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THE NEW UKRAINE-NATO ANNUAL NATIONAL PROGRAMME: CHANGE OF ESSENCE RATHER THAN FORM

Inna Potapova

The Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration

In 2019, Ukraine will get an absolutely new in its essence Ukraine-NATO Annual National Programme. The ANP is a mechanism for real convergence of Ukraine with NATO, without waiting for political will regarding the future membership of Ukraine in the Alliance. It was the first time when the general principles of strategic planning were employed: specificity, feasibility, attainability, timing, and continuity. It was also defined that the ANP is not about bilateral cooperation with NATO, but is a fully functional programme of all required domestic reforms for gaining membership in the Alliance.

Introduction

The Ukraine-NATO Annual National Programme (hereinafter – ANP) has been developed for almost the last 10 years. However, within this time, there was a certain period when the document was not given attention – this is the period of so-called “stagnation” of Euro-Atlantic integration, the time of the presidency of V. Yanukovich.

In 2010-2014, the cooperation vector with NATO was not just slowed down; it was missing from the priorities of Ukraine’s foreign policy. Moreover, the approval of non-block status strengthened this within the legislative framework. For sure, back then there was no discussion regarding ANP development. As NATO membership was not a goal for the state highest leadership of that time, consequently there was no appropriate attention given to a meaningful content of the ANP. As a result, it turned out that the Programme became more similar to

a certain list of bilateral events of not active cooperation with the Alliance, without long-term plans.

After the Revolution of Dignity, the situation has changed dramatically. The course of Ukraine towards NATO resumed legislatively; the Euro-Atlantic vector became one of the main priorities of the state, which is closely connected to reforms of Ukraine in general. Ukraine confidently demonstrated and continues to show its clear position – our goal is to gain membership in NATO.

Each year, the ANP has consistently been improved, taking into account NATO recommendations, the current situation in the country, and a thorough analysis of the mistakes made during the development and implementation of previous Programmes.

A significant event within this line of effort was the establishment in the government of the post of the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration.

This decision has substantially intensified the Euro-Atlantic vector and the process of development and improvement of the ANP in general.

A significant positive boost was also the restoration of the work of the Commission on Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine as an auxiliary authority under the President of Ukraine, which includes 32 representatives of the state authorities and agencies, those that are the most actively involved in the development and implementation of the ANP. The commission has been fundamentally reformed and renewed in light of changes in foreign policy priorities. The Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration was appointed to act as a head of the Commission. Besides, national coordinators in various fields, in accordance with the subjects of the ANP chapters, were identified among the commission members. The work of the Commission greatly facilitated inter-agency coordination in the field of Euro-Atlantic integration.

The New Ukraine-NATO Annual National Programme

The year 2018 has brought a substantial breakthrough in the process of Annual National Programme development. Finally, a clear and consistent understanding was reached as to what the document should look like to prepare Ukraine for membership in NATO. This was preceded by the persistent and purposeful work of all interested government authorities and agencies in close cooperation with foreign advisers and experts from the NATO member states, in coordination with the NATO Department of the Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration.

Consistently the corresponding action algorithm was developed. Two main directions were identified, which the central executive authorities and other government

authorities and agencies took for moving forward in parallel within the process of updating the ANP.

The first direction is the writing of new Provisions on the ANP development, implementation, and monitoring of the results. The Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration was responsible for this along with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and foreign advisers.



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The second, equally important, is the training of all government employees who are involved in the writing and implementation of the ANP, teaching them new methods in close cooperation with the Ukraine-NATO Professional Development Programme.

Since the beginning of 2018, an annual modular course has been launched, which took place almost every month, and the first six months were devoted exclusively to the new methods of writing the Annual National Programme. More than 100 representatives of state authorities and agencies who are on a continuous basis directly involved in the Euro-Atlantic dimension of their agencies took part in the course. The course is called “Champions-100”.

As a result of the training, state authorities and agencies made quality proposals to the draft Ukraine-NATO 2019 Annual National Programme. However, more importantly,

many agencies and authorities have made changes in understanding and perception of the nature and goal of the ANP in general.

As it was already mentioned, new provisions on the annual national programmes were in the process of simultaneous development in order to be introduced for consideration by the head of state. After continuous consultations in the process of writing the highest quality and acceptable document, the provisions were approved by the Decree of the President of Ukraine dated 02 October 2018, No. 298.

One of the main ideas of these provisions is that the ANP is not only about bilateral cooperation with NATO anymore. The ANP is a comprehensive programme of all necessary domestic reforms, required for gaining NATO membership.



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Often society has questions about Ukraine getting the Membership Action Plan (MAP). It is believed that this is the only way we can achieve our goal. However, even NATO has repeatedly emphasized the need to use all mechanisms for positive and urgent changes in the state. Getting the MAP by Ukraine is exceptionally a political issue of leadership of the state and nations of the Alliance. And while the discussion of this is under way, the state authorities actively use all the possibilities, tools, and mechanisms for real approximation of Ukraine to NATO. The Annual National Programme is just that very mechanism. That is why the approach to its development has been radically changed.

How different is the new approach to the ANP? First and foremost, the main principles of strategic planning that are used in NATO member states were employed: specificity, feasibility, attainability, timing, and continuity.

Following these principles, a clear and understandable logical chain of strategic goals, objectives, priorities for the current year and measures to achieve them is built. At the development stage, this minimizes the possibility of introducing into the ANP of measures inconsistent and directly unrelated to the corresponding objectives. In other words, the new ANP almost does not have “substitution of concepts” and “process for the sake of the process”, but maximum specificity and sequence.

For the first time, efficiency indicators and performance indicators have been added to the Annual National Programme. First of all, it helped to shape the tasks and activities specifically aimed at the result while simultaneously forecasting its impact on the activity of the state. The already mentioned annex is scheduled to be filled in once a year in December, which will allow tracking the progress of each reform or, on the contrary, to identify gaps and mistakes. This is the main value of this document. Besides, the information provided will enable the public to get quality and accessible information about the progress of Ukraine in the Euro-Atlantic direction.

It was also important to change the time frame for the development of the Ukraine-NATO Annual National Programme. From now on, the Programme will start development in March-April due to the need to harmonize with the budget planning process. This condition was made deliberately in view of the importance of timely planning by the state authorities of the appropriate funds for the implementation of their proposed measures. Of course, the ANP is implemented through NATO’s advisory,

technical, and financial support. However, the ANP is a national programme and, consequently, first of all, is implemented at own expense.

The deadline for submitting government proposals to the draft programme have also changed. Now it is May 30, not August 15, as it was before. This will give the opportunity and additional time for more thorough processing of the consolidated draft ANP before it is sent for consideration by the NATO Secretariat and the Commission for Coordination of Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine by October 15.

Upon receipt of their recommendations, which should be taken into account as much as possible, the draft ANP is sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine for finalization within the framework of its competence and ensuring a coordination process with all interested central executive authorities and other state agencies. An unprecedented number of agencies participate in the process – almost 80 were involved in the development of the draft ANP-2019. Then, the draft ANP is approved by the government and submitted for the revision by the President of Ukraine along with the relevant Decree of the Head of State by January 31 of the planned year.

Coordination System

Particular attention should be paid to the coordination system in the process of development and implementation of the NATO-Ukraine Annual National Programme. As it was already mentioned, in accordance with the new Provisions on ANP, the control and coordination of activities of central executive authorities and other state agencies are entrusted to the Commission for Coordination of Euro-Atlantic Integration

of Ukraine. In addition, the Commission ensures that the existing goals indicated in the ANP are reviewed in the light of the current situation in the country and, if necessary, makes the necessary adjustments.

The coordination role in the ANP development process is entrusted to the Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration. In this context, an interdepartmental working group on the development of Annual National Programmes was established, chaired by the head of the NATO office of the Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration. The working group operates within the Commission and includes 72 representatives of almost all interested state agencies.

The ANP draft, taking into account new requirements, is developed in the Government Office by the working group. In fact, the working group has become an effective platform for consultation and resolution of inconsistencies in the process of drafting of a new ANP.

The result of the work, which lasted throughout 2018, can be objectively evaluated after receiving the first reports on the implementation of the updated ANP. They will show whether everything was done right in the development of the Programme, whether the new methodologies work, and whether the ANP requires further improvements and if so where exactly.

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