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### **NATO and ensuring energy security in the Caspian basin**

This article presents an attempt to consider NATO's role in fostering security in the region and raising awareness among NATO and partners of energy security issues. More precisely, this article discusses NATO's approach and tools in contributing to energy security and NATO and Caspian littoral countries' cooperation in addressing the main challenges, risks, and threats to energy security. This article argues that, given NATO's involvement within the region and the tools available to deal with local governments, the interference of the Alliance is necessarily destined to be restricted. So although NATO can legitimately make efforts to play an active role in the Caspian, its attempts to enhance energy cooperation with regional actors need to be gradual and focused.

**Key words:** NATO, energy security, Caspian basin, partnerships, resources.

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### **НАТО және Каспий аймағындағы энергетикалық қауіпсіздікті қамтамасыз ету мәселелері**

Бұл мақалада НАТО-ның энергетикалық қауіпсіздік мәселелеріне қатысты көзқарасы және энергетикалық қауіпсіздікті нығайту саласындағы Одақ пен Каспий аймағында орналасқан әріптес-мемлекеттерінің ынтымақтастығы қарастырылған. НАТО-ның стратегиялық құжаттарында белгіленген құзыреті шегінен тыс шығатын қызметті айқындау және негіздеу бойынша үлкен жұмыс жүргізіліп келе жатқындығы көрсетілді. Бүгінгі күні НАТО лаңкестікпен күрес, энергетикалық қауіпсіздік сияқты мәселелерді шешуге бағытталған бағдарды дамытуға үлкен көңіл бөлуде. Автор НАТО-ның аймақ мемлекеттерімен байланысының даму деңгейіне талдау жасаған. Мақалада энергетикалық инфрақұрылым қауіпсіздігін қамтамасыз ету саласындағы НАТО және аймақ мемлекеттері арасындағы ынтымақтастықтың әрі қарай жетілдірілуі қажеттігі негізделген.

**Түйін сөздер:** НАТО, энергетикалық қауіпсіздік, Каспий аймағы, әріптестік, ресурстар.

А.Б. Кузембаева

### **НАТО и обеспечение энергетической безопасности в Каспийском бассейне**

В статье рассмотрены подход НАТО к вопросам энергетической безопасности и сотрудничество Альянса со странами-партнерами Каспийского региона по укреплению энергобезопасности. Было определено, что в НАТО проводится большая работа по определению и обоснованию миссий, выходящих за пределы тех функций, которые обозначены в стратегических документах организации. Сегодня главное внимание уделяется переориентации НАТО на решение таких задач, как борьба с международным терроризмом, проблема энергетической безопасности и др.

Автором проведен анализ уровня вовлеченности НАТО в регион. В статье обосновывается важность дальнейшего совершенствования сотрудничества НАТО со странами региона в области обеспечения безопасности энергетической инфраструктуры.

**Ключевые слова:** НАТО, энергетическая безопасность, Каспийский регион, партнерство, ресурсы.

#### **Introduction**

Today energy security has become one of the most important tasks due to the necessity of

elaboration of mechanisms to reduce instability in the world and in connection with the scantiness and depletion of key energy resources. Energy security can be defined as «sustainable access to

reliable sources with affordable prices, without any disruption. The basic components of energy security are availability, reliability, affordability, and sustainability.

Energy security has become a matter of growing concern of NATO countries in recent years. Most states in the Euro-Atlantic region are far from full energy independence, and rely on resources located abroad, often in faraway and unstable regions. NATO states recognize that the disruption of the flow of vital resources could affect Alliance security interests.

Collectively, NATO countries own only 6% of all proven global oil reserves. Oil production in NATO states is also very small, constituting just 18% of the global production. Since NATO nations account for about 39% of the global oil consumption. As for the natural gas, NATO countries own a mere 7% of the global reserves. Although they manage to account for 34% of global gas production. Again, NATO nations account for almost half of the global natural gas consumption [1].

Thus, these nations are highly dependent on crude oil and natural gas imports from non-NATO countries.

Energy security is the issue that affects both NATO states and Caspian basin partner countries. Promoting security in the region is in the interest of both energy-importing countries, which are looking to diversify their energy sources and supply routes, and energy-exporting and transit countries, which need to ensure the security of their industry and pipeline infrastructure.

### **NATO's role in the energy security**

Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has undertaken significant changes to adapt organization to new security threats and challenges. NATO countries have given the Alliance new strategic roles, accepted new countries, and established partnership and dialogue programmes with non-member states. The renovation of NATO is still ongoing to make NATO more useful and effective.

Energy security is an ever growing area of focus for NATO as a sign of NATO's transformation and eagerness to take part in the resolution of non-military security issues.

NATO's implication in ensuring energy security contains two significant circumstances. The first has a more military focus which assumes that Alliance carries out practical and logistic planning of the

protection of energy supplies, at the same time maintains broader security of its member states and the stability of its operational capability. This involves contemplating military threats to energy infrastructure as well as the energy supply routes. Another moment for NATO's involvement in the discussions for energy security focuses more on reducing the possibility of using energy as a political pressure on NATO governments. Such a position may be identified and emphasized especially since January 2006 when Russia turned off supplies of gas to Ukraine. In that manner Moscow insists on keeping the debate on economic terms, stressing that the increased price has an economic, and not political meaning [2]. The growing concerns about the reliability of supplies created the grounds for a number of American and European officials, politicians and experts to call for a more prominent NATO role in Europe's energy security. NATO embarked on an effort «to consult on the most immediate risks in the field of energy security, in order to define those areas where NATO may add value to safeguard the security interests of the Allies (...)» [3].

Thereby, the Alliance recognizes that its security interests can be affected by the interruption of the flow of energy resources. The term, add value, is also important, meaning that NATO should avoid duplicating the actions of other actors in the international system.

The nature of discussion was changed: this subject started to be seen as part of a consistent and more comprehensive policy of Alliance. A second significant moment was the speech by the American Senator Richard Lugar on the eve of the Summit who has called for Alliance intervention when its energy sources are threatened: «There is little ultimate difference between a member being forced to submit to coercion because of an energy cutoff and a member facing a military blockade or other military demonstration on its borders. An attack using energy as a weapon can devastate a nation's economy and yield hundreds or even thousands of casualties, the Alliance must avow that defending against such attacks is an Article 5 commitment [4].

This approach was followed up at the Bucharest Summit in April 2008, where NATO decided a set of guiding principles and outlined options and recommendations for further activities involving NATO in the international challenges of energy security. This includes the support to the protection of critical energy infrastructure, information and

intelligence sharing, consequence management, and international cooperation. In that context, information and intelligence sharing represents one of the key principles of energy security. NATO may contribute acting as an important bridge between the energy and security community.

NATO's Lisbon Summit declaration of November 2010 further emphasized these goals and a commitment to enhanced consultation and cooperation with partners and other international actors by resolving to integrate energy security concerns in NATO's policies and activities where appropriate. Importantly, NATO's new Strategic Concept asserted the alliance would «develop the capacity to contribute to energy security, including protection of critical energy infrastructure and transit areas and lines, cooperation with partners, and consultations among Allies on the basis of strategic assessments and contingency planning» [5]. At the Chicago Summit, the leaders of NATO member nations repeated that «a stable and reliable energy supply, diversification of routes, suppliers, and energy resources, and the interconnectivity of energy networks, remain of critical importance» [6].

Thus, NATO has managed over the past years to reach a common consent on energy security which is adapted to its specific capabilities. This consent is based on three main pillars:

First of all, dialogue and sharing of information among member countries, with partner countries. Here are some key points that are put on focus: security of critical energy infrastructure, particularly in energy producing and transit countries; the security of transport routes.

Second, maintaining political dialogue and military cooperation with partner countries in Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East, and the Gulf region. This group comprises energy producers, transit countries, and consumers. Hence, energy security features in many individual cooperation programs.

Third, critical energy infrastructure protection. NATO is interested in helping its member states and partners in the protection of energy infrastructure for sustainable energy supplies.

### **NATO and its Caspian partners: cooperation**

The long-term outlook for global oil demand and supply emphasizes the potential significance of Caspian oil. NATO nations have seen the Caspian Sea as a part of the wider Eurasian energy corridor

linking Europe to Central Asian energy supplies.

NATO has military options for strengthening its energy security in the region. Alliance elaborated a policy of military support and training, providing technical assistance and expertise (to be linked to energy security goals) to the armies and police corps of supplier and transit countries through the framework of its Partnership for Peace (PfP) Program and Individual Partnership Action Plans. Refining military training and procedures, and adapting them to NATO standards, would be useful for both NATO members and partners: the former would benefit in energy security, while the latter would improve their ability to maintain internal stability and cope with external threats.

Over the past years Caspian partner countries have developed different degrees of security cooperation with Western states under the PfP and IPAP umbrellas. At present, these cooperation programmes do not include any project specifically conceived to enhance energy security. However, some of the activities promoted by the Alliance to enhance military and security support in the region can be used, in agreement with local governments, as tools to improve both bilateral and multilateral energy security cooperation.

Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan demonstrated a marked penchant for cooperation with NATO. Both countries joined the PfP programme and are participating in the PfP Planning and Review Process and joined NATO's Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP). The Alliance cooperates with Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan on security assistance, defense reform, defense policy and planning, education and training, military-to-military cooperation and exercises, civil emergency planning and disaster-response, and science and environmental issues.

In the field of security assistance, many activities undertaken through the PfP framework can be useful in managing energy security, mainly in the field of infrastructure protection and attack prevention. First of all, the both countries army are working with NATO to increase maritime security in the Caspian Sea. Moreover, two countries contribute to the fight against terrorism through their participation in the Partnership Action Plan on Terrorism (PAP-T), which includes sharing information and analysis with NATO, enhancing national counter-terrorist capabilities and improving border security. Astana and Baku are also involved in a Civil Emergency activity organized by NATO's Euro-Atlantic

Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC). Additionally, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan have been involved since 1995 in NATO's Science for Peace and Security (SPS) programme. The SPS, upgraded by the IPAP, has launched several energy-related activities in a range of areas: chemistry, biology, physics, environmental security, human and social dynamics and information and communication security.

The relationship with Turkmenistan is more limited because of Ashgabat's official policy of neutrality. Turkmenistan's activity is far less deep and far less frequent. Ashgabat played an active role in the NATO-Russia Council project on counter-narcotics training for Afghan and Central Asian personnel. Ashgabat's commitment has also been very limited in the Science for Peace and Security (SPS) programme and in Civil Emergency Planning.

The NATO-Russia relationship is undoubtedly one of the most important relationships that affects overall Euro-Atlantic region. Although, NATO and Russia mainly cooperate on the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking, and in the field of non-proliferation and arms control, they also face a number of challenges (missile defence in Europe, NATO enlargement), which are negatively influencing the practical cooperation.

Russia signed a PfP framework document in 1994, but strongly resisted NATO's enlargement. However, since 9/11, Russia has found shared interests with NATO regarding to terrorism, drug trafficking and proliferation. During summits in Rome (May 2002) and Moscow (June 2002), NATO and Russia formally agreed to work toward a cooperative security regime throughout the Commonwealth of Independent States. The NATO-Russia Council was also established in 2002 to provide a mechanism for consultation and cooperation between NATO member states and Russia on issues which theoretically could include energy. While the Council's formal meetings were suspended after Russia's military action in Georgia in August of 2008, meetings were resumed in March 2009.

In some ways, Russia's stance negatively on the development of Caspian energy. For instance, using energy supplies as an instrument for political pressure and opposing to energy infrastructure projects. Russia has strongly stood against the Nabucco pipeline and a Trans-Caspian oil pipeline from Kazakhstan to Azerbaijan to connect to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline.

In its Military Doctrine of 2010, Russia underlined increasing military threats emanating from NATO collectively and its members individually [7]. For its own part, NATO trying to focus on value-added aspects of cooperative security to manage transnational issues that threaten both Europe and Russia and other partner countries. Yet, NATO's Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen stressed out that at a time of global risks and threats, delivering security must be a cooperative effort [8]. And this means NATO must continue to strengthen its connection with other countries and organizations around the globe.

### Conclusion

Emerging concern about current energy challenges impels NATO members to increase common efforts to guarantee higher levels of energy security. In this regard, the following points should be underlined:

1. The Alliance has started to discuss the topic, expressing publicly its engagement in energy security during the last Summits held in Riga, Bucharest, Lisbon and Chicago respectively. NATO leaders recognized the importance of energy security and that the disruption of the flow of vital resources could affect Alliance security interests. The Strategic Concept of 2010 outlines the essential position of energy resources in defining the security environment of Allied states and the importance of the security of energy transport routes and sets for the Alliance the goal to develop its capacity to contribute to energy security, including protection of critical energy infrastructure and transit areas and lines, cooperation with partners, and consultations among Allies on the basis of strategic assessments and contingency planning. The Lisbon Summit Declaration reinforced the Strategic Concept's message by tasking NATO to integrate energy security considerations into NATO's policies and activities. Together, the Strategic Concept and the Lisbon Summit Declaration opened a new chapter in the evolution of energy security as a legitimate item on NATO's agenda. At the NATO Summit in Chicago, NATO countries committed to work towards significantly improving the energy efficiency of military forces; develop competence in supporting the protection of critical energy infrastructure; and further develop their outreach activities in consultation with partners.

2. However, NATO is maintaining a limited



and complementary role in the area of energy security. NATO contributes to European and Caspian energy security indirectly by providing education and training support to NATO member and partner countries. Through the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, NATO has established platform for dialogue that bring together energy producers, transit countries and consumers to mitigate energy security-related risks and threats. Several individual cooperation programmes with partner countries also contain energy security as an area for dialogue and cooperation.

3. The Caspian region is a realistic target for the Western energy security strategies. As already stated, Caspian basin countries are oil and gas-rich countries and cooperation with them could assist the European members of NATO to formulate a coherent strategy of energy diversification. In this regard, taking steps towards confidence building between Russia and NATO is essential to avoid unnecessary tensions and diffuse misunderstandings.

NATO is using its limited political means in the region to enhance cooperation with local governments, but without overstressing the complementary functions. A realistic goal for NATO is further enhancing cooperation with its Partners on energy security within the PfP and Individual Partnership Programs (IPAPs). Furthermore, in coordination with their Partners, NATO nations could define and list the means and mechanisms they need to meet the challenges of energy security in the Caspian region and in other geographic areas.

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In conclusion, it should be noted that NATO's last Security Concept outlines the necessity for an increased engagement of NATO in dealing with energy security threats, and insists on the inclusion of Partners in addressing this issue. However, implementation of these principles faces difficulties in the Caspian region. NATO's efforts to enter more forthrightly into the energy space of Caspian basin are likely to meet a negative response from Russia. What NATO may need to do is to have two complementary agendas. The first is to identify key energy issues that it seeks to affect and the second is to create a diplomatic approach toward Russia that helps convince it that its move into the energy sphere is defensive and not a threat.

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