THE ROLE OF EUROPEAN UNION AND NATO IN THE CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN WESTERN BALKANS

Ionel Claudiu PASĂRE[1]
[1] PhD, "Mihai Viteazul" National Intelligence Academy - Bucharest

Abstract: *The crises that marked the destiny of the Western Balkans Region in early '90s have had a notable impact on the development of crisis management concept both at EU and NATO's level. These international organizations have been playing and important role in stabilizing, securing and upgrading Western Balkan states.*
The purpose of this paper is to analyze the evolution of NATO and EU crisis management concepts emphasizing the role of the events in this region.
This study also approaches the present turmoil in the region. Considering the last evolutions in the area, the Western Balkans crises haven't been ended by peace agreements as there are still political stalemates, tensed relations between states or between ethnic communities.
Keywords: *NATO's vision on crisis management, EU vision on crisis management, Crisis management in Western Balkans, NATO-EU cooperation in Western Balkans, Security in Western Balkans – present trends.*

With the end of the Cold War, one fundamental premise of the European security architecture changed: no longer was collective security something to be achieved, in large part at least, through deterrence and the threat of mutual annihilation should a military confrontation between NATO and the Warsaw Bloc occur. Unsurprisingly, a security architecture predicated upon the need to prevent war between the two blocs was ill-equipped to respond rapidly and adequately to the newly emerging threats of ethnic conflict within the (successor) states of the communist bloc.

NATO, OSCE, United Nations and Council of Europe - the main building blocs of Europe's Cold War security architecture, survived easily into the 1990s, but they needed to reinvent themselves and develop new and more effective instruments and policies to address the challenges of a changed security situation. Moreover, the EU (until 1995, the EC), did not have a particularly clear role in this emerging security architecture at all as it had, after all, been conceived and developed as a primarily economic union whose past political successes had been all but stellar successes. Clearly, however, the EU was growing to become a more significant

Political actor in Europe based both on its economic muscle and the attraction that it possessed for many countries in Central and Eastern Europe keen to join the organization.

Thus, the task for the EU was easier and harder at the same time: it had to define its own role in conflict prevention and crisis management and carve out its own space in an already crowded field at a time when all the established players were about to adjust themselves to a fundamentally changed situation. At the height of this time of institutional uncertainty in the early 1990s, the EU and all the other international organizations concerned with security in Europe were faced with the challenge of an initially largely peacefully dissolving Soviet Union and a violently disintegrating Yugoslavia. The failure to prevent the latter, and the cascade of wars and human suffering that followed in its aftermath, is, in retrospect, the most obvious illustration that then prevalent traditional paradigms of conflict prevention and crisis management were utterly inadequate to deal with the post-Cold War situation, despite initial pronouncements by European leaders to the contrary. Based on its own experiences of ethnic conflict management, the EC's initial response to the Yugoslav crisis was to contain the problem and seek to keep the Yugoslav state intact. European leaders expressed fears, that if they supported the dissolution of Yugoslavia, this could encourage ethnic minorities elsewhere in the region (and beyond) to push for independence, ultimately resulting in war in Bosnia. The EC therefore supported President Milosevic's plan to reconstruct the Yugoslav federation within its existing borders and attempted to use its power as an economic heavyweight to broker a peaceful agreement by offering aid to those who cooperated and threatening to withhold it from those who did not. As war broke out in 1991 in

Slovenia and later Croatia, the EC continued this containment strategy attempting to hinder the conflict from spreading throughout the region, but by the end of the year ethnic violence had expanded to Bosnia (Silber & Little, 1996).

The EC responded by freezing all financial aid to the region and sending in its troika of Foreign Ministers (later replaced by a single EC negotiator) on a number of peace missions. Following the repeated rejection of these efforts and the increasing humanitarian crisis in Bosnia, the EC eventually abandoned its containment strategy and in December 1991 declared it self ready to recognize Slovenian and Croatian independence provided certain conditions of minority protection, peaceful settlement of border disputes and guaranteed government control of their territories were met.

Germany, however, ignored the joint EC position and proceeded to recognize the two republics independently, despite the fact that Croatia did not meet the EC conditions. EC recognition of both countries followed shortly after, ignoring not only Croatia's non-compliance but also (and perhaps more importantly in this respect) its own foreign policy demands. This undermined the EC's competence and credibility as an international actor not only to its own members and allies but also to the warring parties on the ground. The Serbian side especially questioned the EC's credibility as a neutral mediator and when trade embargos against Croatia, Slovenia and Macedonia were lifted, while the embargo against the Serbs was kept intact, the Serbian delegation finally withdrew from the negotiations and the EC peace efforts collapsed (Kintis, 1997, Silber & Little, 1995).

By 1992 full-scale military conflict had broken out in Bosnia. The EC had recognized the country's independence, but rejected to send in peacekeeping troops as requested by Bosnian President Izetbegovic. Instead, the EC and UN co-hosted another round of peace negotiations (Vance-Owen), which were again rejected by the Serb delegation.

Further sanctions were imposed on Serbia and Montenegro and both trade and weapons embargos remained in force. Under EC pressure, the UN sent protection forces to Croatia, Bosnia and Macedonia, intending the presence of international troops to calm down nationalist aggression and the humanitarian purpose of the troops to foster respect for the UN missions. The mandate, however, entitled the troops to use force in 'self-defense' only. Leaving the soldiers unable to provide the protection their name indicated, or to "create the conditions for peace and security required for the negotiation of an overall settlement of the Yugoslav crisis", the very purpose of the mission according to Security Council resolution 743 of February 1992, the mission was bound to fail and incapable to prevent large-scale disasters such as the 1995 atrocities in the 'UN protectorate' of Srebrenica, demonstrating the complete of the European-led conflict management efforts.

The US finally sidelined the EC by sending in the Contact Group of Five to reach an agreement, but it was not until NATO's military intervention, that Milosevic, Tudjman and Izetbegovic agreed to the US brokered Dayton Peace Agreement, ending the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Kintis, 1997; Morris, 2004; Pentland, 2003). Only gradually were the lessons of European failure learned. Even more slowly is a new security architecture emerging in which different international organizations play their part and contribute to a cooperative, rather than merely collective security order.

Characterized by task- and burden-sharing, this new cooperative security architecture that has begun to emerge at the beginning of the 21st century, involves the same security institutions but with mandates, instruments and policies that (in principle) enable them to face existing and emerging security challenges. Within this new European security architecture the EU occupies a central role: enlarged to 27 member states in 2007, strengthened in its political weight through the enlargement, accession and association process, and diplomatically and militarily more capable as a result of the development of its security and defense identity and policy.

The 1992 Maastricht Treaty on European Union (TEU), which introduced the current three-pillar structure of the European Union, brought the notion of CFSP from EPC (which is outside the Community framework) into the formal institutional structures of the European Union.

There are two surprising political tendencies in the West Balkan states. Actually, one would think that the dramatic economic crisis has shattered the population's trust in the post-socialist political order and European Union accession as the only reasonable future prospect. However, throughout the region, fairly democratic elections and interesting power transitions - as seen recently in Serbia - are still taking place. Regional stability - one of the core concerns of the EU enlargement policy in Southeastern Europe after the end of the wars in the former Yugoslavia - has basically not been damaged so far, despite the failure in applying the Western free-market model. Also, in most West Balkan states, the majority still wants EU accession to take place – despite the "infection" caught from the EU's economic struggle and despite the reluctance of most EU citizens to welcome new "cohabitants" into the "European house". Reform laws recommended by the EU are still being passed in the parliaments without any reservations. Even though support for EU accession is not at 90% anymore, the number of accession advocates has stabilized at between 50% to 60% according to the "Euro-barometer".

Democratic stability and the preservation of EU orientation in the West Balkans are good news for the EU. Now it is up to the politicians to circulate it widely and remind EU citizens of the central and strategic goal of the EU: the strengthening of peace on the continent through the accession of new states to the Brussels community. Especially during the times of the debt crisis, the European spirit has to be strengthened and pursued further, with the support of EU citizens. Crisis management is a policy area under the CSFP and the Common European Security and Defense Policy (CESDP), as established by the TEU and revised by the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997), but owing to the complexity of the task, also requires input from policy areas in Pillars 1 and 3. Specifically, the Treaty of Amsterdam expanded a range of tasks of the Union to 'humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking' (Article 17). These so-called Petersberg Tasks have their origin in the June 1992 Ministerial Council of the Western European Union (WEU) at which WEU member states agreed to make available military units for tasks conducted under WEU authority.

NATO-European Union cooperation has subsequently made significant progress. The so-called Berlin Plus agreement comprises a whole host of different agreements between NATO and EU, negotiated after the 1999 NATO Washington Summit, which are held together, and were put into force, by a Framework Agreement consisting of an exchange of letters between the EU's High Representative for CFSP, Javier Solana, and former NATO's Secretary-General, Lord Robertson, on 17 March 2003. There are also clear European Union-NATO consultation arrangements in place for EU crisis management operations for which NATO makes available its assets and capabilities. In addition to the Berlin Plus agreement, NATO and the EU have also signed an Agreement on Security of Information in March 2003, which enables the two organizations to implement common security standards for the handling of sensitive data and to share classified information (Pasăre, 2012).

While dependency on NATO resources may potentially be a problem for the EU's ability to decide upon and implement its (military) crisis management operations autonomously, cooperation between the two organizations makes a lot of sense for various reasons: 21 of the EU's current member states are also members of NATO, the security concerns of both organizations and their member states are very similar (e.g., regional conflicts, terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, state failure, organized crime) and, under the current cooperation arrangements, the strengthening of EU capabilities benefits both EU and NATO, simultaneously increasing their abilities to engage independently of one another in crisis management operations.

At the same time, however, the role of NATO as a defense alliance may continue to decrease, leaving EU capabilities even more vulnerable. Following the attacks of September 11, NATO has been effectively sidelined by the United States in its war on terrorism when the Bush administration decided not to avail itself of the opportunities of an Alliance operation under Article V. NATO enlargement, too, might contribute to turning the Alliance into an increasingly political rather than military organization. In this context, the process of building up EU crisis management capabilities has also not been helped by a re-focus of national defense spending on 'homeland security' issues across most EU member states (Garden 2002). Thus, despite existing agreements between EU and NATO and common security interests, the Union may sooner or later come to depend more on its own resources, which, however, so far hardly exist independently of NATO as far as military assets are concerned. Crisis management is one of the tasks NATO's fundamental. However, the concept of management Crisis has changed over time depending on the risks and alliance has faced threats from the beginning until these days. This is due primarily to the fact the international security environment has undergone major changes which resulted in the need for NATO and its Member States to adapt continuously to these changes, in order to be able to ensure the security status. the expression of crisis management has entered the vocabulary of politicians, strategic military and academics after the crisis episode Cuban missile in 1962. On the basis of popularity that has State got a notion of faith that President Kennedy solved that crisis, obtaining a great victory, avoiding. While a war, but that the principles applied could be used for solving other crises. We appreciate that NATO's strategic thinking has experienced three stages: the first is related to the Cold War period, the second period after the end of the Cold War, and the third - after the attacks on September 11, 2001. Strategic Concept that marked the existence of NATO during the Cold-war among mention that the main objective of the Alliance is to deter aggression and NATO forces will be employed only if efforts fail to prevent conflict (art. 2). I also outlined the main features of the vision of NATO on crisis management features that will tend to remain constant in the evolution of strategic concepts developed at this level us. It's about dialogue (Article 8), cooperation with other states (Article 7) and maintaining NATO's military capacity (art. 2).

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the European security environment has changed, the main feature of which is the end of the confrontation between East and West, and the hazard of a massive military confrontation, former confrontation was replaced by former cooperation initiatives. Guarding the crisis management approach to NATO, we see that it is treated in relation to the prevention of crises. When referring to this issue, the documents indicate, first, that NATO will seek, in cooperation with its partners to prevent conflict escalating crisis. Crisis management activities are undertaken when the prevention fails. The possibility of consultation between NATO plays a particularly important role in crisis management since it allows them to identify the most appropriate measures to be taken politically and militarily, especially in civil emergencies.

Crisis management has become NATO's operational tool to promote and maintain stability both within its borders and beyond. Basically, the concept includes two main components: Conflict Prevention (using diplomacy and preventive deployment) and crisis response operations, as were those of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. Also, crisis management can be done through operations such as Article 5 of deterrence and collective defense, or by non-Article 5 operations, where fall and stability operations. Among these may be mentioned the following: combating terrorism, arms control, support anti-drug operations, humanitarian assistance, evacuation of non-combatants, the imposition of sanctions, military support of civil authorities, search and rescue operations, show of force, strikes and raids, defense and constitutional policing, peacekeeping operations, conflict prevention, peace-building, peacekeeping, peace enforcement.

After the Cold War, NATO has focused on preventing and managing crises with roots in ethnic tensions and antagonisms, extreme nationalism, internal political struggle, political change inappropriate domestic economic problems, etc.

After episode 11 September 2001, interest has focused on terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, as sources of crises, but also inter-institutional cooperation, in particular with the European Union. In 2010, NATO has released a new Strategic Concept (NSC), which develops the definition of crisis management in the act of 1999. Firstly, the NCS refers regarding crisis management lessons learned during missions conducted in Afghanistan and the Western Balkans, emphasizing the importance of a comprehensive approach to the crisis has not only militarily but also politically and civil. Also relevant is how to refer to lessons learned during missions in the Western Balkans. In 1999, the Strategic Concept spoke about the decision to comply with crisis response missions undertaken in the Western Balkans and the 2010 NCS mention lessons learned in Afghanistan and the Western Balkans (Frunzeti T, 2009). We can deduce both approaching the final stage of NATO's involvement in the two regions and the importance of those tasks performed to develop a crisis management concept at NATO. However, it is noted particularly poignant emphasis on developing civilian crisis management dimension. Therefore, we believe that the North Atlantic Alliance, the concept of crisis management has evolved absolutely necessary being defined and associated with a range of measures, principles, procedures, guaranteeing efficiency Alliance in such situations. NATO intervention in solving the crisis that followed the collapse of Yugoslavia has demonstrated the need for this development, but also the continuous adaptation of crisis management way to new conditions imposed by the changes in the international environment.

Crisis management thus involves political activities and military national ally, conflict prevention and crisis response and actually applied the principles of cooperation and dialogue between NATO members and between Alliance and state actors and non-state partners, as well as that of maintaining the capacity for collective defense alliance, a state of continuous training that can provide effective response allies.

In dealing with the concept of crisis management in the EU, we can identify a number of features. The first one is that the Union has failed to formulate a concept of crisis management that has developed the consistency and coherence of NATO level. One reason for the difficulties encountered in this line is the specificity of the European Union, the political and economic integration organization, where security and defense dimension is relatively recent, and where integration is slower because of the importance of sovereignty implications. Moreover, this dimension has begun to materialize only after the failure of the EU to intervene in the crisis that led to the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 90s. In fact, the history of CFSP / CSDP can be seen as an effort to increase consistency and institutions to develop mechanisms that allow relevant EU action in the international arena. However, this is not tantamount to a complete paralysis of the EU's external action, it still having a consistent history of missions conducted outside its borders, but usually they were deployed in the aftermath of crisis peak and is managed in their most acute stage, other organizations, such as NATO or the United Nations.

Another feature of EU intervention in crisis management lies in the importance of cooperation with NATO has. NATO has contributed substantially to the development of security and defense dimension of the European Union, and the progress in EU-led missions themselves, as the "Berlin +" EU the possibility to use NATO capabilities and resources to conduct their missions. Following the Lisbon Treaty, they conducted a series of institutional and conceptual changes designed to increase its ability to act independently and consistently international arena. In 2009, ratified by the EU Member States has created a Centre Operations within the EU Military Staff, which can function as a command center that led missions. The Union also may be used for this purpose, and command centers in the Member States involved in a particular task. Therefore, the size of the security and defense of the EU is relatively new and developed with the direct support of NATO.

Immediately after 1999, after the creation and implementation of ESDP, the EU has begun to establish itself as an important strategic player on the world stage. Under the ESDP, were conducted both civilian and military, which reveals the EU's efforts to have a comprehensive approach to the management of crisis situations. Conflicts caused the disintegration of Yugoslavia and EU involvement in post-conflict stabilization process marked a decisive way in which the concept of "crisis management" is addressed at EU level.

Both are developed military capabilities under the ESDP, which can take action to respond to crises, and political commitments are undertaken to prevent conflicts. The events that occurred in the Western Balkan space showed also that in order to maintain sustainable peace outside its borders, the EU will need to identify an optimal mix of civilian and military tools to address the crisis adequately depending on its stage of development - precrisis dispute confrontation recovery.

Regarding security issues, we might consider that the different character of the two organizations lead to complementary views that can make a real contribution to the comprehensive approach to security in terms of military and non-military dimension. EU approach to crisis management is different from that of other international organizations, including the NATO because it is made in the Common Foreign and Security Common EU unlike NATO, the European Union may have its own foreign policy, which greatly influences its involvement in crisis management since the Union shall take into account not only their own political objectives, but also other interests and priorities of the European Union and its Member States, which resulted in difficulties in creating a shared vision, coherent unit. If EU crisis management knows no duality only use two tools - civilian and military, but also in conceptualizing crisis response. It is based on two strategies - crisis management and conflict prevention (Duțu, Bogzeanu, 2011).

In terms of crisis management, the EU defines this concept as follows: actions initiated to prevent escalation vertical (intensification of violence) and horizontal (territorial spread) conflict existing violent. Conflict resolution envisages actions in the short term to stop a violent conflict.

However, the uniqueness of how crisis management is addressed at EU level is not just about that. As noted above, NATO had a very important role in the creation and consolidation of the security and defense of the Union and the NATO-EU relationship has behaved and counts to conduct special importance for both organizations. NATO and the EU have cooperated effectively in crisis management in the Western Balkans. Missions and operations have been designed not to be redundant. NATO military missions have been conducted, usually at times of peak of the crisis, conflicts or the level was very high. The EU has, however, a much greater emphasis on civilian crisis management resources, most of its tasks are of this nature. However, the Union managed to successfully conduct its first military mission under the "Berlin +". Western Balkans were also an opportunity to test their operation. Moreover, military missions, whether driven by the EU or NATO, find continuity in EU civilian missions, benefiting from a relatively stable environment, with a much reduced level conflicts can contribute to building democratic states based on the rule of law which govern who can be able to provide security themselves, at least the internal problems, twenty years ago, led to violent conflicts.

Therefore, both institutions have assumed roles in complex crisis management in the Western Balkans and cooperated usually effective to manage these crises.

However, given the lack of experience of both institutions in this regard, cooperative relationship and was often undermined by procedural deficiencies in certain circumstances, could create conditions of instability.

However, we could say that the roles of NATO and the EU in crisis management in the Western Balkans were complementary NATO intervention being made mostly by the power of "hard" and military means of crisis management, the EU and the power "soft" and non-military capabilities. None were effective without the other. Commitment of both organizations in the Western Balkans continues to this day, when most states have joined the Euro-Atlantic integration path, the only viable solution, according to the international community to end tensions in the region final.

However, despite the fact that the probability of the emergence of armed conflict in the Western Balkans is almost zero, no one can believe that this is an area without conflicts. States are still fragile ethnic tensions continue to be a daily reality and entail serious social, political, economic, in terms of the relationships between these countries and is often tense.

The presence of the international community in the region, its interference in the internal divisions or regional mitigation remains a necessity. NATO and EU intervention in the management of these crises will be considered complete only when these countries will reach a level of development and democratization that will enable them to acquire the status of member states of NATO and the EU. Until then, their intervention in the post-crisis continues and often are forced to intervene and some new or repeated seizures.

REFERENCES

[1] Duțu, P, Bogzeanu, C, *Reforma instituțională a UE din perspectiva Politicii de Securitate şi Apărare Comune*, Editura UNAp, Bucureşti, 2011
[2] Frunzeti, T., *Geostrategia,* Editura Centrului Tehnic-Editorial al Armatei, Bucureşti, 2009
[3] Garden, T., *EU Crisis Management: A British View*. Paper presented to a Colloquy held at the Ecole Militaire, Paris, 31 May 2002
[4] Kintis, A.G., 'The EU's foreign policy and the war in former Yugoslavia' in Holland, M. 1997. *Common Foreign and Security Policy* (London: Pinter), 1997
[5] Morris, N., *Humanitarian intervention in the Balkans* in Welsh, J. 2004. *Humanitarian intervention and international relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 2004
[6] Pasăre, I.C., *NATO-transformare şi noi provocări,* Editura Academiei Naționale de Informații "Mihai Viteazul", Bucureşti, 2012
[7] Pentland, P.C. 'The EU and Southeastern Europe after Dayton' *Europe-Russia Working Chapters* (Ottawa: Carleton University), 2003
[8] Silber, L. & Little, A., *The death of Yugoslavia* (London: Penguin Books), 1996.