

• **President Gitanas Nausėda on Lithuanian Foreign Policy**

• **Lord George Robertson on NATO's Past and Future**

• **Robert Spalding on Transatlantic Links and China**

• **Brian Whitmore on Baltic-US Security Cooperation**

• **General Ben Hodges on Regional Security**

• **Rytis Paulauskas and Corneliu Bjola on Diplomacy in the Digital Age**

• **Cyrille Bret on European Defence Cooperation**

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

It is a privilege to be the Editor-in-Chief of the Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review (LFPR) for the second year. We continue our journey toward becoming a well-known analytical publication that seeks to discuss the most important challenges to the Lithuanian foreign and security policy. Enormous progress has been made since last year's edition, which received an exceptionally good response both from decision makers and the expert community.

This issue is special. The LFPR is honoured that the President of Lithuania, Gitanas Nausėda, shares his thoughts on the future of the country's foreign policy in an extensive interview, covering a variety of issues from neighbourhood policy to transatlantic relations. It is probably the first deep and comprehensive conversation on the topic since Mr Nausėda was elected the President in mid-2019. Hopefully, not the last one.

I am also proud to announce that the publication is full of well-known names and globally recognized experts, whose discernment has allowed the LFPR to discuss a broad range of topics. Lord Robertson of Port Ellen, who served as the 10th

Secretary General of NATO from 1999–2004, is a distinguished political leader, who oversaw NATO's enlargement in 2004. Fifteen years have passed since the Baltics joined the Alliance; therefore, it is very useful to look at how we all evolved over such a significant period of time. In addition to this, Lt. Gen. (Ret) Ben Hodges, who served as Commanding General, United States Army Europe, from 2014 to 2017, goes deeper into how NATO copes with the challenges of today. Last but not least, on security, a leading French expert Cyrille Bret analyses the idea of the European army and its (rather complicated) relationship with NATO.

There is a strong emphasis in this issue on the topic of China. Gen (ret) Robert Spalding, who was among the authors of the most recent National Security Strategy under Donald Trump's administration, presents the American view on the difficulties of the bilateral relationship. Konstantinas Andrijauskas, a leading Lithuanian expert on China, looks at how China perceives small states such as Lithuania.

Finally, we look at other subjects



as well; Corneliu Bjola and Rytis Paulauskas seek to explain how Lithuanian diplomacy adapts to multiple challenges in the digital age; a group of authors discuss ideas on how to develop the European Union's Eastern Partnership policy; Andžej Pukšto shares his thoughts on Lithuanian-Polish relations.

This publication would not have been possible without our partners. I am extremely happy that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania remains a key partner, providing support while ensuring editorial independence. Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and the US Embassy in Lithuania continue to be our reliable partner; these contributions were essential to making the current issue of the LFPR as far-reaching as it is. I am thankful to my colleagues at the EESC as well as all the editors and advisors for their help.

There is only one more thing: please, do not hesitate to share LFPR with your friends, colleagues and partners!

Yours sincerely,
LINAS KOJALA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECURITY AND TRANSATLANTIC LINKS

- 05** PRESIDENT GITANAS NAUSĖDA: NO INITIATIVE WILL BRING MORE SECURITY TO EUROPE IF IT BREAKS OR WEAKENS NATO
- 09** Lord Robertson. NATO: THE PAST, THE PRESENT, THE FUTURE
- 13** BEN HODGES TALKS ON NATO, DEFENSE SPENDING AND SECURITY CHALLENGES
- 16** Cyrille Bret. TOWARDS A EUROPEAN ARMY?

LITHUANIA IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

- 19** Brian Whitmore. THE SECURITY OF SMALL STATES: THE BALTICS AND US INTERESTS
- 22** Robert S. Spalding III. THE AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE ON THE RELATIONS WITH CHINA
- 25** Konstantinas Andrijauskas. THE WATERSHED YEAR OF THE PIG IN SINO-LITHUANIAN RELATIONS?
- 28** INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE “PIVOT TO ASIA: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES”
- 33** Corneliu Bjoła and Rytis Paulauskas. LITHUANIAN DIPLOMACY IN THE DIGITAL AGE: CLOSING THE FOREIGN POLICY GAP
- 36** Andžej Pukšto. LITHUANIA-POLAND: IS EVERYTHING CHANGING FOR THE BETTER?

THE REGION AND BEYOND

- 40** THE WAYS OF STRENGTHENING AND SUPPORTING INTEGRATION OF DCFTA COUNTRIES INTO THE SINGLE MARKET OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

PRESIDENT GITANAS NAUSĖDA: NO INITIATIVE WILL BRING MORE SECURITY TO EUROPE IF IT BREAKS OR WEAKENS NATO

The Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review's Editor-in-Chief, Linas Kojala, talks with President of Lithuania, Gitanas Nausėda, on a range of issues from security and economic diplomacy to relations with Belarus and China.

– Mr President, you have been inaugurated on July 2019. As a head of state, you have a responsibility to lead the country's foreign policy. The times are challenging, there are many global tendencies that raise concerns to politicians, experts and societies around Europe. With this in mind, what are the main goals and principles of today's Lithuania's foreign policy?

Since the restoration of Lithuanian independence in 1990, the foreign policy goals were full integration into the EU and NATO. These goals remain the main pillars of the Lithuanian foreign policy. They will continue to be at the heart of our activities. New challenges on the EU agenda – innovations, the digital union, climate change – call for new responses from Lithuania as an active EU Member State. The Transatlantic Alliance is adapting to the present security environment as well, so contribution to its strategic goals is in focus of our diplomatic effort.

Lithuania's support to the EU Eastern Neighborhood is yet another pillar of our foreign policy. Being aware that the Eastern European countries still have a lot to do in reforming their societies, government structures and democracy standards, we are ready to contribute to their reform process and their transformation. Our development assistance and twinning projects are aimed namely at these countries.

Traditionally, Lithuania maintains good relations with its neighbors. We are determined to expand and bring new quality to our ties with neighboring states in the Baltic Sea region: Poland, the Nordic and Baltic countries, Germany. Together we are aiming at very close integration, active economic cooperation, interconnected energy and transport infrastructure.

We have a special link with the countries that share a common history. A dialogue with Belarus, a neighbour with a long common border, is part of such an effort. We support all diplomatic and political measures contributing to the strengthening of Belarusian sovereignty and to building its civil society. However, we should also openly discuss challenging issues,

IN SHORT

- We support all diplomatic and political measures contributing to the strengthening of Belarusian sovereignty and building its civil society. However, we should also openly discuss challenging issues like the Ostrovets Nuclear Power Plant, which poses a safety threat not only to Lithuania but to the whole region.
- I am confident that no initiative will bring more security to Europe if it breaks or weakens NATO. Our position is very clear and firm: NATO is and will remain the foundation of European security. Transatlantic unity cannot be broken or weakened, nor can it be replaced by something else.
- Sanctions against Russia must continue until grounds and reasons for their introduction are eliminated. I am concerned about the ideas and initiatives which sound to me like returning to "business as usual" with Russia. From Lithuania's point of view, Russia has done nothing to review the current EU-Russia relationship.

such as the Ostrovets Nuclear Power Plant, which poses a safety threat not only to Lithuania but also to the whole region. It is in our common interest to resolve this issue.

Economic diplomacy is yet another foreign policy priority for me. We will be looking actively for new export markets both inside and outside the EU. We will work to attract new safe investment to Lithuania. My visits abroad often include an economic diplomacy element, namely, meetings with businesses and global companies.

– There has been a great number of steps taken by our allies to reassure the Baltic states after Russia's



IMAGE: Lithuania hopes to maintain good relations with the U.S. (photo by LRP.It)

aggression in Ukraine. Deployment of Enhanced Forward Presence (EFP) multinational battalion-size battlegroups to the eastern part of the Alliance was one of them. What else is needed to strengthen deterrence in the region?

The deployment of NATO enhanced forward presence battle groups in the Baltic States and Poland is, indeed, an extremely important factor of strengthening deterrence and our security. However, the deteriorating security situation in our region requires full and timely implementation of other equally important NATO leaders' decisions. We need to urgently address rapid reinforcement as a cornerstone of NATO's adaptation and response to security threats. We also need to raise the level of readiness of our forces. It is of utmost importance to ensure that NATO and national forces in Lithuania receive timely support and reinforcement in the event of a crisis and have adequate capabilities, including those of air defense. NATO's ability to send rapid reinforcement as well as immediate air defense to the

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NATO at its seventieth anniversary, can examine the balance sheet and see if the sceptics were right or wrong. The universal verdict is that they were very wrong and that the Alliance is alive and well and still as relevant as it was on its foundation.

region must be constantly tested in military drills. I would also argue that solid US military presence in the Baltics, especially through regular troop deployments and exercises, would be a very important tool to confront all adversaries who challenge our common values and security interests. We take our security very seriously, spending 2 percent of GDP for defense. We have an agreement between political parties to reach 2.5 percent of GDP in defense

spending by 2030. We are working consistently to deliver it.

– European defense integration is another widely discussed security issue. Some political leaders openly talk about the idea of a “European army” as a possible integration scenario. What kind of integration on a European level would you see in this policy area and what are the interests of Lithuania? Is there a risk of duplication with NATO?

It is crucially important that initiatives to strengthen European security do not duplicate or compete with NATO or, worse, still, question the need for the Alliance itself. I am confident that no initiative will bring more security to Europe if it breaks or weakens NATO. Our position is very clear and firm: NATO is and will remain the foundation of European security. Transatlantic unity cannot be broken or weakened, nor can it be replaced by something else. On the contrary, the United States' presence is vital for European security, the United States needs Europe too. EU Member States need to cooperate more closely in the field of security and defense, but avoid creating alternative military structures to replace or duplicate NATO. It must be clear from the very beginning that complementarity and compatibility have added value, not duplication and competition.

– Western countries firmly condemned Russia's annexation of Crimea and destabilizing actions in Donbass. Economic and diplomatic sanctions, which were imposed by both the European Union (EU) and the US on Russia, are a good example. However, it also seems that the voices of those who would

like to reset the relations with Russia became louder recently, especially in some European capitals...

With Russia increasingly disregarding and challenging the rules-based international order and pursuing aggressive actions against the EU and its Member States, partners and neighbors, EU-Russia relations remain in deep crisis. Despite growing support for lifting the sanctions, the EU has managed to remain united on sanctions since 2014. Sanctions against Russia must continue until grounds and reasons for their introduction are eliminated. I am concerned about the ideas and initiatives which sound to me like returning to “business as usual” with Russia. From Lithuania’s point of view, Russia has done nothing to review the current EU-Russia relations. It is also very important to evaluate and weigh the cost of normalizing relations with Russia. We would never agree to do this at the expense of our values and security. Circumstances that would allow the normalization of the relations with Russia currently do not exist. We will have to wait until Russia’s actions make it possible. The international community must keep Russia accountable for its actions.

– Lithuania’s relations with Belarus have been complicated for a long time. The Ostrovets nuclear power plant and its safety concerns is an obvious sticking point, in addition to regular military exercises conducted by Belarusian and Russian militaries. On the other hand, Belarus is an important trading partner for Lithuania. What is Lithuania’s view on the future of the relations with Minsk?

The current policy of isolation of Belarus has not produced the expected results. Not only Lithuania came to this conclusion, the



The current policy of isolation of Belarus has not produced the expected results. Not only Lithuania came to this conclusion, the EU and the US would also like to reconsider their policy. This isolation policy created conditions for Russia to increase its influence in many areas in our neighborhood. A dialogue with Belarus could create grounds for mutual understanding and coordination.

EU and the US would also like to reconsider their policy. This isolation policy created conditions for Russia to increase its influence in many areas in our neighborhood. A dialogue with Belarus could create grounds for mutual understanding and coordination. People-to-people contacts between Lithuania and Belarus are already expanding. We will continue to support human rights and we will never put up with actions that threaten our national security, environment and population.

In this context, it is important to emphasize that the Ostrovets nuclear power plant under construction now is one of the major challenges to our national security, but at the same time it is a challenge to the whole of Europe. Belarus has to follow its interna-

tional commitments to meet the highest environmental and nuclear safety standards. First of all, as a matter of urgency, Belarus has to eliminate critical deficiencies identified by the EU stress test procedure before considering the commissioning of the NPP. We will continue speaking about the shortcomings of this project at the international level and we will demand a responsible approach. There will be no market entry to Lithuania for electricity generated at the unsafe Ostrovets nuclear power plant.

In addition, we will seek to enhance import controls and speed up the synchronization of power grids with continental Europe.

– Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia have signed Association Agreements, including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA); it is a framework for implementation of much-needed reforms, necessary for closer political, economic, and legislative integration into the EU. Yet it does not seem likely that any of these countries could be granted membership perspective in the near future by the EU.

The EU enlargement is primarily a long-term investment in the future of Europe as a whole. It brings stability and transformation to membership seeking countries, promoting the necessary reforms. Such effects should also be expected in Eastern Europe.

Lithuania did not miss its big chance to join the family of EU member states 15 years ago. Based on our experience, we know that the prospect for membership – however far it might seem – is a major impetus to move forward. We cannot take it away from those countries which demonstrate a clear European



IMAGE: President Nausėda represents Lithuania in the European Council meetings (photo by LRP.lt)

orientation and determination to introduce changes.

Therefore, support for the EU Eastern Neighborhood is a key element of Lithuania's foreign policy. We need to have an ambitious EU Eastern Neighborhood policy: major its achievements of the past 10 years were achieved due to the ambitious goals set in Prague in 2009. We will continue working to deepen the relations with our partners, primarily with associated countries, and we will stand by them in their aspirations to deepen sectorial integration leading to the full integration into the EU internal market.

– *Trade disputes, disagreements on international treaties, defense spending, political miscommunication...* These are only a couple of things that have complicated the transatlantic relations in recent

years. Some argue that the state of relations between the US and the EU is poor. Does that concern you?

A strong transatlantic bond is irreplaceable. For 70 years, the unique American-European relationship has made NATO the strongest Alliance in history and an indispensable foundation for collective security. However, this should not be taken for granted. It is our duty to make every effort to keep the transatlantic bond strong despite today's challenges and difficulties.

Fair burden-sharing and defense spending are the most challenging aspects in transatlantic relations. Collective security comes at a price: investment in defense and capabilities is necessary. For us this is not a whim but rather an existential necessity, especially given our security environment

where Russia is demonstrating a growing ambition to modernize its military, increase the readiness and mobility of its forces, and continues the same pattern of aggressive behavior.

– *The relations between the global superpowers, China and the US, are also problematic. According to some experts, European countries might have to make a choice between either maintaining good relations with the US or enhancing cooperation with China in the nearest future. Moreover, it has not been easy for the EU to forge a common approach towards China, especially when it comes to finding the right balance between the benefits of economic cooperation and national security concerns, such as 5G. What is Lithuania's view on that?*



Lithuania bases its bilateral relations with China on common EU values: democracy, respect for human rights and free market principles. China is an important trade partner of Lithuania in Asia. Still, we have a huge untapped potential across many industrial sectors, and we are ready to facilitate the movement of Chinese goods to the European market.

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We are an open economy. We closely follow the global trends and responds to them. At the same time, we have learned our historical lessons and defend our values and national security interests in the

most responsible manner. There are clear rules envisaged in our laws on all investment in sectors of strategic importance to national security and critical infrastructure. The same principles of non-discrimination and proportionality are applied to all investors, irrespective of the size of a country.

All countries are free to decide on how they defend their national security interests. We live in a changing environment and our instruments of response should also be further developed. In this respect, a day-to-day dialogue with strategic partners on security challenges is very important. At the EU level there is an EU-wide regulation on third countries investment screening in strategic sectors, which facilitates the exchange of information among EU members.

– Climate change poses a global threat to peace and prosperity. While not seen as a primary challenge in Lithuania, it certainly has an impact already. How can Lithuania better contribute to tackling this issue?

I would say that there should be more discussions in Lithuania on climate change and the ways to implement this global agenda at home. It is a big mistake to think that global challenges will not affect Lithuania. We cannot stand as passive onlookers while many other countries are working towards sustainable growth and circular economy. As we seek change, we need to streamline the efforts of all authorities, business

companies and the general public. Therefore, I intend to propose that all new legislation should be evaluated in the light of its effects on climate change.

Lithuania has already made a commitment to significantly reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases by 2030. It means that we will have to increasingly rely on renewables. As the EU works to words creating a climate-neutral economy by 2050, we will have to phase out fossil fuels almost completely.

Although Lithuania ranks third in the Climate Change Performance Index 2019, we cannot relax. Changes must be continuous, long-term and targeted at economic growth. If Lithuania is able to come up with successful green economy innovations, it will give us a big competitive advantage. We are a small country, which makes us quick and effective. ■



I would say that there should be more discussions on climate change and the ways to implement this global agenda at home. It is a big mistake to think that global challenges will not affect Lithuania.

NATO: THE PAST, THE PRESENT, THE FUTURE

LORD ROBERTSON OF PORT ELLEN

When I brought down my gavel at the 2002 NATO Summit in Prague, I was making history but no ordinary history. The invitation that day to join the Alliance was not just to seven new countries, four of them former members of the Warsaw Pact, but we were also inviting another three countries once constituent parts of the Soviet Union.

The Baltic States were always likely to be a special case. Their history, geography and population mix meant that they were very different from the other ex-Communist countries. Their application had to be handled with great care and sensitivity. It took up a lot of my time and attention.

NATO enlargement had been a controversial subject for a decade – and not just in the Eastern part of Europe. Many seasoned commentators in the West had raised doubts about the Alliance's ability to absorb new ex-Communist countries without losing its essential cohesiveness and unity of purpose. They saw its military effectiveness and political potency being diluted by countries benefiting from, but not contributing to, collective defence. They were to be out-argued but their warnings had to be heeded.

In the East the controversy was sharp. President Yeltsin and his old guard saw NATO enlargement as a direct challenge. They ignored the benefits to Russia – a peaceful, stable Western neighbourhood unresentful at historical Soviet domination and instead fulminated about encroachment. The NATO response was to pull Russia closer and inside the new structures to reassure them.

Now NATO at its seventieth anniversary can examine the balance sheet and see if the sceptics were right or wrong. The universal verdict is that they were very wrong and that the Alliance is alive and well and still as relevant as it was on its foundation. Not only that, it has been tested on several occasions, its effectiveness put under strain and its cohesiveness questioned. It has passed every time.

That pass has not always been easy nor inexpensive. Tensions alive in 1949 are still there pushing at unity. Initial worries, expressed in the fraught debates in the US Senate in 1949 over the North Atlantic Treaty, were always subordinated to a visible enemy and credible adversary. But a transatlantic alliance born out of a fear of attack and invasion acquired an iron sense of purpose which

LORD ROBERTSON

The Right Honorable Lord Robertson of Port Ellen was the tenth Secretary General of the



North Atlantic Treaty Organisation between 1999 and 2004. He presided over the dramatic restructuring and enlargement of the Alliance to Central and Eastern Europe. He was the first leader of NATO to invoke the Article V mutual defence provision, responding to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States. Lord Robertson also served as UK Defence Secretary from 1997 to 1999.

IN SHORT

- The countries who adapted themselves – often painfully and expensively – to conform to the standards of a full Alliance member expected to gain full membership itself. The journey to a reformed military, to civic and judicial reform, to sustainable political institutions and to resolving neighbourhood conflicts was accelerated by the carrot of full membership. Without that carrot – and a few well deployed sticks too, it is unlikely that the remarkable peaceful transition would have taken place.
- The concept of collective security underpinned the foundation of NATO. Today's challenges and threats may be different, but they still represent a collective danger.
- After seventy years NATO is as strong and relevant as it ever was. It still is the cornerstone of the defence of its member states. We all have a right to celebrate the most successful defence alliance ever.

wavered only momentarily when the common threat disintegrated at the end of the eighties.



IMAGE: US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, and the Prime Minister of Lithuania, Algirdas Brazauskas, during the Accession Ceremony for Seven New NATO Members in 2004 in Washington D.C., US (© NATO)



Now NATO at its seventieth anniversary can examine the balance sheet and see if the sceptics were right or wrong. The universal verdict is that they were very wrong and that the Alliance is alive and well and still as relevant as it was on its foundation.

When that particular glue weakened on the demise of the USSR there were many who questioned the role of the Alliance in the post-Cold War world. Then the penny dropped that the transition from Communism to Capitalism and from Warsaw Pact military to civilian controlled armies need not be a peaceful process. If forecasts of revenge, retribution, even revolution were not to be the aftermath of decades of dictatorship then perhaps the only agent of peaceful change could be NATO.

Hence the North Atlantic Consultative Council, the Partnership for Peace, the Euro-Atlantic Partner-

ship Council and the other organisations hastily established to help with the transition. A new unity of purpose was added to the adhesive of collective defence – and NATO was once again seen as the premier security organization.

There was then an inevitable logic in progressing those countries into a bigger NATO adapted to fit the new post-Communist age. The countries who adapted themselves – often painfully and expensively – to conform to the standards of a full Alliance member expected to gain full membership itself. The journey to a reformed military, to civic and judicial reform,

to sustainable political institutions and to resolving neighbourhood conflicts was accelerated by the carrot of full membership. Without that carrot – and a few well deployed sticks too, it is unlikely that the remarkable peaceful transition would have taken place.

The big enlargement in 1999 taking in Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic was a big step for the organization and the countries involved. Precious few changes had been made to the structure of NATO since its foundation fifty years before. Many leaders had tried to get consensus on reforms and internal updating, but they had always failed. NATO had demanded – and forced reforms to aspirant members but had always retreated on its own modernization. The system creaked.

It took the shock of military challenges – in Bosnia, Kosovo, North Macedonia, 9/11, and Afghanistan – to establish that without reform to structures and working practices then the pessimists of the nineties would have been proved right.

It is striking that it was the old Cold War Alliance of nations which in 1995 took on the role of protecting the Muslims of Bosnia from the genocidal behaviour of their neighbours.

Not a shot was fired in anger in NATO's first forty years and its first military engagement – in Bosnia, and then in Kosovo – was to save Muslims from their enemies. It is an irony which we under-sell in the new propaganda battle being waged against us today by radical jihadists.

But it was these military engagements, in many ways forced on NATO because there was no one

else to act, which reminded the world of NATO's utility but also how precious it was. But the world has changed again. The old certainties don't hold as they did before. Our own domestic politics have been shaken up with the rise of populism and nationalism. And our adversaries too have chosen new and sometimes unfamiliar ways to challenge us. The Alliance and its members have to catch up and respond. Quickly.

In conventional and, indeed, nuclear terms we out-match any potential adversary. We breast-beat ourselves and we, of course, need to do more, but we out-spend and out-power anyone who might threaten our existence. That's why they have chosen new instruments and focused on the soft underbelly of our democratic societies. Cyber, social media, corruption,

propaganda, election tampering, organised crime – these are the instruments of choice and not just of disruption but also of domination and influence. We are way behind the curve on countering these current influences.

Of course, many of these challenges are the remit of national governments and international agencies and not just of NATO. But where these instruments of smart warfare coincide with national and collective security then we have to find collective solutions to defend our countries. The concept of collective security underpinned the foundation of NATO. Today's challenges and threats may be different, but they still represent a collective danger.

NATO is already making moves to close the gap with the disrupters. Focus on cyber and hybrid



IMAGE: President George W. Bush talks with NATO Secretary General Lord George Robertson at the beginning of the North Atlantic Council Summit in Prague, Czech Republic, Thursday, Nov. 21, 2002. (White House, Paul Morse)



We must also address obvious grievances where they exist in our countries – and sort them before our adversaries have a chance to exploit them.

warfare is already very much on the agenda. More thinking is going on to make defences robust and up-to-date but there is still a hill to climb. That soft underbelly has to be a priority. Interference in elections, overt propaganda, corruption and the exploitation of new media channels – all of them need to be addressed and by every country.

We must also address obvious grievances where they exist in our countries – and sort them before our adversaries have a chance to exploit them. Inside democracies there can be many unhappy people with a sense of injustice; they are free fodder for those who sow dissent. Where political parties can be secretive about funding, rest assured the coffers will be filled. Where a blind eye is given to infrastructure financing, be confident that non-friends will be there to help – and to exact a serious price. No battle tank can defend us against insidious subversion.

After seventy years NATO is as strong and relevant as it ever was and still is the cornerstone of the defence of its member states. We all have a right to celebrate the



IMAGE: NATO allies in military exercises (Photo by Sgt. David Turner)



IMAGE: President George W. Bush greets Lithuanians in person at the Rotuse Square in the center of Vilnius, Lithuania, Nov. 23, 2002. “This is a great day in the history of Lithuania, in the history of the Baltics, in the history of NATO, and in the history of freedom,” said President Bush in his remarks. “And I have the honor of sharing this message with you: We proudly invite Lithuania to join us in NATO, the great Atlantic Alliance.” (White House, Paul Morse)

most successful defence alliance ever. But to ensure that it remains a success for the next seventy years we need to invest now in

its future strength. Because its success is the main guarantee of the safety of our people and of a generation to come. 🇺🇸

BEN HODGES TALKS ON NATO, DEFENSE SPENDING AND SECURITY CHALLENGES

Ben Hodges visited the Eastern Europe Studies Centre in Vilnius in August 2019. During a round-table discussion he shared his thoughts on numerous issues concerning regional and international security.

Here are key excerpts from an hourlong conversation on seven different topics.

THE US NEEDS ALLIES

“The United States does not have enough capacity to do everything by itself. In a strategic sense, we can’t patrol the Strait of Hormuz, South China Sea, deal with Africa, deal with Yemen, deal with Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, deter Russia and compete with China all at the same time. Hence, we need allies. All our best and most reliable allies are in Europe, as well as Canada and Australia.

It is understandable that some of the President Donald Trump’s tweets may be confusing; however, facts on the ground are that the number of US troops in Europe has increased. Moreover, the support of the Congress for our European allies is as strong as it’s ever been. The administration has a sense of urgency about this European pillar becoming strong enough. This is because if we do get locked into a conflict

with China of some sort, then the European pillar will still be strong enough to deter Russia.”

DEFENSE SPENDING

“Every president since Harry Truman has asked for our allies to do their share. This is not new. What is new is that the current administration has put some teeth into this and done it in a way that is disruptive; and maybe it has encouraged some countries to do their part, but in Germany it had an opposite effect, so I am unsure this was the best approach. A lot of people with whom I met during my recent trip to the United States wondered why the Germans don’t do more. So, there’s frustration with how Germany has an incredible pension system and quality of life, yet they have a military that’s at a level of readiness where even people of the Green Party, the Left Party and the Social Democratic Party there are embarrassed about. Something about political will has to change.

However, I think it’s unfortunate that the 2% has become the dominant metric. And I think there are so many other ways to look at burden sharing and contributions. If you think about

BEN HODGES

Lieutenant General (Retired) Frederick Benjamin “Ben” Hodges is the Pershing Chair in Strategic Studies at the Center for European Policy Analysis. He graduated from the United States Military Academy in May 1980 and was commissioned in the Infantry. After his first assignment as an Infantry Lieutenant in Germany, he commanded Infantry units at the Company, Battalion and Brigade levels as the 101st Airborne Division and in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. He also served in an operational assignment as Director of Operations, Regional Command South, in Kandahar, Afghanistan and in a variety of Joint and Army Staff positions. His last military assignment was as Commander, United States Army Europe, from 2014 to 2017.



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IN SHORT

- All our best and most reliable allies are in Europe, as well as Canada and Australia.
- Everyone knows about NATO’s Article 5, but Article 3 is maybe the most important. It says that “All the parties will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attacks”. In other words: you will do your own part to defend yourself.
- Lithuania has earned a place of respect in the administration and in the Congress. And Lithuania has been a leader in that for years. Not just the ability of the men and women in uniform in Afghanistan and elsewhere, but also in terms of modernization efforts. Lithuania has earned a place of respect in the administration and in the Congress.

Germany, Germany was the first country to employ NATO Enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) battlegroup.

That puts pressure on the remaining allies. That was important. Germany has offered the Baltic Maritime Component Command in Rostock. We needed headquarters that wake up in the morning and smell Baltic air, help unify and coordinate efforts in Sweden, Finland as well as in the 6 NATO countries around the Baltic Sea for exercises, and have a common maritime air picture. Germany has offered that.

The things that Germany has done: more than 400.000 soldiers from the Bundeswehr have deployed outside of Germany on operations since unification, mandated by the Bundestag. I think it would be useful if the president of Lithuania, for example, or the ministers would tell their American counterparts “we need the Germans.”

Hence, I certainly don't evaluate allies based on defense spending only. For me, the important question is whether they will be there for the fight. Whether I can trust that if there is a Lithuanian unit, a German unit, or a Polish Unit in my area, they will do what they say they would do. That's number one criterion. Number two is why is it to our advantage to be in their alliance? Obviously – it's access, it's the ability to have troops, to have an air base. We depend so much on bases in Spain, Italy, and Greece – NATO bases. It's essential for our national security strategy.”

NATO'S COHESION AND RESPONSE TO AGGRESSION IN UKRAINE

“Everyone knows about NATO's Article 5, but Article 3 is maybe the most important. It says that “All the parties will maintain and develop their individual and collective ca-

capacity to resist armed attacks”. In other words: you will do your own part to defend yourself.

Therefore, it is not the size of the armies or the navies that matters; it is the cohesion, 29 nations – soon to be 30 – comprising this phalanx, a virtual phalanx, of confidence and trust. For instance, I think there should be more American soldiers in Europe – I'd like to see thousands more American troops in Poland. But don't take them from Germany to put them in Poland, because that would be seen by everybody as a punishment of Germany for not spending more on defense. I believe that undermines the cohesion of the alliance. That's where United States has to continue to play a critical role, not by itself, but to make clear that United States is committed, that if Lithuania was ever attacked, you hit the full wave of every American in Europe. Cohesion is the one thing that the Russians fear the most.

The second theme is a need for coherence on NATO's eastern flank. The alliance correctly responded in 2014 after Russia's invasion of Ukraine with immediate assurance efforts, immediately deploying troops in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Poland in order to communicate to our allies and to the Russians that we were paying attention and cared about this. Such a big institution, a coalition of 27 nations at the time, responded so fast to create the NATO force integration units, to create rapid reaction forces, to create new command structures, to make a commitment to increase the defense spending.

Then at the Warsaw summit – maybe one of the most important summits in the history of the alliance – the alliance members com-

mitted to deploying the Enhanced Forward Presence battle groups and then Germany was the first nation to say it would deploy an EFP battle group, a multinational battle group, in Lithuania. The model how Germany and Lithuania have made this work has set the standard for everybody else. And the fact that Germany was the first to do it put pressure on everybody else. If you look on your map, in the Baltic region, we have a strategic situation with six NATO countries, two very good partner countries, and then Russia. And because of Denmark and Sweden and Norway, we control access in and out of the Baltic Sea.”

LITHUANIA

“The support of the Congress for our European allies is as strong as it's ever been. Lithuania has earned a place of respect in the administration and in the Congress. Everyone knows about NATO's Article 5, but Article 3 is maybe the most important. It says that “All the parties will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attacks”. In other words: you will do your own part to defend yourself. And Lithuania has been a leader in that for years. Not just in terms of the ability of the men and women in uniform in Afghanistan and elsewhere, but also in terms of modernization efforts.

If Lithuania or any ally were asked, “Would you contribute to a coalition? Would you contribute to an alliance mission or a coalition mission?” I think the instinct would be to say, “The US has been there for us, we want to show solidarity,” and I am grateful for that. But I want to ask: what's the mission? What would you want for us to do? It's not good enough to deploy

your young men and women and spend all that money just to be in solidarity. The defense minister has to be able to articulate to your parliament: this is the mission, this is why it's in our interest – either directly or indirectly – as Lithuanians, to deploy somewhere.”

BELARUS

“Today there are no Russian ground forces based in Belarus and that's to everybody's advantage. So, it seems that President Lukashenko is able to tell the Russians, as I heard him say publicly: “Thank you, we can defend ourselves.” That's our advantage.

I read recently that President Lukashenko is looking to buy oil from the United States, he wants to diversify or change his total dependence on Russia for energy. Maybe there are some other ways to give some sort of leverage. And certainly, putting an American ambassador back to Belarus, which I hope will happen within a year or so, would be an important part of trying to find that leverage. The strategic, most important aim, however, is to ensure there are no Russian troops sitting within Belarus.”

RUSSIAN STRATEGY

“There is a reason why Russians talk about nuclear weapons all the time – it is so that every foreign minister, defense minister, prime minister, member of parliament, member of Congress thinks that, they would actually use nuclear weapons and that they practice nuclear scenarios and all the related exercises. They don't make up some artificial locations: they talk about Warsaw, they name actual cities in the West as targets. Then you have their ambassadors to Denmark, a country that will



IMAGE: Russia and Belarus may enter a new phase of relationship (© Пресс-служба Президента России / Press Service of the President of Russia)

place a radar on their ships that will be part of the missile defense system, stating, “If you join any missile defense system of NATO, we have no choice; you are now our nuclear target.” Or “Romania, you have Aegis; you're going to be a nuclear target.” So this is all part of it.

If they enter Lithuania or Latvia, and if the alliance does not respond, then they have in effect achieved a strategic objective, which is to undermine the cohesion of the alliance and people will no longer believe that all the other 28 would show up. This scenario does not require a huge military force and it would result in undermining the alliance – and that's the strategic objective.”

FURTHER NATO ENLARGEMENT

“Georgia should be invited to join NATO. Probably that should have happened years ago. They have nothing left to prove. I believe that security and stability would increase as opposed to what some of my German friends would say, asking how would we defend Georgia. That's not the point. I think with Georgia as a member of the alliance, you won't see Russian troops continuing to try

and expand the borders of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. This would be especially relevant if Georgia becomes the economic portal that it could be with a deep-water seaport in Anaklia, which would dramatically change its economic and political situation. Then European countries would become far more interested in the security of Georgia as well. This is why the Russians are doing their best to prevent this port from ever opening.

Ukraine is not ready to join. I would not be against eventual membership, but they have work to do: number one is the transparency of their defense budget.

It is currently completely opaque. For comparison, there's no way that the Lithuanian Parliament, for example, would tolerate the Lithuanian Ministry of Defense having a secret budget. So, I think achieving transparency, as well as conducting a serious, unbiased audit of the defense industry has to be done first.

Furthermore, while they mean to rebuild their navy, they also need the facilities to do maintenance and to form a culture of maintenance on ships. Failing this, the navy would just act as a massive siphon of funding.” ■

TOWARDS A EUROPEAN ARMY?

CYRILLE BRET

Delusion, propaganda or historical vision? The European Army has long been considered a dream or a nightmare. Scepticism on this issue is widespread: how could Europe unite all the armed forces across the continent? Europe is not a single nation. And the Union is not a state. European strategic sovereignty remains to be created and pacifism is dominant in many Member States.

Yet, several recent events favour the (re-)emergence of an ambitious military project for the Union. First, the threats are now clearly perceived as common security challenges: the wave of ISIS attacks on European soil, the annexation of Crimea, the build-up of the Russian military from the Arctic Ocean to the Black Sea via the Baltic Sea, the presence of the Chinese Navy on the Mediterranean, all those evolutions are identified as military risks in Madrid, in Warsaw, in Athens and in Paris. Second, political will: the German PM, the French President and also the former and the new Presidents of the European Commission have been making the case for a Real European Common Defence i.e. for an Army. Third, the need of a common procurement policy is becoming more obvious now that

the US ally urges all the European states to comply with the 2% GDP target dedicated to the Defence Budget.

What could transform the ideal into reality?

IN SEARCH OF LIFE INSURANCE

In November 2018, at the outset of the electoral campaign for the 2019 European elections, the French President, backed by Angela Merkel, called for the creation of a European army. Was it a typo or a mistake? No! The German and French leaders only expressed a deeply rooted conviction and a vision. They revived the spirit of the Union's Founding Fathers. At the end of WWII, peace in Europe seemed impossible. Today, the project of a European Army seems preposterous. Let us do it then! Here is a new frontier for the Continent!

Nowadays, rather than needing internal pacification, Europe needs a strong shield against external risks. In Syria and in the Balkans, in the Baltic Sea as well as in the Mediterranean Sea, European sovereignty is at stake. The American alliance and NATO remain and are to remain a solid pillar for many Member States. Yet, the Trump administration,

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IN SHORT

- Nowadays, rather than needing internal pacification, Europe needs a strong shield against external risks.
- However, in matters of Europe and peace, scepticism is a self-fulfilling prophecy. The "somnambulists" of 1914, according to the expression of Stephen Clark, triggered up WWI because they believed it to be inescapable. Not the opposite. Today, the time has come to take seriously into account the founding utopia of Europe: pacifism. But it is now essential to know how to defend it, including by arms.
- Europe can only perish from an excess of realism. She cannot die of an excess of ambition.

following the Obama Presidency, clearly voiced the US stance on European security. The main direct security challenge for the US is the People's Republic of China, not the Russian Federation. Moreover, the European nations are to protect themselves. It is only a question of political will and fiscal resources. Hence the 2% GDP target for the European budgets. Poland, Romania and the Baltic



IMAGE: French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel are supportive of the idea of a European Army

States have reached that level. It is now the turn for Germany, France, etc. Even from the US perspective, NATO can no longer be the only life insurance of the European Member States.

The European army is no longer a taboo or a utopia: it is becoming a program to be implemented for the next European term, under the auspices of the Von der Leyen Presidency.

CONTINENTAL STRATEGY AND EUROPEAN SOLDIERS

The European army is no longer a taboo nor a scarecrow, it is a salutary ambition. It must be treated

as such by the citizens, the military and the leaders of the Union.

The conditions to be met are difficult. But they are now well identified. An army is first and foremost a shared vision of the enemies and the allies. For more than ten years, the member states of the Union have gradually merged their visions of the world. Their national white papers converge on a common definition of their security stakes: terrorist attacks, Chinese incursion, resurgence of Russian power, encroachment of sovereignty in cyberspace, etc. Despite all the criticism of the idea, the Europeans are not far from a com-

mon definition of our strategic interests. The next Commission has to set up a European White Paper on the continental risks.

An army relies also upon a complete and solid defence and industrial defence base. Several recent initiatives are moving in this direction. The creation of a European Defence Fund prepares the financing of technological innovation on the Union's budget. In modern warfare, technological advances give tactical superiority. In addition to that, the creation of the European intervention initiative is taking over, alongside the Union, the torch of rapid reaction forces.

Yet an army is mostly a matter of soldiers. Here again, the European army can rely on the bi-national battalions (French-German), the battle groups or the more than thirty operations conducted in the transnational alliance across the planet. European soldiers operate together, in Mali and on the Baltic. European officers know each other and work together.

SKEPTICS ARE RIGHT ... BUT ONLY FOR TODAY

Irony is easy for sceptics talking about the chimera of a European army. The objections are numerous and solid against the very possibility of a European army.

Many states privilege the Atlantic Alliance to ensure their security by buying American equipment (like Sweden, Romania or Poland), by welcoming American bases (like Greece or Romania) and by endorsing the concept of "framework nation". At a time when the United Kingdom wishes to leave the Union, France is well isolated in its ambitions concerning European defence initiatives. The defence industries are fragmented between



IMAGE: While the issue of European army is controversial, history unites both sides of the Atlantic. First Lady, Melania Trump; US President, Donald J. Trump; French President, Emmanuel Macron; and French First Lady, Brigitte Macron, with a member of the American Battle Monuments Commission study a map of the D-Day landings at an Omaha beach overlook during the commemoration ceremony of the 75th anniversary of D-Day at the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial, June 6, 2019 (US Army, Cpl. Kevin Sterling Payne)

many actors still tempted by a non-cooperative stance at home and abroad. All those objections are well documented and the tune is often played in Paris as well as in Berlin.

However, in matters of Europe and peace, scepticism is a self-fulfilling prophecy. The “sommnambulists” of 1914, according to the expression of Stephen Clark, triggered up WWI because they believed it to be inescapable. Not the opposite. Today, the time has come to take seriously into account the founding utopia of Europe: pacifism. But it is now essential to know how to defend it, including by arms.

CEMENTING CONTINENTAL SOLIDARITY

An army is more than a military instrument, a set of disciplined and trained soldiers equipped with sophisticated equipment. For any nation, an army is the living symbol of collective solidarity: to have an army is to be ready to die for one another in order to preserve institutions, principles, and a way of life. This state of mind is currently emerging: Estonian soldiers are engaged in Mali alongside the French forces; French, German and British soldiers act to protect the Baltic States, etc. “To die

for the King of Poland” always seemed pointless. But fighting for the preservation of European nations is much less so.

A European army is neither a useful chimera nor an electoral slogan. It is an indispensable ambition for peace on our continent. And for its sovereignty on the international scene. Europe can only perish from an excess of realism. She cannot die of an excess of ambition. Julien Benda put it well in the Speech to the European Nation: in Europe and for peace purposes, the ideal is realistic. ■

THE SECURITY OF SMALL STATES: THE BALTICS AND US INTERESTS

BRIAN WHITMORE

The document that defined the United States' policy toward the Baltic States during the Soviet occupation was a bold statement of principle that resonates to this day.

But the truth is, the 1940 Welles Declaration, which strongly condemned and refused to recognize the Soviet annexation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, should never have been necessary in the first place. We never should have gotten to that point.

As Moscow became increasingly aggressive toward the Baltics in 1939, bullying them into signing "mutual assistance pacts" and forcing them to host Soviet garrisons, the United States was not engaged. In late 1939, a Latvian minister visiting Washington told State Department official Loy W. Henderson that Riga was using all its available resources to avoid being swallowed up by its larger Eastern neighbor.

When the Red Army marched into Tallinn, Riga, and Vilnius in June 1940, the world was distracted as all eyes were on Nazi Germany's invasion of France. The next month, in July 1940, the United States reacted to the Soviet occupation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania with the Welles Declaration, a strong and forceful state-

ment that rejected the Soviet *de jure* rule over the Baltics. But by then, *de facto* Soviet rule was already a *fait accompli*.

This history is relevant today as Vladimir Putin's Kremlin regime becomes increasingly revanchist and increasingly menacing toward the Baltics. Because as 1939–40 and its aftermath illustrates, when the security of small states is ignored or compromised, large wars that threaten the security of great powers often follow.

And US policy today is designed to make sure this never happens again – both within the context of NATO and bilaterally with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

With NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence, the Western alliance has moved from reassurance to deterrence by deploying forces to the Baltic States and Poland. This tripwire sends a clear message to Moscow that any incursions – hybrid or otherwise – into these countries will engage NATO troops and involve the alliance in any conflict. The so-called "little green men" will not enter the Baltics uncontested.

The United States also currently deploys 6,000 troops across the Baltics and Eastern Europe –

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IN SHORT

- The 1940 Welles Declaration, which strongly condemned and refused to recognize the Soviet annexation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, should never have been necessary in the first place.
- Washington has markedly stepped up its defense cooperation with all three Baltic states since 2014.
- Given the threat from the East, all three Baltic states have argued for more American boots on the ground and following the recent U.S. decision to station more troops in Poland, this may come in the future. But more importantly, unlike in 1939–1940, the fact is that the United States and the European allies are deeply engaged in the Baltics like never before.

Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania – as part of the US Army Europe's Atlantic Resolve mission.

Beyond these deployments, Washington has markedly stepped up its defense cooperation with all three Baltic states since 2014.



As a result, during the US-Baltic Strategic Dialogue in November 2018, April and May 2019, all three Baltic countries signed to bilaterally develop bilateral Defense Cooperation Strategic Roadmaps with the United States. In April 2019, Lithuania was the first Baltic nation to sign a US defense cooperation pact, followed by Latvia and Estonia immediately after.

Since 2014, the United States has sold approximately \$456.7 million worth of US arms and defense services to the Baltic countries and authorized an additional \$353.5 million.

Through security assistance programs like Foreign Military Financing, Washington has contributed more than \$150 million to the Baltic states, enhancing their electronic and hybrid warfare capabilities, border security, and maritime, air domain awareness, as well as NATO interoperability.

Each of the Baltic states receives more than \$1.2 million in assistance through the International Military Education and Training program, which provides for military education and training for mid-level and senior Baltic military officers in the United States.

And in 2017, the United States signed the Defense Coop-



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JULY 23, 1940
No. 354

STATEMENT BY THE ACTING SECRETARY OF STATE,
THE HONORABLE SUMNER WELLES

During these past few days the devious processes whereunder the political independence and territorial integrity of the three small Baltic republics--Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania--were to be deliberately annihilated by one of their more powerful neighbors, have been rapidly drawing to their conclusion.

From the day when the peoples of these republics first gained their independent and democratic form of government the people of the United States have watched their admirable progress in self-government with deep and sympathetic interest.

The policy of this Government is universally known. The people of the United States are opposed to predatory activities no matter whether they are carried on by the use of force or by the threat of force. They are likewise opposed to any form of intervention on the part of one state, however powerful, in the domestic concerns of any other sovereign state, however weak.

These principles constitute the very foundations upon which the existing relationship between the twenty-one sovereign republics of the New World rests.

The United States will continue to stand by these principles, because of the conviction of the American people that unless the doctrine in which these principles are inherent once again governs the relations between nations, the rule of reason, of justice and of law--in other words the basis of modern civilization itself--cannot be preserved.

The United States does not recognize the incorporation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania into the Soviet Union.

IMAGE: The Welles Declaration (<https://ee.usembassy.gov>)

eration Agreements with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. As a result, during the US-Baltic Strategic Dialogue in November 2018 and April and May 2019, all three Baltic countries signed to develop bilateral Defense Cooperation Strategic Roadmaps with the United States. In April 2019, Lithuania was the first Baltic nation to sign a US defense cooperation pact, followed by Latvia and Estonia immediately after.

The "road maps" cover bilateral defense cooperation and lay out the main defense policy objectives between the US and each Baltic country through 2024.

Amid all of this, of course, Russia continues to amass arms and troops in the Western Military District and is continuing to militarize Kaliningrad, deploying missiles and tanks. It uses smugglers and other organized



IMAGE: Maj. Gen. Anthony Carrelli, left, Pennsylvania's Adjutant General, and Lithuanian President, Dalia Grybauskaitė, receive a brief on the Stryker armored fighting vehicle during a visit at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., on March 13, 2019. (US Defense Department)



A world of spheres of influence in which the sovereignty of small nations is negotiable and limited is a dangerous world in which a major war always looms.

crime groups to surveil the borders of all three Baltic States. It famously kidnapped an Estonian law-enforcement officer, Eston Kohver, from Estonian territory in 2015. And it is constantly using disinformation and other hybrid tactics to agitate ethnic Russians in the Baltics.

Given the threat from the East, all three Baltic states have argued for more American boots on the

ground and following the recent US decision to station more troops in Poland, this may come in the future. But more importantly, unlike in 1939–1940, the United States and the European allies are deeply engaged in the Baltics like never before. This time, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are not facing Moscow alone. They are facing them together with NATO and they are facing them with strong bilateral partnerships with the United States.

The defense of the Baltic States is important not only because they are valuable NATO allies. It is important not only because all three are among the seven alliance members who have met their commitment to spend two percent of GDP on defense. And it is important not only because we share common values and because of

the close bond Americans feel with Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians.

It is important because Baltic defense is vital to the United States' own national security. A world of spheres of influence in which the sovereignty of small nations is negotiable and limited is a dangerous world in which a major war always looms. In a rules-based world order, where the security of small states is no less sacrosanct than that of great powers, we are all safer.

As Sumner Welles wrote in July 1940, "the United States will continue to stand by these principles, because of the conviction of the American people that unless the doctrine in which these principles are inherent once again governs the relations between nations, the rule of reason, of justice and of law – in other words, the basis of modern civilization itself – cannot be preserved." ■

THE AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE ON THE RELATIONS WITH CHINA

ROBERT S. SPALDING III

One of the remnants from the Cold War is that incremental gains can be made by totalitarian regimes without triggering a full-blown war. Nuclear weapons still loom large in the deliberations on how to approach nefarious behavior. While there is a tendency to view them as irrelevant anachronisms when discussing policy alternatives, they inevitably must be acknowledged in a crisis between two nuclear-armed opponents. Just by their existence they push competition into less kinetic areas.

The way the Cold War ended informs how the Chinese have chosen to compete. Despite the fears of a great conflagration across the West, the Soviet Union bankrupted itself trying to compete with the Western liberal economic model.

The Post-Cold War world infused the US and the West with a sense of hubris around the model of economic and social development that had triumphed over totalitarianism. However, it didn't change the totalitarians' minds. It merely forced them to change strategy and tactics.

Fortunately for China, the US and the West decided to fully embrace totalitarian regimes wrongly thinking it could change them through globalization, the Internet and the rising wages that would accompany direct investment.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) had a different idea of how a globalized China would function. It effectively engineered a social, economic and political system that can appropriate capital and innovation from the West while stifling the spread of democratic principles domestically and exporting illiberal norms internationally.

The geopolitical manifestations are unmistakable. The EU decision in the Summer of 2017 to not condemn China for human rights violations is the best example of a democratic multi-lateral institution supporting a totalitarian regime.¹ China had essentially used its re-engineered brand of six-sigma fascism² to reorient the international order in a way that benefited China and radically changed the way the international system prioritizes principles.

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IN SHORT

- To solidify the new international order, China needs to effectively export its model in a way that garners widespread adoption beyond the troubled nations in the EU.
- Made in China 2025 and the Belt and Road Initiative combine to solidify this thinking within the multinational corporate system and the development endeavors of OECD nations. By appropriating the technological heights from the West and using it along with non-market based economic, financial and trade behaviors the CCP seeks to enshrine China at the center of the means for global information flows in the 21st century.
- The West's folly has extended to the growth of the Internet, a lawless space which defies the ability of mankind to govern. Precisely because the technology was never designed to be governable. Individual liberty, rule of law, private property and sovereignty all require an enforcement mechanism.

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jun/18/greece-eu-criticism-un-china-human-rights-record>

² A term describing societal engineering that seeks to automate the suppression of society's outliers through the application of technology.

To solidify the new international order, China needs to effectively export its model in a way that garners widespread adoption beyond the troubled nations in the EU. It needs extensive support for favoring economic development over all the other freedoms enshrined in the Atlantic Charter and the UN Charter. This means that “Freedom from Want” is really the only freedom that should be considered universal, and each sovereign nation’s only mandate is to guarantee it at whatever the cost.

Made in China 2025 and the Belt and Road Initiative combine to solidify this thinking within the multinational corporate system and the development endeavors of OECD nations. By appropriating the technological heights from the West and using along with non-market based economic, financial and trade behaviors, the CCP seeks to enshrine China at the center of the means for global information flows in the 21st century.

While oil and human capital were the drivers for colonialism in a pre-globalized construct, the 21st century will usher in the rise of data as a strategic resource. By controlling the systems on which our digital future is built, China is building a commanding fortress from which to use that data to ensure the CCP’s long-term reign.

The West’s folly has extended to the growth of the Internet, a lawless space which defies the ability of mankind to govern. Precisely because the technology was never designed to be governable. Individual liberty, rule of law, private property and sovereignty all require an enforcement mechanism. America’s founders believed the



IMAGE: President Donald J. Trump joins Xi Jinping, President of the People’s Republic of China, at the start of their bilateral meeting Saturday, June 29, 2019, at the G20 Japan Summit in Osaka, Japan (Official White House Photo by Shealah Craighead)

correct system was one in which no single authority could gain ultimate power, and it has stood for over 241 years as a testament to the forethought that went into its writing.

But the Internet is a different sort of domain. First, the physical laws are defined by mankind through the underlying technology. How you interact with data on the internet indicates a system designed for speed, connectedness and resilience rather than security. By allowing for anonymity, it has made governing in the Internet impossible. Because

of the development of machine learning and artificial intelligence, power can accrue to those who can aggregate data.

Here is where the old liberal order meets the efficiently designed new totalitarian order. The liberal laws of the west preclude governments from aggregating the data of their citizens. However, it does not prevent the multi-national corporate sector from doing so, nor does it prevent totalitarian regimes from doing so.

Because liberal democratic countries seek to separate corporate from government behavior this



IMAGE: 5G development remains a contentious issue in US-China relations

allows for large data aggregators to do things that are contrary to the national interest without giving the government the means to reassert the rule of law. Totalitarian regimes are free then to use that same separation and private profit motive to gain assistance from those same technology companies to harness the power of data for their illiberal ends.

This was a truly brilliant observation on the part of CCP strategists and has been effectively

packaged by President Xi as the future of governance. Give us your data, and we'll help you be rich is what Xi was saying at Davos when he proclaimed "a community of common destiny" for all.³ Left unspoken is the inevitable slow erosion of the other freedoms enabled by digitally connected economically powerful belligerent fascist regimes.

5G will usher in the age of data allowing for mass surveillance, targeted influence, and when

influence fails the ability to use machines against their owners. EU efforts like GDPR are no match for this onslaught as it is written in paper and not designed in technology. Thus, getting Huawei out of our networks is a good first step towards protecting democracy, but must be followed by a complete redesign of our underlying digital domain if we want to remain free. ■

³ <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/economy/article/2141099/chinese-president-xi-jinping-stands-globalisation-free-trade>

THE WATERSHED YEAR OF THE PIG IN SINO-LITHUANIAN RELATIONS?

KONSTANTINAS ANDRIJAUSKAS

As the People's Republic of China (PRC) was celebrating its 70th anniversary on October 1, 2019, the Asian country's relationship with Lithuania experienced a downturn probably not seen since its establishment back in 1991. By briefly outlining Chinese interests in Lithuania and events leading up to such a situation, it can be argued that the year 2019 might become a watershed one in a relatively calm history of bilateral relations, as security concerns and normative debates increasingly (out)balance the long-expected but so-far unrealized economic opportunities between the two states. Although these developments might be seen as part of a general trend at both the global and regional (European) levels of analysis, the Lithuanian case has notable peculiarities of its own.

It is worth mentioning that several milestones in Sino-Lithuanian relations had been reached just before 2019. The total volume of bilateral trade had finally passed a symbolically important mark of a billion Euros in 2017. Although Lithuanian exports to China have recently grown faster than imports from it, a huge trade imbalance (189 vs. 855 million Euros, respectively, in 2018) remains a major issue in their economic relationship. In



Although Lithuanian exports to China have recently grown faster than imports from it, a huge trade imbalance (189 vs. 855 million Euros, respectively, in 2018) remains a major issue in their economic relationship.

November 2018, the outgoing president Dalia Grybauskaitė went to Shanghai where she met her Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping and launched the Trade and Investment Forum. Grybauskaitė's first visit to China since attending the 2010 World Expo was most probably made possible by her earlier decision not to meet the visiting Dalai Lama in June 2018, especially considering that they had a "private" meeting back in 2013.

CHINA'S INTERESTS IN LITHUANIA

There are several interrelated reasons behind the Chinese interest in Lithuania. To begin with, as

KONSTANTINAS ANDRIJAUSKAS

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IN SHORT

- The most alarmist perspective interprets the Chinese interest in the region in general and Lithuania in particular as an attempt to target the soft underbelly of both the EU and NATO and pursue the long-term "divide and rule" tactics on the European and even Euro-Atlantic dimensions.
- As the ongoing comprehensive rise of China is primarily driven by economic factors, its interest in Lithuania follows such imperatives and increasingly raises concerns due to their implications for the latter's own competitiveness, prosperity and security.
- China is interested in affecting Lithuania's public and political discourse related to the sensitive topics that it deems to be purely domestic and thus off-limits to foreign countries.

the world's only clear-cut emerging superpower today, China has been naturally increasing its attention to distant regions and countries on the global scale.

Clearly aware of the diplomatic value and potential of small states, the Asian giant included Lithuania into its “16+1” format (“17+1” after Greece’s accession in 2019) of cooperation with the Central and Eastern European countries back in 2012. The Chinese have taken notice of Lithuania’s own unprecedented activism on both the European and global stages in a remarkably sensitive period of 2013–2015 due to its Presidency of the EU Council and non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council. The most alarmist perspective interprets the Chinese interest in the region in general and Lithuania in particular as an attempt to target the soft underbelly of both the EU and NATO and pursue the long-term “divide and rule” tactics on the European and even Euro-Atlantic dimensions. In any case, the establishment of the Chinese state-run Xinhua News Agency’s Lithuanian Office in 2014 might be seen as a part of this willingness to both learn more and affect better the target country.

As the ongoing comprehensive rise of China is primarily driven by economic factors, its interest in Lithuania follows such imperatives and increasingly raises concerns due to their implications for the latter’s own competitiveness, prosperity and security. Following the global trend, Lithuanian manufactured products, technologies and resources are seen by China through their possible role in its own growth story, ranging from increasing the huge country’s notorious food security to serving its openly-expressed ambitions of becoming a high-tech superpower. While the exports of Lithuanian meat and dairy products have yet to achieve their potential, the bilateral economic agenda has gradu-



China has already become one of the largest markets for Lithuanian producers of lasers, while politicians and companies on both sides have expressed an interest in Chinese investment in the country’s emerging fintech and biotech industries. The results thus far are very modest, however, as China’s foreign direct investment in Lithuania failed to reach even 10 million Euros in 2018, and probably remains below 100 million Euros overall, thus being dwarfed by other countries and outstripped by Lithuanian investment in China itself.

ally moved to essentially dual-use topics related to technology and critical infrastructure. China has already become one of the largest markets for Lithuanian producers of lasers, while politicians and companies on both sides have expressed an interest in Chinese investment in the country’s emerging fintech and biotech industries. The results thus far are very modest, however, as China’s foreign

direct investment in Lithuania failed to reach even 10 million Euros in 2018, and probably remains below 100 million Euros overall, thus being dwarfed by other countries and outstripped by Lithuanian investment in China itself.

Lithuania’s geographical position explains Chinese attention to its critical infrastructure, particularly transportation. The seaport of Klaipėda and the Lithuanian Railways have already jointly formed an important supply route for the developing China–Belarus Industrial Park near Minsk, and these two actors are expecting to service more Chinese cargo traffic as part of Beijing’s Belt and Road Initiative that aims to physically connect both sides of Eurasia. However, the willingness by Chinese commercial actors to develop Klaipėda’s seaport and their interest in the ongoing Rail Baltica project has raised some concerns in Lithuania due to these objects’ strategic importance for both national and regional security.

Last but not least, China is interested in affecting Lithuania’s public and political discourse related to the sensitive topics that it deems to be purely domestic and thus off-limits to foreign countries. Although the problem of Tibet has long ago become an uncomfortable but essentially habitual part of the bilateral agenda, Lithuanian diplomats, politicians and public activists have recently made statements on China’s other so-called “core interests” in reaction to Beijing’s escalatory policies regarding most of those cases. Thus, 2019 bore witness to the combination of a normative and security agenda which established the necessary preconditions for the current downturn between Lithuania and China.

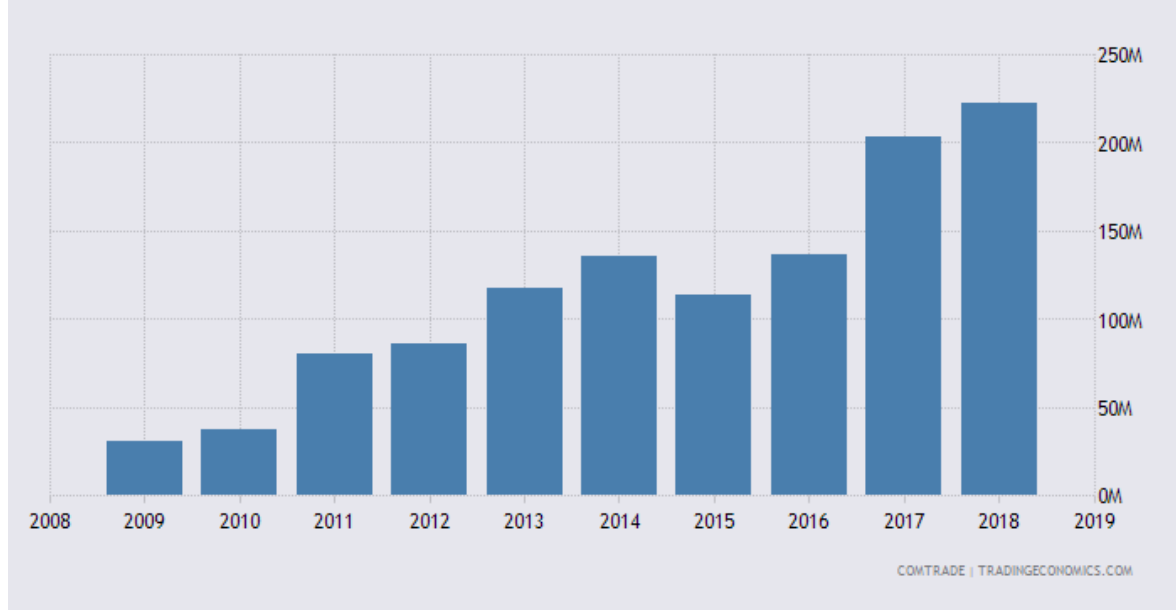


IMAGE: Lithuania's Exports to China stood as US\$222.73 Million in 2018, according to the United Nations COMTRADE database on international trade

ENTER THE YEAR OF THE PIG

On February 5, the auspicious first day of the Year of the Pig in the Chinese lunar calendar, Lithuanian intelligence bodies for the first time identified China's espionage activities as a threat to the country's national security, adding China to the two usual suspects of Russia and Belarus. The lead-up to this assessment had been marked by gradual "securitization" of Chinese increasing presence in the region ever since their first joint naval drills with Russia in the Baltic sea in mid-2017 and neighboring Poland's espionage allegations against Huawei in January 2019.

In July, Lithuania joined 21 other countries in a letter addressed to the UN human rights bodies call-

ing on Beijing to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous Muslims in Xinjiang. On August 23, the 30th anniversary of the much-cherished Baltic Way, several hundreds of Lithuanians that joined hands in solidarity with the protesters in Hong Kong were confronted by a small but vocal group of pro-Beijing counter-demonstrators in downtown Vilnius. Notably, this incident marked the first time that the latter expressed themselves openly in Lithuania. Since the group apparently included Chinese diplomats, the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs responded by summoning the Chinese ambassador, Shen Zhi-fei, and handing him a diplomatic note protesting such a breach of diplomatic practices.

The embassy's unprecedentedly harsh rhetorical reaction to all of these recent incidents was followed by a clumsy call to publicly celebrate the PRC's anniversary with fireworks, displayed without a necessary permission in the streets of Vilnius exactly a month after the August incident. No wonder that it caused an uproar on both the municipal and the national levels with some Lithuanian politicians calling for their colleagues to ignore invitations to the embassy's official reception marking the anniversary. Hence, the Year of the Pig has already proved to be a transformative one for the Sino-Lithuanian relations, though sadly for troublesome reasons. Whether this downturn marks a "new normal" or merely just a temporary aberration, remains to be seen. 🇱🇹

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE “PIVOT TO ASIA: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES”

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania held the international conference “Pivot to Asia: Challenges and Opportunities” at the Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania on 24 and 25 October. For the first time ever, the conference in Lithuania has brought together members of the academic community and independent analysts from more than a dozen of Asian and European countries, the USA and international organizations. Participants discussed ongoing

developments in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as their impact on Europe and Lithuania.

Gitanas Nausėda, President of Lithuania, sent a video message to participants of the conference, which was followed by the greeting address by Linas Linkevičius, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania. Guest speakers included the Hon. Dupthob, Member of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Bhutan, Nina Vaskunlahti, Under-Secretary of State for

External Economic Relations of the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of Finland, and Steve Yates, CEO, DC International Advisory, Former Deputy National Security Advisor to the US Vice President Dick Cheney.

Gitanas Nausėda underlined the importance of maintaining an open dialogue among civilizations and close ties with Asian countries. The President said that “our nations are united by shared goals to better understand each



IMAGE: Map showing countries within the Asia-Pacific region. The definition of the region is fairly ambiguous (© Wiki)

other and work together towards building mutual trust, peace, and general welfare.”

Minister Linas Linkevičius noted that “the Asia-Pacific region has become particularly prominent on the global geopolitical, economic and innovation map. Fifteen years ago, Lithuania became a member of the European Union and NATO. The country also joined the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) and Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF). Thus, we have the right and obligation to build a fruitful and results-oriented dialogue with our Asian partners.”

According to Mr. Dupthob, humanity is at a crossroads. It has never been in a situation like this before. Therefore, the people of Bhutan wish to contribute to global security

with their unique tool to measure progress and development – the Gross National Happiness Index.

Nina Vaskunlahti pointed out challenges facing the world today, such as questioning international institutions and rules, as well as climate change. In order to tackle these problems, we have to see the solutions that are in our hands and find new ones. Connectivity is the way to move forward. A level playing field and partnerships with Asian countries in many shapes and forms will lead us into the future.

Steve Yates noted that it was not going to be easy to adapt to new changes in Asia. The US has developed alliances in the Asia-Pacific region over the last 50 years. Today, China represents a

challenge to these alliances. The rise of Chinese military power challenges the US. Many big issues of tomorrow can be solved in Asia by its free and accountable society.

RECENT GLOBAL POLITICAL TRENDS AFFECTING EAST-WEST RELATIONS

Panelists Stefanie Babst, Head of the Strategic Analysis Capability for NATO Secretary General and for the Chairman of the NATO Military Committee; Jekuk Chang, PhD, President of Dongseo University of the Republic of Korea; Prof. Yoko Iwama from National Institute for Policy Studies of Japan; Assoc. Prof. Gregory Moore, Head of the School of International Relations of University of Nottingham Ningbo, China; Konstan-



IMAGE: Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania Linas Linkevičius (© Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania)



IMAGE: from right to the left: Mr. Steve Yates, CEO, DC International Advisory, Former Deputy National Security Advisor to Vice President Dick Cheney, USA; H.E. Nina Vaskunlahti, Under-Secretary of State for External Economic Relations of the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of Finland; the Hon. Mr. Dupthob, Member of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Bhutan; Moderator Prof. Mindaugas Jurkynas, Faculty of Political Science and Diplomacy, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania (© Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania)

tinus Andrijauskas, PhD, Vilnius University Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Lithuania; and Giedrius Česnakas, PhD, General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania, discussed prospects for NATO-China cooperation, global developments in East Asia, Japan-Europe cooperation, trends in China-US and China-Russia relations, and China's interactions with other countries against a backdrop of the emerging world order. Prof. Mindaugas Jurkynas from the Faculty of Political Science and Diplomacy, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania, moderated panel discussions.

Stefanie Babst underlined that

NATO was no stranger in Asia-Pacific. NATO has long-standing partnerships with Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea that date back to the 90s. As a regional multilateral organization, NATO has always cared about the observation of norms and regulations. There is a growing recognition by NATO members that China cannot be ignored.

Jekuk Chang addressed the concept of moving towards a “new normal” in East Asia. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, a multipolar world has emerged. The US is a preeminent global power. The features of the “new normal” include unpredictability and

inconsistency. The rise of China and tensions between Japan and South Korea are also part of the “new normal”.

Yoko Iwama presented the Japanese approach to the Indo-Pacific and prospects for Japan-Europe cooperation. Shinzo Abe's government is following the path of value-oriented diplomacy. Japan's foreign and security policy aims at advancing a free and open Indo-Pacific region. Japan and the EU share a similar approach to the development of connectivity between Asia and Europe.

Gregory Moore explored the challenges of China-US relations.



IMAGE: from right to left: Prof. Yoko Iwama from the National Institute for Policy Studies of Japan; Mr. Jekuk Chang, PhD, President of Dongseo University of the Republic of Korea; Ms. Stefanie Babst, Head of the Strategic Analysis Capability for NATO Secretary General and for the Chairman of the NATO Military Committee (© Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania)

He emphasized a lack of agreement between the US and China on the concept of foreign policy. China believes that the US is encircling and containing it. Thus, there is no ready solution to the Sino-American trust deficit.

Konstantinas Andrijauskas focused on the developments in Russia-China relations. Russia has indeed turned to Asia since 2014. However, the Sino-centric character of the Asian vector in Russia's foreign policy failed to diminish, as the country struggled to provide a viable alternative to its relations with the West in the face of increasing pressure from China.

Giedrius Česnakas illustrated China's growing power by the Chinese concept of Tianxia (天下) or "all under heaven". It defines the international system as a system where states do not possess

sovereignty and borders of states are irrelevant. Furthermore, there is no equality among states, as the world order is hierarchic.

GLOBAL ECONOMIC DYNAMICS AND CHALLENGES

Panelists Romana Vlahutin, Ambassador-at-Large for Connectivity (EEAS); Masanori Nishi, Japan's former Vice-Minister of Defense; Andy Lim, Chairman of Tembusu Partners, Honorary Consul General of Lithuania to Singapore; Nortautas Statkus, PhD, Head of Research Centre of the General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania; Arseny Sivitsky, Director of Center for Strategic and Foreign Policy Studies, Belarus; and Dmytro Yefremov, analyst from the Centre for International Studies at the Diplomatic Academy of Ukraine

under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, addressed issues related to Asia-Europe connectivity, geopolitical trends in Asia, regional dynamics in East Asia, Southeast Asia and the Baltics, relations of Belarus and Ukraine with China, and their strategic considerations. Prof. Mindaugas Jurkynas from the Faculty of Political Science and Diplomacy, Vytautas Magnus University, moderated the discussions.

In the opening address, Romana Vlahutin presented the EU's Connectivity Strategy with rules-based connectivity at its core. The second-largest economy in the world – the EU – has huge resources to improve connectivity between Asia and Europe. In addition, the EU is capable to deal with common economic and political challenges in Europe and Asia.

Masanori Nishi shared his insights into current geopolitical trends in the Indo-Pacific region. The US has remained the region's dominant military power since the end of the Second World War. The Indo-Pacific has been turning into an engine for global economic growth since 1980s. Japan has been a key driver of these economic developments. Moreover, the rise of China and India has brought about key changes in regional and global politics.

Andy Lim highlighted the growing importance of China and its relations with countries in South-east Asia. In this current period of turbulence, the world is embroiled in trade wars. Recent years have witnessed the rise of populism as well as exacerbated racial and cultural divisions. Trade wars have put state leaders in a fix.

Nortautas Statkus presented the interests of China in the Baltic Sea. China seeks to gain secure access to the Baltic Sea to ensure better connectivity with Northern European countries. Scandinavia is dubbed the gateway to the Arctic. Thus, it is very important for Lithuania to think about striking the right balance among economic gains, national security and geopolitical considerations.

Arseny Sivitsky focused on Belarus-China relations in the new geopolitical environment. China sees Belarus as its gateway to the European market. China has paid much more attention to Belarus since the 2014 events in Crimea, Ukraine. The country also takes particular interest in the development of the Great Stone Industrial Park outside Minsk. China is ready to play the role of a security provider for Belarus.

Dmytro Yefremov spoke about the strategic cooperation between China and Ukraine. Ukraine declared a strategic partnership with China in 2011. The country also joined China's Belt and Road Initiative and expects benefits from its participation.

CULTURAL EXCHANGE: A SOURCE OF STRATEGIC ADVANCEMENT OR AN INSTRUMENT OF SOFT POWER?

Panelists included Anupama Sekhar, Director of Culture Department of Asia – Europe Foundation (video); Assoc. Prof. Asun Lopez Varela from Complutense University of Madrid and Mykolas Romeris University; Vidya Shankar Aiya, PhD, political scientist, Indian journalist, Jurgis Vilčinskas, Deputy Head of Division for Strategic Communication



IMAGE: from the right to the left Mr Andy Lim, Chairman of Tembusu Partners, Honorary Consul-General of Lithuania to Singapore; H. E. Romana Vlahutin, Ambassador-at-Large for Connectivity, European External Action Service; Mr Masanori Nishi, former Vice-Minister of Defence of Japan (© Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania)



IMAGE: Voting in Ukraine (© OSCE Parliamentary Assembly)

of EEAS; and Amb. *István Kovács*, Senior Expert of NATO Strategic Communications Center of Excellence. They discussed issues related to Asia-Europe scientific and cultural dialogue, the significance of cross-cultural communication in Asia-Europe relations, international relations in the age of social media, the EU public diplomacy in the Asian Century, and the Far East from the Western

perspective. Assoc. Prof. Virginijus Valentinavičius, Dean of Institute of Communication of Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania, moderated the discussions. The panel was organized in cooperation with Mykolas Romeris University.

In the opening address, Prof. Inga Žalėnienė, PhD, the Rector of Mykolas Romeris University, stressed the sig-

nificance of cultural exchange in today's world. In the context of the increasing pace of globalization and technological advance, cultural exchange has become routine in the 21st century. It also has an undeniable effect upon the work of national and international institutions.

Laimonas Talat-Kelpša, Chancellor of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, former Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania to India and Diana Mickevičienė, Director of Latin America, Africa, Asia and Pacific Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, summed up the discussions. According to Talat-Kelpša, Lithuania needs to reflect more broadly on how to integrate into the narrative that is being developed between Asia and the West. Mickevičienė noted that Asia was no longer an exotic entity for Lithuania. It is already here. In conclusion, expertise on Asia and active engagement with this region are essential. ■



IMAGE: President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and his wife Olena, voting at the extraordinary elections of people's deputies of Ukraine (© Ukraine Presidential Office, Mykola Lazarenko)

LITHUANIAN DIPLOMACY IN THE DIGITAL AGE: CLOSING THE FOREIGN POLICY GAP

CORNELIU BJOLA AND RYTIS PAULAUSKAS

By expanding its digital presence in the network of influential and engaging social media, actively operating on multiple platforms (Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, LinkedIn, Instagram), and supporting carefully crafted strategies of digital communication, the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has managed – in a rather short period of time – to distinguish itself as one of the most innovative members of a relatively small club of digital diplomatic powerhouses. According to the 2018 Twiplomacy study,¹ the Lithuanian MFA ranks sixth among the best digitally connected organisations and shares the platform with globally influential foreign services such as the European External Action Service (EEAS), the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs.

A capacity for strong adaptive leadership, coupled with an organisational culture open to innovation and experimentation, as well as commitment to delivering ambitious foreign policy goals in a complex geopolitical context are

IN SHORT

- A capacity for strong adaptive leadership, coupled with an organisational culture open to innovation and experimentation, as well as a commitment to delivering ambitious foreign policy goals in a complex geopolitical context are the key ingredients accounting for this performance.
- In other words, for digital diplomacy to advance into the next stage, it must enhance its strategic value primarily by ensuring that online influence is successfully converted into offline influence of relevance for foreign policy.
- Lithuanian digital diplomacy can make to its foreign policy is to help advance the country's interests and to protect them when they are challenged.

the key ingredients accounting for this performance. That being said, the broader question is: how can digital diplomacy contribute more effectively to Lithuania's foreign policy, both in terms of advancing the country's interests and in protecting them when they are challenged.

CORNELIU BJOLA

received his PhD in Political Science from the University of Toronto (2007) and previously went on to teach and conduct at McMaster University and the University of Toronto. He was a research fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and a Visiting Fellow at the Australian Defense Force Academy (2012) and China Foreign Affairs University (2016). His current research interests relate to the impact of digital technology on diplomacy with a focus on strategic communication and digital influence as well as on theories and methods for countering disinformation and propaganda. He has authored or edited six books.



RYTIS PAULAUSKAS

heads Information and Public Relations Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania. He graduated from Vilnius University Law School, L.L.M and has a Master of Arts Degree from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts, USA, with cross registration with J. F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University (Fulbright Scholar). He also attended training courses at the Academy of International Law, the Hague, Austria. In 1995–1999 Paulauskas was a counselor at the Permanent Mission of Lithuania to the United Nations, New York, USA and in 2003–2008 has served as an Ambassador, and Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the UN, OSCE, IAEA and other International Organizations in Vienna. From 2008 to 2012 he served as Ambassador and the Director of the OSCE Chairmanship Department/ Head of the OSCE Chairmanship Task Force. From 2012 to 2016 he was Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the UN and other International Organizations in Geneva, Austria.



¹ Twiplomacy Study 2018, available at <https://twiplomacy.com/blog/twiplomacy-study-2018/>

The main reason why small and medium-sized states like Sweden, the Netherlands, Mexico, Israel, or Australia have enthusiastically embraced digital diplomacy from early on has to do with the perception that digital technologies can help them increase their diplomatic influence to levels they might otherwise not be able to reach. It is thus assumed that by being able to directly engage with millions of people, MFAs and their network of embassies could positively shape the views of the global public about the country of origin and, in so doing, they could increase the diplomatic standing of the country in bilateral or multilateral contexts and even punch above their political or economic weight.

The Lithuanian MFA makes no exception to this principle. Its expanding network of diplomats, journalists, businesspeople, diaspora leaders, academics, etc. has proved effective in boosting the country's efforts in public diplomacy, diaspora engagement, and crisis communication. With the arrival of a new generation of digital technologies including artificial intelligence (AI) and mixed reality (MR), the Lithuanian digital diplomacy could expand even further and bring consular services, negotiations and new forms of diplomatic representation under its digital umbrella.

Currently the Lithuanian MFA's digital network has four main Facebook pages, directly aimed at communicating with Lithuanian citizens living in the country and its sizeable diaspora community residing abroad. Three main Twitter accounts (Lithuania MFA; LT MFA StratCom and the Foreign Minister's account) introduce Lithuania's diplomatic activities and its foreign policy positions to foreign



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audiences. In the field of economic diplomacy, the MFA uses its LinkedIn page to reach out and engage with a more sophisticated audience made of professionals and experts. The digital network also includes 50 Facebook, 21 Twitter, and 4 Instagram accounts of Lithuanian embassies and consulates around the world. One hundred Twitter accounts are used as personal accounts by Lithuanian ambassadors and diplomats. The total reach of the Lithuanian MFA's network from 31st of August 2018 to September 1st 2019 is estimated at 10.5 mil., while the total engagement of the reached users is approximately 590,000. Between 2018 – 2019, the MFA has launched and managed 7 major campaigns such as the Lithuanian Freedom Fighters, Brexit information for Lithuanian citizens, the Papal visits to Lithu-

ania, the Baltic Way 30 and a few others. During this period, the MFA's main pages (Facebook; Twitter; LinkedIn) have gained from 1.5 to 11 thousand new followers.

The strategic aim of the MFA in its digital activities is to achieve systemic integration of all its accounts so that they can communicate together as one coherent network, a well-designed and effective "Network of Networks". The strength of this approach lies in improving coordination between the MFA and its embassies, amplifying online influence by reaching out to a wide range of audiences in real-time, and strengthening the effectiveness of its communication through the use of advanced analytical and content planning programs.

As we are about to enter a second decade of steady evolution and professionalisation of digital diplomacy, one particular lesson stands out for MFAs with respect to how they can excel in their digital approach. More specifically, they need to demonstrate that digital diplomacy holds not only tactical value for communicating MFAs' positions and interests, but also strategic significance as an element of statecraft. This requires a better understanding of how technology impacts relationships between states and a solid commitment to developing the necessary capabilities by which to respond to the opportunities and challenges so generated. In other words, for digital diplomacy to advance into the next stage, it must enhance its strategic value primarily by ensuring that online influence is successfully converted into offline influence of relevance for foreign policy.

The recent media controversy over the role of Lithuania in the second World War (WWII) and the political memory of the Holocaust presents itself an interesting case for briefly

exploring how digital diplomacy could provide better strategic support to foreign policy. To mark the eightieth anniversary of the Munich Agreement, the Russian MFA and several of its embassies launched a coordinated digital campaign in Sept-Oct 2018 (see Graph 1 below), promoting the narrative that, against the background of extremism and neo-Nazism in Europe, the Baltic States, including Lithuania, deny their past and facilitate neo-appeasement policies by celebrating national heroes who were Nazi collaborators.

The campaign targeted audiences primarily in Europe and North America with the rather transparent goal to discredit these countries and generate diplomatic tensions with their allies. The digital campaign followed closely the pattern of earlier Russian disinformation of cultivating political controversies tailored to the local context, exacerbating divides in the West and building an echo chamber of support for the Kremlin.² It was aided by the fact

that traditional media was also running Holocaust-related stories to commemorate the International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

From a strategic perspective, this case shows the importance of closing the gap between digital diplomacy and foreign policy by ensuring that hostile attempts to undermine the country's international position and reputation do not go unanswered. Given that Russia's narrative is spread through Twitter, Lithuania should also disseminate its counter-narrative on Twitter by refuting the argument of the adversary without repeating it unnecessarily. Moreover, as the Russian narrative centres on the allegation that Lithuania is whitewashing its past, Lithuania's counter-narrative should be centred on the argument that Lithuania is dedicated to remembering the lessons of the Holocaust and ensuring that these lessons are not forgot.

The digital campaign should also prioritize increasing the number of positive reports in newspapers

as such development can help break the mutually reinforcing cycle between social and print media. At the same time. The campaign should seek to map the "network of networks" of Russian sources, bots, and influencers involved in the dissemination of negative stories and disinformation about Lithuania and tainting the political memory of the Holocaust. The map could prove useful for identifying potential patterns of dissemination in social media. Which could then be modelled to predict and pre-actively react to further disinformation campaigns.

The key contribution Lithuanian digital diplomacy can make to its foreign policy is to help advance the country's interests and to protect them when they are challenged. This can be better accomplished not by directly influencing the views of (friendly or hostile) decision makers, but rather by shaping the environment in which those decisions are made or unmade. ■

Handle	Date							Grand Total
	2018				2019			
	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	
lv_rusembas	587	407						994
mfa_russia	3,606	1,202						4,808
MID_Kaliningrad			7				13	20
natomission_ru	220	10		116			418	764
PMSimferopol	1,013	515						1,528
PskovMid	206	161	38	105	321	5	63	899
rus_emb_est	199	289						488
RusEmbNo		134	84	131				349
rusembusa	725	1,827						2,552
russian_un	455	169						624
russianembassy_c	6,423	2,007						8,430
Grand Total	13,434	6,728	122	352	321	5	494	21,456

GRAPH: Breakdown of ReTweets by month

² Corneliu Bjola and James Pamment, "Digital Containment: Revisiting Containment Strategy in the Digital Age," *Global Affairs* 2, no. 2 (2016): 132, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/23340460.2016.1182244>.

LITHUANIA-POLAND: IS EVERYTHING CHANGING FOR THE BETTER?

ANDŽEJ PUKŠTO

Naturally, the recent presidential election and the inauguration of Gitanas Nausėda have raised an important question: what sort of developments await Lithuania's foreign policy and how will the relations between Lithuania and Poland evolve?

We should keep in mind that the last decade of foreign policy implemented by Dalia Grybauskaitė culminated in significant political rapprochement with Andrzej Duda, the President of Poland. Nevertheless, the overall balance of the two presidential terms cannot be said to have been positive in the context of bilateral relations. It is important to emphasise that the Polish political leaders associated with the Civic Platform – i.e. President Bronisław Komorowski, Prime Minister Donald Tusk, Ewa Kopacz and Radosław Sikorski, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, best known in Lithuania for his anti-Lithuanian statements did not have a clear vision on close cooperation of the two neighbouring countries either.

It is certainly interesting to observe that even the Russian aggression in Donbass and the subsequent occupation of Crimea, which was acknowledged as such in 2015, did not immediately

bring the two countries together in the fight against the imperialist initiatives of Vladimir Putin. Prime Minister Saulius Skvernelis was the first to start looking for possibilities of closer dialogue with Warsaw. He committed himself to resolving the misunderstandings related to Mažeikių Nafta, a company operated by the Polish group PKN Orlen. This, in turn, resulted in the intensification of the relations with the Polish conservatives, namely, the ruling party, Law and Justice.

The relationship between the two presidents soon regained its former strength. The process was aided by the particularly favourable context of both Lithuania and Poland celebrating the centenaries of their respective statehood restorations in 1918.

Thus, by the time the presidential election campaign started in Lithuania, the relations between Poland and Lithuania had gained considerable momentum. The most popular candidates unanimously maintained that Poland was a priority country, without whose help it would be next to impossible to ensure the military and energy security of Lithuania, to develop infrastructural projects and to speak with a united voice in the institutions of the European Union.

**ANDŽEJ
PUKŠTO**

graduated from Vilnius University with a degree in history and defended his PhD in the Cardinal



Wyszynski University in Warsaw. He works in Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas from 2005 and serve as an Associate Professor and Head of Department of Political Science from 2008. His research and lectures are connecting with East and Central Europe Politics as well as National Movements in Eastern and Central Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries. He has published a book (in Polish), *Between Capital and Province: Multinational Vilnius in 1915–1920* (2006), and over 20 articles in Lithuanian, Polish and English. He is a member of the editorial board of the *Baltic Journal of Law and Politics*; *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review*; and *Przegląd Geopolityczny*.

IN SHORT

- Both countries have also been speaking in a united voice in NATO forums and have been asserting the importance of strengthening the eastern flank of the Alliance, given the activity of Russia in the post-Soviet states.
- The conclusion reached by both countries should be applauded: they decided that the issues of the Polish ethnic minority in Lithuania should not take precedence over the general agenda concerning questions of security, politics and economics. On the other hand, it was acknowledged that the issues raised by the Lithuanian Poles should not be swept under the rug - instead, the government must look for solutions.
- The bilateral relations between the neighbouring countries have gained noticeable momentum, but the danger of minuscule stones unexpectedly preventing these powerful wheels from spinning is still present.



IMAGE: President of Poland, Andrzej Duda, and President of Lithuania, Gitanas Nausėda, © Robertas Dačkus, LRPK



By the time the presidential election campaign started in Lithuania, the relations between Poland and Lithuania had gained considerable momentum. The most popular candidates unanimously maintained that Poland was a priority country, without whose help it would be next to impossible to ensure the military and energy security of Lithuania, to develop infrastructural projects and to speak with a united voice in the institutions of the European Union.

During his election campaign, President Gitanas Nausėda emphasised that his first official visit would be to Warsaw. Once he was elected, the President kept his promise. Furthermore, he visited the Polish capital for the second time on September 1 in order to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the start of World War II.

Alongside the growing cooperation between the presidents and prime ministers of both countries, the cooperation between their respective parliaments has been intensifying too: in 2019, the Interparliamentary Assembly of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania and the Sejm of the Republic of Poland was fully re-established and is successfully developing its activities.

A friendly atmosphere at the highest political level certainly expedites the implementation of crucial and urgent projects in the areas of security and economics. Coordination of the actions of both countries' military commanders and joint projects in the areas of information and cybersecurity



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must be emphasised here first and foremost. Both countries have also been speaking in a united voice in NATO forums and have been asserting the importance of strengthening the eastern flank of the Alliance, given the activity of Russia in the post-Soviet states.

Projects concerning energy security have also gained momentum. Lithuania must cooperate with Poland in order to build new electricity connections and deepen solidarity in the European Union



IMAGE: Polish relationship with EU remains somewhat ambivalent

when it comes to the diversification of gas and oil imports. The infrastructural projects of Poland and other Baltic states, which are being developed with the financial support of the European Union, are no less important – we are speaking about “*Via Baltica*” and “*Rail Baltica*” here, two projects that have been, up until now, marked by consistent delays.

Nonetheless, while observing the far-reaching conglomerate of the cooperation between Lithuania and Poland, one feels compelled to ask if there are no hidden threats in the process. Is it possible for unexpected, minuscule stones to stop these powerful wheels from spinning?

There are at least two problems that require our attention.

Over the past four years, since the election of Law and Justice with Jarosław Kaczyński as the party leader, Poland has significantly undermined its relations with the institutions of the European Union. Brussels has condemned the judicial reform executed by the Polish conservatives, and emphasised the dangers inherent in the under-

mined independence of the judicial system more than once and at various political levels. The conflict has even reached a certain “red line”: there have been proposals concerning the suspension of the Polish voting rights in the European Council. In addition to Hungary and, perhaps, Romania, Poland needs the Lithuanian vote in order to avoid the sanctions projected by the European Union.

It is intriguing to observe that the conflict between Warsaw and Brussels has hardly affected the popularity of the Law and Justice party both within the country itself and abroad. There have been supporting voices amongst the politicians of the European Union, claiming that the time has come to fight the dictate of Brussels. Furthermore, some conservative politicians have tried to present the conflict as part of the eternal battle between Poland and Germany or as an effort to counter the domination of Germany and France in the European Community at the expense of others. Relations with France, however, have been far from reminiscent of the period of the active Weimar

Triangle (however slow) which lasted over the course of the leadership of Komorowski and Tusk on the Polish political scene.

Additionally, Poland's achievements in global politics should also be acknowledged. These are, undoubtedly, the close relations with the United States under Donald Trump's leadership. The dialogue between the two countries culminated in plans to reinforce the American military presence on the Polish territory, cooperation in the area of energy security and efforts to stop using the Nord Stream 2 pipeline that conflicts with the interests of Eastern and Central Europe.

It can be claimed that the old dreams of the Polish political right, who fantasised about countering the imperialist initiatives of Russia as well as curbing the deeper integration of the European Union and the dominating German-French duo, with the help of the United States of America, have – at least in part – been realised.

For Lithuania, finding its place in this game of chess is not and never will be easy. Up until now, both Dalia Grybauskaitė and Gitanas Nausėda, as well as Saulius Skvernelis, have consistently declared that both Brussels and Warsaw must take advantage of any and all possibilities for dialogue and negotiation and that suspending of the rights of a member of the European Union is not a good idea. It is no secret that the American military activities near the Lithuanian border are viewed positively and efforts have been made to initiate new military and security projects in a tripartite format with the USA.

It is not yet clear how the relations between Poland and the newly formed European Com-

mission will develop over the coming months. Despite a large number of problems, some EU political leaders have promised to keep the questions of the quality of democracy within the Member States in mind. Thus, it is not and will not be easy for Lithuania to manoeuvre the situation.

Last but not least, we should consider the issues of ethnic minorities in the context of the relations between the neighbouring countries. It should not be forgotten that this political misunderstanding culminated when the aforementioned Radosław Sikorski stated that he would not set his foot in Vilnius until the problems of the Polish community in Lithuania had been resolved.

In this context, the conclusion reached by both countries should be applauded: they decided that the issues of the Polish ethnic minority in Lithuania should not take precedence over the general agenda concerning questions of security, politics and economics. On the other hand, it was acknowledged that the issues raised by the Lithuanian Poles should not be swept under the rug – instead, the government must look for solutions. It seems that the public discourse in Lithuania has, albeit slowly, shifted towards the notion that the problems raised by the local Poles must be addressed within

the country itself and cannot be held hostage by cross-border relations.

Given the background of the developing cross-border relations, the accession of the Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania – Christian Families Alliance to the ruling coalition in the summer of 2019 became a matter of considerable importance. Although the EAPL-CFA has so far supported the main political initiatives of the ruling Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union, the signing of the coalition agreement and the presence of two Polish ministers in the Government of the Republic of Lithuania undoubtedly signifies the turning of a new page in the development of our country's political system.

Nevertheless, this process has also been marked by numerous paradoxes and problems. First of all, many participants of political life in Lithuania were surprised by the decision of the party led by Waldemar Tomaszewski to forego entering any requirements of the ethnic minority, which have been fought for tirelessly up until now, into the coalition agreement. Thus, the questions concerning the functioning of schools using Polish as the language of instruction, the Original Polish Spelling of Polish names and surnames as well as the drafting and adoption of the Law on Ethnic Minorities of the Republic of Lithuania were not

subject to political negotiation by the members of the coalition.

It is thought that the Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania – Christian Families Alliance might wish to save these issues for the upcoming parliamentary election and to mark them as unsolved in the new election campaign.

The political significance of the scandal related to the alleged ties between Irina Rozova, member of the EAPL-CFA parliamentary group, and diplomats of the Russian Federation and politicians in Moscow, must not be overlooked either. Once again, the problems of the ally of the Polish party – namely, the Alliance of Russians – were brought to the surface, as was the attitude of the leaders of the EAPL-CFA, who had shown considerable sympathy towards the Kremlin more than once.

While Waldemar Tomaszewski and his circle of like-minded people are not the only allies of Warsaw, they nevertheless remain its partners in the continuing development of the cross-border relations between Lithuania and Poland.

All in all, a conclusion can be drawn that the bilateral relations between the neighbouring countries have gained noticeable momentum, but the danger of minuscule stones unexpectedly preventing these powerful wheels from spinning is still present. ■

THE WAYS OF STRENGTHENING AND SUPPORTING INTEGRATION OF DCFTA COUNTRIES INTO THE SINGLE MARKET OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The review of the European Union's Eastern Partnership (EaP) at its tenth anniversary is an opportunity to develop new ideas on how to pursue the aims of the EU and EaP countries in a wide range of areas of cooperation.

Therefore, the aim of this article is twofold. The first part aims to discuss the key challenges facing Eastern Partnership countries that are currently implementing Association Agreements (AA), of which DCFTA is a part. The second part analyses ways to improve EaP institutional architecture, capacity development and civil society initiatives.

EAP AND THE EU'S SINGLE MARKET

To start with, it is important to contemplate about the ways to stimulate reforms in the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) countries, namely Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova, in order to accelerate their European integration process.

The EU membership perspective, while not yet politically realistic on the EU side, will be mentioned by some analysts as a necessary condition which would help lock the DCFTA countries into reforming themselves as clarity about

long term aims helps bear short term domestic political costs and reassures populations. Still, without improvement of the current framework, it is highly unlikely that reforms will ever be solid or irreversible. This is illustrated by the Western Balkan accession story, which has been ongoing for more than 15 years, and only one country has joined the Union, while the other five candidates and potential candidates are still far off the target.

Hence the following arguments aim to suggest what could and should be changed in the implementation of the already agreed agenda within AA/DCFTA.

Public administration institutions and, more broadly, governments remain weak in the DCFTA countries. This is despite the modernization of public administration and anti-corruption clean-up of the Georgian state during 2004–2013 and the significant public administration reform initiatives in Ukraine after 2014 (and in particular from 2016 onwards). Therefore, the need to focus on the fundamentals of state building and strengthening of institutions in all three DCFTAs remains paramount and should be pursued vigorously.

IN SHORT

- The need to focus on the fundamentals of state building and strengthening of institutions in all three DCFTAs remains paramount and should be pursued vigorously.
- Reform efforts and advancement of European integration in the DCFTA countries would be very much strengthened if the European Commission and the EU member states tuned their financial support to needs in a better way than has been so far.
- Based on the experience of Lithuanian non-governmental organizations, which have been implementing the EU and Lithuanian Development Cooperation and Democracy Promotion Programme supported projects in the EaP countries, small-scale grants might require greater administration, but if properly geographically distributed can deliver results similar to the big-scale projects.

Beyond the capacities of state institutions, sectoral integration should be pursued as agreed in the AA/DCFTAs and, in some cases, beyond the current framework. In the economic domain, initiatives of some DCFTA countries to join the Energy Union, and the Transport

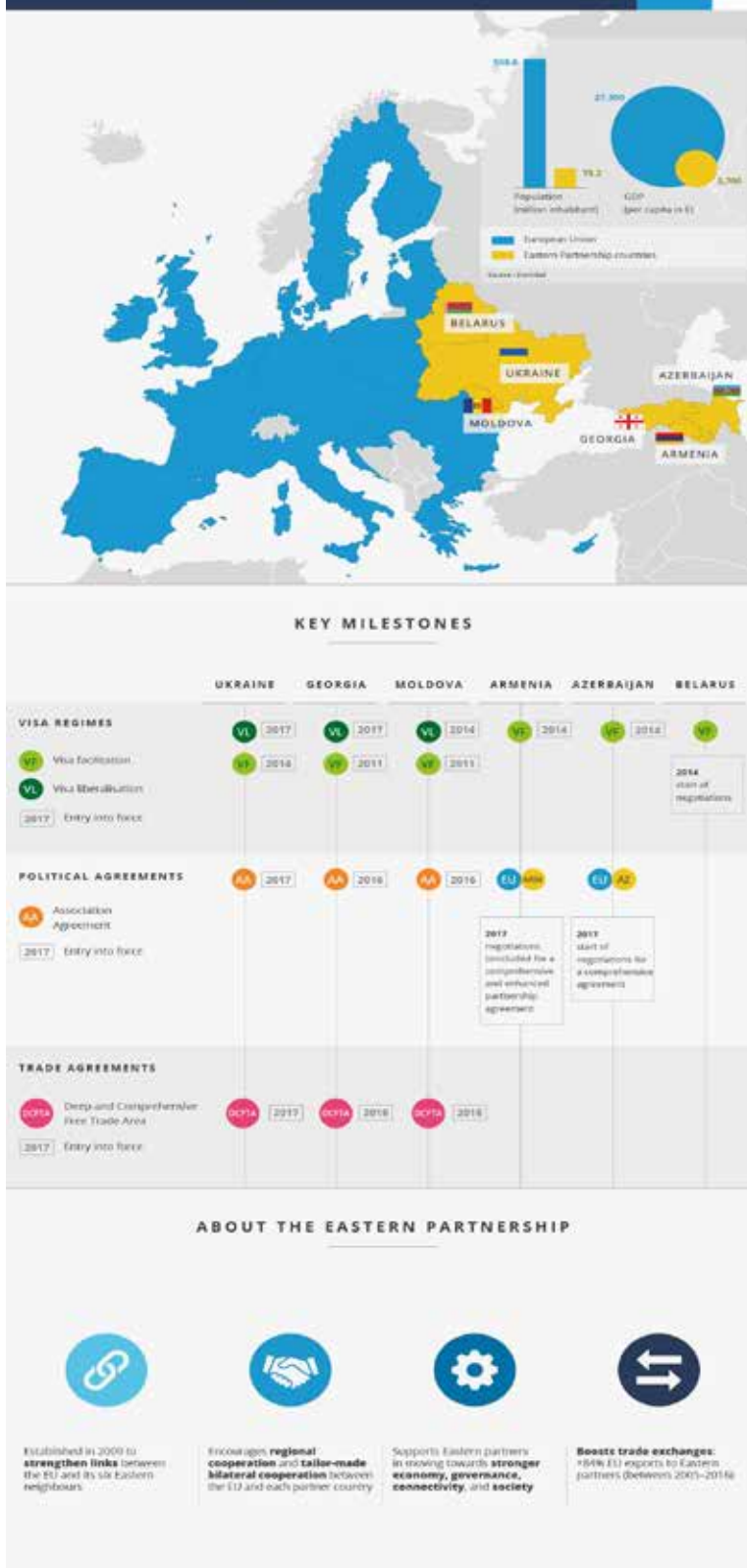


IMAGE: The Eastern Partnership (EaP) is a policy that aims to strengthen political and economic ties between the EU, its member states and six eastern European partners: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

“ The issue of the final aims of DCFTA countries’ integration in specific sectors can and should be discussed. It is important to note that much if not all of the content of the current contractual relations can be revised (deepened, updated or amended) through the work of joint (EU-DCFTA country) institutions.

Community, strengthen customs co-operation and single Digital Market should be supported with detailed operational (properly sourced, sequenced and addressing all surrounding structural constraints) action plans, and, where appropriate, bigger funding/investment opportunities.

Importantly, the single market treatment for economic operators from DCFTA countries is envisaged (pursuant to fulfilment of reforms through legal approximation) only in the Ukraine agreement and only in four areas of services. The issue of the final aims of DCFTA countries’ integration in specific sectors can and should be discussed. It is important to note that much if not all of the content of the current contractual relations can be revised (deepened, updated or amended) through the work of joint (EU-DCFTA country) institutions.



Impact assessment regarding implementation of the current obligations in all three DCFTA countries (but also by the European Commission) at the time of negotiations in late 2000s – early 2010s was next to non-existent, and even by now there are not many sector or regulation specific cost-benefit analyses to help properly sequence transposition and implementation of EU law.

Integration into the single market of the EU is already possible for industrial goods falling under the scope of the EU's New Approach directives via signature and implementation of the Agreement for Conformity Assessment and Analysis (ACAA). Out of the three DCFTA countries, this agreement would be most relevant for Ukraine. Yet despite the decision made (more than a decade ago) for three product groups (low voltage, machinery and electromagnetic compatibility) to enter this process eventually leading up to 27 product groups being part of the EU's single market, progress has been rather slow on both sides and the ACAA has not been signed to date.

Assessment of the possibility to implement the current obligations by all three DCFTA countries (and

also by the European Commission) at the time of negotiations in late 2000s – early 2010s was next to non-existent.

Even now there are not many sector or regulation specific cost-benefit analyses to help properly sequence transposition and implementation of EU law. Therefore, it would make sense to operationalize implementation of DCFTA related commitments on the basis of impact assessment.

Finally, reform efforts and advancement of European integration in the DCFTA countries would be very much strengthened if the European Commission and the EU member states tuned their financial support to needs in a better way than they have so far. There have been some welcome experiments in Ukraine (funding of the civil service staff reform scheme and bigger sector-centered financial assistance programmes via so-called delegated agreements), but so far there is very little evidence collected on what works and what doesn't regarding EU assistance in the DCFTA countries (and perhaps in the EaP region in general). There is too little experimentation and risk taking, in other words, the EU is responding as usual.

Notably, procedural implementation of the Association Agreements is not enough: successful and effective cooperation with the Eastern neighbors needs wider horizons and more ambitious goals. However, the EU's strategic ambiguities are the biggest hindrance to the progress of EaP.

KEY DELIVERABLE AFTER 2020 – STABLE DEMOCRACY

In the upcoming years, the EU will continue addressing issues threatening democracy and the rule of



Since three associated EaP countries are asking for greater engagement with the EU, additional venues for cooperation should be considered. This could be done by grouping willing EaP countries according to themes and sectors in which they wish to deepen relations with the EU.

law in its Member States. The same attempts to strengthen democratic principles and values should be supported in the EaP countries.

- Implementation of Deliverables after 2020

Ownership is a key precondition for successful implementation of EaP deliverables after 2020. So far, 20 Deliverables by 2020 served more as a checklist for the EU assess progress made by the EaP countries than a joint vision by the EU and its Eastern Partners. The new set of deliverables should be formalised as a mutually agreed document. It should include or be accompanied by national plans in which each EaP country sets feasible deadlines for implementation.

- Improving EaP institutional architecture

Since three associated EaP countries are asking for greater engagement with the EU, additional



IMAGE: Eastern Partnership Summit in 2017 (© European Union)

venues for cooperation should be considered. This could be done by grouping the willing EaP countries by themes and sectors in which they wish to deepen relations with the EU. In addition, the role of coordinator could be given to a selected partner country, as by now the EU coordinates all platform and panel meetings.

The EaP countries-led processes would also contribute to increasing the role and participation of civil society in policy planning and decision-making. The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum is a permanent participant of all four thematic platforms, as well as of panels.

- Capacity development, cooperation and support for the Eastern Partnership civil society

Lithuanian CSOs find the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP CSF) to be a useful platform for cooperation with EaP CSOs. Participation in the EaP CSF Working Groups and in the Annual Assembly allows to follow civil society-related developments in the six partner countries, to learn

about priority activities of EaP CSOs and to plan cooperation activities accordingly. The EaP CSF serves the needs of civil society in the EaP countries by providing access to EU institutions and EU Member States. In addition to the EaP CSF Secretariat, the EU CSOs serve as intermediaries, helping to ensure that the voices of EaP CSOs are being heard.

Based on the experience of Lithuanian non-governmental organizations, which have been implementing the EU and Lithuanian Development Cooperation and Democracy Promotion Programme supported projects in the EaP countries, small-scale grants might require greater administration, but if properly geographically distributed can deliver results similar to the big-scale projects. For example, the project “Georgia on European Way” implemented by the Eastern Europe Studies Centre distributed 60 grants of 1,000 EUR to civil society organizations in Georgia with an assignment to educate local population, entrepreneurs and public officials about the opportunities provided by the DCFTA. As a result, numer-

ous events (consultation and informational meetings, training sessions, etc.) with the participation of over 9,000 participants were organized. Furthermore, media coverage, including TV, radio and print media, and informational materials prepared by sub-grantees reached over 1 million Georgian citizens.

In addition, the EU Delegations in EaP countries should have a bigger reserve of funds to support local CSO initiatives. Big-scale EU grants for civil society are focused on technical issues of reform implementation, which strips the civil society of funding for its regular activities. It is important to understand that CSOs provide support to local communities. Their actions may have little to do with reform policy, but they are equally important. ■

The paper was written by Darius Žėruolis, Dovilė Šukytė, Dovilė Jakniūnaitė and Linas Kojala and summarised by Mr Kojala.

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