NATIONAL SECURITY AND COLLECTIVE SECURITY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ENSURING ENERGY SECURITY

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ABSTRACT

Under the terms of a security environment more complex and more dynamic, states and politico-military alliances are making efforts to ensure their own security. Security, in the present context, requires a comprehensive approach at all levels and in all dimensions and domains of the security concept.

In modern society, in which technology plays an increasingly important role, the energy represents the basic element of development, and energy security by promoting energy independence or interlinkages, has become a major concern for all States, whether they are producing or consuming energy resources.

Whereas security in general and in particular energy security requires a considerable effort on the part of all actors involved, it is necessary to approach the problem in terms of efficiency, which means the concentration of efforts and resources, and promoting the concept of “smart energy security”, regarded as an expression of cooperation between States and as a tool for achieving both of national security and collective security.

KEYWORDS: energy security, collective security, national security, alliance, interdependecies

1. Introduction

The concept of security influence and affect all levels of social organization, from individual, community, State, until the international environment [1], as the issue of security has been at the centre of the concerns of all human communities over time.

In the context of globalization and regional integration, national security cannot exist and to assert independent of what happens outside the borders of a State. Therefore, national security, in good measure, can be represented as a component of the regional security, and through it as an element of international security. Traditionally, in international relations, the concept of security means the protection of a State, and thus its population against a threat, especially a military one.

National security is influenced by the phenomenon of globalisation with multiple effects that it has on economic, social, political activity of all countries of the world, since, in these circumstances, States are increasingly interdependent in everything they do.
It also shows an increase in the influence exerted by the global security over national security, due to the rise of world community’s role in the crisis management of any sort, at any time and in any place in the world.

Given the interdependencies between countries are becoming stronger, and the risks and threats are becoming more numerous and more diverse, actors in the international security environment have realized that making individual security is possible only through a joint effort. This effort must be carried out continually and involves the adoption of more effective measures, at military, political and economic and social level. Collective security in the early 21st century is a challenge and States must overcome differences and barriers and to discover those elements that unite them, and allow them to deal with the risks and threats together.

The economic dimension of national security, and in particular energy security, plays nowadays an especially important role in the complex equation of national and international security, since the raw materials (especially oil and gas) “have a strategic role in ensuring the security of the nation because their existence or nonexistence can’t create or, on the contrary, creates vulnerabilities in situations of crisis and war, underline, or even play a determining role in the external relations of the State concerned” [2].

In the present circumstances we may consider that energy resources are the basis of national security, because they are essential to proper functioning of any State. Possession of a sufficient amounts of energy resources increases the power of a State and at the same time increase its internal stability. States which are dependent on foreign energy resources must adopt an active foreign policy, aimed at ensuring energy security. Once energy security provided, the conditions of economy functioning at optimum parameters are created, which contributes to strengthening national security, because “the economic dimension of security is essential and synergistically, because gather around it and integrate into same concept of power all other dimensions: human, cultural, social, cyber and military – giving them strength and consistency” [3].


The basic component of economic security, energy security expanded its coverage of over time, reaching nowadays to underpin the security of Nations, communities and citizens, by the fact that energy security policy is aimed at reducing dependence on foreign energy resources and ensuring, as far as possible, their energy independence. From the moment that a State has the opportunity to ensure its energy security, through various methods, it may focus its entire energy to promoting and defending the national interests and values, to create all necessary conditions for its citizens to enjoy well-being and feel safe and secure.

In order to ensure national security, any State should act simultaneously in several directions and must use all the tools he have, from the political, diplomatic, cultural, to economic and military tools. National security should not be regarded in isolation, but as a part of regional and global security, and national security energy component must enjoy increased attention, because without it, regardless of the efforts that we make, the State will not be able to obtain and maintain a climate of security.

National security is the normative, organisational, structural and functional framework, designed to maintain individual and collective safety, critical infrastructure protection and civil protection, ensure or restore law and order and the Constitutional Defense of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Romania [4]. The aim of national security is to promote and defend fundamental interests, to ensure freedom of action to the Romanian State in
international relations, in a constantly changing world, characterised by interdependencies, emphasizing the protection of Romanian citizens, guaranteeing the fundamental rights and freedoms of the Romanian individuals [5].

In the security policy of each State, energy security occupies a particularly important place, as the issue of energy security has become a priority for all actors of the international environment, whether it's about States or suprastate organizations, all realizing that “energy is the condition sine qua non for the exercise of power in international political economy and that neither welfare nor security can not be achieved without a reliable supply of energy” [6].

An important role in safeguarding national security rests on energy security through the adoption of measures aimed, inter alia, reducing dependency on supplies from unstable regions and countries that use energy as a tool for political pressure; accelerating energy production programmes in nuclear power plants; reviving the concerns aimed at increasing the production of hydropower and energy based on modern technologies using coal, increasing the production of renewable energy or energy efficiency and alternatives in industrial and domestic environments [7].

In order to achieve energy security, and by extension, national security, we must act in an appropriate manner in the following basic directions: the deep transformation of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of internal and external energy policy; increasing the expertise of personnel acting in the field of energy and national security; creating a modern, effective and participatory design, planning and evaluation of energy security policy; establishing a new regulatory framework governing the transformation of institutions with responsibilities in the field of energy security; improving communication and the transformation of the education system through modernization and diversification of training and development programs of research with the objectives of the national energy security, increasing the population and State institutions resilience in the field of energy, promoting energy efficiency and the rational use of energy resources, etc.

To ensure the security of Romania’s from an energy security perspective, the Government has established that national efforts should be directed towards: implementation of a programme for diversifying sources and routes of supply and limit dependence on energy supply from imports; ensuring the security of critical energy infrastructure, storage capabilities, including nuclear installations; promotion of investments to increase production capacity of electricity and for ensuring the energy security of the country; promoting cross-border and regional projects to ensure diversification of access to energy resources of raw materials, mainly oil and gas; support to strategic projects of national interest; encouraging the discovery of new hydrocarbon reserves and increasing the rate of replacement of existing reserves; the development of manufacturing industry of power equipment in accordance with the EU standards in this field; the promotion of programmes to increase the capacity of underground storage of natural gas, with a view to doubling them; green certificates market improvement, with a view to attracting private capital investments in the field of renewable sources. We believe that only through the concerted efforts of all State authorities and through a series of vigorous measures, both nationally and internationally to achieve energy security of Romania, as an expression of European energy and security as the foundation for the national security of Romania.

In the era of globalization, security issues cannot be dealt with in isolation, so that national security does not represent anything other than our country’s contribution to regional or international
security, and Romania’s energy security cannot be undertaken independently, without a correlation with the European and allied energy policies and strategies, since global problems require a global approach and the principle of “smart defence” should not only apply to those in the military, but must be adopted in all areas of security, which means cooperation, collaboration etc.

3. Energy Security Role in Ensuring Collective Security at NATO and EU Level

Energy security is an issue that goes beyond the boundaries of the States for his achievement, and individual efforts of each State concerned about carrying out national interests are not enough. In a globalized society, characterised by growing dependence, achieving energy security requires a common approach, to minimize efforts and maximize the benefits. Due to these aspects, States grouped in the politico-military entities in order to ensure the survival and security in the cold war era, have realized that a strict approach in terms of military security is not sufficient, being necessary a comprehensive approach aimed at the political, diplomatic, social, ecological, cultural and economic level.

Seen as one component of the economic dimension, energy security must be addressed as a matter of collective security, so that the risks and threats faced by an actor to be treated with the utmost seriousness by all allies, as if they represent a threat or a risk to their own safety. States which owns energy resources have been organized in the economic entities to better represent their interests, such as OPEC and States that are consuming energy resources have realized the need for a common approach to this problem and in so doing have expanded coverage and reference range of existing alliances, such as NATO – a political-military alliance that is concerned with increasingly more energy security component – and the EU – a political and economic alliance whose members understood that economic development must be based on the availability of energy resources that Europe does not have in the necessary quantities.

NATO and the European Union, as an economic, political and security entity, must formulate appropriate skills and competences as regards energy security [8] and last but not least, due to the fact that these two overstate political-military entities, are composed of almost the same States and of States with similar interests and aspirations, a common approach to the problem of energy security is needed.

Being a security organization, NATO is interested in reducing energy vulnerabilities that are exposed to member countries and partner countries, vulnerabilities arising from sources situated both inside and outside the Alliance. NATO needs to focus his attention to: sharing information, design of stability, promoting cooperation, regional and international crisis management, critical energy infrastructure protection.

The attention that member States attach to the issue of energy security is closely linked to the degree of energy dependency, which varies greatly from one country to another, in NATO having countries almost self-sufficient in terms of energy, as well as countries dependent in an overwhelming proportion. To be able to assess the degree of dependency of the NATO member countries we must take into account the amount of expenditures and of imports, the origin of energy resources, the number of suppliers and the existence of alternative sources of energy [9]. Thus in NATO we find countries that are dependent on external energy resources in a very small measure, such as Canada, Denmark, Norway, Netherlands, United Kingdom and United States, which have a degree of dependence under 40 %, as a result of their significant reserves, internal policy based.
on the diversification of electricity production, the existence of several suppliers of energy resources, achievement of energy savings, with a focus on energy efficiency and the widespread use of renewable energy sources.

Another category is represented by the intermediate States, such as France, Germany, Slovenia, Belgium, Italy, Portugal, Spain, the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Albania, Iceland, who have a dependency between 40 and 70 %, and the most vulnerable category is made up of very dependent States, with a degree of dependency of over 70 %, such as Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Greece, Luxembourg, Croatia and Turkey.

Sustainable solutions that have been identified at the level of NATO are the following: production support within the Alliance, the diversification of imports of fossil resources, the development of partnerships, increasing the share of nuclear energy, the use of renewables, increasing energy efficiency and effectiveness.

NATO's contribution to achieving energy security, taking into account the direct link between the supply of energy resources and the security of NATO member States and its allies, as well as the direct nature of most of the threats, could consist in [10]: monitoring and ongoing assessment of issues related to energy security, assisting all allies and partners on issues related to security in general and, in particular, energy security, maritime and air surveillance of points of interest, especially the shipping routes of energy resources, flexible approach to the problem of energy security based on answers adapted to the threats, interdiction operations, specifically designed to ensure the continuity of supply of oil and natural gas, especially in times of crisis.

Starting from the ideas listed above, we consider that from the situation of the NATO member States, heterogeneous in terms of energy security, arise a series of strategic consequences, which can have long-term negative effects. The most important question to ask NATO refers to the degree of energy autonomy of the Alliance in case of a prolonged military conflict. The answer to this question lies, at least at the moment, at the national level and consists of stocks that each country possesses. Also, the issue of energy security does not arise only in times of conflict, but also in times of peace and that is why it is necessary to have a holistic approach to the issue of energy security, involving all Member States, the integration of European energy security strategy and the development of a common strategy throughout the Alliance, encompassing concrete measures and solutions, both short-term but especially on medium and long-term.

Another important actor on the international scene, especially in the economic field, is the European Union. The EU is one of the most important consumers of energy resources in the world, being heavily industrialized but is dependent to a large extent on energy resources that are outside of its own territory. EU States have realized that the welfare of the population, industry and economy depend on reliable, sustainable and affordable energy, and the nature of the energy challenge is one of the biggest challenges that Europe must face. To be able to respond effectively to this challenge requires a sustained effort extending over a long period of time and that should materialise in medium-term and long-term energy policies and strategies.

In the future, Europe’s dependence on the resources of gas and oil will worsen, in parallel with increasing energy needs of emerging powers such as China and India. Access to fossil fuels will be increasingly harder to achieve, and their prices will be increasingly larger. Besides these aspects, we should mention the impact of climate change and the issue of nuclear energy, threats of armed attacks on the supply of...
energy resources, energy system vulnerability to cyber attacks, political instability that reigns in many producing countries, the use of energy resources as an instrument of international pressure, etc.

As a result, energy issue was on the agenda of the European Summit meetings, especially as regards the need to ensure uninterrupted power supply at competitive prices. The major objectives of EU energy policy are security of energy supply, competitiveness of the internal market and the promotion of sustainable energy. These objectives have guided the efforts of action on external dimension (in relation to third producing or transit countries) and the internal dimension (strengthening the internal energy market and the diversification of the energy mix in order to increase the share of alternative energy sources). Energy has been included on the agenda of the dialogue with third countries (Ukraine, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan) and in partnership with partner countries in the framework of the neighbourhood policy (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, etc.).

Safe and uninterrupted supplies of energy resources, efficient use of resources, the affordable prices and innovative solutions in the field of energy are the key for sustainable development of the EU. To address these problems more effectively, the EU member States have agreed to treat them in a common, integrated manner, in order to obtain maximum results. Joint efforts are translated in improving security and increasing the sustainability of energy systems, the management of energy networks and energy markets legislation etc.

To meet the challenges required close cooperation with all the partner States and especially with NATO is needed, because these two organizations are not competing but are complementary, and their purpose is not to heighten conflictuality, but to fully establish a climate of safety and security. Proactive attitude in the field of energy security should guide the efforts of these organizations, which must find common solutions to share information and resources and to secure mining areas and transportation routes of energy resources, simultaneously with the development of partnerships with the countries situated in the area of interest of NATO and the EU, because energy security is becoming more and more a pillar of strength structure in the construction of security [11].

4. Conclusion

Energy security is the basis of the national security of individual States in part because it creates the conditions for economic development, provides the means and instruments for the pursuit of the activity in normal conditions and also ensures the internal stability of the State, as well as the regional stability.

Energy security is deeply marked, in our opinion, by the competition for resources, which may become instruments of pressure in international relations. Competition for energy resources could lead to increased international tensions, especially when this competition for energy resources overlap deeper issues such cultural, political, ideological, related to spheres of influence etc.

That is why we believe that it is vital that States, both as individual actors, but mostly as part of politico-military alliances, to unite their efforts to achieve energy security, to identify the main areas of interest and to jointly develop projects aimed at diversifying sources and routes of energy resources, security of transport etc., so as to create energy and economic interdependencies, that are allowing all the attainment of short, medium and long-term objectives. Both States rich in energy resources, as well as consuming States must be aware that nobody can evolve independently, on medium and long term, under present circumstances, when globalization has penetrated into all areas and reached all geographical areas. With the globalization of the society, we see the
multiplication of risks and threats, and system vulnerabilities are harder to manage. A common approach to energy security issues will prove to be the most viable option, so long as it is not based on a colonial-type relationships, with the dominating and dominated countries, but with partnerships that bring benefits to all parties involved, and which contributes to the achievement of national and collective security.

The attention payd by the States in recent years to energy security is materialized, inter alia in developing energy strategies, showing the position of that State on the international energy scene, and its attitude towards the energy challenges that can affect the fulfillment of national interests and the way to achieve national security.

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