

THE FUTURE OF NATO AND AN EVOLVING EUROPEAN SECURITY INTEREST

BY

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ABSTRACT

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Throughout its 60 years, NATO has united the West, secured Europe, and ended the Cold War. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, NATO saw a significant enlargement towards the East, went on the offensive for the first time in the Balkans and deployed for its first "out-of-area" mission to Afghanistan. U.S. unilateral actions in Iraq in 2003 shattered European trust in the transatlantic relationship and the Alliance had to withstand a political segregation into an "old" and "new" Europe. Subsequently, Europeans questioned if they should organize their security beyond NATO and if the Alliance remains meaningful to the United States. It is the aim of this paper to analyze the status of NATO and to discuss NATO's purpose in the 21st century in the light of the transatlantic relationship and Europeans evolving security interests. It will conclude with recommendations how should NATO respond to the strategic challenges in order to accomplish successfully its future tasks.

THE FUTURE OF NATO AND AN EVOLVING EUROPEAN SECURITY INTEREST

Europe must decide if it wants peace or wants to be left in peace.

—Nicolas Sarkozy¹

Since its foundation 60 years ago, NATO has united the West, secured Europe, and ended the Cold War. After the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989/90, NATO has seen a significant enlargement towards the East, embracing formerly Warsaw Treaty countries. Almost all countries in the European region not in NATO, have been offered a Partnership for Peace (PfP) or are undergoing reforms to qualify for PfP membership. This has extended the Alliance's reach and created a 'zone of peace' across the European continent. NATO went on the offensive for the first time in Bosnia in 1994/5 to hasten the end of the war, and in 1999 conducted a large air operation to oppose Serbian ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. These operations were followed by NATO's Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (SFOR) and Kosovo Force (KFOR), the first peacekeeping operations for the Alliance.

NATO also has an agenda for military transformation – agreed at the Prague Summit in 2002 – which seeks to overhaul its military capabilities. Relieved of its operational responsibilities, the NATO Atlantic Command in Norfolk, Virginia, was turned into an "Allied Transformation Command" (ACT), a motor for reform. NATO's ability to deploy forces rapidly has apparently increased after the Alliance's announcement that the NATO Response Force (NRF) had reached full operational capability in October 2006 with approximately 21,000 troops. Within the transatlantic area, the interoperability of NATO forces is taken for granted and the relatively

seamless integration of different national militaries in combat missions stands out and appears to be proven in the first “out-of-area” mission in Afghanistan.²

Taking a look at these accomplishments, it has been a long time since anyone earnestly questioned the continuous existence of the Alliance, narrowing down to a rather polemic choice, if the Alliance goes “out-of-area or out of business”.³ However, against the background of the Iraq campaign in 2003, the Alliance had to withstand a virtual political segregation into an “old and new Europe”, driven by the George W. Bush administration. U.S. unilateralism and the forging of a “coalition of the willing” shattered European trust in the transatlantic relationship. On the eve of the 2008 presidential election, the United States lacked concrete European support on vital issues, and European confidence in U.S. leadership had mostly collapsed. The current Obama administration now stands for providing an opportunity for a restart in U.S.-European relations.⁴

Nevertheless, after the NATO Strasbourg/Kehl summit⁵ in April 2009 – which saw France’s full reintegration into NATO’s standing military structures and the defense planning mechanisms of the Alliance – considerable challenges remain. These include NATO’s expansion, its Afghanistan operation, and its transformation to a leaner organization. Some Allies now want to return to a static, defensive posture, which focuses primarily on traditional territorial threats; others want to concentrate mainly on expeditionary operations like the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF). This is likely to be the biggest strategic dilemma facing NATO, after the Alliance lost its galvanizing Cold War threat and is leading to the existential question: what is NATO’s purpose in the 21st century?

“Alliances must continually reassess their purposes and adapt to new circumstances”⁶ states U.S. Senator Richard Lugar. It is against this background, that NATO currently undergoes a re-examination of the apportionment of U.S.-European security responsibilities whilst ensuring the continuation of the Alliance. NATO members have launched a process to articulate a new strategic concept that will define their purpose going forward. In doing so, they must respond to a number of critical challenges.⁷

Firstly, how can the Alliance engage in military operations in places such as Afghanistan and Pakistan with obviously only a handful of members willing and able to do so? Secondly, how can NATO engage Russia in a binding and mutually beneficial relationship with Europe and the wider North Atlantic community? Thirdly, how should the Alliance respond to evolving global security dilemmas, given the majority of NATO members fear a dilution of the Alliance’s transatlantic character if NATO “goes global”? And finally, how should NATO update the meaning and obligations of "collective security", as embodied in Article 5 of the Alliance's treaty?

Challenges After the End of Cold War (“11/9”)

When the Berlin Wall fell and the Cold War ended, there seemed little reason why to expect NATO to remain in business. In history, alliances usually formed to encounter threats; when those threats disappeared, so did the alliances. Therefore, if the Alliance were going to remain strong and capable of meeting the future challenges, NATO would have to make dramatic changes in its policy, structure, and composition. Subsequently, since 1991, NATO’s security focus has shifted from a collective European defense to potential conduct of a full spectrum of military operations to resolve issues possibly outside of NATO traditional territories. Furthermore NATO

reached out to the former Warsaw Pact nations to extend that zone of security and stability. First by establishing partnerships with militaries from Central and Eastern Europe, and later by holding out the prospect for membership in the Alliance, NATO became essential to fostering political, economic, and military reform.⁸

With the intervention in Kosovo at the end of the 20th century, and 50 years after its creation, NATO crossed the threshold of acting as an expeditionary Alliance for the first time. However, most European members were reluctant to see the intervention in Kosovo not as an exception to the rule since NATO was designed for collective defense rather than for missions abroad. Ultimately, the terrorist attacks of 9/11 became the catalyst for NATO members to realize that collective defense had a new meaning, beyond a regional and nation state-related context.⁹

Challenges After “9/11”

The core of the Alliance is Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, which declares that an attack on one member is to be considered an attack on all.¹⁰ However, Article 5 was never used. It was invoked for the first time in support of the United States in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. But as the United States considered the process of gaining allied consensus too awkward, the Bush administration chose instead to put together a coalition of the willing, thereby signaling that the Alliance’s usefulness to the United States seemed to be limited.¹¹

As NATO's experiences in mounting and sustaining the ISAF Operation in Afghanistan have provided a reality check, pointing not only to the possibilities but also the limitations of NATO's contribution to international peace and security outside the Euro-Atlantic area. While allies are slowly contributing more troops and equipment to Afghanistan, the major challenges remain a lacking unity of political purpose and the

clarity of strategic direction required to sustain global engagement. In terms of domestic politics, a number of states cannot gain or sustain the public and parliamentary support which would be necessary for sending (more) troops to fight the Taliban and Al Qaeda. Subsequently, U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates complained openly about the danger of a “two-tiered Alliance of those who are willing to fight and those who are not.”¹² That is hardly indicative of a robust military alliance and shows evidence of a substantial need for improvement.

The Situation of NATO Since the End of the East-West Conflict.

NATO was born in the aftermath of World War II, when twelve states signed the Treaty of Washington on April 4, 1949, creating a system for the collective defense of all its member states. This collective defense idea, embodied in Article 5 of the treaty, had been the foundation of the Alliance ever since but with the end of the East-West conflict, the security and political conditions of the North-Atlantic alliance have changed in Europe, as well as in the global political arena. The former East-West contrast that characterized the international system for more than four decades does not exist anymore and new security-political challenges were to be mastered.

The Warsaw Pact organization dissolved in March 1991. The states in Central and East Europe re-attained their political freedom of action and the existence of the Soviet Union eroded. Since 1989, crises and wars expanded in the area of the former Soviet Union and increased ethnic and nationalist riots in East Europe and in the Balkan region brought and continuously bring violence, which causes further political changes and consequences. NATO's actions during this period were “less the product of strategic design than the result of history's spontaneity”, concludes Zbigniew Brzezinski, former U.S. National Security Advisor.¹³

Nevertheless, through its interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo, NATO was perceived to have demonstrated powerfully its continued relevance in the post-Cold War world. Though intervening in the Balkans had meant intervention beyond NATO's formal territory, promoting stability in Bosnia and Kosovo was seen as part of safeguarding European security as a whole.¹⁴ Seeking to address the new challenges arising from ethnic rivalries, territorial disputes, and other political and economic difficulties, the Alliance also declared its intention to broaden security policy to include "dialogue" and "cooperation" in addition to the "maintenance of a collective defense capability."¹⁵ Ever since the interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo, a debate has raged among the members about whether NATO should transform into a more expeditionary, operationally-focused Alliance.¹⁶

Additionally, new security problems appeared, which resulted in the activities of international terrorism and culminated in the acts of terrorism of the 11th of September, 2001 and finally caused the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Despite its current mission in Afghanistan, those debates about out-of-area¹⁷ operations are still ongoing. NATO is apparently still approaching its new out-of-area missions with the political tools developed after the Soviet threat faded in the early 1990s, as Rebecca Moore argues.¹⁸ Against this background, NATO was turning away from the system of co-operative security needs without a basic new definition and new adjustment of all its functions and duties.

In this changing environment, the United States remained the only world power without an equal opponent for the first time in history. It is worldwide at the moment the only nation able to project permanently military power on a global scale, and it runs the

world's most efficient national economy. Since the end of the Cold War, Europe and the United States were repositioning themselves in the international system, culminating in a risk of losing the internal balance during the Iraq-War in the George W. Bush era.¹⁹ With its desire to operate in the world according to its own interests, the Bush administration stressed the global mission of the United States. Its administration was ready to devalue international rules, contracts and alliances, particularly NATO, towards the achievement of primacy of their own freedom of action.²⁰

This development led to an immense crisis within NATO and a “structural gap” that was seen as increasingly separating the United States from Europe. Such differences created the potential for U.S.-European divisions even before 9/11, and the Iraq-War dramatically brought such differences to the surface. Robert Kagan argued famously that Americans and Europeans were on two different planets, writing that “Americans are from Mars, Europeans from Venus.”²¹ From his perspective, the stimulus for the crisis was provided by the failure of European states to build sufficient military capabilities to make significant contributions to post-Cold War security problems and the resulting loss of U.S. confidence in the extent to which it could count on its European allies. Furthermore, the polarization of European NATO partners’ national interests and their inconsistent position on their new security- political priorities regarding the European Foreign and Security policy, were responses that also damaged the Euro-Atlantic relationship.²²

Europe’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) did not speak an unanimous language, as Harald Müller stated: “A European chaos in the Iraq question” – the bigger countries galloped on "German", "British" or “French” trails without giving a

chance for the Europeanization of its positions.²³ The Federal Republic of Germany formulated its “German way”²⁴, without consulting European partner nations about a common action. Five Prime ministers of the then-fifteen members of the European Union (Great Britain, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Portugal), and three High Representatives for the Central European countries Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary, that were to enter the union in 2004, signed the “Letter of Eight”²⁵ on 30 January 2003 wherein they declared their support of the United States’ position.²⁶ The letter was followed on 6 February 2004 by the Vilnius letter²⁷, a more outspoken declaration of support for the position of the United States from the Vilnius group composed of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia, Albania, Republic of Macedonia, Romania, and the then-member of the UN Security Council, Bulgaria. The new NATO member states connected their national security with not only the affiliation to NATO and her security guarantees, but also desired to place themselves under the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

With an enlarging NATO, the faction of the pro-American European NATO partners grew and the development of coordinated positions which might deviate from U.S. standpoint, trans-Atlantic controversies became more difficult to resolve.²⁸ The way the “old” Europe acted on one hand, and how on the other the “new Europe” siding the United States, demonstrated a strict division in respect to foreign policy and attitudes towards international law, and underlined the discrepancy in the use of the institutional and military abilities of NATO.²⁹ Based on these experiences and of the NATO campaign in Kosovo – the conflict with which time-consuming consultations with the European allies and their positions did not coincide with their military abilities – the United States assigned NATO a minor role during the lead-up of the Iraq War.³⁰

In addition, NATO structurally was and is not prepared for a campaign against terrorist threats. Even though NATO's Strategic Concept of 1999 has referred numerous times to the risks to security by terrorist attacks, it makes no serious conclusions. Only the United States owns the technical, logistical and military means to become operational over wide distances like in Afghanistan or in Iraq, or is militarily efficient with air and land power. Nowadays, in contrast to the Cold War during which two highly prepared nuclear and conventional blocks confronted each other, the trans-Atlantic community faces a terrorist network whose main weapons are of more psychological than military character, fuelled by religious ideology, and hosted by "failing/failed states" of the Third World.³¹

The traditional instrument of the military deterrence of NATO has become ineffective against unscrupulous terrorists who even do not shrink back from suicide attacks. With this new world-political challenge, NATO with its current structure and military orientation can play only a marginal role. The need for a collective defense treaty, particularly in light of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact has repeatedly been questioned, with some apocalyptic suggestions that NATO was an anachronism of the Cold War.³² It has lost its meaning as a defensive organization in the trans-Atlantic region and is still deemed less prepared since the west-European NATO partners might have placed an emphasis on collective territorial defense in the Central European region far too long. As General James Jones, the former Supreme Allied Commander Europe put it at its best: "...the future of NATO is not to be a reactive defensive static alliance, but it is to be more flexible, more proactive. We must take on

the family of missions that actually prevent future conflicts instead of reacting to future conflicts once they've started..."³³

The present basic condition for the North-Atlantic alliance based upon collective defense, thus does not exist anymore. This classical basic understanding also distinguished NATO from other systems of collective security like the United Nations or the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). According to Kalevi J. Holsti, military alliances may be differentiated by four criteria: the kind of the alliance case, the kind of the alliance liabilities, the degree of the military integration and the geographical outreach.³⁴ Until the end of the East-West conflict, these criteria were especially valid for the North-Atlantic alliance. Since that time, however, the situation has changed from the point of view that the alliance case (Art. 5 NATO treaty) is less and less likely to serve as a rationale for a collective self-defense organization. Military integration as such continues, but needs to be adapted to meet the less threatening security environment. A reduction with regard to personnel and structure is also needed. On the one hand, according to the North-Atlantic treaty, NATO is still a defensive alliance and a system of collective self-defense. But, at the same time, has become a system which acts as an instrument of international crisis control in Afghanistan or in the Balkans. NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer underlines in this context that "territorial defense remains a core function, but we simply can no longer protect our security without addressing the potential risks and threats that arise far from our homes."³⁵

What conclusions should the North-Atlantic alliance draw from this development? Is there a need for a comprehensive review of the whole defense and military policy of

NATO, the corresponding structures, and capabilities? Also is there a need to decide on new security architecture in the trans-Atlantic region? Had this not already been demanded after the end of the East-West conflict, but not really put into action?³⁶ Even though NATO has initiated adaptations in strategy, operational capabilities and structure, the most recent history has proven that the present constellation of NATO, still laid out on the basis of collective self-defense, is not sustainable and does not meet the requirements anymore.

NATO handbook states that “the Allies agree that they must be ready to help to deter, defend, disrupt and protect themselves collectively against terrorist attacks...from abroad and that this may include action against terrorists and against those who harbor or protect them”.³⁷ It also declares that the Allies “agree that the Alliance should not be constrained by predetermined geographical limits”, and that “it must have the capacity to act as and when required”.³⁸ This may be true, but it gives the impression that the argument about NATO’s current and future role has been settled and that there is consensus in favor of the Alliance acting globally to guarantee security in the Euro-Atlantic area. However, only under the leading role of the United States, was the Alliance politically ready and militarily able to tackle the conflicts in her most recent history. Anthony H. Cordesman properly summarizes: “Institution building is not force transformation. Ministers may agree to force modernization priorities and to creating power-projection capabilities, but most country defense plans and budgets reflect slow progress, a continuing lack of interoperability, and the inability to move and sustain more than a small fraction of national forces much beyond national boundaries.”³⁹ It can be asked therefore, which course of action for NATO has a future?

The Perception of Trans-Atlantic Security in the United States

The re-orientation of American security interests since the end of the East-West conflict indicates that the affiliation to the North-Atlantic alliance is seen as a possibility, but not as an obliging default to the global protection of interests. In order to remain at the centre of the American thinking, NATO has to justify its role as the embodiment of the trans-Atlantic link and earn its right to exist as a new collective Euro-Atlantic security system. Only by an American focus can this institution receive its meaning. A reduced emphasis could lead to its increased insignificance or in a “Europeanization” of NATO, and consequently a retreat of the United States from the trans-Atlantic area. Kagan, supported by the Dutch analyst Peter van Ham, must not be proven right when stating that the United States and Europe were destined to disagree more and more in the future. (Ham’s answer is that Europe needed to unite more strongly against American power.)⁴⁰

On the other hand, even the economic and military superpower of the United States experiences its limits with the exhausting campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is aware that its global ambitions need the support of other nations. This basically comes from the NATO allies; in the words of President Obama: “America cannot meet the threats of this century alone, but the world cannot meet them without America.”⁴¹ Particularly, in conflicts like the current one with Al Qaeda leaders who use terrorist tactics on behalf of their radical ideology, the United States cannot “win” simply by the use of military force. It desperately needs the political legitimacy and assistance that is provided by allies and partners who share in the risks and take on military and non-military responsibilities. To quote Javier Solana, “Europe is a partner with legitimacy”⁴² Against this background, it should be in the United States’ vital interest, to foster this

important Euro-Atlantic cooperation further and to animate it again, in order to create a Euro-Atlantic zone of peace and freedom, in order to develop common positions, plausible strategies of a common legal system and security policy.⁴³

Changes Needed by European Allies

If a sustainable future for new NATO is to be realized, new preconditions need to be set not only by the United States, but also by the European partner states. The latter have placed special emphasis on their self-interests as nation-states. They were the primary cause for the fact that after 1990 a whole-European collective security structure or a collective European defensive organization for the now undivided Europe was not created.⁴⁴ What is then to be done by the Europeans? Which changes must take place to create a new NATO?

1. Europe must function within NATO as a single entity and develop a common will. This has yet to be achieved. Therefore, in the arena of the UN, the Security Council would be first of all a central sphere of action for the European Security Defense Policy (ESDP). There, however, the EU is not represented, but except for France and Great Britain as permanent members. These two nations orient less on their role in the EU and as a lobbyist of the ESDP, but rather with priority on their “responsibility on account of the charter of the United Nations”. Also in this regard, they act primarily in their role as world powers. The OSCE might serve as a better example, in which a single seat represents the EU in the Permanent Council.⁴⁵

2. Acting and operating as a European entity requires a Europe-wide harmonization of national security policies. Furthermore, the Europeans need to generate savings and efficiencies by pooling their assets.⁴⁶ However, it has become clear to the Europeans that the aim of establishing the EU as an armed world power for

the foreseeable future will not be attainable. Instead, they must develop and agree upon common principles, rules and procedures for the use of their military means for foreign policy and security-political common purposes. In addition, the aim should be in the long run, to create common European armed forces which could not only be integrated into a collective system of a Euro-Atlantic security organization, but could also operate separately. By using the past method of national single-handed efforts in the area of the military planning for armed forces, operations, structure, infrastructure, training and resourcing, the West European NATO partners will depend in the foreseeable on the United States. Up to now, the European strength existed in its multilateral ability and in accompanying multilateral capabilities. These forces must be unified to be able to confront a suitable and equivalent alternative concept with the unilateral and partially imperial policies of the United States and to foster European interests without confrontation with the United States.⁴⁷

3. Europe offers resources at a time when America is overstretched, but is organized less well. Additionally, the Europeans must develop their greater capabilities and competencies for non-military conflict management. This appears crucial within the scope of a preventive and co-operative security order in the Euro-Atlantic region. A larger European security concept will gain more significance if it incorporates all elements to include economic, social, cultural and the military. Europe must take the initiative together to become a capable security alliance with the expanding EU, ready to deal more with questions of the stability beyond Europe. The more persuasively Europe develops initiatives for security beyond Europe, the more weight Europe will have not

only within a new system of security for the Euro-Atlantic region, but also beyond their borders to enhance global stability and security.⁴⁸

A reality of the national European armed forces in comparison to the United States, was their insistence on relying on armed forces suitable for territorial defense against conventional attacks. Thus, for example, the armed forces of the Federal Republic of Germany concentrated after the end of the East-West conflict primarily upon the transformation and integration of the National People's Army / NVA (Armed Forces of the former "German Democratic Republic") into the German Armed Forces ("Bundeswehr"). By doing so, Germany did not consider sufficiently the world-political change in the problems of military armed forces. Furthermore, military structures, equipment and education oriented themselves on the structural images of the Cold War. While Germany tried to solve its own internal problems of the desegregation of both armed forces, other armed forces like the French and British, were already adapted and were focused upon the structure, equipment and training to meet the new challenges.⁴⁹ As a consequence, the United States has reached with its 1.4 million active armed forces personnel a far higher effectiveness than the west-European NATO partners. NATO Europe is spending more than US\$220 billion on military forces, and has some 2.2 million active military and 2.6 million reservists. However, most of its procurement efforts are scarcely properly coordinated and interoperable and are not coming close to providing U.S. levels of technology and war-fighting capability. More generally, only a tiny fraction of NATO's total manpower is deployable outside Alliance territory, and much of it is only really usable if Europe goes to war with itself. Hence, the West European partners should overcome constraints of national sensitivities and

heterogeneity in Europe and rather initiate integrative measures to create a European security perspective.⁵⁰

NATO and Russia

In the aftermath of the fall of the wall, NATO successfully fostered stability along its European periphery. Former Communist countries, fueled by a subliminal fear of the Soviet “bear”, looked immediately for NATO membership, which implied the nuclear shield and the political safeguard by the United States. For these new members, the collective defense, as codified in Article 5, has the relevance that it had for more than 65 years to the “old NATO”, whereas for the latter the effort to build a Europe at peace deems largely complete. The “old” NATO members were more concerned about maintaining a good relationship with Russia, since their economies are fairly intertwined, or depend on Russian natural gas. Their governments show little interest to have as a “neighbor” a geographically vulnerable country that might invoke Article 5 by the Alliance.⁵¹ Therefore, NATO has to address the issue of a security guarantee towards countries like Ukraine, Georgia, and others who live in the shadow of Russia knocking on its door.

Nevertheless, Russia is historically, politically and culturally deeply connected to Europe. Europe’s aim should therefore be to reach a more extensive binding of Russia to Euro-Atlantic institutions by a progressive cooperation that might flow into a formal affiliation. This would require that clear objectives, mutual obligations, patience and perseverance of all partners are developed, so that in the long term a sense for an enlarged security community and mutual trust is learnt.⁵²

A New Strategic Concept for NATO

The current NATO Strategic Concept⁵³ dates from 1999, a time when NATO had 19 members compared to the 28 it has today and when NATO's focus was very much on challenges within Europe or on Europe's periphery. It emerged from the NATO Washington Summit in 1999 and was designed to offer the Allies a roadmap for NATO's future. It outlined the new security environment and concluded that NATO should open the door for future operations potentially outside its traditional sphere of influence: "NATO will seek, in cooperation with other organizations, to prevent conflict, or, should a crisis arise, to contribute to its effective management, consistent with international law, including through the possibility of conducting non-Article 5 crisis response operations." ⁵⁴

Clearly, as shown above, the current NATO concept from 1999 does not respond to the new challenges. It is not enough that only one "military concept is initiated in the defense against terrorism", but a totally new strategic concept must be written which does address the necessary process of change of NATO and considers all new members and candidate countries with the new duties and relations comprehensively. Otherwise NATO runs the risk of being removed from national interests or mission driven coalitions. NATO acknowledged this development and at the Summit in Strasbourg / Kehl on 3 and 4 April 2009, NATO's Heads of State and Government tasked the Secretary General to develop a new NATO Strategic Concept. This exercise should be completed by the time of NATO's next Summit, which is expected to take place towards the end of 2010. It is supposed to give specific guidance to NATO governments on how they need to further transform the Alliance and their own national

defense structures and capabilities to be successful in meeting NATO's core tasks in the 21st century.

In conclusion, a "new NATO" should respond to the following strategic interests in order to further transform the Alliance and their own national defense structures and capabilities to be successful in accomplishing NATO's core tasks in the 21st century:

1. NATO should document its transition from a now-collective defensive approach into a system of collective security in which the security interests of the totality of the members are clearly formulated. NATO should be able and willing to act as an executive body of Euro-Atlantic security interests everywhere in the world. Given the global nature of the threats, there is no alternative to the Alliance fulfilling a global role. Its willingness and ability to act on a global basis to tackle threats where they arise is fundamental to NATO's continued relevance. If NATO limits itself to a regional role in defense of the territory of the North Atlantic area alone, its value will be diminished, particularly to the United States, and its future will be in doubt.
2. A new NATO strategy should call for reorganization of all armed forces. Its credibility depends substantially on the military efficiency of NATO. To increase their credibility, the European forces must be better coordinated to make them more efficient and compatible in training; equipment and military doctrines. Also, a synthesis must be produced between NATO forces and EU forces either together or also apart with political, diplomatic, economic and military means in order to try to prevent armed conflicts. The new strategy

- must address the current discussion about operations beyond the Alliance area.
3. More weight should be given to the political crisis prevention by which conflicts are encountered using diplomatic work and by economic and society-political measures under the umbrella of the UN. In terms of its operations, NATO is about more than the projection of military force alone; it is about implementing the Comprehensive Approach (CA)⁵⁵. The Alliance should focus on incrementally moving NATO forward where possible to enhance civilian capacities and providing the stability in post-conflict situations to allow reconstruction and development to take place.
 4. It must be the purpose of a Euro-Atlantic security community to intensify cooperation with Russia and to speed up its integration into the European security architecture. The reinforced cooperation in the fight against terrorism between the United States and Russia and the recent bilateral agreement on arms control measures have indicated that global security and political challenges of the future can be mastered commonly. In the same way, NATO allies should not ignore Russian calls to pan-Europeanize the current dialogue, further reforming the existing security institutions.
 5. Within an enlarged NATO, the process of finding a consensus and the machinery of the consultation and cooperation should be streamlined. Most important, it has to be determined how decision making can be conducted more efficiently in conflict situations and crisis periods. "Opting out" should be a possibility for those countries which do not contribute to an operation. In

addition, a faster crisis management process and a leaner organization with lower numbers are needed.

6. The NATO Secretary-General recognized the need for broader legitimacy in 2006 when he called on the Alliance to develop relations with democracies from other parts of the world, particularly Asian and Pacific democracies such as Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand. However, NATO's outreach to these non-NATO democracies (and others such as Sweden and Finland) is not without risks: future enlargement risks the possibility of over-extending NATO members as they seek both to reduce forces and to extend security guarantees to a wider area. In developing its new strategic concept, NATO will have to clarify the relationship it seeks with these other nations.⁵⁶

A "new NATO" has to take account of the way in which security challenges have evolved, such as the new emphasis on proliferation, failed states, piracy, energy supplies, terrorism, and climate change. Moreover, it has to incorporate how NATO has adapted and transformed in the last decade to be able to tackle these challenges more effectively. A sound transatlantic consensus of NATO's roles and missions and of its strategy in dealing with security challenges is essential if NATO is to function optimally. The strategic orientation could line up in old recipes for success. Forty-three years ago, at a time when NATO members argued very intensely about the future of the Alliance, a conceptual far-reaching and, in retrospect, ideal solution was sketched. In the "Harmel" report of 1967 NATO concluded that instead of an uncompromising "either/or" between deterrence and détente, it would pursue a "double strategy of military strength" and a "politics of the outstretched hand".⁵⁷

This strategy turned out to be historically significant and visionary. Nowadays, the North-Atlantic alliance needs the same strategic farsightedness. NATO requires military strength and superiority to master the problems of security. However, it also needs a unified political will to address security concerns successfully also with political means. To achieve this, the differences between the United States and most European partners should be overcome, especially since the latter are marked on European side by a more liberal and institutional concept, and the former by a rather pragmatic approach.⁵⁸ President Barack Obama has sent encouraging signals in his Nobel Speech: “Peace requires responsibility. Peace entails sacrifice. That is why NATO continues to be indispensable”.⁵⁹ Almost all European crisis management will require U.S. involvement for the foreseeable future. The equal partnership between Europe and the United States that is emerging in economic terms will not be matched for a long time to come in the security arena. Transatlantic security policy remains “the management of asymmetries”.⁶⁰ It is now up to the European NATO allies to contribute from their side to the success of a powerful new NATO, in concert with their U.S. partner.

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