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### **CSTO and its collective security strategy**

During the annual summit of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) - a post-Soviet security bloc lead by Russia - the heads of the member states (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Armenia) adopted the organization's collective security strategy for the period until 2025.

In the document, CSTO members highlight the priorities of the organization, mainly the focus on the cooperation with other international organizations to react against new challenges and threats, in order to maintain peace and stability as well as ensuring global security. Following this approach, CSTO established a crisis response centre and a unified list of terror organizations.

It appears evident that CSTO would like to obtain the international recognition as a regional multilateral security organization, especially by the NATO which has always refused to consider the Russian-led organization as a reliable security partner in Afghanistan and Central Asia. In spite of the shared goal to ensure security in Afghanistan, preventing the spread of a dangerous condition of instability in the region, a potential cooperation between CSTO and NATO in the security field appears currently unrealistic, considering that CSTO has always achieved the goal to contain the western influence in the post-soviet space. Moreover, during a meeting in last September CSTO Secretary General Nikolay Bordyuzha had talks with United Nations officials in order to progressively involve CSTO peacekeepers in UN peacekeeping operations.

The creation of a crisis response centre is aimed to coordinate initiatives in order to deal with frequent tensions and crisis involving CSTO member states, also allowing an efficient deployment of the CSTO Rapid Reaction Forces (which were created in 2009, even if Moscow announced again their creation in 2015) in the post-Soviet space. However, the domain of potential intervention

appears limited due to the fact that, according to the Treaty on Collective Security, CSTO is not designed to deal with internal security issues or conflicts between member-states, but the organization will provide military assistance to its member states only in the case of an external aggression (article 4). The complexity of the post-Soviet security architecture is pushing Russia to take on the role of security provider, involving regional countries in a multilateral framework of cooperation, which should be enlarged to other international actors (UN, NATO, China).

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