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Editorial

It was at the Munich Security Conference 2011 that NATO Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen introduced the Smart Defence concept. A year later addressing the Allied Command Transformation Seminar in Washington DC on 12 February, 2012 he said this about Smart Defence: *“This is all about creating a new mindset. About better aligning our collective requirements and national priorities. And about focussing our efforts on prioritisation, cooperation, and specialisation. It means setting the priorities. Deciding not just what to cut, but what to keep. And spending resources on what we need to have before spending them on what would be nice to have”*.

There is no doubt that the current financial crisis followed by the inevitable austerity measures and coupled with the ever broadening spectrum of common security threats provide NATO Nations with a solid reason to continue ensuring their security with more collaboration, better spending, enforced prioritization, effective specialization and fewer unilateral decisions. The objective of such an approach to collective defence is to develop, deliver, and deploy capabilities through the collective efforts of a number of NATO Nations. This will most likely result in easing the burden of Allies to build the necessary capabilities of their own and reducing the overall expenditure to do the job.

Lithuanian civilian and military authority supports the proposal to apply the “smart defence” concept when addressing capability gaps in logistics, training, sharing of existing equipment, etc. At the same time Lithuania holds the view that political decisions on the “smart defence” initiative should include a strong commitment to work jointly on the operational energy security matters, such as improvement of energy efficiency and wider use of alternative energy sources during missions and operations, on the protection of critical energy infrastructure and on improving cooperation among national, EU, NATO and other bodies responsible for energy security. In this context, Energy Security Forum has asked five distinguished scholars to debate this approach and offer the Reader their views and arguments.

For **Michael Rühle** (who is Head of Energy Security Section at the Emerging Security Challenges Division in NATO) energy efficiency in the military is as feasible politically as it is militarily urgent. According to him *“making NATO’s militaries more energy efficient may be among the most effective contributions to “smart defence”*. Mr Rühle also recalls the words of NATO’s Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges, Gábor Iklódy who once said that *“NATO is not investing in energy saving and environmentally friendly technologies because they are politically correct, but “because they make sense: they are the key to success in our military missions”*.

Former UK ambassador to Finland, a prominent security expert and Adjunct Professor at the University of Iceland **Alyson JK Bailes** points out that *“energy security is not one topic but a cluster of different problems, where the core may be economic but politics and security loom large in many of the surrounding issues”*. Ms Bailes sees the need for better cooperation in the area of critical energy infrastructure, land and sea lines of energy resources supply. She holds the view that the principles of smart defence in this regard „should be applied as much as anywhere – from better analysis and planning, to pooling or collective exploitation of the most appropriate and cost-effective assets“.

Kevin Rosner (Senior Fellow at the Institute for the Analysis of Global Security and Editor of the Journal of Energy Security, the USA) writes that despite of some NATO Member States becoming leaders in alternative fuels, sustainability in producing alternative fuel blends for tactical weapons systems for military use is still missing. He goes on to suggest that NATO through the Smart Defense-Smart Energy initiative and through the scaling-up of alternative fuel demand could increase NATO military efficiency and help avoid the pitfalls associated with strategic oil vulnerabilities.

Jonas Grätz (Researcher at the Center for Security Studies at ETH Zurich) discusses a slightly broader understanding of energy security. He recognizes an increasing role of NATO in the area of energy security but is cautious about NATO’s capacity to add significant value in this regard. Nevertheless, he fully supports energy efficiency component and agrees with the approach that information sharing and enhanced coordination on critical infrastructure protection, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy could serve as a good starting point for leading the Alliance towards new forms of cooperation within its limited energy security mandate.

Narciz Balasoiu (Researcher at the Center for Conflict Prevention and Early Warning, Romania) thinks that energy security is less about military and more about politics. Due to the complexity of the matter he also doubts that NATO could deliver any concrete results in this regard. On the other hand, Mr Balasoiu agrees that the new concept of “smart defence” may enhance cooperation among the Allies. His concluding remark that *“budgetary constrains force us to become creative, which might prove quite efficient to some extent”* goes straight to the point.



Michael Rühle

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(the author expresses his personal views)

LINKING “SMART DEFENCE” AND ENERGY SECURITY: THE CHICAGO SUMMIT AND BEYOND

“Key environmental and resource constraints, including health risks, climate change, water scarcity and increasing energy needs will further shape the future security environment in areas of concern to NATO and have the potential to significantly affect NATO planning and operations.”

(NATO's Strategic Concept, emphasis added)

NATO is at a historical watershed. It is neither the emergence of new threats nor the re-emergence of old ones that will ultimately determine NATO's future ambition, policy and posture. The main reason for these changes is as simple as it is profound: the international financial crisis is affecting Allied defence budgets in unprecedented ways. If left to fester, these developments will curtail NATO's military competence and thus its ability to shape the strategic environment in line with its values and interests. Consequently, a sustained effort must be made to spend limited resources more effectively and efficiently. Such an effort, labelled “smart defence”, is currently underway, and should become one of the major deliverables of NATO's May 2012 Chicago Summit.

Much has been written about “smart defence”, notably its aspects of “pooling and sharing” as well as jointly procuring certain military assets. There is widespread agreement that these approaches may indeed offer more potential than has hitherto be exploited. At the same time, it is equally clear that they will not be sufficient to address all of NATO's problems. Hence, if “smart defence” is not going to suffer the same fate as “soft power” and other lofty concepts of previous decades, it must reach further. Energy efficiency in the military is a case in point. It offers considerable pay-off for all Allies, and it is as feasible politically as it is militarily urgent. Making NATO's militaries more energy efficient may thus be among the most effective contributions to “smart defence”.

The cost of providing energy for the military is enormous. It is estimated that the US Department of Defense alone spends about \$20 billion per year on energy: \$15 billion on fuel and \$5 billion on facilities and infrastructure. Aside from the cost factor, however, Allies' current energy posture also limits the effectiveness of military operations. The growing fuel requirements of NATO's nations can compromise their operational capability and, ultimately, the very success of their missions. Since NATO's missions will involve long distances and a sustained presence, they require ever larger support structures, which will eventually start eating away on the fighting forces. Moreover, the more fuel needs to be transported, the more the risk for Allied soldiers increases. In both financial and security terms, this is a “lose-lose” situation. Finally, NATO also needs to protect the environment. Armed forces are large polluters, and it is in NATO's collective interest that every effort is made to reduce their environmental impact. Like with fuel consumption, small technical improvements can have a huge cumulative effect.

All this explains why energy efficiency is becoming a strategic imperative. NATO Allies need to reduce their dependence on traditional fuels, shrink their logistics footprint (thereby enhancing the security of their troops), and take environmental concerns into account. Achieving these multiple objectives requires the introduction of new technologies, and modifications in NATO's operational planning. Above all, however, it requires a collective mindset that gives energy considerations much more prominence. The 2010 Strategic Concept, which provides a cogent analysis of the growing importance of energy security, is a major step in this direction.

Ultimately, however, it may well be the global financial crisis that will instil such a mindset within NATO. The need to save money will gradually push aside hesitations to grant NATO a stronger role in energy security and environmental security. In the years to come, defence budgets will shrink further. Moreover, many countries will be importing energy over ever greater distances and through ever more vulnerable transit lines. In a similar vein, climate change will increasingly become a driver of international security developments. These trends will not allow NATO to remain indifferent to energy security.

The creation of the Emerging Security Challenges Division (ESCD) in NATO's International Staff in 2010 was one important move to prepare NATO for the future security environment, including its energy and environmental dimensions. In a similar vein, NATO's Allied Command Transformation (ACT) has produced analyses of the future security environment which highlight the energy and environmental dimensions of security. The next logical step in giving energy security a more visible place on NATO's agenda should be to utilise distinct national initiatives, such as the Lithuanian Energy Security Center in Vilnius. The process to turn this national institution into a NATO Centre of Excellence is on track.

There are still some who believe that energy efficiency and environmentally friendly technologies are issues that owe more to pressures of “political correctness” than to real-life military requirements. However, as NATO's Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges, Gábor Iklódy, has bluntly put it, NATO is not investing in energy saving and environmentally friendly technologies because they are politically correct, but “because they make sense: they are the key to success in our military missions.”

In an era of budgetary scarcity, NATO must spend smarter. However, if “smart defence” is to be more than a slogan or a mere re-packaging of previous initiatives, it needs to take account of the energy dimension. Increasing the energy efficiency of the military is the path to make “smart defence” even smarter.



Alyson JK Bailes

Adjunct Professor at the University of Iceland

SMART DEFENCE, ENERGY SECURITY – AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Hardly anyone, either in the world of politics or of research, would dispute today that security for a democratic state is a complex matter. To have a viable and sustainable economy is as important as military defence of one's borders: perhaps more so in a region like Europe where the risks of conventional war are relatively low. And adequate, reliable access to energy at affordable prices is one of the basic features of a secure economy. Lacking it, countries may see their wealth, welfare and competitiveness eroded; or could be held to ransom and exposed to blackmail as the price of covering their vital needs.

If NATO countries need to be 'smart' about defence, as the Secretary-General argued at Munich last February, it seems clear they should be smart about everything affecting their security. The financial pressures that have sharpened the need to pool military efforts have also made good economic management, including a prudent and effective energy policy, even more of a strategic matter than usual.

Yet NATO is not the only place where free nations cooperate for their security. The Alliance itself sees that increasingly clearly, with its ideas on 'comprehensive' crisis management and its renewed efforts for good relations and burden-sharing with the UN and European Union. It makes little sense for NATO to attempt tasks in energy security that other legitimate Western organizations are already tackling, or in which it is simply not equipped to succeed.

Energy is after all a commodity and its production, transport, distribution and use are economic transactions pursued largely through the private sector of a free international market. NATO does not have expertise, regulatory powers, or funds to apply in the economic field; and it would hardly serve Allied interests to redefine energy as something that should after all be controlled by states and their defence advisers for strategic purposes. Indulgence by other states in that kind of behaviour causes some of our sharpest energy problems, and we are right in every way to protest against it.

This is not the end of the story, however – for at least three reasons. The first is that energy strains and rivalries can be a contributing cause of actual conflicts that need defence expertise and sometimes military force to be applied for their solution. International energy delivery in particular can be a target for physical attacks (on wells, pipelines etc) and attempted blockage of delivery lines by land and sea. NATO is an obvious instrument for joint responses to such physical challenges and has shown itself prepared to play that role. Within this specific area the principles of smart defence should apply as much as anywhere, from better analysis and planning, to pooling or collective exploitation of the most appropriate and cost-effective assets.

Secondly, energy is scarce and expensive also in the military context. The US defence establishment has led the way in asking whether military equipment could be less energy-intensive and particularly less oil-dependent, from a smaller carbon footprint in manufacture through to reduced consumption/pollution in action. NATO nations should help each other catch up and aim for world-leading standards in this field, where success also demands partnership with business and independent science. Aside from cost savings, climate change awareness and maximum efforts to mitigate global warming are the duty of every responsible institution. After all, if temperatures surge out of control, not only will specific strategic challenges like the management of a newly open Arctic space hit us faster, but the

present drivers of both internal and external conflict could multiply precisely as our resources are depleted and operating conditions in much of the world become even tougher.

Thirdly, energy security is not one topic but a cluster of different problems, where the core may be economic but politics and security loom large in many of the surrounding issues. Europe's strong dependence on both Russian and Middle Eastern oil and gas poses problems not because of access and affordability, but because of politically-driven risks both within and between states that are not open to purely commercial bargaining. But when we try to reduce dependence by exploiting sources on our own territory, new security headaches arise – nuclear safety and the risks of nuclear proliferation; the safety of high dams for hydro-power in earthquake zones; current fears about 'fracking' (subterranean rock fragmenting) for extracting shale oil and gas, and speculation just starting over harmful side-effects of extracting wind and solar energy. An Alliance aiming to pool expertise on 21st century security challenges should be able to help analyse issues of this kind, without claiming to be the main executor of solutions.

NATO is also a forum for both formal and informal discussions, in which it may – and may need to – stimulate its members to be 'smart' also about problems they are tackling in other settings. For instance the EU has long grappled with the idea of a truly open internal market in energy products, which the Commission promotes in the name of both efficiency and solidarity – very much the same 'pooling' idea as behind smart defence - but which some states still fear could undercut national profits. Security and defence experts might have something to say to their national energy-policy colleagues about the rationale of that. Again, the EU's new Lisbon Treaty commits its members to bring all means at their disposal to help any member suffering a civil emergency, of either manmade (terrorist) or natural origin – should that include energy cut-offs, and how could energy resources be used collectively in response? Security experts might have a word to say.

Military experience may also help spot new or neglected risks. Mainly in the US, scientists worried about climate change have started proposing major 'geo-engineering' projects involving cloud manipulation, changing the properties of Earth's land and sea surfaces on a vast scale, or launching massive sun-screens into space. They have shown little awareness of strategic aspects such as weaponization and misuse, possible conflict caused by rivalries and jealousies, or just the horrendous scale of possible accidents. If NATO's smart defence aims also to be forward-looking, perhaps this issue should join the agenda for collective brain-work – if not already there.



Kevin Rosner

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THE SMART ENERGY SOLUTION

That is our Chicago challenge: to lay the foundation of the NATO of the future – towards 2020 and beyond

Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, February 2012

Smart defence is a concept that encourages Allies to cooperate in developing, acquiring and maintaining military capabilities to meet current security problems in accordance with the new NATO strategic concept. That means pooling and sharing capabilities, setting priorities and coordinating efforts better.

Smart energy is a concept that embraces forward-thinking solutions to vulnerabilities associated with Allied energy security. It addresses the operational energy needs of the warfighter. It addresses the key strategic vulnerabilities of oil as the primary feedstock for all military tactical weapons systems. And it addresses the key NATO requirement of being a more robust, deployable, and sustainable collective security organization moving towards 2020 and beyond.

One Smart Defense application is in the area of military fuels and the tactical weapons systems that depend on them. Another Smart Defense application is in assessing and then implementing alternative fuels and technologies for generating power for Allied operations. Technologies that reduce energy consumption through increased military efficiency are a key step towards achieving the objective of literally ‘doing less with more.’

There are a number of compelling reasons why NATO should address the smart defense-energy security agenda be it at the pending NATO Chicago Summit in May 2012 or beyond.

*The warfighter is increasingly energy intensive and expensive to sustain. In World War II, the average fuel consumption per soldier or Marine was about 1.67 gallons a day; in Iraq, it was approximately 27 gallons. A typical US military platoon-consisting of 30 men over a 72 hour mission period-carries with it 400 pounds of batteries to power their equipment. One German study reports it costs \$4,200 per day per ISAF soldier in Afghanistan. The energy consumption and intensiveness of military operations is a key area for exploring how NATO can better provide “more tooth with less tail” where energy and military operations are concerned. This would be best achieved, less expensive to research, and more optimal to realize through a collective NATO effort at pooling and sharing capabilities. The goal here is to make the warfighter lighter both in terms of the weight he carries but also in terms of the financial cost of maintaining and expanding his capabilities.

*Maintaining a one fuel, oil based military, leads to a greater financial burden for NATO Member States as the price of oil is unlikely to ever decrease below \$100 per barrel for any sustained length of time. It is estimated that the Russian government requires a \$130/barrel export price for its oil in order to balance its national budget. The situation for the Arab world is not much different with Saudi Arabia requiring \$125-\$130 per barrel to balance its domestic budget. To put oil prices and demand in some military perspective, the US DoD spent approximately \$16 billion on fuel in 2011. This is equivalent to 26% of France’s 2010 defense budget, 34% of Germany’s 2010 defense budget and 42% of Italy’s 2020 defense budget. This figure is 16 times the annual defense budgets of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania combined.

*Price volatility leads to greater cost-containment vulnerabilities for NATO Member States, for maintaining military operations, and for executing more frequent and vigorous military training exercises. A \$1 increase in the cost of oil sustained over one year costs the Pentagon an additional \$130 million per year. How much does a \$1 increase in the cost of oil sustained over one year cost NATO Member States collectively?

*Maintaining a one fuel, oil based military, fails to address the strategic vulnerabilities associated with the monopoly of oil over the transportation sector and can undermine otherwise well-intentioned military energy efficiency Smart Defense initiatives. No matter how successful military energy efficiency is, its impact will be lessened if there is not a strategic shift away from oil as a pure feedstock for tactical weapons systems. The oil market is not a free market but one in which prices are set by a cartel and supply is manipulated by a cartel to exact the preferred price set by the cartel from consumers. Many military organizations have already approved alternative oil-alternative fuel blends for tactical weapons systems. What is lacking is the scalability, salability and sustainability of producing these alternative fuels for military use. NATO can contribute, through a Smart Defense-Smart Energy initiative through the scaling-up of demand and in increasing the sustainable availability of these fuels and fuel-blends by encouraging their use based on the concept of interoperability across NATO Member States in their tactical weapons systems. Finally, oil is not a political issue. All NATO nations, be they net producers or consumers of oil and oil products, are all dependent on oil for transportation purposes.

In October 2011, Army General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated that, “energy advances are unique in the opportunities they afford. Traditionally, we must spend money to increase capability. Here, we may have the opportunity to increase capability and save money, at least that is what we ought to aspire.” The same holds true for NATO yet momentum is lacking on a NATO scale to examine collectively the feasibility for the introduction of alternative fuels for tactical weapons systems and in power generation [infrastructure]. Smart defense is the goal and smart energy solutions provide a key for getting where we need to go. It is insufficient to rely exclusively on US leadership to pioneer an examination of alternative fuels in weapons systems and infrastructure and it is unwise to neglect the contributions that other NATO members can and should make to this discussion. Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands and many other NATO Member States are already global leaders in alternative fuels and power production. This technical and commercial knowledge, know-how, and ongoing commitment should be harnessed to catalyze a Smart Defense Initiative for increasing NATO military efficiency, in avoiding the pitfalls associated with strategic oil vulnerability, and in building the Alliance as the most effective and efficient collective security organization of the 21st century.



Jonas Grätz

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SMART DEFENCE: TOWARDS A LIMITED, BUT REINFORCED ENERGY SECURITY MANDATE

NATO has helped maintain energy security for several years now, albeit only as a secondary mission. As an alliance of the world's greatest naval powers, it has been active in ensuring freedom of movement on the high seas, for example, by keeping key sea lanes of communication (SLOCs) open and by deterring acts of piracy in the Gulf of Aden. Operation Ocean Shield is only the most recent example of the latter. Thus, shipping safety has been one of the core tasks of NATO. While underpinning the stability of the world oil market, the organization is also catering to the needs of world trade in general. It is a prime example of how military capabilities are used to ensure energy security via backing up market forces. Such a mission is seen as beneficial for all major parties with access to world oil markets and thus carries a non-confrontational character of common goods provision. It also forms the backbone of the world trade system, relying heavily on sea transport. This explains why it has been easy to agree upon such missions inside NATO, even though they pose no direct threat to the territory of a member state.

Another area where NATO is engaged in energy security provision is related to military security. However, the focus in this area shifted from territorial defence during the Cold War (where military security meant strengthening the resilience of energy infrastructure against a possible attack) towards support of expeditionary operations. The former focus led to the creation of infrastructure that is valuable for civilian use as well, such as the CEPS and NEPS pipeline systems in Western and Northern Europe. With the new focus being on global deployability, Central and Eastern European NATO members did not reach a comparable degree of infrastructural integration. Rather, their infrastructural ties are still reminiscent of their former "membership" in the Warsaw Pact. A new military energy security focus related to Smart Defence would increase the military's energy efficiency, in order to reduce cost and increase expeditionary flexibility. This is basically a task for the defence industry and could be enhanced by increased cooperation, as prescribed by the Smart Defence concept.

The idea for a broader role for NATO in energy security has propped up from time to time, most notably during the 1973 energy crisis. However, it has been explicitly taken on board only since 2006. The so-called "emerging" energy issues that were taken on the agenda in the Prague and Bucharest ministerial meetings, and further substantiated in NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept, emphasize the military dimension in energy security, to which NATO can add value. Basically, NATO envisages a role in critical infrastructure protection against terrorist attacks and also offers assistance in training to Partnership for Peace members. In addition, NATO offers a forum for discussing national contingency plans for energy supply disruptions and for general information sharing on energy issues. Thus, NATO has so far tackled the military dimensions of energy security which mainly defend energy infrastructure against unconventional threats and thus do not directly confront other state actors.

Meanwhile, regional issues have not been taken onto the NATO agenda, which caters for a certain disparity in vulnerability among European NATO members: Whereas Western Europe enjoys the benefits of Cold War legacy infrastructure, Central Europe and the Baltics lack integration of energy infrastructure with other NATO allies and often have very limited access to world oil markets, not to mention gas markets. Their infrastructural isolation and (sometimes) land-locked position limits the benefits that NATO's global role in policing SLOCs brings to their economies. This renders them more vulnerable towards energy security threats of a non-terrorist sort, as they are mainly supplied by Russian oil and gas. Russia, while claiming that energy supply is a "purely economic" issue, has

used energy and other trade ties to exert political pressure. Also, it is difficult to understand on a conceptual level how non-market relationships such as the rigid supply relations that exist with Russia in many CEE states and the Baltics could be of a “purely economic” nature: If one party can easily harm the energy security of another party, economic relations necessarily become politically relevant. Thus, if energy should become the “purely economic” relationship Russia claims to envisage, greater diversification and infrastructural integration is needed in the region.

However, the key strategic question remains whether NATO is the right actor to take on this crucial problem. The great plus is that NATO would bring the US to the table in European energy security. As the US is not only the world’s most potent military actor but also the world’s third-largest oil and largest gas producer, as well as host of the most advanced extraction technologies, it can add significant value to the European energy equation. Moreover, NATO brings in non-EU and non-EFTA countries such as Turkey and Canada, which are also important energy players. However, the crucial downside is that NATO is mainly a military alliance and thus has limited tools to deal with regional energy security issues.

Even if it can be seen as a trans-Atlantic forum for deliberating security issues, NATO remains a military alliance in essence. This implies that NATO faces problems of signalling: If NATO would broaden its energy security agenda, it would give way to other players to openly militarise and further politicise energy relations, linking them to broader strategic questions. As most EU countries are also NATO members, this could delegitimise the prevalent EU focus on marketization and a rules-based integrated EU energy market. As Russia is not only the main energy producer, but also a major military power, which is seen as being vital for the resolution of many problems from Afghanistan to Iran, an elevation of energy security by NATO could well backfire on the EU’s energy agenda. Some forerunners of this can already be observed in the ideas touted by the Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative, proposing to respect Russia’s concerns with regard to market liberalisation policy in the EU in the interest of broader Euro-Atlantic security. Such a redefinition of energy security in terms of broader security interests and “security of demand” could well prove to be disadvantageous and derail the progress made in the EU’s internal market. Meanwhile, the US is fully aware of the regional problems in CEE states and the Baltics and likely to remain committed to improving the situation even without further NATO involvement.

Thus, some of the worries over a broader NATO involvement in energy security seem to be well-founded. Having said that, the current focus on common goods provision (SLOCs), on information sharing, critical infrastructure protection, military energy security, as well as contingency planning, is favourable, as it does not give a point of reference to other states to militarise energy relations themselves. Meanwhile, cooperation with other organisations such as the EU is set to ensure a reduction of threats to energy security. Indeed the EU has become a much more active player in energy security provision for all its members, though many problems remain on the level of member states with regard to implementation.

The current areas of NATO activity in energy security are also being reinforced by the Smart Defence principle, calling for a better coordination of efforts and a focus on key priorities. Smart Defence calls for better information sharing and enhanced coordination in critical infrastructure protection. As emphasised above, smart defence also calls for joining efforts in military energy security, meaning energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy. Also, joint contingency planning for energy supply disruptions should be in the Smart Defence cards, as it will lead to further efficiency gains and may improve the security situation of individual member states. So, Smart Defence is a good starting point for leading the alliance towards new forms of cooperation within its limited energy security mandate.



Narciz Balasoiu

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OPTIMISTIC, BUT MODERATELY

Energy Security has become, without a doubt, a relevant point on the NATO agenda. There is a widespread perception within the Alliance that ensuring energy security is not a debatable concept anymore, and that pragmatic steps forward should be made. Well, up to this point NATO managed quite successfully to deal with its military issues, but when it comes to political ones, the decision making mechanism begins to encounter difficulties. And energy security is less about military and more about politics. Harmonizing positions within Europe could prove a real challenge. There's a certain reluctance towards this issue among Allied countries, mostly due to national divergent interests, so putting together a coherent and representative agenda will be an uphill battle. Recent international and regional developments have turned energy security into an unavoidable topic. Realities like Europe's growing dependency on foreign oil and gas supply can't be ignored. Today, EU countries as a whole import 50% of their energy needs, a figure expected to rise to 70% by 2030. When a country like Russia, depicting NATO in its Military Doctrine as the main threat to national security, is the key supplier of oil and natural gas, then we have a problem.

On the other hand, states like Belgium, with its 5% dependency, will not share the anxiety of Baltic states which 100% dependent on Russian gas supplies. Actors like Germany, also an important country energetically dependent on Moscow, may become too reliant on Russian energy supplies and move away from its EU partners and the United States. Berlin is already suspected to be Euro-Asianist rather than Euro-Atlanticist. The international environment is even more complex, so that emerging powers like China and India have seen an increase in consumption, thus placing additional pressure on the global energy market. Beside factors with a heavy dose of geopolitics, we are currently facing phenomena such as terrorist attacks or piracy to energy supplies, and equally serious, political instability in many energy-producing states. Attacks on oil tankers off the Somali coast have become a matter of notoriety, which prompted NATO to take action. Patrols in Somali territorial waters are nothing less than an effort to ensure energy security, at the level of critical transport infrastructure. At the antipode, we find actors such as Russian Federation benefiting from "too much" political stability, virtually dictating the managerial trajectory of companies like Gazprom. In these cases countries are tempted to use their energy supplies as a political leverage or weapon (see Russia-Ukraine gas crisis of 2009). Considering the latest presidential election results in Russia, the Europeans should prepare themselves for some pessimistic scenarios.

Making an appeal to history we may find that NATO key countries – although not the Alliance as a whole – have been involved in military operations to secure energy resources. Undoubtedly, one of the most relevant cases is the first Gulf War, when major NATO members like the United States, France, Italy or Great Britain fought shoulder to shoulder to liberate Kuwait. But let us not forget that one of the main goals of the western liberators was to ensure that Iraq did not control Kuwaiti oil and threaten Saudi Arabia and other Gulf producers. So, the issue of energy security is in fact an old story, we've seen it before, we've responded to it, and we definitely need to prepare for what lies before.

Romania is maybe one of the most fervent supporters of the energy security efforts, of course with an eye on the Black Sea Area. The 2008 Bucharest NATO Summit was in fact the first reunion of the Allies to insert the concept of "energy security" into an official document. Then we have had the Lisbon Summit, where the Allies managed to take

the efforts to the next level, by introducing the theme into a programmatic document – The new strategic concept.

Considering this trajectory corroborated with other factor (such as the shift from the protection of territory to the protection of people) we may assume an optimistic posture for the Chicago Summit this year. There will be steps made forward, but again, the issue is far too complex to hope for spectacular results. After all, what can NATO do in terms of supply diversification, or ensuring alternatives routes? - two of the three major action levels, along with ensuring security for the critical transport infrastructure. Negotiate the contracts/projects with the guns on the table? Maybe the new concept of “smart security” will enhance a better and broader cooperation between the allies, and also maybe the energy sector will benefit from it. For the moment the budgetary constrains force us to become creative, which might prove quite efficient to some extent.

On short notice instead, I don't see a valid answer to Europe's energy security challenges outside the southern corridor. We definitely need to reduce our dependence on Russian hydrocarbons, as part of the supply diversification process, but again Europe seems to have failed to speak in one voice. We have the Caspian resources knocking on our door, but who is there to open – Nabucco, SEEP or TAP?