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**CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE / COLLEGE DES  
FORCES CANADIENNES**

NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES COURSE 6 / COURSEDES ETUDES  
SECURITE NATIONALE 6

**LITHUANIAN MEMBERSHIP IN NATO AND THE EU:  
A SECURE FUTURE**

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## ABSTRACT

The most important objective of this work is to create an overview of Lithuania's National Security issues in the Lithuanian context as well as of the whole Baltic region, and to give some thought to the question of what effect Lithuania's NATO membership will have on that country. There is no doubt that once Lithuania became a member of NATO, for the first time it is more secure than it ever was before. On the other hand, this paper seeks to acquaint the reader with the means Lithuania ought employ in order to strengthen its internal security encompassing economic, social and other non-military security aspects. Therefore, in this work, the membership in the European Union is also briefly reviewed from the point of view of its influence on security.

While pursuing these objectives it was important to examine Lithuania's and the whole region's security environment as well as currently valid Lithuanian security and defense policy. The neighboring countries of Russia and Belarus did influence Lithuania's security before and will continue to do so in the future. Therefore, in this work the internal political and economic situation is briefly reviewed with a view toward the threats that might possibly emerge from them. It is even more important to show what initiatives Lithuania should take to increase mutual trust and cooperation with those states. When Lithuania sought and became full member of NATO, the USA remained an important partner of Lithuania we which will undoubtedly have influence for strengthening the national security in Lithuania and the whole Baltic region. Therefore, considerable thought is given to the question why the USA should maintain its interest in the Baltic region, and how the Baltic countries should encourage that.

In conclusion the national security aspects of Lithuania are again reviewed focusing on the effect of NATO membership on national security as well as new initiatives that would strengthen not only Lithuania's but the whole region's security. Besides, following the decline of the threat of war, Lithuania should pay more attention to the prevention of internal threats. Based on the conclusion that since becoming a member of NATO Lithuania does not have any military threats, Lithuania should take on new initiatives for strengthening the overall aspect of national security.

## INTRODUCTION

“I believe in NATO membership for all of Europe’s democracies that seek it and are ready to share the responsibilities that NATO brings. The question of “when” may still be up for debate within NATO; the question of “whether” should not be. As we plan to enlarge NATO, no nation should be used as a pawn in the agendas of others. We will not trade away the fate of free European peoples. No more Munichs, no more Yaltas. Let us tell all those who have struggled to build democracy and free markets what we have told the Poles: from now on, what you build, you keep. No one can take away your freedom or your country. As we plan the Prague Summit, we should not calculate how little we can get away with, but how much we can do to advance the cause of freedom”.<sup>1</sup>

Lithuania’s NATO membership constitutes a major formalized turning point toward realization of its Western orientation. Thus the purpose of this paper is to explore the main components of such membership’s impact on Lithuania’s national security strategy development. Lithuania as well as several other post – Soviet states have found themselves in a peculiarly dynamic situation for initiation into NATO. One can surmise that during the next 3-4 years the most significant political, military, economic and societal transformations will occur in the whole Baltic region. There can be no doubt that NATO membership will influence the countries geo-political/economic orientation. The question remains – in what ways?

This paper explores the impact of NATO through the military prism. Other political, economic, ecological, and societal issues will be touched upon where they intersect with some aspect of military power. It does not mean that they are not important, but they are out of the scope of the military perspective. The militarily significant aspects of the international geopolitical environment bearing on the Baltic Sea region, namely the influence of USA strategy, especially from a view point directed on Belarus and Russia, and their emerging authoritarian tendencies will be emphasize. The strategic influence of the USA is considered especially important because Lithuania has demonstrated faith in American values and rose to join in the common challenges.

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<sup>1</sup> Buch G.W.,Remarks by the President in Address to Faculty and Students of Warsaw University, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/06/20010615-1.html>. 01 06 2002

Lithuania is also willing and prepared as a new member to do what it can to help NATO adapt and cope with new challenges and changing circumstances. Lithuania accepts the democratic worldviews of NATO and the USA as well as the need for developing free markets. This paper concentrates on the interactive aspects among Lithuania, NATO and all other neighboring countries and suggests optimum ways and means to accomplish those efforts effectively.

After the collapse of Soviet Union the main region between the Baltic and Black Sea was momentarily disoriented and not sure in which direction to proceed – East or West. These alternatives developed many arguments about the strengths or weaknesses of various countries as well as merits and demerits that would come into play if one or the other direction was taken. From the start, the Baltic countries took the direction of not joining the former Soviet Republics into the Commonwealth of Independent States. In August 1993, the last remnants of the Soviet Army withdrew from Lithuanian territory. In the same year, President of the Lithuania Brazauskas declared the unambiguous intent of the Lithuanian National Strategy to become a member state of NATO. In 1993 a Baltic Peace Keeping Battalion was established which became instrumental in making it possible for the Baltic countries to join the Partnership for Peace Program. The choice of taking the Western path was a security priority, a historical chance to secure sovereignty for the future. The 1989 revelations of the protocols of the secret Molotov – Ribbentrop Pact revealed the complete illegality of Soviet aims. Any kind of similar activity in contemporary circumstances now in Lithuania would have been unacceptable either from political or judicial viewpoints.

Looking further back in history, the national security problem was vitally important to Lithuania for centuries. The 250year long union with Poland was useful for a while, but later it became disastrous, converting Lithuania into prey for Russia. From 1795 to 1918, a period of 123 years, the Baltic districts were parts of Russian Empire. Lithuania became a completely independent state in the period 1918 – 1940. It was again subjugated by USSR from 1940 to 1941, and 1944 to 1990.

## INTERNATIONAL GEOPOLITICAL CHANGES IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION'S SECURITY

It quickly became obvious that NATO is clearly the best security structure for Lithuania and the rest of the Baltic. Though the Baltic Sea region appears to be an ideal place for the formation of classical regional security regime, this assumption is substantially wrong for one simple reason: Russia cannot accommodate itself in this regional format. Therefore, only international institutions of a wide scope are capable of resolving the dilemma of Baltic security and performing the conflict prevention function. The Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) successfully coped with this task in 1991 – 1994. CSCE was the international format that ensured successful withdrawal of Russian troops from the Baltic States. However, it soon became clear that the organization was of little use in further settlement and normalization of the Baltic – Russian relations. Therefore, the regional Cold War could only be ended by the influence of international institutions capable of conducting equal dialogue with Russia. NATO is such an institution.

### *Political changes in the Baltic Sea Region after the Cold War.*

Political changes in the Baltic states after the Cold War started somewhat later than in Eastern and Central Europe. If by the end of 1989 almost all Central European states had already liberated themselves from Communist rule and restored their sovereignty, in the Baltic region, the forthcoming changes were also anticipated by national liberation movements in the three republics – Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – still controlled by the Soviet Union. However, Moscow did not intend to abandon control over them in spite of fundamental changes in its posture on the international arena elsewhere. Even the issue of Finland, whose sovereignty was restricted by the Freedom, Cooperation and Mutual Agreement (FCMA) of 1948, was not discussed publicly at that time. The re-unification of Germany can be considered as one of the fundamental developments in the Baltic Sea region although it was not initiated by Gorbachev's policy aimed at ending the confrontation with the USA and its allies, but the collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991 was. The disappearance of this empire from the political

map made both a substantial change in the geopolitical situation and opened entirely new opportunities never considered earlier.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of independent Baltic States was probably one of the principal causes of change in the entire geo-strategic situation in the Baltic Sea region. While the Soviet Union was a dominating power in the Baltic Sea region, the Russian Federation as its heir received only insignificant areas on the Baltic seacoast: the Kaliningrad enclave and St. Petersburg region. However, such change in the situation gave rise to a new line of conflict between the Baltic States and Russia, with the ensuing threat to the regional security. A possibility of direct Russian intervention was not the main cause of the pressure. The new Russian state and its political leaders could not question the Baltic States independence itself: “As the Soviet Union disintegrated and was replaced by Russia, both the legal form and content of bilateral Baltic – Russian relations had to change.”<sup>2</sup> Though no one disputed the independence of the Baltic States, the choice of the status quo of their relations with Russia was rather wide by late 1991. The Baltic States still accommodated the armed forces controlled by Russia; and, the economy of the new states was fully integrated in the economic space of the former Soviet Union; many Russians – immigrants from the Soviet Union – lived in the Baltic States, who suddenly found themselves living abroad as the Soviet Union collapsed. Therefore, it was quite natural that in this period the Baltic States and Russia faced many unresolved issues related to the dismantling of the Soviet Union legacy.

From the standpoint of regional security, the main problems for the Baltic States, just as for the entire Central and Eastern Europe, included withdrawal of the Russian Army and the legalization of state borders, former administrative boundaries of the Soviet republics: “Disagreements by Russia’s were influenced by both objective and subjective reasons - Russia had to meet the obligations of the army withdrawal from East Germany and Poland. Furthermore, the withdrawn troops had to be accommodated in new places of deployment, which were overfilled or not yet fitted out.”<sup>3</sup> Russia inherited a huge army from Soviet Union, which held the entire democratic world in pressure but which was clearly excessive for the purposes of Russian’s defense. For this reason the

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<sup>2</sup> Gediminas Vitkus ‘ Changing European Security Space’ p. 110. 2002

<sup>3</sup> Gediminas Vitkus, ‘Changing European Security Space’, p. 118, 2002

Russian government was interested in delaying the withdrawal, at least from the Baltic States, as long as possible. Therefore, “no date of the withdrawal was mentioned at the beginning of the negotiations. Later, on the Russian side, a deadline for withdrawal in the 1997 – 1999 time frame started to appear as a feasible solution”.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, the only way for a speedy resolution of the problem of the foreign army’s withdrawal that the political leaders of the Baltic States could choose was immediate internationalization of the problem, making it a problem of the entire international community. In this situation the Baltic States had considerable opportunities as members of the principal international organizations, the UN and CSCE. Strict internationalization of the problem of the Russian troops withdrawal was a tactic that brought political success for the Baltic states and the withdrawal of the Russian Army. It also created costs for the Baltic States, such a homes built in Kaliningrad for displaced Russian soldiers. Their relations with Russia worsened to such an extent that they could even be called a regional “cold war”. The reason for conflict was the legal status of the Russian – speaking population in Latvia and Estonia. Of the three Baltic States, Latvia and Estonia had proportionally bigger Russian-speaking minority.<sup>5</sup> Finally, after long negotiations the Russian troops were withdrawn from Lithuania in September 1993, and the last Russian units officially left Estonia and Latvia on 29 August 1994.

#### *Military modernization and reform.*

During the NATO summit meeting in Madrid in 1997, the Baltic States received not very joyful news that consideration of their applications for NATO accession was to be postponed for an indefinite future. Lithuania and other Baltic States had to solve economical problems and had to meet other requirements such as meeting NATO military standards to obtain NATO membership. Only the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland were invited to start accession negotiations in July 1997. However, the Madrid meeting stressed – which was very important for the future – that NATO enlargement was a process which did not end with this stage of admission and that NATO would

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<sup>4</sup> The first negotiations between Russia and all three Baltic State on the issue of troop withdrawals took place on January 31 – February 2, 1992. The talks with Lithuania and Latvia concluded with an agreement that troops would begin to leave the Baltic States in February. In response to Baltic demands for an immediate troop withdrawal, the Russian side repeated that the withdrawal of former Soviet forces from the Baltic States before 1997-1999 would depend on the material provision for the servicemen.

<sup>5</sup> According to the latest census figures, ethnic Russians formed 8,7 percent of the Lithuanian population, as against the 30,4 percent in Latvia and 28,1 percent in Estonia.



continue to pursue its policy of “open doors” based on Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty. Therefore, the Baltic States had to console themselves with the following recognition of their efforts contained in a single sentence: “At the same time, we recognize the progress achieved towards greater stability and cooperation by the states in the Baltic region which are also aspiring members”<sup>6</sup>. However, there were probably two factors important for the security situation of the Baltic Sea region and its further development. First of all, the State belonged both to Central Europe and was important for the region-Poland-was invited to NATO. The Polish-Lithuanian border became the first border of the Baltic States with a NATO country. This gave a certain hope for the future that NATO’s enlargement will be continued.

After NATO made known its decision to enlarge, a new situation started forming in Europe, with the new contours of a security architecture, where a place could be found for the Baltic States. Therefore, though it seems paradoxical, namely the Baltic States could adapt their policy to the changing situations most easily. Nothing had to be changed substantially, but the work started within the PfP and EAPC framework had to be continued. Having not received an invitation to join NATO, the Baltic States had to satisfy themselves with, and successfully made use of their status of countries almost universally recognized as NATO candidate countries. They understood that NATO faced serious difficulties in including them in the first round of the enlargement. The reason was the NATO-Russian relations, ineffectiveness of the NATO-Russian Permanent Joint Council, and Kosovo crisis. But the first successful enlargement formed a solid basis for the final settlement of the region’s security problems in the way desired by the Baltic States.

All the Baltic States after the “first rejection” tried to substantiate their membership credentials by participating as fully as possible within the PfP, trying to demonstrate that they were not only “consumers” of security, but were and would be, a valuable asset for Alliance as a whole. Baltic participation in Bosnia Implementation Force (IFOR) was, therefore, symbolically very important. In Bosnia, Baltic forces worked together with Swedish, Finnish and Polish contingents in a Nordic Brigade,

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<sup>6</sup> NATO Summit. Madrid, July 8-9, Madrid Declaration on Euro-Atlantic Security and Cooperation, <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1997/p97-081e.htm>, 28 01 2004.

operating side by side with Russian troops, all under US command and under NATO auspices. The Baltic States also often participated in PfP annual exercises like the “Baltic Challenge”. All three countries also participated in the PfP Planning and Review Process, which was designed to advance interoperability and increase transparency among Allies and partner countries. The desire to strengthen ties with NATO in order to join the Alliance eventually, had already positively influenced cooperation among the Baltic States in security and defense fields, and had also speeded up internal defense policy reviews.

The Baltic States had to create militaries from scratch. Given their small size and limited financial resources, this task has not been easy. Nonetheless, all three Baltic States have made significant progress in modernizing their military forces and making them capable of operating with NATO forces.

The budgets in all three have been rising: “Estonia’s defense budget increased from 1,6 percent of GDP in 2000 to 1,8 percent in 2001 and rose to 2 percent in 2002. Estonia is in the process of creating a small intermediate reaction force; a battalion-size rapid reaction force; and two brigades of main defense forces.”<sup>7</sup>

Defense spending has also risen in Lithuania. In 2001, all parliamentary parties signed an agreement reaffirming their commitment to devote no less than 2 percent of GDP in 2001-2004. To reinforce this commitment, the extension of the accord until 2008 is under consideration. Lithuania has also taken steps to modernize its forces and make them NATO compatible. It plans to have one NATO-interoperable reaction brigade by 2006. It has also formed a peacekeeping battalion (LITPOLBAT) with Poland.

Latvia’s military transition has perhaps been the most difficult. Low defense spending in particular has been a problem. “In 2000 and 2001, Latvia spent only 1 percent of GDP on defense. However, Latvia has pledged to raise defense spending to 2 percent by 2003. By the end of 2004, Latvia will be able to commit a fully professional motorized infantry battalion, with more combat support and combat service support units, to the Alliance for a full range of NATO missions.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> F. Stephen Larrabee, ‘NATO’s Eastern Agenda in a New Strategic Era, p.52, 2003

<sup>8</sup> F. Stephen Larrabee, ‘NATO’s Eastern Agenda in a New Strategic Era, p.53, 2003

The three Baltic States have also taken a number of steps since 1993 to strengthen regional defense cooperation. The most successful initiative has been creation of a joint Baltic peacekeeping battalion (BALTBAT). Composed of a company from each of the three Baltic States, BALTBAT was deployed in Bosnia as part of the Nordic Brigade.

A joint Baltic Naval Squadron (BALTRON) has also been established that provides mine-sweeping capability for Baltic Sea. It is composed of a combined Lithuania-Latvia-Estonia staff and national ships from the navies of the three Baltic countries. It is based in Estonia. The goal is to integrate BALTRON into NATO naval forces.

A Baltic Surveillance Network (BALTNET), based in Lithuania, has been established. It is designed to improve international cooperation between civilian and military authorities in aviation matters and to increase operational effectiveness. Now that the three Baltic countries have been invited to join NATO, BALTNET is expected to become part of NATO's integrated air defense system.

A Baltic Defense College (BALTDEFCOL) has been set up in Tartu, Estonia. Its primary function is to train senior staff officers and civilians from the Baltic States in NATO-based staff procedures, strategic planning, and management.

All these efforts did not remain unnoticed. On 22 November, 2002, at the Prague Summit Meeting, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were invited to join NATO. This is a big victory for the Baltic states in their efforts to ensure security in the region.

## LITHUANIA'S NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

The independence of the Republic of Lithuania was re-established on March 11, 1990, after five decades of occupation. Since then the country is developing as a mature democratic state from the viewpoint of its modernization, politics, economics, social and cultural progress. It is actively integrating into community of states of the same democratic orientation. The unraveling of the Soviet block created suitable conditions for the Republic of Lithuania to determine its security interests and policy.

### *Lithuania's Security Policy*

The law for the basis of Lithuania's National Security determines that the independent Lithuanian State must guarantee secure life for the nation, and for its unique and free development path. The basic objective of national security policy - vital security interests cover: "sovereignty of the country, territorial integrity, democratic constitutional order, human and civil rights, freedoms, and secure environment for persons – guarantee against escalation of risk factors, rising threats, crisis situations, and military conflicts."<sup>9</sup> The basic notion is that inability to secure such vital interests would negatively affect the Lithuanian state and society.

The Lithuanian National Security Strategy encompasses, along with distinct military goals, some social and political goals. Primary security interests are:

- <sup>3</sup> Global and regional stability and good relations with neighbors;
- <sup>3</sup> Euro-Atlantic integration and membership in NATO and EU;
- <sup>3</sup> Freedom and democracy in the middle and Eastern Europe and the Baltic States;
- <sup>3</sup> Guarantees for strategically important materials and alternative energy supply sources and
- <sup>3</sup> Ecological security for the region.

Lithuania, while attempting to implement its security policy, is guided by the notion that security now encompasses not only military but also political, economic, cultural, ecological and other aspects. Lithuania also "envisions international security as in-separable from its own security and therefore seeks to guarantee the latter as un-separable part of broader regional and global security."<sup>10</sup> The present security policy is determined by the final preparations for NATO and EU membership and also a response to the challenge of international terrorism.

Guaranteeing the freedom and independence of its citizens, Lithuania seeks to create more favorable conditions for economic activity and increasing prosperity. The White Book states "A strong, healthy, self confident state is the foundation of national Security. Lithuania will defend itself and its citizens' interests not only inside the state

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<sup>9</sup> National Security Strategy, p.7, 2002

<sup>10</sup> Ministry of National Defence, White book, p.6, 2002

but on international level as well.”<sup>11</sup> Potential positive changes in the international environment which contribute to the implementation of primary national interests of Lithuania are European Integration, NATO enlargement, reduction of tensions, international peace and stability, and securing the small and middle states a proper role and equality of rights. The increased numbers of democratic states, increased confidence and stability in Euro-Atlantic space and in the world, creates an environment favorable to the Lithuanian state and national interests.

Membership in NATO is considered fundamental means to guarantee internal as well as regional security and stability. Lithuania assigns resources to a line of initiatives concretely oriented toward achievement of membership in the alliance. Perhaps the most important are the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and Partnership for Peace activities, especially participation in "Membership Action Plan" as well as the planning and review process.

Lithuania supports, as a future member of European Union, the EU's defense development as long as it does not decrease the meaning of NATO. The EU's determination to regulate crises single-handedly by establishing Rapid Reaction Force, means the acceptance of greater responsibility by its members, for the guarantee of stability and security in the European continent. Lithuania identified and presented to the EU the listing of their forces, which in the future will become part of Rapid Reaction Force.

#### *The Risk Variables and Threats to Lithuania's Security Aspects*

The current analysis of Lithuania's security situation as it develops in Europe and the world indicate that the emergence of military risk factors have distinctly diminished. However, the non-military risk variables, threat credibility, and its importance has a tendency to rise.

Globalization raises challenges, dangers and threats of a non-military nature against which individual states are not capable to react effectively single-handedly. Such transnational issues “as terrorism, illegal weapons trade, illegal migration, spread of dangerous diseases, narcotics, tend to cross over national borders and become

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<sup>11</sup> Ministry of National Defence, White book, p.7, 2002

international security challenges, dangers and threats.”<sup>12</sup> Lithuania, as a member of world community, cannot remove itself from these ongoing processes and must prepare itself, in collaboration with other countries, to react to those challenges and dangers, although the probability of direct military confrontation in the region is small.

However, it cannot be completely discarded for the future. Apart from this, the demonstration of military force, creation of provocations and apparent internal conflicts, and other political economic means of pressure or threat to Lithuania is more of a historical nature, because its internal situation does not create conditions for the formation of a broad scale network of terrorist structures. This threat may emerge from abroad because Lithuania can become a political target for terrorists or a transit country for international terrorism, directed against other countries.

Lithuania's excessive dependence on the country's strategic raw material and energy supplies or foreign capital concentrations in one or another strategically important areas in the sphere of economic security is a “danger factor, not only from the viewpoint of economic well being, but also for the country's security.”<sup>13</sup>

Weapons of mass destruction, the illegal spreading of their component and production technologies, the activities of foreign special services directed against the Republic of Lithuania, uncontrolled migration, as a result of regional conflicts, are other external treats destabilizing factor for the whole of Europe, and not only for Lithuania.

Threats can appear not only from external environment, but also from internal factors. Unequal socio-economic development, which increases the differences in the standard of living among various social groups, can be considered a risk. Economic instability could affect the interests of every citizen and the state. A particular danger is raised by corruption and money laundering activities of armed organized groups, as well as the spread of narcotics and illegal trade, human slave trade, and illegal businesses.

### *Lithuania's Defense Policy*

Lithuania seeks membership in NATO, as only NATO can provide long term security and stability. Lithuania also supports and is getting ready to participate in

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<sup>12</sup> National Security Strategy, p.7, 2002

<sup>13</sup> National Security Strategy, p.8, 2002

European Union's common foreign and security policy. At this time, Lithuania does not see any military threat for its national security and does not consider any foreign state its enemy. Therefore, Lithuania's defense policy is open, transparent and non-confrontational, not directed against the legitimate interests of any foreign state. The objective mainly to secure the country from threats of military nature, emerging from international security environment.

The main objectives of Lithuanian defense policy delineated in the Lithuanian military defense strategy are:

- <sup>3</sup> 'secure the defense of country;
- <sup>3</sup> 'integrate the country into Euro-Atlantic structures;
- <sup>3</sup> 'stimulate confidence and good relations with neighboring countries;
- <sup>3</sup> 'contribute to strengthening international peace and stability.

The Lithuanian defense policy is based on the following basic principles: First is the principle of deterrence. This principle envisions to demonstrate in peacetime a determination and readiness to defend the country by having a reliable and effective defense system. A potential aggressor must know, that if he attacks he will be confronted not only with military resistance but with the resistance of the whole nation and will experience great losses, that will not be worth the desired net gain. Secondly, universal and unconditional defense principles are determined by Constitution of the Lithuanian Republic, by the baseline of National Security, by laws of armed defense and resistance to aggression, and thus are mandatory. The universality of defense means that the armed forces defend Lithuania, that state's resources are utilized for defense, that the nation and every citizen resists the aggressor or occupant by all possible means. The unconditional defense means, that the defense of Lithuania is not constrained by any conditions (except recognized international norms) and that nobody can restrain the nation and every citizen's right to resist the aggressor.

On the other hand, Lithuania wants to play a significant role in Euro-Atlantic solidarity and collective defense. Strengthening Euro-Atlantic integration processes are the main and most effective guarantees of stability, security and welfare of the obligations of Northern Atlantic Alliance states and are the highest expression of Atlantic

solidarity. Lithuania sees already in its plans that when it becomes a full member of NATO, it could appropriately contribute to NATO collective defense guarantee. The defense policy of Lithuania establishes the fundamental national defense tasks in peacetime - to prepare the nation for defense, at the same time getting ready to participate in collective defense and peace operations. Therefore, the enlargement of Lithuanian defense system directed toward the development of defense capabilities, and at the same time being capable of acting within NATO or as a component part of it.

Lithuania participates actively in world coalition against terrorism. Lithuania has condemned the terrorist attacks against the USA and expressed its solidarity and support of USA and NATO as well as determination together with international community to join in the fight against terrorism. Lithuania supported the decision of the North Atlantic Council to invoke the Article 5 of the Washington Treaty in regard to the attack against the USA. Lithuania also joined the EU Councils decision and action plans. At the regional level Lithuania is ready to turn over all the data collected by the BALTNET to the allies when BALTNET connects into the NATO airspace surveillance network. Lithuanian government and other institutions of state already took on concrete measures of terrorism prevention: the protection of strategic objects was strengthened and enlargement of no-fly zone over Ignalina Atomic energy plant; greater attention is directed to possible susceptibility to terrorism of certain selected objects' security. The administration of civilian aviation implemented additional measures of security for the protection of transport and airports. Law enforcement agencies investigated criminal groups active in Lithuania for connections with terrorists.

The geopolitical environment constitutes an important part of establishing Lithuania's security. The closest neighbors of Lithuania are Poland, Belarus, Russia, Sweden and Latvia. Each of these countries at different times in history had influence upon the Lithuanian State and its societal development (in its political, economic, social factors). The Soviet Union had the greatest influence on Lithuania's development during the decades between 1944 and 1990. However, the historical process in Western Europe and the world created realistic conditions for Lithuania to make its decision for independent statehood. The Lithuanian Republic, while seeking to exit from the USSR's and later Russian Federation's zone of influence, also attempted at the same time to retain



the Russian Federation's markets and good neighbor relations. Simultaneously Lithuania sought the support of Europe and USA as well. There was much accomplishment in this (Lithuania's NATO and EU membership). As was commented by Zbigniew K. Brzezinski "NATO guarantees the removal of disagreements among different states."<sup>14</sup> This process lasting 12 years, required cardinal change in Lithuanian Republic's socio-political, economic situations and has enabled Lithuania to enhance its political, economic, and social relations with its neighbors, particularly Russia.

#### THREATS TO LITHUANIA SECURITY DUE TO RISING AUTHORITARIANISM IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD (BELARUS AND RUSSIA)

The Republic of Belarus is the most authoritarian state in Central and Central-Eastern Europe. The democratic world identifies Aleksandr Lukashenko's regime as both a regional and global threat. What are the concrete threats posed to Lithuania by the Belarusian authoritarianism? The development of the Lithuania-Belarus relationship makes it possible to identify eventual threats to Lithuania arising within political, social, economic and ecological sectors.

Following the recognition of the Republic of Belarus as an independent state in early 1990's, relations between the Euro-Atlantic community and Belarus experienced steady progression. Belarus was given associate member status in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA). The signing of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between the European Union and Belarus in 1995 signaled its commitment to political, economic and trade co-operation as significant assistance was provided to Belarus within the framework of the TACIS Programmes and also through various aid programmes and loans.

However, progress in EU-Belarus relations stalled after 1996 because President Aleksandr Lukashenko sharply turned the helm of the state towards authoritarianism. The associate member status of Belarus in NATO PA was suspended in 1997, following the constitutional referendum organized by Lukashenko in 1996, which authorized him to

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<sup>14</sup> Z. Brzezinski, Lietuvos rytas, 19-08-1999

change the rules of the game by abolishing the existing Parliament (the convention of the 13<sup>th</sup> Supreme Soviet), hand-picking the acquiescent National Assembly and amending the 1994 Constitution, by extending *inter alia* the presidential term of office from five to seven years. New regulations for parliamentary elections were eventually passed on the basis of the 1996 Constitution, making it possible to elect a new National Assembly in October 2000. However, the electoral legislation and, more importantly, the conditions in which the consultation took place were deemed by the CSCE as “short of meeting the minimum commitments for free, fair, equal, accountable, and transparent election”. Precisely the same happened during the last presidential election that took place on a September 9, 2001, when Lukashenko controlled the media and restrained political opposition.

In other words, during the last six or seven years, the Republic of Belarus has solidified its reputation as among the most perplexing and enigmatic countries in Europe. Belarus remains an exception; it is an outsider among the states of Central and Eastern Europe. Whereas almost all other states in the region have undertaken steps to implement democracy, free market reforms, and adopted a westward orientation, Belarus has restored and resurrected the old values and principles of the Soviet Union, such as authoritarianism and state-regulated economy.

A few days before the September 11 terrorist attack, the United States Secretary of State Collin Powell called the dictatorial state of Belarus “the only outlaw state of Europe.”<sup>15</sup> At that time, the head American diplomat emphasized a danger to the regional security in general as posed by the regime itself and the threats inherent in its origins. It should be emphasized that the anxiety of the international security community has been caused not only by the unprecedented violations of human rights in Belarus. Within the context of regional security, particular attention is also given to a number of other circumstances.

The military power of Belarus, far exceeds that of, for example, the neighboring Lithuania or Latvia.

Open statements made by Lukashenka himself and his action on the international scene. Reference is made here not only to the malicious and often offensive speeches of

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<sup>15</sup> Lenzi M. ‘Dark Roads of Arms are going on from Minsk’, *Lietuvos Rytas*, 1 June 2002. – No.125.

the President directed against the West, or his visit destinations – Cuba, Syria, Libya<sup>16</sup> - but also to provocative military exercises. Thus, for example, right before the 2001 presidential election, in the military exercise “Neman-2001” held in September Belarus simulated a repulse of a Lithuanian-Polish assault, while the scenario of the military exercise “Berezina-2002” held in early summer of 2002 included the crossing of the Berezina River and an attack westwards.

The catastrophically deteriorating economic situation and the potential of a total economic collapse poses threats to Lithuania in various forms.

Thus, it is obvious that the international security community perceives potential threats posed by Belarus both at global and regional levels. The problem is – what consequences on Lithuania and its security may be expected from the situation evolving in Belarus and around it?

The development of the Lithuanian-Belarus relationship could be divided into several stages: the period of 1990 –1992, 1992 – 1995 and since 1996/97. The dynamics of the first stage was determined by the specifics of Vilnius-Moscow and Minsk-Moscow bilateral relations. The second – the Moscow-inspired political course of Minsk aimed at encouraging separatism in Lithuania.<sup>17</sup> The third stage was characterized both by the attempts to base the relations on the principles of good neighborhood in accordance with the Agreement on “Good Neighborly Relations and Cooperation” signed on 6 February 1995 and the emerging differences in geopolitical gravitation.

It was the latter that forced to view the Belarus neighborhood to Lithuania as extremely unfavorable within the context of political, social and economic threats.

The existence of the authoritarian regime in Belarus *per se* was a threat to the whole region because of its eventual unpredictability, likewise because of the ambiguity of the consequences stemming from the creation of the Belarus-Russian union.

Belarus, undoubtedly, is the most militarized territory in the geo-strategic area of Lithuania.<sup>18</sup>The amount of strategic weapons accumulated in Belarus and its abundant

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<sup>16</sup> in early January 2002, Lukashenko invited Muamar al-Gaddafi, and in February the President of Iran Mohammad Katami to come to Minsk for an official visit. See: *BNS* information of 18 January and 14 February 2002.

<sup>17</sup> Lopata R. (ed.) National question in Lithuania // [www.nato.int/acad/fellow/96-98/lopata.polf](http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/96-98/lopata.polf)

<sup>18</sup> Military Defense Strategy of Lithuania. – Vilnius, 2000-P.3, 7-8.

military capabilities are a potential source of military threat.<sup>19</sup> It draws attention not only because of the character of the military exercises mentioned above, but also due to the doubts of whether Minsk is always going to de facto honour the norm of international law.<sup>20</sup> Within the framework of Lithuania's accession to the European Union and the Schengen system, it is necessary to emphasize that the absolute majority of illegal immigrants enter Lithuania from the territory of Belarus, which has not yet executed the demarcation of its state border with Lithuania. It is not possible to disregard a likely prospect that a considerable deterioration of the economic situation in Belarus might result not only in a large-scale social turbulence inside the country, but also in a massive migration of Belarusians out of the country. Finally, the factor of economic ties between Lithuania and Belarus. Even though the economic interdependence between Vilnius and Minsk is quite insignificant, threats to the energy sector of Lithuania are quite tangible.<sup>21</sup>

In addition, Lithuania clearly identifies the consequences of ecological threats arising from the neighbouring state. The economic difficulties experienced by Belarus not only render it incapable of ensuring adequate ecological supervision of the operating enterprises; it is also experiencing difficulties in disposing of the munitions still remaining from the times of the USSR.<sup>22</sup>

The unpredictability of Lukashenka's regime in the spheres of domestic and foreign policy, political spontaneity, potentiality of employing the military sector for the legitimization of the regime, threat of economic collapse, uncontrollable character of social consequences – pose security and potential military threat. In this situation, the strategy of pragmatic selective cooperation pursued by Vilnius is likely to be successful only if the international security community possesses levers of substantive influence on the evolution of Lukashenka's regime.

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<sup>19</sup> Belarus reportedly possesses 1 800 battle tanks, 2 500 armoured combat vehicles, 60 military helicopters, 250 combat aircraft and about 85 000 military personnel. *The Military Balance 2000-2001*. – London, Oxford University Press, 2000. –P.87; See more: *SIPRI Yearbook 2002: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*. – Oxford University Press, 2002.

<sup>20</sup> The military doctrine of Belarus includes the majority of universally accepted international law provisions, though the principle of implementing the provisions of international law is not clearly established. Within this context, the facts of cooperation between Lukashenko and Hussein are most illustrative.

<sup>21</sup> Reference is given here not only to the fact that the taps and gauges of the gas pipeline from Russia to Lithuania are in the territory of Belarus, but also to the fact that so far it is unclear what consequences of Lukashenko's attempts to use energy sector in the relations with Russia could be for Lithuania.

<sup>22</sup> *BNS*, *Belarusian Military Faces the Problem of Ammunition Utilization*, 2 October 2002.

The possible influence of Russia on the national security of Lithuania since Russia still treats Lithuania as if it were inside its influence zone. In general, the political interests and actions of Russia can create a great danger to the security of Lithuania's national interests and restrict the sphere of action of Lithuania's foreign policy. The essential Russian interest regarding Lithuania is to convert Lithuania into an enclave of its influence, that is, into its "agent" in EU and especially within NATO. The means available to Russia which it can use to influence and threaten Lithuania.

First there is the Kaliningrad area, which is the furthest extension of Russian Federation's territory.<sup>23</sup> It could be considered an enclave of Russian Federation. Even if the Kaliningrad area is separate from the main body of Russian Federation by the territories of Lithuania and Belarus; nevertheless, it borders the coastline of the Baltic Sea and thus enables a direct connection with other Russian ports. It differs from other enclaves and littoral Western territories, which are dynamic, well integrated entities into the world system, while the Kaliningrad region is a backward area from a socio-economic viewpoint. This socio - economic backwardness, together with its high level of militarization, could be considered as a potential threat to Lithuania.

At the present time, it becomes relevant to identify Russian political features regarding Kaliningrad region and the assessment of possible emerging dangers.

On the one hand, once Lithuania becomes a fully fledged member of NATO as well as NATO air power taking control of the airspace in the Baltic region, Russia threatens to take appropriate measures in response to this, such as strengthening the military capabilities of the Kaliningrad area. Lithuania's snip in NATO violates the established balance of conventional forces in Europe. While desiring to influence Lithuania's membership in NATO, Moscow elevates the issue of military transit through Lithuanian territory and demands that it be resolved according to the norms of "international law."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation covers 15.100 square kilometers, its population totals 926,000 people, of which 415,000 people live in Kaliningrad. ( see Joenniemi P., Prawitc J., eds., Kaliningrad: Amber Region, Aldereshot: Ashgate, 1998, p. 32-56 )

<sup>24</sup> This position was expressed during the President of Lithuania Valdas Adamkus visit to Moscow at the beginning of March 2001 ( see daily Lietuvos rytas, 31 March 2001 ).

On the other hand, Lithuania, an aspiring member of EU, should join the Shengen Treaty<sup>25</sup>. Although this action would mean the invocation of visa requirements for the inhabitants of the Russian Federation, while traveling to and from the Kaliningrad region because of broader EU interests. In Moscow terms, this means a violation of its sovereign rights, and thus worsens the socio - economic situation in Kaliningrad area, by isolating it from Russia proper.

In addition, one ought to mention the fact that the Kremlin, afraid of the strengthening of separatist tendencies, avoids the implementation of genuine reforms there. The fate of the Lithuanian free economic zone illustrates Moscow's inconsistencies in economic reforms. The law on LEZ, which was declared in 1991, had no effect and finally was abolished in 1993. The "modernization" of the area and its socio - economic transformation processes were negatively affected by the inferior administrative know-how of the local political elite, high level of corruption, and societal inertia. It is thought that the inconsistencies of the socio - economic reforms, their postponements, relatively high level militarization level of the region can transform the Kaliningrad region into a source of tensions, which could develop into a threat to the security of the countries within the Baltic region.

Two emerging Kremlin strategies relative to the Kaliningrad region are crystallizing: first - as a forward military post, or a special strategic area; second - a testing ground for economic reforms. This raises the question, which of the above mentioned strategies will be dominate and actualize in the politics of post-imperial Russia, and how that will affect the Security of the Baltic states and primarily that of Lithuania.

A second possible instrument of Russian influence on Lithuania is the dependence of Lithuania on Russia's raw materials. Lithuania imports from Russia approximately 90 percent of all fuel, gas, and other strategically important materials. While Lithuania privatized the raw materials processing plants, Russia applied political as well as economic pressure on the Lithuanian government in order to have the main package of equity (stock) securities sold to Russian companies. They partially succeed. Therefore,

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<sup>25</sup> Shengen Treaty – the first Treaty was signed 14 June 1985. Citizen of Shengen Treaty States can move free along this states.

while having knowledge of the influence wielded by the Kremlin on private Russian companies, it is not very hard to surmise that Russia has acquired a strong instrument of economic influence, which when needed, could be utilized for pressure on the political relations of both countries.

Thirdly, Russia retains great interest to remain in the Baltic region. That is primarily determined by economic interest. Russia does not have access to the Baltic Sea through ports that do not freeze-up in winter. Therefore, Russia seeks to utilize the Baltic countries ports through which they transport only oil and gas products. At the present time this constitutes approximately 40 percent of all obtainable raw materials in Russia.

For Lithuania, as well as for other Baltic states, once they become members of EU, Russia seeks to have them serve as a trampoline into the EU markets by introducing Russian companies in to Lithuania. Therefore Russia tries to participate actively in all the competitions to privatize industrial objects, in order to use them as paths into EU markets.

It is difficult to guess today how Russia will develop during the next 15-20 years and form of democracy it might select. However, even today there are already signs that Russia will attempt to remain a dominant world or at least regional power, with its own interests that will not bypass the Baltic region. That is determined by economic as well as strategic interests of Russia.

## 5. LITHUANIA IN US GLOBAL SECURITY STRATEGY.

The 20th century in world history will be remembered as a century of American hegemony and dominance. The world map in all continents was frequently painted different colours, with only the American continent escaping revolutionary changes. The most powerful country on this continent – the United States of America has been the guarantor of this stability. Its foreign policy remains a synthesis of old traditions and new realities.

The terrorist attacks on September 11 added a new dimension to the American threat perception. The continental US was in danger and its actual defense had to be included into American strategy. America had previously sought to fight its enemies on

their terrain, but now the enemy had brought the fight to the USA. For the first time after the Cold War, a violent enemy was perceived on its territory, the new threat was named and huge resources were allocated to fight it: “Transformation of US interests, strategic concepts and threat perception resulted in the changing attitude and policy towards many regions and countries, its allies and enemies.”<sup>26</sup>

The new American threat perception has a direct impact upon Lithuanian-American relations. A growing US military assistance and political contacts, NATO enlargement, and security guarantees symbolize the evolution of American policy towards Lithuania. These changes are the subject of a double-sided process. On the one hand, in US global strategy, Europe is no longer perceived as a potential area of instability. New threats to US security come from other parts of the world, and these parts of the world now receive a major attention in Washington.

On the other hand, “political, economic and cultural achievements of Lithuania and other countries in the region naturally raise American interest in the region. The US needs allies to preserve its domination in Europe and fight new threats such as terrorism.”<sup>27</sup>

Lithuanian’s interest in having the US in Lithuania derives from its geo-strategic realities. During the last century, Lithuanian’s chances to preserve its statehood were dependant upon Russian expansionism. Historical experience made Lithuanians very sensitive to changes in Russian politics. After the Cold War, Russia lost the status of a great power-this change allowed Lithuania to strengthen its independence and integrate into the transatlantic community. Imperialist ambitions of Moscow have not declined; only the lack of resources does not allow Russia to continue its traditional policy of keeping the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea at its disposal.

US policy towards Lithuania reflects a broader US security and foreign strategy, where promotion of regional security, the fight against terrorism, fostering of foreign investment, economic reforms and free trade, as well as the fight against criminality and corruption play a very important role.

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<sup>26</sup> See: The National Strategy of the United States of America. September 2002.

<sup>27</sup> Vaidotas Urbelis ‘Global international System and Lithuania: Trends of Development’ 2002, p. 37



The US pays special attention to internal policy aspects, such as the issues of genocide, return of property to the Jews, democratization and privatization, attitude towards ethnic minorities, etc. In external relations, it is important for the US that Lithuania strengthen US-Europe relations, contribute to the fight against terrorism, participate in NATO missions, improve relationships with Russia and contribute to the development of democracy.

From the geopolitical perspective, Lithuania and the other countries of the region are not pivot areas in the grand strategy of the US. They do not play a vital role in the fight against terrorism; there are no strategic resources on their territories (oil, gas, nickel, etc.); there are no important communication lines, geographically and they do not control important channels or entrances to strategically important regions. The size of their trade is a small part of the whole US foreign trade.

Even so, this quiet and relatively rich part of the world has certain features that are important to the implementation of US strategy, especially American interests in Europe, i.e. that are mostly of regional, not global level. Europe will stay the major object of US foreign policy, therefore, "Lithuania and countries of this region will have importance in common European context."<sup>28</sup> Lithuania and other countries in region will become members of the EU. The US believes it can exercise influence over the EU through relationships with Lithuania and others in the region because of the security guarantees that they provide.

In order to preserve active American interest in their security, Lithuania and other Baltic states must find areas where their efforts would make a difference for the US. Several aspects are of particular importance. First as a future member of the EU, Lithuania together with other neighbours will influence EU decisions. The bigger influence these countries will have in Brussels, the higher degree in influence they will enjoy in Washington; Lithuania together with other countries may act as a force multiplier of US efforts to promote democracy and fight terrorism.

The main challenge that lies ahead is to combine these principles with national priorities. Lithuania, as a future member of the EU, will take into account common positions, which sometimes differ from US suggestions. The US, as the world's dominant

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<sup>28</sup> Vaidotas Urbelis, 'Global International System and Lithuania: Trends of Development' 2002, p. 56

power, and Lithuania, as a small state, naturally have different priorities in the world, in Europe and its northern part. Lithuania will pay its attention largely to regional problems, intra-European issues will gain more importance, whereas global issues as terrorism, proliferation of WMD, global stability will dominate the US agenda. The Institute of Foreign Policy Analysis concluded: “The United States has exerted a fair amount of political capital to make Baltic membership in NATO a reality. It is now the Baltic states’ turn to repay the favor and prove that they are, in fact, members of the Euro-Atlantic family, ready and willing to continue to contribute their resources and personnel to the defense of common interests.”<sup>29</sup> According to the IFPA, the Baltic states can do this in three ways.

First, they must continue the serious work of preparing and improving their militaries for operations with the Alliance. Expediting and expanding plans and facilities for Host Nation Support Should be a priority in this regard, as should the development of effective capabilities for operating in crisis response scenarios. Second, the Baltic states must enhance their efforts to reach out to Russia. The confidence that NATO’s security guarantee provides should make it easier for them to engage their larger neighbour. Lithuania could serve as a bridge between Russia and the Alliance.

Finally, the Baltic states must recognize that as full NATO members, they will have a meaningful voice in the debates and discussions on key matters of the Alliance’s business. They must use this voice to support the transformation of the Alliance so that it would remain a viable defense organization.

Similar priorities between the US and Lithuania will remain in the future. The US will carry on with its vision – to create a stable and democratic region where friendly and prosperous nations prevail. They are bound by common values, beliefs and wish to expand the zone of democracy and free economy. During the last decade, Lithuania has achieved the status of an ally. The new status means not only privileges but also responsibilities. Security guarantees are the main expression of American interest. This line divides the separation of US – Lithuanian relations into two periods – prior to Prague and beyond.

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<sup>29</sup> Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis (note 36), p.5.

## CHANGES AND NEW INITIATIVES IN NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY OF LITHUANIA

A ceremony ratifying the Atlantic Treaty will crown a decade of Lithuania's efforts to enter NATO. Furthermore, on 2 April, 2004, a meeting of foreign ministers in Brussels will take place, during which time near the headquarters of the alliance the flags of the new members of NATO will be raised. Membership in NATO will grant to Lithuania the most reliable security guarantees in history. On another date, 1 May, 2004, Lithuania will become a member of the European Union. That is also an important event in the history of Lithuania.

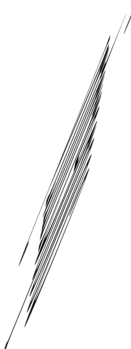
NATO as well as EU enlargement toward the East will strengthen the bonds of unity between America and Europe. In addition it will contribute to the "development of better relations with neighboring Russia, and to the democratic reforms in Ukraine, Georgia and other states in Caucasus as well as Belarus."<sup>30</sup>

Lithuania, as a NATO and EU state, will be obligated not only to benefit from these security guarantees, but also be an active member of these organizations, and seek the realization of common goals not just within NATO and EU but also outside of them.

*What new initiatives could Lithuania take on seeking to strengthen the security environment in the Baltic region as well as outside of it?* The answer may be as follows:

**The strengthening of international cooperation and good neighbor relations:**

- <sup>3</sup> In the Baltic Sea region, the security dimension of such collaboration would be composed by the trilateral cooperation with Estonia and Latvia which will include mutual military projects;
- <sup>3</sup> Close multilateral and bilateral collaboration with the countries of Northern Europe: Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Finland and Sweden, which provide great support to Lithuania;
- <sup>3</sup> Participation in multi-country initiatives, involving international cooperation goals and objectives.



**Second,** is the strategic partnership with Poland. Lithuanian Republic must further develop the co-operation with Poland. Both countries, while being members of NATO and EU, must seek co-operation at all levels. Because of its geographical location Poland is considered a vital link integrating Lithuania's agriculture, information, communications, transport, and energy infrastructures into appropriate systems of Western Europe as well as its defense system into NATO integrated military structure.

**Thirdly,** are the relations with the Federation of Russia. One of Lithuania's highest priorities must be the encouragement of mutual confidence with the Russian Federation in the realm of international security. Lithuanian Republic utilizes multinational weapons control capabilities that facilitate security and trust and implement bilateral agreements with Russia that do the same. Once a member of NATO it ought to take on an active policy role of openness toward Russia and other neighbors. The Republic of Lithuania ought to continue its support of multinational initiatives, designated to involve Russia into closer and more meaningful relationship with NATO. While being a member of NATO and EU, Lithuania ought to retain a viewpoint toward cooperation with Russia which would ensure conditions for Russia's civilian, commercial and military transit through Lithuanian territory that do not conflict with Schengen Treaty.

The Republic of Lithuania should be especially interested in political, economic and ecological stability in the Kaliningrad region, since instability there can create serious problems to neighboring countries, Lithuania among them, related to smuggling, spread of organized crime, uncontrolled migrations and environmental pollution. Other interests in Kaliningrad region are - the maintenance of good relations as good neighbors as well as economic, trade and cultural partner relations, together with efforts to reduce the decline in economic development and standard of living relative to the neighboring countries.

**Fourth,** are the relations with Belarus. As a democratic country and a neighbor of Belarus, the Republic of Lithuania must be interested in the formation of civic society and the cultivations of democratic norms and principles in the country, in the welfare of its inhabitants and the stability of the internal situation. In view of increasing tendencies for democracy in Belarus, Lithuania should enlarge the dimensions of cooperation.

**The fifth** is interregional cooperation. Once having obtained a large experience in efforts preparing for NATO membership, Lithuania ought to share this experience with other regions, especially the Balkans, and beyond the Caucasus, as well as in the states of Central Asia.

Once Lithuania becomes a member of NATO and the EU it must continue to reinforce the internal economic and social security. With external security guaranteed by membership in NATO, Lithuania must now devote greater attention to domestic security interests.

A major issue that must be addressed immediately is crime prevention and control. Lithuania must create a new model of crime prevention and control, whose application could gradually and comprehensively eliminate essential causes and conditions of crime and rationally utilize the resources allocated for this purpose.

Requirements imposed on Lithuania by the EU necessitate action in the realm of environmental security. Once a member of EU, Lithuania must rapidly implement international agreements about requirements for air pollution control. Additionally, there is a potential source of radioactive pollution - the Ignalina nuclear plant. The storage, disposition of radioactive waste and of the used nuclear fuel is a priority direction in preservation of environmental security.

With an unemployment rate approaching ten percent, an aging population and a working population that seeks greater economic opportunity in other countries within the EU, Lithuania must address social security issues. It must ensure the country's social security and implement an effective system which complies with EU rules and is coordinated with the systems of employment, social insurance, and social support. Economic growth is essential to developing a prosperous nation and a population with a standard of living equitable to other nations in the EU. While securing compliance with national security requirements in strategic economic sector, it ought to be ascertained which objects should be the property of the state, and which ones would be allowed to have ownership participation from Lithuanian and foreign private capital. Lithuania must pursue a policy to encourage foreign and domestic investment in private industry. Furthermore, it should not be permitted that one single investor, Lithuanian or foreign, could dominate in one or several strategically important economic sectors; it also should

be prevented for capital from unknown and dubious sources to infiltrate the country's economic system.

While Lithuania's external security can be guaranteed by its membership in NATO, Lithuania obligates itself as a continued priority to further reinforce its defense forces, so that it would be capable of meeting its obligations to the alliance. The accepted obligations shall reflect and be coordinated with available resources to create the needed capabilities.

Lithuania continues to be challenged each year by natural disasters such as forest fires and floods. Other catastrophes that may present themselves from a rising terrorist threat or a nuclear accident requires strengthening of capabilities for crisis response and management. While seeking to secure national security not only in crisis management, but also in its awareness and prevention, it is very important to create in Lithuania an effective operational crisis management system. By such means the capabilities of Lithuania to participate in international crisis management can be strengthened.

Lithuania, as a member of NATO and EU must take care not only for its own but for the security of all its members. While preparing to join NATO, "Lithuania demonstrated its reliability as a partner in strengthening the security of the Baltic region as well as in anti - terrorist struggle, and in implementation of various international peacekeeping missions."<sup>31</sup> Lithuania's membership in NATO and the other six nations will further improve the National Security Strategy, since the essential security environment in the Baltic as well as in the middle and Eastern Europe is constantly changing. Lithuania must remain active participant in the Baltic region and share its experience with new countries seeking NATO membership.

## CONCLUSION

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<sup>31</sup> Ministry of National Defense 'White book', 2002, p. 16

The Republic of Lithuania became a fully fledged member of NATO on 29 March, 2004. Lithuania is prepared to take on its membership commitments to NATO as required. Membership in this organization guarantees an unprecedented level of political and economic security. As a new member, Lithuania does not desire to be a passive follower but to be an active participant in contributions and in decision making. Likewise, Lithuania will play an important role in enabling communications with Russia, Belarus and other Kaukazus states representing not only NATO positions but the interests of Lithuania. With its membership in NATO Lithuania will have much greater political credibility increasing its influence within the region.

Lithuania has a realistic plan, supported by resources, to guide the development of reliable armed forces, capable of securing the defense of state as well as common defense together with its allies.

The national security and defense strategies currently valid delineate mostly internal domestic matters and the work that had to be accomplished before NATO membership. These actions were not very unusual though important for Lithuania. The aim was that the essential political, economic, technical and military requirements and conditions be met by the time NATO decides to admit Lithuania. By the eve of admission Lithuania had achieved very good results, however, more has to be done. Membership in NATO is only the beginning of a more complex and more demanding process. Therefore Lithuania is already prepared for new challenges. Lithuania wants to become a worthy allies and hopes that thanks to the new members NATO will become even more effective and important organization than before.

Lithuania, while seeking to become an active NATO member is already preparing new foreign policy and national security policy guidelines, which undoubtedly will be reflected in a carefully reviewed national security strategy. Lithuania, once having become a NATO member will seek not only to receive, but also to contribute to the security of NATO.

Lithuania will continue to contribute to democratic reforms in Caucasus and beyond, in The Republic of Georgia, Moldova and the Ukraine. Lithuania while preparing to join NATO gained valuable experience and now it's time to share this

experience with countries that implement democratic reforms seeking to become members of NATO and European Union.



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