



## **Involvement of NATO, EU and OSCE in settling the Russia-Ukraine conflict**

### **Advanced Research Workshop**

Best Practices and Lessons Learned in Conflict Management: NATO, OSCE, EU and Civil Society  
Panel V. Identification of the lessons learned and best practices  
Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 10 June 2015

### ***Statement delivered by Mr. Oleksandr Tytarchuk on behalf of the Board of Coordinators of the East European Security Research Initiative (EESRI)***

Mr. Chair, distinguished guests, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen.

First of all, let me extend my sincere gratitude to Slovak colleagues for their hospitalities and having lead in preparation for this important Advanced Research Workshop.

Having in mind the fact that lessons learned in the Russia-Ukraine conflict run all through the workshop, I would also like to point out a couple of my personal conclusions in national capacity, as an expert from the country directly affected by ongoing security crisis.

In my short presentation being not exhaustive one, I want to touch upon some background conclusions on the involvement of NATO, the EU and the OSCE in settling the Russia-Ukraine conflict in terms of main lessons learned and best practices of exerting international efforts to bring peace and security.

The Euro-Atlantic region has become increasingly affected by global change topped by the Russia-Ukraine conflict that reflects institutional changes in the area of responsibility of all leading international players, including NATO, the EU and the OSCE. This conflict certainly accelerated the process of negotiations on strengthening the European security system and reforming existing international structures and mechanisms that ensure international security and global stability.

Remarkable thing is that ineffectiveness of such structures and mechanisms has been defined by Ukrainian experts among the most important risks, challenges and threats to which Ukraine is currently exposed and seems to be exposed in the future.

It could sound paradoxically, but Ukraine relies too much on international support in resolving current crisis being partially triggered by ineffective policy of the same international players that are being called up for support now.

In the framework of Russia-Ukraine conflict the international involvement has been and continues to be executed with different efficiency and tasks inherent to various phases of the conflict cycle, namely from early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, to the post-conflict rehabilitation, incl. peacekeeping and peace-building. In case of a particular conflict, many of these phases exist in parallel and require additional efforts for defining proper objectives and tasks corresponding to the national interests on the ground.

The efficiency of the involvement and practical assistance of above-mentioned international organizations in crisis resolution/management (CR/M) is quite different. An issue of having a competition here is not to be of great importance, because of the level of responsibility to be shared, main missions and objectives of cooperation to be achieved depending from the Ukraine's status of interaction, namely being a participating state, or partner and neighboring country.

All the areas of responsibility of particular international organizations are overlapped to certain extent because of numerous cross-cutting activities, namely protecting national minorities, providing humanitarian assistance, countering human trafficking, executing arms control measures, providing general assistance in implementing UN Security Council resolutions, etc. However, each of these institutions still has its own niche, where the priority of interests being concentrated.

On the current backdrop, this is the OSCE to remain one of the major international players, whose crisis management potential has been broadly involved in resolving crisis in and around Ukraine. The OSCE field operations have managed to prove again their relevance in crisis resolution and management process as a unique instruments of the OSCE available toolkit so that giving additional preferences to this Organization among others, and justifying its functioning whilst facing with deep institutional crisis.

The EU, having almost no military capacity to be able to protect and restore peace and order, still remains to be the best suited in settling this conflict by using its economic and political means primarily connected to the ongoing process of formal Ukrainian association with the EU. According to the Riga EaP summit's declaration, there is no EU intention for further Ukraine's involvement into the CSDP mechanisms dedicated to addressing current security challenges whilst simply conforming the possibility for partners' participation in the relevant EU missions and operations, as it used to be. All current efforts within the CSDP are mainly oriented not for resolving current Russia-Ukraine conflict itself but rather on stabilizing situation on the final stage of this conflict. The main spheres of influence are the following: confidence-building measures; humanitarian assistance, monitoring and mediation. The EU has become more active in using its field presences in the framework of solving the Russia-Ukraine crisis, even competing to some extent with the OSCE.

Among the main problems encountered by the international field presences in Ukraine have been reported the following:

- Absence of ready-made solutions for addressing current challenges and threats;
- Constant need for adapting their activities to changing security environment;
- Lack of synergy with other international institutions engaged in Ukraine.

In general, the recent abolition of Ukraine's non-block status and declaring the course towards Euro-Atlantic integration obviously should contribute to the Ukraine-NATO cooperation with strategic goal of granting a long-awaited NATO membership in the years to come. The main emphasis here will be given to creating conditions for interoperability and compatibility of the Ukrainian Security and Defence Sector with Alliance Forces as main precondition for pending membership issue.

There are following main areas of NATO involvement in crisis management process in Russia-Ukraine conflict that to certain extent overlaps with the OSCE and the EU activities, namely:

- Advisory and financial support for comprehensive reform in security and defense sector;
- Humanitarian support focusing on internally displaced persons;
- Anticorruption activities, etc.

At the same time, the Alliance leads the way in such area as:

- Using the voluntary supported Trust Funds mechanism;
- Protecting critical infrastructure and supporting of contingency preparedness;

- Developing public diplomacy, media relations and strategic communications.

Thorough attention also should be paid to the functioning of a series of additional NATO supported programs, especially Science for Peace and Security one, which contributed to this particular event as well.

No one of these organizations based on given strengths and weaknesses is not equipped enough to address identified threats on its own. Therefore, new security environments revitalizes cooperative role of all regional security organizations under the auspices of the UN. The Chapter VIII of the UN Charter provides a good framework for such cooperation in crisis situations in real life.

The list of general conclusions and recommendations to this topic consists of the following:

1. Having in mind current crisis, affected all mentioned international organizations, and lack of new agreed approaches, further cooperation between all of them still will be based on the existing principles, obligations and commitments, as well as using available international instruments, including the United Nations Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent OSCE documents.

2. All current efforts of these organizations are mainly oriented on crisis management activities related to stabilizing and legitimizing situation on the final stage of this conflict. The existing areas of shared responsibility are steadily growing now and covering such aspects as confidence-building measures, monitoring and mediation, humanitarian assistance, anticorruption activities, support in security and defense sector reforming, building peace and security.

3. The evolving “hybrid” security context requires finding ways to work together more effectively, prevent duplication of efforts and competition for resources, and reinforcing full coherence and synergy of collective actions.

4. The OSCE should be not only the active participant in this cooperative endeavor, but also to perform leading functions in uniting all international efforts while concentrating on such issues as conflict resolution and management, countering transnational threats, protecting human rights, resolving humanitarian issues as well as maintaining peace and stability.

5. The most active players in establishing and strengthening cooperation between the OSCE, NATO and the EU are their executive structures. The reason is the need for prompt response to rapid situation developments, especially in the field.

6. The predominant role in handling Russia-Ukraine conflict is played by the chairmanship/presidency of the above organizations, where appropriate. The main influencing factors here are the following: the motivation for elaboration and implementing of the priorities/initiatives mainly oriented on crisis resolution; establishing close and balanced relationship with all parties involved; nomination of qualified and able person as a special representative to the conflict, etc.

7. There are also some critical remarks on the efficiency of using available potential of the existing initiatives, institutions and mechanisms of the EU, NATO and the OSCE. Among them, one could rather mention the NATO Partnership for Peace Program, the EU Eastern Partnership Initiative, activities of the OSCE Institutions, incl. the High Commissioner on National Minorities, etc.

8. Increasing use of advisory support and deployment of various international field presences are inherent to current CR/M process as well. The changing nature of modern conflicts requires new innovative approaches in combining efforts of different field presences deployed in particular country or even undertaking a part of responsibility from one presence to another while having any difficulties with deployment. In this case, a kind of shared responsibility in supporting such field presence between international organizations should be envisaged.

9. Creation of the alternative instruments as a kind of substitution for the official field presence with controversial mandate not covering all the area of responsibility. The manifest example here is the establishment of the joint Ukrainian-Russian Crimean Field Mission on Human Rights, actively supported by the UNDP.

10. One clear consequence is that running field operations must become an even more co-operative venture than it has been in the past.

11. The need for active involvement of the field operations in political dialogue on all levels and keeping close contacts with mediators also should be kept in mind.

12. And the last but not least important point to consider is the appropriate openness of all governmental structures of hosting country for due acceptance of provided international experience and best practices as well as their practical implementation.

And wrapping up, I want to stress again that the Russia-Ukraine conflict demonstrates both the need for and potential benefits of co-operation between the OSCE, NATO and the EU in addressing urgent peace and security challenges.

Thank you for your attention, and I'll be glad to comment on possible interventions, if any.