



TRANSATLANTICKÉ LISTY

(STRATEGICKÉ ŠTÚDIE)

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Dear readers,

It is a great honor to present you the first 2012 edition of our Transatlantic Files (Strategic Studies). The topic of this issue is more than obvious: NATO's Chicago Summit is the primus inter pares among the highlights of security related events. There are many crucial issues to be discussed in political "home-town" of Barack Obama: it ranges from capabilities to future engagement in Afghanistan.

In Afghanistan, where the Alliance has launched its most robust operation in history approximately a decade ago, there is a time for serious decisions about the future. Politicians, experts, analyst – and public, of course – are expecting clear vision until 2014, but this is the easier issue there: guidelines are certain and already well-drafted. Real challenge is to define nature of our engagement in post-2014 period. It is obvious that 2014 is an important watershed but it must not be a final point of our engagement in Afghanistan.

Partnerships and their future is the "next big thing". They are closely interlinked with vision on post-2014 or post-Afghanistan period. NATO has built up excellent cooperation with like-minded countries like Australia and other Pacific states, but is focusing mainly on Afghanistan. How we will deal with that challenge? How we would like to preserve these extremely valuable partnerships? The answer will determine not only NATO's future, but also shape of global security environment.

Vision related to capabilities sharing and closer defense cooperation is certainly among other key issues. Smart Defense is starting to have clearer profile – we have to use the very important political momentum which is still there in order to be able to fulfill high expectations. But we need clear statements and real commitments.

These three issues are creating just one part of much more greater picture of the Chicago Summit. Others are equally important. Our contributors will surely offer very solid insights into national perspectives and expectations of the Central Europe towards Chicago. Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia are enjoying "strategic proximity" which will be obvious once you read the four excellent contributions to the current issue of the Transatlantic Files. Articles of two political directors of Ministries of Defense (Ivan Dvořák of Czech Republic and Péter Siklósi of Hungary), former political director of Slovak Ministry of Defense and CENAA's current senior research fellow (Marian Majer), as well as well-known and distinguished expert of Polish Institute of International Affairs (Łukasz Kulesa) are the best guarantee that you will receive first-hand information and visions of the Central Europe towards the Chicago Summit but also towards NATO in general.

Róbert Ondrejcsák

Director, Center for European and North Atlantic Alliance



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NATO SUMMIT EXPECTATIONS: CASE OF SLOVAKIA

Marian Majer

Since the fall of the Berlin wall, NATO summits attract considerable attention of the international relations analysts, academics and, of course and primarily, decision-makers. Same applies also to this year, when another gathering of NATO heads of states and governments is taking place in Chicago. Although, when it comes to the summit expectations some components of NATO Headquarters - especially Private Office of Secretary General - seek for something like a „common notion“ of NATO allies, different national views and expectations still persist. So what could be the anticipation of Slovakia and its leaders from this event? Are there any nuances making its probable positions different from those of the other Allies?

Having in mind the importance (at least declaratory) of NATO summits there is still pressure regarding its agenda and possible consequences resulting from it. But reality can be sometimes different as nobody in Brussels can predict all the factors influencing behavior of the leaders during the meeting. So on one hand summits from Washington (1999), Istanbul (2004) or Lisbon (2010) are generally considered as successful, on the other hand those from Riga (2006) or Strasbourg and Kehl (2009) are, because of whatever reasons, regarded as just opposite. Listening to voices from background of the preparatory teams, regardless whether they were from NATO HQ or national sides, even in the beginning of this year there was a fear present, that if more effort will not be devoted to preparations, Chicago can widen the group of the latter. Therefore spring of 2012 is very busy, full of experts' discussions and formal and informal preparatory meetings of politicians and national officials. All that because Chicago must not become a failure.

So what would be a highlight of the summit? Although according to some officials, Chicago offers opportunity to finally bring to stage

discussion about relevancy of the current NATO military capabilities and future of Alliance as a real military tool in the times of financial austerity, it seems that the most discussed and expected topic will be Afghanistan. Partly because of the above mentioned problems with other agenda, but mainly because ISAF is still the most robust operation in the history of NATO and future of Afghanistan remains a crucial question regarding conditions of international security. Especially expected is presentation of the NATO Strategic Plan for Afghanistan, which will outline the steps of NATO during the next two and half years. The plan is extremely important for most of contributors, including Slovakia as ISAF stays our operational priority. We, as many other Allies, are in process of restructuring the mission currently consisting of about 350 Slovak soldiers. It is of utmost importance that changes in our mandate will not be only in line with our national interests and needs, but also in accordance to steps of other countries and partners¹. It is evident that ISAF contributors are to decrease the number of combat troops by the end of 2014. But it is not clear enough, what kind of contribution to keep in Afghanistan after this date to adequately balance security situation in the region and needs for development of internal Afghan security structures.

Part of the answer could be resolution of financing of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). According to the US calculations a long-term sustainable size of Afghan forces (about 230 000 soldiers) requires more than 4 billion US dollars a year. Although NATO Secretary General Rasmussen urged Allies and partners to commit themselves to an overall framework for funding the ANSF, key technical issues how to handle the

¹ During the transition of its contribution will Slovakia likely focus on strengthening its training forces, deploying more mentoring teams and military police instructors and increasing the presence of Special Forces.

whole project are still a big question mark. Notwithstanding the US wanted to have funding matrix much clearer by the summit, Chicago most probably just brings an opportunity to further discuss this topic. By that time Slovakia should have a more explicit vision how and to what extent to contribute to this effort. So far the requirements presented by the US seem to be quite reasonable from the Slovak perspective, but the final decision will much have to do with the complex solution of our future presence in Afghanistan.

Another topic that raises expectations is Smart Defense. Since the birth of this initiative in 2010 deep discussions have been held about what it is really about, how to understand its basic principles of prioritization, specialization and cooperation and what influence it should have on capabilities building and also defense spending. After two years there is at least a common understanding on the expert level in Slovakia, that Smart Defense can be seen as a useful tool to cope with negative effects of financial and economic crisis on defense budgets of NATO countries, however it is not automatic that it equates with savings. Yet, this view was not accordingly accepted on the political level, what has in some cases set wrong expectations from the whole initiative.

Regarding the Smart Defense initiative the main capabilities clusters consisting of the projects catalogue (including the so called flagship projects) are to be presented in Chicago. These should help to supply the shortage of NATO critical capabilities. Slovakia declared a will to contribute to four of them in the field of Centers of Excellence cooperation, medical treatment, pooling of CBRN capabilities and training and exercise. Of course, crucial is how this declaratory policy will be broken to concrete steps of national contribution.

However, Smart Defense is not the only initiative of last months. The Connected Forces Initiative presented at the Munich security conference in February 2012 or the US guided NATO Force 2020 are other initiatives which should help to make the Alliance stronger and more committed to

current challenges. Chicago brings opportunity to harmonize different initiatives, concepts and documents within the Alliance and to find their common perception. The US officials rely mostly on the NATO Force 2020 initiative as they want, using the US Ambassador to NATO Ivo Daalder`s words, to make it reality during the summit. In consequence it would mean a resurrection of the NATO Response Force and strengthened efforts in three connected areas: intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets; training and exercises; and role specialization. Although the first two appear to be unproblematic, the last one is very sensitive especially for smaller Allies. Because if important capabilities were to be abandoned in the process of specialization, making it almost impossible to develop them again, other Allies would be expected to provide them. That means specialization in a certain area may de facto commit a nation to deployment if the burden is shared too narrowly, which can be quite painful.

There are several more issues from the defense package to be discussed in Chicago. First, interim operational capability of ballistic missile defense is to be declared. Although it is end of just the first stage, it will be a confirmation that the project is on right track and can come to its successful finalization. The same is true for the Alliance Ground Surveillance. It seems that after 20 years of project building accompanied by many obstacles also in its very last phase², the summit will officially start its realization. This is of great significance also for Slovakia, as it is one of the 13 contributing nations. Important components of Chicago`s defense package for Slovakia are the internal reform of NATO Headquarters, primarily because of new NATO Command structure, as well as debates about NATO`s deterrence and defense posture review.

If everything will go as expected according to above mentioned agenda, Chicago summit does not need to be such failure as it has been feared several months ago. But there is at least one topic

² Because of Spanish hesitation during the Formal Ministerial meeting in February 2012 ministers agreed on interim acceptance confirmed later in April.

we know even now, that there will be almost no development – partnerships. Not only there is no new initiative prepared, but even those that were presented as a core ones are not forwarding in appropriate manner. To mention just one for all, Russian president Putin asked NATO Secretary General not to receive an invitation to Chicago. Although interpretations of this step can differ, fact is, there will be no debate in NATO-Russia format in the foreseeable future. Neither presence of the EU high representatives would be an automatic guarantee of more fundamental move in NATO-EU relations.

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NATO SUMMIT IN CHICAGO – CZECH PERSPECTIVE

Ivan Dvořák

In a couple of weeks NATO Heads of States and Governments will meet in the country where NATO was established, and where thirteen years ago my country, together with Hungary and Poland, became members of the Alliance – the United States. Chicago Summit will be an important milestone, it will on one side evaluate the progress NATO achieved since the last Summit in Lisbon and on the other side it will pave the ways how to address the challenges standing ahead of us. NATO after more than 60 years remains the principal guarantor of security in the Euro-Atlantic area, honoring the values embodied in the North Atlantic Treaty. As time passes and challenges develop over time, the Alliance has to address these if it is to further serve to the populations of the Allied countries. Chicago Summit will thus define the focus of the Alliance until the year 2020 and beyond. The key messages we therefore expect to get from this year's Summit in Chicago can be from our perspective divided into four distinctive areas.

1. NATO Operations

The main focus of the Chicago Summit in this area will be our collective mission in Afghanistan. The Alliance's presence in this country is undoubtedly *the* NATO operation. Over the past years, there has been clear progress in all imaginable areas of our engagement, but on the other hand, much still remains to be done to reach all our ultimate objectives.

Chicago Summit shall send a clear signal that the Alliance stays united behind its firm commitment to the people of Afghanistan and that the Alliance has a sound plan to navigate through the challenges of upcoming years. This plan will be embodied through the approval of the *Strategic Plan for Afghanistan (NSPA)*, the main goal of which is to set directions for NATO in the upcoming challenging period.

In Lisbon, we have agreed to start the *Transition process*. Through it, the Afghan authorities are already gradually, according to the development of the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF), taking over the responsibility for security in the country. It is on track and by now, Afghan authorities and security forces are responsible for security of more than one half of Afghan population.

In *mid-2013*, we will reach an important milestone - the ANSF is to take over the lead in providing security in the whole country. After that, the ISAF mission should focus on training, advising and assisting Afghan forces, although if necessary, it must be ready to engage in operations. By the end of 2014, Transition should be concluded and ANSF should be able to take over full responsibility. ISAF mission will at this point reach its goal as its key duties will be fulfilled.

But this moment is not the end of Alliance's presence in Afghanistan, even though the tasks of ISAF would be concluded by then. The Alliance – as well as the entire international community – must and will be further engaged. ANSF is proving on a daily bases the growth of its capabilities. The majority of military operations are today led under Afghan leadership, while NATO and partner forces are already acting often only in a supporting role. These Afghan abilities and capabilities have to be however sustained over time, because without their further "*nurturing*", the results can become reversible. Therefore, we have to stay committed to Afghanistan after 2014 and the Joint Declaration on Afghanistan that will be presented in Chicago will undoubtedly underline this commitment.

NSPA will *outline the character of NATO's engagement in Afghanistan after 2014*. In this period, we are prepared to focus on training and advising the ANSF and on strengthening Afghan authorities in governance and development. It is too early to discuss detailed modalities of such

presence, but the message Chicago Summit should send is clear – we will not turn our backs on Afghan people and we will assist in making their country a safe and secure place for them and for future generations.

Due to a number of objective reasons, it will be highly unlikely, that Afghan authorities would be able to cover the whole cost for sustaining the ANSF beyond 2014. The United States have presented a complex scheme for funding of the ANSF in the future, which in its entirety represents a sum of some 4,1 billion USD per annum. Part of this sum will be funded by the Afghan government, partly by ISAF contributing countries, where the US itself is expected to provide 1,3 billion USD. All these contributions will however not be enough to cover all the costs. NATO countries have in past invested already a lot, in terms of resources, in terms of effort, in terms of human lives, therefore also other actors, be they other than ISAF nations or other international organizations, they should carry their part of this task. Although the *sustainability of the ANSF* will be primarily responsibility of Afghan government and international community, Chicago Summit should also draw a picture how will the currently contributing ISAF countries in future support the sustainability of Afghan forces in an other than just a financial perspective.

Czech Republic has been taking and will take further part in implementation of our collective commitment to Afghanistan. Although overall number of our troops participating in the ISAF mission is planned to gradually scale down as the process of Transition progresses, at the same time we will increase our focus on training of the ANSF. This will continue to be clearly the most visible manifestation of the contribution of the Czech Republic to the future of the ANSF.

2. Alliance's Defense and Deterrence Posture

In Lisbon, the Alliance's Heads of States and Governments approved the new NATO Strategic Concept which outlines the direction for the Alliance to take in the upcoming years. To be

assured that the Alliance is provided in the future with an appropriate mix of conventional, nuclear and missile defense capabilities, together with the appropriate level of appreciation of disarmament and arms control processes, the Alliance has gone through a complex and thorough Defense and Deterrence Posture Review (DDPR). We expect that Chicago Summit will evaluate its results and present them to the public in order to show that the Alliance will remain an organization which has all the necessary tools to its disposal to carry out its functions in dynamically evolving 21st century.

3. Defense transformation

In the area of development as well as sustainability of the capabilities necessary for the Alliance to be able to live up to its tasks, the Alliance faces an important moment in time. Almost all of the NATO countries are facing significant pressure on their defense budgets and it seems highly unlikely that this trend will dramatically change in the upcoming years.

In many countries, my country not excluding, the first choice is to reduce services that are not absolutely necessary for armed forces to fulfill their essential goals, but these efficiency measures are nearing their maxim in scope and reason. Hence, when looking forward, there are two principal paths which should be followed in parallel – structural changes in our own defense establishments and more intense cooperation in bilateral, multinational or collective frameworks to preserve and further develop together the essential capabilities for the future.

This is particularly important for us, the *European Allies*, whose defense expenditures have fallen dramatically in comparison to the United States. Decline in defense spending has a number of secondary effects, which include but are not limited to the rise of the proportion of personnel costs in the budgets, decreasing investment into modern technologies or slowing down of R&D, which has in sum a significant impact on our ability to operate together. This tide has to be overturned and Chicago Summit

should provide us with a clear response that will guide us towards maintaining our collective capabilities and strengthening our national ones. The Summit will outline the Smart Defense concept and the plan for “*NATO Forces for 2020 and beyond*” that will capture the key components of the capability development and transformation processes for the future.

It has been obvious for a while, that the development of all capabilities by single countries is – at least on the European side of the Atlantic – unsustainable. *Multinational cooperation* as an instrument for development and maintenance of capabilities has to be increased to a new level. Allied countries should use the multinational approach to capability development whenever it promises to increase efficiency and produce economy of scale. At the same time, they have to coordinate their plans for defense reforms and reductions in order to prevent uncoordinated steps that may result in the loss of some critical capabilities. The importance of the NATO Defense Planning Process should be therefore high on agenda of the Summit.

Czech Republic is actively promoting wider use of multinational cooperation, especially in projects with regional impact. Most prominently, we intend to participate in projects in areas such as helicopter training, multinational logistics and CBRN. We have started an initiative towards establishing a *Multinational Aviation Training Centre (MATC)* that aims to create a comprehensive and standardized training environment for helicopter pilots and ground staff, while using the existing training facilities of participating countries.

For the past two decades, our forces have been shaped mostly by NATO’s operations and missions. This is especially true for smaller and medium-sized countries, such as the Czech Republic. Now that operations will scale down in upcoming years, the Alliance must find ways how to keep the transformation going. We expect Chicago Summit to promote value of the NATO Response Force and more frequent use of exercises based on the tasks set by NATO Strategic Concept including collective defense as

the core mission of the Alliance. The Alliance will in this way increase interoperability of its forces that is crucial for the ability to conduct effective operations. Above that, such exercises will show that our capabilities do guarantee and ensure our collective defense in the eyes of our public.

In Chicago, we should also clearly highlight the progress in the *Missile Defense* program. This NATO program has achieved substantial progress and by the Chicago Summit we should be able to declare its Interim Operational Capability. Thus, this program will mark one of its most important stepping stones towards the protection of the whole territory and population of the European part of the Alliance against the threats posed by proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles.

4. Our partnerships

Few would argue that NATO could be as strong as it is today without its *cooperation with countries outside its borders*. This partnership cooperation has been rapidly growing in importance. In Afghanistan, where the ISAF mission constitutes of 50 contributing states, is historically the largest NATO-led operation. Partners were involved in our mission in the Balkans and most recently over Libya. The need for close ties with partner countries demonstrates itself also in many other areas of global security, such as piracy, terrorism or WMD proliferation. Czech Republic is therefore among those who have been promoting a strong partnership dimension of the Summit. At Chicago, we as the Alliance want not only to appreciate the involvement of partners but also to convey a key message that we want to preserve this close cooperation for the future.

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NATO SUMMIT IN CHICAGO – HUNGARIAN PERSPECTIVE

Peter Siklosi

NATO will be holding its 25th summit in Chicago, on 20-21 May 2012. It will principally focus on three main themes: the Alliance's commitment to Afghanistan through transition and beyond, ensuring the Alliance has the capabilities it needs to deal with the challenges of the 21st century, and strengthening NATO's network of partners across the globe.

The summit comes at a time of significant change and austerity: the economic crisis in Europe, severe deficit reduction measures in the United States and increased pressure on defense budgets, while the US is placing more focus on Asian-Pacific security. Therefore, the most important thing we expect from Chicago is that it will reinforce Allied solidarity and the transatlantic link. The core message should be that NATO remains the cornerstone of our collective security and that the Alliance stays on the course set in Lisbon and in the new Strategic Concept. In the present uncertain security environment our common aim should be to maintain the strength and vitality of the Alliance. This is critical to the security of Europe as well as to global security. The US decision to keep combat ready forces in Europe, the renewed commitment to missile defense, as well as the US initiative to shape up NATO capabilities are significant and most welcome. Allies too must take more responsibility and burdens.

Beyond recommitting ourselves to enduring support to Afghanistan, the most pressing issue at the Summit is finding the necessary resources to make Transition irreversible. We welcome the steady progress made implementing "Inteqal" (Transition). The Afghan National Security Forces are growing in size and efficiency, bringing us closer the day of assuming responsibility everywhere. As this process is gaining momentum NATO/ISAF should prepare for turning to an Advice, Assist and Combat Support role.

Our commitment must be credible and mutual. The Government of Afghanistan must also deliver on its 2010 and most recent commitments and forge the necessary links between the Kabul and Transition processes. There is a need for increasing Afghan lead and ownership regarding both the Transition and Transformation processes. The progress in promoting regional cooperation achieved by the efforts of the Afghan government is a striking example of appropriate engagement paying off.

Hungary's commitment to support the stabilization efforts in Afghanistan is unchanged as we have reconfirmed in the recently adopted medium-term Hungarian concept on Afghanistan. We will not carry out any significant drawdown of forces in 2012. Our engagement remains focused on the Hungarian-led PRT in Baghlan province. Our PRT will remain as long as necessary while Hungarian engagement in Afghanistan will be maintained also after 2014.

Capabilities will be another major theme at the Summit. Chicago offers an opportunity to assess progress on our Lisbon List and where necessary, commit to further efforts to ensure all these key capabilities are delivered. First of all we need to agree on the basic elements that we need in order to establish what capabilities NATO should have in ten years' time. Smart Defense is a mind-set and a method, but there is more to our vision than that, so we need a comprehensive document that takes into account other important initiatives and projects as well. It should also include continued US commitment to the security of Europe, despite lower troop levels on our continent. Emphasis on the importance of the transatlantic link must remain strong.

Missile defense, coming under NATO umbrella by Chicago, is a capability that will definitely strengthen transatlantic ties. Hungary recognizes the threat posed by advances in ballistic missile technology and by the proliferation of ballistic missiles themselves. Some countries already

possess the ability to reach European territory with their missiles, but as technology improves, we can expect missile ranges to increase, which could easily give potentially hostile states the ability to reach Europe with these weapons. We should remain ready to engage and cooperate with Moscow in this area. We expect reciprocal efforts in good faith. At the same time, further progress on NATO's missile defense should remain independent from the NATO-Russian track. We welcome the US-Russian talks on solving the underlying problems and are grateful for the transparency of these meetings.

Missile defense will complement but certainly not substitute NATO's nuclear capabilities. The preservation of NATO's credible nuclear capabilities remains a key pillar of collective defense and solidarity between Allies. We continue to believe that the forward deployment of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons in Europe as well as existing nuclear burden-sharing arrangements are important embodiments of the transatlantic relationship. Therefore, we see no pressing need for significant changes to these current arrangements, nor for re-opening the Strategic Concept. The Alliance's present posture is appropriate in light of the uncertainties and challenges we face, and also in view of the bleak financial outlook in the upcoming years. The diminishing European conventional defense resources, the planned cuts in U.S. defense budget and the rearrangement of U.S. forward presence in Europe should also be taken into account when finalizing the issue by Chicago. Nonetheless we support further initiatives of raising NATO's profile in arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, as these efforts definitely impact NATO's posture. However, we believe that NATO, as an organization has limits in this regard.

With regard to partnerships, we see merits in closer cooperation with like-minded democracies but we should not neglect existing Euro-Atlantic partnerships and aspirants in our immediate neighborhood. The engagement of emerging powers in dialogue must be substance-driven and based on mutual interests (possible topics: cyber,

counter-terrorism). Meeting with selected partner countries in Chicago – definitely yes, but on the principle of self-selection and individual merits.

As for the enlargement agenda in Chicago, I believe it will be a great opportunity for the Alliance to send a strong positive message to the entire Western Balkans. The region remains the collective "unfinished business" for both NATO and the EU, and is truly one of those numerous areas where close NATO-EU co-ordination and cooperation remain a prerequisite for success.

In 2010 we were very satisfied that the Strategic Concept gave proper emphasis to the Western Balkans, especially concerning its Euro-Atlantic integration. Little more than one year after the Lisbon Summit, however, we cannot see much movement in this regard, despite the progress made by certain countries of the region. Therefore, Chicago should have a strong "open door policy" focus and send credible respective messages to the countries of the region. As a concrete deliverable it would be a great idea to offer a clear perspective of launching another round of enlargement at the next summit after Chicago.

We should also recognize individual achievements and merits. In this respect Montenegro deserves appraisal. We should encourage Podgorica to maintain and increase the positive drive of its preparations. We believe that, if the current pace of preparations will be maintained, Montenegro will be a strong candidate for membership by the time of the next Summit. We attach great importance to the earliest possible solution of the Macedonian-Greek name dispute to ensure Macedonia's invitation to NATO, and to the fulfillment of the conditions for Bosnia's genuine participation in MAP.

We should remember that the stability of the Western-Balkans and the Euro-Atlantic integration of the countries in the region are strongly linked. It's easy to forget the importance of this in the midst of the financial crisis.

At the Chicago Summit we will have a challenging task of turning the Lisbon decisions into concrete

programs and initiatives at a time of financial austerity. We must stay committed to NATO principles, prepared to maintain the necessary capabilities and open to developing connections with partners.

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POLISH EXPECTATIONS FOR THE NATO CHICAGO SUMMIT

Łukasz Kulesa

The upcoming Chicago summit has so far not generated same amount of interest in Poland as the 2010 meeting of the Alliance leaders in Lisbon, where the new Strategic Concept was adopted. It is true that present meeting is not meant to take revolutionary decisions regarding fate of the Alliance. However, tasks of reviewing implementation of the Lisbon decisions and agreeing on a set of measures needed to adjust the Alliance to function in the times of financial austerity should not be underestimated. The decision of Russian President Vladimir Putin not to attend the Summit, removed possibility of a dramatic ‘high noon’ standoff in Chicago, but issues such as Afghanistan withdrawal calendar and relationship with this country beyond 2014, efforts to address capabilities shortfalls, or details of defense posture of the Alliance may still generate heated discussions.

The most important added value from Chicago for Poland would not necessarily be any particular decision, but the *right message* coming from the Summit to NATO countries, their publics, media and partners and potential enemies alike. The Summit should reaffirm strength and vitality of transatlantic link and willingness of everyone, the United States, Canada and European states to invest in functioning of the Alliance. In this context, it will also be a good opportunity to reassure European allies of the continued US engagement in Europe and to dispel some of myths and fears surrounding the US ‘pivot’ towards Asia.

In Polish debate, it is frequently pointed out that the Alliance needs to project an image of unity and resolve in facing present and future security challenges. More than decade of focusing almost exclusively on out-of-area operations has led to diminished investments within the NATO in procedures, exercises and capabilities dedicated to *Article 5* contingencies. This imbalance was addressed at the conceptual

level in the 2010 Strategic Concept, which placed collective defense as the first of three core tasks of the Alliance. There is an expectation, that in Chicago, we see further specific decisions bolstering NATO defense potential, including the adoption of the conclusions of the Defense and Deterrence Posture Review, continuation of the Baltic Air Policing, and announcement of interim territorial MD capability. A large part the Smart Defense package of capabilities, including the AGS, should also strengthen defense potential of the Alliance. It should be noted that Poland is not alone in highlighting collective defense as its concerns are shared by a number of Allies, both ‘new’ and ‘old’, and its case is strengthened by increased military spending and major modernization programs of some of NATO’s neighbors.

It is understood in Poland that *crisis management* would continue to be a part of NATO agenda. Experience in Libya may not provide an optimal model for the future engagements, due to the unique characteristics of that operation (NATO ‘taking over’ from the coalition of the willing, limited US role), but it may be safely predicted that in future crises in neighborhood, the Alliance will be expected to act. It is crucial that in such situations the Alliance adhere to principles it laid down itself, including political control over an operation, clarity of purpose, guarantee of the right set of capabilities at our disposal, and need to involve international organizations and, crucially, partners from concerned regions.

Afghanistan will remain the most important political and operational challenge for the Alliance until 2014. Poland has been an important contributor to the ISAF operation, in terms of size of the contingent (at present 2500 soldiers), its tasks (operating without caveats in the restive Ghazni province in the South-Eastern part of the country), casualties suffered (36 soldiers killed in action), and substantial financial costs involved.

The Lisbon decision on the transition of responsibility for security to the Afghan side by 2014 was strongly supported by Poland, and it remains the basis for debates in Chicago for Warsaw. Poland would therefore expect that decisions in Chicago help to avoid two negative scenarios: firstly, a 'rush to the exit', with countries preparing their own withdrawal schedules in disregard of the generally agreed timetable (the new French President's position would be crucial here), secondly, formulating an open-ended commitment to the support of the Afghan security forces beyond 2014, which could be interpreted widely to include combat component. From the perspective of Warsaw, 2014 should clearly mark the end of the ISAF operation as it is. Poland seems to be open to discuss both training and support role of NATO in Afghanistan beyond 2014, and financial and other forms of contribution to assure sustainability of the Afghan security forces, but is wary of making too extensive detailed commitments at this stage.

Debate on disparities between the US and the rest of the Allies and the need to address crucial shortcomings in *NATO capabilities* is as long as the Alliance itself. *Smart Defense and Connected Forces* initiatives are often dismissed as yet another attempt to create an impression of addressing these problems, which would bring very few advantages. However, this time correlation of factors (changing priorities of the US, fresh experiences from Libya, decreased defense spending in many European countries) bring extra urgency to the matter. Poland is one of the few NATO countries which do not cut defense spending (set at 1,95% of GDP), but seems to be determined to use the Smart Defense initiative to strengthen international cooperation in a number of crucial areas. It is also one of the engines of increased cooperation within the Visegrad Group, which potentially may become one of the 'success stories' of the Smart Defense.

Poland seems to be relatively less interested in the *partnership policy* dimension of the Chicago summit, with attention focused mainly on enlargement and Russia. This approach may

backfire in the future, as the Alliance would probably need to increasingly rely on good relations with its partners for realization of its core tasks. It is worth noting that already in Afghanistan and Libya some partners have provided manpower and capabilities not readily available within the Alliance. Regarding Polish priorities, it is understood that *enlargement* would not be prominent on the Chicago agenda, but there is an expectation of re-confirmation of open door policy and acknowledgement of progress made by some aspirants, for example Georgia. Despite absence of President Putin, *Russia* would remain an important point. While the Lisbon vision of strategic partnership with Russia is still on the table, and in some areas cooperation is moving forward, controversy over Missile Defense seems unlikely to be resolved soon. In this context, decision on the MD interim capability would be a signal to Russia that the Alliance would not readily bow to Russian pressure.

In times when in Europe headlines are dominated by economic crisis, NATO should not add to atmosphere of nervousness (or even despair) by highlighting differences and problems. This should be the main guiding principle for leaders gathered in Chicago.

Author works at the Polish Institute of International Affairs. This article does not represent the official position of Poland.

Centrum pre európske a severoatlantické vzťahy (CENAA)

je think-tank, ktorý pôsobí v oblasti medzinárodných vzťahov, zahraničnej a bezpečnostnej politiky. Okrem výskumu v týchto oblastiach CENAA pripravuje analýzy, štúdie, vydáva odborné publikácie, vrátane Panorámy globálneho bezpečnostného prostredia a Transatlantických listov, organizuje workshopy, konferencie, diskusné kluby pre študentov slovenských univerzít a ďalšie aktivity ako napríklad letnú školu pre mladých profesionálov, ktorou prispieva do vzdelávania mladej odbornej komunity z Balkánu, východnej Európy a Kaukazskej oblasti. CENAA zároveň každý rok organizuje aj Slovenské strategické fórum, ktoré je exkluzívnou platformou odborníkov z ministerstiev, parlamentu, think-tankov, mimovládnych organizácií a akademikov. Cieľom projektu je otvorene prediskutovať najdôležitejšie aktuálne otázky medzinárodných vzťahov a európskej bezpečnosti. Okrem aktivít na Slovensku je CENAA zaangažovaná do tranzičných projektov zameraných na odovzdávanie a aplikáciu slovenských skúseností z integračných procesov predovšetkým vo východnej a juhovýchodnej Európe, a tiež pôsobí v širšej medzinárodnej odbornej komunite a participuje na medzinárodných výskumných projektoch v oblasti medzinárodných vzťahov a bezpečnostnej politiky.

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