

The Future of NATO's Nuclear Deterrent: The New Strategic Concept and the 2010 NPT Review Conference - A Workshop Report -

by David S. Yost¹



Workshop Report

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From 28 February to 2 March 2010 the NATO Defense College hosted a workshop on the future of NATO's nuclear deterrence policies in light of the Alliance's ongoing Strategic Concept review and the May 2010 NPT Review Conference.² The workshop panels examined NATO deterrence challenges to 2020, the implications for NATO of "deep cuts" and "global zero," Article 5 and the NATO Strategic Concept, the 2010 NPT Review Conference, and NATO deterrence strategy "over the horizon." The main points raised in the discussions were as follows:

- Several policy considerations point toward continuity in the Alliance's Strategic Concept with reference to nuclear deterrence. The Allies may dedicate more attention in the next Strategic Concept to nonproliferation and arms control and disarmament than in the current Strategic Concept, published in 1999; but participants agreed that the Article 5 mutual defense commitment in the North Atlantic Treaty will remain central to Alliance security.

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² The principal sponsors were the NATO Defense College and the U.S. Defense Threat Reduction Agency. The workshop was organized in coordination with the Nuclear Policy Directorate at NATO HQ. The workshop participants included members of the Nuclear Planning Group Staff Group, senior NATO staff officials, members of national delegations to NATO, national foreign and defense ministry representatives, and policy analysis experts. The nearly 80 participants included representatives of 20 of the 28 NATO member nations.

- The Alliance’s nuclear-sharing arrangements, based on U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe and U.S. and allied dual-capable aircraft, were challenged by some participants as no longer necessary, but firmly endorsed by other participants. The latter participants — including several from Turkey and Eastern Europe — saw a compelling case for maintaining this element of the Alliance’s overall nuclear deterrence posture.
- Reconciling nuclear disarmament aspirations with extended nuclear deterrence, including the Alliance’s nuclear deterrence posture in Europe, presents a continuing challenge. Some participants expressed concern that nuclear disarmament aspirations could create pressures for near-term decisions with far-reaching political, strategic, and psychological effects, notably with respect to the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe. Others stated that NATO needs to strongly support nonproliferation, arms control, and disarmament, and that this is consistent with the Alliance’s nuclear deterrence policy.
- The NATO Allies have multiple interests in promoting nuclear nonproliferation and the success of the May 2010 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). These include upholding the legality and legitimacy of NATO nuclear-sharing policies as well as the record of the Alliance and its three nuclear-armed members in compliance with Article VI of the NPT. The Allies are also interested in strengthening the effectiveness of the NPT regime, notably with respect to Articles III, IV, and X.
- The shortcomings and potential fragility of the non-proliferation regime have led NATO Allies to reaffirm the importance of the Alliance’s nuclear deterrence posture in relation to regional powers armed with (or seeking) weapons of mass destruction.
- The NATO Allies are divided in their assessments of Russian policy trends and in their prescriptions for dealing with Russia.
- The NATO Allies recognize the growing importance for their security of China’s increasing military and nu-

clear capabilities and of Asia-Pacific security trends, but the participants in this workshop drew few inferences for NATO policy other than taking note of these trends.

The following report elaborates on these key conclusions.

KEY INSIGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Several policy considerations point toward continuity in the Alliance’s Strategic Concept with reference to nuclear deterrence. The Allies may dedicate more attention in the next Strategic Concept to nonproliferation and arms control and disarmament than in the current Strategic Concept, published in 1999; but participants agreed that the Article 5 mutual defense commitment in the North Atlantic Treaty will remain central to Alliance security.

While recognizing the importance of new security challenges, workshop participants saw no requirement to revise the definition of Article 5 in the new Strategic Concept in order to encompass new challenges such as cyber warfare or energy security. They also supported retaining many of the essential principles dealing with nuclear deterrence. While the participants favored more systematic assessments of new security challenges, including whether and to what extent military and nuclear capabilities are relevant to dealing with them, they clearly did not rule out the continuing requirement for the Alliance to be prepared to deal with “old threats” of coercion and aggression.

An American participant said that the Allies should be “careful about rewriting or reinterpreting Article 5 on the grounds that the current language — for example, its specific mention of ‘armed attack’ — is somehow inadequate to capture potential 21st century security threats such as cyber attack or the manipulation of energy supplies for political purposes.” His view that the existing treaty language “gives the Allies all the flexibility they need to invoke a decision to act collectively” was generally endorsed by the workshop participants. An Estonian participant said that defining the “Article 5 threat spectrum” in “detailed

and specific” terms “might lead to a situation where some challenge that is perceived by a member state as existential has nonetheless remained out of the enumeration of threats potentially invoking Article 5.” Nuclear deterrence has little or no role with regard to new threats such as cyber warfare, some participants said; but they agreed that it remains an essential element of the Alliance’s security posture.

Several participants said that principles such as burden-sharing, upholding nuclear deterrence, maintaining the transatlantic link, and providing for allied participation matter both for alliance cohesion and deterrence; and that these principles are likely to be included in the new Strategic Concept.

An American participant said that the arrangements based on U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe and U.S. and allied dual-capable aircraft constitute a form of burden-sharing in the nuclear deterrence mission that could not easily be replaced. Three measures might be considered, he suggested, to enhance burden-sharing in the absence of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe: a more integrated NATO Response Force, with common funding and organic airlift; a multinational high-alert fighter wing; and integrated ballistic missile defenses based on the Standard Missile 3 interceptor and other systems proposed by the Obama administration. Even if these measures could be instituted, however, it is clear that they would not have the unique political and strategic significance of nuclear sharing in the Alliance’s deterrence posture.

A French participant suggested six criteria for consideration in debating and drafting the elements of the new Strategic Concept dealing with nuclear deterrence: (1) The posture must deter potential adversaries. (2) The posture must not undermine relations with non-adversaries. (3) The posture must reassure Allies. (4) The posture must be acceptable to allied publics. (5) The posture should entail no net loss for the objective of non-proliferation. (6)

The posture should maintain “a common culture of deterrence” in NATO. Moreover, he said, while missile defenses will never provide a complete substitute for nuclear deterrence, their importance for deterrence — including extended deterrence — appears likely to grow.

A British participant said that, despite the support for “no first use” or “sole purpose” pledges in non-governmental organizations, there does not seem to be “any great interest” in such concepts in NATO governments. It is therefore unlikely that the Alliance will rule out response options by making such a pledge. The Allies may in this regard retain language similar to that in the 1999 Strategic Concept: “The fundamental purpose of the nuclear forces of the Allies is political: to preserve peace and prevent coercion and any kind of war. They will continue to fulfil an essential role by ensuring uncertainty in the mind of any aggressor about the nature of the Allies’ response to military aggression. They demonstrate that aggression of any kind is not a rational option.”³

Another British participant said, “At some level this debate is about the European political class and its willingness to lead public opinion, resist activism and demonstrations, and build support around policies which produce the most stability.” In his view, advocating the removal of the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons from Europe would “further shift the burden of responsibility, and spending, to the Americans, because Europeans find it distasteful to think about the strategic realities behind their fortunate security. . . Ethically, are Europeans entitled to continue with ‘moral burden shedding’?”

The Alliance’s nuclear-sharing arrangements, based on U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe and U.S. and allied dual-capable aircraft, were challenged by some participants as no longer necessary, but firmly endorsed by other participants. The latter participants — including several from Turkey and Eastern Europe — saw a compelling case for maintaining this element of the Alliance’s overall nuclear deterrence posture.

³ North Atlantic Council, Strategic Concept, 24 April 1999, par. 62, available at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_27433.htm

Since the 1950s, U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe have furnished the practical basis for burden-sharing and meaningful consultations among the Allies about NATO's nuclear deterrence policy.⁴ Several workshop participants said that the presence of nuclear as well as conventional U.S. forces in Europe will remain vital to NATO's security and the preservation of peace. In their view, dual-capable aircraft (DCA) from multiple Allies make possible a demonstration of collective resolve that could be of critical importance for successful crisis management, even though — as the 1999 Strategic Concept noted — “The circumstances in which any use of nuclear weapons might have to be contemplated . . . are . . . extremely remote.”⁵

Moreover, the Alliance's long-standing habits of cooperation and consultations in the nuclear domain would not have the same significance without the nuclear-sharing arrangements based on U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe. Workshop participants from across the Alliance, including from member nations such as the Baltic states, the Czech Republic, Germany, Poland, and the United Kingdom, described maintaining U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe as “absolutely pertinent.”

An Italian participant noted that Russia has a “considerable” number of nuclear weapons based in Europe, and that any change in NATO's nuclear deterrence posture would raise questions that would have to be answered “in a convincing way.”

Some participants noted that the “basing countries,” also known as the DCA countries, which host U.S. nuclear weapons and dual-capable aircraft and provide DCA of their own, feel “less exposed” to threats than do some of the new Allies.

An American participant said that NATO's arrangements have involved “a genuine shared ownership of the benefits, the burdens and the risks of extended deterrence,” owing to the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe and Allied “nuclear delivery systems and to the establishment of collective consultation and planning arrangements, a situation particular to NATO, without anything equivalent existing among the United States' Pacific region allies.” As a result, any move away from this arrangement would “immediately raise core issues regarding NATO's identity in both its transatlantic and collective dimensions.” It would be a mistake, he said, to consider nuclear-sharing “in a vacuum,” as if it could be separated from other aspects of the NATO collective defense, deterrence, and crisis management posture.

A German participant said that, aside from their deterrent value and potential operational significance in a crisis, U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe are “of the utmost symbolic importance” as a means for burden-sharing and as a demonstration of the seriousness of the U.S. commitment to Alliance security. Some politicians in Germany are motivated, he added, by calculations of what policy direction would please public opinion, which is predominantly hostile to all things nuclear, including reactors for generating electricity.

A Polish participant said, “We were very unhappy with the three no's when the Founding Act was signed,” because it implied “a secondary membership for some Allies.” Another Pole said that the NATO-Russia Founding Act language implied “an unequal security status” for Poland and the other new Allies. At a minimum, he said, the Allies should uphold the commitment in the NATO-Russia Founding Act not to change NATO's nuclear deterrence posture,⁶ and ensure that the new Allies have equality in contingency

⁴ As some workshop participants noted, NATO's deterrence posture includes elements other than nuclear forces, such as conventional military capabilities, missile defenses, and consequence management assets.

⁵ North Atlantic Council, Strategic Concept, 24 April 1999, par. 64.

⁶ “The member States of NATO reiterate that they have no intention, no plan and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members, nor any need to change any aspect of NATO's nuclear posture or nuclear policy — and do not foresee any future need to do so.” Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, Paris, 27 May 1997, available at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_25468.htm



planning and infrastructure for collective defense.

An American participant said that the historical strengths of NATO's deterrence posture have included retaining multiple options and reserving the right to make use of them as necessary. That is, the Allies have not ruled out options by making "no first use" or "sole purpose" pledges, and they have refused to be pinned down on what they might do in hypothetical scenarios.⁷

Some participants discerned a divide among the European Allies. With regard to the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe, a British participant said, "it is entirely possible that it might not matter if they were withdrawn — for some nations and for some time. But, equally, it's impossible to dismiss the possibilities of severe political impact elsewhere on other nations, newer in membership and closer to the edge of the Alliance. It simply cannot make sense to insist that, psychologically, there would be no impact, when everything we've heard here, plus the public diplomatic positions of Poland and the Baltic States, argues that people in those countries feel profoundly differently." An American participant pointed out that there is continuing support for the current nuclear deterrence posture in governments across the Alliance, and not only in Eastern Europe and Turkey.

Another British participant said that removing the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe would not bring about the Alliance's collapse, but it could have consequences for alliance cohesion and solidarity. Referring to the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe, he said, "If people think they're important, they're important."

An American participant noted that the arguments for removing the weapons rule out entirely what cannot be fully

excluded: the possibility that a contingency could arise in which the Alliance's possession of a multinational nuclear deterrent posture could be relevant for successful crisis management and deterrence. These arguments also overstate the "opportunity costs" and financial investments required to maintain the Alliance's nuclear deterrence posture. According to the Report of the Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management, the cost of maintaining U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe is "low and worth paying" as the price of an Alliance deterrent with transatlantic risk- and responsibility-sharing.⁸

An Estonian participant said that for his country protection via U.S. extended deterrence was "the main reason to join the Alliance." His government understands, he said, that extended deterrence should not be equated with the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe; but Estonian experts and officials "do not like the idea of removing them" because it could create widespread "perceptions" of a U.S. abandonment of the defense of Europe. Before the Alliance thinks of removing the U.S. nuclear weapons, it should first answer a number of questions: Above all, what kinds of measures, if any, could fill the gap created by the withdrawal of the U.S. weapons? What mechanisms and structures could replace what would be removed? How exactly would the removal of the weapons contribute to NATO's security? All the Allies are interested, he concluded, in maintaining the transatlantic link and the U.S. security commitment in Europe.

Reconciling nuclear disarmament aspirations with extended nuclear deterrence, including the Alliance's nuclear deterrence posture in Europe, presents a continuing challenge. Some participants expressed concern that nuclear disarmament aspirations could create pressures for near-term decisions with far re-

⁷ As an example of how NATO communicated uncertainty as to its potential responses during the Cold War, he cited a West German policy statement: "The initial tactical use of nuclear weapons must be timed as late as possible but as early as necessary, which is to say that the doctrine of Forward Defence must retain its validity, the conventional forces of the defender must not be exhausted, and incalculability must be sustained so far as the attacker is concerned." *White Paper 1975/1976: The Security of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Development of the Federal Armed Forces* (Bonn: Press and Information Office of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, 1975), p. 20, par. 38.

⁸ James R. Schlesinger, chairman, *Report of the Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management, Phase II: Review of the DoD Nuclear Mission* (Arlington, VA: Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management, December 2008), p. 60. This report is available at <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/PhaseIIReportFinal.pdf>

aching political, strategic, and psychological effects, notably with respect to the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe. Others stated that NATO needs to strongly support nonproliferation, arms control, and disarmament, and that this is consistent with the Alliance's nuclear deterrence policy.

In his April 2009 speech in Prague, President Obama reaffirmed long-standing U.S. policies. While expressing “clearly and with conviction America’s commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons,” he reaffirmed the commitment of the United States to maintain extended nuclear deterrence protection for its allies. “As long as these [nuclear] weapons exist, the United States will maintain a safe, secure and effective arsenal to deter any adversary, and guarantee that defense to our allies.”⁹ President Obama presented the objectives of pursuing disarmament while maintaining deterrence as coherent and consistent policy goals, and made no reference to U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe.

An Italian participant said that President Obama’s Prague speech had nonetheless created “a profound impression” in Europe and had placed political pressure on the U.S. nuclear weapons presence in Europe. As a result, he said, NATO policy has to take into account the aspiration for nuclear force reductions and disarmament with an ambitious arms control agenda, including the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty.

A Czech participant deplored the February 2010 proposal by the foreign ministers of five NATO countries to discuss what NATO could do to advance the goal of nuclear disarmament.¹⁰ He said that this proposal could be seen as a “problematic” initiative to remove U.S. nuclear weapons

from Europe “without reciprocation or attention to the strategic context of Russia and Iran.” In his view, the U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe constitute “a vital demonstration of U.S. commitment,” and it is not clear what measures could “offset the losses” for Alliance security that would be inherent in a removal of these weapons.

A German participant said that both the statement by the five foreign ministers and the October 2009 coalition agreement of the new CDU/CSU-FDP government in Berlin could “backfire” and fail to achieve their intended objective.¹¹ The coalition government’s ostensible objective in advocating the removal of U.S. nuclear weapons from Germany is — like that of the five foreign ministers — to contribute to disarmament and nonproliferation by sending the following message to the NPT Review Conference: NATO is reducing its reliance on nuclear weapons. In practice, however, when all the Allies — including those in Eastern Europe and Turkey — examine the implications of the initiative for deterrence and alliance cohesion, the result may be a reaffirmation of the importance of nuclear deterrence in the Alliance’s strategy and force posture. Other participants saw no inconsistency between the Alliance’s ongoing reduction in reliance on nuclear weapons and the continuing need for a nuclear deterrence posture based in part on U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe.

A German participant said that “global zero” advocacy “is bringing out the worst in European politics: it serves as a convenient alibi for politicians to argue for the withdrawal of certain weapons — without any reference to Alliance concerns, military-operational issues, or the emerging strategic environment.” If the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe were withdrawn, he said, NATO would “lose much of its ‘nuclear culture’” and the political cohe-

⁹ Remarks by President Barack Obama, Prague, Czech Republic, 5 April 2009, available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-By-President-Barack-Obama-In-Prague-As-Delivered/

¹⁰ The foreign ministers of Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Norway sent the letter to the NATO Secretary General on 26 February 2010. The letter is available at the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands: <http://www.minbuza.nl/dsresource?obje ctid=buzabeheer:200281&type=org>

¹¹ The key sentence in the coalition agreement might be translated as follows: “In this context, and in the drafting of a new NATO Strategic Concept, we will engage within the Alliance, as well as across the table with the American Allies, such that the remaining nuclear weapons in Germany are removed.” “In diesem Zusammenhang sowie im Zuge der Ausarbeitung eines strategischen Konzeptes der NATO werden wir uns im Bündnis sowie gegenüber den amerikanischen Verbündeten dafür einsetzen, dass die in Deutschland verbliebenen Atomwaffen abgezogen werden.” *Wachstum.Bildung.Zusammenhalt: Koalitionsvertrag zwischen CDU, CSU und FDP*, 17 Legislaturperiode, 26 Oktober 2009, p. 120.

sion that is derived from maintaining a multinational nuclear deterrence posture; and the three nuclear-armed Allies would come under “moral pressure” from the rest of the Allies to disarm, with “a corrosive effect both on transatlantic and intra-European relations.” The withdrawal of the U.S. weapons would, however, have “zero” positive effect on non-proliferation or nuclear disarmament.

A French participant said that expressing interest in abolition undermines the legitimacy of nuclear deterrence and thereby erodes extended deterrence and assurance. In his view, advocates of a “lead by example” approach to nuclear disarmament are “living in an ivory tower.” Deterrence remains, he said, one of the advantages of keeping U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe: “The Russians must not think that there is zero nuclear risk if they do something in their neighborhood.”

An American participant said that U.S. and NATO declaratory policy must simultaneously communicate two messages: “Policy must reassure both that nuclear deterrence will continue as long as existential threats remain, and that the aim is to create conditions to eliminate such existential threats, including nuclear weapons.” The cause of nuclear disarmament could be advanced, he said, by strengthening non-nuclear forms of extended deterrence, including conventional military capabilities. In his judgment, “Almost all realistic threats to allies would not be of a scale that would in fact justify or prompt the U.S. actually to use nuclear weapons.”

Another American challenged this view and said that this argument “breaks down” the logic of extended deterrence, and that it would be “catastrophic” if the United States implied that it was not prepared to take nuclear risks if necessary to defend a NATO ally.

The NATO Allies have multiple interests in promoting nuclear nonproliferation and the success of the May 2010 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). These include upholding the legality and legitimacy of NATO nuclear-sharing policies as well as the record of the Alliance and its three nuclear-armed members in compliance with Article VI of the NPT. The Allies are also interested in strengthening the effectiveness of the NPT regime, notably with respect to Articles III, IV, and X.

A German participant said that the NATO Allies should have long ago initiated formal consultations on their positions in anticipation of the upcoming Review Conference. The NATO Allies have never established a “NATO caucus,” however, or made any effort to coordinate their positions at NPT Review Conferences. They have only prepared fact sheets about the Alliance’s policies, in order to be able to respond promptly to misinformation.

Although the United States and its NATO Allies made their nuclear-sharing policy clear at the time the NPT was concluded (and the policy was accepted by the Soviet Union and other parties to the treaty at the time),¹² some critics hold that the policy is inconsistent with the non-transfer principles in Articles I and II of the NPT. The Allies counter this argument by pointing out that in peacetime the weapons are under the direct positive control of the United States in highly secure storage sites, and would not be transferred to NATO Allies except in time of war, when the NPT would no longer apply.¹³ Some governments may propose amending the NPT to make it applicable in wartime, but the treaty amendment process would be protracted and difficult and would raise the risk of weakening the NPT regime through additional amendments. The

¹² Moscow seems to have accepted NATO nuclear-sharing arrangements, including the NATO Nuclear Planning Group and the bilateral programs of cooperation involving the United States and non-nuclear-weapon-state NATO Allies, as consistent with the NPT because of U.S. assurances that these arrangements would not enable the Federal Republic of Germany to become a nuclear power.

¹³ The U.S. Secretary of State wrote at the time to the President, “It does not deal with arrangements for deployment of nuclear weapons within allied territory as these do not involve any transfer of nuclear weapons or control over them unless and until a decision were made to go to war, at which time the treaty would no longer be controlling.” “Report by Secretary of State [Dean] Rusk to President [Lyndon] Johnson on the Nonproliferation Treaty, July 2, 1968,” in U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *Documents on Disarmament, 1968* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1969), p. 478.

approval of such an amendment proposal at the Review Conference is therefore unlikely.

Despite the significant reductions in British, French, and U.S. nuclear forces since the end of the Cold War (and the drastic reductions in U.S. nuclear forces in Europe), proponents of nuclear disarmament will probably also criticize NATO's three nuclear weapon states and the Alliance as a whole for what disarmament advocates regard as insufficient progress in meeting the requirements of Article VI of the NPT: "Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control." Article VI has long been a rather contentious issue in NPT diplomacy, but it has become more politically divisive since the end of the Cold War. Some disarmament advocates argue that non-nuclear-weapon state parties to the treaty may seek nuclear weapons unless the NPT-recognized nuclear-weapon states (Britain, China, France, Russia, and the United States) set a positive example by undertaking more ambitious efforts consistent with Article VI. Other proponents of disarmament see a link between further progress on Article VI and the prospects for increased cooperation on strengthening the nonproliferation regime. Russia and the United States have negotiated a follow-on to the START Treaty, while China is the only NPT-recognized nuclear-weapon state engaged in expanding its nuclear arsenal.¹⁴

Some governments regard the Principles and Objectives agreed at the 1995 Review Conference and the Thirteen Steps listed at the 2000 Review Conference as "commitments," whereas others regard them as "targets." The distinction is to a great extent moot for the Alliance. All NATO governments support the ratification of the Com-

prehensive Test Ban Treaty and its entry into force, as well as the initiation of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty. China, Iran, and Pakistan are blocking discussions on an FMCT, not the United States or any of the other NATO Allies.

NATO's stake in the NPT Review Conference extends to positive goals in addition to being prepared to respond to criticisms that the Allies may encounter. An American participant noted that the Allies have an interest in measures designed to strengthen the NPT regime. It would be advantageous, for example, to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of IAEA safeguards, including efforts to obtain universal acceptance of the Additional Protocol as the new standard for safeguards;¹⁵ to fully utilize all existing safeguards, including special inspections; and to consider the possible need for new authorities. It is important to ensure that Article IV, particularly with regard to the right "to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes," is implemented in a manner fully consistent with Articles I and II of the Treaty. A practical priority in this regard is meaningful progress on promoting new fuel cycle approaches that limit the spread of indigenous enrichment and reprocessing capabilities. Finally, there is a need to obtain agreement on an interpretation of Article X that limits a state's ability to withdraw from the treaty without suffering any consequences.

The NPT Review Conference, a British participant said, offers an example of "dysfunctional multilateralism." It is inherently difficult to reach agreement on a consensus final document in plenary sessions involving 150 or more states. While the media would present a consensus final document as a success, it is not clear whether such an agreement would in fact make a difference to the effectiveness of the NPT regime.

¹⁴ See *National Security and Nuclear Weapons in the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: U.S. Secretary of Energy and U.S. Secretary of Defense, September 2008), pp. 1, 6-7, available at <http://www.defense.gov/news/nuclearweaponspolicy.pdf>. For a discussion of the expansion and modernization of China's nuclear forces, see *Annual Report to Congress, Military Power of the People's Republic of China* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2009), pp. 24-25, available at http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/China_Military_Power_Report_2009.pdf

¹⁵ The Additional Protocol is a legal instrument that supplements existing safeguards and grants the IAEA expanded rights of access and inspection concerning declared and undeclared sites and activities. For background, see "IAEA Safeguards Overview: Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and Additional Protocols," available at http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Factsheets/English/sg_overview.html

The shortcomings and potential fragility of the non-proliferation regime have led NATO Allies to reaffirm the importance of the Alliance's nuclear deterrence posture in relation to regional powers armed with (or seeking) weapons of mass destruction.

The NPT regime has been placed into question most recently by Iran, which has violated safeguards and IAEA and UN Security Council requirements with impunity. It would nonetheless not be easy to isolate Iran at the NPT Review Conference. When the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency voted in November 2009 to express concern over Iran's having built a uranium enrichment facility at Qom in violation of its obligations and to call on Iran to confirm that it has not authorized construction of any other undeclared nuclear facilities, three countries (Cuba, Malaysia and Venezuela) supported Iran and six (Afghanistan, Brazil, Egypt, Pakistan, South Africa and Turkey) abstained.¹⁶

Other important proliferation challenges include North Korea and Syria. North Korea withdrew from the NPT without penalty. The Pyongyang regime sees the country's de facto status as a nuclear-weapon state as a guarantee of survival, and it is therefore unlikely to abandon it. Syria has stonewalled recent IAEA requests for answers about its activities. Both cases show, as an American participant put it, the "failure of compliance and enforcement mechanisms."

An American participant noted that the 1999 Strategic Concept included a reference to the Alliance's "forces" — presumably including its nuclear forces — "detering the use of NBC [nuclear, biological, and chemical] weapons."¹⁷

A Turkish participant said that the Turks had been concerned about a weakening of Article 5 after the end of

the Cold War, and have been pleased to see that the new Allies admitted since 1999 have revived its central importance. Despite having some sympathy for proposals for a Middle East free of nuclear weapons, the Turkish government would oppose the withdrawal of U.S. nuclear weapons, and not only because of their "symbolic" value. Turkey is not interested in seeking nuclear weapons of its own, and would prefer to rely on continued U.S. extended nuclear deterrence guarantees and firmer enforcement of nonproliferation safeguards and associated measures, such as export controls. U.S. extended deterrence, based in part on U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe, has been a major source of assurance and restraint for Turkey. However, owing in part to efforts to cultivate a more positive relationship with Iran and to manage the high level of anti-American sentiment in Turkey since the Iraq war, the Turkish government has been cautious about expressing its continuing support for U.S. nuclear deterrence protection through NATO.

A British participant said that he had reached similar conclusions on the basis of his interviews with Turkish officials and experts. That is, owing in part to Turkish concerns about the Iranian situation, now would be "the wrong time" to withdraw U.S. nuclear weapons from Europe.

The NATO Allies are divided in their assessments of Russian policy trends and in their prescriptions for dealing with Russia.

Western European Allies are more likely to draw attention to errors in U.S. and NATO policy in dealing with Russia, and to support steps intended to promote arms control and disarmament, such as reducing or eliminating the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons presence in Europe. Eastern European Allies tend to emphasize threatening aspects of Russian behavior and to call for continuity in maintain-

¹⁶ Mark Heinrich, "IAEA votes to censure Iran over nuclear cover-up," Reuters, 27 November 2009, available at <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE5AQ1BZ20091127>. The Malaysian government subsequently dismissed the delegate who had cast the vote supporting Iran and said that he had disregarded his instructions. Mark Heinrich, "Malaysia dismisses IAEA envoy after Iran atomic vote," Reuters, 9 February 2010, available at <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE61856820100209>

¹⁷ North Atlantic Council, Strategic Concept, 24 April 1999, par. 41.



ning and strengthening the Alliance's nuclear deterrence posture, including the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe. Some workshop participants warned against overstating these differences among the Allies, because all the Allies are interested in carrying forward relations with Russia in a positive way.

Several workshop participants noted that Russia has for years been engaged in modernizing its nuclear forces and has also shown a willingness to employ energy resources and cyber capabilities for political intimidation and coercion. An American participant said that the Allies need to balance close cooperation with Russia and the requirements of deterrence. Beyond this general principle of balance, differences among the workshop participants concerning Russia policy stood out.

A Polish participant described the idea of withdrawing the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons from Europe as "incredibly dangerous" on two grounds: the need for the Alliance to maintain its political cohesion and the imperative for NATO to retain an "in kind" capability in Europe to deter Russia. He noted that Russian military doctrine has recently reaffirmed the importance of nuclear weapons, and said that removing the U.S. nuclear weapons would put an end to "one of the pillars of the Alliance" — meaningful consultations and exercises about U.S. extended deterrence commitments. He asked, "Who outside France or Britain would believe in their extended deterrence?"

A German participant said that all the Allies should be concerned with assuring the newer Allies of the "reliability of protection" through NATO, but should take care to "avoid an anti-Russia focus" in engaging in contingency planning for all Allies. The challenge in the new Strategic

Concept, as with the Harmel Report in 1967, will be to find the appropriate balance between deterrence and defense, on the one hand, and dialogue and openness to cooperation, on the other. In current circumstances, these have often been summed up as the "reset" and "reassurance" tasks — that is, reestablishing positive relations with Russia while assuring the newer Allies of the dependability of NATO's collective defense commitments.

An Estonian participant said that the divergence in views among the NATO Allies on relations with Russia should not be overstated. The new Allies are all interested in carrying forward relations with Moscow in a positive way and strongly support the NATO Secretary General's initiative for a NATO-Russia Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges.

A British participant noted that Russia's February 2010 military doctrine gives NATO "top billing" among external dangers,¹⁸ and that Moscow has repeatedly affirmed a policy of not ruling out the preemptive use of nuclear weapons.¹⁹ The difficulties in relations with Russia, he said, include "the conspiratorial view of more or less everything" taken by Russian leaders and the assumption that the country deserves more recognition and deference as a great power on the basis of its history, resources, and territorial extent. Many Russians regard the NATO enlargement process as threatening and foresee the emergence of threats to what they deem legitimate Russian claims in other areas. Many Russians, he said, consider a sphere of influence in the Arctic "rightful compensation for the loss of Eastern Europe." An American added that it is difficult to discern an "end point" for the current trajectory of Russian truculence, and that the Alliance may witness "even bigger 'Zapad' exercises [involving Russian

¹⁸ The first of the "main external military dangers" listed in Russia's new military doctrine is NATO's "desire to endow the force potential of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) with global functions carried out in violation of the norms of international law and to move the military infrastructure of NATO member countries closer to the borders of the Russian Federation, including by expanding the bloc." See "The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation" approved by Russian Federation presidential edict on 5 February 2010, Official website of the Russian Federation president; URL: <http://kremlin.ru/>, English translation at OpenSource.gov, CEP20100208042001

¹⁹ In October 2009, Nikolai Patrushev, the head of the Russian Security Council, said, "In situations critical for national security, a nuclear strike, including a pre-emptive one, against an aggressor is not ruled out." Patrushev interview in *Izvestia*, reported by RIA Novosti, 14 October 2009, available at <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20091014/156461160.html> (accessed 15 February 2010).

nuclear forces] and more unease in Russia's immediate neighbors" in Europe.²⁰

Moreover, another British participant said, NATO Europe's placid "acceptance of the theater nuclear imbalance could change if, sometime in the future, the Russians, deliberately or unsystematically, decided to raise the salience of that category of weapons," perhaps with "well-publicized and photographed Zapad exercises, explicitly featuring early nuclear release."

A Polish participant said that the United States and the Alliance have recently modified their missile defense plans and effectively halted the NATO enlargement process as concerns Georgia and Ukraine. In his view, "a process of endless appeasement" could lead to "Finlandization," as the term was used during the Cold War to describe the exceptional status of Finland in relation to the Soviet Union. Allies in central and eastern Europe are, he said, uncertain about the reliability of NATO commitments and concerned about the risk that some Allies might purchase security at their expense.

A British participant said that some Western European Allies are "keen to demonstrate movement on arms control and disarmament." At the same time, another British participant added, some officials and experts in allied governments are wary of initiating an arms control negotiation with Russia about non-strategic nuclear weapons because this would tie the level of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe to Russia, when the rationale for these weapons is not

linked solely to hypothetical Russian contingencies (and, by the same token, the Russians have grounds for maintaining non-strategic weapons other than NATO). Moreover, an actual negotiation with Russia could limit NATO's latitude, subject the Alliance to Russian negotiating tactics calculated to divide the Allies, pose great verification difficulties, and raise modernization requirements. The "enormous stockpile" of non-strategic nuclear weapons in Russia nonetheless makes it "hard," he concluded, for NATO to simply withdraw its weapons in the non-strategic category. The likelihood of the Russian government undertaking reductions in its non-strategic weapons or even agreeing to discuss them in any detail with the United States or NATO is remote.²¹

An American participant noted that if the U.S. nuclear weapons presence were withdrawn from Europe unilaterally, the Russians would have fewer incentives to accept any negotiated measures affecting their non-strategic weapons, including any verification or transparency regime. The assumption of some disarmament advocates that withdrawing the remaining U.S. weapons from Europe would encourage the Russians to eliminate or substantially reduce their large holdings of non-strategic nuclear forces appears to be based on an excessively sanguine view of Moscow's readiness to undertake action in this respect. As the Congressional Commission noted, Moscow has not complied with the 1991-1992 pledges by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and Russian President Boris Yeltsin to eliminate and reduce certain types of non-strategic nuclear forces.²²

²⁰ See, for example, Matthew Day, "Russia 'Simulates' Nuclear Attack on Poland," *The Daily Telegraph*, 1 November 2009, available at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/poland/6480227/Russia-simulates-nuclear-attack-on-Poland.html>

²¹ According to the U.S. Congressional Commission, "Some allies located near Russia believe that U.S. non-strategic forces in Europe are essential to prevent nuclear coercion by Moscow and indeed that modernized U.S./NATO forces are essential for restoring a sense of balance in the face of Russia's nuclear renewal. . . [B]alance does not exist in non-strategic nuclear forces, where Russia enjoys a sizeable numerical advantage. As noted above, it stores thousands of these weapons in apparent support of possible military operations west of the Urals. The United States deploys a small fraction of that number in support of nuclear sharing agreements in NATO. . . . Strict U.S.-Russian equivalence in NSNF numbers is unnecessary. But the current imbalance is stark and worrisome to some U.S. allies in Central Europe. If and as reductions continue in the number of operationally deployed strategic nuclear weapons, this imbalance will become more apparent and allies less assured." *America's Strategic Posture: The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States*, William J. Perry, Chairman, and James R. Schlesinger, Vice-Chairman (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2009), pp. 20-21, available at http://www.usip.org/strategic_posture/final.html

²² In the words of the Congressional Commission, Russia "is no longer in compliance with its PNI [Presidential Nuclear Initiative] commitments." *America's Strategic Posture: The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States*, p. 13. For background on Russia's PNI commitments regarding this broad category of nuclear forces, see David S. Yost, "Russia's Non-Strategic Nuclear Forces," *International Affairs*, vol. 77 (July 2001), pp. 531-551.

A German participant said that the NATO Allies have “some reason for self-criticism” in the deterioration of relations with Russia — for instance, failing to “cushion” the NATO enlargement process in deference to Russian sensitivities, pursuing a missile defense plan that Moscow considered threatening, and walking out of the NATO-Russia Council over the Georgia-Russia war. The Allies must nonetheless, he said, “present clear demands to Russia,” asking the Russians to renounce “passportism” (that is, distributing Russian passports in neighboring countries) and to recognize how their interpretations of history make their neighbors “nervous.”

A British participant said that the relevance of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe for deterrence is not self-evident, but cannot be ruled out. In his words, “if there can be such disagreement over the utility of NATO theater nuclear systems between experts from overlapping backgrounds with similar intellectual reference points, then we should not easily conclude that we know how any potential aggressor would ‘obviously’ regard, or disregard, them.” It is indisputable that Moscow has taken U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe seriously since the 1950s and has never ceased to demand their removal.²³

The NATO Allies recognize the growing importance for their security of China’s increasing military and nuclear capabilities and of Asia-Pacific security trends, but the participants in this workshop drew few inferences for NATO policy other than taking note of these trends.

An American participant drew attention to “the implications for NATO of having to help deter, prevent or terminate a large-scale conflict in Asia, among Asian powers, possibly involving the use by them of nuclear weapons.” Determining what these implications might be requires careful examination.

A German participant said that NATO’s nuclear deterrence posture may be a source of stability and peaceful change in conjunction with the rise of major powers in Asia, and that there would be no need for the Alliance to modify its “to whom it may concern” doctrine.

Another German participant noted that China is increasing its nuclear forces in conjunction with an expansion of its regional and global power projection assets. The upsurge in Chinese military capabilities, nuclear and conventional, has already raised questions in Australia, Japan, South Korea and other countries in the Asia-Pacific region about the long-term reliability of U.S. extended deterrence. China’s increasing military potential is likely to attract more U.S. political attention and greater U.S. military investments in the region. As a result, the United States may well expect its NATO European Allies to backfill for U.S. forces diverted from Europe or the Middle East to the Asia-Pacific region, and to be prepared to contribute to operations in this region. The NATO Allies will therefore, he concluded, need to recognize the changing balance of power in the world beyond the Euro-Atlantic region and take note of this in the new Strategic Concept.²⁴

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The participants generally agreed that the workshop was helpful in clarifying issues and renewing ties between the policy and analytical communities. A future workshop may address issues associated with the implementation of the new Strategic Concept to be published in November 2010.

²³ For a discussion of the history of U.S. extended deterrence in the NATO Alliance, see David S. Yost, “Assurance and US Extended Deterrence in NATO”, *International Affairs*, vol. 85, no. 4 (July 2009), pp. 755-780.

²⁴ For background on these issues, see Stephan Frühling and Benjamin Schreer, “NATO’s New Strategic Concept and US Commitments in the Asia-Pacific”, *RUSI Journal*, vol. 154, no. 5 (October 2009), pp. 98-103.