as-possible and dynamic military co-operation within NATO and the membership in the EU. Our drive to become member of NATO was based on a broad consensus among both the public and mainstream political forces in Poland. Accession to NATO was a landmark not only for Poland but also for the whole sub-region. The moment Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary joined NATO, they permanently left the so called 'grey zone' or to put it outright 'the buffer zone' – the term no longer used in reference to these countries in political writing.

We believe that the North Atlantic Alliance has retained its significance as a system of collective defence. It is and should continue to be a guarantee of peace. At the same time we perceive NATO not only as a collective defence organization but also as a structure performing other important functions. What is more, NATO is operating in different circumstances than those in which this organization was created. The bipolar world has ceased to exist. Ideological and political divisions have vanished. There is no clear conflict of interests between the Atlantic Alliance and its erstwhile principal adversary. On the contrary: the area of common risks and problems is widening. Many of these problems are ones that NATO can tackle only in the co-operation with other nations and we are entering into such co-operation on an ever-broader scale.

In the present European situation to assess NATO in terms of a residual Cold War instrument would be a serious mistake. Consolidation of democracy and human rights, political-military integration of the West, ensuring the US presence in Europe and reinforcement of the effectiveness of the OSCE and UN: these are functions of fundamental importance to European stability and security.

The second main direction of Polish security policy is reinforcement and enlargement of Europe-wide arrangements. This part of policy is mainly

concerned with strengthening and expanding the activities of the Organization on Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

Poland continues as ever to be one of the most active members of this structure. It has also been playing a prominent role in creating rules of international relations between the participating states. This is not to say that these rules are always strictly observed. But awareness of their existence is steadily growing stronger. The best proof is the frequency with which the principles set out in the Final Act and other OSCE documents are invoked.

We are devoting particular attention to the arrangements on confidence-building measures, arms control, and disarmament worked out in the OSCE forum or under its auspices. They include such agreements as the Vienna Document on confidence and security building measures, the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE), the Concluding Act on limitations of the personnel strength of conventional forces in Europe (CFE-1A) and the Treaty on Open Skies.

It may be that each of these agreements is not in itself particularly significant. But together they add up to something qualitatively new without doubt: they are establishing a new political-military order in Europe and have initiated a new way of thinking about European security problems, where transparency of military effort, constraints on military activities and limitations of arms play a crucial role.

The third direction but no less important are bilateral relations. Our approach to them is based on the assumption that European security depends as much on the membership in great institutions as on good bilateral relations. In the past few years, Poland's policy in this field has been notably successful. Treaties on good-neighbourly relations and friendly co-operation have been concluded with all states on her borders. In particular, these treaties have confirmed the inviolability of the existing frontiers and the renunciation of any territorial claims by the signatories. At the same time, they established defined systems of protection of national minorities.

Bilateral arrangements - the aforementioned treaties and a number of other agreements - have created sound foundations for development of intensive neighbourly contacts, including trans-frontier co-operation which is a significant innovation in this part of Europe. Today Poland can say, as seldom before in its history, that all its frontiers are frontiers of constructive and manifold co-operation, not confrontation.

Particularly deep changes have taken place in the relations with Germany. The disappearance of mutual enemy images, reconciliation between Poles and Germans, and expanding bilateral as well trilateral co-operation with France within the so-called Weimar Triangle represent not only a historic transformation of relations between the two countries but also construction of a major pillar of European security. The Weimar Triangle was created on German initiative on 28-29 August 1991. Among many forms of contacts, also political-military co-operation is developing in its framework. So far, military

co-operation has been carried out mostly on lower command levels. In 1996, three ministers of defence accepted an "Initiative Regarding Intensification of Trilateral Political-military and Military Co-operation", which provides the basis for deepening and strengthening of contacts in this sphere. The triangle formula very well serves the priority objectives of Polish security policy and puts us in a privileged position among the states of Central and Eastern Europe, as part of the French-German-Polish "European backbone". The importance of this trilateral co-operation constantly grows.

The element of military co-operation in the Polish-German relations plays a particular role, similar to the one the German-French military co-operation played in the sixties. In 1999 only, the overall number of joint military activities (visits, talks, military exercises, seminars and training sessions) was 380. On 18 September 1999, the Multinational North-Eastern Corps was launched in Szczecin.

We are trying to reinforce good bilateral relations through development of various forms of sub-regional co-operation. The first of the new geo-political regional initiatives for Poland was establishing of the 'Vysehrad Triangle' with Czechoslovakia and Hungary, which now after the independent Slovakia's accession, returns to the original forum of the quadrangle. Another step in this direction was launching the Central European Initiative which today has become an attractive platform for regional co-operation. Equally warm ties are bound with the countries in Poland's north-eastern border. The present geopolitical situation in the Baltic region acts in favour of improving mutual co-operation between the Baltic states in different areas and on different levels. Today, there are no territorial claims by any of these states. Poland, along with the other states of the region, has concluded agreements on the normalization and the development of mutual relations. Most territorial questions have been eliminated from the area of the Baltic states. Relations between the Baltic states feature a close co-operation concerning the rational utilization and protection of the Baltic Sea area as a common resource, trade and goods exchange and development of traditional cultural relations. There are no trends towards hegemony over this area in any of the Baltic states. A pattern of close regional co-operation would create conditions for joint efforts to solve environmental as well as other problems such as economic ventures, transportation, communication, culture and last but not least military affairs. Development of economic markets, military security, pollution control, economic exchange, tourism and other kinds of co-operation and interaction are all elements of political stability in the region. All the Baltic states cooperate among themselves through bilateral and multilateral agreements.

Poland will seek to expand co-operation with the Baltic states in many fields. The increase of importance of the region is evident through the intensification of different forms of activities that are conducted within the framework of multinational co-operation of the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Nordic Council of Ministers and BALTSEA. Poland is actively supporting these initiatives and contributing to various efforts which serve the consolidation of

co-operation and security in the region. These activities take into account specific aspirations of individual states and at the same time both strengthen the existing forms of partnership and co-operation, and develop new ones. Particular attention should be given to the collaboration in the framework of the PfP, the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the 'Danish-Polish-German Triangle' and BALTSEA.

In the Council of the Baltic Sea States, there are countries of different status: NATO members, 'candidates' to NATO, countries willing to remain neutral, EU members and even countries believing in different concepts of building the security system in Europe. What is important is that Russia steadily gets engaged in this co-operation.

The Baltic Sea region is a natural link between the countries of the East and the West and it influences the European political scene. The structure of relations between countries in this region will certainly have an essential influence on the shape of the future European security architecture. Our co-operation in the Baltic region may help whole Europe to overcome its security problems. The northern part of the continent could set a good example for the warm southern part. Poland's position as the Baltic country bridging east and west as well as north and south seems highly significant. Scandinavian small- and medium-sized business enterprises in Polish coastal regions are also highly interested in such perspective. Since Ronneby in 1990 through Visby I 1996 and Riga in 1998, our states have initiated several new programs. The Baltic Sea Initiative and the Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region are probably the most important. Poland wants to participate actively in the common work because we believe that through regional co-operation we serve European unity better and faster.

As a country with painful experiences, Poland is vitally interested in fostering good-as-possible relations with virtually all her neighbours. This is especially valid in reference to our neighbours in the east. We perceive that such an approach can successfully add up to the process of normalization in the region. Poland has signed inter-state treaties with Ukraine, which recognize our common current borders and respect the rights of national minorities. Poland was the first state to recognize the independent Ukraine and managed to sign basic treaties with Belarus and Ukraine six months after they became independent states. The Polish government and society provided further economic and political support to Ukrainian membership in the Central European Initiative. The efforts to help with reforms in our neighbouring countries in the east could have a real impact on the stability and development of this region but they require more expertise and substantial financial support. Nevertheless, Poland will continue to keep her attention also in this sub-region.

The co-operation among the Vysehrad nations, now the CEFTA grouping, and within the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Central European Initiative act as an important stabilizing factor in this region. The exceptionally

good relations between Poland and her immediate neighbours constitute a notable precedent in the history of Europe: countries in this region have hardly ever before, at any rate of their own accord, developed any stable forms of sub-regional co-operation. Poland sets great store by their emergence and is actively seeking to expand them.

It is impossible to present all aspects of bilateral relations between Poland and other countries in this short article but we should at least mention Poland's relations with Great Britain, as in many key problems there is a convergence of views between our countries – also those concerning the vision of European security. The essential motives that stand behind British support to Polish aspirations to EU membership are:

- Convergence of standpoints on the US role in safeguarding European security,
- Reluctance towards federalist concepts of the future political system of the EU

Great Britain expects that her support for countries of Central Europe in their aspirations to EU membership will dilute federalist trends in the enlarged Europe.

Separate categories of arrangements are agreements on bilateral military co-operation. Until 1998, Poland had signed 151 such agreements with 42 countries. After Poland joined NATO, their number grew and is now exceeding 200. Several of these agreements are of great importance for maintaining security in the region. They engender a habit of constructive co-operation and further stability.

Poland has been an active UN member, engaged in a number of actions conducted under its auspices, including peacekeeping operations. It supports all efforts raising the effectiveness of the UN actions. The Polish armed forces have been taking part in UN peace missions for over 45 years. Since 1953 more than 30 000 soldiers took part in UN actions. Poland is one of the founders of the Multinational Brigade (SHIRBRIG). On 9 October 1999 the Polish Minister of National Defence officially declared Poland's readiness to assign a mechanized battalion to participate in SHIRBRIG. The battalion is to reach its operational capacity in July 2001.

The new elements of the Polish Security Strategy refer to the NATO's role as a major factor in preserving political-military stability in Europe. Thus, Poland wants to play an active role in strengthening this organization and maintaining its capacity to perform the following basic security tasks: ensuring a stable Euro-Atlantic security environment, consultations and guarantees of an effective policy of deterrence and defence and – within the process of strengthening security and stability – participation in conflict prevention and crisis management as well as developing partnership, co-operation and dialogue with other states of the Euro-Atlantic area.

Poland's priority is for the Atlantic Alliance to maintain its capacity to perform its functions as an effective organization of collective defence and to ensure reliable allied solidarity. Poland wishes to play a significant role – commensurate with its potential and needs – in shaping and implementing the Alliance's politico-defensive strategy, taking advantage of, among other things, its position and role in Central and Eastern Europe. Owing to its location, Poland is vitally interested in the constructive development of the Alliance's relations with the states of Eastern Europe, including those covered by the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council and the NATO-Ukraine Commission, as well as the Partnership for Peace programme.

Poland's accession to the Atlantic Alliance did not conclude the country's process of integration within NATO's political-military structures. Adapting Poland's defence system to allied requirements is a comprehensive process, which includes:

- Adapting the organizational structures of the Armed Forces of Poland so as to achieve the required level of interoperability with the armed forces of other NATO states;
- Proper training of personnel for work within the Alliance's structures and in accordance with its standards;
- Continuation of analytical and research work on full integration with the Alliance.

Practical activities in the economic-financial sphere should mainly concentrate on:

- Adapting the defence planning process, including its budget dimension, to NATO standards;
- Guaranteeing stable, long-term financial resources for defence;
- Identifying domestic (budgetary and non-budgetary) sources of financing ventures supporting integration;
- Skilful application of NATO's Security Investment Programme (NSIP) to expand infrastructure in Polish territory which will also be available for use by other NATO states, especially to enable Poland to fulfil its duties related to host-nation support (HNS);
- Adapting the economic-defensive infrastructure to the Alliance's requirements.

Poland's viewpoint on the second phase of NATO enlargement

The decision to open NATO for further candidates from among countries of Central and Eastern Europe was announced in the official document issued on the Washington, D.C. summit. The candidate countries to be considered are: Romania, Slovenia, Estonia, Lithuania, Bulgaria and Slovakia. On the account

of the extending conflicts in the Balkan region NATO's priority is the effort to develop its south-eastern flank. In each of the candidate countries the process of accession to NATO would face specific local circumstances.

Romania: The Romanian society experienced a great disappointment after Romania had not been included among the countries admitted to NATO at the first go, especially as the local support for such a process was higher than in any other candidate country. Yet, there are arguments of geo-strategic character that speak for admitting Romania at second phase. Romania is the largest country in the region and could play a leading role in preserving local stability. There are major obstacles, however, to such a role as Romania is presently suffering economic and social hardships. It is delayed in adopting rules of the free market economy. There are also objections as to development of her social life according to the principles of democracy.

Romanian politicians frequently underline that admitting Romania to NATO could become a landmark for the country and could contribute to its more successful modernization. At the present moment, Romania does not comply with the basic criteria as defined in '*The study on NATO enlargement*' in 1995.

Bulgaria: Like Romania, Bulgaria is a formal candidate to NATO membership. However, the Bulgarian society – due to their pro-Russian sentiments – expressed much weaker support for the accession to the Alliance. Economic reforms in this country are implemented with much bigger difficulties than in the Visegrad group countries, although one can already point at their numerous beneficial results. The modernization of the Bulgarian army is of crucial importance and is due to be completed in 2004.

Slovakia: The accession of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary to the Alliance, to a great extent, contributed to the change of the Slovakian attitude towards the prospect of NATO membership. Since the change in political power in 1998, Slovakia has kept making up for the delays in transforming its economy. Admitting Slovakia to NATO would fill the geo-strategic gap which exists between Poland and Hungary. It is not without meaning for the process of EU enlargement and the development of the 'Schengen Agreement' area.

The Baltic Sea states: November 2002 is when the next NATO summit is planned to take place and when new candidates to NATO will probably be invited. Despite possible Russian discontent, Poland will support the candidacy of the Baltic Sea states.

Poland and Russia should not be seen as adversaries in this matter. If they are competing with each other on political grounds, it is on account of promoting different visions of security. Russia is trying to promote a multi-polar system so it would ultimately play a leader's role in European politics. Poland is opposing such a vision and perceives NATO as a major safeguarding force to the European security. Thus, Poland's foreign policy supports the direction of further enlargement of NATO.

We regard NATO enlargement as part of a broader policy which should in our opinion comprise the following elements:

- A gradual, transparent and open process of enlargement which excludes no one *a priori*;
- Development of cooperative relations between NATO and countries that remain outside the Alliance; this should encompass reinforcement of NATO, expansion of PfP and EAPC;
- In particular, construction of partnership between NATO and Russia and NATO and Ukraine;
- Reinforcement of pan-European arrangements, which means both the OSCE and other projects that will add up to a new political-military order in Europe;
- Introduction, if necessary, of additional means of strengthening security in the form of appropriate confidence building measures or development and suitable adaptation of a European arms control system.

This approach takes account of the interests not only of Poland but of other states as well. It shows that we do indeed treat NATO enlargement as a part of a broader process: the building of a new European security structure. In line with this approach the establishment of special relations between NATO and Russia and Ukraine is not regarded as a kind of "compensation" for the enlargement of the Alliance. Such relations and NATO enlargement form two parallel strands in one and the same process of creating a new European security architecture based on partnership and trust.

Polish standpoint and proposals on the CESDP

For quite a long time there had been no explicit support in Poland for the development of Common European Security and Defence Policy (CESDP). It was caused by multiply reasons. First of all it was feared that the American engagement in Europe will decrease in the course of growing EU defence capability and in consequence NATO would lose its collective defence character. Some observers and politicians considered the development of ESDI a threat to NATO's unity. There were too many controversies around this set of issues. The views among Polish politicians on the concept of ESDI (CESDP) were also influenced by the standpoint of the EU policymaking bodies on the participation in such projects partners from outside the EU. Warsaw did not receive any encouraging signals from Brussels on the issue of including Poland into the framework of European security and defence policy. The change of the Polish line on CESDP was caused by the EU policy towards the former Yugoslavia under the military intervention in Kosovo.

Of great significance was also the fact that after the Cologne summit, where the objectives of CESDP were defined, Poland was already acting as a NATO

member. The Polish government expressed its support to the development of CESDP in an explicit way. The document issued on 4 January 2000 and entitled: '*The Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland*' reads:

The second pillar of Poland's security will be a system comprising relations between the European Union/Western European Union and NATO. From the perspective of Poland's long-term interests, participation in that system is just as important as participation in the North Atlantic Alliance itself. Poland is interested in harmonizing the security interests of all states of the Euro-Atlantic area and European Union members.

Another opportunity to present the Polish foreign policy on this matter was the Santa Maria de Feira summit. The decisions of the Feira European Council closed a first stage of the development of Common European Security and Defence Policy.

Firstly, after a period of difficult dialog and intensive search for best structural arrangements guaranteeing effectiveness of a newly-built architecture, now we are entering a new, even more challenging phase, of their gradual implementation.

Secondly, following the internal EU work towards the implementation of CESDP, the Feira decisions are supposed to start a period of building mechanisms and procedures serving the EU co-operation with NATO as well as with non-EU European Allies and other partner countries. Both of these tasks we perceive as of vital importance for final cohesion and effectiveness of the European project.

In our view, the Feira decisions may be assessed fully only together with their implementation mechanism. They seem to offer a fair chance to develop CESDP in a fully satisfactory manner, provided they will be implemented to the benefit of all those concerned.

The need to assure functionality and effectiveness of co-operation requires that detailed permanent rules of our participation in CESDP be based on two mutually reinforcing pillars: political consultations and co-operation, military and operational dimension.

The Polish assumptions of political co-operation are

- Readiness of EU members to share their opinions as well as their ability to accommodate specific concerns and ideas of non-EU European Allies,
- Opportunity to discuss questions with the view to arriving as far as possible at common political and operational conclusions,
- Opportunity to exchange all necessary information and documents on EU activities in the field of CESDP,
- Necessary substance and continuity of co-operation.

This dimension of co-operation should preferably be based on the following rules:

- Meetings of the General Affairs Council with the participation of Ministers of Defence of EU countries directly before the European Council could be pursued with Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence of 6 non-EU European Allies,
- Coordination of co-operation should be the prerogative of the PSC in the formula 15+6,
- Meetings of PSC in this formula at the beginning of each Presidency would allow for setting up:
- Specific areas for co-operation for upcoming semester,
- Specific short- and long-term objectives for consultation and co-operation, detailed calendar of dialogue,
- Participation of six in the meeting of PSC directly before the GAC preceding the EC would allow best for joint summing up of so far achievements as well as working out common conclusions for further co-operation,
- A consultation within the PSC in 15+6 formula, in the run-up to any additional GAC meeting with EU Ministers of Defence, would provide for an opportunity to share views and to accommodate as far as possible our opinions,
- Appointment of permanent representatives to PSC by the six would assure the continuity of dialogue and works in 15+6 formula,

Continuity of work, substantial exchange of views and required functionality of co-operation demand, in our opinion establishment of a relevant working group which would provide for necessary access to appropriate documents and prepare meetings on the PSC level.

Operational and military dimension

The unique role of non-EU European Allies in CESDP creates conditions, which make military (operational) aspect of co-operation extremely important already during the routine phase of co-operation.

Our engagement in new EU military structures as well as the fullest possible access to their work will be of key importance for our quick and effective involvement into potential EU-led Petersberg operation, for the EU's ability to assess capabilities offered by us to this operation as well as to absorb them and use in most effective way.

Therefore, we believe detailed arrangements, similar to those concerning political structures, should be found for:

- Formation of participation in meetings of Chiefs of Defence,
- Formation of participation of our representatives in EU Military Committee works,
- Formation of participation of our liaison officers in day to day work of Military Staff.

Participation of non-EU European Allies in EU-led Petersberg missions should reflect the fact that these countries are the most probable potential non-EU contributors to any EU operation and they are, by definition, potential contributors to EU-led operation using NATO assets, for which they are co-responsible.

Poland's participation in preparation of the EU operation should be based on the following three stage approach:

- The EU decision to address emerging crisis situation,
- Political consultations with "6", as members of NATO and potential contributors of operation as well as full involvement of our officers in appropriate research and preparation of recommendations to the EU Council,
- The EU decision on the appropriate way of conducting operations (with or without NATO assets and capabilities) as well as on launching necessary preparations.

Further work on these practical arrangements in the military (operational) dimension might well become a part of incoming joint EU-NATO works since they constitute an indispensable element of overall practicalities of co-operation between both organizations.

Areas of consultations, which, in our opinion require regular co-operation in the 15+6 formula, might be as follows:

- Political co-operation between EU-NATO on CESDP,

- WEU *acquis* concerning operational co-operation of NATO and WEU, specifically in the field of Petersberg operations,
- Elaboration of the European Headline Goal.

In conclusion, there are four important factors that shape Poland's perspective on the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). First, since April 1999, Poland is a member of NATO. Second, Poland is an associate member of the Western European Union (WEU). Third, Poland seeks EU membership in the near future. Fourth is the timing, i.e., in the development of ESDP due care must be taken to avoid unwanted side-effects.

Poland sees the need for significant improvement of political and military capabilities of the European Union in crisis and conflict prevention. Poland, therefore, supports the measures proposed at the Washington, D.C. and Cologne summits, and later refined at Helsinki. They are coherent and mutually complementary.

The results of these summits allow for a number of general observations. First, enhanced capability of Member States to launch Petersberg Missions is in the interest of both NATO and the EU and will increase security across Europe. Second, NATO is ready to cooperate in the implementation of such missions. Third, ESDP should be developed in an open discussion, involving all NACC and EU members. Fourth, measures increasing the European capability for emergency actions ought to strengthen the transatlantic ties, the US engagement in Europe and by the same token, stability and security on the continent. Fifth, the key role of NATO for defending the entire Euro-Atlantic area remains unchanged. Sixth, and in consequence of the above, cohesion and effectiveness of the Euro-Atlantic security system may only be guaranteed by the establishment of a transparent and effective mechanism of NATO-EU co-operation.

As to the relation of those European members of NATO who are not members of the EU to the ESDP, Poland insists on their full involvement in the new structures, including - should those countries so desire - preparation of decisions and their implementation within the CFSP-ESDP framework. To ensure that, all meetings of EU bodies on defence policy should be field order the 15+6 formula. i.e., fifteen current Member States and six NATO - non-EU countries. Poland, as a member of NATO, would contribute to the enhancement of European military capability, allowing for the Petersberg Missions, within the framework of the NATO Defence Capabilities Initiative.

Poland shares in the desire of EU Member States to assume greater responsibility for dealing with emergencies in Europe. Poland strives for such a development of European military capabilities, which, by strengthening the European 'pillar' would also strengthen the transatlantic security system. Poland wishes that the security system so reformed contain 'more Europe' but not 'less America'.

One could yet raise many a question concerning the prospect of the European Security project – the project that still remains an equation with many unknown. However, at the dawn of the third millennium these unknown are not as many as they were in the year 1990.

In his famous book, Francis Fukuyama predicted that the end of communism would bring about the end of history. His expectations did not come true but at the beginning of the twenty-first century there is a chance for the end of 'the history of war strategies'.

Upon his visit in Warsaw, NATO's Secretary General, Lord Robertson raised several important questions concerning the future of security in Central and Eastern Europe:

'Our Partnership for Peace and our Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council have created broader context. These mechanisms include all interested nations in the Euro-Atlantic area - nations from all corners of our continent, nations with many different security traditions. But enabling all of them to make a contribution to European security and stability, PfP and EAPC have planted the seeds of a Euro-Atlantic security culture – a security culture that offers the chance for Europe to leave its tragic past behind for good. Will Russia be part of this new security culture? Will Russia, that huge Eurasian power, eventually come around to define herself as a true European power? Will it use its vast resources and influence in order to create – or will it remain content with her power to deny?'

The above-cited Lord Robertson has put forward a bold idea of creating a Euro-Atlantic security culture. It is an ambitious attempt of a new strategy perception. It reminds of a 'Peace Culture' project which the UNESCO proposed in 1995.

In our comprehension 'the Euro-Atlantic strategic structure' means first of all crisis prevention and solving conflicts in a peaceful way. That is why we in Poland with great respect observe efforts made by the neutral countries, mainly Austria and Sweden, aiming at creating effective strategies of conflict prevention. Such was also the understanding of our three-year-long co-operation in running this joint project.

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