Krzysztof Orzech
Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce
Faculty of Law and Social Sciences
Institute of Security Studies

Summary of the doctoral dissertation entitled:

„Adaptation of the North Atlantic Alliance to Threats to the International Security Environment Generated by the Russian Federation"

Dissertation Advisor: prof. dr hab. Mirosław Banasik

Dissertation Co-Advisor: dr hab. Agnieszka Rogozińska

This doctoral dissertation constitutes a theoretical and empirical study within the discipline of security studies. The subject of the dissertation is the process of adaptation of the North Atlantic Alliance to threats generated by the Russian Federation to the international security environment. The research subject is examined with regard to kinetic, non-kinetic, and weapons of mass destruction-related threats originating from the Russian Federation in the time horizon up to 2040.

The main objective of the dissertation is to identify adaptive measures undertaken by the North Atlantic Alliance that are necessary to counter threats generated by the Russian Federation in order to ensure international security up to 2040. Accordingly, the research focuses on answering the following main question: How should the North Atlantic Alliance adapt to threats generated by the Russian Federation in order to ensure international security up to 2040?

Based on the problem situation, identified research problems, and the adopted research objective, as well as methodological assumptions and a preliminary literature review, five hypotheses were formulated addressing possible solutions to the main research problem and detailed problems.

The general hypothesis assumes that if the North Atlantic Alliance adapts its command structure to the nature of future operational activities and acquires new kinetic and non-kinetic capabilities as well as strategic deterrence capabilities, it will successfully adapt to threats to the international security environment generated by the Russian Federation. The second hypothesis assumes that, by 2040, the Russian Federation will intensify threats using a broad spectrum of kinetic and non-kinetic means as well as weapons of mass destruction, aiming to weaken the defensive capabilities of the North Atlantic Alliance. The third hypothesis indicates

that, until the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation, the North Atlantic Alliance focused on expeditionary operations and therefore possessed limited capabilities for the defense of treaty territory. Another hypothesis emphasizes that despite adaptation measures undertaken by the Alliance in the years 2014–2025—consisting of changes in deterrence posture, strengthening defense capabilities on the eastern flank, and increasing readiness and interoperability of armed forces—the North Atlantic Alliance is still not fully prepared to effectively counter threats from the Russian Federation. The final hypothesis assumes that, following the establishment of the NATO Eastern Flank Joint Force Command, strengthening of military potential for kinetic operations, acquisition of new capabilities to counter hybrid and cyber threats, and integration of political and military instruments of strategic deterrence, the North Atlantic Alliance will be prepared by 2040 to counter threats generated by the Russian Federation.

The dissertation consists of an introduction, a methodological chapter, four substantive chapters, and a conclusion. The first chapter presents the methodological foundations of the research, the results of which constitute the core of this dissertation. The second chapter provides a detailed analysis of threats posed by the Russian Federation to the security of the North Atlantic Alliance. The third chapter evaluates mechanisms for ensuring treaty security in the context of the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation. The fourth chapter characterizes the adaptive measures undertaken by the North Atlantic Alliance in response to threats generated by the Russian Federation in the years 2014–2025. The final chapter is empirical in nature and presents research results aimed at defining proposals for changes in command structure, acquisition of new kinetic and non-kinetic capabilities, and modifications to NATO's deterrence policy and strategy in response to the potential use of weapons of mass destruction by the Russian Federation. The conclusion presents findings from the conducted research regarding threats posed by the Russian Federation to NATO and the process of the Alliance's adaptation to these threats.

The results of the research contributed to supplementing and systematizing knowledge on the adaptation of the North Atlantic Alliance to security threats generated by the Russian Federation. Based on the conducted analysis, the effectiveness of the Alliance's actions was assessed, and forecasts regarding its evolution and its impact on international security up to 2040 were formulated.

The conclusions indicate that the Russian Federation constitutes the greatest threat to the security of the North Atlantic Alliance. Moreover, it will employ a wide spectrum of kinetic

and non-kinetic threats as well as weapons of mass destruction against the Alliance and may attack NATO by 2040.

The North Atlantic Alliance remains a key pillar of collective security in Europe and North America. However, in order to continue fulfilling this role effectively and credibly, it must not only continue the process of adaptation but also accelerate its pace and increase its scope. Only in this way will NATO be able to effectively counter threats generated by the Russian Federation and ensure long-term stability in the Euro-Atlantic security environment. In light of the above, NATO's adaptation to threats generated by the Russian Federation is not merely a reaction to changing conditions, but a long-term strategic necessity. Its success will determine not only the future of the Alliance but also the security of the entire world.

Keywords: NATO, Russian Federation, international security threats, deterrence, adaptation