

UKRAINE IN A BROADER TRANSATLANTIC CONTEXT

In 2013 Ukraine holds the OSCE chairmanship. Ukraine considers this as an important opportunity to make a solid contribution to strengthening security and promoting stability from Vancouver to Vladivostok. As OSCE Chair, Ukraine looks forward to working with Turkey and all our OSCE partners in building a free, democratic, common, and indivisible Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community. Another important milestone ahead for Ukraine is the Third Eastern Partnership Summit to be held in Vilnius in November 2013. The Vilnius Summit may provide impetus for the further development of the Eastern Partnership by becoming the first event of its kind marked not only with words but with concrete deeds.

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New Transatlantic Dynamics

We are living in a rapidly changing and complex international scene. While still being the backbone of this scene, the transatlantic community is going through radical transformation.

We used to think about the transatlantic community mostly in terms of security. For almost six decades, NATO has been both the symbol of transatlantic unity and a practical framework for security and defense between the United States and an increasingly large part of Europe.

Until today, NATO remains a key mechanism for strengthening the security ties and collective military power of North America and Europe. But compared to the period of the Cold War, when NATO's goals were very easy to identify, its wide range of activities today do not enable simple characterization. The Alliance's future relevance for maintaining transatlantic security relations is far from clear. Today, NATO is definitely going through the most challenging period of adjustment since its foundation.



A comprehensive approach towards security-building in the 21st century implies coordination between civilian and military components and tools. Thus, more structured and close relations between NATO, the UN, the OSCE, the EU, and other established international actors are needed in order to allow them to be more proactive in preventing future crises as well as to work together more effectively in restoring peace and stability in crisis areas.

Closer economic cooperation within the transatlantic community is another encouraging development. The EU and the U.S. announced recently that they have agreed to pursue talks aimed at achieving an overarching trans-Atlantic free trade deal. If established, such an agreement would be the biggest bilateral trade deal ever negotiated.

Ukraine as an Important Security Actor

Ukraine is ready to do its best to facilitate such positive trends in the political, security, and economical sphere.

For years, Ukraine has been an active supporter of strengthening preventive diplomacy in international relations, of course, with the key role of the UN. Being guided by this approach, Ukraine has launched a dialogue on the prevention of human rights violations within the UN Human Rights Council, particularly by initiating a relevant thematic resolution.

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In 2013 Ukraine holds the OSCE chairmanship. Ukraine considers this role as an important opportunity to make a solid contribution to strengthening security and promoting stability from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

Ukraine has always supported the important role of the OSCE in ensuring European and Eurasian security and stability as a unique platform for an open dialogue among partners, which is conducted on an equal footing and in the spirit of mutual respect. The Ukrainian Chairmanship wishes the OSCE to be a strong and relevant regional security organization, making full use of its unique comprehensive mandate, which addresses security not only from the political and military angle, but also through the lens of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, economic and environmental cooperation.

In the first OSCE dimension, we aim at promoting a future-oriented strategic discussion on conventional arms control, confidence and security-building measures, and enhancing the OSCE politico-military instruments. On the protracted conflicts, we strive to re-energize the existing negotiating formats, to promote confidence-building measures, and to address humanitarian needs on the ground.

Ukraine is strongly determined to facilitate the Transnistrian settlement process. The Ukrainian Chairmanship has already hosted two rounds of talks in the 5+2 format and will continue to encourage the parties to move forward in solving existing social and economic problems and to advance towards a lasting political solution.

Supporting the work within the framework of the Geneva Discussions and the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs remains an equally important task for the Ukrainian Chairmanship.

Turkey is an important player in the region and among OSCE countries and it is a very active participating country of OSCE, which makes a significant contribution to regional security and cooperation.

As OSCE Chair, Ukraine looks forward to working with Turkey and all our OSCE partners towards moving forward in building a free, democratic, common, and indivisible Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community.

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Not being a party to any military alliance, Ukraine plays an active role in security dialogue. The political leadership of Ukraine is firmly determined to further pursue its longstanding constructive partnership relations with NATO through all mechanisms at hand (Annual National Program, NATO-Ukraine Commission, Joint Working Groups etc.).

Ukraine’s practical cooperation with NATO has been well-established in a wide range of areas, including operations, defense and security sector reform, civil emergency planning, science, and environment.

The Defense Ministerial meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, which took place earlier in February, has given a renewed momentum to both political and practical interaction between Ukraine and NATO for the upcoming perspective. More than that, Ukraine strives to expand its engagement in NATO anti-pirate activity in the area of the African Horn. An issue discussed was the plan of Ukraine to deploy its frigate off the Horn of Africa in the second part of 2013.

As of today, Ukraine remains the only partner nation participating in all ongoing NATO-led operations and the first partner nation to take part in Operation Ocean Shield. As a major contributor to the regional and international security, Ukraine is prepared to further engage in the NATO-led operations, among them being ISAF (*International Security Assistance Force*) in Afghanistan, KFOR (*Kosovo Force*), Operation Active Endeavour (in the Mediterranean) and Operation Ocean Shield.

We cannot but be concerned over the erosion of the regime of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. We believe that this international legal instrument is a cornerstone of stability in the European continent. That is why as part of its chairmanship of the OSCE, Ukraine pays special attention to the recovery from crisis that has arisen around this Agreement.



As of today, Ukraine-NATO cooperation continues to gain pace. As far as bilateral Ukraine-Turkey cooperation is concerned, we highly appreciate the financial contribution made by Turkey to the NATO Partnership for Peace Trust Fund project to eliminate surplus conventional ammunition, anti-personnel landmines, and SALW (*small arms and light weapons*) in Ukraine. We are very pleased with Turkey being a donor-country within the second phase of the project.

Ukraine appreciates close cooperation with Turkey within NATO Air Situation Data Exchange Program. We look forward to further keeping this cooperation on track.

Ukraine also looks for possibilities in joining NATO's Smart Defense initiative.

From Partnership to Integration

European integration remains both the main impetus and pattern for the current political and economic transformations in Ukraine. This process is painful and uncertain in terms of time framing, but it is one of the important means to modernize the country.

The Third Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius (28-29 November 2013) shall be marked with several important deliverables paving the way to further progressive development of EU's engagement in the region of Eastern Europe.

The Summit should prove the credibility of the Eastern Partnership policy to both respond to EU internal challenges and to meet the expectation of the East European countries in the spirit of mutual respect, equality, and joint ownership.

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The Vilnius Summit may bring about an important impetus for further development of the Eastern Partnership by becoming the first event of its kind marked not only with words but with concrete deeds. Its decisions are relevant for the Eastern Partnership as a whole.

The signing of the Ukraine-EU Association Agreement, concluding negotiations or initialing similar

agreements with Armenia, Georgia, and Moldova are seen as the most important deliverables of the Summit.

It is a milestone for the relatively young foreign policy initiative that the main instruments of transformative power, through which the EU expects to bring about systemic changes in the Partner States and achieve the goals of the Eastern Partnership, are gradually established.

The Summit should also be marked with important decisions within visa-free dialogues. A priority for Ukraine for 2013 is transition to the implementation phase of the Visa Liberalization Action Plan. Should there be no decision prior to the Summit, we expect it to be taken in Vilnius.

The Vilnius Summit in November should become a proper platform for these logical and timely decisions. These decisions should constitute a minimum program for the Summit and be considered as the main criteria of its success.

Despite the crisis, the EU should show enough flexibility to agree on compromise wordings, even regarding the most uncomfortable topics like the European perspective. The primary assignment and the maximum program for the Vilnius Summit should be providing for strategic guidance and a new momentum. The only way to opening the full potential of the Eastern Partnership lies in acknowledgement of conditional European perspective.



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