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UKRAINE-NATO RELATIONS IN 2014-2020

Introduction. A sovereign and independent Ukraine, steadfastly committed to democracy and the rule of law, is paramount to Euro-Atlantic security. Relations between Ukraine and NATO began to develop in the early 90-s of XX century and have since become one of NATO's most significant partnerships. Since 2014, as a result of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, cooperation between Ukraine and NATO has been intensified in a number of key areas, namely capacity building. Allies continue to condemn Russia's illegal annexation of the Crimea, as well as its destabilizing and aggressive actions in eastern Ukraine and the Black Sea region. NATO's presence in the Black Sea has been increased and cooperation in the naval field between NATO and Ukraine has been intensified.

In June 2017, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine passed a law recognizing the country's membership in the Alliance as a strategic priority of national foreign and security policy. In 2019, the relevant amendment to the Constitution of Ukraine came into force.

Review of recent publications. Many domestic and foreign scholars have studied relations between Ukraine and NATO, including Viktor Gvozd`, a leading analyst at the Borisfen Intel Independent Analytical Center for Geopolitical Studies, Kateryna Zarembo – Deputy Director of the Center for New Europe, James Sperling – Professor of Political Science at the University of Akron and Mark Webber – Professor of International Politics at the University of Birmingham and others.

Objectives of the paper: to analyze the relations between Ukraine and NATO in the period of 2014-2020; to investigate the discourse of the dialogue development and what mutual decisions the two actors of international relations have reached as well as to provide options for further development of partnership between Ukraine and the Alliance.

Results of the research. In 2014-2020, NATO-Ukraine relations were defined by Ukraine's integration into North Atlantic Treaty Organization and NATO's support for Ukraine in the conflict with Russia, which began in 2014.

Since 2014, the NATO-Ukraine dialogue has included reaffirmations of promises made at the 2007 NATO Budapest Summit, when NATO leaders assured Ukraine that it would become a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The final step in integration with NATO is the *Membership Action Plan*, which Ukraine hoped to join in 2007 but has yet to do so. At NATO summits, there are regular assurances that this state of Ukrainian membership is only a matter of time, but these statements are not followed by action.

Thus, there are two ways for Ukraine to develop its relations with NATO. The first is Ukraine's accession to the Membership Action Plan, designed for full integration into the Alliance, and the second is NATO assistance to Ukraine using the NATO Trust Fund. The first option seems more difficult to implement, because it, on the one hand, will increase the degree of tension in Ukrainian-Russian relations, which the Ukrainian leadership fears, and, on the other hand, is not too eagerly supported by NATO member countries, as not all of them are ready to see Ukraine with its unresolved territorial problems as a full member of the organization.

Such attitude, first of all, is connected with Article 5 of the NATO Washington Agreement, which is one of the bases of the NATO collective defense concept. According to this article, an attack on one of the member states should be perceived as an attack on the Alliance as a whole, and the member states should take measures against the aggressor using the system of collective defense.

The second option for cooperation between NATO and Ukraine involves the use of the NATO Trust Fund as the main tool for implementing integration. This fund was created to support the Cooperation for Peace program.

On the one hand, using the Trust Fund can be a very useful avenue of cooperation for Ukraine, as it needs resources to implement reforms. But on the other hand, using such avenues of cooperation with Ukraine allows to pause the dialogue on accession to the Membership Action Plan, which is the main stated goal of cooperation.

NATO's support in the territorial conflict in eastern Ukraine and the dispute over the status of the Crimea is an important component of Ukraine's relationship with the

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Thus, at the height of the crisis in relations with the Russian Federation in March 2014, the North Atlantic Council declared the Crimean referendum illegal and illegitimate, calling on the Russian Federation to de-escalate the situation, up to and including the cessation of all armed activities.

The rhetoric of both the Ukrainian and NATO leaders remained unchanged both during Poroshenko's presidency and afterwards, as well as after the election of V. Zelenskyi as president of Ukraine. On the Ukrainian side, one of the key actions was the adoption by the Verkhovna Rada of a bill that defines NATO membership as one of the strategic foreign policy goals of the state.

The Ukrainian leadership is stumped, as it, on the one hand, sees its salvation in integration with NATO, while on the other hand, it fears an escalation of the conflict with the Russian Federation, which can be easily seen in its intention to consider the Steinmeier formula for resolving the conflict. At the same time, the NATO leadership pursues more reliable and stable options for strengthening relations with Ukraine, helping it with the help of the NATO Trust Fund and providing moral, informational and political support.

However, the fear of decisive steps suggests that NATO sees Ukraine not as part of its collective defense system, but more as part of the collective security system in the Euro-Atlantic area.

Conclusion. Ukraine is important to NATO because it is on the cutting edge of curbing Russia's expansion westward. Therefore, the Alliance's leadership supports Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic course, provides practical assistance in strengthening its defense sphere and bringing it into line with the standards of the North Atlantic Alliance. But unlike Georgia, NATO is not currently considering any options for Ukraine's accession to the Alliance in the near future. Due to the lack of consensus in the Alliance on the Ukrainian issue, the Ukrainian population and political forces have different attitudes towards NATO, and there are still shortcomings in the implementation of internal reforms in Ukraine, namely ineffective measures to combat corruption and slow down internal reforms.

NATO's reluctance to cross certain "red lines" in the confrontation with Russia is also quite obvious. Such a "red" line for Moscow is the possibility of Ukraine's accession to NATO. At the same time, although Ukraine has no real prospects for gaining official NATO membership in the near future, this in no way limits its cooperation with the Alliance and bringing it to a qualitatively new level. In essence, such cooperation can take the form and depth of NATO's official membership. The basis for this is created by the existence of common interests in Ukraine and NATO, the consolidation of the course of Euro-Atlantic integration in the Constitution of our state. The preservation of such a course as a priority of Ukrainian politics was confirmed by the new President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyi.

The deepening of cooperation between Ukraine and NATO will be a powerful factor in deterring Russia and other countries (including Hungary) from aggressive actions against our country, both in the form of "hybrid" wars and direct armed attack. And NATO will have greater opportunities to counter threats to Europe's security from the east by advancing its front lines.

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HUNGARY-UKRAINE BILATERAL RELATIONS: PROBLEMS, STAGNATION AND MISUNDERSTANDING

Introduction: The relations between Ukraine and Hungary can be partly defined as stable and friendly. Despite the fact, that both Ukrainian and Hungarian sides declared their wish to develop partnership relations, there are things, which are used by both sides as grounds for political tension. Until 2017, relations between