

What Does Enlargement Mean for the Aspirants: case of Montenegro

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Introduction

- In last three circles of enlargement twelve countries became NATO members -in 1999 (Chech, Poland and Hungary), in 2004 (Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia) and in 2009 (Albania and Croatia)
- Enlargement Policy is based on democratic peace and collective security approach:
 - „ ***NATO's door remains open to any European country in a position to undertake the commitments and obligations of membership, and contribute to security in the Euro-Atlantic area***“ (NATO official statement)
- Aspirants are expected to ***take action on dozens of specific areas to achieve agreement with Alliance norms and customs***
- Aspirant countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro

- Procedure for aspirant countries to join the Alliance consist of few phases that does not guarantee membership „especially if current members judge an accession to be damaging to the overall security environment“ ([Thomas S. Szayna](#) „NATO Enlargement 2000-2015 -Determinants and Implications for Defense Planning and Shaping“, RAND Corporation)
- Key preparation mechanisms are:
 1. Intensified Dialogue with NATO on membership aspirations and related reforms.
 2. MAP - preparation for potential membership in addition to prove ability to meet obligations and commitments of possible future membership (started from Washington’s Summit 1999)
 3. ***Aspirants must prove that they are in a position to apply the Washington Treaty principles and to contribute to security in the Euro-Atlantic area as well as to meet certain political, economic and military criteria.***

Enlargement & NATO Wales Declaration

- Stay on track with a strong commitment to integrate Aspirants
- Individual not group approach – it was stated that each aspirant will be judged on its own merits
- Follow up with the „Open Door Policy“ but approach to aspirant for joining to the Alliance will be modified depending by individual progress
- Some countries were evaluated positively and it was stressed that have achieved significant efforts in some area (e.g. Georgia, Macedonia, Montenegro)
- Some aspirants are getting late with reforms (e.g. BiH) or haven't achieved yet an appropriate level of reforms (Georgia, Macedonia, Montenegro) and each are encouraged to continue

- Aspirants are commended for the significant contributions to international security and stability, participation in regional stability and
- Bosnia and Herzegovina is encouraged to complete first MAP cycle ASAP and was stressed importance of contributions to NATO-led operations as well as „constructive role in regional dialogue and security“
- Macedonia is expected to continue with national reforms, especially in the field of democracy („democratic dialogue, media freedom, judicial independence and a fully-functioning multi-ethnic society based on full implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement“) and with active participation in regional stability and security

- Montenegro has got very special status and expectations that will achieve progress till the end of 2015
- Minister of Foreign Affairs of Croatia: „ Never so far for any country NATO didn't make specific conclusion as it is for MNE“
- Positive was assessed reforms that Montenegro has achieved, regional and international contribution into peace and stability, participation in ISAF, etc.
- In next year will be intensified dialogue through the MAP and to the end of 2015 will make decision whether or not will MNE be invited to Membership
- Few main tasks that must be completed - security sector reform and rule of law, and to continue with activities on enhancing public support for NATO membership

- „We welcome the **significant progress** made by Montenegro in its reforms, **its constructive role** in the Western Balkans region and the **contribution** that it makes to international security, including its contribution to our engagement in Afghanistan. In recognition of Montenegro’s progress towards NATO membership, ***the Alliance has agreed to open intensified and focused talks with Montenegro, and agreed that Foreign Ministers will assess Montenegro’s progress no later than by the end of 2015 with a view to deciding on whether to invite Montenegro to join the Alliance.*** These talks will be conducted in conjunction with the Membership Action Plan (MAP) process. In the meantime, we look to Montenegro **to continue its efforts to address the remaining challenges, particularly with respect to rule of law and completing security sector reform.** We also welcome the **increase in public support** in Montenegro for NATO membership and encourage continued efforts in this area“

Aspirants and National Interests

- Aspiring to NATO membership does not mean that all or even more than a few of them will be admitted to NATO
- Security, political and economic reasons WB countries for integration into NATO (e.g. stabilization, economic progress through the foreign investments, etc.)
- Different political conditions and national interest based on the specificities (e.g. some are burdened with ethnical tensions and disputes)
- Old recidives from the ethnic conflicts and the same political elites are still present in WB
- Important security aspects of integration - security sector reforms, rule of law, democracy, fight against organized crime, corruption and terrorism, etc.

- Geopolitical interest and national orientation – East Vs. West
- External and internal issues :
 - E: international conflicts (e.g.Ukraine), globalization processes, geopolitical interests, regional instability and spillover effect...
 - I: lack of the institution, corruption and political affairs, socio-economic uncertainty and human security, politization, ethnical tensions or disputes, human rights, security sector democratic control, slow reforms, frequent elections, compatibility of the integration processes (both EU and NATO....e.g. Albania), integration fatigue....
- Achieving NATO standards and criteria – „short“ lane and „long“ lane (e.g. WB countries) – in Declaration is stressed that will be inested on criteria (par. 95)

Montenegro-reality and expectations

- Public support still less than a 50%, but good progress has been made in 2014 and last survey has shown it is from 43-45% (it raised 15% in period of one year)
- Internal political issues – local elections in May 2014, but still didn't formed governance in some municipalities (Podgorica, HN, Bar...)
- Relations with Russia and negotiation with EU (e.g. Sanctions over Russia)
- Lack of the political will and consensus on NATO – right-wing national political parties are against membership

- Rational choice of the Government, but in next period must show full commitment to the criteria implementation (**security sector reforms and rule of law**) if wants to be positive assessed and to avoid potential obstacles
- Expectations that can be made positive decision for Montenegro on Wales Summit, mostly because of the Ukraine situation and relations with Russia
- NATO decision is very **precise and promising message** for Montenegro both with date and expectations to achieve till end 2015 – the question is how it will be implemented (with MAP, par 95)
- Positive impact of the Summit Declaration conclusion – to force Government to implement reforms and improve capacity for belonging to Euro-Atlantic Community