MASTER OF DEFENCE STUDIES RESEARCH PROJECT

ROUMANIA'S MILITARY CAPABILITY:
SHAPING THE FUTURE, REMEMBERING THE PAST

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ABSTRACT

Roumania's entry into NATO marks a decisive step in the overall process of integration into the European and Euro-Atlantic organizations. Since the beginning of the 1990s this membership has represented the cornerstone of Roumania's security policy. Also, integration into the North Atlantic Alliance played a catalyzing role for the reform of the armed forces and the re-evaluation of their role and missions in a changed international and internal environment. Now that this important objective has been achieved, Roumania must be ready to prove its capability, credibility, and reliability as an integral part of the most important security organization in the world. Also, Roumania must continue the process of military reforms in order to meet its security needs. This process presents Roumania with difficult decisions regarding its military capability. The future of its military capability must be decided by taking into account a couple of factors. The historical legacies, and the foreign and defense policy challenges derived from them represent the most important factor. Also, the difficulties with which NATO is confronted, regarding its cohesion and efficiency, represent another important factor that must be considered. These two factors can put at risk Roumania's security and its capacity to respond to national contingencies. Consequently, Roumania must retain a unilateral capability in order to respond to its contingencies, despite its membership in NATO.

INTRODUCTION

A new chapter in Europe's history is now opening. The Western European

countries, accompanied by their North American counterparts, have turned again towards

Eastern Europe and the struggle to create a prosperous and secure Europe has begun. As

Gale A.Mattox stated in his book, *Enlarging NATO, The National Debates:* " Europe is

only now beginning to adapt to the changes initiated by Polish workers in the late 1970s

and early 1980s and symbolized by the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989."[1] The end of the

Cold War brought Europeans the opportunity to enhance their security, a new

understanding of the relationship that must exist between them, and most importantly, the

feeling that they belong to this continent and they must share their values in order to

preserve their existence.

As a result of these fundamental changes, Roumania is again at a historic

crossroads. When it received, alongside six other countries, the invitation to join NATO

at the Prague Summit, Roumania took its first firm step towards integration into the Euro-

Atlantic family of free and democratic nations. It was the first concrete sign of the

importance given by the Western countries to Roumania, and a response to its continuous

struggle to find a place amongst Euro-Atlantic democracies. As Mircea Geoana, the

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Roumania, stated at the meeting of the North Atlantic

Council, Roumania has striven hard to be here and is proud of its achievements.[2] Indeed,

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[1] Gale A. Mattox, "New Realities, New Challenges," in *Enlarging NATO, The National Debates,* ed. Gale A. Mattox and Arthur R. Rachwald (Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2001), 241.

[2] NATO Speeches; available from http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2003/s030326h.htm; Internet; accessed 18 March 2004.

Roumania has the right to be proud of its achievements, having spent much energy on a coherent and well focused internal and external policy.

Obviously, many political and military analysts gave great importance to the decision made at Prague in November 2002. Their opinions reflected a variety of perceptions, concerns, and interests. Roumania, due to its particularities, occupied a special place in this debate. Even now, with its newly acquired membership in NATO, due to its geographical position, modern history and current economic, social, and political problems, Roumania's case deserves a thorough analysis. Indeed, the implications of its membership in NATO on Roumania's future evolution on the European political stage are not negligible and Roumania's attitude towards the Alliance is also critical. Consequently, Roumania is again in the position to make historical decisions and to act in a way that will affect its future, in the short, medium, and long term. Is this a unique situation for Roumania? For those who are not aware of Roumanian history the answer may be affirmative but for the Roumanian people, obviously, the perspective is completely different. They know very well Roumania's role as "a state of European necessity" as the renowned Romanian historian of the interwar period, Nicolae Iorga, very well described it. In its people's perspective, Roumania always belonged to Europe, was part of Europe, was influenced by Europe and brought its contribution to Europe's history. Furthermore, many Roumanians believe that Europe owes something to Roumania and especially to its people, because of the role played by their ancestors in defending and preserving the European identity during the turbulent years of the Middle Ages when Roumanians opposed the Ottomans, preventing them from expanding into Central Europe.

Among other historical decisions Roumania must make as a result of its new posture as a member in NATO, the way in which its military capabilities will develop in the future is the most critical one. Having a traditional role of state builder and defender of national sovereignty against any threat, the Roumanian military won its prestige through great efforts and sacrifices. During the 19th and 20th centuries, the Roumanian military played a critical role in the unification of the Roumanian territories and also, in obtaining and maintaining Roumania's independence and sovereignty. Consequently, today the Roumanian military is regarded as one of the most trustworthy institutions of the country, enjoying the respect of the Roumanian people. Furthermore, its contribution to different missions abroad in the last fourteen years has added new international laurels to the Roumanian Army's crown. Therefore, Roumania can be proud of its military past, upon which a good future can be built. Indeed, Roumania's present military capabilities offer a very solid foundation for transforming the Roumanian armed forces into a compact, mobile and very efficient army, capable of responding alone or within NATO to the country's security needs.

On the other hand, the decision Roumanian policy makers must make is not easy because Roumania acquired its membership in NATO 14 years after the Cold War. In this period, new potential risk factors to Roumania's security - specific to the region - added to the existing ones. However, it is notable that some of the threats, such as territorial disputes and minority issues, have remained or even been exacerbated. Also, in the same period, the Alliance itself suffered a profound transformation, reflected by its organizational changes, redefined and broadened missions, and last but not the least the

important process of enlargement. But all these changes have not taken place without affecting one of the most important characteristics of the Alliance, namely its cohesion. Indeed, in the last few years many scholars have claimed the imminent demise of the Alliance. Although this prediction has not so far been realized and the Alliance has survived, there have been clear signs of weakness. Therefore, if they take into consideration these factors, Roumanian decision makers must reach one clear conclusion: Roumania must retain a unilateral capability to meet all national contingencies, despite its membership in NATO.

In order to understand the necessity to maintain Roumania's capability to act unilaterally, the decision makers should remember Roumania's historical legacies, the amplitude of these legacies, and, of course, their influence on Roumania's current foreign and defense policies. Furthermore, they should analyze carefully the evolution of the relationship amongst NATO members, especially amongst some European members and the US, and the importance of this relationship in maintaining NATO's cohesion and relevancy. This paper will address these relevant factors and some of their possible effects on Roumania's ability to respond to its contingencies.

ROUMANIA'S HISTORICAL LEGACIES

The beginning of Roumania's modern existence can be traced back to the 19th century. In January 1859, the representatives of the principalities Moldavia and Walachia decided the unification of these two territories inhabited by Roumanians. Thus, the first step towards achieving one of the main dreams of Roumanians was realised. The following decades of that century were also marked by different significant events. Between 1877 and 1878, Roumania fought alongside Russia against the Ottoman Empire, in what was called *The Roumanian War of Independence.* As a result, at the Berlin Peace Congress held in 1878, the Great Powers recognized the independence of Roumania, and its right over Dobruja, another territory inhabited by Roumanians. Three years later, in 1881, Roumania proclaimed itself a kingdom and Prince Carol I was crowned as the first Roumanian King. Thus, in just 24 years, the Roumanian territories were united and the young Roumanian state became capable of deciding its own future. But the most important result is the fact that the idea of unification became the soaring dream of six million Roumanians living outside the existent borders of Roumania.

The years leading up to the First World War were marked by the increasing national struggles of the Roumanians living in Transylvania, Bukovina and Bessarabia, territories in which the Hungarians and Russians were conducting a systematic policy of assimilation of the Roumanian majority.

The beginning of the First World War found Roumania in a neutral position. Unwilling to join an alliance that included Russia, Roumania maintained its neutrality until 1916. Finally, in August 1916, after a political convention was signed, Roumania

entered the war on the side of the Triple Entente, in order to relieve part of the pressure

posed by the Central Powers on the Western Front. It was a difficult political decision,

taking into consideration the German origin of the Roumanian royal family, but at the

same time a justified one, considering the unification aspirations of several million

Roumanians. However, after the war, at the Paris Peace Conference, Roumania achieved

almost all its goals for which it sacrificed the lives of 400,000 men. Thus, although

reluctant, the Allied Powers accepted and officially recognized the unification with

Roumania of the other territories, Transylvania, Bukovina, Bessarabia and Southern

Dobruja, provinces inhabited mainly by Roumanians.

The beginning of Second World War and the rapid evolution of subsequent

events, found Roumania in a delicate position. Once again, Roumania's intentions were

to use the system of alliances in order to assure its survival as an independent state.

Unfortunately, on 26 June 1940, taking profit of the confusion created after the Fall of

France, the USSR presented an ultimatum to Roumania through which it demanded

Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina – an area which was not even mentioned in the

German-Soviet Pact - thus confirming Roumania's fears when Germany and Russia

signed the 1939 Non-Aggression Pact. At the time when France was occupied and Great

Britain was in a desperate situation, Roumania had no alternative but to "yield to the

Soviet Government demands."[3] Furthermore, "in an attempt to finally settle the perennial

territorial dispute between Roumania and Hungary, Hitler and Mussolini compelled the

Roumanian government to sign the Vienna Decree which gave two-thirds of

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[3] Paul D. Quinlan, *Clash over Romania: British and American Policies towards Romania:1938 – 1947* (Los Angeles: American Romanian Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1977), 63.

Transylvania to Hungary."[4] One week later, Roumania lost Southern Dobruja to Bulgaria.
In those difficult months of 1940, due to the rapid deterioration of the international
situation, different and unusual alliances between Russia and Germany, and deteriorating
internal situation, Roumania lost one-third of its territory.

Greatly affected by the important territorial losses and isolated from its traditional
allies, Roumanians felt that "only Germany could protect them from the Soviets."[5]
Consequently, Roumania signed the Tripartite Pact with Germany, a pact that bound the
two countries for completely different purposes. On one hand, Roumania's objective was
to protect itself and restore its former frontiers. On the other hand, Germany was
interested in having access to Roumanian oil and exploiting Roumanians' feelings
towards the USSR in order to launch the planned attack against the Soviets. Roumania's
decision to sign this pact must, therefore, be seen in the context of the efforts made to
restore its former frontiers. This clearly defined and explainable aim is demonstrated by
the fact that "Roumania refrained from participating in Hitler's attack on Yugoslavia and
Greece" and supported the German military campaign only to the East.[6]

The Roumanian forces fought alongside Germans on the Eastern front until
August 1944 when a coup d'état took place in Bucharest and the government was
overthrown. At that time, the Russian Army was pushing the Romanian and German
forces westwards. In that period, although political leaders of the country were trying to
withdraw Roumania from war against the Allies by negotiating with Great Britain and the

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[4] Paul D. Quinlan, *Clash over Romania: British and American Policies towards Romania:1938 – 1947* (Los Angeles: American Romanian Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1977), 64.

[5] *Ibid*, 69.

[6] *Ibid.*

US, the country's fate was sealed; Russians "viewed Roumania as their own private concern."[7] The political change that took place in August 1944 opened the country to the Russian forces. The German forces were forced to abandon much of the region and pulled back to Hungary. Furthermore, due to the fact that the Roumanian Army cleared many regions of German troops, the Red Army was able to spread across much of Roumania without any fight. Through the armistice agreement signed in Moscow, on 12 September 1944, Roumania became prey to the Soviet Army occupation force. Besides the fact that it had to allow free passage to Soviet troops, Roumania was obliged to assist the Allies by supplying 12 infantry divisions. It also had to pay a reparations sum of three hundred million dollars, over a six-year period and restore all property taken from the Allies.[8] The territorial clauses acknowledged the Soviet annexation of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, and annulled the detested Vienna Award that gave Northern Transylvania to Hungary.[9] In this context, even Harriman - at that time, the US ambassador in Moscow - who predicted that the terms would "give the Soviet Command unlimited control of Roumania's economic life and police power for the period of the armistice," expressed his reserves regarding the future role played by Russia in Roumania.[10] As a confirmation of his prediction, after this armistice and the agreement signed by Churchill and Stalin in September 1944, Roumania entered the Russian sphere of influence. All events that took place after the agreement led to major changes in

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[7] Paul D. Quinlan, *Clash over Romania: British and American Policies towards Romania:1938 – 1947* (Los Angeles: American Romanian Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1977), 87.

[8] *Ibid,* 109

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] *Ibid.*

Roumania's evolution during the subsequent years. Apart from the effects of the Russian military presence in the country, Roumania fell under the complete control of Russia, became a communist country, and interrupted its normal democratic evolution.

The communist period in Roumania was dominated by one important characteristic: a limited autonomy of the country within the Communist Block and especially in relation to the USSR. The consequence of this limited autonomy was that the image of monolithic Communism was destroyed.[11] Thus, Roumania, which in the early 1960s "had been at odds on numerous occasions with Soviet policy in formulating its own foreign policy" refused in 1968 to support the Soviet and Warsaw Pact intervention in Czechoslovakia and criticized severely that intervention.[12] Furthermore, in 1971, Roumania strengthened its relationship with China daring, despite the USSR protests and pressures, to act as a channel of communication between the US and China. On the other hand, the introduction in 1972 of the new Defense Law reflected Roumania's desire to delimit itself from the security umbrella offered by the Warsaw Pact and, at the same time, demonstrated Roumania's fear of a Soviet intervention using the method the USSR had employed in Czechoslovakia. In this respect, the country's entire defense system was changed, the emphasis being put on the total war concept. Therefore, through its behavior Roumania maintained within the Communist Block the autonomy to pursue different foreign and defense policies.

The events of the late 1980s - the unification of Germany, the internal changes in the Soviet Union, and the fall of all communist regimes in Poland and Czechoslovakia -

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[11] Aurel Braun, *Romanian Foreign Policy Since 1965, The Political and Military Limits of Autonomy* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1978), X.

[12] *Ibid.*

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created a new regional and international environment. Due to its geopolitical position, Roumania was again part of those events. Although until late December 1989, it seemed that Roumania "would enter the final decade of the century as one of the few remaining communist states," the events of those last days of the decade sealed the fate of Communist system in Roumania.[13] Thus, through the sacrifice of many lives, the civil demonstrators supported by the armed forces' actions succeeded in their struggle to overthrow the toughest Communist regime in Europe. As a result, these events changed profoundly Roumania's history and Roumania had the possibility to engage itself in a process of social and economic democratic reforms.

Fourteen years ago, therefore, Roumania started a process of transformation from a communist society to a democratic one. The beginning of the process was very difficult because it implied changes in all domestic realms of the society: political, social, and economic. The dynamic of this process also created difficulties because it was conditioned to a great extent by the regional and international context and even by external forces, either states or international and regional organizations. That is why this process of transformation required changes in Roumania's external relations, according to the current evolution of relations between states on the international stage. Furthermore, it required a new security policy able to respond to the beneficiaries, namely the Roumanian citizens. In this regard, Roumania chose to address first its relations with the European and Euro-Atlantic organizations. Thus, beginning in January 1990, Roumania engaged in diplomatic contacts with the European Economic Community, later on the European Union, the Council of Europe and NATO, with the

declared aim of obtaining integration into all European and transatlantic organizations.

From 1994, one of the continuously pursued objectives was the country's integration into

NATO. Manifested by different declarations, agreements, and accords, the efforts made

by Roumanian policymakers were designed to put in practice the intentions stated in the

1996 Appeal of the Parliament of Roumania to the parliaments of NATO member states:

> Roumania's entire activity within Partnership for Peace, the North Atlantic
> Assembly [,] as well as its quest for NATO admission is based on the will of the
> people, backed by all parliamentary parties, [with the] view of becoming, as soon
> as possible, a full-fledged member of NATO structures…. Roumania understands
> [that it would] assume the rights, commitments and obligations that are inherent
> to a NATO member. The Parliament of Roumania conveys to the parliament of
> [the member state] the assurances of its highest consideration and requests
> support for its endeavor as a free, independent, sovereign and democratic country,
> in compliance with the article 10 of the Washington Treaty, in view of becoming
> full-fledged NATO member.[14]

On the other hand, Roumania's relations with its neighbors were given increased

attention starting in 1995. As a result, bilateral treaties with neighboring states were

signed– with the Federal republic of Yugoslavia on 16 May 1996, Hungary on 16

September 1996, the Ukraine on 1 June 1997, and the Republic of Moldova on 29 April

2000. All these treaties included provisions for the treatment of minorities and assurances

of mutual respect for territorial integrity, on the one hand, and cultural identities on the

other hand. The Roumanian approach to bilateral relations was influenced by its desire to

settle former territorial disputes, solve the problem of minorities and demonstrate its

determination to be a factor of stability in the region.

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[13] Federal Research Division, *Roumania-a country study*, ed. Ronald D. Bachman, July 1989, XXI.

[14] Mariana Cernicova-Buca, "Romania: The quest for Membership," in *Enlarging NATO, The National Debates,* ed. Gale A. Mattox and Arthur R. Rachwald (Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2001), 210.

Of the bilateral relations enumerated above, the settlement of relations between Roumania and Hungary was particularly critical due to the common tense past, demonstrated by a series of political disputes and military conflicts. Although these tensions are "rooted in over one thousand years of Roumanian-Hungarian cohabitation in Transylvania" it is worth mentioning that only in the 20th century did the two states clash violently several times.[15] The origin of this long conflict is complex and, of course, both Roumania and Hungary have fundamentally different visions of its causes. However, Roumania's bilateral relation with Hungary was and it is mainly "intertwined with the status of the 1.6 million ethnic Hungarians" who live on its territory.[16]

In the last decade, bilateral relations between the two states, on one hand, and the relations between the ethnic Hungarian minority and the ethnic Roumanian majority, on the other hand, had a continuously ascendent evolution, especially after the general elections held in Roumania in 1996. Roumania in particular, made great efforts to put all these relations "on the pillars of historical reconciliation, mutual tolerance and cooperation."[17]

inclusion of the party representing the Hungarian minority into government between 1997-2000; acceptance of the use of minority language in certain areas; and establishment of the first Hungarian universities. In terms of bilateral relations between Roumania and Hungary, the signing of the Basic Treaty between them in 1996 represented the main achievement. Unfortunately, all these achievements were undermined by different negative events that characterized the post-communist period. The first of them was the clash between Hungarians and Roumanians living in the town of Tg.-Mures in March 1990. Also, the "political use of the minority issue in Hungary, principally by centre-right governments in Budapest" at the beginning of 1990s and even after the bilateral treaty was signed (1998-2002) represented another step back in the relations between the two countries.[19] In this case, the Hungarian Premier Viktor Orban's pre-electoral declarations concerning the necessity to renegotiate the bilateral treaty with Roumania, once again inflamed the tensions between the ethnic Hungarian minority in Transylvania and the majority of the Roumanian population. More recently, in June 2001, the adoption by the Hungarian Parliament of the Law on the Status of Hungarians Abroad brought again the two states to a tense relation. In the latter case, the Roumanian government approached the issue in a sober manner asking the European Commission on Democracy Through Law to evaluate the Law independently.[20] As a result, the Commission largely supported Roumania's objections to the law and thus the bilateral talks were resumed and relations between Roumania and Hungary normalized.

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[19] Larry L. Watts, "Romania and NATO: The National-Regional Security Nexus," in *Almost NATO – Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security,* ed. Charles Krupnick (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2003), 186.

[20] *Ibid.*

Roumania's relations with Ukraine represented another concern. Ukraine, "a big, newly established country with no historical precedents to set patterns for future relations" brought Roumania other problems which had to be addressed in bilateral talks.[21] Although in 1997 an over-postponed bilateral political treaty was signed, the relations between the two states remained strained due to the legacies of the Second World War. After 1991 part of the territories taken by the Soviet Union from Roumania in 1940 came under Ukrainian administration. The northern part of Bukovina, Herta County and the Southern part of Bessarabia, territories that belonged to Roumania and still comprise a large minority of Roumanian population, represented the subject of dissensions between the two countries. Furthermore, the relations between the two countries were also strained because of the dispute over the status of the Serpents Island - located off the Roumanian Black Sea coast - and the continental shelf associated with the island. It is worth mentioning that the importance of the island and the continental shelf for Roumania is not only historical but also economic and strategic. However, although the Roumanian policymakers were keen to normalize the bilateral relations, the treaty between Roumania and Ukraine have not solved all problems between them.[22]

Roumania's relations with Russia also represented a main preoccupation of the past years. The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the interposition of Ukraine between Russia and Roumania diminished the threat perceived by Roumania for centuries. However, some of the concerns remained, and they were mainly caused by two factors: Russia maintained its Fourteenth Army in the Transnistria region – a region which

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[21] Mariana Cernicova-Buca, "Romania: The quest for Membership," in *Enlarging NATO, The National Debates,* ed. Gale A. Mattox and Arthur R. Rachwald (Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2001), 202.
[22] *Ibid.*

belongs to the Republic of Moldova and is located at the border with Ukraine - and throughout the 1990s it opposed NATO enlargement. These factors hampered mutual-confidence building.[23] As stated by various Russian policymakers, Russia's concern was that Roumania's membership in the alliance could encourage it to grab Moldova.[24] Therefore, as a result of Roumania's desire and efforts to join NATO, Moscow tried in 2001 "to sway Bucharest by using the predominately Roumanian ethnic character of the population in the Republic of Moldova and its former status as Roumanian territory prior to World War II, volunteering Russia's support for reunification in return for Roumania's neutrality."[25] The statement of the chairman of the Committee for Foreign Affairs of the Russian State Duma, Dimitri Rogozin that joining NATO " was Romania's option, but it would separate the country from the Republic of Moldova" creates a clear image of Russia's attitude towards Roumania.[26] Such statements had the dual purpose of opening the government to allegations by the political opposition that it was not doing everything it could to support the Roumanian ethnics in Moldova while generating international doubts about Roumania's behaviour and its territorial irredentism. For several years, Russia's behaviour was perceived as being dangerous for Roumania. Consequently, this kind of attitude impeded the conclusion of a bilateral treaty. In the end, in July 2003, the

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[23] Larry L. Watts, "Romania and NATO: The National-Regional Security Nexus," in *Almost NATO – Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security,* ed. Charles Krupnick (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2003),182.

[24] .J. L. Black, *Russia Faces NATO Expansion-Bearing Gifts or Bearing Arms?*, (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.2000), 9.

[25] Larry L. Watts, "Romania and NATO: The National-Regional Security Nexus," in *Almost NATO – Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security,* ed. Charles Krupnick (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2003),182.

[26] Agentia de presa RADOR, *Statement by Dimitri Rogozin;* available from http://www.ici.ro/romania/news/arheng2001/e_mai30.html; Internet; accessed 16 March 2004.

treaty between the two countries was signed, definitely as a result of the changes that took place in the world after the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks.

Roumania's relation with the Republic of Moldova represented another major preoccupation of the Roumanian policy makers during the last decade. Moldova, a state that acquired its independence in 1991 as a result of the Soviet Union dissolution, has a special importance for Roumania due to the fact that the majority of its population is of Roumanian origin. Despite the fact that the relations between the two states had an ascendent evolution, materialized in all domains and especially in cultural, economic and political cooperation, the domestic political evolutions of the last three years transformed this relationship into a strained one. One of the reasons is the fact that the "increasingly disenchanted population of Moldova returned the pro-Russian and anti-NATO Communist Party to power in 2000."[27] The attitude of this new leadership was oriented towards "denying common cultural and historic roots with Roumania much like the Soviet authorities had done before."[28] More than that, the presence of the Russian 14th Army in Transnistria and the lasting dispute between Moldavian leaders and the breakaway province's leaders added tensions to the region.

In summary, compared to some other European states, Roumania is a relatively young one, formed in a period in which three empires were disputing the continental Europe and Britain was engaged in conquering the seas and territories all over the world. Roumania's subsequent evolution highlights the fact that until the end of the Second

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[27] Larry L. Watts, "Romania and NATO: The National-Regional Security Nexus," in *Almost NATO – Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security,* ed. Charles Krupnick (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2003),184.

[28] *Ibid,* 182.

World War Roumania's short existence was dominated by a continuous struggle to survive as an independent and sovereign state.

Later on, the communist period brought a certain stability and security to the country. Roumania enjoyed a great degree of political, economic, and military autonomy despite its membership in the Warsaw Pact and the pressures posed by the Soviet Union. As a result, Roumania managed to "build bridges to the West" acquiring powerful Western friends such as France, Germany, and the US.[29] Taking the benefits of these relationships, Roumania achieved "an important immunity from politically inspired, Soviet economic pressures."[30] Also, Roumania pursued its own defense policy and consequently, it was able to prepare a strong active defense that played a significant role in the 1960s and 1970s in preventing a Soviet military intervention into Roumania.

In the post-communist period, Roumania had to overcome many other obstacles laid by internal and regional evolutions. The ethnic Roumanian majority – ethnic Hungarian minority tensions, the occasionally tense political relation with Hungary, the unsolved territorial disputes with Ukraine, Russia's inability to renounce to its hegemonic behavior in the region, and the legacy of the Republic of Moldova exposed Roumania to many security challenges. Furthermore, the proximity of the Yugoslavian conflict zone brought Roumania a surplus of insecurity and the new burden of decisions that could have affected Roumania's relations with both the international community and Yugoslavia. All these problems had to be addressed and Roumania chose the right path: constructive engagement in all regional and international initiatives. What enabled

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[29] Aurel Braun, *Romanian Foreign Policy Since 1965, The Political and Military Limits of Autonomy* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1978), 191.

[30] *Ibid,* 192.

Roumania to choose this path were the internal political cohesion with regards to foreign policy and the Roumanian Armed forces' constructive engagement in the creation of post-1989 European and international security structures and initiatives.[31] Therefore, the Roumanian armed forces, despite the profound reforms they experienced, contributed fundamentally to offering a suitable response to the problems of the post-communist period.

As proven by the events of the last decade, the end of the Cold War has not resulted in the creation of a complete stable and secure South Eastern Europe, free of threats to the stability of Roumania. On the contrary, in this period some century-old animosities surfaced violently demonstrating that Roumania's historical legacies still reverberate in the present. Therefore, despite its constructive engagement in all regional and international initiatives, Roumania must be able to adapt continuously to meet the current foreign and defense policy challenges derived from its historical legacies.

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[31] F. Peter Wagner, "EU, NATO and Romania: Beyond "Sultanism", in *EU, NATO and the Relationship Between Transformation and External Behavior in Post-Socialist eastern Europe,* ed. Reimund Seidelmann (Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden, 2002)*,* 263.

CURRENT FOREIGN AND DEFENSE POLICY CHALLENGES
FACING ROUMANIA

ROUMANIA'S FOREIGN POLICY CHALLENGES

The fervor with which Roumania pursued integration into NATO and the

European Union, can lead to the idea that it has forgotten that it belongs to the Southeast

Europe and it is situated "at the crossroads of the Western, Slavic, and Muslim

cultures."[32] Furthermore, the collapse of the communist systems in Europe, the

dissolution of Soviet Union and all other events that took place on the international

political stage, give the feeling that the military threat to Roumania was removed. In this

respect, Roumania's leaders no longer perceive rivalry among states to be the main

source of danger in the realm of international relations. However, they identified a

myriad of emergent problems as potential risk factors to the national security. According

to Roumania's National Security Strategy the potential risk factors are:

> Possible negative developments at the sub-regional level, in the area of
> democratization, human rights and economic development, which might result in
> serious crises, with destabilizing effects over a large area; proliferation of mass
> destruction weapons, nuclear materials and technologies, non-conventional arms
> and lethal devices; proliferation and development of terrorist networks,
> transnational organized crime, illegal trafficking in people, drugs, arms and
> ammunition, strategic and radioactive materials; clandestine migration and the
> emergence of some massive flows of refugees; actions inciting extremism,
> intolerance, separatism and xenophobia that might affect Romania and the
> advancement of democratic values; gaps between the levels of enforcing security
> and the stability of the states in the proximity of Romania; limited access of the
> Romanian state to some regional resources and opportunities that are important
> for the attainment of the national interests.[33]

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[32] VG Baleanu, *Romania at a historic crossroads*, (Camberley, Royal Military Academy
Sandhurst, Conflict Studies Research Centre, June 1998), 1.

[33] Romania's National Security Strategy; available from
http://english.mapn.ro/stratsec/directii.php; Internet; accessed 17 March 2004.

Of all potential risk factors, the proliferation and development of terrorist network represent a major concern because they manifest in an unprecedented acute form with multiple effects on state security and overall international stability. That is why Roumania expressed its willingness to participate in the fight against international terrorism. On the other hand, the threat of regional instability has been identified as a major risk factor. In this respect, considering all events in Yugoslavia, Roumanian policy makers assess extremism, intolerance, xenophobia, and separatism as factors with highly destabilizing effects on Roumania and the entire region. Although these factors cannot be prioritized, the emphasis put on the danger represented by the regional specific factors is significant.

As a result of this evaluation of potential risk factors, Roumania's role in providing security in the region was well understood by all governments after 1990. Sharing the same views regarding the foreign and defense policies, all Roumanian governments placed a premium on involvement in regional diplomatic initiatives and on active participation in Western military, peacekeeping, peace support, and humanitarian operations.[34] Taking the European and Euro-Atlantic initiatives as a model, Roumania considers that cooperation in this part of Europe represents the only way to achieve regional stability. At a conference held in 2002 at the George Marshall Center, the Roumanian president Ion Iliescu summed up the Roumanian perspective on foreign and defense policy:

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[34] Larry L. Watts, "Romania and NATO: The National-Regional Security Nexus," in *Almost NATO – Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security,* ed. Charles Krupnick (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2003), 172.

Roumania's strategy as security provider includes its contribution to security through cooperation, through the development of complementary initiatives in the region, through bilateral and multilateral military cooperation, defense diplomacy, and participation in multinational peacekeeping operations. All these instruments and activities are oriented to inducing stability in the area. Taking into consideration that European and Euro-Atlantic initiatives have proven beneficial to Southeastern Europe, we believe that translating this cooperation model to the Black Sea and the Caucasus area would have a positive effect on the level of international cooperation in this region and, eventually, on the establishment, in the medium term, of mutual understanding and on promoting the common interests of the neighboring countries.[35]

Therefore, aware of the fact that there is no national solution to regional problems, Roumanian policymakers express their belief that regional cooperation is imperative for the region stability and, of course, for Roumania's security. Consequently, they establish directions for action in all realms of the national security policy and especially in Roumania's regional and international foreign policy and national defense.

Despite its newly achieved membership in NATO and successes in improving the bilateral relations with the neighboring countries, Roumania will still face multiple foreign policy challenges in the years to come. First, as presented in the first part of the paper, Roumania inherited some unsolved problems in bilateral relations with the countries in the region. Second, Roumania still has to make great efforts to join the European Union, an objective that seems quite far off. These efforts imply the acceptance of certain fundamental changes in Roumanian internal policy, while trying to comply with the European Union standards. All these foreign policy challenges cannot be seen outside the general context of Roumania's security and therefore, a thorough analysis of their implications on Roumanian military capabilities is necessary.

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[35] Larry L. Watts, "Romania and NATO: The National-Regional Security Nexus," in *Almost NATO – Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security,* ed. Charles Krupnick (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2003), 172.

In the context of the adamant desire to join the European Union, the necessity of solving the bilateral issues with the countries in the region is clearly understood by the policymakers in Bucharest. They understand that Roumania's good relations with Hungary, Ukraine, Moldova and Russia is a guarantee for regional stability and also a prerequisite for being accepted into the European Union. Consequently, concrete efforts were made towards the normalization of the long-lasting strained relations with the countries in the region. The efforts were viewed as the best means of bolstering the country's capacity to concentrate on internal problems and, of course, to enhance its security. However, although bilateral treaties were signed and relations became more normal and unstrained, there are some variables that must not be underestimated.

The most important are perhaps the attitudes of Hungary, Ukraine, and Moldova towards Roumania. These attitudes were recently subject to changes that affected for short-term the bilateral relations. A difficult situation was created, for example, in 2001 when Hungary tried to implement the Law on the Status of Hungarians Abroad. Roumania solved this problem was solved by appealing to European Commission on Democracy through Law. Roumania should not also forget its dispute with Ukraine over the continental shelf and the Serpents Island. In this respect, "the position of Romania, both with relation to Ukraine and internationally, must be firm, in the sense that Ukraine has no reason to assume more rights than the former USSR."[36] In terms of its relations with Moldova, Roumania reiterates its support for an independent and sovereign Moldavian state. Despite this clear position, the relation between Roumania and Moldova could have an unexpected evolution due to the political and economical problems

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[36] Aurelian Teodorescu, "Serpents' Island: between rule of law and role of force"; available from http://www.tomrad.ro/iserpi/ENGLISH.HTM; Internet; accessed 17 March 2004.

Moldova is facing, and also the presence of the Russian 14th Army in the self-declared

and not internationally recognized Republic of Transnistria. This last problem adds to the

historical and lasting Roumanian concern about the relationship with Russia.

 Apart from the behavior Russia had in 2001, when it tried to sway Roumania by

speculating its sensibilities, the recent attitude towards NATO enlargement demonstrates

that "Russia's international policy has not moved very far away from the concepts of

spheres of influence and nuclear deterrence."[37] In this respect, the March 2004

declarations of the Russian Defence Minister, Serghei Ivanov, are significant. Thus, at the

beginning of the month he declared that:

> Russia does not see anything frightening in NATO's early enlargement but is
> ready to offer a response to possible threats generated by this process […]
> Moscow will respond to the extension of the alliance's infrastructure and its
> approach towards the Russian border […] We can withdraw from unilateral
> obligations dealing with confidence-building measures, […] since there are no
> legal documents confirming these obligations.[38]

Later on he warned "Russia will have to adequately revise its military planning and

principles regarding the development of its armed forces, including its nuclear forces, if

NATO remains a military alliance with an offensive military doctrine."[39] Clearly, the last

act of enlargement is not well received by Russian politicians and consequently, both

NATO and Roumania must take into consideration these declarations because they reflect

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[37] J.L. Black, *Russia Faces NATO Expansion-Bearing Gifts or Bearing Arms?*, (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.2000), 239.

[38] Politics, "Russia will respond to NATO enlargement"; available from http://www.interfax.ru/e/B/0/28.html?id_issue=9177321; Internet; accessed 17 march 2004.

[39] US nuclear expansion under fire; available from http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2004/03/26/1079939849825.html?from=storyrhs; Internet; accessed 25 April 2004.

the fact that Russia still perceives NATO as a challenger to its security in this region. From Roumania's perspective, the warning may also be interpreted as a manifestation of Russia's frustration because, despite its continuous insistence that Roumania renounce its NATO integration, Roumania pursued resolutely its policy of integration into the Alliance.

Definitely, Roumania has some good reasons for which it cannot minimize the significance of Russia's declarations. First, it is located at the forefront of the Alliance and its location in the Russia's proximity may represent a serious disadvantage in case of Russia's renouncement to its constructive relationship with NATO. Second, as history proved many times, Russia's declarations as well as its behavior can be unpredictable. An illustration of this is the fact that Russia's declarations regarding the enlarging West evolved significantly and unpredictably in the last decade. Thus, in the early 1990s, Russia manifested its interest in joining NATO. In 1996, it started criticizing American attempts at unipolar domination of the world through NATO, and seeking partners such as China for balance in relation to the West.[40] In 2004, it has launched warnings mentioning its nuclear forces. Therefore, there are always uncertainties implied by Russia's declarations and Roumania must not ignore them when it formulates its foreign and defense policies.

In the post-communist period, Roumania's interest in cultivating good relations with neighboring countries has been matched by its desire to join the family of Western democracies. In fact, the key constants in Roumania's policy have been its integration into all European and Euro-Atlantic organizations and regional cooperation.

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[40] "Russia and NATO," George Washington University, 1997; available from http://www.fas.org/man/nato/ceern/introduction.htm; Internet; accessed 26 April 2004.

Thus, the Western European organizations have been viewed as the best means of bolstering the country's economy and enhancing its security. In this respect, the importance of Romania's accession to the European Union was clearly stated in Roumanian Parliament Declaration issued in 1995:

> Roumania's admission to the European Union represents a fundamental strategic goal for the Romanian society. This option is based on the convergence of political and social forces and aims at that solid integration of the country into the European system of values, the development of the Romanian society on the democratic and market economy principles so as to assure the social stability and the prosperity of the citizens and of the nation. The accession has to serve to the promotion of the national interest and to the development of the economic potential and of the Romanian cultural heritage, thus becoming an essential element of the national solidarity.[41]

Therefore, since 1995, Roumania has declared its commitment to the integration into the European Union defining its admission as a fundamental strategic goal. All Romanian governments have pursued this objective and the entire Roumanian society has understood that the EU membership will have a major impact upon all facets of the economic, political and social life. As envisioned by Roumanian policy makers and analysts, the economic implications will be the most significant, though radical mutations will also be recorded in the political, security, social and cultural domain. Translated into the main direct advantages this means that Roumania will have a stable political and economic climate, an increased access to Western European values, a consolidated relationship with other European countries, and an enhanced security.[42]

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[41] Romania on Line, "The National Strategy for the Preparation of Romania's Accession to the European Union"; available from http://romania-on-line.net/PostolacheTudorel/snvst.htm; Internet; accessed 18 March 2004.

[42] Romania's Accession to the European Union - Strategic Elements; available from http://domino.kappa.ro/mae/dosare.nsf/0/beea4fea6f400dc2c22566e2005c969a?OpenDocument; Internet; accessed 25 April 2004.

Roumania's relationship with the European Union, the former European

Community, can be traced back to 1974 when Roumania became the first country of

Central and Eastern Europe to have official relations with this organization. In 1980,

Romania had proceeded to officially acknowledge this economic organization by signing

the Agreement concerning the establishment of the Joint Romania-CEE Commission.

Consequently, at the beginning of the 1990s, from a Roumanian perspective, the

European orientation was viewed as a continuation of the Roumanian successes of the

nineteen-seventies.[43] Obviously, as the European Union' decisions proved later, it was an

unsubstantial assumption. Thus, in 1997 the European Union decided to reject Roumania

as a candidate for membership of EU because it did not fulfill the majority of criteria

established by for admission. This refusal had a serious impact on Roumanian internal

policy. The situation was amplified by another rejection Roumania received at the same

time from NATO. Consequently, these rejections "undercut the entire integration

strategy" of the Government at that time, and the process of economical and social

reforms was slowed down.[44] In 2004, according to the statement of Commission for

Enlargement at the most recent conference, "Roumania continues to fulfill the political

criteria, and is closer to fulfilling the economic criteria."[45] In spite of this, though,

Roumania continues to remain outside the European Union for the time being, its

accession not expected until 2007. However, this time interval allows the continuation of

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[43] F. Peter Wagner, "EU, NATO and Romania: Beyond "Sultanism", in *EU, NATO and the Relationship Between Transformation and External Behavior in Post-Socialist eastern Europe,* ed. Reimund Seidelmann (Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden, 2002)*,* 259.

[44] *Ibid,* 261.

[45] "Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey make significant progress towards accession criteria"; available from http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/1499|0|RAPID&lg=EN; Internet; accessed 18 March 2004.

the process of economic and social reforms, which may have accompanying effects on the security policy.

Roumania's motivation to meet the requirements of the European Union is strong. However, it must pursue the objectives established for integration without ignoring the effects on its security, which might result from a wrong application of the internal reforms. One of the most important and delicate reforms concerns the minorities and their rights. This problem came repeatedly to the attention of Roumanian governments due to the pressures exerted by the European Union. As a result, Roumania has made many efforts to change its internal legislation in order to meet the European standards. However, alongside the positive results obtained in the problem of minorities, some limitations in Roumania 's perception regarding the minorities' rights surfaced. In this respect, the evolution of the Hungarian minority's situation represents the best example. Thus, cooperating closely with Hungarian governments, Roumanian governments managed to fulfill many of the Hungarian minority's demands. Obviously, some of the demands challenged the national consensus of Roumanian politics and consequently, put a strong pressure on governments. The solution that was found in those circumstances was to fulfill the demands that were part of a well-defined and acknowledged historical-cultural legacy and as such not alien to Roumanian national politics.[46] In other words, Roumania's governments have implemented only the solutions that cannot cause prejudices to Roumania's integrity and sovereignty. This example illustrates the fact that there are some limitations to the reforms a nation state like Roumania can afford to

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[46] F. Peter Wagner, "EU, NATO and Romania: Beyond "Sultanism", in *EU, NATO and the Relationship Between Transformation and External Behavior in Post-Socialist eastern Europe,* ed. Reimund Seidelmann (Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden, 2002)*,* 272.

undertake when dealing with the minority issue. Therefore, despite transnational involvement and the lure of Europe that have gone a long way to manage ethnic conflicts in Roumania, it seems that ethnic problems cannot disappear entirely. They remain as a main concern when formulating Roumania's security policy.

In establishing the future of its military capability, Roumania must take into consideration the challenges of its foreign policy. On one hand, there are long lasting uncertainties derived from Roumania's century-old bilateral relations with the neighboring countries: Hungary, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, and Russia. In this respect, serious efforts were made to normalize these relations and the results are promising. With perseverance, seriousness and dynamism, Roumania tried to rebuild its credibility and respectability in the region and in Europe. These efforts paid dividends and Roumania now has bilateral treaties with all neighboring countries. However, occasionally tensions surfaced in Roumania's relations with Hungary, and Ukraine, and on one occasion Roumania decided to refer the case to international organizations. Also, Roumania's relations with the Republic of Moldova have been subject to some changes. Thus, at the beginning of the 1990s these relations were promising a German-style reunification but starting in 1993, as a result of the ethnic separatist conflict in the Transnistria region, coupled with the Russian military presence in the region and the increasingly bleak economic malaise in Moldova, all reunification hopes were demolished.[47] Relations with Russia evolved very slowly as a result of mutual lack of confidence. Russia's fears of NATO's enlargement towards Roumania and the use of this

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[47] Larry L. Watts, "Romania and NATO: The National-Regional Security Nexus," in *Almost NATO – Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security,* ed. Charles Krupnick (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2003), 183.

justification to maintain the 14th Army in Transnistria – which according to Roumanian Foreign Minister represents a vanguard of Russia interests – hindered a rapid development of bilateral relations. Therefore, because the problems in this region are too deeply rooted in history, Roumania has sufficient arguments to shape its military future cautiously and to try to guarantee its national security objectives unilaterally.

On the other hand, its quest of integration into the European Union presents Roumania with other challenges. The integration objectives, Roumania is devotedly pursuing, are clearly defined and most of them are achievable. Unfortunately, some of them cannot be easily fulfilled because the implementation of the corresponding reforms can produce undesired outcomes. For example, the obligation to improve the minorities' situation can become a significant security issue. Indeed, a number of contentious issues continue to confront the Hungarian minority in its relations with the Roumanian majority. Many of these issues are determined by some unacceptable Hungarian minority's demands that are viewed as dangers for Romania status. Consequently, Roumania, as a national state cannot afford to respond to all demands and even to some pressures posed by the European Union. Instead, Roumania can try to find the balance between these pressures and its own interests in order to avoid any setback with respect to its security and, at the same time, fulfill its aspirations. Therefore, given the challenges it faces with respect to its minorities and the integration into the European Union, Roumania must shape the future of its armed forces considering the risk factors that might derive from these challenges.

ROUMANIA'S DEFENSE POLICY CHALLENGES

Roumania's defense policy during the last decade had two important constants: the country's defense and, concurrently, Roumania's admission into NATO. The special importance given to the country's integration into NATO brought many difficulties to the Roumanian armed forces, but the overall effort sustained by the military personnel, politicians and the Roumanian society as a whole was oriented towards the right direction. Despite the economic problems the country faced in these years, Roumania managed to remain a leader in military reform and inter-operability with NATO forces.[48] However, what contributed decisively to the achievements, were the concrete, rapid, and efficient military reforms undertaken in a short period of time and the military contributions to international missions abroad. The reform process was conducted in several stages, comprised all domains, and had, as the overall goal, creation of compact, effective, efficient and flexible NATO-like armed forces. As a result, Roumania has today a smaller partially professionalized army, capable of deploying small units in countries contiguous to Roumania or in the Middle East. Some of the units are interoperable with NATO forces being able to contribute to NATO Response Force. In terms of the contribution to different missions abroad it can be said that Roumania proved that it is part of the community of democratic states, which respects today's internationally recognized values and international law. Furthermore, Roumania's military contribution in the Balkans demonstrated the desire to assume responsibilities for regional security and stability. From 1990, the Roumanian armed forces participated in

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[48] F. Peter Wagner, "EU, NATO and Romania: Beyond "Sultanism", in *EU, NATO and the Relationship Between Transformation and External Behavior in Post-Socialist eastern Europe,* ed. Reimund Seidelmann (Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden, 2002)*, 264.

almost all major military operations conducted under the United Nations' banner and more recently under NATO command.

Roumania's newly acquired membership in NATO represents an end and a new beginning. It represents the end of its isolation in the South Eastern part of Europe. The former Roumanian Minister of Defense, Victor Babiuc, very well expressed the danger represented by this isolation: "History proves to us that every time Roumania tried to be neutral it did not succeed. The danger as a neutral of waking up in an uncomfortable position is too great to be considered again."[49] This membership represents also a new beginning because Roumania, for the first time in its history, is trying to become a fully interoperable partner in a military alliance. Interoperability addresses the Roumanian Armed Forces structure, equipment and doctrines and consequently means the continuation, at a higher pace, of the already started reform process. It also sets a standard for the Roumanian armed forces to aspire to in the future. In these circumstances, the changes that will be made in the Roumanian military will be very profound and will pose some difficulties. However, as the Roumanian Secretary of State George Maior declared recently, "Roumania can take the advantage of the unique opportunity of adapting to the Allliance's transformation."[50] Addressed in a different manner by the member countries this transformation refers to changes in the role of the Alliance and its capabilities. In terms of the role it wants to play, NATO tries to assume a global role with the declared purpose to promote international security. The capabilities of the Alliance represent

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[49] An interview from Jane's; available from http://www2.janes.com/docs/definterview/dw990120_i.shtml; Internet; accessed 20 March 2004.

[50] Romanian Defence 2004 - Reliable in NATO; available from http://www.mapn.ro/eveniment/aderare/index.php; Internet; accessed 12 April 2004.

another debated issue, the development of a niche-type structure for each country's armed forces being an idea advocated by more and more NATO leaders. However, Roumania must analyse continuously the feasibility and the impacts of these changes, which means that it must have certain criteria against which it has to weigh the planned changes. In this respect, the changes should be made in accordance with Roumanian historical and cultural values, they should be affordable from the social and financial point of view and consequently, they should not diminish the Roumanian capability to act unilaterally in order to protect its interests like any other European country in NATO.

The current Roumanian military strategy is an active-defensive one. In fact it represents a continuation of the traditional defense policy Roumania had during its history. For instance, between First and Second World Wars, Roumania based its security on its alliances, the peace treaties, the League of Nations, and its friendship with France.[51] Furthermore, during the communist period, Roumania pursued a strictly active-defensive policy, completely different from the other communist countries' defense policies, despite its membership in the Warsaw Pact. Thus, in 1968, in the aftermath of the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia, due to the pressure posed by the Soviet Union, Roumania took different steps to enhance the capability of its regular armed forces to offer resistance to a military intervention. Also, it did not limit the armed resistance to regular forces, introducing the concept of people's war in the preparations for responding to any possible attack conducted by the Soviet Union.[52] Today's military strategy means

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[51] Paul D. Quinlan, *Clash over Romania: British and American Policies towards Romania:1938 – 1947* (Los Angeles: American Romanian Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1977), 16.

[52] Aurel Braun, *Romanian Foreign Policy Since 1965, The Political and Military Limits of Autonomy* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1978), 173.

also that the Roumanian armed forces are mainly designed to deter and, if necessary, to defeat a possible aggression against Roumania and they are not meant to become a source of concern to other states.[53] The same document also emphasizes that Roumania will continue to be a provider of regional stability and its armed forces will contribute to regional security.[54] This strategy, therefore, has a defensive character that "reflects Roumania's traditional aversion to aggressive foreign policy" and corresponds to NATO's defensive policy.[55] At the same time, Roumania is trying to affirm the role that it will play in the region for maintaining regional stability. In terms of the circumstances under which the armed forces can be involved in missions abroad, the Roumanian Constitution is also very clear: "the armed forces contributes to the collective defense in military alliance systems and participates in peacekeeping and peace enforcing missions."[56] Therefore, today the defensive character of the Roumanian defense policy is indubitable and is reflected in the country's legislation.

The same defensive character of Roumania's defense policy during the Cold War was responsible for the establishment of the country's defense industry. Thus, during the Cold War, in order to eliminate its heavy dependence on the Soviet Union, which was very reluctant to provide modern armaments to a country that was not complying with its orders, Roumania pursued a policy of self-sufficiency in armaments and made significant

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[53] Military Strategy of Romania; available from http://www.dcaf.ch/publications/e-publications/Transparency_defence/Romania_Military_Strategy.pdf; Internet; accessed 20 March 2004.

[54] *Ibid.*

[55] Mariana Cernicova-Buca, "Romania: The quest for Membership," in *Enlarging NATO, The National Debates,* ed. Gale A. Mattox and Arthur R. Rachwald (Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2001), 208.

[56] Parlamentul Romaniei, Constitutia Romaniei; available from http://diasan.vsat.ro/pls/dic/site.page?den=act2_1&par1=3#t3c1s1a61; Internet; accessed 20 March 2004.

progress towards developing an independent domestic arms industry. Thus, starting in 1968, when the development of a domestic arms industry became a national priority, Roumania became able to provide almost two thirds of the weapons and military equipment required for the country's defense. After ten years, in the late 1970s, Roumanian arms production included fighter aircraft, armored combat vehicles, multiple rocket launchers, small arms and ammunition. There was therefore, a clear understanding that a country with limited resources, surrounded by potential enemies, had to rely on its own capability to provide armaments both for conventional forces and for the paramilitary ones. Furthermore, the politicians understood that the domestic arms production could boost the country's exports and become a source of hard currency. Thus, in the early 1980s, arms exports averaged $620 million, making Romania the world's ninth largest arms exporter.[57]

The evolution of the Roumanian defense industry during the last few years has not been encouraging. Roumania lost former markets for military equipment and consequently, arms sales dropped dramatically, this trend being amplified by the economic crisis. Consequently, in the last years of the 1990s a program of structural reforms of the industry commenced, aiming to liquidate unprofitable plants or change the profile of some of them to a civilian production, as Roumanian Prime Minister declared in 2001:

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[57] Arms production, exports and decision-making in Central and Eastern Europe; available from http://www.saferworld.co.uk/Romania.pdf; Internet; accessed 20 March 2004.

The defense industry plants will enter a restructuring process, so that some of them will further preserve their profile, while others will switch to civil production, and those, which are not viable, will be declared bankrupt.[58]

Obviously, this economic reform of the defense industry implies personnel reductions and special protective measures to alleviate the social impact such redundancies may have. According to a 2001 estimate, "some 10,000 employees from various commercial arms companies are expected to lose their jobs, including a substantial proportion from the national defense company Romarm."[59] The effects of the personnel reductions are very serious considering the fact that the economies of some towns are heavily dependent on defense firms.

There is though some hope, which is related to Roumania's new status. From a Roumanian perspective, revival of the national defense industry is intertwined with the country's admission into NATO: "NATO membership […] might provide an opportunity to bolster the Roumanian defense industry by increasing the country's defense budget and the procurement of modern weaponry."[60] Obviously, the solution is not simple. Despite the pool of educated and skilled people able to work in the defense industry, Roumania should retrain these people in order to be able to produce West European armament. Also, it should modernize its production facilities in order to meet NATO's standards. However, there are some incentives in this respect and they are mainly based on the fact that Roumania has the infrastructure, the personnel, and the experience necessary to

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[58] Arms production, exports and decision-making in Central and Eastern Europe; available from http://www.saferworld.co.uk/Romania.pdf; Internet; accessed 20 March 2004.

[59] *Ibid.*

[60] *Ibid.*

produce, perhaps under license, cheaper military equipment for the Roumanian army and for other countries of the Alliance.

Roumania put a great effort in obtaining the security umbrella provided by the Alliance. However, in the subsequent period, this effort will continue, with the transformation of the army into a compact, mobile, and effective force as the ultimate goal. Being already involved in this vortex of transformation, Roumania must make some key decisions regarding its military future. These decisions are critical especially because the construction of this new army has certain continuity. Roumania's traditional defense policy and its inherited defense industry capabilities can provide the right answer. The status Roumania enjoyed as a member of the Warsaw Pact for almost 40 years provides strong arguments today in favor of maintaining a unilateral solution in order to respond properly to all possible national contingencies. Also, the existence of a national defense industry assures certain independence for Roumania, its armed forces having the possibility to invest the allotted budged in cheaper equipment. Furthermore, the social impact of the decisions regarding its defense industry reform is not negligible. Nevertheless, by modernizing the Roumanian arms industry and providing jobs to the experienced personnel the social impact can be alleviated. Consequently, this solution would respond to both Roumania's traditional values and its responsibilities assumed as a member of NATO.

NATO AND ROUMANIA

NATO'S LACK OF COHESION

The North Atlantic Treaty, signed by 12 countries from Western Europe and North America in April 1949, represented the legal basis for one of the most enduring military alliances in history. Established within the framework of Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, which affirms the inherent right of individual or collective defense, the aim of the allies was to "promote peaceful and friendly relations in the North Atlantic Area."[61] However, although it was not officially declared, the Alliance's immediate purpose was the defense of its members against any potential threat posed by the Soviet Union and the other communist states.

At the beginning of the 1990s, once the communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe fell and the Soviet Union collapsed, this threat was removed and NATO came out of the East-West-conflict as the most powerful and capable security institution.[62] Nevertheless, the period that followed proved to be more difficult for the Alliance and even its survival seemed to be in jeopardy. Thus, in 1990 doubts were raised, especially from realist quarters, whether a defensive military alliance could long survive in the absence of a common, classical threat.[63] In that context, the Alliance started a slow but profound process of institutional and procedural adaptations to the perceived post-Cold War security challenges. Among the achievements of this process, the most important were: the creation of new institutions and programs such as the North

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[61] *NATO Handbook,* NATO Office of Information and Press, Brussels, 2001, 31.

[62] Philipp Borinski, "Double Enlargement: NATO Policy Towards South-Eastern Europe," in *EU, NATO and the Relationship Between Transformation and External Behavior in Post-Socialist eastern Europe,* ed. Reimund Seidelmann (Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden, 2002), 47.

[63] *Ibid,* 48.

Atlantic Cooperation Council (replaced in 1997 by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership

Council) and the Partnership for Peace Program; the strengthening of Alliance's

relationship with Russia; and the two rounds of enlargement to the East. However, this

process was conducted in a very difficult security context created by the Gulf War

(1991), the wars in Yugoslavia and Kosovo, the permanent terrorist threat after 11

September 2001, the war against terrorism in Afghanistan, and the recent war in Iraq.

Therefore, NATO had to adapt its political and military infrastructure to new threats

while simultaneously responding to regional and international crises.

Among all these crises, those that took place in the last 5 years put NATO in very

delicate situations. Thus, the Alliance's difficulties in reaching consensus during the

Kosovo air operation, the differences amongst allies about American intervention in Iraq,

and related to this the dispute regarding how to deal with Iraq's weapons of mass

destruction (WMD) and the necessity to protect Turkey against a possible Iraqi attack

revealed a lack of consensus inside the Alliance. As NATO Secretary General Lord

Robertson stated after the February 2003 summit - on the eve of the Iraqi Freedom

operation – NATO was "seen to be in disarray."[64] Despite the fact that at the end of the

summit the Alliance reached the necessary consensus to react properly to the new crisis,

the risk that disagreement could have escalated into the use of a permanent veto was a

constant presence during the summit.[65] Therefore, although in the last years the Alliance

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[64] Building a Transatlantic Consensus; available from
http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2003/s030220b.htm; Internet; accessed 17 April 2004.

[65] *Ibid.*

has made a sincere effort to retool itself to meet the strategic challenges of the new era, some events demonstrated that it is less cohesive today than it was during the Cold War.

However, NATO's difficulties during the crises of the last 5 years represent only the visible part of the iceberg. Indeed, Lord Robertson's words about the Alliance's difficulties at the above-mentioned summit are very suggestive: the damage to the Alliance during the summit was made above, not below, the waterline.[66] As characterized by some scholars, the crisis within NATO in February 2003 was a short-term tactical test applied to a long-term, strategic Alliance.[67] However, the damage was done. Although, according to the former Secretary General of NATO, this damage did not put at risk the cohesion and credibility of the Alliance, it has crystallized the idea that NATO is experiencing fundamental problems that are jeopardizing its cohesion. Indeed, two of these problems seem to be at the core of NATO's current lack of cohesion: the Europe - US relationship; and the current military technological gap between Europe and the US.

The Europe - US relationship and its impact on NATO's cohesion must be analyzed by taking into consideration the mightiness of the US, and the differences between the European Union members and the US regarding their individual security policies. Of course, the relationship that exists between non-EU members and the US is also important. Carl Hodge, in his article *The Vocation of Peace, The Hypothesis of War,* stated that the fundamental difference between Europe and the United States is that Europe is used to thinking in regional rather than global terms while the United States is

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[66] Building a Transatlantic Consensus; available from http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2003/s030220b.htm; Internet; accessed 17 April 2004.

[67] Michael Rühle, *NATO after Prague: Learning the Lessons of 9/11,* Parameters, Summer 2003; available from http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/03summer/ruhle.htm; Internet; accessed 18 April 2004.

accustomed to thinking primarily in global terms.[68] Undoubtedly, the US is the most

powerful country in the world and there are clear signs that it will maintain its status in

the foreseeable future. Because there is no match for its military mightiness, the US is the

only country capable of projecting its interests to every part of the globe. Unfortunately,

in the last years, the US position has become overwhelming even for its traditional allies,

the Western European countries and Canada. As a response to the US domination, a

European defense came to reality. In 2003, a joint readiness force - designed for

enhancing the European military capacity and comprising almost 60,000 troops - was

created. Officially, the role of this force is to "undertake military operations led by the

EU in response to international crises, in circumstances where NATO as a whole is not

engaged militarily."[69] However, through this force the European Union also provides

itself with the capacity for autonomous military operations, without need of NATO and

the US. Tellingly, the creation of the European joint readiness force can be tracked back

to the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) which addressed the European security policy without

mentioning NATO as an integral part of Europe's security future.[70]

Backed by their economic, political, and military supremacy in Europe, the main

proponents of the creation of this force were France, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

France's presence at the forefront of this initiative is explainable because it "has always

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[68] Carl C. Hodge, "The Vocation of Peace, The Hypothesis of War", in *NATO for a New Century-Atlanticism and European Security,* ed. Carl C. Hodge (Praeger Publishers, Westport, 2001), 152.

[69] NATO Handbook, NATO Office of Information and Press, Brussels, 2001, 102.

[70] Steven E. Meyer, *Carcass of Dead Policies: the Irrelevance of NATO,* From Parameters, Winter 2003-04; available from http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/03winter/meyer.htm; Internet; accessed 16 April 2004.

been and remains the champion of autonomy."[71] Germany, still "marked by a degree of

multilateralism, anti-militarism, and reticence" is also involved in this initiative but,

concurrently, it expresses its concerns about maintaining strong defense links with the

United States and NATO.[72] Finally, the United Kingdom participation is motivated by the

desire to "support increased European responsibility within NATO" while maintaining

NATO as the essential foundation of Transatlantic security.[73]

However, the creation of the European force encouraged a new division between

Europe and the US and even amongst European countries. This division surfaced very

clearly in 2003, a year dominated by the controversial war conducted by the US and some

European allies in Iraq. Thus, almost as a continuation of the debate that took place inside

NATO in February, in April 2003 four Western European countries met in Brussels in

order to debate the future of the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) and of

course, the main issue at hand, the war in Iraq. At that summit, France, Germany,

Luxembourg and Belgium decided to establish a EU operational planning staff, thus

allowing the EU to conduct autonomous operations.[74] Obviously, this so-called

"Tervoren initiative" provoked a reaction both in Europe and the US. For instance, the

European countries that were not invited to the meeting, such as United Kingdom, Spain,

and Italy felt excluded from a very important decision regarding the European defense.

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[71] Carl C. Hodge, "The Vocation of Peace, The Hypothesis of War", in *NATO for a New Century-Atlanticism and European Security,* ed. Carl C. Hodge (Praeger Publishers, Westport, 2001), 161.

[72] *Ibid,* 163.

[73] Joint Statement by President and Prime-Minister Blair; available from http://www.usembassy-israel.org.il/publish/peace/archives/2001/february/me0223b.html; Internet, accessed 19 April 2004.

[74] Charles Grant, *Resolving the rows over ESDP*; available from http://www.google.ca/search?hl=en&ie=ISO-8859-1&q=resolving+the+rows+over+esdp&meta=; Internet; accessed 19 April 2004.

Reacting promptly, the United Kingdom expressed its opposition to proposals that would fundamentally alter the balance achieved in the Treaty of Nice – regarding the role played by NATO for the common defense - especially any that would imply competition, rather than complementarity, with NATO.[75] On the other hand, the US interpreted this initiative as an attempt to undermine NATO and of course the American role in Europe. In this respect, the US position was clearly expressed by the American ambassador to NATO, Nicholas Burns, who described the plans as "the most serious threat to the future of NATO."[76]

In the end, the initiative taken by the four Western European countries emphasized the fact that the EU member states remained divided over the future role and prospects of ESDP and that there are also diverging views about how the EU should formulate its relationship with the US. Also, although the EU Member States work closely on defense and security-related issues, they still see the links between Europe and NATO differently.[77] On the other hand, Washington's reaction underscored the European perception that, although the US wants Europeans to achieve a greater degree of self-reliance for their own security, it does not want to see NATO and its American leadership undermined.[78]

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[75] Battle lines drawn over link between NATO and EU defence policy; available from http://www.euractiv.com/cgi-bin/cgint.exe?204&OIDN=1506097; Internet; accessed 19 April 2004.

[76] Franz Josef Meiers, *Tervuren- A Tempest in a Pot*; available from http://www.aicgs.org/c/meiersc.shtml; Internat; accessed 19 April 2004.

[77] Battle lines drawn over link between NATO and EU defence policy; available from http://www.euractiv.com/cgi-bin/cgint.exe?204&OIDN=1506097; Internet; accessed 19 April 2004.

[78] Carl C. Hodge, "The Vocation of Peace, The Hypothesis of War", in *NATO for a New Century- Atlanticism and European Security,* ed. Carl C. Hodge (Praeger Publishers, Westport, 2001), 160.

Obviously, this last setback in the Europe-US relationship had a great impact on NATO's cohesion. As many US academics of the realist school assumed years ago, the absence of a common threat means that differences in national interests within the Atlantic Alliance increasingly will come to the fore and that these will override the common interests. In fact, there is a strong belief in US that the European Union will act independently of NATO on some security matters.[79] If the technological and capability gap is added to this centrifugal tendency generated by different interests, the negative effects on the Alliance are multiplied.

Clearly, the efficiency of any alliance's forces at peace, in crisis or military conflict depends on the ability of the forces to operate together efficiently. In order to obtain and maintain this ability, the allied countries' forces should train together, have the same or at least interoperable equipment, and have the same doctrines and apply the same principles of conducting military operations. Also, combined joint operations should be planned, prepared, and conducted in a manner that makes the maximum use of the individual capabilities of the countries participating in operations. If all these conditions are met, the allied forces should reach a good level of standardization and consequently, their efficiency on the ground should allow them to accomplish their mission. Achievement of standardization can in turn play an important role in strengthening and maintaining alliance's cohesion.

Since its foundation, NATO has expended much effort in order to achieve a suitable level of standardization between its members. These efforts were made in different spheres and were designed to improve military cooperation and eliminate

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[79] James E. Goodby, Petrus Buwalda, Dmitri Trenin, *A Strategy for Stable Peace. Towards a Euroatlantic Security Community,* United States Institute of Peace Press, 2002, 99.

duplication in research, development, production, procurement and support of defense systems. One of these efforts concretized in 1995, when the Alliance founded NATO Standardization Organization with the key role to enhance interoperability and to contribute to the ability of the Alliance's forces to train, exercise and effectively operate together. Thus, the Alliance established that standardization of equipment, supplies and procedures is an overall force multiplier that has to be taken into account in the design and production of systems and equipment.[80] Obviously, due to the differences between its members, the highest level of standardization, namely commonality, could not be achieved. That is why the members of the Alliance established that the minimum objectives needed to achieve combat effectiveness are interoperability of the principal equipment, interchangeability of supplies and commonality of procedures.[81]

However, despite the declared desire to obtain an appropriate combat effectiveness of the allied forces, the military operations conducted by NATO in the post-Cold War era revealed a lack of interoperability of the principal equipment, especially between the US and the European members and, consequently, a reduced efficiency of their actions. They also demonstrated that the European members do not have the necessary capability to conduct entire spectrum operations – from peacekeeping or peace-enforcement operation to high-intensity warfare in defense of alliance territory – without the major contribution of the US.

During the 1991 Gulf War, the US' NATO allies participating in the campaign were deficient in a wide range of areas, including communications, precision attack,

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[80] NATO Handbook, NATO Office of Information and Press, Brussels, 2001, 178.

[81] *Ibid.*

long-range transport, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. Also, in 1999, the NATO air campaign conducted in Kosovo highlighted the gap, qualitative and quantitative, in hard military capabilities between the United States and its NATO allies.[82] Although 13 countries took part in the campaign, more than 70 percent of the firepower deployed was American.[83] In terms of aircraft, France was the only European ally able to make a significant contribution to high-level bombing raids at night, accounting for about 14 percent of all allied strikes at ground targets.[84] Overall, as Italian Admiral Guido Venturoni, chairman of NATO's Military Committee observed, the campaign was so dependent on American air power and precision-guided ordnance that, unless Europeans demonstrated sustained resolve to acquire the necessary resources, a European defense and security capability "will remain nothing more than a noble concept."[85]

The Kosovo campaign brought many concerns to some European countries. Alarmed by their continuing dependence on the United States, the European countries declared their commitment to narrow the technological gap between them and the US. Furthermore, the EU leaders vowed their commitment to the development of an effective common European security and defense policy through the creation of a rapid reaction force and the establishment of a number of new political and military decision-making

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[82] Carl C. Hodge, "The Vocation of Peace, The Hypothesis of War", in *NATO for a New Century-Atlanticism and European Security,* ed. Carl C. Hodge (Praeger Publishers, Westport, 2001), 158.

[83] Economist.com, *Knights in shining armor?* ; available from http://www.economist.com/surveys/displayStory.cfm?Story_id=378964; Internet; accessed 20 April 2004.

[84] Joseph Fitchett, "US Seeks More Defense Technology Cooperation With Europeans", International Herald Tribune, 14 June 1999.

[85] Carl C. Hodge, "The Vocation of Peace, The Hypothesis of War", in *NATO for a New Century-Atlanticism and European Security,* ed. Carl C. Hodge (Praeger Publishers, Westport, 2001), 158.

structures.[86] Unfortunately, the European commitments have not been realized. The technological and capability gap between the US and its European allies has widened in the last 5 years and is reflected in the current lack of standardization inside the Alliance. Although at the NATO summit in April 1999 the heads of state and governments decided to address the issue, and made the decision to launch a Defense Capabilities Initiative, nothing was done in order to enhance the interoperability of national military forces. Then, in 2002, at the Prague Summit a new attempt was made to recover the failed Defense Capabilities Initiative. This time, nevertheless, the new NATO Defense Transformation Initiative had a narrower focus on new missions and a small but select number of forces for them. According to this initiative, each country would take on a capabilities task in advance as one or more of their responsibilities, leading to so-called niche responsibilities for even the smallest member, depending on each member's perceived areas of comparative advantage. However, there is little interest among small countries to give up some of their capabilities and to focus all their resources on one or two capabilities.

In any event, the problems of standardization inside the Alliance exist and, according to some scholars, have been exacerbated in 2003, especially as a result of the disagreement between Washington and several European NATO countries over Iraq.[87]

The implications of the lack of standardization inside the Alliance are obvious. First, it is possible that in the future the European forces will not be able to operate

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[86] Elinor C. Sloan, *The Revolution in Military Affairs. Implications for Canada and NATO,* Mc Gill-Queen's University Press, 2002, 85.

[87] Steven E. Meyer, *Carcass of Dead Policies: the Irrelevance of NATO,* From Parameters, Winter 2003-04; available from http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/03winter/meyer.htm; Internet; accessed 16 April 2004.

alongside the US forces because of their technological backwardness.[88] Although problems of compatibility have been an issue for the Alliance since its foundation, the difference today is that the US advances in communications, data processing, and precision-guided munitions may completely eclipse those of its allies, jeopardizing any attempt to operate together in the future.[89] Second, and most importantly, the inability of the allies to work together in military operations could bring tensions between them and further undermine NATO's overall cohesion.[90]

NATO in 2004 is clearly an organization very different from that of 1991. If in 1991, at the end of the Cold War, Western Europe welcomed the United States as the global preeminent power, today it does not welcome its own military impotence relative to the Alliance leader and the fact that, in a crisis, the substance of European security is determined in Washington. That is why in the last years, some of the Western European allies have questioned the US position. They are fearful of watering down NATO's core mission of collective defense, but at the same time, they are wary of becoming some sort of "junior partner" to American strategic interests.[91] The sense of military impotence has been accentuated in some EU members - especially in France, Germany, and the United Kingdom - whose history and current economic, political, and military development give them incentive to challenge the US tendency to hegemonic behavior. Consequently, their initiatives aim at the creation of exclusively European security structures that should

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[88] Elinor C. Sloan, *The Revolution in Military Affairs. Implications for Canada and NATO,* Mc Gill-Queen's University Press, 2002, 82.

[89] *Ibid*, 83.

[90] *Ibid*, 84.

[91] Elinor C. Sloan, *The Revolution in Military Affairs. Implications for Canada and NATO,* Mc Gill-Queen's University Press, 2002, 86.

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match their US counterparts. Unfortunately, until now these initiatives have caused European members of NATO to focus on efforts that have not accorded with NATO necessities. Some of these initiatives – such as the Tervoren Group initiative – exacerbated the tensions between the US and some EU members, and even between some European countries. Finally, in the relationship between Europe and the US, it is worth mentioning the posture of the new members of NATO from Central and Eastern Europe. As recent years have demonstrated, these countries are inclined to give more support to the US efforts to maintain the current military and political status quo in Europe at the expense of any Western European initiative. On the other hand, the technological and capability gap between Europe and the US adds other difficulties to the Alliance. Because during the Cold War the Alliance was held together by a common and massive threat, its members understood the value of standardization in the creation of compatible forces capable of rapid reaction. Now that this threat has gone, although the Alliance understands the vital contribution of standardization to the combined operational effectiveness of its military forces, the military technological gap between the US and its European partners becomes an important concern. Unfortunately, while on the European side too few efforts have been made to improve their military capabilities, on the other side of the Atlantic, the US is devotedly pursuing its Revolution in Military Affairs, widening the technological and ca

ROUMANIA'S DEFENSE POLICY MUST CONSIDER

NATO'S LACK OF COHESION

For a new member of the Alliance, such as Roumania, NATO's cohesion represents a matter of great importance. As the Roumanian Minister of Foreign Affairs stated in 2003, "the cohesion of NATO is its most important and effective weapon. Not only will Roumania not forget this but also it will be its course of action as a member of the Alliance."[92] Also, at the beginning of this year, other officials declared that Roumania would pursue three core objectives: maintaining NATO as the main pillar for the defense and security of Europe; strengthening the solidarity and cohesion within the Alliance; and strengthening the solidity of the transatlantic link.[93] Therefore, even before its official admission into NATO, Roumania stated very clearly that they put a great value on the Alliance's cohesion.

The Alliance's military efficiency is also very important for Roumania. In this respect, according to the last official declarations, Roumania does not only want to take the full advantage of its newly acquired membership but also to share the burden of the responsibilities given by the Alliance. Thus, Roumania acknowledges that it must bring its contribution to defining and advancing the Alliance's own objectives.[94] That is why Roumanian concrete commitments towards NATO are not simple rhetoric. Rather, these

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[92] Address by H.E. Mr. Mircea Geoana, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania, at the extraordinary meeting of the North Atlantic Council; available from http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2003/s030326h.htm; Internet; accessed 19 April 2004.

[93] Video Interview with Ambassador Bogdan Mazuru; available from http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2004/s040109b.htm; Internet; accessed 17 April 2004.

[94] Romanian Defence 2004, Ministry of National Defence, Public Relations Directorate, Bucharest 2004, 3.

commitments are the continuation of the transformation process that started several years ago. They also involve the development of interoperable, expeditionary and self-sustainable forces, which will be offered to the Alliance in order to address the new security risks, especially combating terrorism and WMD proliferation. Finally, they involve the development of Roumania's infrastructure for the use of its national territory for projecting forces to different remote areas.[95]

This devotion to the Alliance's cohesion, endurance, and military efficiency is understandable considering the fact that, for the last 14 years, Roumania has been in a difficult posture. Its location in an insecure neighborhood in which there is a continuing potential for economic instability, its unsolved historical legacies, and ultimately, the emergence of the new threats represented a continuous preoccupation for Roumania. This uncertain situation provided sufficient incentives to animate Roumania's desire to break an insecure isolation, join an effective alliance, and devote all available energies for assuring the existence of NATO.

However, despite its commitment to NATO, Roumania's future decisions regarding the country defense policy must not ignore two related difficulties the Alliance is currently facing. Among them, NATO's lack of cohesion represents the most worrying problem that should be considered because it was responsible for all shortcomings of the Alliance in the last 5 years and its effects are still visible. Also, Roumania should not ignore the current disputes regarding the Alliance's future military capabilities. In this respect, one of the issues in dispute concerns the Alliance's general capabilities that

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should allow it to conduct engagement, expeditionary combat, and post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction. Furthermore, there is a dispute regarding the alignment of the modest capabilities of some countries to the more technologically advanced capabilities of the US. From this viewpoint, one of the identified solutions is to convince the smaller Allies to focus on niche capabilities. However, in order to implement this solution some important conditions must be fulfilled. First, the core competencies of the members should be established according to their concrete possibilities. Second, in all countries there must be the same strong public willingness and real political cohesion to support the military and its reform process. Thus, all Alliance members will share a strong view that they always have to act together in peacetime, crisis, and war. Finally, in all countries there must be the willingness to give up some national capabilities in order to restructure for the common good.[96] Unfortunately, because NATO does not yet meet al these requirements, it cannot implement successfully the ambitious program of niche capability. Despite the evident shortcomings, some countries continue to support the initiative, which, they claim, is suitable for small countries.

Obviously, Roumania, as a small member of the Alliance, is encouraged to develop those niche capabilities necessary to the Alliance overall capability requirements. In this regard, Roumania has already offered NATO some capabilities, from infantry and mountain specialized units to air defense units, naval forces, and other formations designed to contribute to the general capability needs of the Alliance and to fill the gaps within the Alliance's pool of forces. This proves again that the Roumanian perspective of the defense policy is based on the security guarantees provided by a cohesive and strong

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[96] Read, David W. *The Revolution in Military Affairs: NATO's Need for a Niche Capability Strategy*; available from http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/engraph/Vol1/no3/pdf/15-24_e.pdf ; Internet;

alliance. However, although the idea of developing niche capabilities at the expense of other capabilities has already gained some proponents in Roumania, the solution is not suitable for meeting the country's security requirements.

The most important argument in this respect is that NATO does not have the necessary cohesion to handle all traditional and new security threats to Roumania. This weakness is determined by the fact that NATO does not have in place the suitable decision-making mechanism to ensure that all countries comply with the general rules and bring their support to the country in need. For example, if Roumania invests the bulk of its defense budget in acquiring the most modern fighter aircraft and attack helicopters at the expense of ships and submarines, it has to rely on other countries' navy in order to defend its maritime and fluvial territorial waters. However, it is possible that no country possessing a naval expeditionary force have the necessary interest in providing naval support when the threat to security might only affect Roumanian interests. If it is confronted with this problem, NATO does not have the instruments to oblige the other countries to help Roumania. As a result, Roumania could find itself in the impossibility to defend its seashore.

Despite its membership of NATO, Roumania should not exclude the possibility to act alone in order to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity. NATO's inability to act cohesively in critical situations represents a very clear warning for Roumania. NATO does not have yet the necessary cohesion to provide a complete security to its members. Some of its members' reluctance to develop niche capabilities represents strong evidence in this respect. That is why Roumania must have the unilateral capability ready for any contingencies.

CONCLUSION

Roumania strived very hard to become a member of the most powerful military alliance of the moment. Now that this objective is attained, Roumania is facing the important challenge of shaping the future of its armed forces. In this respect, there are several judgments and decisions that have to be made in order to address properly this challenge. First, Roumania must clearly identify and articulate the role it will play in the Alliance. For doing this, Roumania must evaluate NATO's formulated needs and also its own possibilities and limitations in response to the Alliance's demands. Second, and most importantly, Roumania must decide how it will address all its national contingencies. In this regard, it must take into account the possibility that the Alliance is unable to fulfill its engagements towards Roumania. Obviously, all these difficult decisions must provide the right answer - with a clear vision of the future - to the security needs of the country. However, many of the answers they are seeking for are at hand. Indeed, Roumania's history, the legacies of the past, the current challenges of the defense and foreign policies, and finally, NATO's evolution in the last decade represent useful benchmarks for reaching the right decisions regarding the future of Roumania's military capabilities.

Roumania cannot break very easily with its past. Therefore, its history and its legacies can represent the first benchmark for Roumanian policy and military decision makers. Indeed, when dealing with neighboring countries, its foreign and defense policies are driven by historically derived reticence. Although some scholars characterized this attitude as exaggerated, it is not groundless. As proven by the last 14 years, the evolution of its relations with the neighboring states revealed the fact that Roumania still has

unsolved problems with Hungary and Russia. Furthermore, new strains, derived mainly

from historical legacies of the Second World War, surfaced at the beginning of the 1990s.

For example, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, new independent states on the

European map, added other tensions and uncertainties to Roumania's security. Therefore,

many history-induced disputes and questions, accentuated by Roumania's position at the

crossroads of western, Slavic, and Muslim cultures, characterized the last decade.

The second benchmark is NATO itself. In the last 14 years, the military alliance

that won one of the longest wars in human history - the Cold War – viewed its survival in

jeopardy. Indeed, starting in 1990, NATO's existence was questioned by more and more

scholars and policy makers. Obviously, their attitude was fully justified. The Europe-US

tense relationship in a number of occasions, the military technological gap between the

US and its European allies brought difficulties to the Alliance, undermined its cohesion

and diminished its credibility. Therefore, NATO in 2004 is clearly an organization very

different from that of 1991.

Definitely, Roumanian policy and military decision makers cannot be

pleased if they base their decision on the two benchmarks. They might say that all efforts

spent by Roumania for obtaining the membership in NATO were in vain. But this is not

the case. However, because their decision is of crucial importance for Roumania's future

security they must pay attention to all political and military evolutions inside the Alliance

and in the region. They also have to consider all hypothetical contingencies for Roumania

– derived from these evolutions - and the means that must be in place to respond to them.

In other words, they must retain Roumania's military capability to act unilaterally in all

national contingencies.

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