



Center for Euro-Atlantic Studies CEAS
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WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES

Comparative reading and analysis
of the April 2018 and August 2019 draft versions
of the National Security and Defense Strategies

Belgrade | September 2019

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*What a difference a day made
Twenty-four little hours
Brought the sun and the flowers
Where there used to be rain*

*My yesterday was blue, dear
Today I'm a part of you, dear
My lonely nights are through, dear
Since you said you were mine*

*Lord, what a difference a day makes
There's a rainbow before me
Skies above can't be stormy
Since...*

CEAS tribute to Maria Grever, Stanley Adams, and Dinah Washington

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the new Report, *What a Difference a Year Makes*, the Center for Euro-Atlantic Studies from Belgrade (CEAS) presents a comparative analysis of the draft versions of the new National Security Strategy (NSS) and National Defense Strategy (NDS), which the government of the Republic of Serbia approved on 8th August 2019 and passed on to the National Assembly for consideration, in versions that had undergone public discussion back in the spring of 2018. Bearing in mind all the significant changes of circumstances on global, regional and local level that have happened since spring 2018 on one hand, and some significant nuances in the new versions of Serbian strategic documents endorsed in late summer 2019 on the other, CEAS calls this report – *What a Difference a Day Makes* - a tribute to its songwriters in Spanish and English, and especially to Dinah Washington and her legendary album *What a difference a day makes!*

CEAS is glad that these draft versions of strategic documents have finally entered the parliamentary verification procedure, which was one of the key recommendations in the recently published CEAS report titled *Rashomon*, regarding Serbian-Chinese relations. Namely, due to the current dynamics of the global, regional and domestic developments, the strategies of national security and defense that are still in force, adopted back in 2009, are evidently outdated. Also, the partners of the Republic of Serbia (RS), both governmental and international organizations need updated relevant strategic documents on the basis of which it will be possible to make forecasts regarding future cooperation and assess the level and quality of partnership with the Republic of Serbia, which has significantly improved its international position thanks to the manner and the volume of participation in multinational operations.

CEAS assumes that final adoption of these strategies will accelerate the opening of Chapter 31 in the negotiations with the EU - Foreign, Security and Defense Policy.

CEAS hopes that all the parties shall responsibly participate in the process of consideration, making necessary amendments and adopting these important documents, as well as other legislative and normative documents that should originate from them, either by the current, or the



later National Assembly of RS. A boycott of the upcoming elections would constitute avoidance of these very important civil and governmental duties.

This is especially important if we bear in mind the new geopolitical and regional circumstances and the fact that the documents are being adopted in an extremely difficult period of the ongoing negotiations on new relations between Belgrade and Pristina. The forthcoming assembly session and discussion of the documents will provide an opportunity for confirmation of the intention to improve the general atmosphere and functioning of the Assembly, and give a chance to opposition leaders and other parties to present their views on the drafts and possible amendments. This is an exceptional opportunity for their policies and plans to be heard, apart from those pertaining to the election procedures. For every country it is very important to reach a general consensus regarding foreign policy, security and defense policies, in line with a realistic assessment of the strategic environment and common national interests that are within the realm of the possible.

CEAS is pleased that the new draft versions of the NSS and NDS, *inter alia*, include the following:

Protection of environment and resources of the Republic of Serbia is recognized as a national interest (NSS new version); one of the announced elements of the national security policy is a significant increase of the number of citizens trained for defense of the country (NSS new version); professional approach, control and supervision are included among the key principles of functioning of the National Security and Defense Systems (NSS, NDS new versions); the sentence stating - "Russian Federation shall continue to strengthen its political influence and advance its capacities and its position in certain regions and globally" has been omitted (the new version of NDS does not contain this sentence); it is recognized that spreading of false news and disinformation within the concept of hybrid and information warfare may adversely affect the functioning of the defense system elements (NDS new version); KFOR is explicitly named as the guarantor of the Brussels Agreement (NDS new version); it is explicitly stated that the system of defense shall be under democratic and civilian control (NDS new version); Serbian Army is named explicitly as the subject of implementation of the Defense Strategy.

CEAS suggests that the new strategies should harmonize the phrases that pertain to the level of cooperation of the Republic of Serbia with CSTO, because the new version of NSS mentions the observer status of the RS, which is not mentioned in the new draft of NDS. Also, NSS makes references to expansion and deepening of cooperation, whereas the NDS mentions expansion and deepening of cooperation with CSTO, but there is no mention of the observer status.

As was the case with the detailed normative and contextual analysis of the draft versions of strategic documents from the 2018 *Kosovo First*, CEAS is aware of and wishes to emphasize the very peculiar circumstances under which these documents are being discussed and adopted, namely, the elements, dynamics and possibility for adoption of a multidimensional compromise agreement for formalization of the relations between Belgrade and Pristina.

Nevertheless, with full understanding of the very complicated situation in which Serbian Government has endorsed the new versions, especially with regard of trying to reach a multidimensional comprehensive agreement with Pristina that would not cause big concerns and other unwanted actions among Serbs living in Kosovo and elsewhere, CEAS is worried that some of the new elements in these drafts could be interpreted too arbitrarily, leading to misunderstandings and problems at the local, global and, primarily, regional level. This is particularly the case with the sections on protection and preservation of the Serbian people wherever they may live, as



a newly introduced national interest, and patterns of protection of the special parallel relations with the Republic of Srpska.

The NSS now, for example, states: „Any threat to the national interests shall be regarded as a threat to security of the Republic of Serbia and Serbian people, wherever they may live, as well as to the Serbian religious, cultural and historical heritage.”

CEAS believes that potential problems that might hinder communication and strengthening of regional cooperation, as well as European integration that has rightfully been included in the national interests, might be caused by provisions of the NDS contained in the section titled ‘Defense Policy’, which explicitly state that the goals of protecting the peace and security in the region and the worldwide, as one of the defense interests of the RS, shall also be realized through “Preservation of the Republic of Srpska within Bosnia and Herzegovina in accordance with the Dayton Accords and improvement of the position of Serbs in the world and in the region.”

Bearing in mind that new provisions have been introduced in Security and Defense Strategies drafts, rather than in the foreign policy one, and that they quite resemble the “compatriots living abroad” concept (the Russian World Concept) pursued by the Russian Federation, in the period in which many policy makers and commentators raise concerns about security implications of various possible outlooks of the Belgrade - Pristina agreement and Serbia’s defense and security ties with Russia, CEAS expects them to cause concerns with many regional and Western actors.

Practices show that attempts to misuse or weaponize compatriots living abroad can expose them to be seen as the “fifth column” in their countries of residence. CEAS hopes that this will not be the case with Serbs wherever they live, and that protection of their individual and collective rights by Republic of Serbia will only contribute to the improvement of relations with the countries where they live.

The “little green men” scenario in Crimea also comes to mind. Many parties in the region and the world have their own interests and plans for the future outlook of Belgrade-Pristina agreement (or a failure to reach one). Similar kind of scenarios to the Crimean one, in all their variations, attempted by state or non-state actors, can be especially dangerous bearing in mind the presence of EUFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina and KFOR in Kosovo. In order to subdue provocations, preempt misunderstanding and avoid incidents that can escalate, CEAS advocates that the Serbian government should comply with all its agreements made with KFOR, EU and UN to the full extent, and maintain the best possible level of communication and cooperation with KFOR.

CEAS truly hopes that, for all reasons enlisted above, the by-laws and other documents passed pursuant to the strategies, starting with action plans for their implementation, will reduce the possibility of arbitrary interpretation or define in more detail the procedures for assessment of threats to stated interests, as well of means for their protection and improvement in order to preserve domestic and regional stability and security. Experiences and good practices and policies of NATO and the EU Member States with similar issues of large number of compatriots living abroad, in particular in the neighboring countries, should be thoroughly examined and considered for implementation.

In other elements that have not been modified, CEAS fully stands behind the assessments and recommendations issued in the *Kosovo First* report from 2018, which analyzed the overall context of the procedure of adoption and offered a methodological and value-based examination of the content of the new draft of the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia and its



harmonization with the existing legislative framework. The Kosovo First report concludes:” In short, it is necessary FIRST to resolve the issue of KOSOVO in order to make way for Serbia to escape its current situation in which the issue of Kosovo is overshadowing all others, hence, KOSOVO FIRST. This situation is not sustainable if Serbia wants to pursue the democratic consolidation of its society and state. A new reality needs to be created in which a democratic SERBIA FIRST will be a viable option”.

CEAS sincerely hopes that a year’ diff’rence will turn out to be the one that after tough negotiation soon delivers a multidimensional comprehensive agreement between Belgrade and Pristina, that will bring Serbia closer to the EU and NATO. But, for that to happen, the political West should say that it is ours too.



INTRODUCTION

What a Difference a Year Makes - Comparative reading and analysis of the April 2018 and August 2019 draft versions of the National Security and Defense Strategies – new report of the Center for Euro-Atlantic Studies (CEAS) was developed as part of the project “Encouraging Debate on Euro-Atlantic Integration“, supported by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) from the U.S. Views and opinions stated in this publication do not represent NED’s views or opinions.

For the purpose of the research, this report used publicly available data, official documents of the Republic of Serbia, current National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia/NSS and National Defense Strategy/DS of the Republic of Serbia (both adopted in 2009), drafts of the NSS and DS published by the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Serbia (published in April 2018, and discussed at the public debate in May 2018) and the newly Government endorsed drafts of these strategies (published on August 8, 2019). During the research, CEAS also used the methodology developed for the previous analysis reports of the strategic documents, namely for the report *Kosovo First*.

On the August 5th, 2019 CEAS published its new report – *Rashomon – Analysis of the bilateral relations between Serbia and China and their impact on the continuation of Serbia’s democratization, EU integration, and cooperation with NATO and the Member States*.¹

In its conclusions and recommendations, CEAS stated that: *Formalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina in a foreseeable future would improve the RS’s currently limited potential to pass new strategic documents in the midst of very complicated negotiations with Pristina.*

After its formalization and institutional adoption through constitutional amendments, Serbia will need to develop its foreign policy strategy as soon as possible, as well as to adopt new defense and security strategies. Once the issue of Kosovo is resolved, they will need to assess the geopolitical circumstances in a manner that is more realistic than is the case with the proposed new defense and security strategies published last spring.

*CEAS recommends that, should an assessment be made that formalization will not take place any time soon, the **competent government bodies should expedite the adoption of amendments and improvements to the above drafts (already presented in 2018) or come up with new proposals for the respective strategies.** This is indispensable for the Western partners so that they could come to an official assessment of predictability and reliability of Serbia in coping with the future common challenges and threats. Bearing in mind the complex and volatile geopolitical situation, it is an absolute must, but it will not be an easy task for the RS.*

In *What a Difference a Year Makes* Report CEAS is providing a scoop of all the findings after the comparison of the adopted version of the National Security Strategy with the one present-

¹ Executive Summary of CEAS new report *Rashomon- Analysis of the bilateral relations between Serbia and China and their impact on the continuation of Serbia’s democratization, EU integration, and cooperation with NATO and the Member States*. August 2019. Available at: <https://www.ceas-serbia.org/en/ceas-publications/8272-rashomon-new-ceas-report-analysis-of-the-bilateral-relations-between-serbia-and-china-and-their-impact-on-the-continuation-of-serbia-s-democratization-eu-integration-and-cooperation-with-nato-and-the-member-states>



ed in 2018² that we managed to spot. We could not obtain any publicly available information whether the amendments that have been submitted to the Ministry of Defense (in charge of conducting the public debate) or the Government have been considered and adopted. These documents are to be debated and approved by the Serbian Parliament. At the moment of publication of this report there were no public information about the timeline for this.

For more information about new Serbian strategic documents see Center for Euro-Atlantic Studies (CEAS) Report *Kosovo First*³, published in September 2018, in which we analyzed: the context of the adoption process and the methodological content of the draft of the new National Security Strategy (April 2018) of the Republic of Serbia and its compliance with the existing legislative framework.

The Executive Summary of the *Kosovo First* Report highlights:

“The new strategic documents of the Republic of Serbia, National Security Strategy and Defense Strategy are being considered and shall be adopted in a uniquely dynamic period regarding the global security and political situation. At the same time, Serbia is facing many very strong internal challenges, starting from the necessary judicial reforms. Both external and internal circumstances objectively hinder the adoption of well-articulated strategic security and defense documents for a relatively small country in the middle of a relatively uncertain process of European integration.

A commendable development brought by the draft version of the new National Security Strategy is the explicit statement that European integration is a national interest and the fact that the President of Serbia has tied an optimal outcome of negotiations on Kosovo to Serbia’s membership in the European Union.

Two parallel trends can be discerned in Serbia’s relations with Russia: a series of small but positive steps in the Government’s response to pressures coming from Moscow on the one hand, and increasingly intense actions by pro-Kremlin structures in Serbia opposing Belgrade’s policy on Kosovo on the other.

In this period there have been increasingly intensive activities, promising an improvement in bilateral communication between Serbia and the United States, followed by a new and different treatment of the United States as a whole in the pro-government media. Although unquestionably positive, the trend might be jeopardized if Serbia fails to take notice of the new round of United States’ sanctions against Russia and goes through with the announced purchase of Russian equipment deploying new technologies.

Nevertheless, Serbia’s intense internal dialogue on Kosovo and the negotiation process with official Pristina under the auspices of the European Union are the key political characteristics of the period in which the National Security Strategy is being analyzed. The process of drafting the new strategic documents and their content are conditioned primarily by the acceleration of the negotiations with Pristina, which, objectively, is an additional impediment.

2 NSS – Abbreviation which CEAS uses for the draft of the National Security Strategy presented by the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Serbia in April 2018.

NSS/G – Abbreviation which CEAS uses for the draft of the National Security Strategy adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia in August 2019.

3 Kosovo First. CEAS report. September 2018. Available at: https://www.ceas-serbia.org/images/publikacije/Kosovo_First_WEB.pdf



The view that the new draft of the National Security Strategy is predominantly conditioned by the negotiations on Kosovo is grounded in the fact that parts of the draft relate to the competencies of the President of Serbia as the leading negotiator in the talks on Kosovo. The draft repeatedly suggests strengthening of the position of the President of the Republic in the envisaged legal framework.

CEAS has understanding for this trend to a certain degree, although it is highly questionable in the light of the principles regarding the separation of power and democratic control over the security system, for which reason it is a double-edged sword, given the political circumstances and the challenges that the state leaders face in attempts to find a peaceful and sustainable solution for Kosovo, in the hope that it would keep Serbia on the European integration track.

The first national security strategy of President Donald Trump's administration is called *America First*, and it is extremely well written. CEAS holds that Serbia's state leaders have correctly and timely noticed that the U.S. focus is shifting from the multilateralism of President Obama's administration to the principled realism of President Trump. It entails focusing on the outcome and not on ideology and makes peace, security, and development the responsibility of strong sovereign states which respect their own citizens and cooperate to promote peace in the world. A comparative analysis with Serbia's new National Security Strategy draft is highly complicated because all of its aspects are overshadowed by the issue of Kosovo. Unless the draft undergoes significant changes, it might as well be titled *Kosovo First*.

All this has led CEAS to believe that if the new strategic documents are adopted, even with significant changes – which is highly unlikely – their lifespan will be short.

CEAS believes that first of all it is necessary to formalize the normalization of relations between Serbia and Kosovo, which remains the last major unresolved issue originating from the legacy of Milosevic's regime and the wars of the nineties. In line with the new comprehensive solution, it is necessary to initiate the process of amending the existing Constitution or adopting a new one. These changes should offer a better formulation of the basic premises of the security and defense system. In accordance with the new circumstances, continuation or abandonment of the EU integration process, it is necessary to adopt a sincere and comprehensive foreign policy strategy that should no longer be reduced to eventual continuation of EU integration only, as is the case now, and only then adopt the new security and defense framework documents. These documents need to be substantially and normatively coordinated with the chosen foreign policy orientation of Serbia on the one hand, and with the geopolitical and geostrategic environment on the other, offering clear provisions regarding the separation of power, rule of law, human rights and the democratic control over the security system.

In short, it is necessary **FIRST** to resolve the issue of **KOSOVO** in order to make way for Serbia to escape its current situation in which the issue of Kosovo is overshadowing all others, hence, **KOSOVO FIRST**. This situation is not sustainable if Serbia wants to pursue the democratic consolidation of society and state. A new reality needs to be created in which a democratic **SERBIA FIRST** will be a viable option.”



In the report *Rashomon*, published in August 2019, CEAS concluded the following:

„Formalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina in a foreseeable future would open up the RS’s currently limited potential to pass new strategic documents in the midst of the very complicated negotiations with Pristina.

After formalization and institutional adoption through constitutional amendments, Serbia would need to embark on developing its foreign policy strategy, as soon as possible, and adopt new defense and security strategies. Once the issue of Kosovo is resolved, these documents would need to consider the geopolitical circumstances in a more realistic manner than is the case with, for example, the draft versions of new defense and security strategy published in the spring.

CEAS recommends that, should an assessment be made that this formalization shall not take place any time soon, the RS government bodies in charge should expedite adoption of the amendments and improvements to the said drafts or come up with new proposals for the relevant strategies. This is indispensable, so that Western partners also might officially assess predictability and reliability of Serbia in coping with the common challenges and threats. Bering in mind unusually complex and volatile geopolitical situation, this is a must, though it may not be easy for the RS.

Should Belgrade succeed in formalizing relations with Pristina in a manner that would keep it on its EU integration track and facilitate strengthening of relations with NATO and the Member States individually, first of all with the USA, which CEAS considers as the most favorable outcome, the above mentioned new strategies would have to project the future relations with China in a manner that will not interfere with these primary interests.”

***Note:** Quoted and discussed sections of the NSS and NSS/G, as well as DS and DS/G are provided in CEAS’s translation for internal use.



SHORT POLITICAL BACKGROUND AND THE CONTEXT ANALYSIS IN WHICH NEW STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA ARE ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT – BREAKDOWN OF KEY POLITICAL EVENTS

At the **end of November 2018** Government of Kosovo introduced 100% taxes (customs fees) on goods imported from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁴

Only few weeks after the introduction of taxes, on **14 December 2018**, the Kosovo parliament adopted three draft laws on the Kosovo Security Force (KSF), giving the lightly armed force the attributes of an army.⁵ The three draft laws concern one directly on the Kosovo Security Force, another on a Ministry of Defense and a third on service in the KSF. Out of 120 MPs, 106 supported the draft law on a Ministry of Defense and 105 supported the law on the Kosovo Security Force. The draft law on service in the KSF was backed by 107 votes.⁶ The speaker of the parliament, Kadri Veseli stated after the voting: “From this moment, we officially have the army of Kosovo”.⁷

President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, visited Serbia in **January 2019**⁸. This visit was the first official Putin’s trip to Serbia since 2014 and fourth since coming to power twenty years ago. During a several-hour programme, he met with Serbia’s President Aleksandar Vučić and other government officials and discussed mutual cooperation and the process of the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia.⁹ During the joint press conference, Putin reflected on the normalization process between Serbia and Kosovo, emphasizing that Russia supports a mutually acceptable solution of Belgrade and Pristina, but based on the UN Resolution 1244.¹⁰

At the end of **March 2019**, CEAS Director Ms. Jelena Milic participated at the TV show *Ćirilica*, broadcasted at the TV Happy (television with the national frequency), with the President of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić.¹¹ Main topics of the TV show were NATO bombing of FRY, the invasion of RTS by the “1 of 5 million” protestors and the survival of Serbs in Kosovo. During the TV show, for the first time, President Vučić acknowledged that several Serbian NGOs (im-

4 Kosovo hits Serbia, Bosnia with 100% customs fees after Interpol snub. EurAktiv. November 2018. Available at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/enlargement/news/kosovo-hits-serbia-bosnia-with-100-customs-fees-after-interpol-snub/>

5 Kosovo Votes to Turn Security Force Into Army. Balkan Insight. December 2018. Available at: <https://balkaninsight.com/2018/12/14/kosovo-votes-ksf-transformation-into-army-12-14-2018/>

6 Ibid

7 Ibid

8 Putin’s visit to Serbia: Symbolism overshadows the substance. EWB. January 2019. Available at: <https://europeanwesternbalkans.com/2019/01/18/putins-visit-serbia-symbolism-overshadows-substance/>

9 Ibid

10 Vladimir Putin in Belgrade: Five things that marked „Putin’s day“. BBC. January 2019. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/serbian/lat/srbija-46912785>

11 President Vucic on NATO aggression, RTS incursion and Serb survival in Kosovo. TV Happy. March 2019. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQnY1-V_qIE



plying Humanitarian Law Fond whose data CEAS use in its reports) have most accurate data about human losses caused by NATO bombing.¹²

CEAS, together with the Royal Norwegian Embassy (which is the NATO Contact Point Embassy in Serbia), on **April 20, 2019** organized high level event within the high flagship annual program “Belgrade NATO Week”.¹³ NATO, member states and partner states commemorated 70th anniversary of NATO foundation by series of high level events. In the same time Serbia also commemorated 20 years since NATO bombing of FRY. A series of events scheduled during March, April and May 2019 marked the twentieth anniversary of NATO FRY bombing, including the malign campaign conducted by the Belgrade Sputnik office.¹⁴

In **July 2019**, Miroslav Lazanski, Serbian ambassador to Moscow, for the first time spoke about the shipment of 30 modernized T-72 tanks and 30 BRDM-2 armored combat vehicles, which he said that Russia donated to Serbia several years ago.¹⁵ Further, he stated that Romania was breaking the Convention on the Navigation on the Danube by not allowing the shipment of military vehicles by river through its country due to an EU embargo on Russian arms acquisitions imposed after the annexation of Crimea.

French President Emmanuel Macron visited Serbia in **mid-July 2019**. During a joint press conference held in Belgrade with Serbian president Aleksandar Vučić, Macron stated that Serbia cannot join the European club until the EU has been reformed.¹⁶ Regarding the relations between Serbia and Kosovo, he stated: “Serbia and Kosovo are European countries and we need to help to translate this into facts,” urging both sides to refrain from unilateral moves.¹⁷

In **May 2019**, on the occasion of the Victory Day, Serbian government, led by the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior organized a military-police parade “Defense of Freedom” in Serbian city Niš. More than 4,000 soldiers and police officers participated, while 380 vehicles and 40 aircraft were displayed.¹⁸ The parade was broadcasted live, and the Russian tank T-72 was presented to the Serbian public for the first time. During his speech at the opening of the parade, president Vučić stated: “Serbia will act responsibly and seriously, to preserve peace and stability, but, along with many bad thing that (Yugoslav president) Josip Broz said, he had a good one - to live as if peace would last 100 years, but to be ready to defend the country at any time”.¹⁹

On **June 10, 2019** the Ambassador of the Permanent Mission of the People’s Republic of China to the UN Security Council Wu Haitao reaffirmed the view of China and stated that resolution

12 Ibid

13 CEAS’s VII Belgrade NATO Week – spring edition. CEAS. April and June 2019. Available at: <https://www.ceas-serbia.org/en/news/ceas-news/8172-ceas-s-vii-belgrade-nato-week-spring-edition>

14 From Moscow Without Love. Published by CEAS. March 2019. Available at: <https://www.ceas-serbia.org/en/ceas-publications/from-moscow-without-love>

15 Serbia Declares Contract to Acquire Russian Tanks ‘Secret’. Balkan Insight. August 2019. Available at: <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/08/26/serbia-declares-contract-to-acquire-russian-tanks-secret/>

16 Macron Dampens Serbia’s Hopes of Rapid EU Membership. Balkan Insight. July 2019. Available at: <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/07/16/macron-dampens-serbias-hopes-of-rapid-eu-membership/>

17 Ibid

18 “Defense of freedom”, a spectacle in Nis: Great military-police parade for the Victory Day. Telegraf. May 2019. Available at: <https://www.telegraf.rs/english/3059558-defense-of-freedom-a-spectacle-in-nis-great-military-police-parade-for-the-victory-day>

19 We must be ready to defend our country, says president. B92. May 2019. Available at: https://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2019&mm=05&dd=10&nav_id=106805



1244 sets an important legal basis for resolving the Kosovo issue. “Our position on the Kosovo issue is consistent and clear. We believe that, within the relevant Security Council resolutions, stakeholders need to reach a mutually acceptable solution through dialogue. We see this as the best way to resolve the Kosovo issue. China respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Serbia. We understand Serbia’s legitimate concerns about the Kosovo issue and commend efforts to find a political solution to this issue.”²⁰ The exact same message was relayed by the Chinese Ambassador to Serbia Chen Bo on 24 August, 2019.²¹

In **mid-July 2019**, the Ministry of Defense published the “The Informant on the Work of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Serbia”.²² According to the Informant, in the last couple of years, the United States is the largest donor to the Serbian Ministry of Defense, with \$ 4,625.62 million in donations made in 2017 and \$ 3,283,765 million in 2018.²³ Although there were no donations from the Russian Federation in the Informant for 2017 and 2018, in a statement issued on July 31, 2019, the Ministry of Defense stated that the Russian Federation is the largest donor of the Serbian Armed Forces with: “...Six MiG-29 aircraft, and the realization of the donation of 30 armored reconnaissance vehicles BRDM-2MS and 30 T-72MS tanks with supporting elements of logistical support.”²⁴ Serbian Ministry of Defense explained the differences in donations between the Informant and the “real situation” by not showing those in the Informant by the fact that the Informant does not show the ongoing donations, or that there is no consent of both parties to the disclosure information on the amounts of these donations.²⁵

At the **end of July 2019**, Russia has delivered 10 BRDM-2²⁶ armored patrol vehicles to the military base Niš in Serbia, part of a broader military assistance package for the Balkan country, with the plane transporting the cargo passing through Hungarian airspace after Romania blocked the shipment.²⁷

Ramush Haradinaj, who resigned as Kosovo’s Prime Minister, on **July 19, 2019** has been summoned to the Kosovo Specialist Chambers (KSC) court in The Hague as a suspect for war crimes committed by the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK) and by ethnic Albanians against Serbs during and after the Kosovo War.²⁸

At the session held on **8 August 2019**, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted drafts of the new National Security and Defense Strategy of the Republic of Serbia, published and discussed through public debate in **spring 2018**. According to some sources, these documents are

20 The Permanent mission of the People’s Republic of China to the UN Security Council. 10 June 2019. Available at: <http://www.china-un.org/eng/chinaandun/securitycouncil/regionalhotspots/europe/ksw/t1671034.htm>

21 Chinese Ambassador Chen Bo: Resolution 1244 framework for resolving Kosovo issues. Danas. August 2019. Available at: <https://www.danas.rs/svet/ambasadorka-kine-cen-bo-rezolucija-1244-okvir-za-resenje-pitanja-kosova/>

22 The Informant on the Work of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Serbia. July 2019. Available at: http://www.mod.gov.rs/multimedia/file/staticki_sadrzaj/informator/2019/jun/Informator_o_radu_jun_2019_godine_cirilica.pdf

23 Ibid

24 Russian Federation largest donor to the Serbian Army. Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Serbia. July 2019. Available at: <http://www.mod.gov.rs/cir/14235/ruska-federacija-najveci-donator-vojske-srbije-14235>

25 Ibid

26 Serbia’s leader praises Putin for boosting its military. AP. July 2019. Available at: <https://www.apnews.com/f16d99a1a5a74f2fbae828d5760af33a>

27 Hungary defends decision to allow transit of Russian military shipment. Politico. July 2019. Available at: <https://www.politico.eu/article/viktor-orban-hungary-defends-decision-to-allow-transit-of-russian-military-shipment/>

28 Former Kosovo PM Haradinaj Heads To Hague Court. Radio Free Europe. July 2019. Available at: <https://www.rferl.org/a/former-kosovo-pm-haradinaj-heads-to-hague-court/30071515.html>



already in the parliamentary procedure and should be debated and adopted (only the National Security Strategy has to be adopted by the Parliament) in **October 2019**.

Only a few days later, the governments of Quinta countries - France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States - in the statement dated **13 August 2019** stated that they were ready to take a more prominent role in facilitating an agreement between Serbia and Kosovo through support of the High Representative of the EU, but are unable to do so until both parties show a willingness to compromise, remove the remaining obstacles and continue the talks, which in case of Kosovo means abolishing the taxes (on imports) imposed on Serbia, and for Serbia to suspend the campaign to reverse recognition of Kosovo's independence.

On **August 16, 2019** delegation of the Serbian Ministry of Defense, led by Minister Aleksandar Vulin, visited the "Rostvertol" helicopter factory in Rostov on Don (Russian Federation), where were organized a demonstration flight and a static display of four Mi-35M helicopters that the company would deliver to the Serbian Armed Forces.²⁹

In 2017 the U.S. Congress adopted the *Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act* (CAATSA).³⁰ Section 231 of this law is titled Imposing of Sanctions with Respect to Persons Engaging in Transactions with the Intelligence or Defense Sectors of the Government of the Russian Federation. Part of this Section says that "the President shall impose 5 or more of the sanctions described in section 235 with respect to a person the President determines knowingly, on or after such date of enactment, engages in a significant transaction with a person that is part of, or operates for or on behalf of, the defense or intelligence sectors of the Government of the Russian Federation". It is important to emphasize that the Russian factory "Rostvertol" is on the list of the U.S. CAATSA sanctions, which went under the radar of the Serbian media, as well as the NGOs.

On **August 20, 2019** Aleksandar Vučić, President of the Republic of Serbia met with the U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in New York.³¹ After the meeting Mike Pompeo stated that normalizing relations with Kosovo would strengthen stability and prosperity for Serbia.³²

Just few days after the meeting between President Vučić and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, on **August 26, 2019** President of Kosovo Hashim Thaçi announced that the Kosovo's early parliamentary elections will take place on October 6, 2019.³³

On **30 August 2019** Federica Mogherini, the EU outgoing High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, after meeting the Western Balkans leaders in Helsinki, regarding Kosovo's taxes on Serbia stated that "any player" outside the EU was not

29 Vulin: Russian helicopters are flying tanks, the best in the world in its class. N1. August 2019. Available at: <http://rs.n1.info.com/Vesti/a508292/Vulin-Ruski-helikopteri-su-leteci-tenkovi-najbolji-na-svetu-u-svojoj-klasi.html>

30 Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act. U.S. Department of the Treasury. 2017. Available at: <https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Pages/caatsa.aspx>

31 Important meeting in New York today: Vucic meets with Pompeo, to seek protection for Serbs in Kosovo. Telegraf. August 2019. Available at: <https://www.telegraf.rs/english/3093841-important-meeting-in-new-york-today-vucic-meets-with-pompeo-to-seek-protection-for-serbs-in-kosovo>

32 Belgrade - Pristina dialogue should resume, US' Pompeo, Serbia's Vucic agree. N1. August 2019. Available at: <http://rs.n1.info.com/English/NEWS/a509308/Belgrade-and-Washington-agree-Kosovo-talks-should-continue.html>

33 Kosovo parliamentary elections on October 6. EWB. August 2019. Available at: <https://europeanwesternbalkans.com/2019/08/26/kosovo-parliamentary-elections-on-october-6/>



capable of beating the Union's role in the region since the bloc's trade and investments in the Balkans were higher than anyone else's."³⁴

Alexander Botsan-Kharchenko, newly appointed Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Serbia, on **August 2019** stated that the signing of free trade area agreement between Serbia and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) could be expected on **October 25** and that the Serbian EU accession process should not move it further away from the EAEU.³⁵

On **August 30, 2019** Slovak Foreign Minister Miroslav Lajcak, during the meeting with representatives of the Western Balkans countries in Helsinki, stated that he believes that the announced signing of the Free Trade Agreement with the Eurasian Union does not bring Serbia closer to its strategic goal, which is the EU membership.³⁶ Kosovo is a problem because it has not been recognized by five EU member states, that's the reality - Lajcak said, adding that the first change he wants to see is the Kosovo taxes on goods for Serbia to be abolished.³⁷

During Informal Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs held in Helsinki on **29/30 August, 2019**, Commissioner for European Neighborhood Policy & Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes Hahn stated that dialogue, and reaching an agreement between Belgrade and Pristina, are crucial to the European perspective of the entire Western Balkans region.³⁸ He was even clearer when he told Serbia to stop with the initiatives to withdraw Kosovo's "worldwide recognition", and at the same time he told Pristina to withdraw the taxes.

In a statement issued on **August 30, 2019** the U.S. State Department³⁹ announced that the U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary Matthew Palmer was appointed as the Special Representative for the Western Balkans with a mandate to help integrate the region into Western institutions.

A week after Palmer was appointment as the U.S. Special Representative for the Western Balkans, on **September 4, 2019** during the Bled Strategic Forum in Slovenia, referring to the Serbia and Kosovo issue, he stated that the first step was "getting the parties back to the table."⁴⁰ Palmer said Serbia's attempts to get countries to rescind their recognition of Kosovo was "counterproductive" and "not in the interest of peace, stability, and security in the region."⁴¹

34 EU's Mogherini: Bloc's FMs support enlargement to Western Balkans. N1. August 2019. Available at: <http://rs.n1info.com/English/NEWS/a521780/EU-aware-of-its-consistency-in-policy-toward-WB.html>

35 Tax-free exports of Sumadija's products to Russian and other Eurasian markets are not foreseen. Danas. August 2019. Available at: <https://www.danas.rs/ekonomija/bescarinski-izvoz-sumadijskih-fica-na-rusko-i-ostala-evroazijska-trzista-nije-predvidjen/>

36 Lajcak: Serbia cannot go in multiple directions at once. RTS. August 2019. Available at: <http://www.rts.rs/page/stories/sr/story/9/politika/3642690/lajcak-srbija-ne-moze-ici-u-vise-pravaca-istovremeno.html>

37 "You can't do that": Clear messages from Helsinki - Pristina reprimanded for taxes, Belgrade for an agreement with the Eurasian Union. Blic. August 2019. Available at: <https://www.blic.rs/vesti/politika/ne-mozete-tako-jasne-poruke-iz-helsinkija-pristini-packa-zbog-taksi-beogradu-zbog/v312vzt>

38 Shot in the leg called Russia - Why is the Helsinki warning for Serbia. Blic. September 2019. Available at: <https://www.blic.rs/vesti/politika/metak-u-noge-zvani-rusija-zasto-je-helsinki-opomena-srbiji-pred-crveni-karton/8c9zzhk>

39 Matthew Palmer's Appointment as Special Representative for the Western Balkans. U.S. Department of State. August 2019. Available at: <https://www.state.gov/matthew-palmers-appointment-as-special-representative-for-the-western-balkans/>

40 New U.S. Balkan Envoy Makes Mending Serbia-Kosovo Relations A Priority. RFE. September 2019. Available at: <https://www.rferl.org/a/new-us-balkan-envoy-makes-mending-serbia-kosovo-relations-a-priority/30145601.html>

41 Ibid



On the same day Serbia's Foreign Minister Ivica Dačić stated that Serbia aims to reduce the number of countries which recognize Kosovo's independence to below a half of the UN member states and that will happen by the end of the year.⁴²

President of the Republic of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić had a two-day visit to Budapest on **4 September, 2019**. During the visit Vučić met with the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and spoke at the Third Demographic Summit in Budapest.⁴³ During his speech Vučić stated: "Demographic problems are the problems of the whole Europe, and the negative trends in this regard in Serbia have the following characteristics: aging population, late birth, migration. I've come to learn from you. I can guarantee that Serbia will be ready to work together with Hungary and all other Central European countries, and I am sure that if we work together, if we try to solve problems together, we will be closer to the solution."⁴⁴

On **September 6, 2019** U.S. Senators Chris Murphy (Democrat /Connecticut) and Ron Johnson (Republican/Wisconsin) visited Serbia.⁴⁵ During their visit to Serbia and talk with Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić, Murphy and Johnson have called on Serbia and Kosovo to restart the dialogue with the aim of normalizing their relations. President Vučić stated that for negotiations to resume Kosovo should first drop its 100 percent tariff on imports from Serbia.⁴⁶

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, Ivica Dačić, visited Bratislava on **September 9, 2019**. During the visit he stated that security sector reform in Serbia is an important segment and that the reform aims to develop systems that allow peace and stability. Dačić added that Serbia gives priority to the participation in the UN and EU missions and operations, in which members of the Ministry of Defense, the Army of Serbia and the Ministry of Interior are highly valued and recognized. "Serbia's efforts to increase its participation in civilian missions, such as the OSCE Special Observer Mission in Ukraine, reaffirm our willingness to share responsibility and burden in building peace and stability where necessary, respecting international law and recognized universal standards", he concluded.⁴⁷

On **September 10, 2019** it was announced that László Trócsányi who served as Minister of Justice of Hungary in the government of Viktor Orbán between 2014 and 2018, was nominated for the Neighborhood and Enlargement portfolio in the new European Commission. A final vote on the Commission will take place in October 2019.⁴⁸

42 FM: Number of states withdrawing recognition of Kosovo will continue to drop. N1. September 2019. Available at: <http://rs.n1info.com/English/NEWS/a523090/Serbia-s-FM-Belgrade-will-continue-lobbying-for-withdrawals-of-Kosovo-independence.html>

43 President Vučić in the visit to Budapest. The official web page of the President of the Republic of Serbia. September 2019. Available at: <https://www.predsednik.rs/en/press-center/news/president-vucic-in-the-visit-to-budapest>

44 Vucic spoke at the Budapest Demographic Summit: In Serbia we call it the White Plague, only in the last year we have lost a whole city the size of Kikinda. Kurir. September 2019. Available at: <https://www.kurir.rs/vesti/politika/3315755/vucic-idanas-u-budimpesti-posle-obracanja-na-demografskom-samitu-poseta-srpskom-zabavistu-i-gimnaziji-nikola-tesla>

45 Visiting U.S. Senators Urge Renewed Serbia-Kosovo Dialogue. RFE. September 2019. Available at: <https://www.rferl.org/a/us-senators-urge-renewed-serbia-kosovo-dialogue/30150365.html>

46 Ibid

47 Dacic in Bratislava: Security sector reform is an important segment for Serbia. Danas. September 2019. Available at: <https://www.danas.rs/politika/dacic-u-bratislavi-reforma-sektora-bezbednosti-je-vazan-segment-za-srbiju/>

48 Orbán's former Justice Minister nominated to be in charge of EU's enlargement. EWB. September 2019. Available at: <https://europeanwesternbalkans.com/2019/09/10/orbans-former-justice-minister-nominated-to-be-in-charge-of-eus-enlargement/>



SERBIA AND THE EU COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY (CSDP)

In **January 2014**, the first intergovernmental conference between Serbia and the EU was held in Brussels, marking the beginning of accession negotiations at the political level. So far, Serbia has opened 17 out of 35 negotiating chapters, but not the Chapter 31 – Common Foreign, Security and Defence Policy.

Following the opening of the public consultation process on the draft National Security Strategy and Defense Strategy in the second half of **April 2018** by the Government of Serbia, the Working Group on Chapters 30 and 31 of the National Convention on the European Union (NKEU) made proposals and comments on the content of both drafts. Both new strategies represent important segments of negotiation chapter 31 - Common Foreign, Security and Defense Policy.⁴⁹

Serbia still does not have a screening report for Chapter 31, and that it is therefore unable to draw up a negotiating position for this chapter.⁵⁰

In **May 2019**, European Commission published the Annual progress reports of the European Commission for Serbia - *Serbia 2019 Report*.⁵¹ EU Commission report stated following: “Foreign, security and defense policy Member States must be able to conduct political dialogue under the foreign, security and defense policy, to align with the EU statements, to take part in the EU actions and to apply agreed sanctions and restrictive measures. **Serbia is moderately prepared. Some progress was made as the government submitted drafts of new security and defense strategies for consultation and continued preparations to allow participation of civilians in international missions and operations.** In the coming year, Serbia should in particular: improve alignment with EU declarations and Council decisions on common foreign and security policy; complete the review of its national security and defense strategies fully reflecting Serbia’s EU orientation in these areas; continue to apply its law adopting international sanctions, including EU restrictive measures, and monitor its implementation.”

In **July 2018**, Minister for European Integration of Serbia, Jadranka Joksimović stated that Lithuania is still an opponent of Serbia opening Chapter 31 in the accession negotiations with the European Union, primarily because of the relations between Belgrade and Moscow.⁵²

Out of four candidate countries for the EU membership, Serbia has the lowest alignment of foreign policy with the European Union’s foreign policy declarations and measures in the first half of 2019, with 60 per cent.⁵³ International and Security Affairs Centre (ISAC) from Belgrade published the Analysis of Serbia’s alignment with the European Union’s foreign policy

49 Drafting of the National Security and Defense Strategies was not inclusive. EurActiv. July 2018. Available at: <https://www.euractiv.rs/srbija-i-eu/12809-izrada-nacrta-strategija-nacionalne-bezbednosti-i-odbrane-nije-bila-inkluzivna>

50 Ibid

51 Serbia 2019 Report. European Commission. May 2019. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-serbia-report.pdf>

52 Joksimovic: Chapter 31 Will Hardly Be Open Before Year-End, Blic, July 2018. Available at: <https://www.blic.rs/vesti/politika/blokada-iz-ukrajine-joksimovic-otvaranje-poglavlja-31-tesko-pre-kraja-godine/g8kyb0b>

53 Serbia and North Macedonia still not fully aligned with EU’s foreign policy. EWB. August 2019. Available at: <https://europeanwesternbalkans.com/2019/08/29/foreign-policy-alignment/>



declarations and measures in 2019: Semi-annual Review⁵⁴ in **July 2019**. During the period from January 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019, the European Union published a total of 48 foreign policy declarations with which partner countries were requested to comply. Serbia aligned itself with 29 of the 48 declarations.

On one hand, increase of compliance exists only on paper, however, positive development is that the decline has stopped. In majority of cases Serbia did not comply with declarations aimed at the entities and/or citizens of countries that did not recognize Kosovo. Serbia also did not comply with the EU declarations regarding the extension or expansion of already existing restrictive measures against entities and individuals from Russia and Ukraine.

Further on, the fact that sanctions have not been imposed on Russia could not be looked only from the position of the Russia's role in the negotiations with Kosovo, but also because of Serbia's considerable degree of energy dependence on Russia.

54 Analysis of Serbia's alignment with the European Union's foreign policy declarations and measures in 2019: Semi-annual Review. International and Security Affairs Centre (ISAC). July 2019. Available at: https://www.isac-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/ISAC_CFSP_Analysis-2019.pdf



COMPARATIVE READING AND ANALYSIS OF THE APRIL 2018 AND AUGUST 2019 VERSIONS OF THE DRAFT NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

In the chapter “STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT” the version of the NSS adopted by the Government (NSS/G) there is a reference regarding the intention and attempts to “create a Greater Albania”, which development would pose “a threat to peace and stability at the regional level, as well as in a much broader context”. The version of the NSS presented to the public in April 2018 contained no such references.

In the chapter “CHALLENGES, RISKS AND THREATS TO SECURITY” of NSS/G, the “climate change” is introduced as a factor with a negative impact on the security of Serbia... that may generate deep social impact and result in security risks”.

In the section “NATIONAL INTERESTS” NSS/G defined them as follows:

- Preservation of sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity;
- Preservation of internal stability and security;
- Preservation of existence and protection of Serbian people **wherever they may live (new)**, as well as the national minorities and their cultural, religious and historical identity;
- Preservation of peace and stability in the region and the world;
- European integration and EU membership;
- Economic development and overall prosperity and **protection of the environment and resources of the Republic of Serbia (new)**.

The version from April 2018 defined the national interests in the same section as follows:

- Preservation of sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity;
- Preservation of internal stability and security;
- Preservation of the Serbian people and national minorities and their cultural, religious and historical identity;
- Preservation of peace and stability in the region and the world;
- European integration and EU membership;
- Economic development and overall prosperity.

In the elaboration of the stated interests in the same section, the NSS/ G subsequently states: “Preservation of **existence (new)** of Serbian people **wherever they may live (new)**, as well as the national minorities....”.

The same sub-section of the NSS from April 2018 stated: “Preservation of the Serbian people, national minorities, and their cultural, religious and historical identity....”



The mentioned chapter of the NSS/G includes the following conclusion: “...to endanger national interests is to endanger the security of the Republic of Serbia **and Serbian people, wherever they may live, as well as its religious, cultural and historical heritage (new).**”

The April 2018 version of the NSS in this chapter states that: “To endanger national interests is to endanger the security of the Republic of Serbia.”

In the chapter “POLICY OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY”, the section 4.1 titled *Preservation of sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia* differs in the sub-section *Deterrence of armed attack jeopardy and efficient defense of RS* from the April 2018 version.

In the part which introduces the concept of total defense, the NSS/G stated the following: “Along these lines, the concept of total defense shall be elaborated and implemented **and the number of citizens trained for the defense of the country shall be significantly increased (new).**”

The April 2018 version stated that: “Along these lines, the concept of total defense shall be elaborated and implemented.”

Section 4.3. in this chapter is titled *Protection of the existence (new) and protection of the Serbian people wherever they may live (new), as well national minorities and their cultural, religious and historical identity.*

The same section in the April 2018 version is titled: *Protection of the Serbian people, and national minorities and their cultural, religious and historical identity.*

The NSS/G concludes this chapter with the following: “Activities in UNESCO and other international organizations shall be intensified in order to preserve, renew, protect and **increase visibility of the cultural legacy of the Republic of Serbia and Serbian people outside of the territory of the Republic of Serbia (new or different).**...”

The April 2018 version of the NSS concludes this chapter with the following: “Activities in UNESCO and other international organizations shall be intensified in order to preserve, renew and protect monuments and cultural and historical assets....”

Section 4.4. of this chapter titled *Preservation of peace and stability in the region and the world* is different in the NSS/G and April 2018 version in the parts related to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

NSS/G states that: “**Preservation of the Republika Srpska is one of the foreign policy priorities of the Republic of Serbia (new).** In accordance with that, it is the Republic of Serbia’s intention (determination/choice) to continue to develop special **parallel (new)** relations with Republika Srpska with respect to the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in accordance with Dayton Peace Agreement...”

The April 2018 version of the NSS stated the following: “It is the Republic of Serbia’s intention (determination/choice) to continue to develop special relations with Republika Srpska with respect to the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in accordance with Dayton Peace Agreement...”



The same section is different in the part pertaining to the Republic of Serbia's cooperation with The Collective Security Treaty Organization – CSTO.

The NSS/G stated: “The Republic of Serbia shall **expand and deepen (new)** the current level of cooperation with CSTO in order to contribute to global stability and security in accordance with its policy of military neutrality. The Republic of Serbia **will continue to improve (new/different)** its mutual trust with CSTO in order to achieve common goals.”

The April 2018 version of the NSS stated the following: “The Republic of Serbia cooperates with CSTO in order to contribute to global stability and security. The Republic of Serbia intends to improve mutual trust with CSTO in order to achieve common goals.”

The same chapter of the NSS/G contains section 4.7. titled *Preservation of the environment and resources of the Republic of Serbia* which does not exist in the April 2018 NSS version. It has a sub-section titled *Protection of natural wealth and assets of public interest and preservation of the healthy living environment*.

The NSS/G in the section 4.7. *Preservation of the environment and resources of the Republic of Serbia* stated:

“Preservation of the environment and resources of the Republic of Serbia is achieved by accomplishing the following goals:

- Monitoring, assessing, planning and taking measures to mitigate the impact of climate change;
- Flood and fire protection;
- Improving the quality of the environment;
- Effective management of hazardous waste;
- Enhancing the ability and capacity to manage resources.”

The newly introduced section elaborates in more detail the government plans to improve the protection of the environment and the living conditions in this area. Protection against fires and floods is explicitly mentioned.

The April 2018 version of the NSS in chapter 4.6. *Economic development and overall prosperity* contained paragraph stating: “In order to increase energy security, the Republic of Serbia is in favor of regional and global energy integrations, but **will consider the justification of the current policy towards nuclear energy** and identify an alternative, in order to reduce energy dependency and reduce the price of electricity. The energy market will be developed by providing an open and integrated domestic energy market with regional and European markets.” This paragraph was deleted from the NSS/G draft.

The chapter “NATIONAL SECURITY SYSTEM” in the NSS/G version contains two additional features in the section *Key principles of functioning of the national security system* in comparison to the April 2018 version of the NSS.

It introduced and elaborated **Professionalism** and **Control and Monitoring**.

The chapter “IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY” has slightly different phrasing in the following:



NSS/G stated that: "...The Government of RS shall **deliver** the annual report (on implementation of the action plan for implementation of the National Security Strategy to be developed by the Ministry of Defense/CEAS explanation) **to the National Security Council and respective Parliamentary Committees (new)**.

NSS April 2018 version stated: "The National Security Council **shall be informed about** (variation - will get a copy FW from the Government/CEAS explanation) the annual report."



COMPARATIVE READING AND ANALYSIS OF THE APRIL 2018 AND AUGUST 2019 VERSIONS OF THE DRAFT NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY

Comparison of the proposal of the new Defense Strategy that Government of Serbia has passed to the Serbian Parliament in **August 2019** (NDS/G)⁵⁵ with the version that the Serbian Government working group⁵⁶ submitted for public debate in **spring 2018** (NDS).⁵⁷

Chapter 1 “SECURITY ENVIRONMENT”

NDS/G does not contain the line with regard Russian Federation that exists in the NDS.

NDS has a section which states that: “Russian Federation will continue to strengthen its political influence and improve its capacities, and thus in the same time its position in certain regions, as well in the world”.

This line is taken out from NDS/G.

Chapter 2 “CHALLENGES, RISKS AND THREATS TO SECURITY OF RELEVANCE FOR DEFENSE”

Section of the NDS/G has new elements about cyber-attacks on critical infrastructure and fake news. It states that: “The Development of information technologies, as a significant factor in the systematic organization of the state, contributes to creation of the favorable **circumstances for a wide spectrum of challenges, risks and threats to defense (new /changed). Cyber-attacks on critical infrastructure (new)**, high tech crime, endangerment of information and communication systems, **as well dissemination of fake news and disinformation within the concept of hybrid and information warfare (new)** can have negative impact on functioning of elements of the defense system...”

The NDS version of the same segment states: “Development of information technologies, as an significant system element of the state functioning, contributes to creation of the convenient circumstances for criminal activities of individuals and groups. High tech crime, endangerment of information-telecommunication systems can have negative impact on functioning of elements of the defense system. ...”

Chapter 4 “DEFENCE POLICY”

55 **NDS/G** - Abbreviation which CEAS uses for the draft of the National Defense Strategy adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia in August 2019.

56 Serbian Government formed a working group for drafting the strategic documents in the domain of security and defense late in 2016, and the group was expected to finalize its work till the end of 2017. The group consists of representatives of the General Secretariat of the President of the Republic, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Security Information Agency, the Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Government, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economy, the Office of the National Security and Protection of Classified Information, The Office for European Integration and the Office for Kosovo and Metohija.

57 **NDS** - Abbreviation which CEAS uses for the draft of the National Defense Strategy presented by the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Serbia in April 2018.



Subchapter 4.1. of the NDS/G *Protection of Sovereignty independence and territorial integrity* in a segment related to cooperation with KFOR (section 16) does not contain reference to the Brussels agreement, while NDS does.

The NDS/G segment states: “In order to ensure stability and security, as well continuation of the political dialogue with temporary self-governing institutions in Pristine, Republic of Serbia will continue to request unreduced presence of KFOR, as a guarantor, **of security in the territory of Kosovo and Metohija (new / changed)**, and in particular of Serbian and non-Albanian citizens and protection of Serbian cultural and historic heritage.”

The NDS version in the same segment states: “In order to ensure stability and security, as well continuation of the political dialogue with temporary self-governing institutions in Pristine, Republic of Serbia will continue to request unreduced presence of KFOR, as **a guarantor of implementation of the Brussels Agreement (taken out in the NDS/G)**, of security Serbian and **other (taken out in NDS/G)** non-Albanian citizens and protection of Serbian cultural and historic heritage.”

Subchapter 4.3. *Preservation of the peace and security in the region and the world* is changed in its introduction segment.

NDS/G version of this subchapter starts with:

“Preservation of the peace and stability in the region and the world, as a defense interest of Republic of Serbia, will be achieved by realization of the following goals:

- Preservation of the Republika Srpska as an entity within Bosnia and Herzegovina, in accordance with Dayton Peace Agreement and improvement of position of Serbs in the region and world (new);
- Participation in the multinational operations and missions under UN, EU and OSCE auspice”.

NDS version states:

“Preservation of the peace and stability in the region and the world, as a defense interest of Republic of Serbia, will be achieved by realization of the following goals:

- Participation in the multinational operations and missions under UN, EU and OSCE auspice...”.

The NDS/G version contains entire new segment which elaborates this goal.

“Preservation of the Republika Srpska as an entity within Bosnia and Herzegovina, in accordance with Dayton Peace Agreement and improvement of position of Serbs in the region and world is of a special significance for security and defense of Republic of Serbia. Republic of Serbia, as one of the guarantors of the Dayton peace agreement, will continue to improve special parallel relations with Republika Srpska, while respecting territorial integrity of and sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Republic of Serbia is committed to establishment of more content rich relations of improved quality with states of the region, while strengthening regional approach to security and defense. Improvement of position of the Serbs in the region and the world create conditions for cohesion and social development , improvement of position and rights off Serbs wherever they live, Serbian cultural



spiritual and historical heritage, in other states, improvement of cultural exchange, understanding and acceptance of cultural and other differences, which will in turn contribute to improvement of position and rights of national minorities in Republic of Serbia. “(all new).

Subchapter 4.4. *Improvement of national security and defense through the process of European integration* varies in titled its introduction part.

The NDS/G version states: “Improvement of national security and defense through the process of European integration, **with respect of specifics of Republic of Serbia (new),** is a defense interest of Republic of Serbia which will be achieved by fulfillment of the following goals: ...”

The NDS version states: “Improvement of national security and defense through the process of European integration is a defense interest of Republic of Serbia which will be achieved by fulfillment of the following goals ...”

Subchapter 4.5. *Military Neutrality of the Republic of Serbia*

In fourth segment of the NDS/G in this subchapter there is now the similar provision with regard CSTO like in NSS/G. It states: “ It is Republic of Serbia commitment to **widen and improve (new) cooperation with The Collective Security Treaty Organization – CSTO,** as well with its member states....”

The NDS (April 2018 version) at the same place states that: “ It is Republic of Serbia commitment to cooperate with The Collective Security Treaty Organization – CSTO, as well with its member states....”

Subchapter 4.6 *Security and defense cooperation and partnership with states and international organizations* also varies in two comparatively read versions of the Defense Strategy.

Segment 4 of this subchapter related to the regional cooperation in NDS/G states: “ Cooperation of Republic of Serbia with NATO, **through Partnership for Peace as an optimal level of cooperation (new),** will contribute to improvement of bilateral relations with states of the region which are either members of candidates for NATO membership, in order to contribute to preservation of peace in improvement of stability of the region....”

The same segment in NDS (April 2018) states following: “ Cooperation of Republic of Serbia with NATO will contribute to improvement of bilateral relations with states of the region which are either members of candidates for NATO membership, in order to contribute to preservation of peace in improvement of stability of the region....”

Segment 6 of this subchapter, related to the development of partnerships relation and cooperation with international organizations, in NDS/G states: “ In accordance with its interests Republic of Serbia is committed to widening and improvement with The Collective Security Treaty Organization - CSTO. Also, it will further improve partnership relation with NATO within Partnership for Peace **as an optimal level of cooperation. (new, additionally order of sentences is changed)**”

The same segment in the NDS states that: ”In accordance with its interests, Republic of Serbia is improve partnership relation with NATO within program Partnership for Peace. Also it will continue to improve cooperation with The Collective Security Treaty Organization - CSTO.



Chapter 6 “DEFENCE SYSTEM”

Subchapter 6.4 *Principles of functioning of the defense system* in the new version of the NDS/G endorsed by the Government in August 2019 has an addition. It starts with the following:” **Defense system is under democratic control which is conducted by Serbian parliament, President of the Republic of Serbia, Government, other state organs and public, in compliance with the law (new).”**

This subchapter introduces three more features of principles of functioning in the new version that also do not exist in the previous version: patriotism, professionalism and control and monitoring (as one /CEAS comment).

The new version in segment 3 states: “Founding principles of the defense system are: constitutionality and legality, **patriotism (new)**, unity, continuity, effectiveness, sustainability, prevention, reliability, efficiency, adjustability, comprehensives, cooperation, interoperability, openness in work, **professionalism** and **control and monitoring (new)**.”

The NDS version at the same place states: : “Founding principles of the defense system are: constitutionality and legality, unity, continuity, effectiveness, sustainability, prevention, reliability, efficiency, adjustability, comprehensives, cooperation, interoperability, openness in work.”

New version in the segment 5 elaborates patriotism, professionalism and control and monitoring:

“Patriotism. Patriotism expressed through awareness and highlight of values of freedom and peace, belonging to one’s peoplehood and state, responsibility for preservation of fatherland and readiness to protect its interest significantly contributes to functioning of defense system.” (new)

“Professionalism. Affairs within defense system are conducted responsibly, with conscience, ethically correctly and in accordance with rules of the profession, while encouraging cooperation in professional relations.” (new)

“Control and monitoring. It is provided that the system operates in compliance with identified defense interests, within framework of the Constitution and laws.”

Chapter 7 “IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DEFENSE STRATEGY”

The April 2018 version of the National Defense Strategy draft does not mention Serbian Army as a subject of importance of the NDS.

Segment two of this chapter in the NDS/G states: “ **Serbian Army (new)**, state bodies, **bodies of state administration (new)**, autonomous provinces bodies, local self-governance bodies, business entities, other legal entities, entrepreneurs and citizens are implementing defense strategy in compliance with identified rules and obligations as well stipulated mandates...”

The April 2018 version of the NDS states at the same place: “ Citizens, state bodies, autonomous provinces bodies, local self-governance bodies, business entities, other legal entities, entrepreneurs and citizens **(yes, twice/CEAS comment)** are implementing defense strategy in compliance with identified rules and obligations as well stipulated mandates...”



In the segment 4 the new version NDS/G stipulates: “ Ministry in charge for of defense affairs, in cooperation with other parts of the defense system, will produce draft action plan for the implementation of the DS, in compliance with law. Positions and commitments expressed in the Defense Strategy are to be operationalized by production and adoption of document of public policies, based on the action plan. Also, this ministry will submit to the Government annual report about the realization of the action plan for the implementation of the Defense Strategy. Government of the Republic of Serbia presents **(changed)** the annual report to the National Security Council **and respecting committees of the People’s Assembly of Republic of Serbia. (new).**“

The old (April 2018 version) at the same place states following: ” Ministry in charge for of defense affairs, in cooperation with other parts of the defense system, will produce draft action plan for the implementation of the DS, in compliance with law. Positions and commitments expressed in the Defense Strategy are to be operationalized by production and adoption of document of public policies, based on the action plan. Also, this ministry will submit to the Government annual report about the realization of the action plan for the implementation of the Defense Strategy. National Security Council is to be informed about the annual report.“

The new version of the Defense Strategy NDS/G contains one more final change in the conclusion chapter.

Chapter 8 “CONCLUSION”

The new version of the Defense Strategy NDS/G contains one more final change at its very end. NDS/G ends with stating the following: “ **Defense Strategy is to be changed in accordance with change of key factors which determine it, and mandatory in case change of the National Security Strategy.**” (new)

The old version does not contain this stipulation.



CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CEAS is glad that these draft versions of strategic documents have finally entered the parliamentary verification procedure, which was one of the key recommendations in the recently published CEAS report titled *Rashomon*, regarding Serbian-Chinese relations. Namely, due to the current dynamics of the global, regional and domestic developments, the actual strategies of national security and defense endorsed back in 2009 are evidently outdated.

Also, the partners of the Republic of Serbia, both governments and international organizations need updated relevant strategic documents on the basis of which it will be possible to make forecasts regarding future cooperation and assess the level and quality of partnership with the Republic of Serbia, which has significantly improved its international position thanks to the manner and the volume of participation in multinational operations.

CEAS assumes that the final adoption of these strategies will accelerate the opening of Chapter 31 in the negotiations with the EU - Foreign, Security and Defense Policy.

CEAS hopes that all the parties shall responsibly participate in the process of consideration, making necessary amendments and adopting these important documents, as well as other legislative and normative documents that should originate from them, either by the current or a subsequent convocation of the RS' National Assembly. A boycott of the upcoming elections would constitute avoidance of these very important civil and governmental duties.

This is especially important if we bear in mind the new geopolitical and regional circumstances and the fact that the documents are being adopted in an extremely difficult period of the ongoing negotiations on new relations between Belgrade and Pristina. The forthcoming assembly session and discussion of the documents will provide an opportunity for confirmation of the intention to improve the general atmosphere and functioning of the assembly, and give a chance to opposition leaders and other parties to present their views on the drafts and possible amendments, as the last year's public debate was very short and surprisingly few parties took part in it. This is an exceptional opportunity for their policies and plans to be heard, apart from those pertaining to the election procedures. For every country it is very important to reach a general consensus regarding foreign policy, security and defense policies, in line with a realistic assessment of the strategic environment and common national interests that are within the realm of the possible.

CEAS is pleased that new draft versions of NSS and NDS, among other things, include the following:

- protection of environment and resources of the Republic of Serbia is recognized as a national interest (NSS new version);
- one of the announced elements of the national security policy is a significant increase of the number of citizens trained for defense of the country (NSS new version);
- a professional approach, control and supervision are included among the key principles of the functioning of the national security and defense systems (NSS, NDS new versions);
- the sentence reading: "Russian Federation shall continue to strengthen its political influence and advance its capacities and its position in certain regions and globally" has been omitted (the new version of NDS does not contain this sentence);



- it is recognized that spreading of false news and disinformation within the concept of hybrid and information warfare may adversely affect the functioning of the elements of defense system (NDS new version);
- KFOR is explicitly named as the guarantor of the Brussels Agreement (NDS new version);
- it is explicitly stated that the system of defense shall be under democratic and civilian control (NDS new version);
- The Serbian Army is named explicitly as the subject of implementation of the defense strategy.

CEAS suggests that the new strategies should harmonize the phrases that pertain to the level of cooperation of the Republic of Serbia with CSTO, because the new version of NSS mentions the observer status of RS, which is not mentioned in the new draft of NDS. Also, NSS makes references to expansion and deepening of cooperation, whereas the NDS mentions expansion and deepening of cooperation with CSTO, but there is no mention of the observer status.

As was the case with the detailed normative and contextual analysis of the draft versions of strategic documents from the 2018, *Kosovo First*, CEAS is aware of and wishes to emphasize the very peculiar circumstances under which these documents are being discussed and adopted, namely, the elements, dynamics and possibility for adoption of a multidimensional compromise agreement for formalization of the relations between Belgrade and Pristina. Our overall assessment is that these documents are Kosovo-centered and that they do not depict global and regional context in a way that would be expected from a country which proclaims that joining the EU is among its national interests. They rather suggest what the policies and measures pursued in final phases of possible continuation of negotiations would be and Belgrade's key expectations.

Nevertheless, with full understanding of the very complicated situation in which Serbian Government endorsed the new versions, especially with regard of trying to reach a multidimensional comprehensive agreement with Pristina that would not cause big concerns and other unwanted actions among Serbs living in Kosovo and elsewhere, CEAS is worried that some of the new elements in these drafts can be interpreted too arbitrarily, leading to misunderstandings and problems at the local, global and, primarily, regional level. This is particularly the case with the sections on protection and preservation of the Serbian people wherever they may live, as a newly introduced national interest, and patterns of protection of the special parallel relations with the Republic of Srpska.



Here are all of them enlisted once again in one place:

National Security Strategy:

Chapter 3 of the NSS/G “NATIONAL INTERESTS” NSS/G states: “..Preservation of existence and protection of **Serbian people wherever they may live (new)**, as well as the national minorities and their cultural, religious and historical identity...”

The same sub-section of the NSS from April 2018 stated: “Preservation of the Serbian people, national minorities, and their cultural, religious and historical identity....”

The mentioned chapter of the NSS/G includes the following conclusion: “...to endanger national interests is to endanger the security of the Republic of Serbia **and the Serbian people, wherever they may live, as well as its religious, cultural and historical heritage (new).**”

Chapter 4. “POLICY OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY” contains section 4.3. titled: “**Protection of the existence (new) and protection of the Serbian people wherever they may live (new), as well national minorities and their cultural, religious and historical identity.**”

The same section in the April 2018 version was titled: “Protection of the Serbian people, and national minorities and their cultural, religious and historical identity.”

The NSS/G concludes this chapter with the following: “Activities in UNESCO and other international organizations shall be intensified in order to preserve, reconstruct, protect and increase the visibility of the cultural legacy of the Republic of Serbia **and the Serbian people outside the territory of the Republic of Serbia (new or different)...**”

The April 2018 version of the NSS concludes this chapter with the following: “Activities in UNESCO and other international organizations shall be intensified in order to preserve, reconstruct and protect the monuments and cultural and historical assets....”

Section 4.4. of this chapter titled “Preservation of peace and stability in the region and the world” is different in the NSS/G and April 2018 version in the parts related to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

NSS/G states that: “**Preservation of the Republic of Srpska is one of the foreign policy priorities of the Republic of Serbia (new). In keeping with that, it is the Republic of Serbia’s intention (determination/choice) to continue to develop special parallel (new) relations with the Republic of Srpska, respecting the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in accordance with the Dayton Peace Accords...**”

The April 2018 version of the NSS stated the following: “It is the Republic of Serbia’s intention (determination/choice) to continue to develop special relations with the Republic of Srpska, respecting to the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in accordance with Dayton Peace Accords...”



National Defense Strategy:

Chapter 4 “DEFENCE POLICY” of the NDS/G contains subsection 4.3. titled ”Preservation of peace and security in the region and the world” which is changed in its introduction segment.

NDS/G version of this subchapter starts with:

“Preservation of the peace and stability in the region and the world, as a defense interest of Republic of Serbia, will be achieved by realization of the following goals:

- Preservation of the Republic of Srpska as an entity within Bosnia and Herzegovina, in accordance with the Dayton Peace Agreement and improvement of position of Serbs in the region and world (new)”

The NDS/G version contains entire new segment which elaborates this goal.

“Preservation of the Republic of Srpska as an entity within Bosnia and Herzegovina, in line with the Dayton Peace Accords and improvement of position of Serbs in the region and world is of a special significance for security and defense of Republic of Serbia. Republic of Serbia, as one of the guarantors of the Dayton peace agreement, will continue to improve special parallel relations with Republika Srpska, while respecting territorial integrity of and sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Republic of Serbia is committed to establishment of more content rich relations of improved quality with states of the region, while strengthening regional approach to security and defense. Improvement of position of the Serbs in the region and the world create conditions for cohesion and social development, improvement of position and rights off Serbs wherever they live, Serbian cultural spiritual and historical heritage, in other states, improvement of cultural exchange, understanding and acceptance of cultural and other differences, which will in turn contribute to improvement of position and rights of national minorities in Republic of Serbia. “(all new).

Bearing in mind that new provisions are introduced into the Draft Security and Defense Strategies, rather than into the foreign policy one, and that they resemble the “compatriots living abroad” concept (Russian World Concept) pursued by the Russian Federation, in the period in which many policy makers and commentators raise concerns about security implications of various possible outlooks of the Belgrade - Pristina agreement and Serbia defense and security ties with Russia, CEAS expects them to cause concerns with many regional and Western actors.

Practices show that attempts to misuse or weaponize compatriots living abroad can expose them to be seen as the “fifth column” in the countries where they live. CEAS hopes that this will not be the case with Serbs wherever they live, and that protection of their individual and collective rights by Republic of Serbia will only contribute to the improvement of relations with countries in which they live.

The “little green men” scenario in Crimea also comes to mind. Many parties in the region and the world have their own interests and plans for the future outlook of Belgrade-Pristina agreement (or a failure to reach one). Scenarios similar to the Crimean one, in all their variations, attempted by state or non-state actors, can be especially dangerous bearing in mind the presence of EUFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina and KFOR in Kosovo. In order to subdue provocations, preempt misunderstanding and avoid incidents that can escalate CEAS advocates that Serbian



government honors all its agreements with KFOR, EU and UN to the full extent, and maintains the best possible level of communication and cooperation with KFOR.

American military experts assess that: The National Security Strategy (NSS), National Defense Strategy (NDS), and National Military Strategy all note that future confrontations among the major powers may most often occur below the level of armed conflict. In this environment, economic competition, influence campaigns, paramilitary actions, cyber intrusions, and political warfare are likely to become more prevalent.

Such confrontations increase the risk of misperception and miscalculation, among the powers with significant military strength, which may then increase the risk of armed conflict. In this context, the US capability to influence the outcomes of both global and regional events must be reconsidered. The growing divergence among great powers (i.e., the US, China, and Russia) regarding what constitutes legitimate or acceptable deterrence, compulsion, and escalation management activities should be carefully examined.⁵⁸

Experts warn that: the “Russian World” is perhaps Russia’s most controversial piece of policy. While the terms “Compatriots” and “Russian Diaspora” were not new when President Vladimir Putin took office, the first time he officially mentioned the term “Russian World” was in 2001 before the first World Congress of Compatriots Living Abroad. Specifically, Putin stated, “the notion of the Russian World extends far from Russia’s geographical borders and even far from the borders of the Russian ethnicity.” From this moment onwards, the Russian government erased the boundaries between ethnic Russians and those who identified themselves belonging to the cultural-linguistic-spiritual sphere of the Russian Federation. “Russian World,” can be best described as the ideological concept guiding the way in which Russia’s responsibility to “compatriots” abroad manifests itself into concrete policy. Overall, “Russian World” is such a versatile piece of policy that it can be observed in Russia’s 2015 National Security Strategy just as it can be seen in Russia’s 2018 “Decree on the Concept of the State Migration Policy.”⁵⁹

CEAS truly hopes that, for all reasons listed above, by-laws and other documents that will succeed the strategies, starting with action plans for their implementation, shall reduce the possibility of arbitrary interpretation or define in more detail the procedures for assessment of threats to stated interests, as well of means for their protection and improvement in order to preserve domestic and regional stability and security. Experiences and good practices and policies of NATO and EU Member States with similar issues of large number of compatriots living abroad, in particular in neighboring countries, should be thoroughly examined and considered for implementation.

In other elements that have not been modified, CEAS fully stands behind the assessments and recommendations issued in the *Kosovo First* report from 2018, which analyzed the overall context of the procedure of adoption and offered a methodological and value-based examination of the content of the new Draft National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia and its harmonization with the existing legislative framework. The *Kosovo First* report concludes:” In short, it is necessary FIRST to resolve the issue of KOSOVO in order to make way for Serbia to escape its current situation in which the issue of Kosovo is overshadowing all others, hence, KOSOVO FIRST. This situation is not sustainable if Serbia wants to pursue the democratic

58 Russian Strategic Intentions. A Strategic Multilayer Assessment (SMA) White Paper. May 2019. Available at: <https://www.politico.com/f/?id=0000016b-a5a1-d241-adff-fdf908e00001>

59 Assessment of the Future of ‘Russkiy Mir’ in Russia’s Grand Strategy. Real Clear Defense. December 2018. Available at: https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2018/12/31/assessment_of_the_future_of_russkiy_mir_in_russias_grand_strategy_114070.html



consolidation of the society and state. A new reality needs to be created in which a democratic SERBIA FIRST will be a viable option”.

CEAS sincerely hopes that a year’s difference will turn out to be the one that, after tough negotiation, soon delivers a multidimensional comprehensive agreement between Belgrade and Pristina, that will bring Serbia closer to the EU and NATO. But, for that to happen, the political West should say that it is ours too.



ABOUT CEAS

The Center for Euro-Atlantic Studies (CEAS) is an independent socio-liberal think-tank organization founded in 2007 in Belgrade, Serbia.

The motto which the CEAS follows in its work is “Progress, Determination, Influence”.

We stand for:

- Adoption of the principle of the precedence of individual over collective rights, without disregard for the rights which individuals can only achieve through collective action;
- Strengthening of the secular state principle and promotion of a faithless understanding of the world;
- Development and preservation of a more open, freer, more prosperous and more cooperative international order founded on smart globalization.
- Our advocacy and research work is mostly focused on:
 - Contemporary Serbian, Regional and Trans-Atlantic Foreign and Security Policies;
 - Full Serbian membership in EU and NATO;
 - Russian and other non-democratic influences on the stabilization and democratization of Western Balkans;
 - Importance of connection between security sector reform and transitional justice in the post-conflict Balkans;
 - Promotion of Responsibility to Protect, the international humanitarian and security doctrine;
 - Overcoming of the democratic deficits of multiculturalism.

Among CEAS’s most popular reports are: “Rashomon - Analysis of the bilateral relations between Serbia and China and their impact on the continuation of Serbia’s democratization, EU integration and cooperation with NATO and the Member States” (2019), “From Moscow Without Love” (2019) , “Kosovo First - Analysis of the draft of the Defense Strategy of the Republic of Serbia” (2018), “Kosovo First - Analysis of the context of the adoption process and analysis of the draft National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia” (2018), ”West Side Story” (2018), “Vencislav The Virgin” (2018), ”Basic Instinct – The Case for More NATO in The Western Balkans“ (2017), “Guide through information security in the Republic of Serbia” (2016), “Eyes wide shut – Strengthening of Russian Soft Power in Serbia– goals, instruments and effects” (2016), “The Missing Link: Security sector reform, ‘military neutrality’ and EU-integration in Serbia” (2014), “Guide through information security in the Republic of Serbia” (2016), “Keeping up with the private security sector – II” (2015), “Keeping up with the private security sector” (2013), “X Factor Serbia” (2013), “CEAS analysis - The Law on Classified Information” (2015), “CEAS analysis - Security Vetting in Serbia” (2015), “CEAS analysis - Protection of Whistleblowers in Serbia” (2015), “Extreme Makeover” (2014), “10x in favor NATO” (2014), “CEAS analysis of the Law on Amendments of the Law on the Security Intelligence Agency” (2014), “Putin’s Orchestra” (2014), “Putinization” (2014), etc.

CEAS is the only member from the Region of South-Eastern Europe to have full membership in ICRtoP- the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect. The coalition brings together non-governmental organizations from all over the world to collectively strengthen



the normative consensus for the doctrine of Responsibility to Protect (RtoP), with the aim of better understanding this principle, pushing for the strengthened capacities of the international community to prevent and halt genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, and to mobilize the non-governmental sector to push for action to save lives in RtoP country-specific situations.

CEAS is a member of the Coalition for RECOM – a coalition comprising more than 1,800 organizations from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia, advocating for the founding of the Regional Commission for establishing facts about war crimes and other serious violations of human rights committed on the territory of the former Yugoslavia between 1991 and 2001.

CEAS is among the most visible think-tanks in the Balkans, with a wide media, institutional and social outreach. CEAS has been quoted in leading prominent liberal media such as The New York Times, Washington Post, Politico, etc. In December 2016, CEAS Director Jelena Milic was elected as one of the POLITICO 28 Most influential People in the annual POLITICO 28 list of people who are shaping, shaking and stirring Europe.

In mid-2018 CEAS became one of the 22 leading international organizations, and the only one from the Western Balkans, which are partners of the Atlantic Council (AC USA) on the new strategic project DisinfoPortal. AC USA is considered one of the most influential think tank organizations in the world.

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WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES

Comparative reading and analysis of the April 2018 and August 2019 draft versions of the National Security and Defense Strategies

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