

*Alexander VINNIKOV,
Head of the NATO
Representation to Ukraine*

2018 – YEAR OF UKRAINIAN REFORMING

– Dear Mr. Vinnikov, you have been Head of the NATO Representation to Ukraine since March 2016. The same year the Strategic Defence Bulletin of Ukraine was adopted. In accordance with this document, certain reforms shall be implemented into the defence sector of Ukraine in order to approach NATO standards. In your opinion, whether the implementation of this document is effective and how the situation in defence and security sectors of Ukraine has changed in recent years?

– Indeed, in 2016 Ukraine took the very significant step of adopting a comprehensive roadmap for defence reform – the Strategic Defence Bulletin. Advisers from the NATO Representation to Ukraine contributed to its development and now to its implementation. We are actively involved in the work of Defence Reform Committee and its many Working Groups.

In 2017 we recognized progress in many areas of defence reform. The main focus last year was to set the ground rules and to develop concepts and other guiding documents. In parallel, new structures were established in the Ministry of Defence and General Staff. We noted particular progress in areas like capability-based planning, implementation of a Unified Medical Command, and significant improvements in non-commissioned officers training and development.

Over the past few years Ukraine's Armed Forces have come a long way. Their tactical and technical capabilities have increased significantly, and they continue to benefit from training and equipping programmes from a number of NATO Allies.

At the same time, many challenges remain in order to move from designing and planning reforms to actually implementing them in practice. NATO's key instruments for assisting Ukraine on the path of reform – the Planning and Review Process (PARP) and Annual National Programme (ANP) assessments – provide Allied guidance and expertise to help overcome such challenges.

Ukraine's political leadership has set a very ambitious goal of reaching NATO standards by the end of 2020.

Of course, there are technical or material standards, including around 2,000 so-called Standardization Agreements (STANAGs). However, when we talk about NATO standards and principles, it is not only about military or technical requirements. Even more important are standards of democratic institutions, civilian control and democratic oversight over the security and defence sector, good governance, rule of law, human rights, market economy, etc.



Виступ директора Центру інформації та документації НАТО в Україні (ЦІДН) Барбори Маронкової на модулі стратегічних комунікацій Програми #Champions100 в Дипломатичній академії України ім. Геннадія Удовенка

Speech delivered by the Director of the NATO Information and Documentation Centre in Ukraine (NIDC) Barbora Maronkova during the strategic communications module of the #Champions100 Program at Hennadii Udovenko Diplomatic Academy of Ukraine

It is important to realize that the implementation of NATO standards, principles and best practices implies a fundamental change in mindsets and in the way that institutions act and interact. Without this, the introduction of NATO technical standards will not bring the result Ukraine is seeking.

– *How NATO assists Ukraine in implementation of reforms in security and defence sectors? What programs NATO currently implements in Ukraine?*

– In terms of practical support to Ukraine's reforms, we continue to implement the activities under the Comprehensive Assistance Package for Ukraine (CAP), approved at Warsaw Summit in 2016. The first periodic report on the CAP's implementation in 2017 revealed the intense level of strategic advice that NATO provides to Ukraine, in particular to the security and defence institutions, as well as continued progress with the implementation of the 40 tailored support measures. With the CAP, NATO provides extensive support to reforms in Ukraine through three key strands of activity: subject-matter experts in an advisory role, Trust Funds and capacity-building programmes.

Currently there are about fifteen advisers in the NATO Representation to Ukraine who interact on a daily basis with a wide range of Ukrainian counterparts. Our advisers are experts seconded by NATO Allies to Ukraine to assist in specific areas including for example logistics, standardization (i.e. the ability of different security structures to better interact and support each other), cyber defence, C4 (Command, Control, Communications and Computers), and demining.

Through ten different Trust Funds, NATO Allies have pledged almost 40 million euros to support Ukraine. Trust Funds help develop Ukrainian capabilities in areas such as – amongst others - logistics and standardization, cyber defence, communications, and medical rehabilitation.

Last but not least, is the development of Ukraine security personnel's know-how. We are helping Ukraine with the professional development of civil servants in the security and defence structures, with the social adaptation of military service leavers, and with efforts to strengthen good governance in the security and defence sector. NATO also helps to modernise Ukraine's defence educational system, build its public communications capacity, and boost the cooperation amongst scientists working on security-related projects.

– Mr. Vinnikov, please tell us in more details about the program of military education enhancement, career transition and rehabilitation of former Ukrainian military personnel.

– Our Medical Rehabilitation Trust Fund is delivering assistance to both individual patients and medical institutions. Modern medical equipment is being delivered to 6 medical rehabilitation institutions across the country. Over 300 servicemen have been provided with medical rehabilitation support in and outside of Ukraine. We are particularly proud of having supported the participation of Team Ukraine in last year's Invictus Games in Toronto. We have also provided over 150 psychological rehabilitation seminars to around 6,000 beneficiaries across Ukraine.

Since 2000 NATO has been providing specialized training for former servicemen or servicemen close to retirement to better integrate them into the civilian job market. Approximately 10,000 personnel benefited from the NATO-Ukraine Resettlement Programme in more than 65 locations across the country.

And our Defence Education Enhancement Programme has trained over 1,000 Ukrainian instructors and engages with a range of defence educational institutions to modernise their curriculum and teaching methods in accordance with Euro-Atlantic best practices.

– One of the most important points in relations between Ukraine and NATO is possibility to join the North Atlantic Alliance. The last report provided by NATO stipulates that the Alliance recognizes the aspiration of Ukraine to become a member of NATO. In your opinion, to what extent Ukraine is ready to join NATO? What are the main challenges on this way?



Українські фахівці з кіберзахисту, переможці TIDE Hackathon-2018, взяли участь у навчаннях НАТО CWIX-2018 у Польщі за підтримки програми НАТО C4 Knowledge Sharing

Ukrainian experts on cyber security, winners of TIDE Hackathon-2018, took part in NATO CWIX-2018 Training in Poland within the NATO C4 Knowledge Sharing Program

– NATO’s policy towards Ukraine remains the same. There has been a change in Ukraine’s policy, reflecting Ukraine’s aspirations towards NATO. NATO has an open door policy on membership. Any decision on membership would be for Ukraine and for the 29 NATO Allies. No one else has the right to try to intervene or to veto such a process.

Ukraine is focusing on key reforms at this time. And NATO is providing support to these efforts. We are supporting Ukraine to meet NATO standards, to be better able to defend itself and to increase the ability of Ukrainian and NATO forces to work together. We also support Ukrainian efforts to strengthen its democracy and the rule of law.

The Annual National Programme is the main instrument through which NATO helps Ukraine to advance its reforms. It is equally the best tool for Ukraine to promote its Euro-Atlantic aspirations. The ANP is structured in the same way as the Membership Action Plan and it is based on the NATO Study on Enlargement.

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As for the challenges, I will focus on four points which I believe are critical to progress in reform:

Functioning structures are paramount for success. We believe more can be done to define their tasks, responsibilities, accountabilities as well as staff them with the right trained and experienced personnel;

Functioning inter-agency processes: it is vital for Ukraine's security and stability to use the full potential of a "whole of government" approach.

Systemic change: it's about changing mindsets, and making reforms irreversible.

Last but not least, the fight against corruption. Security and defence reform cannot be viewed in isolation from other processes in the country. We speak in one voice with our international partners regarding the need for progress in this area. And this was underlined by the NATO Secretary General during his Address to the Verkhovna Rada in July 2017.

– *What are the main global security threats that NATO counters today?*

– As we look around us, in almost every direction we see a host of complex challenges, many of which pose a direct threat to our long-term safety, security and prosperity. Including North Korea's nuclear proliferation; terrorism on our streets; instability in the Middle East and North Africa; and a more assertive Russia violating international borders. Other challenges, like cyber-attacks, know no borders at all. By the way, at the Warsaw Summit 2016 Allies recognised cyberspace as a new operational domain, joining land, air and sea. No single country can address these problems alone. In today's interconnected world, global challenges demand global solutions. We are constantly adapting the Alliance to a more demanding security environment.

At our Summit in July, Allied leaders will take the next steps in NATO's adaptation in the face of evolving challenges. Building on the decisions from our 2016 Warsaw Summit and the 2017 meeting of NATO leaders. First, how to further enhance our deterrence and defence, with stronger reinforcement and better readiness. Second, how to better project stability in our neighbourhood. This is essential in the fight against terrorism and for our own security, because if our partners are more stable, we are more secure. Third, stronger cooperation with the European Union, on issues such as fighting terrorism, military mobility and capacity building for our partners. Fourth, Alliance modernisation, including the adaptation of the NATO Command Structure. And last but not least, fairer burden-sharing is the foundation for everything we do. We have made great progress in this regard, All Allies have started to increase their defence spending and more and more Allies are spending at least 2% of GDP on defence. Since the cuts stopped, European Allies and Canada have added a total of 83 billion dollars to their defence budgets. So, the trend was down, and now it is up; but of course more remains to be done.



Урочистий прийом до 69-річчя підписання Північноатлантичного договору. Дипломатична академія України ім. Геннадія Удовенка

Solemn reception on the occasion of the 69th anniversary of signing of the North Atlantic Treaty. Hennadii Udovenko Diplomatic Academy of Ukraine

– Does NATO plan to join the process of conflict resolution and peace maintenance in temporary occupied territories of Ukraine? If yes, what kind of support may it be?

– NATO does not have a mandate to work in this area. At the same time the Alliance supports the full implementation of the Minsk Agreements and all efforts that seek to achieve a political and diplomatic solution to the conflict. Allies fully support the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission which has a key role in helping to de-escalate the conflict. In fact, nearly two thirds of the personnel of the SMM are from NATO countries. And we also follow closely the discussion related to a possible UN peacekeeping mission. From our perspective a full access and a robust mandate would be crucial for such a mission to effectively contribute to the settlement of the conflict.

– The last year Ukraine and NATO celebrated 20th anniversary from the day of signing the Charter of Cooperation. Furthermore, this event symbolically coincided with your movement into the new office in Kyiv. How could you characterize the further cooperation between Ukraine and NATO, namely for 2018? What are the plans, key priorities and challenges?

– Indeed, the new premises of the NATO Representation were opened by the NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine Ivanna Klymush-Tsintsadze in the margins of the North Atlantic Council visit to Kyiv in July 2017. This opening was another milestone in NATO-Ukraine relations, which enables our staff to continue and further enhance their excellent work in support of NATO-Ukraine dialogue and Ukraine's reform efforts. The new premises for the NATO Representation are generously provided by the Ukrainian authorities. Special thanks are due to GDIP, the owner of the premises, for their unwavering support throughout the complex process of the NRU's move.

These were two very visible and memorable events highlighted the 2017, the year that marked the 20th anniversary since the signing of the Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine.



Уроцисте відкриття нового приміщення представництва НАТО в Україні. Генеральний секретар НАТО Єнс Столтенберг зустрівся з працівниками. Київ, 10.07.2017 р.

Inauguration of the new premises of the NATO Representation to Ukraine (NRU). NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg meets with the staff. Kyiv, 10.07. 2017

From NATO's perspective 2018 will be crucial year for the reform process in Ukraine. The key overarching goal in the security and defence sector is to establish effective civilian control and democratic oversight across the full spectrum of security structures and institutions sector as a whole.

One of the next important steps for reforming will be the adoption of the Law on National Security. It is a fundamental element that will provide the required legislative framework necessary for the implementation of virtually all areas of security and defence reform. NRU advisers together with the EU Advisory Mission and the United States Embassy have been working with our Ukrainian partners, led by the National Security and Defence Council staff, to advise and assist in the process of developing this key legislation. We encourage Ukraine to work actively towards its adoption in a way that supports the key European and Euro-Atlantic values and principles that Ukraine has committed to.

Another key step will be the reform of the security and intelligence institutions including the Security Service of Ukraine, to ensure that they are de-politicised, accountable and effective.

April, 2018