

## PET LET V ZAVEZNIŠTVU IN 60 LET ZAVEZNIŠTVA: SLOVENIJA IN NATO

## FIVE YEARS IN THE ALLIANCE AND 60 YEARS OF THE ALLIANCE: SLOVENIA AND NATO

Review paper

**Povzetek** Članek analizira potek dogodkov, ki so zvezo Nato pripeljali do tega, da se spoprime z enim največjih izzivov po hladni vojni, s stabilizacijo Afganistana. Sedem let po padcu talibskega režima se je smiselno vprašati, kaj so pri poskusih vzpostavitve državnih struktur dosegli zainteresirani akterji mednarodne skupnosti – Nato je le eden izmed številnih – skupaj z afganistanskimi oblastmi za stabilizacijo oziroma za to, da bi Afganistan lahko začel delovati samostojno, brez zunanje pomoči. Analiza pokaže, da je na nekaterih področjih, kot sta na primer izobraževanje in vračanje beguncev, prišlo do napredka, razmere na drugih področjih pa ostajajo nespremenjene ali se celo slabšajo, na primer varnostne razmere. Ker je leta 2004 članica zavezništva postala tudi Slovenija, je stabilizacija Afganistana posledično postala tudi njena naloga, zato članek analizira dosedanje vlogo Slovenske vojske pri stabilizaciji Afganistana. V članku so analizirani »vojaški prispevki« držav članic; pokazalo se je, da Slovenija med državami, s katerimi se pogosto primerja, na misijo Isaf prispeva razmeroma malo vojakov glede na število prebivalcev. Slovenija sicer izdatno prispeva drugam, in sicer tja, kjer naj bi bili strateški interesi Slovenije jasneje izraženi, oziroma tja, kjer meni, da ima primerjalne prednosti, na primer na Kosovo. Ker se je v Natu nedavno začel proces oblikovanja novega strateškega koncepta, ki bo poleg največjega samoopredeljenega izziva, stabilizacije Afganistana, moral odgovoriti tudi na to, kako se bo Nato spopadel z nekaterimi novimi izzivi, članek s pomočjo metode strukturiranega intervjuja z visokim uradnikom Nata odgovarja na vprašanje, kateri izzivi oziroma grožnje bi morali biti vključeni v dokument, ki bo določal prihodnjo usmerjenost zavezništva, in kakšno vlogo bi Slovenija morala imeti v tem procesu.

**Ključne besede** *Slovenska vojska, Afganistan, stabilizacija, Nato, Isaf, strateški koncept Nata.*

**Abstract** The article analyses the course of events which brought NATO to face one of the biggest challenges after the Cold War, the stabilisation of Afghanistan. Seven years

after the fall of the Talib regime it is appropriate to ask ourselves what the interested actors of the international community - NATO is merely one of many such actors - together with the Afghan authorities, in their efforts to establish government structures, have done for the stabilisation of Afghanistan or for Afghanistan to be able to function independently, with no outside help. The analysis shows that progress has been made in certain areas, such as education and the return of refugees, while the situation in other areas has remained unchanged or even worsened, such as the security situation. Because Slovenia also became a member of the Alliance in 2004, the stabilisation of Afghanistan is now consequently its task as well, and the article thus analyses the hitherto role of the Slovenian Armed Forces in the stabilisation of Afghanistan. The article analyses "military contributions" of member states and the results show that Slovenia, from among the countries with which it is usually compared, contributes a relatively small number of soldiers for the ISAF mission, regarding the number of the population. Otherwise, Slovenia substantially contributes elsewhere, mostly where strategic interests of the country are more clearly expressed or where it believes it has comparative advantages, for example in Kosovo. Considering that NATO has recently started the process of forming a new strategic concept which, besides the biggest self-imposed challenge, the stabilisation of Afghanistan, will also have to define how NATO will face some new challenges, the article, on the basis of a structured interview with a high NATO official, answers the question of which challenges or threats should be included in the document which defines the future orientation of the Alliance and what role Slovenia should play in this process.

**Key words** *Slovenian Armed Forces, Afghanistan, stabilisation, NATO, ISAF, NATO's strategic concept.*

**Introduction** At anniversaries we like to ask ourselves what we have achieved and look back on the path taken. Various scientific, technical and other publications talk a lot about the fifth anniversary of Slovenia's accession to NATO which is now celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Upon receiving an invitation by the responsible editor-in-chief to write an article for the *Bulletin of the Slovenian Armed Forces*, the authors of this article focused primarily on the possible contribution and the added value to what has already been written, in order to avoid repeating the previously written and discussed issues.

There are several current problematic assemblies which NATO and Slovenia will have to find answers to if they wish to appear as trustworthy subjects of international relations. *First*, how, since the dissolution of the organisation of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union in the 1990s, NATO has gradually, organisationally and institutionally as well as functionally, adapted to the new international security environment; *second*, what is the issue with the ever increasing (self-)questioning regarding NATO's identity crisis and its new mission; *third*, what are the advantages and costs of Slovenia's membership in NATO five years after the accession; *fourth*,

what are the current and future roles of Slovenia in facing the most currently adopted NATO challenge, the stabilisation of Afghanistan.<sup>1</sup>

Comprehensive answers to each of the four problematic assemblies call for an in-depth analysis. Due to limitations regarding space and content as well as the provision of an in-depth analysis, the article limits itself only to currently the main challenge of NATO, that is to the participation in the stabilisation of Afghanistan. The importance of analysing NATO's operations in Afghanistan and commitment to stabilisation are emphasized by the highest NATO representatives,<sup>2</sup> Alliance members (including Slovenia)<sup>3</sup> as well as national and foreign professional and academic public.<sup>4</sup> The course of the operation in Afghanistan and its completion will have strategic and conceptual implications for the existence of NATO and its future operations. Due to the broader title of the article, the conclusion will also include thoughts on Slovenia's participation and operation within NATO as well as within the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP).

The analysis of the problem of NATO's operation in Afghanistan and of Slovenia in this context is based on the method of analysing secondary and primary resources as well as on the structured interview with a high civil representative of NATO, director of the Policy Planning Sector at the Secretary General of NATO, Jamie Shea.<sup>5</sup>

The article is composed of six topic areas: the introduction defines the purpose of the article, the methodological approach as well as some challenges and limitations of conducting the analysis. The remainder of the article presents: the reasons which led to NATO's participation in the mission in Afghanistan; the decision of the Slovenian Government to deploy members of the Slovenian Armed Forces (SAF) to Afghanistan as well as several characteristics of the now five-year operation of the Slovenian contingents in this restless country; several characteristics of the security situation in Afghanistan seven years after the fall of the Talib regime;<sup>6</sup> challenges in the formation of a new strategic concept of NATO and the view of a high expert

<sup>1</sup> *The main challenge of such a subject of international relations as NATO is perhaps mostly dependant on the perspective or on own definition of missions and tasks, which is why we wrote »adopted challenge«. The stabilisation of Afghanistan is definitely also a challenge for the wider international community or the UN, not only for NATO. However, it is not a **conditio sine qua non** for the future existence and development of the Alliance.*

<sup>2</sup> *The question of the stabilisation of Afghanistan has been mentioned in most official speeches of the Secretary General of NATO, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, in 2009 (see, for example, Scheffer 2009 a, Scheffer 2009 b, Scheffer 2009 c).*

<sup>3</sup> *Defence Minister Dr. Ljubica Jelusič says that Afghanistan remains »...our common concern within NATO, increasingly within the EU, and since 2001 also within the UN«. (Slovenian Press Agency 2009 a).*

<sup>4</sup> *During the conference at the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NATO in February 2009 at Brdo pri Kranju, Afghanistan was one of the important topics (Euro-Atlantic Council of Slovenia, 2009). See also Harvard University Centre for Middle Eastern Studies (2008).*

<sup>5</sup> *The result of the analysis will not be exactly as we would wish, mostly because of the relatively high level of classification of data regarding NATO's operation in Afghanistan.*

<sup>6</sup> *Slovenian and foreign technical and scientific literature often incorrectly uses the words **Talib** and **Taliban**. **Taliban** is the plural form of **talib** which literally means »student«. The correct singular form is thus **talib** and plural **talibs**.*

of this organisation of the newly formed concept which would reflect the changed security situation in the world and define the role and mission of NATO for the future; the last part of the analysis presents several starting points for the future study of the proposed issue.

## 1 STABILISATION OF AFGHANISTAN AS A CHALLENGE FOR THE LEGITIMACY OF THE EXISTENCE AND OPERATION OF THE ALLIANCE TODAY

Seven years have passed since NATO, celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, faced its, perhaps biggest challenge since the end of the Cold War, the stabilisation of Afghanistan. In the territory of this country, in the 1990s, after several years of fights which began after the departure of the Soviet soldiers, settled the Talibs who soon offered shelter to members of the terrorist organisation Al-Qaeda. The day after the terrorist attacks in the United States of America on September 11, 2001, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) severely condemned these actions and used Resolution 1368 to urge member states to punish the perpetrators, organisers and sponsors of the attack (UNSC Resolution 1368). This subchapter specifies the course of events which led to NATO's participation in this Asian country. The mentioned participation is contrary to NATO's operations during the Cold War when the union as a whole skilfully evaded direct participation in any of the (post)colonial conflicts, despite the fact that individual members of the Alliance did participate in them.<sup>7</sup>

Even before the Talib seizure of power and particularly under the Talib regime, Afghanistan was an unstable country and a threat to the international community with its internal tensions and foreign policy. Some authors and particularly politicians declared the Talib regime as "wicked" or terrorist because it offered shelter to terrorist organisations, including Al-Qaeda.<sup>8</sup> Most people, weary of bloody combats which raged in Afghanistan after the departure of the Soviet soldiers in 1989, welcomed the Talibs who occupied Kabul in 1996 (they later expanded their control to as much as 90 percent of the territory).<sup>9</sup> However, by establishing a regime which proved to be much crueller from the previous one in some respects, the Talibs soon withdrew from the population (Kolhatkar and Ingalls, 2006, Roberts, 2009, p. 30-31).

<sup>7</sup> Such cases include French wars in Indochina and Algeria, Portuguese wars in Africa, British wars in Malaya, Dutch wars in Indonesia etc. (Roberts, 2009, p. 47).

<sup>8</sup> »Afghanistan is ruled by a rogue regime, the Taliban.« (Khalilzad and Byman in Kolhatkar and Ingalls, 2006, p. 29). Kolhatkar and Ingalls (2006, xii) warn that such a denotation has a negative connotative meaning and signifies the search for an excuse for outside interference.

<sup>9</sup> Only the Pashtuns generally opposed the victory of the Northern Alliance at first, which, with the support of the US, gradually banished the Talibs. The voice of the Pashtun people strengthened particularly in 2003 and 2004 when their representatives were elected into the government (Roberts, 2009, p. 32-33).

The terrorist attack on the US on September 11, 2001 actually marks the beginning of an end of the Talib regime in Afghanistan.<sup>10</sup> Afghanistan was also said to be a place of hiding for the initiator of the attacks and the leader of the terrorist network Al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, along with his most devoted followers. On October 7, 2001, less than a month after the terrorist attacks, the US began the military operation Enduring Freedom (Kolhatkar and Ingalls, 2006).<sup>11</sup> Merely a day after September 11, the North Atlantic Council of NATO adopted a Declaration which states that "...the attack was directed towards the US from abroad and has to be treated in accordance with Article 5 of the Washington Treaty which states that an attack directed at a member of the Alliance in Europe or North America is an attack directed at the Alliance as a whole." The US declined NATO's offer because they wished, as claimed by Roberts (2009, p. 47), an 'A La Carte' coalition which would include no institutional constraints to the American conduct of the operation, which caused much dissatisfaction among the European NATO members. The US, with the support of their Allies, conducted the military operation Enduring Freedom outside the shelter of the NATO umbrella, even though, for the first time in history of the Alliance, one of its member states referred to Article 5 of the Washington Treaty.

On December 20, 2001, two weeks after the adoption of the Bonn Agreement which laid the framework for the political future of Afghanistan, the UNSC adopted Resolution 1386.<sup>12</sup> The resolution authorised the ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) mission as well as the deployment of multinational forces in Kabul and its surroundings. 18 countries participated in the ISAF mission at that time, either by deploying soldiers or materially (NATO 2009 a, UNSC Resolution 1386).

Right after the attacks, NATO was removed from the "Afghan story" but soon returned to the scene. It entered directly in August 2003 when the union assumed the conduct of ISAF. The Alliance assumed responsibility for commanding, coordinating and planning the operation. It soon faced the problem which had been present the whole time; how to provide enough soldiers or countries which would be willing to send members of their armed forces to the restless country of Afghanistan (NATO 2009 b). The mandate of ISAF was first limited to Kabul and its surroundings. However, in October 2003, the UNSC, with Resolution 1510, expanded the mandate to the entire territory of Afghanistan. The operation again reflected the mutual commitment of the Afghan transitional government and ISAF to the stabilisation of

<sup>10</sup> Some authors, including Kolhatkar and Ingalls (2006, p. 41-3), claim that the attack on Afghanistan was merely one of the points of the American strategy for this Central Asian country, which the US had planned long before the attack on September 11, 2001.

<sup>11</sup> The military operation Enduring Freedom has to be distinguished from NATO's operation ISAF. Several other operations within the so called Global war against terrorism are also connected with the operation Enduring Freedom, for example Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines, Operation Enduring Freedom – Horn of Africa etc. Operation Enduring Freedom is an operation of the American Army (with the support of British and Afghan troops), while the operation ISAF runs under NATO command, with American and British soldiers participating in it. In the past there had been tendencies to join both operations; this, however, did not happen, mostly at the wish of the US to preserve part of their units directly under own command.

<sup>12</sup> Exclusion of the Talibs from the negotiations at the Bonn conference was, according to many analysts and politicians, a primary error at the initial stage of the stabilisation of Afghanistan (Giustozzi, 2008, p. 229).

Afghanistan. ISAF is granted legitimacy through the request of the Afghan authorities for assistance. The resolution particularly emphasizes the principle of cooperation, meaning that ISAF, from legal and formal points of view, cannot function without the approval of the Afghan government (UNSC Resolution 1510).

ISAF first began expanding the mission to the north. In December 2003, the North Atlantic Council of NATO authorised the Supreme Allied Commander, General James Jones, to expand the ISAF mission by assuming command over the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Kunduz which had until then been under German command. The other eight PRTs remained under the command of the operation Enduring Freedom, that is under the American command. On December 31, the military part of the PRT in Kunduz passed over to ISAF. Half a year later, on June 28, 2004, at the NATO Summit in Istanbul, the establishment of PRTs in four other provinces was announced (in Mazari Sharif, Fayzabad and Baghlan), which took place on October 1 of the same year. The first phase of the expansion was thus finished. The territory whose stabilisation was the responsibility of ISAF included nine provinces or approximately 3600 square kilometres (NATO 2009 b).

In February 2005 NATO announced that it will also expand the operation of ISAF to the west of Afghanistan. The second phase of the expansion began on May 31, 2006, when ISAF assumed command over two more PRTs in the provinces of Farah and Herat. Members of the Slovenian Armed Forces were also sent to Herat later and remain there until today. They are also stationed at the logistic base in Herat, the so called Forward Support Base. Two more PRTs started operating in September of the same year. One in Chaghcharan, the capital of the Ghor province, and the other in Qala i Naw, the capital of the Badghis province. By expanding to the west, ISAF expanded its mandate to half of the Afghan territory (*ibid.*).

The third phase of the expansion included the restless south of Afghanistan. On July 31, 2006, ISAF, within the operation Enduring Freedom, took over the command of the south of Afghanistan from the American forces and thus expanded its area of operation to additional six provinces, namely Daykundi, Helmand, Kandahar, Nimruz, Oruzgan and Zabul. At the same time it also assumed command of four other PRTs. The number of soldiers within ISAF increased from about 10.000 to about 20.000 (*ibid.*).

During the fourth phase, ISAF assumed responsibility of the entire territory of Afghanistan when, on October 5, 2006, it took over command of the forces in the eastern Afghanistan from the coalition under the American command. A new operational plan was also adopted at that time, which enabled ISAF to play a more important role in Afghanistan. Among other things, ISAF could now establish Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLT), designed to support the Afghanistan National Army (ANA) (*ibid.*).

In April 2009, approximately 58.390 soldiers from 42 countries participated in the ISAF mission, while 26 PRTs operated in the territory of Afghanistan. Most soldiers are stationed in Regional Command South (approximately 22.830) and in Regional Command East (just over 22.000), while Regional Command Capital (approximately 5830 soldiers), Regional Command North (approximately 4730 soldiers) and Regional Command West (approximately 2940 soldiers) stay considerably behind in the number of soldiers (ISAF, 2009, p. 1).<sup>13</sup>

The diverse “coalition” of countries within ISAF provides for the legitimacy of operations. The US contributes the highest number of soldiers, that is more than 26.000.<sup>14</sup> Next comes Great Britain with 8300 soldiers; other countries which contribute more than 1000 soldiers are Germany with 3465 soldiers, Canada with 2830 soldiers, France with 2780 soldiers, Netherlands with 1770 soldiers, Poland with 1590 soldiers and Australia with 1090 soldiers. The representation of some countries in ISAF in April 2009 was merely symbolic: Georgia with one soldier, Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Austria with two soldiers, Jordan and Ireland with seven soldiers each, Iceland with eight soldiers, Luxembourg with nine and Ukraine with ten. Slovenia, with 70 soldiers, was listed in the lower part of the spreadsheet; 27 countries contributed more soldiers and 14 countries contributed less (*ibid.*).

## 2 COOPERATION OF THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES IN AFGHANISTAN

The absolute contributions regarding the number of soldiers for the ISAF mission, shown in the previous chapter, are only one of the ways of comparing data. However, due to different number of inhabitants, different gross domestic product (GDP), different number of armed forces etc., the comparison only gives a partial image of the actual participation of countries.

To obtain a more accurate comparison it is important to determine the number of soldiers contributed by individual countries regarding the number of inhabitants.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Much professional and scientific literature talks about the minimum number of soldiers (occupation forces) required for the stabilisation of a country. Authors mostly agree that generalising is not suitable. Older doctrines of anti-insurgent combat or occupation state that stabilisation requires at least 20-25 soldiers per 1000 inhabitants (Roberts, 2009, p. 33-34). In the case of Afghanistan, with 33 to 34 million inhabitants, this means more than 750.000 soldiers. The calculation is based on the CIA World Factbook 2009 and the mean value of the »recommended number«, that is 22.5 soldiers per 1000 inhabitants.

<sup>14</sup> The US also has additional 12.000 soldiers participating in the operation Enduring Freedom, that is outside the auspices of the ISAF mission (International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2008, p. 301).

<sup>15</sup> The calculations are based on the data for individual countries, found in the CIA World Factbook (2009), and on the spreadsheet of contributions for the ISAF mission (ISAF, 2009).

**Table 1:**

The number  
of soldiers  
in ISAF per  
inhabitant

Country	Number of inhabitants	Number of soldiers in the ISAF mission	Number of inhabitants of a country per one soldier of this country in ISAF
Slovenia	2.005.692	70	28.653
Hungary	9.905.596	370	26.772
Slovakia	5.463.046	230	23.752
Lithuania	3.555.179	200	17.776
Czech Republic	10.211.904	580	17.607
Croatia	4.489.409	280	16.034
Latvia	2.231.503	160	13.947
Estonia	1.299.371	140	9281

Among the comparable countries, Slovenia contributes the least soldiers to Afghanistan regarding the number of inhabitants; that is one soldier per 28.653 inhabitants. The most active countries are Estonia, where each 9281<sup>st</sup> inhabitant participates in ISAF, and Latvia, which sends a soldier per every 13.947<sup>th</sup> inhabitant to ISAF.

We began this topic area in chronologically reverse order because of the logical sequence to the previous topic area, namely with a review and data comparison of the number of foreign soldiers in Afghanistan in the first half of 2009. Let us now return to the beginning of Slovenia's cooperation in the mission for the stabilisation of Afghanistan.

The first Slovenian contingent, with 18 members of the Slovenian Armed Forces, was sent to Afghanistan in March 2004. It operates in the west province of Herat with a capital of the same name and in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. As many as 485 members of the Slovenian Armed Forces have already participated in this operation. Most of their tasks include protecting the logistic base at the airport in Herat, operations at control points and patrolling in their immediate vicinity as well as escorting vehicles in the immediate area of Herat. Soldiers are stationed at the military camp Arena near Herat, together with members of the Italian and Spanish international forces (Slovenska vojska (The Slovenian Armed Forces magazine), 2009).

NATO had no financial obligations in the case of Slovenia's participation because the Slovenian government assumed responsibility for the transfer of the members of the Slovenian contingent, weapons and equipment. Slovenia also took care of the provision of food, accommodation, utility services, fuel, oil, lubricants and medical services. The country also made a commitment to provide for and maintain the equipment of the Slovenian contingent, and to assume responsibility

for the salaries of the Slovenian soldiers and other financial obligations resulting from their participation in Afghanistan (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 105/2005). Slovenian political leadership states that Slovenia will maintain its military presence in Afghanistan in the future as well. Prime Minister Borut Pahor and Defence Minister Dr. Ljubica Jelusič often emphasize that members of the Slovenian Armed Forces will remain in this restless country, as the stabilisation of Afghanistan is also of national interest to Slovenia. They made an official statement about this issue at the NATO Summit in Strasbourg and Kehl in April 2009. (Slovenian Press Agency 2009 a, Slovenian Press Agency 2009 b).

### **3 SECURITY SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN SEVEN YEARS AFTER THE FALL OF THE TALIBS**

The purpose of this topic area is to present the internal security situation in Afghanistan, measures or progress of the Afghan government, and the role of several evident international actors (NATO, USA, UN etc.). Only a few facts from the area of security will be exposed; that is those facts that could be the result of the efforts of the international community regarding stabilisation. The available data shows that, hypothetically, Afghanistan will find it difficult to transform into a stable country in the future if it does not receive serious and comprehensive international assistance. We must not, however, get into reductionism and, based on the partial analysis, equate the security situation with the (success of the) mission for the stabilisation of Afghanistan.

Seven years after NATO members adopted the stabilisation of Afghanistan as the priority challenge on the basis of which an alliance would either finally be put into force or completely fall through, as is claimed by some people, there are very few reasons for optimism in this Central Asian country. The United Nations reported that the number of civilian victims in 2008 increased by 70 percent in comparison with 2007.<sup>16</sup> Insurgents under the leadership of the Talibs (authors such as Giustozzi (2008), Roberts (2009, p. 31) and Synnott (2009, p. 71) warn, however, that linking the insurgency exclusively to the Talibs is problematic, since many

<sup>16</sup> *Analysts point to the aviation, which people rely too much on, as one of the main reasons for the numerous civilian victims because it operates in a non-discriminatory manner. Reliance on the aviation is particularly strong in the east and south of the country where insurgents are most active and there is shortage of coalition soldiers (Roberts, 2009, p. 40-41).*

Afghan insurgency groups have little in common with them)<sup>17</sup> have expanded the area of operation and began resorting to new tactics.<sup>18</sup>

The last report of the UN Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan contains quite pessimistic data. It states that the year 2008 was the most violent since the fall of the Talibs in 2001 – 31 percent more so called security incidents took place that year than in 2007. The number of incidents in December 2008 was 42 percent higher than in December of the previous year. The second half of 2008 saw an average of 857 so called security incidents per month, while the average for the first half of that year was 625 per month. The report also states that insurgents began operating in areas which, until recently, were relatively peaceful, including the provinces of Faryab and Badghis (the latter is a province bordering on Herat where members of the Slovenian Armed Forces are also stationed; author's warning) (UN General Assembly, 2009, p. 5).

The security situation is also unsatisfactory because of badly trained and personnel deficient Afghan armed forces. In April 2009, ANA included less than 83.000 members. The planned objective is having 134.000 soldiers by 2011 (ISAF, 2009). There is no shortage of recruits but many are joining the insurgents because of poor economic conditions and lack of opportunities (Roberts, 2009, p. 44).<sup>19</sup> An important element talking in favour of the hypothesis about the incohesiveness of the Afghan armed forces and consequently the inability of a successful combat against the insurgents is also the ethnic structure of the Afghan National Army. The Tajiks possess the most political power and the most manpower within ANA; almost 56 percent of the officers' assembly is composed of Tajiks (only 32 percent of officers are Pashtuns), despite the fact that Tajiks only represent 27 percent of the Afghanistan ethnic structure, while the Pashtuns represent 42 percent. Regarding the ethnic structure,

<sup>17</sup> *Insurgents are often joined by the inhabitants of those provinces which are characterised by high unemployment (up to 40 percent) and poverty. Insurgents, in return for joining, often give a relatively large amount of money. Rashid (Roberts, 2009, p. 31) claims that the United States of America and NATO could not understand that Talibs do not belong to Afghanistan and Pakistan - this was about a poor population with no future, the product of refugee camps, militarised religious schools (medrese) and the lack of opportunities in the border areas at the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.*

<sup>18</sup> *Giustozzi (2008, p. 13 and 147-157) warns about the spread of informatisation in the operation of insurgents. They make wide use of modern means of communication, such as cameras, video footages, DVDs and internet. Some insurgent commanders at the level of county commanders are, since 2005, equipped with laptops in those areas that have practically no electricity. There are also great changes in the way of attacking coalition forces. In the beginning of 2009, the largest British base in the Helmand province in the south of Afghanistan, the location of the fiercest combats between the coalition forces and insurgents, experienced an indirect rocket attack: insurgents brought trucks with rockets installed on them to the wider area of the base. They then deserted these improvised weapon systems and activated the rockets from a safe distance. The insurgents used 107 mm Type 63 rockets. The NATO base in the Qandahar province has also been a frequent target of rocket attacks in the last four and a half years. NATO has never succeeded in eliminating the constant threat (Ripley, 2009, p. 5). Insurgents, as emphasized by Clements (2009, p. 5), resort more frequently to attacking NATO's supply capabilities outside Afghanistan - in December 2008, in Peshawar, Pakistan, two terminals were attacked within two days and more than 140 trucks with supplies for the coalition forces in Afghanistan were destroyed altogether. The number of attacks on NATO convoys in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province has generally increased in the past months (ibid.).*

<sup>19</sup> *The Talibs are trying to win the inhabitants of the areas in which they are active, for example by building schools, hospitals etc. (Giustozzi, 2008, p. 111).*

the officers' assembly and the soldiers also include the Hazaras and the Uzbeks (Giustozzi, 2008, p. 187, CIA, 2009).

Afghanistan, almost seven years after the overthrow of the Talib government in Kabul, remains the largest world "exporter" of opium, although the international community is striving to suppress opium production. The production of opium is present especially in those areas where the security situation is bad – as much as 98 percent of Afghan poppy is produced in the east and south of the country, two thirds in the Helmand province, the location of the fiercest combats.<sup>20</sup> However, there are also several positive elements which need to be exposed: according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the opium production in 2008 decreased by 20 percent compared to the previous year, while the number of provinces which do not produce opium increased from 13 to 18 (Afghanistan has 34 provinces). The decrease in the opium production is thought to be the result of several related elements, namely the political pressure, development assistance and drought (Wright, 2009).

Poor economic situation, precarious conditions and a high level of corruption also influence the investors' trust. Foreign direct investments in Afghanistan remain relatively modest but the situation is slowly improving. In 2004, foreign direct investments totalled nearly 190 million American dollars; the number increased to 273 million dollars the following year and fell back to 242 million American dollars in 2005. In 2007, these investments slightly exceeded the level from 2005, totalling 288 million dollars. Afghanistan did not invest in foreign markets (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2008, p. 1, International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2008, p. 304).

One of the important indicators of the post-war stabilisation is the number of refugees returning to their homes. According to the data of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, almost five million Afghan people returned to their homes from January 1, 2002, to December 31, 2007. This is the biggest return since the data on refugees is being recorded. It is encouraging to know that refugees are still returning today, although to a smaller extent (Roberts, 2009, p. 43).<sup>21</sup>

It is also positive that schools are attended by more children than in the past. 6 million children are being schooled, of whom 30 percent are women. However, schooling is mostly present in the relatively peaceful north in west of the country. 85 percent of the population has access to medical services; in 2002, this number was below 10 percent. The number of media has increased as well; Afghanistan has more than 60 radio stations, 15 television networks and many printed media (International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2008, p. 304).

<sup>20</sup> 157.000 hectares of cultivated area is designed for poppy production (Wright, 2009, p. 38).

<sup>21</sup> It has to be stated that not all refugees returned voluntarily. Some host countries indirectly forced people to return. Also, at the return of refugees from abroad, internal emigration continues due to violence (Roberts, 2009, p. 43).

When planning the strategy for fighting against insurgents, one has to be familiar with the opponent's power. NATO faces a problem here because the opponent's power is hard to determine, particularly due to the fact that there are many "occasional militants" who only fight in case an operation against the coalition forces is taking place in the vicinity of their homes. In 2004, the US estimated that the hard-core militants of the opposite side only number approximately one thousand men, but this number increased with years (from 2.000 to 3.000 in 2004, from 3.000 to 4.000 in 2006). The UN gave much higher numbers: approximately 6.000 insurgents were supposed to be engaged in combats in the south alone. Based on these estimates and some other sources, Giustozzi (2008, p. 34-35) assesses that in 2006 the number of Talibs and their allies in the fight against the coalition forces totalled approximately 17.000 men, of whom 6.000 to 10.000 were constantly active. These estimates do not include the 40.000 Talibs in Pakistan for whom the Afghanistan-Pakistan border signifies an artificial formation and who pass over the border and fight in Afghanistan.

Numerous analysts (Roberts, 2009, p. 52, Synnott, 2009, Vendrell, 2008) and politicians, including American president Barack Obama (Reid, Hussain, 2009), thus see the key to at least partial stabilisation of Afghanistan in the neighbouring Pakistan because the porous border enables the insurgents to pass over without any trouble – the insurgents train in Pakistan and fight against the coalition forces in Afghanistan. The situation in the Pakistan provinces on the border with Afghanistan, otherwise known for their secessionist tendencies, was so unbearable for the Pakistan government from the point of view of security that it complied with the enactment of the Sheriatic law. Time will show what consequences this will have on the future stabilisation of Afghanistan. Many in the west, including NATO and the US, officially criticised the enactment of the Sheriatic law in some parts of the Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province; however, according to some information, even the American government or the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton quietly agreed to the enactment, as this move would set the religious communities of various nationalities in this province at variance (Nelson, Siddiq and Khan, 2009). Giustozzi (2008, p. 25-26) also warns of a strong likelihood of an eventual double role of the Pakistan's Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) which not only supplies insurgents with intelligence but possibly also with weapons.

It has turned out that partial analysis of merely certain aspects of internal security considers both positive and negative indicators and it is therefore difficult to form a comprehensive assessment of the security situation in Afghanistan: some issues have improved, others have deteriorated. Although this can be scientifically questionable, it is sometimes necessary to rely on common sense and the experience of those who have lived in a country for some time and have a better understanding of it, and not on dry "facts" alone, which are often also methodologically questionable. The authors are citing the opinion of Rory Stewart who researched Afghanistan in 2002 and later, after he had retired from British diplomacy, began leading a humanitarian organisation. Stewart (Roberts, 2009, p. 45) states that people should focus less on

investing and more on what they are able to do. He is especially critical of increasing the number of soldiers because:

»... increasing the number of soldiers would lead to the incitement of the Afghan nationalism, as the Afghan people are more opposed to everything that is foreign than we acknowledge, while the support to our presence /.../ is declining. The Talibs, who were a reactionist and discredited movement, are gaining support by representing themselves as those who fight against foreign military occupation, for Islam and for Afghanistan (*ibid.*).«

Stewart's opinion, which is also shared by other people who are familiar with the situation in Afghanistan, reflects some fundamental, even identity, questions which NATO is now facing: what exactly is the primary mission of this international organisation today? An answer to this question, as well as to the question of NATO's role outside the territory of its members, is given by the Alliance's strategic concepts. NATO is well aware that the Strategic Concept of 1999, which is still valid today, is obsolete because it does not reflect the current situation in international relations. Appeals and discussions of the political and expert public on the nature and contents of a new strategic concept have thus enhanced in recent months.<sup>22</sup>

#### 4 FORMATION OF A NEW NATO STRATEGIC CONCEPT

The new Alliance's strategic concept will be the first such strategic doctrinal NATO document which Slovenia will be able to co-create. Upon entering NATO, Slovenia had to adopt the valid strategic concept, adopted in Washington in 1999. However, as regards the new strategic concept, the Slovenian political leadership, with the support of experts, may and probably must help in its creation, as this primary document of the Alliance, which reflects the Alliance's view of the security environment, will establish NATO's role and mission for at least the next decade.<sup>23</sup> This is a topical subject, especially in light of the fact that the formation of a strategic concept is usually conducted as a two-way process (member states – organisations and vice versa). The new strategic concept will define and possibly hierarchize current security threats to the Euro-Atlantic area and the Alliance. It is thus all the more necessary that Slovenia plays a proactive role in this process.

Already in 2006 did Secretary-General Scheffer call upon and illustrate the formation of a new strategic concept which would redefine NATO operational guidelines. At that time, many saw this appeal as premature (Scheffer, 2008); however,

<sup>22</sup> See, for example, Scheffer (2008), Hutton (2009) etc.

<sup>23</sup> The first strategic concept focused on defending the territory of NATO member states. The mid-1950s emphasized the so called mass retaliation, including nuclear weapons. The Strategic Concept of 1967 introduced the so called **flexible response** which replaced mass retaliation. The Strategic Concept of 1991 emphasized coordination with the former opponents. The today valid Strategic Concept of 1999 includes the commitment to maintain peace in the wider Euro-Atlantic area as well as the commitment to conduct non-Article 5 operations. All strategic concepts adopted so far also consider the nuclear aspect (NATO and Hatfield in Regehr, 2009, p. 6).

such appeals strengthened just before and at the NATO Summit in Strasbourg and Kehl in April 2009.<sup>24</sup> At this Summit, the last point of the Declaration on Alliance Security assigned Secretary-General the official task of starting the preparations for the formation of a new strategic concept (Šinhva, 2009, Declaration on Alliance Security, 2009).<sup>25</sup>

If the question of the Alliance's new strategic concept was perhaps truly premature in 2006, it is today, for various reasons, necessary to adopt a new strategic framework for the operation of NATO:

- the Strategic Concept of 1999 is obsolete and does not reflect certain essential characteristics of the new strategic environment as well as the new security threats;
- NATO requires a clear conceptual framework which will define future planning and operation of the organisation;
- the new security environment (military threats are less exposed, while non-military threats are becoming very extensive: global economic-financial crisis, diseases, poverty etc.) requires quick setting of priorities which will be addressed by the Alliance and determining proper division of labour between international organisations and alliances which ensure international peace and security;
- discussion of NATO's identity crisis has been revived in recent years and the new strategic concept may also offer a new answer to this question.

An outline of the new concept, which was presented at the NATO Defence Ministers Meeting in Krakow in February 2009, but has not been presented to the public yet, contains the following main subjects: fight against international terrorism and related threats, proliferation of nuclear weapons, cyber attacks, climate changes, energy security, other post-modern threats and security challenges (Socor, 2009, Šinhva, 2009). Such a selection of threats to be included in the new strategic concept of the Alliance has also been indirectly verified by the director of the Policy Planning Sector at the Secretary General of NATO, Jamie Shea, in the interview with him (Zupančič, 2009).

It is expected that Afghanistan will be considered a priority in the new strategic concept. Afghanistan may not be defined a priority directly, but the concept will definitely define generic problems present in the country, such as unstable authority, terrorism, the risk of nuclear expansion etc. The next important question that the Alliance will have to find an answer to is relation to the Russian Federation. The

<sup>24</sup> See, for example, Socor (2009), Spiegel Online (2009), Hutton etc.

<sup>25</sup> »... we task the Secretary General to convene and lead a broad-based group of qualified experts who, in close consultation with all Allies, will lay the ground for the Secretary General to develop a new Strategic Concept...« (Declaration on Alliance Security, 2009). This indicates that the process of forming the concept is to be conducted as a two-way process. Shea (Zupančič, 2009) adds that the group of experts will represent both a professional basis and a mediator between the organisation and member states, and that member states will be included in the process of forming a new concept from the very beginning. The group of experts will include experts from different fields; however, an approximate geographic balance will also have to be ensured (not in a way that each member state contributes an expert, but that the group includes experts from the largest member states). The possibility for Slovenia to significantly contribute to the formation of the new document is thus, if the process is really conducted in such a way, very topical.

Georgian-Russian armed conflict in 2008 caused the relations between both actors to weaken. The Russian Federation constantly emphasizes that Georgia and Ukraine membership in NATO is a threat to its national interests and security, but Shea believes that the new strategic concept will repeat the commitment to the openness of the organisation to new members; however, we must not expect a time line (*ibid.*).

Due to the mentioned and many other aspects, the formation of a new strategic concept is a demanding process because it is necessary to find the highest common denominator of all member states of the Alliance whose number increased to 28 countries in April 2009 when Croatia and Albania joined NATO. This means more difficult coordination, as the countries perceive threats differently and the selection of security areas, which the countries would like to include into the strategic concept, will thus be very large: for example, Southern European countries perceive security quite differently (they are traditionally oriented towards the Mediterranean Area or Africa, which is also reflected in their national strategic documents) from the Baltic countries which, almost two decades after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, have still not been able to free themselves from the pressure coming from the east and would especially like the strategic concept to include areas which regard protection against potential threats of the Russian Federation.

The time limit for the preparation of the strategic concept is until the next NATO Summit which is at the end of 2010 in Lisbon. The new concept, as stated by Shea, is expected to reflect three main groups of challenges:<sup>26</sup>

- 1) challenges arising from Article 5 of the Washington Treaty: inclusion of such challenges is particularly important for the Eastern European and Baltic countries as well as Northern countries, as the Russian Federation has been more active in their vicinity recently, for example in the Arctic regions;
- 2) the challenges outlined in the previous concept are still topical: terrorism, disintegrated countries, proliferation of nuclear weapons etc.;
- 3) “new challenges”<sup>27</sup> which have become topical in the last years and need to be included in the agenda of the strategic concept: climate changes, migrations, organised crime, cyber terrorism etc.

NATO, in the new strategic concept, will have to explain what its comparative advantage is in comparison to other organisations. The Alliance does not possess most security instruments and mechanisms which could be defined as the mechanisms or instruments for the provision of the so called *soft security*. NATO should not interfere with areas, such as provision of social and development assistance, integration in the post-conflict society, judicial administration and police tasks, as other organisations, such as the UN, World Bank, European Union and other regional or-

<sup>26</sup> NATO terminology uses the term *challenge* more often than the term *threat*.

<sup>27</sup> The term »new challenges« has to be used conditionally as these are traditional challenges or threats that were present in the past but were not given such attention.

ganisations, are better equipped and trained for the implementation of these tasks.<sup>28</sup> NATO should therefore not be overambitious; ambitions and capabilities should be mutually balanced. In particular, in light of successful provision of international security at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the following fundamental strategic question needs to be answered: which security aspects NATO is able to provide to its members and the wider international community and which aspects would be reasonable to leave to other international organisations (the UN, EU, OSCE; SE...). In a word, NATO's new strategic concept will be operational and only possible to conduct if it is also based on a clear division of labour and plans for coordination and cooperation with other international organisations. In this case, the legitimacy of the existence of NATO and its future operation would be guaranteed.

**Conclusion** Within the analysis of NATO's operation, the resultant operation of Slovenia has exposed the following issues:

**1 The status of ISAF or NATO in Afghanistan:** NATO has set itself a legitimate objective of stabilising Afghanistan, which, however, can only be achieved slowly and gradually, while receiving substantial and constant support of other countries and international organisations. The ISAF mission has gradually formed and increased in number (although several countries removed their troops from Afghanistan during this process!) and expanded its mandate to the entire territory of Afghanistan. NATO is guaranteed international legal support in Afghanistan by the UNSC resolutions or the wish of most of the large countries for stabilisation. Eight years after the fall of the Talib regime there are two operations being conducted simultaneously in Afghanistan: the operation Enduring Freedom under the American command and NATO ISAF forces operation, which sometimes leads to questions of the division of tasks. Larger problems are also brought on by the so called national constraints, as the main proportion of combat operations is conducted by units of only several countries, namely the US, Canada, Britain, Netherlands, Denmark, and partly France, which raises doubts about cohesiveness and commitment of member states to stabilisation. NATO is constantly appealing for larger military contributions and potential withdrawal of national constraints. As many as 42 countries within the ISAF operation are supporting the transformation of Afghanistan into a peacetime society and providing proper legitimacy for the efforts of the entire international community in this country. Legitimacy of the operation is formally not denied by any of the countries in the international community; however, the state-focused view can be misleading in this case, as the main opponent of NATO is no longer an organised country but a more or less organised insurgent movement.

**2 Experience of the Slovenian Armed Forces participating in the ISAF operation:** members of the Slovenian Armed Forces have, by being deployed to Afghanistan,

<sup>28</sup> Shea (Zupančič, 2009) thinks that it is unrealistic to expect the new Strategic Concept to define the development of NATO's civil capabilities, as resistance to this is quite strong in some member states, for example in France. France believes that NATO's primary task is »hard« military defence.

become acquainted with new areas of operation (new cultural and social framework, new geographically conditioned challenges ...) and directly faced with solving one of the biggest challenges adopted by the Alliance. It has been shown that Slovenia, from among the countries with which it is often compared, is among those that contribute fewer soldiers to the ISAF mission, regarding the number of soldiers per inhabitant.<sup>29</sup> Participation in multinational units has brought important experience to numerous members of the Slovenian Armed Forces as well as the institution as a whole. Exchange of experience and learning are opportunities for improvement; however, organisational learning is mostly dependant on whether the Slovenian Armed Forces will know how to transfer knowledge to those members of the Slovenian Armed Forces who are leaving for Afghanistan.

**3 Security situation in Afghanistan:** it has been seen that chances of successful stabilisation and rapid improvement of the security situation in Afghanistan are small, although gradual improvement can be observed in some areas, such as education, return of refugees, partly also in the fight against production of drugs and drug trafficking as well as in the economy, in particular as regards gradual increase of foreign indirect investments. The international actors who participate in these efforts are aware of the fact that the biggest internal challenges in Afghanistan are currently seen in suppression of violence, prevention of corruption, establishment and operation of the judicial system or operation of the current authority as well as enhancement of the police and army, which is one of the key problems of the Afghan society. Many of those who should take responsibility for the security in the country are illiterate, insurgents are also infiltrating into the armed forces, the ethnic structure of the armed forces is highly unbalanced or in favour of the Tajiks etc. In a word, improvement of the security situation is necessary for the stabilisation of Afghanistan as a whole and for the country to start functioning as a trustworthy subject of international relations.

**4 New strategic concept of NATO:** its formation is linked to the experience that NATO is gaining in Afghanistan as well as to the question of mutual relationships between the main actors for the provision of international peace and security. The document in preparation will have to clearly divide and define the mission and the priorities of the Alliance. It should also answer the question of how NATO understands the provision of collective defence and international security in the world which is now also facing new threats which NATO has so far not addressed (climate changes, energy security, protection against cyber attacks).

**5 The changed security paradigm,** which is also reflected in the analysis of NATO's operation in Afghanistan, acquired some new characteristics and emphases at the end of the Cold War. The traditional patterns of conflicts and cooperation are thwarted by the new dynamic of the international security environment, which calls for new definitions of what is considered internal security and what international security, who needs to be protected and how. In this regard, NATO has to establish its legitimacy

<sup>29</sup> *It also needs to be mentioned that the Slovenian Armed Forces participate in several other areas which are perhaps strategically more important for Slovenia (for example Kosovo).*

for the future in three main areas: 1. attainment of unanimity among member states regarding perception, assessment and categorisation of threats; 2. development of proper capabilities, organisation and unanimity of when these capabilities should be used (Grizold, 2006, p. 14); 3. attainment of general international unanimity of the division of labour, cooperation and regular coordination between NATO and other international organisations in the provision of international peace and security. The existence of NATO in the future is dependant on whether member states are able to conduct strategic discussions in the above-mentioned fields among themselves and with the wider international community.

Besides the proposed consideration regarding the operation of Slovenia within NATO and ESDP, the following issues also have to be exposed:

**1 Inclusion in NATO:** by joining NATO in 2004, Slovenia achieved one of its strategic objectives which it set itself at the time of emancipation; the other objective was joining the EU, which was, regarding the provision of security, directly linked to Slovenia's inclusion in NATO. Slovenia travelled a long way to join NATO. In 1994 it joined the Partnership for Peace programme, then NATO Defence Planning Committee in 2003, and gained full NATO membership in 2004. By joining NATO, Slovenian national security acquired new and modified dimensions as well as new challenges – one of the more important ones became the stabilisation of Afghanistan. In the modern international environment the security of an individual country finally became part of international security and the role of Slovenian national security, regarding regional and international security, has thus been modified. The new strategic environment considers Slovenia first as part of the Euro-Atlantic and at the same time the wider international security, which brings not only advantages but also responsibilities for the accomplishment of common goals. This involves, in particular, the political-security role and recognisability of Slovenia in Europe and the world as well as the possibility of cooperation and participation in decision-making on an equal rights basis regarding matters that shape the wider international environment. Slovenia can either be merely a passive observer and executor of common security policy of NATO or a partner who runs a proactive policy and pursues own capabilities, knowledge, experience and interests. So far, Slovenia has, also in the case of Afghanistan, mostly joined the efforts of the Alliance, whenever the initiative came, and not engaged so much in co-creating an active policy.

**2 Slovenia's operation in NATO and the EU:** even a superficial analysis of Slovenia's operation within NATO in the last five years shows that the country has mostly performed the roles of an observer and executor, but played a much smaller part in actively helping to shape the security policy of NATO and the EU. Let us refer to two specific examples to illustrate this general statement. *The first case* points to a lack of commitment and activity of Slovenia within the security policy of NATO and the EU. The accession process for EU and NATO membership showed a common interest of Slovenia, the EU and NATO for Slovenia, as a South Eastern European country, to especially engage in efforts for the enhancement of stabilisation

and association processes in South Eastern Europe and for the shaping and implementing of specific measures and solutions. Slovenia, as a member of the EU and NATO, was expected to play an active role of a mediator, explainer and contributor to better understanding of the situation and finding of proper solutions for the stabilisation of the situation in South Eastern Europe and particularly in the area of the so called Western Balkans (Rupel 2004, p. 22-24). Various indicators of the present situation and previous solving of a complex situation in the mentioned area, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in Kosovo and Macedonia, as well as indicators of Slovenian economic, cultural, scientific and similar presence or engagement in this area point to the conclusion that Slovenia, in the last five years of operating within the EU and NATO, has not realised the afore-mentioned expectations of both organisations and own interest in this matter. It is not too late, however. Now that the situation in the above-mentioned areas is slowly improving, Slovenia can also contribute to stabilisation in a different way. Its assistance in Afghanistan can be carried out not only by military operation but also by contributions of civil experts, which may also help Slovenia enhance its international recognisability and reputation.

*The second case* clearly shows that Slovenian standpoint and solutions can be put forward within the EU and NATO if, at the government level, there exists a clear and coordinated concept of national interests on the matter of what is important and good for Slovenia. Slovenia clearly strived for such a concept during the accession process and immediately after joining the EU and NATO. The cooperation of the EU and NATO in the area of defence and security is based on the principles of reciprocity and not on duplication of their military and defence capabilities. Slovenia, during the process of integration into these two organisations, pursued the policy of organising its military and defence capabilities in a way that will enable its credible cooperation in both organisations. In this context, Slovenia did not provide for the development of special military and defence forces for each of the organisations.

**3 Strategic priorities of Slovenia:** Within NATO and the EU, Slovenia has so far pursued a proactive policy of cooperating in peacekeeping operations, which was mostly based on two starting points. *First*, the strategic security area of interest to Slovenia is South Eastern Europe. It was estimated that security and stability of this area are key elements for the provision of political, military and defence, economic, cultural and other relations with the countries in this area as well as for the maintenance of communication and supply relationships and for the prevention of potential threats coming from this area. *Second*, Slovenian contribution to common security and defence policies of the EU and NATO in this area should be the most important, particularly due to Slovenia's geostrategic position, knowledge of history, culture, language and situation in the area of South Eastern Europe. The climax of Slovenian efforts was Slovenia's participation in the political preparation and execution of transferring NATO's peacekeeping operation (SFOR) to the EU (EUFOR). The EU's assumption of the leading role in the peacekeeping operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina signified an important incentive for future development of a common

EU security and defence policy and for the development of cooperation between the EU and NATO in the area of security and defence.

The new reality of the Euro-Atlantic framework demands that Slovenia have clearly defined standpoints, views and interests regarding various questions within the EU, NATO and the world. A synthesis of such a subject matter is usually formed within a country's political strategy which is implemented by state and non-state institutions and individuals. The basic condition for the implementation of active and internally coordinated foreign and security policies of Slovenia is the establishment of a comprehensive institutional framework for their permanent cooperation and coordination within government sectors, between the government and the National Assembly, the National Council and justice administration, and between national authorities and the civil society. Slovenia is still to establish such a consistent institutional framework. Also, if it wishes to function as a credible international actor, Slovenia needs to conduct a comprehensive public, expert and political discussion of the position, role and operation of Slovenia within NATO and the EU.

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