

Thematic Session “Security and Defence Sector Reforms”

Discussion paper

Since 2014, considerable progress has been made in security and defence sector reforms. In June 2020 Ukraine was granted NATO Enhanced Opportunities Partner’s (EOP). Ukraine stays firm to the 2008 Bucharest Summit decisions on Ukraine's future membership in the Alliance. Ukraine determined to achieve progress in implementing key reforms in the areas of democratic civilian control over security and defence, Security Service reform, military command and control transformation, professional military education and human resources management, defence industry and procurement, resources management, bringing gender equality and social protection of militaries and their families. One of good examples of the improvements achieved – ongoing reformation of the professional military education system, which is a backbone of future professional and efficient military. Based on national and international audits’ results, Ukraine has a plan how to reform the system. Given the scope of work and expertise needed, further international assistance will continue to be required. These reforms are critically important to strengthen Ukrainian capabilities in security and defence sector and to fulfill criteria necessary to bring Ukraine closer to NATO membership.

Reforms in security and defence sector

Ukraine continues carry out its ambitious goal to transform its security and defence sector in accordance with NATO standards and practices. Seven years of on-going armed aggression of the Russian Federation forced Ukraine not only to defend itself, but also to drastically and qualitatively enforce its security and defence sector transformation. The main strategic goal is to ensure the readiness of the security and defence sector, the economy and society to repel the armed aggression against Ukraine. The command and control system of the Armed Forces was improved; the Joint Operational Headquarters as well as Special Operations Forces Command element were formed; substantially improved exercises and training for the Ukrainian servicemen. State Budget for 2021 provides for expenditures on national security and defence at the level not less than 5.93% of GDP. These funds are aimed at further developing the security and defence sector in accordance with NATO standards and principles, production and purchase of new weapon systems and military equipment, creation of the new technologies, strengthening the air defence and intelligence capabilities, eliminating disparities in military salaries. Further reforms’ steps included adoption the laws “On Defence Procurement”, “On Intelligence”, as well as the National Security Strategy and the Military Security Strategy of Ukraine. In January 2021, the draft law on the Security Service was adopted in the first reading making the start for key reform of the Security Service. Other important laws that influence transparency of defence and security industry and defence procurement – the draft laws on corporatization of defence industry, screening of investment to defence industry and law on security of classified information are under development.

Main remaining challenges in implementing reforms are related to the strategic planning, imperfect system of powers and authorities distribution, inefficient resources and personnel

management, inconsistency of many business processes with the Euro-Atlantic principles and practices. In short- and mid-term, the key tasks are to continue with the reform of defence governance, defence resources and human resources management.

- *What are the most problematic areas in security and defence sector reforms to be addressed?*
- *How to ensure consistent implementation of reforms throughout the whole security sector? What are the lessons learned? How can Ukraine meet this challenge?*
- *How do you measure success of the reforms?*
- *Implementing the principle of democratic civilian control over security and defence sector considered by western experts as one of the most important issue. How do you estimate Ukraine's progress in this area of reform?*
- *How would you assess ongoing state owned defence industry reform?*
- *There is a great number of international advisers, military missions, ongoing NATO and EU activities in support of reforms' agenda within the security and defence sector. How can Ukraine best utilise this potential in achieving tangible progress?*

NATO integration strategy and progress

Ukraine highly appreciates the fact that NATO member states remain committed to the 2008 Bucharest Summit decisions on Ukraine's future membership in the Alliance. Since the NATO Summit in Bucharest, the geopolitical situation in the region has dramatically changed – the war in Georgia in 2008, Russia's on-going armed aggression against Ukraine since 2014, a significant deterioration of the security situation in the Black Sea. The course of internal political development in Ukraine drastically changed as well. The 2014 Revolution of Dignity testified to the need for radical changes in Ukraine's approaches to the formation of the principles of the NATO integration strategy. Ukraine's course towards Euro-Atlantic integration as a key element of its foreign and security policy was enshrined in the Constitution of Ukraine and is final and irreversible. The recent accomplishments of Ukraine in the Euro-Atlantic direction create a unique opportunity for its further support and giving a new incentive to the relations with the Alliance. Today, Ukraine implements annual national programs under the auspices of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, which cover strategically important for Ukraine reform areas that eventually bring Ukraine towards NATO. Ukraine deepens its engagement with NATO through (1) enhanced political dialogue; (2) reforms legislative support; (3) interagency coordination; (4) new opportunities such as EOP; (5) implementation of NATO standards; (6) education and training; (7) administration of Euro-Atlantic integration including informational support of the Euro-Atlantic integration course; (8) delivering gender equality and (9) development of national resilience system.

- *In June 2020 Ukraine was granted EOP status. What has been done so far with regard to its practical implementation?*
- *Ukraine has been developing and implementing annual national programs since 2009. How this practical tool helped the country to approach NATO membership criteria?*
- *Membership Action Plan remains the next milestone for Ukraine on the way towards eventual NATO membership. What can be done besides the existing level of engagement between Ukraine and NATO?*

Cyber security, countering hybrid threats and disinformation

In accordance with the draft of Ukraine Cyber Security Strategy for 2021-2025 - cyber security is one of Ukraine's national security priorities. It will be implemented by strengthening the capacity of the national cyber security system to counter cyber threats in today's security environment. Over the last decade Ukraine has been the major target of Russian hybrid attacks. As a part of the Comprehensive Assistance Package for Ukraine endorsed at NATO 2016 Warsaw Summit, NATO and Ukraine agreed to establish the special Platform as a practical tool to identify key lessons-learned from hybrid war against Ukraine and to develop recommendations for analyzing and countering hybrid threats as well as to bring together, provide coherence to and ensure synergy of efforts in the area of hybrid warfare research and analysis. The implementation of the NATO-Ukraine Platform on Countering Hybrid Warfare continues. The President of Ukraine recently stressed that today, Ukraine is at the forefront, including at the forefront of the fight against propaganda. The problem of combating information warfare and disinformation requires the coordinated efforts of all state bodies, parliament and civil society, as well as support at the international level. With this aim in March 2021 by the decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine the Center for Countering Disinformation was established.

- *What are the main challenges in strengthening institutional and organisational capacities to counter cyber and hybrid threats? What international assistance is required for developing substantial capabilities?*
- *There is well-established cooperation between Ukraine and NATO. Can Ukraine additionally benefit from the cooperation with the EU in cyber security and countering hybrid threats and disinformation?*
- *Cyber-attacks on critical infrastructure objects become more painful over the last time. How Ukraine builds its cyber security?*
- *As a target of Russia's hybrid attacks, Ukraine is a unique case study. What are Russia's hybrid tools of aggression against Ukraine?*
- *What are the practical steps Ukraine has recently made in order to strengthen its capacities in the area of fighting disinformation?*