NATO and Partnership for Peace: Position and Perspectives of Eastern and Southeastern European Countries

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Summary

The cessation of cold war and the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact in the early ninties confronted NATO with new challenges, particularly in the reation to the countries of Europe's East and South-East and Russia. The fact that the document "Partnership for Peace" was adopted at the start of 1994 and that it was signed by 26 countries meant the overall acceptance of the conceptual document of European security on the treshold of the 21st century. This document provides democratic countries outside NATO with the possibility of cooperating with its political and military bodies and paves the way for their full membership.

If regular criteria were applied, Croatia and Bosnia and Hercegovina could count on joining "Partnership for Peace" only after they have resolved internal conflicts and frictions with their neighbours by political means.

There is no single opinion about the place, the role and the impact of NATO in present-day international relations. There are those who see NATO as a progressive military-political alliance whose main task is to provide peace, freedom and independence as well as international involvement of all democratic states. This also includes its gradual expansion to new countries in Eastern and Southeastern Europe. Such view is supported by Germany, in particular by its Minister of Defence, Volker Rühe, who advocates the idea that the degree of achieved democracy in these countries is a solid ground for their involvement because "if the West does not export stability, it will import instability". A similar view is shared by the American research Rand corporation, claiming that "NATO has to step out of the defined regional frameworks or it will come to nothing". These attitudes are also shared by those who believe that "danger does not come from the Russians but from regional wars such as the one in Bosnia-Hercegovina and in Transcaucasia".[1] Others do not

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[1] According to Vidušić E., "NATO ili — novi vojni savez?" *Nedjeljna Dalmacija*, December 15, 1993, p. 32.

favour fast changes in the organization, tasks and number of NATO members, justifying this as a measure aimed at preventing the escalation of extremism in Russia. These include primarily the United States, France and Great Britain, which offer cooperation with Eastern and Southeastern European countries through the "Partnership for Peace" as a piecemeal process of their joining NATO after they fulfill the defined and rigorous criteria. There is a substantial number of those who feel that the place and role of NATO as an organization is becoming less and less adequate in present-day post cold war time and that its role should be taken over by some other organization such as the Organization for European Security and Cooperation or the Western European Union. Such standpoints are also advocated by Russia which opposes NATO's expansion in Eastern and Southeastern Europe and supports the Organization for European Security and Cooperation. Alongside with the growing Russian influence there are those factors in the West which fear that Russian nationalist forces are gaining power. In order to view the present position of NATO in international relations and the perspective of its expansion in Eastern and Southeastern European countries, it is necessary to examine the reasons why NATO was established, how it works and how it is structured.

I.

North Atlantic Treaty was signed in Washington on April 4, 1949, and was effected on August 24 of the same year. The Treaty was signed by Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the USA and Great Britain. The number of states amounted to fourteen during the Korean war, when Greece and Turkey joined the Treaty in accordance with provisions from Article 10 of the Treaty.[2] Three years later, on the basis of Membership Protocol, adopted in Paris on October 23, 1954, and coming into effect on May 5, 1955, the Treaty was also signed by West Germany, and Spain became the sixteenth member of the Treaty in 1982.[3] North Atlantic Treaty contains a preambule and 14 articles. In the preambule the contract parties emphasize their desire to provide peace and freedom for their people as well as independence and possibility of international involvement for states, reaffirming their faith in goals and principles of the UN Charter and

[2] Protocole on Greece's and Turkey's joining was signed in London on October 22, 1951, and came into force on February 18, 1952.

[3] Interestingly, in 1966 France stepped out of the integrated military organization without leaving the Treaty, Greece did the same in 1974, but rejoined the organization in 1980.

readiness to put together all their potentials for collective defence and the preservation of peace and security. In an attempt to meet these goals, the Charter provides the following obligations for its member states:[4] peaceful settlement of international disputes, refraining from threats and the use of force, which is not in accordance with the UN Charter (Article 1); development of political and economic cooperation within the Treaty (Article 2); strengthening of individual and collective defence in case of aggression (Article 3); mutual agreement in case any of the member states is threatened (Article 4). Article 5 specifies mutual assistance in case of armed attack on any member states.[5] This article shows that the Treaty allows complete freedom to each member state to decide what to do in case of armed attack on any of the members of the North Atlantic Treaty, with the aim of supporting the Treaty partners. The above facts show that the obligation of support is not automatic and the forms of assistance are not defined.[6] Article 6 defines the territory covered by the Treaty. Besides the territories of member states in Europe and North America the Treaty includes the "Algerian department of France,[7] islands under the jurisdiction of each of the North Atlantic states north of the tropic of Cancer"[8], as well the waters of the Mediterranean. Article 7 emphasizes the legal compatibility of the Treaty with Article 103 of the

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[4] For more details on this issue see: Miletić A., *Francuska i Atlantski savez*. Beograd: Savremena administracija, 1973, pp. 30-50; Grishchenko A. et al., *Danger: NATO*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1985, pp. 16-33.

[5] Since Article 5 represents the key point of the Treaty, it is cited verbatim: "Treaty parties agree that any armed attack on one or more parties occuring in Europe or North America will be considered as an attack on all of them. In accordance with this agreement, if some attack takes place, each of the parties will assist the Treaty party or parties in order to realize the right of individual or collective self-defence, recognized in Article 51 of the United Nation Charter, taking immediate action, individually or with agreement of other Treaty parties, which it sees fit, including the use of armed forces so as to establish and provide security in the area of North Atlantic. Any armed attack of such kind and any measure taken will be immediately reported to the UN Security Council. Measures taken will be ended when the Security Council takes action for establishing and maintaining international peace and security." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 16, 1963, p. 519A.

[6] Such evaluation is in accordance with American official interpretation of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which says that "The Treaty does not impose automatic obligation of war declaration in case of casus foederis, or, in other words, help provided for the attacked alliance can be, but need not be of military nature, which depends on the estimation of those who provide it in particular cases...", Miletić A., op. cit., 1973, p. 31.

[7] Upon the declaration of Algeria's independence, on July 3, 1962, its territory ceased being covered by the Treaty.

[8] *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, ibid., p. 519A

United Nation Charter[9] , while Article 8 proclaims higher legal power of the Treaty in relation to all other obligations of the Treaty members both in the past and in the future. Article 9 introduces the Council as the highest and at that time only body of the North Atlantic Treaty. The Council meets as required and is made of representatives of all member states. Article 10 stipulates that the Treaty can be joined only by European countries which receive unanimous invitation from all those who have already signed the Treaty.[10] Article 12 stipulates that each party to the Treaty can ask for revision of the Treaty after it has been in effect for ten years. Each party can resign by giving a one year notice, twenty years after the Treaty came into effect, which is stipulated by the following article. Finally, it should be noted that signatory countries of the Treaty emphasize that it is a defence alliance of sovereign and independent countries of unlimited defensive character.

It has already been stated that the North Atlantic Treaty has not, with the exception of the Council, formed any other permanent bodies. However, on the basis of authorities provided in Article 9 of the North Atlantic Treaty[11] , on the basis of numerous decisions the Council set up an organization known as NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), which has its permanent independent bodies — civilian and military, hierarchically structured and with mutually divided and coordinated authorities. The Council as the highest and leading body of NATO assembles representatives from all the member states. Depending on the importance of issues to be considered, these can be ministers of foreign affairs, defence or financial ministers or even prime ministers. In order for the Council to work continuously between ministerial meetings, the Permanent Council was established in 1952, which assembles permanently in one place representatives of all member states at ambassador level. Permanent Main Secretary Office with the position of Main Secretary was established. Today, the meetings of the Council are chaired by the Main Secretary and only those decision which were made unanimously are considered to be binding for all member states. The Council considers and draws directions of civilian and military orientation, establishes, changes or dismisses civilian or military bodies; appoints leading people in civilian or military bodies; decides on financial issues, supervises the implementation of its decisions.

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[9] This article of the UN Charter is as follows: "In case of conflict between UN members' obligations towards this Charter and their obligation towards any other international agreement their obligations towards this Charter prevail."

[10] In accordance with this Article, Greece, Turkey, West Germany and Spain joined the Treaty as stated above. This was also ratified in parliaments in all member countries and the same procedure will be applied today when accepting new members — countries of Eastern and Southeastern Europe.

[11] This article emphasizes that the Council can create assisting bodies which have proved to be needed.

Main Secretary Office is also a civilian body with a rather wide range of authorities. It consists of five division with divided competencies: for political matters; for economic-financial issues; for production, logistics and infrastructure; for research and Executive Secretary Office. A large number of committees have been set up by the Council for military and civilian issues.[12]

Military Committee is the highest military body in the complex NATO pyramid. It is made of heads of supreme army commands of all member states, except Iceland, which is represented by one civilian representative due to the fact that it does not have its own military forces, while France is represented by one liaison officer upon its resignation from NATO (its military division). Chief commands are the next lower level in the military pyramid. All important regions embraced by the North Atlantic Treaty are covered by a net of permanent and integral military chiefs-of-staff of chief commands. These are Allied Command Europe[13] , Allied Command Atlantic, La Manche Command as well as Regional Strategic Group for Planning USA-Canada. Each of them supervises a number of lower level commands. Lower integrated commands are at the level of military groups and tactical air forces.[14]

The beginning of the Korean war (June 25, 1950) worsened the already bad international situation and proved right those who had predicted further conflicts between the West and the East. At the NATO Council meeting in New York on September 15, 1950, evaluating the new conditions as rather dissatisfactory for the security of the West, a decision was reached about the establishment "of an integrated force under central command capable of preventing aggression and providing defence for Western Europe".[15] In other words, signatory countries of the North Atlantic Treaty agreed to establish integrated military forces. This actually means that national military forces are put under command of Allied Command Europe. According to the level of integration there are basically three kinds of military forces. Hierarchically speaking, the most important are the so called assigned military forces[16] . During peace time they are

[12] Geršak T., "Severnoatlanska zveza od notraj — osnovna načela delovanja" *Revija Obramba*, 9, 1994, p. 4.

[13] Allied Command Europe has four subordinate commands: for northern Europe, for central Europe, for southern Europe and for the Mediterranean. For more see: *Vojna enciklopedija*, 2nd edition, vol VIII, Belgrade, 1974, p. 1974.

[14] See: Geršak T., "Poveljstvo zveze NATO", *Revija Obramba*, 11, 1994, p. 4-5.

[15] Javorović B. et al., *Suvremeni obrambeni sistemi* Zagreb: Fakultet političkih znanosti, 1990, p. 165.

[16] Different kinds of NATO military forces are listed according to Miletić, A., op. cit., p. 36.

under national commands, but are stationed in the way planned by Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR). The use of these forces is planned in case of emergencies in accordance with the member state providing the forces. Another category is made of so called "earmarked" forces. In accordance with common plans of NATO Operation Command, those are forces which will be appointed to this Command at a specific time. They have to be stationed where they are planned to be deployed. The third group includes forces which are not "assigned" nor "earmarked" beforehand and they are exclusively national forces and each state maintains absolute control and command over them.

Military strategy of the North Atlantic Treaty has for many years represented an area of American military strategy due to the position the United States of America held regarding nuclear power, at the same time emerging as the most powerful Western country and NATO leader. In its forty years' existence, within the system of "collective security", NATO established the so called coalition doctrine. Based on the basic concepts of American post-war military strategy which postulated that "the defence of the USA starts in Europe", as well as that the European front favours the former USSR more because the rest of Europe is connected with it by land and that the position of the USA is harder because of its geographical distance and the Atlantic Ocean which separates it from the European front, the USA constantly brought up the problem of defence of   European members of NATO. This resulted in frequent corrections of the accepted strategies. In the first few post-war years, NATO's "coalition doctrine" was based on American nuclear monopoly. Based on clear nuclear advantage over the "enemy", the military strategy of "mass nuclear retribution" was established. The forces of the *sword*, which included nuclear arms as the essential war factor, and the forces of the *shield*, which were made of conventional forces, were intended for the realization of this strategy. The bottom line of the strategy was to respond to each USSR's attack by a heavy nuclear brunt. The assumption of the strategy was that the other side does not have appropriate arms at its disposal.[17] However, the extensive development of nuclear power and the growth of nuclear power of the USSR soon showed that the use of this "defense arm" would equally destroy both the attacking and the defending side and frequently a third side as well, which would find itself completely outside the political (military) conflict. As a response to this realization, Kennedy's strategy of "flexible response"[18] was proclaimed and it was applied with some corrections until the end of the bloc division in

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[17] For more see: Vukadinović R., *Nuklearne strategije supersila* Zagreb: August Cesarec, 1985, pp. 109-121.

[18] In 1962 it was introduced in the USA, and in 1967 it became NATO's official strategy.

the early nineties[19] . General John Galvin, former commander of NATO forces in Europe said about this strategy: "Since its adoption in 1967, the strategy of NATO's 'flexible response' did not bend under significant changes in our strategic milieu. Those changes made us — as well as our enemies — modernize our armament and the structure of armed forces, and keep our strategic goals"[20] . The strategy of flexible response defined a new way of using nuclear means. It was basically about accepting the possibility of selective and flexible use of nuclear power and means instead of a general use of threat to use global nuclear power. At this stage of NATO's military strategy development, the plans of collective right to decide on the implementation of nuclear power were rejected and this right was transferred to the president of the USA. In the context of the given changes, European allies expressed their fear that the USA would not use nuclear power defending Europe in circumstances of nuclear balance with the USSR. Europeans gradually started to believe that it was unlikely that the USA would sacrify New York or San Francisco because of Europe. Such fear became evident in the attempt to create their own nuclear means made by France[21] and Great Britain. In order to alleviate allies' doubts concerning the defence of the West with nuclear weapons, the USA developed tactical nuclear means along with their conventional forces in Europe. New developments, conditions and relations on the European stage and roles of superpowers were reflected on the need for further corrections of existing strategic options. An important impact of European members on American standpoints regarding military aspects of European security should be added here. As a result of the estimates, made by American strategists in the mid-eighties, that NATO and the USA do not have appropriate deterrence means for a short-term, intensive conventional war in Europe, the strategy of "forward defence" was adopted along with coalition strategy of "flexible response". The strategy of "forward defence" was based on the assumption that the forces of the then Warsaw pact were to be forced to enter the decisive battle in the border areas, which would preserve the depth of European territory and would reduce the need for complex and risky transfer of large conventional forces of the United States of America in order to organize a counter offensive, because this role would be taken by tactical nuclear arms. This resulted in two concepts of the use of military forces within the framework of the "forward defence" strategy, being: "Follow-On

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[19] In Croatian literature strategies of "flexible response", "realistic diversion" and "strategic globalism" are discussed. See: Vukadinović R., ibid., pp. 164-173.

[20] Galvin J., "Comparing forces — NATO and Warsaw Pact", *NATO's Sixteen Nations*, April-May, 1988, p. 15.

[21] France developed its own nuclear forces big enough to cover enemy's territory.

Forces Attack (FOFA)" as NATO's doctrine in Europe and "Air-Land Battle" as the doctrine of American ground troops[22] .

The collapse of communism caused not only the fall of the Berlin wall but also the fall of the "forward defence" strategy in the Central European war scene. The new post-cold war situation challenged directly the basic postulates of the "forward defence" strategy. The reunification of Germany and the shift of the frontier to the East made the plans concerning the use of military forces of Eastern and Southeastern European countries as well as NATO anachronic and the search for a new model of European security started. In such circumstances NATO started a profound reorganization of its forces directed towards the strengthening of multinational troops, the enlargement of air mobility, the perfecting of leadership and command and the improvement of decision making procedures.[23] NATO has undergone significant evolution in its fourty-five years' existence. It took place both because of the changes occurring within the alliance itself through the growing number of member states, through the changes in the member states themselves and in their interrelations, and because of outside factors through developments in international relations generally, and particularly in the adverse bloc. The end of the cold war and the disintegration of the Warsaw pact in the early nineties made NATO face new challenges especially regarding countries of Eastern and Southeastern Europe and Russia. At that time the proclaimed goal was: "Stable security in Europe is the main goal and raison d'etre of NATO. In order to achieve this goal, many negotiators keep discussing new initiatives on military control"[24] . This was the topic of the NATO summit in London in the mid-nineties, where the declaration of the transformation of the NATO pact was issued.

The declaration emphasized that positive changes in Europe required a modification of NATO. In other words, the issue of NATO's dissolution was never on the agenda as "nobody can be certain about the future. We need to stay together in order to prolong a long-lasting peace..."[25] . In the context of this, the united Germany was seen by the Atlantic Treaty as a contribution to the realization of a just and long-lasting security system in all Europe. The proclaimed direction is that NATO is exclusively

[22] Rogers B., "Follow-On Forces Attack: Myths and Realities", *NATO Review*, 6, 1994, p. 22.

[23] Huysman P., "New Face in NATO", *Military Review*, September, 1994, p. 19-25.

[24] Hamm M.R. and Pohlman H., "Military Doctrines and Strategies The Missing Keys to Success in Conventional Arms Control?" Aussenpolitik, Quaterly Ed., 1, 1990, p. 52.

[25] *Međunarodna politika*, 968, August 1990, p. 16.

a defensive alliance and it was further emphasized that Europe has been changing and that the Treaty has to alter its attitude to defence. The changes underway in the East and future steps were considered in particular. The declaration emphasizes: "We (NATO) understand that, in a new Europe security of each state is firmly tied to the security of its neighbouring country. NATO has to become an institution where Europeans, Canadians and Americans work alongside, not only on common defence but also towards crating new partnership with all European countries. The Atlantic community has to turn towards East European countries that were our adversaries in the cold war and offer them a friendly hand".[26]

II.

The disappearance of the Warsaw Pact, the collapse of communist systems in Eastern Europe and the disintegration of multinational federations that caused the wars on the Balkans and in Transcausasia, made NATO direct its efforts more to Eastern Europe and try to stop the negative security tendencies. Numerous NATO actions, though lacking in decisiveness, ensued. Interestingly, at the end of 1993 for the first time in history NATO's regular annual conference was held in Hungary, a state which is not a member of this alliance. The choice of Hungary by NATO's officials was made deliberately. Hungary as well as the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland, besides experiencing a hard time during the occupation by the former USSR after World War II, also represented the bases for Russian actions towards the West. The above mentioned Central European countries are still very significant for European security as they were in the former Warsaw Pact due to their geostrategic position.[27] Upon the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland started intensive activity regarding their defence system and military forces. In order to define new defence strategies following democratic changes, they all tried hard to enter NATO, which would result in the reduction of their own military potential and would help a faster economic development. Apart from that, statesmen of these countries are convinced that their membership in the North Atlantic Treaty would be a

[26] Ibidem.

[27] These four countries are also called "The Višegrad Four", and due to the security vacuum in Central Europe, NATO established very intensive cooperation. See: Rosser Baldwin, "Addressing the Security Concerns of Central Europe Through NATO", *European Security*, 4, 1993, pp. 548-549.

long-term guarantee for peace in this part of Europe.[28] They share the view that this could also represent the model for the admission to NATO membership of other Eastern European countries or would pave the way for the formation of a regional alliance under the sponsorship of NATO.

All considerations about the position and role of NATO, including American, are based on the assumption that NATO is undoubtedly the world military, technological, political and economic superpower of the western hemisphere countries as well as that NATO has an exceptional impact on the world. NATO was neither first nor the last military political alliance made after World War II by most West European countries and North America. However, NATO was undoubtedly extremely important for European countries, the USA and Canada. Having gathered the most developed countries of Western Europe, NATO became the basic and permanent institutional framework of their political coordination and action, the centre of all military political organization of Western countries which came into being either before or after the establishment of NATO including the increasingly autonomous West European Union (WEU).

Due to modest results achieved in the East and with the goal of accelerating the development of the security system of Eastern and Southeastern Europe, as well as in Russia, NATO held a summit in Brussels in January of 1994. Unlike previous summits, the results of this one were not expected only by its 16 members, but by more that ten candidates for this organization's membership. At the NATO summit in Brussels the main topics for discussion were, as expected: the strengthening of the "transatlantic connection" by improved American-European relations and by defining security strategies on the European continent for the 21st century, with the focus on Eastern and Southeastern Europe, Russia and the war in Bosnia-Hercegovina. The members of NATO which needed concord at this summit more than ever before, tried to discuss only topics for which there was a high degree of agreement. The chief result of the summit was signing of the document "Partnership for Peace", a new platform for relations with "new democracies". "Partnership for Peace" was presented as a conceptual document of European security at the beginning of the 21st century by which the democratic countries outside NATO are given possibility for cooperation with its political and military bodies and by which perspectives for full membership are opened. Although after the summit the countries of Eastern and Southeastern Europe expressed their dissatisfaction regarding its results, according to NATO officers their chances of entering the military political alliance following the principle "country by country" were enhanced owing to the "Partnership for Peace". These new democratic countries were primarily dissatisfied because of their

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[28] See: Valki L., "A Future Security Architecture for Europe", *European Security*, 4. 1993, pp. 522-528

desire to enter NATO as soon as possible, which would allow them to get protection under Article 5 of the Atlantic Treaty. It guarantees protection in case of attack to all its full members. This also made the member countries of NATO, which defined the criteria for joining the "Partnership for Peace", cautious because according to Article 10 of the Atlantic Treaty consensus of all full members regarding accepting new members is required. Those criteria are also stated in the very document: "This partnership was established to express common belief that the stability and security of the Euro-Atlantic region can be accomplished only by cooperation and common actions. Protection and promotion of basic freedoms and civil rights and guaranteeing these freedoms, justice and peace through democracy represent common values this Partnership is based upon". The member states of North Atlantic Treaty and other countries that join this alliance are by their cooperation reaffirming their commitment to preserve democratic societies, to protect their own freedoms from aggression and threats and to keep following the principles of international law. They are confirming their readiness to meet their obligations towards the UN Charter in good faith, as well as the principles of the Universal Declaration on Civil Rights, in particular to refrain from threatening territorial integrity or political independence of any country by the use of force, to respect the existing borders and to resolve conflicts peacefully. They are also confirming their full acceptance of the Helsinki Final Document and all other CSCE documents as well as obligations regarding disarmament and arms control".[29] The most significant stimulus for the realization of the "Partnership for Peace" was given by the American president Clinton, who managed to convince the until recently opposing parties but currently interested in entering NATO to be patient and gradually earn their full membership of NATO.[30] "Partnership for Peace" is not a temporary solution which might become permanent and which would postpone the acceptance of new countries, members of NATO. It clearly states that NATO members do not intend to give in to any pressures regarding immediate acceptance of candidates, and American officials remind that a unanimous decision about the acceptance of a new NATO member would require a prior 2/3 majority vote by the American Senate, which is very hard to expect. Those studying the document "Partnership for Peace" more carefully could read between lines that there is actually a deliberate lack of political and security earmarking of countries from the Baltic to the Balkans. This was based on an article written by Warren Christopher, American State Secretary, who defines the area of the "Partnership for Peace" as an area of Central and Eastern Europe including a part of the former USSR, where reforms and the development of democracy is in progress, but where nothing is certain. "Extremists, who misuse economic problems in order to stir up hypernationalism" and

[29] *Međunarodna politika*, 1026, May 1994, p. 30-31.

[30] Tatalović, S., "NATO u krizi", *Slobodna Dalmacija*, January 9, 1994, p. 17.

"nations trapped in international frictions for many centuries" both "are capable of threatening the progress of reforms and the stability of Western Europe". As these countries impatiently knock on the door of Western associations, primarily NATO — at the same time justly fearing that their peoples might tire on their "way to Europe" and that great Russian imperialism will get blown out of proportions — the USA and the Western defence alliance are willing to offer them "pragmatic cooperation in the area of defence planning, training and preparation for possible joint operations". However, bearing in mind that the "central mission of NATO is the defence of the Western alliance", all the offered partnership activities "will not interfere with joint command structures of NATO, its decision making mechanisms, nor will they interfere with their commitment for common defence." Thus "Partnership for Peace" is becoming something that is supposed only to "help the adjustment of NATO action potentials in vital area such as crisis management, transportation of humanitarian aid and peace keeping". "The very participation in 'Partnership for Peace' does not guarantee NATO membership and the Alliance's decision on new membership will be based on realistic evaluations of the needs of transatlantic security and on the readiness of each candidate country to accept common defence responsibilities of the member state".[31]   Therefore, all the countries outside NATO will, metaphorically speaking, "be left outside in the cold". Interestingly, "Partnership of Peace" is opened not only to countries undergoing the process of democratization but also to until recently neutral countries — Finland, Sweden, Switzerland and Austria.[32]   At the preparation stage of the "Partnership for Peace", official Moscow was warning that the expansion of NATO to countries of Eastern and Southeastern Europe could have a negative impact on Russia's home affairs and its relations with Western partners, primarily the USA. Those warnings were implicit in the statements given by the Russian president Boris Yeltsin, as well as those given by other Russian officials. According to them, pushing the borders of NATO towards Russia could lead to unwanted reactions of Russian people and military circles, which would destabilize peace and force Russia to undertake countersteps which would give the opposition a pretext for its extremist positions. They also emphasized that the American formula 'Partnership for Peace" represents an acceptable solution for all countries, thus supporting and facilitating the acceptance of the document at the NATO summit.[33]   The response to Russian warnings was reflected in moderate and cautious decision making and readiness for cooperation with all willing countries, in the first place with Russia. This is how the USA and NATO allies attempted to incorporate

[31] See Christopher W., *The Washington Times*, January 9, 1994, p. 2.

[32] Brdarić D., "Partnerstvo za mir: Čekaonica za NATO", *Vjesnik*, January 8, 1994, p. 7.

[33] Tatalović, S., "Nečista savjest NATO-a", *Slobodna Dalmacija*, January 13, 1994, p. 12.

the countries of Eastern and Southeastern Europe into their technological structures by collaborating on civilian and military projects. For comparative advantages, according to future plans, the hibernated military industrial complex of the East will be revived, but under NATO supervision. This enables very fast economic assistance to these countries, but at the same time it makes them technologically dependent on the West, which is strategically significant from the point of view of European security. Twenty six countries joined the "Partnership for Peace" in 1994 and at the beginning of 1995 thus, starting to compete in adjusting their political and defence systems to high criteria set for   NATO membership. Prospective candidates would have to meet two basic prerequisites: they need to complete thorough reorganization and the adjustment of their military forces to NATO standards which are extremely demanding and imply creation of stable democracy in the country. Changing the existing military infrastructure is very demanding in the area of armament, soldier training, recruitment of the armed forces, leadership and command and army supervision. Also, each country needs to present clearly and publicly its own security situation and its overall defence capacities, publicly stating the defence budget, giving figures of their military industries, stating the exact number of troops with no hesitation and ambiguity, stating the number of active soldiers and officers, the actual number of reserve, of arms, particularly heavy arms, its age, source and the like. The geostrategic position of a country, its geo-political advantage, non-existence of inner conflicts, refraining from involvement in military conflicts and commitment to democracy are factors contributing to the country's admission into NATO. Besides, in accordance with the given criteria it is not possible to enter NATO without being subjected to two kinds of control. The first refers to monitoring the degree of politicization of the army, which means keeping the balance of the influence political parties have on the military structure, which is NATO's standard common practice. The second refers to permanent civilian control over defence and semi-military forces in order to avoid their interference in the political life of a particular country or prevent various inadequate procedures that could threaten the constitutional and legal system.[34]   Although it has not yet been clearly stated which countries meet most criteria, according to Western strategists, those are: Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. Although nearly all European countries outside NATO have made an official claim for their entering the "Partnership for Peace", NATO leadership did not invite all the countries to join the Partnership, among others, Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina, while special attention has been directed to Russia. NATO wants to foster Russia's close cooperation and integration. However, on the other hand, it is not willing to give Russia the status which would entitle it to veto or which would allow Russia to have an impact on decisions made by the Atlantic military alliance. After a lot of negotiation and co-

[34] Višnar F., "Vojska pod nadzorom", *Vjesnik*, August 9, 1994, p. 16.

ordination of interests, on June 22, 1994, Russia entered the "Partnership for Peace" as the 21st country. The concession only Russia was given is a special "protocol" according to which the West and NATO need to consult Russia in advance on all important issues concerning world security in areas of special Russian interest. Russian entrance to "Partnership for Peace" was not welcomed in the Russian political life because this did not give Russia the status of a big country and Mikhael Gorbachow thinks "that it is an example of inferiority of today's Russian politics and the short-sightedness of the West".[35] Although Boris Yeltsin supported and accepted the "Partnership for Peace", he is not fully satisfied with it either. In his annual speech in the Russian parliament in which he defined his foreign and domestic political strategy for 1995, he firmly opposed the idea of expanding NATO to Eastern European countries. Yeltsin stated that this idea was based on non-existent Moscow's "black plans". "There are no such thoughts in Moscow and NATO's expansion to the Western Russian borders could have a negative impact on the development of the European security system" — said Yeltsin. "At this moment a new long-term European and world system is developing and it is essential for this process to be based on mutual cooperation and respect of legal rights and interests of any country and not on egoist confrontations or the logic of instant gain".[36] According to Yeltsin, Europe is threatened by a new disunion which is not to be allowed and misusing Russian partnership would throw Europe back into the 19th century instead of taking it into a stable 21st century.

Accepting what was offered them through the "Partnership for Peace", countries of Eastern and Southeastern Europe started changing their military structures with the assistance of NATO's experts and immediately realized that this was probably the most complex present undertaking and a national priority with an uncertain outcome. Former Russian allies in the Warsaw pact would like to change not only the facade of their military forces, but also to adjust the entire infrastructure to Western criteria, standards and norms.[37] However, these countries are faced with numerous problems which can be divided in four main categories. The first category refers to the transformation of these countries' military industry which was based on the Russian model and which was employing a large number of people.[38] The disintegration of the Warsaw pact and the disappearance of

[35] Lacmanović B., "Partnerstvo uz oštre kritike", *Vjesnik*, June 23, 1994, p. 6.

[36] Cited according to: Lacmanović B., "Odlučno protiv širenja NATO", *Vjesnik*, February 17, 1995, p. 10.

[37] Višnar, F., "Bolni odraz sloma", *Vjesnik*, August 2, 1994, p. 16.

[38] For example, in the early nineties military industry in Poland employed about 260,000 highly qualified workers and experts or 7% of the total number of the country's work force. Today this number has been reduced by two thirds. A similar situation can be found in the Hungarian military industry.

a safe market in the Third World countries caused the collapse of military industry, whose transformation requires huge investments. The biggest problems in the transformation of military industry appear in Russia, which is receiving the biggest financial support from its Western allies for their solution, especially in the area of nuclear industry.[39] The second category of problems is a result of the slowed-down process of depoliticization of the army. For example, after Hungary's first democratic elections in 1990 formal depoliticization of the army took place. Thus, for the first time a civilian politician took the head position in the Ministry of Defence, the position of Head chief-of-staff of the military forces was separated from the Ministry of Defence and the position of the Supreme Commander, which is, according to the Constitution, held by the President of Republic, was established.[40] However, in Hungary as well as in other former socialist countries the influence of military officers is still felt in the political life, and there is also disagreement between "the old" and "the new" officers regarding many military forces related issues. The third category of problems refers to army training and officers in particular. The existing training system which is based on the Russian model needs to be replaced by the new NATO model. Even though it was thought that the NATO training model could be introduced in a very short time simply by bringing new staff into military forces, it proved to be a much more complex and lasting process. The use of the most modern military technology, armament and equipment, some of which are used for the first time, and the acceptance of modern principles of warfare technique are possible only in the presence of top military professional expertise and competence, primarily of commanding structures. This is why countries which count on their entering NATO send their officers to Western military schools. The fourth category of problems is related to the recruitment of military forces. The existing populous military forces recruited on the basis of general enlistment need to be replaced by military forces recruited solely by professional soldiers or combined with obligatory military service.[41] NATO committees and superintendences which have visited the present member countries of the "Partnership for Peace" found that their military forces are facing the problem of adequate recruitment that would be in accordance with western standards. Due to the existing problems of meeting NATO's criteria, most countries do not expect to join this military political alliance soon. For example, the Republic of Slovenia expects to become a full member of the European Union between 1998 and 2003

[39] See Cooper J., "Transformation of the Russian Defence Industry", *Jane's Intelligence Review*, 10, 1994, p. 445.

[40] Sauerwine B., "Defence Adequacy—The Hungarian Defence Forces", *Jane's Intelligence Review*, 10, 1994, p. 435.

[41] Tatalović S., *Vojna moć u svijetu*, Zagreb: CSI, 1995.

at the best. That would help Slovenia to enter NATO as a full member only in 2005 as a member of WEU.[42]

The war in Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina has helped NATO officials to, upon realizing its tragic consequences, convince the world factors of the need to prevent its expansion. The approach directed towards preventing the war's expansion outside Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina, enabled NATO's current and effortless penetration into almost all countries of Eastern and Southeastern Europe through the "Partnership for Peace", with the exception of Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina. Preventing the expansion of the war outside Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina, which NATO insists on, is connected with the war's gradual expansion to Eastern and Southeastern Europe. According to NATO officials, it is only when a firm security encirclement around the war area in the Balkans is formed that it is possible to stop the war and establish a just peace. This approach is seen by NATO members as well as by the members of the "Partnership for Peace" as cheaper and safer. However, in this way NATO and the international community, consciously or not, are imposing the burden of resolving the Balkan crisis and the costs of establishing a new security system in this part of Europe on Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina, countries which would, according to present state of affairs, be allowed to enter the "Partnership for Peace" only when these costs are paid. According to standard criteria, Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina can count on entering the "Partnership for Peace" only after they resolve their internal conflicts and their conflicts with neighbouring countries by political means. However, depending on further developments in Eastern and Southeastern Europe, Croatia might enter the "Partnership for Peace" avoiding regular procedure. This would mean its pulling out of the interest sphere of the new Russian strategy of expanding to the Balkans.

Hoping to have found adequate responses to historical challenges of the European continent after the cold war and the dissolution of the Warsaw pact, NATO allies offered the "Partnership for Peace" to their yesterday's adversaries. This project of global security for the 21st century is one form of American and NATO involvement on a military-security level in "Europe from Vancouver to Vladivostok". It is supposed to resolve four essential problems of European security: first, the adjustment of NATO's political and military structures to new geostrategic conditions in Europe; second, openness of NATO to other European countries for cooperation and gradual membership; third, paving the way for turning the North Atlantic Treaty into a "forum for agreement" in solving crises; and forth, taking positions against the expansion of "massive destruction arms" and for the ban and prevention of nuclear arms proliferation. "Partnership for Peace" is only a part of this plan on the line of long-term and

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[42] Geršak, T., "NATO-Slovenija", *Revija Obramba*, No. 3, 1995, p. 4.

complex cooperation of "new democracies" with NATO, while the ultimate goal is the integration of these countries into NATO.

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