

## PRESENTATION OF THE CONFERENCE

*Romanian Military Thinking* International Conference is organised by the Defence Staff, in the context of the anniversary of 162 years since the Defence Staff was established as well as of the 23<sup>rd</sup> edition of the *Gândirea Militară Românească* Journal Awards.

### Keynote speakers:

- **Daniela GRIGORE-GÎTMAN** – State Secretary Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- **Burcu SAN** – Director for Operations, NATO's Operations Division
- **HE Nikoloz NIKOLOZISHVILI** – Ambassador of Georgia to Romania
- **Gheorghită MÎNDRUȚĂ** – Senator, Committee for Defence, Public Order and National Security, Senate of Romania

## PANEL 1

### NATO DETERRENCE POSTURE IN THE BLACK SEA REGION (PANEL COORDINATED BY THE NEW STRATEGY CENTER)

#### Moderators:

- **CAPT (ret.) Cristian BOGDAN** – Scientific Advisor, *Romanian Military Thinking* Journal
- **Radu TUDOR** – Defence & Intelligence Analyst

#### Speakers:

- **MG Giorgi MATIASHVILI** – Chief of the Georgian Defence Forces
- **MG Stayko PROKOPIEV** – Director of the Bulgarian Defence Staff
- **GEN Daniel PETRESCU** – Chief of the Defence Staff
- **LTG (ret.) Ben HODGES** – Pershing Chair, Centre for European Policy Analysis
- **Dr. Phillip PETERSEN** – President, New Generation Warfare Center

The Black Sea is a strategic crossroads between Europe and Asia having enduring geopolitical and geo-economic relevance both regionally and globally. It connects energy routes from the Caspian Sea and Central Asia to Europe, being also a meeting point of four great driving forces: Western democracy to the west, Russian military aggressiveness to the north, Chinese financial influence to the east, and Middle Eastern instability to the south.

Considering the recent developments in the region, including Russia's military build-up and Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD), as well as its hybrid activity, NATO has to improve situational awareness by addressing the appropriate policies, laws and structures. Moreover, the Alliance and its partners can develop greater maritime intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities in the Black Sea region. All the mentioned aspects represent premises for the development of a comprehensive regional strategy, a Black Sea strategy, and a unified deterrence and defence posture for the NATO eastern flank.

Nevertheless, a robust NATO maritime presence should take into account the provisions of the 1936 Montreux Convention limiting non-Black Sea NATO member operations in the Black Sea. Therefore, the three NATO member states that are also littoral states – Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey have a critical role to play.

In this context, important steps have already been made. Following the summits between 2014-2018, NATO boosted its presence in the form of tailored Forward Presence – tFP, in the south-eastern region of the Black Sea, which has got materialised in the establishment of a multinational training brigade in Romania, joint air policing missions to cover Romanian and Bulgarian airspace, as well as the increase in NATO naval exercises, such as Sea Shield 21 – a Romanian-led multinational naval exercise focused on enhancing interoperability,

namely initiatives that are aimed at bringing more coherence in all deterrence and defence efforts. Moreover, a Black Sea Centre was established within NATO's Maritime Command to increase awareness, collaboration and information-sharing between littoral states and regional navies. In addition, a Maritime Coordination Centre was established in Varna, as an important step towards greater NATO and regional cooperation in the Black Sea region.

In geopolitical terms, the tFP, along with the enhanced Forward Presence – eFP, in the north-eastern allied flank, benefits the EU too, increasing stability and security of the eastern neighbourhood, especially under the current circumstances generated by the developments in the Middle East and Afghanistan. Therefore, Brussels should be a strong advocate of NATO military and naval presence in the region. In this context, the EU's Strategic Compass initiative aims to provide enhanced political and strategic direction for the future of the Union's defence and security, the maritime one included.

Under the fast-changing circumstances in the past years, NATO has started a process of recalibration, adaptation and preparedness. Thus, at the summit in Brussels, 14 June 2021, leaders agreed NATO 2030 agenda to strengthen the Alliance over the next decade and beyond. In this context, it was reaffirmed the dual-track approach of defence and dialogue towards Russia, and the pledge to continue to support NATO partners, Ukraine and Georgia, bringing them closer to the Alliance. Moreover, leaders took decisions to strengthen political consultations, reinforce collective defence, enhance resilience, sharpen NATO's technological edge, step up training and capacity building for partners, and address the security impact of climate change. They further agreed to develop NATO's next Strategic Concept for the summit in 2022.

The discussions included in Panel 1 will highlight some aspects to be considered in developing a coherent strategy across the Black Sea region, aspects that could become building blocks in the new Strategic Concept-related documents, based on the following topics: NATO deployed/established capabilities in the Black Sea region; the Russian Federation intent in the Black Sea; possible hybrid conflicts scenarios in the Black Sea region; enhanced Allied forward presence in the Black Sea region; strategic shocks in the Black Sea region; challenges for future strategic thinkers in the Black Sea region; Pax Americana – present and future, impact on the Black Sea region; Romanian Armed Forces participation in NATO missions and exercises in the Black Sea region/Host Nation Support; NATO exercises effects on the Alliance and the Romanian Armed Forces; what a post-Putin Russia would look like; what the relevant issues to be addressed in a potential *Black Sea Security Net Assessment* study would be.

**PANEL 2**  
**RESILIENCE AND TECHNOLOGICAL SECURITY**  
**IN THE WIDER BLACK SEA REGION**  
 (PANEL COORDINATED BY THE CENTER  
 FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION & EARLY WARNING)

**Moderator: Narciz BĂLĂȘOIU** – Director, Center for Conflict Prevention & Early Warning

**Speakers:**

- **Iulian CHIFU** – President, Center for Conflict Prevention & Early Warning
- **Greg SIMONS** – Researcher, Institute for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Uppsala University
- **BG Constantin Iulian VIZITIU** – Commandant (Rector), “Ferdinand I” Military Technical Academy

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is marked by profound changes in the security environment. The emergence of a global, highly interconnected, economy reconfigures the system of international alliances, accelerates the adoption of new technologies and gives impetus to the development of new economic centres.

The interconnected world offers new opportunities; however, it generates significant risks to international security. Nowadays, globalisation determines the high speed of technological development. In this context, security professionals will have to combine scientific, educational and commercial advantages in order to annihilate the ability of opponents to acquire and use capabilities generated by the new wave of technological evolution. Currently, security threats are increasingly “*hybrid*” in nature, which means that they do not necessarily employ traditional military or violent means. Hybrid threats represent a central feature of “*grey zone*” conflicts, a term that refers to the increasingly blurred distinction between peace and war, resulting in a “*conflict continuum*”.

In the context of hybrid threats and conflict continuum, to which are added natural disasters, essential infrastructure failures, biological hazards, terrorist threats, cyber-attacks, climate change, to mention the most important ones, resilience has become a major necessity. By definition, resilience is the ability of a society to resist and recover from a shock, combining both civil preparedness and military capacity.

At the NATO level, the principle of resilience is anchored in Article 3 of the Alliance's founding treaty. Thus, resilience is a national responsibility and a collective commitment, contributing to the achievement of the Alliance's three essential core tasks, namely collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security.

In this context, the NATO 2030 Agenda, agreed by Allied leaders in June 2021, considers increasing resilience as a major issue. Resilience will remain a national responsibility, but an integrated and better-coordinated approach will be adopted, in accordance with Art. 3, in order to reduce vulnerabilities and ensure that the NATO military can successfully accomplish their missions in times of peace, crisis or conflict. To this end, Allies will develop a proposal to establish, assess, review and monitor resilience objectives to guide nationally-developed resilience goals and implementation plans.

As far as security, in general, is concerned, the common approach starts from its components, namely threats, risks and vulnerabilities. Technological security, in particular, is viewed in direct relation to disruptive technologies and the side effects of technological development, which are transposed into threats, given the following considerations: science and technology have become multipliers and benchmarks of power globally; a competition for access to technology has developed, which can lead to wars and growth constraints, to a wider development gap, as well as to the possibility of niche developments, which, especially in the case of emerging states, can lead to the rearrangement of global hierarchy; technology is an advantage and creates opportunities, but it can also become a vulnerability and a source of new threats to humanity; technology polarises, being able to generate alliances for technological exchange or blockages, namely constraints, containment, limitations of the access to technology or of the option for the source of the used technology; there is a relatively common space of technological elements covered by the reference to technological security, namely IT, artificial intelligence, cyber, nanotechnologies, biotechnologies, big data, quantum computers, space technology; there are no ethical norms and limitations, very important in this exponential development of new technologies, which can become destructive; the race for new technologies can mean, in the case of autocracies, the race for the supreme weapon, for the world domination; there are already identified enemies in the field, not only technological competitors, precisely on the basis of their aspiration to dominate the world, to have absolute control of the people on earth,

to direct and constrain their way of thinking. China and Russia are considered here, with major nuances and differences between the two actors and the degree of danger involved.

Under such circumstances, the main international actors aim at exploiting new and disruptive technology through innovation. The key areas covered are data, artificial intelligence, autonomy, hypersonic systems, quantum technologies, biotechnology and augmented reality.

NATO notes the significant role of space, which has become an operational domain, technology transfers within the Alliance, technology in communications and modern visualisation. The NATO Science and Technology Organisation published the report *"Technological and Scientific Trends: 2020-2040"*, a comprehensive assessment of new technologies, while the NATO Industrial Advisory Group assessed the report on the impact of disruptive technologies on the development of NATO capabilities. It is about technological maturity and market readiness to absorb critical technologies, such as artificial intelligence, hypersonic speed, biotechnology, quantum technology, 5G and 6G telecommunications. The recommendations focus on how to incorporate these technologies into NATO's planning process.

The United States retains artificial intelligence, quantum computers, advances in clean energy technology, which delays climate change, biotechnology and nanotechnology to cure diseases, next-generation (5G) telecommunications.

In the same vein, cyber security, drones, network security and quantum technology remain at the forefront at the EU level. Moreover, the effort to increase strategic autonomy in relation to China is considered a good practice.

As it has already been shown, emergent and disruptive technologies generate both advantages and threats. The most important threat is the loss of strategic advantage related to science and technology. Moreover, it is the irresponsible behaviour in space and cyberspace as well as the unethical development and use of technologies, especially those that undermine democratic values or impose autocratic approaches to international norms, rules and laws in the field of new technologies.

The integration of resilience and technological security, in the context of emergent and disruptive technologies, into the concerns of the states in the Wider Black Sea Region, in general, and of Romania, in particular, is the main topic of debate within Panel 2 of the GMR Conference, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.

### PANEL 3

#### PLANS, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES TO ENSURE SECURITY IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

**Keynote speaker: Dan DUNGACIU** – Director of the Institute of Political Sciences and International Relations “*Ion I.C. Brătianu*”, The Romanian Academy

**Moderators:**

- **Cristina CILEACU** – Journalist and Producer, DIGI TV News Channel
- **Colonel Cosmin OLARIU** – Dean, Faculty of Security and Defence, “*Carol I*” National Defence University

**Speakers:**

- **Antonia COLIBĂȘANU** – Senior Geopolitical Analyst and COO, Geopolitical Futures
- **HE Sorin DUCARU** – Director, European Union Satellite Centre
- **Silviu NATE** – Director, Global Studies Center
- **RADM (UH) Mihai PANAIT** – Chief, Naval Forces Staff

The current global security environment is characterised by the increasing trend towards changing the balance of power within the international system and towards transitioning to a stratified multipolar system, having power centres at the global or regional level.

The mentioned trends result in the states perceiving growing strategic insecurity, uncertainty and lack of predictability, which makes them orient towards national or bilateral solutions for managing risks and threats to national security, to the detriment of the classic mechanisms represented by multilateral formats or international organisations.

In terms of regional security developments, geopolitical competition continues to strengthen the regional influence of major global players (USA/NATO, EU vs the Russian Federation). The security situation in the Wider Black Sea Region is characterised by instability, mainly due to the assertive approach of the Russian Federation in its relationship with NATO. This approach is based on a strengthened regional military posture, as part of Russia’s comprehensive vision aimed at maintaining pressure on the entire NATO eastern flank.

Under these conditions, the perpetuation of phenomena subsumed under hybrid threats in the Black Sea region remains a constant concern for Romania. The security and stability of the region is a strategic priority, not only for our country but also for the North Atlantic Alliance.

The Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), in its capacity as intensified form of cooperation that is part of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), contributes to deepening the process of developing defence capabilities at the European level on a solid basis, by reducing duplication, so that the EU missions and operations can be appropriately executed.

Romania’s participation in PESCO, by meeting a number of 20 commitments related to the initiative, allows for tangible progress in the field of developing capabilities, increasing strategic cohesion at the military level and deepening operational cooperation with the other EU Member States. PESCO, linked with CARD and EDF, is appreciated as one of the effective tools for achieving the European Union military level of ambition.

In the NATO context, the main effort of the Ministry of National Defence is dedicated to consolidating Romania’s profile within the Alliance. The priorities for action are to meet the commitments in terms of providing resources for defence, capacity building and contributing to operations and missions, along with promoting and supporting the national objectives related to adapting the collective deterrence and defence posture, in line with the decisions taken since 2014 at the level of the heads of state and government of NATO member states.

According to the 2021 White Paper on Defence, the goals of Romania’s defence policy for the period 2021-2024 consist in: developing the national defence position and contributing to strengthening resilience; strengthening Romania’s strategic profile within NATO and the EU on the dimension of defence and deterrence; deepening the strategic partnership with the USA and developing cooperation with Romania’s other strategic partners; consolidating Romania’s profile as a security provider in the Wider Black Sea Region; developing bilateral and multilateral international cooperation in the field of defence; supporting public authorities in managing emergency situations.

Based on these desiderata, the Romanian Armed Forces have the mission to materialise the national contribution within NATO collective defence, in line with the operational commitments as an EU Member State, as well as with the participation in peace or coalition missions and operations.

The mentioned aspects, in relation to different plans, policies and strategies, presented in specific documents, in compliance with the legal framework, will be addressed during the discussions in Panel 3 of the Romanian Military Thinking Conference, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.

## PANEL 4

### REGIONAL SECURITY VERSUS NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

(PANEL COORDINATED BY THE I2DS2)

**Moderator: Nicolae IANCU** – President, Integrated Intelligence, Defence and Security Solutions/I2DS2 Association

#### Speakers:

- **Dimitrios TRIANTAPHYLLOU** – Director, Centre for International and European Studies, Kadir Has University
- **Mario BLOKKEN** – Director, Permanent Secretariat, Finabel European Army Interoperability Center
- **MG Viorel PANĂ** – Chief, Air Force Staff
- **COL (ret.) George TIBIL** – Integrated Intelligence, Defence and Security Solutions
- **Gabriel RAICU** – Prorector, Constanța Maritime University
- **Viorel CIBOTARU** – Executive Director, European Institute for Political Studies in Moldova

Despite the expansion of liberal democracy on the Black Sea coasts in the past two decades, the Black Sea region remains the realm of *Realpolitik*. Since the Ottoman Empire expansion peaked in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, no general security system has been realised in the Black Sea. Even during the Cold War, when the Soviet Union enjoyed a position of first amongst equals in the area, the Black Sea remained a heterogeneous and divided security region. NATO enlargement to the Black Sea in 2004 went even further, and in early 2014, all coastal states, except for Russia, were either NATO Allies or NATO partners.

The Russo-Georgian War of 2008, the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in 2014 and Russia's military intervention in eastern Ukraine have been the major security events that fundamentally altered regional security. The Black Sea militarisation and the changing military balance in the region make us wonder whether a kind of violent regional conflict might emerge in the foreseeable future. It is the context in which Russia today can be described as a revisionist power,

seeking to restore what Moscow believes is at its national security core, in historical and “*sphere of privileged influence*” critical terms.

Thus, the fundamental assumption of this panel is that the Black Sea region is a “*central locus*” of the rivalry between Russia and the West for the democratic future of Europe and the Euro-Atlantic stability. Having set the framework, the overarching question of the debate will be: What is the best security approach for the Black Sea region in an increasingly turbulent world?

The topics covered will be as follows: the role of major powers in the Black Sea security – NATO, Russia, EU and US interests, strategies and presence in the region; the Black Sea as a regional security complex – the main regional security dynamics and the security interdependence and division among the Black Sea littoral states; the balance of power in the Black Sea region – security providers and consumers at the Black Sea; NATO collective defence vs Russia's unipolarity in the Black Sea region; Romania's contribution to the Black Sea security – from national defence readiness and resilience to proactively fostering joint response to the regional security crisis; security and defence coherence and convergence from the Black Sea to the Baltic Sea – security initiatives to focus more systematically on common security challenges along NATO's eastern flank.

**PANEL 5**  
**ACTIONABLE INTELLIGENCE IN THE DYNAMICS**  
**OF THE TRANSFORMATIONAL GEOPOLITICAL CHALLENGES**  
**IN THE BLACK SEA**

**Keynote speaker: Gheorghită MÎNDRUȚĂ** – Senator, Secretary of the Committee for Defence, Public Order and National Security, Senate of Romania

**Moderator: COL Dan COLESNIUC** – National Defence and Security Expert, Ministry of National Defence

**Speakers:**

- **MG (r.) Cristian EREMIA** – Program Coordinator, Integrated Intelligence, Defence and Security Solutions
- **LTG Marian SIMA** – Chief, Military Intelligence Directorate
- **Marius Adrian PĂRĂLUȚĂ** – Head of Analysis Division, Romanian Intelligence Service
- **Mirela ATANASIU** – Scientific Researcher, Centre for Defence and Security Strategic Studies
- **BG Cristinel IORDACHE** – Chief, Human Resource Department, Foreign Intelligence Service
- **Cristian BARNA** – Training Manager, Intelligence4All

Geopolitical and geo-economic supremacy at the regional and global levels represents the challenge of the millennium, from the transformational perspective of the new world order, of a multipolar and competitive world, with tendencies of innovative multilateralism. In the current geopolitical and geostrategic context, regional and subregional, there is an increasing tendency to generate and actuate risks and threats to the national security and safety of Eastern European states. They come to complement, in fact, the extremely complex state of uncertainty, against the background of an uncontrolled evolution of the internal situation specific to each country, corroborated with its stimulation and maintenance by internal and external stakeholders.

The enlargement of NATO, since 1999, as well as that of the European Union to the East, beyond the former Iron Curtain, since 2004, have been undoubted strategic triumphs of the West. In recent years, however, taking advantage of US-EU disagreements, Russia has regained part of the economic, political, and information influence it had over the region until 1989. In Ukraine it went even further, annexing the Crimean Peninsula. Therefore, the question of *whether the Russians are to come* began to haunt the Black Sea states. Russia can return to the region, not necessarily by military force and by the mechanisms of domination specific to the communist world, but through the levers and means of the action of the hybrid war

that Moscow is waging against the West, namely to destabilise and discredit liberal democracies.

The armed forces of the states worldwide are constantly concerned with identifying and discovering real risk factors. All this work is performed, first and foremost, by the civilian and military intelligence structures that are able to provide the politico-military decision-makers with data and appropriate information so that risks can be countered and eliminated.

Compared to other regions of the world, Eastern Europe has been modest in terms of potential for population growth and market expansion, namely as an economic force.

The North Atlantic Alliance considers that the current security challenges are marked by the aggressive behaviour of the Russian Federation, through hybrid actions meant to undermine and destabilise the ex-Soviet states on the Eastern European flank. Moreover, Moscow's attitude of continuing the militarisation of the Black Sea, the creation of a system of regional interdiction and the restriction of access to the Pontic basin generate new states of tension and premisses for divergences with NATO member states.

The mentioned developments underlie the need to permanently strengthen NATO's deterrence and defence posture in the Black Sea, through the forward presence with land, air and naval support forces and capabilities.

Defence, security and intelligence thus enter a new stage, in which traditional reductionist models of predictive knowledge must be reconfigured based on resilient and interactive thinking, adaptable to the volatility, unpredictability, complexity and ambiguity of the new space of confrontation.

The rationale for strategic decisions must be based on in-depth knowledge of regional geopolitical competition, which is necessary for the process of developing actionable elements that are crucial for strengthening the force presence in a collective defence scenario.

In this cognitive framework, Romania, as an integral part of the *Enhanced Forward Presence*, is gradually consolidating its profile as a proactive actor in the security process in the Black Sea region, in line with international commitments to NATO and the EU to promote peace and stability not only at regional level but also at global one.

Why is the strategic influence important in a relatively fragmented and heterogeneous region, traditionally conflictual, neither too poor nor too rich, in the Black Sea area? Why would global actors want to play an important role in a region of the geopolitical periphery? All these questions will find an answer in the discussions focused on the topic of *Actionable Intelligence in the Dynamics of the Transformational Geopolitical Challenges in the Black Sea*.

**PANEL 6****ROMANIA AND THE BLACK SEA MILITARY CONFLICTS****IN THE 19<sup>TH</sup>-20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES**

(PANEL COORDINATED BY THE INSTITUTE  
FOR POLITICAL STUDIES OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY HISTORY)

**Moderatori:**

- **Carmen-Sorina RÎJNOVEANU** – Director, Institute for Political Studies of Defence and Military History
- **COL Liviu CORCIU** – Chief, National Military Archives of Romania

**Speakers:**

- **COL (r.) Petre OTU** – Professor, Faculty of History, University of Bucharest
- **Ion RÎȘNOVEANU** – Curator, National Museum of the Navy
- **Adrian-Bogdan CEOBANU** – Lecturer, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University, Iași
- **Manuel STĂNESCU** – Researcher, Institute for Political Studies of Defence and Military History
- **George UNGUREANU** – Curator, National Military Archives of Romania, Central Archive Repository

Bordering the Middle East, the Caucasus, the Mediterranean Sea and Southeast Europe, the Wider Black Sea Region is notable for its strategic position, at the crossroads of the main trade routes in antiquity. Later, in modern times, the main geopolitical axes intersected in the Wider Black Sea Region, which thus became a demarcation line, a natural frontier between three continents.

The characteristics of the Black Sea have led throughout history to an almost permanent struggle for supremacy. The total control of the Black Sea basin exercised by the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman empires is reflected in recorded history. Frontiers, as social and political phenomena within which the states of the Wider Black Sea Region were formed and developed, represent areas of dispute or areas of contact and promotion of the principle of good neighbourliness. Frontiers are

the statehood symbol and they will never disappear from the existence of nations.

In the Black Sea area, complex geopolitical developments have occurred over time, focused on the hotbeds of conflict-related either to the reconstruction of the nations in the region or to the ethnic and territorial disputes. Based on different reasons, from those generated by the national element to those related to borders, autonomous or separatist territories, the tensions in the Pontic area have been characterised by a very high potential for contagion in nearby areas.

For a long time, frontiers divided mentalities, separated peoples and represented real strongholds for the expansionist powers, which once conquered left room for the exploitation of undue wealth. Most of the wars waged throughout the history of the Wider Black Sea Region were fought for the conquest of territories and, consequently, for the exploitation of assets in soils, subsoils, but also in the maritime space and the air one.

We will find out more about the role, interests and involvement of Romania in the Black Sea military conflicts in the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries during the discussions scheduled in the context of the Romanian Military Thinking Conference – 2021 edition.

## PANEL 7

### EMERGENT AND DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGIES APPLICATIONS IN PLANNING MILITARY OPERATIONS IN CYBERSPACE

**Moderator: COL Mihai BURLACU** – Deputy Chief, Communications and IT Directorate ROU Defence Staff

**Speakers:**

- **MAJ Fotios KANELLOS** – Cyberspace Subject Matter Expert (SME), Joint Air Power Competence Centre (JAPCC)
- **Greg MELCHER** – Chief Operations Officer, New Generation Warfare Center
- **BG Gabriel DAVID** – Head of IT&C Security Directorate, Special Telecommunications Service
- **BG Adrian SINGHEORGHE** – Head of R&D Directorate, Special Telecommunications Service
- **Ofer ROTBERG** – Head of EDR Group, ELBIT Systems
- **Alexandru GEORGESCU** – Expert, Department for Cybersecurity and Critical Infrastructure Protection, the National Institute for Research and Development in Informatics
- **COL Costel MAFTEI** – Chief of Staff, Cyber Command
- **LTC Georgian TUDOR** – Chief, Space and Radiocommunications Agency

Cyberspace is a unique field in which technologies, including the emergent and disruptive ones, play an extremely important role. The mentioned technologies can generate both opportunities, for those that have to defend themselves in cyberspace, and vulnerabilities, which can be exploited by attackers. In this regard, the analysis conducted by NATO Allied Command Transformation – *Cyberspace Strategic Foresight Analysis* points out that potential competitors and opponents will increasingly include operations in this domain in their own warfare strategies, mainly to respond to hybrid or information operations.

Thus, given the anticipated technological advances for the next ten years, it is very likely that actors in the international arena, be they state and non-state entities, will enhance their cyber-attack capabilities. Furthermore, the mentioned document identifies emergent and disruptive technologies that are relevant

either as threats or as opportunities, as follows: artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, 5G communications, smart city expansion, cloud, blockchain, Software Defined Radios and Zero Trust Networks. In addition, ways to respond are also suggested, and it is promoted the adoption of a multi-level approach to different technologies, depending on the stage of their development – embryonic, incipient, mature that can be exploited by NATO member states, as well as by potential opponents, and technologies already existing in NATO. Among the suggested response modalities, articulated on the four levels, the following are mentioned: observation and monitoring, research and experimentation, immediate adoption and implementation, maintenance and optimisation of existing programmes respectively.

As it can be noted from the above, technological progress can have major military implications, related to the changing nature of war and the character of conflicts. Consequentially, the Alliance future operations are expected to develop in a different framework. Thus, in order to properly respond to technological threats, it is necessary for security and defence decision-makers to focus on capability development and operations planning activities at the three levels – strategic, operational and tactical, in the medium and long term. Therefore, Romania, together with the other member states of the Alliance, implements the related measures so that it can contribute to the collective defence effort as well as to NATO defence and deterrence posture, especially on the eastern flank, where it is situated the Extended Black Sea Region, with its particularities, mainly derived from its geostrategic position, while being aware of the technological impact on the confrontations in cyberspace.

Details regarding the mentioned topics will be provided by experts in the field during the discussions in Panel 8 of the Romanian Military Thinking Conference – 2021.

**PANEL 8**  
**EDUCATION, MAIN VECTOR OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**AND PROMOTING THE SECURITY CULTURE**  
(PANEL COORDINATED BY THE TRAINING  
AND DOCTRINE DIRECTORATE)

**Moderator: BG Eugen MAVRIȘ** – Chief, Training and Doctrine Directorate ROU  
Defence Staff

**Speakers:**

- **Stephen J. MARIANO** – Dean, NATO Defense College
- **Dirk DUBOIS** – Head, European Security and Defence College
- **BG Dorin-Corneliu PLEȘCAN** – Commandant (Rector), “Carol I” National Defence University
- **Jarosław GRYZ** – Deputy-Rector for Didactic Affairs, War Studies University Poland
- **BG Ghiță BÂRSAN** – Commandant (Rector), “Nicolae Bălcescu” Land Forces Academy

Military education is a complex field, subject to multiple pressures and competing agendas. At a time when the armed forces insist that uncertainty is a dominant feature of future operations, and the security environment is becoming increasingly complex and unpredictable, education, literally, has never been more important to the military than it is today.

The new challenges posed by technologies such as artificial intelligence or quantum technology can change the nature of war in unpredictable ways, demographic and climate change generate the potential for triggering new conflicts, terrorists can use advanced communications to launch attacks without too many warnings, and Russia and China seem determined to challenge Western notions of world order. Whether we accept that these challenges are unprecedented in their scope or not, it seems logical to say that those who serve in the military must be prepared to face uncertainty – especially as they climb the career ladder to positions of strategic responsibility in decision-making.

Military education can play a critical role in transmitting cultural values and traditions related to national security. The concept of human capital means that individuals bring value to society and links educational progress to the cultural

and economic development that, when applied at the level of a region, should also contribute to greater transnational security. Government education systems represent the challenge of the millennium for all the states in the world, regardless of their geographical position or their level of socio-political and economic development. This approach is generated by the dynamics of the transformations of the human values system, against the background of the technical-scientific revolution that occurred in all fields of activity at the global level. All the mentioned aspects as well as other similar initiatives developed within the military education system represent a priority for an in-depth analysis of the critical interdependencies between the educational strategies, capabilities and technologies that are necessary to ensure the influence and effect of the decisions taken at all hierarchical levels.

Continuing the sustainable development of a model of multilateral interconnection in the educational field, both in terms of curricula and technologies, represents a level of ambition that will generate new skills in the face of the operational-strategic challenges of the information age. The recruitment, training and modelling of active staff, able to act in a complex, dynamic and extremely volatile environment, ready to fulfil a wide range of tactical, operational and strategic missions, must represent the essential objectives of the military specialist continuing education and training. Interoperability at the tactical, operational and strategic levels will be determined by the achievement of intellectual-educational interoperability regarding the semantic understanding of the specific concepts, which will contribute to the consolidation of trust in the allied environment.

The discussions included in the panel are aimed at providing an insight into the way in which military education systems are linked to the concept of security. Thus, participants will provide their own perspective on key concepts related to the impact of military education on security and conflict, such as: security issues related to education; the concept of human capital as a socio-cultural relationship between education and regional security/conflict; the nature of transnational threats related to education; the effects of education for the stability of the security environment; the desirable educational curricula in the modern military education system.

## PANEL 9

## STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THE NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

(PANEL COORDINATED BY THE ROMANIAN DIPLOMATIC INSTITUTE)

**Moderator: George VIȘAN** – Counsellor, Romanian Diplomatic Institute**Speakers:**

- **Iulian FOTA** – General Director, Romanian Diplomatic Institute
- **LTG Vasile TOADER** – Military Representative of Romania to NATO and the EU
- **Stanislav SECRIERU** – Senior Analyst, European Union Institute for Security Studies
- **Marius GHINCEA** – Researcher, European University Institute

The historical record shows that at regular intervals the national security policy, the most important of all public policies suffers improvements and significant changes in order to keep up with the challenges of the day. At the height of the Cold War national security policy had a distinct military character and concentrated on the competition of the main superpowers, the United States of America and the Soviet Union, as well as on the antagonism between the western free world and the communist camp. In the post-Cold War era, which was less tense in geopolitical terms, we needed to balance the relationship between the military and the non-military dimension of the national security policy. With the risk of great power war highly diminished, other national security issues gained traction. Confronted with the rise of ethnic conflicts, civil war, “*new wars*” and genocide, western nations had to integrate into their national security strategies political, social, economic and environmental risks. After 9/11 2001, terrorism and the war against terrorism had the greatest impact on the way in which western states developed their national security policy.

Today, we have overcome the anti-terrorist and counter-terrorist dimensions of national security policy. We have witnessed the return of great power politics, but in a new guise, in a less westernised international system, during a new technological revolution and during a global environmental crisis and health crisis. States are now confronted with a “*cascade of crises*”. How will this new and dangerous global reality influence national security policy?

We will try to offer an answer to this question in our panel. We will analyse the new and dangerous international context which is characterised by the three “*Ds*”: disruption, discontinuity, and devastation. We will evaluate older but also newer concepts such as the liquefaction of national security or grey-zone activity; we will debate solutions put forward by others for these challenges, as well as their national security approaches.

Above all, however, we will talk about Romania and its national security policy – at the end of the strategic holiday and during a full-blown “*orange code*” of geopolitical competition. The international order of the past 30 years which was favourable to Romania has crumbled before our eyes and nothing will guarantee that the coming future will be as favourable to us as the recent past was. As we well know from our history, the transitions to a new type of world order have not been always favourable to Romania. Is Romania doomed to repeat the same unfortunate national developments as before or do we have the strength and power to guarantee ourselves a future as good as the last twenty years? The best twenty years in the history of the Romanian state.

## MAIN MESSAGES

## PROMOTED DURING THE DEBATES

- ❖ Black Sea Security has already become a syntagm for NATO’s eastern flank, given that the Black Sea Region is a key area in the competition between the Russian Federation and the West, which can have a major impact on determining Europe’s future;
- ❖ We need to promote the concept of actionable intelligence, which is a combination of the intelligence used (information sources, HUMINT, OSINT, previous experiences and attitudes etc.) and the in-depth knowledge of the regional geopolitical competitive framework, to gain a strategic advantage over opponents;
- ❖ The security environment neighbouring NATO’s eastern flank will further represent a challenge;
- ❖ The Covid-19 pandemic has given Russia and China the opportunity to take offensive action to increase their influence and has highlighted a new feature of the threats posed by them (China used “*vaccine diplomacy*” to strengthen its influence in the Western Balkans; Beijing is increasingly interested in diversifying cooperation with the states in the region; Russia has led widespread disinformation campaigns to undermine confidence in Western states, the EU and NATO, remaining the main security concern for Romania, both militarily at the Black Sea, and through the levers of influence held by our country’s Area of Strategic Interest);
- ❖ The COVID crisis has reignited existing crises, such as the economic or the migrant ones, with cascading effects;
- ❖ There is a trend of massive use of unmanned aerial systems for intelligence gathering (especially by Russia and Turkey);
- ❖ In order to properly address complex challenges, the people in charge of Romania’s security and defence must join forces in order to capitalise on the tools available, especially by ensuring complementary institutional efforts;
- ❖ 5G technology is a hot topic, addressing the fifth generation of mobile communications technologies, especially as far as the security aspects of those networks are concerned;
- ❖ Hybrid confrontation is a present-day reality that is impossible to assimilate from a doctrinal point of view, thus requiring a shift from the military to the society level and an operationalisation within the concept of “*security culture*”;
- ❖ The Black Sea region is a very complex one and has certain vulnerabilities, such as the absence of a functional regional security architecture, which make it very susceptible to hybrid warfare approaches, in the current security context – this reality has been highlighted by the success of hybrid and unconventional operations in the region, including those targeting civilian infrastructure;
- ❖ A massive militarisation of the area added to the old conflicts in the Black Sea region, especially after 2014. In these circumstances, a clearer understanding of the security dynamics in the region, as well as the exploration of opportunities for dialogue between the actors involved in regional security are needed. NATO and the member and partner states in the region need to develop a common security agenda, even in the challenging conditions of strengthening active multidimensional security posts;

❖ Insecurity in the Black Sea area also has a perspective based on critical infrastructures, highlighting both the danger posed by hybrid threats and the measures that the Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP) framework can provide to increase resilience to hybrid threats – Romania could contribute to regional security in terms of CIP, based on its experience and its successful PIC implementation; it is necessary for Romania to identify the optimal way to monitor developments in the region in order to acquire strategic situational awareness. Romania has made progress in this respect and has shown credibility in data analysis, geospatial analysis, diplomacy, intelligence and cyber domain;

❖ A very important aspect regarding deterrence is to be able to recognise what is happening particularly in the hybrid or gray zone-type environment, meaning what we call the “new generation warfare”, and thus to see how the Russian Federation operates. Neither satellites nor a column of troops will be the ones able to identify something like this. This means that we must have an “unblinking eye” that is able to see air, sea, land domains and understand what is happening. Romania is the perfect place for an intelligence fusion centre that brings together all of these different types of intelligence, plus open source information and a NATO center of excellence for drones, for unmanned aerial systems, where we can practice using all the different types of drones, for reconnaissance as well as strike, and also how to protect ourselves, how to camouflage to conceal the signatures of peoples and headquarters;

❖ The national intelligence and crisis response capacity building system has both a theoretical branch and a strategy of international relations, which require a new cultural design and new pragmatic capabilities for the intelligence system – as a result, a new transformative paradigm model is desired for strengthening the capacity to respond to threats, based on a brief assessment of national elements of intelligence analysis in a regional context;

❖ The topic of information warfare has generated many comments and questions about the cognitive dimension of large-scale conflict, in which the nature of war has remained the same, but the character has evolved, and the perspectives on what war in its full spectrum represents have taken on different meanings for different actors; in this context, the “*lessons learned*” as a result of the analysis of the exercises carried out by the Russian Federation provide us with interesting details (an example being ZAPAD 2021);

❖ In the current security context, there is a multitude of challenges, including technological ones. That is why, at NATO level, cohesion, cooperation (with member and partner states in the region) and interoperability are very important elements;

❖ NATO operations in the Black Sea region are carried out in accordance with international standards in the field;

❖ NATO does not want a confrontation with Russia, nor does it want to become a threat to Russia. NATO is strengthening its profile in the Black Sea Region in order to anticipate possible crises and be able to respond appropriately to them, given the importance of the strategic initiative. Therefore, the development of a NATO security strategy for the Black Sea region is extremely important;

❖ Technological progress, especially emerging and disruptive technologies, raises many issues. In this context, it is interesting to note that the virtual space has the capacity to generate new geopolitical frameworks, being able to discuss “*virtual sovereignty*”;

❖ Manoeuvre platforms move into virtual space. Moreover, there is a shift in focus from markets to behaviours (see also the cognitive dimension of conflicts);

❖ There is a major relevance of normative elements, values and ethical criteria in the field of liberal democracy and human rights, as well as in that of emerging technologies;

❖ Romania has important achievements in the field of cyber defence – Cyber Security Center – Bucharest, AI Competence Center within the Military Technical Academy, National Center for Information Technology within the Timișoara Politechnica University, the project in the field of quantum telecommunications – Bucharest;

❖ Quantum technology acquires strategic dimensions, through its fields of application (weather, cryptography, etc.);

❖ AI processes (deep learning, neural networks, etc.) can be used to create autonomous weapon systems, where focus, optimisation and encryption are essential elements. Romania could use such a window of opportunity;

❖ As a NATO military state and Black Sea riparian state, Romania has increased its investments in the military field, becoming a security provider in the region;

❖ Regarding the EU’s relationship with the security situation in the Black Sea region, its involvement becomes evident, especially in terms of the Strategic Compass, the future EU military strategy document. The addition of hard power elements to the existing soft ones and the consolidation of crisis management missions in the region, in the context of the Common Security and Defense Policy, would be desirable ways to follow;

❖ In the field of intelligence, there may be actors who try to (re)define the physical space, so as to correspond to their own interests, the role of military diplomacy becoming very important in this regard;

❖ Security investments at the Alliance eastern flank contribute to the protection of the transatlantic core;

❖ The security agenda in the region should be developed jointly, despite the challenges of developing an active multidimensional security post, a key role in this context being defence diplomacy;

❖ National security is that part of public policy that has to deal with the worst situations a country can face. When drafting a national security strategy, it is necessary to use very well-defined terms. The military should not handle “*challenges*”, but use terms such as “*threat*” or “*aggression*” instead;

❖ In Romania, the concept of extended security was introduced in the National Defence Strategy in 2015. Thus, a number of public policies have been included in the concept of security (education, health, economy, finance, environment, critical infrastructure). Culture, demography, energy, cyber security, cultural monuments, etc. were added to the National Defence Strategy in 2020.

❖ Virtually, almost every public policy has become a subject of national security. The main mechanisms by which this concept of extended security is applied are the extension of the mandate of certain institutions and interinstitutional cooperation. The inclusion of so many areas under the umbrella of the security concept is rather based on the inability of authorities and decision-makers to promote fair and coherent policies for the development of those areas. But extending the concept of national security to as many public policies as possible has the effect of diluting the concept of security.