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Dilemmas of Polish Foreign/Security Policy in the context of EU and NATO Eastward Enlargement

From Poland's point of view one of the fundamental questions regarding political implications of the EU and NATO Eastward enlargement is to what degree it is going to influence Polish foreign and security policy?

Any consideration of the issue should start from an analysis of evolution of the very notion of security. This very broad issue has been thoroughly studied and presented in literature.¹ It is also well known to political decision-makers, so it should be sufficient here to remind just in outline that the past decade has brought a number of essential and far-reaching changes in this area.

1. New notion of European security

The collapse of the communist rule in Europe at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s implied the concurrent breakdown of the hitherto existing Cold War balance of power that was based on confrontation between the USSR and its satellites on the one side and the USA with their allies on the other. This pattern,

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¹ Bigo D., *When two become one. Internal and external securitisations in Europe* in: Kelstrup M., Williams M.C. (eds.), *International Relations Theory and the Politics of European Integration. Power, security and community*, London-New York 2000; Bobrow D.B., Halizak E., Zięba R., (eds.), *Bezpieczeństwo narodowe i międzynarodowe u schyłku XX wieku (National and International Security at the End of the 20th Century)*, Warsaw 1997; Czaputowicz J., *System czy nieład? Bezpieczeństwo europejskie u progu XXI wieku (A System or a Disorder? European Security at the Turn of 21st Century)*, Warsaw 1998; Stańczyk J., *Przeobrażenia międzynarodowego układu sił w Europie na przełomie lat osiemdziesiątych i dziewięćdziesiątych. Analiza uwarunkowań i mechanizmów w kontekście bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego (Transformations in the International Balance of Power in Europe at the Turn of the Eighties and Nineties. An Analysis of Conditions and Mechanisms in the Context of International Security)*, Warsaw 1999.

founded on what may be called “the balance of fear” was potentially threatening yet at the same time relatively stable as it succeeded in ensuring – despite all its faults – over half a century of peace in Europe. The new arrangement, on the other hand, is plainly a unipolar one, with an overwhelming predominance of the United States; it also features a new understanding of the very notion of security.

Security, in this context, involves much more than just a military aspect, as it also includes other preconditions, such as social, economic, environmental and other ones.² Accordingly, there have been five so-called security sectors distinguished in literature, namely the military, political, economic, cultural and ecological one.³ This means that the scope of the notion of security has evolved to become regarded in a very broad manner. Furthermore, its scope is not limited just to territories and protection of interests of individual countries, but it covers regional or global arrangements of political, economic and military powers present at an international level as well.

This also means that military potential itself has no longer been perceived as the key factor ensuring security of the actors of international relations. A parallel change has occurred in the scope of most serious threats for international security. During the period of block-to-block confrontation such threats resolved themselves to the danger of outburst of global military conflict (soon to become a nuclear war, as generally feared at that time), while the number of threats we nowadays have to deal with is much larger, including several types of local or regional tensions, conflicts or ignition points. Such threats may contribute to general destabilisation of international *status quo*, but they may also result in a use of weapon of mass destruction – admittedly, not just by the countries as such but by any type of extremist organisations as well. Other types of threats arise from activities of international terrorism and organised crime, as well as from the so-called humanitarian disasters in the form of great migrations of refugees, famine, destruction and so on. They may be caused by armed conflicts but also by natural calamities (floods, earthquakes, etc) or by acts of man, especially in the form of contamination of environment on a large scale.

The effect of the above-outlined transformations, in relation to Europe, is that what we deal with at present is but a transitional situation, as the past system no longer works and the new one isn't fully developed yet. It is still at a formation stage, *in statu nascendi*. One should nevertheless point out that its basic components are already in place and working. This way, what we are experiencing in the present Europe is not a political and military vacuum, since the Western democracy – the true winner in the past rivalry between the systems

² Kukułka J. (ed.), *Bezpieczeństwo międzynarodowe w Europie Środkowej po zimnej wojnie* (International Security in Central Europe following the Cold War), Warsaw 1994.

³ Czaputowicz J., *System czy nieład? Bezpieczeństwo europejskie u progu XXI wieku* (A System or a Disorder? European Security at the Turn of 21st Century), Warsaw 1998, p.7-8.

– has an efficient and well-proven defence system at hand. This system, however, has developed under different conditions to suit different set of aims, so that today it requires far-reaching reform to adapt it to new requirements of the present day.

As seen from the point of view of the aim to ensure Pan-European security, including that of Poland and other Central European countries, full integration of the whole Europe seems to be the only reasonable solution.⁴ According to the extended concept of security, it should cover all the areas: those of politics, defence, economy as well as social and cultural issues, etc. In this sense the Eastward enlargement of European and Euro-Atlantic integration structures: namely, of the European Union and NATO, is best suited to vital interests of all the interested European countries.

One should firmly stress, in this context, the fact that this enlargement is going to be of advantage to Europe as the whole rather than just to those Central-European countries that are directly interested.⁵ Benefits to accrue therefrom are too many to mention; below we only focus on some of them.

Looking from perspective of Central Europe, one of those benefits consists in final departure from the “grey zone” in which countries of the region have previously stayed, as well as averting, for the first time in the last couple of centuries, the threat for Central Europe of being “suffocated” from either side by Russia and Germany. This way, Central European countries have earned an opportunity to acquire stable and solid guarantees of their political and military security as well as of economic and social development, necessary to carry on the process of systemic reforms within the general scope of their post-communist transformation. Moreover, the same will contribute to elimination of their backwardness in general terms of civilisation, rooted deeply in the past, not just in the last half a century but in certain cases reaching as far as several centuries back.

Building the united Europe ranging „from the Atlantic to the Ural” (as once advocated by General Charles de Gaulle) is also in the interest of Western Europe, since full integration of Central Europe is going to bring on a number of benefits, including, among other things, final elimination of an unnatural division of the continent followed by creation of a wholly consistent organism

⁴ Brzeziński Z., *Wielka szachownica. Główne cele polityki amerykańskiej (The Grand Chequer. Main Objectives of the U.S. Politics)*, Warsaw 1998; Kuźniar R., *Geostrategiczne uwarunkowania bezpieczeństwa Polski (Geostrategic Implications of Poland's Security)*, “Sprawy Międzynarodowe”, no. 1/1993.

⁵ Friis L., *An ever larger Union, EU enlargement and European integration. Anthology*, Danish Institute of International Affairs, Copenhagen 1999; Inotai A., *Political, economic and social arguments for and against EU enlargement. A survey of the influence pressure groups*, Institute for World Economics, Budapest 1999.

with an enormous sales market for products from the European Union and, on a long-term time scale, significant extension of the EU's economic potential. This last aspect has quite often been either underrated or even neglected by those criticising the European Union's Eastward enlargement, who were mainly focused on pointing out costs of the process thus failing to take undeniable benefits to accrue for the present "Fifteen" into account. Furthermore, one should expect an important extension of defensive structures and of the Eastern border of both NATO and the whole European security system to include new territories. This is going to raise considerably and objectively the level of Western Europe's safety – the factor unjustly disregarded by the opponents of NATO enlargement – and affords NATO much larger scope and freedom to act. As the whole, the process will result in extension of the European area of democracy, welfare and stability, in line with interests of the whole Western world, something very important especially if we consider persistence of sources of tension and conflicts in Europe itself (including, in particular, Balkan countries) and in territories adjacent to the continent (such as Maghreb and Near East).

Both the EU and NATO Eastward enlargement should result in adoption of the model of security which could be called Euro-Atlantic one. This model would consist in establishment of an even closer co-operation among both existing and planned structures of EU and NATO (such as, for instance, the Rapid Deployment Forces of both the EU and NATO, approved during respective summits in Helsinki in 1999 and in Prague in 2002.) Although these model can already be regarded as largely united, yet it should be remembered that they have been basing upon different assumptions and that they aims have been different as well. For example the European Union has sought to develop its own defence component, which, although related to NATO, should also enjoy a large degree of autonomy with respect to the latter one. Besides, some EU Member States have remained beyond NATO structure.

Adoption of the Euro-Atlantic model is equivalent with either rejection of the former model of collective security assuming establishment of common structures such as OSCE altogether, or at least taking on a reserved attitude towards it. While this organisation has certainly played a vital and beneficial role in our continent and it still does, nevertheless, due to a number of reasons (including its limited scope of competence and a threat of being dominated by Russia) it cannot be seen as both an efficient and sufficient security system for the whole continent.⁶

As clearly shown both by debate that has taken place for quite a long time and by specific plans and political efforts, the adoption of Euro-Atlantic model,

⁶ Zięba R., *Funkcjonowanie paneuropejskiego systemu bezpieczeństwa KBWE/OBWE (Operation of the Pan-European Security System of CSCE/OSCE)*, "Studia Europejskie", no. 3/1998.

while quite far from being an easy task, should nevertheless be seen as an entirely feasible one. It is necessary in the first place to have a clean-cut concept of the ultimate form, role and tasks of NATO in Europe, accepted by all the allies, since an area of serious disagreement still seems to persist between the United States (playing the pivotal role in NATO) and their European partners. This is closely related to a broad scope of issues (which have also involved some transatlantic dispute in their own right) regarding both the formula and the level of development of components of European defence structures.⁷

It used to be believed during the 1990s that those components were going to be centred around the re-vitalised Western European Union as the core structure. After a period of coma lasting for several dozens of years WEU was expected, according to provisions of the Treaty of Maastricht, to be activated once again and to stand up to a couple of important roles as an „armed component” of the European Union and the „European pillar” of NATO at the same time. There was, however, a deal of controversy in such a stipulation itself (for what about the EU Member States which have not been NATO members at the same time?), and then, coupled with other political and military limitations, the WEU lost its very reason of existence, as subsequently confirmed by stipulations of the Treaty of Nice.⁸

Considering this, an unavoidable question arises regarding the issue of operation of the so-called “second pillar” of the European Union, namely that of Common Foreign and Security Policy, which is complemented by Common European Security and Defence Policy.⁹ Its further development will depend, among other things, on solutions to be reached to the above-mentioned dilemmas, as well as on the EU Member States’ readiness and will to speak

⁷ Gompert D.C., Larrabee F.S. (eds.), *America and Europe. A partnership for a new era*, Cambridge 1997; Jean C., *Changing Interests and Inter-Institutional Relations in Europe and NATO* in: Foster E., Wilson G. (eds.), *CJTF – A Lifeline for a European Defence Policy?*, ed. Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, London 1997; Milczarek D., *Zagadnienia bezpieczeństwa w stosunkach Unia Europejska - Stany Zjednoczone: partnerstwo czy rywalizacja?* (*Issues of Security in European Union–United States Relations*), “*Studia Europejskie*”, no. 1/1999; Vassort-Rousset B., *Les Etats Unies face à la sécurité et de la défense européenne*, “*Cahier de CEDSP*”, no. 20/1997.

⁸ Gryz J., *Unia Zachodnioeuropejska a NATO, UE i OBWE (Western European Union and NATO, EU and OSCE)*, Toruń 1996; Plantin M.-C., *Le résistible approfondissement de l’UEO*, “*Cahier de CEDSP*”, no. 18/1997.

⁹ Duke S., *The Elusive Quest for European Security. From EDC to CFSP*, Basingstoke-London 2000; Parzymies S., *Wspólna Europejska Polityka Bezpieczeństwa i Obrony, (Common European Security and Defence Policy)*, “*Stosunki Międzynarodowe*”, no.1-2/2000; Peterson J., Sijrsen H. (eds.), *A Common Foreign Policy for Europe? Competing Visions of the CFSP*, London-New York 1998; Regelsberger E. et al. (eds.), *Foreign Policy of the European Union. From EPC to CFSP and Beyond*, London 1997; Starzyk J., *Wspólna Polityka Zagraniczna i Bezpieczeństwa Unii Europejskiej (The European Union’s Common Foreign and Security Policy)*, Warsaw 2001.

univocally on the international forum and to win larger political and military independence, also in the framework of the European Security and Defence Identity concept. The occurrence of positive tendencies in this respect was confirmed by some stipulations of the Treaty of Amsterdam (such as those appointing the position of the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy) or decisions made during the subsequent EU summits, including the above-mentioned decision of Helsinki on the establishment of European Rapid Deployment Force.¹⁰

In this context also the adoption, first by the Western European Union and at present also officially by the European Union, of the so-called Petersberg missions was the fact of primary importance. Their adoption should be seen as an evidence of a new understanding of the issue of security, since their main tasks focus around counteracting all the previously-discussed new types of threats experienced in the context of European security. Therefore, Petersberg missions aim at taking on any such efforts, supported by both political and military measures, as appropriate for reaching a broad number of aims, from either preventing or extinguishing local conflicts, through fighting pathological tendencies on a supra-national scale, to carrying on various types of humanitarian and emergency actions. The NATO alliance has adopted similarly extended scope of activities, going as far as to foresee the possibility of reaching, to that end, even beyond its strictly geographic range of operation.

With respect to those problems one should question attitudes that may be observed in the Western Europe, which spread about fears that enlargement of the Euro-Atlantic integration structures towards the East involves the danger of them being paralysed. This would allegedly happen due to inclusion thereto of an excessive number of members (with also a deal of doubt as to their full efficiency or reliability), clogging of decision-making procedures, financial problems and so on.¹¹ Such fears are entirely unjustified, since, as everything seems to suggest, the new members could significantly contribute to both the reform of the enlarged NATO and to development of common foreign and defensive policy of the European Union.¹² The latter scenario is additionally justified by the fact that in the field of approval of political and defensive aspects of NATO and EU membership a valid social consensus has been reached in the

¹⁰ Missiroli A., *CFSP, Defense and Flexibility*, "Chaillot Papers", no. 38/2000, Institute for Security Studies, WEU, Paris; Parzymies S., *Europejska Tożsamość Bezpieczeństwa i Obrony: mit czy rzeczywistość? (The European Identity of Security and Defence: a myth or reality?)*, "Sprawy Międzynarodowe", no. 2/1999; Puig L.M., *The European Security and Defence Identity within NATO*, "NATO Review", no. 2/1998.

¹¹ Kay S., 1997, *The 'New NATO' and the Enlargement Process*, "European Security", Winter.

¹² Parzymies S., *Unia Europejska a Europa Środkowa. Polityczne aspekty współpracy (The European Union and Central Europe. Political aspects of co-operation)*, Warsaw 1997.

all the countries of our region and most notably in Poland – the most important country in this respect.¹³

At this stage it seems quite tricky to try to describe either the final form or particular functional and organisational solutions the postulated Euro-Atlantic security model. The issue depends on a lot of factors, both substantial and subjective, with only a part of them being susceptible to forecasts. In a more self-restricted and reasonable attitude it only seems possible to draw up some “outline conditions”, through implementation of which it would be possible to develop such a model and make it work.

Considering such outline conditions, meeting of the above-mentioned postulate regarding adoption of final concepts and strategies of operation of the already-existing EU and NATO structures, fully agreed upon and approved by all the partners, appears to be the first and forefront issue. This would have been an indispensable condition since new strategies would have to assume either final levelling or at least minimising the basic differences that persist, on the one hand, among the European allies themselves and, on the other, between Europe and the USA. Unless this condition is met, any debate on development of principles of common security system, acceptable to all the parties, seems just pointless. The very issue of acceptability is also the most difficult one since one has to consider divergences in the way their fundamental interests are understood by individual actors of international relations (such as the USA, the EU Member States or the EU regarded as the whole), as well as differences regarding their basic strategic and political concepts.

Eastward enlargement of both the European Union and NATO results in a number of implications. Apart from being a source of a number of the above-mentioned undeniable political and economic benefits it should also contribute to general reinforcement of a pan-European security system. However, there have been some phenomena and tendencies in this area that may negatively affect the system efficiency, including disadvantageous influence upon Poland's foreign and security policy, and as such, they should not be overlooked.

Before we describe such threats in more detail, their broader political and military context should be outlined. The importance of adoption, by the European Union and NATO, of a new attitude towards the issues of security stems from the fact that such an attitude should definitely feature a clear continuity in the field of drawing up both a catalogue of imminent threats itself and, as an answer thereto, political and military concepts to identify those threats and to suggest ways and means to eliminate them.

¹³ According to the outcomes of public poll made by OBOP (The Centre for Public Opinion Research) in January 1997, support for Poland's accession to NATO was declared by as many as 90 per cent (!) of Poles.

There seems to be an ample body of argument that this catalogue, put together in the early 1990s, has undergone no major change as a result of the events of 11 September 2001. Contrary to what was pronounced in widely-publicised and sometimes excessively frantic and exaggerated opinions, no fundamental revolution seems to have taken place in the way the very notion of international security is conceived, or in other area, such as a shift in general balance of power on the global scale or an attitude towards the principle of the countries sovereignty, etc. The terrorist attacks against the United States certainly have to be seen as very serious, yet no more than just another stage in terrorist fight which, as should be remembered, has been the fact to reckon with for dozens of years now, manifesting itself in a number of ways and aimed by various extremist forces against the USA and the whole Western world.¹⁴ Seen this way, the 11th September brought no qualitative change. What was really unprecedented and seemed to be the turning point was the fact that the events of that day not only directly triggered firm and resolute measures being taken by the United States, but also became a catalyst for a change in American relations with their European allies.

2. Transatlantic relationship as a key factor

This way we arrive to the argument that evolution in transatlantic relation has become of the key factor to influence both the present shape and the future progress of the system of security in the whole Europe, including, in particular, foreign/security policy of Poland.

This statement certainly needs justification. To begin with, it should be remembered that NATO seems to be troubled by a number of inner contradictions that can be observed in several areas. The most serious problem involves the need to define its character and aims anew. It has to be resolved whether it should remain just a political and military alliance or should its formula be extended to include a broader scope of political matters and provide for a closer co-operation with other actors of international relations (such as Russia, for instance). Secondly, the issue of a new strategic doctrine hasn't been fully clarified, since its extension to include new tasks such as Petersberg missions doesn't seem to suffice for a new concept, well-suited to requirements adapted of the post-cold war era, to be defined.

Generally speaking, NATO obviously finds its place in the new architecture of European security which – while still under development – has relied upon an updated understanding of the very notion of security, but the process is far from being simple. Beside some indisputable success, such as resolution of dilemmas

¹⁴ One could remind frequent case of airplane kidnapping that have happened since the 1960s or bomb outrages during the 1980s and 1990s in France, United Kingdom or Japan, and so on.

behind its Eastward enlargements (this of 1977 and that of 2003), quite a deal of hesitation can also be observed. The latter regards, among other things, NATO's attitude towards Russia (whose potential inclusion into the alliance decision-making structures may lead to them being paralysed) or, in particular, aspiration of those members of the alliance, who have at the same time been the EU Member States, to tend in more or less determined manner to develop their own and independent defensive potential.

NATO seems to be out of necessity involved in such processes taking place in the EU, which is quite natural if we take into account that the Common Foreign and Defensive Policy of the Union has assumed close-co-operation with NATO from the very beginning, despite its aspiration towards a degree of autonomy and neither one of the concepts in this field, mentioned above, differs much in this respect. In spite of that NATO's attitude towards such European initiatives has always been ambiguous and, to a considerable degree, so it remains. This seems to stem from the fact, that, quite obviously, the principal role within the frame of the alliance goes to the United States which, no matter how much policies of subsequent Washington administrations wander about in details, invariably tend to keep their pivotal position of the principal power to ensure Europe's security.

This way we're back to the central issue, already mentioned above: that of the importance of transatlantic relations in the field of European foreign/security policy.¹⁵ Any further progress in that matter is going to depend on clear answers being given to the following questions:

1. Which forms both organisational and doctrinal formula of NATO (as the main guarantor for security of Europe and of Poland) are likely to take? A number of scenarios seem relevant here: ranging from an optimistic vision, assuming significant reinforcement of political and military structures, to a thoroughly pessimistic one: that of the alliance "washing away" in excessive, overbuilt political co-operation with non-members (such as Russia or Ukraine), with an inherent threat of it becoming another inefficient „OSCE-clone”.

2. To which results the European Union's efforts (aiming at development of a truly efficient common foreign and defensive policy, and, in the future, also of a common defence) will lead?¹⁶ The presently adopted formula of Petersberg missions (with all respect due to its justification) is certainly does not suffice, even if supported with particular activities to improve their effectiveness, such as making decision on establishment of European Rapid Deployment Force.

¹⁵ Milczarek D., *Zagadnienia bezpieczeństwa w stosunkach Unia Europejska – Stany Zjednoczone: partnerstwo czy rywalizacja?* (*Issues of Security in European Union–United States Relations*), „*Studia Europejskie*”, no. 1/1999.

¹⁶ It should be reminded that the possibility of transforming the Union's defense policy into common defence was already foreseen in the Treaty of Maastricht.

Also in this area several scenarios are possible, from the Union providing itself with an efficient military potential putting it in position to play the role of a true power (or even as much as the world's second largest superpower) through freezing the present *status quo* and contenting itself with a role of a kind of "civilian power". The latter concept assumes that in order to play a significant role globally it is sufficient to have appropriate diplomatic and economic tools at hand, enabling one, among other things, to promote democratic values and to provide economic aid as well as to satisfy interests of the EU and its Member States. To this aim possession of military potential is not required or even inadvisable.¹⁷

Taking both the above-mentioned factors into account it adds up to confirm the statement that ultimately the future shape of European security will depend, to a considerable degree, on the actual state of relations between the European Union and the United States, seen in a broad political context. As a result of the imminent Eastward enlargement of both the EU and NATO vast majority of countries of the continent will belong to a couple of security-oriented structures made up, together or apart, by the most important allies and partners: in the form of NATO (*de facto* subordinated to the USA) and of the European Union's common foreign and defensive policy. The mutual relationship of both structures can be described in terms of concurrent existence of elements of rivalry and co-operation.

It has to be reminded, since, that the European Communities and the United States have been involved, for the past dozens of years, in a dense and complex network of various relationships, being, at the same time, both rivals and closest allies to each other. Apart from the fact that they have also been each other's most important economic partners, they have mutually played, in the political area, the role that cannot be overestimated. As evidenced by modern history, the United States have filled, for over the half of the last century, the role of the main guarantor of security of the unifying Europe, while Europe, in its turn, has been America's most natural ally having an enormous strategic importance for it. Considering the whole interplay of mutual relationship, one should not regard the mutual power arrangement taking place between the USA and the EU just as a "zero-sum game" in which one player either wins at the cost of another, or, worse still, tends to dominate over it.

Yet nevertheless we still have to deal, both in doctrinal perspective and in political practice, with what seems to be a fundamental difference in the way foreign and security policy is conceived and implemented by both partners;¹⁸ the

¹⁷ Stavridis S., *Why the 'Militarising' of the European Union is Strengthening the Concept of a Civilian Power Europe*, EUI Working Papers no. 2001/17, San Domenico 2001.

¹⁸ One should remember, in this respect, about the difference between possibilities to carry on an efficient foreign policy by a single power, such as the United States, and by the European

difference that – it needs emphasising once again – may influence the future options of Europe's and Poland's foreign/security policies to a very serious degree.

Looking at things this way one can observe the fundamental difference between not just the style but the very essence of the EU's external policy and the foreign policy of the United States. Leaving the complex issues of transatlantic relations aside,¹⁹ it should be pointed out that while activities of the EU – with any potential accusations regarding their inefficiency admitted – in principle fit into the canon of international political correctness, the same could hardly be said about actions of the US diplomacy. While steering clear of coarse anti-Americanism, it should nevertheless be observed that according to opinions uttered even by Americans, the Washington administrations tend to draw a dividing line across the world, „*separate the good and the evil, the enemy and the friend, while in the picture the Europeans prove capable of perceiving there is more shade and nuance. While confronting an opponent the Americans prefer force to persuasion, a policy of sanctions rather than that of encouraging others to take the right way*”. Europeans, on the other hand, „*attempt to influence others in an indirect, more subtle way (...), they usually choose peaceful solutions, favour negotiation over compulsion*”.²⁰ There certainly is a deal of cliché in such a reasoning, yet it also seems to hit the point.

What we see are actually two different types of political philosophy: the more severe American and the milder European one. In literature they have been addressed as “economic containment” in relation to the US policy, with reference to once famous cold war period doctrine, and “interdependence” to describe European attitude.²¹ “Asphyxiation” and “oxygen” have been another pair of terms to describe those policies.²² This is also closely related to the distinguished categories of hard power (as policy exerting different types of

Union which is a international structure consisting of sovereign states and only now struggling to develop a formula of its foreign policy which in most cases ends up as a compromise between the Community interest and the interests of its Member States.

¹⁹ Jarczewska-Romaniuk A., *Unia Europejska a idea transatlantycka – partnerstwo transatlantyckie u progu nowego wieku (The European Union and the Trans-Atlantic Concept – Transatlantic Partnership at the Turn of a New Century)* in: E.Haliżak, S.Parzymies (eds.), *Unia Europejska nowy typ wspólnoty międzynarodowej (The European Union – A New Type of International Community)*, Warsaw 2001.

²⁰ Kagan R., *Kowboje i barmani (Cowboys and Bartenders)*, “Gazeta Wyborcza”, 17-18.07.2002.

²¹ Zielonka J., *Introduction: Eastern Europe in Transition* in: Bertsch G.K., Vogel H., Zielonka J. (eds.), *After the Revolution. East-West Trade and Technology Transfer in the 1990s*, Boulder 1991.

²² Lavin F.L., *Asphyxiation or Oxygen? The Sanctions Dilemma*, “Foreign Policy”, Fall 1996.

pressure, including the use of armed force) and soft power, relying upon conciliatory and peaceful methods.

Seen from perspective of the last half a century, such controversy evident in the area of transatlantic relations have been anything but new since basic beliefs and positions of both partners in several fields of policy, economy of defence have always differed considerably and they still do. It seems, however, that what we face at present is a qualitatively new situation, whose peculiarity is in development of fundamental doctrinal and practical differences in the way foreign policy is both conceived and implemented by the European Union and the United States. The essence of the difference is in quite disparate towards problems of contemporary world. In a very shortened and, unavoidably, simplified approach one could say that (according to the above-outlined Kagan's diagnosis) Americans tend to divide the world into the good and the evil in a kind of Manichaeian way and, at the same time, they clearly prefer resolute actions, basing upon pressure and coercion rather than on persuasion, and, finally, they don't seem to hesitate (as they have manifested a number of times) to use their military power.

Furthermore, there recently seems to appear another peculiarity of the U.S. foreign policy: that of unilateral-bound tendency. Earlier on manifesting itself in political practice, now it has also been reflected in official strategic concepts. Such a one-sided attitude, determined only by desire to secure American interests and security, may be illustrated by the so-called Bush's doctrine, announced in the autumn 2002. According to it, the United States afford themselves the right to assess global situation independently (thus contrary even to position taken by the United Nations or by their allies) and, moreover, to undertake any measures they deem appropriate, including the use of military force against so called rouge countries. Even more importantly, such operations may have preventive nature, therefore hardly fitting into the logic of contemporary international law, whose rules stipulate for sanctions for its infringement, if any, only *ex post* rather than *ex ante*.

All this is in plain contradiction to the attitude represented by the European Union whose politicians tend to look at international problems in a more subtle and multi-dimensional way. They certainly prefer to use persuasion and peaceful solutions using political and economic instruments. (According to the assumptions of the above-mentioned concept of „civilian power”.) The Europeans also firmly advocate multi-lateral activities, preferably under the auspices of the United Nations, or at least such as have undergone consultation and been arranged upon in a broader forum: within NATO, among transatlantic allies or similar way.

The basic differences in questions may well be illustrated with a distinctively different attitude towards one of the basic problems, one that has already reached

global scale: namely, that of international terrorism. Leaving aside the fact that hard reaction of the USA following 11th September 2001 was caused by the direct attack against their territory, it nevertheless is quite clear that transatlantic allies have different visions of solving the problem. Americans, as shown by their armed intervention in Afghanistan and in Iraq, reach for military solutions in the first place, with political measures used only to a lesser degree. Europeans, on the other hand (despite having supported the Washington policy with both official declarations their actual military involvement) would rather have the order of measures the other way round, with potential of political solutions, in particular within the United Nations, preceding any use of military power and the latter one being reserved only to cases of an absolute necessity.²³ It also seems that such a difference stems, to a larger degree, from the above-described different political philosophy adopted by European politicians, and only to a lesser degree from the fact that military potential of the EU Member States is much less significant than the American one, so that Europeans are simply short of sufficient potential to act. Although their combined armed forces are larger in numbers, yet the funds they have spent is hardly more than a half of the U.S. military budget and their capabilities of armed interference globally is rated at only 10-15 per cent of the American potential in this field.²⁴

Such disparities in terms of attitudes towards key international problems seems to have very significant and far-reaching implications also for Europe and specifically for Poland, going much deeper than one may conclude basing on superficial analysis reducing them just to a “family quarrel” within the Western world. While not tempting to draw any catastrophic visions it should be emphasised anyway that in a long-term perspective such divergence implies a threat of some kind of erosion of the transatlantic alliance to which Poland has accessed so recently. Both the USA and the EU have already uttered hard and serious accusations against each other: the Americans charging Europe for its passive behaviour or even cowardice in the face of global threats, while accusations regarding political and military irresponsibility and an urge to play the role of a “global gendarme” have been addressed the other way round.²⁵

To make the issue even more complex, both protagonists of the conflict are partly right, although it seems that the American policy arises a greater deal of

²³ One has to admit, however, that the United Kingdom is a significant exception in this field, as it has always faithfully supported the USA.

²⁴ Milczarek D., *Geopolityczne czynniki kształtujące międzynarodową pozycję Unii Europejskiej: wyznaczniki militarne i społeczne*, (*Geopolitical Factors Behind European Union's International Position*) “*Studia Europejskie*”, no. 1/2001.

²⁵ According to the above-quoted R.Kagan, the Americans have played, globally, the role of a sheriff who actively fights against criminals, while the Europeans not only confine themselves to the role of passive spectators, but sometimes seem to fear the energetic sheriffs more than they do the criminals.

doubts and anxiety. Additionally, one should stress the fact that in cultural and civilisational terms the United States have become more and more remote from their European roots, reinforcing, instead, their links with regions from where main streams of immigrants come to the USA, namely with Latin America and South-Eastern Asia. As a result it is not unlikely that America is going to gradually loose its interest in Europe.

In spite of the above-outlined controversy or even disparities in the area of political philosophy it should be underlined once again that so far the European Union's foreign policy has not become anti-American in any aspect (either in economic relations or in its foreign and security policy) – furthermore, as the analysis of development of the Common Foreign and Security Policy suggests, it has been based upon the transatlantic alliance. Nevertheless, the EU politicians keep on stressing the need to retain a good share of autonomy in relation with their powerful ally. To name one, H.Vedrine, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France, the country well-known for its traditional mistrust for hegemonic aspirations of the USA, has described the United States as “hyper-power” whose *“strength causes an inherent risk of monopolistic domination unless some counterbalance is found for it”*. The only such counterbalance conceivable nowadays is the EU which *„has no other choice but to gradually come to consider itself the power”*.²⁶ The same belief has been frankly expressed by the European Commission which has declared in a special statement: *„It has to be our aim to turn Europe into a global actor with political importance to match its economic strength; an actor capable of speaking full-voice and to influence the affairs of the world”*.²⁷

3. Implications for Poland

It may be concluded from the above considerations that in a foreseeable future Poland is going to experience a somehow inconvenient political situation. Our country is likely to find themselves linked with strong political economic, military as well as social and cultural relations with two allies whose mutual relationships have presently undergone a stage of tension and revaluation if not an evident crisis, and their final form remains unknown. Although one may foresee with good deal of probability that present trouble will not result in breaking up the unity of the transatlantic alliance (as there are too many shared values and interests both partners have in common) yet they certainly undergo a serious test nowadays. In such conditions Poles will be confronted with the

²⁶ Walker M., *Europe: Superstate or Superpower?*, “World Policy Journal”, Winter 2000/2001.

²⁷ *Shaping the New Europe*, Communication from the Commission of the European Communities, February 2000 (www.sidint.org).

necessity to make actual and, in some cases also officially imposed choices between support for foreign and security policy lines of either the United States or the European Union.

In an institutional dimension no significant changes seem likely to occur – anyway, Poland will remain within NATO structures and involved in both preparation of assumptions and implementation of the EU foreign and defensive policy. It is our will to take an active part in operation of both structures as confirmed by our experience in NATO membership this far and smooth completion of Poland's negotiation on accession to the EU in the area of Common Foreign and Security Policy. Furthermore, it may be expected that as Eastward enlargement of those international security structures proceeds, the role and position of Poland should relatively gain importance, especially in relation to smaller Central and Eastern Europe countries.

In terms of political practice, on the other hand, the above-discussed dilemma may lead to some serious difficulties in implementation of Polish foreign and security policy. Poland has already gained position of a close ally of the United States, additionally strengthening it over the recent couple of years with its full support given to the American anti-terrorist crusade, including participation in Iraqi operation. As long as we haven't become the EU Member State yet, there's no reason to regard this issue as an "aggravating" one. If anything, it provokes sarcastic comments from political extremists such as Le Pen who referred to Poland as "the US Trojan Horse in Europe". This, however, is going to change as soon as our accession. Poland hasn't enjoyed neither political nor military power of the United Kingdom, the country capable of playing, at the same time, a double role of both the United States ally and a very important EU Member State. Poland, on the other hand, is most likely to undergo strong pressure on the part of its EU partners to proclaim itself in a more determined way in favour of the European model of foreign and security policy. This is the more probable that the EU membership will quite naturally be much more important for Poland in political, economic, military and social terms than political links with the USA and military ones we have with NATO (as close or even warm as they might be).

As mentioned above, while this issue of "European loyalty" wasn't specified in Poland's negotiation on accession, one shouldn't assume it will not appear in the future. According to the most likely scenario, Polish diplomacy – no matter how hard it tries to avoid it – will sooner or later face the pressure to make what seems to be painful choices between sense of loyalty to either the European Union or the United States. As may be expected, this will not so much influence the formal and institutional aspect our security (that, as emphasised before, is not prone to any significant change) as it will affect the way it practically work. What we try to suggest is the possibility of actual "silencing", mitigating or even

suspending our activity in some specific areas of relationships with either the USA (including with NATO) or with the EU. This may additionally be underpinned by various factors, internal (pressures exerted by political forces or by public opinion) or international, such as potential terrorist attacks against Poland which still have to be reckoned with as possible reaction to Polish support for anti-terrorist operations and its presence as a stabilising power in Iraq. (This last threat, unfortunately, has recently been considered as more and more serious one.)

Summing up one may say that years to come may bring a number of new challenges to Poland's foreign/security policy, to arise not necessarily from the occurrence of new external threats (although such threats are not unlikely, for example in the form of act of terrorism) but rather from the necessity to find the most appropriate position within political and defensive arrangement that, on the one hand, gives shape to the ever-changing balance of relations between the European Union and the United States, and, on the other, is itself subject to serious turbulence. It can be hoped that the interested parties will prove successful in overcoming such turbulence, however the process may also plod along with much difficulty, in which case diplomacy on the part of the Union (including that of Poland) would have to undertake a set of very difficult efforts.

This is not meant to suggest that difficulty is overwhelming and insuperable. It is peculiar to the process of globalisation taking place in the modern world that the growing density of network of multilateral relations and dependence induces all the actors of international relations, even such powerful ones as the United States and the European Union, to look for a possible scope of compromise in virtually any area, including with respect to their interests in the field of foreign and security policy.