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**THE NECESSITY TO CREATE A COMMON EUROPEAN  
SPACE FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION**

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**Abstract:**

*EU's cooperation with NATO is, from personal perspective, of vital importance at the moment. NATO is in a very important organization that ensures security perspective for a large percentage of the European population. If the European Union was originally founded on economic criteria, and tries to preserve its main objectives, with certain exceptions elusive, and the fact that three quarters of European states are members of NATO, a closer cooperation is unavoidable for the proper functioning of states. We don't have a safe economy if there is no security.*

*Thus in the present study, we addressed the need for the creation of the single European Security and Cooperation, the place that Romania occupies at the interference of the two actors in the world and efforts to fulfill the tasks required of them.*

*Key words: NATO, the European Union, strategic objectives, cooperation, development.*

## **1. Introduction**

The current expansion of the Eastern frontier of the EU and NATO, on the North-Eastern and South-Eastern axes, with ten, and respectively with seven new states, is a decisive step towards building the common European space for security and cooperation. Practically, the new wave of member States, the largest one in the history of the two organizations, contributes substantially to the unity and stability of the entire continent, by strongly re-launching the debates on the common European policies for security and cooperation.

Bringing into question the case of Romania, we may state, in a thorough analysis, the fact that, by integration in NATO and EU, its contribution can be significant in shading away the effect of strategic fault line from the South-Eastern European space (the Balkans, Black Sea, Caucasus). As a member of the Alliance and of the EU, it has an important part to play in the cooperation between the two organizations. Its advantages of medium European country add superior valences to the common continental space for security and cooperation, valences which are visible politically, economically, militarily, etc. Its neighborhood to the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, and even to Belarus enables a unique perspective on these countries and on their importance towards the Alliance, but also towards the EU.<sup>1</sup>

After Romania's and Bulgaria's accession, the EU became the largest common market in the world, with a population of approximately 500 million people, and a huge surface, a superior political and structural capacity, adequate to the consolidation of the geostrategic balances in the sphere of stability and security. It is true that new specific European problems appeared, derived from the expansion, aid for Central and South-

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<sup>1</sup> V. Popa, N. Dolghin, *NATO and EU. Determinations and Finalities*, National Defense University Publishing House, Bucharest, 2004, page 17.

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Eastern Europe, ethnic conflicts, terrorism, proliferation of mass-destruction weapons, migration control, trafficking in weapons, drugs, human beings, etc., which might affect the functionality of the Union and the stability of the common space.

However beyond all these possible difficulties, one thing is certain: the new member States bring about to the Union, which has defined a common external and security policy, their own capacity to improve the power relations, their own resources of stability and security.

Facing so many geopolitical, strategic, and technological changes, the complexity of asymmetrical and cross-border threats, the implementation and evolution of the concept of common European space for security and cooperation prove to be and to remain a necessity. Founded on the common pursuit for development in security and stability of the continent, the concept presupposes an increased dynamism and capacity of crisis management, restoration of peace, development of humanitarian operations or eviction of nationals.

Therefore, it is clear that the expansion of the common European space, inclusively in the Balkan perimeter, shall consolidate the stability and the security of the continent, shall acquire increased capacities to fill those “black holes” on the map of the region, as it is self-proclaimed Republic of Transnistria, with a destabilizing, destructuring effect for the unity and integrity of Europe. The spatial and structural transformation of NATO and EU shall result in the appearance of new forms of cooperation and consolidation of the existing ones, in the creation of new specific instruments of counteracting non-conventional risks, positive evolutions in terms of sub-regional, regional, and inter-regional development and security.<sup>2</sup>

The double determination of the regional and continental stability and security by NATO and EU fortifies the peripheral European space, assuring an accelerated diffusion of democracy, freedom, equity, and social security at the level of the former Eastern communist states. Our region benefits decisively from the major advantages supplied by the harmonization process of the European Policy for Security and Defense with the new philosophy of the Alliance as regards crisis management, which practically results in the development of European defense, an element of complementariness of NATO adaptation to the new security context.<sup>3</sup>

The common space practically removes the idea of alternatives which EU might project independently from NATO in the matter of the continent security, useless duplications, and possible fissures in the transatlantic relation. The use by EU of the Alliance’s capacities is the expected step towards a normality about which states with double affiliation to these organizations should have thought, as long as they were developing the same process on two overlapping levels.<sup>4</sup>

Erecting the common space for security and cooperation cannot be exempted from the “crises of European construction”, revealing a Europe of diversities, where the enlargement of EU is a difficult, not at all simple and linear process. As security is revealed as a priority objective for both organizations, the relations between them are cohesive, and are based on the principles of a strategic partnership, beneficial for both parties, and especially for Europe’s security and defense. The following are taken into consideration: specificity of each organization; respect and equality of their autonomy in making decisions; necessity of mutual consultation, dialogue, transparency, and cooperation; respect for the interests of the EU and NATO members; respect for the

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<sup>2</sup> Ibidem, page 18.

<sup>3</sup> Government of Romania, White Charter on Security and National Defense, Bucharest, 2004.

<sup>4</sup> V. Popa, N. Dolghin, op. cit., page 19.

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principles from the Charter of the United Nations; commitment of each organization to develop coherently and by mutually strengthening its military capacities, depending on the joint needs of the two organizations.

Nevertheless, most likely not only the idea of the common managed space, but especially the joint responsibilities for its security and stability represent the arguments for an expansion of partnership nature.

Facing the complexity of the world, the collapse of the former international balances, terrorism, and other global threats, NATO and EU must settle an active, united Europe that has projected a fair strategic vision, has freed itself from the spectrum of nationalisms, by expanding its territorial and ideational frontiers towards the unique border of a common European space.<sup>5</sup>

### **2. Romania's Vision towards NATO - EU Alliance**

Even before Romania's accession to NATO, this country has supported the development of a strong partnership between NATO and the European Union, which observes the autonomy of the two organizations, and multiplies the effect of their policies and actions.<sup>6</sup>

Regarded in the current geopolitical and geostrategic context, as well as in the light of the distinctive elements in terms of state and cultural identity, the diagram Romania - NATO / Romania - EU is placed under the joint interest channeled firstly on common values, and implicitly on the collective interests of the partners involved in the two organizational structures. In this context, one must notice the bilateral dimension of Romania's involvement in the mentioned bodies, namely the political-military body, represented by NATO (The North Atlantic Treaty Organization), with mainly military valences, and that of super-state construction which is permanently expanding and developing - the European Union, both generating equally for our country obligations of political-military nature with respect to security, as well as of economic, social, institutional, cultural nature, etc.

As a partner with equal rights, in NATO, as well as in the EU, Romania's action, towards the interoperability on all the levels with the two bodies, must be focused on solidarity, economic growth, promotion of democracy, etc., considering the fact that the phenomenon of globalization is delimited, as a characteristic of competitiveness based on the enlargement of the internal market, economic performance, stability of the common currency, also as a resultant on the plane of technologies, social cohesion, and internal stability, all these under the spectrum of political influence, and military power of the states representing these integrated systems for globalization.

Taking into consideration the international dimension of the involvement and participation of our country in the common projects for collective defense and security promoted by the two world actors, we believe that the correlation security-defense is extremely important, also the complementariness between NATO and the EU, materialized in EU taking over the Balkans as regards national security, participation with the highest weight of NATO in the security of Afghanistan, and eventually in a part of the Iraqi territory, as well as development of NATO Response Force for security missions outside the territory of the Alliance. As far as Romania is concerned, these elements are with a nature to delimit even clearer the options that our country needs to follow in these two entities, respectively of standardization of its own structures according to the diagrams of

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<sup>5</sup> V. Popa, N. Dolghin, op. cit., pages 20-21.

<sup>6</sup> [Speech](#) by NATO General Secretary from Berlin, 29 January 2007, as regards the relations between NATO - EU.

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relational nature, of communication efficiency, and solving aspects of any kind during the zonal or regional partnerships, as well as of permanent preparation of the human, material, and decision-making infrastructure, in order to answer, in a prompt and professional manner, to the commitments laid down with these structures.

Regarded in the light of affiliation to South-Eastern Europe, however in the context of openness to new occidental political-military and civilization standards, the chance offered to Romania towards modernization and integration in this spectrum, must be analyzed in correlation with the main dimensions of action and contact: the political, economic, and military dimension.

As regards the military dimension, our country must establish and operationalize firmly the place, role, weight, intensity, missions, and management of its military or military-like structures, in various actions during peace, crisis or war. Appreciating Romania's contribution to the collective security in the last decade, one can state that it has been constant and consistent, defining characteristics of a true NATO member.

This is the reason why it is of the utmost importance for Romania to act in the sense of accomplishing the common European defense (EU) and Euro-Atlantic collective defense (NATO) in complementariness with the process of permanent adaptation and transformation of the two international bodies to the realities and challenges of the new millennium.

Thus, taking into consideration the NATO - EU binominal, Romania must promote its partner programs by taking into account the duality of the relations with both world actors.

Nevertheless, Romania must not forget its national interests, supported by the American military presence on its territory, which increases the security of the state and the promotion of security in the Black Sea region.

Concurrently with the European Union's drafting of the Common Security Strategy, Romania supports the non-proliferation of the nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, and it is the signatory of all the international agreements relevant in this field. Romania has introduced and exercises a strict control as regards the products and technologies with double use, and it is part to all the international treaties concerning the control of weapons.<sup>7</sup> The classification in the global spectrum of the Union, forming an "efficient multilateral order" shall be taken into consideration.

As regards the territorial-cultural affiliation to the Balkan Region since Romania's accession to NATO/EU, the role of our country, as a "buffer" between the initiative of regional remodeling of the system of relations between states (promoted by USA, as well as by NATO and by EU) and the geopolitical realities of the reminded space has been permanently consolidated, and further resides in the technical assistance granted to the states from the Balkan Peninsula aspiring to the capacity of NATO member, experience pooling, cooperation for the reform of armies, democratization, and adaptation of doctrines, our country serving as a connection link between the traditional members and the aspirants to the North-Atlantic Alliance.

Not lastly, in the context of Balkan cooperation and of the good neighbor relations with the states in this area, Romania proves the institutional-state maturity, confirming once again the chance of its partner modernization by promoting the Romanian model of respect for human rights, and minorities' rights inclusively.

In conclusion, we may state that Romania, by its bi-dimensional affiliation to the two world forums, NATO, and EU respectively, has received the responsibility to be integrated and to participate complementarily in the activity of these institutions, and,

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<sup>7</sup> Gabriel I. Năstase, *Challenges of the Third Millennium*, Ion Basgan Publishing House, Bucharest, 2006, page 258

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taking into consideration the remarks from this paper, our opinion is that it has successfully and professionally complied with the tasks received until now.

The conduct and the coherent manner to treat standard and relational indicators entitle us to state that our country is currently a viable, stable, and competent partner on the political and strategic map of the new millennium.

## **3. Conclusions**

The cooperation between the North-Atlantic Alliance and the EU in the Balkans offers most likely the best example about the things that these two organizations can do together. The collaboration between them in places such as Bosnia-Herzegovina or the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia has had a direct, positive impact on regional stability and security.

We believe that the experience of the successful cooperation between NATO and EU in the Balkans has proven the fact that NATO and EU are indispensable partners in the consolidation of Euro-Atlantic and international security. The cooperation between NATO - EU also contributes to a solid transatlantic relation.

As a member of the EU since 1 January 2007, Romania continues to be an advocate of dialogue and cooperation between NATO - EU on common subjects. From Afghanistan and Kosovo to supporting democratic reforms and integration of the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe or to fighting global challenges such as terrorism, proliferation of mass-destruction weapons, or trafficking in human beings, there is a huge potential of collaboration by whose materialization NATO and EU can have together an important impact on international security.

Another example emphasizing clearly the cooperation between NATO - EU can easily result from the contemporary realities. I am referring to the events from Libya - NATO's consultation with the international and regional organizations as regards the modalities of intervention in this country and the possible operations, by reviewing the options, resources at their disposal, and the most important missions (imposing the embargo on weapons, decreed by the UN, humanitarian assistance, evictions of persons, etc.).

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