

DISCUSSION

Łukasz Kudlicki, National Security Bureau:

One of our national goals is NATO enlargement for sure. So I have the question to both Italian guests. What should occur to persuade western critics of NATO enlargement to open the door for example Ukraine and Georgia to the Alliance.

Sergio Balanzino:

I think that there is a twofold possible answer to your question. One: we – I mean NATO or NATO member nations – should first of all talk to aspiring members and try to convince them or explain to them that certain initiatives or certain reactions may be boomerangs for them returning back and hitting them in the face. I don't say that Ukraine behaved in a criminal way or behaved illegally or whatever. But the fact that part of Europe was cut off – in a pretty cold winter – Russian gas created a very negative sentiment within the public opinion. I mean middle class, low class citizens. They read newspapers and read in the newspapers that Ukraine is pumping European gas away from the pipeline on order to get energy for themselves. True, not true – I do not discuss. But certain steps, certain initiatives, certain moves should be avoided. Georgia. Was is Saakashvili that sent soldiers into Abkhazia? I don't know. I was not there. But for example in Italy all newspapers reported that Georgia had attacked Osetia.

There are certain precautions that aspirant members before joining NATO should respect. Once inside they may then act sometimes in a bizzare way. But once inside you are inside, always inside.

As far as NATO governments, members stated. You should look at variety of positions that members states have. The farther they are the less affected they seem. So it is a task of – I would say – the leading member states to convince, talk to governments of other member nations and convince them not to oppose, not to veto an application from European country, not yet member of the Alliance. It's not an easy exercise. Nobody wants to go back to tensions like those we had during the Cold War, missiles crisis, Berlin Wall, etc. etc. So it is a work to be done with patience and determination. On two fronts. The applicant and the member nations which are more uncertain about accepting, voting for the admission of a new member.

You know I feel that nowadays what is most serious and critical in international relations is not what happens. Somebody shooting at somebody else and attacking etc. These are facts of life. Don't misunderstand me. These are things that do happen. What is critical, what is important is what doesn't happen. Lack of reactions, lack of response to certain events. That is what is pathological. Violence in itself is violence. We are against but does erupt from time to time. But if in front of violence people disperse instead of coming together to contain such violence – that is a critical point.

Now that being said, we should not challenge Russia on specific issues: Transnistria, Georgia and so forth. We should not only challenge it there because that would make the issue much more acute and it would lead to series of actions and reactions etc. We should enlarge

the involvement. Now that is why I was saying earlier that Russia is sitting in various places and doing nothing. That is the real problem.

I hope there is no Georgian here because he would disagree with part of what I am saying but what I am saying is that we should not test Russia on individual subjects. The gas or Crimea...I do not know what could happen. We should challenge it on a series of issues just like European Union is challenged on a series of issues. European Union is not doing anything in the Middle East, not enough. European Union is not doing enough in Africa. There are various issues where European Union should be doing more. America should be doing things here, there, everywhere. Where is America? Afghanistan, Pakistan, India? What is it doing, what is it not doing? We, the big guys, America and European Union, the big western guys who are the ones who are attached to cooperative international system are being challenged on a host of different issues and try to respond best they can. Sometimes badly but they try to do this. They make mistakes, but you know what Becket used to say. He said once: "in front of many difficulties of life, try again, fail better". Continue trying. You will fail. Of course you will fail. But you will fail better, you will fail less etc... But you will fail.

Now why – and this is what I tried to say earlier – we should try to involve Russia in various things. Now, what the hell is it doing, sorry, what on Earth is it doing on Iran? Why doesn't it help us with Iran? Persuading the Iranians that having this thing is not in its interest. That is the soft underbelly of Russia – Iran. Is there going to be a kind of Alliance between Russia and Iran? Just like Russia and Chavez? What kind of a game is that? It doesn't make much sense.

In other words: the Russians are still engaged in the balance of forces issue. You retreat there, I move in. I move there, you move there, etc. That kind of chess, whatever. The balance of forces game. We should try and challenge it in a different kind of game which is called a network of international involvement where you are exposed, where you fail, where you are a participant, where you are challenged to be a participant. And Russia should be – I could say – shamed. Could I say that? Not named and shamed but shamed or at least shown internationally that it is not assuming the responsibility worldwide that a member of the Security Council in present and of any other group in present international circumstances should undertake. Omissions. It is omitting to do things that it should be doing precisely because we consider it a great country. It is a great country. Geographically at least.

There was a question I think down there.

Piotr Naimski, Chief Adviser, National Security Bureau:

I am afraid I don't agree with you. You see, networking of the problems in dealing with Russia leads very often to packaging the problems. And packaging the problems leads to trade-off tactics. And trade-off tactics is very – I would say – difficult for us. Could be difficult for peripheries. Peripheries usually are sold out if somebody is going trade-off tactic.

Sergio Balanzino:

Briefly respond to that. I am not saying that we should be negotiating with Russia. This or that and the other and putting in the package. I am saying that we should expose its responsibilities. Participate not negotiate.

Łukasz Kudlicki:

And only one short remark. We are here in Poland quite afraid about – so called – engaging Russia. Because what we are expecting from new American administration is that the States can appear as big mall with commercials on its windows. Bargain. Sale. Iran – sale. Bargain. We can be the element of such a deal that can be called Russian involvement. Persuading Russia to be involved.

Wojciech Miazgowski, Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

Excellency – the colleague – I must say your lecture was very inspiring. Indeed. What I have to say is that what you said in your last remarks. You said: we should not challenge Russia. Transnistria and so on. I believe, in my opinion it is a classic appeasement, sir. Sir, you said also before that starting a discussion with Russia on the Medvedev doctrine is nothing wrong. Just to discuss is nothing wrong. Well, the first sin in the Paradise was to start discussion with devil. Look what happened then. But the first sin was a discussion. Russian want

NATO to go down, Americans – to go out. And they want to create a new zone of influence for them. So if we accept that we can discuss we accept tacitly the argumentation they used to persuade us that indeed a discussion is important because something wrong happened. Well, of course something wrong happened. They first of all withdrew from CFE treaty. It was and is legally binding treaty. What they did? They withdrew although the treaty does not provide for this kind of procedures. Well. What they did next? They invaded Georgia. They violated UN Charter. It is legally binding treaty. If we talk about legally binding treaties with Russia, we talk about empty papers.

You mentioned Iran. It's a false assumption. I don't know who invented that. And everybody repeats this false assumption that we need Russia to solve the Iranian problem. Well. It's a game on the part of the Russians. They never will join our efforts to really solve the problem. For them the goal is that the problem exists. Why? Because Russia is the first owner of the gas resources and Iran is the second one. So if the Iranian problem is over, the sanctions are over and Iran starts exporting gas. Is it in the interest of Russia?

*Adam Daniel Rotfeld,
former Minister of Foreign Affairs:*

I am really inspired by both of our guests. We are not here to find the solution but rather to understand what is going on and what are the problems. And in that sense it seems to me that there are three different levels of the debate. One is that very often we are saying that in fact, after the end of the Cold War we are in the new security environment. The threats, risks etc., all that is new. And not always we do

understand properly what does it mean. What is qualitatively new. In my view there are some totally new, qualitatively new elements. One is non-state threats. Not only non-state actors but for example internal conflicts. I would like not to continue because it would be too long.

Second level of the discussion is the structure of NATO. Ambassador Balanzino spoke about some problems, what could be discussed in the new Strategic Concept. I would like to say that the main resistance to discuss the Strategic Concept is connected with the fact that it will immediately demonstrate, manifest the differentiated positions within the Alliance. And people prefer not to discuss. But in addition there are different mentalities, different historical interests etc. I do not agree Guido with you that it has to be interests not values. In fact very often – I would say – there are some alliances where values are not important but only interests. In this case values and interests have to be seen in common.

But what is the problem: structures, institutions, organizations – all of them are established in very specific moment and they are historically defined. Events, political life is dynamic. Institutions are very static. And at the moment situation... – and this I would say is my last point, what I would like to say – the main problem is that we see a lot of problems, but at the same time old structures, old instruments proceed...

The West accepted that it is division between the East and the West and it is – I would say – within the Russian domain. The second element was to some extent the same with Czechoslovakia. That NATO did not react. And what you said that we do not react properly. They did not react at that time properly as well. But at that time there were some rules. Everybody knew that it is divided world and we are within

the divided world. At the moment we do not have this type of organizing principle and this is the problem: what kind of principle could be offered for the new emerging security system.

You spoke about cooperative system. I do agree with you that in fact we cannot invent anything better than cooperative system. But in order – I would say – to understand what we are speaking about, it is mainly based on interdependence. We are interdependent. But we are interdependent without the rules. In other words: we are interdependent but we do not have procedures, mechanisms, rules, institutions which are adequate to this interdependence. Because it is not interdependence within homogeneous society, between democratic countries which are sharing the same values but we are interdependent with many autocratic regimes, dictatorial regimes. And we have to accept – I would say – some common rules. The problem is that we are accepting the rules and they are not.

Przemysław Pacuła, National Security Bureau:

I would like to know your expectations towards Obama and his policy towards NATO and – maybe broader – the European security.

Sergio Balanzino:

Well, I left my crystal ball upstairs, I am sorry. I cannot give you the precise and short answer. But if you are patient, in a couple of days or couple of months, I will. No. Well. What we hope is – from Obama – it's an activation of the... activation... revamping of the multilateral

approach to foreign policy. What we lost completely during the first Bush George W. mandate, a bit less during the second but still. Return to a multilateral dialogue, cooperation, initiatives within NATO.

Now, what I personally – I would not say fear – I would say what I am a bit concerned with, preoccupied is that in the list of priorities that Obama or his collaborators – I don't know – will put on the table of the president, NATO and/or the transatlantic link will not appear on the first batch of those priorities.

I was reading an article written by Kissinger in today's Herald Tribune. Three columns about the future – I would say – attitude of the new administration towards international problems. Well, one column and a half almost is reserved for China. What the United States have to do. How important is the relationship with China. How the United States should develop a cooperation, understanding with China. For the transatlantic problems, issues – only two paragraphs. The rest is mostly blah, blah. So my fear is that transatlantic relations, NATO, position of NATO within the international arena would be somehow retroceded by NATO's main stockholder. So that the contribution, the push, the drive that was given to the Alliance by the United States may diminish. And that would be – I think – extremely risky and dangerous for the life of the Alliance.

Two brief responses to our colleague from the foreign ministry back there. Basically that was the question asked today as well. No, don't misunderstand me. Diplomats are about negotiations. But diplomats are also about discussions and developing new scenarios. What I'm saying that is extremely important is to expose the contradictions of the Russian attitude. And there are contradictions. Because they cannot say we're going to do binding things here and then not wanting to bind themselves and so forth. No. You say binding? OK. Binding! And then

we'll see what happens. And you know, in the world in which we are today, an agreement between Russia and America for example cannot stand the test of events of time as well as it would have in the past. It's not as written in stone as it would be in the past. A military action does not lead to unconditional surrender. Because we saw it more than a time. Here, there and everywhere with bombs etc. Nobody surrenders. What kind of a war is that when you don't surrender?! So even war does not have the same significance. Agreements do not have the same significance. The important thing is to expose. I think the Chinese expose themselves very well. I mean the things that they say are maybe insincere, maybe need double-checking in many of the things that they say but at least they try to argue. Yeah, Tibet here, Darfur there but you understand... They try to argue. So I mean – it's better that simply doing things without trying to explain. There is a need of explanation. Expose the contradictions of Russians. They are still full contradictions. As to Adam Rotfeld I am very much reassured by what he said because he basically agreed with what I wanted to say. The fact very disturbing for me is that he said it much better than I said it.

Krzysztof Zielke, National Security Bureau:

First I must remember Manfred Woerner with whom you – Ambassador Balanzino – worked with. How great service he did to Poland when we had the 1992 discussion about our chances to get into NATO. When everybody was saying: “no we are not getting to NATO, never”. Mr Manfred Woerner came to Poland on March 92 and said: “the doors to NATO are open, some day you may have a chance to get in.” So I must praise this great service that you worked with Manfred Woerner.

We have this discussion on NATO. What conclusions we have to take from the Georgian war. That we have to start contingency planning on defense of our territory. And the second is: what about transformation? What about out-of-area missions. And there, in this discussion, there is – as some call it in Poland – Sikorsky doctrine. That is a doctrine of our Minister of Foreign Affairs who went to America Atlantic Council and said: “Russians do have a doctrine that they will defend their minorities in the countries around.” We have to respond to this doctrine with another doctrine that such attempts of change of borders in Europe should be considered a threat to our security. And in a sense this Sikorsky doctrine may be something in between. That we not going to take a defensive, to defend our territory and not only we are going to do some far global missions but maybe we should have something in between. Between out-of-area. That we should defend against changes of the border in the wider European sector. Maybe that's a solution to this discussion.

Sergio Balanzino:

As I said before we don't know what will be in the Declaration. We don't know what will be in the new Strategic Concept. I think that all ideas, all doctrines if you prefer, all suggestions are useful and important to be put on the table for the Alliance to discuss and debate, to approve or modify. The territorial defense is – I would say – a must that cannot be erased from the Washington Treaty – I would say. Missions abroad is somehow something new which was not contemplated by the allies in 1949. Of course treaties are tailored or are the consequence of historical events. Now history moves. Treaties are printed in books, on paper. Those books, those pages have to be replaced by new texts.

I wouldn't touch the Washington Treaty. If you put your hands on Article 5 you open the can of worms. So better leave it unfinished or unclear as it may be, but leave it there.

But there are new texts. The Strategic Concept for example. And in there you can insert all concrete, constructive ideas and visions or guidelines for the Alliance to adapt itself to the new historical circumstances, to new events and new threats. It's – once again – up to the governments of the member nations to sit around the table and work constructively without second thoughts in the back of their minds, without being excessively stingy, without looking to the side because the problems that are being discussed take place or arise somewhere far away from their land.

So this is what we hope or I hope at least that will be respected and implemented when negotiations, discussions for the drafting of the new Strategic Concept will take place.

Guido Lenzi:

One thing I forgot, very briefly, to what Rotfeld said. We should remember that after 56 – Hungary we had 57 – the European Rome Treaty, after 68 – Prague we had the beginning of the CSCE process. That's exactly why I'm saying that after 08 – Georgia we need to try and find a response that is – like you say – an organizing principle. Something that changes the parameter, not the mechanism but the parameter.

*Witold Waszczykowski,
Deputy Head, National Security Bureau:*

I wouldn't dare to summarize and evaluate the comments of our guests and friends. Just maybe to summarize the Polish position. I will try to sound less hawkish than my colleague at the table. But this would be rather traditional and very conservative approach to thinking about security and NATO future.

I think that we still dream about NATO of our fathers. Although we were told by some leaders that this is not the NATO of our fathers, we still dream about NATO of our fathers. Because security is important for Poland we understand that this is not granted for ever. And NATO is supposed to remain as a main provider of security. We care about the condition and shape of the Alliance. Our expectations... I would enumerate four of them.

First, NATO will stay as a core security institution of any security architecture, also the future architecture. NATO will clearly define the list of threats and challenges. Will clearly define also the answers to these challenges. Including the clearly defined contingency planning. The real contingency planning. Part of this contingency planning will be the idea that NATO will suppose to preserve its value as a military alliance with very balanced missions. Second, NATO is supposed to act and work as a projector of stability because there are still unfinished businesses. Unification of Europe is still not done. There are some frozen conflicts. So NATO is supposed to keep the doors open. Is supposed to be a prospect for further enlargement. And of course NATO is supposed to have instruments to develop and straighten different kind of partnership programs. Third, NATO is supposed to maintain and develop expeditionary capacity but NATO shouldn't be responsible for peace

on the whole planet, it shouldn't be a gendarme of the hot world. Fourth, we still expect that NATO is supposed to be considered as a forum for political transatlantic decisions. Is supposed to overcome the transatlantic reefs and European schizophrenia. There is no time to time to discuss this farther.

Our concerns. I would say there are two main concerns. And I will surprise you: this is not Russia. This is rather threat from the West. This time it's not the threat of the German invasion but lack of western unity and solidarity which was reviled in recent conflicts. European approach to conflict in Gaza, to conflict with Russia over gas and a few months ago lack of unity towards the crisis with Georgia. In all these crisis we have problems to identify who is running the European Union and transatlantic area. Is this a presidency? Is this a commissioner who is totally lost recently? I don't know what Solana is doing. And maybe they are together with Benita Ferrero-Waldner and our prime minister in Italy exercising the skies. Or maybe the nations are ruling because in each of these crises we saw that behind the presidency there is a particular nation or leader of the nation. Sarkozy was dealing with Middle East, madame Merkel is dealing with gas crisis. There are some others.

And the second concern is a possibility of pragmatic deal or transaction, the trade off. I would also say that I am personally afraid that the new government, new US administration, would be inclined to come back to direct arms control talks with Russia. That means come back to feudalistic approach to the world international relationship. Because this will vassalise us and will make us hostage to the arms control discussions. And this kind of a pragmatic deal ("pragmatic" has a negative connotation in Poland because this means that pragmatic deal is based not on values but rather shortsighted interests, short transactions)...

And we are afraid that this pragmatic deals may be done at the expense of Central European interests. Which will stabilize our unequal security status in the western institutions.

So that's my personal opinion of course but for the clarity of course it was exaggerated maybe and simplified.