

COOPERATION BETWEEN EU AND THE USA IN THEIR POLICY TOWARDS RUSSIA

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Abstract: The article is focused on the legislative and institutional background of the mutual cooperation of the EU and the USA within their policy framework towards Russia. It also briefly points out the use of sanctions as one of the main tools.

Keywords: European Union; USA; Russia; Sanctions; Security.

1 INTRODUCTION

At the end of the 2nd decade of the 21st century it seems that the so-called „unipolar“ world development being characterised by a global dominance of one superpower – the USA – is threatened. The globe has to deal with a range of political, economic and social issues together with security problems inevitably linked to them. The new global or regional powers try to break the dominance of the USA.

One of the challenges for the West – as we traditionally label the transatlantic area plus Australia and the New Zealand - is an undoubted increase of power of the „non-west“ countries. Another, and obviously a hotter, question is the relationship between the EU and the USA, as the representatives of the western civilisation on the one hand, and Russia, as the new and old power, on the other hand.

2 BASIC FRAMEWORKS OF THE EU POLICY

The Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) had been created by the Treaty on the European Union, while the CFSP was the second from the three pillars on which the inception of the EU was established. The Lisbon Treaty, which had entered into force in January 2009, formally confirmed not only the legal status of the European Union and institutional means for its foreign activity but, at the same time, removed its pillar structure. Several key players entered the CFSP area, inter-alia, the post of the European Union representative for foreign affairs and the security policy who is the Deputy Director General of the Commission and the post of a permanent President of the European Council. Since 2012, the European Parliament and the Parliaments of Member States have been organising inter-parliamentary conferences, where the issues related to CFSP are mutually discussed.

On 28 June 2016, the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini submitted a global strategy for foreign and security policy of the EU [1]. The global strategy is particularly focused on 5 areas: 1) security of Union, 2) stability of states and communities to the East and South of Union, 3) integrated approach to conflicts,

4) cooperative and regional arrangement, 5) global management to be used for the 21st century. By its adoption a revision of sectoral strategies, together with the inception of thematically and geographically new strategies, occurred. During 2017, a report on the performance of global strategy was released where the progress in terms of cooperation with NATO was highlighted and the Parliament issued an annual report [2] on the pursuance of CFSP, where the common judgement of threats and a joint approach on their solution was stressed.

The Lisbon Treaty also strengthened the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), which is an integrated part of the CFSP. The main institutional role was taken over by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who chairs the Foreign Affairs Council. Its members are foreign ministers. Parliament organises discussions and seminars on, inter alia, the topic of international crises with security and defence implications, and multilateral frameworks on security issues.

3 FOREIGN POLICY OF THE USA AND EU TOWARDS RUSSIA

Within the course of recent years the relationship between the USA and Russia has become one of the top priorities of the U.S. foreign policy. The American political representatives are aware that they should neither overvalue nor undervalue the ability of Russia to influence or distort the American national security planning. The relations between both countries are too deep and interlinked to take lightly such problems as the interventions in Syria, Ukraine or the nuclear weapons cut-off.

With reference to Wallin [3], there are several main areas the U.S. foreign policy should be focused on. One of them is the membership in NATO. The Member States committed themselves to spend 2% of GDP on defence, what causes difficulties to some of them and are therefore heavily criticised by the USA. In addition to the USA, only six NATO Member States exceeded 2 % of GDP on defence in 2018, namely Greece, Estonia, United Kingdom, Latvia, Poland and Lithuania, as stated in the press release published by NATO Public Diplomacy Division on 14 March 2019.

Another domain is the nuclear weapons issue. Despite the fact that the USA and Russia are aware of the importance of programme on the diminishing of the number of ballistic missiles, they consider each other as a nuclear threat. In particular, Russia considers whatever technology in the field of nuclear weapons developed in the USA as a threat directed against the Russian Federation.

The cyber security is another domain, which is considered by the USA very intensively. The reason lies in several hacker attacks from Russia, China and other countries. Officially Russia disavows these activities of any kind. On June, President Putin said that the Russian government did not play any role in terms of hacker attacks during the US elections in 2016, however, at the same time he declared that „*as long as some Russian citizens are thinking patriotically, they start to organise on their own will - what is according to their opinion appropriate - different activities against those, who have addressed bad things on Russia*“ [4].

Another challenge for the USA is to cope with the increasing number of regular incidents on sea and in air caused by Russian mariner and aviation powers. The incidents are frequently accompanied by a dangerous and provocative behaviour what, at the end of the day, could lead to casualties on all sides involved. The Treaty between the USA and the Soviet Union as of 1972 is out of date and Russia is not abiding by its terms. Both, the revisiting of this issue and the creation of exact mechanisms for diminishing the tension escalation are echoed in the USA.

The USA and the European Union do not coincide in all foreign policy questions, however, they still remain the most important allies. Nonetheless, their mutual cooperation is long-term, e.g. the contacts between the Parliament and the US Congress went down to 1972. These relationships had been institutionalised in 1999 and the Institute of Transatlantic Legislator's dialogue was created. The last, 82nd inter-parliamentary meeting was in 2018 in Sofia, Bulgaria. The importance of this Institute is growing mainly by the authority of the US Congress when approving the interventions of the USA during the world crises and influencing the US activities within the global administration institutions. With regard to the key role of NATO when ensuring the European security, the EU Parliament is also participating in the plenary meetings of NATO.

Although the attitude of the USA towards EU and the transatlantic alliance has changed since the accession of Donald Trump to the Office of President, it returns into a constructive mode. For example, the negotiations on the Transatlantic Business and Investment Partnership between the USA and the EU, which had begun in July 2013, were interrupted after the election of President Trump. The situation is even more complicated due to the fact that in 2017 the USA were the main export market of the Union and

that EU and the USA are mutually the biggest investors. However, in terms of security the partnership covered by the cooperation of allies within NATO is ongoing.

The representatives of the EU are aware of Russian ambitions and a complicated relationship between both parties. As one of the steps for a better security assurance of the EU countries, a so called Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) [5] has been established. It is to be considered as a reinforced cooperation of 25 EU member States in the field of security and defence, which have committed themselves to take over more duties and criteria in order to comply with the EU ambitions resulting from the Global strategy for the foreign and security policy of the EU. The level of defensive capabilities of particular countries should be increased and harmonised in order to achieve a better cooperation in the fulfilment of goals. In addition to the security of citizens living in the EU member states, the members of PESCO committed themselves also to a more active participation in the EU operations focused on the support of worldwide peace and security. The participation in PESCO is voluntary and the defensive capabilities remain in the ownership of the EU Member States involved, thus, it has no impact either on the state sovereignty or on the security and defence policy of some of them.

PESCO contains 20 commitments [6] which are common for all EU Member States involved. They are focused on the increase of national expenditures on defence and the reinforcement of cooperation of these states in the areas of harmonisation of defence planning, increase of military forces deployment, removal of critical abilities and the performance of multinational projects. The participating countries of the EU have prepared the national plans of PESCO pursuance, which are to be upgraded annually and which contains the way how and in which time intervals the commitments will be jointly fulfilled.

National pursuance plans will be submitted by Member States to the European External Action Service (EEAS) and to European Defence Agency (EDA). EEAS and EDA will provide administrative and technical support for the EU Member States involved. The High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who leads the EEAS and the EDA simultaneously, will provide the ministers of foreign affairs and the ministers of defence with an assessment report on the PESCO pursuance state of play, including the fulfilment of commitments of each EU Member State according to its national pursuance plan. In practice, the assessment report will compare the content of national pursuance plans of particular EU Member State involved with the actual state of play. In case of non-fulfilment of joint commitments, the EU Member State could be excluded from PESCO.

As it has been mentioned above, the multinational projects focused on the creation of defence

capabilities and their use in the joint EU missions are also part of PESCO. Making these projects feasible should lead to the strengthening of the strategic EU autonomy in the field of security and defence and their ability to react to crises. On 11 December 2017, the participating EU Member States had released a declaration of the PESCO projects [7], by which they announced the first wave of projects pursued from 2018. 17 projects have been selected into the first phase from 49 proposed projects, among them also a Slovak project EuroArtillery being intended for an indirect fire support.

PESCO should help also to the strengthening of the so-called European Pillar of NATO, by the means of which the EU Member States, which are simultaneously the NATO Member States, confirm that NATO with its collective defence principle remains the main security guarantee. At the same time, they repeatedly declare the cohesion of their security and defence with those EU Member States which are not NATO members.

4 RUSSIA – „THE NEW AND OLD GREAT POWER“

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the rising Russian Federation must cope with the enormous, literally, subsistence issues. The former obstructers from the cold-war times began to consider Russia as a second-rate power, mainly due to its big losses in terms of military power and capabilities. All the more the EU and USA were shocked by observing the Russian intervention to Ukraine and Syria. Despite the fact that Russia is economically relatively less powerful, militarily it regains its lost position. To compare, GDP of Russia in 2017 was only by 12 % higher than the joint GDP of Belgium and Netherlands. In 2017, the military expenditures amounted to 61 billion USD. The USA spent approximately 10 times more during the same time period. However, it has to be mentioned, that a simple comparison of military budgets does not perfectly reflect the reality. Whereas Russia buys prevalingly on the domestic market often from government producers, it pays lower price as compared to the majority of other states on the world market. Another difference is visible in the ratio of expenditures on wages of military employees and on purchases of new military equipment. While in NATO Member States approximately 80 % from the budget on defence goes to wages, in Russia this ratio is 50 : 50 [8].

One of the factors supporting the Russian Federation's powers is the nuclear arsenal. According to Rumer [9], the Russian military strategists rely on the nuclear potential of their country and the ability of Russia for a second strike is considered as inevitable. They react also to the attitude of the US President D. Trump who in February terminated the participation of the USA in the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) [10]. Immediately on the

next day the Russian President V. Putin declared that Russia terminates its participation in the Treaty as well.

All three parties involved (EU, Russian Federation and the USA) are concurrently accusing themselves from the abuse of the airspace by the aircraft of the „opponent“. Above the international air space, the Russian long-range bombers and multipurpose combat aircrafts meet the NATO airplanes, which watch over, for example, the Baltic sea; however, the incidents occur also at the coast of United Kingdom or Canada and the USA. The incident of Ukraine ships being blocked and captured by Russian Navy at the coast of Crimea, annexed by Moscow, was heavily criticised by the EU.

For more than a decade, the increasingly aggressive demonstrations of Russian policy in different forms can be observed. Alleged attempts to meddle into the election processes of democratic countries done by Russia are not new phenomena but their methods have changed. In recent years Russia directly financed the political parties which should deteriorate the situation in concrete countries [11]. The expansion of NATO and American military troops, together with the missile shield, represent a traditional stumbling block between West and the Russian Federation. Inter alia, the Russian Federation reacted also by the deployment of sizeable military equipment in Crimea being unlawfully occupied. The USA, EU and their allies have been forced to respond to these steps in order to prevent the escalation of tension.

5 ECONOMIC SANCTIONS POLICY OF THE USA AND EU TOWARDS RUSSIA

Since the end of cold war, the sanctions have become a popular tool, especially for the USA (Illieva, Dashtevski, Kokotovic 2018). The European Commission considers the sanctions as one of the EU tools for supporting the goals of Common Foreign and Security Policy too. There are several forms of sanctions. The military ones (use of military forces), political or diplomatic or cultural sanctions could be in question. The economic sanctions represent a relatively new phenomenon in the international affairs, nevertheless in the 20th century they occurred relatively often. In general, they are focused on the prevention against the delivery of goods and services, funds or know-how to a concrete recipient.

In March 2014, the EU imposes sanctions focused on the prohibition of travelling and freezing of financial means of concrete persons. It was a reaction to the annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol to Russian Federation, which was considered by the EU as a sovereignty threat for Ukraine.

Another impetus for economic sanctions of EU against the Russian federation was the military conflict in Ukraine. In July 2014, the EU adopted a Decision 2014/512 of the CFSP Council on

restrictive measures with regard to the activities of Russian Federation, by which it had destabilised the situation in Ukraine. The USA, EU, Japan and Australia imposed economic sanctions on Russian official representatives, firms and private persons. Illieva, Dashtevski, Kokotovic (Illieva, Dashtevski, Kokotovic 2018) have concretely identified what EU has focused on and separately what the USA have targeted on.

EU sanctions are targeted on:

- individuals or legal entities who have been involved in actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, freedom and independence of Ukraine and their property is frozen in the EU;
- restrictions and afterwards a complete ban of import of goods originating from Crimea or Sevastopol to the EU, as a response to the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol;
- economic sanctions against Russia restricting the use of EU financial markets and a prohibition of export of armament and goods of duplicitous use, furthermore of equipment and services related to the oil industry.

On the other hand, the US sanctions are related to [12]:

- property freeze of concrete persons (close to President Vladimir Putin) and the prohibition for physical persons and legal entities from the USA to carry out whatsoever financial transactions with the sanctioned persons;
- property freeze and a prohibition to perform economic transactions with concrete entities especially with the banks owned by the government, defensive and energetic firms
- restrictions related to financial transactions with Russian firms belonging to key sectors, i.e. defence, energetic, financial);
- restrictions on export of technologies related to oil and goods of duplicitous use;
- restrictions related to specific export (e.g. military goods).

As retaliatory measures against EU, the USA, Canada, Australia and Norway, the Russian Federation introduced tools hampering import of three goods and services – vegetables and fruit, milk products, meat and meat products. In addition, it has to be mentioned, that a list of countries which had joined the EU and USA was extended in 2015 by Japan, Switzerland, Albania, Iceland, Lichtenstein and Monte Negro.

According to Korhonen, Simola and Solanko (Korhonen, Simola, Solanko 2018), the economic crisis, which broke out fully in 2015, has only very little to do with sanctions from the USA and the EU. The origin must be sought in the sharp drop of oil prices what has had a significant impact on the Russian economy.

Illieva, Dashtevski, Kokotovic (Illieva, Dashtevski, Kokotovic. 2018) pointed out that if the economic sanctions are to be effective, especially in the country where the political elite, headed by the President, has the media in power, it will be necessary to have a clear transmission mechanism at disposal, which might appropriately force the Russian electors to vote for an alternative solution. The main reason why the majority of UN Member States is against the sanctions imposed on Russia is the fact that instead of solving one problem (Crimea), they have caused the creation of other problems. The authors also emphasise that there is no international organisation or generally accepted mechanism, which is authorised to govern the legality of these sanctions. There is even no definition of economic sanctions in international law, so their illegality is often the subject of debate.

6 MILITARY MEASURES AND THE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE USA AND THE EU WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF NATO

The incidents as of the end of 2013 and the beginning of 2014, and especially the annexation of Crimea by Russia, led to concrete steps of the NATO Member States. Within the summit in Wales, they adopted, among the other things, the implementation of the Readiness Action Plan and the reinforcement of the collective defence and the Eastern wing of NATO. In the next summit in Warsaw in 2016, further decisions were adopted in order to strengthen the positions of NATO especially on the Eastern border of Alliance. Alliance defense ministers confirmed the creation of four multinational combat groups as part of a forward presence program (Enhanced Forward Presence) [13]. These battle groups consisting of soldiers from different countries are deployed in the area of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia and their total number represents more than 4 500 soldiers and civilians.

The groups cooperate with the local military forces, however, they still fall under the leadership of the Alliance through the so-called Multinational North-East Corps [14], based in Poland in Szczecin.

The Estonian Armed Forces cooperate with a battle group led by the United Kingdom based in Tapa. This group consists of British troops, Danish soldiers and Icelandic civil servant responsible for the management of communication systems.

A Canada-led military group is located in the Latvian city Adazi and consists of Canadian troops, soldiers from Spain, Italy, Poland and 50 soldiers from Slovenia, as well as from the military service of the Czech Republic, Albania and Monte Negro. In 2018, the Slovak Republic sent 150 soldiers to Latvia.

The base of the battle group led by Germany is in the Lithuanian city of Rukla. It involves soldiers from Germany, France, Croatia, the Netherlands and

military personnel from Norway, Belgium and Iceland.

The last battle group is led by the United States and based in Orzysz, Poland. It is made up of American, British, Romanian and Croatian troops.

As far as the size is concerned, each group consists of around 1000 people, which does not necessarily represent a force large enough to deter. For this reason, in mid-2017, the Lithuanian President asked for the permanent presence of US troops in Lithuania in order not only to deter, but also to defend.

Within the framework of increasing the readiness and capability of their armed forces to cooperate, the Alliance's defense ministers agreed to create two new headquarters, bringing approximately 1 200 new personnel to the NATO Command Structure. The Joint Support and Enabling Command (JSEC) center will be based in Ulm, Germany, and its primary task will be to supervise the movement of military units and materials within Europe. The NATO Joint Command for the Atlantic region will be resided in Norfolk, Virginia, in the USA, and at the same time will be involved in the management of operations in the North Atlantic region, including the management of redeployment of troops and materials in the region.

The Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization said: "We are currently in the process of adapting NATO's command structure, which is a key building block of our alliance ... to ensure the deployment of the right type of armed forces at the right places and at the right time. These headquarters will be indispensable to strengthen the Alliance in the Atlantic region and across Europe [15]. "The Defense Alliance also agreed to launch a NATO Emergency Initiative, known as the "Four Thirties". In practice, this plan would mean that by 2020 the Member States should have 30 mechanized battalions, 30 air squadrons and 30 combat vessels at their disposal, and these units should be deployed no later than 30 days after the crisis. Albeit the proposed plan did not include data on specific numbers of units, usually one battalion includes 600 up to 1000 soldiers.

It is not yet clear how the Four Thirties plan would correspond to further efforts to improve the combat readiness of NATO military forces, many of which have commitments in different regions while facing a shortage of weapons and equipment. It is also unclear how quickly the Alliance could move large numbers of troops to its Eastern borders and how long it could keep them there. Stoltenberg explained that the Emergency Initiative "is not based on increasing the number of new armed forces, but rather on increasing the preparedness of the existing armed forces. This initiative highlights our determination to encourage a culture of readiness across the alliance" [16].

7 CONCLUSION

It is clear from the above mentioned that the relationship between the EU, the USA and Russia requires a combination of several foreign policy tools. In addition to the diplomacy itself, which however fails in many cases, different forms of controls are necessary. The policy of sanctions are in question, which have not fully reached in practise the required result but they still are considered as an important foreign policy tool towards countries acting similarly as Russia.

On the one hand, there are ill-considered political statements, on the other hand business relationships, which to a great extent depend on the geopolitical situation and the concrete economic interest. Russia is rather to be considered as a single player. It relies on its nuclear arsenal representing the power, which has to be taken into account, but mainly it relies on the mineral sources. The use of energy card for enforcement of its geopolitical interest is in case of Russia very often. In the EU, however, there is a split in attitudes towards such behaviour, both between individual EU Member States and between the EU itself and the US.

The EU and USA are traditional political allies. However, the facts related to the recent five years show that in some cases the political will is not enough. Both partners have faced with the unwillingness of the other party to take some joint measures, mainly for economic reasons. President Trump's policy keeps the European Union's attention mainly for the announced custom duties on the automotive industry.

In addition to disagreement in the field of energy, there is an obvious conflict of interests also in the military domain. Currently, the European Defense Area is fully covered by NATO forces, which also serve to deter any efforts to undermine the sovereignty of EU states and all Member States support the activities of the North Atlantic Alliance. However, frequent criticism from the US is the attitude of European states towards their commitments and, above all, the lack of NATO funding.

It is the sufficient deterrent military force of the EU or NATO countries to serve as a support for diplomatic efforts to reach agreements with the Russian Federation on current sensitive issues. Cooperation between the two most important representatives of the "West" - the USA and the EU - is therefore inevitable.

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