

Strategic Issues of European Security

We present a synthesis of the results of the strategic consultations and workshops, attended by the secretaries of the national security councils from Visegrad Group countries. The meetings, initiated by BBN, took place in 2013-2014. Its aim was to strengthen the EU's security policy.

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The European Council in December 2013 invited the High Representative, “in close cooperation with the Commission, to assess the impact of changes in the global environment, and to report to the Council in the course of 2015 on the challenges and opportunities arising for the Union, following consultations with the Member States”. This conclusion entails a reflection on the strategic issues of EU security. It is important that this reflection goes along with a comprehensive approach to security and it comprehends: EU security mission in the area of security, its international environment and security conditions, possible directions of the EU's actions and the range of necessary preparations which allow to fulfill this mission effectively. In other words: it should essentially be like an European security strategic review, and thus, the report prepared on its basis for the 2015 European Council Summit would be alike an EU white paper/security framework document containing possible scenarios and options of actions.

The HR Report could, therefore, become a basis for a new European Security Strategy, if the European Council 2015 Summit recognizes the need to have one. We should head toward such objectives. Therefore, it is important to discuss as early as possible the substance, in order to get a better understanding and an agreement among the EU Member States on the European key strategic security issues. We believe that this approach will strongly support the HR Report proceedings.

The present document have been laid down as a living document in a consequence of the Visegrad Group strategic workshops conducted in 2013 at the highest level of the EU Member States including National Security Advisers to the Heads of State and/or National Security Council Secretaries. It makes up a point of reference for national and international consultations. The strategic issues of European security are addressed within four blocks:

1. The EU mission in the area of security,
2. Security environment,
3. The EU actions in the area of security, and
4. Means/capabilities required for common actions.

1. EUROPEAN UNION MISSION IN THE AREA OF SECURITY

National interests and strategic objectives constitute an important point of re-ference for the security issues analysis. You can take that agreed by Member States common interests and strategic objectives constitute the EU mission in

the area of security, and they might be viewed in the three dimensions, at least: 1) political entity existing within definite border area (territory) – the EU as an entire formation; 2) the citizens – basic elements of this formation; 3) individual and collective material (economic) and non-material (social) resources/goods/values. From this perspective, the following catalogue of the main common interests constituting the EU mission in the area of the security might be identified:

- supporting the independence of the Member States, and inviolability of their borders, mainly in political, economy and other non-military areas and sectors, as well as in the military area, if the Member States mutually agree;
- cooperation for strengthening a common and individual Member States' capabilities to provide security;
- measures to ensure the EU Member States citizens free and safe live, their human rights and freedoms at the EU territory, as well as out of it, without detriment to the safety of other individuals and the security of the EU Member States;
- supporting the individual protection of citizens and collective protection of the population against accidental or intentional threats to their life and health as well as against violation, loss, or degradation of (material and intangible) assets at their disposal;
- common actions for ensuring the security of balanced social and economic development of the EU Member States;
- targeting of the social and economic activities to support a development and strengthening of the EU security system.

2. SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

It is worth to assess the EU security environment: in the perspective of 10-15 years; in the light of threats, challenges and opportunities; in the global, regional (Europe, Middle East, North Africa) and internal (EU Member States) dimensions. In such context, an assessment of contemporary security environment allows to identify a number of phenomena and processes.

Within global dimension, the main threats will be generated by rapidly increasing cyber threats, international terrorism and a proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, as well as crises/frictions among regional powers. Major challenges will be posed by globalization, information technology and biotechnology revolutions. A peaceful use of global commons (sea, air, space, cyber) might be perceived as the key opportunity.

The main threats within regional dimension might be posed by: intrastate or regional conflicts in the EU's close neighbourhood (Eastern Europe, Middle East and North Africa), failed and failing states and attacks in cyberspace. The main challenge for the European security is associated with the ways to cope with the consequences of the current crisis of security in Europe; with the erosion of nuclear and conventional disarmament agreements, including the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). As regards the opportunities, democratic transformations, and emerging of new investment and trade markets in the close European neighborhood seems to be the most probable.

Within internal dimension, the main threat result from the technical and technological decapitalization of energy infrastructure, cyber attacks against control systems of critical infrastructure, forms of terrorism specific to Europe (e.g. separatist terrorism, home-grown terrorism). The major challenges will be connected with maintaining of the coherence, integration/stabilization of the EU financial system and diversification and deepening of the EU energy market. The opportunity for the European community might be seen in a better use of shale gas and renewable energy sources.

An analysis of the probability of occurrence of various phenomena and processes and their systemic impact on the security of the EU, indicates three scenarios of possible development of European security strategic conditions (environment) can be:

- realistic scenario, the most likely (evolution) – a continuation of current trends. Integration processes in Europe will

be continued (though at a slower pace), as well as the basic elements of the EU's cohesion maintained - despite the crisis situations. The EU would retain its limited ability to take actions in the international arena. At the same time, it would gradually strive towards enhancing cooperation on security matters. Problems may result from Russian actions aimed at limiting this cooperation and breaking European unity.

- very favorable, optimistic scenario (advanced integration) - superiority of positive and desirable phenomena and tendencies in development of the security environment. Europe comes back on the path of economic growth, overcomes the euro zone crisis and strengthens common currency; deepens European integration towards a full federation including security and defense policy, cooperates closely and effectively with NATO; the main prerequisite of this scenario is a continuation of political and military presence of the United States on the European continent and return of Russia on the path of cooperation with the West;
- highly unfavorable, pessimistic scenario (disintegration) - predominance of adverse and dangerous external/internal processes and phenomena. Deepening of the political, financial and economical crisis leading to a deteriorating cohesion of the EU; renationalization of the security policy of the EU Member States; decreasing abidance of international law, including the Community Law. It would lead to the creation of "multi-speed Europe", in the long term - collapse of the common currency and/or disintegration of the EU. One of the important elements of this scenario would be confrontational actions of Russia (new cold war).

3. EU ACTIONS IN THE AREA OF SECURITY

The EU should have a concept of strategic actions (i.e. implementation of its mission under expected conditions) in accordance to the most probable scenario (first scenario), but also taking into account the ability to the adjustments needed in the case of two other scenarios, if necessary. Therefore, it seems to be legitimate to recommend the following strategic priorities for actions of the EU in the security area:

- maintaining and demonstrating cohesion, determination and readiness to act in full security spectrum;
- strengthening the international security community, in particular by promoting the deepening of integration processes based on the shared interests and values, especially development of the CSDP, common European energy security as well as cooperation with NATO and strengthening of strategic partnerships (the US, at first);
- supporting and participating adequately in the international community activities aimed at preventing the emergence of the security threats source and spreading of existing crises - under a clear international mandate.

The activities of the EU in the area of security may include:

- stabilization of the security environment - promoting and developing cooperation within and outside the EU, exploiting opportunities, resolving challenges, and preventing non-military threats, especially in the energy, cyber, political and military areas;
- crisis management - agreed in advance mutual/reciprocal support in the crises prevention and monitoring, especially in the areas of energy, cyber and natural disasters; joint response to the crises outside the EU, if they endanger the national interests covered by the EU mission;
- defensive actions - agreed in advance mutual/reciprocal support to deter and repel aggression/attack, especially the non-military ones, according with the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty.

4. MEANS/CAPABILITIES REQUIRED FOR COMMON ACTIONS (EU security system)

Preparations for the EU actions supporting its mission in the area of security should be focused on the following priorities:

- co-ordination of co-operation and collaboration between the EU security management institutions;
- professionalization of defensive and protective entities/agencies in the Member States, including the armed forces, guards and services and, in particular, creation of an energy security system and a professional and comprehensive system of cyber security;
- more extensive/common engagement/commitment of social (including information/public relations policy, cultural, educational, scientific) and economic (including industrial, financial, energy, infrastructure) stakeholders in security matters.

Maintenance and transformation of the European security system will require the following actions:

- development of existing and establishment of a new procedural, institutional, legal and doctrinal arrangements in the frame of EU security management system, including creation of a genuine strategic planning system (white papers, strategies, development programs, etc.);
- development of European defense capabilities and in other security areas, including strategically oriented and balanced integration of European defense industries;
- strengthening European area of freedom, security and justice;
- development of non-material (including information, educational, cultural, scientific-technical) and material (including financial, energy, infrastructural) capabilities to support European actions in the area of security;
- development of capabilities needed to prevent, protect, eliminate and fight cyber, terrorist and international organized crime threats and risks.

The consultations in different regional formats over the strategic issues of European security facilitate favorable political climate and contribute to the foundation of a knowledge base which might be useful during the HR Report consultations before the European Council 2015 Summit, as well as for the preparation of a new framework document on security policy of the EU - EU Security White Book/Paper and - probably in longer perspective - a new European Security Strategy.

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