

TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS: LITHUANIAN PERSPECTIVE

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Analysis has proven that changes in transatlantic relations largely depend on the changing organisation, aims and policies of NATO and the EU on the one hand, and the changes in EU–U.S. relations on the other, with the U.S. being the largest and most powerful NATO state, and Europe moving towards ever closer integration. Transatlantic relations cannot be thoroughly analysed without addressing other current global geopolitical changes and possible further development trends. The euroatlantic community is facing exceptional challenges today. What changes are possible in the North Atlantic Alliance after September 11? What is the solution to disagreements over Iraq between the U.S. and some larger EU states? Transatlantic relations are further complicated by the differences in EU and U.S. economic interests. The EU and the U.S. are competing on the global markets and the competition is very tough. As their economic interests differ, European and American policies cannot be completely uniform either; even more so since policies partly reflect economic interests or indeed serve as an expression of the economic interests of the parties. The EU and U.S. had common economic interests when they had a common menacing adversary, and maintenance of political discipline was a prerequisite for survival. However, the end of the cold war period gave way to growing differences between the U.S. and the strengthening European political voice.

U.S., EU AND NATO: COMPETITION OR CONVERGENCE OF INTERESTS?

The future of transatlantic relations and their influence on NATO development trends has currently become one of the most frequently debated questions in international relations' discourse, with the European Union being increasingly identified with Europe as a whole. The St. Malo Declaration issued at the British-French summit in 1998 represents an important point of departure for the discussions. The Declaration serves as an expression of the growing identification of the United Kingdom under Tony Blair's government with the European continent. Before St. Malo, European politicians largely relied on the formerly unchallenged principle that common European security and defence could only be developed within the NATO context and with America's accord. The EU and its common foreign and security policy had no essential role to play in European defence. The British-French bilateral declaration put forward an objective to supply the EU with an autonomous defence dimension and thus opened the way for the creation of an autonomous EU defence force capable of reacting in times of international crisis and of carrying out Petersberg-type missions, and possibly, even more.

Ever since the establishment of the Alliance, the U.S. has been and still is the major and clearly dominating NATO state both in political and military terms. U.S. politicians and especially members of Congress are permanently expressing discontent at the insufficient financial and military input of the European NATO members towards the implementation of NATO tasks, including one of the most important ones, European defence. The U.S. allocates a greater part of its GNP than the European NATO states for defence. The European NATO states outstrip the U.S. in terms of size of armed forces; however, European NATO states badly lack modern munitions (e.g. precision weapons), communications, transport equipment, military aviation equipment and many other things essential to modern armies. Presently, U.S. military expenditure accounts for 43 percent of global military expenditure. The U.S. spends approximately three times more on ammunition per soldier than NATO states do in Europe. U.S. defence expenditure in 2002 accounted for 3.4 percent of GDP, whereas the average expenditure

in Europe amounted to 1.8 percent. Germany, the largest EU state, gave 1.5 percent of GDP for defence in 2002, France allocated 2.7 percent of its GDP, and the UK allocated 2.6 percent of GDP¹.

U.S. defence expenditure more than two times exceeded the military expenditure of all 15 EU member states in 2002. In 2003 U.S. military expenditure rose by another 48 billion U.S. dollars and accounted for \$396.8 billion. What about the EU? The U.S. defence budget in 2004 accounted for \$401.3 billion. By 2007, the U.S. is planning an increase in defence expenditure up to \$469.8 billion per annum². After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 the U.S. administration established the Homeland Security Department to combat terrorism. The 2003 national budget allocations for this purpose amounted to \$27 billion and will amount to \$28 billion in 2004³. The U.S. president demanded Congress to increase allocations for the Homeland Security Department by 9.7 percent in 2005 based on the expenditure foreseen for 2004⁴. At least a part of these allocations should be considered as national defence expenditure. Therefore, the gap between defence expenditures in the EU and U.S. is only likely to widen. Indeed, some EU states increased their military budgets in 2003, however, the EU and U.S. still remain unequal partners in terms of the financing of military forces. The gap is even larger in terms of the quality of their respective military forces. What aggravates the situation from the U.S. point of view is the fact that European states use their comparatively modest military allocations ineffectively, and their priorities in terms of military spending do not answer their needs.

It is worth mentioning that according to the EU strategic research institute (European Institute for Research and Strategic Studies) six EU states including France, Germany, the UK, Italy, Spain, and Sweden account for 85 percent of EU military expenditure and for 98 percent of all investment in scientific research and modernisation of technologies⁵. However, EU R&D investment is meagre if compared to the respective U.S. investment. This largely explains the huge gap between the U.S. and European states in military power. While maintaining an obvious technological advantage over its allies and potential enemies, the U.S. is not interested in sharing its inventions and technological secrets. This is also a reason for tensions between the EU and U.S. The U.S. is only prepared to share a part, at best, of their new technologies with their traditional ally the UK; other European NATO member states and EU states are not likely to be taken into account.

The technological gap between Europe and the U.S. gives rise to serious problems affecting overall NATO effectiveness and viability. The military operations carried out in recent years have shown that European soldiers are unable to work together with American forces. The increasing technological gap would make Europe even more dependent on U.S. technologies, although this is precisely what Europe is trying to avoid. This situation has a negative impact on the military and political significance of the Alliance. That is precisely why the modernisation of European military forces is crucial both for Europe and for the Alliance.

The Kosovo campaign largely added up to destroying the illusion that NATO is an alliance of partners who are equal or at least comparable in military strength. During the Munich Conference on Security Policy in 2000 the U.S. Defence Secretary at the time William Cohen clearly pointed this out to American allies in Europe:

“We simply cannot continue with a posture in which one member of NATO conducts virtually two-thirds of all air support missions and half of all air combat missions; in which only a handful of countries have precision munitions that can operate in all kinds of weather; and in which some pilots had to communicate over open frequencies in a hostile environment.”

Europeans were obliged to acknowledge the truth of the deserved criticism. The German Defence Minister at the time, Rudolf Scharping, said at the same conference that the problem is

¹ SIPRI Yearbook 2003

² Schmitt B. Defence Expenditure, Institute for Security Studies – <http://www.iss-eu.org/esdp/11-bsdef.pdf>

³ Office of Management and Budget. Summary tables - <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2004/tables.html>

⁴ Progress in the War on Terror – <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/01/20040122-1.html>

⁵ Schmitt B. Defence Expenditure, Institute for Security Studies – <http://www.iss-eu.org/esdp/11-bsdef.pdf>

not about the Alliance depending too much on the U.S., but about it depending too little on Europe.

The military mission in Kosovo exposed a serious lack of military and technical compatibility in NATO forces more clearly than ever before, although the compatibility requirement was highest on the NATO requirement list for the NATO candidate states. This proved to be a great impediment to the successful conduct of military operations involving armed forces of different countries of the Alliance.

In order to strengthen the role of the European NATO states in NATO activities and operations, efforts to support European military capabilities were undertaken back in the 1990s, at the same time seeking to prevent duplication of the existing NATO administration and planning structures and military capabilities. Building up the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) within the Alliance was considered to be an integral part of NATO efforts to adapt to the new political and military realities emerging after the end of the Cold War.

Over time, however, Europeans grew increasingly unsupportive of this concept of ESDI developed within the NATO framework. Along the lines of ESDI, Europe was continuously approached as a younger partner of the U.S., with the U.S. being able to veto European actions at any time. As the EU acquired strength and continued on its way towards closer integration, it became increasingly aware of its interests and sought more independence from the U.S. In a way, this also meant seeking less dependence on NATO, as the U.S. was the clearly dominating state in the Alliance both in military and political terms. Clearly, at least for the time being, the EU cannot take over the territorial defence tasks the Alliance was created to perform. However, the EU is clearly demonstrating a tendency towards greater independence from the U.S., and this is evident in its implementation of the Petersberg tasks formulated back in 1992, including, (1) humanitarian and rescue tasks, (2) peacekeeping tasks and (3) tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking.

The implementation of the Petersberg and similar tasks by the EU should be based on both CFSP and common European security and defence policy. Since both these policy areas overlap, we can *de facto* talk about a common EU foreign security and defence policy. Its formation is based on European interests, rather than formal obligations to take up the implementation of the tasks that the WEU has just approached. According to analysts, European interests cannot be adequately represented in the global forum without real access to any military means of their implementation.

With transatlantic unity slowly, although not dramatically weakening and the U.S. influence in Europe waning for various reasons, Europe, embodied by the enlarging EU, is starting to see its place in the world in a new light. Europe seeks to become one of the power centres of the twenty-first century, with its might comparable to or even surpassing that of the U.S., China and Russia.

While seeking to become a global player, Europe cannot ignore the importance of the military dimension. A European military power with an independent military capacity cannot remain dependent on the military might of the U.S., even though the objectives of the European forces consist of the implementation of tasks limited in scope. This is the main reason why Europe grew less interested in its security and defence identity within the NATO framework and also why the Common European Foreign and Security Policy was supplemented by the Common European Security and Defence Policy.

The Americans tend to emphasise that the creation of an EU military force essentially independent from NATO should not lead to a splitting of the Alliance. They fiercely oppose the formation of independent European military planning and management structures by arguing that this leads to unnecessary and even harmful duplication of the existing NATO structures. Some leaders from the largest EU states have an opposing view. In their opinion, EU armed forces will remain dependent on NATO and on the U.S. unless they have their own military planning and management structures. Otherwise the European military force will essentially be controlled by the U.S., not by the EU.

There is increasing awareness in Europe that opinions about international security problems and the ways of dealing with them may not necessarily coincide on both sides of the Atlantic. The

U.S. and EU worked together in the past during the Kosovo crisis in spite of the difficulties they faced in the area of military cooperation. However, this situation may not necessarily repeat itself during all other possible crises, especially those arising outside Europe. The war in Iraq has proven that these fears do have a solid foundation.

Much needs to be done in order to enable the future EU armed forces to work independently from NATO, especially within the area of logistics. The first organisational steps towards the creation of independent European armed force management have already been made. They include the establishment of the Political and Security Committee, the Military Committee and the Military Headquarters, although through the end of 2003 the Headquarters were involved in military inspections rather than military leadership.

The new status of the EU as a political *and* military union, not limited to economic and political cooperation is further demonstrated by the institutional EU – NATO cooperation which started in January 2001. This includes regular EU- NATO meetings on the ambassadorial and foreign ministerial level.

There are talks in certain quarters in Europe, and especially in France, that the future EU rapid reaction force is going to become part of a larger future European army capable of implementing tasks ranging from Petersberg-type tasks to tasks of territorial defence. The first steps towards the creation of such an army have already been taken. With Europeans claiming a larger share in European defence matters, the creation of independent European military planning and management structures previously strongly opposed by the U.S. and labelled as duplication and a waste of resources, appears absolutely inevitable. This is a prerequisite, be it not a sufficient one, for the creation of full-fledged European armed forces. The French president Charles de Gaulle once said that NATO means European defence organised by Americans. U.S. military presence in Europe is weakening, and Europeans *volens nolens* will have to gradually shoulder the burden of European defence.

After meeting the new NATO Secretary General J. De Hoop Scheffer in Washington in late January 2004, United States Secretary of State Colin Powell officially declared that the U.S. was reviewing its military doctrine and intended to further decrease the number of military personnel and military bases in Europe in the near future⁶. During his visit to Russia a few days later he mentioned that U.S. redeployment of military forces in Europe in the near future would involve the creation of several new military bases in the former states of the Warsaw Pact. He assured, however, that the new bases were not going to be as large as the military bases in Germany had been during the Cold War period. According to Powell, American military forces in Europe will be decreased to less than 100 thousand; however, the remainder of the military force will be more rationally deployed. It may be that after their mission in Iraq ends a part of the U.S. soldiers will come to the new military bases in Central and Eastern Europe. Western analysts foresee that a part of the military bases in Germany may be transferred by the U.S. to Poland and even to some other new member states which are joining the Alliance in May 2004. Washington is reassuring Moscow that American plans to establish several military bases in Central and Eastern Europe are intended to provide better access to the regions of potential military crises, especially in the Middle East, and do not constitute part of an anti-Russian strategy nor pose any threat to Russia.

The Draft EU Constitution foresees the possibility for separate EU member states to work under a *structural cooperation* framework within the area of defence in order to work in closer military cooperation. In other words, several EU states may cooperate more closely within the defence area and later they may be joined by other states capable of such a degree of cooperation. States involved in closer cooperation in defence matters could undertake obligations of mutual support broadly analogous to the obligations under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. Earlier in 2003, France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg proposed that the EU set up its own military headquarters in Tervuren, Belgium⁷. The public statement on strengthening European defence integration contained a proposal to establish the Planning and Management Headquarters for EU international operations carried out without the participation of the Alliance and independent of

⁶ Remarks with NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer after their Meeting, 29 January 2004 - <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/28606.htm>

⁷ Defensive War// The Economist, p.25, 6 December 2003

NATO. Leaders of the four states said that this initiative is aimed at strengthening the European pillar of the Alliance. Washington was severely critical about this initiative and stated that the EU should endeavour to better its military capabilities rather than trying to create a new structure and continue ineffective use of its limited military resources.

The U.S. administration expressed even greater concerns about the creation of a Common European Defence System when the UK grew interested in the EU *structural cooperation* possibilities within the area of defence. Officially London maintains that the UK shall not undertake any measures that could weaken NATO. However, Britain can see many advantages to the future creation of a military force that could be used in critical situations without the participation of NATO and the U.S.

The move of the UK closer to the official position of France and Germany was largely influenced by the fact that Tony Blair has had to pay a high political price for participation in the U.S.-led war in Iraq. The majority of the UK population opposed dispensable military actions in Iraq. Besides, the UK is concerned about its influence in the enlarged EU. It strives to be a major player in forging the future of the EU and not to leave this task to France and Germany alone.

As the EU economy strengthens, creation of the European armed forces may become reality in several years' time. It is true that the objectives specified in the Helsinki summit in 1999 were not completely accomplished by 2003. However, according to CFSP High Representative Javier Solana certain work is being done or has already been done in implementing the ESDP and in reaching the objectives stated in Helsinki. Currently three EU-led missions are being carried out outside the EU, including the "Concordia" mission in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and missions in Bosnia and Congo. In addition, the European Defence Agency will be established in the near future. It will be responsible for harmonising munitions in EU member states, coordinating more effective use of EU states R&D investment and ensuring a competitive edge to the European defence industry⁸. The Helsinki summit objectives should be reviewed, made more specific and included in the "European Headline Goal 2010", a document which is still being discussed.

The transformation of EU-NATO relations in this case may change the structure of the euroatlantic defence community significantly: from "one polar power" it could move towards a two polar cooperation.

NATO-related problems are not the sole complication in EU-U.S. relations. Adam Daniel Rotfeld, Director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, one of the most authoritative institutes in Europe, wrote about European-U.S. relations.

Much misunderstanding stems from the simple fact that European-U.S. relations are and will be asymmetrical. The United States is a global power with a foreign and security policy determined by the president. The European Union is not and will not be in the foreseeable future a single state – it will be a community of states with differing priorities. Thus, so long as a genuine common foreign policy is lacking, there will be no common security and defence policy. Therefore, Europe and the United States are incompatible in these respects.⁹

However, this position could be questioned because the CFSP potential may increase within the European Draft Constitution context. The establishment of the post of EU Minister of Foreign Affairs for the EU alone will not guarantee the creation of a common EU foreign policy, but may surely add to the gradual convergence of foreign policies of the EU member states. It is likely that the establishment of this post will help coordinate the foreign policy of the EU and will result in its consistency. On the other hand, it is important to note that up to now forming a truly common foreign policy has proven to be a difficult task for the European Union.

IMPACT OF THE SEPTEMBER 11 ATTACK ON TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS

⁸ Summary of the Interventions by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP, Brussels, 5 November 2003 - <http://ue.eu.int/pressdata/EN/discours/77839.pdf>

⁹ Rotfeld A.D. "The New Transatlantic Agenda: the EU-U.S. Relationship", in: *Prospects for EU-U.S. Relationship*. Ed. by Ryszard Stemplowski, Warsaw, 2001, p. 15-16.

The attack on September 11, 2001 changed the world, and transatlantic relations were not an exception. NATO's response to the September 11th attack was quick and decisive. At the time NATO was established, everybody thought that an armed attack on one or several member states of the Alliance would really only be possible in Europe and that the United States would be the major power capable of withstanding such an attack. On September 11th, however, a European NATO-member country was not attacked, but the United States itself. American military power was unsurpassable, resting on the country's economic power: during the last decade of the twentieth century the American share in the world economy increased from 25% to approximately 30%¹⁰.

In fact, the strike was aimed at the major world power militarily, economically, technologically and in many other respects. The military, technological and economic power, however, did not prevent the attack that went down in history as a glaring example of an "asymmetric" act of war.

The North Atlantic Alliance responded according to Article 5 of the Washington treaty and thereby demonstrated the unity that everyone expected from it at all times of its existence. True, that unity had weakened since the end of the Cold War when a common enemy of Alliance members – the powerful and aggressive Soviet Union – ceased to exist. It is well known that the unity of any alliance is based on the existence of powerful enemies. In September 2001, the world realised that a new and equally dangerous enemy had emerged or, to be more specific, had been triggered. Like communism, it too is an international phenomenon, therefore it was natural to expect an international response to the threat to international security. NATO is often marked as the most successful military alliance in the history of the world. Consequently, though NATO was created as a response to threats of a different nature, the experience of its member states in the sphere of military cooperation supported the idea that NATO might become the most important international organisation in fighting international terrorism.

Being a member state of NATO, the United States could have taken advantage of membership in the Alliance and sought to carry out the operation in Afghanistan under the umbrella of NATO and make the Alliance a leader and headquarters for fighting international terrorism. However, the U.S. waived such an option and decided not to use NATO resources.

Such a secondary role played by NATO in Afghanistan and during the entire fight with international terrorism makes many politicians and analysts doubt the significance and future of the organisation. As already mentioned, such doubts emerged immediately after the Cold War, but they have never been as abundant and blaring as in recent years.

In fact, why was it undesirable for the Americans that NATO begin taking real actions according to Article 5 and that response to the international terrorism attack be a collective one attempted by the entire Alliance? One of the most frequently mentioned reasons thereof was the bitter experience of the Americans while acting together with the Europeans in NATO-led operations in the Balkans. The Americans decided that their formal allies would not be of much use from a military standpoint; they would hinder rather than help to carry out a speedy and successful military operation. Therefore, after September 11th the United States decided to take unilateral actions in spite of the good intentions of the Alliance. Based on the attitude formulated by Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld that "a coalition should be conditioned by a mission; a mission should not be conditioned by a coalition", the Americans formed a wide informal coalition whose actions were not restricted by the procedure for carrying resolutions applicable in the North Atlantic Alliance.

The most recent problem that has arisen since the Americans emerged victorious (in part) in Afghanistan is pertinent to Iraq. The only super power used its military force to change Iraqi regime. True, there was not much evidence of direct links of Saddam Hussein with *Al Qaeda*, or evidence that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. In January 2004, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice acknowledged that seemingly Iraq had not possessed a significant stockpile of weapons of mass destruction immediately before the war. However, the Americans are of the

¹⁰ See: Cox M. "American power before and after 11 September: dizzy with success?", *International Affairs*, vol. 78, No. 2, April 2002, p. 266.

opinion that Saddam Hussein, because of his malevolent international reputation, had to be removed.

The dispute as to whether it is necessary to prevent modern threats by military measures demonstrates the different attitudes of Americans and Europeans towards ways that international problems should be dealt with. Many people thought that *a war* was not necessary. Their opinion is supported by the fact that the toll of casualties among soldiers of the U.S. and Coalition forces in Iraq after the official end of large-scale military operations have exceeded those suffered during the operations and that a great many civilians have been killed in terrorist attacks.

The U.S. Coalition against Iraq did not receive support from many old timers of NATO and even met with their opposition. The difference in opinion on Iraq revealed a noteworthy development: the new European democracies are well-disposed towards the U.S. and seek to become important players in international relations. The Vilnius 10 pledged backing for the U.S. stance on Iraq and once again demonstrated the fact that the Old Continent was divided into two groups: the loyal allies of America from the former Soviet block and the old allies with much more sceptical views, namely Germany and France. The conservative American daily newspaper *The Washington Times* summed up the difference in opinion of the U.S. and Europe by stating that “the countries of Central and East Europe have become the major allies of America in Europe, and the dynamics of Old Europe policy may have a colossal impact on U.S. foreign policy¹¹”.

In February 2003, the Alliance faced the biggest crisis in several decades when NATO members France, Germany and Belgium blocked the approval of additional defence measures in Turkey in the event of war with Iraq. Agreement was reached some time later through NATO’s military planning unit without involvement from France.

The differences in opinion of the Europeans and Americans on Iraq and many other issues of international policy – from environmental problems to the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court – are obviously as dangerous as international terrorism. Transatlantic unity had been a guarantee of international security for more than 50 years. According to many experts and researchers, such unity is weakening now.

Europeans accuse Americans of unilateralism that they, like most of the rest of the world, cannot accept and consider lawful. They are of the opinion that by stating that “a coalition should be conditioned by a mission” (not vice versa) Rumsfeld expressed doubt in the future of steady coalitions, permanent alliances and thereby, the future of NATO itself.

Thus, the question naturally arises whether NATO will manage to survive among *ad hoc* coalitions. Decreasing the significance of NATO’s role would be a real threat to the transatlantic partnership. It would be more expedient that such coalitions be a temporary measure to deal with particular problems, whereas NATO should continue as a long-term guarantee of security and stability.

Americans and Europeans view the world from different perspectives – power versus weakness. Europeans are weaker militarily and therefore tend to solve problems through diplomatic and other non-military measures. They are not capable of using military measures simply because they do not possess the required military capacity¹².

The future of transatlantic relations will be mostly determined by the fact of whether the Americans and Europeans can succeed in clinching their material arguments brought on by several factors: geopolitical position, different value systems and distinct ideas as to how to deal with international problems. Analysis of national security strategies supports this statement.

EU AND U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGIES: SIMILAR OR DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES?

¹¹ A Ticket to the New Europe// the Washington Times, 9 February 2003, p. 4.

¹² Kagan R. “Power and Weakness”, *Policy Review*, 113, 2002

One of the factors that determined the weak position of Europe in the transatlantic partnership was the fact that the EU failed to develop an agreed and consistent common foreign and security policy. Therefore, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) has been more an objective rather than a fact. Nevertheless, today, for the first time in its history Europe has a common security strategy. In December 2003, the common vision on European security and its place in the world, developed by Javier Solana, was approved. The development of such a vision was mainly brought about by increasing differences in the foreign policies of countries of the Old Continent and the natural desire of Europe to have more influence in the sphere of international relations. The document provides concrete suggestions on how the EU can contribute to fighting modern threats and become a stronger, more active and consistent global player.

The common attitude of Europe concerning the character of its response to modern threats is effective multilateralism. The strategy clearly specifies that the EU must closely cooperate with its partners and, above all, continue the *indispensable* transatlantic partnership.

The strategy maintains that Europe continues to face threats to its security. Moreover, the new threats – terrorism, distribution of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, the fall of entire states and organised crime – are less visible and more difficult to predict. Since most of the threats emerge in other regions, Europe must draw the first line of defence further off its borders. In addition, the security strategy provides that the EU must take strong preventive measures before a situation spins out of control. Since neither of the newly emerging threats are mere military ones, it is impossible to combat them by taking only military actions.

The document lists and discusses aspects of U.S.–EU relations. The strategy emphasizes that acting together they can be an effective force, and that Europe is the only reliable global partner of the United States, and vice versa.

In the course of analysis of transatlantic relations, EU Security Strategy should be compared with the National Security Strategy declared by the U.S. administration in September 2002, which is the most comprehensive document prepared by the G.W. Bush Administration and sums up the international system, defining the U.S. role therein. It is emphasized at the very beginning of the Strategy that from military, economic and political power perspectives the United States cannot be surpassed by any other country. The new strategy has a fundamental difference from the former one: it is a strategy of “pre-emption” rather than the passive Cold War strategy of “deterrence and containment”. After the Cold War, deterrence ceased to be the most effective means to guarantee U.S. national security, because the major threat to the U.S. is now posed by underdeveloped and unpredictable countries rather than by some other equal power. The document, which straight after its adoption became known as “the Bush Doctrine”, obligates the United States to identify and eliminate any threats posed by terrorists before they approach the borders of America¹³.

According to U.S. global strategy, Europe takes priority over other strategically important regions. It is emphasized in the National Security Strategy that “there is little of lasting consequence that the United States can accomplish in the world without the sustained cooperation of its allies and friends in Canada and Europe. Europe is also the seat of two of the strongest and most able international institutions in the world – NATO and the EU”¹⁴. On the one hand, Europe is considered a guarantee of democracy and the major ally from military, economic and cultural perspectives. On the other hand, status as an ally does not mean that Europe must become strong enough to challenge U.S. dominance.

It can be maintained that, according to the authors of the National Security Strategy, that U.S. global dominance and national interests can be guaranteed only by a strong, safe and democratic Europe. The European roots of the founders of the United States, close EU-U.S. cooperation as well as universal Western values establish that the U.S., in fact, is just “a little bit different Europe”. Therefore, EU-U.S. cooperation in various fields is inevitable and natural. Still, the strategic interest of the U.S. is not to allow any country – neither European nor Asian – to challenge U.S. global dominance.

In spite of the increasing power of the United States and the universally recognised fact that for the time being the U.S. is the only super power, Americans still need international structures

¹³ See also: U.S. Administration’s *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, declared on 14 February 2003.

¹⁴ The National Security Strategy of the United States of America. September 2002, p. 25.

which can support the aims and objectives of Washington. The Strategy declares that the U.S. will continue to adhere to commitments given to NATO, the United Nations and other organisations; however, it also emphasises the establishment of *ad hoc* coalitions for the purpose of U.S. national security. Such coalitions are convenient for the U.S. because they can be quickly formed by several countries for the accomplishment of a concrete mission. In order to obtain support for pre-emptive actions the U.S. shall give its greatest attention to allies or “*Coalitions of the Willing*”. In addition, the Strategy says that the U.S. shall constantly try to make use of the support offered by the international community but it shall not think twice about acting unilaterally if necessary. The Strategy implies that the U.S. does not believe now as before that its interests can be protected by means of deterrence and collective actions irrespective of whether it is NATO’s collective defence or resolutions of the United Nations Security Council.

Comparison of the above two strategic documents has shown some similarities – an almost identical understanding of threats and emphasis on the necessity of pre-emptive actions. On the other hand, there are many differences. Firstly, the obvious unilateralism of the United States as distinct from the multilateralism advocated by Europe. Further, some differences can be found when analysing their views on allies – Europe speaks in favour of equal partnership, taking into consideration U.S. military dominance, whereas the U.S. in the context of “*ad hoc*” coalitions tries to provide its allies with some secondary functions (e.g. peace keeping operations after settling a conflict). The differences will continue to complicate the U.S.-EU partnership, which, of course, does not imply that development of the partnership is impossible. In the end, the most important condition for a successful U.S.-EU partnership is the equality of its partners, and the increased military power of Europe should provide more opportunities to take joint actions.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RUSSIAN FACTOR ON U.S.-EU-NATO RELATIONS

While carrying out analysis of U.S.-EU relations, the Russian factor cannot be ignored. In the course of the changing international situation, Russia eventually started dialogue with NATO, but at the same time, it was trying to decrease the importance of NATO and diminish the role of NATO as an organisation of collective defence. Since September 11, 2001, relations with Russia have transformed into real cooperation, though there is no way of knowing if this will last. Russian President V. Putin was one of the first to offer support for the United States and its actions in fighting terrorism. At that time the Russia-U.S. cooperation developed into a new partnership, which was confirmed in the *Joint Statement on New U.S.-Russia Relationship*¹⁵ announced in November 2001. The Statement spoke in favour of close cooperation between the United States and Russia in building an integral and peaceful Euro-Atlantic community. Further, the new common enemy – international terrorism – was named, and the necessity to combat the same was maintained. All of this provided stimulus for more active cooperation in both political and military fields. Russia supported the operation of the U.S.-led Coalition in Afghanistan, opened its air space and even did not dramatise the fact that U.S. forces were deployed in former USSR territory. Furthermore, Russia did not oppose the war in Iraq as much as did Germany and France. All of these factors led to intensification of the dialogue between Russia and United States. On the other hand, Russia’s support for the U.S. in fighting international terrorism helped the country put some of its internal problems on the international agenda. Aiming to justify its equivocal methods applied in solving the conflict in Chechnya, Russia benefited from linking its actions to the necessity to combat terrorism¹⁶.

In the context of the analysis of transatlantic relations it would be quite complicated to say who will be a close partner of Russia in the future – the USA, the EU or NATO. Europeans worry about the tendency towards unilateralism characteristic of the U.S. administration foreign policy,

¹⁵ Joint Statement on New U.S.–Russian Relationship – access via the Internet:
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/11/20011113-4.html>

¹⁶ The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, approved on 28 June 2000 - access via the Internet:
<http://www.president.kremlin.ru/>

because the U.S. could seek cooperation with Russia on a unilateral (or better, a bilateral) rather than on a multilateral basis.

Through cooperation and development of both political and economic relations with the U.S., Russia wants to show Washington that Moscow (not Paris or Berlin) is the best ally. Should Moscow succeed, this factor would become an additional threat to the limited unity of the North Atlantic Alliance and would make relations between America and Europe even more complicated.

It often so happens that Russia, though supporting the initiatives of Old Europe, in fact seeks to prevent the EU and U.S. positions from getting closer. Russian President Putin emphasises the significance of Russia–EU relations and maintains that the shortest and most reliable way for Europe to become an independent and strong centre of global power lies through relations with Russia, which has become more transparent, understandable and predictable. Recent events in Russia, however, fall short of proving the above opinion of Putin. By balancing between the two powers, Russia hopes to win or at least not lose.

Contradictions between the U.S. and EU should not, however, be overestimated. Although the EU seeks to strengthen its political influence through the CFSP, and the U.S. seeks to maintain its dominant position in the Western world and North Atlantic Alliance, and though Europeans are not satisfied with U.S. plans to develop the antimissile defence system while Americans oppose the formation of self-dependant EU military forces, these contradictions are not too great to allow Russia to cause damage between the allies. Europe and America enjoy common, though not completely identical, civilisational values that would not allow the West to split easily. One could hardly expect that based on such cooperation that Russia would be able to drive a wedge between the U.S. and EU. The United States needs a strong, safe and reliable partner - and Europe as well.

The end of the Cold War and ensuing processes highlighted some points of disagreement between the major allies which would have been impossible in the former bipolar system (West-East), and even could have caused the U.S.-European partnership to cease. Nevertheless, Europe most likely will remain the major U.S. ally and partner in military, political, economic and cultural spheres.

LITHUANIA AT THE CROSSROADS OF TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION

What conclusions should Lithuania draw from the transformation of U.S.-EU-NATO relations under analysis, and how should they be reflected in the foreign policy of Lithuania? The most important conclusion should be the following: both the EU and NATO today are rather different from the organisations that were called the EU and NATO at the time when Lithuania officially declared its intention to join them. In addition, the global balance of power has also been changing. At present, the second centre of power after the U.S. is located in Europe (and most likely will be for a long time), which through economical and, to a lesser extent, political power allows Europe to compete with America. However, the growing economies of Russia and, in particular, China, as well as their strivings to increase their own international influence may create conditions for the development of a system with several centres of power.

Lithuanian membership in NATO and the EU will impose some more restrictions, in addition to those already existing, on the foreign policy of Lithuania. It will have to comply with the provisions provided for in the common foreign policy of the Alliance and the European Union. Therefore, Lithuania will have to apply significant efforts with a view to influencing the EU CFSP, so that it would satisfy the country's interests. Of course, much will depend on the evolution of the CFSP itself, because nowadays the EU fails to produce unanimous opinions on certain international issues, leaving the policy still somewhat of a draft rather than a reality. In cases when the interests of the EU and Lithuania do not completely match, Lithuania certainly will continue to defend its interests as it has been doing so far, for instance, in the case of transit to Kaliningrad.

In addition, Lithuania will have to take a clearer position concerning EU evolution, functioning, organisation and other issues. To this point, while not being a member of the EU but taking part in discussions on the future of the EU (for example, in the Convention), it has been reasonable for Lithuania to adopt a relatively cautious and moderate position. After Lithuania

becomes a full member of the EU, we believe it will be possible to express ideas that are more daring. The same could be said about the position of Lithuania on the functions, tasks, enlargement and development of NATO.

Another problem, even more important in our opinion, of the long-term foreign policy of Lithuania could be defined as a problem of *divided or dual loyalty*. This problem will result from the simultaneous membership of Lithuania in the two international organisations, whose relations have been far from ideal recently.

NATO and the EU are separate, though cooperating, organisations. U.S.-European relations will have great impact on the future of both NATO and the EU. Nowadays, many analysts and experts believe that the strategic U.S.-EU alliance that played such an important role during the Cold War now faces a deep crisis. If we look at U.S.-European relations taking into consideration their development from the late 1700s to now, we have to state that the strategic partnership in the second half of 1900s is far from being as natural as we are used to thinking. Moreover, we can hardly assume that such a partnership will last forever. Nevertheless, it is not very likely that in the near future the partnership will collapse, though there is no question that it will have to overcome many difficulties.

We are frequently asked how the European security and defence policy initiatives should be evaluated from Lithuania's position. Naturally, in general they are assessed positively because Lithuania associates itself with Europe, which is getting stronger and more secure economically as well as politically and therefore serves the national interests of Lithuania. Lithuania as a would-be member of the European Union supports development of the EU defence dimension so far as it does not decrease the importance of NATO. Lithuania holds the position that determination of the EU to independently settle crises by establishing the EU rapid response forces demonstrates its willingness to assume more responsibility for stability and security assurance in Europe. Lithuania identified and provided the EU with a list of its forces that in the future would become a part of the EU rapid response forces. Nevertheless, NATO remains the most important security-assuring factor, and the Vilnius 10 countries assume the same position on this issue as Lithuania.

After accomplishment of the set task to become a full member of NATO and the EU, Lithuania should stop for a while and think of further landmarks of the foreign policy of the country, in particular, if the positions of the U.S. and the major countries of the EU would differ on international issues.

Until now Lithuanian foreign policy has been more pro-American for many reasons. One of the most important factors has been the priority of the country's security over its welfare. Since there was no question that only NATO membership could provide the security guarantee, and only the strong support of the United States could ensure membership in the North Atlantic Alliance, the pro-American position of Lithuania was natural and reasonable. Lithuania would not become a member of NATO without the active support of the U.S., because the major European powers were definitely much more sceptical than America over the necessity of the present NATO enlargement. The latter applied pressure on the former, and that resulted in an outcome favourable for Lithuania. The truth is that the pro-Americanism of most of the other Central European countries is, or was, conditioned, to a great extent, by concern over the security problems and the conviction that only America is able to help solve them.

Although Lithuania, after more than a decade of tenacious efforts becoming full member of the North Atlantic Alliance, has to admit that today the future of NATO seems quite vague and uncertain. The Alliance was established with a view to fighting threats that no longer exist. Moreover, it does not have much to boast about as far as fighting the new threats to international security is concerned. For many reasons, including the regionality of the Alliance, it might be very difficult to fight global threats of international terrorism or the distribution of weapons of mass destruction, even after the introduction of radical structural and operational changes by the Alliance.

Having admitted that in this century the role of NATO will be less significant than in the second half of the 1900s, and having established that both the security environment of Lithuania as well as the nature and functions of NATO have changed, we may entertain doubts about whether Lithuania should *under all circumstances and almost automatically* support the U.S. position on international issues.

U.S. foreign policy to a great extent is conditioned by the president and his administration. It is doubtful that Bill Clinton would have started a war in Iraq. Anyway, today many analysts and even influential politicians in both Europe and America do not believe that the war was inevitable. Official independent commissions in both the United States and the United Kingdom have already started investigations into why the intelligence information about the Iraqi weapons of mass destruction was so inaccurate.

It is unlikely that the war in Iraq has made the world more secure. It seemingly has strengthened rather than weakened international terrorism. One of the facts supporting this point of view is the increasing number of casualties after the official end of the massive military operations.

The U.S. administration seems to have failed to learn lessons from Afghanistan. After true (or superficial) victory in Afghanistan, the country's government really only controls its capital though it has the support of U.S. soldiers other NATO member states and countries that are not members of the Alliance (including Lithuania). Today Coalition forces in Iraq fail to guarantee security even in Baghdad. The war in Iraq has been the most significant step in realising the U.S. National Security Strategy (2002). However, it is reasonable to doubt whether it has been a rational and successful step.

The pro-American position of Lithuania is conditioned by various factors. One of the factors is the Russian threat in its new forms strengthened by "the controlled Russian democracy" developing towards authoritarianism. For many reasons there is not the slightest doubt that the American factor will remain very important in the foreign policy of Lithuania. Still, should it be as significant as it has been up to now?

Lithuania, as a full member of the EU and NATO, is interested in the success of this relationship. New EU and NATO states, including Lithuania, should actively contribute to the development of the transatlantic partnership of the new century. It is very likely that over time the pro-Americanism of the Central and East Europe countries will be declining, whereas European orientation will be increasing. The stronger unity of the EU countries should assure a more harmonious and successful transatlantic relationship.