

Introduction

Partnership for Peace programme is the most important NATO initiative, formally initiated in 1994, designed to reinforce trust and cooperation among members of the Alliance and other Euro-Atlantic States with a view to developing and strengthening stability and security in Europe and beyond. The protection and promotion of fundamental freedoms and basic human rights, as well as preservation of freedom, justice and peace represent the common values on which the Partnership is built and they are compatible with the values of other international and regional organizations – the United Nations, OSCE, Council of Europe, European Union and others.

Partnership for Peace is a programme of bilateral cooperation between NATO as a whole and its individual Member States, which is based on the principles of voluntariness, flexibility and transparency. The Programme for each participating state is individual and country specific. Participants of the Programme independently decide on the level, content and dynamic of partner cooperation, in line with their sovereign rights, national interests, needs and requirements. Although its main focus is on the development of defence cooperation, its political dimension is also very significant as an important factor of the European security architecture.

When joining the Partnership for Peace, the States affirm their commitment to honour in good faith the obligations arising from the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, especially to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, to respect the existing borders and to resolve mutual problems by peaceful means. They also affirm their commitment to the Helsinki Final Act and other OSCE documents, as well as the commitments undertaken in the field of disarmament and arms control.

In order to join the Programme, it is necessary to have the consent of the Alliance which examines the readiness of a candidate country to meet its standards and criteria, and then invites the state which has expressed an interest, to apply. Participation in the PfP and EU membership are not conditioned upon each other, although they are compatible since NATO and the European Union have close value systems, standards and procedures.

The political framework for cooperation between NATO and partner countries is the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), a political and security forum which gathers all NATO Member States and PfP participants. The EAPC is a mechanism of political coordination and oversight of all activities within the PfP programme, which reviews issues that are relevant for partner cooperation, through political consultations.

Republic of Serbia and the Partnership for Peace programme

Relations between the Republic of Serbia and NATO are specific in many ways - they are the result and reflection of historical circumstances and events from the recent past. However, there is an understanding on both sides that the promotion of partner cooperation, especially through Serbia's participation in the PfP, contributes to stability and confidence building in the Balkans and, more broadly, in the Euro-Atlantic area. In this regard, for the Republic of Serbia, participation in the PfP programme is, right now, the most appropriate framework to develop its

relations and cooperation with NATO, its Member States and other PfP participating countries, particularly bearing in mind the nature of this programme, its flexibility and possibilities for adapting it to individual participants.

Relations between the Republic of Serbia and NATO, in the period which immediately preceded accession to the Programme, had been on an ascending line and had manifested themselves through a developed political dialogue. Alongside the promotion of its relations with NATO political and military structures, the Republic of Serbia has developed multi-faceted bilateral cooperation in the field of security and defence policy with NATO Members and PfP countries.

At the NATO Riga Summit on 29 November 2006, the Republic of Serbia was invited, together with Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina, to join the Partnership for Peace. It formally became a PfP participant on 14 December 2006, when then Serbian President Boris Tadic signed, at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, the Framework Document containing the fundamental principles of the PfP programme. In this way, the Republic of Serbia formally became a participant in the Programme with the right to participate in the deliberations of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and NATO committees and working bodies in the format open for partners.

After the signing of the Framework Document, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Presentation Document which then Minister of Foreign Affairs Vuk Jeremic delivered at NATO Headquarters, on 5 September 2007. This document defines areas of cooperation with NATO, the activities that the Republic of Serbia intends to undertake in order to achieve the partnership goals, as well as military and other capacities made available to the PfP programme. In the Presentation Document, the Republic of Serbia emphasized the intention to take an active part in the PfP programme and the readiness to participate in almost all established mechanisms of the programme, including the Individual Partnership Action Plan, as a more advanced form of cooperation.

The Republic of Serbia and NATO signed the Security Agreement on 1 October 2008 and the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia ratified it on 5 July 2011. This Agreement guarantees the minimum necessary standards of security of information exchanged. This agreement enables the exchange of classified information with NATO and creates conditions for a more active role of the Republic of Serbia in the PfP programme.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia, in late October 2008, adopted the decision to establish the Mission of the Republic of Serbia to NATO, which was an important step toward enhancing its diplomatic and defence and military presence at NATO Headquarters, for the purpose of promoting dialogue and developing PfP cooperation. The Mission of the Republic of Serbia to NATO was officially opened in December 2009.

The first Individual Partnership Programme (IPP) between the Republic of Serbia and NATO for 2009-2010 was adopted in 2008. The IPP made more concrete Serbia's participation in the programme, in line with the goals and areas of cooperation identified in the Presentation Document. The Second Individual Partnership Programme covered the period from 2010-2011, whereas the third one covered the 2011-2012 period.

In February 2011, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Conclusion on launching the procedure for the elaboration of the Individual Partnership Action Plan ([IPAP](#)) between the Republic of Serbia and NATO, as a more intensive form of cooperation within the Partnership for Peace. IPAP consists of the Presentation Document and the matrix implementation plan for the objectives defined in the Presentation Document. On 14 July 2011, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Presentation Document which was presented at NATO Headquarters in Brussels on 25 November 2011.

The first IPAP (2015-2016 period) came into force on 15 January 2015. Adoption of the document was a significant step forward in the relations between the Republic of Serbia and NATO, which created the conditions for a regular and structured dialogue, including dialogue at the political level. The validity of this IPAP has been extended to 2017, while the one covering the 2018-2019 period is currently under preparation.

The report on the implementation of the first IPAP demonstrated that out of a total of 215 activities as many as 134 activities (62%) were carried out, 75 (35 %) have been partly implemented within the planned period, while only 6 (3%) have not been implemented at all. NATO Partnerships and Cooperative Security Committee (PCSC) adopted on 26 September 2016 the report on IPAP implementation so far and recognized a major progress in development of partner relations between the Republic of Serbia and NATO.

In addition, there is a joint activity between the Republic of Serbia and NATO within the Planning and Review Process (PARP), a PfP mechanism of particular importance for promotion of cooperation in the military field.

Importance of the participation in the Partnership for Peace programme by the Republic of Serbia

The participation in the PfP programme is an essential contribution to the strengthening of the Republic of Serbia's international standing and reputation, it is in line with its foreign policy priorities and facilitates its progress towards EU integration.

Also, Serbia's participation in the PfP programme has a positive effect on the process of the reform of the security sector and the defence system, especially in the context of assistance to a more effective adjustment to the generally accepted principles of democratic oversight of the armed forces and strengthening of the country's readiness to respond to modern security threats and challenges.

An important aspect of practical cooperation between the Republic of Serbia and NATO is the destruction of surpluses of outdated ammunition and ordnance posing a threat to the security of the people and environment of Serbia. To that end, NATO and the Republic of Serbia launched a project, on 12 October 2016, aimed at destruction of ammunition and ordnance surpluses, and technical /technological modernization of "Technical Overhaul Works Kragujevac". The project, whose total value is 3.7 million dollars, is financed by the NATO Trust Fund.

Additionally, there are many projects under NATO Science for Peace and Security Programme

in which young Serbian scientists are engaged. These NATO funded and supported scientific projects have a specific practical value and importance for people, communities and public institutions. Six projects from various scientific fields are currently underway and nearing a final phase. In August 2017, it was publicized that eight Serbian scientists are leading a research project for commercial production of biofuel from algae.

An important area of Serbia's relations with NATO is cooperation in the field of civil protection and emergencies, enabling Serbia to gain best experience and improve its structures and capacity for responding to natural disasters and other emergencies. With its newly-established water search and rescue team, the Republic of Serbia participated in an exercise aimed at managing consequences of disasters "EADRCC Montenegro 2016", from 31 October to 4 November 2016. Representatives of the Sector for Emergency Management in the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Serbia participated in the EADRCC exercise in Tuzla (Bosnia and Herzegovina) from 25 to 29 September 2017. In 2018, an exercise will be conducted in the Republic of Serbia to manage consequences of disasters, to be jointly organized by the Republic of Serbia and NATO Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre – EADRCC.

Concurrently with the promotion of relations with the relevant NATO structures, the Republic of Serbia has developed diversified bilateral cooperation in the political and security fields with NATO members and partner countries.

Political dialogue between Serbia and NATO

The adoption of IPAP established the framework for deepening the cooperation between Serbia and NATO, and consequently enhancing and upgrading the political dialogue. In this context, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs I. Dacic and then Defence Minister B. Gasic visited the NATO Headquarters in Brussels on 18 March 2015, and participated in the meeting between the North Atlantic Council and Serbia, where they met with NATO Secretary General J. Stoltenberg and permanent representatives of NATO member countries. Particularly important for the further promotion of the relations between Serbia and NATO was the visit by the Organization's Secretary General J. Stoltenberg to Belgrade, 19-20 November 2015, who met with then Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia A. Vucic and other senior officials. On that occasion, Secretary General Stoltenberg expressed his regret over innocent victims who lost their lives in airstrikes against FRY in 1999 and offered condolences to their families.

The trend of further strengthening the political dialogue at the highest level was continued by the visit of Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic to NATO Headquarters, on 23 November 2016. The bilateral talks with NATO Secretary General J. Stoltenberg dealt with prospects of further deepening the partnership and cooperation between NATO and the Republic of Serbia, as well as other topics of common interest. Then Prime Minister A. Vucic participated in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council, where he exchanged views with the permanent representatives of member countries on the bilateral relations between Serbia and NATO, and on other security-political themes of importance to the Western Balkan region.

In 2017, there were a number of meetings between the representatives of the Republic of

Serbia and NATO. NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller attended a formal Presidential inauguration reception for Aleksandar Vucic and held separate meetings with President Aleksandar Vucic and Prime Minister Ana Brnabic. Minister of Defence Aleksandar Vulin on 22 September visited NATO Headquarters in Brussels and met with Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller. The most recent in a series of high and highest level visits took place on 14 November 2017, when President of the Republic of Serbia Aleksandar Vucic visited NATO Headquarters in Brussels and met with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and permanent representatives of NATO member countries.

INDIVIDUAL PARTNERSHIP ACTION PLAN (IPAP) - [PDF](#)