

NATO AND THE EUROPEAN UNION – COMMON PLATFORMS FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION

Vasile ROMAN

“A.I. Cuza” University, Iași, Romania

v_roman2005@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

What is happening in Moldova and Ukraine does not represent the priorities of the European Union (not because it do not want, but because the ambiguity of vision).

In such a context, the relations between the states from the eastern border of the European Union (and implicitly of NATO), and the countries in the vicinity are vital not only in terms of the need for a common vision on the issue of security, but especially because a cohesive and complementary mode of action in the management of security issues is necessary.

Economy is a field of cooperation and competition in the security area, and in this sense the (European) Joint Operational Program Romania-Ukraine-the Republic of Moldova, with the main area of cooperation, in Romania, the counties from the eastern border, in Ukraine, the oblasts: Odessa and Chernivtsi oblast and the whole territory of the Republic represent the main trans regional instrument.

The platforms of regional cooperation, in terms of the military, are the initiative of NATO, Defence Capability Building (DCB), launched at the summit in Wales (continued by the Warsaw summit engagements), the initiatives of the US, Global Peace Operation Initiative (GPOI), the European Reinsurance Initiative (ERI) and State Partnership Program (SPP).

KEYWORDS: region, cooperation programs, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Ukraine

1. Introduction – Brief Overview of the Security Issues on the European Continent

The world often transforms for the better because the revolutionary, unexpected or violent challenges determine changes of the mechanisms and of the behaviour of the actors, the problem that appears being caused by the amplitude with which these phenomena occur and by the manner in which the international organizations manage them.

Europe, the continent that has had no major conflicts for over seventy years, accustomed to use the soft power method as form of manifestation of the interests, that is a diplomatic method of management, has passed in the recent years through a series of crises that have marked its existence.

The first was the financial crisis of Greece, which consumed time and energy, and which seemed to be the only problem of Europe and for the solving of which all the energy was summoned. The finality still

has not appeared, Greece is still in crisis and, it now has to manage another problem that of the influx of immigrants stationed in difficult conditions on its islands.

Europe was concerned afterwards with the conflict in Ukraine, where we witnessed German and French initiatives, generally manifested in a diplomatic manner, not to provoke Russia, the process being focused more on image than on the solving of the problem (the economic sanctions being the only tangible result). Very little was achieved following these negotiations, Ukraine was left alone and Russia appears to dictate its future because the idea of lifting the economic sanctions seems to be more and more present.

We witnessed in the past year, an unimaginable flow of immigrants and we witnessed the moment when Germany opened the gates of Europe for almost a million and a half persons invited to enter or stay in different member or non-member states of the Union. Regardless of their number and especially regardless of their education, the problem of integration was not clearly defined and a Union strategy was and will be hard to identify.

Moreover, during this time we witnessed the withdrawal (not only one time) of Russia from Syria, without realizing the aim of its presence and especially the effects of its withdrawal or presence (it is sure than one exists). It is hard to say whether the intervention in Syria was a show of force, a distraction from the conflict in Ukraine or a modality to demonstrate that Russia is part of the solution for the European security. There is the assumption that Russia wanted to show that by participating in this conflict, it brought added value to the eradication of the violence in Syria and limited the flow of refugees, helping Europe, which, in turn should have given up the economic sanctions.

The attacks in Paris and Brussels induced the perception that the European Union is extremely exposed taking into consideration the fact that it lacks a

comprehensive strategy regarding its security and that each event can bring one of the member countries in the position of leader, for a punctual solving of a stringent situation.

The Brexit phenomenon did not spare Europe either and all the concessions made to Britain came after empirical, fragmentary analyses, but these were wanted fast, because the security issues the Union was confronted with were extremely pressing. The end was a shock for Europe and for the whole world, and not all the effects can be anticipated now.

Starting from these preoccupations, it seems that what happens in the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, and Georgia and in the Caucasus in general, are problems that do not represent the priorities of the Union.

Meanwhile, the US remained interested in the balance of the defence budget, in the conflicts in the Middle East, in the quantity of armed forces in Europe (they prefer rotational system not a total presence), in the phenomena in the area of the Pacific Ocean, thinking that Europe was able to manage its security situation.

What is more, the preoccupation of the partners from over the Ocean has focused, during the last two years, on the achievement of a complex economic treaty with the Union, in order to prepare a future marketplace of nearly eight hundred million consumers and less on security issues (except for the European Reassurance Initiative, caused by the Ukrainian crisis, and the antimissile system in Romania).

Until 2014 the North Atlantic Organization did not take focus on transformation, reaffirmation and recommitting to guarantee the security of the Member States either, convinced that the problems will continue to be limited to the crisis management in the Middle East or in Africa.

The annexation of the Crimean peninsula by Russia corroborated with the conflict in Ukraine made the military and

political leaders of the Member States, at the summit of Wales, in 2014, to raise the issue of a repositioning of the defence effort.

The problems arose when they discussed the manner in which the danger or threat was perceived, the action strategies and especially the manner in which the states had to rethink and resize their defence effort.

In this sense, the issue of the manner in which the states perceive the area in which they have to concentrate their effort is still being debated, knowing the fact that the perception of dangers is different in the countries in the east as compared to those in the west.

The Warsaw Summit, in 2016 brought a lot of problems confronting NATO, different perspective and opinion, but important was the common declaration... *“NATO’s essential mission is unchanged: to ensure that the Alliance remains an unparalleled community of freedom, peace, security, and shared values, including individual liberty, human rights, democracy, and the rule of law... To protect and defend our indivisible security and our common values, the Alliance must and will continue fulfilling effectively all three core tasks as set out in the Strategic Concept: collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security”* (NATO, 2016).

Related with Republic of Moldova the engagement that NATO took in Warsaw says that *“...we remain committed in our support for the territorial integrity, independence, and sovereignty of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and the Republic of Moldova. In this context, we continue to support efforts towards a peaceful settlement of the conflicts in the South Caucasus, as well as in the Republic of Moldova, based upon these principles and the norms of international law, the UN Charter, and the Helsinki Final Act. ...”* (NATO, 2016). More than that at Warsaw in the common declaration is underlining that

“an independent, sovereign, and stable Ukraine, firmly committed to democracy and the rule of law, is key to Euro-Atlantic security. We stand firm in our support for Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and Ukraine’s right to decide its own future and foreign policy course free from outside interference, as set out in the Helsinki Final Act...” (NATO, 2016).

2. The Current Cooperation Framework

In such a context, the relations between the states at the eastern border of the European Union (and implicitly of NATO) and the countries in the vicinity are vital not only in terms of the need for a common vision on the issue of security, but especially because a cohesive and complementary mode of action in the management of security issues is required.

The issues related to the field of security are closely connected, because the economic development of the region is linked to the solving of the problems of state integrity, to the safety of the citizens and of their assets, to the degree of education and, last but not least, to the policies that the states, through their representatives, conceive, construct, and, especially, assume.

In this regard, the states are determined to design their future in a direct connection with the two organizations in their proximity the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance, one as a guarantor of the economic development and of the safety of the citizen, and the other as a guarantor of the state security and integrity.

Thus, in terms of collaboration, Romania, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, starting from the geographic proximity, the elements of common history, the state ideals (democracy, peace, their belonging to Europe), are put in a position to cooperate using everything that connects them as well as any favourable framework in the current context.

Following the rules of the School of Copenhagen, we believe that it is correct and necessary that the analysis of the cooperation should be made from the diplomatic, political, economic, socio-cultural, military and environmental perspectives, addressing especially the relationship between the reality of the present and what is desirable in the future.

The politico-diplomatic field leads to the consideration that the fundamental elements of the analysis need to focus especially on the coordinates Romania and the Republic of Moldova, which, from a common perspective, focus on the assertion of the special nature of this relationship, conferred by the common language, history, culture, traditions and on the European dimension of the bilateral cooperation, based on the strategic objective of integrating the Republic of Moldova into the European Union.

Analysing Romania's relations with Ukraine, we notice the format of the working commissions, the fact that the points of interest are situated in the area of European, Euro-Atlantic and regional security and cooperation, in the fields of culture, education, national minorities and public information, environmental protection and sustainable development).

Without analysing more deeply the political relations between Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, we can say that they are at a normal level and that the diplomatic experience is very influenced by the presence of Ukraine in the format of the Commission, 5+2, for the regulation of the Transdnister conflict.

The economy is another area of cooperation and developing competition in the area of security, and in this sense, the (European Joint Operational Program Romania-Ukraine-the Republic of Moldova, with the main area of cooperation, in Romania, the counties on the eastern border, in Ukraine, the oblasts: Odessa and Chernivetska and the whole

territory of the Republic represent the main trans regional instrument.

The program aims, in the context of secure borders, at stimulating the development potential of the border area, by encouraging contacts between partners on both sides of the borders, in order to improve the social-economic situation and the situation of the environment (MDRAP, 2016). This program has the conceptual and financial framework and it has also developed state and regional mechanisms of cooperation that may be established as lucrative models.

The military field also has present manifestations, maybe less through the military structures of the European Union, but certainly through NATO and implicitly through the US.

Because of NATO, there is the working platform launched at the summit in Wales, namely the Defence Capability Building Initiative (DCBI), an initiative to develop defence capabilities. This initiative aims at strengthening the support of partners in the current security environment and represents a modality by means of which NATO wants to achieve stability in the world as part of the overall contribution to international security and stability as well as to conflict prevention.

Through expert counselling and assistance, training and education, the package offered by NATO to Moldova supports the consolidation and modernization of the armed forces and the reform of the national security structures (NATO, 2016b).

The same type of program (written above) has also worked in Ukraine since 2012 and it is the largest program launched with a partner country, focusing on education and training.

This declaration from Warsaw was followed by the pragmatic measures taken in the entire East area of the alliance. The creation (before the summit) and the certification (in the summit period of time)

of the Very High Readiness Task Force (VJTF), the certification process of the NATO Integration Forces Units (NFIU) and Multinational Corps Northeast (*Szczecin*), *the process of building and training of Multinational Division South East (Bucharest)* are only a part of the effort on the field made by NATO.

All of these forces or support structure is real platforms for cooperation between NATO and countries from vicinity.

In the context to develop relations between Ukraine and NATO at the highest level it was adopted a decision on abandonment of the Ukraine's non-block policy, approval of the new National Security Strategy of Ukraine by the Decree of the President of Ukraine, comprehensive assessment of the security and defense sectors of Ukraine, improvement of the coordination system of cooperation with NATO, increase efficiency in the preparation and implementation of annual national programs, achieving the maximum level of interoperability between Ukraine and NATO forces and implementation of NATO standards in the military sphere (<http://mfa.gov.ua/>).

The second platform of cooperation comes from the US, as action on three levels, that of the Global Peace Operation Initiative, that of the European Reinsurance Initiative and that of the State Partnership Program developed with the National Guard.

The first level aims at ensuring the development of the armed forces (especially in the field of structural reforms and infrastructure) in order to increase the military capabilities for crisis management and peacekeeping.

The second level, the European Reinsurance Initiative (IRE), announced by President Barack Obama in June 2014, had in 2015 a budget of one billion dollars as an urgent response to the Russian aggression. This initiative is addressed to the European countries (especially to those in Eastern Europe, and especially to the NATO

members) and aims at confirming the commitment to preserve the independence and integrity of these countries, given the behaviour of Russia. This initiative corrects a mistake the US made around the 2000s, when, trusting the pacifism shown by Russia drastically reduced the amount of US forces on the European continent.

The initiative aims at: increasing the presence of the US forces in Europe, increasing the number of joint exercises with member and non-member countries, investments in the infrastructure necessary for deployment and training, increasing the financial support necessary for the deployment of rotational forces and for the pre-positioning of their equipment and, last but not least, building viable partnerships.

In order to expand its presence in the region, the US military has begun periodical rotations of the army forces in Romania, Poland and the Baltic States, the Air Force supplemented the number of aircraft for the missions of air police in the Baltic Sea and the naval forces increased their presence in the Black Sea.

The State Department has also received funds to enhance security assistance for partners within NATO, including Georgia, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova (csis.org/publication).

In this respect it is important to note that one of the US projects, which is worth \$ 1.6 million dollars is destined for the development of the infrastructure intended for training the military of the Republic of Moldova and to increase the degree of preparation of the military for peacekeeping operations (Caspian Defense, 2016).

Moreover, in Ukraine, the security assistance as response to crisis, to help the Ukrainian forces to operate more efficiently, under safety conditions, to preserve the territorial integrity of Ukraine, amounted to \$ 118 million dollars in 2014.

The third level, the one developed in particular through the US European Command (EUCOM), the Strategic

Partnership Program, represents the national partnership side between the American states and European states (NATO members or non-NATO members). In this sense, the connection for the three states is built through the Alabama National Guard, with Romania, through the National Guard of North Carolina, with the Republic of Moldova and through the National Guard of the State of California, with Ukraine.

This form of collaboration has an extraordinary inter-institutional content because it focuses on the development of effective democratic institutions, promoting democratic values and sharing the best practices to help partner countries to achieve their goals.

The unique civilian-military character of the National Guard enables it to engage in a wide range of cooperation activities regarding security, such as: disaster preparedness, humanitarian assistance for the civil authorities, etc.

Particularizing this program, we find that the partnership between Romania and Alabama was the most fruitful, considering that the Alabama National Guard had nearly a thousand soldiers and various equipment of combat (including combat aircraft) in 2015 (Roberts, 2015).

The cooperation between Ukraine and California focused, in general, on education and counselling in the field of human resources, on the setting up of battle groups and on cooperation with the neighbouring countries. Being an inter institutional program, the centre of gravity was represented by the development of the institutions with a role in citizen safety. The conflict in 2014 brought closer the military of the National Guard, moving on to the training of the forces (ukraine.usembassy.gov).

The partnership between Moldova and North Carolina focused more on the training of troops, in this regard the relevant activities being those from 2014 and 2016, regarding the training in common of the

staffs of the 2nd Infantry Brigade of the Republic of Moldova and the representatives of the 30th Mechanized Brigade from North Carolina (www.balkandefense.com).

The socio-cultural field should not be unknown for any of the three states since they have spent together the history of the past decade, the social and cultural life being nearly equally marked both by communism and by the social transformations that followed its fall.

Moreover, starting from our history, through the presence on the outskirts of empires and through the status of battlefield (in this context we have developed defence mechanisms), the tendency has been the one to develop a special ethos.

Thus, the proclivity for enduring and lasting buildings has diluted, the trust in people, especially foreigners, has diminished and indiscipline has become a form of resistance of the weak for the protection of their culture in relation to the strong (David, 2015, p.336).

Without feeling offended, we will have to realize that the use of the available models will not necessarily lead to outstanding results. There appears the need for a change of attitude, for vision, strategy, coherent plans, common and effective methods of work, trust, joint effort for commonly agreed upon objectives.

3. Desirable Directions to Develop

Starting from the idea that the lessons learned over time and the experiences of the neighbouring countries and of the organizations with which we cooperate need to be capitalized upon, we believe that within the Romanian-Moldavian-Ukrainian cooperation a model is needed, which will later be structured both on areas of action and on working platforms.

In this sense, the model could be the Visegrad group (VG), consisting of four Central European states, the Czech Republic, Poland Slovakia and Hungary,

which, through the joint declaration, signed in 1991 showed their mutual support for the economic and political integration in the European Union. The reflection of this cooperation is visible today in projects in the military field (the idea of a joint combat unit), and especially in security policies common both to the EU and to NATO (VG, 2016).

The eastern partnership (the cooperation framework between the EU and the six partner countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine) could be considered a platform for regional collaboration and an embryo for a Visegrad-type of partnership. An argument in this regard is the declaration from Riga, where it was stressed that, in order to achieve the objectives, the use of the European good neighbourhood instrument, including relevant cross-border programs and territorial cooperation, will be essential (European Council, 2015).

All these platforms act through different organizations and in different areas of security and therefore it is necessary to identify how all these instruments will be integrated in this trio.

Although the conceptual framework compelled us to make a necessary analysis of the political-diplomatic performance of the relations between the three states, our intention is only to highlight an issue that will affect the cooperation framework, especially in the military field, so dependent on political decisions.

Thus, quoting from Iulian Chifu's analysis, which seems quite pertinent, Russia will never yield the border control in the separatist area to Ukraine, even in the form and interpretation of joint management. Ukraine, despite all the pressure from Germany seconded by France, will not permit local elections in the areas occupied by separatist Russian forces for the simple reason that that is an occupied area and they would have a bigger

Transdnister in Donbas (Chifu, 2016). The conclusion that can be drawn is that the political dilemmas will have effects in terms of cooperation and, what is more, the hesitations of the decision makers will affect the military strategies, plans and programs.

Having a similar situation in Transdnister, the Republic of Moldova is very often determined to change certain decisions regarding cooperation just because it is necessary to respond intelligently to the pressure Russia exerts by means of different agents.

Starting from this recognition of the reality, we consider that the basic element in this developing analysis should remain in the military field, focusing on the operational area.

The military field cannot be analysed without a review of the socio-economic area, as an element security depends upon.

Thus we reach the area of congruence through the Joint Operational Programmes Romania-Ukraine and Romania-the Republic of Moldova, programmes that are complementary to that of the European Union, aiming at enhancing the economic development and at improving the quality of life of the people in the area of the program, through common investments in education, economic development, culture, infrastructure and health, ensuring at the same time the safety and the security of the citizens in the two countries (RO-UA-MD Programme, 2016).

The priorities and the measures of the programme are structured so as to ensure a competitive economy of the border area, institutional cooperation in education in order to increase access to education and its quality, improving accessibility in the regions, the development of transport and of the common transport networks and systems.

In the field of safety and security, the priorities of the program are given as support for the development of health services and for access to health care, as

support for joint actions to prevent natural disasters and for joint actions during emergencies, for the prevention and combating of organized crime and for police cooperation (MFE, 2015).

The military field must be analysed in the desirable and operational area, the one that produces visible results and that presents itself through results as a development model for other institutions.

Returning to the NATO platform, as a collaboration platform, the initiative regarding the connection of the forces can play this role because it develops three important pillars: the restructuring of the structures of command and of the organization of the forces, the maintenance of a balanced level of training that would prepare the NATO forces to continue the necessary missions (but they should also be ready to carry out missions of high intensity and on a wide scale) and the implementation of an increased and expanded training program.

For the trio Romania, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, the third pillar remains important, the one which has as the main objective the construction of exercise scenarios for the realities of the context, combined with the multi-nationality of the participants (NATO members, partners or other participants), with the multi-years (i.e. a cycle of three years of training) and with the multi-level training.

This philosophy represents a challenge to the military, but also an exceptional form through which the national can be included in the allied multinational, an opportunity not only to plan but also to conduct joint activities at all levels, to certify the C2 elements and, more than that, to learn together.

Connectivity, as process in which one country seeks to be host for training, does not entail a single area of training, but a diversity of frameworks of simulation, manoeuvre, joint firing, all with facilities for accommodation, storing ammunition

and fuel, assembly points, landing (train stations, airports, ports) to facilitate deployment and training with a heightened degree of efficiency.

Warsaw summit declaration emphasized that “... *the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative that we adopted in Wales has proven a particularly important tool to help project stability, providing support to Georgia, Iraq, Jordan, and the Republic of Moldova. We are committed to further develop and adequately resource our capacity building efforts*” (NATO, 2016), and showed that states have the opportunity to develop a common effort for a high degree of security.

The results of this joint training will be given by the experience accumulated in the process of planning, organizing, conducting and evaluating exercises as well as by the lessons identified in terms of the compatibility of the weapons systems, of ammunition, of working procedures and of compatibility of the C2 means, of the procedures and compatibilities in the field of military intelligence, special forces, fire support, engineering or other fields.

In this sense, we can identify certain levels of expectation – structural transformation – equipment/acquisitions, because very often we notice that a futuristic trend in the field of acquisitions can lead to reduced compatibility with the majority and to a complete compatibility only with the minority. We must not forget that NATO is not only the US, Great Britain and other Western states well technologies in defence, but also other states that do not have a high technological performance.

The connectivity of the infrastructure necessary for training is, in our opinion, the main element of a strategy, so urgently required because of the need for connectivity funds coming both from the national as well as from the international areas, but also because once materialized, it turns into the predominant channel of training.

What is necessary to achieve in the future is the definitive connection in the area of training through simulation of the centres in Cincu, Bucharest and Constanta (Romania), with those in the US from Hohenfels and Grafenwöhr (Germany) and Novo Selo (Bulgaria), with those from Bulboaca (the Republic of Moldova), Yavoriv (Ukraine) as well as with the NATO ones from JFTC (Joint Force Training Command), Bydgoszcz (Poland) and the Joint Warfare Centre, Stavanger (Norway).

First steps will not be easy but the reality demonstrated that it is possible. In this regard, the large-scale Ukrainian-US military exercises code named Rapid Trident 2016 have been performed at the Yavoriv range in Ukraine's Lvov region and involved more than 1,800 troops from 14 countries. According to the US Army Europe Command, Rapid Trident was a regional command post exercise and field training exercise focused on peacekeeping and stability operations to ensure a safe and secure environment within the operating environment. The maneuver involve troops from Ukraine, the United States, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Georgia, the UK, Moldova, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Romania, Sweden and Turkey. The Rapid Trident exercise comes at the explicit request of the Ukrainian government and military (tass.com).

The project was developed, at small level, by the Republic of Moldova which planned and performed an exercise with Romanian and US soldiers. The multinational, combined, small unit, artillery training exercise took place at the Bulboaca training area in Moldova and the purpose was to improve interoperability, explore concurrent training opportunities, and conduct safety training (Army MD, 2013).

4. Instead of Conclusions

To convince the people that NATO initiative are planned to bring long life effects is necessary to underline again the common declaration from Warsaw summit "...in Wales, we extended the Defense and

Related Security Capacity Building Initiative to the Republic of Moldova. Since then, Allies and partners have provided expertise and advice in support of the ongoing defense reform process to strengthen the capabilities of the Moldovan armed forces and the defense sector. Allies remain committed to this work so that the country can enjoy a stable, secure and prosperous future in accordance with the values shared by European democracies. In order to realize such a future, it is important that the Republic of Moldova remains committed to the implementation of reforms that benefit all its citizens. We thank the Republic of Moldova for its contribution to NATO-led operations... (NATO, 2016).

Related with Ukraine, NATO summit showed once again that "NATO-Ukraine cooperation is an important part of the Alliance's contribution to the international community's efforts to project stability in the Euro-Atlantic area and beyond. We welcome Ukraine's intent to further deepen its Distinctive Partnership with NATO, as well as its past and present contributions to NATO-led operations and the NATO Response Force even while it has been defending itself against Russia's aggressive actions. ... Ukraine's participation in the Defense Education Enhancement Programs is an important effort in this respect.... The Comprehensive Assistance Package is aimed at consolidating and enhancing NATO's support to Ukraine, including by tailored capability and capacity building measures for the security and defense sector, which will contribute to enhance Ukraine's resilience against a wide array of threats, including hybrid threats..." (NATO, 2016).

Starting from the analysis on the fields of activity, we consider that the development of a complementary strategy (US based, as the head-arrow of NATO) of inter-state cooperation starts from the existence of the lucrative structures of the Office of Defence Cooperation (ODC), of the offices of military cooperation of the

General Staff of the Romanian Army (romania.usembassy.gov), at the level of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine (ukraine.usembassy.gov) and at the level of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Moldova (Army MD) is highly necessary (Army MD, 2013).

These offices should become lucrative interfaces between the Ministries of National Defence of the states and EUCOM, the US Army, Navy, Air Force, the Marines, the National Guard, etc. in order to facilitate access to resources, education and training programs, exchanges, etc.

At the same time, it is necessary to develop experience through inter-ministerial counselling and here Romania can be a good mentor, having experience in strengthening security in the proximity of the border and the experience that it acquired both as part of NATO and in the Strategic Partnership with the US.

Exercise Saber Guardian 2016 held in Romanian Land Force Combat Training Center (RLF-CTC) in Cincu, should be a prove because approximately 2,700 personnel from eleven nations participated. It was an annual multinational exercise that rotates among Romania, Bulgaria and Ukraine. The exercise is part of U.S. European Command's Joint Exercise Program designed to enhance joint combined interoperability with allied and partner nations. Saber Guardian is part of the U.S. Army Europe's annual training and exercise program and has been conducted since 2013. In 2015 the exercise was combined with Exercise Rapid Trident and was held at the International Peacekeeping and Security Center near Yavoriv, Ukraine (www.eur.army.mil, 2016).

Historical vicinity has proven that together we are stronger and history has demonstrated that results are evaluated in relation to vision and partners.

REFERENCES

Balkan Defence. (2016). *Moldovan troops train in Virginia*, available at: <http://www.balkandefense.com/moldovan-troops-train-in-virginia/>

Caspian Defence. (2016). *Commander of U.S. European Command Visits Bulboaca Training Ground*, available at: <https://caspiandefense.wordpress.com/2016/03/24/commander-of-u-s-european-command-visits-bulboaca-training-ground/>

Chifu, I., (2016). *Leadershipul european față cu crizele: eșec, nesiguranță, lipsă de aplomb*, available at: http://adevarul.ro/international/europa/leadershipul-european-fata-crizele-esec-nesiguranta-lipsa-aplomb-1_56fcd0d55ab6550cb86b4ec4/index.html

David, D., (2015). *Psihologia poporului român, profilul psihologic al românilor într-o monografie cognitiv-experimentală*, Iași: Polirom, 366.

European Council. (2015). *Summitul Parteneriatului estic*, Riga, 21-22/05/2015, available at: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ro/meetings/international-summit/2015/05/21-22/>

Ministerul Dezvoltării Regionale și Administrației Publice. (2016). *Programul Operațional Comun România-Ucraina-Republica Moldova (2007-2013)*, available at: <http://www.mdrap.ro/dezvoltare-regionala/-2257/programe-de-cooperare-teritoriala-europeana/-3696>

Ministerul Fondurilor Europene. (2015). *Programului operațional comun România - Republica Moldova 2014-2020*, available at: <http://www.fonduri-ue.ro/ro-md>

Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Moldova. (2013). *U.S. Office for Defense Cooperation in Moldova Has a New Chief*, available at: http://www.army.md/?lng=3&action=show&cat=122&obj=2129#.VwvR_zGoMYg

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. (2016). *Home page*, available at: <http://mfa.gov.ua/en>

Reproduced with permission of copyright owner.
Further reproduction prohibited without permission.