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POLAND AS A MEMEBER OF NATO'S OPEN DOOR POLICY

ABSTRACT

Since the beginning of the nineties the Alliance has been consistently carrying out its open door policy with countries that are willing to accept and implement rules stated in the Northatlantic Pact and declare the willingness to participate in joint efforts for ensuring euroatlantic area's security and stability. After the decline of communism, Poland became an independent, democratic country and concentrated on achieving its set goal of participation of the creation of a stabile security system and support open door Policy very strongly. This support is important for countries seeking to become a member of NATO and for polish interests. This paper aims at an analysis of Poland's participation in NATO's open door policy.

Key words

North Atlantic Treaty Organization, open door policy, Poland, MAP

1. Introduction

The end of the Cold War provided a unique opportunity to build improved security in the entire Euro-Atlantic area and that NATO enlargement would contribute to enhanced stability and security for all. The process of enlargement contribute to enhanced stability and security for all countries in the Euro-Atlantic area by encouraging and supporting democratic reforms, including the establishment of civilian and democratic control over military forces; fostering patterns and habits of cooperation, consultation and consensus-building characteristic of relations

among members of the Alliance; and promoting good-neighbourly relations. It would increase transparency in defence planning and military budgets, thereby reinforcing confidence among states, and would reinforce the overall tendency toward closer integration and cooperation in Europe. Enlargement also strengthens the Alliance's ability to contribute to European and international security and strengthen and broaden the transatlantic partnership.¹ After the decline of communism, Poland became an independent, democratic country and concentrated on achieving its set goal of participation in the creation of a stable security system. Since 1989 Polish government has seen NATO as a foundation to Europe's security, and for that reason its foreign politics aimed at joining the structures.² As a preparation for NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) accession, Poland joined Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme, which was initiated by the US former president Bill Clinton and launched at NATO summit in January 1994. The programme's concept came from the belief that transatlantic stability and security could only be ensured by countries' joint action. The cooperation within the frameworks of 'Partnership for Peace' takes place on the grounds of individual agreements between NATO and its member states. Within that cooperation lie: the development of a dialogue between the member states' leaders, discussing military issues, and participating in military operations.³ Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary joined NATO in 1999. Since then, Poland has been actively participating in NATO's open door policy, which aims at stretching the secure area by encouraging Alliance' accession.

This paper aims at an analysis of Poland's participation in NATO's open door policy. Due to a dynamic character of the issue, the authors will base their research on sources found at NATO's official website.

Since 1949, the number of NATO member countries has increased from 12 to 28 through six enlargement processes in 1952, 1955, 1982, 1999, 2004 and 2009. The latest additions were Albania and Croatia, which were invited to join

¹ See: *The Study of Enlargement*, www.nato.int [access: 18.11.2012]; K. Voigt, *NATO Enlargement: A Holistic Approach*, "SAIS Review" 1995, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp. 121–136; H. Kissinger, *Expand NATO Now*, "Washington Post" 19.12.1994, p. A27.

² A. Kołodziej, *Droga Polski do NATO [Poland Road to NATO]*, www.polityka-polska.pl, p. 3 [access: 01.12.2012]; www.mon.gov.pl [access: 18.11.2012].

³ A. Kołodziej, *op.cit.*, p. 10.; See: P. Duignan, *NATO, Its Past, Present and Future*, Stanford 2000, p. 58; J. Simon, *Poland and NATO. A Study in Civil-Military Relations*, Oxford 2004.

the Alliance in 2008, at the Bucharest Summit, and their accession process formally finished on 1 April 2009. This open door policy has its origin and basis in the Washington Treaty, which states that democratic European countries will be welcomed into the Alliance if they meet certain conditions: “Article 10 – The Parties may, by unanimous agreement, invite any other European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area to accede to this Treaty. Any State so invited may become a Party to the Treaty by depositing its instrument of accession with the Government of the United States of America. The Government of the United States of America will inform each of the Parties of the deposit of each such instrument of accession. (The North Atlantic Treaty, Washington D.C., 4 April 1949).”⁴ Alliance expansion is another step to reaching the chief goal – security development and stabilization of the transatlantic area, as well as integration – especially European Union (EU) enlargement. That is verified by NATO’s General Secretary Andreas Fogh Rasmussen’s words: “Alongside the European Union’s enlargement, NATO’s Open Door policy has already transformed this continent fundamentally, and permanently.”⁵ The Central and East European Coalition (CEEC) strongly applauds NATO’s enlargement in 1999 and 2004. The inclusion of the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland in NATO in 1999, and Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovakia and Romania in 2004, has resulted in the integration of these re-established democracies into the transatlantic community of nations. United States policies and support of these countries’ NATO membership have been prescient, as they have become staunch American allies. As such, the CEEC reiterates its support for the Alliance’s continued open door policy to include countries which are ready, able and willing to join the Alliance and which are democratic and respect the rule of law, including human and minority rights.⁶ Alliance membership allows strengthening international cooperation, looking after good-neighbourly relations as well as democratic and

⁴ *North Atlantic Treaty*, Washington D.C., 4 April 1949. See: A. Rotfeld, *NATO 2020: Zapewnione Bezpieczeństwo Dynamiczne Zaangażowanie* [Provided security – Dynamic Commitment], Warszawa 2010, p. 72. See: *Chicago NATO Summit: Open Door Policy, Information Document 31/2012*, Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos.

⁵ R. Rozoff, *NATO’s Global Open Door Policy*, website of Voltaire Network, www.voltairenet.org [access: 18.11.2012].

⁶ *CEEC Statement on NATO Enlargement and Supporting the Open Door Policy. April 2009*, <http://www.pac1944.org/ceec/NATO-stmnt-0904.pdf> [access: 18.11.2012].

civil control over armed forces; the newly accessed member states must stay open to countries that are waiting for accession.⁷ Due to the above mentioned, every Alliance member state should make efforts to enable further NATO accessions, in order to maintain stabilization and security.

2. Open door Policy

Since the beginning of the nineties the Alliance has been consistently carrying out its open door policy with countries that are willing to accept and implement rules stated in the Northatlantic Pact and declare the willingness to participate in joint efforts for ensuring euroatlantic area's security and stability. In the *Study of NATO Enlargement* of 1995 it is stated that "there is no fixed or rigid list of criteria for inviting new member states to join the Alliance." However, in that same study some minimum requirements are established:

- A democratic system based on market economy;
- Respect for the rights of minorities;
- A commitment to peaceful conflict resolution;
- The ability and willingness to participate militarily in NATO operations.⁸

Since 1999, Alliance's open door policy has been institutionally backed up by a group of colligated initiatives – Membership Action Plan (MAP) is one of them. It is an instrument addressed to countries aspiring for Alliance accession and was introduced at NATO's 1999 Summit in Washington. The Membership Action Plan is a NATO programme of advice, assistance and practical support tailored to the individual needs of countries wishing to join the Alliance. Participation in the MAP does not prejudice any decision by the Alliance on future membership. Current participants in the MAP are the former Yugoslav

⁷ *Vademecum NATO*, Warszawa 1999, p. 81. See: B.J. Collins, *NATO. A Guide to the Issue. Contemporary Military, Strategic and Security Issues*, California 2011; K. Archick, P. Gallis, *NATO and the European Union* [in:] *NATO: Status, Relations and Decision-Making*, M.I. Clausson (ed.), New York 2007.

⁸ A. Rotfeld, *op.cit.*, p. 73. See also: *Chicago NATO Summit*, *op.cit.*, pp. 4–5; *NATO Enlargement*, www.nato.int [access: 19.11.2012].

Republic of Macedonia⁹ (since 1999) and Montenegro¹⁰ (since 2009). Welcoming progress made in its reform efforts, in April 2010, the Allies formally invited Bosnia and Herzegovina¹¹ to join the MAP with one important condition: the first Annual National Programme under the MAP will only be accepted by NATO once a key remaining issue concerning immovable defence property has been resolved.¹² The MAP process provides a focused and candid feedback mechanism on aspirant countries progress on their programmes. This includes both political and technical advice, as well as annual meetings between all NATO members and individual aspirants at the level of the North Atlantic Council to assess progress, on the basis of an annual progress report. A key element is the

⁹ The accession process of Macedonia into NATO has not made any progress between the Bucharest Summit and the Chicago Summit. In both summits its accession into the Alliance was subject to the solution of its denomination issue. Greece rejects the use of the name Macedonia since it is also the name of an historical Greek region. Greece fears that the use of this name by its neighbouring country will lead to territorial claims towards the region with the same name. After a commitment reached by both parties in 1993, they provisionally accepted the use of the term Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). To the date, this terminology conflict has caused the rejection of Macedonia's accession into NATO and into the EU (to which it has been a candidate country since 2005). After the failure at the New York meeting, under the UN auspices, which was celebrated in order to find a solution to this issue last January 2012, it seems difficult to put an end to this problem and, therefore, to complete the accession process of Macedonia into the Alliance. See: *Chicago NATO Summit*, op.cit., p. 3.

¹⁰ At the Bucharest Summit, Montenegro was invited to start the Intensified Dialogue. In December 2009 Montenegro entered the second phase: the MAP. At this Chicago Summit the commitment to the MAP, the political, economic and defence reforms carried out, its contribution to security in the Balkan region and its participation in ISAF have been welcomed. Out of the four candidates discussed in this declaration, Montenegro is the only country with a clear prospect of early accession into NATO. See: *Ibidem*.

¹¹ After democratizing its defence structures and collaborating with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina started the Intensified Dialogue (2008) and it joined the MAP in April 2010. However, its accession is subject to the registration of all the properties that the Bosnian Government considers necessary for national defence in the name of the Ministry of Defence. At the Chicago Summit it has been acknowledged the significant progress made in the agreement reached in March 2012 with regard to the issue of properties and state assignment, but the practical implementation has not been carried out yet, which is an essential step for the country to start the MAP and become a member of the Alliance. See: *Ibidem*, p. 4.

¹² See: *Membership Action Plan (MAP)*, www.nato.int [access: 18.11.2012].

defence planning approach for aspirants, which includes elaboration and review of agreed planning targets. Throughout the year, meetings and workshops with NATO civilian and military experts in various fields allow for discussion of the entire spectrum of issues relevant to membership. An annual consolidated progress report on activities under the MAP is presented to NATO foreign and defence ministers at their regular spring meetings each year.¹³ To MAP, an annually prepared document ANIP (Annual National Integration Program) is connected. It includes integration strategies of individual countries and covers six basis areas:

- Political issues;
- Economic issues;
- Defence;
- Issues of the security policy;
- Budget (with the emphasis on defence, security elements and protection of classified information);
- Legal matters.¹⁴

ANIP is the basis for Alliance's evaluation of internal reform implementation of countries wishing to access it.¹⁵ It gives basis for preparing a progress evaluation of internal reform implementation, crucial for NATO accession.

The ANIP programme is consulted by the Alliance and aspiring countries during autumn. That leads to a further and more detailed discussion during spring the following year. It takes place in the aspiring country's capital city, and requires the presence of a NATO panel, which includes civil and military representatives. On the basis of the discussion an aspiring country is presented with an individual progress report, which becomes the foundations for further talks between NATO ambassadors and an aspiring country's delegation, usually chaired by the minister of foreign affairs or defence. Such talks are held before NATO's spring ministerial meetings, during which the ministers of the Alliance's member states receive a comprehensive report concerning MAP progress.¹⁶ This

¹³ *Membership Action Plan (MAP)*, www.atlanticinitiative.org [access: 20.11.2012].

¹⁴ A. Kempa, *Membership Action Plan-MAP*, www.wojsko-polskie.pl [access: 18.11.2012].

¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶ F. Bolond, *Sprawy wojskowe, MAP – drogowskaz ku przyszłości* [Military Affairs, MAP – Signpost to the Future], "Przegląd NATO" 2002, www.nato.int [access: 20.11.2012]; See also: *The Key to the Prague Summit an Agenda for Change*, 21–22 November 2002, www.nato.int [access: 20.11.2012].

intense process aims at thoroughly informing the Allied about progress the aspiring countries are making on their way to become a part of the Alliance and at showing the aspiring countries expectations they will have to meet once they have accessed NATO. The procedure's goal is to highlight the areas that require working on, in order to provide the aspiring countries with help throughout the process of their accession.¹⁷ Initiatives for the member states-to-be allow development of a democratic country in good-neighbourly relations, and consequently lead to region's security and stabilization.

As an independent and democratic country, Poland is a spokesman for NATO's open door policy, a process adding to security and stability spreading. It actively participates in common initiatives that aim at showing Alliance's structures and mechanism to the countries wishing for accession. It has also taken part in the elaboration of NATO's Membership Action Plan.¹⁸ Poland's foreign affairs policy's priority is to build a secure and stable region through NATO's open door policy. Poland concentrates its actions upon:

- Part-taking in confidence measures building between Russia and the West;
- Close cooperation with Ukraine and other countries of the Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus;
- Supporting Moldavia, the Western Balkans and the South Caucasus in their aspirations for accession (supporting the process of their political and economic transformations).¹⁹

NATO will remain the main, comprehensive instrument of Polish security policy on the political-military level. NATO's New Strategic Concept, adopted during Lisbon's summit in November 2010, consists of a number of elements vital for Poland's, Europe's and Transatlantic community's security. Apart from the confirmation of Article's 5 validity, crucial matters include: keeping the open door policy towards all the European countries which fulfil accession criteria and Alliance's readiness for a strategic partnership with Russia, based on the principal of mutuality. Poland will remain the spokesman for NATO accession. By supporting accession aspirations, especially Moldavia's, the South Caucasus's and Western Balkan's, it will provide them with help in political and

¹⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁸ *Polska w NATO* [Poland in NATO], www.msz.gov.pl [access: 20.11.2012].

¹⁹ *Priorytety Polskiej Polityki Zagranicznej 2012–2016* [Polish Foreign Policy Priorities 2012–2016], http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/polityka_zagraniczna/priorytety_polityki_zagr_2012_2016/ [access: 20.11.2012].

economic transformation.²⁰ The new Strategic Concept almost certainly will advocate expanding NATO's dialogue and pragmatic cooperation with Russia, intensifying its civil-military approach to crisis response, building much closer relations with the EU and other key international actors, and enhancing allied cooperation in the "global commons," including the protection of cyberspace and maritime security in the Baltic and Arctic regions.²¹ The experience gained by it through political, economic and military transformation is invaluable.

Poland's support for the accession of new candidates stems from a few factors. As a NATO's front border country, situated directly vis-a-vis the East it is interested in moving Alliance's borders further towards the east. That is why, Ukraine's accession was the priority of the past decade. Poland's openness towards accession of new members stems from a debt of gratitude contracted in 1999. Poland was one of the first countries that joined the Alliance after the cold war and understands the necessity new accessions. Additionally, the process of Eastern countries' integration with the West moves them away from other political and military centres.²² The above mentioned factors made Poland get involved in supporting Georgia and Ukraine's accession aspirations. It is worth noting that, Ukraine was one of the earliest and initially enthusiastic aspirant members from the former Soviet bloc. Yet in sharp contrast to the Baltic States and the Central European members of the Warsaw Pact, Kiev's aspirations for NATO membership have waxed and waned since Ukraine gained its independence from the former Soviet Union. Indeed, Ukraine's "on-off" relationship with NATO remains subject to diplomatic and economic ties between Moscow and Kiev. The opening decade of the 21st century saw an initial acceleration of NATO-Ukraine relations. In 2002, for example, the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan (the Plan) was adopted. The Plan sought to support Ukraine's reform efforts 'on the road to Euro-Atlantic cooperation'. Earlier in the year, then-President Leonid Kuchma announced that Ukraine would eventually seek full membership of NATO. Ukraine's membership aspirations received a boost in the aftermath of the Orange Revolution. NATO leaders not only expressed support for the new Ukrainian leader Viktor Yushchenko's reform plans and commitment to enhancing Kiev's relations with the Alliance, they also launched an Intensified

²⁰ Ibidem.

²¹ L. Michel, *NATO's Open Door, Next Round of Enlargement*, www.defencenewes.com [access: 29.11.2012].

²² P. Pacuła, *Przyszłość polityki „otwartych drzwi” NATO* [The Future of "Open Doors" Policy of NATO], "Bezpieczeństwo Narodowe" 2012, No. 21, p. 99.

Dialogue on Ukraine's aspirations to join NATO.²³ It should be noted that, NATO-Ukraine dialogue has often been supported with military cooperation.

NATO-Georgia relations date back to 1992, when Georgia joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (later renamed the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in 1997), upon gaining independence with the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Cooperation deepened and broadened after Georgia joined the Partnership for Peace programme in 1994 and the Planning and Review Process (PARP) in 1999. After the "Rose Revolution" in 2003, the focus on supporting Georgia's domestic reform process intensified, in particular through the development of the Georgia's first IPAP with NATO in 2004. Georgia was granted an Intensified Dialogue on membership aspirations in September 2006. At their Summit in Bucharest in April 2008, NATO leaders agreed that Georgia will become a member of the Alliance.²⁴ Nevertheless, it did not bring any results. At the moment, their accession seems unreal. Promoting Ukraine and Georgia's accession aspirations has until recently been one of Poland's "NATO policies" main objectives. As an effect, both countries received a confirmation of their future accession in their final reports at 2008 Bucharest's summit. Nevertheless, neither the mode of accession nor time frames were specified. In spite of USA and so-called new countries' support, the aspiring countries were not given MAP. Both Kiev and Tbilisi made endeavours to receive it, however unsuccessfully due to, *alter alia*, Germany and France's opposition. Under the government of Viktor Janukovych, Ukraine stopped their endeavours to receive MAP and join the Alliance. On the third of June 2010 Internal and Foreign Affairs Policy Act was adopted. It excluded Ukraine from military alliances and specified its non-unit status. At the same time, aspirations for NATO accession were crossed out from Ukraine's National Security Act. Allowing the deployment of Russian Black Sea Fleet in Crimea until 2042 was a crucial event in Kiev's security policy. This agreement is seen as one of the factors hindering Ukraine's NATO accession.²⁵ Public opinion polls have on occasion suggested that the majority of Ukrainians do not necessarily favour NATO membership. A 2010 poll undertaken by the Pew Research Center, for example, suggests that only 30% of the Ukrainian population support membership of NATO. Moreover, other polls have also suggested consistently suggest that 30% of Ukrainians actually view NATO as

²³ *Ukraine and NATO an – On-Off Relationship*, International Relations and Security Network (ISN), www.isn.ethz.ch [access: 29.11.2012].

²⁴ *NATO's Relations with Georgia*, www.nato.int [access: 29.11.2012].

²⁵ P. Pacuła, *op.cit.*, p. 99; A. Rotfeld, *op.cit.*, p. 63.

a threat. Indeed, a lack of public support for NATO membership segues into the third, and perhaps most important, factor of Ukraine's current policies. While the Orange Revolution resulted in the installation of a pro-Western government, the return of Yanukovich further suggests that Ukraine has recently moved away from more Western notions of democracy.²⁶ After the elections in Ukraine in 2012, NATO's Secretary General said: "Ukraine is an important partner for NATO. An independent, sovereign and stable Ukraine, firmly committed to democracy and the rule of law, is key to Euro-Atlantic security. The Alliance stands ready to further assist Ukraine in its reforms."²⁷

Georgia's situation deteriorated in August 2008 with the outbreak of war with Russia. It faced two problems: occupation of a part of its territory by the Russian (or pro-Russian) forces and the loss of West's confidence in Micheil Saakashvili, who was partly burdened with the responsibility for the conflict's outbreak. On the 15th of September 2008 the Allied made a political gesture towards the Georgian government and formed a NATO-Georgia Commission (NGC) which plays a central role in supervising the process set in hand at Bucharest. In December 2008, Allied foreign ministers agreed to the development of an Annual National Programme (ANP) under the NGC. The formal cooperation was sustained, however the perspective of accession, despite political declarations, was moved into the future. Here, it is important to underline that the objections towards both candidates were justified. There have been doubts concerning the state of their democracies and their readiness to comply with NATO's standards in different aspects of state governing.²⁸ The Chicago summit declaration says that NATO-Georgia Commission and Georgia's Annual National Programme (ANP) have "a central role in supervising the process set in hand at the Bucharest Summit."²⁹ However, it was important to highlight the efforts that have made Georgia: "We welcome Georgia's progress since the Bucharest Summit to meet its Euro-Atlantic aspirations through its reforms, implementation of its Annual National Programme, and active political engagement with the Alliance in the NATO-Georgia Commission. In that context, we have agreed to enhance Georgia's connectivity with the Alliance, including by further strengthening

²⁶ *Ukraine and NATO an - On-Off Relationship*, op.cit.

²⁷ *Statement by the Secretary General on Ukraine Parliamentary Elections*, www.nato.int [access: 12.11.2012].

²⁸ P. Pacuła, op.cit., p. 99, A. Rotfeld, op.cit.; See: www.nato.int [access: 12.11.2012].

²⁹ *Chicago Summit Declaration*, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_87593.htm?mode=pressrelease [access: 20.11.2012].

our political dialogue, practical cooperation, and interoperability with Georgia,” the declaration reads.³⁰ It says that NATO encourages and actively supports ongoing reforms in Georgia, including democratic, electoral, judicial, security and defence reforms. The declaration reiterates NATO support to Georgia’s territorial integrity and welcomes Georgia’s “full compliance” with the EU-mediated 2008 ceasefire agreement and “other unilateral measures to build confidence,” as well as Tbilisi’s non-use of force pledge and calls “on Russia to reciprocate.”³¹

Both Georgia and Ukraine have been offered special structures of cooperation – NATO-Ukraine Commission and NATO-Georgia Commission. Communication channels within their frameworks work effectively and both countries contribute to NATO’s mission. Due to geographical features both countries have been afflicted by long-standing problems stemming from ethnical differences and uncertainties in the area of energetic security. One of the biggest failures of NATO’s partnership system was the 2008 conflict between Georgia and Russia, during which both parties became involved into a conflict triggered by causes that remain unresolved until today. The Allied should use the mechanisms of NATO’s crisis management whilst cooperating with partnership Commissions to correctly evaluate and monitor events of importance to both countries’ security.³² It is advised that the Allied discuss issues concerning security in their countries and strengthen their cooperation with NATO.

Realistic recognition of the state of Ukraine and Georgia’s aspirations of joining NATO does not have to mean Poland’s full capitulation in this matter. It is worth to mention the support of the process of bringing both countries’ closer to NATO, at least to keep it in Alliance’s agenda. In addition, relationships with Kiev and Tbilisi should be tightened in order to keep both countries pressurised to carry out necessary democratic reforms and not to leave them to the necessity of choosing the Eastern political option. It is however worth creating an analogical impulse in the relations with those countries.³³

Better horizons for the open door policy can be seen in the Balkan area, where European integration seems most realistic. Montenegro, Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are the potential candidates³⁴ for

³⁰ Ibidem.

³¹ Civil Georgia, 21.05.2012, www.civil.ge [access: 20.11.2012].

³² A. Rotfeld, *op.cit.*, p. 63.

³³ P. Pacuła, *op.cit.*, p. 100.

³⁴ M. Konopka, *Oficjalni kandydaci do Unii Europejskiej* [The Official Candidates for the European Union], www.uniaeuropejska.org [access: 20.11.2012]; See also: *Unia rozszerza swoje granice* [Union Expands Its Borders], www.europa.eu [access: 20.11.2012].

further NATO accessions, which will strengthen region's security. Nevertheless, they cannot strategically strengthen Alliance's military capacity. Due to a small demographic potential, Balkan countries who are aspiring for NATO accession do not have large military capacities. They do not spend recommended 2% of their GDP on military affairs (alike most member states). Nevertheless, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia's participation in ISAF mission in Afghanistan is a big support, already at the pre-accession stage.³⁵ European Union supports countries that wish to join it through democracy and economic growth strengthening. Positive examples of Slovenia, Croatia and Albania prove that an area that used to be a war ignite can during a decade become stable and secure. As their last steps towards the accession, in 2009 Montenegro received MAP and should join the Alliance in 2014.³⁶ It should be highlighted that in 2006, straight after regaining independence, Montenegro joined Partnership for Peace during the summit in Riga, received Individual Partnership Action Plan in June 2008 and MAP in December 2009.³⁷ In a speech given during his visit to the country on 29 June 2011, NATO's Secretary General praised Montenegro for the progress made in introducing necessary reforms: "I commend Montenegro's political leaders for that courage and determination. And I encourage you to continue your efforts. It is of utmost importance to ensure that the Montenegrin security agencies and defence sector meet NATO requirements. And that further efforts are made to fight corruption and organized crime. That will bring Montenegro even closer to meeting its Euro-Atlantic aspirations."³⁸ The probability of Montenegro's accession in 2014 is high, but mostly depends on Alliance's member states' agreement. It is similar in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The relationship between Bosnia and Herzegovina and NATO has been unique in many respects. No other country, including NATO members and non-members states, has had so diversified and numerous interactions with NATO as B&H.³⁹ Bosnia and Herzegovina joined the Partnership for Peace in

³⁵ T. Żornaczuk, *Wyzwania procesu rozszerzenia NATO na Bałkanach* [The Challenges of NATO Enlargement Process in the Balkan], "Biuletyn PISM" ["PISM Bulletin"] 2012, No. 65(930).

³⁶ *NATO's Relations with Montenegro*, www.nato.int [access: 20.11.2012].

³⁷ P. Pacuła, op.cit., p. 94; See: *NATO Ministers Invite Montenegro to Join MAP and Encourage Bosnia and Herzegovina to Step up Reforms*, 4 December 2009, www.nato.int [access: 20.11.2012].

³⁸ *NATO's Relations*, op.cit.

³⁹ A. Dedović, *Bosnia and Herzegovina*, in: *NATO 60. Proceedings of NATO Advanced Research Workshop on "Ypung at 60," Kranj 2009*, p. 59.

December 2006. Democratic, institutional and defence reforms are a key focus of cooperation. The country has been engaged in an Intensified Dialogue with NATO on its membership aspirations and related reforms since April 2008.⁴⁰ In 2009 Rasmussen said: “The fact that three armies that so recently fought each other are now one, under one Defence Ministry, is a real achievement,” (...). “But it is also true that Bosnia-Herzegovina has to do more. We have therefore decided that Bosnia-Herzegovina will join MAP once it achieves the necessary progress in its reform efforts and we will keep Bosnia-Herzegovina’s progress under active review.”⁴¹ Bosnia and Herzegovina was given MAP in 2010, however a conditional one, which is delaying its accession (due to a conflict between Serbian Bosnians, Bosnians and Croats). Another difficulty stems from a large number of war remnants, which include: huge amounts of landmines, guns, rifles and ammunition exceeding the allowed 20 000 tons. Fortunately, the situation has been improving since an agreement with the US government, which declares help in resolving problems in that area.⁴² Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to continue to pursue far-reaching democratic and defence reforms, not just because this will further its aspirations to join NATO and the European Union, but because such reforms are essential for the country to become a fully functioning independent democratic state. The Allies remain committed to supporting the country’s wider reform programme, particularly in the area of defence. But, ultimately, the initiative has to come from the political leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In a speech on 29 June 2011, NATO’s Secretary General called on the political leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina “to demonstrate vision, leadership and the ability to compromise, and to continue on the path of political and economic reform. A solution to the property issue would demonstrate that Bosnia and Herzegovina functions like one state. That it is capable to interact with NATO and to fulfil its commitments within the Membership Action Plan.”⁴³

⁴⁰ *NATO’s Relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina*, www.nato.int [access: 20.11.2012].

⁴¹ *Ibidem*; See: R.E. Kanet, *The “New” Members and Future Enlargement: The Impact of NATO-Russia Relations* [in:] *NATO in Search of a Vision*, A. Gülnur, R.R. Moore, L. Freedman (eds.), Georgetown 2010.

⁴² *Zachodnie Bałkany w polityce UE, Raport CSIS: UE, USA I NATO wobec zachodnich Bałkanów* [The Western Balkans in EU policy, CSIS Report: EU, U.S. and NATO for the Western Balkans], www.usa-eu [access: 20.11.2012].

⁴³ *NATO’s Relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina*, *op.cit.*

The process of Macedonia's accession is at the moment in progress, since Greece blocked it at 2008 NATO's summit in Bucharest.⁴⁴ It should be underlined that Macedonia has fulfilled the accession requirements and has been in the MAP programme since 1999. In December 2011 the International Court of Justice decided that Greece was wrong to block Macedonia's endeavours on the reason of using by it an identical country name. Within a bilateral agreement from 1995 Greece agreed not to block Macedonia's membership in international organisations if it uses the name FYROM (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).⁴⁵ Clearly, Macedonia has to resolve its conflict with Greece to be able to join NATO.

Additionally, from Poland's point of view, it is a region culturally close and therefore, active participation in Balkans' accession process should be taken into consideration. That will open Poland to partnership with countries like Turkey. As one of the first countries that acknowledged Kosovo's independence, Poland is the right candidate for helping to find agreement between Belgrad and Pristina, which is a vital requirement for Balkan's integration with the Alliance.⁴⁶ At 2012 summit in Chicago it was underlined that Macedonia was heading in the right direction: "We welcome the significant progress that Montenegro has made towards NATO membership and its contribution to security in the Western Balkans region and beyond, including through its active role in regional cooperation activities and its participation in ISAF. We also welcome the increasing public support for NATO membership in Montenegro, and will continue to assist this process. Montenegro's active engagement in the MAP process demonstrates firm commitment to join the Alliance. Montenegro has successfully implemented significant political, economic and defence reforms, and we encourage it to continue on that path so it can draw even closer to the Alliance. We will keep Montenegro's progress towards membership under active review."⁴⁷ Moreover, NATO leaders adopted a general declaration, in which repeated that NATO's door would remain open to all European democracies

⁴⁴ Greek authorities claim that the name Macedonia is reserved for a historic region of Greece and that its use by a bordering country could indicate territorial claims for the North region of Greece, Macedonia in NATO under one condition, www.news.money.pl [access: 20.11.2012].

⁴⁵ Ibidem; See: T. Carpenter, *NATO's Empty Victory: A postmortem on the Balkan War*, Washington 2000; J. Christoff, *NATO Partnerships: Dod Needs to Assess U.S. Assistance in Response to Changes to the Partnership for Peace Program*, GAO, September 2012.

⁴⁶ P. Pacuła, op.cit., p. 100.

⁴⁷ *Chicago Summit Declaration*, 20 May 2012, www.nato.int [access: 20.11.2012].

that shared Alliance's values and were willing and capable of undertaking responsibilities and obligations resulting from membership, that are capable of promoting the Treaty's policies and whose accession will add to the security of the North Atlantic region. They also expressed their general support for Bosnia and Hercegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia and Georgia's accession aspirations. In Georgia's case they maintained their provisions from 2008 Bucharest summit; moreover they expressed a positive attitude towards the integration of euroatlantic Serbia and partnership strengthening with Ukraine.⁴⁸

3. Conclusions

Open door policy carried out by the NATO is key in building euroatlantic security. It is impossible not to notice that both the Alliance and its member states, as well as the countries waiting for the accession make intensified efforts towards faster integration and full NATO membership, which gives them a guarantee of stability. At the same time, it is them making the biggest effort – meeting the requirements for a full NATO membership. However, efforts made by the current member states (including Poland) and support given by them are also highly important. Poland is a country that particularly supports NATO and EU accessions. Firstly, support given during Ukraine attempts to be included in MAP was crucial. Support given to Georgia was dictated by good neighbourhood and potential improvement of relationship with Russia. Also the support given to Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina is of significance. First of all, it is shown in numerous appearances, here the deceased President Lech Kaczyński was particularly active. He thought that joining NATO was particularly important for Bosnia and Herzegovina and explained that the Alliance was a “security exporter.” In his opinion former Yugoslavia countries needed stability, especially due to a complicated ethnical structure.⁴⁹ At present, support for Macedonia can be seen through experience exchange and mutual relations.

Possibly, in two years' time NATO will accept into its structures two new, mentioned in this paper members. It would be a great success, rewarding inter alia Poland's efforts, who can definitely be seen as an active propagator of the open door policy not only within the frameworks of NATO.

⁴⁸ *NATO Summit in Chicago*, www.stosunkimiedzynarodowe.info [access: 20.11.2012].

⁴⁹ *Poland Supports the Efforts of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Membership in NATO*, www.bankier.pl, [20.11.2012].