

**NATO - ENERGY SECURITY DISCOURSE****НАТО - ЕНЕРГЕТСКО БЕЗБЕДНОСЕН ДИСКУРС**

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**ABSTRACT**

This paper presents an attempt to approach and clarify the debate for energy security in the framework of the "evolving" NATO. The contemporary states point to the fact that energy supply is not only an economic topic, but also something that more and more often occupies the work agendas of the other institutions on the international scene as well. More precisely, this paper discusses the attempt for politicization and securitization of the energy supply, the involvement and role of NATO in the field of energy security, as well as the complexity in defining such a role of the Alliance. The chronology of the beginnings of the inclusion of NATO in the area of energy security as elaborated in the strategic documents of the Alliance is represented. The paper views the arguments that contribute to the need for more serious involvement of NATO. In addition, the elements that can present a problem for the clear definition of the place and role of NATO in the field of energy security are also analyzed. The energy security discourse presents a serious pointer for the possible directions of the evolving of the Alliance and its future engagement in contemporary international relations.

**Key words:** NATO, energy, energy security, security, resources

**АПСТРАКТ**

Трудот претставува обид за приближување и појаснување на дебатата за енергетската безбедност во рамките на „еволуирачкиот“ НАТО. Современите состојби укажуваат на фактот дека енергетското снабдување не претставува само економска тематика, односно сè повеќе ги окупура работните агенди и на другите институции на меѓународната сцена. Поконкретно, трудот се осврнува на обидот за политизација и секуритизација на енергетското снабдување, вклученоста и улогата на НАТО на полето на енергетската безбедност како и сложеноста во дефинирањето на таквата улога на Алијансата. Претставена е хронологијата на почетоците на вклучувањето на НАТО во сферата на енергетската безбедност елаборирани во стратегиските документи на Алијансата. Во трудот се разгледуваат аргументите кои одат во прилог на потребата за посериозно инволвирање на НАТО. Исто така, анализирани се и елементите кои би

можеле да претставуваат проблем во јасното дефинирање на местото и улогата на НАТО во полето на енергетската безбедност. Енергетско-безбедносниот дискурс претставува сериозен показател за можните насоки на еволуирање на Алијансата и нејзиниот иден ангажман во современите меѓународни односи.

**Клучни зборови:** НАТО, енергија, енергетска безбедност, безбедност, ресурси

## INTRODUCTION

Problems related with energy security have not only represented a basic thematic content only at economic forums for a long time, but they have also increasingly represented the main content within interstate high-level political meetings. The trade exchange of basic energy resources does not represent only an economic issue, but ever more a political issue. In addition to the previously mentioned, if we add the fact that military-political alliances, such as NATO, in their working agendas are ever more incorporating regularity and stability in the supply of energy, this is the confirmation that from primarily an economic issue, the supply of energy also represents an issue for the security corps.

What does energy security actually represent? Energy security at the global and national level means the availability of energy, in sufficient quantities and affordable prices, the stable delivery, as well as the physical security of gas and oil pipelines.

Having in mind the fact that global energy resources are limited, the issue of energy security receives significant meaning. This is a result of the increased demand and consumption of energy resources, which is being increased together with the rise of the world population and the development of new technologies. Also, the geographical distribution of resources and their consumption is extremely uneven. The largest consumers of natural gas are European Union nations, and their main supplier is the Russian Federation, which possesses one third of the gas reserves in the world. On the other hand, the USA and the "Asian Tigers", and the countries from the Middle East as the main oil exporters, have the largest demand for oil.

The uneven ratio of power in the demand and consumption of energy causes the appearance of dependence that occurs between the producer and buyer. At the same time, such dependence is not unidirectional, the nation's importers of energy from the producers are not the only ones who are dependent, but the producers themselves are also dependent on the stable demand and the market where they will sell their products. In economic terminology, the initial assumption would be that the market and its conformity to law represent a main regulatory mechanism, as well as the assumption that the main actors are behaving rationally in that market. However, resources of basic energy are limited and non-renewable, and the demand for them is in constant rise because the functioning of modern

economies is unimaginable without them. All this causes energy trade to become even more of an issue of public importance for each country, which means the engagement of all state institutions, and represents a subject of state policy. In conditions when the energy supply is raised to the level of state policy, then the relation between supplier and buyer is not only determined by economic logic but also by political motive and foreign-political interests. As a result of such relations and the politicization of energy supply, we have the occurrence of unpredictability and an increase in uncertainty and distrust between all participants in the chain of dependence on energy.

The setting of energy issues at the political level also imposes the initiating of discussions for securitization and militarization of energy issues. Securitization represents a process where some object or certain value is determined as an object of primary significance for engagement in its defence. One of the final methods of acting in such cases may be the use of military power. However, it may not mean only the use of military power, but other methods, which are in the domain of foreign political means, are also possible, or the introduction of sanctions or termination of diplomatic relations (Radoman, 2007). The efforts for securitization of energy supply may also be understood as an extreme version of politicization, where a problem, in addition to being of public meaning, is also denoted as an issue for the survival of a certain country, nation or certain group. When a military-political union, such as NATO, addresses a certain topic in the context of global security, then we speak of efforts for securitization in that topic. Today, NATO's profile slowly but surely is evolving, which means that it is more different than the period when the Alliance was created. NATO is a relevant factor in the global security stage that can carry out the act of securitization, convincing the member states and those that are not, about the significance of a certain issue. In the previous period it seems that the Alliance is undertaking steps, discussing the need for securitization of the energy supply and incorporating energy security in its priority tasks.

## **ALLIANCE INVOLVEMENT AND THE ROLE IN THE FIELD OF ENERGY SECURITY**

The opportunity for involving the role of NATO in energy security contains two crucial moments. The first has a more military-security focus which reflects the dual requirement of the Alliance for carrying out practical and logistic planning of the protection of energy supplies, especially oil, maintaining at the same time wider security of its member states and the stability of its operational capability.

Such a conclusion implies contemplating military threats to energy installations as well as the supply routes of energy resources. The possibilities for escalation of commitments for establishing control over the producers, transitional nations in terms of energies (oil, gas pipelines) as well as personal security are relevant factors of possible

military confrontations. Certain analysts estimate that the possibility of approaching energy resources may become subject to large military confrontations and it represents a serious problem in the functioning of the modern international system. Pirate and terrorist attacks increase this risk. According to a study it is indicated that there have been at least 330 terrorist attacks on oil and gas plants all over the world between 1990 and 2005, including NATO and Partner nations (Moran and Russell, 2008).

The second moment for NATO's involvement in the discussions for energy security focuses more on political pressure and threats for energy security. Such a position may be identified and emphasized especially after the dispute between Ukraine and the Russian company "Gazprom". The political pressure was manifested with gas supply disruptions at the beginning of 2006. Russian authorities explained this strictly with economic reasons. The rising prices of oil and gas for the countries of the former Soviet Union marked the end of an era where they were purchasing energy at a lower price. In that manner Moscow insists on keeping the debate on economic terms, stressing that the increased price has an economic, and not political meaning (Radoman, 2007:40). Such events stimulated the discussion for energy security within NATO.

Both moments undoubtedly resulted in conceptual differences in terms of realizing the main goal. Namely, the dilemma is set at the following level: whether the Alliance should adopt a wider "thematic" approach towards energy security, where the interest of the country "producer", the "transit" country and the country "consumer" can be seen effectively in a similar light – against the threats that undermine the interests of all, such as an attack of a main supply route? Or should it adopt a more regional and direct approach, where the interests of the "producer" and the "consumer" differ – which basically carries the influence of a powerful Alliance in support of the country "consumer" in what is considered as competitive dialogue of the "producer" and "consumer"?

In context of the need for involving the Alliance in energy security, especially important is the Riga Summit, held in November 2006. Namely, the Riga Summit Declaration included a short paragraph where it was explicitly announced (for the first time) that energy security is NATO's concern, giving the Alliance a task to examine the specifics of that role. The nature of discussion was changed in that manner in the Declaration; it was not anymore of whether the Alliance has a role, but that it now confirms that it has one. The question is now set regarding the nature of that role. A second significant moment was the speech by the American Senator Richard Lugar in the margins of the Riga Summit. The speech indicated threats from terrorism, as well as the fact that energy will probably be the source of armed conflicts in Europe as well as in the surrounding regions. In that manner, Lugar noted that it would be irresponsible for NATO to reduce its commitment in the field of energy security. But, his focus was directed towards the potential for political manipulation with resources

and the use of “energy weapon” (Luger, 2006). Luger’s speech was the subject of attention of almost the entire international community.

The political moment, after the adoption of the Riga Declaration, continued to receive greater significance, especially after the dispute with the gas supply disruptions between Russia and Belarus in December 2006 and January 2007. The same occurred the following years. On January 31, 2008, Russia cut gas supplies to Ukraine as a result of unpaid bills and as a result of gas prices. The Russian-Ukrainian dispute regarding gas prices left ten countries from Central and Eastern Europe without that energy. Moldova, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia and Macedonia were left without gas for heating and production of electricity, while Turkey, Greece, the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary and Austria were faced with a lack of gas. It seems that the political moment reached its peak in January 2009. The cut of Russian gas supply through Ukraine caused great discomfort in the European Union because the EU receives 40% of the requirements for natural gas from Russia, and 80% of that gas goes through Ukraine. The crises ended on January 19 after the negotiations between the Prime Minister of Russia, Vladimir Putin, and the Prime Minister of Ukraine, Julija Timoshenko. Then it was agreed Ukraine in 2009 to pay Russian gas 20% less than the market value, and from 2010 to begin paying the price like the other countries in Europe, or 470 dollars for 1000 cubic meters. Until then Ukraine enjoyed a favoured price for Russian gas in the amount of 179.5 dollars for 1000 cubic meters.

The Riga Declaration represents a significant starting point for any type of analysis regarding NATO’s role in relation to energy security. Namely, in Article 45 of the Declaration it is indicated that the security interests of NATO may be affected with cuts to vital resource supplies. The Alliance supports the coordinated international efforts for assessment of risks to energy infrastructure and the promotion of energy infrastructure security. The individual engagement of NATO member states was identified even prior to the discussion for the role of the Alliance in the field of energy security. We may detect this even in the period of the Iran–Iraq war of 1980-1988. Then, Great Britain, France and the Netherlands participated in the operation “*Earnest Will*” where they secured the routes of tankers in the Persian Gulf (Varwick, 2008: 38).

Overall, prior to the Riga Summit, the Alliance pointed to problems of energy security rather vaguely, that NATO activities were moving in the direction of preventing supply disruptions of vital resources. Defining the prevention is the key challenge for the Alliance illustrating the gap in the consensus between the military threat to vital resources and those with political motivation. NATO’s mandate defined with the Riga Declaration provides a certain explanation of the interests of the Alliance and its focus towards energy infrastructure security, but not towards the other dimensions of energy security. The focused and limited agenda defined with the Riga Declaration formed the basis for official

talks in 2007 and the beginning of 2008. The former NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, confirmed that the Alliance considers energy security as a “collective” challenge for which a “collective” response must be provided; a response which is greatly linked with coordination between national governments and international organizations”.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the role of NATO in such a collective response would focus where it could give contribution, or that the Alliance should consider its own role in the protection of supply routes, especially in the transport of liquefied natural gas with tankers on open sea, and protection of critical energy infrastructure when a certain high level of threat exists.

At the Bucharest Summit in April 2008, the same approach was confirmed. The Alliance will insist on giving contribution and fully coordinating with the activities of the international community, which consists of numerous organizations that specialize in the field of energy security. However there are still some vague phrases – the Alliance will commit to “projecting stability” and advancing international and regional cooperation. At the same time the focus directed towards civil defence and dealing with crisis and energy infrastructure, remains clear. This leads us to a “deepened” role that NATO would be able to realize.

In that context, NATO’s role might be directed towards giving contribution in the coordinated international effort with the goal of improving energy security in two broad areas, they are: sharing information and planning and response.

Firstly, sharing information represents one of the key principles of energy security. NATO may contribute acting as an important bridge between the energy and security community. This is clearly designated with the Riga Declaration, and confirmed with the Bucharest Declaration, i.e., NATO may contribute for information exchange acting as a forum for exchange of reports. Certain opinions are moving in the direction of enhancing the link between the security and energy community through the establishment of permanent monitoring and assessing the mechanisms for acting in cooperation with the International Energy Agency (IEA) and similar organizations, including the companies as well. Also, NATO may give its own contribution in the exchange of data through the practical use of its assets and capacities. That is, assets for maritime surveillance and early warning may be used for providing current information on main maritime transport routes which are not covered sufficiently by national capacities of certain countries. Secondly, the Alliance may give its own contribution in achieving energy security through making available its own military capacities and expertise where needed. It primarily means physical protection, patrolling and escort during the path of critical infrastructure. NATO already has

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<sup>2</sup> Speech by the NATO Secretary General, Scheffer, on the 44<sup>th</sup> Munich Security Conference:  
<http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2008/s080209a.html> accessed on 15/05/2012.

a clearly defined role in the protection of oil and gas capacities in the North Sea, in case of armed attacks. NATO (and EU) maritime capacities are already being used for protection of oil and gas shipments in the area of the Horn of Africa and Western Africa, especially from attacks by pirates and terrorist attacks. Such possibilities for responding to threats are manifested by the operation *"Steadfast Jaguar 06"*, held on Cape-Verde Islands in June 2006.

At the Lisbon Summit in November 2010 in article 41 and at the Chicago Summit in May 2012, in Article 52, the Alliance noted: "A stable and reliable energy supply, diversification of routes, suppliers and energy resources, and the interconnectivity of energy networks, remain of critical importance. Article 41 at the Lisbon Summit Declaration indicates that: "The Alliance will continue to consult on the most immediate risks in the field of energy security in accordance with decisions at previous Summits and in line with our new Strategic Concept. We will further develop the capacity to contribute to energy security, concentrating on areas, agreed at Bucharest, where NATO can add value. In advancing our work, we will enhance consultations and cooperation with partners and other international actors, as agreed, and integrate, as appropriate, energy security considerations in NATO's policies and activities". The same line is retained in Article 52 of the Chicago Summit Declaration. More precisely, "NATO closely follows relevant developments in energy security. Today, we have noted a progress report which outlines the concrete steps taken since our last Summit and describe the way forward to integrate, as appropriate, energy security considerations in NATO's policies and activities. We will continue to consult on energy security and further develop the capacity to contribute to energy security, concentrating on areas where NATO can add value. To this end, we will work towards significantly improving the energy efficiency of our military forces; develop our competence in supporting the protection of critical energy infrastructure; and further develop our outreach activities in consultation with partners, on a case-by-case basis. We welcome the offer to establish a NATO-accredited Energy Security Centre of Excellence in Lithuania as a contribution to NATO's efforts in this area. We task the Council to continue to refine NATO's role in energy security in accordance with the principles and the guidelines agreed at the Bucharest Summit and the direction provided by the new Strategic Concept as well as the Lisbon decisions. We task the Council to produce a further progress report for our next Summit".

## **ALLIANCE COMPLEXITY ROLE**

According to the above, NATO receives a mandate to reassess its potential role in the field of energy security, internationally. The Riga Declaration, specifically the part that deals with energy security is faced with a number of complex elements that slow down the

practical definition of the role of the Alliance. The officials and analysts from several NATO member states are of the opinion that energy security remains a national problem and should be treated as such. So, according to them, it is inconceivable to deploy NATO troops on oil platforms or to guard oil and gas pipelines. In that context, one NATO diplomat responding to speculations regarding the deployment of troops as “police of oil pipelines” in regions such as the Caucasus, will emphasize that energy security and security of installations and transport routes represent a national responsibility. The engagement of the Alliance would be primarily directed towards giving advice and assistance rather than be actively engaged on the ground.

The Turkish experts and analysts who say that the Turkish state has achieved much more than the Alliance when fighting against the Kurds in terms of protection of key energy infrastructure, also share the same opinions. Azerbaijan, whose territory lies on a significant energy route (Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline), through its President of the Government, Abid Sharifov, noted that the Alliance has no experience in protection of oil pipelines and communications that pass through countries which are not members of NATO. Such positions for not requiring assistance from NATO, concretely for the mentioned oil pipeline, arise from the fact that it is protected by the Azerbaijan government and the companies who believe that protection has also been achieved through other measures such as deep entrenchment of oil pipelines and pointing out to the local population about the importance of security of oil pipelines.

On the other hand, if we move to the north of the planet, more precisely to the North-Atlantic Region, and we analyze the discussions of the experts and analysts there, we would see different conclusions. Namely, the Norwegian Sea and the transport routes for oil and natural gas that pass through here, promote discussions for the need of considering issues for maritime security. It is noted that NATO members from both sides of the Atlantic must work together on energy security, as a central part of the security policy of the Alliance, and primarily on security of transport, and then on energy security. According to Bjorn Bjarnason, energy security represents a new dimension that redefines the northern areas of the Atlantic region in the political and military stage of NATO, or it reiterates the maritime identity of NATO (Bjarnason, 2006).

According to other opinions the energy security role would dilute or distort the agenda of NATO to the detriment of existing missions. Energy security is also connected with other issues from the complex agenda of NATO, such as the debate on the further expansion of Article 5 to include energy security. In his speech in the margins of the Riga Summit, the already mentioned Senator Lugar proposed the effective energy strategies to include the new relations with the countries from the Caucasus and Central Asia and



particularly the relations with Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, where the eventual membership in NATO would have to be put on the table" (Monagan, 2007).

The arguments for expanding Article 5 are related to the possibility of destroying national economies if energy is used as a "weapon". In this manner the Alliance would be obligated to appropriately respond to attempts and use of energy as a "weapon" against its member states.

Although cooperation with other international organizations is an important intention noted in Riga, it is also showing to be quite problematic. Defining NATO's role in the framework of energy security enables broader discussion and stating different opinions that are often on the same "frequency". This may be illustrated, for example, with the difference in defining threats to energy security on a national and institutional level. Taking into account different geographical regions, sources of resources and infrastructure capacities, along with their individual energy strategies, most countries in the EU and NATO look differently on the situation with energy. Therefore in the framework of each organization, there is a problem to define any advanced level of clarification and consensus about the nature of the threat and for whom it is aimed at.

The majority of EU and NATO member states still view the energy crises to be an economic problem which should primarily be regulated at the market, and not with foreign political and security measures. We could generally agree that the U.S. tends to emphasize energy security as protection of energy supplies, while the EU defines it in terms of management with energy demand. Such different approaches in defining the energy issue represent an additionally complicated situation, especially after the different reactions in the EU and NATO on some issues which brought energy security on the agenda of the Alliance. All this undermines the prospects for establishing complementary energy relations between NATO and the EU.

An additional problem is the Russian view of the discussions for involving energy security in the agenda of NATO. The Alliance is making efforts for the debate for energy security not to be interpreted by Moscow as an anti-Russian signal. In this direction it is interesting to mention the statement by the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, at the end of 2007, where he condemned the politicization of energy security to the detriment of nations-producers and stressed that what is represented as purely economic is politicized with the attempt to unify the consumers to contradict Russian energy monopoly (Monaghan, 2008). Just as NATO is beginning to speak about energy as a security issue, so is Moscow, which formed a new Military Doctrine where energy security has its place.

## CONCLUSION

In the process of redefining NATO as a security guarantee of its members, the need to seriously consider security of energy supplies is being increasingly pushed. Threats to energy security are widely established in international policy, but also at the national level. In addition the problems are also seriously elaborated in the academic community. However, views that are not in relation to accepting NATO's role in solving threats to energy security, still dominate.

In relation to existing foundations of the Alliance, regarding Article 5, it may be understood that energy security is contained in it. Article 4 of the Washington Agreement stipulates that Parties "will consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened". Article 5 as well is potentially relevant, taking into account the nature of most threats: "the parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all". Taking into account the fact that with this, energy installations do not distance from remaining goals, and from the other side the nature of threats to energy infrastructure by terrorists, pirates, and even states will most probably be in the form of an armed attack, we may assume that an armed attack on energy installations may be reason to invoke Article 5. The only exception would be the deliberate shutdown of production of required amounts of energy and their distribution to end users, which would affect national economies and certain political positions would be undertaken over the nation producer. In this case it would be symptomatic to invoke Article 5.

Negative overtones in terms of the proposed agenda for the role of NATO in energy security seem to be too simply understood. That is, speculations generally go in the direction of only military response by the Alliance in case of a threat to energy security. To say in addition the unreal agenda or provocation for discussing to amend the existing Article 5 of the Washington Agreement and the potential membership of Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, the new strategic horizon is evident which may be created by the future international context in which the Alliance will function.

In defining its role within energy security, the Alliance is facing two parallel debates directed towards defining cuts in energy supplies. Whether it will be a military shut down, caused by armed attacks or maybe in the context of competition for access to certain resources, it should determine the efforts of the Alliance for finding most appropriate solutions. Its engagement would be in the direction of cooperation with Partners, capacity building, defence reforms and training of Partner nations. In extreme situations it is possible to also include military protection of infrastructure from armed attacks. The second

debate would go in the direction of determining the shutdown of energy supplies by involving political reasons for such an act, which most often are very difficult to define and prove. In such a case it is very difficult to count on a consensus of all Partners in the eventual undertaking of certain measures. On the other hand, such a situation might motivate considering certain solutions inside within the Alliance, such as the intention for improving its own efficiency in the consumption of energy as an asset for reducing the dependence on external conditions.

In conclusion, the Alliance will need to work more actively in its role in energy security, in the context of its evolving path of survival and functioning in the international security stage.

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