

European governments' official positions on missile defense

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Introduction

In an editorial by-line to a comment piece by BASIC's Director, Dr Ian Davis, in July 2002, the following question was posed: 'The American administration has rethought missile defence and plans a fresh drive to sell a new system to "protect friends and allies". Will this win the critics over?'[1]

Teams of US administration officials toured Europe during the summer 2002 with a clear message that the President was determined to press ahead with the early deployment of 'layered missile defence systems' which would provide a cover against 'rogue state' missile attack on continental United States and its deployed forces overseas. 'National Missile Defense' became 'Global Missile Defense' – a missile shield for all, provided prospective governments were prepared to suppress any lingering doubts about its desirability and effectiveness, and indicate some interest in industrial participation in research and development work.

BASIC decided to track developments on missile defence very closely in the United Kingdom through the autumn and winter. Results of this work can be seen in BASIC's E-mail Missile Defence Updates and in the last article on this report.

Within the UK Government, Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon has made all the running on this issue and it was clear from his Parliamentary Statement on 12 October 2002 that he would not be among the European waiverers. He moved the debate along at a cracking pace, leaving critics in his wake, before making the expected announcement of formal approval for US use of Fylingdales radar station for missile defence purposes on 5 February 2003. Equivocation over a two year period was forgotten as he conducted what passed for consultation in under four months, including a parliamentary recess over the Christmas Holiday.

Sensing that what was going on in the UK was being repeated across Continental Europe, BASIC decided to commission articles from people who could make objective assessments of their own government's official positions on missile defence. This turned out to be a more laborious task than originally hoped, and planned for, towards the end of 2002! But, as things were moving along rapidly in the UK, it was difficult to know when to call a halt to the project.

BASIC would like to thank those who contributed to this report: Jean-Marie Collin from France, Regina Hagen from Germany, Wilbert van der Zeijden from the Netherlands, Kirsten Sparre from Denmark, Terje Stokstad from Norway, Frida Blom from Sweden, Radek Khol from the Czech Republic and Liviu Mursan from Romania.

It would appear from these contributions that a consistent pattern has emerged across Europe. Initial disquiet about maintaining good relations with Russia, around the perceived stability offered by the ABM Treaty, was eroded when the US withdrew from its bilateral obligations, with the acquiescence of Russia.

Secondly, the absolute determination of the Bush administration to press ahead with missile defence, while offering the possibility of sharing the benefits of technological development, convinced former sceptics to withhold their criticism. As Ian Davis suggested in his Observer article, "The men from the Pentagon are not coming to mend fences, but rather to convince their European allies to build even higher ones – a Maginot line for the 21st century, stretching far into space".

And thirdly, the prospect of developing protective measures for European forces, particularly through NATO membership and briefly detailed in the communiqué from the

Prague Summit in November 2002, appeared attractive to many national decision-makers. A recurring theme from our contributors is a general lack of official government statements on missile defence. While some are playing a 'wait and see' game, others are quietly getting on with accommodating the US administration.

For now, it would seem that the consensus is to wait and see what happens next and to be well placed to secure any potential benefits which may come their way. Geopolitics, economics and national elections may yet undermine this consensus and turn defence ministries and public opinion against missile defence, as happened with the Strategic Defense Initiative in the 1980s.

Ian Davis probably spoke for the majority in the arms control community when he said, "Cooperative engagement and multilateralism remain the key tenants of European security thinking. After all, this is exactly what the EU is built on. Missile Defence is a diametrically different approach, symbolically erecting a wall against the rest of the world"

France and Missile Defence

Jean-Marie Collin

Since the 1960s, France has always expressed reservations in regard to missile defense projects. Indeed, when France constituted its strategic nuclear force, the installation of these systems by the Americans, and especially by the Soviets, represented a threat to the credibility of French nuclear deterrent. This is why the conclusion in May 1972 of an ABM Treaty between the two major powers was greatly applauded by France, which saw its nuclear force thus becoming fully effective. Moreover, as a result of the Americans' calling into question the ABM Treaty with the Ballistic Missile Defense Act of July 1999, France voted on December 1, 1999, for the draft Resolution (introduced by Russia and China) that pledged for strict application of the treaty.

However, since G. W. Bush committed himself to putting this project into effect, the political statements of the head of the French State, Jacques Chirac, have evolved :

- Speech in front of the ambassadors at the Elysée palace August 29, 1999, when Jacques Chirac confirmed his attachment to the ABM Treaty: " France attaches the greatest importance to the maintenance of strategic stability. The ABM Treaty constitutes an essential element of this stability. We must carefully avoid calling into question the ABM Treaty, a calling into question that could lead to a rupture of strategic balances and a revival of the nuclear arms race, worsened by ballistic proliferation " .
- Speech made at the close of the 53rd session of IHEDN in Paris, June 8, 2001, where we find an evolution of thought on the questioning of the ABM Treaty: " France notes that the ABM treaty sealed the strategic balance of the last thirty years. The United States wishes today to define a new framework for this balance. It rests above all with Russia to come to a conclusion about this proposal. France for its part is not unaware that the world has changed and that the very conditions of this balance must be redefined " .

While the President remains moderate in the evolution of his speech, the French deputies and senators are much more open in their comments, but always with this idea: the project should not impact the strategic autonomy of the French deterrent:

- Paul Quilès, Socialist deputy, fears that this project calls into question the European policy of defence and safety (ESDP) and declares himself to be for a " balanced and constructive dialogue with the United States on the conditions of strategic stability after the cold war " ;
- Xavier de Villepin, UMP senator wishes that the emergence of this anti-missile system reveal new concepts of defence that must "be integrated into our doctrinal reflection in all fields, including that of nuclear dissuasion";

- Pierre Lellouche, UMP deputy, requests that France not only develop anti-missile defence for the theatre, but carry out a thorough technological study of the interception of long-range ballistic missiles during the propelled phase.

Thus we find that in less than five years, the position of France has taken into account American projections in regard to the Missile Defence project.

Initially completely hostile because of the questioning of the strategic balance that the ABM Treaty established, and of the possible ballistic threat that certain countries hold over the United States, France recognizes that the world, the threats and military technology have changed since 1972 and accepts that the idea that nations want to protect themselves against these threats by the deployment of defensive systems.

France is thus not opposed to the Missile Defence project, provided that the project does not impact France's nuclear deterrent which is the ultimate guard of France's safety (and that of Europe); this is why the President of the Republic (Jacques Chirac) announced his wish (June 8, 2001) that France "study the possibility of equipping its forces, in a time frame compatible with the emergence of new ballistic threats, with a capacity of defence against theatre missiles".

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Germany and Missile Defence

Regina Hagen

Contrary to occasional official declarations and public perception in 2000, Germany has no coherent position on missile defence. No German opposition to missile defence has been seen since the United States' announced its withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty in December 2001 (which took effect in June 2002).

Until the Bush administration came to power, the Social Democrat and Green Party Coalition Government frequently confirmed that its consent for missile defence – then meaning a National Missile Defense (NMD) system protecting US territory – was conditional on four essential criteria:

- security and cohesion within NATO must be ensured, meaning that no 'zones of different security' must result from NMD;
- regional and global arms races (with an increase in the proliferation of WMD and delivery systems as well as an arms race in space as a result of US NMD deployment) must be prevented - otherwise missile defence would create more instability and insecurity rather than less;
- international arms control and non-proliferation regimes must not be weakened but effectively strengthened by any decision for NMD, e.g. the START process must continue, leading to drastic nuclear disarmament between the US and Russia, and the ABM Treaty as the cornerstone of the arms control regime must be preserved as the basis for START, the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, negotiations on a Cut-Off Treaty, etc.; and
- close and intensive consultations are required between the United States and their European allies, but also with Russia and China, and the interests of these countries should be considered.

In 2001, it became quickly clear that the United States would not restrict itself to President Clinton's plans for NMD. Instead it was decided to follow all technologically promising concepts. In reaction, the German Government pointed out that no clear position could be taken on this issue as long as US plans, time schedules, and

technologies involved had not been decided on. Furthermore, NATO was pointed out as the appropriate decision body.

Although Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer still voiced concern on the security and stability-related aspects of missile defence, both Fischer and Chancellor Gerhard Schröder underlined the German interest in technological and industrial participation if the US took the decision to deploy.

In 2002, US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld gave up the NMD vs. TMD distinction and introduced the concepts of boost phase, midcourse, and terminal phase missile interception. To prevent a violation of its legal obligations, the United States withdrew from the ABM Treaty. Germany voiced concern about the end of this treaty regime, but took no further initiative.

Throughout these years, the German position on missile defence was unconvincing. While pointing to the relevance of the ABM Treaty, Germany in its turn was busily involved in several missile defence projects:

- Germany owns several Patriot-I air defence systems (a fact which hit the headlines when Germany agreed to make these available to Israel to protect any missile attacks from Iraq in the event of a new Gulf War). The upgrade to the Patriot-III air and missile defence system is also foreseen.
- In cooperation with Italy and the United States, Germany works on MEADS, the Medium Extended Air Defence System, which is also based on Patriot-III.
- In the framework of NATO, Germany not only supports the Defence Ministers "Statement on Capabilities" issued in June 2002 that points to "the need to deploy theatre missile defences to protect our deployed forces". It also backs NATO's decision to conduct an extended "NATO Missile Defence feasibility study to examine options for protecting Alliance territory, forces, and population centres against the full range of missile threats", as stated by the Heads of State and Government in their Prague Summit Declaration in November 2002.

When asked about the German official position on missile defence, a Foreign Ministry official referred to the NATO decisions. It can therefore be concluded that Germany plans to cooperate with NATO and the United States in building up a missile shield. The expectation to profit from such cooperation by way of technological and industrial sharing may go unfulfilled, as was the case when former Chancellor Helmut Kohl and former US President Ronald Reagan signed an appropriate agreement, but the profit remained only with US corporations.

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The Netherlands and Missile Defence

Wilbert van der Zeijden

Missile Defence: a non-issue

On January 22, 2003, a General Election was held for the second time in eight months in the Netherlands. After an unbelievably turbulent political year, this is the second time voters were asked to vote for the National Parliament and for a new Cabinet.

Issues debated throughout both campaigns were primarily domestic. The economic recession, migration and integration of newcomers, organised crime and waiting lists in health care and childcare were the major issues. International political issues were absent during the election campaigns. Even the pending war on Iraq and the so-called "war

against terrorism” were largely ignored both by leading politicians and the media, despite the fact that the Dutch army is taking active part in both military operations. Enlargement of the EU and NATO, international treaties, the US ‘Hague Invasion Act’, North Korea and EU-Russia relations did not play a significant role in the election campaign, which was fought out bitterly on National TV in daily debates.

Missile Defence was also a definite non-issue in all this. In both election campaigns and also during the 87 days the last cabinet managed to stay in office, the whole issue was not debated once.

A short study of party programmes learns that a number of major parties do not have any formal party opinion on the matter of MD at all. Especially the traditionally centre-right parties (the Christian Democrats and the Neo-Liberals) have nothing to say whatsoever on the subject, just as the smaller Socialist Party. Traditionally left wing parties (Labour, Greens, Communists) and the fundamentalist christian parties make statements showing their concern about or even opposition to MD-plans. The only party in favour of active Dutch MD-development is the small populist right-wing party LPF.

Dutch Government position

Digging through the Foreign Affairs Committee minutes of the last two years, shows that the official government position is that US plans for National Missile Defence (NMD) raise “grave concerns” because of the possibly destabilising effects of the US break with the ABM Treaty in international relations and stability. The ABM Treaty was regarded as the cornerstone of international system of control of the arms race. The US abandonment of the ABM Treaty was seen as possibly endangering the US - Russia and US - China relations. At the time the Bush administration formally announced the withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that it could understand the US decision and was confident that Washington would come up and negotiate with Russia a suitable alternative treaty.

Apart from these remarks, the Dutch Government doesn't see itself fit to remark politically on the development of NMD. It is regarded as a US domestic policy that does not concern Dutch affairs, unless any specific requests would come from the US Government on participation in the implementation of a multi-layered MD system. There are no signs of any formal involvement of the Dutch in the Bush administrations plans for the deployment of early warning radars and launch installations in Europe.

The position on Theatre Missile Defence (TMD) within NATO or EU confines is a different story. There is no clear vision or policy from the Dutch Government or from the Ministry of Defence on the matter. Possible development, as a goal or policy is not debated. Yet, reading between the lines, the government prides itself a being “one of the most active allies (within NATO) with regard to Theatre Missile Defence”. And, in an unheated debate in parliament on the relationship between the EU and Russia, the Minister of Foreign Affairs remarks: “... One of the most important possibilities for cooperation between us (EU) and Russia will be on the development and implementation of a European form of TMD...”. Both remarks seem to lead to the conclusion that the Dutch government is planning to further develop forms of TMD, primarily in cooperation with other NATO members and Russia.

Dutch involvement in development and production of MD systems

Politically, there may be no Dutch participation in the development of NMD. Economically, the Dutch are heavily involved. Dutch high-tech companies like Thales (Signaal), Stork and Philips managed to get their hands on contracts for development of NMD related high-tech worth several tens of millions of US Dollars. Also, the second largest European contractor for MD related technology, EADS, is legally based in the Netherlands. It is important to notice this because of the fact that spreading orders over countries is a

way of ensuring political cooperation. Once the Dutch industry is "in", the government is expected to follow, since MD development then becomes a commercial activity boosting the Dutch economy and tax revenues.

TMD development on a technical level has been developing for a long time now. That said, it's not a development with a certain target or deeper plan. It's more an ongoing upgrading and development of existing and follow-up systems. The Dutch pride, the 'Goal Keeper' is being further developed and might become an integral part of missile defence systems in the future. More important is the development of the Patriot Advanced Capabilities III (PAC-III), a joint venture with the German army. PAC-III installations are to be deployed in Turkey, to protect East Turkey against incoming Iraqi missiles.

Wilbert van der Zeijden works for the Transnational Institute, based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. In the coming weeks he is starting up a new project with the working title "Militarism and Globalisation". He is also currently finishing his thesis at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, on "Theoretical Approaches to US National Missile Defence".

Denmark and Missile Defence

Kirsten Sparre

On 18 December 2002 the Danish government received an official request from the American Secretary of State, Colin Powell, to allow the US military to upgrade the early warning radar at the Thule Airbase in Greenland so it can become part of the planned American missile defense programme.

The request has ended the official wait-and-see policy of two successive Danish governments to postpone any real decision-making on the missile plans until such a time where the Americans might bring up the issue formally. Now the Danish government has committed itself to replying to the American request by April 2003 after a thorough public and parliamentary debate has taken place in Denmark and in Greenland.

There are going to be two equally important aspects to the coming debate. One is whether or not Denmark wants to be included in the missile defence project at all. The other rather more sensitive issue concerns the inclusion of the Thule Air Base in the project and who has the right to make decisions about the airbase.

Greenland

The American use of the Thule Air Base is based on the Defence Agreement of 1951 between Denmark and the United States. The agreement was made at a time when Greenland was a Danish colony. However, in 1979 home rule was introduced in Greenland, and in November 2002 a unanimous Greenland Foreign Affairs and Security Committee informed the Danish government that any further development of the Thule Air Base facilities may only take place following a new defence agreement which replaces the Defence Agreement of 1951 between Denmark and the United States and recognises Greenland as an equal partner in a new defence treaty. So far neither Denmark nor the US have been willing to consider a new defence agreement but have only stated a guarded willingness to consider small changes and amendments.

January 2003 saw the collapse of a newly formed government coalition in Greenland between the Inuit Ataqatigiit and Siumut parties. It was later replaced by another coalition of the Siumut and the liberal Atassut parties. The coalition agreement contains an ambition to draw up a new defence agreement to replace the 1951 agreement, but it does not specifically address the issue of the use of the Thule Airbase. However, Josef Møtsfeldt of the Inuit Ataqatigiit informed Colin Powell in November 2002 that an upgrade of the Thule Air Base will not be allowed if Greenland considers it a threat to world peace

or likely to lead to a new arms race.

Denmark

In Denmark, the minority coalition government consisting of the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party is positive about the American missile defence plans particularly because the protection eventually will be extended to Europe. The government's main parliamentary support, the Danish People's Party, has also welcomed the American request and urges a quick and positive Danish reply.

However, the government wants a broad consensus in Parliament on the missile defence plans as well as the inclusion of the Thule Air Base in the new system, and the views of other parties are therefore very important to the final outcome.

Two left-wing parties have already spoken out against the plans and the main opposition party, the Socialdemocrats, together with two small centre parties are very sceptical about the proposal. The Socialdemocrats fear that the missile defence plans will lead to a new arms race and are concerned that it will not be able to address the problems of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The smaller parties are concerned that the missile defence system will use resources that would be better spent on development assistance.

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Norway and Missile Defence

Terje Stokstad

The Norwegian Defense Minister Kristin Krohn Devold made the following statement on missile defence in the national newspaper AFTENPOSTEN on 25 November 2002:

NATO decided several years ago to look into the possibilities of a defence against short to medium range ballistic missiles, in order to protect the deployed forces of the alliance. As regards a study of a limited defence against long-range missiles, this is of particular relevance because of the spread of weapons of mass destruction and modern missile technology. The Prague Summit decided to consider the technical and economical aspects of a missile defence able to protect the territories, the populations and the deployed forces of the alliance against all types of ballistic missiles. This decision does not mean that the missile defence question within the alliance will be dealt with any earlier than anticipated. We are glad the Americans now advocate a multinational solution in NATO and not a purely national one. That makes sure the security of the alliance is regarded as indivisible and confirms the principle of equal security.

Prior to this 'statement' there was an article on 19 November in the same newspaper regarding the upcoming NATO Summit.

On the previous day, 18 November, there had been a meeting in the extended Foreign Affairs Committee the Storting (Parliament). There are normally no transcripts from such meetings, and they are classified for 25 years. But according to newspaper reports, Norway supports wholeheartedly a study of NATO missile defence, as the Government got more than sufficient support at the above-mentioned meeting.

The Defence minister told the reporter she thought all the European NATO countries would profit from such a study being done. That is more reassuring than if done by the United States on its own. She underlined that there are no obligations involved at this stage, that no decision on the realities of the question will be taken, and that there is broad agreement on the study in the alliance.

On the same day, in the same newspaper, there were also short interviews with a

representative from the Center Party (10 MPs out of 165) and the Socialist left wing Party (23 MPs).

The latter party is flatly against the idea. They maintain there is pressure for such a missile defence from the weapons industry in the United States, and partly also from Europe. Further it is their opinion that such a defence will be of limited military value. The Storting should therefore vote against this idea, and Norway should warn against it at the Summit in Prague.

The Center Party would not stop the study, but is sceptical. Their foreign affairs spokesperson said that if other countries accept the idea of a study, there might be good reasons for this. Not least in order to get the US involved in a thinking process. The alternative would be for the US to go it alone. But it will be important not to provoke the Russians. Russians should therefore be fully involved in the process.

Terje Stokstad is a former Chair of NEI TIL ATOMVAPEN in Oslo

Sweden and Missile Defence

Frida Blom

On 3 July 2002, Swedish Foreign Minister Anna Lindh and Finland's foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja together wrote an article entitled "Slaying the Hydra – together" in the International Herald Tribune. In the article, they said:

Strategic missile defence may give an illusion of increased security, but in reality it increases reliance on nuclear weapons and hampers non-proliferation and disarmament efforts.

Anna Lind delivered a statement of Government Policy in the Parliamentary Debate on Foreign Affairs, Wednesday 13 February 2002:

It is regrettable that the USA has unilaterally withdrawn from the ABM Treaty and is moving ahead with its plans for a missile defence. This development risks leading to a new arms race. Having said that, it is unacceptable that China is using the US plans as an argument for modernising and rearming its nuclear arsenals and for blocking progress in the disarmament area. The United States must now continue consultations and strive to find a solution that makes a positive contribution to disarmament and non-proliferation.

Anna Lind also said the following at the Disarmament Conference in Geneva 7th of February 2002:

Fourth, we must co-operate to dismantle old systems, not to build new ones. Sweden has repeatedly expressed concern that a unilateral decision by the United States to develop a strategic missile defence risks having a negative impact on international disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. We are also concerned about the consequences of the American decision to withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM). We hope that the continuing consultations between the US Administration and other countries will lead to an agreed solution that will contribute positively to disarmament and non-proliferation. At the same time I want to stress that it is unacceptable that China is using the American missile defence plans as an argument for expanding its own nuclear arms programmes. It is contrary to what is needed today, and hardly what is implied by Article VI of the NPT. All parties should work for a strengthening of the international disarmament process.

On 13 November 2001, Anna Lindh issued the following statement in the General Debate of the 56th Session of the General Assembly to the United Nations:

The US plans for a strategic missile defence system risk having a negative impact on disarmament, non-proliferation and the whole NPT process. The ongoing consultations are welcome, but the outcome is still uncertain. We strongly believe that new threats of

proliferation require a multilateral response, built on the already existing safety net.

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The Czech Republic and Missile Defence

Radek Khol

The Czech policy towards the US Missile Defence project started to develop only slowly and largely missed the first wave of heated debate within NATO in the summer 2000 concerning the plans of the Clinton administration on NMD. Until spring/summer 2002 Czech official policy followed the consensus within NATO, based on the NATO Feasibility Study which focused mainly on TMD systems. The Czech Republic was neither a major opponent nor a supporter of US MD policy within NATO. This was quite understandable given the rather limited role expected for European allies under NMD project.

Once G.W.Bush entered the White House and brought with him missile defence as one of the top priorities of his defence policy, a broader framework of the Czech position regarding MD changed too. New, more ambitious US plan opened the possibility for much greater participation of US friends and allies. Although Czech official policy was cautious about certain aspects of this US policy, especially regarding the future of ABM Treaty and strategic relations with Russia, it also acknowledged new opportunities for its participation in the US BMD project.

Czech official policy became more detailed during summer 2002. In August, a large US briefing team visited the Czech Republic on MD issues, which proposed possible ways of cooperation with NATO allies. This visit was part of a large European offensive by the US administration in this policy area. Information provided to MFA and MoD found a group of policy enthusiasts especially around defence minister Jaroslav Tvrdik. He generally agreed with the rationale for building multi-layered BMD system as advocated by the US administration. He even circulated hints that further talks elaborating on Czech participation in certain aspects of US BMD plan were under way.

Leaks to Czech and international press were followed by wider political debate in the Czech parliament demanding that any such radical moves were first discussed in parliament. This cold shower was nevertheless followed by another policy initiative of the Czech defence minister in September when he accompanied the Czech president Vaclav Havel on his last official visit to the United States.

During talks in Washington DC with his US colleague, Donald Rumsfeld, future plans for US BMD system development were discussed and Tvrdik confirmed Czech interest in the project and suggested official dialogue of expert teams about concrete proposals for Czech participation in it. These included detailed modalities, financial and technical arrangements and transfer of know-how. The most promising area of Czech participation in US BMD System was mentioned as the possible building of one of the upgraded early warning or X-band radar stations or tracking stations on Czech soil.

The reaction of the Czech parliament upon his return from the US state visit was even stronger than the one he received a few weeks earlier. Czech prime minister Vladimir Spidla had to issue a formal statement for the Czech Parliament on 4 December 2002, shortly after the conclusion of the Prague NATO Summit. It stated that the Czech government had not made any formal decision about eventual Czech participation in the US BMD project and that any results from the initial expert talks would be submitted to the Czech government and parliament for approval.

Radek Khol is the Head, Center for Security Analysis at the Institute of International

Romania and Missile Defence

Dr. Liviu Muresan

From a Romanian perspective, we have to present, from the very beginning, two important contributions to the rocket/missile history.

First, in the XVI Century, Conrad Hass, (from Sibiu) developed the concept of multi-stage rockets which could be seen as a link between the Chinese invention more than three thousand years ago and the Russian V. Tsiolkovsky in the XIX Century.

Second, between the two World Wars, Hermann Oberth, (from Sighisoara) had contributed to the development of rocket theory. He is also known as the professor Werner von Braun, the father of the German V1 and V2 missile program.

Before 1989, due to its position in the Warsaw Pact, Romania did not have the most modern Soviet military equipment, including missiles. Now, Romania, after the Prague Summit, has to reassess its priorities. As a future NATO member country, Romania has to overlap technical limits. The goal is to achieve a national ballistic missile system integrated in the tactical ballistic missile defence or in NATO – NMD.

To achieve this goal, some steps need to be taken. The programme “gap filler” has to be promoted and so the replacement of the old ground radars with new ones for controlling space under 1000 meters has to be completed. A ‘Mission Needs’ document has to be drawn up and, despite the high cost, the procurement of a non-active air surveillance system will be needed.

According to the partnership objective A–2901, ground terminals for connecting the ASOC system to the air radars for early space warning has to be put on the agenda of procurement. The use of digital command-control equipment could contribute to reducing the present reaction time of the systems against ballistic missiles.

After succeeding modernisation, an important system will be integrated – within the NATINEADS (NATO Integrated Extended Air Defence System) - and so, the reaction time will be reduced. This new system will be oriented to the NATO air command and control system (NATO ACCS).

A system which has to point the target of the ballistic missile directly to the ground – air missile system for assuring a good orientation of the launching installations also has to be operational.

There are opinions among professionals that in the future one other step, which will have to be taken, is the need of pointing the target with high precision for allowing the correct use of emission control system. So the coupling on emission will be done as late as possible to limit the possibilities of being discovered and combated with SEAD or RAR of the own ground-air defence system.

Also it could be taken into consideration in the future that the replacing of the existing ground-air missile system of the Air Forces with others with combating abilities and of the ballistic missile and to enable the transfer from objective air-defence, to zone/area defence.

Taking into consideration the estimations done by foreign officers on the arms system expected to be used against ballistic missiles, the report between the efficiency of the ballistic missiles combating system and its cost and the possibility of acting regardless of the weather conditions, season or time, the most adequate combating systems to be acquisitioned by the Romanian Army are the anti-ballistic missiles systems.

The opportunity of buying modern air research and surveillance systems or ground-air missiles like those presented before is rather limited for the immediate future due to the very high costs. The only short term reliable solution for Romania might be the allocation

of NATO systems within Romania's territory in order to be administrated by NATO and by the Romanian army under some agreements to be signed by both parts.

Dr. Liviu Muresan is the Executive President of EURISC Foundation - European Institute for Risk, Security and Communication Management in Bucharest.

The United Kingdom and Missile Defence

Nigel Chamberlain

Towards the end of 2002, the UK Government made significant statements, which indicated a growing willingness to support the concept, if not the detail, of missile defence systems.

On 12 October, Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon told the House of Commons that US officials had visited London, other European capitals and NATO HQ during the summer "to set out possible approaches to missile defence and to repeat US willingness to offer protection to friends and allies". More specifically, he pointed out that:

It is right that we recognise the potential contribution of missile defence to a comprehensive strategy to deal with the threat from ballistic missiles – a strategy that also includes non-proliferation and counter-proliferation measures, diplomacy and deterrence.

He also went on to state that the US Administration had not made a decision about the "precise future architecture" of a missile defence system, nor had there been a formal request for the use of RAF Fylingdales. Such a request would be seriously considered but only if "we were satisfied that the overall security of the UK and the alliance would be enhanced".

Most importantly, after months of prevarication in response to calls to widen the debate, Mr Hoon said:

I have asked for some detailed analytical work to be completed on the implications of missile defence and its relationship with other elements of a comprehensive strategy against the ballistic missile threat. We welcome parliamentary and public discussion of the issues involved. I therefore intend to make available in the coming months further analytical and discussion material as our work progresses, and we will be ready to discuss these issues in the House at the appropriate time.

On 4 November, questions about which European partners support missile defence, if British taxpayers' money has been committed to missile defence and if parliamentarians would be permitted to vote on the issue were put to the Defence Secretary. He said that the questions were premature and he was only prepared to restate that material was being prepared for a debate by the Ministry of Defence.

In a wide ranging speech at the Foreign Policy Centre on 13 November, Geoff Hoon reminded his audience that NATO was already examining the "threat to deployed forces from ballistic missiles" and that "it also needs to look carefully at the emerging threat from ballistic missiles to the territory and population centres of NATO nations". "The US programme on missile defence is gathering momentum in a vast enterprise involving cutting edge technologies which will require a massive effort over the coming years", he said.

On 26 November, the Secretary of State for Defence was asked whether a formal mechanism would be made available for the public to register their views on missile defence with his Department. Mr. Hoon replied that "Members of the public are welcome to write to the Ministry of Defence with their views on missile defence. I intend to publish shortly some discussion material as an aid to public debate".

On 9 December, the Secretary of State told members of parliament that he had placed "further analytical and discussion material in the Library of the House" and that "the paper

will also be distributed widely and will be available on the Ministry of Defence website". In response to a question from Paul Keetch MP: "What Memoranda of Understanding have been signed in relation to the use by the USA of British facilities for missile defence activities", Mr. Hoon replied: "None". In response to a question from Patrick Mercer MP: "To ask when he expects preparations to begin for British involvement in the US-led missile defence system", Mr. Hoon replied:

The United Kingdom already has close access to US research and development work on missile defence, taking part in collaborative research and information exchange on ballistic missile defence technologies. UK industry is also playing an active role. UK expertise in such areas will enable us to consider and make informed assessments about technical advances in missile defence.

On Tuesday 17 December, the Government announced that it considering a request from the US to upgrade the Early Warning Radar system at RAF Fylingdales and that views from the public will be sought before a decision is made. The US request had arrived in a letter from Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. Mr Hoon's statement can be downloaded from the 10 Downing Street Newsroom Web site.

In his response letter, Geoff Hoon said: "The decision on Fylingdales upgrade is an important one, and the Government is keen for it to be informed by public and Parliamentary discussion. We shall ensure that this House has appropriate opportunities to debate the issue in the New Year."

The Defence Secretary told MPs on Wednesday 15th January that the Government's preliminary conclusion was that it was in the UK's interests to agree to the US request for the upgrade at Fylingdales. Mr Hoon's full parliamentary statement can be downloaded from the 10 Downing Street Newsroom Web site.

Later that day, he gave oral evidence before the House of Commons Select Committee on Defence, as part of their inquiry into missile defence. The chairman, Bruce George MP, closely questioned him about his earlier parliamentary statement which seemed to foreclose on the public debate he himself had initiated and before the Committee had published their report. Mr Hoon declined to give a timetable for a formal decision but indicated he would take the Chairman's comments into consideration and that there would be a full parliamentary debate before that decision was taken. Other members of the Committee then put their questions to Mr Hoon on a range of related issues which he answered more fully than he had been prepared to in the past. Mr George indicated that the Defence Committee's report should be published within about a month.

Perhaps mindful of suggestions that the Government might make a formal response to the US Administration before the end of the month, the Defence Committee Report on Missile Defence was published on 29 January. The report concluded that "the UK should agree to the upgrade of a US early warning radar on British soil for use in the US missile defence system".

The Committee also largely agreed with the UK Ministry of Defence's assessment of the growing threat from ballistic missile proliferation. The report acknowledges that an upgrade to Fylingdales may draw Britain into active participation in deployed missile defence systems and hoped for UK industrial participation and benefit. However, the report also questioned whether the overall missile defence system would work.

The report was also extremely critical of the Government's consultation process, stating: "The Committee strongly regret the way in which the issue has been handled by the Government." The Committee also noted that the Ministry of Defence "has shown no respect for either the views of those affected locally by the decision or for the arguments of those opposed to the upgrade in principle." The Committee noted that it "will also wish to follow up those matters relating to the upgrade of RAF Fylingdales which could not be addressed fully in this report."

In a Parliamentary statement on 5 February, Defence Secretary Hoon said: "I am

therefore replying today to the United States Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, conveying the Government's agreement to the US request." A MoD Press Officer explained to BASIC that the decision to upgrade Fylingdales does not bring their consultation to a close as this is but a small part of the wider debate on missile defence, which will go on for years.

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[1] Dr Ian Davis, 'Beware Bush's summer charm offensive', Observer Comment, 14 July 2002 (see <http://www.observer.co.uk/comment/story/0,6903,754828,00.html>).