Experiencing the paradox: Greece’s past, current and future of co-operation, at NATO

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Introduction

Considering the constant challenges in the field of security in the 21st century, NATO has rightfully embarked into a phase of transformation that is still ongoing. It is implicit for the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation to transform. This key point was agreed at the time of the Prague Summit in November 2002, which initiated officially the policy of transformation. At the same time, Greece as member-state of NATO since 1952, is involved at several levels of NATO policy and action.

The purpose of this paper is to critically examine and analyse Greece’s policy to NATO considering its relative past, current and future co-operation within the Alliance. As an active member in the decision-making process both at a political but also military levels, Greece’s example is believed that will contribute further to the development of NATO relations with other countries in the area of Southeastern Europe.

Several questions need to be answered in relations to Greece’s evolution and further involvement at NATO: Is Greece’s foreign and security policy interoperable with other NATO nations? Does the current security policy satisfy the needs and the interests of the country and the state as well as supporting NATO nations or not? What are the variables with which Greece establishes a foreign and security policy? Do they always coincide with the interests and needs of NATO? What are the positive and negative aspects of being a member of NATO? Is the Foreign policy of Greece structured in such a manner to conduct multiple transformations when foreign and security challenges arise? Is there a stable and operationally viable ‘Dogma’?

The opinions that will be mentioned in the paper do not reflect any official policies or opinions of the Greek government nor any respective Ministries relevant to NATO’s organization, but are solely based on personal experience and judgments of the author.

2 “Protocol to the Accession of Greece and Turkey to NATO”: http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/bt-a1.htm
NATO policies: A Brief Overview

What we all know is that NATO has changed. What we do not know is why it has changed. As professor Couloumbis points out, “NATO countries have substituted the concept threat, which steamed from imminent Soviet threat, with the concept risks, with all the attendant implications for western defense and security doctrines”.

NATO has evolved. It got over the historical events that took place from 1989 to 1991. NATO’s evolution is a result of multiple consultations and summit meetings of the Heads of States, members of NATO. The outcome would be the sustainability of the Alliance. NATO’s past summits “reveals how closely the Alliance’s evolution has been intertwined with Europe’s maturation into an undivided and democratic security zone”.

Since 9/11, NATO’s purpose has been reaffirmed. NATO is to get further involved in the field of security, to portray the norms and values of the military alliance according to article 51 of the UN Charter that it was created for and at the same time protect all members-states from any imminent attacks, according to article 5 of the treaty, by symmetrical and asymmetrical ways.

NATO is still expanding. It is becoming the single most important security Alliance in modern history of alliances. The organization today includes 26 member-states and many other co-operative states in co-operative programs: PfP-Partnership for Peace, MAP-Membership Action Plan, EAPC, Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. At the same time, it has established relations in a unique way with Ukraine and Russia, via the NATO-Ukraine Council and the NATO-Russia Council. The Alliance has recently established also contacts with Contact Countries such as New Zealand, Australia and Japan, to hold meetings and negotiations for a variety of issues of joint interests in the field of security.

During the Prague Summit meeting held in November 2002, 19 member-states, at that time, agreed to pursue with the plan of a necessary transformation that would provide NATO with tactical ability to pursue operations beyond the traditional sphere of influence. Its abilities had to increase in specific areas: NATO had to improve their administrative, operative, network and fighting capabilities, enhance co-operation and enable different military forces to conduct joint operations (to become interoperable). All those issues were mentioned and supplemented both at the Istanbul summit in 2004 and later on, during the Riga summit in 2006.

One of the positive aspects in relevance to NATO’s ongoing operations in Kosovo and Afghanistan is that the Alliance has improved its readiness to conduct multi-task and multinational operations. At the same time NATO’s Response Force (NRF), which is officially in a ready state of alert, since October 2006, is believed to prove most valuable to operations beyond the traditional points of control. The NRF which can hold 25,000 to 30,000 troops, is equipped with the state of the art weaponry, is interoperable and can -stand alone- (with no contact, away from bases), up to a month.

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3 Couloumbis Th. (2000), Regional Challenges of the 21st century, in NATO and Southeastern Europe, security issues for the early 21st century, (ed) by D. Keridis and R.L. Pfaltzgraff, Virginia, Published by Brassey’s.
4 Jaap De Hoop Scheffer (2006), Reflections on the Riga Summit, in NATO Review: Riga Summit Special, Brussels, Published by NATO’s Public Diplomacy Division
What is yet to come in the near future is a new strategic plan. As the existing one (strategic plan of 1999) is believed to not fulfilling all the needs and requirements of the ‘new’ form and goals of the Alliance. NATO Heads of States need to negotiate a new plan that fulfills the needs and interests of all. A new strategic plan will include a new context and strategy of political and military operations. It will supersede, but at the same time, supplement the current one. It will legally provide the Alliance with a new role, globalize the importance of NATO and will supplement efforts made in all fields of security by NATO, until that very moment. That is why at the Riga Summit a Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG) was drafted. The moment has come as the Secretary General of NATO Jaap de Hoop Scheffer mentioned, to maybe negotiate a new plan. As a senior officer of the Public Diplomacy division stated, the CPG is “a draft guidance that initiates a negotiation on issues relevant to NATO’s needs”, that possibly will be reflected to a renewed strategic plan, is to be drafted in the very near future.

**Greece and NATO**

Greece considers itself, as stated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – a consistent supporter of NATO. Greece’s foreign and security policy is devoted to international political multilateralism, preservation of peace and security and to the respect of International laws and treaties.

Greece’s multi-dimensional integration into the mechanisms and institutions of both NATO and EU has helped Greece to evolve politically, financially and militarily. Today, the country is in terms with NATO’s treaty and agreements and fulfills all its obligations. It identifies itself with all decisions agreed at all summit meetings.

Paradoxically, and for which we will analyze below, Greece has not seen so much progress in its relations with NATO, as in the latest years. This progress has come about due to the changing security environment post-9/11. Greece is active and constantly involved at NATO procedures as its national and foreign interests coincide to those of NATO policies and actions.

In Greece’s recent historical past, its entrance into the Alliance in 1952 signified for most national leaders a feeling of security and certainty, in relations to the integrity and sovereignty of the state. Yet, not all were of the same opinion. As the ministry of Defense mentions “Greece is at an important geopolitical and geostrategic location.” This meant possible imminent threats. With the country’s withdrawal from NATO in 1966 (Greece reintegrated at NATO in late 70s early 80s) and in conjunction to the events of the 1970s, Greece’s national security and defense was challenged. NATO’s reaction was not the one which was

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8 For more information see the geopolitical analysis of the Ministry of Defense: [http://www.mod.mil.gr/Pages/MainAnalysisPage3.asp?HyperLinkID=3&MainLinkID=12&SubLinkID=13](http://www.mod.mil.gr/Pages/MainAnalysisPage3.asp?HyperLinkID=3&MainLinkID=12&SubLinkID=13)

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Greece and NATO
anticipated. The outcome was the atrocities and consequently the unlawful division that followed in Cyprus.

Since then, the Cyprus issue has become an important part of Greece’s foreign and security policy. Greece’s position on the action of Turkey against Cyprus has much reflected its past multilateral policy at a NATO level and its bilateral relations with Turkey. Greece rightfully so, does not support any actions made against the integrity and sovereignty of another country. That was and in some instances still is reflected in Greece’s foreign policy.

In Concern to the area of Southeastern Europe, Greece’s foreign and security policy has been quite noticeable in relevance to the challenging and instable environment of the 1990s. Greece supports and proposes constantly plans for a step by step consolidation of democracy and its terms, in the area of Southeastern Europe for all Southeastern European countries. They have invited, proposed and support the countries of the area to join both the EU and NATO, as long as the international laws and agreements to peace, security, stability and dialogue are agreed and honored.

Greece strongly supports multilateral levels of negotiations and actions as tools of peaceful resolution. The country has politically and militarily signaled to the world that it does no longer feel insecure as it once was. It is a strong supporter of all actions made in relevance to the support of peace, stability and prosperity of all countries or people, always in respect to the Charter of the United Nations.

Consequently, Greece is involved both at the political and operational levels of NATO. It supports NATO’s actions. Perhaps not in a way or with the force that one may have expected, yet it does fulfill its obligations. At the same time, at an EU level, it increases both its economic and political stability and power, as to show that Greece is rightfully its member.

**Political and operational obligations of Greece vis a vis NATO**

Politically, the country belongs to the 26 member-states of NATO. This entails both obligations as aforementioned but also rights. Greece, as all members, is obliged to offer what it has negotiated with NATO, to the support of all its operations and actions.

Militarily, Greece, as all member-states, is offered an opportunity for military co-operation and exchange of information with all member and partner countries to NATO.

Operationally, Greece does not have any obligations to be involved with, initially. It is however actively engaged in all negotiations concerning the operational build of NATO forces and structures. Depending on the importance and needs as well as the political cost and interests, the country agrees to an offer, or does not.

The 9/11 terrorist acts however changed all this theoretical scenery. In response to the challenges posed for an increased co-operation against asymmetrical threats, NATO has required today a more qualitative and risk managerial decision-making process in a political
level. At a military level, NATO required and continuously requests for more finances and better offers for optimum operational capability.

In turn, for the country’s foreign and security policy this meant a need to change. Greece decided to re-identify itself with the needs and challenges of NATO. It needed to identify itself with the efforts to proceed to all necessary reforms to address the non-traditional threats, such as terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, humanitarian crises and natural disasters. These after all are the new national but also trans-national security challenges.

Accordingly, has Greece’s foreign and Security changed over these last years? Is it now interoperable with the other 25 member-states of NATO? Does its security policy coincide with the needs and the interests and support to NATO?

**Greece’s Foreign and Security policy post 09/11.**

Greece’s foreign policy is believed to be two folded: it includes a strategic and an operational plan. Strategically, Greece’s foreign office has established key points of national interests: 1) promotion of peace, security and dialogue 2) establishment of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements 3) Promotion of national interests at multilateral levels of actions such as the EU, NATO, UN 4) Negotiations upon subjects that are of key national priority such as a) FYROM’s bilateral relations with Greece and b) Turkey’s joint process for a steady integration of Turkey into the EU, with the perspective that Turkey will obey to all the rules and regulations set forth by the EU and in respect of other countries integrity and sovereignty rules.

Operationally, Greece exercises what is called ‘a low-policy’. Through constant dialogue, multilateral and bilateral talks, Greece is handling its national and foreign affairs. It agrees to negotiate for issues that are truthfully in need of resolution, such as the ones mentioned above.

The country’s government agrees and obeys to the international laws of mediation and peaceful co-existence as long as its national, foreign and security interests are not at stake. For all issues that cannot, for the time being, be resolved, Greece can apply all its rights at a supranational level either at the UN, or the EU, OSCE, or NATO, depending on the importance, subject and circumstance.

Security-wise, Greece has increased both its levels of operational readiness and strategic ability to handle all national security issues. At a NATO level, Greece supports all decisions that are agreed by Consensus for security and defense purposes of the Allied countries.

The country’s security policy is adequate to counter all new threats and challenges posed in the beginning of the 21st century. Through constant exchange of information, joint operations and exercises, Greece portrays a strong feeling of co-operation. Once agreed, it obeys in security related fields, always to the treaties and rules of peaceful co-existence and satisfies most of NATO’s needs, as agreed, in multi-level negotiations.
An example case of Greece’s co-operation with NATO is the not so long ago exercise held in Greece with the operational code name “Trial Spartan Hammer 06”. The goal was to test “intelligence interoperability” and national preparedness. The goal was “to determine how intelligence and electronic warfare can aid in locating and characterizing terrorist threats”\textsuperscript{9}. The exercise was conducted in co-operation with the Greek exercise on national electronic warfare “Trojan Horse”\textsuperscript{10}.

The outcome of the exercise, confirms that both foreign and security policies of the Greek Government have transformed and supplement the needs and goals also of NATO. Greece’s foreign and security policy is interoperable both at a strategic but also tactical levels. NATO policies and actions are considered to be in demand. This means that a multilevel session of a decision-making body of 26 member states is in demand. Greece portrays the demands and needs of the Greek people. It does however also supplements other states and supports equally proposals, as long as they are in relevance and in the interests to the current strategic and security needs.

Greece was and still is committed to continue to be engaged both in Kosovo and Afghanistan but at also in certain instances Iraq. In the recent past, it supported in defense with tactical engagements the “passing through the Mediterranean sea of US war ships or coalition ships during the beginning of the War in Iraq”. Via its active engagement in operations under ‘Active Endeavour’ Greek Forces are involved into real-time joint exercises at the Aegean, Mediterranean and the Black Seas but also classified or unclassified operations. At the same time via its force both in Afghanistan under ISAF (International Assistance Force) or KFOR (Kosovo Force) Greece fulfills its obligations for standard support of NATO operations, with humanitarian, peacekeeping or peacemaking operations.

Greece is also actively engaged at rescue missions operations and relief work. As such, with the co-operation of the Rescue Mission and Co-ordination Centre of NATO, Greece is actively engaged via its national centre to any humanitarian relief and rescue operation, when required.

Greece’s foreign and security policy is interoperable with NATOs needs. Its national interests do coincide with the ones of the Alliance at multiple-levels of co-operation, both political and military. Maybe Greece could be more actively engaged yet, before projecting such a case, one must understand that the country’s obligations are been fulfilled.

**Greece and NATO: negative perspectives of co-operation**

Being part of NATO does entail political, military and financial costs. Keeping also in mind that NATO’s perspective of engagement in international relations has changed over the last 17 years, a large proportion of Greece’s public opinion is not keen in accepting NATO any longer. For two reasons: 1) NATO’s policy is considered synonymous with the foreign policy of the USA therefore unilateral 2) NATO is considered an offensive military alliance that

\textsuperscript{9} Exercise Trial Spartan Hammer 06. “Exercise to test Intelligence Interoperability”: \[http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2006/02-february/e0208a.htm\]

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid.
does not portray currently the security challenges raised but rather gets operationally involved by interest of the few but ‘dynamic states’.

21st century security challenges amended security concepts and assessments. NATO does no longer represent a defensive alliance. Although its legal clauses in the preamble confirm that NATO is a security defence Alliance, it has adopted a new approach based on the fight against terrorism. NATO is considered the next best thing to a true Alliance that is sustained based on the need for exploration, enlargement and new co-operations, both at military but also political levels.

Yet, it comes with an expense. Financially, the costs for exploration, enlargement, new operations and evolution via its military and political transformation, is high. Although militarily, NATO has been in a constant transformation and alignment to the needs of a transformed security environment, politically the steps for a renewed security preamble are not concrete. There is a need for a robust security preamble that politically and legally justifies actions of NATO outside the traditional sphere of influence and that provides with new commands and operations as well as operatives to conduct multi-level, multi-task, joint operations, in an interoperable environment.

Allies need to draft a renewed and long-term security preamble that truly portrays the interests of all member-states, equally, where the interest groups are set, where the levels of negotiations and engagements are set. Until that very time the cost will continue to be high as public opinion tends to disagree with actions made in a politically correct way for some but not for others. NATO has to portray the consensus of all countries involved.

As long as NATO policy will be synonymous with US or any other unilateral foreign and security policy, NATO will not be accepted. A General of the ACT (Allied Command Transformation) in Norfolk Virginia supported the argument that NATO policy is actually “synonymous”11. In relations to Greek public opinion, as professor Coulombris explains, “…throughout the Cold War, NATO tended to be equated in Greece with the political and strategic will of the United Sates…”12.

For Greece’s public opinion, this policy is considered wrongful. It is understood that NATO’s policy coincides with US foreign policy and judging from the involvement of US military forces in several geographical areas, Greek public opinion tends to disagree.

What public opinion agrees for is that there is a need for a stronger co-operation in the field of security. What it disagrees for is that NATO’s strategy seems offensive but is neither politically nor legally justified.

As long as NATO’s operations, which are not portrayed in the preamble or in actions by consensus, increase, ‘dynamic states’13 will control an alliance that was created for the defence

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11 Academic Research in 12 countries members of NATO including the USA. ACT was visited in the end of December 2004.
12 Coulombris Th. (1997), “Greece and NATO enlargement”, NATO paper presented in a conference held at NATO in Brussels with title: “the National Debates over ratification”.
13 In our PhD research we have established that dynamic states at NATO are a reality. They are a group of countries with high political and military as well as financial power that are portraying their national
of all countries involved. The estimate is that as long as dynamic states do not respect the rules and treaties of NATO as an alliance, NATO will never take its true form. At the same time all member-states need to realise that some national interests may be or should be jeopardised in the interests of an ideal but possibly true form of Alliance.

Greece and NATOs summit meeting in Riga

NATOs latest summit in Riga\(^\text{14}\) is summarized in three key points: “Prevailing in Afghanistan, improving NATOs capabilities and enhancing co-operation”\(^\text{15}\). In the effort to conclude towards a successful result during the Summit meeting, Greece within the framework of its obligations re-affirmed its contributions to the Alliance. In relations to the operations in Afghanistan Greece contributes according to the Greek foreign office a “174-member special battalion with infrastructure work as its basic mission, 56 vehicles, one C-130 aircraft, 2 officials to the ISAF staff, 3 officials to Kabul airport, a 50-member medical unit (Role 2) and 14 persons to Composite HQ. The forces in question are operating in Afghanistan’s capital and in a 30- to 65-km radius outside Kabul.

Afghanistan’s control over Kabul’s Airport, is operating in a rotating period of national control from the countries involved in ISAF. Chronically, between 1 December 2005 to 31 March 2006, Greece “headed the administration of Kabul airport with 39 personnel. Moreover, at the informal summit meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers held in Brussels on 26 January 2007, Greece announced its intention to provide 500,000 Euros to co-fund four programmes (agriculture, education, water management and healthcare) to the Hungarian Provincial Reconstruction Team in northeast Afghanistan's Baghlan Province\(^\text{16}\).

In regards to KFOR (Kosovo Force) and its ongoing operations, Allies “confirmed NATOs preparedness to play its part in implementing the security provisions of a settlement on the status of Kosovo”\(^\text{17}\). In this regard, Greece supplements the efforts made and request further NATO presence. At the same time the country continues its efforts by participating in KFOR with “Mechanised Infantry Battalions (576-strong and 173 vehicles)” and continues to provide its air-cargo assistance with an C-130 that is based in the Elefsina air force Base\(^\text{18}\).

Greece supported also two more important issues concerning NATOs enlargement process and NATOs enhancing co-operation. At Riga, NATO invited three more countries to join the PfP (Partnership for Peace) but also the EAPC (Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council): Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia. At the same time some three countries were evaluated on their MAP (Membership Action Plan\(^\text{19}\)) progress: Croatia, FYROM and Albania.

\(^{14}\) NATO Riga summit meeting \url{http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/2006/0611-riga/index.htm}

\(^{15}\) NATO (2006), "NATO after Riga", Brussels, Published by NATOs Public Diplomacy Division.


\(^{17}\) Ibid 12.

\(^{18}\) Ibid 13.

\(^{19}\) The membership action plan requires countries to fulfil certain objectives in order to further develop their political and military capabilities as to get closer to the Alliance structures and ideals. Further to MAP accession is most of the time PfP. Once all countries fulfil the obligations of the PfP then they are invited to join in full
As the Secretary General mentioned: Riga reaffirmed NATO’s commitment to the ‘Open Door policy’ and to further enlargement of the Alliance. In respect to the MAP countries the Secretary General stressed that they need to continue their efforts to “qualify for membership”\(^\text{20}\). In terms with the PfP and MAP countries, Greece strongly supports the need to maintain and enhance these programs.

In relations to a new partnership framework, with the Contact Countries, such as New Zealand, Japan and Australia, NATO proposes a dialogue process such as the one included at the level of NATO’s “Mediterranean Dialogue”\(^\text{21}\) and the “Istanbul Co-operation Initiative (ICI)”\(^\text{22}\). Greece stressed and proposed a new format of partnership one that will enhance cooperation so long as it is decided by the North-Atlantic Council. As such in this case we propose meetings in the level of a NATO-Contact Countries Council (NCC). Discussions should include sharing of information, tactical and strategic partnership in exercises and in Rescue Mission Operations.

Allies stressed their solidarity into the efforts made to fulfil the strategic vision of NATO’s strategic concept. For this reason a Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG) was drafted. The CPG we consider that is or should be a negotiating tool. It stresses the key points and issues that need to be re-examined in a new form of a strategic plan. NATO is in the process of fulfilling the objectives of a successful transformation and enlargement process and in enhancing political and military capabilities. As soon as all the objectives set out at the transformation plan initiated in the Prague Summit of 2002 are concluded, NATO should set out new rules and criteria in the format of a new strategic concept.

This Concept in turn, should clarify the rules and regulations of NATO’s political and military objectives. It should clarify NATO’s new strategic vision based on the geopolitical and geostrategic challenges and should establish the risks and threats of the 21st century.

As Greece enhances, implements and improves its capabilities in relations to NATO obligations, its foreign and security structures are also in constant and ongoing transformation. In order to meet the interoperability objective, Greece’s forces continue to transform. Its security dogma no longer represents the traditional objectives of defence and mediation, but rather counters, as aforementioned, challenges raised by asymmetrical threats. As Greece’s objectives coincide of those to NATO member and partner countries, Greece is no longer in a position of national insecurity, as aforesaid. Greece is constantly developing in all sectors including in its security and foreign perspectives and objectives.

Through the national program of “reform for the 21st century”, Greece’s security dogma is currently transforming. Currently, major efforts are made to concentrate on issues of “Health and Safety” policy development\(^\text{23}\).

\(^{20}\) Ibd 2.
\(^{21}\) For more information see NATO’s policy and the Mediterranean Dialogue: http://www.nato.int/med-dial/home.htm
\(^{22}\) For more information see NATO’s policy and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI): http://www.nato.int/issues/ici/index.html
\(^{23}\) For more information see the website of the Greek Ministry of Defence: http://www.mod.mil.gr/Pages/MainAnalysisPage3.asp?HyperLinkID=3&MainLinkID=188&SubLinkID=0
However, its armed forces are also changing. In order to effectively counter the challenges raised post 09/11 the Greek armed forces are adapting in order to remain “flexible and effective”\(^{24}\). The armed forces are transforming in the fields of defence and its structures, in its weaponry systems and finally in its human resources.

Consequently, for a viable and interoperable to NATO security dogma, we suggest a supplement to the new national military strategic plan. It should include new doctrines for air, sea and land components, which will promote further interoperability that will create an even smaller but high readiness rapid but multi-task reaction force. At the same time it should look upon new forms of technological insights and applications at a network-centric operational environment.

We should note that Greece’s national armed forces are in a ready state of alert to counter all asymmetrical threats as was shown during the Olympic Games in 2004. Yet, this does not mean that national security forces should not keep on transforming.

Finally, an ever more important sector of reform is the one on information gathering, sharing and action. Greece needs to portray more actions in a tactical order, to counter a multiplicity of regional and peripheral problems within NATO’s framework of action.

Suggestions for a even closer co-operation at NATO

During the Olympic Games of 2004, Greece was in close co-operation with NATO. Greece requested NATO’s presence to portray a better sense of security. The decision to involve NATO via its operation “Distinguished Games”\(^{25}\), in the field of Olympic security, raised some few but important issues.

The country’s political initiative was well accepted by all member states. It initiated a new dialogue between the member-country and NATO on the future of their co-operation. New challenges that still arise from the constantly changing security environment request both Greece and NATO to transform. They both need to be in a ready state of alert to get engaged at anytime, to counter any or all asymmetrical threats.

Greece has to be more engaged into the decision-making process of NATO: 1) due to its geopolitical importance, and 2) due to its experience of coordinating a supranational non-traditional operation in a non-traditional security environment.

With its ongoing national transformation of its security dogma and armed forces, Greece already portrays a ready state of alert to counter all asymmetrical threats. At the same time Greece is already showing the first signs of further engagement in NATO political and

\(^{24}\) For more information see a policy analysis on the transformation of the armed forces: [http://www.mod.mil.gr/Pages/MainAnalysisPage2.asp?HyperLinkID=2&MainLinkID=26](http://www.mod.mil.gr/Pages/MainAnalysisPage2.asp?HyperLinkID=2&MainLinkID=26)

\(^{25}\) For more information see NATO assistance to Greece: [http://www.afsouth.nato.int/JFCN_Factsheets/Athens04/DistGames.htm](http://www.afsouth.nato.int/JFCN_Factsheets/Athens04/DistGames.htm)
military affairs with its actions in relations to the future of Kosovo and negotiations for its further contribution in relations to the operation in Afghanistan.

Greece’s policy towards the operational environment of NATO is more active. The country is offering as stated above everything that is has or is negotiating operationally (e.g. Afghanistan). It is willing to offer more according to its obligations in relations to rescue and humanitarian missions and operations, according to the supplements of the Riga Summit agreements.

In the recent NATO summit meeting in the levels of Foreign Ministers in Oslo in April 2007\(^{26}\), in which the issues of missile defense was discussed, Greece, via its foreign Minister Dora Bakoyianni, initially agreed to one but important issue: If a US missile umbrella should expand to the east, it should protect the whole of Europe\(^{27}\).

The Minister’s action was very much criticized by the Greek Media. Yet, irrelevant to the outcome of this issue, the foreign ministers’ position portrays the increasing willingness of Greece to be much more engaged in NATO negotiations. Greece should continue its efforts to portray an ever increasing co-operation with NATO, as long as it also projects national Greek interests within the framework of the Alliance.

Greece has to establish in a separate to its foreign and security dogma, a policy of national interests that need to be promoted at a NATO level. They need to be coherent and supplementary to the overall Foreign and Security Dogma. The interests should be portraying the national military and political interests within the Alliance in tactical, strategic, operational and conceptual levels.

Greece should get further involved in the field of intelligence. Via NATO’s Deployable Corps in Thessaloniki\(^{28}\), Greece should be keen in being further involved both at an intelligence gathering and sharing. At the same time, Greece should be more involved at the Joint Intelligence Centre in Moleworth\(^{29}\).

Greece should re-examine its ‘insecurity related fields’. It should assess future co-operation with neighboring countries in the context of NATO co-operation as those countries do happen to be willing to join the Alliance. In its bilateral talks with its northern non-NATO countries, Greece should take more concrete steps to resolve all issues prior to the next summit meeting of 2008\(^{30}\). It is important for Greece to portray to the member states that within the context of NATO, Greece offers viable solutions to all problems relating with possible enlargement of NATO in the area of South-Eastern Europe.

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\(^{27}\) Comments and article By Russian News & information Agency: \[http://en.rian.ru/world/20070427/64568868.html\]

\(^{28}\) NATO Deployable Corps Thessaloniki Greece: \[http://www.ndc.gr/\]

\(^{29}\) NATO builds Intelligence Apparatus in Moleworth: \[http://english.pravda.ru/world/20/91/365/16760_NATO.html\] see also : Intelligence fusion centre initial operational capability (IOC) ceremony: \[http://www.nato.int/shape/news/2006/10/061011a.htm\]

\(^{30}\) Next Summit meeting was decided to be held in Bucharest Romania: \[http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2007/04-april/e0427a.html\]
For Greece’s closest northern neighbor soon to be invited to NATO FYROM, it needs to understand that a viable solution is equal to joint concessions. If concessions on both sides are not portrayed then a viable solution is not an option and therefore neither is membership to the Alliance. In case a viable solution fails a possible ‘memorandum of understanding for a viable solution’ within the context of NATO negotiations, should be proposed as to initiate negotiations in order to protect all vital interests of Greece as a member of NATO that reflects the country’s integrity, sovereignty and historical and cultural safety.

Greece on its own side needs to take concrete steps towards a resolution of issues that need an end. It is estimated that Greece is willing to take brave and difficult decisions for issues that concern its periphery. However, Greece should be given in return, much more to a respect, an ability to act without constraints in the wider area of Southeastern Europe politically and financially. It should lead the integration of possible new member-states from Southeastern Europe to NATO and should be helped by other experienced NATO members to construct a NATO Balkan (or South-Eastern) Educational Centre for all military and civilian employs to NATO or NATO structures or those civilians related to NATO issues, policies and actions.

**Conclusions:**

This short assessment aimed at portraying the ongoing changes in the foreign and security policy on both NATO as an Alliance and Greece as its member-state, as a result of the constantly changing security environment.

Several questions that were raised initially concerning the past current and future policies of Greece vis a vis NATO and their co-operation were answered in the most discrete way, and in respect to the policies of the Greek government.

It is the conclusion of this paper that the future of co-operation of Greece to NATO should be its ability to lead at its periphery within the framework of the Alliance. Its national interests vis a vis NATO policies should continue to be set. The ongoing renewed foreign and security dogma when finalized should be long-term, should include all possible threats and risks and should be able to self-transform in case of possible alteration in the wider security environment.

At the same time, Greece should continue its active engagement within the framework of the Alliance. At the same time it should enhance its ability by proposing new and interesting issues for consideration both at NATOs military but also political committees.

As Greece slowly portrays its obligations in relevance with NATO duties and obligations, it should make the outmost to promote concretely its national interests in relevance with the Alliance.
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