

## **ESSAY COMPETITION Selection of personal compositions**

### **A. FLC STUDENTS**

1.

For me, as a Romanian military person, NATO is just an opportunity. Contrary to many people who think that Romania is protected by NATO forces just because it makes part of this alliance, I have a different point of view. I think that the Romanian military people just have the opportunity to act together with the NATO military members. I also think that the Romanian Army must “pay the price” for being in NATO. I mean, we must have the weapons and technique interoperable with NATO. I also mean we must have most of the Romanian military be able to speak the NATO language. And not the least, I mean that the Romanian Army must act in the main operation theatres with NATO forces. But I consider that we don’t have to forget that we need a big and prepared army, not for NATO, but for ourselves. As we knew, between 1955 and 1991, Romania made part of the Warsaw Pact. Then, between 1991 and 2004, Romania didn’t make part of any military alliance. In 2004, Romania became a NATO member. In the future, no one can say what the political, economic and military alliance will look like. What I would like to say is that no matter what our situation will be, we will always need an army well prepared to act. In conclusion, for me, being in NATO is the best situation for nowadays because NATO is at least for now, the biggest military alliance. (*Sorin Boda*)

2.

Security in my daily life is key to my well-being. This is true for me as an individual but I can have this only if the whole world has it too. NATO’s purpose is to guarantee the freedom and security of its members through political and military means. When Romania joined NATO in 2004, I hoped many things would change for me and my country and I understood the change had to take place. As a military, I had the occasion to change experience with other colleagues from different countries which are part of NATO and I have been interacting with them. Because I work in Cincu unit which is an important working point for the Romanian military, as well as

for the Alliance, and for the Americans, I have seen and learnt many important things for my career. Among these things maybe the most important is the role of cooperating and communicating with each other, learning from each other, learning and working together, as well as helping each other when it is necessary. It is only through communication and cooperation that we can achieve and maintain our most precious goal – living in peace and security. (*Casandra Bica*)

### 3.

NATO is a strong military alliance whose purpose is to safeguard the freedom and security of its members. Romania is part of this alliance although the Romanians had to make quite a big financial effort for this. For me NATO is very important because, as a member of the alliance, if my country is attacked by an enemy army/nation, such an attack is viewed as an attack on the rest of the members and, therefore, they will defend and protect it. So, both as an individual and as a military person, living in a NATO member country makes me feel more secure, since you know you are part of an alliance in which the members are "all for one, one for all." In other words, each NATO member country shares its individual cultural entity enriched with a feeling of solidarity, as well as with the responsibilities and benefits given by the membership in this alliance. To conclude, I would that where many powers work together, the enemy has no chance of success. (*Negrea Ioan*)

### 4.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is an international organization created after World War II, in 1949, to maintain collective security. As military personnel in the Romanian army, which has been a member of the alliance since 2004, I consider this commitment as especially important for both the defense and development of our country. This engagement brought us the opportunity to train for and then participate in military actions in conflict areas such as Afghanistan and Iraq, which also improved our military capabilities and abilities. Another good reason for being glad to be a NATO member country is that this membership gives military personnel chances to professional, economic and, last but not least important, linguistic development. There is also the chance for military personnel to exchange experience with their foreign counterparts, learn from each other and cooperate in order to achieve the common goal of maintaining collective security. In conclusion, I would say that joining NATO, was one of the best decisions made by Romanian leadership in the country's recent history. (*Chirtop Vlad*)

### 5.

From my point of view, NATO is the cornerstone of Euro-Atlantic security and the most successful alliance in all human history. From its inception, NATO has proven its flexibility and adaptability in tackling with challenges ranging from Soviet nuclear threats and all-out conventional warfare to stabilization in Afghanistan and refugees crises management in the Mediterranean. Personally, NATO has proved for me to be an effective military framework that has allowed me to see a different world in Afghanistan and to interact with a variety of allies and partners that have helped me improve my work skills and leadership style. (*Puiu Alexandru*)

6.

Security in our daily lives is key to our well-being. NATO's purpose is to guarantee the freedom and security of its members through political and military means. NATO is committed to the peaceful resolution of disputes. If diplomatic efforts fail, it has the military power to undertake crisis-management operations. These are carried out under the collective defense clause of NATO's founding treaty. Since 2004, Romania has been one of the member countries of the Alliance. For Romania, being a NATO country has represented a major evolution with decisive influence on both its foreign and domestic policy. NATO membership represents the guarantee of security and external stability, which is vital for ensuring the prosperous development of the country. Romania has been a reliable partner to the allied forces in numerous peacekeeping operations and not only. As a member of the alliance, any country has more enhanced security and, implicitly, stability, as membership brings with it duties and responsibilities related to defending each other if it is the case. As a result, the citizens of any NATO member country, Romanians too, have an extra protection shield – the Alliance. (*Muntean Busuioc*)

7.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, also called the North Atlantic Alliance, is an intergovernmental military alliance of 29 North American and European countries, created to ensure the freedom and security of its members. My first contact with NATO was 22 years ago when I was part of a mission in Bosnia under the command of the Alliance. It was an unusual experience for me at the time because it was actually the first time I had seen some of the technique of other armies. After this experience, our country had a better relationship with the Alliance, reaching now a stage when the Alliance cannot be thought of without Romania as its member. (*Blagu Mihai*)

8.

NATO is a political and military alliance which provides security to all its member countries. NATO'S armies fight against terrorism around the world and, at the same time, focus on the

Russian threat. Another of NATO's missions is to discourage the nuclear race that is developing in the Middle East. From time to time, NATO members get together for military training sessions during which they test and improve their interoperability capabilities. Being a NATO member country we should have more confidence in the security of our country and in the capability of the alliance to defend us in case we need such a thing. **(Filipiuc George)**

**9.**

In a world where peace is fragile, it is very important for me to know that there is someone who cares about my safety and the peace of others. It is important to know that today and tomorrow, we and our children can live in PEACE without knowing terror or war. But for peace to be in the world, there must be NATO, a powerful organization that can always ensure and keep it. NATO gives me the security of a good and prosperous world for us and our children. I think there is a need for an organization like NATO to be able to fight effectively through conventional ways against terrorism, through well-prepared and cyber-friendly staff to ensure information security. More than ever, countries must make a common front against terrorist acts and prevent catastrophic events that afflict thousands of innocent lives. I am proud and happy at the same time that I am from Sibiu and I am in the city where there will be a NATO commandment. I hope that, for my city, the coming of this organization will be beneficial both militarily and economically.

I am glad and proud that my country is a member of NATO and I hope that in the future, more and more countries will join this organization in order to be stronger and to ensure peace in the world. **(Monica Pănoiu)**

## **B. ONLINE STUDENTS**

1.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), also called the North Atlantic Alliance, is an intergovernmental military alliance between 29 North American and European countries. But for me, NATO represents a military and political organization that Romania joined in 2004. NATO was created through the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty by the 12 founding states in Washington on 4 April 1949.

Firstly, being a military law advisor, NATO represents for me a set of political and military engagements that Romania, as one of its members, has to obey and apply. Furthermore, under NATO, Romania has joined more subsequent treaties that regulate the status of NATO forces and headquarters, as well as their relationships with non-NATO countries.

Additionally, Romania sends troops in theaters of operations, as a NATO member, to comply with international commitments, but being a NATO state also means that we benefit from the protection offered by the Alliance.

Secondly, NATO means that Romanian troops are engaged in many NATO exercises. That implies that our military technique must be interchangeable with the one used by other armies, thus ensuring the interoperability of the armed forces.

To conclude, NATO is a military and political organization from which Romania has been a part since 2004, an Alliance that provides protection but, at the same time, it also implies a set of rules and obligations for the member states. **(Costin Balea, PIA)**

2.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was founded in 1949 and is a group of 29 countries from Europe and North America that exists to protect the people and territory of its members. The Alliance is founded on the principle of collective defence, meaning that if one NATO Ally is attacked, then all NATO Allies are attacked.

*“One for all and all for one”, how familiar is that? “If NATO didn’t exist today, we would have to invent it,”* said Ursula von der Leyen, Federal Minister of Defence of Germany. Both she and Jens Stoltenberg, Secretary-General of NATO, borrowed the phrase made famous by the novel *The Three Musketeers* as they both believe that all of us are safer together than apart.

Basically, NATO is the world's biggest military alliance, like a “gun club”, but actually has no weapons of its own. The battleships, war planes, missiles and potential pool of more than 3 million personnel are owned and brought to the range by the 29 member states, mostly at their own cost. The only military equipment NATO has is a fleet of early warning radar planes and five surveillance drones. Strange, isn't it?

This exclusivist club is showing an “open-doors” policy, so everyone who meets the requirements and obligations that its members have already established is free to join. The United States is without

doubt the biggest and most influential member. But, in my opinion, this reality can also represent their vulnerability, because the alliance is the one international forum where Washington agrees to put its military might up for negotiation and can be persuaded to act differently by its allies. For me, this is the essence of NATO: not being afraid to show your weakness, in order to become stronger, with the help of your allies, while serving a greater purpose than your own.

This kind of trusting each other is crucial in terms of terrorism, the most frightening global threat there is. NATO is currently joining the international coalition fighting the Islamic State group and setting up a counter-terrorism intelligence cell to improve information-sharing. Unfortunately, this organization has been subject to many geopolitical discussions, which can alter its common purpose. Many leaders have different opinions on handling things, especially when it comes to preserving peace which involves money spending, so it is very likely for NATO to get weakened from within because of the lack of sufficient funding from all its members. But I consider it should only be about understanding the power of partnership, and the reciprocal nature of its bonds, in an alliance that stands for something far bigger than paying your dues on time.

This is the reason that many wonder whether the alliance still has a purpose, since the trans-Atlantic alliance was created to “*keep the Soviet Union out, the Americans in and the Germans down*”, in the words of NATO’s first secretary general, Lord Ismay. Nowadays, Russia is still out, America is the strongest member and Germany has risen, but in the right way. Well, I think it still has a purpose: terrorism has severely increased and has shown many new faces, even though NATO’s efforts have been great. This is why all its members should focus on reducing terrorist attacks rather than showing off their personal egos.

To sum up, I would say that no one is perfect. No alliance would ever meet everybody’s expectations. But, if they work hard enough on bringing up only the truth in politics, they would have a pretty good shot on making the best out of something already unstable. In the end, isn’t peace that we all yearn about? And “*peace begins with a smile*”, as Mother Theresa beautifully pictured it.  
**(Ingrid Marin, PIA)**

### **3.**

While NATO continues to adapt to changes in the security environment, the fundamentals of how it works haven’t changed. Consensus and consultation are part of NATO’s construction. All member countries are represented in the North Atlantic Council, where decisions are made by consensus, expressing the collective will of all the member nations. There is no NATO army. National forces are under national command. When called upon, allied nations volunteer their troops, equipment or other capabilities to NATO operations and exercises. Each member state pays for its own armed forces, and covers the costs of deploying its forces. But together, the allies get a lot more security for a lot less cost than they would if they had to do it alone. Each member contributes a small percentage of its national defence budget to NATO. The national contributions pay for running the political and operational headquarters in Belgium, as well as the integrated military command structure across NATO territory. They also cover some of the costs of shared military capabilities, systems and facilities needed for communication, command

and control, or for logistical support to NATO operations. Other multinational capability projects are funded by groups of allies. Thanks to years of joint planning, exercises and deployments, soldiers from different nations can work well together when the need arises. Working together, the Allies are stronger.

This is a romantic presentation, but the fact is Nato has become the ultimate judge assuming that the need for peace is always justified by the threat of war (Iraq, Afganistan).

As an Eastern European I prefer NATO than the alternative Russia. We know how peaceful they are. (*Stefan Anghel, PIA*)

#### 4.

”Me, myself and NATO”

It was **Jens Stoltenberg**, NATO Secretary General, who said that *”NATO is not only the longest lasting Alliance in history, but NATO is the most successful Alliance in history”*.

NATO is the most important politico-military organization in the world. 29 states from North America and Europe fight daily, under the NATO umbrella, for the purpose of keeping the world’s security.

In my opinion, NATO is the most important organization in the world. For me, as a Romanian Army officer, NATO is not only a purpose to train better every day, but also the reason why I sleep peacefully every night, because I know my country is protected.

As I said before, NATO is a very important organization, which includes a lot of powerful countries. It gives to the military personnel of all member countries the opportunity to train together and to gain a lot of new skills.

On the other hand, within military conflicts in which NATO has participated, a lot of people died. Not to mention the material damage caused by these conflicts.

To sum up, for me NATO is at, the same time, a powerful organization which protects my country and the main way in which peace is maintained in the world. (*Tablet Rares, PIA*)

#### 5.

First of all, NATO is a political-military alliance established by the North Atlantic Treaty, signed in Washington on 4 April 1949 by the US, Canada and 10 European countries. It currently comprises 29 member states from Europe and North America. It is well known that NATO's ultimate goal is to ensure the freedom and security of all its members through political and military means, in accordance with the North Atlantic Treaty and the principles of the United Nations Charter.

According to all the things mentioned above, I can say that in my view, NATO is the strongest and most powerful world power that we can unconditionally rely on. Maybe the most important fact for me is the “collective defence”, the principle that the alliance is built on, because I am sure that if any country tries to attack my country there is someone who will defend us.

I also think that managing crises around the world, promoting stability in our neighborhood and protecting our people at home can make a huge difference and that is very important for me.

Nowadays, all of us are confronted with terrorism that is very scary for me as well as for the people around me; as a result of this widely spreading phenomenon, we are scared to travel around the world as nothing is safe anymore. But I am sure that NATO plays an important role in fighting terrorism, contributing more than 13,000 NATO troops to train local forces in Afghanistan. They do their best, and I hope that terrorism will disappear soon.

To sum up, all the arguments above assured me that Romania being a NATO member is beneficial for all of us. To me, NATO means unity, security, protection, collaboration and capabilities development. *(Ulmet Luiza, PIA)*

## **6.**

For me, as a civilian serving as defence advisor in the Ministry of national Defence, NATO is more than a military organization, a political one, and as my colleague emphasized, I would like to mention that its primary goals are collective defence of its members, crisis management and cooperative security through partnerships, based upon maintenance of democratic values in the North Atlantic area.

From political perspective, what is more important, all 29 member states have an equal say, and the Alliance's decisions are taken unanimously by consensus, and its members must respect the values that underpin the Alliance, namely democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. Moreover, NATO is defensive in nature and provides a unique forum for political consultations and decision making on political and military aspects.

The news that Mr. Mircea Geoana, was appointed as deputy NATO Secretary General is an important recognition of Romania's seriousness, involvement in and contribution to both the operational plan to maintain security and stability within the North Atlantic area and beyond, and in political decision making process.

These things considered, at this stage, we have to be proud for Romania's image all over the world and this recognition involves also our human and material loss.

*(Goran Irina, PIA)*

## **7.**



Working in a military unit as a civilian I became more aware of the known and unknown dangers worldwide. Reading more about the security concept, it was underlined that security is taken to be about the pursuit of freedom from threat and the ability of states and societies to maintain their independent identity and their functional integrity against forces of change, which they see as hostile according to Barry Buzan.

When NATO was founded in 1949, it had a clearly defined role, it was an alliance for collective security against the USSR and the Warsaw Pact, based on article 5. In other words, attacking one member of NATO means that all the countries in the alliance will respond. This allows bigger, more powerful countries in the alliance to protect the smaller NATO allies. In turn, smaller nations give NATO better tactical positioning in relationship to potentially adversarial global powers.

NATO protects the Allies' common values of individual liberty, rule of law, the democratic values and the peaceful resolution of disputes and promotes these values throughout the Euro-Atlantic area. It provides a forum in which countries from North America and Europe can consult together on security issues of common concern and take joint action in addressing them.

The future world is filled with known and unknown dangers and NATO can act as a lighthouse in the deep sea of various dangers. It is an ever changing organization, continually pushing for growth, unity and change. Various changes in the world scenario are taking place with the influence of NATO. (*Stan Ana Raluca PIA*)

### **C. AFT STUDENTS**

#### **1.**

I see NATO as a friendship relationship. I think the best way to approach this organization is with this kind of relationship.

Firstly, we are talking about support. NATO supports every member country and shares its experience within the organization. Each country learns from the others and shares something with the other allies, in its turn. It is an exchange at a very large scale.

Secondly, we are talking about commitment. When I learned what the member countries must do for the others once they reach consensus, I thought it is amazing. They must be ready to fight for each and every of the other countries in the alliance and for their people, just to preserve peace and good relations. I think that is formidable.

NATO is friendship. (*Mara Mihai*)

## 2.

NATO, an acronym for The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, is an intergovernmental military alliance between 29 countries. This treaty was formed to balance the need for safety, help and protection between those countries and to ensure peace.

I believe that NATO united and fortified the strength of 29 nations and for this reason every country can benefit from military stability. This Organization has established harmony between states, thus eliminating the subtle threat and the military competition between them. Also, the help that NATO provides gives each nation confidence on their individual power, which contributes to the optimal communication between them.

On the other hand, NATO is a symbol of humanity, of empathy and peace, showing us that the power stays in unity. The treaty provides the basic social needs of every nation, the need to be heard, to be part of the greater good. I strongly believe that Romania has gained a higher status after joining this organization, because it has begun to be part of a system that ensures international peace.

To conclude with, NATO emerged from the need of countries of protection and security, this organization providing benefits to everyone on both a military and a social level. **(Alexandru Radu)**

## 3.

To me, NATO is a shield that protects everyone - not just its members - from war and other atrocities.

At first, this shield was built to protect us from the Russian threat; now, it is much more diverse as it fights terrorism, keeps stability and peace in once war-thorn countries, and tries to prevent conflict all around the world.

Now NATO could mean the future, as it started only as a North Atlantic alliance. Now, there are more and more ideas of bringing countries from other areas of the world, meaning that NATO would become a global alliance. Such an alliance could bring forth a new era of security and peace.

For me, NATO is the future of global military. **(Baraboi Andrei)**

#### D. TEACHERS

For me, as a teacher of English, the significance of Romania's NATO membership meant, first of all, a tremendous professional evolution. In the year 2000 I joined a system that was eagerly bracing up for embarking on the Alliance. And it was doing it wholeheartedly. So I had the enormous privilege to work in an atmosphere suffused with so much yearning to learn about language, attitudes, mentalities and communication peculiarities specific to English-speaking cultures, but also about attitudes of awareness of other cultures. I have been exposed to a myriad of opportunities which enriched my understanding of a world coming in such manifold variety that it cannot but challenge parochial thinking patterns, defeat strongholds of the mind and expand the palette of interpretations of an otherwise endless Universe.

Yes, I admit, I had my moments of panic, when my pacifist nature revolted, and I said to myself, wait, with the sweat of my brow, am I serving the god of war, instead of the God of peace? Too fortunately, in the course of preparing for my 1<sup>st</sup> degree teacher's exam, I ran across Professor John Rassias' call: "*We must learn to speak languages for peace, not for war*<sup>1</sup>". This was, at the time, a true eye-opener for me, since I indeed discovered this feature in everything that happened here, where we were teaching English language and culture: from the contents that we have been teaching and organizing to what we have experienced during the courses in the United States, in which we all teachers participated, and where a lot of emphasis was put on constructing a mentality of mutual understanding between cultures, as a prerequisite for ending wars and preserving peace.

In conclusion, I am grateful to all these circumstances brought into life by NATO for allowing me to access this immense fountain of knowledge, to impart it with as great a number of people as time could fit in, and in whose minds and hearts the same goals reverberated, so that they, in their turn, would be able to bring light into the darkness of a conflictual age. I am grateful for the recognition I received and for the big satisfaction from having learned how to contribute to making this world a better place. (***Teacher Monica Stinghe, Foreign Language Center of the Land Forces, Sibiu***)

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<sup>1</sup><http://media.dartmouth.edu/~pubs/views-rassias.mp3>, accessed June 3, 2019

## Short comments for the e-book

1.

Firstly, being a military law advisor, NATO represents for me *a set of political and military engagements* that Romania, as one of its members, has to obey and apply. *(Costin Balea)*

2.

*Romania sends troops in theaters of operations*, as a NATO member, to comply with international commitments, but being a NATO state also means that *we benefit from the protection offered by the Alliance*. *(Costin Balea)*

3.

The unity, peace and security of every nation is paramount and, therefore, all *nations should strive to ensure that in all circumstances, peace prevails*. Signing of more agreements or pacts like NATO should be implemented so as *to foster peace and security among nations*. *(Cerbu Vasile)*

4.

*NATO is friendship*. *(Mara Mihai)*

5.

Nato has become the ultimate judge assuming that *the need for peace is always justified by the threat of war*. *(Anghel Stefan)*

6.

For me, this is the essence of NATO: *not being afraid to show your weakness, in order to become stronger, with the help of your allies, while serving a greater purpose than your own*. *(Ingrid Marin)*

7.

Many leaders have different opinions on handling things, especially when it comes to preserving peace which involves *money spending*, so it is very likely for NATO to get weakened from within because of the lack of sufficient funding from all its members. But I consider *it should only be about understanding the power of partnership, and the reciprocal nature of its bonds, in an alliance that stands for something far bigger than paying your dues on time*. *(Ingrid Marin)*

8.

For me, NATO is the future of global military. (**Andrei Baraboi**)

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In my opinion, NATO is the most important organization in the world. For me, as a Romanian Army officer, *NATO is not only a purpose to train better every day, but also the reason why I sleep peacefully every night, because I know my country is protected.* (**Rares Tablet**)

**10**

For me NATO is at, the same time, *a powerful organization which protects my country and the main way in which peace is maintained in the world.* (**Rares Tablet**)

11

I believe that NATO united and fortified the strength of 29 nations and for this reason every country can benefit from military stability. This Organization has established harmony between states, thus eliminating the subtle threat and the military competition between them. Also, the help that NATO provides gives each nation confidence on their individual power, which contributes to the optimal communication between them. (**Alexandru Radu**)

12.

In a world where peace is fragile, it is very important for me to know that there is someone who cares about my safety and the peace of others. It is important to know that today and tomorrow, we and our children can live in PEACE without knowing terror or war. But for peace to be in the world, there must be NATO, a powerful organization that can always ensure and keep it. NATO gives me the security of a good and prosperous world for us and our children. (**Monica Panoiu**)

**13.**

NATO is the most important Alliance in the history of mankind that maintains peace at global level, and fights to overcome possible conflicts in the world. (**Piele Cosmin**)

14.

For me, as a military, I must respect NATO's principles and decisions. I can participate in the missions within the alliance and, if necessary, I will go where I'm ordered to. Some missions and activities of the alliance allowed me to develop my professional training. I hope that

NATO will bring benefits to the world and maintain peace and collaboration among countries. (*Ioan Virca*)

15.

I can say that in my view, *NATO is the strongest and most powerful world power that we can unconditionally rely on*. Maybe the most important fact for me is the “*collective defence*”, the principle that the alliance is built on, because *I am sure that if any country tries to attack my country there is someone who will defend us*. (*Luiza Ulmet*)

16.

In my opinion it is a good idea to be part of such an alliance because we are not a big country and also we don't have a strong and well equipped army. But when you are part of this alliance, of course there are advantages and disadvantages. It's good to be protected but it's not easy when you have to go to protect a country. Another good thing for our military is that we are forced to improve our equipments such us radio stations, trucks or weapons. Also the accommodation is improved in the bootcamps, the type of multinational exercises with NATO soldiers as we have to be at a high level.

17.

In my opinion, NATO means freedom and security and I think these are the main purposes of it, *to maintain or to create freedom where it needs and to sustain security* and when I say security I mean the security of all of its members and partners and, why not, *soon to all the people on this planet*.

Firstly, you can understand NATO's mission by taking a look to its values and, for me, the most important are freedom, peace and stability and democracy. Through these values we can simply understand NATO's mission and *I'm very thankful that my country is taking part in the biggest alliance on the planet*. (*Paul Buzas*)

18.

Both as an individual and as a military person, living in a NATO member country makes me feel more secure, since you know you are part of an alliance in which the members are "all for one, one for all. (*Negrea Ioan*)

19.

Each NATO member country shares its individual cultural entity enriched with a feeling of solidarity, as well as with the responsibilities and benefits given by the membership in this

alliance. To conclude, I would that where many powers work together, the enemy has no chance of success. **(Negrea Ioan)**

**20.**

Joining NATO, was one of the best decisions made by Romanian leadership in the country's recent history. **(Chirtop Vlad)**

21.

As military personnel in the Romanian army, which has been a member of the alliance since 2004, I consider this commitment as especially important for both the defense and development of our country. **(Chirtop Vlad)**

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Personally, NATO has proved for me to be an effective military framework that has allowed me to see a different world in Afghanistan and to interact with a variety of allies and partners that have helped me improve my work skills and leadership style. **(Puiu Alexandru)**

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***Romania has been a reliable partner to the allied forces in numerous peacekeeping operations and not only.*** As a member of the alliance, any country has more enhanced security and, implicitly, stability, as membership brings with it duties and responsibilities related to defending each other if it is the case. ***As a result, the citizens of any NATO member country, Romanians too, have an extra protection shield – the Alliance.*** **(Basil – Muntean Busuioc)**

24.

My first contact with NATO was 22 years ago when I was part of a mission in Bosnia under the command of the Alliance. It was an unusual experience for me at the time because it was actually the first time I had seen some of the technique of other armies. After this experience, our country had a better relationship with the Alliance, reaching now a stage when the Alliance cannot be thought of without Romania as its member. **(Blagu Mihai)**

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Being a NATO member country we should have more confidence in the security of our country and in the capability of the alliance to defend us in case we need such a thing. **(Filipiuc George)**

