



# BULLETIN

No. 33 (109) • February 24, 2010 • © PISM

## COMMENTARY

Editors: Sławomir Dębski (Editor-in-Chief), Łukasz Adamski, Mateusz Gniazdowski, Beata Górka-Winter, Leszek Jesień, Agnieszka Kondek (Executive Editor), Łukasz Kulesa, Marek Madej, Ernest Wyciszkievicz

---

### US Stance on NATO's New Strategic Concept

by Marcin Terlikowski

*The US position on the new Strategic Concept of the North Atlantic Alliance was fleshed out in Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's Washington speech on 22 February 2010. In particular, she devoted much attention to reinforcing the importance of the Washington Treaty's Article 5.*

In her address organized by the Atlantic Council, Secretary Clinton said the US expected the new document to emphasise the importance of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty (WT) as the signatories' continuing commitment to collective defence. This can be seen as acknowledgement of some allies' (including Poland's) demands to confirm the character of NATO as primarily a defence alliance. Clinton also stressed the need for the Alliance to keep its nuclear deterrence capability, which may indicate a US intention to persuade the allies reluctant to continuation of US nuclear force deployment in Europe to keep discussing the subject within NATO.

At the same, Clinton said that the Alliance must specify methods of collective defence against threats that are not purely military, e.g. those related to energy or cyber security. The US will likely seek for NATO to develop mechanisms to be employed in these fields. The secretary of state also reaffirmed US commitment to improve the use of the Article 4 of WT, providing for consultations among allies when faced with dangers.

Referring to the issue of the Alliance's activities outside the Treaty area, Clinton noted, that the changing nature of threats to the allies' security requires continuation of the NATO out-of-area operations. She stressed the need for developing NATO's civilian capabilities and said that the success of the Alliance's future operations will be contingent on its access to non-military instruments. These proposals, though, may be difficult to accept by the member states which insist that NATO should focus exclusively on military activities.

The Alliance, in the opinion of the secretary of state, should actively support the operations of those organisations and institutions which have comparative advantages in respect of non-military security dimensions. Of key importance, she said, is cooperation with the EU, also on issues such as energy security. The US does not perceive the Common Security and Defence Policy as a threat to NATO, but rather as a chance for closer collaboration. But Clinton did not comment on the question of the EU's creating capabilities which duplicate NATO resources.

The secretary of state reiterated the readiness of the United States to contribute to the building of a European missile defence system which should be a NATO project carried out in cooperation with Russia. She thus confirmed the US policy line oriented to engaging Russia in the system's development. She also called for improving activities of the NATO–Russia Council and reaching agreements that would allow an exchange of military information and visits to military installations. At the same time, Clinton reiterated the US position on breakaway Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and she insisted on NATO's open door policy to be continued, which means that these will remain to be contentious issues in US–Russia relations.

The secretary of state emphasised the need for NATO's internal reform, to cut costs and increase the effectiveness of its civilian and military institutions. This is likely to provoke resistance on the part of many allies, as involving increased spending and a reduction in the number of NATO institutions, with the resultant decrease in some member states' influence on Alliance activities.

The speech by the secretary of state means that the US will press for matters of interest for Poland, namely strengthening the importance of Article 5 and keeping NATO's deterrence function.