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The second decade of the evolution of Poland's security and defence strategy and policy, as a member of the North Atlantic Alliance, coincided with the redefining of several axioms in world politics, resulting from the 9/11 attacks and the mission in Afghanistan. Poland had to face up to this redefinition. Generally, it acted on three planes: the alliance with NATO, partnership with the European Union and relations with the USA. The rational adaptation to the new security conditions and the multilateral organizations and policies in process was neither easy nor painless. Poland had to revise many an assumption and amend the national security strategy, including a realistic evaluation and taking account of its own national interests in cooperation with allies and partners.

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Paweł Pietrzak

The NATO summit in Chicago was a routine meeting, not a watershed. It did not stir up emotions comparable with the previous "strategic" Lisbon summit; it was rather a step in adapting NATO with the aim of developing more efficient responses to current and future threats. Documents agreed during the summit were not epoch-making; they rather constituted practical guidelines included in NATO's Strategic Concept adopted in 2010. Time will show if the declarations drawn up at the summit (concerning, inter alia, smart defence, the Joint Forces initiative and the interim capability of NATO's missile defence system) are sufficient to keep the might and reliability of the Alliance as the most powerful military organization in history.

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Zdzisław Lachowski

Nuclear weapons issues are witnessing a moderate renaissance in various fields of political and military activity: arms control, broadly-defined nuclear security, non-proliferation and counterproliferation. All those issues are undergirded by the grand goal announced by the US President – to liberate the world from nuclear weapons in the future. So far, the American administration has failed to carry out this plan

under a comprehensive project, nor does that translate into relevant adjustments in the security policy of other major international actors. However, the return to multilateralism offers a chance of progress in this important domain of international relations.

Regional contest for Syria

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Aleksandra Dzisiów-Szuszczkiewicz

The stake in the competition for Syria concerns first and foremost the geopolitical leadership in the strategic region, i.e. the Middle East, and the benefits stemming from it. Therefore, the major states of the region: Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Iran as well as Russia engage directly and indirectly in the events that are taking place in Syria. However, the main actors' particularistic interests make solving the crisis difficult. None of those countries wants to have recourse to radical measures, yet one cannot completely rule out the possibility that they would decide to use their armed forces (although this seems to be a last resort). Efforts to solve the crisis in Syria diplomatically stem from the awareness that escalation of the conflict as well as the rivalries among Saudi Arabia (and Qatar), Turkey and Iran, the latter supported by Russia, would impact adversely the situation and security in the region as a whole.

Kosovo: contemporary problems, future challenges

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Przemysław Pacuła

The creation of an independent Kosovo led to increased tensions in the region and divisions among the international community. As some countries (including Russia and China) refused to recognize the new state, Kosovo's integration with the Euro-Atlantic structures is far away. At the same time, the inefficiency of its internal structures and economic weaknesses are the reasons for Kosovo's dependence on international support provided predominantly by the UE and NATO. Poland recognized the independence of Kosovo, but it has not established political relations with this state. The participation in the EULEX and KFOR missions as well as the cultural affinity with the region can help Poland play an important role in the process of building the Balkan stability.

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– an overview

Michał Grzelak, Krzysztof Liedel

The protection of cyberspace has become one of the most frequently addressed security-related subjects. Countries, international organizations and other non-state actors have understood that in order to develop and function steadily, the global information society needs an open and – first and foremost – fail-safe cyberspace. Awareness-raising in this area is matched by the rapid growth of a number of computer incidents and new types of threats. Poland is also the target of cyber attacks. Like other countries, it is facing the challenge of preparing legal and organization-

al changes to ensure the appropriate levels of security in cyberspace and citizens therein.

The Nabucco project fiasco following the contest for control over gas transportation routes from the south 141

Paweł Turowski

The Nabucco pipeline, the EU's flagship energy project will not be completed. The failure ensued the decision of Azerbaijan and Turkey to launch a competitive pipeline. Control over this gas transportation route will help strengthen the position of both countries vis-à-vis the European Union and the neighboring countries. Both countries' decision will determine who will purchase and who will sell gas in Europe. The competition over the South Stream, won by Azerbaijan and Turkey, provides a good illustration of the EU's limited capability in completing ambitious diversification projects that go beyond the community's area.

The UNHCR role in ensuring civilian population's safety during contemporary armed conflicts 165

Katarzyna Bis

The Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees is more than 60 years old. It is a persistent initiator and coordinator of international support for civilian population in unstable countries whose rights are infringed, and who are persecuted and harmed by regional conflicts, crises and other catastrophes. The UNHCR activities include monitoring and guaranteeing that refugees' rights are observed, including help in seeking refuge in third countries, assimilation, and – eventually – safe return to the country of origin. The record of the UNHCR, its limitations notwithstanding, is remarkable; nonetheless, considering the dynamics of the world today, continuing search for solutions is necessary in order to ensure the efficacy of the entire system of aid and assistance, also outside this very institution.

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