



ORIGINAL PAPER

The main mechanisms and instruments used in Romania's foreign policy with the aim of materializing foreign policy objectives

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Abstract:

In what the East-West European concept is concerned, it must be very clear that the division of the continent between the two blocs was arbitrary in several respects. In addition to the physical factors, the political factors were of vital importance in determining the division between a Western and a Eastern Europe. Located between East and West and with a heart divided between Slavic and Latin origin, passed through the French sieve, Romania is the country surrounded by a whirlwind of uncertainty and chiaroscuro, the servility of a grotesque dictatorship that characterizes us for decades. Synthesizing the most remarkable features of Romania's systematic change in the new European geopolitical context, I will try, based on a new interpretation and vision of international relations, to highlight with the help of various materials studied, Romania's foreign policy objectives.

One of Romania's priority objectives was to integrate the country into the broad process of globalization, in this case, joining the Euro-Atlantic structures. In order to achieve the main objective, I considered it would be proper to structure the analysis in three directions, taking into account the current problems of the Romanian foreign policy:

- ✓ *NATO Alliance;*
- ✓ *Romania's integration into the European Union;*
- ✓ *Regional cooperation with the countries in the area and Romania's participation in international organizations*

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Regional cooperation with the countries in the area and Romania's participation in international organizations

NATO Alliance

Given the major lack of an analysis, which justifies Romania's involvement in the international arena, I will use in addition to the basic bibliography, some official documents provided by the Archive of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, documents attached to this report, which I am going to analyze during this chapter. Romania, due to the facilities it offers, is an important architectural piece of European and trans-Atlantic security. After the fall of the communist regime, ensuring security was a fundamental concern for Romania. According to Professor Lazăr Comănescu, in his article published in French: “La Roumanie et l’Otan”, Romania considers joining NATO as “*a logical trend towards the reconstitution of the unity of Europe. For most Central and Eastern European countries, addressing Western political structures, economic and security measures will be considered profitable, after a half-century absence.*” (Cosmulescu, 2016). Before assessing the significance of Romania's NATO integration, we must mention the global safety scenery. The agreement adopted by the NATO Summit in Madrid in early 1997, which approved the incorporation of Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic into this politico-military organization, is an important event that confirms a number of changes that have taken place in international relations starting with the fall of the Berlin Wall. (Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1986: 21)

I set out to highlight some features about the existence and role of NATO, in order to mark the possibilities that led to Romania's integration into the North Atlantic Organization. NATO was born fundamentally to stop the influence of the USSR, as a guarantee of the core capitalist countries developed in the dispute of hegemony in the ideological, cultural, economic and military field of the system (Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1986: 21).

The NATO strategy followed the evolution of the changes produced on the opponent's field. Thus, we distinguish two clear periods in this evolution: the years 1949-1991 and 1991-1999. On April 4th 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty was signed in Washington, which sought to create a military defense with a strong defensive character and linked to the Charter of the United Nations. In this way an artificial division of the world between East and West was established. In the first four decades, the strategy will be fundamentally determined by the balance of East-West forces and the technological evolution of the nuclear-dominated weapons system. Much closer to my analysis is the second stage, from the red to the grey danger, that is, the period between 1991 and 1999. According to Willy Meyer, in an interesting study of NATO, we move from a red enemy to a grey, and that grey color becomes associated with more or less defining dangers:

- ✓ Possible degeneration of the former Soviet republics with strong nationalist and expansionist feelings;
- ✓ Nuclear weapons dispersal in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan;
- ✓ Conflicts in the Caucasus;
- ✓ Conflicts in the Mediterranean and the Balkans. (Ioannides, 2018: 50).

Therefore, we can point out that at this stage we are experiencing new turbulence and violent conflicts that contribute to a reassessment of the use of force, transformed as an instrument in the service of a new legitimation of capitalist globalization in full process. Analysts have expressed differing views on NATO: Susanne Peters states that:” *the choice of NATO as the main Western security organization through its emerging force doctrine is an example of how multilateralism*

can become a rhetorical prank used by Western elites in order to mobilize Western aid in the policy of force" (Peters, 1996: 28) However, there is a process of transformation of NATO, which is visible with the intervention in Kosovo, which is why we cannot talk about multilateralism, but rather unilateralism, for the benefit of the United States military. As we have shown, the collapse of the Soviet bloc and the disappearance of the Warsaw Pact stimulated a reorientation towards NATO, meant to justify the occupation of that politico-military goal. This process began with the Brussels Summit in December 1989, when US Secretary of State James Baker warned that the visible reduction of the Soviet threat had led some to assume that our only reason for remaining in Europe for the last forty years was years was to counterbalance the Soviet Union. (Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1980: 91).

This would be one of the deepest strategic mistakes of the current generation. The reduction of the Soviet threat cannot be the cause of the recession of a situation in which an insecure balance of power or a resurgence of national rivalry and ethnic tensions predominate (Baker, 1996: 12). Theoretically, Brzezinski's 1998 theses, referring to the strategic value of Eurasia, emphasized the need to maintain the United States as an active presence. Throughout this process, Romania's request to join NATO, along with that of other Eastern European countries, appears to be a compelling reason to achieve greater legitimacy of this body before international public opinion, as stated by the director of the Institute Lev Voronkov, the Vienna International Peace Reporter, says: "... it is difficult to insist that NATO is outdated when so many countries want to be members."(Voronkov, 1997). We must analyze the process of NATO enlargement to the east and, therefore, to Romania, in the general context of conflict scenarios and the redefinition of NATO, as a guarantee of the construction of a new international order.

Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic have met some of the requirements for national unity, the construction of a market economy, which is why they were welcomed into the NATO family at the Madrid Summit. As for Romania, both at the 1997 Madrid Summit and at the Washington Summit in 1999, NATO's doors were still closed due to the delay in state restoration reforms and the lack of strategic interest in the area. However, the main objective of Romania's foreign policy was integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures, and NATO integration was a primary one. (Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1980: 91). This goal was strongly supported by the Romanian political parties, but also by the majority of the country's population. Romania's strategy for full integration into NATO had a number of key elements. The main objectives of the Romanian state in foreign policy can be structured as follows:

- ✓ Maintaining Romania's position as the main candidate in the next stage of NATO enlargement;
- ✓ Supporting NATO's "open door" policy, taking into account as a primary objective the integration into the eligible European democratic system that wants to join Alliance and be able to contribute to the achievement of the proposed objectives;
- ✓ Development of good neighborly bilateral relations and cooperation between the states in the region;
- ✓ Participation in peacekeeping operations, under the auspices of NATO;
- ✓ Compatibility of Romania's defense and security strategy with the NATO strategic concept;
- ✓ Continuing domestic policy reforms and supporting the consolidation of the transatlantic dimension;

Regional cooperation with the countries in the area and Romania's participation in international organizations

✓ Restructuring and developing the defense industries in such a way that they can supply the national defense system with equipment to NATO standards.

Romania's choice to join NATO is a logical consequence of the fundamental changes that took place after the 1989 Revolution. From a geographical and historical point of view, Romania belongs to European culture, despite the twists and turns of its stormy history (Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1999). It should also be noted that, for Romania, the mere fact of belonging to NATO is an important stimulus for supporting democratic processes and orienting the reform towards a market economy. In the words of Dumitru Ciușu "... *belonging to NATO means belonging to today's world*". (Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007). A relevant argument for Romania's integration into NATO is the role of stability that our country has in Balkan Europe. In this regard, we must highlight two important aspects:

✓ First of all, the relations between Romania and Hungary, which were characterized by a painful legacy of hatred and enmity and which has evolved into a strategic consensus and is currently one of the foundations of stability in Central and Balkan Europe. The Treaty, which entered into force in December 1996, is the basis for a lasting relationship between Romania and Hungary, enabling the development of joint initiatives in line with the practices and approaches of the Euro-Atlantic Community;

✓ Secondly, the relations between Romania and Poland which have the quality of protecting the spirit of Euro-Atlantic cooperation, in the way that, before the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Romania's integration in NATO, together with Poland represents the necessary balance for the northern flanks. alliance of the Alliance and, why not, the inclusion of Russia in the cooperation scheme of the Balkan Council, in the case of Poland, and for Romania in the Economic Cooperation of the Black Sea.

One argument would be substantial military capability. Compared to other candidates / states, former members of the Warsaw Pact, Romania is less dependent on military products supplied on the eastern market. On the other hand, it is worth noting the high level of efficiency of the Romanian armed forces, demonstrated by the three peacekeeping battalions in Bosnia, Angola and Albania respectively. The financial implications of the integration of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic have not led to a significant increase in the Alliance's budget. Taking into account both the level of interoperability of the Romanian Armed Forces, as well as the funds allocated for accession, it was estimated that Romania's integration will represent a much smaller financial effort. Experts from the Romanian Ministry of National Defense have estimated the cost of Romania's integration at \$ 272 million annually. Of that amount, \$ 108 million was direct costs - 10% of the annual defense budget. (Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1999). Regarding the political and diplomatic actions with NATO member states, we can highlight the opportunities for cooperation arising from the strategic relations of the USA as follows:

✓ Relations with France;
✓ Political and military cooperation with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland;

✓ Extended cooperation with Germany;
✓ Quadripartite meetings: Italy-France-Romania-Slovenia;
✓ Regular meetings with the three NATO members - Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary;

✓ Intensified cooperation with Slovenia, an intensive program of bilateral practices at all levels was launched;

Daniela Alina Mic (Mărgineanu)

- ✓ Preparation of the individual Romania-NATO dialogue with special emphasis on projects aimed at achieving interoperability objectives;
- ✓ Intensification of sub-regional cooperation at bilateral, trilateral and multilateral level, focused on priority sectors of common interest and specific projects, for example: Romania-Bulgaria-Turkey trilateral, having as main objective the fight against organized crime;
- ✓ The development of bilateral cooperation programs with NATO member states, aimed mainly at increasing the level of interoperability and reducing the costs of Romania's integration (Ioannides, 2018).

Romania's integration into the European Union

"I believe that there must be a kind of rationing between peoples in the same geographical area as those in Europe (...). These peoples must always have the opportunity to discuss, to make common decisions, to establish relations of solidarity that will allow them to communicate at any time depending on the dangers that may arise." (Briand, 1929).

Therefore, in the era of nation building, Romanian culture has outlined its originality under strong French and German influences. The Romanian cultural elite of the time, educated in the big cities: Paris, Berlin, Vienn, was at the same time the messenger of Western values, beliefs and works, propagator of the consciousness of Romanian civilization and art and creator of European masterpieces. According to the Romanian historian Nicolae Iorga - "Romanian culture is the fruit of a perpetual dialogue between national and universal, Romanian and European".(Iorga, 1938 : 80)Even during the Cold War, the imposed division of the old continent was overcome in some respects because the entire barrier, no matter how repressive, was permeable to the flow of ideas. The ties that anchored Romania in Western society were not completely abandoned even during the communist period. Reluctant to the idea of a Soviet-ruled communist camp, Romania retained its independence from Moscow by recognizing the Federal Republic of Germany and not joining the Soviet communist troops that invaded Czechoslovakia in 1948.

Romania is the only country with a socialist past that has maintained uninterrupted diplomatic relations with Israel, it was also the first state in the Eastern bloc to initiate a bilateral dialogue with it and concluded a general agreement on tariffs and trade when no other communist state was a member. Although the bipolar system forced them to belong, against their will, to a region defined in the terminology of the Cold War, Eastern Europe, despite this and a dictatorial regime to which it was subjected for 24 years, Romania refused to it renounces its European identity even in the context of the confrontation of the two poles of power.

Romania's association agreement with the EU, signed on February 1st 1993 and which entered into force on February 1st 1995, guarantees the legal and institutional framework of the Romanian-EU relations, having as fundamental objective the preparation for Romania's integration in the EU. To help the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in the integration process, the Commission prepared a document called the White Paper for the preparation of the associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe to facilitate their entry into the EU's internal market. This guide is the first step towards implementing the "acquis communautaire". The *acquis communautaire* is a body of EU laws, regulations, rules and standards that candidate countries must take on in order to integrate. In June 1993, the Copenhagen criteria were adopted, requiring the

Regional cooperation with the countries in the area and Romania's participation in international organizations

European Commission to look to the future and assess the progress that could be expected in anticipation of future developments in Union policies.

I will mention below the main criteria of the Copenhagen, on the basis of which the accession of the states to the accession to the EU is evaluated:

1. Stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, the rights and freedoms of citizens, the protection of national minorities;
2. The existence of a functioning market economy as well as the ability to cope with the competitive pressure of forces on the Union Market;
3. Ability to assume the obligations of members, including accession to Economic and Monetary Union

The Commission's conclusions were that only a few countries made progress in their transition to a market economy and are closer to meeting the above requirements. These countries were Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovenia. In order to better explain the path that Romania is taking in trying to get closer to the EU, we need to highlight a few events that are taking place in this regard. At the beginning of his term, in 1995, President Jaques Santer set two key objectives for the European Commission:

- ✓ Consolidation of the Union;
- ✓ Preparing for expansion.

On 16th July 1997, the Amsterdam Treaty clarified the way forward, set out in the European Parliament's agenda for 2000, on the Commission's strategy to strengthen the enlargement of the Union at the beginning of the 21st century. In this way, Agenda 2000 prepared for the accession of the ten candidate countries from Central and Eastern Europe and recommended the start of accession negotiations with Hungary, Poland, Estonia, the Czech Republic and Slovenia. These were the states that were considered closest to the criteria already set by the European Council at the Copenhagen Summit. We must not forget, however, that the "doors" remain open for Romania, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia, which have been proposed to be EU partners in order to accelerate their preparations for accession. On 31st March 1998, the 15 EU countries began bilateral negotiations with six candidate countries: Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia, subject to EU accession. The other countries that applied for accession, Bulgaria, Romania, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia, will start accession negotiations as soon as the reforms they have undertaken are considered sufficient (Harbour B., 2000).

The European Commission approved its new policy strategy on enlarging the European Union. The executive proposed to the 15 to open negotiations with six other Eastern European and Mediterranean countries - Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Latvia, Lithuania and Malta - which would already join the other six that had already negotiated - the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia, Estonia and Cyprus -. It was concluded that the six countries meet the political conditions - they have stable institutions that guarantee democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for minorities, as well as their protection, and in these conditions they can start accession negotiations starting with January 1st 2000.

In the words of Romania's president: "... *the invitation to be part of the great union of European states is an important step in achieving Romania's historic goal, and this marks the recognition of an extraordinary effort we have made in recent years to build and to consolidate a new social, economic and political regime. A new era is beginning for Romania.*" (Harbour, 2000).

Conclusions

Taking into consideration the cultural connection of our country with the old continent, it can be stated that the desire for its integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures - the European Union and NATO - is a natural continuation of its internal processes that will emphasize the way to take in order to consolidate and implement internal reforms: a new democratic political system, respect for human rights, operation of the rule of law and the market economy. In conclusion, the foreign policy of the state is determined by the need to promote and defend the national interest, which, in reality, represents the fundamental goal of the political approach. Achieving this goal is possible by making a correct assessment of the context in which real foreign policy actions take place and their effects on internal policy.

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