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REPORT: NATO'S FUTURE

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It is already the year 2013. The Republic of Poland has already had the presidency of the European Union. A year has gone since the UEFA European Football Championship in Poland. The author of this text is already forty years old. But all this is nothing compared to the "pre-retirement" age of the North Atlantic Organisation. The Alliance will then be sixty four, just like in the Beatles's song titled *When I'm sixty four*, which was a declaration of the will to become old together with the beloved person. While we are celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Alliance, we should adopt a perspective view and look beyond the year 2013 – mentioned here for the tactical purposes of this text.

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After 1989, when Poland became the sovereign country, one of the main goals of the foreign policy was to be a member of NATO. In the perspective of the current problems of the enlargement process aiming at incorporating the ex-Soviet Union republics to the Alliance, we should appreciate how lucky we were to join the elitist security group in 1989.

REPORT**NATO OF THE FUTURE –
BIG AND BIGGER CHALLENGES**

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Przemysław Pacuła

The condition of the North Atlantic Alliance celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2009 is ambivalent. On one hand, it is almost impossible to find some other examples of such a long term partnership of an international organisation. However, on the other hand, there are numerous problems, which make some analysts forecast the end of NATO.

REPORT**AFGHANISTAN AS THE BIGGEST CONTEMPORARY
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The operation of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan is the first NATO military mission, which is taking place outside the traditional Euro-atlantic interest zone. However, after the eight-year-presence of the coalition forces, the security situation has not changed much since 2001 and its level is comparable to that one. In consequence, the skepticism is growing in what concerns the perspective of the success of the mission.

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All the States around the Baltic Sea – except for Russia – are the members of the European Union and this situation has a considerable impact on the commercial relations, which can be compared to the Hanseatic League. The access of Sweden and Finland to NATO would guarantee the full security. There is a chance that Sweden can start the access talks as the center wing party won the elections in 2006.

Belarus – Ukraine: a permanent improvement of the bilateral relations?

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In the past the relations between Kiev and Minsk were rather cold (which was due to divergent political goals of the foreign policies of the two States). However, the series of bilateral talks on various levels of administration, including the presidential meeting, have changed the situation. The wish to open the dialog with Kiev is a part of the wider context of the Belorussian foreign policy. For Belarus the key issue is to define and arrange the relations with Moscow.

Anti-missile defense system in Japan

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Magdalena Trzpił

The growing menace in the region of Asia and Pacific ocean, particularly the threats of North Korea and China, have revealed the weakness of the defense system of Japan. In consequence, Tokyo has decided to strengthen some national mechanisms of defense. One of the main symptoms of these changes is the tightening of the relations with the United States. The two countries are now working together on an antimissile defense project.

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The internal situation of the United States forces the country to withdraw from the role of the global leader. The European countries facing the demographic problems will not be able to take over the USA's role. Consequently, the defense policy focusing on the defense activities will limit the military expedition potential. This is one of the scenarios for the coming future, presented by the National Intelligence Council.

Russian – NATO rivalry on the territory of Central Asia

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In 2008 the geopolitical importance of the Central Asia region has grown for the Western countries as well as for Russia. For the USA and for the European Union countries, the region of Central Asia is very attractive as there are many natural energy resources. The co-operation with the states of Central Asia is becoming more and more important for NATO in the context of Afghanistan. As the situation in Pakistan becomes more and more insecure, there is a strong need to guarantee a safe military supply road for the troops stationed in Afghanistan. As the Pakistani transit roads are menaced by the attacking Taliban fighters, the alternative is Central Asian supply path.

Russian methods of fighting the economic crisis

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The autumn crash on the Russian stock exchange market was just a beginning of the crisis in Russia. The financial crisis has soon become the economic crisis, just like it was the case in other countries all over the world, already hit by the recession. The only difference is the range of the phenomenon. The rate of the Russian stock exchange index as well as the rate of the industrial production in Russia are beating all the records.

Middle East policy of the prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu

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Aleksandra Dzisiów-Szuszczkiewicz

After the Parliament elections that took place in February 2009, a complex and multi-dimensional coalition has been formed in Israel (it is composed of the right-wing parties, nationalists and religious groups). In consequence, the prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu had to recompose his ministers' cabinet to answer the ambitions of the coalition partners and of his own party – Likud. It makes the running policy difficult as it is necessary to look for compromise. If Benjamin Netanyahu wants to preserve his post of the prime minister (and for many analysts it is his supreme goal), he has to accept different demands of the coalition partners, often contradictory to his own convictions.

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