

REPORT

The future of the EU-UK security relationship seen from Central Europe

Tuesday 9th of April 2019, 16:00 – 18:00

Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the EU

- **The roundtable aimed at bringing forward opinions and ideas from different actors within the EU regarding the topic of future EU-UK security relationship, with a special accent on the perspective of Central European countries.**
- **This event was organised by the Think Visegrad Platform in cooperation with the Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the EU.**

Introductory remarks were provided by four panellists: *Tomáš Szunyog*, Deputy Head of the Czech Permanent Representation to the EU and Permanent Representative to PSC; *Paul Johnston*, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the PSC; *Tania Latici*, Policy Analyst at the European Parliament Research Service and *Piotr Szymanski*, Research Fellow at the Center for Eastern Studies, Poland. The event was moderated by *Martin Michelot*, Deputy Director at EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy. The roundtable was attended by participants from Permanent Representation to the EU of many European countries, as well as representatives from defense and security-oriented institutes. The event followed the Chatham House rule.

The debate covered a wide range of topics surrounding the future security relationship between the EU and UK in the light of the ongoing Brexit negotiations. Mutual interdependence between the UK and the EU was acknowledged, however the omnipresent will for close future cooperation in the field of security faces many practical challenges of UK's upcoming third country status. Participation of third countries in various EU projects

remains problematic and UK's position will be -at least at the beginning – even worse than other non-EU states, as many of those already have certain aspects of cooperation covered by bilateral agreements.

Participants further touched upon the topic of the European strategic autonomy. More debates are clearly needed to help successfully define the concept – not only for external partners but also for internal communication inside Europe and mutual understanding among the EU member states.

Question of potential creation of the European Security Council (ESC) was mentioned and participants contemplated potential involvement of the UK in the structure – the concept, however, still remains rather theoretical.

The last topic of the discussion was an implication of Brexit for the EU-NATO relations. As the UK remains an important European security actor, it remains to be seen how it will use its position within NATO, whether it will more closely cooperate with its EU partners or move towards the transatlantic pillar of NATO.



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