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Debates on NATO's Future

North Atlantic Treaty Organization was founded with the purpose of containing and deterring the Soviet Union. The enormous threat it posed has gone away. Russia does not pose a similar threat. Thus, the following problem has arisen: is NATO still indispensable and if so, what kind of NATO is needed in the 21st century? In other words: what is NATO's *raison d'être* today? Analysis of various views and opinions raised on these issues is the main purpose of this article. It gives the most attention to different standpoints of Americans and their allies in Europe and their conflicting relations, which pose a danger to the unity and future of the Alliance. Another focus is the relation between NATO enlargement and its changing nature. The Alliance's ability to respond to new challenges to international security, whose symbol became September 11, and its role in the new global security system are explored as well.

Causes of the debates

In order to understand why debates on NATO's future have recently become very intensive and to grasp the character of the questions discussed, we must turn to the roots of NATO. The first attempts to create an organization of the countries of Western Europe, having among others the military dimension, too, date back to 1948, when the Brussels Treaty on economic, social, and cultural cooperation and self-defense, was signed by Belgium, the UK, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, and France. Yet, in the face of the growing Soviet threat, it soon became clear that a Western defense alliance capable of ensuring a balance of power in Europe was impossible without the participation of the USA. After the beginning of the Cold War, the USA did not want to repeat the mistake which it had made after World War I, when the Congress did not ratify the Covenant of the League of Nations, and the USA did not become its member and for long years withdrew from the efforts to solve European security problems. This circumstance was one of the causes of World War II, because France and the UK did not manage to stop the fascist aggression themselves.

At the end of the forties, the source of the threat was expansionist ambitions of communism, and not those of fascism or Nazism. Almost the entire Eastern and Central Europe was in its, that is, the Soviet Union's, sphere of control. The communist takeover in Czechoslovakia in February 1948 and the Berlin blockade, which started in the April of the same year, were clear evidence that without active steps taken by the democratic Western states communism could become a fatal threat to all Western Europe. That meant that it would become a real threat to the United States as well.

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Under these circumstances, a treaty establishing NATO was signed in Washington in 1949. Based on the ideas of N. Spykman and other scholars in geopolitics and strategy, NATO was created as a Western defense organization the main aim of which was to stop the spreading of communism in Western Europe. The doctrines of containment and deterrence were the fundamentals of NATO's strategy during the Cold War.

Lord Ismay, the first Secretary General of NATO, defined NATO's main goals in a concise and suggestive way as follows: to keep Russians out, Germans down, Americans in. Russians (communist countries) had to be contained; their further expansion into Europe had to be stopped. Under the circumstances, it was possible to do only with the help of Americans. Because of the entrenched American isolationist traditions, American military and political involvement in (Western) Europe was not something to be taken for granted. But when the Soviet Union acquired nuclear weapons, the administration, the Congress and wider public became convinced that defense of Europe was an American national interest. Emaciated after the war, Europe at that time had no capacity to defend itself from Soviet divisions deployed in East Germany, which could reach the Eastern border of France in some or some tens of hours. By the way, the post-war plans to create a European defense community faltered by the French Parliament had at that time no real prospects not only because of political but also military-strategic reasons.

Some time later, the President of France Charles de Gaulle remarked that, as conceived in 1949, "L'OTAN, c'est la defense de l'Europe par les Américains"¹. This saying contains much truth, but by defending Europe, Americans defended also themselves, or rather their national interests.

NATO played at least two important roles. The Alliance became a serious military power, which contained the communist expansion in Europe. It turned out to be a serious balance to the conventional and, later, to the growing nuclear power of the Soviet Union. In the post-war years, this balance of power ensured peace and protected not only Europe, but the whole world from a military conflict which could annihilate it.

Not less important was the Alliance's role in uniting (Western) Europe. Today, when the European Union's strength is growing and its enlargement is proceeding swiftly, it is often credited with the role of unifying Europe. Yet, the reconciliation of France and Germany, which is usually linked with Robert Schuman's plan and the creation of the Coal and Steel Union in 1951, was, in fact, the result of the purposive American policy, including the policy conducted within the framework of NATO. There is enough evidence in support of the claim that the activities of Schuman and Jean Monnet, who was the first in the post-war years to propose the creation of super state institutions in Europe, were financed mainly by Americans. They managed to reduce the traditional enmity between France and Germany and pave the way for the admission of Germany to NATO in 1955. Germany's admission to NATO was not only a means of strengthening the Alliance, but also a way of fettering possible revisionist German ambitions, a way to keep Germans down. It is worth of reminding that the Rome Treaty, which became a legal foundation of the European Com-

¹ Giansily J.-A. "From the Defense of Europe to Europe of the Defense", *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, 2000/1(5), p. 29

munity (to be later transformed into the European Union), was signed two years after Germany became a member of NATO, and it is very doubtful that without this step the European Community could be established at all.

There is no need to try to describe and analyze here the later development of NATO. I would only like to mention the admission of Spain in 1982, which strengthened not so much NATO itself as a very fragile at that time democratic regime of this country and demonstrated that NATO was able to ensure political stability of its members, not only their military security. The political element in the activities of NATO was becoming increasingly stronger, especially after the political changes in the Soviet Union in late fifties and the appearance of the first signs of warming of the relations between the USA and the Soviet Union. Yet, until the end of the Cold War, NATO remained mainly a military defensive alliance. Of course, its members were bound together more and more by both common interests of ensuring security and common values, which grew in significance not only in the countries having old democratic traditions, such as the USA, the UK, and France, but also in the former totalitarian or authoritarian (West) Germany, Italy, Spain, and Portugal. However, the main task of NATO was territorial defense of its member-countries. Discussions were going on the circumstances and possibilities of the use of tactical and strategic nuclear weapons and other military matters, but the armed forces of NATO members, especially of its European members, were developed mainly with the purpose of strengthening territorial defense. Mobile forces capable of conducting military operations outside a clearly defined area of responsibility of NATO were not developed at a rapid pace, because they were not very important for territorial defense. Nuclear mines placed at the border with East Germany were regarded as a much more effective protection from the threatening tanks of the Warsaw Pact than mobile rapid reaction forces. The warranted mutual self-destruction in a full-scale nuclear conflict ensured security of both opposing blocks, but gave no incentive to a radical reform of the structure of the armed forces of NATO countries. The Soviet Union's invasion into Afghanistan increased anxiety concerning Soviet intentions and plans in the Middle East, South Asia and elsewhere. Yet, the invasion was regarded rather as an inducement to strengthen the existing NATO's defense capabilities and not as an incentive to start a radical reform of the armed forces.

The situation radically changed after the end of the Cold War. Admittedly, the end of the Cold War may be linked not only with the internal social and political processes in communist countries that NATO's analysts, focused on the analysis of military and strategic factors, did not take notice of, but also with NATO's efforts in the defense area. The Soviet Union had no possibilities to create a wide-ranging ABM system much talked about already in the eighties, although its real construction has started only recently. Although its military-industrial complex was relatively well developed, almost all economy of the country had to be involved into the process of the construction of such system. The shape of the centrally planned economy of the Soviet Union was deplorable because of its natural degradation. Thus, NATO's military might was an important external circumstance, which had an effect on the collapse of the communist system and of the Soviet Union itself. The burden of growing military expenses was simply too great for it to sustain.

Not all analysts agree that the West won the Cold War. Some claim that the Soviet Union simply withdrew from it. Yet, this difference of the opinions does not

deny the fact that after the fall of the Soviet Union and political, economic and military weakening of Russia, this country does not cause a serious and direct threat to the Alliance anymore. This statement is a fundamental presumption on which all recent debates on NATO's future are based. Political changes in Russia do matter. Yet more important is the crude fact that Russia simply has no military capabilities to start a wide-ranging offensive and invade Western Europe. Its divisions are deployed not in East Germany, but more than a thousand kilometers to the East, the general state of its armed forces is lamentable, Germany is united, Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary are members of NATO. One additional fact, which is less often taken notice of, is worth mentioning. Some Western military analysts estimate that in the mid-seventies, the Soviet Union needed just two days or, at the most, two weeks to start a wide-ranging military offensive on the West after making an appropriate political decision. If Russia's political leadership made such an absolutely unimaginable decision today, at least two years for military preparations would be necessary.

Russia still has the most of its strategic nuclear weapons intact, thus, even today it is capable of annihilating all NATO countries. But because of the very bad shape of its conventional military forces, a wide-ranging military conflict in Europe has become virtually impossible. A purely nuclear attack by Russia would be absolutely irrational. Thus, NATO's political and military leaders and experts look at Russia's nuclear potential, still impressive, without the previous fear. To be more exact, they are more concerned not about the very fact of its existence, but about Russia's ability to ensure its safety. NATO was founded to contain and deter the Soviet Union and to withstand the great threat it posed. Now this threat has disappeared. Thus, it is natural to ask: is NATO still indispensable and if so, what kind of NATO is needed in the 21st century? In other words, what is NATO's *raison d'être* today? Of course, when searching for an answer to this question, an account must be taken of many factors and circumstances we still have not mentioned, including new threats to international security, the relations between the USA and Europe, NATO and the EU, as well as relations between NATO, the EU, and Russia. Analysis of different views concerning these matters is the main aim of this article.

NATO's enlargement and NATO's future

We will begin from the issue of NATO's enlargement, because when speaking about NATO's future, the question how big NATO must be and how many members it must have is not of secondary importance. This issue is directly related to the question about NATO's character and role in the 21st century.

In the middle of the nineties, debates on NATO's enlargement were quite often carried on, especially in candidate countries, as if an enlargement of the old style Cold-War-period NATO was discussed. The military might of the enlarged Alliance was much debated about. Thinking in territorial terms, much was anticipated from the expected bettering of the geostrategic situation of NATO after moving NATO's boundaries eastwards. At least Germany, which was one of the most enthusiastic supporters of the first post-Cold-War wave of NATO's enlargement (although until 2002, it was very skeptical as to the necessity of the second wave), was convinced that after it handed over the role of a front-line state to Poland and the Czech Republic, its security would increase.

But, in fact, the admission of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary to NATO was decided mainly not by military but by political considerations. It was much more important for the old NATO countries to ensure stability and democracy in the important adjacent region than to strengthen NATO's military power. Truly speaking, Spain became a member of NATO because of the same considerations. In both cases, the Alliance had to deal with the non-democratic past of the countries to be admitted. The membership in the Alliance was regarded as a guarantee of political permanence and democratic development. The highest officials of NATO, especially civilians, like to reiterate that the unity of the Alliance is ensured not only by the Washington Treaty and common command structures but also by shared values. When presenting arguments for the admission of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, it was possible to claim that this step would speed up the process of adopting Western values in Central Europe and to rely on the fact of the successful political and not only military integration into the "really" Western world of Spain, Portugal and Greece.

Of course, NATO refused to admit Slovakia, which was ruled in the authoritarian manner by Vladimir Meciar, but this step was meant to be a political lesson to other countries of Central and Eastern Europe: in order to become a member of an elite club you must follow written and unwritten rules of it even before you become a member. By the way, the absence of Slovakia in the first wave of NATO's enlargement made that wave slightly questionable from a purely strategic point of view. Hungary became isolated from the other NATO members, thus indefensible.

Debates on NATO's enlargement as an important factor, which could affect NATO's future, have been very intensive during the last two years, and the prevalent opinions were changing quickly. At the beginning, i.e. after the accession of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary and the final ascertaining that from the military point of view they were not full-fledged members of the Alliance, the standpoint of most Western analysts and politicians related to the desire for the next fast wave of the enlargement became very skeptical. This position was strengthened by the fact that public opinion of some new member-countries, especially that of the Czech Republic, was not in favor of NATO's actions during NATO's Kosovo operation. The new members were not prepared militarily and, what was much worse, they were not very reliable politically.

Because of the problems related to the real integration of the new members into the Alliance in the year of 2000, many older NATO members had no intention to support a further enlargement. At that time, early membership of the Baltic countries in the Alliance seemed rather unlikely. It was actively supported by Denmark, Poland, a little more cautiously by other Visegrad countries and, what was most important, by some members of the American administration. Those experts and analysts, who supported the idea of a fast further enlargement at all, tended towards the opinion that it was advisable to limit themselves to the minimal version of a further enlargement. As the most likely candidates, Slovenia, which is the most economically developed country among the candidates, and Slovakia, where political situation changed and Meciar lost his post, have been most often mentioned. Admittedly, the proposal made by Zbigniew Brzezinski to expand NATO in two directions, to the South and the North, by admitting Slovenia and Lithuania to the Alliance, aroused some interest in NATO. Brzezinski emphasized that the admission of Lithuania, postponing the membership of other Baltic countries, was preferable since, firstly, the so-called red line, i.e. the borderline of the former Soviet Union, would be

crossed and the Alliance would show that it does not recognize the limits to its enlargement unilaterally declared by Russia, and secondly, the accession of only one Baltic country to NATO would soften Russia's negative reaction. True, the notion that Lithuania's membership in NATO is possible without the membership of Latvia and Estonia was the cornerstone of Lithuania's foreign policy for a few years. From the middle of the nineties, one of its undeclared aims was the dismantling of the Baltic geopolitical region.

Yet Brzezinski's arguments, in spite of his prestige, did not convince many policy-makers in NATO countries. These arguments were weakened, of course, by the well-known fact of his Polish origin, which was not difficult to link with Poland's support for Lithuania's membership in NATO.

In 2001, the situation in the debates on the enlargement of NATO started to change, and the number of supporters of a wider NATO expansion by admitting many countries simultaneously, i.e. of the so-called big bang, started to grow gradually. A few factors influenced this change. The most important was the increase of the number of supporters of a wider enlargement of NATO in the main NATO country. Many members of the administration, congressmen and representatives of academic circles began to understand two things. Firstly, because of the changing functions of NATO and its evolution from a military defense alliance towards a kind of security community having, admittedly, a developed military structure, the degree of economic development and even the condition of the armed forces of the candidate countries plays a less important role than it was thought a few years ago. For a new, less military and more political Alliance, the admission of several and not only two new members is very desirable. In such case, after making a tentative positive decision concerning Slovakia and Slovenia, it is necessary to decide, which other candidate countries could be invited to NATO: the Baltic countries or Romania and Bulgaria.

The Baltic countries meet membership criteria better than Romania and Bulgaria. Yet, the importance of the latter for NATO was clearly demonstrated during the Kosovo crisis. On the other hand, recently it has become clear that because of a slower pace of economic reforms and their economic underdevelopment, these countries will not be admitted to the EU until 2007. Seeking to expand the zone of stability in Europe, to maintain Western influence and not to disappoint their inhabitants too much, their admission to at least one of the main Euro-Atlantic organizations is clearly advisable. Some NATO countries are inclined to support the membership of the Baltic countries in NATO, others – that of Romania and Bulgaria. In this situation, likely the best solution is to admit all mentioned countries – Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria – simultaneously. Thus, there would be no need to come back to the issue of the enlargement of NATO soon and have new political problems in NATO countries. In his Bratislava speech delivered in 2001, Brzezinski also supported such model of NATO enlargement.

The second reason why Americans started to look more sympathetically at the membership of all mentioned countries is likely the fact that they began to more highly appreciate the importance of their positions in Central and Eastern Europe. Because of the complication of the USA and the EU relations, it became more important to have more devotees of the USA in Europe.

The evolution of Russia's position towards the enlargement of NATO had also some effect on the increase of the number of supporters of the big bang. In Putin's

times it softened considerably. Many facts testified to that even before September 11, 2001. We will mention only one. In spite of the Kremlin's official "no" to the further enlargement, already in the autumn of 2000, the Governor of Kaliningrad region, the former Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Baltic Fleet Vladimir Jegorov openly declared that nothing would change in Kaliningrad region after Lithuania becomes a member of NATO. It was easy to conclude that if Lithuania's membership in NATO did not affect the Russian exclave, which would be surrounded by the territory of NATO member-countries, it could not make a great impact on the geopolitical situation of the whole of Russia. For good reasons, Jegorov was much more concerned about Poland's and Lithuania's future membership in the EU.

At the end of 2000, Russia became more or less reconciled to the fact that it forever lost the status of the superpower it had had in the Soviet times and had to behave as a regional power that could exert only a very limited impact on the decisions made by the only remaining superpower and its allies. Besides, Russia became convinced that NATO was keeping its promise not to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of its new members. The image of NATO as an aggressive alliance was strengthened in Russia by NATO's actions during the Kosovo crisis, but after bombardments ended and especially after Slobodan Milosevic lost power in Yugoslavia, this image began to pale.

The softening of Russia's position towards NATO's enlargement was also related to the hope that the expanding North Atlantic Alliance would become, in purely military terms, not stronger but weaker. This estimation is shared not only by some Russian but also Western analysts. Very characteristic in this respect is the position taken up by *The Economist*. In May 2002, in an unsigned text, which has the status of the so-called special report, this position was defined very clearly:

Last June, in Warsaw, Mr Bush called on NATO to be ready at Prague to issue as many new invitations as possible. The alliance should 'not calculate how little we can get away with, but how much we can do to advance the cause of freedom'. Yet some of those who most value NATO's military effectiveness – the British and German governments, some members of the United States Senate – have doubts about going much beyond the current 19 members. They worry that Mr Bush's open-door enthusiasm really reflects his dwindling interest in NATO as a military tool.

Critics feel that to extend new invitations to Slovenia, Slovakia, perhaps the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and possibly even to Bulgaria and Romania, would inevitably dilute the alliance, turning it into more of a security talking-shop. That might make a bigger NATO more acceptable to Russia, but would reduce it to little more than an armed version of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which is open to all Europeans and spends its time on good works such as election-monitoring.²

The third factor is also worth mentioning: not only Americans, but also European NATO members began to see some advantages of the fast and wide enlargement of NATO. They are not afraid of the possible strengthening (or rather temporary strengthening) of USA positions in the Alliance. At least some European politicians believe that the accession of new countries to NATO in the future will create better conditions for the development of the EU Rapid Reaction Forces. The precondition of a successful advance of such forces is cooperation of most EU countries within the framework of the North Atlantic Alliance.

² "The Future of NATO. Special Report", *The Economist*, May 4th-10th 2002, p. 23.

The USA, the EU, and NATO

NATO's enlargement will have, without doubt, an impact on NATO's character and import. But the changing relations between the USA and Europe (i.e. the EU) will have even a larger impact on NATO's future. One of the factors influencing these relations is the reaction of the USA on the military ambitions of Europe. Yet this reaction must be seen in a wider perspective, and many of those taking part in the debates on NATO's future understand that very well. During the last three or four years, the problem of the evolution of the relations between the USA and Europe and of the impact of this evolution on NATO's future became one of the most if not the most discussed issues in academic and non-academic literature on international relations.

Daniel Rotfeld, the Director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, one of the leading authorities in Europe, is firmly convinced that

This [the USA-EU. – E.N.] relationship will largely determine the new role for NATO in Europe. One thing is unquestionable: in the entire history of the European efforts to integrate security and defence policies, the last two years have brought about a new quality with the adoption of the St. Malo Declaration of December 1998. Various elements have contributed to that: the collapse of the bipolar system; the lack of clear, "classic" external threats; the new status of the USA in NATO, Europe and in the world; and, lastly, the crisis situations on the periphery of South Europe, particularly in the Balkans.³

A very important reference point for Rotfeld and other participants of the debates is the St. Malo Declaration of France and the UK, which reflected a strengthened – during the years of Blair's rule – self-perception of the UK as a European country and opened way to the creation of the military forces of the EU, which could carry out Petersberg type missions. Of course, when discussing the evolution of the USA-EU relations, participants of the debates also recall the Maastricht Treaty, which laid foundations for common foreign and security policy of the EU, as well as other political decisions made and legal acts adopted by the EU, specifically the Treaties of Amsterdam and Nice, and the decisions made at Köln and Helsinki.

Since the creation of the Alliance, the USA has been a politically and militarily prevalent country in NATO. Members of the American administration and congressmen constantly show their dissatisfaction with an insufficient financial and military contribution of European members of NATO to the implementation of NATO's tasks, the most important of which is, or at least was until recently, defense of (Western) Europe itself. The USA spends a much greater part of its national product on defense than European NATO members. An exception from the rule is Greece and Turkey, but the most important reason of a relatively high level of expenses of these countries on defense is rather tense relations between these countries themselves (admittedly, they have lately become less tense), and not the common needs of NATO. As to the size of the armed forces, European NATO members outnumber the USA (1.8 and 1.3 million respectively), but European countries lack most modern military equipment, especially precision weapons, means of transport and communications, military aircraft and plenty of other things necessary for modern armies. For

³ Rotfeld A.D. "The New Transatlantic Agenda: the EU-US Relationship", in: *Prospects for EU-US Relationship*. Ed. by Ryszard Stemplowski, Warszawa, 2001, p. 14.

the equipment of one soldier, the USA spends about three times more than European members of the Alliance. The part of GDP spent on defense in the USA was constantly decreasing during the nineties, but say in 1999, it was 3.5%, whereas the average of European NATO members was 2.4%. The biggest European country Germany decreased its military spendings to 1.8% of GDP in 2001.⁴

The extra 48 billion US dollars, which the USA will add to its defense budget in 2003, exceeds the present defense budgets of France and the UK taken together. Admittedly, 11 out of 15 EU countries plan to slightly increase their military spendings in 2003, but American and European military efforts look very differently in their financial expression. Even a greater gap can be seen between the results of these efforts, i. e. the level of the armed forces. In 2002, the EU made some important decisions concerning these matters, but, at least from the formal point of view, that means the strengthening of the military potential of the EU, not of NATO. Americans are especially unhappy that European countries use even those modest financial means ineffectively.

The most serious blow to the illusions – if somebody still had them – that NATO was an alliance of more or less militarily equivalent and interoperable partners was dealt by the Kosovo campaign. At the February 2000 Munich Conference on Security Policy, the US Defense Secretary William Cohen told Europeans:

We simply cannot continue with a posture in which one member of NATO conducts virtually two thirds of all air support sorties and half of all air combat missions; in which only a handful of countries have precision munitions that can operate in all kind of weather; and in which some pilots had to communicate over open frequencies in a hostile environment.⁵

Europeans had no choice but to accept this criticism. As Germany's Minister of Defense stated at the same conference, the problem in NATO is not too much of America, but too little of Europe. During the Kosovo campaign it became clearer than ever that NATO, which was emphasizing interoperability as a demand candidate-countries must meet, itself had serious problems with interoperability, when carrying out any serious missions, in which military forces of different NATO member-countries took part.

With the aim of developing the proficiency of the European members of the Alliance to participate in NATO missions, efforts have been made recently to strengthen the military capabilities of NATO European countries without duplicating the already existing NATO planning and command structures and other recourses, which are at the Alliance's disposal. The strengthening of the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) has been regarded as part of NATO endeavors to adapt to the new political and military circumstances, which came into being after the end of the Cold War. It was possible to imagine that the development of the European Security and Defense Identity may be linked with the implementation of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy envisaged by the Maastricht Treaty, which also mentions the possibility of common defense policy. Yet in 1996, NATO's foreign and defense ministers decided that the ESDI would be developed within the framework of NATO

⁴ Walker, M. "Europe's Existential Crisis", *The Wilson Quarterly*, 2001, vol. 25, No. 1, p. 43.

⁵ Cohen W. Remarks as prepared by Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen on European Security and Defense Identity. 36th Munich Conference on Security Policy, 5 February 2000.

with the aim of strengthening NATO's European pillar, to better adapt to the new challenges NATO was facing and to carry out crisis management and peacekeeping operations more smoothly and effectively. The ESDI's linkage with the concept of Combined Joint Task Forces (decisions leading to the development of that concept were taken by NATO already in 1994) had to additionally underscore that the ESDI was a process going on *within* NATO.

It is necessary to emphasize that the ESDI has been linked not with the creation of the military dimension or identity of the EU, but with the participation of the WEU in the process of ensuring security in Europe. During the NATO summit in Madrid in July 1997, the Western European Union was identified as the main partner of the Alliance and from the same year it started taking part in the Alliance's military planning. The conception of the ESDI was rather simple: in case a crisis emerged in which the WEU would decide to intervene and NATO – not, the WEU would use the resources and capabilities of NATO by carrying out operations led by the WEU. And although the military forces which the WEU could use, were identified, the WEU had, in each case, to ask for permission to use them and NATO command and control structures, too. That meant that in spite of the fact that the operation would be carried out under the authority of the WEU, the resources used in it would be “borrowed” NATO resources to be given back when the operation is over; and during the period of the operation, permanent consultations with NATO would be mandatory.

Recently Europeans have become dissatisfied with the concept of the European Security and Defense Identity to be developed *within* NATO. They no longer want to be treated simply as a junior partner of the USA whose actions may always be vetoed by the senior partner. Europe, which is becoming stronger, more integrated and better understanding its own interests, wants to be less dependent on the USA and, at least in some respects, on NATO, in which Americans play a predominant military and political role. Of course, at least at present, the EU has no intention to take over from NATO the function of territorial defense, which has been NATO's main task from the very beginning. But when carrying out Petersberg tasks, which were set forth in 1992, i.e. (1) humanitarian and rescue tasks; (2) peacekeeping tasks; and (3) tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking, the EU seeks to become less dependent on the USA. It is worth reminding that Petersberg tasks were set out as WEU and not EU tasks, because in 1992, when the Maastricht Treaty was not yet in force, it was simply impossible to set out them as EU tasks. Yet the WEU, which woke up from a deep winter sleep when the Cold War was over and commenced an energetic, at the first glance, but mainly token activity, in fact, had no prospects to become a permanent element of the European security architecture. Both “sleeping” and “awoke”, it was somewhere between NATO and the EU (EC). It was weak because of many reasons, but the main of them was the fact that it had neither real military might NATO has at its disposal, nor real economic might, which is the foundation of the EU influence. Thus, the WEU's present-day virtual death was to be expected.

When carrying out Petersberg tasks, the EU must rely not only upon the CFSP, but also upon common security and defense policy. Both policy areas overlap to quite a great extent. Thus, it is possible to speak about the EU's common foreign, security and defense policy. Of course, the shape of that policy is determined mainly not by the commitment to take over from the WEU the tasks it just started to perform, but by

European interests, which, according to many analysts, cannot be defended in the world without some military capabilities. Admittedly, until recently, Japan has managed to successfully defend its economic interests in the world having very limited self-defense forces, but, it seems, the EU is concerned about far more matters than economy, and Japan's geopolitical status does not fit it.

Western unity, which was at its height during the peak of the Cold War, is gradually fading away. The role of the USA in Europe is diminishing. Europe, whose embodiment is the permanently enlarging EU, starts to see its role in the world in a different way. It opposes American aims to maintain – in spite of a sharp decrease in the size of the American military forces deployed in the old continent – control of processes going on in Europe. Europe, which from the beginning of the 16th century until the beginning of the 20th century clearly dominated in the world, aspires in the 21st century to become *one* of the power centers of the world, which at least in some respects could be comparable with the USA and China. Two years ago in Lisbon the EU put forward a very ambitious task – to become around 2010 the leader and the moving force of world economy. Admittedly, the results of the implementation of this task do not look, from a two-year perspective, very impressive.

When aspiring to become one of the world's power centers, Europe cannot ignore an important characteristic of such center – its military dimension. The united Europe needs military power not so much for its territorial defense, but rather for facing other security challenges of the modern world. Even if the military power of a self-dependent power center is devoted to performing limited tasks, it cannot depend to such a degree as today upon the military power of the other power center, i.e. the USA. This is the main reason why Europe became less interested in the European Security and Defense Identity within NATO and why the CFSP was supplemented by common security and defense policy.

The main result of Europe's common foreign, security and defense policy is practical implementation of the decision adopted at the EU summit in Helsinki in 1999: to have 60,000-man Rapid Reaction Forces, which could be deployed at a wanted place in 60 days and could perform operations as long as one year. A successful deployment of such forces requires to have adequate means of transportation. European countries do not have enough of them. Thus, a decision to start to produce transport aircraft A-400 M has been adopted recently.

Yet, having in mind that only about 20,000 soldiers out of 60,000 could take part in carrying out combat missions, whereas others should be involved in logistic and support operations, the proposed number is clearly insufficient for a bigger operation. Therefore, military experts estimate that in 2003, the EU must have 200,000-300,000 soldiers, 300-350 aircraft and 60-80 military ships in its Rapid Reaction Forces.⁶

The administration of President Clinton had some reservations as to the European plans to create such forces, but, in general, its position was rather positive, although previous US administrations were opposing such plans. Yet, the standpoint of the G. W. Bush administration on European plans is, it seems, slightly less favorable. All American administrations, both previous and present, were inclined to emp-

⁶ See Howorth J. *European Integration and Ddefence: the Ultimate Challenge*, Chailot Papers, 2000, No. 43, p. 37-43.

hasize that the creation of the EU Rapid Reaction Forces should not split NATO. Most of all they were opposed to the creation of separate, independent of NATO planning and command structures of such forces. They argued that the emergence of such structures would lead to an unwanted and even harmful duplication of the already existing NATO structure. The standpoint of most Europeans was the opposite: without their own military planning and command structures, the military forces of the EU would remain dependent upon NATO, i.e. upon the USA. In that case, they would become forces controlled by the USA, not the EU.

Europeans tend to better understand that their point of view and that of Americans on international security problems and ways of solving them do not necessary coincide. During the Kosovo crisis they were acting in a united way in spite of all problems of military cooperation. Yet, the main reason of their unity was not equal strategic importance of the Balkans to Americans and Europeans, but rather the fact that they regarded the Kosovo crisis as a test of stability and reliability of the Alliance. This situation does not have to reoccur in all possible future crises.

As Gilles Andréani, Christoph Bertram and Charles Grant – the authors of the study *Europe's Military Revolution* – indicate:

The new threats no longer unite because they are rarely existential for all NATO's members, and sometimes concern very few of them. In most instances, their source is geographically defined, and they will affect members, which are geographically distant in very different ways – with the greatest distance provided by the Atlantic Ocean. In the new environment of limited insecurity and limited threats, the behaviour of allies is shaped less by military statistics than by cultural patterns, traditions and historical experience, coupled with specific regional interests and economic ambitions.⁷

These words were written before September 11, 2001. We will deal with the issue of the impact of the September 11 attack on the future of NATO later. At the moment it is important for us to emphasize that this attack did not stop EU military efforts.

So that the military forces the EU is aiming to create could act independently of NATO, it is necessary to do very much, especially in the area of logistics. Yet, the first steps towards the creation of independent European command structures have already been made: the EU established the Political and Security Committee, the Military Committee and the Military Staff, the latter, admittedly, performing at the moment the function of military expertise and not of military command. Military and technical structures, which must enable the EU to conduct military operations making no use of NATO's resources, are being created and developed. One of the latest specific projects of the EU in this area is the creation of the independent satellite system *Galileo*. The European Council decided in 2000 in Nice that in operations, conducted by the EU using NATO resources, NATO should have the right to make the final decision. Yet in the operations, in which the Alliance's resources would not be used, the cooperation between the EU and NATO should be limited to the exchange of information.

⁷ Andreani, Gilles, Christoph Bertram and Charles Grant. *Europe's Military Revolution*, London: Centre for European Reform, 2001, p. 74.

Thus, the EU is, in fact, becoming a political-military alliance and not only an economic-political union. Its new status is reflected by the fact that the institutional cooperation between the EU and NATO has been going on since January 2001. It includes regular meetings at the level of ambassadors and ministers of foreign affairs. The fact that a representative of a EU country which is not a NATO member – General Gustav Hagglund from Finland – heads the EU's Military Committee bears evidence to the EU's aspirations to separate its military command structures from those of NATO.

Some European politicians and analysts, especially in France, are treating the EU Rapid Reaction Forces as a European Army in embryo, which in the future could perform tasks of territorial defense, and not only those of Petersberg. At the moment, such prospects do not look realistic. The European army is a vain dream for some and a nightmare for others. But if Europeans intend to take over a greater part of the burden of the defense of Europe, the creation of independent European military planning and command structures, arousing at present the resistance of Americans, is indispensable.

Admittedly, besides the already mentioned military, financial and technological difficulties related to the creation of the military dimension of the European Union, legal problems exist as well. Issues related to creating and using independent (of the USA and NATO) and united European armed forces may be solved only on the basis of a European constitution. Yet, it is quite clear that the EU will not have more or less consistent and comprehensive legal foundation at least until 2004. Some political problems exist as well. Some EU member-countries, especially those, which till recently used to define themselves as neutral, have strong objections to the possible transformation of the Rapid Reaction Forces into a European Army.

In spite of all these problems, the creation of European military forces, which could perform not only Petersberg tasks and would be substantially bigger than it was decided in Helsinki, is, in fact, a possible and, moreover, a rather probable development. Thus, the structure of the Euro-Atlantic defense would change dramatically: from unipolar presently, it could become bipolar in the future. Until now, the USA has manifestly dominated NATO. If Europe develops its military capabilities and starts to shape and implement consistent security and defense policy of its own, Europe may become the other pole of NATO, finally treated by Americans as an equal partner and not as a younger brother. In that case, from the structure where the USA in all respects prevails over all other Alliance members NATO may become a union of two partners really equal in rights.

Rotfeld, who has been mentioned earlier, wrote:

Much misunderstanding stems from the simple fact that European-US relations are and will be asymmetrical. The United States is a global power with a foreign and security policy determined by the president. The European Union is not and will not be in the foreseeable future a single state – it will be a community of states with differing priorities. Thus, so long as a genuine common foreign policy will be lacking, there will be no common security and defense policy. Therefore, Europe and the United States are incompatible in these respects.⁸

⁸ Rotfeld A.D. (note 3), p. 15-16.

Rotfeld correctly identifies the present situation. Yet, his appraisal of the prospects for the future may be put under doubt.

Debates on NATO's future were at their height when the ill-fated day of September 11, 2001, came. The Alliance displayed its unity by invoking for the first time Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. Yet, the events that followed demonstrated that the forms and ways of the response to the terrorist attack against the USA gave NATO-skeptics new arguments to support their claim that NATO had no future at all.

It is difficult to overrate the significance of the Munich Conference on Security Policy, which is likely the most important forum for debates on NATO's future and other security issues. In February 2002, it was held for the 38th time. Addressing its participants, the Secretary General of NATO George Robertson began his speech with the following words:

A week ago, the *Wall Street Journal* argued that if security were a marketable product, it would be hard to find a better brand name than NATO.

Dr. Teltschik [Horst Teltschik was the Chairman of the Conference. – E.N.], the same applies to this conference. Munich is a leading trade name in its field, a venue where the most serious security issues are debated openly and honestly, among experts and key decision makers.⁹

Yet, is the NATO after September 11 really the best brand name for security? Key decision-makers of many NATO countries still officially support Robertson's claims. Yet many experts have serious doubts. Writing about the above-mentioned conference in the journal *Politische Meinung*, Ruprecht Polenz professed:

At Munich security conference at the beginning of February it became clear:

The September 11th attacks have put the threat of international terrorism and spreading of weapons of mass destruction into foreground.

Many participants expressed concern that the USA and their European allies move away from each other. Europeans complain because of American unilateral action. Americans take pride in their right to self-defense and reproach Europeans for lack of concern in their armed forces.

Because NATO does not play a leading role in the fight with international terrorism, many fear that NATO's significance may radically decrease. NATO may become superfluous.¹⁰

The world after September 11: the new security environment and new challenges to NATO

Security environment in the world and especially in Europe has been changing very fast since the end of the Cold War. The character of the main threats to the West has considerably altered. During the nineties, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction was considered the most important threat. The increasing number of nuclear states, relatively simple ways to acquire and produce bacteriological and especially chemical weapons posed a danger that such weapons could be used in regional conflicts more widely. The world community was especially worried over

⁹ Robertson G. NATO's Future. Speech by the Secretary General of NATO to the Munich Conference on Security Policy, Munich, February 3, 2002, p.1.

¹⁰ Polenz R. "NATO, Terrorismus und eine neue Weltordnung", *Die Politische Meinung*, Nr. 390, Mai 2002, p. 5.

the possibility that nuclear weapons might be used in the never-ending conflict between India and Pakistan. In the nineties, uncontrollable trade in conventional weapons, international trade in drugs, illegal migration, ecological and other threats were posing an increasing danger as well. The matter of general anxiety, especially at the very beginning of the nineties, was a possible uncontrollable downfall of the Soviet Union with its dangerous consequences; some time later, it was worried about the conflicts that flared up in the Balkans after the disintegration of Yugoslavia and were suppressed only by great efforts of the international community and, first of all, by those of the North Atlantic Alliance. Almost always terrorism was mentioned among the most significant threats to security. Nevertheless, many analysts tended to treat it more as a regional threat than a global one. The Middle East, first of all Palestine and Israel, Algeria, Northern Ireland, Basque province and a few Latin American states were mentioned as the most important terrorism centers. Though there were certain links between groups of terrorists acting in different areas, security analysts usually considered these links as technical ones, related, first of all, to the provision of weapons. It seemed that these groups had quite different aims.

Since in their practice most of politicians and especially military men followed mainly the principles of the realist paradigm of international relations, the role of non-state subjects of international relations was underestimated. Though it was realized that after the Cold War security environment changed, the changes were usually linked with the interrelations and activities of states. Therefore, security experts, politicians and the media paid much more attention, for example, to the threat (though reduced) of Russia, a possible intensification of authoritarian and expansionist tendencies in it, intentions to consolidate its influence in the so called “near abroad” including the Baltic States, its resistance to NATO enlargement or, say, to the growth of the might of China, than to the activities of little known terrorist groups in Middle and South Asia. The names of al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden were barely known not only to the broad public, but to politicians as well. After the withdrawal of the Soviet troops, Afghanistan gradually became a forgotten country to the media. Nevertheless, American oil companies were seriously interested in this country as a potential Caspian Sea oil transit country and namely this fact explains why for such a long time the USA had been supporting the Taliban, which had, supposedly, to ensure stability in Afghanistan and security of the future oil pipeline, but, in fact, became the main guardian of al Qaeda. However annoying it might be, by supporting the Taliban regime and Saudi Arabian wahabites that also backed up bin Laden, the USA, in fact, contributed, even though unintentionally and indirectly, to the growth of influence and might of their enemy that on September 11, 2001, became its enemy No 1.

There is no need here to name all terror acts which special services relate now to al Qaeda’s activities. Necessary conclusions were not drawn even after the attack on the USA embassies in East Africa and the USS “Cole” at Aden harbor. Terror acts had been expected in foreign countries rather than in the USA, and terrorism was not treated as the greatest threat to security. Therefore, September 11 was such a great shock to Americans. Some affirm that it even exceeded the shock caused by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Many politicians, analysts and commentators almost unanimously started to claim that after September 11 the world would never be the same as it used to be.

Of course, this claim can be questioned. Unsanctioned use of nuclear wea-

pons which could cause the Third World War, hunger, exhaustion of natural resources, ecological disasters – all these threats in the last decades have been exaggerated as well. Now the threat of international terrorism might be slightly overestimated, and after some time we will have to admit that. But there is no doubt that today terrorism is reasonably treated as the most significant threat to security, including international security.

NATO's response to the September 11 attack was quick and determined. On September 12, NATO officially declared that if evidence that the terror acts had been guided from abroad was produced, these acts would be treated as an attack against one of NATO states and this would obligate the other states to act in accordance with Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. On October 2, the Alliance declared that such evidence was produced. NATO started to act in accordance with the regulation of Article 5, which stipulates: "An armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all"¹¹.

When NATO was created, it was thought that an armed attack against one or a few states of the Alliance was to be expected in Europe and that the USA would be the main power, ensuring the repulse of such an attack. The state attacked on September 11 was not a European state – NATO member, but namely the USA, which since the end of the Cold War had been feeling safe as never before. In the last decade of the 20th century, the USA military expenses made up about 40 percent of the world military expenses¹², and the state's military might was unrivaled. The basis of the USA's military might was its economic power: during the nineties, the part of the USA in the world economy increased from 25 to approximately 30 percent¹³. Nevertheless, the blow was struck against the most powerful country from the military, economic, technological and many other points of view. Military, technological and economic might did not protect the country from the attack, which went down into history as the most striking example of an "asymmetrical" war. By rough calculations, the preparation for the attack costed al Qaeda about 100,000 USA dollars, while the caused material damage reached 90 or even more billion dollars. Terrorists lost 19 people, whereas the number of their victims amounts approximately to 3,000.

Having started to act according to Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, the North Atlantic Alliance demonstrated the unity which had been expected from it during almost all years of its existence. True, this unity slightly faded after the end of the Cold War, when the common enemy of all Alliance members, the powerful and aggressive Soviet Union ceased to exist. The existence of a strong enemy is known to be the major factor ensuring the cohesion of a coalition. But in the autumn of 2001, it turned out that a new and not less dangerous enemy appeared or, to be more precise, became active. This enemy – like communism – had an international character and it was quite natural to expect that the response to the international threat would be international as well. Quite often NATO is characterized (or at least was characterized) as the most successful military alliance in the history of the world. Therefore, in

¹¹ North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *NATO Handbook. 50th Anniversary Edition*, Brussels: Office of Information and Press, 1998, p. 396.

¹² See Cox M. "American power before and after 11 September: dizzy with success?", *International Affairs*, vol. 78, No. 2, April 2002, p. 268.

¹³ See *ibidem*, p. 266.

spite of the fact that NATO was founded in response to the threat of a different nature, the experience of its members in military cooperation prompted many to expect that NATO might and had to become the most important international organization coordinating the fight against international terrorism. The United Nations, the other possible candidate for this mission, simply did not possess the necessary military resources to cope with the threat of international terrorism and, due to its nature, was able to play only a secondary role, political rather than military.

The USA, as a NATO state, *was able* to take advantage of the membership in the Alliance and seek that the operation in Afghanistan would be conducted as a NATO operation and the Alliance itself would become the leader, center and headquarters of the fight against international terrorism. But the USA, practically immediately, rejected such possibility and decided not to use the resources of NATO as an organization. True, some NATO AWACS planes with international crews were re-deployed from Europe to the USA in order to help control the USA airspace, while the USA would use their AWACS planes in Central and South Asia; the Alliance's warships were redeployed in the Mediterranean Sea for the same purposes; NATO reinforced coordination of intelligence activities, but, in fact, this was practically all that NATO, *as a unified organization*, did in preparing for the operation in Afghanistan and conducting it.

This clearly secondary role of NATO in the operation and, we should add, in the whole context of the fight against international terrorism makes many politicians and analysts call into question the significance and future of this organization. As we have already mentioned, such doubts arose straight after the end of the Cold War, but never were they so loud and numerous than during the year following September 11.

Why didn't Americans wish NATO to start acting *in real terms* according to Article 5 and were not interested in the collective response of the *whole* Alliance to the challenge of international terrorism? There are several reasons, and some of them were identified and analyzed in debates on NATO's future.

One of the most frequently mentioned arguments was the bitter experience of Americans in cooperating with Europeans in the operations led by NATO. During these operations it became evident what was theoretically known long time ago. The gap between the military power of the USA and its European allies, especially concerning modern military technologies, was so deep that Americans were forced, although they did not want, to carry out the greater part of purely military and especially air operations; Europeans seemed to be capable only of peacekeeping. But probably the most important conclusion of Americans was the following: a committee is unable to conduct military operations; from the point of view of Americans, even selecting and discussing specific bombing targets during the Kosovo crisis lasted painfully long.

Americans decided that from a purely military point of view, formal allies were nearly of no use. They rather encumbered them than contributed to successful and quick military operations. That is why after September 11, Americans decided to act, in fact, unilaterally despite the Alliance's good will. Following the principle formulated by G. W. Bush's Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld that "the mission must determine the coalition, the coalition must not determine the mission", they created a broad non-formal international coalition, in which, of course, NATO countries participated as well, but not NATO *as an alliance*. The coalition was led by the

USA, which was not restricted in its actions by decision-making procedures used in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Formal NATO participation in the campaign of Afghanistan was, of course, additionally complicated by the fact that this country was far beyond the limits of NATO's responsibility area as defined by the Washington Treaty. Besides, the support of some countries, for example, Russia or Pakistan, especially in the first stage of the campaign, was undoubtedly more significant from the practical point of view than the support of European NATO members, except, probably, that of Great Britain.

The relatively easy victory in the war against the Taliban, of course, does not mean a decisive victory in the war against terrorism. Al Qaeda was weakened but not destroyed. According to some data, it acts in more than 60 countries all around the world and is quite strong even in Afghanistan. The attempt on Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai's life indirectly confirms that.

There is much to be done in the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan itself, especially in restoring the country's economy and the government which would be capable of keeping control of the whole country. But the campaign against terrorism cannot confine itself to Afghanistan only. Of course, this campaign already involves diplomacy, law enforcement and cooperation between intelligence services. First of all, in the fight against terrorism it is necessary to target its sources: finances, fanatical ideologies, situations and crises that facilitate the recruiting of new terrorists. For example, it is hard to believe that al Qaeda will be defeated if the problem of Palestine remains unresolved.

Here we come to the crucial question: is NATO really capable of becoming the headquarters of the fight against international terrorism as at least some of its leaders would wish. The solution of many important tasks concerning this fight is not quite within NATO's (or at least the present NATO's) competence. The European Union may become an even more helpful partner to America in solving some of these tasks than NATO. But as we have already mentioned, prospects of the relations between Americans and Europeans, who increasingly identify themselves with the EU, are rather hazy.

The most recent problem regarding these relations that came to light after the (partial) victory in Afghanistan has to do with Iraq (or its leader Saddam Hussein) that the USA has identified as its enemy No 2 (enemy No 1 is, of course, bin Laden and his al Qaeda). The only superpower is seeking to use its military might, which, according to it, was very efficiently used in Afghanistan in order to change the regime in Iraq. Though there is not much evidence of Saddam Hussein's direct links with al Qaeda, Iraq possesses some weapons of mass destruction or, at least, has the capability to start their production very soon. Such weapons may be used in even more dangerous acts of terror and that, according to Americans, is a sufficient reason to eliminate Saddam Hussein whose international reputation is more than bad.

The discussion on the necessity to do it by means of a new military operation reveals that the opinions of Americans and Europeans regarding the way of solving international conflicts are quite different. Bush and Rumsfeld are convinced that the world without Saddam Hussein would be a much safer place to live in. Most politicians in the world, including Europe, agree. But at the same time, many analysts and political leaders are convinced that a new *war* against Iraq would make the world an even more dangerous place to live in. Disagreements between Europeans (except,

maybe, Tony Blair, but certainly not all Britons) on this and many other issues of international politics – from the solution of ecological problems to the International Criminal Court’s jurisdiction – pose, most likely, not lesser threat to the global security than international terrorism. The unity of the West has been a guarantee of international security for more than fifty years. As many experts and analysts notice, at present this unity is fading. Now, after a year that has passed since September 11, Europeans and Americans are less united than on September 10, 2001, not to speak about September 12 of the same year. Europe’s unconditional support to the Bush administration declared immediately after the events of September 11 has faded almost as suddenly.

Of course, Lord Robertson would disagree. However, many analysts are convinced that the old and the new continents are drifting apart. The analysis of the reasons of this process is quite a complicated task. We have touched upon some aspects of them earlier. A more detailed analysis of the factors that undermine this unity is not the purpose of this text. I just want to emphasize that this process, as Robert Kagan correctly noticed, looks very different from the American and European points of view¹⁴.

Europeans blame Americans for unilateralism that they, like the rest of the world, cannot accept and admit its legitimacy. In their opinion, when Rumsfeld claims that the mission must determine the coalition and not vice versa, he throws doubt, at least indirectly, upon the very necessity of the existence of permanent coalitions and alliances, including NATO itself.

Americans affirm they are simply forced to act unilaterally. They often recall the words of Madeleine Albright, who once said that “we will behave multilaterally when we can and unilaterally when we must”. The reason of such attitude, as we have already mentioned, is simple: because of the gap between the military capabilities of the USA and Europe, Europeans, from the military point of view, are more often a hindrance to Americans than help. Their participation puts political constraints on the USA, but their real military contribution to any serious operation is of little importance.

Americans and Europeans look at the world from different perspectives, that of power and that of weakness. Europeans are not less egoistic than Americans: being militarily weak, they are interested to solve problems in diplomatic or other non-military ways. They are simply unable to solve them by using military power they do not possess. The dispute over the International Criminal Court reveals much of what divides Americans and Europeans these days.

Europeans [...] are trying to advance their vision of international civilization, with a web of international laws and institutions assuming authority over individual nation-states. Not surprisingly, the world they’re trying to create looks an awful lot like the European Union, where rules and laws are more important than military power. And not surprisingly, they’re none too happy about the militarily dominant United States placing itself above or outside their new international legal system before it’s even begun.¹⁵

¹⁴ See Kagan R. “Power and Weakness”, *Policy Review*, 113, 2002.

¹⁵ Kagan R. “The U.S.-Europe Divide”, *The Washington Post*, May 26, 2002.

Americans respond that the European Union itself came into being and was able to progress only because it was founded and was developing under the safe military wing of Americans. The world beyond the European Union is absolutely different because in it, military power was and remains to be more important than international law and international institutions. In this world, unfortunately, sometimes it is necessary to act unilaterally.

The future of NATO will virtually depend on how successfully Americans and Europeans (European states – NATO members) will solve their disagreements. But the future of the Alliance will depend on other factors as well, not only on the relations between its members, but also on the relations of the Alliance with other states. In the 21st century, China pretends to a status of one of the world power centers. But it will take many years for its economic power to be transformed into a credible global military power, and, for the time being, it is not clear whether it would really pursue this purpose. Japan, for example, whose economic situation during the last ten years has become unenviable, but which was developing very dynamically for quite a long time, never set such a task. As for external factors affecting the future of NATO, its relations with Russia, by all likelihood, will play a much greater role.

They used to be quite complicated, but during the recent two years the situation has considerably improved. After September 11, 2001, these relations acquired a character of real cooperation. There is no need to speak here at length about the changes related to their deepening institutionalization – these are quite well known. The North Atlantic Alliance, which closely cooperates with Russia, has much better perspectives in the 21st century. Of course, these perspectives will depend on the tendencies of Russia's domestic development. Yet, it is quite clear today that the cooperation with Russia is crucial in the fight against international terrorism and other new or relatively new threats to international security.

A more complicated problem is with whom Russia will wish to cooperate more closely – with the whole Alliance, the USA or the EU. Unilateral tendencies becoming more and more evident in the present foreign policy of the USA administration are a great concern to Europeans not only because of the above-mentioned reasons, but also because they are afraid that the USA may strive for the cooperation with Russia on a unilateral (or, to be more precise, bilateral) rather than a multilateral basis. It would become another threat to the unity of the present North Atlantic Alliance and may complicate the relations between Americans and Europeans even more.

In conclusion, I should state that in the international politics of the 21st century NATO will not play such important role that it was playing in the second half of the 20th century. But that does not mean that this role should be insignificant. If the Alliance manages to revise its functions and goals and to reorganize its structures in such a way that they could meet new challenges to international security, if European NATO members succeed in reducing the gap between their military capabilities and those of the USA, if in the future the USA administration values the assets of multilateral actions more highly, NATO may become, as its Secretary General is seeking, a significant center of the fight against terrorism and other security threats of the 21st century. There is no other organization in the world having such great experience of close and effective cooperation in the field of defense and security. Resources of NATO can be used in the fight against terrorism much more effectively.

Yet, after the last bombing in Bali and the terrorist attack in Moscow, not to mention less significant terrorist acts in many other countries, it becomes more and more evident that some kind of a *global* organization which could fight against international terrorism *worldwide* is needed. It is less clear how to create such organization and how it could operate. It is rather doubtful that NATO, whose regional character is reflected in its very name, can evolve into such global organization. Admittedly, during the last ten or more years, the Alliance has acquired great experience in expanding both its functions and the geographical area of its activities. Its enlargement in Europe is going rather smoothly, and within the Partnership for Peace framework it is already cooperating with some faraway countries of Central Asia. Some kind of NATO's Partnership for War against terrorism program is not unimaginable.

Due to many political and technical reasons, the creation of a new international anti-terrorist organization seems, however, a more rational solution. The reformed NATO could become its strongest pillar. On condition, of course, that Americans do not decide that they will defeat international terrorism without an international help.