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THE CONCEPT OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AS AN INPUT IN THE MODERN ALLIANCE THEORY

ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to a new institution of the international political relations – the strategic partnership. The author analysis the realities of the foreign policy conducted in the first decade of the 21st century and takes a side in the discussion between the neoliberals and the neorealists on the states' natural tendency to rivalry or cooperation. Settling her concept in the framework of the realists theory of alliances, the author describes the condition of research on the issue and differentiates between the *sensu stricte* and *sensu largo* alliance, moving closer the wider understanding of the term. The core of the essay, though, is the presentation of a perfect model of the researched institution. Therefore, the author presents and justifies her own definition and sets constitutive features of the material strategic partnership.

Key words

strategic partnership, special relations, alliance theory, alliance, cooperation, rivalry

1. The Realities of the Foreign Policy Conduct in the First Decade of the 21st Century

We live in a period of transition. That is a fact that no researcher or practitioner of international relations doubts. The last decade of the previous century ended the cold war rivalry, which had been in the centre of international affairs for almost 50 years. The countries, that were closely adherent to one of the two blocks, got back the capability of unconstrained choice of potential allies and conducting politics according to their self-made out interests. The fact that the

Soviet Union's collapse marked a change of the international affairs polarity is nothing when it comes to the changes determined by the globalisation. This is the first time in centuries, when the Westphalian system of sovereign and national states has been questioned. An overwhelming co-dependencies redefined the classic term of security and emphasized new chances and threats for the survival and harmonious development of societies. Politicians and political scientists all over the world ask themselves a question, how the world will look like in the 21st century and how changes of international politics will influence the capabilities of conducting the politics by the governments? Are we, according to some predictions, experiencing the "end of history"? Or maybe we are sinking in a conflict-creating chaos? The eternal argument between the liberals and realists about state's natural tendency to cooperation or confrontation returned with a new power.

The author of the below essay leans towards the thesis, that as human being has a potential to do right and wrong, each state, due to the situation, can choose one of the above as well. "The international relations are not a constant state of war and anarchy, because the contradictions of national interest come with convergences and dependencies between states. If there were only contradictions, no cooperation would be possible; if contradictions had not appear at all, no relations between states, known as alliances, would be needed; alliances, that are basic cells of international order, of various and changeable framework of purpose, extension, cohesion, and constancy"¹. Therefore, as establishing coalitions between major political powers is crucial in the internal politics, it is the capability of entering into suitable alliances and networks is often the most important in foreign policy.

Each era shaped institutions in the international environment characteristic for its times. The 19th century was named as "conference diplomacy", the 20th century – "the era of international organizations", and the 21st century has been described as the "summit diplomacy". A strategic partnership – a new type of bilateral relations, that combines a flexibility and deep rapprochement has become a supplement for the multilateral negotiations on the global pressing issues. The extraordinary closeness of the subjects comes from the mutual share of common strategic goals, and belief that a long-term cooperation effectively facilitates its implementation. This way, apart from being an independent and sovereign actors in the international environment, a relation between them

¹ J. Stefanowicz, *Anatomia polityki międzynarodowej* [Anatomy of International Politics], Toruń 2000, p. 126.

is formed. The relation that surpasses an ordinary intensity of relations and preference towards other states.

Even though, the first special relations were concluded in the first part of the 20th century (between Great Britain and the United States), the 90s of the previous century brought a peak of its popularity. Nevertheless, no academic interest followed this practice. As a result, the term of special relations, is currently understood and used intuitively, which causes a lot of misunderstanding. Moreover, as a result of expansion in the number of subjects in the international environment, the strategic partnerships are established not only between states, but also between states and international and supranational organizations, federal parts of states and even between continents. The below article is an answer to the above *status quo* and is to serve as a proposal to cohesive definition and constitutive features of the term on the ground of political science. It will result in the perfect model of strategic partnership concluded between two² sovereign³ states⁴.

2. Cooperation vs. Rivalry – the Theoretical Perspective

Due to the fact that the aim of this essay is to enrich the theory of international relations with tools facilitating the description and understanding of modern international environment, the deliberation will start with the positioning of the research in the particular theoretical stream. Due to the understood time limits, the arguments on definition of the theories of international relations and its classification will be beyond our interest. Our attention will be focused on the traditional discussion between realists and liberals, so on the issue of state's tendencies to cooperation or rivalry. As it can be noticed in the chart below, the essay is written with a theoretical distance towards the aforementioned schools of thought, in a particular spirit of the "neo-neo synthesis" with an inconsiderable dominance of neorealism.

² The assumption was made that in a world of overlapping convergences and contradictions, and also, which is particularly true for all societies, a network of preferences and sympathies, each multilateral structure is indeed a set of many bilateral relations.

³ The starting point is a voluntary cooperation of subjects that are individual and independent in decision-making.

⁴ The assumption was made that states remain the only actors on the international scene; actors conducting foreign politics. Therefore, concluded partnerships will differ from relations, in which at least one partner does not possess legal international subjectivity.

Chart 1. The critic of the neorealist and neoliberal thought in the context of the debate on the natural tendency of states to rivalry or cooperation

Issue	Realism/ Neorealism	Liberalism/ Neoliberalism	The author's stand
Basic motivation of state	<p>Fear and desire to control – The states are guided exclusively by their egoistic interests, they conduct the policy of power and, according to the zero-sum game, aim at gaining the supremacy over the competition.</p>	<p>Rationality – States are by instinct aiming at compromises that are favourable for everybody, because are bound by the harmony of interests.</p>	<p>States did not stop to aspire to their egoistic goals. Nevertheless, the majority of governments realised that in joining forces in coalitions, they have bigger chances for its implementation.</p>
Progression of IR	<p>There is no possibility of progress in the relations between states, similar to the one that took place in interpersonal relations after abandoning the archaic <i>status quo</i>.</p>	<p>Since the environment and the most important features of the state evolve, therefore patterns of their behaviour also change. Thanks to education and learning process humans can build institutions, that would extract their best features.</p>	<p>States are under political development and are capable of creating a supranational community (i.e. EU), but it is not a dominant tendency in the modern world.</p>
Natural State of the IR	<p>The lack of trust and confrontation seems to be the natural state of international relations.</p>	<p>Cooperation is a natural state of international relations.</p>	<p>There is no single determining tendency – with regard to the situation, states can decide to cooperate or confront each other.</p>
Inevitability of war	<p>In politics there is no space for indication of morality, but for efficient and responsible governing. Between states inevitably comes to arguments, that take a form of an armed conflict.</p>	<p>War and conflict are not inevitable.</p>	<p>Today the war has not declined, but in some parts of the globe (the northern hemisphere), it was transferred to a more subtle ground. States do not fight over territories or natural resources, but over access to information, qualified labour force, and high technology.</p>

Chart. 1

Issue	Realism/ Neorealism	Liberalism/ Neoliberalism	The author's stand
Actors in IR	The state-centric model of international system is sustained.	The role of a non-state members of IR and supranational relations between the units increases.	States are still the only actors in IR that possess full legal subjectivity. Therefore they conduct foreign policy.
Sovereignty and autonomy	From the state's perspective, sovereignty is one of the two most crucial values.	State's sovereignty stopped being a superior value. Gradually the social loyalty is being transferred to the supranational level.	The effective politics is the ability to balance between efficient and independent management , that gives the actors a maximum security and possibilities for development, with the acceptable level of dependency.
Security	In the presence of the anarchy in the international environment, each state has to provide security for itself. Possible cooperation is hard to achieve, difficult to maintain and depends on the power of states.	The world full of networks of different connections becomes less stable. The biggest enemy of many states are not other states but the asymmetric threats. Therefore, between those states, a community of security is being established.	What took place in the Northern states was an expansion of the framework of the definition of security and a shift of focus from the survival and development of the states to the quality of life of its citizens. The sense that approaching threats are not only common, but also exceeds the capabilities of units, forced on states long-term actions.
Reasons for the conflicts to cease	1. Rational instrumental thinking assumes some benefits come from cooperation, especially in the era of nuclear weapons. 2. The concept of bargaining assumes the possibility of using extortion instead of brutal force.	1. The achieved level of co-dependency , mainly economic, makes violent conflict unprofitable. 2. "Cooperative" role of international institutions ⁵ that provide the circulation of information and space for negotiation. 3. Peaceful disposition of liberal democracies.	What the humanity did not manage to learn from its own experience, can be found within reach of the multidimensional globalisation, creating a network of codependencies and strengthening unpredictability of the international surroundings.

⁵ Understood both as intergovernmental organizations and regimes – sets of states' rules of conduct in particular fields e.i. in aviation.

Chart. 1

Issue	Realism/ Neorealism	Liberalism/ Neoliberalism	The author's stand
Significance and scope of cooperation	Cooperational behaviour is possible only in particular circumstances. Each concluded alliance is short-term and superficial. There is still a distinct division between the internal and foreign policy.	To solve common problems (often of trans-border nature), indispensable is the transnational cooperation, which if initiated in one field, will be transferred to other.	A progressive modernization constantly expands the need and framework of cooperation beyond the state's borders. Cooperative behaviour is a decisive factor in the state's capabilities to develop . The division to foreign and internal policy is artificial and non-functional .

Source: author's own work based on the theoretical approach presented in books: *Stosunki międzynarodowe: uczestnicy – ich miejsce i rola w systemie międzynarodowym*⁶, *Wprowadzenie do stosunków międzynarodowych. Teorie i kierunki badawcze*⁷, *Globalizacja polityki światowej. Wprowadzenie do stosunków międzynarodowych*⁸, *Podstawy stosunków międzynarodowych*⁹, *Środowisko międzynarodowe a zachowania państw*¹⁰, *Wstęp do teorii stosunków międzynarodowych*¹¹, *Teorie stosunków międzynarodowych: krytyka i systematyzacja*¹².

⁶ R. Zenderowski, *Stosunki międzynarodowe: uczestnicy – ich miejsce i rola w systemie międzynarodowym* [International Relations: Actors – Their Place and Role in the International System], Warsaw 2005, pp. 130–132.

⁷ R. Jackson, G. Sørensen, *Wprowadzenie do stosunków międzynarodowych. Teorie i kierunki badawcze* [Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches, Oxford 2003], Cracow 2006, pp. 70–95, 112–131.

⁸ T. Dunne, *Liberalizm [Liberalism]* [in:] *Globalizacja polityki światowej. Wprowadzenie do stosunków międzynarodowych [The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations, Oxford 2008]*, S. Smith, J. Baylis (eds.), Cracow 2008, pp. 226–244; T. Dunne, B. Schmidt, *Realizm [Realism]* [in:] *Globalizacja polityki światowej. Wprowadzenie do stosunków międzynarodowych [The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations, Oxford 2008]*, S. Smith, J. Baylis (eds.), Cracow 2008, pp. 196–201, 203–216.

⁹ K. Mingst, *Podstawy stosunków międzynarodowych [Essentials of International Relations, New York 2003]*, Warsaw 2006, pp. 64–73.

¹⁰ A. Dybczyński, *Środowisko międzynarodowe a zachowania państw* [International Environment and State Behaviour], Wrocław 2006, pp. 46–47.

¹¹ T. Łoś-Nowak, *Wstęp do teorii stosunków międzynarodowych* [Introduction to the Theory of International Relations], Poznań 1999, p. 45.

¹² J. Czaputowicz, *Teorie stosunków międzynarodowych: krytyka i systematyzacja* [Theories of International Relations: Critique and Systematisation], Warsaw 2007, p. 334.

The strategic partnership itself, as a foreign policy tool, can serve to those in power who are faithful to both liberal and realists approach. Its essence lays in cooperation between the subjects that share the same goals. Those goals can stem from the preferences of the main lobbying groups within the subject (priorities ancillary to welfare/social development) or be determined by the structure of the external environment (priorities ancillary to the states' security). A crucial and a common for both theoretical approaches issue is the parallel maintenance of institutional flexibility and long-term exceptionally close relation between partners. Once can say that strategic alliances bring together the elements of the realist alliances and the liberal integration theories.

On the one hand, just a mere possibility of cooperation which may have its source not only in fear of the third party, confirms the idealistic conviction of the progressive nature of international relations. On the other hand, it does not have to come along, or be a result of, the institutional development of a particular relation. Quite the contrary, the appearance of the special relations might be a response to the developed mechanisms of international cooperation in a form of international and supranational organizations that in the conditions of changeable environment of state's functionality are rather slowing down than initiating the actions. The reason why strategic partnerships are established and maintained is therefore not the cooperation-driven role of institutions, but emphasized by the realists, concurrence of the troubling issues. From this essay's perspective, it is crucial to notice that, even though states did not give up on implementation of their own national interests for the common good, more often it is the cooperation that they perceive to be the best way to reach their goals. Moreover, even though a long-term cooperation undoubtedly strengthens the dependencies between partners that are caused by the globalization, the base for alliances is still the legal autonomy of the subjects. Therefore, since a strategic partnership is an intergovernmental institution, the integration theories that are focused on explaining why states decide to give up part of their sovereignty for the supranational subjects, cannot give much input here. Given some accurate liberal argument, the definition of strategic partnership was set within the framework of the alliance theory.

3. Alliance Theory – Research Condition

The theory of alliances is one of the most neglected fields in the international relations theories. Conservative researchers usually treat its subject in auxiliary

way to describe other political science categories, like: balance of power¹³, or structure of a system. Researchers who are dealing with statistic methods are usually focusing on the correlation between some fixed sets, i.e. the number of alliances and the frequency of conflicts¹⁴, but not on political processes of creation and maintenance of alliances¹⁵. And even though some valuable analysis on particular aspects of international cooperation were created, only a few researchers decided to take up the challenge and create a coherent and holistic theory of alliances. There were attempts to make use of the theories that were created on the basis of related scientific fields, including the game theory or the public good theory. Definitely more frequently the particular alliances, from the historical perspective¹⁶, were studied and usually accompanied with some scarce theoretical content¹⁷. "Taking into consideration the number of research and development centres working on the alliances, number of scientists that work on those issues, and generally acknowledged literature in the subject – one can assume that within the framework of international relations science, there is a science on alliances, or widely understood theory of alliances"¹⁸.

A forerunner of research on the process of establishing and managing the alliances was Georg Liska, who, in 1962, published his monograph entitled *Nations in Alliance: the Limits of the Interdependence*¹⁹. According to his own words,

¹³ Realists wrote about the issue in a wider way, especially their American representatives. As an example can serve *Politics among nations* written by Hans Morgenthau and published in 1948, and *Alliances and balance of power. A search for conceptual clarity* by Mumulla Naidu published in 1974.

¹⁴ E.g. *Theory of international politics* by Kenneth Waltz published in 1979.

¹⁵ See G. Snyder, *Alliance theory: a neorealist first cut* [in:] *The evolution of theory in international relations*, R. Rothstein (ed.), Columbia 1991, p. 83.

¹⁶ The description of this approach is presented in the book from 1976 entitled *Collective security and defence organizations in the changing world coalitions* by Ümit Bayülken.

¹⁷ As an example – in the book from 1968 by Robert Osgood *Alliances and American Foreign Policy* there is a chapter entitled *The nature of Alliances*. On the other hand, the work by Bruce Don *Allies and Adversaries: Policy Insights Into Strategic Defense Relationship* from 1986, while describing internal relations of NATO, and those between North Atlantic Treaty and Warsaw Pact, introduces a definition of allies, opponents, and also inter-alliance and intra-alliance models.

¹⁸ B. Balcerowicz, *Sojusz a obrona narodowa* [Alliance and National Defense], Warsaw 1999, p. 39.

¹⁹ *Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence* includes two main parts that describe the issues of the reasons of aligning and reorganization of alliances, cohesion of alliances, and their effectiveness (*Patterns and Principles*), as well as the arrangement of alliances, non-alignment and neutrality, and the future of alliances (*Trends and Policies*).

“the result is not a system, but exclusively a kind of systematised discussion, it’s not a theory, but only theoretizing on what has been, is or might be”²⁰. Without a doubt, a very important set of theoretical analysis on alliances is a book *Alliance in International Politics* published in 1970, in which all the previous crucial studies on the issue were bound, including those by G. Liska²¹, H. Morgenthau²², K. Holsti²³, Karl Deutsch, and Morton Kaplan²⁴ together with some texts created at that time, including the chapters by Julian Friedman²⁵, Christopher Bladen²⁶ or Steven Rosen²⁷. The study *Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances: Comparative Studies* from 1973 edited by Ole Holsti, P. Terrence Hopmann, and Johna Sullivan²⁸ should also be mentioned. The discussed issues appear also, but in a limited scope, in part of the academic books on the theory of international relations²⁹. Among the Polish researchers, the theoretical side of alliances between the subjects of international relations was not widely covered in the academic publication on international relations theory. Nevertheless, a position worth mentioning is a book published in 2000 by Janusz Stefanowicz *Anatomia*

²⁰ G. Liska, *Nations in Alliance. The Limits of Interdependence*, Baltimore 1962, p. vii.

²¹ The article *Alignments and Realignment*s is devoted to factors that determine entry into alliance or withdrawal due to an establishment of a new covenant.

²² The essay *Alliances* looks into alliances in the context of the balance of power.

²³ The chapter entitled *Diplomatic Coalitions and Military Alliances* takes up on the reasons for establishing alliances and tensions that lead to their disruptions.

²⁴ The study *The Limits of International Coalitions* describes the reality of alliances in the bipolar era, including the role of the non-aligned states, optimum number of members within the structure, and also the process of “bargaining” between the blocs.

²⁵ The article *Alliance in International Politics* is dedicated to the issue of choosing allies and alliance solidarity, and also to the goals of alignment and the function of alliances in the international relations.

²⁶ The text *Alliance and Integration* concentrates on the question whether a durable alliance leads to integration of partners.

²⁷ The study *A Model of War and Alliance* is dedicated to the functioning of relations established during an armed conflict.

²⁸ In the field of interest of the authors of *Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances: Comparative Studies* are, among others: up to date theoretical explanations related to creation, disruption, functioning, and result of alliances (Chapter I), as well as the empirical research dedicated to the creation of alliances and the inter and intra-alliance relations during the Napoleonic wars, II World War, and the Cold War confrontations (Chapters from II to VI).

²⁹ See M. Nicholson, *Formal Theories in International Relations*, Cambridge 1990; J. Goldstein, *International Relations*, New York 1994; M. Donelan, *Elements of International Political Theory*, Oxford 1990.

polityki międzynarodowej (The Anatomy of International Politics) where one of the chapters is entitled *Systemy sojusznicze* (Alliance Systems)³⁰.

4. Alliances *sensu stricte* and *sensu largo*

“The modern literature on political science provides many definitions of alliances; those definitions vary, but are not contradictory. Two groups among those should be differentiated, one is more strict and classical, the other one is wider, modern, and perhaps more of the future”³¹. Through the *sensu stricte*, alliances we understand as “relations of two or more states based on the allied agreement, established to combine the military, political and economic forces and to settle a common action in predicting a threat (aggression) from the third party (third parties)”³². The military character of the relations between subjects is crucial, and therefore this category of alliances includes: non-aggression pacts, defence pacts, unilateral guarantees and collective security pacts”. On the other hand, the *sensu largo* alliance is “a coalition of states that coordinate their actions, to implement a goal”³³. Combination of solidary efforts can have peaceful reasons and be based on the common or complimentary political aims of the allies. According to the wider definition of alliances, this category binds practically every form of international cooperation of states, including, next to the aforementioned military alliances, also diplomatic coalitions, friendship and cooperation pacts, federations and confederations, personal and real unions, intergovernmental international organizations, supranational organizations, and strategic partnerships. A common denominator for both mentioned approaches is definitely the cooperational character of the relations between the subjects, and also, a response to the actual or potential challenge that surpasses the independent capabilities of each of them. States decide to undertake the international commitments only when they are not able to face the problems by culminating its own potential³⁴,

³⁰ Among the issues presented in this part of the essay, the most important seem to be: the introduction of the definitions of alliances, their function and typology.

³¹ J. Stefanowicz, *op.cit.*, p. 127.

³² *Sojusze międzynarodowe* [International Relations] [in:] *Mały słownik stosunków międzynarodowych* [Small Dictionary of International Relations], G. Michałowska (ed.), Warsaw 1996, p. 221.

³³ J. Goldstein, *op.cit.*, p. 80.

³⁴ B. Don, *Allies and Adversaries: Policy Insights into Strategic Defense Relationship*, Santa Monica 1986, p. 18.

and the power of coalition surpasses the simple sum of the resources of each of the allies³⁵. Therefore, in the below essay, the *sensu largo* definition will be used.

5. Definition of Strategic Partnership in the Political Science

The strategic partnership, despite of its popularity in the practice of modern diplomacy and in mass media, has not yet been given a reliable theoretical analysis. The majority of available studies focus on the description of the particular special relation in the historical perspective. Its authors, either are limiting themselves to a very shortened theoretical introduction³⁶, or to the approached issue as to as generally known category and do not give its understanding *expresis verbis*. What is characteristic, pursued research showed only two encyclopaedic positions that include the issue³⁷, and moreover, the only Polish language study dedicated to the above mentioned subject numbers only several pages³⁸. A little more light was cast by the Ukrainian research centres' studies³⁹, but also there,

³⁵ M. Nicholson, *op.cit.*, 123.

³⁶ See R. Stemplowski, *Następny krok w strategicznym partnerstwie polsko-litewskim* [The Next Step in the Strategic Polish-Lithuanian Partnership], "Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny" [Polish Diplomatic Review] 2001, No. 2; S. Burant, *Stosunki polsko-ukraińskie a idea strategicznego partnerstwa* [Polish-Ukrainian Relations and the Idea of Strategic Partnership], Warsaw 2000; I. Гуцуляк, *Еволюція польсько-українського стратегічного партнерства*, "Zeszyty Naukowe Doktorantów. Litwa-Rosja-Ukraina-Polska" [Doctoral Research Papers. Lithuania-Russia-Ukraine-Poland] 2007, No. 1; L. Osińska, *Polskie a ukraińskie pojmowanie partnerstwa strategicznego między Warszawą a Kijowem* [Polish and Ukrainian Understanding of Strategic Partnership between Warsaw and Kiev], "Dialogi polityczne" [Political Dialogues] 2007, No. 8.

³⁷ See G. Berridge, A. James, *A Dictionary of Diplomacy*, Basingstoke 2003, p. 251; J. Sutor, *Leksykon dyplomatyczny* [Lexicon of Diplomacy], Warsaw 2010, p. 411.

³⁸ See K. Bałon, *Co to jest partnerstwo strategiczne?* [What is Strategic Partnership?], "Biuletyn Polskiego Instytutu Spraw Międzynarodowych" [Bulletin of the Polish Institute of International Affairs] 2001, No. 34, pp. 411–419.

³⁹ The complex research, together with the public opinion, polls, and the round table meeting between the politicians of all the parties of the Ukrainian parliament was conducted in 2000 by the Ukrainian Centre for Economic & Political Studies named after Olexander Razumkov. It concluded with a definition of the issue together with the conditions that must exist for the tool to be applied and the rules of its use. See *Strategic Partners of Ukraine: Declarations and Realities*, "National Security & Defence" 2000, No. 12, http://www.razumkov.org.ua/eng/files/category_journal/NSD12_eng.pdf [Access date: 28.02.2011]. Also worth mentioning are: 3. Щербара, *Концептуальні засади стратегічного партнерства*, <http://mev.lac.lviv.ua/downloads/vyklad/scherb/stat/3.pdf> [Access date: 22.03.2011];

the issue that predominates the general subject, is the analysis of the tools in the foreign policy perspective.

In reference to the aforementioned, in order to create the theoretical category of strategic partnership, the output of a related scientific discipline – economics⁴⁰ – was mainly used. A common denominator that was set based on the existing theoretical studies of political scientists and economists, was confronted with a semantic meaning of the words creating the name of the institution and empirical examples of generally acknowledged special relations. This way, the definition of special relations on the ground of political studies was created: strategic partnership is a bilateral relation, characterized by simultaneously the institutional flexibility⁴¹ and exceptional closeness, and intensiveness of relations between subjects that keep their legal sovereignty⁴², that are convinced about

Ю. Седляр, *Теоретичні засади стратегічного партнерства*, http://www.nbuv.gov.ua/portal/Soc_Gum/Npchdu/Politology/2002_12/12-28 [Access date: 22.03.2011]; І. Жовква, *Стратегічне партнерство у зовнішній політиці України: Автореф. дис. канд. політ. наук*, <http://disser.com.ua/contents/17880.html> [Access date: 22.03.2011]; Б. Тарасюк, *Практика стратегічного партнерства випереджає теорію*, http://www.ieac.org.ua/index.php?id=4&ch_id=32&ar_id=270&as=0 [Access date: 22.03.2011]; М. Пашков, *Реалії та перспективи стратегічного партнерства*, “Дзеркало тижня” 2000, http://www.razumkov.org.ua/ukr/article.php?news_id=106 [Access date: 22.03.2011]; О. Знахоренко, *Стратегічне партнерство в українсько-польських відносинах: Автореф. дис. канд. політ. наук*, <http://disser.com.ua/content/44577.html> [Access date: 22.03.2011].

⁴⁰ In the conduct of the research, taken into consideration were: special relations of states (political science), public-private partnership (management), civil partnership (social science, psychology), strategic alliances of enterprises (economy), but only the last one has sufficient number of similarities to conduct the analogy.

⁴¹ The basis for strategic partnership is usually a non-binding declaration (but even this is not necessary), that gives both subject facility of entering and withdrawing from the abovementioned pacts or of their temporal suspension. After each of the joint actions, the subjects can continue, disengage, suspend or cease cooperation without any consequences to their legal personality and capability to function in the international environment.

⁴² Even though the parties have close relations, each of the subjects is inevitably influencing the other, even though they try to preserve as much autonomy as possible. The potential common bodies do not become a subject of mutual competences which are connected with executive sovereign powers. Cooperation on the fields described in the agreement does not negate freedom, nor competition in other fields. While resigning from full rivalry for cooperation, states choose the middle option, which is neither full dependency, nor full autonomy.

the integrity of their strategic goals, and therefore decide to cooperate on the long-term basis⁴³ to implement them.

In the article, a distinction between the formal and the material aspect⁴⁴ of strategic partnership, which was formed by Krzysztof Bałon, was taken. "In the formal approach, the strategic partnerships equals the relations between subjects, that are named this way by their representatives. It includes all types of declarations issued during the official meetings, declarations included in the signed agreements, statements issued during the interviews, in TV, radio, press, etc"⁴⁵. Material special relations are relations between partners that, in spite of issued statements, fulfil some objective premises – it acquires constitutive features that differentiate it from other forms of international cooperation.

In the literature on the issue, the most often used interchangeable terms are: strategic partnership, strategic alliance, strategic cooperation, close partnership, special relations/particular relations. Because of the fact that their mutual relation has not been adjudicated, all those terms are treated as synonymous in the below essay.

6. The Constitutive Features of the Strategic Partnerships in Political Studies

To mark out the constitutive features of the issue, the definitions and considerations existing in the political science literature on the strategic partnership were used, together with a more general category of alliances, and also available texts of declarations establishing special relations between states. Moreover, the analogies to economic alliances were used.

As a result of the research, four sufficient conditions were distinguished that combined prove the existence of the material strategic partnership between states.

⁴³ The condition of long-term relations is connected with the nature of the long-term strategic goals. Cooperation lasting for many years positively influences the creation of other attributes of the strategic partnership: common understanding and mutual trust.

⁴⁴ An alternative differentiation was created by the Ukrainian researcher Julia Sedliar, who proposed a distinction between theoretical and practical dimension of the issue. According to her: "The theoretical dimension includes a conceptual evolution of the theoretical basis of partnership; practical – study on the effective mechanism for its fulfilment [translated by the author]". Седляр, *Теоретичні засади стратегічного партнерства*, p. 157.

⁴⁵ K. Bałon, op.cit., p. 413.

First of all, as a result of the semantic meaning of the researched issue, relations between subjects should possess a partner character. Unfortunately, the literature on the subjects does not give a single generally accepted indicator of the equal position of partners. Some scientists highlight the bilateral voluntary character of the established agreement⁴⁶, whereas others the mutual dependency, in which each of the subject has an advantage over the other in some fields of cooperation⁴⁷, or the differences between the potentials do not surpass the level that could inevitably lead to the unilateral supremacy⁴⁸. Nevertheless, none of the above propositions meet the condition of measurement. The risk of dependency, as a result of the asymmetric potentials, can not serve as an indicator, because, there is no set pattern measuring the potential of a state. On the other hand, the voluntary entrance into the strategic alliance can be proved only on the official level – through the lack of the openly stated ultimatum, but that also seem like an unsatisfactory solution. Because of the above, the equality of the subjects is identified with the mutual respect⁴⁹, that is expressed in the consideration of the opinions and interests of the other side. Finally, being conscious of the partiality of this assumption, the indicator for the partnership character of the relations is the performance of constant and crisis/occasional high level consultancies – between heads of: states, governments and diplomacies.

The crucial understanding of material special relations possesses the convergence of strategic goals⁵⁰ of states, that can be sought for in the official documents on foreign and security policy, like prime minister's expose, the state's national security strategies or landmark parliament's resolutions. Usually, the allies take up the cooperation with different proportion of goals a) equal; b) different but compatible⁵¹; c) different but non-excluding and d) utterly contradictory.

⁴⁶ See *Strategic partners of Ukraine*, p. 21.

⁴⁷ See Знахоренко, *Стратегічне партнерство в українсько-польських відносинах*.

⁴⁸ See Гуиуляк, *Еволюція польсько-українського стратегічного партнерства*, p. 164.

⁴⁹ See A. Зленко, *Стратегічне партнерство – не кліш*, “День” 2000, <http://www.day.kiev.ua/290619?idsource=49157&mainlang=ukr> [Access date: 22.03.2011].

⁵⁰ Understood, for the first time, as goals coming from the clearly formulated strategy of national development, therefore, it included the most important national documents. Secondly, in reference to the distinction proposed by Glenn Snyder between the innate, strategic and reputation interests as instrumental values, where relevance is attributed not to the fulfilment level, but to the input in implementation of its goals. See A. Dybczyński, *op.cit.*, pp. 60–65.

⁵¹ Some of compatible priorities can evolve into more general, common goals.

To establish a strategic cooperation, it is enough to find one priority, that is expressed by subjects in an equal or similar way. No less important for the parties is not to have interests that are utterly contradictory, especially such interest that are crucial from the partners' perspective⁵².

Convergent strategic goals are without a doubt a starting point to form special relations. It is inevitable for both partners to possess a conviction that combining the efforts and cooperation increases the chance of implementing those goals⁵³. An evidence of existence of this conviction is an act of signing the declaration establishing a strategic partnership between parties. A recognition of a particular relation as a strategic⁵⁴, is manifested in a mutual designation of bilateral relations by "special name" in the aforementioned, the most important states documents and devoting in it more space to the second party in comparison to what is reserved for the other partners.

The last and equally important condition sufficient to call a relation a strategic partnership is the presence of authentic and long-term cooperation between the parties. Assuming that only a high level of specific provisions demonstrate that strategic partnership really functions, it is inevitable to have a document signed by states. A document that will operationalise the declarations and compliment it in the main fields of cooperation and close specific actions. On the other hand, a long-term relation is achieved through a recurrence and deepening of the close cooperation, therefore through establishing successive operational plans.

The perfect model of special relations provides for the existence of the three necessary conditions.

In the first place, partner's relations should demonstrate a privilege and intensity that surpasses the typical for both subjects level of enclosed relations with the third parties. This uniqueness should be apparent mainly in the impressive amount of high level meetings⁵⁵. Equally important is the preference in economic

⁵² Even the interests that are contradictory in the beginning, can become convergent through cooperation (through the establishment of common ground or ignoring the differences), particularly when they take different positions in the hierarchy of importance (the issue that is crucial for one party, has a marginal meaning to the other). Nevertheless, to make it possible, the quantity and importance of common goals has to surpass it.

⁵³ Two factors influence a decision of establishing a strategic cooperation: possession of knowledge about common goals, and recognition that the partner's resources and assets are highly helpful in their achievement.

⁵⁴ It poses crucial meaning (strategic consequences) from the subject's perspective.

⁵⁵ The comparison should concern only "face to face" talks that take place during a bilateral meeting or on the side of a multilateral forum (if those were clearly marked).

relations, and that includes: high trade, significant investment cooperation and no boundaries in the access to the partner's national market.

In the second place, there should be an advanced institutionalization of mutual relations between partners, both on interstate and inter-human level. What proves the highly developed infrastructure that provides continuity of relation and facilitates seeking for both long term, and temporary convergent positions, renders: establishing common bodies⁵⁶, and military units settlement of regular consultancy mechanisms, but also cooperation between local units, cultural cooperation and youth and academic exchange.

Third necessary condition is the nationwide sympathies that lead to the creation of relations similar to human friendship, which is based on trust and loyalty. It was assumed that the beneficial atmosphere of bilateral relations is formed by positive experiences within the last 100 years⁵⁷ and good practice in solving the contemporary conflicts. Issues in the bilateral relations should, first of all, not be transferred into the interstate relations⁵⁸, therefore should be solved currently and on the technical level (of the embassies and particular chancelleries, common for institutions). Secondly, should not refer to cases, that at least one of the party considered to be priority (including this issue in the official documents on the foreign and security policy).

As the results, seven constitutive features of the researched issue were set below: 1. partnership character of the relation, 2: convergence of strategic goals of parties, 3. mutual conviction that combining the efforts increases the probability of implementing cohesive strategic goals, 4. authentic and long-term cooperation in order to fulfil the common goals, 5. preference and intensity of contacts that surpasses the ordinary level (for those states) of closeness with other partners, 6. highly developed infrastructure of relations, 7. positive atmosphere of bilateral relations.

To sum up, strategic partnership, responding to the condition of the international scene (forced by the globalization and the end of the Cold War) is a tool of foreign policy of states, that combines both durability and flexibility.

⁵⁶ Such as: interstate councils (commissions) under the leadership of the head of states or governments, interstate bodies preparing decisions in the main fields of the partnership, and bilateral work groups of experts.

⁵⁷ Includes mainly examples of waging war and establishing alliance treaties.

⁵⁸ Should not be a subject of the official summit talks.