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RUSSIA–NATO: TOWARDS TO A NEW FORMAT OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP?

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The article examines the problems and prospects of cooperation between Russia and NATO. It is noted that the interaction between Russia and NATO has a wavy pattern – from the convergence controversy, then back to the collaboration. One of the serious problems of interaction remains the legacy of consciousness in the style of «cold war» that must be overcome for the development of cooperation in the most important areas.

Key words: Russia, NATO, Partnership for Peace, global issues, nuclear deterrence.

Today, relations between Russia and NATO are in a difficult context. On the one hand the need for interaction is obvious, the other differences on major international issues lead to misunderstanding partners and cooling of relations.

Russian cooperation with NATO begins in 1994, when Russia joined the program «Partnership for Peace» (Partnership for Peace – PfP). In 1997, NATO and Russia signed the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security, which was laid a formal basis for relations between NATO and Russia. The signing of the Founding Act has led to the development of bilateral program of consultation and cooperation within the framework of the Permanent Joint Council (PJC).

In 2002, after the signing of the Rome Declaration on «Relations between NATO and Russia: A New Quality» was created NATO-Russia Council. At the meeting, the Heads of State and Government agreed to expand the possibilities of cooperation in areas of common interest, and to stand together against common threats and risks to the safety of their own countries.

Cooperation is carried out not only on paper but also practical actions. Several programs were developed.

The fight against terrorism.

There is a regular exchange of information, consultation, joint threat assessment, civil emergency planning in the event of terrorist attacks, high-level dialogue on the role of armed forces in the fight against terrorism and other events. This program include participation in joint operations (for example, in the Mediterranean Sea).

Cooperation on Afghanistan.

This program is one of the most talked about and demonstration. It regards the fight against drugs, the creation of «air corridor» for the delivery of goods through Russian territory to Afghanistan.

Military cooperation.

A central point is carried out with a view to a possible joint military operation in the future. In May 2007, the Agreement was ratified by the PfP Status of Forces.

You can pay attention to cooperation on other issues: arms control, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the search and rescue operations, and others.

At the same time, in spite of the relatively large number of programs, it is difficult to speak about close cooperation. Relations between Russia and NATO can be represented as a wave-like process: from convergence to a cooling of relations and back, to cooperate.

In relations between NATO and Russia can be traced very different vector and key. On the one hand, this policy of cooperation on many international issues, strengthening partnerships Afghan transit, whose role will increase even more in the future, including, as the deterioration of the situation on other routes. On the other hand, the state of NATO and the West in general are trying hard to influence domestic and foreign policy of Russia, its energy policy, a policy of the former Soviet Union.

With the advent of the post of U.S. President Barack Obama's rise to the term «reset» of relations. During this period, various agreements were reached on cooperation. However, today, more and more talk about the completion of the «reset» and the cooling of relations.

Periods of cooling and convergence reflected in foreign policy. Most notable was the reduction of the period of cooperation between Russia and NATO in 2008, when up to December 2009 was frozen Russia–NATO Council.

Turn to the rapprochement occurred at a summit in Lisbon. There's officially declared policy of strategic partnership. In general, the Lisbon summit Russia–NATO relations will go down in the history of the two parties for the following keywords: increased awareness of the interdependence and the imperative of joint action to meet common security challenges.

Reboot between Russia and the United States, initiated by the Obama administration and supported by the Russian leadership, culminating in the spring and summer of 2010. The most important event of this process was the signing of the new Treaty on the Reduction of Strategic Offensive Arms (START, unofficially appears as START-3), which symbolized a marked improvement in the atmosphere compared to the period of the second half of the 2000s.

However, after the Lisbon summit, relations were not easy.

There are many reasons for it, including differences on Syria; Russia's negative reaction to plans to deploy a missile defense system in Europe is not enough close cooperation on Afghanistan and other reasons.

However, there are secondary causes. We have other more serious problems.

Today Russia and NATO largely view their relationship as a consequence of the «cold war». In public opinion and the government plans to Russia and the U.S. is more like adversaries rather than partners.

Public opinion polls in Russia show that a significant number of respondents view NATO as a hostile or «unfriendly» organization.

Thus, according to VCIPO obtained during the survey of Russian citizens in 2012 to 50 % belong to NATO negatively and only 13 % positive. [1]

In 2014, this figure is even worse. According to a survey conducted by the sociological service «Levada Center», dislike of Russians to the United States in May reached a historic high : 71 % of Russians now say that a bad attitude toward America. In the early 1990s, the United States not to love blazed less than 10 % of Russian citizens. Since 2012, this figure rose to 21 points. Anti-Americanism continues to grow, reaching in May 2014 historic high: 71 % of Russians appreciated his attitude as «mostly bad» or «very bad» – sociologists say. According to the respondents, the U.S. (69 %) is currently the most hostile tuned to the Russian state [5].

However, in the U.S. there is growing anti-Russian sentiment. Thus, according to a survey conducted by the BBC in May 2013, Russia deteriorated sharply among the respondents in the United States – from 47 % to 59 %. Respectively decreased significantly and the number of those who think positively about Russia – to 23 % from 34 % [3].

The actions of each of the parties are often rated as dangerous, threatening national security. These concerns are supported by public opinion, which is quite conservative and cannot be overcome as long as the logic of the «cold war». The governments have to act in view of the prevailing views of the people – the voters.

The low economic interest plays a big role in cooperation. NATO plans to withdraw troops from Afghanistan, which automatically reduces the role of a transit corridor through the territory of Russia.

The confusion of the two sides in the negotiations to reduce nuclear weapons also contributed to cooling. Modern logic of nuclear weapons is such that it acts more as a deterrent than the threat. There are many stockpiled enough to destroy the Earth many times. Winners and losers will not. U.S. and Russian leaders are aware of this, so the probability of use of nuclear weapons by large players is minimal.

At the same time, Russia is in many respects inferior to NATO, raising fears and distrust in a strategic partnership. Total military expenditures of NATO countries in more than 20 times higher than Russia, and by the presence of «soft power» in the aggregate might, I suppose, where Russia still largely inferior to NATO than militarily.

A new crisis in relations between NATO and Russia took place in 2014 and was connected with the events in Ukraine.

NATO Foreign Ministers decided on April 1 to suspend all practical cooperation with Russia, civilian and military. Ministers also decided that political dialogue in the NATO–Russia Council can continue, as necessary, at the Ambassadorial level and above, mainly to discuss the crisis in Ukraine. Political consultations in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council at the Ambassadorial level can also continue as appropriate [2].

Alienating complicate the tasks requiring cooperation.

At the same time, Russia and NATO have common interests more important than the nuclear standoff. S. Karaganov think that more important of them are: promote the peaceful development of China and the situation around it, preventing splashing of

growing Arab chaos outside, limit the effects of which began the spread of nuclear weapons, promoting the international community to prevent the situation from worsening climate, water, food, cybercrime [4].

The result of recent negotiations in the UN Security Council shows that, despite the different vision problems, the desire to solve it turns out to be stronger. The discussion can be found common interests and to reach an understanding and coherence. The adoption of UN Security Council resolution on Syria in support of the plan of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), aimed at the destruction of the Syrian chemical arsenals. It was a good example of joint action capabilities.

Emerging pause may contribute to a rethinking of positions, finding new opportunities for active cooperation. The main vector of this cooperation is the restriction of growing chaos, the lead in solving global problems. Both Russia and the more NATO can live without each other. But together they have more opportunity to influence the world. In this world there are few and far between powers, capable of independent action on the world stage. U.S., China, Russia. It would be better for the whole world if these countries, attracting others would act as common. Therefore, the organization of NATO can act in such a joint venture in the area of international security, in which it will be possible to solve urgent global problems. Most important are problems including the fight against drug trafficking, piracy, and joint development of the European security system.

«The relationship between NATO and Russia have not yet exhausted its potential missile defense cooperation would be the answer to our common threats», – NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, speaking at the opened here on Friday the 48th Munich Security Conference [6]. And we can agree with him. To change our consciousness will be benefit to each other. Russia and NATO would realize a program of strategic partnership.

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РОСІЯ–НАТО: НОВИЙ ФОРМАТ СТРАТЕГІЧНОГО ПАРТНЕРСТВА?

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Розглянуто проблеми та перспективи співробітництва Росії з НАТО. Відзначено, що відносини Росії та НАТО носять хвилеподібний характер – від зближення позицій до розбіжностей. Однією з ключових проблем взаємодії залишається свідомісна спадщина у стилі холодної війни, що потребує коригування задля розвитку взаємовигідного співробітництва.

Ключевые слова: Росія, НАТО, Партнерство заради миру, глобальні проблеми, ядерне стримування.

РОССИЯ–НАТО: НОВЫЙ ФОРМАТ СТРАТЕГИЧЕСКОГО ПАРТНЁРСТВА?

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Рассмотрены проблемы и перспективы сотрудничества России и НАТО. Отмечено, что взаимодействие России и НАТО носит волнообразный характер – от сближения к разногласиям, затем опять к сотрудничеству. Одной из серьезных проблем взаимодействия остается наследие сознания в стиле «холодной войны», что необходимо преодолеть для развития сотрудничества по наиболее значимым направлениям.

Ключевые слова: Россия, НАТО, Партнерство ради мира, глобальные проблемы, ядерное сдерживание.