

KİTAP İNCELEMESİ/ BOOK REVIEW

MICHAEL E. O'HANLON, BEYOND NATO: A NEW SECURITY ARCHITECTURE FOR EASTERN EUROPE, BROOKINGS INSTITUTION PRESS: WASHINGTON D.C., 2017, PP.171, ISBN: 9780815732587.

A.Veronika İNAN¹

¹PhD Candidate, Institute of European Studies, Marmara University, Istanbul
veronikainan@gmail.com ORCID 0000-0003-2740-6775

Geliş Tarihi/Received Date:31.03.2021 Kabul Tarihi/Accepted Date: 07.06.2021

İnan, A. Veronika. (2021). Michael E. O'Hanlon, Beyond Nato: A New Security Architecture for Eastern Europe, Brookings Institution Press: Washington D.C., 2017, pp.171, ISBN: 9780815732587. *Aurum Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(1), 95-97.

Since the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949, NATO's relations with the Soviet Union and then with the Russian Federation might be characterized as a hostile one based on a reciprocal distrust. The tensions between NATO and Russia that increased after Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and Russia's involvement in the Ukrainian crisis prompted a debate on whether NATO should further expand. O'Hanlon in his book proposes an alternative solution for a current security system. He argues that such a new approach could improve U.S. – Russia relations, preserve the sovereignty of neutral countries in Eastern Europe and provide stability in the region.

The book is composed of an introduction and four chapters. The main aim of the book is to evaluate the current geopolitical situation in the Eastern European region within the context of NATO – Russia relations and to present an innovative idea about a new security architecture for Eastern Europe (EESA). The new security architecture is foreseen for independent states of Eastern Europe, namely Finland, Sweden, Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Armenia Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Serbia and the Balkan states. The territory that would be covered by the new security system stretches from “the Nordic region down through the Balkans and into the Mediterranean” (p.35), namely Finland, Sweden, Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Serbia and possibly also other independent Balkan states (p.3). The new security architecture offered in the book would guarantee the aforementioned states' sovereignty and security without membership in NATO. At the same time, the EEAS would ensure the states' freedom to decide on political leadership, on a form of their government, and on economic associations (p.4). The negotiation of the agreement on the rules of the new security architecture should be conducted between NATO member states and the neutral states considered to be included in the new security architecture. The EEAS could be successful in a case where states considered as neutral would support the idea and believe that they would benefit from this new security order (p. 36). Any violation of the agreed conditions would put the agreement in jeopardy and eventually could result in the countries' entry into NATO in the future.

The first chapter of the book depicts the historical context of NATO enlargement after the Cold War, U.S. relations with Russia, and factors pulling both countries apart. NATO intervention in Kosovo was interpreted by Russia as aiming at the expansion of NATO's influence in the Balkans (p.14). Similarly, the U.S. intervention in Iraq assured Putin "that the U.S. was looking for a pretext to act hegemonically" (p.18). A lack of U.S. support for Russia in Chechnya and "color revolutions" that took place respectively in Georgia in 2003, Ukraine in 2004–05, Kyrgyzstan in 2005 (p.17) can be cited as other serious issues of contention between Russia and the U.S. Furthermore, the Ukrainian crisis that began in November 2013 brought a further deterioration in U.S.- Russia relations.

The second chapter of the book explains national security policies in the neutral states considered for the new security architecture. In this endeavor, the context of the relations of the neutral states of the region with the U.S. and Russia are elaborated. Thus subsequently Finland's, Sweden's, Georgia's, Ukraine's, Moldova's, Belarus', Armenia's, Azerbaijan's, Cyprus', Serbia's relations with the U.S. and Russia are elaborated. The analysis offered in this chapter enables a better understanding of the orientation of these countries, their strategic environments, and their stance towards the two great powers. This chapter's major aim is to comprehend the interests and opinions of neutral countries of the region. Such an analysis allows us to grasp the concept of the neutral states in the region within the new security architecture proposed in the book.

The third chapter evaluates factors exhibiting the necessity for a new security paradigm for the neutral states situated in the Eastern European region. It points out that NATO expansion in the region might undermine the alliance's "integrity and credibility" (p.73), further deteriorate U.S. – Russia relations, and put the stability and security of the Eastern European region into jeopardy.

The last chapter presents the framework and characteristics of the proposed new security architecture. This architecture is based on "the concept of sustained neutrality" (p.90) for the countries considered to be included in the project. The new security architecture could be treaty-based and ratified by the legislative bodies of the countries in question. NATO on its part would not offer a membership perspective for any of the neutral states from the region and the countries would agree to neither join NATO in the future nor be covered by the European Union's (EU) security provisions. However, this situation could change in case Russia does not object to further NATO expansion or the conditions of the agreement on EESA are violated. Moreover, the EEAS idea presupposes that the issues as conflicts in Transnistria (Moldova), South Ossetia and Abkhazia (Georgia), Ukraine, and the status of Kosovo would be negotiated and resolved.

O'Hanlon's study contains many useful insights to understand the current security matters in Eastern Europe and to look at it from a different and novel perspective. The author is able to demonstrate that a holistic approach is the key in designing the new security architecture. The analysis of such factors as the countries' location, relations with each other, historical background, and political context enable the readers to gain a broader perspective on the issue. The book is a useful tool for students, scholars, governing elites, and the general reader who is interested in the subject. It offers a comprehensive and objective overview and evaluation of the current situation in the Eastern European region and explains the background and context of the current U.S./NATO-Russia relations. However, the situation where Russia, NATO members, and neutral states of Eastern Europe would agree to the conditions of the EEAS seems

to be rather difficult to come true. So, the new security paradigm is well designed but challenging to be put into practice. Even if the parties act in accord at the beginning, this kind of project does not seem to have the potential to be sustainable in the ever-changing world. Therefore it is questionable that such a new security paradigm would stave off the rivalry between the U.S. and Russia. The author does not explain in detail how the EEAS would exactly operate, so the book offers an innovative approach that necessitates further development.

All in all, the book is a well-researched and interesting source to gain insight into the situation in the Eastern Europe and offers an alternative solution for current security architecture. This book narrows the gap in the existing literature and might prompt further research in the field.

