Vadym Zheltovskyy, PhD
Pultusk Academy of Humanities

FIRST 100 DAYS OF PRESIDENT POROSHENKO: NATO ISSUE IN PRESIDENTIAL AGENDA

Summary:

The article analyses main tendencies and changes in NATO-Ukrainian military and political cooperation during the first 100 days of Petro Poroshenko's presidential term. The purpose of the article is threefold. First, to analyse the existing Ukrainian – NATO relationships and main political factors (domestic and international) that influenced them at the beginning of Poroshenko's term in office. Second, to present main outcomes of scientific research and political debate on Ukrainian perspectives for NATO membership. Finally, to define and analyse aspects that might put impact on Ukrainian and International position on possible forms of Ukrainian cooperation with NATO in the nearest future. Last but not least, the author summarises the role of NATO issue in President Poroshenko's agenda during his first months in office and perspectives for Ukraine that appeared during this time period.

Key words:

NATO-Ukrainian Cooperation, 100-Day Benchmark, Ukrainian Security Policy, Public Influence

Introduction

Time Magazine gives brief history of the 100-day benchmark stating that the 100-day timeline can be traced back to Napoleon Bonaparte, because that is how long it took him to return from exile, reinstate himself as the ruler of France and wage war against the English and Prussian armies before his final defeat at the Battle of Waterloo[1]. Americans, in turn, did not start assessing their Presidents in 100-day achievements until Franklin Delano Roosevelt came in power more than a century later[2]. Krzysztof Michałek asserts that FDR administration and U.S. Congress managed to prepare a legal framework that made it possible to instigate a complex anti-crisis program known as the New Deal in only 100 days. That, in turn, led to further Americans' expectations for FDR successors to begin their terms in office in an equally effective manner[3].

[1] It actually took 111 days.
[2] http://content.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1894531,00.html (25.07.2014).
[3] K. Michałek, *The Power of Change vs. the Power of Continuity: What Might be Achieved by the U.S. President in the First 100 Days of His Presidency? (On George W. Bush and Barack Obama's Examples)* [in:] *The United States and the World: from Imitation to Challenge*, eds. Andrzej Mania, ŁukaszWordliczek, Jagiellonian University Press 2009, p. 323.

The article poses and simultaneously tries to answer the question whether the hundred days' deadline can be justified in reference to Ukraine and to President Poroshenko. The main question, however, is what changes (if any) appeared in NATO-Ukrainian military and political cooperation during the first 100 days of Poroshenko's presidential term and whether one might expect positive perspectives for Ukrainian-NATO cooperation or Ukrainian membership in the Alliance.

An attempt to answer the above questions can be made by analyzing the circumstances of assuming office along with the activities undertaken during the first hundred days by President Poroshenko. To some extent, one might compare the gravity of challenges faced by Poroshenko at the very beginning of his term with those faced by FDR in 1930s. Thus, it seems logical to analyze whether the fifth Ukrainian president proved to be equally effective at the outset of his term. Should the analysis show negative results, the reasons are worth defining as well. Taking into account dramatic and crucial for Ukrainian independence events happening in Eastern part of the country, to be effective meant to be successful in making security decisions. Therefore, the analysis is focused on presidential security policies and place of NATO, as well as the Ukrainian cooperation with NATO structures in the decision-making process.

Already in his inaugural address Poroshenko stressed that there came the time of positive changes for the Ukrainian society. To implement these positive changes, however, there must be peace, security and unity[4]. In fact peace and instruments how to reach peace were central topics of the inaugural address. President-elect Poroshenko defined the following points as regards security issue:

- to obtain peace and, what is more important, to keep it, the security improvement must be achieved in the first place,
- to modernize the Ukrainian army with the help of the Ukrainian industry,
- to use every diplomatic opportunity to sign international treaty that would substitute Budapest Memorandum[5],
- to normalize relations with the Russian Federation[6].

The points given above gave grounds for ambivalent expectations as regards future presidential politics on the Ukrainian movement towards NATO. On the one hand, the accent is put on self-organization of the Ukrainian army by its own means. Additionally, one should keep in mind low rates of NATO support in Eastern parts of Ukraine. On the other hand, the need for international military guaranties was

[4] http://pravda.if.ua/news-56605.html (22.08.2014).

[5] Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances confirmed the commitment of signatories to respect the independence and sovereignty and the existing borders of Ukraine and what is more, their obligation to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine, and that none of their weapons will ever be used against Ukraine except in self-defence or otherwise in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, see: http://www.cfr.org/arms-control-disarmament-and-nonproliferation/budapest-memorandums-security-assurances-1994/p32484.

[6] http://pravda.if.ua/news-56605.html (22.08.2014).

clearly emphasised that might lead to the conclusion that closer cooperation with NATO was on top place of Poroshenko's agenda.

The key moment, however, is that President said nothing about possible NATO membership for Ukraine on the contrary to his firm declaration on readiness to sign economic part of Association Agreement with the European Union.

To follow presidential deeds regarding military aspect, one should start with the analysis of presidential nominees for key positions in military sphere of Ukraine. Traditionally, public attention is paid to new political figures appearing in national politics after the election. In the Ukrainian case, it seems important to remind that in accordance with Ukrainian Constitution, it is the President of Ukraine who is responsible for military block. According to article 106, "*President is the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine; appoints to office and dismisses from office the high command of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other military formations; administers in the spheres of national security and defence of the State*"[7].

Therefore, President appoints Minister of Defense, Secretary of National Security Council, Head of Security Service of Ukraine, etc. These officials, in fact, are expected to form national security policy and meet the security challenges and threats. As far as the Ukrainian case is concerned, these positions were taken by representatives of new Ukrainian authorities right after the escape of Yanukovych at the end February 2014, almost three months before presidential elections. Meanwhile, one might have expected changes in given fields after presidential victory of Poroshenko.

Appointments in Military Sector

As far as the appointments in Ministry of Defence are concerned, they might be described as controversial. At first, Poroshenko did not change former minister Myhailo Koval. However, on 3rd July 2014 he was dismissed and at the same time appointed as a Deputy Secretary of National Security Council. The very same day, after President Poroshenko submitted the candidacy of Valeriy Geletei to Ukrainian Parliament for deliberation he was appointed as a new Minister of Defence. Colonel General Geletei is known for his super fast career movement during presidency of Yushchenko[8]. Similar appointments illustrated that newly elected president concentrated on creating his own team of reliable players. It became clear that any military or security strategy would not be accepted unless it was agreed by Commander-in-Chief.

In terms of NATO perspectives for Ukraine, President himself remained a mystery. If in June 2005 Poroshenko as a Secretary of the Ukrainian Security Council confidently stated that NATO membership was "*a key element in the construction of the national security system of Ukraine*"[9], in April 2014 Poroshenko as

[7] http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/254%D0%BA/96-%D0%B2%D1%80/page2 (22.08.2014).

[8] More on Valeriy Geletei career see: http://file.liga.net/person/401-valerii-geletei.html.

[9]http://www.kommersant.com/p587850/r_1/Petr_Poroshenko_Accession_to_NATO_Is_Like_a_Flicker_of_Light_at_the_End_of_the_Tunnel/ (23.08.2014). On 12 October 2014 Minis-

a candidate for presidency said it would split the Ukrainian society[10]. However, the possibility of the Ukrainian accession to NATO was never officially excluded. A statement that "*unless the idea of NATO membership is supported by at least 50 percent of Ukrainians it cannot be used*"[11], might be understood differently by different audiences. NATO opponents might be satisfied that for the time being the NATO discussion is off the table. NATO proponents, in turn, might be encouraged to increase the amount of their allies to reach the 50 percent rate. In the meantime, the real question remained what real intentions for NATO Poroshenko as President would have and whether his optimism from 2005 would influence the decision-making process in 2014.

To answer these questions, three major aspects should be taken into consideration:

1. debate among NATO members on Ukraine and possibility of reaching consensus on the issue;
2. the Russian opposition to the Ukrainian membership in NATO;
3. dramatic changes of situation in Eastern Ukraine and its influence on public views on the Ukrainian movement towards the European Union and NATO.

In terms of American scholarship's position on the issue of the Ukrainian crisis and possible solutions, latest comments vividly illustrate that agreement has yet to be reached. In their research for Brookings Institution, Clifford G. Gaddy and Barry W. Ickes raise the topic of new international world order and its possible form. According to the authors, there are a few options for U.S. Government in current situation in Ukraine. The first option is to make Ukraine the West Germany of the New Cold War. That would not only mean Ukraine's admission to NATO but making it economically independent from Russia which would lead to "*gigantic costs*". The second option is to abandon all NATO commitments and allow Russia to impose any conditions it chooses in the region. At the same time, Gaddy and Ickes assert that both options are "*beyond unrealistic and unrealizable*" because of their cost. In the first case, the cost would be monetary, while in the second, the cost would be unthinkable damage of U.S. reputation on international arena.

Therefore, the authors see a feasible solution balancing the two kinds of costs. That would mean compromise with Russia by respecting some of its perceptions of threats to its interests and simultaneously by drawing some red lines for Moscow. In the authors' point of view, the Geithner doctrine would bring results acceptable for both sides. That would mean economical and political stabilization in Ukraine with the help of Russia. However, doing that would mean stopping insisting on the Russian isolation and punishment for Putin. What is more, the question of NATO enlargement would have to be postponed. Finally, scholars agree that making

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ter Geletei handed in his notice, which was accepted by President Poroshenko, see: http://www.president.gov.ua/news/31380.html.

[10] more on this topic see: http://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2014/04/03/ukraine-presidential-candidate-poroshenko-tamps-down-nato-membership-hopes.html.

[11] Ibidem.

similar concessions would be regarded by people as unprincipled and distasteful, however, that is the reality[12].

Zbigniew Brzezinski in his turn also points out the three levels on which the West must address the Ukrainian problem. First is to deter the use of force. Second, to obtain the termination of Russia's efforts at the destabilization of parts of Ukraine. Third, to promote and then discuss with the Russians a formula of an eventual compromise. It is important to emphasise that Brzezinski considers that U.S. support to Ukraine is possible only if it is to resist. In that case, Ukraine will get defensive weapons necessary to fight the threat from Russia.

Simultaneously, the most important moment in Brzezinski's speech in terms of a given article is making clear that Ukraine will not be a member of NATO. Nor will it join any "*mythical*" Eurasian Union. Another important aspect Brzezinski mentions is that a country whose security NATO has an interest in, does not have to be a NATO member. NATO can have an interest in its security, but without having it in NATO[13].

Anne Applebaum in her turn is critical about the approach of some member states to the issue of NATO enlargement on the whole. The authoress states that "*any further enlargement is not charity work*", and that enlargement predicts that every current member would be ready to defend that state. Otherwise, Article 5 would be worthless. At the same time, Applebaum considers President Obama to be a politician who can relaunch the Western Alliance to meet two immediate threats for Europe: "*the threat from Russia in the east and the threat from Islamic fundamentalism to the south*"[14].

In all probability, Poroshenko as a former diplomat and his associates perfectly grasped the gravity of the situation and probability of scenarios given above. The real question is whether Poroshenko could influence somehow the West-Russian discussion on further situation in Ukraine or whether everything would be decided without him. Was he ready to continue resisting or did he decide to make concessions to Putin? To answer that question, one should take into account meetings with Angela Merkel on 23rd August 2014 and later with Vladimir Putin on 26th August 2014.

Poroshenko-Merkel Meeting in Kyiv

Poroshenko-Merkel meeting has brought controversial and, to some extent, unclear signals from both participants. On the one hand, there were promising statements on Merkel's plan for Donbas that was supposed to donate 500 mln Euros for infrastructure renovation in Donbas' region. What is more, presidential description of Germany as a trustworthy friend and powerful European advocate of

[12] http://www.brookings.edu/research/articles/2014/06/10-ukraine-nato-geithner-doctrine-gaddy-ickes (25.08.2014).

[13] http://www.the-american-interest.com/articles/2014/06/27/confronting-russian-chauvinism/ (25.08.2014).

[14] http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/anne-applebaum-obamas-legacy-could-be-a-revitalized-nato/2014/08/22/0f43da78-2a22-11e4-8593-da634b334390_story.html (23.08.2014).

Ukraine[15] made positive and optimistic picture not only for the Ukrainian but also for European TV channels. On the other hand, however, some remarks led to further discussion among diplomats and political scientists in Europe.

Generally, commentators saw the meeting results as the attempts to bring Russia back to the table of peace talks. Meantime, there were some controversial moments. Merkel stated that Ukraine is free to go to Eurasian Union if it decides to do so voluntarily. Given remark gave rise to a discussion among European diplomats who divided into those who saw Merkel's remarks as simply a rhetorical statement to underline independent foreign policy of Ukraine, and those who saw hidden deal between Berlin and Moscow over the heads of Kyiv and Brussels[16].

The thing that became clear is a continuous European unwillingness to admit Ukraine to NATO and continuous willingness to bring European (or at least German) – Russian relationship to business as usual. "*NATO membership for Ukraine is not on the agenda*" – this statement has been repeatedly declared by a range of European politicians during recent months[17]. The very same statement was declared by Chancellor Merkel after meeting with President Poroshenko. In fact, a planned participation of the Ukrainian President in 2014 NATO summit was presented as a part of NATO-Ukraine cooperation. Additionally, numerous statements during Poroshenko-Merkel meeting and later Merkel's statement for ARD TV channel on the need to normalize the relationship with Russia, and give Russia a chance to "save face", illustrated that the NATO issue is not likely to appear on the agenda in the nearest future[18]. It should be remembered that given statements were presented while the first Russian convoy of trucks, without the Ukrainian authorization, crossed the Ukrainian border. According to Moscow, it carried humanitarian aid[19].

All that might indicate the European readiness to implement the third option for crisis solution suggested above by Gaddy and Ickes. Option that, in all probability, was not the first choice for Poroshenko's administration.

Unsurprisingly, Merkel – Poroshenko meeting outcomes and, what is more, the Russian further escalation of the situation in Eastern part of Ukraine led to a number of critical comments on the Ukrainian domestic arena. Popular advice for Poroshenko was not to go to the meeting in Minsk and find ways to persuade Verhovna Rada (the Ukrainian Parliament) to vote for a resolution addressed to every nation to provide a full-scale assistance in the Ukrainian fight against terrorists sponsored by the Russian regime[20].

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[15] http://president.gov.ua/news/31054.html (25.08.2014).

[16] http://euobserver.com/foreign/125331 (25.08.2014).

[17] http://www.msz.gov.pl/en/news/they_wrote_about_us/polish_press_agency_on_the_meeting_of_foreign_ministers_of_poland__germany_and_russia_in_st_petersburg__10_06_2014;jsessionid=F9C76A770A699F77B4D210F53B095432.cmsap2p (25.08.2014).

[18] More on Merkel's comments see: http://www.ardmediathek.de/tv/Bericht-aus-Berlin/bericht-aus-berlin/Das-Erste/Video?documentId=23110108&bcastId=340982.

[19] http://online.wsj.com/articles/russia-accuses-kiev-of-deliberately-halting-humanitarian-aid-convoy-1408697601 (25.08.2014).

[20] http://blogs.pravda.com.ua/authors/matvienko/53fb27cb058cf/ (25.08.2014).

Minsk Meeting

The meeting format expected three sides to participate: European Union – Custom Union – Ukraine. Interestingly enough, it was Putin who appeared in the most favourable position before the meeting. Ukraine, in fact, was expected to ask Russia to help normalize the situation in Doneck and Lugansk. One might have also expected to hear a declaration that NATO membership for Ukraine is not on the agenda as it was stated by Chancellor Merkel two days before.

However, the meeting itself brought no accents on Ukranian-NATO relationships. Meanwhile, a repeated message from the Russian side was its concern about a planned Ukrainian ratification of Association Agreement with European Union. According to Putin, Ukraine's orientation on EU would result in huge economical losses for Russia and that is why it will use every opportunity to protect its market[21]. In the light of Putin's comments and rhetoric, there can be drawn a parallel with Merkel's remark on the Ukrainian right to go to Eurasian Union.

All that put Poroshenko in more than tricky position. On the one hand, signing Association Agreement with the European Union was his top priority in election campaign and as a president. What is more, during his meeting with High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton the very same day in Minsk, Poroshenko declared the Ukrainian intentions to ratify Agreement in September. On the other hand, a normalization of the Ukrainian – Russian relations was a task number two. After Minsk meeting, however, it came to light that President Poroshenko would have to make difficult choices in the future.

Two events described above appeared to be crucial international factors for the Ukrainian security and foreign policy for the nearest future. Paradoxically, the results of two meetings brought more questions than answers in regards to both interlocutors. In particular, one might have witnessed pro-Russian sentiments in the position of German leadership, mentioned by Francis Fukuyama in one of his analysis[22].

Symbolism and Ukrainian – NATO relationships

Interestingly enough, the words of Brzezinski that "*In international politics, symbolism is as important as decisiveness and can avert the necessity for extreme measures*"[23] addressed at the need to reduce insecurity of such states as Estonia and Latvia where Russian nationals constitute 25% of their populations may be topical in regard to NATO-Ukrainian cooperation as well. In fact, to fully present the NATO issue in Poroshenko's politics, one should analyze the political outcomes of the presidential meetings with NATO representatives as well as political circumstances that led to particular discussions and decisions on both sides.

Particular attention should be paid to the results of NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen's "*very good meetings with President Poroshenko and*

[21] http://www.kremlin.ru/transcripts/46495 (28.08.2014).

[22]http://zik.ua/ua/analytics/2014/08/2./fukuyama_viyna_z_rf_bula_nemynucha_zupynyty_ii_mozhe_lyshe_svitove_spivtovarystvo_518129> (28.08.2014).

[23] http://www.the-american-interest.com/articles/2014/06/27/confronting-russian-chauvinism/ (26.08.2014).

other Ukrainian leaders"[24] that took place on 7th August 2014. In fact, these meetings were not widely discussed in media and among political commentators despite their important role for the future of the Ukrainian security policy and its cooperation with NATO.

The upshot of the meeting was reaching the agreement on a closer cooperation between Ukraine and NATO in terms of defence planning and defence reform as well as on technology and energy security. Another important aspect was the invitation for the Ukrainian president to attend 2014 NATO Summit in Wales. Last but not least, there was a statement on open doors similar to the one Hilary Clinton said to Yanukovych in 2010: "*Today Ukraine has a law that defines its neutral status. We respect it. If Ukraine decides to change this law, we will also respect it*". In response Petro Poroshenko drew attention of Anders Fogh Rasmussen that due to recent developments a significant growth is noticed among the Ukrainians in the number of supporters of the Euro-Atlantic course of Ukraine, and it cannot be ignored in the perspective.

2014 NATO summit

NATO summit in Newport on 4-5 September 2014 was another symbolic event for international perception of the Ukrainian state. The invitation for the Ukrainian president and his tight schedule consisting of important meetings with key NATO leaders[25] vividly illustrated the NATO willingness to have an influence on the Ukrainian crisis. Furthermore, NATO support for peace plan of Poroshenko sent another strong signal to all interested sides of the military conflict in Ukraine. As a head deputy of presidential administration, Valerii Chalyj noted after the summit that the Ukrainian "distinctive partnership" with NATO was being enhanced and was aimed at concrete tasks[26].

At the same time, the meeting in Newport might be regarded as an attempt of Poroshenko to create a new formula of cooperation with NATO block, the one which would guarantee a political and military support for Ukraine under the existed circumstances. The after summit declarations from both Ukrainian and NATO representatives led to positive and optimistic expectations in terms of the further development of Ukrainian-NATO cooperation. However, it remains to be seen whether the new formula will bring fruitful results on the ground in Ukraine.

NATO Issue and Public Support

Taking into account all factors stated above, one may pose the question on whether public opinion in Ukraine on NATO membership matters on a big scale and whether it may actually change the domestic and international official policies on the issue. Being NATO enthusiast in 2005, Poroshenko himself had to make difficult choices given existed situation. Having analysed his presidential program and presidential speeches, it came to light that during his first 100 days in office Poroshenko tried not to show his enthusiasm in public (if he has had any left). As a matter of

[24] http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_111919.htm (27.08.2014).
[25] http://president.gov.ua/news/31157.html (07.09.2014).
[26] http://president.gov.ua/en/news/31173.html (07.09.2014).

fact, president Poroshenko has never used term NATO in his official speeches or programs[27]. In continuous manner, instead, the accent was put on the improvement of the Ukrainian military sector with the help of every citizen[28].

It should be remembered that, on 1st July 2010 the Ukrainian parliament voted for a new law on "The Fundamentals of Domestic and Foreign Policy" that declared Ukraine's decision to adopt a policy of non-bloc status and set a constructive cooperation with NATO rather than a membership. At that time, former foreign minister Borys Tarasiuk warned that by doing so Yanukovych started the transformation of Ukraine from the subject of a foreign policy to its object[29]. Paradoxically, as Taras Kuzio notices, "*the 1 July vote came exactly eight years after the contemporary President, Leonid Kuchma, issued a decree that first announced Ukraine's desire to join NATO*"[30].

Thus, Ukraine after the Revolution of Dignity found itself in a more distant place from NATO than it was in 2010. Is it possible to quickly come back on the road and reach the goal in the nearest future? Can the Ukrainian society "motivate" Ukrainian leadership to pursue this goal? Or maybe this discussion should be postponed for non-defined time. To answer these questions about the public influence on the Ukrainian road to NATO, at least three aspects should be taken into consideration.

Aspect 1. Power of Social Media

The Revolution of Dignity has vividly demonstrated that the Ukrainian people can be successful on reaching their objectives and can use social media to coordinate their actions, even in the circumstances of total opposition from authorities. As Marek Ilnicki underlines, the Ukrainian protest during the Revolution of Dignity was unprecedented in participants' amount as well as in its intensity, duration and territorial aspect[31]. Therefore, if there is, presumably, an initiative on the necessity to raise public awareness on NATO, its organization and functions, one might expect a successful NATO promotion campaign on a country scale. The upshot may be percentage increase of those who support the Ukrainian membership in NATO and what is more important, the push for Ukrainian authorities and Western leaders to raise this topic despite possible existing secretive agreements with Putin. Bright examples of social media power can be the Ukrainian text messages campaign "Help Your Army" when every citizen was encouraged to donate UAN 5 by sending sms on a given number or numerous cases of charity donations for the Ukrainian soldiers that were initiated by social media.

[27] Based on author's content-analysis of speeches delivered by President Petro Poroshenko. More information on speeches see: http://president.gov.ua/news/?cat=11

[28] http://programaporoshenka.com/Programa_Poroshenko.pdf (25.08.2014).

[29] http://blogs.pravda.com.ua/authors/tarasyuk/4c2ddd848042c/ (25.08.2014).

[30] http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=36584&no_cache=1#.U_s9cWOWnpc (25.08.2014).

[31] M. Ilnicki, *Uwarunkowania ekonomiczne kryzysu politycznego na Ukrainie*, [in:] *Współczesne wyzwania polityki bezpieczeństwa – wybrane zagadnienia*, eds. Marek Ilnicki, Zdzisław Nowakowski, Warszawa, Towarzystwo Naukowe Powszechne 2014, p. 159.

In fact, there are various examples of social media power around the globe. In his article on *The Political Power of Social Media*, Clay Shirky reminds about the case from 2001 impeachment trial of Philippine President Joseph Estrada. The author asserts that Estrada's loyalists in the Philippine Congress voted to set aside the key evidence against him. However, less than two hours after the decision was announced, thousands of angry Filipinos emerged on major crossroads in Manila. Shirky pays attention to the fact that the protest was arranged by forwarded text messages reading, "*Go 2 EDSA. Wear BLK*." As a result, over a million people arrived in a few days and that finally led to a resignation of Estrada who later blamed "*the text-messaging generation*" for his downfall[32].

Taking into account the Ukrainian situation, there are odds that Poroshenko and other politicians will join the initiative to get political bonuses. In that case, one might be a witness of creating a new domestic policy that would influence foreign policy objectives.

Aspect 2. Power of Social Media and Diaspora

Another option might be the engagement of Ukrainian Diaspora in the process of a closer cooperation promotion with NATO structures. The active position of the Ukrainians living abroad has proved many times so far that it may be an effective tool of public influence on political leaders in particular countries as well as on public opinion inside every particular country. Marshes in many countries around the world devoted to the 23rd anniversary of the Ukrainian Independence have illustrated the growing level of public awareness and participation in the political processes. Therefore, the chances are high that the promotion campaign on the Ukrainian membership in NATO led by the Ukrainian citizens living abroad might give equally good results as the campaigns on helping Maidan during the Revolution of Dignity (or during the Orange Revolution as well), or current campaigns on helping the Ukrainian Army.

In this case, social media might serve as a perfect tool to coordinate the campaigns in Ukraine and around the world. The effect of similar actions might be an engagement of political elites in the discussion especially in countries mostly insecure against probable Russian aggression.

All that together with the ongoing debate on the need to review NATO's priorities and implement strong and serious NATO leadership in coming years might result in the review of a popular opinion among the American scholars that Ukraine must never become a NATO member as well. The idea of the Ukrainian perspectives for NATO may seem more realistic if one recalls the statements made by Hillary Clinton in 2010 after Yanukovych signed "The Fundamentals of Domestic and Foreign Policy" law mentioned above. It should be remembered that, the contemporary Secretary of State, Clinton, arrived in Kyiv the next day after the vote and declared that despite the decision of the Ukrainian leadership the door to NATO re-

[32] C. Shirky, *The Political Power of Social Media. Technology, the Public Sphere, and Political Change* [in:] "Foreign Affairs", Jan/Feb 2011, p. 28.

mains open[33]. Moreover, the situation might become even more probable if Mrs. Clinton, who is likely to run for presidency in 2016, wins the election.

Aspect 3. Early Parliamentary Election in Autumn 2014

The early parliamentary election was one of the key promises made by the presidential candidate Poroshenko during his campaign. Because of military actions in Eastern part of Ukraine, many commentators doubted that the President would keep his promise. However, the doubts were cleared on 25th August 2014 when Mr Poroshenko announced early parliamentary elections that were supposed to be on 26th October 2014[34].

According to July 2014 poll taken on public political preferences, if parliamentary election took place in July, the results would be as follows: the 1st place (23,3%) would be taken by the Solidarity party led by President Poroshenko, the 2nd place (13%) – Radical Party (Oleh Liashko), the 3rd place (11,1%) – Batkivshchyna (Yulia Tymoshenko). Additionally, among members of the new parliament might be the representatives of such political parties as UDAR (Vitaliy Klichko) – 7,3%, Gromadianskapozycia (Anatolii Grytsenko) – 4,9%, Communist Party – 3,7%, Svoboda (Oleh Tiahnybok) – 4,1%, Sylna Ukraina (Sergiy Tihibko) – 3,3%, Party of Regions (Myhailo Dobkin) – 3,2%[35].

One could have noticed a significant change in the electoral behaviour in July-October time period. As a result of political agreements, there happened to be a change in the political cooperation among the parties named above. Firstly, the Prime Minister Yatseniuk and the Speaker of the Ukrainian Parliament Oleksander Turchynov created a new political party called Narodnyi Front. Secondly, President Poroshenko and the Mayor of Kyiv, Klichko, decided to go together as one party named Petro Poroshenko Block. Finally, the representatives of Former Party of Regions created their own Opposition Block.

Consequently, after October elections, 6 political parties and formations gained seats in the Ukrainian Parliament: Narodnyi Front, Petro Poroshenko Block, Samopomich Party (that was not taken into account during the July poll taking), Opposition Block, Radical Party, and Batkivshchyna[36].

Therefore, one might have predicted that even if Poroshenko decides not to take road to NATO, there is a good chance that there will be enough voices to adopt necessary resolutions. It should be stressed that, such political leaders as Liashko, Tymoshenko, Sadovyj repeatedly expressed their pro-NATO views. What is more, the new initiative of the Cabinet of Ministers' to cancel the non-bloc status of Ukraine and renew Ukrainian NATO vector speaks for itself as regards the security policy of Yatseniuk and his associates[37]. What is more, it is difficult to predict the

[33] http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/07/03/us-usa-clinton-ukraine-idUSTRE6605IS20100703 (26.08.2014).
[34] http://president.gov.ua/news/31081.html (26.08.2014).
[35] http://www.ratinggroup.com.ua/products/politic/data/entry/14099/ (25.08.2014).
[36] More on final results of 2014 early elections in Ukraine see: http://www.cvk.gov.ua/pls/vnd2014/wp300pt001f01=910.html.
[37] http://www.kmu.gov.ua/control/uk/publish/article;jsessionid=E170A28905B0430B402432F382CFD7C0.vapp63?art_id=247560719&cat_id=244274130 (29.08.2014).

position of Poroshenko Block since some of its members are strongly pro-NATO. Another prediction was that Poroshenko himself may have encouraged his party members to support the course not to stay in opposition to the majority on NATO issue.

That in fact was proved by December 2014 presidential initiative concerning changes to Ukrainian laws as regards the non-bloc status of Ukraine[38]. As a result, on 23rd December 2014 through a constitutional two-thirds majority vote (303 votes) members of the Ukrainian parliament voted for the abolition of the given status[39]. Further symbolic and important step was a common initiative from Coalition leaders to define Russia as an "aggressor state". Moreover, the Ukrainian Parliament voted to define separatist self-styled "Republics" in east Ukraine as "terrorist organisations" and addressed the international community with the appeal to provide an additional non-lethal military aid and stronger sanctions against Russia. The bill was adopted by 271 MPs[40].

Finally, one thing that is clear now is that the majority of the 8th Ukrainian Parliament acts as pro-European (in fact or at the level of declarations) and, what is much more important, pro-Ukrainian. That might result in further or even total review of the Ukrainian security policy. Having said that, there is also a chance that the new Ukrainian parliament will not live up to people's expectations because of its diversity and ambitious players[41].

Summary:

The analysis above has illustrated that the current situation in Eastern Ukraine is a test not only for Poroshenko and his team, it is a test for U.S. and Europe, it is a test for the Ukrainian people. The NATO membership perspective for Ukraine in the light of current troubles inside the Alliance and traditional opposition from Russia is minimal. However, common efforts of the Ukrainian Government and the European allies may lead to a new solution that might be much more effective than the Ukrainian membership in the Alliance which in turn would cause further escalation of its relations with Russia. The key thing about the security solution must be its effectiveness towards the elimination of possible further Russian aggression. Therefore, not only Poroshenko must continue fulfilling his program by moving to European Union but European Union itself must materialize its declarations in political deeds.

For the time being, President Petro Poroshenko does not seem to be a President who will bring Ukraine into NATO. Good thing is that he understands that and concentrates on the objectives that can be reached during the next five years of his presidency, improving the professional level of military forces of Ukraine and

[38] http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=52994 (28.01.2015).
[39] http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/site2/p_bills_stand_laws (28.01.2015).
[40] http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=53718 (28.01.2015). More on the topic see: http://in.reuters.com/article/2015/01/27/ukraine-crisis-parliament-idINKBN0L018F20150127
[41] More on Ukrainian parties see: O. Batishcheva, *Challenge and Perspectives of Ukrainian Political Parties Participation in the Policy Process*, "Społeczeństwo i polityka", Pultusk 2012, p.115-130.

close cooperation with NATO to prepare the Ukrainian Army for new challenges from the Eastern border. Therefore, President Poroshenko does seem to be a President who might enhance Ukrainian-NATO cooperation and prepare the ground for Ukrainian membership in the Alliance.

As a final comment it should be stressed that the NATO issue has been on Poroshenko's agenda during the first 100 days of his presidency even though it has not been officially announced. As a matter of fact, the issue of the Ukrainian membership in NATO has been substituted with the issue of new ways of the cooperation with the Alliance in order to improve the security and stop the Russian aggression. It remains to be seen whether the new solution would be effective and long lasting as well as time will tell whether NATO membership topic would officially appear on the agenda.