

# STRATEGIC INSIGHTS

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Winter 2011

## North Atlantic Treaty Organization

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*Strategic Insights* is a quarterly online journal published by the Center on Contemporary Conflict, Department of National Security Affairs, Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

We publish scholarly articles as well as viewpoints that address issues of current interest to the makers and executors of US national security policy. We are particularly interested in articles addressing homeland security, WMD/WME proliferation, regional conflict, and the contemporary role of US security forces. The journal seeks articles that will make our readers think, generate discussion, and gain new insight into the challenges and opportunities confronting US policymakers and military operators. Views that run counter to the conventional wisdom or official US government policy are welcomed.

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## About the Cover

The cover on this edition of *Strategic Insights* features the NATO sigil overlaid with Leonardo da Vinci's *Vitruvian Man*. The original *Vitruvian Man* was designed by the Roman architect Vitruvius in an attempt to define artistic proportions for the human body. Da Vinci made adjustments to Vitruvius's proportions, making them more accurate. Specifically, da Vinci realized that the circle and square that outline the limits of the man's limbs do not have the same center: the center of the circle is the man's navel, while the center of the square is somewhat lower.

Here, the Vitruvian man stretches his arms to find the extent of his reach, just as NATO today is debating the extent of its mission. His arms reach in many directions, representing the many directions NATO has taken in its various operations around the world. The rays of the NATO star radiate from the center of the man, as the shared goals of the Alliance radiate from a shared history. Even so, the man does not occupy the center of the world; rather, he is a small part of a bigger world, to which he extends his hand.

# Foreword

## Winter 2011: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

### *Editors*

Since the end of the Cold War 20 years ago, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has sought new roles in the world while facing existential questions about its purposes. The Allies have provided some answers to those questions in the 2010 Strategic Concept and other fundamental policy statements, and the Alliance has enlarged to include twelve new member-states—mostly from the former Warsaw Pact—and has conducted missions in Europe, Africa, and Central Asia. Despite an active military and diplomatic agenda, NATO continues to grapple with foundational questions.

This issue begins with arguments regarding the future of NATO, one from Stanley R. Sloan and another from Julian Lindley-French, both keynote speakers at the workshop on deterrence held in Tallinn, Estonia, in May 2011, and co-sponsored by NATO and the U.S. Defense Threat Reduction Agency. Mr. Sloan argues that the debate about strategic matters neglects a crucial problem facing NATO, namely, perceived gaps in commitment and investment between the United States and the European Allies. Americans often see themselves as paying for the defense of European countries that are unwilling to defend themselves or even help the United States protect its interests. Meanwhile, there is a perception in Europe that the United States is using NATO to pursue its own interests at European expense. Mr. Sloan argues that these viewpoints must be addressed, or they will hinder NATO's pursuit of its political goals. Mr. Lindley-French examines similar questions from another angle. While NATO excels at grand strategy and tactical cooperation in its various missions, it has, he argues, neglected its foundation: the coordination of national defense policies to ensure a cohesive alliance.

Brendan Wilson examines the arguments of American critics who see European countries as “freeloaders” in the Alliance, arguing that while their military budgets may not measure up to US defense spending, they contribute more than their fair share according to their size. In addition, European member states also offer capabilities that complement those of the United States, freeing America to devote its resources elsewhere.

Following the argument of complementary capabilities, Glenn Segell examines how NATO air support contributed to the conduct of the African Union mission in Darfur, and how such cooperation with a regional organization outside Europe established a template for NATO's intervention in Libya. His article provides a rare examination of the Alliance's activities in Africa.

Continuing on the theme of peacekeeping and stability operations, Ivan Ivanov examines how countries aspiring to NATO membership have increased their commitment to international operations as they have deepened their relationships with NATO. However, the aspirations of these countries—and thus their participation in NATO-led operations—are constrained by domestic politics, unresolved disputes with their neighbors, and the willingness of current members to accept them as Allies.

From here, we return to the issue of cooperation between member-states, as Richard Weitz examines some of the formal institutional constraints and opportunities facing the Alliance.

Finally, we look at NATO through the lens of the European Union, an international institution that shares many of its members with NATO. Andreas Winter and David Anderson examine the military provisions of the EU's new Lisbon Treaty and consider whether they complement, duplicate, or conflict with the way member states work with NATO. While there is some potential for redundancy or competition, they find that the EU's new military efforts largely complement its members' commitments to NATO.

Through the course of the seven articles presented in this issue, our authors cover common territory from many directions, providing a multifaceted view of a complex alliance and its role in the world today. The editors hope that readers will see NATO in a new light after reading this issue.

# NATO's Deterrence Review

## Strategic Fiddling while Rome Burns?<sup>1</sup>

*Stanley R. Sloan*

In May 2011, American and European experts on NATO deterrence issues met in Tallinn, Estonia, to consider and help inform the review of NATO's deterrence strategy as mandated by NATO leaders in the November 2010 "Lisbon Summit Declaration."<sup>2</sup> As a keynote speaker at this conference, I discussed the broader political context that will influence the production and implementation of any revised NATO deterrence strategy—specifically, whether or not recent developments in the United States and Europe raised fundamental questions about how well today's alliance serves US and European interests. The big question, I suggested, is whether or not a review of NATO deterrence strategy amounts to strategic fiddling while Rome burns.

This provocative question must be considered by anyone who has been a strong supporter of the transatlantic alliance for many decades. Throughout NATO's history its strategists have faced a dilemma: they can devise intricate deterrence formulas that are intellectually rigorous and logically constructed, but perhaps politically irrelevant—or that at least take insufficient account of the seemingly irrational world of political realities.

Today, the future of the transatlantic security relationship rests less on complex deterrence formulas and decisions, for example, about whether or not to continue deploy US nuclear weapons in Europe, and more on the perceptions of mutual trust and shared interests held on both sides of the Atlantic. NATO must address these perceptions if any strategic concept is to move forward.

### Strategic Fiddling

Thirty years ago, the principal political dilemma facing NATO was the deployment of Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) missiles. According to the strategic wisdom of the time, the goal was to hold Soviet targets at risk with nuclear delivery systems deployed on European soil, thereby reinforcing the credibility of the strategic link with Europe through the US nuclear guarantee. In the words of Lynn Davis, an architect of the "dual-track" decision in 1979 to deploy US intermediate range missiles in Europe while trying to negotiate limits on those systems: "NATO governments argued that the capability to strike the Soviet Union with systems based on land in Western Europe was necessary in order to convey to the Soviet Union a real sense of risk from any aggression on the continent, and that only a new generation of INF missiles could provide such an assured capability."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This essay is based on the text of a keynote presentation made to the conference on "Adapting NATO's Deterrence Posture" in Tallinn, Estonia on May 5, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> North Atlantic Council, Lisbon Summit Declaration, 20 November 2010, par. 30, available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_68828.htm?mode=pressrelease](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_68828.htm?mode=pressrelease)

<sup>3</sup> Lynn Davis, "Lessons of the INF Treaty," *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1988 (Accessed at [www.foreignaffairs.com](http://www.foreignaffairs.com)).

The public debate, however, tended to be dominated by less esoteric arguments. Americans who favored the deployments saw them as necessary simply to “balance” the Soviet deployments of SS-20 missiles. European opponents, many of whom took to the streets to protest in large numbers, believed the deployments would increase the danger of nuclear war on European soil, rather than deter it. On the other hand, some American opponents asked why the United States should be taking on such a major new commitment when the Europeans seemed unappreciative and free-riding. In such discussions, the true strategic rationale of the dual track decision got lost, especially when the 1987 INF Treaty eliminated all intermediate-range US and Soviet nuclear-armed ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles. This accord, negotiated by US President Ronald Reagan’s administration, was hailed as a major breakthrough in East-West arms control. The accord surprised many who had suspected the sincerity of the administration’s arms control efforts. Davis suggested that the accord resulted when the Soviet Union surprisingly agreed to eliminate all intermediate-range systems, calling what Davis saw as the administration’s “zero option” bluff.<sup>4</sup>

The treaty, ironically, was inconsistent with the supposed linkage rationale of the original deployment decision. The view of some at the time was that elimination of all weapons in this range would leave the Soviet Union with serious military advantages in Central Europe and with Europeans still questioning the credibility of the US strategic nuclear guarantee. However, in the long run the INF Treaty proved a positive development at the dawn of revolutionary changes in Europe; factors other than sophisticated strategic theories frequently determine final outcomes in such matters. Arguing that some long range missiles should be kept in Europe for the sake of extended deterrence would have been a non-starter politically when the whole class of weapons could be eliminated. When, a few short years later, the Warsaw Pact disbanded and the Soviet Union disintegrated, the treaty seemed a logical prelude to the European revolutions.

### **Mutual Transatlantic Perceptions and Misperceptions**

Times have changed, but perhaps some basic realities have not. On the Eastern shores of the Atlantic, some Europeans ask why they should spend lives and fortune on America’s war in Afghanistan. Many Europeans believe the United States mishandled the Afghan mission by going into Iraq and thus compromising the contributions other NATO members made in the Afghan theater. In addition, Europeans do not like to invest in defenses against threats they see as conjured up by the United States; they are even skeptical of the threat assessments produced by the European Union’s foreign and defense policy system. Such views are shaping new policy approaches among European powers, particularly in the cases of Germany, the United Kingdom, and France. Now that Osama Bin Laden has been killed, the questioning on both sides of the Atlantic has grown.

Germany’s domestic politics can be seen from across the Atlantic as forcing Berlin toward a reduced commitment not only to NATO but also to the European Union’s Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP). A lot of this, it could be argued, comes down to simple populist economics. Germans want to preserve the high standard of living that most of them enjoy. Removing Gaddafi from power and fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan have little relevance to their economic goals. On the other hand, their trade and energy relationship with Russia looks like something that will improve Germany’s economy and the quality of life of Germans. The antagonistic Russian attitude toward NATO could damage these goals.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Stephen Szabo, a leading American expert on Germany, has noted that “...while Germany is crucial to any Western policy consensus on Russia, there are real differences in interests, cultures, and approaches between Berlin and Washington, which could lead to dangerous divisions if not handled well. There is a real danger that without a common approach, Germany could increasingly play the role of mediator between Russia and the United States.”<sup>5</sup> Such a posture would be a radical departure from over 60 years of close cooperation between Germany and the United States on NATO diplomacy with Russia.

Germany’s evolving relationship with Russia could raise the question of whether or not it wants a US-financed deterrent against Russian power, as well as whether the United States will wish to provide such a deterrent in the future. Such declining cooperation between two of NATO’s major powers would worry Estonia and its Baltic neighbors, which are more exposed to Russian power, but this concern is not shared everywhere in Europe.

At the other end of the spectrum, France and Great Britain have recently advanced their bilateral military cooperation,<sup>6</sup> which will enhance their role within the Alliance. For example, they now have leveraged their newfound cooperation into effective international activism in support of removing Gaddafi from power. However, even this success has revealed limitations on their ability to perform such missions: much like the United States, they have voiced frustration that other European countries were not willing or able to do more to support their efforts. After the mission turned out to be much more demanding than expected, they also complained that US reticence was to blame for NATO’s shortcomings. In the process, both Paris and London discovered some of the questionable benefits of leadership that the United States knows all too well. The United States has often been “damned if it did and damned if it didn’t” provide strong leadership for the alliance. Now the French and British have experienced both the highs and lows of taking a strong leadership position.

On the Western shores of the Atlantic, Americans ask why the United States should deploy expensive missile defense systems to defend Europe, when Europeans themselves are unwilling to make serious efforts on behalf of their own defense. Faced with a large and growing deficit, some Members of Congress – both on the left wing of the Democratic Party and among Tea Party Republicans – look at NATO commitments as a prime target for spending cuts. For some, the difficulties of the Libyan mission have only underscored their arguments.

One American commentator, Lawrence F. Kaplan, criticized the Obama administration’s leaving Libya to the Europeans, saying that “someone on the Obama team ought to have inquired about European capabilities – that is, whether the Europeans can do this or, more to the point, [can do] anything at all?”<sup>7</sup> Kaplan quoted French expert Bruno Tertrais as saying that Libya demonstrated

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<sup>5</sup> Interview with Stephen F. Szabo, atlantic-community.org, June 16, 2011 (Accessed at: [http://www.atlantic-community.org/index/items/view/Dr. Stephen F. Szabo, Executive Director of the Transatlantic Academy](http://www.atlantic-community.org/index/items/view/Dr._Stephen_F._Szabo,_Executive_Director_of_the_Transatlantic_Academy).)

<sup>6</sup> John F. Burns, “British Military Expands Links to French Ally,” *The New York Times*, November 2, 2010 (Accessed at <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/03/world/europe/03britain.html>).

<sup>7</sup> Lawrence Kaplan, “Open Wide, How Libya revealed the huge gap between U.S. and European military might,” *The New Republic*, April 26, 2011 (Accessed at: <http://www.tnr.com/article/crossings/87377/libya-nato-military-power-europe-us>).

that Europe has “no ability to achieve a common political vision and no capacity to take on an operation of this kind.”<sup>8</sup>

It may be true that NATO’s problems in managing the anti-Gaddafi mission are in large part due to fact that the United States took a back seat in the operation. However, President Obama was simply applying the lessons the United States had learned from the past decade of US-led military operations: get an international mandate; do not put the United States in the position of attacking another Muslim country; try to get allies to do as much of the grunt work as possible; and keep US boots off the ground. President Obama also was responding to the message he heard from the American people: tend to our own problems; let the world take care of itself.

Unfortunately, when the administration said it was turning leadership of the mission over to NATO, it helped perpetuate a long-standing flawed view of the alliance: many Americans regard NATO as simply meaning “those damned Europeans,” while at the same time, many Europeans look at the alliance as “those damned Americans.”

### **Importance of the Political Environment for Strategy**

All of this leads to the following question: In this kind of environment, how viable is any deterrence strategy that depends on US generosity, manpower, and weapons systems for its credibility? This question is particularly relevant for extended deterrence. Most Americans don’t understand or buy into the argument that many have made about the need to station troops in Europe to ensure that we can build effective military coalitions through NATO.

Arguments about the need to keep the alliance active and viable for building habits of cooperation and interoperability look to many Americans like “inside baseball,” or a concentration on the obscure details of the relationship – this, at a time, when many Americans think Europeans have become self-satisfied, soft, and increasingly disrespectful of their American cousins.

American governments have had to deal with burden-sharing concerns from the beginning of the alliance. In the late 1940s, the US Congress wanted Germany and Spain to be significant contributors to the alliance in spite of continental concerns at the time about Germany’s recent past and Spain’s authoritarian regime.

In the middle of the Cold War, Senator Mike Mansfield argued that the only way Europeans would take responsibility for their own defense would be to pull US troops out of Europe. The essence of his argument still resonates with Americans who maintain that European countries have fallen into a culture of defense dependence and need to be shocked out of it by the United States leaving European defense to the European Union. One NATO expert put it this way in a recent exchange: “the only way the Europeans will be incentivized is if they know we won't always be there for them.”

Of course, those who hope that CSDP can replace NATO must have had at least a few second thoughts after the discord over Libya. Such doubts have likely grown with the current issue facing

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.



the European common currency and the political fractures from electoral earthquakes—like the most recent tremors in Finland, where elections revealed rising anti-EU sentiment.<sup>9</sup>

However, it seems clear that developing a deterrence doctrine that is as politically credible as it is strategically sound requires thorough consideration of the transatlantic world in which it is being prepared. At the very least, policymakers need to consider how to structure and sell any deterrence regime to skeptical publics and deliberative bodies on both sides of the Atlantic. The credibility of deterrence will depend on showing how the strategy responds to contemporary political perceptions and realities.

### Questions for Consideration

In constructing a sound and politically acceptable deterrence doctrine, policymakers should consider the following questions. Further review of NATO deterrence may reveal other questions to consider.

- Will revisions to the deterrence strategy include sufficient burden-sharing components to satisfy the United States, while being marketable in Europe? Can the American people be convinced that NATO deterrence strategy is intended to serve American interests, not just to protect those “damned Europeans?”
- What does missile defense in Europe have to do with American security?
- Moreover, if the US does not extend deterrence to its allies, would that create a less demanding and therefore less expensive strategic environment for US defense programs?
- Would the presence or absence of a credible NATO Article V mutual defense commitment affect how European states respond to a serious crisis?
- Will the strategy be credible in terms of threat perceptions? Will it respond to the sometimes differing views Americans and Europeans have of their vital interests?
- Will it be vulnerable to accusations that threats are being manufactured, or at least exaggerated? Can Europeans be convinced that NATO deterrence strategy is based on European as well as American assessments of the threats it intends to deter?
- How will the strategy reconcile the apparent logical disconnect between continued reliance on the threat to use nuclear weapons even against non-nuclear attacks, and the supposed goal of eliminating all nuclear weapons?
- How will the strategy respond to arguments that crises can better be avoided through non-military means, through the more effective use of diplomacy and other soft power tools?

The audience at the Tallinn review conference was not immediately prepared to consider all these questions. One American participant confided that some of the Europeans present had asked whether perceptions of NATO in the United States were really as bad as I had suggested. She

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<sup>9</sup> Jussi Rosendahl, “Anti-Euro Anti-euro populists surge in Finnish election,” *Reuters*, April 17, 2011 (Accessed at <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,3117086,00.html>).

confirmed to them that my message reflected serious trends in political and strategic thought in the United States.

## The Gates Warning

If the Europeans in the audience needed any further confirmation, it was provided by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates in his valedictory address to a Brussels audience not long before his scheduled retirement from government service.<sup>10</sup> In previous talks (for example at the 2008 Munich Security Conference), Gates had issued warnings about inadequate European contributions to the alliance. At that meeting, Gates cautioned that "A few allies in NATO shouldn't have the luxury to decide only for stabilization and civilian operations, thereby forcing other allies to bear a disproportionate share of fighting and dying.... We must not, we cannot, become a two-tiered alliance of those who are willing to fight and those who are not. Such a development, with all its implications for collective security, would effectively destroy the alliance."<sup>11</sup>

Gates saved his most penetrating points for last, however. In Brussels, home to NATO headquarters, Gates acknowledged that, under current economic and political circumstances, the allies were not likely to increase defense spending to strengthen European contributions to the alliance. However, he pressed for more effective contributions, arguing that "to avoid the very real possibility of collective military irrelevance, member nations must examine new approaches to boosting combat capabilities—in procurement, in training, in logistics, in sustainment."<sup>12</sup>

The warning that was in the headlines almost immediately, however, was stark. Gates concluded his frank talk by observing "...if current trends in the decline of European defense capabilities are not halted and reversed, future U.S. political leaders—those for whom the Cold War was not the formative experience that it was for me—may not consider the return on America's investment in NATO worth the cost."

Gates continued:

"What I've sketched out is the real possibility for a dim, if not dismal future for the transatlantic alliance. Such a future is possible, but not inevitable. The good news is that the members of NATO—individually, and collectively—have it well within their means to halt and reverse these trends, and instead produce a very different future:

- By making a serious effort to protect defense budgets from being further gutted in the next round of austerity measures;
- By better allocating (and coordinating) the resources we do have; and

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<sup>10</sup> The Gates message was absolutely no conspiracy with this author in spite of the fact that we shared neighboring offices as Deputy National Intelligence Officers in 1974.

<sup>11</sup> "Gates Presses Europeans to Back Afghan Mission," Deutsche Welle, September 2, 2008 (Accessed at <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,3117086,00.html>).

<sup>12</sup> Robert Gates, "NATO's Future," Department of Defense Transcript as published by *The Wall Street Journal*, June 10, 2011. (Accessed at <http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2011/06/10/transcript-of-defense-secretary-gates-speech-on-natos-future/>).

- By following through on commitments to the alliance and to each other.”<sup>13</sup>

The headlines and editorials that followed elaborated and, unsurprisingly, distorted the Secretary’s message. The most common mistake was to turn the Gates warning into a prediction, without the careful qualifiers in his text. However, the shot across the bow was warranted, and with far more impact than I could have expected in my cautionary note in Tallinn.

### **Implications for Transatlantic Relations<sup>14</sup>**

The American response to the Gates speech has been impressive across the political spectrum. Everyone knows that the alliance is by no means a perfect arrangement, and that free-riding is an unfortunate but unavoidable consequence of cooperation between large and smaller powers.

Yet, in spite of all the criticism, there has been a notable shortage of credible proposals for US strategic options other than remaining in close cooperation with its European allies. The United States and its allies certainly need to strengthen the alliance. One way to do so would be to put more emphasis on cooperation in nonmilitary responses to security challenges while encouraging the Europeans to take their military commitments more seriously.

But if the United States tries shock therapy, as some advocates suggest, it might not get the hoped-for results. Individual NATO members might opt to make their own deals—some with other EU members, some with the United States, some with Russia, and so on. Another possibility is that a united Europe might emerge, designed to compete against rather than cooperate with the United States. There are enough uncertainties to suggest that America would be better off trying to improve and strengthen the alliance than dump or devalue it.

When searching for alternatives to NATO, Americans should take a look around the world and ask what other countries would be as willing and able as the European members of NATO to contribute to international security in alliance with the United States. The US faces security challenges in Asia, and has allies in Asia willing to contribute to global security, but there is virtually no potential for an organized alliance there to help the US deal with them. This does not mean that NATO should take on responsibility for Asian security, simply that it is the only viable framework for coordinated military responses to global security challenges, and one with which willing Asian democracies can associate, as they have in Afghanistan.

Before consigning NATO to the scrap heap of history, Americans should consider what they would put in its place and whether it would serve US interests as well. Meanwhile, European governments need to ask themselves if they want to encourage continued US support for the alliance, and, if so, what they are prepared to do to earn it.

The bottom line in all of this is that successful deterrence rests uneasily on perceptions: the perceptions of potential adversaries to be deterred, and of those allies intended to be reassured.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Some of the arguments in the following paragraphs first appeared in: Stanley R. Sloan, “Counterpoint: In Defense of NATO,” *International Herald Tribune/Global New York Times*, June 28, 2011 (Accessed at <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/29/opinion/29iht-edsloan28.html>).

Perhaps even more important are the perceptions of the providers of extended deterrence, in this case the United States—perceptions that the benefits are worth the risks and costs of providing reassurance.

It is important to remember that the strategic rationales are solid and logically defensible. The credibility of threats and reassurances is affected by whether or not the defense forces and systems are in place, or planned, to implement the chosen strategy. However, whether or not allies still base their policies and actions on a sense of shared values and interests provides the backbone of any NATO-wide deterrence strategy, as well as the credibility of the threats as seen by adversaries.

Today, the Libya mission has raised new questions on top of those already provoked by Afghanistan. The idea that NATO must be relevant to challenges beyond Article V and collective defense blossomed out of the American debate about NATO's future a few decades ago. It now has been accepted as gospel, most recently in the Lisbon strategic concept.

However, there are serious questions about whether the commitment means anything in terms of American and European attitudes and investments. Such questions about transatlantic commitments should be kept fully in mind as allied representatives discuss the inside workings of deterrence strategy, its relevance to the strategic environment in which we live today, and the one we expect to see in years to come.

### **About the Author**

Stanley R. Sloan is Director of the Atlantic Community Initiative, Visiting Scholar at Middlebury College and author, most recently, of *Permanent Alliance? NATO and the Transatlantic Bargain from Truman to Obama* (2010).

# Rebuilding the Acropolis

## Putting the Strategic Back into a Hollow NATO

*Julian Lindley-French*

### Introduction

An acropolis is a city or part of a city that is fortified, normally dominating a high point to afford furthest vision and maximum defense. Since 1949 NATO has been the acropolis of the West. However, a failure to properly invest in the Alliance could lead in time to obsolescence. Strategic shock, such as another 9/11 or a state conflict on Europe's periphery that demands a rapid Alliance response, could lead NATO to fail. It is precisely at such moments when the gap between strategic judgment, the willingness of states to invest in defense, and the capabilities available to armed forces is at its widest that alliances should serve as a force multiplier to narrow the gap. The opposite seems to be happening: states are losing faith in the Alliance, making the gap even wider.

If NATO is to survive as a credible military alliance it is therefore necessary to look beyond Afghanistan to consider strategy in the round as well as NATO's true role and purpose in meeting those challenges. To that end, this paper assesses NATO from three strategic perspectives: nuclear deterrence; the balance between security and defense; and the relationship between strategy and austerity.

For much of the world the Alliance remains the military grouping *par excellence*. NATO is constructed around the experience gained since 1949 of working together. The Alliance's so-called military interoperability standards are a 'product' and a world-beating one at that, enabling coalitions to embark on complex operations without having to reinvent the command and control wheel every time. Many partners benefited from those structures in Afghanistan and over Libya and, if used correctly, such structures could place NATO at the heart of a powerful, albeit informal, network of world stabilizing defense relationships. However, if left to wither, the impact will be disastrous, not only on Euro-Atlantic security but that of the wider world.

While NATO does a relatively good job coordinating on low-level issues (such as tactical co-operation on operations) and on the broad gamut of high-level politics, such as the drafting of strategic concepts, Alliance performance on what might be termed mid-level issues, such as pooling of equipment, specialization of national forces, common funding, and force development is lamentable. In the absence of these key components of a twenty-first century NATO defense posture, the Alliance will become progressively hollowed-out, forced to do ever more with ever less.

It is the nature of politics to cite any particular moment as pivotal. However, as the US withdraws from Iraq and prepares to leave Afghanistan, and with much of Europe mired deep in debt, the assumptions upon which the transatlantic relationship rests are being challenged. In the United States there is a widespread belief that Europeans are imposing the costs of their defense on the US taxpayer. In Europe there is a countervailing popular belief that the US sees Europeans as cannon fodder for America's global ambitions and wishes to instrumentalize NATO to just such an end.

Given the pressures on the two pillars of the Alliance—the US and Europe—is a sustainable and enduring transatlantic bargain still possible and what would it look like? Would any European government faced with the Eurozone crisis be willing to consider taking on a heavier defense

burden within NATO if it reduced American influence? With the possible exception of France, the answer would appear to be no. In fact, whilst most Europeans might grumble about US policy, they seem content to let the US carry much of the burden—Europe’s leading power Germany being a case in point, which will shortly announce a cut of up to 10% in its armed forces. Equally, the US will want and frankly need the support of its allies in its global mission as the price of a continuing American commitment, but it is hard now to see from where such support would come from within the Alliance and what meaningful role would NATO play.

NATO now faces a 1949 rather than a 1989 moment. As America considers its role in protecting the global commons on land, at sea, in the air and space, it must also consider to what extent it is willing to rely on its European allies for this global mission. The ‘mix’ that NATO must find, therefore, necessarily concerns a new balance to be struck between Alliance protection on the one hand and on the other, US-led projection on what will by its very nature be a much bigger strategic stage than the Eurocentric focus of much of NATO’s past. NATO’s purpose is not only to deter any and all threats via both conventional and nuclear means, but also to help shape the strategic environment in which the alliance must operate. To that end, NATO has no reason to exist other than to serve the strategic security and defense needs of its members. To meet that criterion the Alliance must remain relevant to today’s challenges which in this age of globalization and proliferation can no longer be confined to one neat geographical space. Specifically, in addition to ensuring the stability of Europe, Europeans need to help keep the US strong in Asia and the Middle East. NATO should be seen in that light.

### **An Uncertain Strategic Future**

The fundamental challenge that NATO faces is that, for all the eloquence of the 2010 Strategic Concept and the ‘success’ in Libya, the Alliance remains divided and uncertain.<sup>1</sup> For this reason, some believe the United States is losing interest in NATO. Put simply, as security and defense have become globalized, the Alliance has failed to evolve from being a regional defensive organization to the strategic tool for global influence that its members need if they are to collectively establish the shared strategic vision upon which defense expenditures can be justified.

To that end, NATO leaders should focus on making the Alliance a global interoperability hub, with NATO acting as an ideas exchange for the modernization and integration of the European forces that are able to reach out to partners in the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific. It is NATO’s role as the incubator of military interoperability standards that is NATO’s unique selling point.

Consequently, the failure to establish a global context for critical NATO missions makes the 2010 Strategic Concept more of a wish list than a strategy. Indeed, collective defense, crisis management, and co-operative security as laid out in the Concept do not capture the nature and scope of the systemic change that has taken place since the 1999 Strategic Concept. Critically, the Strategic Concept remains Euro-regional in ambition. If a new balance between credible protection and force projection is not struck, an already outmoded, hollowed-out, and bureaucratic NATO will get in the way of security, not provide it.

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<sup>1</sup> The NATO Strategic Concept was agreed at the Lisbon Summit on 20 November, 2010. Entitled “Active Engagement, Modern Defence” the Concept established NATO’s three core missions over the next decade; collective defence, crisis management and co-operative security.

The lack of a shared strategic planning concept prevents NATO from establishing a sound framework for future force development even though the Alliance claims to be examining the new security agenda, undertaking a deterrence and defense posture review, and seeking to reform the Alliance command structure. Therefore, if NATO is to remain credible in a hyper-competitive, hyper-connected world, Alliance leaders must confront the world as it is, not as short-term political calculations deem it to be. Too often Europeans have chosen to ignore such realities and have instead retreated ever deeper into isolationism, using fortress NATO and the empty bureaucratism of the European Union (EU) as political cover for irresolution. The 26 October 2011 Euro Summit Statement called for further economic integration and eventual fiscal union as a first step towards resolving the Eurozone debt crisis could well exacerbate rather than ease these trends.

The consequence of such strategic dissonance is seen at every level of Alliance strategy. Led by Germany, several NATO member nations are lessening their commitment to cooperative nuclear deterrence and collective nuclear defense while at the same time weakening their conventional forces. Yet beyond Europe's borders is a growing nuclear renaissance with a potential for more states to acquire nuclear weapons, with Iran posing the most notable and pressing challenge. Moreover, Russia's future political posture and defense orientation remains unclear. Moscow has committed to a 3% increase in its defense budget for 2011 and many of its actions, such as bomber sorties across Europe and the deployment of new short-range missile systems, when taken together with stated Russian concerns over the modernization of NATO's collective defense architecture, suggest a future relationship that could well be fractious.

## **A New Nuclear NATO?**

Although many Europeans, after having lived for so long with the specter of nuclear destruction, now find it hard to face the contemporary nuclear reality, deterring new nuclear powers will be part of NATO's future strategy. NATO has always been a nuclear alliance, and with Europe's conventional forces in steep decline, NATO's nuclear arsenal is likely to become more important, not less so. The imbalance between conventional forces was exactly why the Alliance stuck firmly to its 'first use' nuclear policy during the Cold War when there was a profound imbalance between Soviet and Alliance conventional forces. For all the progress made in the February 2011 New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) between Russia and the United States, nuclear weapons remain a fact of strategic life, particularly short and intermediate range weapons. There is no reason to believe that will change any time soon. In early September 2011 the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) drew attention to Iran's renewed efforts to construct a nuclear weapon system at Qom.<sup>2</sup> More could well follow.

Nuclear technology is now over seventy years old, and its associated missile technology of a similar vintage. Many emerging global and regional powers aspire to such technological expertise both for reasons of prestige and deterrence, as well as for its peaceful benefits. While the 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) has held up remarkably well, evidence of proliferation is clear; nine states now possess nuclear weapons in 2011, compared with five in 1968. Moreover, globalization makes it

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<sup>2</sup> On 2 September, 2011 a leaked IAEA report suggested that Iran had not stopped its enrichment activities and had moved much of the programme to hardened bunkers near the city of Qom. The report also cited "new information related to the development of a nuclear payload for a missile." See "Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement and relevant provisions of Security Council resolutions in the Islamic Republic of Iran: IAEA, Report by the Director General, 2 September, 2011. [http://isis-online.org/uploads/isis-reports/documents/IAEA\\_Iran.2Sept2011.pdf](http://isis-online.org/uploads/isis-reports/documents/IAEA_Iran.2Sept2011.pdf)

easier for poorer countries to obtain advanced technology and manufacturing equipment, and to deal with more sophisticated illicit networks to develop nuclear capabilities.

The reality of proliferation, but the difficulty of quantifying it, suggests that transatlantic tensions could well become focused on the search for agreement on what constitutes minimum deterrence. Two points of view have developed between the three NATO nuclear powers on the one hand and Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Norway on the other.<sup>3</sup> The latter five NATO members have been pressing since 2010 for the removal of up to 240 US warheads from Europe. Implicit in this position is the expectation of low-cost defense indirectly subsidized by the American taxpayer via the US defense budget—at a time when an already over-stretched US is being forced by shifts in global power to the East to move its security center of gravity away from Europe. This demand for subsidized defense from those demanding an end to nuclear forces in Europe will paradoxically shift a greater burden of nuclear responsibility onto the three NATO nuclear powers – Britain, France and the US—while they also implicitly benefit from deterrence benefits. It is precisely such strategic contradictions that are hollowing out NATO politically and militarily.

Unfortunately, President Obama's support for the Global Zero campaign has to some extent further complicated NATO's Deterrence and Defense Posture Review (DDPR) which will be presented at the Alliance's May 2012 Chicago Summit. Allies are no longer sure of the future American commitment to NATO's nuclear posture, which has in turn galvanized political forces in Europe that have always seen such weapons as an evil in themselves.

In spite of the START treaties, NATO Europe's immediate neighborhood is not nuclear neutral. Therefore, defining a new minimal deterrence posture will prove both difficult and divisive. Many Eastern European states remain wary of Russia. Its unwillingness to countenance further cuts, particularly in short-range systems, partly reflects the perceived weaknesses of its conventional armed forces (NATO faces the same dilemma), although that is now being addressed, but also Moscow's traditional prickliness towards the West.

In reality the Russian-NATO relationship remains complicated. Hard though it is to explain to Eastern European allies (for very obvious reasons), Russia over the medium term is unlikely to be the real strategic threat unless a divergence of interest takes place over time. Under current thinking NATO's future deterrence and nuclear posture would ideally see the number of nuclear forces reduced, offset by a limited but capable missile defense system along with enhanced and deployable conventional military forces. Yet, the opposite is happening – several NATO Europeans are demanding the removal of American nuclear forces from their sovereign space, are cutting their conventional armed forces to the point of impotence and, in effect, offering Russia a veto on any future missile defense system. This position is defended even while the same countries expect the United States to pay for a missile defense system that will not actually defend the continental United States.<sup>4</sup> In short, far from moving the Alliance forward, the Posture Review could well lock into

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<sup>3</sup> Following the December 2008 launch of the Global Zero initiative and President Obama's endorsement of it, NATO's Strasbourg Declaration of February 2010 and the April 2010 Nuclear Security Summit five NATO members; Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Norway moved to have all US nuclear forces removed from Europe.

<sup>4</sup> In late February 2011 five NATO member nations - Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Norway – called for the removal of all the remaining US nuclear weapons in Europe. See "NATO and Nuclear Weapons", 29 November, 2011, The Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy. <http://www.acronym.org.uk/nato/index.htm>



future strategy the essential contradiction in the balance between strategic protection and projection from which NATO suffers.

The contradiction between stated strategy and force posture is undermining the Strategic Concept, which is fast losing political momentum. Therefore, the role of nuclear forces in the Alliance is again fast becoming a metaphor for NATO's strategic seriousness. Sooner or later, in the absence of the highly unlikely global nuclear zero or investment in sufficient numbers of advanced expeditionary conventional forces, the place and role of nuclear forces as part of a balanced NATO defense will need to be reconsidered. If the burden falls even more disproportionately on the Americans or the extended deterrence capabilities of the other NATO nuclear powers (France and Britain), then over time the Alliance will be rendered impotent.

The debate over NATO's nuclear future is thus part of a wider discussion over burden sharing and in particular the price hard-pressed Americans will demand from Europeans for continuing to act as the last resort guarantor of Europe's defense. The role to be played by nuclear weapons and missile defense in offsetting European weaknesses in conventional deployable forces will be central.

### **Balancing Security and Defense**

Just as NATO allies must adjust the balance between their nuclear and conventional forces, they will also have to adjust the balance between external defense and internal security, especially after the decade-long focus on counterterrorism. The death of Osama bin Laden would ideally ensure a return to a more classical concept of defense strategy after a decade of counter-terrorism. This is a difficult call to make so close to the tenth anniversary of 9/11. However, it is a mark of Al Qaeda's strategic influence that a relatively small and marginal organization should have had such an impact on the consciousness, policy, and strategy of the West and, by extension, NATO. Counterterrorism has dominated the thinking of policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic at the expense of what might be seen as a more balanced assessment of the security and defense implications of the shift in sovereign wealth from west to east. Counterterrorism and counterinsurgency (COIN) will of course remain important, but NATO allies need to consider carefully the place of counterterrorism within broader grand strategy and whether cutting defense budgets to beef up security (counter-terrorism, intelligence and policing) budgets is the correct course of action.

The European penchant for peacekeeping these past twenty years has led to several European armed forces that are little more than glorified constabularies with the result that the fighting power of NATO has been much reduced. Superior fighting power over all-comers is the creed of US forces and should be the *sine qua non* of NATO. Incredibly, many NATO Europeans have been all too happy use the COIN role as a cover to de-invest in armed forces. Armed forces equipped and able to exert real strategic influence on the twenty-first global balance of power are by their very nature extremely expensive, demanding large numbers of long-reach enabling platforms, network architectures, and networked soldiers. NATO should have been at the forefront of this drive but under-investment, a lack of political will, and a bureaucracy designed to serve enlargement rather than engagement has frustrated many attempts, including the NATO Response Force (NRF).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> According to NATO insiders the Combined Joint Statement of Requirement (CJSOR) for the latest NRF rotation is around 27%.

The focus on stabilization and reconstruction, combined with operational tempo and the rapid force rotations caused by efforts to win the peace in Iraq and Afghanistan over the last decade, have further accelerated the retreat of European forces from effective fighting power.<sup>6</sup> This in turn has led to a political determination never again to get involved in places like Afghanistan even if such operations are precisely what most European armed forces plan for. This now begs a fundamental question: just what are European armed forces for?

European military weakness is also generating an implicit shift in strategy from the engagement in expeditionary stability operations to a form of fortress Europe. This, in turn, witnesses the consumption of defense budgets by internal security concerns with investments being shifted from armed forces to policing and intelligence. The United Kingdom is a case in point. The 2010 Strategic Defense and Security Review and the 17 July 2011 announcement to Parliament envisaged a 10% cut in the size of the British armed forces by 2015.<sup>7</sup> In contrast, over the past decade counterterrorism intelligence and policing has seen a four-fold increase in funding. In effect, the UK is shifting from a deployable engagement strategy alongside the US built on a force concept of limited mass and maneuver, to a strike-and-punish force concept built around very lean, but very potent strike forces.

This weakening of NATO's relative military power has been further exacerbated by the failure to create a European defense industry able to produce hi-tech military equipment within a reasonable time and cost frame, the US refusal to properly share with allies key technologies, and on occasion the attempts by US defense manufacturers to offset costs by imposing exorbitant partnership costs on allies.<sup>8</sup>

Thus far, the US Congress has not become too impatient over defense free riding. However, with Bin Laden dead and Western forces scheduled to leave Afghanistan by 2015, twenty-first century grand strategy will tend to shift back towards considerations of state power and with it the place of the Alliance in America's Asia-centric global role. Moreover, so long as the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts were in progress, an implicit contract existed between the US and its European allies whereby some American presence in Europe would be maintained in return for European support for US-led operations. That contract will soon be over. Thus, in spite of Europe's economic travails, the allies are unwilling to help the US square its own strategy-austerity circle. Better use of the Alliance could help to create the synergies vital at a moment of economic stress. Failure to use NATO to such an end could well lead to profound transatlantic political tensions sooner rather than later. Europeans need at least to be aware of this, even if they are insensitive to it.

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<sup>6</sup> For an in-depth study of this phenomenon using the Netherlands as a case study see Lindley-French J & Tjepkema A. (2010) "Between the Polder and a Hard Place? The Netherlands and Defence Planning Challenges for Smaller European Countries" Whitehall Report 2-10 (London: Royal United Services Institute)

<sup>7</sup> General Sir David Richards, Chief of the Defence Staff, said: "If we get it right, this will result in a modern, hard-hitting joint force still capable of operating at the divisional level across the full spectrum of conflict. It will deliver armed forces of which we can all be proud". The cuts will result in the smallest British army for over a century, when Britain had by far the world's largest navy. See "Liam Fox announces army cuts, but promises extra funds in future". <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/jul/18/liam-fox-army-cuts>.

<sup>8</sup> And not just on partners. According to Global Security.org the unit cost of JSF, averaged over variants, had almost doubled since the programme began (from \$50 million in FY02 dollars to \$92 million). See "F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) Lightning II Program"@ <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/systems/aircraft/f-35-program.htm>

NATO is and always has been built on burden sharing, which concerns as much the sharing of risk as cost. The US (and the UK) gets very little of either from its continental European allies. The recent imbalance of effort may be tolerable for a time, but only for a time. However, there is no sign in Europe of any political will to resolve the imbalance by investing in defense proportionate to national economies. Given the world into which the Alliance is entering, the hollowness of NATO will at some point be cruelly exposed.

### **Crafting Strategy from Austerity**

European reluctance to accept a greater share of NATO's burden is compounded by budget cuts forced by the recent recession and continuing economic uncertainty. Such austerity confronts Europeans with a hard reality: Europe is too rich to hide, but too weak to influence the world around it. The facts speak for themselves.<sup>9</sup> NATO Europe nations have a combined gross domestic product (GDP) of \$18 trillion compared with the US GDP of \$14 trillion, or some 124% of the US total. The combined 2009 defense budgets of NATO Europe totaled \$267 billion compared with the 2009 US defense budget of \$715 billion. NATO Europe thus spends some 37% of the US expenditure on defense, while enjoying a 14% higher GDP.

Air operations over Libya have also revealed two lessons: a) no European force has the capacity for sustained, autonomous action to any meaningful extent; and b) the transatlantic defense-technological gap has been reinforced by an intra-European gap with profound implications for military interoperability between Europeans, not just between Americans and Europeans. Indeed, of the \$267 billion Europeans spent on defense in 2009, France and the UK together represented \$114 billion (43%), while France, Germany, and the UK represented \$162 billion (61%). The so-called 'big three' also spent 88% of all defense research and development in NATO Europe. Critically, sixteen of the twenty-six NATO Europe members spent less than \$6 billion per year—and much of it inefficiently—with the ratios between personnel costs (salaries, pensions) and equipment budgets (armaments) particularly perverse, with too much spent on personnel costs and insufficient amount invested in equipment. Set in a global context the picture is stark. Between 2001 and 2008 NATO Europe spending on defense fell from \$320 billion to \$317 billion (not adjusted for defense cost inflation). Over roughly the same period the US has increased its defense expenditure by 109%, China by 247%, Russia by 67%, and Australia by 56%.

The Franco-British relationship will be critical for generating political momentum in Europe towards a more balanced assessment of Europe's defense needs. On the one hand the signs are encouraging. Since the Suez Crisis of 1956 Britain and France have been on opposing sides of the debate over European defense, with the UK by and large seeking US-centric solutions and France a European solution. Neither London nor Paris—nor even the two together—are of themselves sufficient, but both are still essential to Europe's defense posture. The chance now exists to re-energize the Franco-British defense relationship to the betterment of NATO, thanks mainly to French pragmatism and a British government that has finally had the courage to recognize that Washington, though important, is only one amongst several strategic partners. On the other hand, the Eurozone crisis and German-led moves to create an inner-core for the EU from which Britain is excluded could, over time, weaken the ability of even London and Paris to cooperate over defense.

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<sup>9</sup> All the figures used herein are from the author's own research using IISS Military Balance 2010 and 2011.

Without British and French leadership, much needed practical steps towards defense cooperation could falter. Pooling, specialization and common funding ideas have been around for many years, but under Franco-British leadership with American political backing, it is not unreasonable to believe that Europe's defense rehabilitation could develop some momentum. This being Europe, most such efforts will see a *mélange* of projects, some state-led, some NATO-led, some led by the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP). Small clusters of like-minded states coming together to share and/or develop capabilities would be vital to re-establish affordable armed forces on firm strategic principles, leading to defense policies and strategies that will, in time, make NATO once again relevant to the age. Sadly, such leadership is unlikely to come from the Alliance in its entirety because NATO is no longer capable of acting as a whole beyond the low-level operational or the high-level rhetorical, primarily due to a lack of political cohesion but increasingly due to an inability of NATO forces to operate safely and effectively together. If the big states do not lead, NATO's steady retreat into irrelevance will sooner or later lead to failure.

### **Putting Strategic Partnership at the Heart of NATO**

Critical to the future transatlantic relationship will be preserving and developing the strategic partnership at the heart of the Alliance. This will require the usual measures of greater defense spending by European allies, new technological solutions, and better strategic coordination to balance resources and capabilities. However, NATO must also recognize the growing role that coalitions are playing in international security and move to reconcile such coalitions with the well-being of the Alliance.

Now is the time when the nature of the strategic partnership must be reshaped. NATO is rapidly moving towards a post-Afghanistan age in which defense strategy, like that of the British, will tend to emphasize punish-and-strike rather than stay-and-stabilize. This would be a mistake, since strategic common sense would suggest that a balance needs to be struck between the two roles. It is an age that will likely witness the emergence of new nuclear powers, either for purposes of deterrence, prestige, or both. Effective conventional reach will also be critical, with dangerous crises all too likely in Africa, Arabia and Asia, with much of it focused on the littorals. After all, 75% of the world's population lives less than 100 kilometers (62 miles) from the sea.

Today, NATO Europe can only begin to perform what might be termed a strategic role by developing its defense capacity in and around Europe. Given that reality, the most that Washington can hope for from most of its NATO allies is a commitment to European defense to relieve the pressure on America's security commitments in other regions. This will by no means prove an easy task, with North Africa, the Middle East (including Iran), Sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia as Europe's neighboring regions. That engagement will, of course, be mainly political and economic, but European armed forces must also be far better configured to play a meaningful influence role beyond international counter-piracy and aerial patrol, important though they are. Such roles will be no mean challenge. However, will the US accept its European allies playing such a significant role in Middle East security? Asia-Pacific is for the longer-term. Europeans clearly have interests therein but realistically only Britain and France may wield some influence there—and then only alongside the US and only very modestly.

Sound and shared strategic judgment will be vital to strike a credible balance between a reasoned assessment of the strategic environment, the level of national resources that can be invested, and the capabilities needed to provide a minimum level of credible deterrence. One key will be to make virtue out of necessity because NATO will need both small, hi-tech deployable forces and larger lower-tech forces that can offer presence far from Alliance shores—be it sea or space control or defense diplomacy.

NATO's ageing populations will also demand and require a defense strategy ever more reliant upon technological solutions. The very existence of high-tech deterrence in all its forms will act as strategic reassurance in its own right. Moreover, a far higher degree of protection of NATO's populations will need to be realized before the Alliance as a whole can project force to resolve crises. Indeed, after the Afghanistan experience and the Libyan 'success,' those forces will be permitted to stay only for short periods and will need enhanced force protection.

New forms of deterrence, such as cyber-deterrence will also be needed to reinforce renewed nuclear deterrence. In that context, NATO should be encouraged to look far into the future with confidence and not be constrained, as is currently the case, by short-term political strictures. Recognizing only as much future threat as can be afforded today is a sure-fire guarantee of Alliance failure in the face of future shock. Indeed, such a notion makes future shock likely.

However, to realize NATO's full potential in the twenty-first century, political reality must be grasped. The old mantra that security is indivisible is as empty as many of NATO members' arsenals. Free-riding is here to stay, especially for the smaller NATO nations. Therefore, even though coalitions represent a threat to alliances, if NATO is to play its role in the legitimate security and defense of the West, then ultimately coalitions must be reconciled with the Alliance. That is the minimum price to be paid if future strategic concepts are to provide the planning guidance that will make them worth reading. In short, if nothing else survives of NATO into the twenty-first century, at least preserve the all-important force planning and interoperability standards vital to the efficient force generation of coalitions.

The true test will be the extent or otherwise of the European allies to credibly support the United States in its global mission. Such a test will need to be passed—and seen by the US Congress to have been passed—if the US is to reaffirm its role as the guarantor of Europe's security and defense.

## **Rebuilding the Acropolis**

NATO is hollowed out. Twenty years after the end of the Cold War, it is now no longer possible to hide the gap between what NATO can do and what it should be aspiring to do, however deft the politics. Operation Unified Protector over Libya represented a moderate success, but it was a very limited effort. Such 'success' should not be confused with the pressing need to re-establish strategic credibility, which after ten years of incompetence in Afghanistan is hanging by a thread. The trinity of strategy, defense, and deterrence rests inevitably on three essential political foundations: shared political vision and strategic ambition, a secure home base, and the means and determination to act with credible solidarity at the point of contact with danger. Unless the Alliance member-states patiently and with determination rebuild the strategic credibility of NATO, all that will be left is a bureaucracy, and Europe in particular already has too many of them.

The 2010 NATO Strategic Concept rightly emphasizes the modernization of Article 5 through a mix of missile defense, cyber-defense, and deployable conventional forces, and by extension, strategic re-

assurance. That, in turn, will require a new approach to collective defense in order for a new balance to be struck between affordable protection and projection while remaining relevant to today's challenges as well as those that might emerge over the next decade and beyond. 'Armed' attack in a virtual age underscores the need for the home base to be secure from catastrophic cyber-attack, terrorism and missile attack.

Effective defense will also require a new approach to collective security. It may seem strange to say, given the instability to NATO's immediate south—Tripoli is, after all, only 294 kilometers (182 miles) from NATO's southernmost point. However, Asia is likely to be the epicenter of proliferation and instability and many of the tensions and frictions that arise, particularly so given the fractious relationships between China, India, Japan, North Korea, Pakistan and South Korea. NATO will have to plan for the role it will play in such situations, decide how the Alliance should best be organized, and move forward with the necessary reforms.

Re-establishing NATO's strategic credibility will thus require much more than vague adherence to the generalities of the Strategic Concept. Rather, it will require America to re-affirm a political commitment to the stability and defense of Europe, and for a Europe led by Britain and France to re-commit to a strategic partnership with the United States based on a genuine strategic vision.

The West collectively has done much to make the world a safer place in the twentieth century and must continue to have the will and means to do so in the twenty-first century. Put simply, the world is a safer place when the West is strong. However, the cornerstone of that legitimate, collective strength is dangerously close to losing its essential position in that effort: NATO. At the very least a new contract must be struck between the allies because the twenty-first century will likely be as dangerous as the twentieth. If NATO fails, cowering Europeans will retreat into a fortress Europe, hoping against hope that in the end the US Cavalry will come riding over the horizon, but never certain they will and offering Americans little in return.

## **About the Author**

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# NATO: Prologue or Requiem?

*Brendan Wilson, PhD<sup>1</sup>*

It is often said that NATO is an organisation in search of a mission; that since the end of the Cold War, NATO is simply casting about for some reason to stay in existence.

One recent example of this type of analysis was an article by Justin Logan, director of foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute, titled, “NATO is a Farce”.<sup>2</sup> Among the points Mr. Logan made is that NATO’s European Allies do not pull their weight (offering the operations in Libya and Afghanistan as examples), US expenditures on behalf of NATO are excessive and unwarranted, and in particular that the US would have been better off if it had disbanded the Alliance at the end of the Cold War.<sup>3</sup>

Underlying all such criticisms of NATO is the claim, stated or unstated, that NATO was somehow unprepared for the collapse of the Soviet Union and the resulting altered political and military landscape. Detractors admit, although reluctantly, that NATO’s deterrent value did play a role in winning the Cold War. Beyond that they see it as an anachronism, unsuited for the modern environment, largely irrelevant and mired in delusions of past glory—a hammer looking for a nail.

These claims should be evaluated against the larger picture of NATO’s recent history, its goals, and the steps it has taken—and continues to take—to achieve those goals.

This article will present the case that the benefits of collective defence, deterrence, and efficiencies resulting from the pooling of resources and the sharing of the burdens of operations outweigh the relatively modest costs of NATO membership. Rather than a cumbersome Cold-War relic, NATO has been and remains on the forefront of both diplomatic and military transformation of the Euro-Atlantic security environment. The US is a major beneficiary of this arrangement.

## Late Cold War Thinking

In the late 1980s a debate had emerged in policy circles about how best to posture the United States and its allies to meet the demands of a changing security environment. At the risk of oversimplification, let me set out, in general terms, the two major sides of that discussion. Paul Kennedy in his 1987 book, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict From 1500 to 2000*,<sup>4</sup> articulated a view that the US was in the position of an over-extended empire. With troops stationed on foreign soil, entangling alliances, and burgeoning defence expenditures, the US risked catastrophe if it did not pull back, consolidate itself and concentrate on domestic priorities.

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<sup>1</sup> The views expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of NPS, the Dept. of Defense, the U.S. Government, or NATO.

<sup>2</sup> Justin Logan, “NATO is a Farce,” *The CATO Institute*. Accessed 1 November 2011.  
[http://www.cato.org/pub\\_display.php?pub\\_id=13614](http://www.cato.org/pub_display.php?pub_id=13614)

<sup>3</sup> For an excellent review of NATO critics see Loree Filizer “Skeptics at NATO’s 60th Anniversary: a Critique of the Criticism,” *Strategic Insights*, Volume VIII, Issue 3 (August 2009).

<sup>4</sup> Paul Kenedy, *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers*, New York: Vintage Books, 1987

An alternate view, posited in 1990 by Joseph Nye in his book, *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*,<sup>5</sup> countered that the US was not an empire in that it did not occupy foreign lands nor extract wealth or tribute; rather it provided stability, promoted free trade and encouraged self-governing democracies in the areas where it extended its influence. He pointed out that US defence expenditures were only around some 6% of GDP, nothing like the enormous sustained defence expenditures of the empires, such as Rome and Spain, which Kennedy had used as his examples.

But most important, at that time, Nye pointed to what he considered to be the impending collapse of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. The end of a bipolar balance of power in historical experience would mean instability and conflict as the newly sovereign states of a fragmented empire cast about for security, armed themselves, and joined in alliances against perceived threats. It is hard for us now to look back and not recognise the importance of his insight. The collapse of the Soviet Union could have led to regional fighting—including possibly even the use of nuclear weapons—with the inevitable consequences of death, dislocation, and economic and environmental catastrophe. Nye's recommendation was that the US and its Allies should move rapidly to fill this prospective security void with cooperative arrangements, together with political and economic assistance, in an effort to foster a peaceful transition to a new stability.

## Proactive Steps

Whether or not NATO leaders subsequently followed Dr. Nye's advice, NATO was already moving quickly to meet the new challenges. The 1989 NATO Summit Declaration recognised the changes that were underway in the Soviet Union as well as in other Eastern European countries and outlined the Alliance's approach to overcoming the division of Europe and achieving its long-standing objective of shaping a just and peaceful European order. The following developments illustrate this point.

At the Summit Meeting in London in July 1990, NATO leaders extended offers to the governments of the Soviet Union as well as Central and Eastern European countries to establish regular diplomatic liaison with NATO and to work towards a new relationship based on cooperation.

Following a visit by NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner to Moscow, President Gorbachev in July 1990 accepted the future participation of the soon to be united Germany in the North Atlantic Alliance. His position was explicitly linked to the positive nature of the commitments made by Alliance governments in London.<sup>6</sup> *The Los Angeles Times* reported:

“Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev, accepting an invitation to a future NATO meeting, called Saturday for a joint East-West declaration that would proclaim the end of the Cold War and move beyond it to establish a partnership ensuring European security.

“Gorbachev told NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner that decisions at the recent summit meetings of NATO in London and the Warsaw Pact in Moscow to reduce their armaments and reorient their defense strategies had confirmed that the long period of East-

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<sup>5</sup> Joseph S. Nye. *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, Basic Books, New York, 1990

<sup>6</sup> For a comprehensive view of the role played by the US in the German unification process, see Condoleezza Rice and Philip D Zelikow, “Germany Unified and Europe Transformed: A Study in Statecraft,” *Harvard University Press*, 1997



West hostility was over and that moves should be made quickly to build this into a new relationship.”<sup>7</sup>

It is important to understand that this substantial reorientation of policy—away from Cold War deterrence based on a balance of military power and toward cooperation and transparency—began before the collapse of the Soviet Union.<sup>8</sup>

On December 20<sup>th</sup>, 1990, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC)<sup>9</sup> met for the first time. It included all NATO foreign ministers and those of Bulgaria, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Romania. The Soviet Union sent its ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary, Nikolai Nikolaevich Afanasievsky. In the course of the meeting, Ambassador Afanasievsky was called from the room. He returned and read a statement requesting that the phrase Soviet Union be dropped from the final communiqué. The following day, as history records, the member states of the former Soviet Union signed the Alma-Ata Protocols, which formally dissolved the Union and established the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

In very rapid succession, the fruits of these early diplomatic efforts led to many well-known successes, including the establishment of the NATO/Russia Charter, the NATO Ukraine Commission, and the Partnership for Peace, all of which offered both diplomatic and practical levels of cooperation to help guide this process. Perhaps the most overlooked aspect is NATO enlargement itself, which has allowed former Warsaw Pact nations, former Soviet Republics, and former component states of Yugoslavia to join NATO, securing their own independence as members of a powerful defensive alliance.

Far from being taken by surprise, NATO, through a series of prescient diplomatic initiatives, was well-positioned to facilitate a peaceful transition to a post Cold War security environment.<sup>10</sup>

## **Transformed Capabilities and New Military Operations**

Alongside NATO’s efforts to promote security by bringing neighbouring countries to the table is its ability to use military forces to prevent conflict, conduct peacekeeping, and protect civilian populations through selective interventions. The scorecard on this count reflects a string of hard-won successes.

Four years after that first meeting of the NACC, NATO’s reorientation for the post-Cold War environment was put to the test. Following the unsuccessful efforts of the UN to keep peace in

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<sup>7</sup> Los Angeles Times, 15 July 1990, recovered on 25 August 2011. [http://articles.latimes.com/1990-07-15/news/mn-266\\_1\\_soviet-leader](http://articles.latimes.com/1990-07-15/news/mn-266_1_soviet-leader)

<sup>8</sup> The effort toward political détente began as early as 1967 with the issuing of the Harmel Report, which urged a lessening of tensions, a peaceful solution to the issues of the division of Germany, and the participation of the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries in a diplomatic process in order to achieve “a just and lasting peaceful order in Europe accompanied by appropriate security guarantees.” Accessed on 5 September 2011 from [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-14E9AA0A-A3E624ED/natolive/official\\_texts\\_26701.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-14E9AA0A-A3E624ED/natolive/official_texts_26701.htm?selectedLocale=en)

<sup>9</sup> The NACC has since evolved into the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC).

<sup>10</sup> The US played a significant role in the momentum to establish the Partnership for Peace (PfP), and used its influence as a NATO member to help foster this programme. In 1994 and 1995, Dr. Nye served as Assistant Secretary of Defence for International Security Affairs, where he was instrumental in the development of the Partnership for Peace (PfP).

Bosnia—a failure that was highlighted by the killing of up to 8,000 men and boys in Srebrenica and the deaths of up to 10,000 civilians during the siege of Sarajevo—NATO undertook robust military actions when asked to do so by the UN. Following a naval blockade and the imposition of a no-fly zone, NATO conducted an air campaign that compelled the warring parties to agree to negotiations which resulted in the Dayton Peace Accord. Next was the establishment of an international peacekeeping force, IFOR. Within hours of being given the political green light on 20 December, 1995, NATO began the deployment of the required forces in what was a well-planned and successful operation. Almost 60,000 troops from 30 nations deployed and took up peacekeeping duties in the first month.<sup>11</sup>

It is worth noting that Russia played a substantial role in the peacekeeping effort, providing an entire brigade under a shared command arrangement between Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR) General George Joulwan and Russian Colonel-General Leontiy Shevtsov who served as Deputy to SACEUR for Russian participation in IFOR.

The NATO bombing of Serbia from March to June 1999, code-named Operation Allied Force, curtailed the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, led to the withdrawal of Serbian forces from Kosovo, and the establishment of UNMIK, a UN mission in Kosovo. NATO forces provided the military component (KFOR) of some 50,000 troops. As the security environment improved, that number has been progressively reduced and now stands at approximately 5,000.<sup>12</sup>

### **NATO Invokes Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty**

On 12 September 2001, the day following the terrorist attacks on the United States, the North Atlantic Council (NAC), NATO's highest governing body, invoked Article Five of the Washington Treaty, which states,

“The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all.”<sup>13</sup>

However, from reading the views of NATO critics, one would never know that Alliance military operations in Afghanistan were the result of Europe's offer to assist the US. For example, Mr. Logan writes:

“[T]he overall European contribution to the war [in Afghanistan] has been trivial compared to America's. Despite Europe's size and wealth, it is a military dwarf compared to the United States.”

This view overstates the disparity of military effort between the US and its Allies and is not supported by the timeline for involvement in that theatre. Together with the UK, the US entered

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<sup>11</sup> All NATO nations, then numbering 16, participated in IFOR. They were eventually joined by 16 Non-NATO nations including; Austria, Bangladesh, the Czech Republic, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Poland, Slovak Republic, Sweden, the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

<sup>12</sup> Although Russia objected to the use of force in Serbia, it played a major role in mediating the withdrawal of Serbian forces from Kosovo and the entry of NATO forces under a UN mandate.

<sup>13</sup> North Atlantic Treaty, Washington D.C., 4 April 1949. Accessed on 31 August 2011. [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_17120.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm)

into Afghanistan in October 2001, an intervention which resulted in the removal of the Taliban from power.<sup>14</sup> This was not conducted under a NATO umbrella. Thereafter a new Afghan government was established in December 2001 with the support of an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). This force, created under a number of UN security council resolutions, was initially led by the UK, then later Turkey, and subsequently jointly by Germany and the Netherlands. In 2003, NATO took over the ISAF mission and responsibility for Kabul and the surrounding area. It was not until 2006 that NATO took responsibility from the US for the embattled southern region. Since NATO's first involvement, non-US NATO Allies have deployed substantial forces to Afghanistan, suffering more than 900 fatalities, accounting for some 32% of all coalition casualties in that conflict.<sup>15</sup> That NATO critics would paint this substantial, prolonged effort and sacrifice by Allies as trivial suggests a biased interpretation of the facts.<sup>16</sup>

### Costs and Burden Sharing

Critics also argue that NATO is expensive (in particular to the US). As Mr. Logan writes:

“If the current Washington climate of austerity can serve any fruitful end, surely it should be to reconsider such foolish alliances.”

What this statement ignores is the relatively low cost and the considerable efficiency evident in NATO operations. First, one needs to understand that, because the 28 NATO Allies pool their resources, their individual defence expenditures are lower than they would otherwise be. The end of the Cold War saw US defence expenditures drop from a high under President Reagan of some 6.2% of GDP to a low of approximately 3% in the last years of the Clinton administration.<sup>17</sup> While it is true that US defence expenditures have doubled in real terms since that time, this is due almost entirely to the expenditures related to operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.<sup>18</sup> The idea that US expenditures for NATO have contributed to this increase is simply not the case.

Based on cost sharing arrangements, the US contributes approximately 22% of NATO common funding. One often hears quoted the collective budget for NATO is less than 1% of the collective defence expenditures for NATO nations. This actually overstates the cost. For 2012, the US President requested \$807 million for its share of the contribution to NATO common funding;<sup>19</sup> this represents approximately one tenth of one percent of the US defence budget. Even these figures

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<sup>14</sup> The UK and US were quickly joined by other nations, both from NATO nations and those not members of the Alliance. By the spring of 2002, special forces from Australia, Canada, Germany, New Zealand and Norway were on the ground as coalition Partners.

<sup>15</sup> Source: iCasualties.org, retrieved 22 November 2011, <http://icasualties.org/oef/>

<sup>16</sup> Some Allies have made substantial sacrifices which, because of their relatively small size, are often overlooked. Estonia, with its population of 1.34 million, has suffered nine fatalities, a higher per capita rate of battle deaths than the United States.

<sup>17</sup> “Historical tables, Budget of the US Government, Fiscal year 2011; Office of the management and Budget; accessed 8 December 2011. [www.budget.gov](http://www.budget.gov).

<sup>18</sup> According to an analysis by the Strategic Studies Institute in 2009, if the costs of Operation Iraqi Freedom are excluded, average US defence expenditures from 2003-2008 are only 3.25% of GDP, Joel R. Hillison, “New Nato Members: Security Consumers or Producers?” Strategic Studies Institute, pg. 7, April 2009

<sup>19</sup> Carl Elk, “NATO Common Funds Burdensharing: Background and Current Issues,” *Congressional Research Service*, March 10, 2011.

overstate the relative burden to the US. As only one of 28 Allies, the 22% US share might appear to be an excessive contribution. However, US GDP is approximately equal to the combined GDP all other NATO members.<sup>20</sup> If the NATO common funding formula were to be rigidly applied, the US share would exceed 50%.<sup>21</sup>

One of the reasons for this relatively low overall cost is that NATO has been, and remains, a streamlined organisation. Despite the addition of twelve new members since 1999, and the added burden of operations in Afghanistan and the Balkans, maritime counter-terrorism and counter-piracy operations, and most recently operations in Libya, NATO maintains a relatively small cadre. NATO employs some 1,200 civilians in its HQ in Brussels.<sup>22</sup> Planned reductions in its command structure will cut the number of military posts from 13,000 to 8,000. Reform of NATO agencies is also underway and will reduce the number of agencies from 13 to three, with a corresponding reduction in personnel.

The cost of belonging to NATO should be compared against the cost each nation would face if required to provide for its own security independently or through alternative cooperative mechanisms. If the Alliance ceased to exist, the US would need to seek alternate security arrangements with its strategic partners, increase its defence spending, or substantially alter its foreign policy objectives.<sup>23</sup>

One also needs to remember that the US has critical interests in Asia, and thus maintains large land, air, and maritime forces in the Pacific that have nothing to do with NATO. An indication of how seriously the US takes its strategic commitments in the Pacific is the size of the military forces assigned to US Pacific Command (USPACOM). With a total of some 325,000 military and civilian personnel, six carrier battle groups, 180 ships and 1,800 aircraft,<sup>24</sup> USPACOM would rank as the third largest military in NATO, after the US and Turkey. It is arguable that these forces, including those on the west coast of the US, in Okinawa, Korea, and Hawaii, are affordable in part because the US's NATO Allies are, to a considerable extent, protecting US interests in the European theatre.

## Operational Contributions in Context

A final point worth addressing in the common criticism of the Alliance is the jaundiced view of European operational efforts, considering these to be so lamentable that the US has to repeatedly come to the rescue. In reference to the operation in Libya, Mr. Logan states:

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<sup>20</sup> For a very thorough analysis of burden sharing among NATO allies, including defence spending as a percentage of GDP, see Hillison, "New Nato Members: Security Consumers or Producers?", April 2009

<sup>21</sup> Elk, "NATO Common Funds Burdensharing: Background and Current Issues," pg. 6. In 2003 US GDP was 53% of the combined GDP of the US and NATO's allies. However, the addition of new members since that time and the reintegration of France in 2009 to the integrated military structure have resulted in a slight *decrease* in the US burden for common funding.

<sup>22</sup> In comparison, the European Commission has some 38,000 and the Pentagon houses a daily working population of some 24,000.

<sup>23</sup> Beyond the benefits of shared logistics, intelligence, basing and over-flight rights the US, as a member of NATO, is able to operate with both Allies and Partners entirely in English, thanks to 60-plus years of NATO standardization.

<sup>24</sup> Source: USPACOM fact sheet, retrieved on 22 November 2011, **accessed 11 November 2011.**

[http://www.pacom.mil/web/Site\\_Pages/USPACOM/Facts.shtml](http://www.pacom.mil/web/Site_Pages/USPACOM/Facts.shtml)

“Germany and other NATO members sat out the fight. The U.S. military provided most of the surveillance capabilities, largely via drones, that enabled NATO pilots to bomb Col. Moammar Gadhafi’s loyalists. European air forces ran out of precision-guided munitions and had to come begging for Uncle Sam to provide some. Thus, Washington essentially borrowed money from China to buy ordnance to give to Europe to drop on Libya. The post-Cold War NATO rationale is that we agree to spend and fight and the Europeans agree to support us - sometimes.”

This is a distorted view. Within the NATO framework, allies pool their resources to produce a mix of tailored capabilities that can accomplish military missions as directed by the North Atlantic Council. This means that individual allies provide capabilities in areas where they have existing capacity and expertise, each one complementing the efforts of the others. The result is that NATO seeks to provide a combined tailored capability to carry out the full spectrum of military missions.<sup>25</sup> NATO benefits from the division and specialization of labor, and there is little need for nations to duplicate each other’s capabilities.

Precision-guided munitions (PGMs) are a case in point. Although NATO members are, in general, responsible for arming their own aircraft, in NATO it is common procedure to cross-level or share the available PGMs when necessary to achieve an operational effect. No nation, including the US, stockpiles unlimited quantities of these very expensive resources. For the US to provide PGMs to those Allies who were doing the heavy lifting in Libya is normal and expected. This type of cross-leveling is a healthy and positive expression of cooperation, not a sign of inherent weakness. Allies routinely reimburse each other or provide in-kind support in accordance with existing agreements,<sup>26</sup> as will be the case with PGM expenditure in the Libya operation. NATO contributions are carefully negotiated with the capabilities and interests of the both the Alliance and its individual members in mind.

## Libya in Perspective

Now that the operation in Libya has been completed, it is worth considering in some detail what took place. NATO took over the mission on 31 March 2011, in a smooth transition from national authorities that had already begun operations under the associated UN Security Council resolutions. Operation Unified Protector (OUP) had three components: an air component to enforce a no-fly zone; an arms embargo, enforced primarily by sea; and a mission to protect civilians and civilian population centres. In total, NATO Allies conducted a total of over 26,000 sorties, including almost 10,000 strike sorties.<sup>27</sup> Mr Logan complains that not all Allies have physically contributed to this effort. While this is true and there will always be room for improvement, it is also true that not all

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<sup>25</sup> In February 2011, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen called for further measures to “*pool and share capabilities, to set the right priorities, and to better coordinate our efforts.*” NATO web page, Accessed 11 November 2011. [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news\\_70327.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_70327.htm)

<sup>26</sup> The basic framework for cooperation in military logistic matters is the establishment of Acquisition and Cross-Serving Agreements (ACSAs). This mechanism, established by US Law (USC 10, 138), allows for the exchange of logistic support, supplies and services on a reimbursable basis between the US, NATO Allies and Partner nations. Source: Global Security.Org, accessed 22 November 2011, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/acsa.htm>

<sup>27</sup> Source: NATO and Libya, Operational Update, 23 Oct 2011, Accessed on 22 November 2011, [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2011\\_10/20111024\\_111024-oup-update.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_10/20111024_111024-oup-update.pdf)

Allies are needed or desired for every operation, and some Allies have increased their contributions elsewhere.

Relatively small nations like Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands and Norway have each contributed six F-16s to the operations.<sup>28</sup> Proportionately, this is a large contribution for such small countries to make. The four nations together have a combined population of 38 million, i.e. approximately one eighth the size of the US population. If the US were to contribute combat aircraft in the same proportion, it would have to provide almost 200 F-16s. In the end, non-US NATO and Partner nations flew 75% of all sorties.<sup>29</sup> The significant contribution of the US, including critical enablers, a large maritime component, and dozens of aircraft, needs to be seen in the light of its much larger size. Commentators should recognise the substantial contribution and sacrifice European allies are making in this effort. It is important to remember that almost twice as many people live in New York City as in all of Norway.

All NATO nations contributed to OUP either directly or indirectly. Turkey, for example, operating under national, rather than NATO authority, conducted one of the largest and most successful non-combatant evacuations in modern history.<sup>30</sup> Beginning within 24 hours of the outbreak of hostilities in Libya, it used its civilian fleet of ferries and its national airline, in conjunction with military air and sealift, to evacuate 28,600 civilians, including 8,600 non-Turkish nationals from 57 countries. The entire operation was completed within 14 days.

### Criticism Revisited

It is worth revisiting the arguments of NATO's critics once again in the light of the information provided above. Mr. Logan contends that NATO is an expensive farce which should have been disbanded at the end of the Cold War. While we cannot possibly know what would have happened without NATO's efforts in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, it is hard to imagine that events would have been better had it followed Mr. Logan's advice and disbanded. We should not forget that President Gorbachev publicly said that his acceptance of a reunified Germany was conditioned on Germany remaining embedded in the NATO Alliance.<sup>31</sup> NATO could not have disbanded after German reunification without serious risks.

NATO has helped usher in a world that includes a peaceful, reunified Germany; a prosperous, stable and free Eastern Europe; and a united Alliance that delivered on the promise to protect and defend member states when attacked. It remains every bit as vital to security and peace in Europe as it was during the Cold War. This steadfast political commitment over time has meant that NATO nations can individually reduce defence spending to levels lower than they would be if they were not members of the Alliance. The US is a major beneficiary of these arrangements; its commitments in the Pacific would likely not be affordable were it not for the European Allies' strength and

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<sup>28</sup> Source: *The Guardian*, accessed on 23 November 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2011/may/22/nato-libya-data-journalism-operations-country#data>

<sup>29</sup> Source: NATO Media Operation Centre, response to query, 23 November 2011.

<sup>30</sup> Turkey also contributed frigates and submarines to the maritime arms embargo and fighters to the enforcement of the no-fly zone.

<sup>31</sup> Klaus Wiegrefe, "Germany's Unlikely Diplomatic Triumph," *Spiegel Online*, accessed on 22 November 2011, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,druck-719848,00.html>

preparedness. Actual costs for NATO are very small in both real and relative terms. The permanent NATO staffs and command arrangements are lean and efficient. The pooling and subsequent cross-balancing of military capabilities is not a weakness or failure, but rather a strength acquired through NATO's careful defence planning and operational tailoring.

# NATO's Policy in Africa

## Initiated in Sudan, Continued in Libya

*Glen Segell*

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a regional security alliance comprising the United States, Canada and 24 European states with a treaty agreement to assist each other on the basis of one for all and all for one. The North Atlantic Treaty (1949), upon which NATO is based, conforms to Chapter VIII Article 52 of the United Nations Charter (1945). It foresaw regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with the maintenance of international peace and security.<sup>1</sup> Throughout the bipolar two-superpower Cold War, NATO acted under the leadership of the United States to counter another regional organization, the Warsaw Pact led by the Soviet Union. NATO collaborated with other regional organizations such as CENTO, SEATO and ANZUS that operated in the Cold War era but have since ceased to exist. In the post Cold War era of the early 1990s, NATO and the United Nations reaffirmed their desire to share a commitment to maintaining international peace and security. At that point it was not clear the source or nature of threats to peace and security. NATO states prepared for local, regional, and global eventualities. When threats emerged the United Nations Security Council Resolutions provided NATO with a mandate for operations outside of its traditional North Atlantic region in Afghanistan and a framework for the NATO training mission in Iraq.<sup>2</sup> NATO also undertook disaster relief operations in Pakistan and escorted merchant ships carrying the World Food Programme's humanitarian supplies to Somalia. Other regional organisations such as the European Union (EU) and the Africa Union (AU) adopted peace and security mechanisms in their own regions even though they had primarily been created for economic considerations. NATO and these regional organisations were like-minded in sharing similar goals which saw joint operations. This was first witnessed in the Balkans (1995-2004) between NATO and the EU and in Sudan (2005) between NATO and the AU. Consequently NATO's new Strategic Concept was adopted at the Summit meeting in Lisbon (November 2010) stressing that NATO develop new capabilities and partnerships.<sup>3</sup>

The NATO operation in Libya is a continuation of this policy in three aspects 1) its desire to maintain international peace and security, 2) its desire to do so in collaboration with the United Nations and other regional organisations, 3) and its policy in the North Africa region resulting from its first mission to Africa (Sudan 2005) for humanitarian purposes. On the first two, NATO Operation Unified Protector in Libya implemented United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973 (17 March 2011).<sup>4</sup> It called for UN member states and regional organisations to take "all necessary measures" to protect citizens in Libya. In doing so NATO did nothing more and nothing less than meeting its obligations under the United Nations Resolution – no NATO ground troops participated in the operation.<sup>5</sup> The latter is the most important to detail why NATO decided to become involved in Libya and will continue to be involved both in Africa and in collaborating with other regional security alliances.

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Charter, Chapter VIII, Article 52, <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter8.shtml> (2 December 2012)

<sup>2</sup> NATO's relations with the UN, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_50321.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50321.htm) (2 December 2012)

<sup>3</sup> NATO adopts new strategic concept, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news\\_68172.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_68172.htm) (2 December 2012)

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Security Council, SC/10200, 17 March 2011, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2011/sc10200.doc.htm> (2 December 2011)

<sup>5</sup> NATO and Libya, Operation Unified Protector, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_71652.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_71652.htm)? (2 December 2011)



No NATO treaty obligates its member states if there is no direct threat to a NATO member state. Yet, this is exactly what took place in Sudan and was replicated in Libya. From April 2005 to December 2007, NATO agreed to provide airlift, logistics, training, and related support to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) which was deployed to the Darfur region on humanitarian grounds. The main contributing NATO countries were the United States, United Kingdom, Norway, the Netherlands, and Germany. In the deployment of NATO forces, there was no mention of which article of which treaty was being invoked. Hence, NATO and the African Union (AU) did not have any formal relations except on the functional level. Similarly in Libya NATO operations were launched on humanitarian considerations. No formal relations existed between NATO or any of its member states with any of the Libyan rebel forces. Although NATO forces are not currently engaged in operations in either Sudan or Libya, it is important to understand how and why NATO first became involved in the region, why it did so on humanitarian considerations and to maintain international peace and security, why it collaborated with another regional security alliance and why it would do so again.

### **The formulation of NATO policy to humanitarian intervention in Africa**

The Darfur region of Sudan is no different from other parts of Africa, or indeed the world, that have faced tribal conflict for centuries over the territorial imperatives related to the ownership, settlement or usage of land and water. British colonial rule over the region from the late 19th to mid 20th century was unable to ameliorate this particular conflict. More recently, conflict erupted in Darfur in February 2003 when local rebels in Darfur took up arms, complaining of discrimination and oppression by Sudan's Arab-dominated government. The government was accused of unleashing Arab tribal militia, known as the Janjaweed, against civilians in a campaign of murder, rape and arson. In 2008, the president of Sudan was faced with an indictment from the International Criminal Court (ICC) for genocide and crimes against humanity. During the period of NATO assistance to the AU, between 2005 and 2007, the conflict could be described as low-intensity in military terms between local armed groups, militias, the armed forces of Sudan and Chad, and bandit groups sponsored by both sides. Accurate figures are hard to come by, but there is little doubt that by 2005, when the AU requested NATO assistance, there were few left in Darfur who had not felt the conflict. The international attention in 2005 focused predominately on internally displaced persons (IDP), refugees in neighbouring Chad, and atrocities inflicted on civilians on a scale and magnitude that required outside intervention.

The event that initiated NATO involvement commenced formally on 26 April 2005. It was well known at the time that NATO member states had been expressing deep concern since 2003 over the conflict in Darfur and atrocities against civilians. They were uncertain on how to ameliorate the situation but were engaged in ongoing diplomatic efforts, especially at the United Nations (UN). Numerous debates and limited sanctions were levelled at the Sudanese government, yet the Security Council was unable to pass a resolution to authorize armed intervention. A permanent member of the Council, China, had shown reluctance to see such a resolution and would probably have vetoed it if one had been proposed. However, the AU had reached agreement amongst its members to send a peacekeeping force – AMIS – based on provisions of its Constitutive Act that permitted it to do so. However, the AU lacked the capabilities to deploy this force and AMIS lacked the necessary experience to undertake the mission.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Glen Segell, "The United Nations Africa Union Mission in Darfur – UNAMID", *Strategic Insights*, Volume VII, Issue 1, February 2008 <http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/2008/Feb/segellFeb08.pdf> (12 October 2011).

It was no surprise that on 26 April 2005 the AU requested assistance, in a letter from the Chairman of the Commission of the AU, Alpha Oumar Konaré to NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer. The letter requested NATO logistics assistance to expand the AMIS force aimed at ending violence in Darfur and improving the humanitarian situation. At the same time, the European Union (EU) received a similar request. In clarification of the letter of request, Mr. Konaré, visited NATO Headquarters on 17 May 2005 – the first ever visit to the headquarters by an AU official.

It is important to stress that this was the first time in NATO's history that another regional political-security alliance with no NATO members had requested such humanitarian assistance. It therefore appeared that no NATO member state had any obligation to commit forces to NATO and that NATO had no treaty obligation to provide any assistance. Sudan was not within the regional remit of NATO's operations and no NATO member state faced any direct security or defence threat from what was taking place in Darfur. However, it was also apparent at the time that it would be hard pressed for NATO to resist providing some form of assistance to the AU, given the magnitude of atrocities and the inability or lack of willingness of anyone else to take action.

It could be assumed that the leadership of NATO would be intricately involved in the intervention. A study analysing the speeches of De Hoop Scheffer shows that he was a cautious public advocate for extensive and sustained NATO operations in Darfur.<sup>7</sup> This was despite his openly favoured position that the world could not turn a blind eye to atrocities against civilians. Despite his caution, he was an instrumental arbiter in the ongoing debate among European states over whether NATO should be the sole forum for military cooperation or whether the EU should assume a more prominent role.

When the request of the AU was made known to NATO member states, they took the same position they had for many years: the best way to deliver security to Darfur was through those with the primary responsibility to do it – the government of Sudan. However, they also knew that the government of Sudan was not going to do this and, indeed, was the cause of the problem. This posed a dilemma over which international actors should assume responsibility for protecting civilians being killed as a direct result of Sudanese government policies. After the problems experienced in Iraq, NATO states were reluctant to pursue policies of “regime change”. Taking this into consideration, on 27 April 2005, the North Atlantic Council (NAC) asked the Alliance's military authorities to provide, as a matter of urgency, advice on possible NATO support to the AU and, if possible, whether this could also be done in co-ordination with the EU. This advice was prepared in full consultation, transparency and complementarity with the AU, the EU and the UN.

On 24 May 2005, the NAC, after receiving advice from NATO military authorities, agreed on initial military options for possible NATO support. These options included support to the AU in the areas of strategic airlift deployment, training (for example in command and control and operational planning), and improving the intelligence capabilities of the AU mission in Darfur.<sup>8</sup> Such support did not include the provision of combat troops. In announcing this, De Hoop Scheffer said that NATO “will consult in the coming days with the AU and others on how to transform these initial offers into concrete proposals responding to a specific request”.<sup>9</sup> The Secretary General stressed that

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<sup>7</sup> Ryan C. Hendrickson, “Public Diplomacy at NATO: An Assessment of Jaap De Hoop Scheffer's Leadership of the Alliance”, *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, Winter 2005-2006, Volume 8 Issue 2 2-28.

<sup>8</sup> NATO Documents, *NATO Secretary General Pledges Darfur Support*, 26 May 2005 <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2005/05-may/e0526a.htm> (12 October 2011).

<sup>9</sup> Press conference by NATO Secretary General, Jaap De Hoop Scheffer after the Plenary Meeting of the EAPC Security Forum, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2005/s050525j.htm> (12 October 2011).

the AU remained “in the driving seat to solve this difficult conflict and that the Alliance’s role is to contribute to strengthening the AU’s capability to meet this challenge”.<sup>10</sup>

An elaboration of De Hoop Scheffer’s thinking and NATO’s policy and strategy towards Africa highlighted that NATO member states no longer believed that they were constrained by the treaty obligations that had been formulated during the Cold War. NATO member states had voiced their intent to undertake some sort of action in the forum of the UN and EU in support of the AU as all were concerned about the plight of civilians in Darfur. NATO member states, especially the United States, saw NATO as a means to implement what they stood for as sovereign states caring for humanity at large. De Hoop Scheffer explained that Darfur showed the need for close cooperation between international organisations as an element of what he called “modern security”, and that Darfur showed that the international community was ready to support the AU. As a result, NATO commenced a non-combatant military operation in close consultation and in coordination with the EU, the UN and the AU.

The lessons of Iraq were noted and it was clear that any military operation would have to take into account the government of Sudan. The situation in Darfur was a direct consequence of Sudanese government policy. NATO was not intending to embark on a change of regime in Sudan. Yet NATO would airlift foreign forces onto the sovereign territory of Sudan to protect and engage in efforts against the policy of the government of Sudan and its implementation by the Sudanese armed forces. So NATO made clear that it would only implement its policy once the government of Sudan had given the green light to the AU. This was a difficult issue since there was no direct relationship between NATO and the government in Khartoum, and there was also no intention of establishing one. Furthermore, the largest potential contributor, the United States, had a dichotomy of interests as 1) it wished to maintain Khartoum as an ally in the war on terror, and 2) it believed that genocide was being perpetrated in Darfur.<sup>11</sup>

These factors were not considerations for the AU. The founding documents of the AU, signed in 2000, establishes “the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect to grave circumstances namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity”.<sup>12</sup> Although the AU favours African solutions for Africa, it is also pragmatic, and this was one such situation where it recognised that it needed help from other international and regional organisations.

When NATO announced its decision to provide non-combatant military support to the AMIS mission, six former foreign ministers from different countries wrote a joint newspaper article showing moral support for the ethics of NATO’s intended action. They called for NATO to use its Rapid Response Force. This was not beyond the will of NATO member states, but it would require authority from the UN Security Council for a Chapter VII resolution, especially to declare a no-fly zone over Darfur. It was clear, however, that China would oppose this. So NATO pursued the basic option of logistical airlift support and training.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Press conference by NATO Secretary General, Jaap De Hoop Scheffer after the Plenary Meeting of the EAPC Security Forum, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2005/s050525j.htm> (12 October 2011).

<sup>11</sup> Brian Raftopoulos and Karin Alexander (eds.), *Peace in the Balance: The Crisis in Sudan* (London: African Minds, 2008), 84.

<sup>12</sup> Africa Union, Constitutive Act of the Union, Article (h) 4, 11 July 2000 [http://www.au2002.gov.za/docs/key\\_oau/au\\_act.htm](http://www.au2002.gov.za/docs/key_oau/au_act.htm) (12 October 2011).

<sup>13</sup> Statement by former Madeleine Albright (USA), Robin Cook (UK), Lamberto Dini (Italy), Lloyd Axworthy (Canada), Ana Palacio (Spain), Erik Derycke (Belgium), and Surin Pitsuwan (Thailand), *International Herald Tribune*, 25 May 2005, <http://www.ihf.com/articles/2005/05/25/opinion/edalbright.php> (12 October 2011).

While the diplomatic process pressed on, the North Atlantic Council turned to General James Jones, then the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), asking him to take the lead in putting a liaison team on the ground to support the mission. General Jones looked to his command centre in Heidelberg, Germany, and asked Allied Land Component Command Headquarters (ALCC HQ HD) to take the lead in providing a liaison team on the ground. He chose Brigadier General Andre Defawe, Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations to be his Senior Military Liaison Officer (SMLO). The other Heidelberg members of the liaison team were Sergeant Major Pascal Wijkman (Senior NCOIC), Lieutenant Colonel Carsten Petersen (Operations Cell Director) and Lieutenant Colonel Ed Mead (Military Assistant to the SMLO).<sup>14</sup>

Operationally, the NATO mission was undertaken by Joint Command Lisbon, Portugal – under the overall command of Allied Command Operations – where the local responsibility for the NATO SMLO team operating from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The SMLO team was NATO's single military point of contact in Addis Ababa with the AU. In addition, it was NATO's military point of contact with the representatives of the various countries contributing troops to the AMIS operation, the representatives of the donor nations pledging support to the AU, as well as the UN, the EU, and various embassies.

While the military machinery was being put into place—predominately US Air Force transport aircraft—the diplomatic process continued. The NATO Secretary General participated in a meeting in Addis Ababa on 26 May 2005, chaired by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and AU Commission President Konaré, where he pledged international support for the AU's mission in Darfur.

Following that meeting, and based on further clarification and confirmation of the AU's requirements—as well as consultations with the AU, the EU and the UN—the NATO NAC agreed on 8 June on the detailed modalities and extent of Alliance support. The decision to support the AU with strategic deployment and staff capacity building was formally announced on 9 June, at the meeting of NATO Ministers of Defence in Brussels.<sup>15</sup>

## Implementing the strategy and policy

Despite the agreement in principle to provide support to the AU, it was not as straightforward in implementing it. A few days before the 9 June NATO announcement, an open split broke out between those states favoring an EU option and those favouring a NATO option on which organisation should coordinate measures in support of AMIS.<sup>16</sup> In particular the United States (US) and Canada preferred NATO (through SHAPE, the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe), given that the US and Canada were not EU members, while France preferred the EU.<sup>17</sup> The United Kingdom (UK) was amenable to both the EU and NATO, since the UK was already providing direct financial assistance to AMIS (£32 million in 2004 which increased to £52 million in 2006), as well as a chief police expert from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) to advise the AU police commissioner on the AMIS mission's civil policing aspects.<sup>18</sup> Germany, the Netherlands, and Norway remained undecided. An important factor for the European members of NATO who

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<sup>14</sup> Africa Development Information Service, *NATO Organisation Record*, [http://www.afdevinfo.com/htmlreports/org/org\\_56574.html](http://www.afdevinfo.com/htmlreports/org/org_56574.html) (12 October 2011).

<sup>15</sup> Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Defence Ministers Session, Brussels, 9 June 2005, Final Communiqué, paragraph 9 NATO Press Release (2005)076.

<sup>16</sup> D. Dombey, “NATO-EU Spat hits Airlift to Darfur”, *Financial Times*, 8 June 2005, p.4.

<sup>17</sup> Editorial, NATO's Darfur Mission on as Partners deny Split, *The East Standard* (Kenya) 11 June 2005.

<sup>18</sup> DFID Press Release, 18 July 2006 <http://dfid.gov.uk/news/files/pressrelease/amis-brussels.asp> (12 October 2011).

preferred the EU above NATO was that, unlike NATO, the EU Rapid Reaction Force had a defined purpose that included humanitarian, rescue and peacekeeping operations. The EU had been helping the AU since 2004 when NATO had not appeared particularly interested in Africa. The EU also had recent experience on the African continent: Operation Artemis (June-September 2003) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which sent 1,700 troops to secure the town of Bunia, allowing the return of 60,000 refugees.<sup>19</sup>

The escalating situation on the ground in Darfur was the deciding factor which shortened the disagreement, leading both the EU and NATO to provide support to the AU-led military group in Addis Ababa, with the choice of organisations (EU or NATO) being left to individual member states of both regional organisations.<sup>20</sup> Given that United States would provide most of the aircraft for the airlift operations, it was clear that NATO would be the main airlift-supporting organisation to AMIS. France worked solely through the EU, while the UK worked through both the EU and NATO.<sup>21</sup> Other countries, like Norway and the Netherlands, provided vehicles and equipment as part of their commitment to both the EU and NATO.

There was open relief in NATO over the quick resolution to the quarrel, and throughout the mission there was complete transparency between the EU and NATO. Despite this, there remained some apprehension that the Berlin Plus framework had not been invoked – this being the December 2002 agreement between the EU and NATO regarding cooperation on international security. The Berlin Plus agreement was seen as essential to European regional security, given that the membership of both organisations overlapped to a great extent and that the EU Rapid Reaction Force and the NATO Rapid Reaction Force would draw from the same limited pool of deployable European forces and equipment. Such apprehension on the availability of forces was exemplified by the commitment, if not the over-commitment, to other ongoing conflicts, including Afghanistan, Iraq, and peace-support operations in the Balkans.

The Berlin Plus agreement was significant for NATO assistance to the AU, given the perceived need for a common NATO-EU planning centre or chain of command. However, establishing a common command centre could have distracted and delayed assisting the AU by months or even years. NATO consequently planned through SHAPE, while the EU used the Strategic Airlift Coordination Centre (SALCC) in Eindhoven, Netherlands. Any apprehension was short-lived since on the ground, the military achieved tactical cooperation to ensure mission success and, within a few weeks, Darfur was being presented as a perfect example of NATO-EU cooperation in assisting the AU.<sup>22</sup> The longer-term ramifications are still to be evaluated, especially on whether both the EU and NATO could have done more at the time and how they could do it better in the future.

Turning back to the case, cooperation on the ground between the AU, EU, and NATO started when the NATO liaison team from ALCC HQ arrived in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in mid-June 2005 and immediately began to set up the NATO/AMIS liaison headquarters. The mandate from the SACEUR was to liaise with the AU and Darfur Integrated Task Force (DITF), which was co-located with the AU Headquarters in Addis Abba, Ethiopia, and coordinated support in three specific areas:

- 1) strategic airlift (deployment of AMIS forces into Darfur);

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<sup>19</sup> Lee Feinstein, *Darfur and Beyond: What Is Needed to Prevent Mass Atrocities* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2007), 33.

<sup>20</sup> Editorial, *NATO Agrees on Darfur and sets aside strains with the EU*, AFP, 9 June 2005.

<sup>21</sup> ISIS Europe European Security Review, *Support for the African Union in Darfur: A Test for EU-NATO Strategic Partnership* (London: ISIS, June 2005), Review no. 26.

<sup>22</sup> Jaap De Hoop Scheffer, “A Changing Alliance in a Changing World”, speech at Bratislava, 30 June 2005, ISIS Europe European Security Review, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2005/s050630a.htm> (12 October 2011).

- 2) support of the UN-led map exercise (MAPEX); and
- 3) execution of staff capacity-building training for the DITF staff and the force headquarters.<sup>23</sup>

In a rapid display of capability, NATO was able to launch its airlift operations in support of AMIS with the first movement of Nigerian troops on 1 July. This was achieved by having NATO personnel deployed on the ground to coordinate NATO's airlift support. In reality, this only required eight people – seven in Addis Ababa and one in Nigeria. These were later transferred to other countries based on the airlift schedule. Airlifts of personnel from Gambia, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, and South Africa continued through July, August and September. The initial airlift was performed by United States C-130 and C-17 and carried approximately 680 troops to the region, while the United Kingdom later supported the airlift of another 680 troops.<sup>24</sup>

Thus, the first task of NATO support to the AU, immediate and decisive strategic airlift, was successful within a three-month period. Integral to the success was the movement and control specialists and the NATO Senior Military Liaison Officer team. The latter succeeded in the main task to coordinate the planning and execution of cargo and troops between the troop contributing nations (TCN), the DITF Headquarters and various NATO air movement centres. On paper, the task seemed easy and the numbers seemed relatively small. However, it was a complex task because the troop movements had to be coordinated around eleven different Aerial Ports of Embarkation (APOE) and three different Aerial Ports of Debarkation (APOD).<sup>25</sup> It was clear that NATO was thus able to engage in a trans-regional military support operation in Africa without previous expertise.

This foray into Africa intrigued the world, and NATO was publicly questioned by the press over which NATO Treaty was being invoked, which NATO member state was being threatened and, if none, then why NATO was becoming involved in Africa. Jamie Shea (NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General for External Relations) responded,

NATO needs to use its forces in a reasoned manner with clear objectives which might not only include active conflict but also situations to address human indignities certainly as in Darfur, and I think that it's very appropriate that we do have that involvement in a contingency like Darfur.<sup>26</sup>

While the airlift was underway, NATO commenced its second task – that of staff capacity-building training. The NATO liaison team for this task worked with the DITF staff leadership and the tactical commanders on the ground to collect the staff capacity-building training requirements. A plan was formulated, and NATO responded by providing two phases of training, targeting two different training audiences.<sup>27</sup>

The first phase was conducted in August 2005 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, at the DITF Headquarters and was designed to train the DITF staff members on strategic level tasks. The second phase of the training was conducted in El-Fashir, Sudan, at the AMIS Force Headquarters compound and was

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<sup>23</sup> NATO Documents, NATO starts Airlifting African Union Troops to Darfur, 1 July 2005, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2005/07-july/e0701a.htm> (12 October 2011).

<sup>24</sup> NATO Documents, 1,300 African Union Peacekeepers Airlifted to Darfur, 3 August 2005, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2005/08-august/e0803a.htm> (12 October 2011).

<sup>25</sup> NATO Documents, NATO Starts Airlifting African Union Troops to Darfur, 1 July 2005, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2005/07-july/e0701a.htm> (12 October 2011).

<sup>26</sup> NATO Documents, The Transatlantic Alliance in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, 11 July 2005, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2005/s050711i.htm> (12 October 2011).

<sup>27</sup> NATO Documents, NATO Starts Airlifting African Union Troops to Darfur, 1 July 2005, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2005/07-july/e0701a.htm> (12 October 2011).

designed to train the Force Headquarters on operational and tactical level tasks. This training was widely accepted and in total, 114 Force Headquarters and Sector Headquarters staff officers were trained from all the combined Force HQ components (Military, Civilian Police, CIMIC and NGOs).

NATO support was not confined solely to supporting the AU directly. As part of the initial diplomacy, it was clear that NATO would support UN initiatives to the AU as well as the EU in its assistance to the AU. As regards NATO support to the EU in its assistance to the AU, it was on 7 August that NATO airlifted the first team of 49 AU civilian police as well as an additional 533 military peacekeepers into Darfur.<sup>28</sup>

Given these successes in airlift support and training, NATO then turned to the third critical mission that was requested. This was NATO support to the UN-led map exercise (MAPEX) designed to help AU personnel understand the theatre of operations and operate effectively within it, as well as to build their capacity to manage strategic operations.<sup>29</sup>

Towards the end of August 2005, staff capacity-building activities started in Nairobi, Kenya. NATO helped to train AU personnel in key headquarters functions such as command and control, logistics, and planning. The UN asked NATO for assistance in helping to write the scenarios for the exercise and then to provide exercise controllers both in the Force Headquarters and the Sector headquarters. In a cost-effective operation, only sixteen NATO personnel were deployed to conduct the exercise and another eight to organise the staff capability building. In the words of both the AU and UN leadership during the exercise and in the after action review, “NATO involvement and participation in the MAPEX was pinnacle to the success of the entire operation.”<sup>30</sup>

Thus, within six months of the initial request and within three months of the start of operations, a unique milestone was established. This was the first time that NATO was involved in an operation on the African continent where the NATO contingent was accepted as a full partner by the AU leadership and the collective group of partner nations from the AU, the EU and the UN. This resulted in the appointment of a NATO Civilian Senior Representative (NCSR) from the Norwegian embassy in Ethiopia on an informal basis to assist with the political contacts and to work directly with NATO Headquarters. Clearly, this particular NATO mission opened a whole new array of opportunities for the NATO alliance and cast a very positive light on its member states’ intentions to the international community

Given this state of affairs, it was no surprise that on 21 September 2005 that the North Atlantic Council agreed to extend the duration of NATO’s airlift support in order to ensure the airlift of the remaining peacekeeping reinforcements in Darfur until 31 October 2005.

## **Sustaining the strategy and policy**

The rapidity of the decision to support the AU had not left time to justify the actions to an eager public audience nor to undertake an introspective review of the decision and the initial implementation successes. In a show of transparency, an open discussion panel was therefore

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<sup>28</sup> NATO Documents, First NATO Airlift of Civilian Police into Darfur, 7 August 2005, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2005/08-august/e0810b.htm> (12 October 2011).

<sup>29</sup> NATO Speeches, “Back-round Briefing by NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer on the Upcoming Ministerial Meeting in Sofia Bulgaria”, 25 April 2006, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2006/s060425a.htm> (12 October 2011).

<sup>30</sup> NATO Documents, News, <http://www.nato.int/ahd/news/2006/n060317a.htm> (12 October 2011).

organised on 30 September 2005 with the topic “NATO, the AU, the UN and Darfur”.<sup>31</sup> The panel was chaired by Jamie Shea, with a panel of Eirini Lemos (resident UN expert on the NATO international staff), Dr. Klaus Becher (Associate Director of Wilton Park, UK) and Professor Mats Berdal (Kings College London). The panel highlighted that the policy was not a spontaneous decision. It had been clearly defined in political terms with military participation. The military had been given the ability and capability to undertake the mission. Strategic and tactical goals were clearly defined and limitations were clearly demarcated. The panel accepted that NATO’s success meant that it could expect more such requests in the future and it would be hard pressed to reject them, given this precedence.

Since the NATO contribution to the AU missions had suffered no casualties and even gained immense public support following the panel discussion, the NAC agreed on 30 September 2005 to continue to offer support to the AU until 31 March 2006. The policy and strategy remained the same – the coordination of strategic airlift during further troop rotations of the peacekeeping forces as well as additional staff capacity building, in order to add to the military skills of the AU officers. Having reviewed the AU troop rotation schedule on 9 November 2005, the NAC amended this support until end May 2006.<sup>32</sup>

Ultimately, NATO relies on its member states commitments and such decisions required high-level political consent. Clearly, the pressure was on for more to be attempted in Darfur. For example, on 17 February 2006 President Bush called for a sizeable UN force and a bigger role for NATO in the peacekeeping effort.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, the United Kingdom’s International Development Secretary frequently suggested that Darfur “represented the most serious humanitarian emergency in the world today”.<sup>34</sup>

Hence, by mid-March 2006, Pentagon authorities were tasked with and had completed a review of various options, and were ready to back sending a large team of NATO advisers to Darfur. Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld was briefed on the proposal and approved it for discussion with the White House and State Department. However, a larger force with a different mandate was never approved. A number of reasons were cited. Foremost, NATO relied solely on contributing member states; no single member state was willing to make a significant increase in forces, arguing that NATO as an alliance had a growing role in securing Afghanistan, and Darfur might distract from this role.<sup>35</sup> Another concern was the fear that sending significant numbers of Europeans and North Americans could inflame regional sensitivities, particularly if the mainly Muslim Sudanese government opposed such a NATO deployment. This fear in part emanated from an Osama bin Laden tape that accused the United States of igniting strife in Darfur. Last, but not least, was the minimal domestic interest in Western countries about Darfur, in the sense that political elites perceived that they would neither gain nor lose any electoral or popular support by either invoking a smaller or larger military commitment through NATO or unilaterally. It was no surprise when NATO HQ announced on 29 March that NATO was neither planning, discussing, nor considering a NATO armed force on the ground in Darfur, though NATO would continue to provide what it

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<sup>31</sup> NATO STOPWATCH, Debate 1: NATO, the African Union, the United Nations and Darfur Special Interactive Video Forum Series with Jamie Shea, 30 September 2005, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2005/s050930a.htm> (12 October 2011).

<sup>32</sup> NATO Documents, NATO’s Assistance to the African Union for Darfur, 2 April 2008, <http://www.nato.int/issues/darfur/practice.html> (12 October 2011).

<sup>33</sup> Jim Van der Hei and Colum Lynch, *Washington Post* Editorial, 17 February 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/04/09/AR2006040900957.html> (12 October 2011).

<sup>34</sup> UN Document A/60/L.1 (Sixtieth Session, 20 September 2005), paragraphs 138-140.

<sup>35</sup> Bradley Graham and Colum Lynch, “NATO Role in Darfur on Table”, *Washington Post*, 10 April 2006, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/04/09/AR2006040900957\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/04/09/AR2006040900957_pf.html) (12 October 2011).



was already providing.<sup>36</sup>

It was at this stage that the UN escalated its efforts. First, the UN Security Council, for the first time, imposed sanctions on Sudan regarding issues relating to atrocities in Darfur. Secondly, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan formally appealed to NATO by way of a phone call to the NATO Secretary General on 27 March for help in fortifying the ability of the AU force to restrain armed groups and to ensure the safety of civilians.<sup>37</sup> Lacking the mandate from a UN Security Council Resolution, all that the NAC could do was announce its readiness to continue NATO's current mission. The formal statement to this effect came on 13 April, when the NAC announced its readiness to continue NATO's current mission until 30 September 2006 in full consultation, transparency and complementarity with the EU, the UN and all other donors concerned.<sup>38</sup>

Despite the good intentions and successes, all those involved knew that more was needed, and on 30 May 2006 the UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. Jan Egeland, visited NATO HQ to discuss Darfur and the role of the military in disaster relief. This was complemented on 2 June when the Chairman of the AU Commission, Mr. Alpha Oumar Konaré, requested that NATO extend its airlift and training support. The NAC consulted the contributing NATO member states and decided to extend NATO's assistance to AMIS until the end of 2006.

Affirming this on 8 June 2006, NATO Defence Ministers stated NATO's willingness to expand its training assistance to AMIS in the fields of Joint Operations Centres, pre-deployment certification, and lessons learned. They also stated NATO's willingness to consider support to an anticipated follow-on UN mission to the AMIS mission.<sup>39</sup> This follow-on AU-UN hybrid peacekeeping mission was at the time in the planning stage but was formally announced on 16 November 2006 in Addis Ababa, and would later be officially created in UN Security Council Resolution 1706 (31 August 2006). It would come into being on 1 January 2008 as UNAMID when AMIS was disbanded. Egeland's efforts were successful to the extent that his initiatives were in time to be placed on the agenda of the NATO Riga Summit held on 28-29 November 2006. At the Riga Summit, NATO reaffirmed its support to the AU and its willingness to broaden this support. It also reiterated its commitment to coordinating with other international actors and regional alliances.

Some 18 months after the first lift, NATO decided to extend its support mission for six additional months. This was after a meeting on 15 December 2006 between the Secretary General of NATO, Jaap De Hoop Scheffer, and US Ambassador Andrew Natsios, US Special Envoy to Darfur. Ambassador Natsios had just returned from an extensive mission in the region. They discussed the security and humanitarian situation in and around Darfur and concluded that any larger NATO commitment would be expensive, difficult due to the terrain especially the lack of water, could not be set up in a hurry and would be met by strong resistance from the government of Sudan who might view it as an act of war.<sup>40</sup> Having concluded that a NATO reaction force intervention was not possible, other options for enhanced support were considered, and on 15 January 2007 NATO

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<sup>36</sup> NATO Documents, NATO's Assistance to the African Union for Darfur, 2 April 2008, <http://www.nato.int/issues/darfur/practice.html> (12 October 2011).

<sup>37</sup> Bradley Graham and Colum Lynch, "NATO Role in Darfur on Table", *Washington Post*, 10 April 2006, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/04/09/AR2006040900957\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/04/09/AR2006040900957_pf.html) (12 October 2011).

<sup>38</sup> Editorial, The AU Remains in the Driving Seat for Solving the Conflict in Darfur, <http://reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/EK0I-6QQ3VR?OpenDocument&rc=1&emid=ACOS-635PIQ> (12 October 2011).

<sup>39</sup> NATO Documents, NATO's Assistance to the African Union for Darfur, 2 April 2008, <http://www.nato.int/issues/darfur/practice.html> (12 October 2011).

<sup>40</sup> NATO Documents, NATO News, 12 December 2006, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2006/12-december/e1215b.htm> (12 October 2011).

announced that it would provide staff capacity training at the AU Mission HQ in Khartoum, in addition to training provided in El Fasher and Addis Ababa.<sup>41</sup>

## Conclusion

Drawing a line on the chronology of NATO involvement in Sudan is possible, since AMIS was disbanded and replaced by a United Nations force (UNAMID) on 31 December 2007. However NATO continued to assist the AU. Shortly after the termination of the Sudan mission, NATO began to provide support to the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).<sup>42</sup> Assistance to the African Union has also continued in capacity building support to its long term peacekeeping capabilities, in particular to the African Standby Force (ASF). NATO coordinates its assistance missions principally with the United Nations and the European Union, but is also expanding such missions to include bilateral partners as well.

From March to October 2011, NATO Operation Unified Protector in Libya implemented United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973. The Sudan and Libyan missions shared several similarities: 1) NATO did not provide combat troops on the ground, 2) the decision to be involved was based on concerns for the lives of individuals who were unable to defend themselves, i.e. humanitarian reasons, 3) there were no relations nor contact between NATO and the governments of the states where the NATO air forces were used, 4) the deployment of military force was authorized by a United Nations mandate, and 5) there was collaboration with other regional security alliances.

Inherent to NATO's policy are three factors 1) its desire to maintain international peace and security, 2) its desire to do so in collaboration with the United Nations and regional security alliances 3) its desire to be involved in the Africa region on humanitarian considerations. The successful outcome of such missions and operations show that regional security alliances such as NATO have an important role to play and will continue to exist.

## About the Author

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<sup>41</sup> NATO Documents, NATO's Assistance to the African Union for Darfur, 2 April 2008, <http://www.nato.int/issues/darfur/practice.html> (12 October 2011).

<sup>42</sup> NATO Documents, *African Union looks to long-term cooperation with NATO*, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2007/03-march/e0302a.html> (12 October 2011).

# NATO's Relations with New Members and Partners

## Contributions to Peacekeeping, Counterterrorism, and Humanitarian Missions

*Ivan Dinev Ivanov<sup>1</sup>*

### Introduction

The end of the Cold War marked the beginning of a profound transformation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): the introduction of new missions designed to meet the new demands in international security, the development of allied capabilities to execute these missions, and the incorporation of a dozen new allies from Central and Eastern Europe. Furthermore, NATO's increased role in international security led to enhanced cooperation not only with its former adversaries, but also with other nations around the globe that were interested in expanding cooperation with the organization. In the course of the last two decades, NATO developed a number of partnerships with nations from the Caucasus, Central Asia, Middle East and North Africa, and even the Pacific Rim. The 2010 Strategic Concept recognized that the wide network of partner relationships with countries and organizations around the globe is intended to "further promote Euro-Atlantic security" as these partnerships make a "concrete and valued contribution to the success of NATO's fundamental tasks."<sup>2</sup>

How do NATO's relationships with its new members and partners affect these nations' decisions to participate in peacekeeping, counterterrorism and humanitarian operations? This study surveys the involvement of NATO's Euro-Atlantic partners (EAPs) and new members in various international operations; it argues that the alliance's success in drawing new participants into international operations is largely determined by three different groups of variables: (1) the prospects for membership; (2) the presence of unresolved disputes with neighboring countries and; (3) the degree of internal political divisions in these transitional societies. This article will examine these three variables. First, it will show that when NATO upgraded its relationship with prospective members and signaled high chances for membership, these nations significantly increased their participation in international operations. Second, it will discuss how the presence of unresolved conflicts could effectively paralyze integration into NATO as was the case of Macedonia and Georgia thus constraining these countries' involvement in Afghanistan. Finally, it will illustrate how deep political divisions in Ukraine led to a plummeting public approval for membership and subsequent withdrawal of support for NATO-led operations. The three variables together point to the conclusion that the alliance was overall fairly effective in persuading the new members to participate more actively in peacekeeping, counterterrorism, and humanitarian missions. At the same time, it has had a mixed record in engaging its Euro-Atlantic partners (EAP) to become involved in various international efforts. Although NATO's incentives have facilitated EAPs' contributions to peacekeeping, counterterrorism, and humanitarian missions, these incentives have not always proven sufficient to overcome neighbors' opposition or domestic resistance to membership.

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<sup>2</sup> "Active Engagement, Modern Defence," Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, 19 November 2010, Lisbon, Portugal. <http://www.nato.int/lisbon2010/strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf> (accessed May 30, 2011).

## Explaining the Impact of NATO Membership and Partnerships

In the course of the past two decades, NATO managed to develop an advanced web of partnerships in the Euro-Atlantic area, including the now defunct North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) that was created in 1991 and replaced in 1997 by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC). The latter provided the framework for the oldest and largest partnership program—Partnership for Peace (PfP)—and served as a foundation for several additional partner relationships with selected PfP nations. These included the Individual Partnership Action Plan Program (IPAP), the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), and the NATO-Ukraine Charter on a Distinctive Partnership (NUCDP). For those nations interested in expanding their relations with NATO and possibly seeking membership, the organization offered *Intensified Dialogue* and even a Membership Action Plan. New partnerships also emerged outside of the Euro-Atlantic area in the Greater Middle East (the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative) and with such countries as Australia, New Zealand, and South Korea, which have partnered successfully with NATO in the war in Afghanistan.<sup>3</sup>

The introduction of Euro-Atlantic partnerships underwent several major stages of adaptation. The Brussels Summit of 1994 officially approved the program, which at that time constituted a novel, cooperative framework and “a diplomatic invention of first order.”<sup>4</sup> Nonetheless, this flexible format of cooperation was hardly able to meet the expectations of most leaders in Eastern Europe who sought NATO membership as their ultimate foreign policy goal. Similarly, PfP extended no formal guarantees or clear promises for membership as Brussels tried to insure itself against possible accusations from Moscow that these partnerships were intended to entice the former Soviet satellites into the Western camp. First step toward expansion was taken at the Madrid Summit in 1997 when three countries from the Visegrad group (the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland) were invited to join NATO. Since then, two additional rounds of expansion occurred in 2004 and 2009 with a total of nine new members joining the organization.

Scholars of international alliances do not hold uniform understanding as to the reasons that NATO needs these new members and partners, and how these nations benefit from their enhanced cooperation with the alliance. Institutionalists argue that alliances expand beyond mere aggregation of military capabilities; they serve as security coalitions differing in their purposes and “degree of their institutionalization.” Alliances also engage smaller nations to participate in their decision-making process, thus providing for transparency, consultation, and incentives for cooperative strategies.<sup>5</sup> NATO membership offered unprecedented security guarantees to the new members under Article Five. In contrast, the EAPs do not extend any formal security commitments to their participants; they only provide an opportunity for these nations to participate in an enhanced security dialogue, to exchange ideas about military transformation and adaptation, to discuss their possible contributions to global military operations, and occasionally seek advice on how to handle terrorist challenges.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> For further details about NATO partnerships see Håkan Edström, Janne Haaland Matlary, and Magnus Petersson (eds.) *The Power of Partnerships* (Palgrave Macmillan, New York; London, 2011).

<sup>4</sup> Rob De Wijk, *NATO on the Brink of the New Millennium: the battle for consensus* (Brassey's Atlantic Commentaries, Herndon, Virginia, 1997), p. 83.

<sup>5</sup> Celeste Wallander and Robert Keohane, “Risk, Threat and Security Institutions” in *Power and Governance in a Partially Globalized World* (Routledge-Taylor and Francis Group, New York, 2002), p. 97.

<sup>6</sup> Ryan Hendrickson, “Potential NATO Partners – Political and Military Utility for NATO” in *NATO: The Power of Partnerships*, eds. Håkan Edström, Janne Haaland Matlary, and Magnus Petersson (Palgrave Macmillan, New York; London: 2011), pp. 163-80.

Democratic peace theorists justify the extension of new membership or partnership invitations as a strategy of reinforcement used by NATO to bring about and stabilize political changes inside these new countries, such as the consolidation of the rule of law, democracy, the promotion of human rights, and the modernization of civil-military relations in these nations.<sup>7</sup> This strategy, known as political conditionality, is strictly rewards-based, i.e., it means that if the new members or partners comply with the expectations, they will be rewarded for their behavior by the international organization. NATO has used both invitations for membership and the extension of various partnerships as such rewards.

Previous studies have shown that the transformation of the military establishment, the modernization of civil-military relations, and effective contribution to NATO's overseas operations have been an integral part of NATO's conditionality. As a result, new members were required to undergo significant restructuring and adaptation of their armed forces prior to their admission into the organization.<sup>8</sup> However, existing literature does not provide much insight into how specifically the admission of new members and the introduction of new partnerships affects these nations' decisions to participate more actively in international peacekeeping, counterterrorism, and stabilization efforts. The following section will focus on how political conditionality, specifically the prospects of membership, has contributed to an effective engagement of new participants in peacekeeping, counterterrorism, and humanitarianism.

### **Membership Prospects as Political Conditionality for Participation in International Operations**

When the Partnership for Peace framework was developed in the mid-1990s, every country that joined the program signed an individual Peace Framework Document and was required to submit a Presentation Document. This requirement exemplified NATO's early conditionality for participation in PfP and, as ethnic violence spiked out of control in the 1990s, multinational peacekeeping was recognized as a key area where cooperation was most needed. The scope of these operations remained relatively limited—it primarily included humanitarian aid, peacekeeping, and search and rescue. The first PfP exercise—Cooperative Bridge—took place in Poland in 1994 and included 600 soldiers from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, the Netherlands, Ukraine, UK and the U.S.<sup>9</sup> Gradually, all parties understood the need for diversification and specialization in the forms of cooperation among individual partners as the number of these exercises soared in mid- and late-1990s.

Toward the end of the 1990s, NATO leadership realized that the PfP framework was insufficient to accommodate the aspirations of all participants. In order to distinguish between potential entrants and the rest of the partners, NATO leaders officially introduced the Membership Action Plan (MAP), designed to help aspirant nations prepare for the burdens of membership, review the

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<sup>7</sup> Frank Schimmelfennig, "European Regional Organizations, Political Conditionality, and Democratic Transformation in Eastern Europe," *East European Politics and Societies* 21 (April 2007), p. 126.

<sup>8</sup> Frank Schimmelfennig, *The EU, NATO, and the Integration of Europe: Rules and Rhetoric*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> "Exercise *Cooperative Bridge 94*," 12 September 1994, *NATO Handbook/ NATO e-Library*. [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-8BD9D109-6EB228F2/natolive/news\\_24256.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-8BD9D109-6EB228F2/natolive/news_24256.htm) (accessed December 9, 2011).

progress of every individual applicant, and provide candid feedback.<sup>10</sup> East European states like the three Baltic Republics, Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia used PfP as a stepping stone to join MAP and, thus, upgrade their relationship with NATO in order to receive much desired membership invitations.

Therefore, MAP represented a more sophisticated mechanism of political conditionality introduced by NATO officials to improve the aspirants' transformation and adaptation, but also to stimulate their further commitment toward international peacekeeping, counterterrorism, and humanitarianism. It also indirectly influenced the decision of the potential entrants to participate in international missions due to their expectations to enjoy membership benefits in the future.

Overall, the plan was considered a success as it led to the 2002 Prague Summit (2004) which decided to extend membership invitations to seven countries from Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>11</sup> In the aftermath of the Summit, an interagency team led by Nicholas Burns, the U.S. Ambassador to NATO, found that all of them were making efforts to reform and modernize their defense establishments as outlined in their individual plans. To ensure that all new allies would remain on track with the military reforms, they were asked to submit individual *Timetables for the Completion of Reforms* prior to the signing of Accession Protocols.

The timetables constituted important mechanisms to enforce NATO's political conditionality; they also represented commitments undertaken by the invitees to guide them through the accession process and beyond. These documents also helped inform NATO and the allied parliaments about the status of the applicants' preparedness to meet the responsibilities of membership. Indicators for such preparedness included a commitment to spend a minimum of 2% budget appropriations on defense. Furthermore, NATO explicitly asked the new members to identify the steps that they had undertaken or planned to undertake to reach full interoperability in order to fully participate in overseas operations. These included a number of specific measures by the seven invitees to ensure that connectivity of air space, the availability of secure communications (voice and data), adequate military education, effective training, and national defense planning systems were set in place at the time of accession. These technical measures were clearly geared toward more effective participation in NATO-led peacekeeping, counterterrorism, and stabilization missions.

Therefore, key events such as the introduction of PfP and MAP, and the extension membership invitations led to these nations' higher contributions in the subsequent years. For example, PfP mobilized additional support for peacekeeping operations in the former Yugoslavia between 1995 and 1997. Nonetheless, after 1998 NATO partners became fairly inactive on the international arena. The decisions of the Washington Summit (1999) and the Prague Summit (2002) once again catalyzed additional overseas troop deployments by these countries in 2000 and 2003 as shown in Figure 1 below.

NATO Heads of State and Government agreed at the Prague Summit that three of the MAP participants (Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia) were not prepared to meet the responsibilities of membership. Nonetheless, they were encouraged to continue with reforms geared toward transformation of their civil and military institutions, the implementation of the rule of law, and the improvement of their cooperation with international institutions as required by NATO's

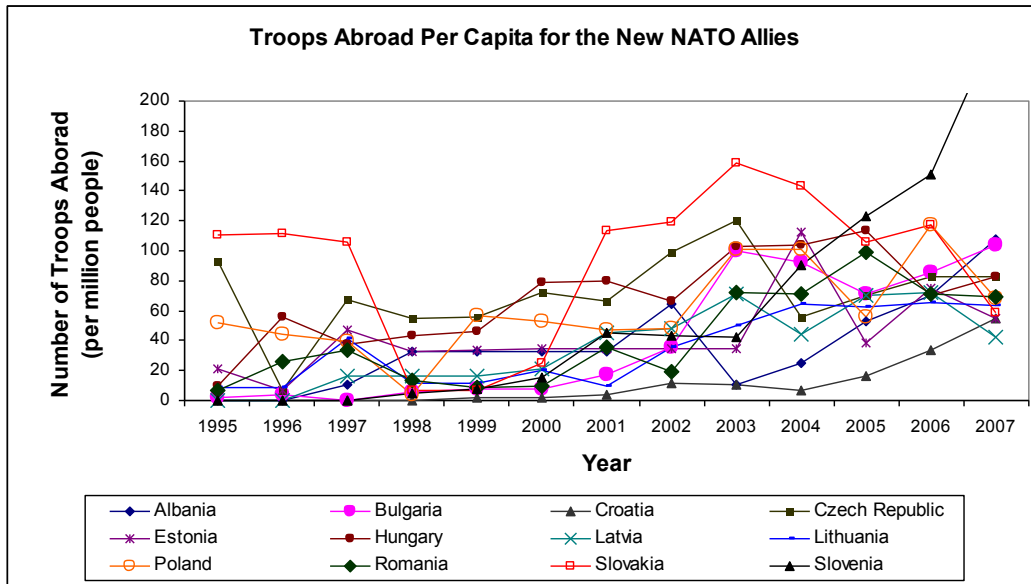
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<sup>10</sup> "An Alliance for the 21st Century," Washington Summit Communiqué, issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington, D.C. on 24th April 1999, <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-064e.htm>. (accessed June 5, 2007).

<sup>11</sup> The seven invitees in 2002 were Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

conditionality for membership. Albanians, Croatians and Macedonians remained active in the international arena and their contributions for NATO-led efforts in Afghanistan surged. As a result, Albania and Croatia's efforts were rewarded with membership invitations at the subsequent NATO Summit in Bucharest (2008), while Macedonia was the only holdout, due to a Greek veto related to an outstanding dispute over the country's name.

Figure 1: Deployment of Troops Overseas for Twelve Nations That Were Admitted to NATO in 1999, 2004 and 2009 (per million citizens)



Source: *The Military Balance* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies), 1995/96 through 2006/07.

Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, which included all NATO members and PfP partners, was designed to serve as a security forum for dialogue and consultation about political and security-related issues. This multilateral body dealt with cooperation in the areas of peacekeeping operations, arms control and proliferation, defense planning, and policy implementations in the context of regional conflicts, terrorism, emergency planning, and civil-military cooperation.<sup>12</sup> Gradually, new tiers of partnerships surfaced within EAPC allowing for a flexible framework of cooperation. Thus, the new Council effectively comprised of four distinct categories of partners: (1) Russia and Ukraine who upgraded their relations within the framework of the new bilateral Councils; (2) seven EAPs whose interest in cooperating with NATO varied substantially and who would be offered Individual Partnership Action Plans<sup>13</sup>; (3) six “advanced” West European NATO partners (Austria, Finland, Ireland, Malta, Sweden and Switzerland); and (4) six relatively inactive PfP nations with practically

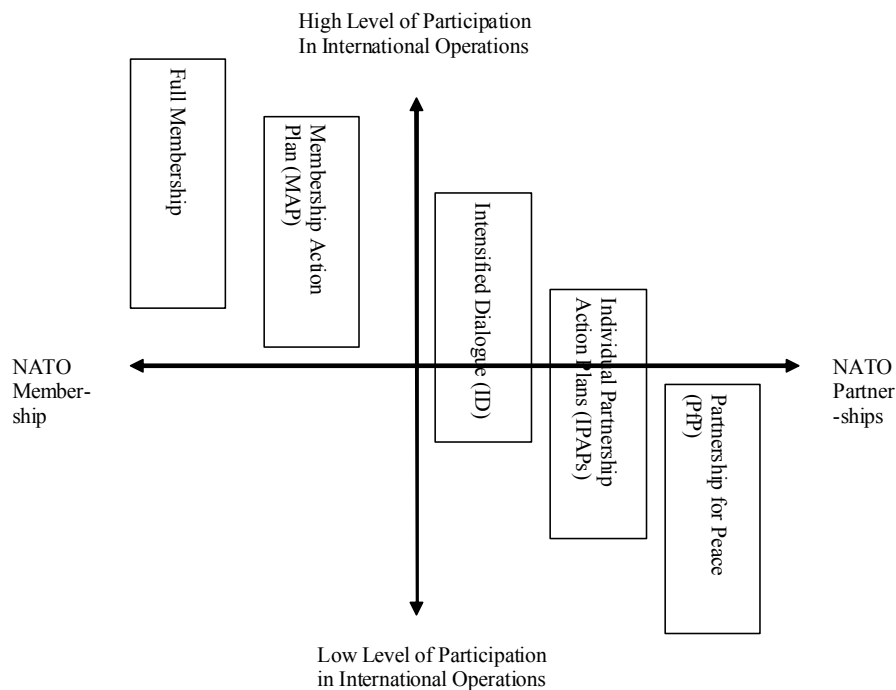
<sup>12</sup> Jeffrey Simon, “Partnership for Peace: Charting a Course for a New Era,” *Strategic Forum* 206 (March 2004), p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> The seven IPAP nations joined during different periods of time and included Armenia (December 2005), Azerbaijan (May 2005), Bosnia (January 2008), Georgia (October 2004), Kazakhstan (January 2006), Moldova (May 2006), and Montenegro (January 2008).

no intention in developing individual partnerships (Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan).<sup>14</sup>

The Prague Summit fundamentally revamped NATO’s partnerships in several ways: First, the partnerships with Russia and Ukraine were upgraded. The new permanent NATO-Russia Council built on the goals and principles of the 1997 Founding Act. In July that same year, the alliance signed the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Ukraine. The dialog with Russia on the issues of counterterrorism was regarded especially promising, while for Kiev the partnership presented an opportunity to deepen ties with the alliance. Second, the new format of the partnerships with Russia and Ukraine was followed by the introduction of the Individual Partnership Action Plans (IPAPs). IPAPs were geared toward nations that had intent to deepen their relationship with NATO but ultimately were unfit to pass the membership conditionalities any time soon. Georgia was the first partner to join the new program in 2004, followed by Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, and Moldova.<sup>15</sup> In 2008, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro decided to pursue participation in IPAPs. Additionally, the new individual plans introduced an explicit expectation that the partners would participate more actively in the allied efforts in Afghanistan. NATO encouraged these countries to identify their own specific areas of contributions and provided guidance for military reforms as needed.<sup>16</sup>

Figure 2: Types of Euro-Atlantic Partnerships and Participation in Peacekeeping, Counterterrorism and Humanitarianism



<sup>14</sup> Jeffrey Simon had offered previous classifications of the PfP participants. For further details see Simon, “Partnership,” p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> Georgia is probably the only notable difference in this respect as Tbilisi joined IPAP with clear intention to pursue NATO membership. The alliance, on the other hand, remained cognizant of the fact that Georgia was locked into the unresolved conflicts over Abkhazia and South Ossetia and offered Tbilisi IPAP as an alternative to MAP.

<sup>16</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plans,” *NATO Handbook*. <http://www.nato.int/issues/ipap/index.html>. (accessed June 1, 2011).

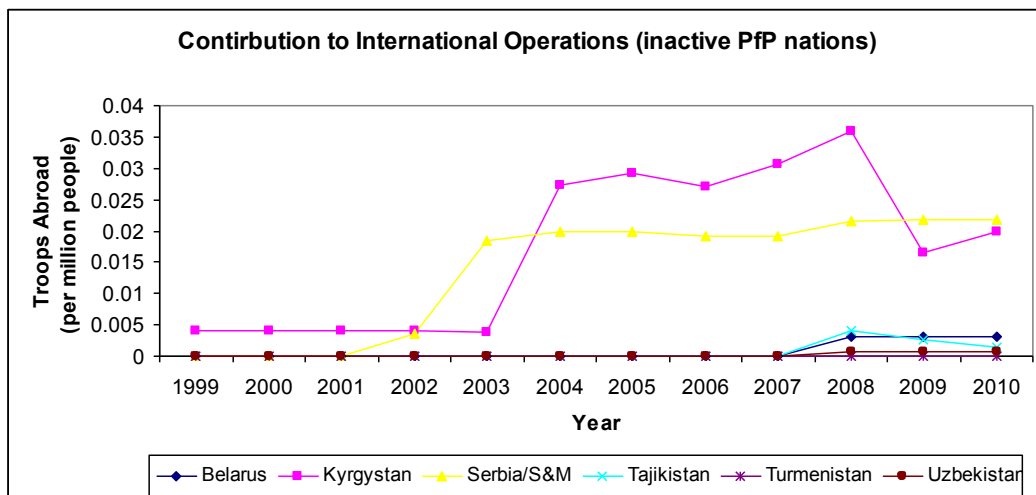


Finally, a new partnership called *Intensified Dialogue* that included Bosnia, Georgia, and Montenegro, was introduced in 2005 an intermediate step toward Euro-Atlantic integration. The *Dialogue* also facilitated joint planning, improved interoperability between allies and their partners, and ensured higher partners' participation in joint operations. Nonetheless, this form of partnership was cautious about offering any immediate prospects for membership and, therefore, has had a more limited impact on the partners' decisions to deploy troops overseas.

The overwhelming evidence suggests that participation of NATO's Euro-Atlantic partners in international peacekeeping, counterterrorism and humanitarian operations is linked to the level of institutionalized cooperation between these nations and the alliance as summarized in Figure 2. For example, full members and MAP nations that await membership invitation are the most likely contributors to NATO's overseas missions. Furthermore, participants in *Intensified Dialogue* like Georgia, Montenegro and Ukraine are somewhat likely to participate in international operations. Alternatively, IPAP nations and other PfP participants (with the exception of the "advanced" West European NATO partners) are somewhat unlikely to join NATO-led international operations. Therefore, partners' willingness to maintain enhanced relations with the alliance, determines their varying degree of contributions to international operations.

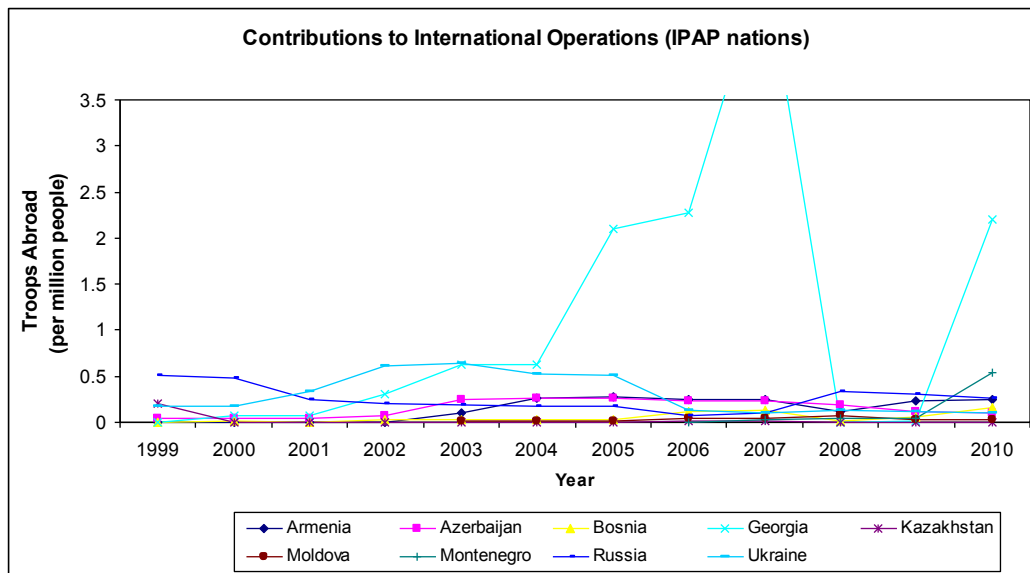
Nations that participate in PfP but have not upgraded their relationship with the alliance are less likely to participate in international peacekeeping, counterterrorism and humanitarianism, as shown in the cases of Belarus, Serbia and the Central Asian republics (Figure 3). Kyrgyzstan and Serbia's decisions to deploy troops under a UN mandate in Burundi, Liberia and Sudan (a total of 15-20 civilian observers) is unrelated to their participation in MAP and has minimal effect on international peacekeeping. Alternatively, individualized partnerships (e.g., *Intensified Dialogue* or MAP) are much more likely to contribute to international efforts. This tendency is illustrated by the cases of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Ukraine, whose participation in Afghanistan and Iraq peaked between 2004 and 2009 following the introduction of the IPAPs and *Intensified Dialogue* (see Figure 4).

Figure 3: Deployment of Troops Overseas by NATO's PfP Nations (per million citizens)



Source: *The Military Balance* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies), 1999/2000 through 2009/10.

Figure 4: Deployment of Troops Overseas by NATO's IPAP Participants (per million citizens)



Source: *The Military Balance* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies), 1999/2000 through 2009/10.

Furthermore, the Individual Partnership Action Plans constitute a transitional category that offered a substantial degree of flexibility to the participants but lacked unity of objectives. For example, Georgia's entry into the program in 2004 was regarded a waiting room preceding Tbilisi's admission into MAP and an opportunity to enhance the country's membership bid. As a result, the country participation in Iraq and Afghanistan increased exponentially between 2005 and 2008 as shown in Figure 4. For Azerbaijan, IPAP presented an alternative to MAP because Baku was considered ineligible for membership in the foreseeable future due to its substantial democratic deficit. Armenia, which joined the program shortly after Azerbaijan, had not declared any expressed intentions to pursue NATO membership in the near future, and have decided to maintain low overseas troop deployments. Azerbaijan and Armenia have no realistic chances of entering MAP any time as long as both nations remain locked in the frozen conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. Albeit for different reasons, the same observation applies to the cases of Bosnia, Kazakhstan and Moldova. Ukraine's fluctuating performance can be attributed the unstable domestic environment and will be discussed separately.

### Unresolved Disputes with Neighboring Countries as a Restraint for Membership and a Disincentive for Participation in International Operations

The cases of Macedonia and Georgia illustrate that while enhanced cooperation tends to stimulate the partners' involvement in international operations, this process is further complicated by the presence of unresolved ethnic, political or territorial disputes with neighboring countries. For example, the dispute between Greece and Macedonia dates back to the early 1990s when Athens refused to recognize this newly independent nation under its constitutional name, the Republic of Macedonia. The argument behind Greece's staunch opposition to Macedonia's constitutional name

is that the name “Macedonia” is historically inseparable from Greek culture, ever since the ancient Kingdom of Macedonia which gave rise to Alexander the Great. Despite the fact that the two neighboring nations concluded an Interim Agreement in 1995, no permanent settlement has been reached since then. As a result, Greece used its veto power in 2008 to block Macedonia’s admission into NATO and to halt any further negotiations with the EU. The North Atlantic Council reluctantly accepted Greece’s veto despite vehement protests by the United States and other allies. In response, Macedonia filed a lawsuit in the International Court of Justice arguing that Greece’s decision is illegal because it fails to comply with previous agreements between the two neighbors. This decision to postpone Macedonia’s invitation into the alliance once again indicates the complexity of membership conditionality. The recent judgment of the International Court of Justice which found that, by using its veto power, Greece essentially failed to comply with its obligations under international law, does not alter significantly the bargaining dynamics.<sup>17</sup> U.S. Ambassador in Skopje Paul Wohlers signaled once again that the Macedonia’s admission to NATO must be preceded by the settlement of its outstanding dispute with Greece in a non-coercive manner.<sup>18</sup>

Similar to Macedonia, Georgia’s further integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures is practically paralyzed by its outstanding dispute with neighboring Russia over the break-away republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Georgia was among the first to join PfP in March 1994, but it indicated no membership aspirations in the 1990s when governments in Tbilisi attempted to carefully balance between a pro-Russian and pro-Western foreign policy. The Rose Revolution brought a profound change of Tbilisi’s foreign policy orientation. The reformist government led by President Mikhael Saakashvili took a course that pursued fundamental institutional reforms, improved transparency, reduced corruption, and sought closer integration into Euro-Atlantic structures. Recognizing Russia’s concerns, NATO acted cautiously and offered Tbilisi an Individual Partnership Action Plan in 2004.

The introduction of the IPAP was followed by large-scale military cooperation between Georgia and the United States. By and large the extensive training programs of the Georgian military were funded and supervised by Washington and the accomplishments of this cooperation were significant. Prior to 2002, the state of Georgia’s armed forces was deplorable—they were a collection of loosely organized, poorly disciplined units with corrupt leadership and limited modern combat skills.<sup>19</sup> With the help of U.S. military aid, Georgia’s participation in international operations increased dramatically—within five years Tbilisi had 2,000 troops deployed in the cities of Tikrit, Baghdad and Al Kut in Iraq. Furthermore, after 2006 this former Soviet Republic became the largest contributing nation among all IPAP nations to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan and second largest per capita contributor (after the U.S.) in international operations among all NATO allies and partners.<sup>20</sup> Georgia’s forces in Afghanistan were not merely conducting stationary

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<sup>17</sup> Application of the Interim Accord of 13 September 1995 (The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia v. Greece), *The International Court of Justice*, 5 December 2011, <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/142/16827.pdf>. (accessed December 5, 2011).

<sup>18</sup> “Wohlers: First the Name; NATO Membership will Follow Then” (Волерс: Прво името, па членство на Македонија во НАТО), *Denvnik Daily*, Skopje, 5 December 2011.

<sup>19</sup> Robert E. Hamilton, “Georgian Military Reform—An Alternative View,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, 3 February 2009. [http://csis.org/files/media/isis/pubs/090203\\_hamilton\\_militaryreform.pdf](http://csis.org/files/media/isis/pubs/090203_hamilton_militaryreform.pdf). (accessed June 17, 2011).

<sup>20</sup> Georgia deployed on average about 280 soldiers per million in overseas operations between 2006 and 2008. During the same period the United States maintained about 650 military personnel per million, Britain and Slovenia had approximately 220-250 soldiers; and NATO’s average contribution was 175 soldiers per million people. It is also worth noting that more than half of the allies contributed with less than 100 military personnel per million. For detail see *The Military Balance* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies), 2006/07 through 2009/10.

peacekeeping, but also patrolled high-risk areas in Kabul and participated in full-scale combat operations in the Helmand Province, often with significant U.S. assistance. Tbilisi introduced very few caveats for its troops, which is why U.S. commanders preferred to operate with Georgian units over those from other partners.<sup>21</sup> U.S. military assistance was geared mostly toward the acquisition of capabilities to participate in overseas operations and was specifically intended not to enhance any Georgian capabilities to fight with Russia or other neighboring countries.

As a result, Georgia became a preferred partner and potentially a very strong applicant for future NATO expansion as the country was admitted to *Intensified Dialogue* in September 2006. This new cooperative framework represented recognition of the headway made by this former Soviet Republic. To strengthen its case in favor of NATO membership, Georgia held a referendum on January 5, 2008, in which the voters backed its membership bid with overwhelming approval of 72.5%.<sup>22</sup> Georgia drastically increased defense spending to more than five percent of the nation's total budget as a part of its efforts to restructure and improve its armed forces.<sup>23</sup> The new resources tremendously helped modernize the army with training and equipment that meet NATO standards.

Nonetheless, the status of the two break-away republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia once again became a major obstacle for its future Euro-Atlantic integration.<sup>24</sup> After the break up of the Soviet Union, the majority of the population in these autonomous regions remained loyal to Moscow and wanted to eventually join the Russian Federation. Multiple diplomatic attempts by President Saakashvili to reach a comprehensive agreement reached a stalemate. In the summer of 2008 Georgia began a military operation in South Ossetia, aimed at repelling the Russian tanks approaching the conflict zone in the break-away republic. Russia responded immediately with a full scale military invasion in Georgia by air and land, and even launched a cyber attack against online media starting August 8, 2008.<sup>25</sup> Independent reports have pointed out that both the Russian and Georgian sides had contributed to the reciprocal escalation of tension prior to the outbreak of the conflict.<sup>26</sup> The Russian assault was short-lived, and peace was brokered within a week with the mediation of France and the United States.

The Georgian-Russian conflict of August 2008 had a major impact on Tbilisi's relations with NATO and its future integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures. First, the war substantially decreased Georgia's chances for NATO membership prior to a final settlement of the status of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The West expressed sympathy with Georgia's position regarding the status of Abkhazia and Ossetia, but Washington and Brussels recognized that Tbilisi's progress toward Euro-Atlantic integration would be contingent upon improved relations with Moscow. In fact, the settlement of all territorial disputes with aspirants' neighbors has always been a core principle that guided NATO's expansion in 1999, 2004 and 2009. Second, the Russians, who have always disapproved Georgia's aspirations to join NATO, were quite pleased with this outcome as it provided Moscow with a *de facto* veto power to block Georgia's further Euro-Atlantic integration.

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<sup>21</sup> Hamilton, "Georgian," 3 February 2009.

<sup>22</sup> "Georgia Referendum to Include NATO Membership Question," *Agence France-Presse*, Tbilisi, 26 November 2007 and "Russia's NATO Ambassador: Georgia Unqualified to Join NATO," *Agence France-Presse*, Moscow, 18 January 2008.

<sup>23</sup> "Georgia to Raise 2007 Defense Spending by \$200 mln to \$600 mln," *Global Security Online*, 29 August 2007.

<sup>24</sup> Abkhazia and South Ossetia are located in Georgia's North and Northwest close to the border with Russia. Both entities broke away from Tbilisi in 1992 and sought protection for independence from Russia.

<sup>25</sup> Johanna Popjanevski, "From Sukhumi to Tskhinvali: the Path to War in Georgia," in *The Guns of August 2008* eds. Svante Cornell and Frederick Starr (M. E. Sharpe, New York, 2009), pp. 150-2.

<sup>26</sup> Alima Bissenova, "Foes Say Saakashvili Distorted War Report," *Central Asia-Caucuses Institute Analyst*, 14 October 2009.

More importantly, the 2008 war had a major impact on the reforms of Georgia's armed forces. The loss of the war to Russia appears to have been a catalyst for re-armament, but also for significant doctrinal and personnel reorganization within the Georgian armed forces. As a result, the government in Tbilisi focused on completing military reforms at home and decided to minimize its overseas deployments following the withdrawal of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade from Iraq. The war with Russia inadvertently undercut Georgia's commitment to international peacekeeping as most of the military resources were re-directed toward territorial defense. The country once again returned to international operations in April 2010 when the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade was deployed in Afghanistan, where the Georgian contingent carried out a full spectrum of security operations side by side with the U.S. military.<sup>27</sup> As long as NATO membership remains distant, Georgian leadership feels that current status quo creates disincentives for Tbilisi to deploy larger contingents overseas in support of NATO- or UN-led missions.

### **Weak Domestic Support as a Restraint on Participation in International Operations**

Finally, strong public support at home may be a decisive factor for partners' future Euro-Atlantic integration. The level of public support for membership varied among the twelve new allies. Nonetheless, a wide consensus emerged among their political elites who were able to persuade the general public about the utility of NATO membership and the long-term benefits from active participation in international operations. Ukraine, however, presents a specific case of cooperation with NATO that departs from the general patterns of Euro-Atlantic integration in Central and Eastern Europe. This country's foreign and security policy has been complicated, in part, by the heavy divisions between the pro-Western and pro-Russian camps that reflect geographical, political, social, and ethnic boundaries. These divisions contributed to highly polarized political elites on key issues, such as national security policy and alliance orientation, and effectively paralyzed the nation's Euro-Atlantic integration and also led to a significant drop of Ukrainian participation in international operations.

Ukraine enjoyed a special relationship with NATO in the years after the collapse of the Soviet Union. As previously discussed, Kiev was a founding member of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), as well as an active participant in the Partnership for Peace (PfP). In 1997 Ukraine and NATO signed a Charter on a Distinctive Partnership and five years later a NATO-Ukraine Action Plan was introduced at the Prague Summit. Its purpose was "to identify clearly Ukraine's strategic objectives and priorities in pursuit of its aspirations towards full integration into the Euro-Atlantic security structures."<sup>28</sup>

The Orange Revolution of 2004 changed this dynamic when the new pro-Western President, Prime Minister, and Speaker of the Parliament sent a letter to Brussels officially asking NATO to accept the country into the Membership Action Plan as a first step on the path to full membership. However, this step was met with disapproval and skepticism at home by the pro-Russian opposition and a majority of the Ukrainian public. Officials in Kiev and Brussels agreed that the country needed a thorough public debate before its entry into the alliance.<sup>29</sup> The political change in 2004 also

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<sup>27</sup> "Participation in International Missions," Webpage of the Ministry of Defense of Georgia. <http://www.mod.gov.ge/index.php?page=-10&Id=34&lang=1> (accessed June 17, 2011).

<sup>28</sup> "Introduction to the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan," NATO Handbook, Brussels, Belgium.

<sup>29</sup> Sabina Zawadzki And Yuri Kulikov, "Ukraine Says Ready for NATO Membership Steps," *Reuters*, 16 January 2008, <http://www.defensenews.com/>. (accessed January 21, 2008).

brought new momentum to Ukraine's preparedness to participate in international peacekeeping, counterterrorism, and humanitarian operations. The Yushchenko government adopted a New Strategic Defense Doctrine and a New Military Doctrine, in which interoperability with NATO forces and command structures was identified as a key area of defense reform so that Kiev could meet adequately the needs of the UN and other international organizations.<sup>30</sup> Upon the advice of its Euro-Atlantic partners, Kiev began to explore its comparative advantages in certain niche capabilities such as Joint Rapid Reaction Forces (JRRF), Main Defense Force, and Strategic Reserves.<sup>31</sup>

Unlike the other East European societies, the Ukrainian political elite was never able to forge a consensus on its future NATO membership. As a result, the public opposition to NATO membership steadily increased in the years following the Orange Revolution as the ratio between opponents and supporters of NATO membership reached 2:1 in 2009. This high level of disapproval for NATO membership stands in sharp contrast to the rest of Eastern Europe, where improved integration with the Euro-Atlantic structures led to increased public support for NATO membership.<sup>32</sup> As a result, Ukrainian political leadership felt compelled to draw down its military contributions to international operations. The presidential elections in February 2010 brought to power the pro-Russian and anti-NATO candidate Victor Yanukovich from the Party of the Regions, who withdrew Kiev's application for accession into the MAP. This wavering relationship between Ukraine and NATO, coupled with the lack of consensus at home and indecisiveness to move forward with the issue of membership, adversely affected military reforms and constrained the nation's future participation in international peacekeeping, crisis response, and humanitarian operations.

## Conclusion

The cases of Georgia and Ukraine illustrate how NATO's individual partnerships could effectively engage the partner countries to increase their international deployments in support of various missions led by international organizations or multinational coalitions. NATO persuaded Kiev to invest significant efforts into "strategic" peacekeeping, thus boosting the nation's international deployments between 2000 and 2006. Georgia, on the other hand, took advantage of U.S. military assistance after 2005 to improve its peacekeeping capabilities, thus becoming a major contributor in Afghanistan.

Nevertheless, sources of domestic opposition or unsettled disputes with neighbors can effectively paralyze the improvement of relations between the alliance and its partners, which ultimately reduces the partners' participation in various NATO and UN-led overseas missions. In the case of Ukraine, the unpopularity of NATO membership dissuaded the Yanukovich government from further engagement in NATO-led international operations. Similarly, Georgia's active involvement in international peacekeeping surged after the United States started providing military aid and mentorship. However, the conflict with Moscow in 2008 convinced the military and political

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<sup>30</sup> Deborah Sanders, "Ukraine after the Orange Revolution: Can It Complete Military Transformation and Join the U.S.-led War on Terrorism?" *Strategic Studies Institute* (U.S. Army War College, October 2006), p. 14.

<sup>31</sup> Green Book on Ukrainian Defense Policy (Зелена книга з Питань Оборонної Політики України), Kiev 2010, p. 24.

<sup>32</sup> Upon the accession of the new allies from Eastern Europe the ratio between NATO supporters and opponents in these nations was usually 2:1 and sometimes even 3:1. The consensus among political parties certainly contributed to the increased public support for membership and military reforms.

leadership in Tbilisi that traditional territorial defense should once again remain a core priority in the Caucasus.

These observations bear several theoretical and policy implications. First, the security guarantees extended by NATO membership represent the highest reward for prospective members. Thus, membership prospects present robust stimuli for partner nations to adapt their armed forces by the organization's standards and participate actively in its overseas operations. Second, partnerships with international security organizations can be effective tools in engaging new partners, persuading nations to participate in international military and political efforts and, ultimately, building broader international coalitions for military and civilian campaigns. At the same time, however, NATO partnerships have limited mechanisms at hand to influence the participation of non-members, especially countries with divided societies and political elites, competing allegiances at home, and stubborn neighbors. Third, applying a one-size-fits-all approach to all NATO partnerships, nonetheless, would be inappropriate and impractical. While EAPC and PfP present a viable framework for cooperation, only individual partnerships customized to meet each country's needs for cooperation can successfully persuade partners to cooperate more actively with international organizations. Finally, on the policy side, NATO's regional or global partnerships can be useful and effective tools for engaging new partners in a meaningful "intensified" dialogue. Scholars and policy makers should be cognizant of the limitations emanating from this form of security cooperation and, therefore, have realistic expectations about its success in the future.

# Transatlantic Defense Troubles

*Richard Weitz*

In his last major policy speech as Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates on June 10 made his most public rebuke ever of Europe's failure to provide adequate defense resources in international missions. Before a meeting of the influential Security and Defense Agenda in Brussels, Gates complained that NATO had finally become what he had long feared: a "two-tiered alliance" divided between those few allies that engage in "hard" combat missions and the overwhelming majority of those members that can only contribute extensively to "soft" non-combat humanitarian, peacekeeping, and development missions. Gates noted that proposed NATO-wide reforms and efficiency measures would at best have a limited impact; ultimately, our European allies would need to spend more on defense. He cited the Libyan campaign as providing ample evidence of the problems arising from lackluster European defense spending.<sup>1</sup>

During his first visit to Europe as Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta echoed much of what his predecessor had said four months earlier. Speaking at an event hosted by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace on October 5 in Brussels, Panetta recognized the contributions of NATO members in the Libya campaign but pointed out the "significant shortfall in capabilities" of NATO allies, specifically citing the shortage of supplies and munitions that "forced the United States to sell millions of dollars of ammunition, repair parts, fuel, technical assistance and other support items simply to keep the operation going." He further went on to state that "nowhere was the gap more obvious than in the critical enabling capabilities, refueling tankers, and the provision of ISR platforms...without these capabilities Libya Operation would have had a very difficult time getting off the ground or being sustained." Panetta expressed his concern that NATO would not be able to again sustain operations such as Libya and Afghanistan without the U.S. taking on even more of a burden, something he emphatically stated would not occur when he said that "as for the United States, many might assume that the U.S. defense budget is so large that it can absorb and cover alliance shortcomings, but make no mistake about it; we are facing dramatic cuts with real implications for alliance capability."<sup>2</sup>

European NATO members suffer from low personnel levels and a lack of adequate material. Furthermore, each member's armed forces have poor interoperability with those of other members. A lack of specialization creates excessive redundancies. Though plans have been put forward to address these issues, they are rarely implemented, often because of domestic politics. The ongoing financial crisis has led many European states to reduce their defense budgets. Their defense spending has dropped almost 2% annually for a decade, even in the face of continuing NATO operations in Afghanistan.<sup>3</sup> Even without the crisis, European public opinion is frequently against higher defense spending. Often, European governments are keen to preserve their independent defense industries at the expense of greater integration and specialization. As a result, the United States increasingly sees itself as having to fill this funding gap, leading to Gates' complaint of a "two-tiered alliance."

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<sup>1</sup> Speech by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, Brussels, Belgium, U.S. Department of Defense, June 10, 2011, <<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1581>>.

<sup>2</sup> Speech by Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta, Brussels, Belgium, U.S. Department of Defense, October 5, 2011, <<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1618>>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



Though an international alliance, NATO is funded from national governments and so domestic politics plays a crucial role in questions of funding. The largest European NATO members have passed austerity measures and are cutting the size and budget of their armed forces, decreasing future capabilities. There is a risk that Europe would thus become increasingly irrelevant and unable to promote stability even in nearby regions. Defense specialization and collaborations has already been mooted by EU and NATO leaders as a cost-effective way of maintaining European military strength. National interests have often proven to be a stumbling block, however. European militaries are often cumbersome and based around territorial defense. Moves towards expeditionary forces are overdue. NATO itself is currently experiencing a funding gap. Plans to reduce NATO structures will likely cause acrimonious debates among members.

Why is this funding issue such a problem? In his speech, Secretary Gates stressed the injustice and political impossibility of perpetuating a situation in which some NATO members are “apparently willing and eager for American taxpayers to assume the growing security burden left by reductions in European defense budgets.” Gates cited severe capability shortfalls with the NATO missions in Afghanistan and Libya to illustrate how slumping European defense budgets were depriving European militaries of essential capabilities. He lamented how, despite having more than two million military personnel and an aggregate \$300 billion in defense spending, the non-U.S. allies struggled to maintain 25,000 to 45,000 soldiers in the field in Afghanistan. Furthermore, European militaries have consistently proven unable to provide adequate helicopters, transport aircraft, and support assets. As a result of the Obama administration’s surge of forces into the conflict, what had been a genuine coalition effort—with an approximately equal number of American and European troops engaged—became Obama’s War, in which some two thirds of the foreign soldiers fighting against the Taliban are American. The problem is that most European militaries spend excessively on territorial defense capabilities, leaving relatively little to meet global challenges through expeditionary forces. Gates did praise the allies for sustaining the Afghanistan mission for so long—NATO forces have been there for almost a decade and have gradually overcome integration problems, such as the insistence of many governments on limiting how their forces are employed through “national caveats.” But he warned against any “rush to the exits” now that victory was in sight, arguing that the only way to induce the Taliban to negotiate seriously about reconciliation was to convince them that they cannot win on the battlefield.

Gates was even more critical of the NATO effort in Libya, which dominated the previous two days of meetings among the alliance defense ministers. He lamented that, while all the NATO members had voted in favor of Operation Unified Protector, less than half of them had participated in combat missions, and even fewer were engaged in strike operations. In particular, Gates noted that the lack of European intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) aircraft and aerial refueling planes has required the United States to provide the largest share of these planes despite its own strike aircraft disengagement from that mission. And the United States had to make up the ammunition shortfall European air forces began to experience only a few weeks into the campaign. The irony was that, as Gates noted, if ever there was a NATO operation that should be European-led, Libya was it. Operation Unified Protector encountered little domestic political opposition, did not involve NATO ground forces on Libyan territory, and was occurring right in Europe’s own backyard. Yet, while singling out Belgium, Canada, Denmark, and Norway for pulling above their weight in contributing to the air strikes, Gates bewailed that these cases represent a handful of exceptions in an otherwise gloomy picture. According to Gates, “many of those allies sitting on the sidelines do so

not because they do not want to participate, but simply because they can't. The military capabilities simply aren't there."<sup>4</sup>

Gates advanced these ideas in a similar speech on February 23, 2010, warning that European governments' failure to meet their minimum defense spending obligations was creating "funding and capability shortfalls [that] make it difficult to operate and fight together to confront shared threats." Perhaps the main reason for this enduring problem was what Gates had then termed "the demilitarization of Europe—where large swaths of the general public and political class are averse to military force and its attendant risks. He colorfully called this "an impediment to achieving real security and lasting peace in the 21<sup>st</sup> century."<sup>5</sup> It is much easier to mobilize support among European publics for peaceful purposes even if their governments want them to go to war. Panetta reinforced all of these criticisms in his speech in October. While recognizing that Europe took on the brunt of the combat operations "after the United States employed its unique assets in the first week of the conflict," he noted as well that without U.S. supplies, especially ammunition and ISR platforms, the operation could not have been sustained.<sup>6</sup>

Since then, many European defense budgets have fallen even further while that of the United States has until recently been on the ascent. Indeed, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) calculates that total military expenditure in Europe in 2010 was \$382 billion – a 2.8% decrease from 2009.<sup>7</sup> Although this figure is 11.9% higher than in 2001, much of that increase can be attributed to the spending on combat operations in Afghanistan and the 21.9% increase in military expenditures by the United Kingdom in that same period<sup>8</sup> – a trend unlikely to continue in light of the cuts already being evoked by the Strategic Defense and Security Review (SDSR) instituted by the coalition government. If the SDSR will prove to be the norm for larger European members, the situation could deteriorate even more drastically due to the large cuts in the smaller countries such as Bulgaria (28%), Latvia (26%), Estonia (23%), and Albania, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, and Slovakia (all more than 10%).<sup>9</sup>

According to NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, during the Cold War the United States and the other NATO members spent roughly equal sums on defense, whereas the United States currently accounts for 75 percent of all NATO defense spending, though the massive \$1.34 trillion U.S. budget deficit could soon force some reductions in U.S. defense spending.<sup>10</sup> Since the end of the Cold War, defense spending by the European NATO countries has fallen by almost 20 percent, while their combined GDP has risen by around 55 percent. This inverse relationship between military spending and GDP growth portends poorly for the future. Rasmussen does not believe that NATO lacked military capabilities during the Libya operation, but that any shortfalls were primarily due to political, rather than, military constraints. However, Secretary General

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid. See also Camille Grand, "Libya Campaign Shows Need to Re-Think the Transatlantic Link," European Institute, June 2011, <http://www.europeaninstitute.org/EA-June-2011/libya-campaign-show-need-to-re-think-the-transatlantic-link.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Burns, "Gates Urges Europe to Bolster NATO Capability," *Boston Globe*, February 24, 2010, <[http://articles.boston.com/2010-02-24/news/29334386\\_1\\_nato-alliance-european-members-defense-secretary-robert-gates](http://articles.boston.com/2010-02-24/news/29334386_1_nato-alliance-european-members-defense-secretary-robert-gates)>.

<sup>6</sup> Speech by Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta

<sup>7</sup> Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Yearbook 2011: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, 186.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Anders Fogh Rasmussen, "Building Security in an Age of Austerity," 2011 Munich Security Conference, February 4, 2011, reprinted at <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions\\_70400.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_70400.htm)>.

Rasmussen did acknowledge that if the precipitating downward trends in European defense budgets continue at the current pace, that it would be difficult to envision how Europe would maintain enough military capability for a similar scenario as in Libya.<sup>11</sup>

This paper shows how NATO members have been struggling to overcome these problems of decreasing collective capabilities due to declining spending on troops and equipment as well as less than desirable interoperability and specialization. The allied governments clearly recognize these problems, try to address them through collective policy initiatives, and have demonstrated some progress in certain areas. But this article shows how many of their plans to reduce these gaps are uncoordinated and incompletely executed. Many of the recent cuts have been occurring with little coordination among the states. Often a country will announce a reduction without even informing NATO allies in advance, let alone soliciting their views on their plans.<sup>12</sup> The European governments have also been cutting capabilities without making much effort to preserve essential capabilities. The text ends with some recommendations for further progress—or at least damage limitation. For example, the allies need to ensure that, if they prune essential capabilities, these will remain available with partners—at least transatlantic ones if not within Europe.

Even so, several independent variables are driving this widening gap in transatlantic defense spending and related problems—such as declining European influence in global affairs—and making it difficult for the commonly prescribed solutions to overcome it. These variables include Europe's deepening financial crisis, limited public support for sustaining defense expenditures at the expense of welfare spending, domestic politics and political processes that make it difficult for leaders to resist these popular sentiments (especially during times of economic crises), and the ability of special interest groups such as defense companies and labor unions to promote inefficient defense industrial practices that allocate large portions of military spending to employment and industrial policy concerns. Nationalism and sovereignty concerns also work against greater defense specialization within the alliance. Finally, the willingness of the United States to pick up the slack and sustain high levels of defense spending (and if necessary bail out allied militaries as in Libya) combined with “buy America” defense procurement policies that further weaken transatlantic defense integration reinforces these problems of the sub-optimal allocation of defense resources.

### **Transatlantic Capability Shortfalls**

Although Gates focused on the current NATO missions in Afghanistan and Libya in his Brussels speech, the capabilities shortfall problem spans a range of Alliance issues. The deep defense budget cuts adopted by many NATO members recently, on top of years of insufficient military spending, call into question whether the Alliance can maintain and develop the expanding capabilities called for by the 2010 Strategic Concept, which lists a growing range of security challenges requiring an Allied response. The November 2010 NATO heads-of-state Summit in Lisbon that adopted the Concept also approved a so-called Lisbon package of priority capability needs. These ten critical capabilities—ranging from missile and cyber defenses to improved protection against improvised explosive devices in Afghanistan—aim to bolster the Alliance's ability to address global threats. For example, NATO's newly expanded cyber mission will require significant, accelerated, and efficient

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<sup>11</sup> Anders Fogh Rasmussen, “The Atlantic Alliance in Austere Times,” *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2011).

<sup>12</sup> Julianne Smith, Principal Director (Europe and NATO), Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy), presentation on “European Defense Trends,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 29, 2011, <http://csis.org/event/european-defense-trends>.

modernization among alliance members to guarantee security across communications, military, and energy networks. In addition, the development and deployment of the NATO-wide system to protect European populations from missile attacks from Iran and other rogue states may prove uncertain given that equally important projects are already encountering funding difficulties. Furthermore, sustaining NATO's nuclear capabilities will require the Alliance to maintain a means to deliver those nuclear weapons it decides to retain. Europe's fleet of expensive dual-capable aircraft able to drop U.S. nuclear bombs has reached the end of its operational life and must now be replaced with new delivery systems.

On October 19, 2010, the British government released its Strategic Defense and Security Review. If implemented as described, it will cut military personnel by ten percent, scrap forty percent of the army's artillery and tanks, withdraw all British troops from Germany within ten years, force the early retirement of the aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal and the Harrier jump jets, forego the new Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft, delay construction of a new fleet of Trident nuclear submarines, and eliminate 25,000 civilian jobs in the Defense Ministry. Prime Minister David Cameron described the proposal as an effort to streamline and modernize the "overstretched, under-equipped and ill-prepared" armed forces.<sup>13</sup> Altogether the military spending cuts amount to an approximate eight percent reduction in overall military expenditures and are one component in Cameron's promise to eliminate more than \$130 billion in government expenditures by 2015. As pointed out by critics, the decommissioning of the Royal Navy's only aircraft carrier nine years before its replacement comes online makes Great Britain virtually unable to project military power to meet its own strategic needs without significant American support.<sup>14</sup>

British austerity measures are neither unique nor the most severe being considered by NATO's European members as their governments struggle to overcome individual and collective financial crises. In late October 2010, then-German Defense Minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg announced plans to reduce defense ministry staff from 3,300 to 1,600 and troop levels from 250,000 to 180,000, with a final decision to be made by January 2011.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, France has announced plans to curtail outlays by \$1.77 billion over the next three years and Italy is planning to cut its defense budget by nearly ten percent.<sup>16</sup> Elsewhere, Spain has postponed the procurement of a new Armored Fighting Vehicle, and the Netherlands has reduced its planned purchase of new F-35 Joint Strike Fighters from 85 to 50.<sup>17</sup> Smaller countries like Denmark are also following suit, with plans to cut \$500 million by 2014.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> John F. Burns, "Britain Announces Severe Military Cutbacks." *New York Times*, October 19, 2010, <<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/20/world/europe/20britain.html?scp=9&sq=nato%20austerity&st=cse>>.

<sup>14</sup> Tony Karon, "Britain's Defense Cuts: Grim Portent for U.S. Military?" *Time*, October 21, 2010, <<http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,2026961,00.html>>.

<sup>15</sup> "Germany Undertakes Major Military Restructuring." Bloomberg, October 26, 2010, <<http://www.businessweek.com/ap/financialnews/D9J3AP580.htm>>.

<sup>16</sup> James Joyner, "NATO in an Age of Austerity." World Politics Review, October 26, 2010. <<http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/6839/nato-in-an-age-of-austerity>>

<sup>17</sup> All data from "NATO'S Defense Budgets 2011," Atlantic Council of the United States, November 19, 2010, <[http://www.acus.org/files/ISP/111910\\_ACUS\\_Kordosova\\_NATOBudget.pdf](http://www.acus.org/files/ISP/111910_ACUS_Kordosova_NATOBudget.pdf)>.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

## Best Laid Plans?

Europeans concerned about falling into strategic irrelevance due to a lack of military power can easily point to the 1998 St. Malo Declaration between Britain and France, which inaugurated the European Security and Defense Policy. It declared that: “The Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises.” The declaration further called for “strengthened armed forces that can react rapidly to the new risks, and which are supported by a strong and competitive European defense industry and technology.”<sup>19</sup> Despite the passage of more than a decade since the two EU members with the largest defense budgets issued this declaration, the EU has made little progress in developing a collective military capacity.

At the September 2010 informal meeting of EU defense ministers in Ghent, French Defense Minister Hervé Morin warned his colleagues that Europeans needed to pool their defense capabilities more effectively or risk Europe “gradually becoming a protectorate - 50 years from now we'll become a pawn in the balance between the new powers and we'll be under a joint dominion of China and America.”<sup>20</sup> Morin has long been pressing EU governments to make defense a more important priority, telling one interviewer a few years ago that having a common defense policy was at least as important to the EU as having a common currency.<sup>21</sup> At Ghent, Morin argued that, without sufficient military capability, Europe could not exert significant influence in the world. He was particularly concerned that Europe was neglecting the key interest of maintaining stability in Africa, where Islamist militancy was on the rise, often in countries that were separated from Europe merely by the Mediterranean Sea.<sup>22</sup> Morin argued that, notwithstanding their defense cuts, European governments could enhance their overall military capabilities by deepening their defense cooperation. He proposed that all 27 EU states compile a list of their military capabilities and specify those that should be shared and those that should remain under the control of the individual nation states.<sup>23</sup> German Defense Minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg likewise thought that the EU could mitigate the adverse effects of their declining military budgets by agreeing to specialize in different defense areas and by combining their defense procurement orders “to secure better deals.”<sup>24</sup>

Guttenberg proposed a three-step program to promote such defense specialization and collaboration. First, EU members would determine which defense capabilities the individual members had to retain as national assets. Second, they would assess which areas would produce savings if procured collectively. Finally, the members would distribute defense assets among the individual members, which would make these capabilities available to other members if necessary.<sup>25</sup> The EU's foreign affairs chief, Catherine Ashton, attending the UN General Assembly session in New York in September 2010, said that “we [Europe] need to turn the crisis into an opportunity” by “pooling and sharing” the increasingly limited EU defense resources. Ashton proposed that the EU exploit “joint research programmes” for dual-use items, such as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

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<sup>19</sup> “Franco-British Summit: Joint Declaration on European Defense,” Saint-Malo, December 4, 1998, <http://www.atlanticcommunity.org/Saint-Malo%20Declaration%20Text.html>.

<sup>20</sup> David Brunnstrom, “EU Risks Being Pawn of China, US: France,” Reuters, September 24, 2010, <<http://arabnews.com/world/article146152.ece>>.

<sup>21</sup> Mark Beunderman, “French EU Presidency to Push for Defence Integration,” November 13, 2007, <<http://euobserver.com/9/25131>>.

<sup>22</sup> Brunnstrom, “EU Risks Being Pawn.”

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> “EU Defense Ministers Advocate Military Cooperation as Austerity Measure,” Deutsche Welle, September 24, 2010, <<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,6043477,00.html>>.

(UAVs), which could be used to monitor the EU's external borders and in several civilian applications. She also called for making better use of the European Defense Agency to develop new common projects. Ashton further called for pursuing “greater complementarity with NATO” in developing joint defense capabilities, noting that the European Council gave her a clear mandate “to move forward on EU-NATO co-operation in crisis management.”<sup>26</sup> Belgium’s Defense Minister, Pieter De Crem, optimistically noted that the EU was making progress in pursuing collective defense efforts. He specifically cited an agreement signed earlier that month in which Belgium, France, Germany, and the Netherlands agreed to place 200 transport aircraft under a single command. The governments of Spain and Luxembourg are considering joining the project.<sup>27</sup> Crem told reporters that the economic crisis could actually prove beneficial to furthering EU defense cooperation. Using language similar to that of Lady Ashton, Crem said that “we have to turn this into an opportunity to develop cooperation in capabilities.”<sup>28</sup> The head of the liberal grouping in the European Parliament, Guy Verhofstadt, even thought the imperative to cut military budgets had now perhaps created the necessary incentives to take the ultimate step of creating a common European army: “There are two million soldiers in Europe, but only 300,000 in the US, and I think that the American army is more efficient than the European forces. So that's a good reason to start this.”<sup>29</sup> Seeking to make this position more credible, Verhofstadt noted that the EU would simply be replicating the progress it had made in the diplomatic realm in the related area of defense: “We have now a diplomatic service, which is very important, but we also need the other instrument - a common European defense, a common European army.”<sup>30</sup>

Few expect the EU to seek a common European army, but whether the Union can achieve even the more limited proposals to pool defense assets and significantly expand their collective defense procurement efforts is questionable. At Ghent, the ministers asked the European Defense Agency to evaluate how the EU states could enhance their military cooperation and report back at a formal meeting of defense ministers in December.<sup>31</sup> Since its creation in 2004, the Agency has proved unable to promote the bloc's collective defense capabilities, largely due to its miniscule budget of €30 million (\$40.2 million US).<sup>32</sup> The EU defense ministers have consented to Morin’s suggestion to compile lists of national capabilities, but one should not be too optimistic about this initiative. The EU governments have yet to implement earlier agreements to deepen joint military training and education, logistics, and surveillance. They are even less likely to share their even more sensitive combat capabilities. At best, the EU members seem prepared to establish a multinational helicopter wing that could be used for disaster response and other emergencies as well as to support combat operations.<sup>33</sup>

Defense budget cuts could be realized without hampering capabilities as there is much scope for reform within and among the European armed forces. At present, European defense spending is

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<sup>26</sup> “Remarks by High Representative Catherine Ashton at the informal meeting of EU Defence Ministers Ghent, 23 and 24 September 2010,” European Union, September 24, 2010, <[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/116710.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/116710.pdf)>.

<sup>27</sup> “France Wants Europe to Boost Defence Cooperation,” September 27, 2010, <<http://www.euractiv.com/en/foreign-affairs/france-wants-europe-boost-defence-cooperation-news-498152>>.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> “EU Defense Ministers Advocate Military Cooperation.”

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Laurent Thomet, “EU Risks US-China Domination with Military Cuts: France,” Agence-France Presse, September 24, 2010, <[http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iS4DBOnZnocGOMmQ5dQbOO9yO\\_-g](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iS4DBOnZnocGOMmQ5dQbOO9yO_-g)>.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Brunnstrom, “EU Risks Being Pawn.”

misallocated for meeting governments' self-described global security requirements. Funds go overwhelmingly toward paying for personnel and operations and not towards developing or buying weapons.<sup>34</sup> In 2009, more than half of European defense spending went to military personnel, while only one fifth was used to procure equipment. These distributions will not soon change due to the rigidity of many military pay structures. Furthermore, most European militaries still devote most spending for capabilities related to territorial defense—a legacy of their Cold War orientation—rather than for meeting global challenges.<sup>35</sup> Of the two million European active duty forces, only 3-5% of them are readily deployable and sustainable at strategic distances from Europe in complex contingencies, such as stabilization, counter-piracy or peacekeeping missions. These deployments address emerging threats that directly affect Europeans' interests if not necessarily their national frontiers.<sup>36</sup> NATO needs dynamic and flexible forces to address these threats rather than legacy forces that suck up funds but provide relatively little defense capability. At present, only British and French forces are able to join their U.S. counterparts as equals in the initial phase of a war (as in the two invasions of Iraq in 1990 and 2003). The other European powers now generally lack sufficient advanced weapons systems required to support out-of-area missions against a regional power like Iran—and these are precisely the procurement projects likely to be degraded by the recent wave of budget cuts.

At the aggregate level, only 5 (Albania, Britain, France, Greece and the United States) out of 28 NATO members in 2009 met alliance requirements to spend two percent or more of national GDP on defense. Bulgaria and Turkey fell below that threshold after meeting it in 2008.

Yearly military expenditure levels from 2001-2010 highlight the huge disparity between spending levels of the U.S. and NATO. For the U.S., military expenditures totaled (in millions): \$379, \$425, \$484, \$528, \$553, \$562, \$576, \$619, \$669, and \$687 in that time frame. In contrast, NATO Europe accounted for: \$277, \$285, \$286, \$296, \$290, \$293, \$293, \$299, \$308, and \$298.<sup>37</sup>

Without major changes in these conditions, Americans could become even more annoyed at perceived European free riding. The defense cuts could also increase tensions among European countries since some, such as Britain and France, spend much more on defense than others with roughly equivalent economies and populations, such as Germany and Italy. In fact, there is a five-to-one ratio between the highest and lowest European country in terms of spending on military R&D.<sup>38</sup>

For the moment, the United States is committed to remaining a major European security player despite NATO's spending problems. On April 8, 2011, the U.S. Department of Defense announced that it was revising its 2004 plan to withdraw two of the four U.S. Army Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) currently stationed in Europe.<sup>39</sup> Consultations with allies and the NATO Strategic Concept reviews led the Obama administration to decide to retain three BCTs in Europe. Their missions are to maintain a flexible and rapidly deployable ground force to meet the U.S. commitments to NATO, to conduct a robust engagement mission with NATO members and partners, and to address the

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<sup>34</sup> Nick Amies, "NATO Unity Threatened by Defense Budget and Equipment Shortfalls," Deutsche Welle, March 3, 2010, <<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,5310375,00.html>>.

<sup>35</sup> Fabio Liberti, "Defence Spending in Europe: Can We Do Better Without Spending More?," Notre Europe Policy Paper 46, p. 17, [http://www.notre-europe.eu/uploads/tx\\_publication/Policy46\\_FLiberti\\_EN.pdf](http://www.notre-europe.eu/uploads/tx_publication/Policy46_FLiberti_EN.pdf).

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> SIPRI Yearbook 2011 Armaments, Disarmament and International Security. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, 194.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> "DOD Announces U.S. Force Posture Revision in Europe," U.S. Department of Defense, April 8, 2011, <<http://www.defense.gov/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=14397>>.

broad range of 21<sup>st</sup>-century security challenges. The fourth BCT will be removed in 2015, when Pentagon planners anticipate a reduced demand for U.S. ground forces in the European region. The remaining three BCTs in Europe after 2015 will consist of a Heavy, Stryker, and Airborne BCT. The Pentagon noted that these BCTs will be complemented by other U.S. capability enhancements, including the forward deployment of U.S. Navy Aegis ships to conduct BMD missions, land-based missile defense systems in Poland and Romania as part of the European Phased Adaptive Approach, forward-stationing of special operations aircraft, and a new permanent aviation detachment in Poland. These efforts were strengthened in October with the international agreement to base Aegis-equipped ships at Rota, Spain, about 60 miles northwest of Gibraltar.<sup>40</sup>

In early June 2011, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) released a comprehensive report on European countries' defense economic and industrial policies. Thus far, European governments have devoted sufficient resources to keep their deployed forces in a state of high readiness. Often this has required special funding mechanisms such as supplementary appropriations kept separate from their countries' regular defense budgets. Furthermore, since the size of most European national armed forces has decreased more rapidly than their governments have cut defense spending, the result has been that spending on the remaining military personnel has increased for the average individual soldier.<sup>41</sup> The combined effect of these two trends—a general per capita increase in spending and extra resources flowing to select deployable units—has been that some of their forces, particularly those regularly sent to Afghanistan, have received adequate training and equipment to develop the expeditionary capabilities needed by NATO and the EU for sustained post-conflict stabilization operations.

Unfortunately, these few military units represent the exception. For the most part, European governments have kept their other non-deployed forces at lower readiness levels. In addition, they have deferred many of their defense procurement and modernization programs. These funding and capability shortfalls have created major problems in unit readiness levels. In the current Libyan campaign, many European militaries have experienced major shortages in precision-guided munitions and other essential equipment, ordnance, and other capabilities. The United States, which had been eager to limit its resource allocations to the Libyan War to prioritize the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts, felt compelled to fill these gaps by supplying almost all of the aerial refueling, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and suppression of enemy air defenses for the campaign.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, whatever the per capita effects, Europe's aggregate defense capacity has probably already declined due to decreased defense budgets and force levels. For example, the number of active duty military personnel in the 37 European countries studied in the CSIS report (not all were NATO members) declined from 3.5 million in 2001 to about 2.3 million in 2009.<sup>43</sup>

Furthermore, although the CSIS Defense Industrial Initiatives Group found that many European countries have protected their defense budgets during the last few years from the most severe cuts—often because of commitments to NATO, industrial policy considerations, or contractual obligations—the analysts anticipate that this figure will fall as European countries experience major

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<sup>40</sup> Michael Fabey, "Navy Anchors European BMD Mission With Basing," *Aviation Week*, October 7, 2011. <[http://www.aviationweek.com/aw/generic/story\\_generic.jsp?channel=aerospacedaily&cid=news/asd/2011/10/07/06.xml](http://www.aviationweek.com/aw/generic/story_generic.jsp?channel=aerospacedaily&cid=news/asd/2011/10/07/06.xml)>.

<sup>41</sup> Guy Ben-Ari, David J. Berteau, and Joachim Hofbauer, "European Defense Trends: Budgets, Regulatory Frameworks, and the Industrial Base" (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, November 2010).

<sup>42</sup> James Joyner, "Libya Exposes Transatlantic Contradictions," CNN's Global Public Square, August 26, 2011, <http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2011/08/26/libya-exposes-transatlantic-contradictions/>.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.



structural economic problems in the next decade. These macroeconomic challenges will include slow growth, high unemployment, enormous fiscal deficits, and an increase in the ratio of retired pensioners to taxpaying workers. All these trends will squeeze defense budgets still further. Presuming military personnel levels stabilize, the result will be declining per capita spending on soldiers and a decrease in their ability to contribute to NATO missions, most of which will involve expeditionary rather than territorial defense operations.<sup>44</sup> The end of the Afghanistan War could further encourage decreasing European defense spending in the future since that would remove one argument (alliance solidarity in current missions) defense ministries have used to sustain their spending.

From 2001 to 2009, aggregate European defense spending fell from €251 billion to €218 billion (a negative compound decline of 1.8 percent annually). Over the same period, aggregate spending per soldier increased in constant terms, from €73,000 to €91,000 (a compound annual growth rate of 2.8 percent). These same broad trends can be found in the narrower defense spending categories. For example, European military research and development (R&D) spending in Europe fell from €12.3 billion<sup>45</sup> in 2001 to €10.3 billion in 2008, but R&D per active duty member rose somewhat from €6,700 in 2001 to €7,200 in 2008. Operations and maintenance fell the least during the 2001-2009 period, largely because of the need to sustain the missions in Afghanistan, the Balkans, and elsewhere during this decade.<sup>46</sup>

### **Glass Half Full or Half Empty?**

Optimists hope that the downward pressure on military spending will force European governments to take long-needed measures to reduce procurement duplication and pursue greater military specialization and interoperability. NATO and EU leaders have cited the cost pressure as giving them an opportunity as well as an imperative to secure more military value for defense spending through such measures as reducing unwanted defense duplication, reallocating resources based on collective rather than national priorities, encouraging more national military specialization on niche capabilities, as well as pursuing more collaborative research, development, and procurement based on common funding mechanisms. In some cases, NATO can act as a force multiplier, allowing members to contribute to expensive projects that they could not have afforded to pursue on their own. The Alliance has achieved some success in such collective defense capability initiatives, such as in the case of the Strategic Airlift Initiative (a helpful resource for NATO's mission in support of the African Union in Darfur) and the Allied Ground Surveillance System. NATO Secretary-General Rasmussen and others have cited the timeshare operations for C-17 transport aircraft based in Hungary as another worthy example of emulation.<sup>47</sup> Another example of success in collaborative research, development, and procurement is the joint Franco-Italian FREMM (Frégate Européen

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<sup>44</sup> David Berteau, Guy Ben-Ari, Joachim Hofbauer, and Roy Levy, "European Defense Trends: Briefing Update," (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 29, 2011), <<http://csis.org/event/european-defense-trends>>.

<sup>45</sup> A note for our international readers: the *billion* used here is an American billion, ie. *one thousand million* or 10<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> James Joyner, "NATO in an Age of Austerity," *World Politics Review*, October 26, 2010. <<http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/6839/nato-in-an-age-of-austerity>>.

Multi-Mission) program, developed in part due to recognition of impending and future budget cuts and potential European naval shipbuilding consolidation.<sup>48</sup>

The best hope for keeping transatlantic capabilities somewhat in harmony would be greater defense specialization on select military acquisitions by country, increased multinational cooperation in procuring and using military capabilities, and a commitment by NATO governments to concentrate their remaining resources on developing smaller, more expeditionary-capable forces.<sup>49</sup> These steps would best ensure that NATO's collective capabilities more closely match the sum of its individual members' contributions.

Unfortunately, pessimists can point to enduring obstacles to enhanced European defense industrial coherence, and wonder if progress will come soon, or prove sufficiently widespread, to have much of an impact on their military capabilities. Industrial policy concerns such as sustaining domestic employment as well as a natural national reluctance to rely on other countries for important military capabilities typically exert much more influence on NATO or EU spending than collective security considerations. For this reason, proposals to extend NATO- or EU-wide defense procurement have never made much progress. NATO defense investment continues to be diluted across an excessive number of projects, with the most important military powers seeking to sustain national aviation, shipbuilding, and other high-technology sectors (valued for their stimulus to economic development as well as the skilled jobs they produce) despite the resulting duplication, inefficiencies, and insufficient economies of scale.<sup>50</sup> For example, the European tradition of relying on state run or majority state led defense contractors such as Navantia in Spain and DCNS in France highlights a hurdle in the move towards a cohesive European defense industry. Even in European countries with large aggregate defense budgets, such as Germany and Turkey, spending is not optimized to NATO's expanding international security obligations since money flows predominately to manpower and maintenance rather than researching, developing or procuring new weapons systems.<sup>51</sup>

The key question is whether Europe's most important military powers pursue similar policies. The United Kingdom, France, and Germany represent about 65 percent of all defense expenditure in Europe and 88 percent of all military research and development in Europe. Most other allies can only make small or niche contributions to expeditionary missions, while still requiring that they keep defense spending sufficiently high to permit their military personnel of valuable potential training opportunities. Despite budgetary strains, their governments are still planning to retain major expeditionary military capabilities—having the ability to deploy some 10,000 to 30,000 troops within a few months on a multi-month mission—for the next few years. But the end of the Afghanistan mission around 2014 combined with probable future demographic trends such as expected rises in welfare spending due to aging national populations and other fiscal pressures will likely result in further reductions over time in force levels, military readiness, and defense procurements.

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<sup>48</sup> Interview with Xavier Itard, Defense Professionals Daily, September 9, 2011.

<<http://www.defpro.com/daily/details/879/>>.

<sup>49</sup> Ben-Ari, Berteau, and Hofbauer, "European Defense Trends," November 2010.

<sup>50</sup> Judy Dempsey, "The Peril That NATO Can't Ignore," *New York Times*, November 10, 2010,

<[http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/11/world/europe/11iht-letter.html?\\_r=1&scp=2&sq=nato&st=cse](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/11/world/europe/11iht-letter.html?_r=1&scp=2&sq=nato&st=cse)>.

<sup>51</sup> Amies, "NATO Unity Threatened."

The NATO Group of Experts that helped write the Strategic Concept cautioned in their May 2010 report that the transatlantic capabilities gap “could undermine Alliance cohesion.”<sup>52</sup> The United States spends almost five percent of its GDP on defense when one includes the supplemental expenditures relating to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Even after the latest round of budget cuts, Britain will still spend more than two per cent of its GDP on defense, and retain the ability to surge forces into distant theaters of war. But many other European governments have been keeping military expenditures to minimum levels well before their recent austerity reductions. In 2009, only five out of 28 NATO members met NATO’s requirement that they spend at least two percent of national GDP on defense. Yet, achieving a global capability, and sustaining domestic political support for the transatlantic alliance in Washington, requires that the European allies have some capabilities that they can commit to non-European missions.

NATO itself now has an operating deficit for the first time in its history, estimated at perhaps as much as €500 million.<sup>53</sup> The alliance is cutting some collective expenses by reducing committees and through improved auditing, but more radical proposals—such as reducing the number of headquarters from 11 to 6 or NATO defense agencies from 14 to 3—are encountering severe resistance since every member wants a few high-profile positions and installations.<sup>54</sup> In any case, NATO’s entire military and administrative budget is only €2 billion, or less than 0.5% of the allies’ combined defense budgets, and any savings would be distributed among many members. And cutting funds supporting common operations and equipment could lead less wealthy members to shun foreign deployments, which could weaken these missions’ political legitimacy (renewing cries of Anglo-American imperialism). Hopes to improve these figures through a further rationalization of defense spending will depend on overcoming some long-standing barriers in this area. NATO and EU members’ defense practices sometimes appear more responsive to industrial policy considerations than collective or even national military needs.

European leaders have proposed reducing duplication of military investment across NATO and EU member states by promoting further cooperation between the two organizations. But collaborating on defense procurement has proven surprisingly difficult in the past and nothing new has occurred to suggest things will prove any easier now. Turkey constrains NATO collaboration with Cyprus while Cyprus limits Turkey’s engagement with the EU; their mutual vetoes restrict broader institutional collaboration. European governments pledge the same forces to both organizations while hoping they do not receive simultaneous requests for the same assets. Meanwhile, Europeans view with skepticism proposals to create a transatlantic defense market by citing protectionist pressures within the United States. For example, they point to alleged favoritism shown Boeing against European companies in the bidding for the next U.S. mid-air tanker. The NATO governments will probably avoid another transatlantic blowup soon over the issue because, even while cutting overall defense spending, most European governments have sought to sustain their combat presence in Afghanistan to address the evident priority concern of the Obama administration. For example, French Defense Minister Herve Morin said that, while his ministry would cut spending by some €3 billion through 2013, France would maintain its Afghan operation at

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<sup>52</sup> “NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement: Analysis and Recommendations of the Group of Experts on a New Strategic Concept for NATO,” May 17, 2010, p. 38, <<http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/expertsreport.pdf>>.

<sup>53</sup> Valentina Pop, “NATO to Make Cutbacks Amid Budget Crisis,” EU Observer, June 11, 2010, <<http://euobserver.com/13/30269?print=1>>.

<sup>54</sup> Christoph Hasselbach, “NATO looks to tighten its belt,” Deutsche Welle, June 10, 2010, <[http://www.dw-world.de/popups/popup\\_printcontent/0,,5673017,00.html](http://www.dw-world.de/popups/popup_printcontent/0,,5673017,00.html)>.

current levels. Similarly, the Italian government has announced plans to cut back on military hardware, such as by buying fewer Eurofighters, but conduct its own surge in Afghanistan, to 4,000 soldiers by the end of this year. Most prominently, the UK SDSR did not cut defense spending as much as was feared in Washington. According to the figures released by the UK government, Britain can still participate in future missions like Iraq or Afghanistan, but with a contribution of about one-third fewer forces. British defense planners anticipate being able to sustain a 6,500-troop brigade on an overseas mission, while having the capacity to surge to as many as 30,000 troops for a short period. The corresponding figures for Afghanistan now and Iraq in 2003 are 9,500 and almost 50,000 personnel. The accelerated withdrawal of British ground forces from Germany and the increased spending on transformational forces and capabilities—such as those for cyber defense—coincides well with alliance priorities and could be profitably emulated by other NATO allies as they try to sustain their military power while cutting their defense budgets once again. The Netherlands have already left Afghanistan, and Bulgaria is cutting almost a third of its troops there.<sup>55</sup>

Two issues merit further detailed discussion. First, the recent British-French defense treaties raise the possibility of enhanced military industrial cooperation between some European countries. Under its terms, Britain and France will jointly procure some items, share other military assets, and create a joint expeditionary force of 10,000 personnel.<sup>56</sup> Rasmussen said that the Anglo-French defense collaboration treaties could point the way forward for other allies as they seek to balance reduced military spending with their alliance obligations. The United Kingdom and France are the largest European military powers (45% of the continent's military budget, 55% of battle-ready forces and 70% of military research and technology), so their bilateral defense collaboration has the potential to have the greatest impact on European military capabilities.<sup>57</sup> The UK defense budget in 2011 will be around 34 billion British pounds.<sup>58</sup> In September 2011, the French Ministry of Defense said that its defense allocation next year would amount to €31.1 billion, though the current plan hinges on the successful €1.1 billion sale of unused military radio frequencies to private operators. Additionally, the continued rise in the polls of the French Socialist Party, which has traditionally been less inclined to spend on defense, could result in cuts in 2012 or even the cancellation of the 2009-2014 six-year military spending program.<sup>59</sup> Most recently, Germany and Italy have announced plans to cooperate more in the procurement of defense equipment and modernization of their respective armed forces.<sup>60</sup> Until now, though such defense cooperation does occur between NATO allies—especially between Britain, France, Germany, and the United States—it normally involves a limited number of partners (typically two) and a few select systems.

Second, the German situation is complex since the pressure to reduce defense spending is coinciding with proposals to abolish conscription and switch to an all-volunteer military. That transformation could make the German forces more usable since currently conscripts cannot be forced to

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<sup>55</sup> Elizabeth Konstantinova, "Bulgaria to Cut Three Quarters of its Troops in Afghanistan," Bloomberg, November 30, 2011, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-11-30/bulgaria-to-cut-three-quarters-of-its-troops-in-afghanistan.html>.

<sup>56</sup> Patrick Wintour, "Britain and France Sign Landmark 50-Year Defence Deal," *Guardian*, November 2, 2010, <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2010/nov/02/britain-france-landmark-50-year-defence-deal>>.

<sup>57</sup> Neuger, "NATO Says Europe Risks Becoming 'Paper Tiger'."

<sup>58</sup> Ben Jones, "Franco-British Military Cooperation: a New Engine for European Defence?," European Union Institute for Security Studies Occasional Paper no 88 (February 2011), p. 12, [http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/Setting\\_a\\_standard\\_for\\_stakeholdership-JPZ.pdf](http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/Setting_a_standard_for_stakeholdership-JPZ.pdf)

<sup>59</sup> J.A.C. Lewis, "France Eyes Asset Sale as Way to Maintain Spending Levels," *Jane's Defense Weekly*, October 5, 2011, 23.

<sup>60</sup> Sabine Pirone, "Germany, Italy May Cooperate in Defense-Equipment Alliance," Bloomberg, November 30, 2011, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-11-30/germany-italy-may-cooperate-in-defense-equipment-alliance.html>.

participate in foreign combat missions. Currently, only some 10,000 German soldiers can easily be used overseas. Still, Germany's already low levels of defense spending might not be able to purchase all the modern equipment the additional forces would need.<sup>61</sup> And in this regard, former German Defense Minister Guttenberg has noted that the democratic nature of EU military policy constrains both defense spending and the actual use of national or collective armed forces on military missions. Like many EU militaries, the Bundeswehr is a parliamentary force answerable to the German legislature. Within the EU, not only do all 27-member governments need to support a collective defense mission, but also the members' national legislatures, which enjoy considerable influence in many European countries and whose members are highly responsive to their constituents' opposition to foreign military adventures, have to endorse every foreign mission.<sup>62</sup>

## The Way Ahead

European defense cuts are threatening core NATO military capabilities and deepening fears of the emergence of a "two-tier alliance" with a small number of important military powers and a large number of essentially free riders. Public preferences and a stringent budgetary climate are leading European members to reduce the size, quality, and funding of their armed forces. The recent Libyan intervention has demonstrated how these developments have hampered Europeans' ability to act independently and increased the dependence on the capabilities of the United States.

Many European members have inefficiently organized armed forces. A lack of specialization and interoperability across states prevents them from working together effectively. There is no lack of intelligent proposals, but thus far an element of political inertia and perhaps national pride has hindered substantive integration. Some argue that the current deep crisis offers an impetus to much-needed reform and integration. Belgium, Denmark, and Norway were able to provide valuable contributions during the recent Libyan War thanks to their intelligent use of limited resources.

There are several examples of how NATO countries have been able to develop the dynamic and flexible forces the Alliance needs to address emerging threats rather than legacy forces that suck up funds but provide relatively little defense capability. Belgium, Canada, Denmark, and Norway have all been able to make important contributions to the NATO operation in Libya despite their limited defense spending because they have concentrated their resources on developing expeditionary capabilities such as strike aircraft.

There are several additional ways in which NATO could help overcome these budgetary problems. NATO can save money collectively by reducing the size and rationalizing the management of the Alliance's numerous commands, defense agencies, and other support structures and processes. The November 2010 Lisbon Summit endorsed proposals to make NATO's new command structure more effective and flexible—specifically by making these structures more easily deployable outside the Euro-Atlantic area. At the summit, NATO committed to adopting a new, streamlined Command Structure, which should reduce costs by around 35%.<sup>63</sup> Such a move will decrease the number of

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<sup>61</sup> Ben Knight, "Budget Cuts Are a Good Pretext for Reforming Military Policy, Say Experts," Deutsche Welle, September 6, 2010, <<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,5979046,00.html>>.

<sup>62</sup> "EU Defense Ministers Advocate Military Cooperation as Austerity Measure," Deutsche Welle, September 24, 2010, <<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,6043477,00.html>>.

<sup>63</sup> "Lisbon Summit Declaration", NATO, November 20, 2010, Paragraph 49, <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_68828.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_68828.htm)>.

high-end headquarters from eleven to seven, and reduce military personnel by about a third.<sup>64</sup> The number of NATO agencies is set to fall from fourteen to three in a similar effort to achieve greater efficiency.<sup>65</sup>

Even so, a great deal rests with national leaders. They have deferred deciding which specific cuts to make—and the individual allies can be expected to bargain hard to retain their share of these dwindling assets. How much integration can be achieved in NATO’s administration and logistics support functions, and with what effects, is also uncertain. Even if these changes in NATO’s support structures and processes are extensive, the history of almost all modern defense organizational reforms suggests that realizing massive financial savings or huge efficiency gains is improbable. The appropriate capabilities—and even strategy and tactics—required to fulfill the new NATO missions, such as ensuring members’ cyber and energy security, have only begun to be studied.

The NATO organization could assist the defense cooperation initiatives of its individual members by improving its long-term force planning processes to ensure better coherence and integration among allies’ future defense programs, especially for the less visible so-called out-year forces whose procurement will occur at least six years beyond the current budgetary cycle. This could also allow NATO members, including the United States, to develop complementary future capabilities that avoid gaps and leverage synergies. Some of this is already occurring through existing alliance-wide processes as well as initiatives among a few NATO members. For example, the 2010 British-French treaties has led both countries to consider how to ensure that their various naval capabilities are complementary and even provides for the sharing of an aircraft carrier. The Visegrad Group, the Weimar Group, and the Nordic countries are also engaging in more pooling, sharing, and integrated defense planning. But the procedure needs to be extended to cover more capabilities and countries, including the United States, which has many defense programs that proceed largely independent of NATO.

The best hope for keeping transatlantic capabilities somewhat in harmony would be if the Allies would pursue greater defense specialization through more selective military acquisitions by country, increased multinational cooperation in procuring and using military capabilities, and a commitment by NATO governments to concentrate their remaining resources on developing smaller, more expeditionary-capable forces.<sup>66</sup> These steps would best ensure that NATO’s collective capabilities more closely match the sum of its individual members’ contributions. As such, the onus remains on national governments making intelligent decisions. A reduction in funding need not mean a reduction in capability when there is so much scope for reform already within the system. If European members wish to retain power and influence within the Alliance, they will need to overcome their political concerns and take serious steps towards reform.

## About the Author

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<sup>64</sup> Ian Davis, “NATO Reform Lite: An Evaluation of the Lisbon Summit (Part 1),” *NATO Watch Brief* No. 14, November 26, 2010, p. 7,

[http://www.natowatch.org/sites/default/files/An\\_Evaluation\\_of\\_the\\_Lisbon\\_Summit\\_Part\\_I\\_0.pdf](http://www.natowatch.org/sites/default/files/An_Evaluation_of_the_Lisbon_Summit_Part_I_0.pdf).

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> Ben-Ari, Berteau, and Hofbauer, “European Defense Trends,” November 2010.

# Implications of the Lisbon Treaty on the European Union's Common Security Defense Policy and the Emerging Strategic Partnership Between NATO and the EU

*Major Andreas Winter and Dr. David A. Anderson*

## Introduction

The Lisbon Treaty is a monumental step toward fully integrating European Union (EU) military capabilities within its Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP). An underlying concern resulting from the treaty is the amount of redundancy it creates with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). NATO and the EU had already developed redundancies in military capabilities. To some extent, this duplication is healthy and necessary to allow Europeans to further develop their military capabilities. On the political level, the line between healthy and unhealthy redundancy can be thin. This is particularly true when one organization attempts to take on the role of the other creating competition rather than cooperation.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this paper is to determine the extent the Lisbon Treaty actually promotes a complementary relationship between NATO and the EU in the field of Security and Defense Policy.

After providing a brief historical background, the investigation begins with a review of NATO's relationship with the EU and its CSDP and the existing cooperation between both organizations. This sets the stage for the subsequent assessment of the Lisbon Treaty within the framework of NATO-EU relations. In this part, the analysis briefly assesses the decisions implemented by the Lisbon Treaty in relationship to the major changes it creates within the CSDP. Then, the analysis focuses on the implications of these changes for the NATO-EU relationship. This includes the impact on the strategic orientation of CSDP, the effects of the Lisbon Treaty's changes on the EU's institutions and procedures, and the relevance of the Lisbon Treaty for collaborative capability development.

## Background

### *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization*

NATO has been the cornerstone for European security for more than sixty years and remains a vital component of the global security framework for both the United States (US) and European members.<sup>2</sup> Since its foundation in 1949, critics often inaccurately portrayed the organization's condition and calculated the Alliance's death in view of its record of perpetual internal political conflict, epitomized by such events as the Suez crisis of 1956, the French withdrawal from NATO's integrated military command in 1966, or the stationing of Pershing II missiles in Europe in the early

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<sup>1</sup> The reviewed literature shows that in international relations "competition" is predominantly used in a negative sense of "rivalries" and opposing interests. The paper will follow this definition.

<sup>2</sup> NATO, *Letter from President Obama* (January 20, 2009), <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2009/s090120a.html> (accessed April 26, 2011).

1980s. However, the Alliance has repeatedly proven its ability to overcome internal crisis and diplomatic strategic challenges by successful dispute resolution and effective adaptation.<sup>3</sup>

From a historical perspective, the Yugoslavia Wars in the Balkans caused the Alliance to transform into an active provider of security outside its territories for crisis management. Member states agreed on a new Strategic Concept in 1999, which defined wider security risks for NATO and shifted the focus of the organization to more global security matters.<sup>4</sup> In order to meet new threats where they occur, it became necessary to transform NATO member's large and conventionally focused units into agile and deployable expeditionary forces. Thus, member state political leaders endorsed the Defense Capabilities Initiative during the Washington Summit in 1999 to "ensure the effectiveness of future multinational operations across the full spectrum of Alliance missions in the present and foreseeable security environment with a special focus on improving interoperability among Alliance forces."<sup>5</sup> Promoting security and stability in Europe, the Alliance also reached out to the east: Poland, Bulgaria, and Albania – among other countries – joined NATO in 1999, 2004, and 2009. With this, NATO doubled the number of its members in barely ten years.

Two years later, the appearance of international terrorism posed a new threat for the Alliance. In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, when NATO invoked collective defense under Article 5 for the first time in its history, the member states showed their willingness to adapt to new threats but also revealed that they had not yet transformed their forces sufficiently to close the gap between US and European military capabilities. Consequently, the Alliance refined the Defense Capabilities Initiative during the 2002 Prague Summit and agreed to improve military capabilities in eight specified areas under the Prague Capability Commitment.<sup>6</sup> The Prague Summit also introduced the NATO Response Force. This high readiness force should serve as a catalyst for focusing and promoting improvements in these areas and should equip the Alliance with a high quality, self-sustainable, expeditionary capability to respond to any crisis within thirty days. The transformation process initiated in Prague 2002 is ongoing. NATO remains heavily dependent on United States' forces and capabilities today and European countries have not yet aligned their efforts and resources within the Alliance sufficiently.<sup>7</sup> Besides the ongoing transformation process in NATO, twenty-two of NATO's twenty-eight members have also pushed forward their integration in security and defense within the European Union in an equally dynamic, comprehensive, and politically transformational way.

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<sup>3</sup> NATO is also often referred to as the "Alliance". Both terms will be used synonymously in this article. Ryan C. Hendrickson, "The Miscalculation of NATO's Death," *Parameter* (Spring 2007): 101-104, 112. See also Lawrence S. Kaplan, *NATO Divided, NATO United - The Evolution of an Alliance* (London: Praeger, 2004), 13, 31-34, 91-94.

<sup>4</sup> NATO, *The Alliance's Strategic Concept* (April 24, 1999), [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_27433.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_27433.htm?selectedLocale=en) (accessed April 26, 2011).

<sup>5</sup> NATO, *Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI) Overview* (December 1999), <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/1999/9912-hq/fs-dci99.htm> (accessed April 26, 2011).

<sup>6</sup> NATO, *Prague Summit Declaration* (Brussels, 21 November 2002): 1, <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2002/p02-127e.htm> (accessed 20 April 2010).

<sup>7</sup> Sally McNamara, *NATO Summit 2010: Time to Turn Words into Action* (Backgrounder No. 2498, Washington D.C.: Heritage Foundation, 2010), 8. Carl W. Ek, *NATO's Prague Capability Commitment*, CRS Report for Congress (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2006), 1-6. NATO, *Comprehensive Political Guidance* (Brussels, 29 November 2009), <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b061129e.htm> (accessed 5 September 2010). Mats Berdal, and David Ucko, "NATO at 60," *Survival* (Mai 2009): 60.



## *European Integration in Security and Defense*

During the Cold War, the primary focus of European integration lay on economic integration and economic cooperation through a common European market within the European Communities. In 1992, the Treaty of Maastricht merged these Communities into the European Union and expanded the level of cooperation among the members including a Common Foreign and Security Policy. Given the ongoing NATO transformation process triggered by the Balkan Wars, the EU also chose to rethink its approach towards crisis management. This led to revived interest in the idea of a European Common Defense concept.<sup>8</sup>

NATO's intervention in Bosnia revealed a huge imbalance between European and US military capabilities and led to the creation of a European pillar within the NATO framework, known as the European Security Defense Initiative. This approach, favored by US President Clinton's administration, implied that any political decision on European defense cooperation would always require de facto US approval. The initially hesitant US attitude towards an engagement in the Kosovo conflict in 1998 again demonstrated the inability of European countries to provide security in Europe and convinced European powers to create a European Defense within the EU rather than within NATO.<sup>9</sup> Consequently, the British-Franco Saint Malo initiative of 1998 proposed that the EU should handle Europe's joint defense and that European countries should correct imbalances in Euro-American security cooperation. The initiative is often referred to as the "birth certificate" of the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP).<sup>10</sup> This development raised serious questions among non-EU NATO members, particularly because of fears that CSDP would duplicate NATO assets, discriminate against non-EU NATO members, and decouple the United States from Europe. Hence, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom (UK), Tony Blair, reaffirmed CSDP's limitation to peacekeeping missions, particularly "where NATO as a whole chooses not to be engaged."<sup>11</sup> With

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<sup>8</sup> The forming of the Western European Union was the "first attempt at a common European defense alliance." However, the organization was soon marginalized due to the founding of NATO. The Western European Union nevertheless existed until 30 June 2011. The second attempt to integrate in the field of security and defense was the French proposal of a European Defense Community. The treaty failed to come into effect in 1954, mainly because of France's fears that such an agreement would threaten its national sovereignty. Margarita Mathiopoulos and István Gyarmati, "Saint Malo and Beyond—Toward European Defense," *Washington Quarterly* 22, no. 4 (Autumn 1999): 65. GlobalSecurity.org, *European Defence Community* (EDC) (July 09, 2011), <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/int/edc.htm> (accessed August 17, 2011).

<sup>9</sup> The Kosovo conflict was one major contributing factor to the British shift in attitude towards European Defense within the EU rather than the European Security Defense Initiative within NATO (the St. Malo initiative), particularly if the US does not want to be engaged. Europa, *European Security Defense Identity* (2010), [http://europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/european\\_security\\_defence\\_identity\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/european_security_defence_identity_en.htm) (accessed April 26, 2011). Mathiopoulos and Gyarmati, 66, 68.

<sup>10</sup> The EU officially introduced CSDP – originally referred to as European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) – during the EU summit in Cologne in June 1999. Asle Toje, *The EU, NATO and European Defence—A Slow Train Coming* (Occasional Paper, Paris: European Union Institute for Security Studies, 2008), 11. LTC (GS) Peter Fischer, *European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) After Ten Years—Current Situation and Perspectives* (Monograph, Fort Leavenworth, KS: School of Advanced Military Studies, 2010), 7.

<sup>11</sup> Secretary of State Madeleine Albright spelled out the US concerns and the US policy towards CSDP using the "three Ds" and Donald Rumsfeld repeated this warning addressing the Munich Conference on Security in 2001, expressing US policy-makers' and defense experts' skepticism regarding the value of CSDP. Fischer, 13. Kori Schake, *Constructive Duplication: Reducing EU Reliance on US Military Assets* (Working Paper, London: Center For European Reform, 2002), 5.

these peacekeeping missions, Blair referred to the Petersberg Tasks that the EU had already adopted in 1997. The Union later extended these tasks to include joint disarmament operations, military advice and assistance, conflict prevention, and post-conflict stabilization.<sup>12</sup> To fulfill the Petersberg Tasks, the member states of the EU needed to transform their militaries and to gain access to the military planning capabilities and forces of NATO to avoid unnecessary duplications. To meet these two requirements, the EU adopted the Helsinki Headline Goal of 1999 and the “Berlin Plus” agreements in 2002.<sup>13</sup> The Helsinki Headline Goal, later transferred into the Headline Goal 2010, set out a general capability requirement with the objective to hold a corps size force of 50,000-60,000 deployable within 60 days with the ability to sustain them for at least one year. Subsequent analysis identified five key shortfalls in European military capabilities: strategic and tactical airlift; sustainability and logistics (including air-to-air refueling); effective engagement technologies including precision weapons; rescue helicopters; and Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance systems.<sup>14</sup>

The rapid development potential within CSDP motivated EU member states to create an EU Security Strategy for cooperative defense. This set for the first time a policy framework for CSDP, which led to the adoption of the Headline Goal 2010, and introduced the European Battle Group concept.<sup>15</sup> This should enable the EU to contribute more visibly to external security and to

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<sup>12</sup> Initially, the Ministerial Council of the Western European Union introduced the Petersberg Tasks in June 1992, which comprised humanitarian and rescue missions, peacekeeping missions, and tasks for combat forces in crisis management (including peacemaking). The EU adopted these tasks from the Western European Union by the Treaty of Amsterdam of 1997, amending the Maastricht Treaty. The extension of the Petersberg Tasks goes back to a report of Michael Barnier, who suggested creating a European Civil Protection Force in 2002. Assembly of Western European Union, "Security and Defence Aspects of the Lisbon Reform Treaty," *Europa Varietas Institute* (January 31, 2008): 2-3, <http://europavarietas.visuart.eu/files/combarieulisbonneen.pdf> (accessed April 30, 2011). Julian Heß, *Das Verhältnis von NATO und EU—Eine Analyse unter Berücksichtigung des Lissabonner Reformvertrages* (Munich: AVM-Verlag, 2009), 4. Martin Reichard, *The EU-NATO Relationship—A Legal and Political Perspective* (UK, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2006), 73. European Union, *Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union*, (May 09, 2008), <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:115:0013:0045:EN:PDF> (accessed April 30, 2011).

<sup>13</sup> Berlin Plus has its roots in the “Berlin Agreement” that allowed European countries already limited access to NATO planning capabilities as part of the European Security Defense Initiative. NATO, *Final Communiqué* (June 03, 1996), <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1996/p96-063e.htm> (accessed April 30, 2011). Javier Solana, "Remarks by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy following the agreement on the establishment of EU-NATO permanent arrangements," *Consilium* (December 16, 2002), 1, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/73803%20-%20Solana%20-%20Permanent%20arrangements%20+%20NATO%20declaration.pdf> (accessed April 30, 2011).

<sup>14</sup> European Council, "Annex IV of the Presidency Conclusions Helsinki European Council," *Consilium* (December 10-11, 1999): 5, 9-11, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/Helsinki%20European%20Council%20-%20Annex%20IV%20of%20the%20Presidency%20Conclusions.pdf> (accessed April 30, 2011). European Parliament, "The European Security and Defence Policy: from the Helsinki Headline Goal to the EU Battlegroups," *The European Parliament* (September 12, 2006): 4, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009\\_2014/documents/sede/dv/sede030909noteesdp\\_/sede030909noteesdp\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/sede/dv/sede030909noteesdp_/sede030909noteesdp_en.pdf) (accessed April 30, 2011). European Union, "The EU Battlegroups and the EU Civilian and Military Cell," *Consilium* (February 2005): 1, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/Battlegroups.pdf> (accessed April 30, 2011).

<sup>15</sup> A Battle Group is a combined arms battalion of approximately 1,500 troops; reinforced with combat support elements, and associated with a Force Headquarters as well as pre-identified transport and logistics elements; deployable within fifteen days; and sustainable for 120 days. Ibid., European Council, "Headline Goal 2010," *Consilium* (June 17-18,

transform European forces more rapidly. To avoid duplicating NATO's command structure, the member states of Alliance and the EU also agreed on the Berlin Plus agreement, which granted the EU access to military planning capabilities and enabled the EU to lead military missions.<sup>16</sup> With regard to the EU's goal of more effective crisis management, CSDP also needed to include civilian capabilities and effective structures to lead operations following a comprehensive approach. From May 2000, the EU thus started to create the structures to plan and coordinate civilian crisis management and to deploy civilian capabilities of its members.<sup>17</sup> The last step in European integration marked the Lisbon Treaty, established in December 2009. Its impact on CSDP made the three-pillar model obsolete, which has described the functioning of the EU until 2009.<sup>18</sup> The significant progress in CSDP and the ongoing transformation in NATO increased the need to improve the strategic partnership between NATO and the EU.

### The Lisbon Treaty in Light of NATO-EU Relations

NATO and the EU are founded on common values and strategic interests, particularly in the fields of security, defense, and crisis management. NATO and the EU's cooperation are primarily directed at supporting the fight against terrorism, strengthening the development of coherent and mutually reinforcing military capabilities, and cooperating in the field of civil emergency planning. From a NATO perspective, there is no doubt that a "stronger EU will further contribute to our common security."<sup>19</sup> NATO strives for improvements in the strategic partnership with the EU, which can be summarized by the following four premises: closer cooperation, higher transparency, greater efficiency, and continual autonomy.<sup>20</sup> To achieve a closer cooperation and higher transparency,

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2004): 3, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/2010%20Headline%20Goal.pdf> (accessed April 30, 2011).

<sup>16</sup> The agreement of 2002 determined the EU-NATO framework for permanent relations. Operation Althea in Bosnia Herzegovina was the first mission in which the EU accessed NATO command structures under Berlin Plus. Before the EU could take over the mission from NATO, the member states had to agree on the terms, which proved to be difficult due to the Turkish-Greek conflict on Cyprus. This dispute resulted in three years of difficulty negotiations before Berlin Plus became eventually effective on 17 March 2003. Solana, 1. Council of the European Union. "Presidency Conclusions," *Institute of European Integration and Policy*, (October 24-25, 2002), 17, <http://eep.pspa.uoa.gr/cn-Brussels%20Octob%202002.pdf> (accessed April 30, 2011). Reichard, 284, 286, 287.

<sup>17</sup> Andreas Winter, "The Lisbon Treaty and its Implications for the CSDP in the Light of the Emerging Strategic Partnership Between NATO and the EU" (Master's Thesis, Fort Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff College, 2010), 38-43. Manfred Lange, "Militärische Aspekte der ESVP aus der Perspektive des deutschen EU-Vorsitzes," *Militärische Aspekte der Europäischen Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik im Lichte der EU-Ratspräsidentschaft* (Michael Staack (ed.), WIFIS No 26, 2008), 20.

<sup>18</sup> From 1992 until 2009, the "three pillar model" explained best the functioning of the EU. Supranational treaties (the original European Communities) characterized the first and strongest pillar. The second and third pillars represented the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Justice and Home Affairs (transferred into Police and Judicial Cooperation on Criminal Matters by the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997).

<sup>19</sup> NATO, *Riga Summit Declaration* (Brussels, 29 November 2006): paragraph 41, <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2006/p06-150e.htm> (accessed 5 September 2010).

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. NATO, *Bucharest Summit Declaration* (Brussels, 3 April 2008): paragraph 14, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_8443.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_8443.htm) (accessed 18 September 2010). NATO, *Strasbourg/Kebl Summit Declaration*, (Brussels, 4 April 2009): paragraph 20, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news\\_52837.htm?mode=pressrelease](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_52837.htm?mode=pressrelease) (accessed 9 August 2010).

NATO took various initiatives within the NATO-EU Capability Group—a forum established in 2003 to allow formal coordination between both organizations besides the existing informal NATO-EU staff-to-staff dialogue.<sup>21</sup> To achieve greater efficiency in NATO operations, the Alliance also agreed to integrate civilian public service planners (e.g., police) into the planning and conduct of military operations, following the idea of a “comprehensive approach” for conflict resolution. Considering the scarce resources of its members, NATO cannot afford to develop its own civilian capabilities and thus relies on cooperation in this field with other organizations, namely the EU.<sup>22</sup> Avoiding unnecessary duplications would also allow greater efficiency to get more (capabilities) out of less (resources). Particularly, NATO encourages nations to re-prioritize financial resources, “including through pooling and other forms of bilateral or multilateral cooperation.”<sup>23</sup> However, two major political obstacles prevent closer cooperation, higher transparency, and greater efficiency between NATO and the EU. First, France and the UK differ substantially in their political end state of CSDP and the question of how to progressively carry forward European integration in the defense sector. Second, the Greece-Turkey conflict over Cyprus blocks effective cooperation within the NATO-EU Capability Group. The missing security agreement between the EU and NATO allows Turkey to block cooperation with Cyprus. In return, Cyprus and Greece oppose Turkey having closer relationships with the EU, particularly through administrative arrangements with the European Defense Agency (EDA), which hinders effective cooperation between NATO and the EDA. Those political obstacles have a huge impact on NATO who is struggling to define how the Alliance wants to achieve an effective strategic partnership with the EU, how to achieve greater transparency in its relations with the EU, and how CSDP could effectively contribute to NATO’s missions and vice versa. Particularly, this materializes in sharing information and intelligence in such missions, the development and employment of military and civilian capabilities, and the overcoming of the highly fragmented European industrial defense market, which is a major factor in military capability shortfalls of European countries.<sup>24</sup>

### *The Lisbon Treaty and CSDP*

The effect of the Lisbon Treaty on the EU, and in particular, on the Union’s CSDP is considerable. The changes concern three areas: the strategic goal and orientation of CSDP, the modification of institutional structures responsible for carrying out CSDP, and the procedures for future capability development under the head of EDA.<sup>25</sup> The modified strategic goal for CSDP is a continuation of the provisions of the European Security Strategy, which aimed at strengthening “mutual solidarity of the EU [to make the EU] a more credible and effective actor.”<sup>26</sup> This will eventually lead to a common defense and solidarity among EU member states in case of an armed attack, a natural

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<sup>21</sup> Paul Sturm, “NATO and the EU: Cooperation?” *European Security Review* No. 48 (February 2010): 1, [http://www.isis-europe.org/pdf/2010\\_artrel\\_445\\_eu-nato-capabilities.pdf](http://www.isis-europe.org/pdf/2010_artrel_445_eu-nato-capabilities.pdf) (accessed 20 September 2010).

<sup>22</sup> NATO, *Comprehensive Political Guidance*, paragraph 7e.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, paragraph 15.

<sup>24</sup> Winter, 55, 61-62, 90-91.

<sup>25</sup> For a more detailed assessment of the changes of the Lisbon Treaty: Winter, 62-73. European Union, *Treaty of Lisbon—Amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty Establishing the European Community* (Brussels, 3 December 2007), <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/cg00014.en07.pdf> (accessed 20 September 2010).

<sup>26</sup> European Union, *A Secure Europe in a Better World—European Security Strategy* (Brussels, 12 December 2003): 1, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf> (accessed 11 September 2010).

disaster, or a man-made accident. Additionally, the EU also adopted the extended Petersberg Tasks for CSDP from the Western European Union, which now include “joint disarmament operations, humanitarian and rescue tasks, military advice and assistance tasks, conflict prevention and peace-keeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making and post-conflict stabilization.”<sup>27</sup>

The major changes to the institutional structures and main decision making bodies responsible for implementing CSDP impact various areas. First, the Treaty establishes the European Council as an official institution, which is now chaired by a long term and full-time President in contrast to the former six month rotation cycle of the Presidency. Second, the treaty adapted the office of the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy (HR) and, third, establishes the European External Action Service as a diplomatic service of the EU.<sup>28</sup> With this step, the EU merges two former areas of EU foreign relations and takes the next step towards more coherent and consistent external relations. The bureau of the HR is in fact a new and independent office, which now coordinates and conducts CSDP as a link between the Council of the EU. The European Commission now also serves as head of the European External Action Service, and as president of the EDA. Lastly, the EU integrates EU civilian and crisis management structures at the strategic planning level introducing the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD).<sup>29</sup> The directorate will streamline existing structures responsible for civilian crisis management, will unify civilian and military planning at the strategic level as integral part of EEAS, and will serve as the highest institution of civilian crisis management planning within the EU.<sup>30</sup>

The treaty also officially introduces Permanent Structured Cooperation in Defense (PSCD) as a tool to foster the military capacity of its member states and to harmonize, pool, and specialize military needs, means and capabilities – including higher cooperation in the fields of training and logistics, particularly through EDA. The Lisbon Treaty elevated the EDA from Joint Action to Treaty level, which provides a much firmer legal base to work from and clarifies existing practices in armament cooperation. EDA is now an official part of CSDP and—under the direction of the HR—identifies

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<sup>27</sup> After the Lisbon Treaty came into effect, the Western European Union treaty was terminated in 2010 and the organization ceased to exist on 30 June 2011. The extended Petersberg Tasks can be executed within the Union framework only by a group of member states, “which are willing and have the necessary capability for such a task.” Western European Union, *Western European Union* (Brussels, 27 May 2011), <http://www.weu.int/> (accessed 28 November 2011). European Union, *Treaty of Lisbon—Amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty Establishing the European Community* (Brussels, 3 December 2007): 47, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/cg00014.en07.pdf> (accessed 20 September 2010).

<sup>28</sup> The EU also renamed the post to “High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.”

<sup>29</sup> Although not introduced by the Lisbon Treaty, CMPD is very important for gaining a better understanding of the Treaty’s impact adapting its institutional level. European Peacebuilding Liaison Office, *Statement on Civilian-Military Integration in European Security and Defence Policy* (Brussels, 6 January 2009): 8, and 14, [http://www.eplo.org/documents/EPLO\\_Statement.pdf](http://www.eplo.org/documents/EPLO_Statement.pdf) (accessed 21 June 2010).

<sup>30</sup> Carmen Gebhard, “The Crisis Management and Planning Directorate: Recalibrating ESDP Planning and Conduct Capacities,” *CFSP Forum* Vol. 7, No. 4 (Vienna, Institute for Advanced Studies, July 2009): 8, [http://carmengebhard.com/CFSP\\_Forum\\_vol\\_7\\_no\\_4\\_Gebhard.pdf](http://carmengebhard.com/CFSP_Forum_vol_7_no_4_Gebhard.pdf) (accessed 3 July 2010).

operational requirements and implements any measures needed to strengthen a competitive European defense market and a strong European industrial base.<sup>31</sup>

## The Lisbon Treaty and its Effects on the NATO-EU Relationship

The Lisbon Treaty constitutes a very important juncture for CSDP and its strategic orientation, even though the Treaty does not resolve the Union's lack of strategic culture. First, by unifying the EC and the EU, the EU undoubtedly assumes a single legal personality, which strengthens the organization's position in negotiating international agreements (the treaty making power) using its entire means. It also allows the Union to establish bilateral diplomatic relations with international actors, by speaking and acting as one body. Furthermore, the Lisbon Treaty provides a possible end state for CSDP (mutual defense), amends its spectrum of future missions (the extended Petersberg Tasks), and specifies its strategic vision of a "more active, more coherent, and more capable" Union.<sup>32</sup>

Despite these important strategic effects on the EU, it is equally important to address remaining shortcomings in European strategy development. The EU has not initiated a continuous progression in its strategic thinking, even though it is already demanded by the EU Security Strategy and suggested by a variety of international scholars. The absence of corresponding objectives for the Union's political, diplomatic, military, civilian, and trade and development activities actually fosters internal disputes and internal division about strategic objectives and priorities, which leads to EU actions that appear unpredictable and weak to external actors.<sup>33</sup> However, the Lisbon Treaty as a next step towards higher integration in the European defense sector would address all of the shortfalls in European strategic development.<sup>34</sup>

### *Mutual Defense and the Solidarity Clause*

At first glance, the intent of mutual defense duplicates NATO's role of providing a common defense of member states. This would be contradictory to achieving a complementary relationship and probably promote competition between both organizations. However, for the EU to act as

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<sup>31</sup> Jean-Pierre Darnis et. Al., *Lessons Learned from European Defence Equipment Programmes*, Occasional Paper (Paris: European Union Institute for Security Studies, 2007), 18. Ibid., 89. European Union, *Treaty of Lisbon—Amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty Establishing the European Community*, 46.

<sup>32</sup> European Union, *Treaty of Lisbon—Amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty Establishing the European Community*, 11. Klaus Olshausen, "Zehn Jahre Europäische Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik," *Der Mittler-Brief* 24. Jg (Herford, 2009), 5-6. Lange, 17. Sven Biscop, "A 'European Army' for the EU and NATO?" *Egmont Paper* (Brussels: Egmont—Royal Institute for International Relations, 3 March 2007), 12. Winter, 73-74.

<sup>33</sup> Sven Biscop and Jo Coelmont. "A Strategy for CSDP—Europe's Ambitions as a Global Security Provider," *Egmont Paper* No. 37 (Brussels: Egmont—Royal Institute for International Relations, October 2010): 8, <http://www.egmontinstitute.be/paperegm/ep37.pdf>, (accessed 11 October 2010). Biscop, "A 'European Army' for the EU and NATO?" 12.

<sup>34</sup> The "bottom-up approach" is an important characteristic of the EU's external policies. Usually, (a group of) individual states take the initiative to create something new and/or to build up their involvement in CSDP, rather than following a supranational decision to become involved. A good example is the creation of the European Security Strategy, which was provided in 2003, after European countries had already started building capabilities under CSDP five years earlier.

another provider of collective defense is questionable for two reasons. First, the Lisbon Treaty explicitly defines NATO's primacy in this regard. The Treaty clearly states that the EU respects "the obligations of certain Member States, which see their common defence realized in [NATO]" and that its policy will "be compatible with the common security and defence policy established within that framework."<sup>35</sup> Second, the EU's six neutral Member States do not indicate any intent to change their distinct national defense policies of not participating in a CSDP. In practice, this means that the EU will not be able to organize its military forces for a territorial defense. Given NATO's and the EU's similar threat assessment, such an attempt would also be unnecessary and redundant. However, the solidarity clause might have important legal implications for the Union, for instance, in case of a terrorist attack. Meeting such threats remains vital for the EU, especially in conjunction with proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Mutual defense may allow the EU to use military force internally to meet such threats and their consequences, including natural disasters, man-made accidents, or collapses of supply networks and communications. The mutual defense clause may also help to overcome the wide array of national caveats on the use of military forces inside the EU, and signals that solely nationalistic approaches in defense planning of its members are no longer feasible.<sup>36</sup>

In light of these reasons, the mutual defense clause is not directed to duplicate NATO's role and will certainly not promote competition between NATO and the EU. The legal and secondary implications of the clause could actually encourage EU Member States to focus on streamlining capability planning under the head of the EU. As long as this is in line with NATO capability planning, this could have positive effects for the Alliance as well. In this sense, the mutual defense clause could even promote a complementary partnership between both organizations, if the EU does not decide to decouple military defense planning from NATO's procedures and if the organization translates the political goal of common defense in operational terms. This emphasizes the need for NATO and the EU to strengthen cooperation through regular consultation, highlights that political consensus within the EU is required to shape CSDP more progressively in the future, and raises the question of how cooperation with NATO should be institutionalized.<sup>37</sup>

### *The Extended Petersberg Tasks*

In adopting the extended Petersberg Tasks for CSDP, the EU partly took over tasks, such as providing military advice, military assistance, and conflict prevention. Since 1994, these tasks were already fulfilled by NATO's Partnership for Peace program. This creates an overlap in tasks between NATO and the EU, but does not necessarily lead to competition between both organizations. The credo of Berlin Plus – to launch EU-led operations only "where NATO as a whole is not engaged" – still determines whether the EU can actually fulfill these tasks.<sup>38</sup> EU-led operations such as

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<sup>35</sup> European Union, *Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union*, 26.

<sup>36</sup> Alyson J. K. Bailes, *Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)/European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP): Challenges and Prospects* (Hamburg: IFSH, 2005), 3-4.

<sup>37</sup> Sturm, 1, 3.

<sup>38</sup> Heß, 59. European Security and Defense Assembly, "The EU-NATO Berlin Plus Agreements," *Assembly Factsheet* No. 14 (November 2009): 1, [http://www.assembly-weu.org/en/documents/Fact%20sheets/14E\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_Berlin\\_Plus.pdf](http://www.assembly-weu.org/en/documents/Fact%20sheets/14E_Fact_Sheet_Berlin_Plus.pdf) (accessed 12 October 2010).

CONCORDIA in Macedonia (completed on 15 December 2003) and EUFOR ALTHEA in Bosnia (still ongoing) have shown that the agreement can be successfully achieved, enabling the EU to act. In both operations, NATO's Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe acted as Operational Commander for the EU and the Union launched its missions following a terminated NATO mission (e.g., ALLIED HARMONY and SFOR).<sup>39</sup> In contrast, the duplication of tasks can also lead to negative examples, such as, the "beauty contest" between NATO and the EU over West Sudan. Both organizations were divided due to a US-French argument about the question of whether NATO or the EU was supposed to lead management of the crisis. Another example is Operation ARTEMIS, launched in 2003 to stabilize conflict areas in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The EU was able to deploy military forces without NATO support utilizing Berlin Plus. This was an important accomplishment for the EU, but simultaneously raised annoyance among some NATO Members because of the EU's lack of consultation with the Alliance.<sup>40</sup>

Adopting the extended Petersberg Tasks neither promotes a complementary relationship between both organizations nor does it increase competition. Like the mutual defense clause, the actual utilization of a task and its perception will depend upon communication and consultation between NATO and the EU. This underlines how important it is for NATO and the EU to agree upon a standard protocol in this regard and to institutionalize their cooperation.

#### *Adapted Institutions and their Effects for a Strategic Partnership*

The officially introduced European Council, the widely adapted tasks and responsibilities of the HR, and the newly introduced EEAS are remarkable amendments in the EU's institutional framing and exercising of CSDP. With the introduction of CMPD and the streamlining of its civilian crisis management institutions, these changes will have significant effects for the future of the EU and its relations with NATO.

#### *The European Council as a Intergovernmental Institution*

Officially introducing the European Council and its new presidency as the main body responsible for developing general guidelines and strategic lines for CSDP strengthens the intergovernmental character of CSDP.<sup>41</sup> The Lisbon Treaty underlines that the principle of unanimity as a cornerstone of security and defense cooperation in the EU will remain, although qualified majority voting applies for some areas of CSDP. This has positive and negative aspects for CSDP. On the one hand, decisions that require consensus among the EU's members send a strong and firm internal and external message demonstrating the EU's determination to act. On the other hand, unanimity gives member states the power to block decisions that a vast majority might want to take. This hampers

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<sup>39</sup> CONCORDIA and EUFOR ALTHEA were actually the only missions conducted under Berlin Plus. Ibid., 1.

<sup>40</sup> Stephen F. Larrabee, "The United States and the Evolution of ESDP," *What Ambitions for European Defense in 2020?* (Paris: Rand Cooperation, 2009): 50, [http://www.rand.org/pubs/reprints/2010/RAND\\_RP1404.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/reprints/2010/RAND_RP1404.pdf) (accessed 21 August 2010). LTC (GS) Peter Fischer, "European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) After Ten years-Current Situation and Perspectives" (Monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2010);, 27-28.

<sup>41</sup> Guérot, 41.



the EU in carrying out CSDP more progressively.<sup>42</sup> There is, nevertheless, a good chance that political issues between the Member States could be mitigated through the HR, the EEAS, and the EDA and that CSDP will be more capable in the future.<sup>43</sup> However, progress in this field will continue to be slow and will remain dependent on bottom-up initiatives.

Inter-governmentalism for CSDP neither fosters nor hampers a complementary relationship between NATO and the EU. Nevertheless, there are risks that existing political issues between EU Members as well as between EU and non-EU Members may become institutionalized, which will prevent a strategic partnership. On the one hand, the EU's definition of national security as the sole responsibility of individual Members also undermines the organization's attempt to create common security. This reduces the power of its adapted institutions and creates obstacles to aligning military and civilian capabilities as well as in creating a competitively viable European industrial defense base. On the other hand, the Treaty explicitly provides possibilities to delegate specific defense policy tasks and functions to a group of states. This mitigates the risks of internal issues for the conduct of CSDP and can lead to multinational cooperation between willing and more capable EU Member States. In view of capability development and a strategic partnership with NATO, this can only be appreciated.

#### *The New HR and the EEAS as "Foreign Ministry" of the EU*

The most prominent and probably most important institutional amendments by the Lisbon Treaty are the "new" HR and the introduction of a diplomatic service for the Union. The office of the HR was clearly strengthened and can – in tandem with the EEAS – function as a "transmission belt for national foreign policy goals, which the smaller member states in particular stand to profit from," while the EEAS could benefit from the nations' experiences, networks, and traditions.<sup>44</sup> Both the HR and the EEAS as a single structure have great potential to bring external actions and foreign policies of the EU together. Due to the diversity of national interests of its Members, this will probably not lead to a unified face in foreign policy for the Union in the intermediate term. However, by merging formerly divided responsibilities and fragmented competencies, the HR will ensure much more consistency and coherence within the EU regarding foreign policy and will have the formal right to initiate proposals regarding CSDP.

Of critical importance is the HR's central role between the European Commission, the Council, the European Council, and the EDA. These links provide the HR the possibility of exercising CSDP more consistently and coherently – from initiating political objectives down to promoting multinational cooperation in capability development. The EEAS, directly supporting the HR, will facilitate its work and further consolidate the ties to the main decision making bodies of the EU. With this, the HR and EEAS can significantly affect and effectively conduct CSDP within the framework of the other EU institutions.

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<sup>42</sup> Center For Security Studies, "ESDP after Lisbon: More Coherent and Capable?" *CSS Analyses in Security Policy* Vol. 3, No. 28 (ETH Zurich, February 2008): 2-4, [http://se2.isn.ch/serviceengine/Files/ESDP/46839/ipublicationdocument\\_singledocument/9BDF5F23-3BC5-49A6-9DDA-F9CB1414FBC0/en/28e.pdf](http://se2.isn.ch/serviceengine/Files/ESDP/46839/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/9BDF5F23-3BC5-49A6-9DDA-F9CB1414FBC0/en/28e.pdf) (accessed 8 October 2010).

<sup>43</sup> Major, 5.

<sup>44</sup> Guérot, 43.

In view of a complementary relationship with NATO, the HR and the EEAS are likely to play a significant role as well. Unifying responsibilities in the two offices will contribute significantly to more coherence and transparency in all fields of CSDP. Thus, the modifications are likely to have a positive effect creating greater transparency and establishing closer cooperation between both organizations – two of NATO Members’ main goals in CSDP. However, to what extent the new Foreign Minister of the EU will actually shape CSDP will depend mainly on the personalities exercising the adapted post. In this regard, the “grotesque dispute over personnel”<sup>45</sup> in appointing the first HR for the EU dampens hope that the Member States fully recognize the importance and the chances the HR and the EEAS create for the EU and NATO.

### *Integrating and Streamlining Civilian Crisis Management Planning*

With the introduction of CMPD, the EU reduces the fragmentation of civilian-military crisis management planning capacities at the political level, provides a more coherent and efficient capability for the HR and the EEAS to exercise their responsibilities, and institutionalizes the comprehensive approach to strategic level planning. The creation of CMPD is a result of the suboptimal civil-military planning cell in the European Union Military Staff, which failed to “act as a ‘system integrator’ that would unify the civilian and the military strand of [CSDP].”<sup>46</sup> In conjunction with the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability, CMPD is the attempt to increase effectiveness, coherence, and efficiency of planning and execution procedures for civilian crisis management operations and to establish a civilian counterpart to the strategic military chain of command within CSDP.

Streamlining its civilian crisis management institutions enables the EU to apply a comprehensive approach at the strategic level and will contribute to more efficiency and coherence in CSDP. This capability has the potential to benefit a complementary relationship between NATO and the EU, if both organizations link their strategic planning capabilities. Yet again, this calls for institutionalized coordination and cooperation between both organizations.

### *Berlin Plus as a Framework for a Successful Comprehensive Approach?*

At this point, it does make sense to briefly reflect on the EU’s existing procedures to apply its means in a comprehensive approach as introduced earlier. As shown, the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty integrate permanent military and civilian planning capabilities on the strategic level of CSDP. However, the EU does not possess the capabilities to actually plan and lead a military operation on the highest military level. For its civilian operations, the Union can rely on ad hoc structures to form an Operational and Force Headquarters. However, to utilize a comprehensive approach in crisis management, the EU relies on the Berlin Plus agreements for operating military command structures.

The Lisbon Treaty does not provide specific provisions for accessing non-inherent capabilities and using them in a comprehensive approach in crisis management operations. The EU still depends on

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<sup>45</sup> Nations circulated second rate candidates and prominent candidates were refused nomination in order not to jeopardize their national careers. Ibid., 40.

<sup>46</sup> Gebhard, 12.

Berlin Plus, which has been successfully utilized in the past. However, cooperation under Berlin Plus is continuously overshadowed by the Turkey-Cyprus-Greece conflict and their competing national interests and objects on how to shape CSDP. Thus, a strategic and complementary relationship between NATO and the EU is unachievable under Berlin Plus.

## The effects of the Lisbon Treaty on Capability Development

### *Permanent Structured Cooperation in Defense for a More Flexible and Capable CSDP*

The Lisbon Treaty's most important, innovative, and ambitious amendment is certainly the introduction of PSCD as a tool to deepen the cooperation of its Member States in various areas of CSDP. PSCD seems indeed to be the Union's solution for this issue.<sup>47</sup> Key provisions of the PSCD are the prerequisites it demands of a nation to join, as well as the measures to assess progress and the ability to suspend a participating country that fails to meet these standards. Although initially high standards were set, proposed prerequisites to join a PSCD were soon lowered on behalf of smaller countries during the Treaty text negotiations, which virtually eliminated any discriminator to join.<sup>48</sup> However, this will not likely have any serious consequence, because PSCD must be inclusive in order to avoid a division of the EU concerning defense cooperation, and to increase political coherence in security matters. On the other hand, too many participants would pose the risk of slowing down the pace of planning and executing a PSCD. Thus, only the right balance of a critical mass of member states will make PSCD an effective tool.<sup>49</sup>

EDA will have to play a major role in creating future concrete criteria to assess the progress of a PSCD. Assessment criteria will also have to include proposals on how to suspend a country from cooperation. The Lisbon Treaty does provide the theoretical conditions to do this; whether the EU will be able to achieve this in practice remains uncertain. This also applies to the question of whether a PSCD can be established if it violates particular interests of another EU Member State.<sup>50</sup> PSCD does have the potential to generate a top-down approach in CSDP and to accelerate capability development for the Union. However, it is not the "silver bullet" for solving the EU's problems.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Once established, only members participating in the PSCD are eligible to vote and to determine ends, ways, and means of their cooperation. Christian Mölling, "Ständige strukturierte Zusammenarbeit in der EU-Sicherheitspolitik: Auswirkungen des Lissabon-Vertrags auf die Entwicklung von Fähigkeiten und die Rüstungskoooperation in der Europäischen Union," *SWP Aktuell* Vol 13 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik—German Institute for International and Security Affairs, February 2010), 3. European Union, *Treaty of Lisbon*, 49.

<sup>48</sup> Major, 3.

<sup>49</sup> Pierre Hougardy, "Permanent Structured Cooperation", in: Sven Biscop and Franco Algieri (eds.), "The Lisbon Treaty and ESDP: Transformation and Integration," *Egmont Paper* No. 24 (Brussels: Egmont—Royal Institute for International Relations, June 2008): 12, <http://www.egmontinstitute.be/paperegm/ep24.pdf> (accessed 10 October 2010).

<sup>50</sup> Mölling, 3.

<sup>51</sup> Hougardy, 11-12. Sven Biscop, "Permanent Structured Cooperation and the Future of ESDP: Transformation and Integration," *Egmont Paper* No. 20 (Brussels: Egmont—Royal Institute for International Relations, 18-19 September 2008): 16, <http://www.egmontinstitute.be/paperegm/ep20.pdf> (accessed 22 June 2010).

The introduction of PSCD clearly favors NATO Members' interests in achieving higher efficiency in capability development and thus promotes a complementary relationship between both organizations. The Protocol explicitly aims at increasing the deployability of European forces and at reducing military capability redundancies among EU countries. With this aim, the Lisbon Treaty implements a concept that could open new possibilities in strategic NATO-EU cooperation, particularly in armament cooperation.

### *EDA as an Official Organization of the EU*

Introducing EDA as an official organization of the EU has the potential to be the most significant change resulting from the Lisbon Treaty. Although at first glance unimposing, associating the EDA with the HR and integrating it in CSDP will offer a significant number of possibilities in three interacting areas: harmonizing, specializing and pooling of European military forces, overcoming the fragmented European defense market, and the proactive framing of multinational armament cooperation.

In the first area, the range of possibilities is certainly immense but at the same time hindered by the most significant political obstacles. Abandoning certain military capabilities to focus on niche capabilities and specialization does increase political interdependence among collaborating nations and can lead – in the worst case – to an inability to employ viable military force. This narrows the scope of cooperation mainly to pooling of non-expeditionary forces, the alignment of military doctrine and concepts, and the standardization of equipment and logistics. A first positive example of successful harmonization and pooling of capabilities is the European Air Transportation Command. With, continuously decreasing military budgets and constant high political ambitions, such harmonization, specialization, and pooling of military forces are likely to increase.<sup>52</sup> At the strategic level, EDA will play a central role in this regard.

In the second and third areas, EDA has a great chance of accomplishing short-term objectives, although significant political obstacles exist in these areas as well. The major reason for the increasing capability gap between European and US forces lies in the relatively high costs European countries have to bear for research, experimentation, and development, and not primarily in a lack of budgets and spending.<sup>53</sup> The disproportional costs result from highly fragmented national defense programs, which also diminish military interoperability and further consolidate the already fragmented industrial base for defense equipment in Europe.<sup>54</sup> Here, the primary political obstacles are various degrees of government-industry relations among EU countries and unresolved questions of the ownership of intellectual property rights of developed technology.<sup>55</sup> With a high redundancy of industrial skills on the national level, countries seek to run their own research and development programs. Elevated to Treaty level and under the direct lead of the HR, the EDA is in the right position to address those issues and to overcome protectionism among member states' defense

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<sup>52</sup> Olshausen, 9.

<sup>53</sup> François Heisboug, cited in: David S. Yost, "The NATO Capabilities Gap and the European Union," *Survival* Vol. 42, Issue 4 (UK: Oxford University Press, 2001), 99.

<sup>54</sup> Darnis et. al., 18.

<sup>55</sup> Darnies, 23-24.

markets.<sup>56</sup> As such, the EDA will probably perform first the management and coordination tasks. Linked by the HR to the EU's main decision bodies, EDA can play a central role initiating such cooperation and utilizing PSCD as a tool to facilitate progress and to overcome political obstacles.

EDA is likely to play a crucial role in the strategic partnership between NATO and the EU, particularly in the field of capability development. Embedding EDA in CSDP under the HR, the EU has taken significant steps clearly directed towards a more capable and deployable European force. More harmonized, specialized and pooled European military forces, a competitive defense market, and more multinational cooperation will most certainly lead to an increase of deployable military capabilities in Europe. Furthermore, EDA provides NATO with a single point of contact to discuss and to align military capability development programs. This is in the Alliance Members' best interests. However, limiting EDA to EU's Members does exclude non-EU countries, such as Turkey, from participation. With a view on the Cyprus conflict, this appears counterproductive to efforts to resolve strategic issues between NATO and the EU.

## Conclusion

In implementing the Lisbon Treaty, the EU is undertaking the necessary steps to strengthen CSDP. The treaty aligns and harmonizes the institutions and procedures in CSDP and provides a fertile framework for future military capability development. That does not mean that the Treaty resolves every shortcoming in CSDP and that all provisions are directed towards a complementary relationship with NATO. This would be beyond rational expectations.

On the strategic level, the main political obstacle for a true strategic partnership between NATO and the EU remains the unresolved Turkey-Greece-Cyprus conflict. The resulting strategic stalemate denies the EU the ability to develop a more coherent CSDP, prevents effective NATO-EU cooperation, and hampers military capability development through EDA. Furthermore, the strengthening of the intergovernmental character of CSDP dampens the hopes for the development of an inherent strategic culture, which would allow the EU to operationalize the EU Security Strategy into a civil-military strategy for CSDP. The limited political coherence yet denies the EU developing a strategic frame that explains the rationale behind the Lisbon Treaty's amendments and raises questions of how integration in foreign relations and the defense sector should go forward. Despite those limitations, one must acknowledge that Lisbon Treaty's mutual defense clause and the extended Petersberg Tasks do not aim at replacing the Alliance's role and have rather a high potential to promote a strategic partnership between NATO and the EU through its significantly adapted institutional structures. The most significant effects of the Treaty are its provisions regarding the EU's institutions that deal with CSDP. These provisions will enable the Union to establish a strategic partnership with NATO. However, the changes also have the potential to reinforce already existing political obstacles within the EU as well as the NATO-EU relationship. First, by introducing the European Council as an official institution the EU strengthens the intergovernmental character of CSDP and provides an anchor for its Members to oppose further integration as well as block important decisions. This decreases the chances for establishing a supranational CSDP and continues to limit EU's capabilities to the least common denominator. However, by introducing the

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<sup>56</sup> European Defence Agency, "Steering Board Decision in NADS Formation on EDA Input to the Commission's Consultation Process on the Green Paper" (Brussels, 2 March 2005): <http://uu212-190-205-2.unknown.uunet.be/genericitem.aspx?area=Reference&id=142> (accessed 8 October 2010).

HR, the EEAS, the CMPD, and the PSCD, the EU is undertaking innovative and ambitious steps to increase transparency, coherence, and efficiency of CSDP. The HR and the EEAS have the potential to be the driving forces in CSDP and to strengthen the interconnection with NATO towards a complementary partnership.

The introduction of the PSCD provides the EU an appropriate tool to overcome member state dissent over CSDP and clearly facilitates military capability development through multinational cooperation of those Members who are willing and capable to do so. Streamlined strategic planning, operational capability, and the EU's ability to apply a comprehensive approach in strategic crisis management planning, offer opportunities for future cooperation with NATO. All these changes are in the best interests of NATO and EU Members, if the EU takes appropriate steps to link its institutions, procedures, and planning capabilities to NATO. It will require significant political effort of major state players of both organizations to mitigate the inertia caused by the unresolved Turkey-Greece-Cyprus conflict.

With regard to military capability development, the Treaty introduces EDA as an official institution and embeds the Agency in CSDP appropriately. The agency has the potential of being a cornerstone in future NATO-EU relations and cooperation between both organizations in capability development. This is in the best interests of NATO Members, particularly the US. However, limiting EDA for EU Member States institutionalizes existing political issues and hampers progress. Overall, the Lisbon Treaty creates the necessary institutional prerequisites for successful capability development among EU Member States and promotes a complementary relationship between NATO and the EU.

## **About the Authors**

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