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ENERGETIC SECURITY – STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE FOR EU AND NATO

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Abstract:

This paper aims to illustrate, from a theoretical point of view, the idea that great powers are constantly looking for opportunities to get more power, arguing their actions that are made to achieve this goal, through the fact that this way they feel more secure.

This paper focuses on the evolutions of key international actors on the international scene in the context of competition for energy resources. Taking into account that energy security is an essential component of national and international security, identifying the threats and vulnerabilities of energy infrastructures is absolutely vital.

The use of energy resources in the relations between great political powers became an efficient instrument to influence other actors' behavior or to control them in order to achieve someone's own interests. NATO and especially EU are directly interested in ensuring the energy security of its members and try to complete each other.

Key words: energetic security, European Union, NATO, resources,

1.Introduction

Energy has become a strategic factor in global policy, a vital component for the overall economic development and progress of the society, generating a series of preoccupations worldwide since the period immediately following the First World War.[i]

The expression "energetic security" has been used more and more lately, it is deemed to be the key of regional security: "any failure of critical energetic infrastructure has the potential of a political, military and social impact".[1] The term of critical infrastructure refers to infrastructures of high importance, which are related to the national security of each state. Higher energetic security means firstly a higher diversity of the supply sources. Hence, the major importance of the projects regarding the transportation of energetic resources, in this case of oil and natural gas.

Historically, two major episodes put a mark on the subject of energetic security, namely: the oil crisis from 1973, and respectively the crisis in natural gas supply by Russia of West-European states from January 2006.

Energetic security, together with food security, financial security, commercial security, etc., is part of a wider concept of the national and individual security issue, namely economic security[2]. Reaching a certain level of security depends on the capacity of the state to aggregate resources at an internal level, and to win or keep its access to external economic resources.

No doubt, any longer energy supply interruption is a significant damage to the economic growth, political stability, and prosperity of the citizens of a nation. Therefore, energetic security aims mainly at the following dimensions: assuring certain alternative supply sources, identifying certain alternative energy transportation routes, securing the

existent sources and routes, and increasing the weight of alternative energies in the internal consumption. However, the realities of the current era have proved that the major consumers should let go of the utopia of energetic independence, and accept energetic interdependence.

2. Geopolitical considerations

From the geopolitical point of view, energetic security takes into consideration the actions concerted to secure international trade with energetic goods, the adoption of an overall legal framework in the field of transnational energetic services, such as Energy Charta Treaty from 1994, the tendency of re-nationalizing deposits, infrastructure, and energetic corporations, and the necessity for strategic concepts and overall approaches.

Another dimension begins to become an independent component of energetic security, namely the military one. It is manifested internally in the defense policies of the most important actors on the energetic market, aiming eventually at using the military means to maintain the favorable positions. In their military programs, USA is aiming at creating worldwide force projection capabilities, Russia is perfecting its nuclear arsenal as a guarantee of territorial inviolability, the Middle East states and Venezuela are those purchasing the biggest quantities of weapons, Iran is supporting its controversial nuclear program, China and India are developing their military programs with unforeseeable effects in the near future, etc.

Obviously, energetic security is not threatened only by terrorism, political distress, armed conflicts, piracy, but it is vulnerable also before hurricanes, floods, earthquakes or destructions caused by human activities. For instance, an explosion caused on an oil field in China shall determine the Chinese government to buy as much oil as possible, which shall result in a growth of the oil price internationally, and implicitly of the gas in the USA. In conclusion, one may state that energetic security is endangered by six major challenges of the twenty first century:

- short circuits in supply flows;
- determined nature of energetic resources;
- energy use as a pressure instrument;
- energy-related income used in view of supporting non-democratic regimes;
- overall transformations of the climate;
- high costs of energy for the developing countries.

Therefore, energetic security must take into consideration the challenges brought about by the globalization process, any dysfunction or vulnerability from one part of the globe (regarding an energetic source) affects consumers worldwide.

2.1 Use of Energetic Resources to Influence Geopolitical Strategies

Using the “energetic weapon” in international relations is a form of blackmail, an action classifiable in the category of covered or discrete techniques, aiming at accomplishing certain political, economic, military objectives, etc. This instrument is used to weaken military, economic or political power of a nation, by undermining the moral, loyalty or trust of the citizens. Therefore, we believe that the “energetic weapon” is an additional instrument of the political pressures exercised by the states/international community against a country which is guilty for serious trespassing of international norms.

Concurrently, the “energetic weapon” might represent an asymmetrical form of action in the power relations at a global level, as answer to other political, economic and financial, and military forms that have always been used.[3]

In the opinion of Daniel Yergin, Chairman of Cambridge Energy Research, in order to achieve energetic security, the decision-making factors must take into consideration ten key principles[4]

- diversification of energy supply sources is the starting point for energy security;
- there is only one oil market;
- the existence of spare capacity, emergency stocks and redundancy in critical infrastructure is important;
- relying on flexible markets and avoiding the temptation to micromanage them can facilitate speedy adjustment and minimize long-term damage;
- understand the importance of mutual interdependence among companies and governments at all levels;
- foster relationships between suppliers and consumers in recognition of mutual interdependence;
- create a proactive physical security framework that involves both producers and consumers;
- invest regularly in technological change within the specific industry;
- commit to research, development and innovation for longer-term energy balance and transitions.

2.2. Europe's Energetic Dependence

Energetic and raw material resources are generally limited and distributed unevenly throughout the world. The spectrum of energetic resource depletion in the years to come made an important part of external and power policies preoccupied, on one hand, with the accessibility of pipes and terminals, future tracks of the energetic routes, partnerships, etc. On the other hand, the following are emphasized: identifying the most efficient ways of use, and possibilities to substitute such resources; diminishing environmental unbalances determined by the exploitation, conditioning, processing, and using of resources.

According to some estimates, the largest world hydrocarbon pools are found in: the area of Persian Gulf, Russian Federation - Siberia; the area of the Caspian Sea - Central Asia; South America - Venezuela - Orinoco river area; USA and Alaska; Canada - Newfoundland. Other less important pools are found in the North Sea, Northern Africa, etc. Currently, Europe has become more and more dependent on energetic resources, and therefore, is searching new suppliers in the field, suppliers that can help Europe to assure its demand and security. The current projects reflect mainly the interests of Europe for the Caspian Area, intending to limit its dependency on Russia.

On the contrary, Russia, in its capacity as supplier, wishes to keep its influence and decision-making power as regards the export of gas, but also to limit the need of transit through the Ukrainian territory, facing towards Turkey, and initiating concurrently alternative projects to those promoted by the European Union.

European Union has a special interest in the issue of energetic security. Currently, the Union of the 27 countries is one of the largest consumers of energetic resources in the world. Except (possibly) Norway, all the other EU states are dependent on the imports of hydrocarbons, especially from the Russian Federation. At the end of 2006, EU was on the second place, after the USA, with a consumption of oil of approximately 14,995 million barrels/day[5], and on the third place, following the USA and the Russian Federation, with a consumption of natural gas of 18,869 billion m^3/year[6]. The dependence on energetic imports is foreseen to grow from 55% currently to 70% in 2030.

Following the repeated interruption in the supply with gas of Europe (energetic crises commenced by Russia in 2006-2007), and the current conflicts from Northern Africa (which ceased the supply of the Southern Europe with natural gas and oil products), the EU

is faced with the decision to speed the process of consumption efficiency and source diversification.

Therefore, the European Council adopted an Action Plan, where the member States are entitled to select the modalities of achieving the established objectives. Energetic security guarantee measures and eventual crises management shall be strengthened. The EU shall insist upon energetic efficiency, renewable energy, and bio-fuel use.

In 2007, the European Council launched the initiative *An Energy Policy for Europe* [7] which is meant to bring about more efficiency to the Community policy, coherence between the member States, and consistency in the actions from various fields.

The document identifies three major challenges in the field of supply security:

- common approach to external policy;
- diversify sources, routes and resources;
- common management of crises, based on principles of solidarity and subsidiarity.

As it is noticed, in the field of energetic policy, the Union has a series of documents and action plans. However, one Strategy is needed, to establish concretely objectives and modalities to fulfill the above in the field of external energetic policy. EU must identify the major risks as regards the supply sources, and formulate its political and security interests, all integrated in a pragmatic strategic concept. A closer collaboration with NATO and revitalizing the transatlantic partnership could help the European Union to decrease its energetic vulnerability.

Concurrently, EU states - Germany, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Austria, Italy - participate in the Russian projects for diversification of routes for natural gas through the North Sea and the Black Sea, which shall practically accelerate the role of Russia on the energetic market of the European Union.

Therefore, not only the EU is preoccupied with energetic security, but also the most important military block (NATO). On the occasion of the summit from Bucharest (2-4 April 2008), one of the main issues of debate was energetic security and clear strategies to be established for the future.

Energetic security is no longer only an economic issue, but it became a deeper one, with political-military implications. The member states of the North-Atlantic Alliance, therefore indirectly NATO too, have already been involved in the efforts for securing energetic resources. In the first Gulf War, the participation of the USA, France, Great Britain, and Italy aimed at assuring the fact that Iraq would not gain control on the Kuwaiti oil, threatening thus Saudi Arabia and other important producers in the area. Also, some states such as the Great Britain, France and Holland have participated in Operation Earnest Will to protect the traffic of Gulf tankers during the war between Iran and Iraq from 1980-1988. The operation Active Endeavour can also be classified in this category. Here, the maritime forces of the Alliance are directly involved in the actions to maintain the security of key ships and energetic routs in the Mediterranean.

2.3. Pan-European Energetic Corridors

These corridors have a double objective: to complete the economic and territorial integration of (former Communist) Eastern Europe in the European market, however it equally represents a strategic way to assure the future of European economy (by assuring a big part of the necessary raw materials, mainly of energetic nature).

As regards the most adequate routes to transport oil and natural gas within the former Soviet territory, and mainly in the Caspian Area, harsh competition has been proven lately. Therefore, Moscow wishes to continue the transportation of hydrocarbons by

crossing Russia towards the North and North-West, and through the Black Sea towards the West, aiming at:

- Connecting the existing or future Caspian pipes, to Drujba pipe (Friendship), with the length of 4,023 km, which has been supplying Central Europe for a long time; it has two branches: a Northern one, supplying Poland and Germany, and a Southern one, towards the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Croatia (with the destination point in the Croatian port Omisalj from the Adriatic Sea).
- Transporting through the straits (Bosphorus and Dardanelles) or to some ports on the Western shore of the Black Sea (preferably in Bulgaria), and further through pipes crossing the Balkan Peninsula to the Adriatic Sea.

Meanwhile, Occidental Europe and the USA wish to avoid these routes; a first step and concurrently an example for this purpose is the oil pipe BTC (Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan).

At their turn, the other countries in the area or in the neighborhood either have resources of hydrocarbons (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan), or they are only classified or may be classified in the energetic corridors (Georgia, Turkey, the Balkan Countries, Romania, Hungary), are associated only to some projects, depending on their own personal interest.

3. Energetic Security of Romania

For Romania, assuring energetic security translates into assuring the necessary energetic resources and limiting the dependency on the import ones, diversifying imported sources of energetic resources and the transport routes thereof, increasing the level of compliance of the national transport networks of electricity and natural gas, protecting critical infrastructure.

A brief presentation of Romania's advantages consists of the following aspects:

- Geostrategic considerations: it is the biggest country in the area, it has political stability, and it is situated at the crossroad between the Eastern-Western and Northern-Southern European economic (and commercial) corridors.
- Romania is included in three major Pan-European transport corridors:
  a. Berlin (Germany) - Prague (Czech Republic) - Bratislava (Slovakia) - Gyor-Budapest (Hungary)-Arad-Craiova-Bucharest-Giurgiu (Romania) - Sofia (Bulgaria) - Istanbul (Turkey);
  b. transcontinental shipping route (Danube-Main-Rhine, connecting the Black Sea with the Mediterranean Sea);
  c. Helsinki (Finland) - Sankt Petersburg-Paskov (Russia)-Vitebsk (Belarus)-Ljubasivka (Ukraine)-Chişinău (Republic of Moldova)-Bucharest (Romania)-Plovdiv (Bulgaria).
- Romania is the only country in the area included in both programs of the European Union, TRACECA and INOGATE, having as aim the oil and natural gas fields from the Caspian area and the transport routes thereof to the Central and Western Europe.
- Romania has the biggest and most active port to the Black Sea, Constanța, with fully operational special terminals both ways for crude oil (24 million tons annually) and for oil products (12 million tons annually), as related tanks (1.7 billion m^3). In a not too distant future, Constanța shall become, owing to the wide-spreading works that have been commenced, the second biggest port of Europe (after Rotterdam), and concurrently one of the biggest worldwide.
- Romania has not only offers of crude oil transiting, but also of processing raw materials brought from the Caspian region. Our country has a rather well developed system of pipes, for the crude oil (approximately 4,500 km), but also for the oil products (approximately

2,500 km), system which can be easily connected, with minimum investments, to the central-European transport system.

- Existence of an oil refining capacity (over 30 million tons annually), exceeding by far its own production of oil (a little over 6 million tons annually) and the domestic necessary oil products. Therefore, it has an excessive refining capacity. The biggest and most modern unit of this nature, Midia - Năvodari, is right near Constanța port.

The territory obtained by Romania after the decision of the International Court of Justice from 3 February 2009, further to the dispute with Ukraine, allows Bucharest to exploit the resources existing in the newly obtained area of the continental platform of the Black Sea with the area of 9700 square kilometers. According to the National Agency for Mineral Resources, maximum preliminary assessments mention the existence of approximately 70 billion cubic meters of natural gas and of 12 million tons (85 million barrels) of oil.

4.Conclusions

In the circumstances of a growing competition for power and influence in the global arena, material resources, and especially energetic ones, have a more and more important role in the position and role of a state in the system of international relations. The uneven distribution and foreseeable depletion of the resources of hydrocarbons, resources which remain for now the engine of the world economy, have led to the development of the games with respect thereto, and have enabled certain "monopolies" as regards the control of sources and routes, of markets and prices.

The component of oil and gas of energy represents a challenge, and concurrently a reason of concern not only at the European level, but also at worldwide. This depends on many factors: on the reserves in the field, on the managing countries, on their policy, on the transit routes, on the geopolitical situation, economic and diplomatic power.

Since 1990, EU has succeeded in diversifying significantly its gas supply sources: Norway, Algeria, Libya, Nigeria, and the Middle East are responsible for the growth of imports with over 80%, while Russia's share from the total of gas imports decreased from 75% in 1990 to a little over 40% in 2008. However the problem resides in the extreme differentiation of the degree of dependency on Russia: from 100% from the internal raw consumption of gas for Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and between 60-95% for Bulgaria, Greece, Czech Republic, Austria and Hungary to 10% in Portugal and Spain.

In the case of natural gas, the economic and geographic considerations make impossible for Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) to decrease significantly the strategic dependency on the Russian gas**.** Taking into consideration the current geopolitical perspectives, Russia still seems a surer source than Caucasus and Caspian Sea region. However, the situation needs no radical approaches, due to the fact that the dependency on Russia is mutual, and therefore the use of energy as a weapon can have repercussions also on the country that uses such an instrument.

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