NATO 2030

Towards a New Strategic Concept and Beyond

Jason Blessing
Katherine Kjellström Elgin
Nele Marianne Ewers-Peters
Editors

Rakel Tiderman
Associate Editor

Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies
Johns Hopkins University

Jason Blessing, Katherine Kjellström Elgin, and Nele Marianne Ewers-Peters, editors; Rakel Tiderman, associate editor, *NATO 2030: Towards a New Strategic Concept and Beyond.*

Washington, DC: Foreign Policy Institute/Henry A. Kissinger Center for Global Affairs, Johns Hopkins University SAIS, 2021.

© Foreign Policy Institute/Henry A. Kissinger Center for Global Affairs, Johns Hopkins University SAIS 2021.

Distributed by Brookings Institution Press.

Supported by

DAAD Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

Funded by

Federal Foreign Office

Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies | Foreign Policy Institute

Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies | Henry A. Kissinger Center for Global Affairs

Foreign Policy Institute and Henry A. Kissinger Center for Global Affairs
Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies
Johns Hopkins University
1717 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: 202.663.5882/202.663.5813
https://www.fpi.sais-jhu.edu/
https://sais.jhu.edu/kissinger

ISBN: 978-0-9997406-0-6

Contents

List of Abbreviations v
Foreword ix

Introduction 1
New Decade, New Challenges, and New Opportunities: The Way Ahead to NATO 2030
Jason Blessing, Katherine Kjellström Elgin, Nele Marianne Ewers-Peters, and Rakel Tiderman

Part I: A Changing External Environment

Chapter 1 23
NATO-Russian Relations in an Era of Russian Aggression
Mark David Simakovsky and Michael John Williams

Chapter 2 47
NATO and China: Navigating the Challenges
Una Aleksandra Bērziņa-Čerenkova

Chapter 3 67
NATO's Place in the European Security Architecture: Cooperation with the European Union and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
Nele Marianne Ewers-Peters

Chapter 4 87
NATO and the Middle East
Mehmet Yegin

Chapter 5 109
Making NATO's Partnerships More Strategic: Sweden and Finland as Partner Models for Development
Katherine Kjellström Elgin and Anna Wieslander

Part II: Shifting Internal Dynamics

Chapter 6 133
The Future US Role in NATO
Hans Binnendijk and Jim Townsend

Chapter 7 157
There is No "Europe": Disagreements Within NATO Are Not Solely Transatlantic and Pertain to the Fundamentals of European Security
Barbara Kunz

Chapter 8 177
Democratic Backsliding and Contested Values Within the Alliance
Trine Flockhart

Chapter 9 195
NATO, Public Opinion, and the Next Generation: Remaining Relevant, Remaining Strong
Rachel Rizzo

Part III: Evolution in Warfare

Chapter 10 215
NATO Burden Sharing in a New Geopolitical Era
Steven Keil

Chapter 11 235
NATO in Space
Kaitlyn Johnson

Chapter 12 261
Fail-Deadly, Fail-Safe, and Safe-to-Fail: The Strategic Necessity of Resilience in the Cyber Domain
Jason Blessing

Chapter 13 289
War by Other Means: Securing NATO Against Disinformation in the Coming Decade
Corina Rebegea and Carsten Schmiedl

Chapter 14 315
NATO 2030: Hybrid Future, Hybrid Readiness?
Karlijn Jans

About the Authors 337

List of Abbreviations

A2/AD	Anti-Access/Area-Denial
AA&R	Artificial Intelligence, Automation, and Robotics
ACO	Allied Command Operations
ACT	Allied Command Transformation
AEHF	Advanced Extremely High Frequency
AfD	Alternative for Germany (Alternative für Deutschland)
AI	Artificial Intelligence
APTs	Advanced Persistent Threats
ASAT	Antisatellite
ASOC	Air and Space Operations Center
ATA	Atlantic Treaty Association
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
C2	Command and Control
C4ISR	Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
CAATSA	Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act
CARD	Coordinated Annual Review on Defense
CCDCOE	Cooperative Cyber Defense Center of Excellence
CdE	Commandement de l'Espace (French Space Command)
COE	Center of Excellence
CPD	NATO's Committee on Public Diplomacy
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy of the EU
CyOC	Cyberspace Operations Centre
DCI	Defense Capability Initiative
DDA	Deterrence and Defense of the Euro-Atlantic Area
DDOS	Distributed Denials of Service
DLR	German Aerospace Center
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
EDA	European Defense Agency

EDF	European Defence Fund
EDI	European Defense Initiative
EDTs	Emerging and Disruptive Technologies
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EFP	Enhanced Forward Presence
ELINT	Electronic Intelligence
EOP	Enhanced Opportunity Partners
EPAA	European Phased Adaptive Approach
EPF	European Peace Facility
ERI	European Readiness Initiative
ESA	European Space Agency
ESCD	Emerging Security Challenges Division
ESDI	European Security and Defence Identity
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEO	Geosynchronous-Earth Orbit
GNSS	Global Navigation Satellite System
GPS	Global Positioning Service
GRU	Russian Main Intelligence Directorate
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IFOR	Implementation Force
INF	Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces
ISAF	International Stability Assistance Force
ISIS	Islamic State
ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
ISS	International Space Station
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
JEF	Joint Expeditionary Force
JSEC	Joint Support and Enabling Command
KDP	Kurdistan Democratic Party
LEO	Low-Earth Orbit
MaRV	Maneuvering Reentry Vehicles
MCDC	Multinational Capability Development Campaign
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MEO	Medium-Earth Orbit
MJO	Major Joint Operations

MPCC	Military Planning and Conduct Capability
MSR	Maritime Silk Road
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NAOS	National Advanced Optical System
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCIA	NATO Communications and Information Agency
NCIRC	NATO Computer Incident Response Team
NDPP	NATO Defense Planning Process
NLP	Natural Language Processing
NORDEFCO	Nordic Defense Cooperation
NRC	NATO-Russia Council
NRF	NATO Response Force
NRI	NATO Readiness Initiative
NWCC	NATO's Warfighting Capstone Concept
OSCE	Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe
PDD	NATO's Public Diplomacy Division
PESCO	Permanent Structured Cooperation
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PII	Partnership Interoperability Initiative
PKK	Kurdish Workers Party
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PNT	Positioning, Navigation, and Timing
PRC	People's Republic of China
PSC	Political and Security Committee
RAP	Readiness Action Plan
REFORGER	Return of Forces to Germany
RPO	Rendezvous and Proximity Operation
RSM	Resolute Support Mission
SATCOM	Satellite Communications
SCEPVA	Sovereign Cyber Effects Provided Voluntarily by Allies
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SFOR	Stabilization Force
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
SIGINT	Signals Intelligence
SITCEN	Situational Center
SJO	Smaller Joint Operations

SSA	Space Situational Awareness
SSF	Strategic Support Force
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UKIP	United Kingdom Independence Party
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USG	United States Government
USSR	Soviet Union
UUV	Underwater Unmanned Vehicle
V4	Visegrád Group
VJTF	Very High Readiness Joint Task Force
WEU	Western European Union
WGS	Wideband Global SATCOM
WMDs	Weapons of Mass Destruction
YPG	People's Protection Units

Foreword

NATO remains the United States' indispensable alliance and Europe's guarantor of peace, security, and stability. It is the largest and most successful alliance in history and is the preeminent institutional expression of the transatlantic bond and a common commitment to shared values. Yet, it is again under pressure. NATO faces simultaneous dangers to its east, to its south, and from a series of security challenges unbounded by geography, at a time when some Allies have stepped away from their own commitments to democracy and to each other. These internal tensions may be as consequential as external dangers to NATO's cohesion and effectiveness.

NATO's opportunity is to move ahead to address these challenges and others looming in the future, rather than to harken back to some imagined era of greater allied harmony. A fresh narrative for NATO is also important to engage a new generation of citizens and leaders who do not view the Alliance through the twin lenses of the Cold War and Afghanistan. They want to know why NATO is relevant for the future, not why it was important in the past.

The editors and authors of this book offer the sorely needed spark to this conversation. They explore the changing strategic environment in which NATO must operate, and together they offer a vision of an Alliance that can be more strategic, more flexible, and more intentionally cooperative. Their analysis is enriched by the multi-generational perspectives offered throughout the volume. The Alliance will profit from their insights.

This project has been conducted by the Foreign Policy Institute and the Henry A. Kissinger Center for Global Affairs of Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), specifically our program on "The United States, Europe, and World Order."

We are particularly grateful to the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the Federal Foreign Office (AA) for their support of our postdoctoral program and related activities, including this project.

The views and opinions expressed are those of the editors and authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of any institution or government.

Daniel S. Hamilton
Andreas Rödder
School of Advanced International Studies
Johns Hopkins University
August 2021

Introduction

New Decade, New Challenges, and New Opportunities:
The Way Ahead to NATO 2030

Jason Blessing, Katherine Kjellström Elgin, Nele Marianne Ewers-Peters, and Rakel Tiderman

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is the world's largest and most enduring alliance, due in part to its ability to adapt to new strategic challenges and dynamics among its member states.[1] With renewed talk of great power competition, 2021 represents another crossroads for NATO. The need to adapt is clear. With official approval at the June 2021 Brussels Summit, the process for updating NATO's Strategic Concept is already underway.[2]

To successfully navigate the next decade and beyond, NATO must understand how new challenges interact with and shape its priorities and strategic outlook. The so-called Reflection Group, appointed by Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and comprised of defense and security experts from ten NATO Allies, has already laid much of the intellectual framework for the new Strategic Concept in an initiative dubbed "NATO 2030." Since the publication of the NATO 2030 Reflection Group Report,[3] policymakers, security experts, and scholars in the Euro-Atlantic area have been discussing the ways in which NATO can forge a path for the future.

This book contributes to this critical conversation by bringing together a collection of chapters that provide in-depth analysis of and recommendations for addressing three major sets of challenges that will shape deterrence and defense for the Alliance and its member states:

- a *changing threat landscape*, with the return of geopolitical competition, the rise of new state-based challenges, the continued challenge posed by non-state actors, and a world increasingly shaped by globe-spanning issues such as climate change;

- *shifting internal dynamics*, as divergent priorities among member states are exacerbated by democratic backsliding and a growing wave of illiberalism; and
- the *continued evolution of warfare*, with the emergence of new technologies, operational domains, and novel military doctrines.

Written by a diverse, multi-generational group of policymakers and academics from across the transatlantic space, the chapters in this book cover a wide variety of issues, ranging from the challenges of Russia and China to democratic backsliding, from burden sharing and changing warfare to new forms of partnerships and public opinion. Good strategy requires knowledge of both the operating environment and of oneself.

By offering rigorous assessments of rising challenges and opportunities, this volume provides NATO's strategic planners and Allies' experts with an indispensable resource for determining the Alliance's appropriate role and charting its course for the next decade and beyond. As the editors of this book, we use this introductory chapter to advance a vision of NATO that is more strategic, more flexible, and more intentionally cooperative. In doing so, we look to contextualize the subsequent contributions and their recommendations with a broad framework for approaching NATO 2030 and a new Strategic Concept.

NATO's Evolving Strategic Environment

Today's world looks much different than it did at NATO's founding. Looking to the next decade, NATO will face three main sets of challenges: a changed threat landscape, shifting internal dynamics, and an evolution of warfare. Each of these alone warrants greater strategic consideration; taken together, these shifts provide impetus for a new Strategic Concept.

A Changing Threat Landscape

The international security environment has always shaped NATO's purpose, tasks, and responsibilities. From changes at the end of the Cold War to the turn of the century, the Alliance has demonstrated its

adaptability and has continuously proved its *raison d'être* and relevance. While enshrining the three core tasks of collective defense, cooperative security, and crisis management into its identity, NATO is now facing a new set of threats and challenges that require it to rethink its strategic objectives and reassess its capabilities and posture. Three major forces have emerged in the Alliance's operating environment that necessitate a renewed focus on adaptation, preparation, and global cooperation.

First, and foremost, increased revisionism—largely from authoritarian powers—has marked the decade following the 2010 Strategic Concept. This trend is likely to continue. Within the Euro-Atlantic community, the erosion of the security order and relations with Russia has exemplified great power revisionism. The relationship with Russia has gone through phases of rivalry, rapprochement, and stagnation. While NATO's very existence initially hinged on deterring the Soviet threat, relations with the Russian Federation improved after the end of the Cold War and, in broad terms, throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. With an assertive foreign policy, Russia once again poses a key external challenge to the Alliance. The ongoing tensions over Russia's illegal occupation and annexation of Crimea, the conflict in eastern Ukraine, and Russia's general displeasure with the current security order will undeniably shape NATO's future strategy.

At the same time, China's quest for greater global influence, its desire to shape the international world order (often in ways detrimental to the existing rules-based liberal order), and its rapid economic growth has lifted it into great power competition. An emerging rivalry between authoritarian and democratic regimes provides a new breeding ground for future conflicts, and NATO and its Allies must be prepared to defend their shared values and norms. The United States' relationships with China and Russia will undoubtedly influence the Alliance's agenda. A key challenge for NATO will thus be defining its position in relation to great power competition while grappling with deeper fragmentation among member states over how to approach Russia and China.

Continued challenges in the Middle East are a second consideration. Troop withdrawals from Afghanistan, and a potential resurgence of tensions and military confrontations, will likely add to the ongoing instabilities in the Middle East and Central Asia.[4] In addition, old

and new conflict lines among states in the region continue to simmer and reduce the chances for peace and stability. In this sense, the Nagorno-Karabakh War between Armenia and Azerbaijan in 2020 may be a harbinger of events to come. Additionally, refugee and migrant flows from the Middle East and North Africa through the Mediterranean Sea will continue to challenge European responses. Terrorism will remain an impactful threat that NATO will need to consider for the foreseeable future.

Third, currents that affect the entire globe are increasingly shaping the external environment. New technologies, including emerging disruptive technologies (EDTs), will shape warfare and the conduct of politics more broadly. Growing interconnectedness, dual-use technologies, and the race to acquire crucial expertise and capabilities implicate a new global scramble for vital resources. Outside of technological flows, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the risks of an increasingly interconnected world and the need for increased cooperation. The risks of climate change also continue, with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimating that global warming will likely reach 1.5°C (2.7°F) between 2030 and 2052.[5] The warming of the Arctic opens up new potential avenues for shipping, but also risks great power competition to NATO's north. Furthermore, climate change will likely become a threat multiplier, adding to global instability through resource scarcity and shifts in climate patterns, as well as threatening military installations via floods or other natural disasters.[6] As the world looks to combat climate change, militaries are also likely to consider their own contribution to global warming—as NATO agreed to do at the June 2021 summit.[7] The list of external challenges and threats is thus extending and stretching NATO's own security agendas and Allies' capabilities and capacities.

Shifting Internal Dynamics

Since its inception, internal dynamics and conflicts have been a mainstay of the Alliance. The North Atlantic Treaty binds Allies together, with the collective defense clause of Article 5 as the core element. This has not meant, however, that Allies have harmonized preferences or actions. The rising tides of populism, nationalism, and illiberalism in the 21st century have only underscored this dynamic. With the disap-

pearance of the Soviet threat and the post-Cold War transformation of the international environment, NATO refocused on its commitment to democratic rules and principles. However, multiple member states have recently called into question these democratic foundations. Allies such as Hungary, Poland, Turkey, and the United States have received increasing attention because of their unilateral and nationalist foreign policy behavior, questionable partnerships, and outspoken criticisms of democratic values within NATO.[8] The rise of nationalism has also triggered a wave of democratic backsliding and intra-alliance tensions that challenge cohesion and threaten the overall strength, credibility, and accountability of the Alliance. Moreover, old tensions have once again flared among member states, most notably between Greece and Turkey and between France, Germany, and Turkey. New cleavages have also emerged, as evidenced by the frequent confrontations between the United States and Germany during the Trump administration.[9] Each of these dynamics shape Allies' positions within NATO and their stances on collective defense and deterrence.

The long-lasting debate on burden sharing—specifically on how to measure and assess Allies' contributions and capability commitments—continues to be a source of tension. As a repercussion of the COVID-19 pandemic, defense budgets are likely to stagnate or even decline. This has amplified calls to revamp the 2 percent burden sharing metric to which NATO Allies agreed at the 2014 Wales Summit.[10] New realities thus dictate that burden sharing evolve to encompass more effective force planning, civilian contributions including development aid, and non-traditional defense and deterrence instruments.

With domestic conditions in flux across member states, the rise of actions targeting domestic audiences, and the risk of unforeseen economic and political shocks, member states must also consider the non-military protection of their societies. In response, resilience has emerged as a key area of focus for the policy and academic discourses on NATO. Across the Euro-Atlantic security space, and in global governance more generally, resilience is seen as a way to make NATO and its partners fit for the future and to increase their readiness and deterrence. In light of shifting internal dynamics, resilience would facilitate NATO's ability to resist and recover rapidly from external shocks and disruptions of a cyber, hybrid, natural, or conventional nature. Such resilience necessarily

includes both military and civil preparedness. Anchored in Article 3 of the North Atlantic Treaty,[11] the Alliance currently refers to resilience in the context of mutual aid and self-help to develop capacities to resist attacks and exogenous shocks and to reduce vulnerabilities among its member states. However, the Euro-Atlantic security space has increasingly experienced heightened vulnerabilities—such as from climate change, global health pandemics, cyberattacks, and external election interferences—that require a revised conceptualization of resilience.

Evolution of Warfare

Alongside a changing threat landscape and challenges to internal cohesion, new capabilities, resources, and types of warfare have emerged. Since NATO's last major transformation effort, warfighting has extended from the traditional air, sea, and land domains into the space and cyber domains.[12] New technologies have enabled fighting from increasingly longer distances and have introduced autonomous systems into operational contexts. Artificial intelligence (AI) may even augment and shape decision-making.[13] In addition to increasingly complex and dynamic conventional military operations, new operational concepts have arisen to grapple with the rise in 'hybrid' warfare[14] and 'grey zone' operations that fall below the threshold of traditional armed conflict. These are unconventional challenges with potentially unforeseeable and force-multiplying effects. Such challenges demand that NATO and its members rethink approaches to defense and deterrence.[15]

The digitalization of conflict in particular has introduced new dynamics into the strategic calculus. One significant challenge is the plausible deniability of operations, a factor that complicates deterrence efforts and delays defensive response times. For instance, as cyber operations have increasingly become a feature of modern warfare and geopolitical competition, their asymmetric costs and the ability to obscure their origins have made it difficult to develop timely and proportionate retaliatory measures. The broader information space has also become increasingly contested—both in the ways actors seek to gain information and in how they attempt to influence the information ecosystems of others.[16] On the one hand, the ability to collect large amounts of data has wide-ranging implications for both the battlefield and the way states operate internally. On the other hand, the rise of highly accessible and

easily disseminated disinformation has increasingly put into question the veracity of information. From sophisticated 'deep fake' videos to the creation of alternative narratives and disruption of communication platforms, disinformation and other manipulations of the information space could allow states to both influence the domestic populations of their adversaries to shift political opinions about war and disrupt the information flow upon which modern warfighting relies.[17]

These new elements of warfare necessitate new strategic approaches and new ideas of what constitutes readiness. Readiness traditionally refers to how prepared a force is to fight, especially with little or no warning.[18] Importantly, readiness implies both the availability of forces and ready access to pre-developed capabilities.[19] Readiness requires answering three questions: By when must troops be ready? For what does the force need to be ready? And of what and whom will the forces be comprised?[20] Each of these questions becomes more complicated looking forward to 2030. First, as Russia's annexation of Crimea has demonstrated, revisionist operations can take place quickly, helped by changes in technology and plausible deniability.[21] Emerging disruptive technologies, hybrid warfare, and cyber operations will increasingly condense the timeframe for reactions. AI will further enable and push faster decision-making.[22] The ability, then, to react quickly both militarily and politically is vital, especially in an age where competition is more likely to feature below-threshold warfare. Second, threats are diffuse and dynamic—coming from multiple actors, multiple domains, and multiple geographies. Third, discussions of burden sharing are not disappearing—understanding the composition of NATO forces, and which countries will contribute to which missions, will persist in importance.

The Way Ahead

Taking the three sets of trends in the strategic environment into account—a changing external environment, shifting internal dynamics, and an evolution of warfare—it is clear that a new Strategic Concept is necessary. The 2010 Strategic Concept is outdated and provides little common ground for contemporary challenges and risks. Given fast-paced changes, new vulnerabilities and threats, and a greater diversity

of actors in the international system, NATO requires a revised strategy that both reflects real-world transformations and directs the Alliance towards higher levels of readiness and resilience for future challenges. An effective guiding document would thus set the Alliance on a path to enduring security in the coming decades. To this end, NATO's Brussels Summit in June 2021 was meant to be a turning point in the Alliance's history. Yet, adaptation and transformation come with both a certain price and a long wish list from policymakers, state leaders, and defense experts.

In this volume, we have asked a number of policy and academic thinkers to contribute their perspectives and to formulate recommendations on a wide array of issues such as cyber and space security, new burden sharing metrics, internal dynamics, member state disagreements, and the management of external relations with rivals and partners alike. Across each subject, the authors envision NATO as an alliance with a regional focus on the Euro-Atlantic that is capable of addressing global issues and developments. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how crucial non-traditional threats and challenges are to Allies' national security. The demands of climate change and global health have steadily moved further up Allies' and NATO's agendas. Contemporary discussions circulate around whether and what NATO should do in these policy domains, which have sparked further debates on the broadening of its security agenda.[23] While it is clear that NATO must broaden its future security agenda to address new challenges, what is less clear is how to do so.

We advocate that NATO should continue focusing on its existing core tasks—collective defense, cooperative security, and crisis management—in order to remain the most pertinent security and defense actor in the Euro-Atlantic space. At the same time, the Alliance must adapt to new strategic dynamics. Yet, we assert that NATO should not be the primary driver of security for all new challenges. The Alliance must avoid the temptation to lead in areas such as climate change, migration flows, and pandemic responses. Although these are indeed important challenges for the global society, they are not directly related to NATO's three core tasks. The Alliance should retain its specialization in defense, security, and crisis management; attempting to lead on *all* challenges would only sacrifice effectiveness for the sake of breadth.

Instead, the Alliance should build its own resilience within and across member states while taking on a collaborative role with new and existing entities that specialize in broader, non-military issues. One prominent example is the European Union (EU), which is better suited to lead on non-traditional issues through its comprehensive crisis management framework that combines civilian and military approaches. In this regard, while we encourage the expansion of NATO's partnerships and networks, deterrence and territorial defense must remain the core focus of the Alliance. However, these efforts must now account for both new meanings of territory encompassing the cyber, information, and space domains, as well as new types of threats that can destabilize defense and deterrence efforts.

What emerges, then, is a NATO that (1) prioritizes investing in its own territorial defense and deterrence, (2) aggressively develops a greater capacity to withstand and recover from non-traditional disruptions to defense and deterrence, and (3) cooperates with other states and organizations that lead initiatives secondary to territorial defense and deterrence. We therefore advocate that NATO become more strategic, more flexible, and more intentionally cooperative. This vision of NATO rests on significant political cohesion among Allies, a crucial factor to which the NATO 2030 Reflection Group has already drawn attention.[24]

First, while its primary strategies of defense and deterrence by military means have been unchanged since inception, the approaches and instruments have evolved over time. NATO's policies, activities, and capabilities need to match its main objectives so that the Alliance is able to deliver favorable outcomes. We thus encourage the Alliance to agree on a list of key priorities that enables it to make use of its comparative advantages to excel in defense and deterrence. A more strategic NATO is one that identifies and invests its key defense and deterrence priorities, while also recognizing that extra-regional and cross-sectoral dynamics affect its security.

In this vein, we propose that NATO should adopt resilience in some form as a fourth core task to formalize its efforts to withstand, recover from, and adapt in the wake of these complex dynamics. At a strategic level, greater resilience begets more credible deterrence and more ef-

fective defense. In addition to adopting resilience as a core task, a key bureaucratic step would be the development of an Office of Net Assessment, similar to the one in the U.S. Pentagon, tasked with understanding the key asymmetries in the challenges that NATO faces.[25] After identifying what comparative advantages the Alliance might possess, NATO should be strategic about the forces it encourages its member states to develop. Here, NATO has an opportunity to influence and shape competing conceptions of European strategic autonomy.

At the same time, the changing nature and hybridization of warfare demand that NATO become a more flexible and agile alliance. Flexibility requires a rethinking and adaptation of its institutions and bureaucratic set-up, and particularly mechanisms for more rapid decision-making to respond to crises and conflicts with more effectiveness and efficiency. To be more agile, NATO needs to develop the capacity to react quickly—as a whole alliance, or in smaller groupings. Alliance-wide readiness suggests that each Ally should contribute some minimal level of capabilities. Beyond that, each member state could develop niche expertise that aligns with both their national interests and Alliance needs.

Flexibility also suggests agility in the types of responses that NATO brings to the table. While deterring and defending from major kinetic actions continues to be vital, competition below the threshold of warfare will undoubtedly endure. Facing the longer-term prospect of the accumulation of below-threshold costs, Allies should be prepared to use political tools in addition to military ones and—either in an Alliance-wide effort or through minilateral groupings—respond to adversarial actions from adversaries that fail to reach the threshold of warfare. Situational awareness thus becomes key to monitor how individual actions by adversaries could add up to larger influence and competition campaigns.

Recent developments in negotiations in international security institutions and global governance more broadly indicate a trend towards informal groupings and minilateralism.[26] Within NATO, several minilateral groupings have emerged (such as the E3, the Quint, the Friends of Europe, and the Joint Expeditionary Force),[27] which all seek to accelerate and facilitate negotiations and consensus build-

ing. Minilateral groupings and informal exchanges not only allow for more rapid negotiations and consensus-building before the actual decision-making and deployment of forces, but can also help disseminate skills and information about specialized capabilities that not all members need to select into. A focus on core tasks, with minilateral cooperation on specific missions, will also increase political cohesion around the true purpose of the Alliance while allowing space for divergence on select issues.

Finally, NATO needs to be more intentionally cooperative and adapt its partnership models in ways that reflect the changing international security environment. The Alliance currently employs different partnership and cooperation models with its partners and allies across the world. Formats such as the Mediterranean Dialogue and Partnership for Peace (PfP), however, appear outdated and do not reflect the current international order and security dynamics.[28] Similarly, bilateral relations with other international actors such as the European Union, the United Nations (UN), and Russia through the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), need to be further developed since cooperation and coordination of international engagements has become more pressing than ever.

Considering today's increasing complexity and interconnectedness, NATO must be more intentional with its cooperative efforts by pursuing opportunities based on shared interests instead of partner-driven demand or cooperation for cooperation's sake. NATO will thus need to find new avenues for engaging with like-minded nations and organizations to develop new partnership and cooperation models that are flexible and tailorable to a given circumstance. A more strategic interest-based and flexible partnership model will take on greater importance should NATO undertake resilience as a core task. Due to the cross-boundary and interconnected nature of non-traditional and unconventional threats, the resilience of partners bears directly on the resilience of NATO. Strategic and flexible partnerships will thus be a key element of projecting the Alliance's resilience efforts forward to different partners. This in turn will make NATO itself more resilient and ultimately more secure.

Remaining Questions and the Contributions of this Volume

A vision of a more strategic, flexible, and intentionally cooperative NATO can guide the Alliance forward—but the devil, as always, is in the details. In this volume, we asked our authors to address three primary questions: How can NATO live up to its own commitments in a new security environment? What value can NATO provide its members moving forward? And how must the Alliance (re)orient itself for the future? Given the developments and the rise of new challenges in the international and European security systems, this edited volume sheds light on the Alliance's relations with key international actors while considering internal developments and new aspects of warfare. Reflecting on the key contemporary dynamics that NATO faces, we have organized this book into three parts according to the three sets of challenges identified at the outset of this introductory chapter.

Part I of this volume addresses NATO's changing threat landscape composed of new and old actors. With over fifty mentions in NATO's 2021 Brussels Communiqué, Russia remains NATO's key challenge to Euro-Atlantic security. NATO-Russia relations have severely eroded since the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the country's frequent attempts to undermine the Alliance's unity. In Chapter 1, Mark Simakovsky and Michael Williams argue that NATO needs to "build a more realistic framework vis-à-vis Russia," acting less reactively and focusing on more robust deterrence measures and the ability to impose costs—while still keeping dialogue open where possible.

At the same time, China's rise is undeniable and as it continues to grow, NATO will have to develop a strategy towards Beijing. In Chapter 2, Una Aleksandra Bērziņa-Čerenkova argues that, whether formally acknowledged or not, China is already on NATO's agenda. She not only examines the ways in which member states have prioritized China, but also sheds light on the way that China sees NATO cohesion—and suggests ways to make progress on an Alliance-wide strategy for China that does not risk escalating adversarial tensions.

With their shared geographies and overlapping memberships, both the EU and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) constitute NATO's closest allies in Europe. As Nele Marianne

Ewers-Peters argues in Chapter 3, growing complexity and overlaps as well as a blurred division of labor between these three organizations compels NATO to take a strong stance and find its place as *the* defense and security provider in the European security architecture.

However, NATO cannot be *the* defense and security provider outside the European neighborhood; indeed, it must grapple with key players and work with partners abroad. Mehmet Yegin examines such dynamics in the Middle East in Chapter 4. Yegin asserts that NATO's key interest in the region is stability. Yet, NATO faces a host of challenges: increased involvement from Russia and China in the region, Iran's nuclear and missile developments, population outflows from Syria, and a decreasingly democratic and increasingly belligerent Turkey. Barring re-democratization in Turkey, Yegin sees a redefinition of partnerships as the best avenue for the Alliance to approach the Middle East.

In this vein, Katherine Kjellström Elgin and Anna Wieslander propose in Chapter 5 that NATO be more proactive and deliberate in its partnerships by pursuing interest-based, rather than demand-based, arrangements. They examine NATO's partnerships with Sweden and Finland as key examples of the possibilities of building partnerships around converging interests. In identifying and emphasizing interest-based formats, Elgin and Wieslander suggest that the Alliance can selectively expand its partnership opportunities based on concrete goals.

Part II turns inward to address the shifting internal dynamics that will define how NATO operates going forward. Member states are both the bedrock of NATO's very existence and a source of tensions that have significantly marked the Alliance's evolution. Notably, it is no longer a given that the United States will play a significant leadership role in the Alliance. In Chapter 6, Jim Townsend and Hans Binnendijk examine four underlying conditions—domestic attitudes, military challenges, broader security threats, and European cohesion—to assess how the United States' security partnership with Europe may develop over the next decade. Ultimately, they recommend seeking a more balanced division of labor between the United States and Europe within NATO.

Chapter 7 examines member state disagreements and divergences in a broader context, where Barbara Kunz foresees continued troubles

across NATO in terms of finding common ground for approaching different threats. While old rivalries and divergences among member states will remain—here, Kunz highlights the role of Turkey—NATO will need to deal with new provocateurs among its Allies.

Trine Flockhart explores the increasing democratic backsliding among Allies in Chapter 8. Because the Alliance has developed into not only a robust defense alliance but also a community of values, democratic backsliding presents an existential threat. One of her key takeaways is thus that "defense alliances die when they lose their common enemy or their capability to defend against it—communities of value die when their values are no longer salient or shared." NATO therefore needs to become more resilient from within to counter the trend of democratic backsliding.

At the same time, public opinion of NATO remains vital. In Chapter 9, Rachel Rizzo explains the ways in which NATO must pay attention to—and shape—public opinion, particularly among younger generations. She highlights the need to "integrate ideas of the emerging generations on shared values, shared interests, and shared destiny" in order to ensure NATO's relevance in the future.

Finally, Part III pivots to examine both the continued thorn of burden sharing issues and the migration of conventional and hybrid warfare to new domains. A common theme that emerges across chapters in this section is that addressing these challenges in a new geopolitical era requires adapting the Alliance's strategies, capabilities, capacities, and readiness. To meet today's and tomorrow's demands and to advance towards a fairer burden sharing, Steven Keil proposes in Chapter 10 that capabilities and contributions should be emphasized over monetary figures. What is more, solidarity and political cohesion should not be undermined by the 2 percent metric.

In Chapter 11, Kaitlyn Johnson details the extension of military capabilities into the space domain. NATO and its member states have been fairly active in space, but so too have competitors Russia and China. Johnson acknowledges that while space has become an important enabler for military operations, it also presents unique challenges and vulnerabilities. As such, she suggests that an effective shift in the Alli-

ance's posture would be from one emphasizing deterrence-by-punishment to one that rests more on deterrence-by-denial.

Jason Blessing also engages with the logic of deterrence-by-punishment in relation to the cyber domain in Chapter 12. Blessing highlights a number of conditions that undermine the deterrent and defensive strategies of NATO's collective defense efforts in cyberspace. He sees cyber resilience as one avenue to address challenges in ways that the respective 'fail-deadly' and 'fail-safe' logics of deterrence and defense cannot. To this end, he advocates for incorporating 'safe-to-fail' principles into the Alliance and offers several recommendations.

In Chapter 13, Corina Rebegea and Carsten Schmiedl address one such challenge that intersects with the digital domain: disinformation. NATO has rarely addressed issues of disinformation, but, as the authors note, disinformation will only grow in its operational and strategic importance. Rebegea and Schmiedl assert that NATO has all too often taken a passive approach to countering disinformation, and national and Alliance-level initiatives remain out of sync. More fundamentally, NATO has not reached a consensus on how to define and categorize disinformation in the context of emerging security threats. Accordingly, the authors propose a number of strategic and institutional measures for the Alliance to counter the external and internal threats posed by disinformation.

Karlijn Jans rounds out the book with a discussion of what readiness NATO will need in the future. She advocates for a concept of "hybrid readiness," in which NATO forces are prepared to address hybrid threats and emerging disruptive technologies. Jans highlights the need for "an ability to act towards challenges that transcend boundaries and conventional warfare and diffuses the military and civilian domains" and recommends a number of shifts in NATO's Strategic Concept to ensure that the Alliance is ready for future threats.

Conclusion

Taken together, the chapters provide an overview of the challenges that NATO must tackle to position itself for the coming decade and

beyond. Now is the time for the Alliance to act, and our authors suggest a number of ways in which NATO can effectively move forward.

At the same time, the chapters also highlight that the path will not be easy. There are several tensions that persist and questions that remain unanswered. For example: How much of a threat is China, and how should that threat be balanced against the threat raised by Russia? How decisive of a role will emerging disruptive technologies play? How can NATO manage internal disagreements while simultaneously partnering with outside entities? What are the bureaucratic steps necessary to ensure good policy ideas are effectively enacted? This book provides a springboard from which NATO policymakers can address these questions.

We would like to thank our authors for their contributions to this volume. Rigorous analysis should form the backbone of policy decisions. In this book, our authors take important steps to highlight new perspectives, to question assumptions, and to suggest creative solutions. In addition to the notes of thanks in the foreword, we would be remiss to write this book without properly expressing our gratitude for Dr. Daniel S. Hamilton, Professor Andreas Rödder, and the Program on "The United States, Europe, and World Order" at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies. Furthermore, Jason C. Moyer provided key editorial and administrative assistance throughout the project. Peggy Irvine and Peter Lindeman guided us through the publishing process and were instrumental in the final outcome of the book. Without this support, this book would not have happened. As NATO looks to 2030 and a new Strategic Concept, we hope that this volume provides new insights and sparks thought-provoking discussions that ultimately strengthen transatlantic security.

Notes

1. Seth A. Johnston, *How NATO Adapts: Strategy and Organization in the Atlantic Alliance since 1950* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017); John Andreas Olsen, ed., *Future NATO: Adapting to New Realities* (London: Routledge, 2020); Timothy Andrews Sayle, *Enduring Alliance: A History of NATO and the Postwar Global Order* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2019).

2. NATO, "Brussels Summit Communiqué," June 14, 2021 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_185000.htm).

3. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," November 25, 2020 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf).

4. Iskander Akylbayev and Nurtas Janibekov, "What Does the US Withdrawal from Afghanistan Mean for Central Asia?" *The Diplomat*, May 21, 2021 (https://thediplomat.com/2021/05/what-does-the-us-withdrawal-from-afghanistan-mean-for-central-asia/).

5. IPCC, "Summary for Policymakers," in Global Warming of 1.5°C: An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty, edited by Masson-Delmotte et al (Geneva, Switzerland: 2018), p. 4.

6. Caitlin E. Werrel and Francesco Femia, "Climate change raises conflict concerns," *Courier* (UNESCO), 2018, (https://en.unesco.org/courier/2018-2/climate-change-raises-conflict-concerns); Office of the U.S. Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, "Report on Effects of a Changing Climate to the Department of Defense, " January 2019 (https://climateandsecurity.files.wordpress.com/2019/01/sec_335_ndaa-report_effects_of_a_changing_climate_to_dod.pdf).

7. NATO, "NATO Climate Change and Security Action Plan," June 14, 2021 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_185174.htm).

8. Ruud van Dijk and Stanley R. Sloan, "NATO's inherent dilemma: strategic imperatives vs. value foundations," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol. 43: no. 6-7 (2020), pp. 1014-1038.

9. Jim Townsend and Andrea Kendall-Taylor, "NATO Is Struggling Under Trans-Atlantic Tensions," *Foreign Policy*, December 5, 2019 (https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/12/05/nato-is-struggling-under-transatlantic-tensions-trump/).

10. Derek Chollet, Steven Keil, and Christopher Skaluba, "Rethink and Replace Two Percent," Atlantic Council, 2020, pp. 80-85; Alexander Mattelaer, "Revisiting the Principles of NATO Burden-Sharing," *Parameters*, vol. 46: no. 1 (2016), pp. 25-33; Christian Mölling, "NATO's Two Percent Illusion," *SWP Comments*, no. 36 (2014), pp. 1-4.

11. NATO, "The North Atlantic Treaty," April 4, 1949 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/stock_publications/20120822_nato_treaty_en_light_2009.pdf).

12. Winston S. Williams and Christopher M. Ford, *Complex Battlespaces: The Law of Armed Conflict and the Dynamics of Modern Warfare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019); Greg Simons, Yuriy Danyk, and Tamara Maliarchuk, "Hybrid war and cyber-attacks: creating legal and operational dilemmas," G*lobal Change*, *Peace and Security*, vol. 32: no. 3 (2020), pp. 337-342.

13. See, for example: Bryan Clark, Dan Patt, and Harrison Schramm, "Mosaic Warfare: Exploiting Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Systems to Implement Decision-Center Operations," Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2020; Michael C. Horowitz, "Artificial Intelligence, International Competition, and the Balance of Power," *Texas National Security Review*, vol. 1, iss. 3 (May 2018) (https://tnsr.org/2018/05/artificial-intelligence-international-competition-and-the-balance-of-power/).

14. Nadia Schadlow, "The Problem with Hybrid Warfare," *War on the Rocks*, April 2, 2015 (https://warontherocks.com/2015/04/the-problem-with-hybrid-warfare/); Kieran Green, "Does War Ever Change? A Clausewitzian Critique of Hybrid Warfare," E-IR, September 28, 2020 (https://www.e-ir.info/pdf/87895).

15. Alexander Lanoszka, "Russian hybrid warfare and extended deterrence in eastern Europe," *International Affairs*, vol. 92, no. 1 (2016); King Mallory, "New Challenges in Cross-Domain Deterrence," RAND Corporation, 2018 (https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PE259.html).

16. Eric Rosenbach and Katherine Manstead, "The Geopolitics of Information," Harvard Kennedy School, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, May 2019 (https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/geopolitics-information).

17. Christopher Whyte, A. Trevor Thrall, and Brian M. Mazanec, eds., *Information Warfare in the Age of Cyber Conflict* (London: Routledge, 2021).

18. Richard K. Betts, *Military Readiness: Concepts, Choices, Consequences* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1995).

19. Charles Q. Brown and David H. Berger, "Redefine Readiness or Lose," *War on the Rocks*, March 15, 2021 (https://warontherocks.com/2021/03/redefine-readiness-or-lose/).

20. Betts, Military Readiness: Concepts, Choices, Consequences.

21. See also: Robert Dalsjö and Michael Jonsson, "Autonomy, Cacophony, or Coherence? The Future of European Defense," *War on the Rocks*, May 7, 2021 (https://warontherocks.com/2021/05/autonomy-cacophony-or-coherence-the-future-of-european-defense/).

22. Clark, Patt, and Schramm, "Mosaic Warfare: Exploiting Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Systems to Implement Decision-Center Operations."

23.Lauren M. Speranza, "An Agenda for NATO's Next Generation," CEPA Strategy Paper, 2020 (https://cepa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/An-Agenda-for-NATO-11.9.2020.pdf).

24. NATO Reflection Group.

25. Andrea Gilli, "Net Assessment: 'Competition Is for Losers,'" NDC Policy Brief, NATO Defense College, May 2021; Niccolò Petrelli, "NATO, Strategy and Net Assessment," NDC Policy Brief, NATO Defense College, May 2021.

26. See, for example, Fen Osler Hampson and Paul Heinbecker, "The "New" Multilateralism of the Twenty-First Century," *Global Governance*, vol. 17: no. 3 (2011), pp. 299-310; Erica Moret, "Effective minilateralism for the EU: what, when and how," EUISS Brief, issue 17 (2016), pp. 1-4.

27. The E3 consists of France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. The Quint and the Friends of Europe are minilateral groups with informal consultations and decision-making in NATO consisting of France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) is a UK-led group with the Nordics (except for Iceland), the Baltics, and the Netherlands that focuses on high-readiness capabilities to jointly conduct full-spectrum military operations.

28. Sophie Arts and Steven Keil, "Flexible Security Arrangements and the Future of NATO Partnerships," GMF Policy Brief, pp. 1-21, 2021.

Part I

A Changing External Environment

Chapter 1

NATO-Russian Relations in an Era of Russian Aggression

Mark David Simakovsky and Michael John Williams

NATO-Russia relations today are dismal, defined by mutual mistrust and eroded by Russian efforts to destabilize NATO Allies and partners through both military and non-military means. Despite twenty years of deliberate efforts to positively engage and build a potential partnership with Russia, NATO is locked in a bitter confrontation with a Kremlin intent on disrupting European stability and undermining global international order. Russia's invasions of Georgia and Ukraine indicate Moscow's desire to undermine the post-Cold War security architecture in Europe. These invasions, however, were just a prelude to an escalated and consistent Russian effort to undermine the NATO alliance and the wider international order. President Putin has sought to take advantage of a divided western alliance and weakened US leadership in Europe to fundamentally undermine NATO's credibility. Russia has sustained its aggression both along NATO's borders and within allied states in recent years, conducting an array of political interference efforts, cyberattacks, and assassinations of Russian opponents abroad. Moscow's massive build-up of military forces on Ukraine's borders in spring 2021 is a further indication that Russian opportunism and aggression to destabilize Europe and keep NATO off guard will continue for years to come.

In light of Russia's efforts to destabilize NATO and the United States itself, the Biden administration is seeking a transformation of US policy towards Russia, one where the United States will respond more coherently and concretely to Russian aggression, while also seeking avenues for pursuing limited engagement with Russia to help prevent escalation and instability. The new US administration also seeks to again prioritize the NATO alliance as the focal point of US engagement in Europe, rejecting President Trump's attacks on the Alliance and undermining of alliance unity. The 2021 NATO Summit in Brussels showcased that

the Alliance is not set to simply endure, and is not willing to fade into irrelevance, but is instead actively seeking to reinvigorate its priorities to ensure that NATO thrives and can manage all the threats arrayed against Allies.[1]

NATO used the 2021 Summit to highlight the challenge that Russia presents and solidify allied solidarity to meet this challenge head on. Moscow's zero-sum approach and perception of the United States and NATO as Moscow's main enemy portend a new era in NATO-Russian ties, one marked not by a balance of cooperation and contention that shaped the past twenty years of NATO-Russian ties, but by a hardening of mutual positions. Despite the reality that a new era of NATO-Russia competition and confrontation is upon us, NATO remains hesitant to set forth a dynamic vision for NATO-Russia relations that goes beyond the current limited focus on deterrence and keeping the door open for future dialogue. Despite NATO's past hesitation on Russia, there is also a growing awareness among NATO members that the organization needs to go beyond its current approach. The arrival of a new US administration presents a unique opportunity for a bolder, more coherent, robust, and proactive NATO-Russia policy that can better deter Russian aggression and protect allied security.

NATO has had some success in recent years responding to Russian aggression by bolstering deterrence vis-à-vis Moscow. The Alliance's Russia policy, however, is largely static and has remained inherently reactive.[2] NATO's challenge today is to heed the lessons of the past twenty years and build a more realistic framework vis-à-vis Russia. This framework must move past the reactiveness of current NATO Russia policy, focusing instead on prioritizing more robust deterrence measures, building stronger and more lasting allied unity to respond to Russian aggression (to include more robust sanctions measures), enhancing allied political support to raise the costs on Russia when necessary, focusing on more precise NATO assistance to stabilize and bolster Ukrainian sovereignty and the sovereignty of other NATO partners facing Russian aggression, and developing a concrete path of dialogue with Russia where possible on a range of mutual interests, such as on arms control and stability mechanisms that can help prevent destabilizing military incidents. In this chapter, we will briefly examine the historical terrain of NATO-Russia ties, provide analysis of current

dynamics between the Kremlin and NATO, and discuss a set of recommendations for NATO and the US government (USG) to pioneer vis-a-vis Moscow in the coming years.

Post-Cold War Rapprochement and Cooperation

In the years following the Cold War, NATO sought to nurture ties with Russia. Allies agreed in the early 1990s on a dual-track approach that would focus on engagement with prospective new members while also prioritizing enhanced engagement and cooperation with Russia.[3] NATO's goal was to achieve a balanced approach that would enlarge the Alliance slowly and carefully while building a cooperative framework with Russia. NATO hoped to include Moscow as a key participant in building a new European security environment. Cooperative mechanisms with Russia would build over time, culminating in the NATO-Russia Founding Act and the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) in 1997.

US policymakers engineered this dual-track approach, crafting a US-led pan-European security system that sought to realize the vision of a Europe whole, free, and at peace first articulated by President George H.W. Bush and reaffirmed by President Bill Clinton.[4] A transformed NATO, with enlargement as a core principle in this new Alliance, would be paired with an institutionalized NATO-Russia partnership that sought to consolidate peace and security across Europe and end the divisions that marked the European security landscape throughout the Cold War.[5] Although Russia would never be allowed a veto over allied decision-making, allies crafted an intentional and deliberate Russia policy that took into consideration Russian concerns while also allowing enlargement to proceed.[6]

Despite Moscow's subsequent and recent claims to the contrary, US policy towards NATO was never intended as a policy to contain Russia.[7] Instead, Allies intended to "build a unified Europe that could eventually include Russia as well."[8] Every step NATO took to engage eastward was paired with a reciprocal effort towards Moscow. The Clinton administration consistently sought to engage and partner with Russia, with the goal of transforming the European security system into a mu-

tually beneficial architecture for both parties. This initial engagement resulted in Russian forces deploying alongside NATO troops in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1995 to implement the Dayton Peace Accords.[9]

These initial steps ultimately led to the NATO-Russia Founding Act, signed in June 1997 in Paris. The Founding Act included NATO making unilateral commitments that remain today to limit NATO deployment of nuclear weapons and combat forces on the territory of new members.[10] The Founding Act was a historical breakthrough, as both sides agreed to "trade in decades of escalating rhetoric, intimidation and high-stakes maneuvers for dialogue and cooperation."[11]

Cooperation and engagement were further strengthened in 2002 with the creation of the NATO-Russia Council, which transformed into a robust mechanism for consultations and practical cooperation in a range of areas.[12] NRC cooperation accelerated in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 9/11, with NATO and Russia committing to working together on a wide array of counterterrorism and security projects. Russia eventually contributed to the NATO-led, UN-mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) force in Afghanistan, facilitated the transit of non-military equipment for ISAF contributors across Russian territory, trained helicopter technicians, and provided helicopter parts. NATO and Russia trained Afghan, Pakistani, and Central Asian narcotics officers, and Russian ships deployed in support of Operation Active Endeavor, NATO's maritime operation against terrorism in the Mediterranean Sea, and as part of Operation Ocean Shield, NATO's counter-piracy operation off the Horn of Africa. The NRC Helicopter Maintenance Trust Fund, which was started in 2011, trained Afghan pilots and crews to operate and maintain a growing helicopter fleet. The NRC also designed a Counter-Narcotics Training Project, that helped train thousands of officers from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. NATO and Russian officers and soldiers also met periodically to seek cooperation and hold exchanges on logistics, combating terrorism, countering piracy, and missile defense. These engagements showed NATO and Russia could cooperate when the requisite political will in Moscow was applied.

Throughout this period, NATO also shifted away from planning, resourcing, and deploying forces for military competition with Rus-

sia, as NATO focused resources and military planning on peacekeeping and counterinsurgency. The US reduction of its ground force presence in Europe from over 350,000 at the height of the Cold War to just over 60,000 today showcased how the paradigm on Russia shifted over time, as Allies moved from seeing it as a potential threat to a partner. Even through 2013, NATO and Russia were discussing game-changing cooperation to link ballistic missile defenses to counter threats from Iran and other rogue states.

It was this potential for lasting cooperation through the NATO-Russia Council that breathed real life into NATO-Russia ties. Day-to-day interaction gave confidence to many NATO watchers that a new era of engagement, mutual respect, and consultation could transform NATO-Russia ties, overcoming the latent mistrust, lack of transparency, accusations, and destabilizing actions that had characterized the Cold War. Although these mechanisms facilitated real avenues of cooperation and were important venues for dialogue, a fundamental conflict of interests ultimately plagued and eventually ruptured NATO-Russia ties.

Missteps and Missed Opportunities

Despite years of cooperation, there were incredible missteps, missed opportunities and fundamental conflicts of interests that ultimately frayed NATO-Russia ties. NATO enlargement, Russia's rising authoritarianism, Russian opposition to US missile defense plans, Kosovo's independence, and the US war in Iraq helped erode ties. In particular, Russia used the pretext of colored revolutions in Ukraine and Georgia to lay blame on the West for undermining Russia's interests in its "privileged sphere of interests." The Bush administration's commitment to support Ukraine and Georgia's NATO aspirations and US inability to address Russian concerns prior to the 2008 Bucharest Summit, additionally soured NATO-Russia ties.

President Putin's 2007 speech to the Munich Security Conference previewed the impending NATO-Russia divorce, as Putin warned Russia would not accept the international global order that respected the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of states. Russia

wanted a world order similar to the one of the 19th century, in which strong states ruled over weaker states with a firm hand and with the threat of military force, free of any international norms. Moscow would pursue a fundamentally different view of European security, one defined by limiting the independence and territorial integrity of neighbors and using military force and other means to carve out a sphere of influence bolstering Russia's great power status.[13]

President Putin's 2012 return to the presidency ultimately capped the potential for enhancing NATO-Russia ties, as the Obama administration's "reset" with Russia succumbed to the usual conflict of interests between Russia and the West. With the invasion of Ukraine in 2014, the Putin regime was motivated by Russia defining its interests exclusively in opposition to the West and the United States. Russia ultimately chose to trample on the principles it helped to establish in the Helsinki Accords, such as respect for state sovereignty and territorial integrity, peaceful resolution of disputes, individual liberty, and the rule of law. Putin's call for a return to a divided Europe based on spheres of influence and limited sovereignty for Russia's neighbors—a Yalta 2.0—would be a principle NATO could not accept.[14]

In recent years, Russia has escalated its campaign to undermine NATO and the EU, deploying a malign influence campaign to discredit these institutions and reduce social and democratic cohesion in countries that are members of both organizations. Russia's manipulation of social and print media by creating or amplifying false content; use of illicit financial flows to political parties, businesses, non-governmental organizations, and media corporations to shape narratives aligning with Russia's interests; conducting of cyber and physical attacks against critical infrastructure; and working with fringe political movements to destabilize NATO countries and promote Russia's domestic and foreign policy agenda have accelerated the divide between NATO and Russia.[15]

Russia has also been increasingly willing to threaten or use military force to achieve its objectives. In addition to repeatedly violating Georgian, Moldovan, and Ukrainian sovereignty, Putin has threatened intervention in Belarus to quell civil society protests that erupted since

a rigged election in August 2020. The Kremlin has dramatically increased military activity in the Arctic and in the North Atlantic. Russian ships and airplanes repeatedly play "chicken" with NATO Allies, increasing the chance of confrontation. Russia's intervention in Syria helped consolidate Bashar al-Assad's regime, while its indiscriminate use of force contributed to vast numbers of civilian deaths.[16]

Moscow's efforts to collaborate on a range of issues and build a strategic partnership with China also raises security concerns for NATO.[17] The two have stepped up the frequency and scale of joint military exercises, including in the Baltic and Mediterranean Seas. Russia and China have increased their cooperation on advanced technologies, and Russia continues to supply much of China's arms imports, including sophisticated air defense systems and combat aircraft.[18] Putin announced in 2019 that Russia was helping China develop a ballistic missile early warning system. Russia has sought to institutionalize defense cooperation with China, including by establishing agreements codifying defense-technical cooperation, facilitating greater Russian-Chinese defense industrial cooperation on sensitive technology, such as on theater hypersonic weapons, counter-space capabilities, and submarine technology, which all present a potential challenge to NATO security and the alliance's deterrent capabilities.[19]

Russia's actions have also violated the principles established in the NATO-Russia Founding Act of 1997, the Rome Declaration of 2002, the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, and the Budapest Memorandum of 1994. Despite Putin's efforts to undermine European security, NATO's attempt to create an integrated European security architecture, with Russia serving as a prominent partner, was the right decision. Although NATO's aspiration to see Russia become a partner should continue to serve as a guidepost for NATO-Russian ties in the future, NATO needs to prepare for and navigate a period of intense competition with Russia. The Alliance may be entering a period akin to some of the most difficult years of the Cold War. NATO needs to prepare for this period by focusing on how best to deter Russian aggression and countering Russian efforts to destabilize European and NATO interests.

Back to Deterrence

The invasion of Ukraine in 2014 marked the eventual disruption of NATO-Russian ties. Russian occupation of Ukraine resulted in NATO halting civilian and military cooperation through the NATO-Russia Council, even though channels of communication remain open at the ambassadorial level.[20] In response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Allies sought to reestablish deterrence vis-à-vis Russia, which had largely deteriorated as part of the post-Cold War "peace dividend." These deterrence measures were formally announced at the 2014 Wales Summit, as Allies strengthened the NATO Response Force and stood up a VJTF (Very High Readiness Joint Task Force). Allies also pledged to spend 2 percent of GDP on defense by 2024, reversing years of reductions that had deteriorated NATO's ability to counter Russian aggression. The United States created a European Reassurance Initiative (ERI), later dubbed the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI), which bolstered US force posture and deterrence measures in Eastern Europe. These US initiatives jumpstarted NATO's deterrence efforts against Russia and were critical to bolstering NATO's confidence to respond more forcefully to rising Russian aggression.

Despite then-President Trump's inherent skepticism of NATO and attempts to undermine the Alliance, the United States continued to lead NATO efforts to deter Moscow. At the 2016 Warsaw Summit, NATO agreed to deploy four 1,000-plus person NATO battle groups, one each in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland (commanded by Britain, Canada, Germany, and the United States respectively). As part of NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence, the US deployed a third brigade combat team on a rotational basis in Europe, primarily in Poland. NATO's creation of a tripwire force in Eastern Europe would give confidence to vulnerable eastern allies that NATO would intervene militarily in a potential conflict with Russia, reinforcing deterrence vis-à-vis Moscow.

The 2018 NATO Summit would see Allies further reinforcing four forward-deployed battle groups in Eastern Europe to strengthen command arrangements to manage the forward deployment of troops. Allies also agreed to develop a Readiness Initiative that would eventually deploy 30 battalions, 30 squadrons, and 30 major naval combatants to

be ready to deploy in 30 days, dubbed the "4 x 30" initiative.[21] A mobility initiative was also introduced to help streamline infrastructure and legal obstacles to the mobility of troop deployments in Eastern Europe. Although these arrangements still require tangible support and funding, they represent important steps building on the 2014 Readiness Action Plan (RAP) and the multinational forward presence battalions in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. These measures, however, remain insufficient to comprehensively manage the challenge that Russia presents to allied interests.

The Kremlin's continued willingness to use force to change borders and block neighbors' path to join NATO and the EU have put to rest any assumptions about the near-term potential for growing NATO-Russian ties. Despite some limited allied success in rebuilding deterrence vis-à-vis Moscow, NATO policy towards Russia has remained relatively static and reactive. The Alliance has found it difficult to counter Moscow's ongoing political warfare against allied societies and democratic values.[22] This is not a surprise, as attention to Moscow and the inability to coordinate a coherent Russian policy was also tied to the Trump administration's inconsistencies on Russia. President Trump's inability to confront President Putin, a willingness to heap criticism on key NATO Allies like France and Germany, and a preference for criticizing the Alliance, all soured the trust and cooperation critical to navigating a sensitive policy issue like Russia. President Trump's consistent undermining of NATO hampered the alliance's ability to respond to Russia, creating mistrust and derision among Allies, while distracting them from the collective engagement needed to calibrate a more punitive approach to Moscow.

Set the Framework

One of the most constant and challenging elements of NATO-Russia ties remains varying threat perceptions among allies, and their differences over the scale of the challenge that Russia presents. These differences, which have defined NATO policy towards Russia for decades, continue to plague NATO's Russia policy. Although Russia remains a more critical concern for states to the east, Allies to the south such as Italy, Spain, and Greece remain more concerned about security in

the Mediterranean and migration challenges. Other critical allies, like France and Germany, have in the past supported a policy of enhanced engagement with Moscow in the hope of both bolstering European stability and potentially changing Russian behavior through inducements and positive reinforcement. In addition, several allies with populist or more pro-Russian leadership, such as Hungary and Turkey, have also increasingly opposed a more assertive NATO policy towards Russia in recent years.

Despite these differences within the Alliance, which are natural and inevitable, NATO needs to find a way to establish a more coherent and common picture of the challenge that Russia presents to allied interests. Berlin will likely remain one the most decisive voices outside of Washington on shaping NATO policy towards Russia. In recent years, Germany has stiffened its stance toward Moscow, particularly since the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Chancellor Merkel has led Germany's approach to Russia, supporting escalating sanctions measures and a range of deterrence initiatives within NATO intended to counter Russian aggression. Germany, however, has also sought to balance its approach by sustaining energy and economic ties with Russia, most pointedly by seeking to complete the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. The Biden administration's 2021 decision to sanction and immediately waive sanctions against Germany entities involved in building the Nord Stream 2 pipeline both showcased the new administration's efforts to avoid rupturing US–German ties, while sending conflicting signals about the US government's willingness to confront predatory Russia behavior in Europe. Germany's role in influencing and shaping NATO's policy towards Russia will remain critical, particularly as the EU and NATO seek to synergize their approach towards Russia. Historically, Germany has played a key role facilitating western engagement with Russia, which will remain a natural predilection for many German politicians. The Biden administration should prioritize finding a way to work closely with Germany, as the USG did in the late 1990s, to formulate a synchronized approach towards Russia that involves the US pressuring Russia where necessary and Germany offering Russia inducements to try and change Russia's destabilizing behavior, in a "good cop, bad cop" approach.

Solidifying Allied unity on Russia policy will remain a key requirement for crafting a more coherent and robust response to Russian aggression. Although Allies ultimately settled on the current dual-track policy of "defense and dialogue" with Russia at the 2016 Warsaw Summit, NATO has avoided a more defined Russia policy over the past half decade.[23] The Warsaw Summit decision was the lowest-common-denominator approach, meant to assuage German, Italian, and other Allies' concerns that NATO was focusing too heavily on military deterrence at the expense of other priorities. Although NATO members still have a diverse and often conflicting set of views of how to handle Russia, the alliance has an opportunity to bolster its approach towards Moscow. Russia's continued attempts to sow instability in Europe illustrates that NATO can no longer afford to postpone its debate on Russia.

Setting a new strategic framework for NATO policy towards Russia can start with the development of a new Strategic Concept. NATO's last strategic concept was drafted in a fundamentally different strategic environment—before Russia's invasion of Ukraine and use of hybrid warfare throughout Europe, before President Trump exacerbated internal NATO divisions, before the rising threat of cyberattacks and disinformation to domestic resilience, before Russia defined NATO as a threat to its national security, and before China took a range of measures that threaten NATO Allies' economic, political, and security resilience.

To support this new strategic concept, NATO should launch a Russia policy review, which would drive conclusions for the updated 2022 NATO Strategic Concept. Although NATO should continue its dual-track policy, focused on deterrence measures while maintaining readiness to continue dialogue with Russia in the NRC to both exchange views on the crisis in Ukraine, maintain channels of open military dialogue to reduce risks, and to discuss nuclear arms control issues, NATO needs to go further on Russia.[24] NATO needs to shift towards a more proactive and robust policy of deterrence vis-à-vis Moscow.

Growing Sino-Russian cooperation also raises a new set of challenges for NATO and necessitates the alliance think more about the growing cooperation of Russia and China as a potential threat to allied interests. All key elements of NATO adaption, as decided at the previ-

ous three NATO Summits, were based on two premises that are now questionable: First, that Putin's Russia posed the only serious military threat to the territorial integrity of member states, and second, that Russia stood alone. No consideration was given to the likelihood that Russia would be supported by another like-minded great power, such as China, or that a Chinese-Russian entente could amplify Russia's own risk calculus when it came to challenging the Alliance. As a result, NATO's current defense posture needs to adapt to even more challenging and broader-ranging scenarios of crisis and conflict.

An updated strategic concept should also label Russia as a primary threat to NATO, highlighting the Euro-Atlantic region is threatened by Moscow's willingness to foment instability. The strategic concept should also describe how Russia's rising willingness to use unconventional warfare needs to be countered with additional resilience and deterrence measures. For the last twenty years NATO has been at "peace" with Moscow, but Moscow has increasingly grown ambivalent towards this peace and instead, has prepared for a low-scale conflict with the West. The strategic concept would highlight the need to support NATO partners, whose own security vulnerabilities are a threat to Allied security. A new strategic concept could help the Alliance retake the initiative, serving as a foundational document that helps NATO develop tools to increase the costs for Russia's disruptive activities.

To help develop the new strategic concept and drive nimble policy recommendations to anticipate Russian aggression and counter it, NATO should set up a NATO Coordination Committee on Russia policy, which works closely with the EU on efforts to contain, deter, and raise the costs for Russian aggression. In addition, similar to the US-EU Working Group on China, the US should offer to establish a US-EU-NATO Working Group on Russia, which can help coordinate efforts across security, political, and economic domains against Russia. NATO should also bolster deterrence measures in Eastern, Northern, and Southern Europe; implement a coherent Black and Mediterranean Sea Strategy that counters Russian aggression; develop a coordinated cyber defensive and offensive campaign that counters Russian cyber threats; develop response mechanisms to Russian disinformation; and reinvigorate allied engagement with NATO aspirants, which will include an enhanced assistance program to Ukraine and Georgia. These

measures should also be paired with leaving the door open to enhanced NATO-Russia dialogue and cooperation, where possible, on areas of mutual interests.

A Strong, Yet Flexible Sanctions Regime

NATO members will also need to work together to signal the costs associated with seeking a path of confrontation to the Putin regime. NATO is a political-military alliance, and as the NATO 2030 report indicated, Allies should be comfortable discussing punitive measures against Russia within NATO political debates and these discussions can serve as a bedrock for decisions made within capitals and within the EU to raise the economic costs to Russia for its transgressions.[25] A critical element in a more coherent and coordinated transatlantic approach to Russia is a set of clearly defined sanctions that can be escalated when Russia pursues aggression, measures which can also be ratcheted down when Russia engages constructively. Despite a consistent effort to retain and, in some cases, bolster sanctions on Russia, current measures have been insufficient to change Russian behavior.[26] This highlights the need for a uniform approach to Russia—any fragmentation among allies on sanctions will be used by Moscow to divide the Alliance. Allies should coordinate a more robust sanctions approach to Moscow, one that builds off the Biden administration's recent sanctions against Russia. This would involve additional sanctions on Russian elites supporting the Kremlin regime, Kremlin elements engineering Russian aggression against Ukraine and, if necessary, more robust sanctions that target the Russian economy.

Effective NATO coordination with the European Union will be critical in this effort. Allies should look for opportunities to tighten sanctions on Russian entities involved in Ukraine through the EU. A ratcheting up of sanctions against Russia could include limitations of the use of sovereign debt for specific investments, targeted sanctions against all technology companies that support the harmful cyberattacks undertaken by the Russian government, as well as a potential clamp down on Kremlin-connected oligarchs' funds in NATO and EU countries. NATO countries should also continue to expel Russian 'diplomats' when faced with Russian aggression. Although these measures will come

with reciprocal expulsions of NATO country diplomats and Russian sanctions—they nevertheless continue to raise the costs of Russian aggression and reestablish deterrence that has eroded in recent years.

Allies also need to find a way to lay out to Moscow the specific sanctions they will face with reinvading Ukraine or additional aggression in other parts of Europe. This could also be paired with offering road maps to Russia for the sanctions that could be removed if Moscow takes steps to resolve the conflict in Ukraine and de-escalate tensions. If Moscow feels there is no possible end to sanctions, it negates the possibility of any policy change for the better from the Kremlin.

Enhance Conventional Deterrence

Deterrence has been a fundamental element of NATO posture in Europe since the dawn of the Cold War and it remains a cornerstone of US posture in the region. Enhancing this deterrence, which came into question during the Trump administration, will be critical to NATO policy towards Russia moving forward. President Trump's announced withdrawal of up to 12,000 US troops from Germany, which was done out of pique with Angela Merkel rather than as considered strategy, sent conflicting signals about US force posture commitments in Europe and NATO's ability to deter Russia. The Biden administration quickly froze this decision and will likely overturn it, a wise move to ensure NATO posture is aligned correctly to manage the rising threat Russia presents. Although US force posture changes may be required in Europe, they should not come at a cost of undermining the appropriate level of force posture and mix of capabilities necessary to deter and counter Russian aggression. A bolder NATO approach to Russia will inevitably require bolstering NATO posture in Europe and strengthening the capabilities of NATO forces in Eastern Europe, particularly around the Baltics and Poland, while also looking for ways to enhance force posture and deterrence along NATO's southeastern periphery. NATO's creation of the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF), improving the NATO Response Force, forward deployment of NATO Battle Groups into the Baltic States and Poland, creation of a Readiness Initiative, as well as cooperation on a Mobility Initiative have increased its Allied deter-

rence efforts in Eastern Europe. NATO should continue to find ways to strengthen and build on these initiatives in the coming years.

The current rotation of troops in the Baltics and Poland should also both be maintained and enhanced. In addition, NATO air policing in the Baltics should be expanded to a NATO air defense mission in the region that would showcase NATO resolve to defend allied territory. Rotational deployments to both regions should also be enhanced with additional enablers and supported by providing additional anti-armor and anti-air systems to the current mix of forces. To further enhance deterrence, US support for the European Deterrence Initiative, which peaked at approximately $6 billion in 2020, needs to be sustained and strengthened.[27] In addition, the Biden administration needs to ensure the increased focus on deterrence measures to counter China in the Indo-Pacific region, and the potential for Congressional funding of an Asia-Pacific Readiness Initiative, will not come at the expense of sustained funding for European deterrence.

Allies should also focus on filling capability gaps in the areas of precision strike, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance as well as missile defense, while enhancing the NATO Readiness Initiative. Although NATO's 4x30 initiative remains an incredible objective for the alliance well suited for bolstering deterrence in the region, it remains an aspirational one. Concrete funding and country-by-country commitments to meet the ambitious targets set by the initiative need to be enacted to ensure NATO can deploy the requisite battalions, squadrons, and air wings in 30 days. Allies should also consider finding ways to enhance NATO-EU cooperation on military mobility, expedite crisis communications and decision-making, enhance NATO's role in the High North, and increase NATO's maritime capabilities. Enhanced allied presence in the Mediterranean and Black Sea region with increased deployments of NATO military assets, increased cooperation with naval and coast guard units of NATO allies and partners in the region, and enhanced assistance to NATO partners in the region should also be pursued. In particular, NATO should provide more maritime assistance to NATO partners, including increased resources on naval and coast guard capabilities, to countries such as Ukraine and Georgia.

Finally, NATO should continue to plan and fund large scale military exercises that will help its forces plan for Russia-related contingencies. Defender Europe, which concluded in June 2021 with 28,000 total troops from 27 nations participating, are the types of exercises NATO should build on.[28] Allies should also put more resources for simultaneous operations across multiple training areas and enhance airborne operations, live-fire training, and joint over-the-shore logistics operations and exercises that run a headquarters commanding multinational land forces in joint and combined training environments.

Countering Cyber and Hybrid Warfare

NATO's ability to respond to and deter Russia will also require a bolder approach on both non-traditional security areas like cyber, while also calibrating NATO's nuclear posture to manage the rising Russian nuclear threat. Russia has used cyber operations, political interference, energy intimidation, political subversion, and disinformation, all which fall short of an Article 5 attack, to undermine NATO allies. Although many of these competencies will ultimately fall to the EU, countering them requires increasing NATO resilience and responding more effectively to potential provocations. Increasing NATO's cooperation and deconfliction with the EU will be critical in this effort, through mechanisms like NATO's Cooperative Cyber Defense Centre of Excellence (CCDCOE). NATO-EU cooperation can also help increase allied ability to withstand and respond to cyber operations. Member states should support efforts to make NATO the leader in developing and adapting cyber-deterrence and counter disinformation guidelines and capabilities, as well as efforts to synchronize EU and NATO planning on this issue. NATO and the EU should continue to develop a common set of standards for dialogue and collaboration on countering attacks in cyberspace and disinformation in the civilian space. Efforts to hinder cyber operations will require working with the private sector as well. The private-public transatlantic partnership between NATO, the EU, and the private sector should be enhanced to develop solutions to counter disinformation, cyberattacks, and address election integrity issues.

NATO will also need to find a way to respond to Russia's sustained efforts to use unconventional tools which fall below NATO's Article 5

mutual security threshold. This includes election interference, cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns, and attacks or intimidation of critical infrastructure, such as energy. Although NATO has recognized cyberspace as a domain of operations in which it needs to defend itself as effectively as air, land, or sea, it needs to coordinate cyber responses more effectively and consider collective offensive action when threatened by Russian attacks. Allies should increase dialogues on countering cyber threats, and as mentioned above, should help engineer conversations with the private sector as well.

Dialogue

Despite the need for a bolder allied approach towards Russia, NATO will inevitably need to sustain a posture that supports dialogue with the Kremlin. Communication between allied military officials and Russia needs to be sustained to avoid misunderstandings and miscalculations. This dialogue, however, should not drive allied policy and it should remain limited. It also needs to focus on stabilizing military tension when political disagreements flare and to pursue common interests as they appear. For example, the NATO-Russia Council met three times in 2016 and twice in 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively. Although practical cooperation on shared interests with a revanchist Russia will remain extremely limited, pursuing practical political dialogue with Moscow at the ambassadorial level through the NRC in Brussels should remain open. The NRC can remain a forum for dialogue and information exchange, as it serves to reduce misunderstandings and increase predictability.

Future NRC meetings could address ways to prevent dangerous military incidents in the Baltic, Black, and Mediterranean Seas, areas of heightened NATO-Russia military interaction. Such discussions could draw on previous mechanisms such as the 1972 Incidents at Sea Agreement and the 1989 Prevention of Dangerous Military Activities Agreement, as well as the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaties. Sweden and Finland, both of which are exposed to the dangers connected with increased military activities in the Baltic Sea region, could facilitate discussions between Russia and NATO (for more on Sweden, Finland, and partnerships, see Elgin and Wieslander in this volume).

This dialogue could be open to other members of the Partnership for Peace and OSCE. Confidence-building discussion on cyber and space could also be on a future NRC agenda, discussing an end to anti-satellite weapons (ASAT) tests that generate debris, bans on placement of earth-strike weapons in space, and restrictions on approaches to each other's military satellites, could also be considered.

A critical area of NATO-Russia dialogue should also be enhancing discussions on arms control issues, both conventional and nuclear. Arms control agreements, when properly negotiated, provide a high degree of strategic and regional stability for the US and NATO allies. During the Cold War, the strategic arms limitation process allowed both sides to be confident about their own security at the strategic level.

In recent years, Moscow has bolstered its nuclear capabilities and eroded its commitments to international agreements. Russia's regional military capabilities improved greatly with the introduction of the SSC8 cruise missile, which ultimately violated the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty and has given Russia nuclear advantages over NATO forces in Europe. NATO has thus far failed to respond to Russia's own "escalate to de-escalate" nuclear doctrine. Citing Russian violations, the Trump administration's abandonment of a number of arms agreements has worried allies and weakened the global nonproliferation regime. Although the erosion of these agreements may be irreversible, renewing discussions with allies on the future role of arms control agreements will help alleviate some allied concerns on what has been lost. Successful future arms control negotiations with Russia, however, will require significant preparatory work to build consensus among allies. Now that the Biden administration has extended New START until 2026 and agreed to a Strategic Stability Dialogue with Russia at the 2021 US-Russia Summit, the United States government (USG) should work with allies on developing an effective approach that could result in further nuclear arms reductions. The US could pursue a broader agreement with Russia encompassing non-strategic nuclear weapons and the forces of other nuclear powers. Discussing a binding political commitment that addresses new weapons like hypersonic missiles and Russia's nuclear-powered drones subject to New START limits could serve as a placeholder before a longer-term agreement is concluded. While the INF Treaty is unlikely to be resuscitated, Al-

lies and Russia could consider developing an agreement where neither side will introduce nuclear-armed cruise or ballistic missiles in Europe. As part of an agreement, Russia would need to remove from Europe any nuclear-armed versions of its 9M729 missile that precipitated the demise of the INF Treaty. The intrusive measures needed to verify these commitments could be part of the follow-on agreement to the New START. The US could also explore negotiating a global ban on *nuclear-armed* ground-launched intermediate-range missiles.

Ukraine—The Insurmountable Crisis?

Ukraine will remain one of the most significant obstacles in NATO-Russia ties and a litmus test for the trajectory of the relationship. So far, Allies have proven unable to convince Russia to pursue a durable solution to the conflict in Donbas, based on full implementation of the Minsk agreements. Anticipating that Western resolve to confront Moscow may be growing and frustrated with Ukrainian President Zelensky's targeting of Russian backed oligarchs in Ukraine, President Putin massed tens of thousands of forces on Ukraine's borders in spring 2021 to both pressure the Ukrainian government and showcase to the new US administration the costs of seeking to punish Russia.[29] The Biden administration, sensing that a Russian re-invasion of Ukraine could be a costly early test for the administration, sought to reduce tensions and offered a Putin-Biden summit partially as a way to deescalate tension. With the June 2021 US-Russia summit unable to facilitate progress on Ukraine, Russia will continue to prevent a resolution of the conflict in Ukraine and will retain tens of thousands of Russian forces along Ukraine's borders to pressure the Ukrainian government. Moscow will continue to use Russian-occupied separatist areas throughout the region (such as in Transnistria, South Ossetia, Abkhazia) to push back against a more proactive western policy towards Russia.

To counter this Russian pressure and aggression and as part of a bolder NATO approach to Russia, the Alliance should find ways to build on Ukraine's partnership. In 2014, NATO included Ukraine in the Partnership Interoperability Initiative to deepen interoperability with Ukraine and other partners (e.g., Australia, Finland, Georgia, Jordan, Sweden). These partners have much to offer to support NATO

operations and exercises. NATO should find ways to maximize and sustain Ukraine's contributions to the Alliance and take the opportunity at summit meetings to reinforce publicly that its door remains open to all countries able and willing to contribute to Alliance security. Keeping NATO's door open to Ukraine and other aspirants like Georgia can also have a transformative impact on spurring reforms in the region, which remain far behind what is required for membership.

If Russia chooses to engage and negotiate a framework for resolving the Ukraine conflict, NATO Allies could offer Moscow a concrete set of deliverables that can bolster NATO-Russian ties and restart the NRC. This could include enhanced discussions on elements of former Russian President Medvedev's 2009 European Security Treaty to codify risk reductions, security measures, and an institutional framework for renewing the transatlantic partnership with Russia in a more realistic fashion that respects inherent Russian interests.

Conclusion

Despite years of cooperation and a hopeful 2021 US-Russia Summit, NATO-Russian ties will remain frayed and dominated by competition for years to come. A return to Russia's partnership with NATO will remain out of reach, so long as Russia continues to reject the principles pledged under the Helsinki Final Act and the NATO-Russia Founding Act. Inevitably, President Putin will continue to rely on fomenting instability to both undermine allied interests and retain the attention of NATO. This stark reality requires that NATO Allies take a bolder approach towards Moscow and pursue a substantive course correction on NATO-Russia policy, which is driven by enhanced allied deterrence and bolstered capabilities intended to counter a revanchist Russia. Although NATO will need to keep the door open for dialogue and deconfliction, NATO-Russia ties cannot be "reset" and Putin is incapable of becoming a trusted NATO partner. The Biden administration will need to continue its current approach of responding robustly to Russian aggression and the USG will need to drive and shape a bolder NATO approach to Russia, which can better protect allied interests in an era of increased competition with Moscow.

Although bolstering deterrence, raising the costs for Russian aggression, and reducing the risks of military conflict may be the most that Allies can achieve in the short term, they should continue to make clear that NATO's longer-term vision remains a return to the path of cooperation and partnership that NATO and Russia pursued—to mutual benefit—in the immediate post-Cold War era. This can only happen, however, when Russia is willing to recommit—in deeds as well as in words—to the basic principles that guided European security in the past, and which Moscow previously pledged to uphold as well. Getting NATO policy towards Russia right will require a coordinated allied effort, both within NATO and increasingly within the EU, to develop a bolder set of measures that deter and contain Russia more effectively in an era of strategic competition on the European continent. Just as the United States has successfully worked with the EU and NATO to more closely respond to the rising threat that China presents, so can the NATO alliance strengthen cooperation to offer a bolder vision for managing the Russia challenge.

Notes

1. M. J. Williams, "Enduring but Irrelevant? Britain, NATO and the Future of the Atlantic Alliance," *International Politics* (2013), pp. 360-386.

2. Alexander Vershbow, "Ramp Up on Russia," Atlantic Council, 2020, p. 67 (https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/content-series/nato20-2020/ramp-up-on-russia/).

3.George Grayson, *Strange Bedfellows (University Press of America, 1999)*, p. 90.

4. James Goldgeier, "NATO Expansion, the Anatomy of a Decision," *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 21: iss. 1 (1998), pp. 83-102.

5.Alexander Vershbow, "Present at the Transformation: An Insider's Reflection on NATO Enlargement, NATO-Russia Relations, and Where We Go from Here," in *Open Door: NATO and Euro-Atlantic Security After the Cold War*, edited by Daniel S. Hamilton and Kristina Spohr, p. 1.

6. Mary Elise Sarotte, "How to Enlarge NATO: The Debate within the Clinton Administration," *International Security*, 44:1 (2019), pp. 7-41.

7. Mary Elise Sarotte, "A Broken Promise? What the West Really Told Moscow about NATO Expansion," *Foreign Affairs*, 93: 5 (2014); see also Josh-

ua R. Shifrinson, "Deal or No Deal? The End of the Cold War and the U.S. Offer to Limit NATO Expansion," *International Security*, 40:4 (2016), p. 7–44.

8. Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2004), p. 26.

9. James Goldgeier, *Not Whether, but When: The US Decision to Enlarge NATO* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1999).

10. Vershbow, "Present at the Transformation," p. 2.

11. Julianne Smith, "The NATO-Russia Relationship: Defining Moment or Déjà Vu?" *Politique* Étrangère, iss. 4, 2008.

12. Ibid.

13. Ruth Deyermond, "The Uses of Sovereignty in 21st Century Russian Foreign Policy," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 68:2 (2016).

14. Ibid.

15. Keir Giles, "Russian's New 'Tools' for Confronting the West," Chatham House, 2016; Vincent Charles Keating and Olivier Schmitt, "Ideology and influence in the debate over Russian election interference," *International Politics* (January 2021), (https://doi.org/10.1057/s41311-020-00270-4); Constanze Steltzenmüller, "The Impact of Russian Interference in Germany's 2017 Elections," Testimony Before the US Select Committee on Intelligence, June 28, 2017.

16. Suleiman Al-Khalidi, "Russian-led assault in Syria leaves over 500 civilians dead: rights groups, rescuers," Reuters, July 6, 2019, (https://www.reuters.com/article/us-syria-security-casualties/russian-led-assault-in-syria-leaves-over-500-civilians-dead-rights-groups-rescuers-idUSKCN1U200Q).

17. Paul J. Bolt, "Sino-Russian Relations in a Changing World Order," *Strategic Studies Quarterly*, 8: 4 (2014), pp. 47-69.

18. Pieter D. Wezeman, Alexandra Kuimova, Siemon T. Wezeman, "Trends in International Arms Transfers, 2020" SIPRI Factsheet, March 2021 (https://sipri.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/fs_2103_at_2020.pdf).

19. Paul N. Schwartz, "The Military Dimension in Sino-Russian Relations," in *Sino-Russian Relations in the 21st Century*, edited by Jo Inge Bekkevold and Bobo Lo (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019).

20. Margarete Klein and Claudia Major, "Perspectives for NATO-Russia Relations," SWP Comments 49, November 2015 (https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/comments/2015C49_kle_mjr.pdf).

21. NATO, "NATO Readiness Initiative," July 2018 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_06/20180608_1806-NATO-Readiness-Initiative_.pdf).

22. Vershbow,"Ramp Up on Russia," p. 67.

23. Ibid.

24. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United For a New Era," November 25, 2020 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf), p 5.

25. Ibid.

26. Vershbow, "Ramp Up on Russia."

27. Aaron Mehta, "European Defense Initiative Funding Drops in Defense Budget Request," *Defense News*, February 10, 2020 (https://www.defensenews.com/smr/federal-budget/2020/02/10/european-defense-initiative-funding-drops-in-defense-budget-request/).

28. Todd South, "Massive, Army-led Exercise Defender Europe Kicks Off," *Army Times*, March 15, 2021 (https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2021/03/15/massive-army-led-nato-exercise-defender-europe-kicks-off/).

29. Anton Troianovski, "Ukrainians Alarmed as Troops Mass on their Doorstep," *New York Times*, April 20, 2012 (https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/world/europe/-ukraine-russia-putin-invasion.html).

Chapter 2

NATO and China:
Navigating the Challenges

Una Aleksandra Bērziņa-Čerenkova

As NATO frames goals for its eighth decade, China is becoming the main reason to reassess NATO's purpose, reach, and institutional agility. NATO has cautiously, yet progressively begun framing China to be at the center of long-term global security challenges, and, therefore, a political problem. This chapter argues that China will prove to be a new, substantive challenge for NATO in the coming decade. Therefore, a more ambitious agenda for NATO needs to be set, including issues such as spotlighting China, communicating that China-related concerns do not just stem from US-China disputes but are shared across member states, empowering member states' best practices, establishing creative and flexible ways to cooperate with countries outside the Alliance, and ultimately even rethinking some aspects of Alliance-wide decision-making. Without actively threatening NATO, China provides a counterargument to the decade-long calls for the Alliance to retire by equipping it with a purpose for coordination and growth. Importantly, although the need to craft a joint political approach stems from the member states' increasing perception of China as a non-ally on national levels, NATO should avoid framing it as an adversary.

NATO's Approach to China—State of Play

Until the late 2010s, China had been a distant concern for NATO. When Xi Jinping gradually began implementing a more assertive foreign policy, an ambitious national security outlook after coming to power in 2012/13 and introduced a "holistic view of national security"[1] in 2014, the changes primarily affected China's immediate vicinity and did not trigger stark responses from NATO members. The country existed on NATO member states' agendas primarily in the economic

domain, and this aspect was being handled either bilaterally or by the European Union (EU), not NATO.

"NATO first woke up to Asia after the 2016-17 DPRK [the Democratic People's Republic of Korea] missile and nuclear tests. The implications of the test were clear—Pyongyang could now target Europe just as easily as LA," Rose Gottemoeller, NATO Deputy Secretary General at the time and the person responsible for the NATO approach to China, remembers. "NATO allies wanted to see if a political-military discussion could be established with China, initially to talk about DPRK."[2] Therefore, NATO-China exchanges were conditioned not by China's rise, but rather China's role in alleviating the North Korea issue—a tangible positive agenda.

This initial promise of cooperation, coupled with the member states' differing views of the People's Republic of China (PRC), might help account for the long time it took NATO to speak out on China in terms of threats and challenges, as the issue only pierced the Alliance's agenda at the London Summit of 2019. Contemplating the future of the Alliance, the text of the London Declaration pointed to China first in a veiled manner as a state actor that challenges the rules-based international order, stating that NATO is committed to ensuring the security of its communications, including 5G, and strengthening the "ability to prepare for, deter, and defend against hybrid tactics"; and then directly: "We recognize that China's growing influence and international policies present both opportunities and challenges that we need to address together as an Alliance."[3] NATO has cautiously, yet progressively begun framing China to be at the center of long-term global security challenges, and, therefore, a political problem.

The Declaration did not go unnoticed in Beijing, but China's response strategy was to avoid criticizing NATO as a whole. First, with its security interests traditionally clustered in its immediate geographic vicinity,[4] China had customarily attached a relatively low importance to NATO. Secondly, Beijing did not want to take the risk of alienating major European powers. Instead, it chose to blame the United States for bullying other NATO partners into submission: "We also noted that within NATO, there are objective and rational voices saying China is not an enemy. As a matter of fact, the greatest threat and

challenge the world faces is unilateralism and bullying practices. There is no immunity even for US allies," Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying commented on the topic of the London Declaration.[5] This strategy explains why Beijing's tone vis-à-vis NATO was still quite mild when PRC's Foreign minister Wang Yi spoke to NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg in 2020:

> (…) you have just made it clear that NATO does not regard China as an opponent, and you have also made positive comments on China's great development achievements. China highly appreciates this. (…) There is no geopolitical contradiction and competition between China and NATO members. Although there are differences on some issues between the two sides, this should not be an obstacle to exchanges and cooperation. It is hoped that NATO will continue to establish a correct view of China and regard China as a friend and partner.[6]

China's anti-US focus spared NATO from criticism, even after NATO had explicitly named China to be an issue.

China, however, had underestimated the extent of shared Alliance-wide unease over its rise. NATO leadership had created an international reflection group in anticipation of the NATO 2030 analysis and tasked it with exploring the potential for political cohesion in three areas:

1. Reinforcing allied unity, solidarity, and cohesion, including to cement the centrality of the transatlantic bond;
2. Increasing political consultation and coordination between allies; and
3. Strengthening NATO's political role and relevant instruments to address current and future threats and challenges to alliance security emanating from all strategic directions.[7]

All three tasks concerned China to some extent, but NATO's relationship with China was central to third task in particular. And the analysis addressed just that, with much stronger and more direct language than the London Declaration—all the more noticeable considering it had only been one year between the documents. The analysis stated, "the scale of Chinese power and global reach poses acute chal-

lenges to open and democratic societies." Bringing up China's authoritarianism and the expansion of territorial ambitions, it called China a "full-spectrum systemic rival" and recommended allies' political coordination in this regard.[8] No doubt, the analysis owed the newfound stricter wording and framing of China to the deteriorating US-China relationship, but it could have not been possible without the toughening China positions of the individual member states. The trend only strengthened during the Brussels Summit of 2021, as the Communiqué read: "China's stated ambitions and assertive behavior present systemic challenges to the rules-based international order and to areas relevant to Alliance security. We are concerned by those coercive policies which stand in contrast to the fundamental values enshrined in the Washington Treaty."[9]

The authors of the NATO 2030 report are not optimistic about the effect that the rise of China will have on global stability. It will lead to a world of competing great powers, in which assertive authoritarian states with revisionist foreign policy agendas seek to expand their power and influence, and in which NATO Allies will once again face a systemic challenge cutting across the domains of security and economics.[10] This, in turn, means that the Alliance has to become a geopolitical, rather than just a security and defense, entity, to cement its ability to act as the principal political forum for the strategic and geopolitical challenges facing the transatlantic community.[11]

Although the concrete means for achieving this goal listed in the report remain institutionally narrow and low in ambition, e.g., to "resume the practice whereby the number of annual Foreign Ministerials matches the number of Defense Ministerials" and to "organize a new Center of Excellence," one can still conclude that without actively threatening NATO, China provides a counter-argument to the decade-long calls for the Alliance to retire.[12] The need for a more comprehensive approach towards China is equipping NATO with an immediate purpose. Conversely, according to Ian Brzezinski, a failure of NATO to develop such an approach "is not only going to lead to a weaker Western strategy towards China, it will probably also lead to a division within the transatlantic community."[13]

Weighing NATO 2030 Priorities—Old Russia, New China?

On the one hand, NATO documents present the threats coming from Russia and China as similar and mutually enhancing. The 2021 Brussels Summit Communiqué points out that China is "cooperating militarily with Russia, including through participation in Russian exercises in the Euro-Atlantic area."[14] The NATO 2030 report speaks of "simultaneous geopolitical and ideological challenge from Russia and China." On the other hand, the report refers to Russia as "persistently aggressive," but to China as "rising." Indeed, one might argue that the challenges NATO will face from China in the following decade are quite different from those of Russia, both in substance and in scale. Russia is steadily acting as it has been since Putin's second term: it is ideologically stable and, therefore, predictably disruptive. China, on the other hand, is changing, and the state ideology is in flux. While Sino-centrism as well as nationalism remain important elements of Chinese strategy, it seems that Xi Jinping has yet to decide "what kind of world and what type of international relations China should promote; what kind of foreign policy best serves China, and how China is to conduct diplomacy in the new era."[15]

This is not to say that the Russian factor is vanishing nor should be overlooked in the next decade. Indeed, Russia is likely to remain a challenge to NATO (see the chapter by Simakovsky and Williams). Thus, NATO needs to explore a more ambitious China agenda that does not deprioritize Russia. As Helena Legarda notes,

> this is not about either or—NATO is huge, the Alliance should be capable to handle both. With China, unlike Russia, it's not about boots on the ground. But it's about China coming closer to Europe, and NATO should start focusing on it right now. NATO should be identifying the main challenges China poses, and coming up with solutions that will work.[16]

Downplaying the Russian issue is not the goal of the argument and indeed, both Russia and China pursue their strategic territorial "core" interests with visible success. For example, Russian expansion in Ukraine has gone largely unpunished, and the negotiations of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict have pushed Armenia back into Moscow's sphere of influence. But China's capacity to keep countries from es-

caping its gravitational field via direct political and economic pressure surpasses that of Russia and will only grow. For instance, Vietnam succumbing to PRC pressure against oil exploration in the contested territories of the South China Sea time and again since 2014 is a vivid example of such tactics.

With this distinction in mind, there are several other arguments favoring greater attention to China on the NATO level. First, a comparison of national military spending further outlines the difference in potential security challenges between Russia and China. China's official 2019 defense budget reached $175 billion in 2019, but according to SIPRI estimates, the military expenditure of the PRC was closer to $240 billion.[17] This was almost four times greater than Russia's military spending in 2019 which amounted to $65.1 billion.[18] This leads to the conclusion that "Russia spends less than might be inferred from the scale of its military activities and the size of its armed forces."[19] The issue is not lost on Moscow itself. For example, the Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation, Sergei Shoigu, complained that "against the background of annually growing expenditures of the United States and other countries, the military budget of Russia has remained practically unchanged for several years."[20] In this context, by "other countries," he clearly primarily meant China. And if Russia is aware of the implications of Chinese military spending, NATO should be as well. Of course, the risks lie not just in the size of the budget, but also its application: while China has greater capabilities, they do not impact NATO as directly as those of Russia.

In the domain of capabilities, China is acting in accordance with "the path towards a strong military with Chinese characteristics"[21] by increasing its blue-water naval presence, civil-military fusion, innovation in defense science and technology (S&T), and informationalization of the army, both in its immediate vicinity and beyond. The horizontal integration and fusion do not solely refer to the civil-military axis, but also to the Party-Army axis. In China, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is an army of the Communist Party, and Xi Jinping stresses that the "Party must have absolute control over the gun."[22] This idea is directly rooted in Mao Zedong's famous quote: "Every Communist must grasp the truth, 'Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.' Our principle is that the Party commands the gun, and the gun must

never be allowed to command the Party."[23] Drawing on the security dilemma logic, these buildups increase the likelihood of continued mistrust. Such circumstances, exacerbated by the growing promulgation of extraterritoriality in PRC laws,[24] project that a phasedown in NATO-PRC suspicion during the decade leading up to 2030 is unlikely.

Second, many NATO member states have already begun to prioritize China in their national security and foreign policy agendas. China's growing significance and presence is addressed in foreign policy documents of the majority of NATO member states, including Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, the UK, Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania.[25] In fact, the dilemmas the member states face vis-a-vis China in economic, technological, and security terms are very similar, so that China was the one thing on which member states could actually make a decision, "providing a surprising point of agreement in an otherwise contentious December 2019 NATO summit."[26]

China had already developed a strategy of offsetting unity within the European Union by approaching member states bilaterally or regionally. Since NATO's 2019 London Summit, this strategy has been spilling over into attempts to offset NATO cohesion by pursuing stronger bilateral ties with its member states.[27] China has also sought to engage in dialogues with NATO member states in other fora, including the EU, using the connections they have already established in a play to isolate the United States. China's Foreign Minister and State Councilor Wang Yi explains Xi Jinping's signature foreign policy framework *Major-Country Diplomacy with Chinese Characteristics* as a multifaceted diplomatic offensive with the goal of changing global governance: "We are actively building a global network of partnerships to advance China's diplomatic agenda in a comprehensive, multilevel, multifaceted way, (...) we are spearheading the reform of the global governance system."[28] Oftentimes, such advancements of China's diplomatic agenda are directed towards NATO member states.

As many NATO member states have already acknowledged the complexities that surround China's security outlooks and have thus formulated the need to develop national policies on China, the natural next step for NATO is to take responsibility over the supranational coordi-

nation on the issue. The Alliance is institutionally well-positioned for this role because it has already solved the central issue of supranational security cooperation—that of mutual trust between national-level security establishments. For this to work, however, the member states need to be on the same page on whether China is just a US problem, or an issue for NATO as a whole.

China the Rival—to the US or to NATO as a Whole?

China's security outlooks, cyber and space domains aside, largely center on its geographic vicinity. Is it fair to say, then, that China is a challenge only for the NATO member state with the largest presence in the Indo-Pacific, namely, the United States?

The official Chinese understanding of security and defense goals is directly framed in relation to the United States with NATO mentioned more as an afterthought. China's whitepaper "China's National Defense in the New Era" puts the United States front and center in the description of today's security challenges, and the mention of NATO is secondary to that: "The US has adjusted its national security and defense strategies and adopted unilateral policies. It has provoked and intensified competition among major countries, significantly increased its defense expenditure, pushed for additional capacity in nuclear, outer space, cyber and missile defense, and undermined global strategic stability. NATO has continued its enlargement, stepped up military deployment in Central and Eastern Europe, and conducted frequent military exercises."[29]

The common thread running through the Chinese discourse on national defense is that the anti-China agenda is a uniquely US policy and not necessarily shared by other NATO member states. The arguments circulating in the Chinese public space largely boil down to three domains: (1) the economic domain, (2) the strategic domain, and (3) the security domain. Economically, major European players, including Germany and the United Kingdom, value the growth input that bilateral cooperation with China provides, which means that fully decoupling from China is not on their agendas. Strategically, European states such as France are looking to establish a certain degree of autonomy,

which is read as reluctance to uphold the strict US position on China. Lastly, from a security perspective, Chinese policymakers believe that European NATO member states do not feel threatened by China the way the United States does, because the Indo-Pacific is portrayed as a specifically US priority. Hence, the line of thinking suggests, China does not present itself as a common enemy for NATO as a whole. These three arguments speak to the Beijing mindset of distinguishing between the United States and other, especially European, countries.

Deriving from this mindset, the Chinese image of a NATO that is disintegrating grows. Top-level Chinese analysts have written that NATO is on its last legs, and thus weak: "Only a China-Russia alliance could revive a 'brain-dead' NATO. But with that unlikely, the transatlantic alliance may be on its last legs," Zhou Bo, ex-director of the Center for Security Cooperation of the Office for International Military Cooperation of the Ministry of National Defence of China, writes in his *South China Morning Post* article from January 2020.[30] Senior Colonel Zhou argues that, unlike the United States, Europe is reluctant to see China as a threat to NATO. He presents as evidence good EU-China relations and the popularity of the Belt and Road Initiative in Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe. The article, immediately republished in Chinese mainland blog outlets under the title "Who can resuscitate a 'brain-dead NATO'—China or Russia?" attracted many comments in support of the author's arguments. From this perspective, NATO is seen as simply a tribune for US ambition, European countries do not wish to support the United States' anti-China crusade, and NATO has no common enemy. Therefore, the argument goes, it is destined to fail.[31] The low level of relevance China lends to NATO is also illustrated by the fact that the official Chinese Ministry of the Foreign Affairs' online information sheet on NATO has not been updated since 2002—while the fact sheets for most other country groupings, including ASEAN and the EU, have been updated in the last year.[32]

China's foreign policy behavior towards the Alliance and its members is shaped by the belief that the United States' view on China is not equally shared by any other NATO member states and that NATO is on the verge of greater fragmentation. For example, during a video call in 2021 between EU's High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell and PRC State Councilor and

Foreign Minister Wang Yi, it became evident that "[a]t the initiative of the Chinese side, there was also an exchange of views on relations with the United States."[33] Consequently, China has called on and continues to call on the EU to exercise more autonomy vis-a-vis the United States in order to pursue its own approaches and interests towards China.[34] The situation has arguably tilted since the EU, which has an overlap of twenty-one member states with NATO, along with the UK and Canada, imposed sanctions on China in a coordinated effort with the United States in March 2021.[35] Yet, the position presented by Zhou Bo is still widespread among foreign policymakers in Beijing, i.e., China does not identify NATO's concerns about its rise to be an expression of a joint alliance emotion, but rather a spill-over effect from China's dispute with the United States. Such framing could well be Beijing's deliberate strategy, feeding back into the Chinese reluctance to harm bilateral relations with the European powers.

Claiming the United States, not NATO *per se*, to be its main security problem, Beijing has been pursuing ways to talk to Europeans without the United States in the room. If larger European powers merit bilateral relations in Beijing's eyes, then for the smaller NATO members the approach has been to cluster a number of countries into China-introduced platforms. China's creative regional approach, including its cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe in the "16+1" format,[36] can be viewed in terms of a potential play against transatlantic unity. This link has not gone unnoticed in the NATO 2030 report, which recommends "uphold[ing] NATO cohesion when Allies engage China bilaterally and through formats such as the 17+1."[37] In a further attempt to pursue this strategy, China approached France with a proposal "to find ways to work with France on issues concerning central and eastern Europe."[38]

There is some truth to the Chinese reading that the main driver of NATO anti-Chinese rhetoric is the United States, especially with the hawkish position of the Trump administration in mind. However, it is not fully accurate as it overlooks the shared nature of risk perception that China has created across the bloc. Even though the United States is the primary driving force in adopting China-critical approaches among NATO members, shaped by its national security considerations, it would be misleading to see the China issue as solely a US problem. As has been demonstrated, China has already entered the na-

tional foreign and security policies of the UK, France, Germany, Italy, and other NATO member states. This means that even those member states with whom China has a positive agenda and a strong tradition of bilateral economic exchanges through the EU still pay attention to the China factor in the security domain. Hence, the economic argument used in the Chinese public discourse does not stand.

As for the Chinese strategic argument: naturally, the European powers' views on China are evolving as well, and they are not willing to follow the United States' lead on China without question. Still, concluding that these powers would be willing to undermine the transatlantic link for the sake of China is a stretch. Europe and the United States may disagree,[39] but that alone does not signal a relationship crisis—after all, there are mutual disagreements on the European continent as well. At the end of the day, Europe and the United States fall back on a similar understanding of the rule of law, democracy, equality, the market economy, as well as freedom, human dignity, and human rights.

When it comes to security, the argument that the Indo-Pacific is insignificant for European states can be challenged as well. China's actions in the East and South China Seas are a global issue because they matter to several major member states. The UK and France have already concluded joint exercises with the US Navy, thus "complementing the Japan-US alliance or creating 'an additional layer of security above and beyond that provided by the United States.'"[40] The UK, France, Germany, and the Netherlands have released national Indo-Pacific strategies and are exploring more involvement in the region. In August 2021, Germany sent the frigate Bayern to the Indo-Pacific in one of its largest naval operations in distance since World War II. Therefore, any Chinese hopes that its activities in the Indo-Pacific could simply be branded regional, rather than global, destabilization are unfounded.

Furthermore, several NATO partners in the Indo-Pacific, including India, Japan, and Australia, share NATO member states' concerns over China and are actively calling for more regional security cooperation involving the United States. Clear examples of this are the Quad Summit in March 2021 and the announcement of the AUKUS trilateral security pact in September 2021. Even the Philippines, a rhetorically US-critical

actor, has been looking towards the United States precisely for "shared concerns with the massing of PRC maritime militia vessels in the South China Sea" and bilaterally reiterating the "applicability of the 1951 U.S.-Philippine Mutual Defense Treaty to the South China Sea,"[41] which was followed by a joint military drill with the United States.

This means that grievances over China's challenges in the international arena are not just the United States' problem, and not even just a problem confined to NATO. Therefore, it would be wrong for China to write off all national decisions to limit China for security considerations simply as the "US is returning to bully its allies, (...) and mak[ing] its allies pay more resources or efforts to serve its hegemony."[42] This line of logic leads Chinese analysts to presume that the European NATO member states would push against the US and argue in favor of closer relations with China. This is not the case. Granted that intra-NATO issues over China, i.e., different interests of member states and especially different preferences over how to deal with China remain, the insecurity caused by China's rise is very much shared across both shores of the Atlantic and will serve as a major driving force for the Alliance to persevere in the next decade and beyond.

NATO member states must understand the Chinese reading of the situation and recognize that this pushes China to engage with NATO member states bilaterally. In light of this perception, for NATO to maximize its relevance for the future, the United States under President Joe Biden should aim at counterweighing any messaging associated with the previous administration that puts Washington apart from general NATO goals.

Acknowledging that a rising threat perception towards China is a phenomenon wider than the Alliance itself, NATO should also aim to break out of strict institutional contours and expand elastic cooperation outside the immediate NATO members to include "like-minded countries" (on NATO partnerships, see the chapter by Elgin and Wieslander). The US has already begun to act in this direction, but if NATO wants to remain relevant for the coming decade, it needs to take initiative as an alliance instead of leaving this task in the hands of just one member state, albeit the leading one. Also, NATO's lack of a mandate and competencies in areas like trade and economics is a good

reason to collaborate with other international actors, including individual states, and supranational organizations, including the EU.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Though the NATO 2030 report currently views Russia as a greater rival than China, in the decade leading up to 2030, China will grow to pose a wider challenge to NATO. Paradoxically, the increasing China challenge has become a powerful driver for NATO's adaptation to the next decade and beyond—the new setting does not equal the Cold War condition of a single, outspoken military threat, and a looming fear of a full-scale traditional conflict. Rather, NATO is waking up to the reality that China, a country that has a complicated web of interconnectedness and cooperation with NATO's own member states, can also be a promoter of untransparent dependencies. It is a massive military spender, proactive security thinker, and a challenger to the existing security architecture on top of that. China's rise has implications for the liberal international order in general. There is an international demand for effective coordination and approach-sharing on China. NATO is well-poised to fill this demand by providing immediate member states, like-minded partner countries, and even a wider list of states affected by China's rise, with an immediate purpose for capability building, institutional response shaping, as well as political coordination across all areas of security, with the goal of ultimately establishing better practices. If NATO will live up to the task, the decade-long calls for the Alliance's retirement will be history—the China issue gives NATO a new purpose. However, first, the Alliance needs to adapt and formulate a clear strategy based on a number of recommendations:[43]

Gather the Willing: Under the circumstances of the current decision-making practice of NATO as well as the disparities between individual member states' positions on China, it would be hard to introduce a short-term common agenda that will find support among all member states. Instead, it is advisable to foster an Alliance-wide understanding in the long term by engaging in a "coalition of the willing" type of cooperation within NATO for the short- and medium-term.[44] NATO is a much more suitable coalition-building platform than the United States alone, as the NATO operational capacity is designed to engage allies in

the planning and decision-making, unlike US operational capacity.[45] It is imperative to focus on security and defense as well as strategic issues so that NATO does not directly interfere with member states' economic relations with China.

Cooperate Elastically: A rising threat perception towards China is a phenomenon wider than the Alliance itself and includes regional like-minded states and even US-skeptical countries. NATO should aim to break out of strict institutional contours, and to expand elastic cooperation outside the immediate NATO members. The US has already begun to act in this direction, but if NATO wants to remain relevant for the coming decade, it needs to take initiative as an alliance instead of leaving this task in the hands of just one member state. The NATO "Partners across the globe"[46] is an existing framework to achieve elastic cooperation outside of the Alliance, and previous research has underlined the "viability of more flexible groupings of members and partners with shared interests under the NATO umbrella to address global threats."[47] For those who do not want to engage in partnerships with NATO, but are nevertheless faced with the same dilemmas surrounding China's rise, "a commitment to work towards shared security on the basis of mutual respect"[48] is still possible.

Respond Jointly: NATO should understand that China uses the bilateral strategy as well as regional formats, such as "16+1," in its exchanges with NATO member states precisely because it believes that the member states don't share the US position on China and can be persuaded to adopt a stance more in line with Beijing's interests. The United States and European partners should recognize the divide that the PRC wants to emphasize and signal to Beijing that NATO moves together, despite any perceived differences in stances towards China. This implies that NATO member states should try to arrange a common China policy, careful not to force any state to take a position that it does not want to take—but also emphasizing where there are shared concerns.

Introduce Standards: The Alliance is institutionally well-positioned to take responsibility over the supranational coordination on the issue of China's rise in the global security domain. Member states are already dealing with a dilemma of security vs. economy concerning China. Instead of looking for paths individually, this new shared task

could mean putting out best practices and producing guidelines for the member states. The additional advantage of a NATO-level approach would be symbolically dissociating this function from the US. Currently, this function is exclusively fulfilled by the US on a bilateral basis (e.g., the case of Joint Declarations on 5G and the pressure surrounding Nuctech Inc.) and is therefore interpreted by US-critical countries, including China, as the enforcement of US hegemonic interests.

Uphold a Community: In connection to the previous point, the Alliance should serve as an exchange platform and as a channel for existing best practices between the member states. However, NATO shouldering the bulk of proposals and advice centrally would create disinterest and disconnectedness on the part of member states. NATO staff should identify the main national proactive China agenda setters, as well as effective national solutions across the bloc, and then encourage the member states to share the solutions directly through NATO-funded partnership projects.

Decide Faster: Fully acknowledging that "the principle of consensus in decision-making is applied throughout the Alliance,"[49] there is nevertheless a problem with consensus configuration. Since countries tend to pursue quid-pro-quo in their voting, NATO is robbed of the advantage of rapid response.[50] China, or Russia for that matter, just needs to convince one player to stall the internal NATO deliberation process. As China is an important factor in shaping the NATO 2030 outlooks, the Alliance needs to rethink its own decision-making structures, and introduce a configuration that has the capacity to hold member states to some decisions they didn't necessarily support. The NATO 2030 report, in fact, cautiously points in this direction as well by stating that "NATO must be diligent in ensuring that it remains capable of reaching and implementing decisions in a timely fashion."

Be Firm, Yet Engaging: Having a clear understanding of one's own security interests should not equal full-spectrum securitization. Military-to-military staff talks between NATO and China should be upheld to ensure exchange of information and contacts. Relevant issues for both sides, including North Korea, JCPOA, and counter-piracy, should remain high on the agenda. China is a non-ally, but NATO should avoid framing it as an adversary.[51,52]

Without actively threatening NATO, China has already entered the Alliance's agenda, because dealing with China's challenges to national security matters to member states on individual levels and they are turning towards the Alliance for guidance and coordination. This challenge posed by a major power that is not an ally, but also not an adversary, grants the Alliance an immediate purpose. Furthermore, the challenges of the new security reality brought about by China's rise is an issue not just on the agenda of the member states or NATO's likeminded partners, but also countries that are generally suspicious of NATO. To respond to this new reality, NATO needs to spotlight China, to communicate that China-related concerns do not just stem from US-China disputes but are shared across member states, to establish mechanisms of sharing best practices among member states, to explore creative and flexible ways to cooperate with countries outside the Alliance, and ultimately even rethink some aspects of Alliance-wide decision-making. At the end of the day, it would mean a greater leadership role for NATO members other that the United States.[53]

Notes

1. CPC Central Committee Bimonthly Qiushi, Xi Jinping, "A Holistic View of National Security," April 15, 2014 (http://en.qstheory.cn/2020-12/04/c_607611.htm).

2. Interview with Rose Gottemoeller, April 16, 2021.

3. NATO, "London Declaration issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in London 3-4 December 2019" (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_171584.htm).

4. The State Council of the People's Republic of China, "China's National Defense in the New Era" ("新时代的中国国防"), July 24, 2019, pp. 6-7 (http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/2019-07/24/content_5414325.htm and http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/whitepaper/201907/24/content_WS5d3941ddc6d08408f502283d.html).

5. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying's Regular Press Conference," December 5, 2019 (https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/t1721889.shtml).

6. Consulate General of the People's Republic of China, "Wang Yi: China is willing to strengthen cooperation with NATO on the basis of equality and mutual respect," February 15, 2020 (http://surabaya.china-consulate.org/chn/sbxw/t1747224.htm).

7. Pierre Morcos, "NATO in 2030: Charting a New Path for the Transatlantic Alliance," CSIS, December 3, 2020 (https://www.csis.org/analysis/nato-2030-charting-new-path-transatlantic-alliance).

8. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," November 25, 2020, p.27-28 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf). (not a book so removed parentheses, harmonized across all references in other chapters)

9. NATO, "Brussels Summit Communiqué Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Brussels 14 June 2021," https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_185000.htm

10. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 5.

11. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 6.

12. See, for example, Doug Bandow, "NATO's Lack of Any Serious Purpose Means It Should Retire," *Forbes*, April 22, 2013 (https://www.forbes.com/sites/dougbandow/2013/04/22/natos-lack-of-any-serious-purpose-means-it-should-retire).

13. Ian Brzezinski, "NATO, China and Russia: A Balancing Act", Podcast by CNAS, April 16, 2021 (at 10:12) (https://www.cnas.org/publications/podcast/nato-china-and-russia-a-balancing-act-with-sara-bjerg-moller-and-ian-brzezinski).

14. NATO, "Brussels Summit Communiqué Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Brussels 14 June 2021" (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_185000.htm).

15. W. Yi, "Study and Implement Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy Conscientiously and Break New Ground in Major-Country Diplomacy with Chinese Characteristics," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, July 20, 2020 (https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1799305.shtml).

16. Interview with Helena Legarda, April 21, 2021.

17. Nan Tian and Fei Su, "New Estimates of China's Military Expenditures," SIPRI, 2021 (https://www.sipri.org/publications/2021/other-publications/new-estimate-chinas-military-expenditure).

18. Siemon T. Wezeman, "Russia's Military Spending: Frequently Asked Questions," SIPRI Commentary/Backgrounders, April 27, 2020 (https://www.sipri.org/commentary/topical-backgrounder/2020/russias-military-spending-frequently-asked-questions).

19. Wezeman, "Russia's Military Spending: Frequently Asked Questions."

20. N.A., "Russia in 2020 will be in ninth place among the world leaders in military spending," Interfax, December 24, 2019 (https://www.interfax.ru/russia/689202).

21. Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, "Xi Jinping emphasizes persisting in taking the road of strengthening the army with Chinese characteristics, comprehensively promoting the modernization of national defense and the army," ("习近平强调坚持走中国特色强军之路，全面推进国防和军队现代化") , October 18, 2017, http://www.gov.cn/zhuanti/2017-10/18/content_5232658.htm

22. Willy Wo-Lap Lam, "Chinese Politics in the Era of Xi Jinping: Renaissance, Reform, or Retrogression?" (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), p.76.

23. Mao Zedong, "II. The War History of the Kuomintang," in *Problems of War and Strategy* (1938) (https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-2/mswv2_12.htm#p1).

24. Freedom House, "Beijing's extraterritorial reach, Hong Kong National Security Law, more 'subversion' charges in China," *China Media Bulletin*, vol. 146 (2020) (https://freedomhouse.org/report/china-media-bulletin/2020/beijings-extraterritorial-reach-hong-kong-national-security-law).

25. Una Aleksandra Bērziņa-Čerenkova, "#NATO2030: Towards a NATO China Strategy," *ICDS Brief* (2020) (https://icds.ee/en/towards-nato-china-strategy).

26. Lindsey W. Ford and James Goldgeier, "Retooling America's alliances to manage the China challenge," Brookings, January 15, 2021 (https://www.brookings.edu/research/retooling-americas-alliances-to-manage-the-china-challenge/).

27. Interview with Helena Legarda, April 21, 2021.

28. Yi, "Study and Implement Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy Conscientiously and Break New Ground in Major-Country Diplomacy with Chinese Characteristics."

29. The State Council of the People's Republic of China (2019).

30. Zhou Bo, "Only a China-Russia alliance could revive a 'brain-dead' Nato. But with that unlikely, the transatlantic alliance may be on its last legs," *South China Morning Post*, January 1, 2020 (https://www.scmp.com/comment/opinion/article/3043999/only-china-russia-alliance-could-revive-brain-dead-nato-unlikely).

31. Zhou Bo, "Who can stimulate the "brain-dead" NATO, China or Russia?" *Sina News*, n.d. (https://news.sina.cn/gj/2020-01-04/detail-iihnzahk1871167.d.html).

32. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, "North Atlantic Treaty Organization," November 28, 2000 (https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/ziliao_674904/tytj_674911/tyfg_674913/t9605.shtml).

33. European External Action Service, "China: High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell holds video conference with State Councilor/Foreign Minister Wang Yi," *EEAS Press Release*, February 8, 2021 (https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/92825/china-high-representativevice-president-josep-borrell-holds-video-conference-state_en).

34. Stuart Lau, "Amid Biden pressure, China calls for EU autonomy," *Politico*, February 8, 2021 (https://www.politico.eu/article/china-wang-yi-calls-for-eu-autonomy-competition-trade).

35. N.A., "Uighurs: Western countries sanction China over rights abuses," *BBC*, March 22, 2021 (https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-56487162).

36. The original name of the grouping is used for the sake of clarity. The format, introduced in 2012, had included 16 members on the European side and hence referred to as "16+1." It expanded after the accession of Greece in 2019, and the name "17+1" appeared. However, after Lithuania's 2021 decision to leave, the format has again returned to 16 European members, and is expected to undergo further line-up changes in the coming years.

37. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 28.

38. Katherine Wong, "China offers France chance for joint action with eastern Europe," *South China Morning Post*, February 26, 2021 (https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3123276/china-offers-france-chance-joint-action-eastern-europe?fbclid=IwAR3k-gOhNJH-6FLTGgrfqUDjJycNRBbSUvufqZPVN2TEVxGMbiSLIzqA2H8M).

39. Helen Collis et al., "Where Europe and the US don't see eye to eye," *Politico*, June 8, 2021 (https://www.politico.eu/article/europe-us-trade-coronavirus-vaccines-data-china-russia-artificial-intelligence-farming-carbon).

40. Tsuruoka Michito, "Making Sense of Europe's Military Engagement in Asia: A new direction and Tokyo's challenges," *The Diplomat*, March 23, 2021 (https://thediplomat.com/2021/03/making-sense-of-europes-military-

engagement-in-asia/); Quote from James Rogers, "UK and Japan consolidate their ties in the Indo-Pacific," *9Dashline*, March 4, 2021 (https://www.9dashline.com/article/britain-and-japan-consolidate-their-ties-in-the-indo-pacific).

41. US Department of State, "Secretary Blinken's Call with Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs Locsin," April 8, 2021 (https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinkens-call-with-philippine-secretary-of-foreign-affairs-locsin-2/).

42. Yang Sheng, "US, Europe hard to rebuild trust, because 'who knows what would happen in 2024?'," *Global Times*, March 24, 2021 (https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202103/1219371.shtml).

43. The Author thanks Katherine Kjellström Elgin, Nele Marianne Ewers-Peters, Jason Blessing, and Rakel Tiderman for their input.

44. Jim Townsend, "NATO, China and Russia: A Balancing Act," *Brussels Sprouts*, podcast by CNAS , April 16, 2021 (at 20:37) (https://www.cnas.org/publications/podcast/nato-china-and-russia-a-balancing-act-with-sara-bjergmoller-and-ian-brzezinski).

45. Interview with Rose Gottemoeller, April 16, 2021.

46. NATO, "Relations with partners across the globe," July 8, 2021 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49188.htm).

47. Sophie Arts and Steven Keil, "Flexible Security Arrangements and the Future of NATO Partnerships," *GMF Policy Brief*, 2021, p. 2.

48. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era."

49. NATO, "Part II: Policy and Decision-Making," n.d. (https://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2006/hb-en-2006/Part2.pdf).

50. For example, Turkey's 2020 stalling on the Eagle Defender defense plan for Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland.

51. Interview with Rose Gottemoeller, April 16, 2021.

52. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 15.

53. Arts and Keil, "Flexible Security Arrangements and the Future of NATO Partnerships."

Chapter 3

NATO's Place in the European Security Architecture:

Cooperation with the European Union and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Nele Marianne Ewers-Peters

With his statement that "we really have to work together, and we have a unique opportunity now to strengthen that cooperation, a new transatlantic Chapter," Stoltenberg[1] reiterated the importance of NATO's partnerships with the European Union (EU) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for European security. As the complexity of risks, threats, and challenges within Europe as well as on its periphery grow, cooperation among European security organizations has become increasingly relevant. What has also become evident is that NATO cannot face these challenges on its own and cooperation with both the EU and the OSCE is even more indispensable for the development of a comprehensive approach to security and crisis management considering the new complexities. Recent examples of their cooperation include efforts in the Balkan wars in the 1990s, fighting terrorism and organized crime in Afghanistan, and comprehensive approaches to crisis management in the Gulf of Aden and Ukraine. In the debates over cooperation among these security actors, the notion of European security architecture has been re-occurring.[2] Since the end of the Cold War, the European security architecture has both been significantly shaped by the adaptation and transformation processes of its key actors—NATO, the EU, and the OSCE—and has changed these institutions' positions over time. Considering the new security dynamics within Europe and globally, these actors need to rethink their partnerships and cooperative frameworks to address emerging challenges. Consequently, this yields the question where NATO will position itself in the European security architecture until 2030 and beyond, and how it seeks to move forward its cooperation with both the EU and the OSCE.

Over the last thirty years, all three organizations underwent significant transformation and adaptation processes. Both NATO and the OSCE had to readjust to the new security environment—NATO survived its identity crisis and search for a new purpose, and gained new core tasks including territorial defense, cooperative security, and crisis management, and the OSCE had to deal with the dissolution of the Soviet Union and adjustments to new responsibilities. In contrast, the EU's integration project moved forward with the development of its Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), and thereby presented itself as another security provider in Europe. These profound changes in policies, purposes, and structures by all three organizations in Europe created a higher level of domain similarity and functional overlap.[3] Given their different toolboxes, strengths, and capabilities, both the EU and the OSCE seem to be NATO's natural partners. However, while the EU developed defense capabilities and pursued strategic autonomy, the OSCE faced internal blockages. As a result, the NATO-EU relationship has advanced more significantly than the NATO-OSCE partnership. What is more, cooperation has not been easy among these organizations and certain obstacles persist since no clear division of labor has been agreed upon.[4]

Looking forward to 2030, this chapter evaluates NATO's partnerships with the EU and OSCE as its indispensable allies in European security. Because of the increasing complexity and hybridization of threats—today and in the future—NATO cannot guarantee the security of Europe by itself and therefore needs other multilateral partners, especially the EU and OSCE, to deal with the demands posed by contemporary security challenges. Cooperation will also enable NATO to focus on its own core tasks, ensure fairer burden sharing and, above all, to remain relevant for European security beyond 2030. By positioning NATO's place in the contemporary European security architecture, this chapter first reflects on the areas where cooperation is most and least feasible. It then formulates a number of recommendations for NATO's role in the future European security architecture, how it should best make use of these partnerships, and how to move forward and create a more dynamic model of cooperation considering current stalemates.

NATO and the Contemporary European Security Architecture

How we should understand and conceptualize the European security architecture is a recurring debate, particularly among European practitioners and scholars. Here, the European security architecture refers to the institutional structures within Europe that provide peace, security, and stability on the continent and for the wider periphery, both of which have developed and transformed over time. The main actors that make up this architecture are the EU, NATO, and the OSCE, and, as some would argue, the Council of Europe. Overall, the European security architecture has gone through phases in which its institutions have had to adapt and adjust to the changing security environment within Europe and internationally. In the first phase, the build-up of the security order within Europe took place after World War II and throughout the Cold War as states created these institutions and developed a network of security and defense partnerships. The creation of the architecture relied on shared commitments to democracy, human rights, rule of law, peace and security, and mutual respect.[5] During this time, each organization was tasked with their own specific mandates that allowed for a clear division of labor and responsibilities. This allowed them to strengthen their specific capabilities and capacities to develop their own comparative advantages and approaches to peace and security.

Renewed architectural debates came to the fore with the end of the Cold War as the EU, NATO, and the OSCE were forced to adapt and transform. New attempts at conceptualizing and defining the European security architecture have been made with different visions emerging from all sides of the Euro-Atlantic security space.[6] What has crystallized is an overall consensus that NATO should present the central building block in the post-Cold War European security architecture, which would imply its expansion as well as transformation. The EU and the OSCE would be complementary and support this architecture.[7] Moreover, both the EU and the OSCE have established themselves as valuable and indispensable partners for NATO in security and defense affairs in Europe and the wider neighborhood. The NATO-EU relationship is considered to be the Alliance's most institutionalized and comprehensive partnership, whereas the relations with the OSCE primarily take place through informal channels and focus mainly on arms

control, conflict prevention, and post-conflict reconstruction. However, despite the significant membership overlap—all NATO Allies are members of the OSCE, and twenty-one NATO member states also possess membership in the EU—the path towards partnerships took different turns. This has resulted in an uneven triangle of European security cooperation in which NATO-EU cooperation represents the strongest bond, as demonstrated by the growing overlap in functions, geographical coverage, mandates, and responsibilities.[8]

Since the 1990s, NATO and the EU have advanced their cooperation particularly in crisis management and consultations. Historically, their relations are rooted in informal exchanges and smooth working exchanges between the heads of both organizations. The first rapprochements between the two organizations occurred in the 1990s, when NATO Secretary General George Robertson and the EU's High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana (who previously held the position as NATO Secretary General) occurred over lunch meetings to discuss contemporary European challenges and common interests. Interactions and exchanges moved to include meetings between NATO's North Atlantic Council (NAC) and the EU's Political and Security Committee (PSC) in the early 2000s, which led to three meetings per year as well as exchanges between their military staff.[9]

The time period from the end of the Cold War in 1990 until 2004 has been perceived as the "honeymoon" of the NATO-EU relationship.[10] During this "honeymoon" period, their cooperation was fostered through informal ties, making advancements in terms of exchanges and consultations as well as collaboration in crisis management operations such as in Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia. With the further development of CSDP due to NATO's support, mechanisms for operational engagements, such as the Security of Information Agreement and Berlin Plus arrangements[11] in 2003, were established that facilitated cooperation in crisis management operations in the same theatres.[12] Nevertheless, increasing involvement in the same areas and growing functional overlap also initiated competition between the two organizations.[13] In addition, the amicable relations ended with Cyprus' accession to the EU in 2004 and the emergence of the Turkish-Cypriot double veto in both organizations. These vetoes, rooted in the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974 and still unresolved dispute as well as

Turkey's non-recognition of the Republic of Cyprus, have presented one of the key political stalemates in the EU-NATO relationship. The so-called Cyprus issue primarily limits intelligence and information sharing as well as the reciprocal veto to participation (also known as hostage-taking) in the respective other organization's activities.[14]

Although NATO's relationship with the OSCE evolved during the same time period, it has not received as much prominence. Because of the OSCE's institutional nature and thematic focus, their cooperation concentrates on areas of disarmament and arms control, counterterrorism, cyber security and capacity-building measures. Their interactions also take place primarily through informal exchanges and meetings between their secretariats as well as through annual talks at the staff level.[15] Furthermore, what sets these two organizations apart are their different capabilities and responsibilities due to NATO's focus on territorial defense, deterrence, and crisis management, and the OSCE's tasks of election monitoring, political cooperation, and economic and environmental security.

Russia's annexation of Crimea and the onset of the Ukraine conflict in 2014 marked a new period of relations among European security organizations and triggered a rethinking of the contemporary European security architecture. As a result of a number of joint efforts towards Russia, NATO and the EU recognized the need for enhanced cooperation and a more institutionalized framework for exchanges, coordination, and joint exercises.[16] The signing of the EU-NATO Joint Declarations[17] in 2016 and 2018 can be considered a game changer and major milestone after a period of "frozen conflict."[18] The 2016 Joint Declaration defines seven areas in which NATO and the EU sought closer cooperation, coordinated planning, and information sharing: hybrid threats, operational cooperation, cyber security, capacity-building, defense capabilities, industry and research, and exercises.[19] In addition, both organizations endorsed a set of proposals and seventy-four concrete actions to implement enhanced cooperation and strengthen political dialogue. As a result of more frequent exchanges between Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and High Representative Federica Mogherini between 2014 and 2019 as well as the proposals and common actions, NATO-EU cooperation has established itself as a norm and a daily practice consisting of regular staff-to-staff interactions and

reciprocal participation at their Defense and Foreign Ministers Meetings. As reiterated at the 2021 NATO Brussels Summit, "the European Union remains a unique and essential partner for NATO" and their cooperation has produced "tangible results" in several areas including *inter alia* cyber security, hybrid warfare, operational cooperation, defense capabilities and military mobility.[20]

This chapter argues that cooperation among the institutional triangle of NATO, the EU, and the OSCE is crucial for the security and stability of Europe due to their complementary roles in Euro-Atlantic security. Shifts in the contemporary security environment demand continuous processes of adaptation and new developments which have resulted in a situation of interlocking institutions where both the EU and the OSCE seem to be NATO's natural partners. But their internal developments, particularly the EU's engagement in military operations and developments towards greater strategic autonomy and the OSCE's engagement in cooperative security also interfere with NATO's own core tasks and responsibilities. Neither a clearly defined division of tasks nor a clear geographical division have so far been negotiated among the three organizations, which has severe implications for the design of the European security architecture.[21] Cooperation and coordination in European security matters have thus become even more crucial considering the higher degree of overlaps and the rising complexity of security threats and challenges. This calls to reconsider their current relationships and the setup of the contemporary European security architecture that has become unfit for emerging security challenges. Moreover, in their reciprocal interactions, all three organizations face a number of stalemates that will need to be overcome in the future.

Major Obstacles and Political Stalemates

With the growing complexity of hybrid threats, NATO has acknowledged the benefits of cooperating with the EU and OSCE but has faced several obstacles and political stalemates as it has tried to do so. These barriers to cooperation have severely obstructed the advancement of cooperative security efforts on the interorganizational level and created a flawed security architecture in the 2010s, marked by inter-state rivalries and growing risks, e.g., the tensions with Russia

as well as with Turkey and the unresolved Cyprus issue. Most of these obstacles are rooted in member states' different understandings and usage of the three security organizations, their approaches to security and defense more broadly defined as well as tensions among each other (see the chapter by Barbara Kunz). While NATO and the EU have outlined specific areas of cooperation in their 2016 Joint Declaration, there are also areas which require attention to address the complex security threats and challenges of today and tomorrow but are hampered by numerous roadblocks. Above all, the EU, NATO, and the OSCE embrace different understandings of security, their member states diverge over their strategic interests, and the organizations often lack the institutional compatibility for smoother cooperation.[22]

Exchanging intelligence and information is crucial for conducting military operations, joint security efforts and cooperation more generally. One of the key milestones in NATO-EU cooperation is the 2002 Security of Information Agreement, which allows the two organizations to share classified information, in addition to the 2003 Berlin Plus arrangements. However, Turkey's hostage-taking of Cyprus and the on-going conflict between Cyprus, Greece, and Turkey account for the major political stalemates in the NATO-EU relationship.[23] Although efforts at rapprochement have been made on several occasions, most recently at the 2016 Davos meeting, no agreement to finally settle their dispute is in sight. In contrast, Turkey's latest behavior in the Mediterranean Sea against other NATO Allies and its enhanced relations with Russia over arms deals has not only paralyzed NATO itself but also relations within the wider Euro-Atlantic security community.[24]

Another thorn in the eye is the issue of capability development and the diverging levels of ambition of the EU, NATO, and the OSCE. When NATO introduced the Defense Capability Initiative (DCI) in 1999, its Allies agreed to ensure greater effectiveness, interoperability and sustainability of their forces and military capabilities. Subsequently, with the interventions in Afghanistan and Libya, member states also had to adapt to new types of warfare that demanded more advanced capabilities and capacities. With its 2 percent spending pledge (see the chapter by Steven Keil) and out-of-area engagements, NATO's current level of ambition is to have the necessary capabilities to compete with an aggressor of equivalent size and power or conduct eight simultane-

ous operations at a less demanding level, i.e., two at the Major Joint Operation (MJO) level and six Smaller Joint Operations (SJO).[25] According to its 2016 Global Strategy, the EU's level of ambition is targeted at establishing itself as a global security and defense actor capable of securing and protecting its own citizens and able to act in its broader neighborhood, stretching from the EU's border to Central Asia and Central Africa. Its force catalogue furthermore includes the ambition to deploy troops of 50,000-60,000 personnel within sixty days and be sustainable for one year.[26] Establishing a list of demands and ambitions has helped the EU to formulate its own goals. Over the years, the EU has been able to position itself as a credible security actor and crisis manager, though not as a defense actor and is still far from doing so both politically and structurally.[27] As a result, because the EU has still not achieved its own proposed level of ambition, while NATO has revised its own force catalogue and defense planning, divergences in their levels of ambition become evident. This often disallows speaking of an equal partnership between them and thus hampers operational cooperation and joint exercises and trainings.

Each organization in the European security architecture possesses its own security and defense toolbox and different comparative advantages, but their interests and responsibilities often overlap. The changing security environment has furthermore demanded them to expand and broaden their security agendas towards new tasks and responsibilities, risking maladaptation and mismanagement. Moreover, each organization has tried to establish itself as *the* key security actor and to foster its own position in the European security architecture. Criticism about the growing domain similarity and functional overlaps has become louder and a clearly defined division of labor would be expected due to each organizations' comparative advantages and mutual benefits.[28] The current developments and negotiations over a new Strategic Concept within NATO as well as over the Strategic Compass in the EU outlining its key objectives in security and defense, however, demonstrate that parallel efforts are still being pursued by both organizations and their member states. Even though a division of labor has been indirectly agreed upon through the Berlin Plus arrangements, i.e., NATO's 'right of first refusal' allows the EU to take over crisis management operations when a decision has not been made within NATO, it has

been practically put on ice because of the repercussions of the Cyprus issue. All sides therefore need to negotiate a new bargain with a division of labor that supports their own comparative advantages in which each organization acts as either first or second responder depending on the crisis situation and their comparative advantages.

In addition, a key challenge has been posed by the issue of discrimination and non-participation. In line with Madeleine Albright's famous '3 Ds' of no duplication, no decoupling and no discrimination, NATO and the EU sought to ensure the inclusion of all member states in cooperative efforts. Again, this has been hampered by Turkey and Cyprus' double veto and hostage-taking. A number of countries that are not multiple members, i.e., do not possess memberships in NATO, the EU, and the OSCE, were partially left out of the joint efforts by all three organizations.[29] This is particularly addressed by Turkey, Russia, the UK, and the US who have occasionally vocalized their concerns over discrimination in the European security architecture.

European Security Cooperation Until 2030 and Beyond

Today's international and European challenges can only be addressed in a cooperative approach which requires regular coordination and consultations. The rise of hybrid warfare and non-traditional threats demand civil-military cooperation and making use of the different toolboxes and comparative advantages of NATO, the EU, and the OSCE. For the foreseeable future, this demand will only increase, making enhanced cooperation, the alignment of security interests, and the development of capabilities ever more important. This yields the question what this means for NATO's own position in the European security architecture in the future and, moreover, for its approach to cooperation with the EU and OSCE. It also requires a rethinking within NATO about where it seeks to foster cooperation and how it needs to reinvent its own partnership policy.[30] Against the backdrop of the seven areas of cooperation identified in the 2016 Joint Declaration as well as the number of areas where cooperation has faced seemingly insurmountable obstacles, assessing possible avenues for future collaboration and coordination is overdue. According to NATO's 2030 Reflection Group Report, "rather than developing new mechanisms to broaden the re-

lationship, concerted effort is needed to build trust and make fuller use of existing arrangements and identified areas of cooperation, with a view to deepening long-term practical cooperation between the two organizations."[31] NATO's 2021 Brussels Summit Communiqué furthermore underlines the importance of cooperation and coordination "in addressing resilience issues, emerging and disruptive technologies, the security implications of climate change, disinformation, and the growing geostrategic competition" considering the changing and more complex security environment.[32] This chapter consequently proposes five specific areas where NATO will need to enhance cooperation with the EU and OSCE to remain a relevant actor in the European security architecture: hybrid warfare, cyber security, resilience, capability development, and military mobility.

Adversaries' use of a wide range of threats and warfare urge a rethinking in addressing contemporary and future challenges. NATO, alongside the EU and OSCE, have responded by developing comprehensive approaches to security and crisis management consisting of their wide toolboxes in security and defense.[33] Hybrid warfare, broadly defined, is a combination of military and non-military threats including disinformation, economic and cyberattacks. Responding to hybrid warfare specifically needs civil-military approaches and thus a clear division of labor to use each organization's key strengths and comparative advantages. Although the EU and NATO define hybrid threats somewhat differently since the EU focuses on its multidimensional character, i.e., encompassing disruptions in critical infrastructure, energy supply and financial services as well as jeopardizing government activities, while NATO emphasizes the blurring of lines between war and peace, both nevertheless recognize the need for a holistic approach through partnerships with local, regional and international actors.[34] Past experiences in the Western Balkans, Afghanistan, and the Gulf of Aden have shown that a coordinated and concerted effort by NATO and the EU made considerable achievements and established a certain division of labor. For example, in Bosnia and North Macedonia, NATO was the first responder by deploying troops within the context of its military operations while the EU, alongside the OSCE, took charge of post-conflict reconstruction, capacity-building, and stabilization. These experiences and lessons learned can be translated into the realm of hybrid

threats. A joint endeavor with a tangible prospective is the launch of the Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Countering Hybrid Threats located in Helsinki by the EU and NATO in 2017. The CoE serves as a platform for strategic discussions and for developing capabilities to counter hybrid threats and joint strategies and exercises.[35] The two organizations should therefore use this joint platform to ensure and foster consultations as well as the implementation of coordinated and parallel exercises and trainings to facilitate interoperability and the alignment of security interests to address the multi-facetted challenges posed by hybrid warfare.

Closely linked to the prospective for future cooperation on hybrid warfare is NATO-EU cooperation on cyber security issues (see the chapter by Jason Blessing). Due to the rise of global interconnectedness and the rapid change of technological advancements, cyberspace is a crucial area for collaboration. NATO understands hybrid and cyber warfare as disinformation and online propaganda, the use of disruptive technologies, and cyberattacks as tools employed by adversaries "to undermine international order, weaken NATO and undermine democratic systems of government from within."[36] Specifically, the cyberattacks in Estonia in 2007 served as a wake-up call for both NATO and the EU to develop cyber policies and capabilities. Since then, both focused on protecting their infrastructures and decision-making processes and sought to improve situational awareness among their member states. Despite the different threat perceptions and capacities among member states, NATO and the EU have shared experiences and lessons learned, worked on common standards and supported their members in making larger investments in improving their cyber defense capabilities.[37] First steps in the implementation of the provisions of the Joint Declaration, which clearly highlights cooperation in both hybrid and cyber security, and the 2016 Technical Arrangement on Cyber Defence, NATO and the EU have already made progress in harmonizing training requirements, joint trainings and exercises, fostering research cooperation, and continued consultations and exchanges.[38] Consequently, there is ample scope for optimism that NATO and the EU will align their interests and foster cooperation on hybrid and cyber security in the future.

Recently, the notion of 'resilience' has become a buzzword in the vocabulary of both member states and European security organiza-

tions. While they all seek to increase resilience to external threats, the question is how they define and seek to pursue resilience, and what this means for cooperation in the future. For NATO's 2030 agenda, resilience is expected to become the Alliance's fourth core task in addition to territorial defense, crisis management, and cooperative security.[39] Resilience has been rooted in the Alliance's very existence with Article 3 of the Washington Treaty stating that "the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resists armed attack,"[40] which has received greater attention with the rise of hybrid threats. Similarly, resilience has emerged within the parlance of the EU and OSCE. While the OSCE primarily refers to disaster risk reduction and the use of its comprehensive approach to security, the EU embraces the understanding of state and societal resilience through safeguarding and promoting a rules-based international order based on core values such as democracy and rule of law, protecting its critical infrastructure and networks, and through making its member states fit for recovering from internal and external shocks.[41] Considering the membership overlap and domain similarity of the three organizations, the pursuit of joint efforts to increase and promote resilience is crucial for Europe's security. Resilience will thus be a lead area in which all three, specifically NATO and the EU, should foster cooperation until 2030 and beyond. The initiative by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly President Gerald E. Connolly to establish a NATO Centre on Democratic Resilience should therefore be open for non-NATO EU and OSCE member states as well as for their secretariats to exchange best practices, harmonize their efforts and strategies, and align their overall strategies to increase resilience in the future.

While resilience, hybrid warfare, and cyber security are fairly new elements to the security landscape of NATO, the EU, and the OSCE, capability development and increasing defense spending have been long-standing debates since the very beginning. Because of their different levels of ambition, all three organizations encourage their member states to increase investments and acquisitions of vital capabilities with diverging focal points. Based on Allies' 2 percent defense pledge at the 2014 Wales Summit, NATO seeks to find ways for improving its capabilities and achieve a fairer burden sharing among member states. Other

initiatives to strengthen its capabilities and readiness include the 2000 Defence Capability Initiative and 2018 Readiness Initiative (NRI). In contrast, EU member states launched a series of initiatives targeted at enhancing security and defense capabilities since 2016 including Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), European Defence Fund (EDF), and Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD). Due to the high degree of membership overlap, this medley of initiatives and projects puts member states' military expenditures and budgets under severe strains. Aligning capability development plans and requirements is thus essential and makes Allies' capabilities more efficient considering their single set of forces and the ongoing transformations and adaptations of their force structures.

Within the EU, the debates over European strategic autonomy have recently moved into the spotlight, once again. Its latest defense initiatives and capabilities development programs, e.g., the PESCO projects and the launch of the European Peace Facility in early 2021, signal the EU's ambition for greater strategic autonomy and sovereignty. This is also reflected in its 2016 Global Strategy which indicates the aim to promote the EU's common interests, principles and values while engaging regionally and globally. To achieve greater autonomy—the capacity to act based on its strategic interests and with an appropriate level of ambition and the necessary capabilities—the EU seeks to "enhance [its] efforts on defense, cyber, counterterrorism, energy and strategic communications" which includes increasing "its contribution to Europe's collective security, working closely with its partners, beginning with NATO."[42] European strategic autonomy is thus *not* to be understood in a purely military sense but in a more comprehensive way to strengthen Europe's resilience. What is more, it should also *not* be understood as Europe's shift away from NATO and the United States, but rather as an approach to making Europe as more capable and independent from other actors in general. Although member states diverge on their views and understandings of European strategic autonomy as well as their desire to pursue this goal,[43] the EU seeks to cooperate with NATO as its closest ally. With the launch of its recent initiatives, the EU generally supports minilateral and multilateral joint capability and capacity developments to enhance greater European security. More importantly, these initiatives, particularly PESCO, are modular,

voluntary, and open to non-EU member states. The opening towards third countries particularly addresses non-EU NATO member states including Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States and attempts to reduce tensions and discrimination. In fact, the US has expressed its interest in participating in some of PESCO's projects to increase interoperability and military mobility.[44] Instead of criticizing the EU's approach towards strategic autonomy, it is therefore time for NATO to embrace these capability development projects as well as Europe's aim to (finally) take greater responsibility for its own security and defense. To contribute to further efficiency and effectiveness, NATO should promote these minilateral projects, encourage its member states to partake and harmonize efforts and approaches.

Military mobility, consequently, presents another possible avenue for cooperation between NATO and the EU. With NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence on its Eastern flank and engagements in the Mediterranean Sea (Operation Sea Guardian) as well as ongoing deployments in the Western Balkans (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo), mobility, infrastructure, and transportation are crucial for its future engagements in a fast-changing security environment. Mobility requires troops and capabilities to be transported across the Euro-Atlantic security space. However, NATO does not possess the legal framework or capacities and therefore relies on the EU as its cooperation partner. Within the EU, transportation and infrastructure including military mobility are considered as areas of common interest and fall within the EU's competencies. It therefore supports its member states to pass the required legislation to facilitate military mobility. Within its Action Plan, the EU developed requirements for military mobility and informally cooperated and consulted with NATO to avoid different priorities. Progress in NATO-EU cooperation in the realm of military mobility has been successful despite objections from Turkey and Cyprus as well as some militarily neutral states such as Austria, since there is no direct competition between NATO and the EU, but rather mutual benefits and reinforcement.[45] In May 2021, the EU invited non-EU NATO members Canada, Norway and the United States to participate in its military mobility projects to allow the swift movement and transportation of assets and personnel.[46] Military mobility is furthermore one of the PESCO projects that is open to non-EU member states, which has

the ability to decrease discrimination and further enhance cooperation and coordination.[47]

Conclusion and Recommendations

The growing complexity and widening agenda as well as the changing security environment highlight the need for NATO to foster its partnerships with its two key partners in Europe, the EU and the OSCE. To strengthen its own place in the European security architecture, NATO should embrace its partners' own security and defense developments, especially in light of growing calls for European strategic autonomy. NATO should therefore not fear the EU's efforts in improving its own security and defense capabilities and instead, it should embrace these developments. European strategic autonomy understood as a more capable, more ready, and more forceful Europe will allow greater burden sharing within the Euro-Atlantic security community. Instead of claiming that the EU seeks to replace NATO,[48] NATO should support European investments which ultimately benefit NATO's own capability development and readiness. More alignment and consultations between NATO and the EU, as well as the OSCE, on development acquisition and planning of force structures are required. In fact, NATO should support its non-EU member states to actively participate in PESCO projects that are open to third states.[49] In this context, NATO and its allies should put a greater emphasis on inclusivity, non-discrimination, and complementarity.

For its relationship with the EU, NATO should thus also revive the working groups and particularly the EU-NATO Capability Group to consult and collaborate on issues such as aligning defense procurement plans, force structures, capability shortcomings, and future defense planning. In this context, NATO and the EU should consult on how to strengthen EU defense projects through embedding them into NATO.[50] The working groups should expand to other issues including relations with China and Russia, crisis management operations, and safeguarding the rules-based multilateral order. Negotiations in working groups are more efficient and flexible and encourage more rapid responses to crises and challenges. The less institutionalized nature and higher frequency of exchanges enable both organizations to

intensify their cooperation in those areas identified in the 2016 Joint Declaration.

Finally, NATO needs a more dynamic partnership model that also fits its cooperation with European security organizations such as the EU and OSCE.[51] The Alliance should thus support minilateral and flexible partnerships as long as they are complementary and not counter to NATO's strategic interests (and those of the EU and OSCE). Growing membership overlap and diverging security interests among member states still pose crucial obstacles to NATO's cooperation with the EU and OSCE. Supporting minilateral groupings that include states from all three organizations, including non-NATO members, can facilitate more effective, efficient, and rapid responses to crises and to more complex challenges that Europe will be facing until 2030 and beyond.

Notes

1. Jens Stoltenberg, "NATO 2030: Future-Proofing the Alliance," Remarks by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the Munich Security Conference, 2021 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_181696.htm).

2. Stuart Croft, "The EU, NATO and Europeanisation: The return of architectural debate," *European Security* (2000), 9: 3, pp. 1-20; Daniel S. Hamilton, "Piece of the Puzzle: NATO and Euro-Atlantic Architecture After the Cold War," in *Open Door: NATO and Euro-Atlantic Security After the Cold War*, edited by Daniel S. Hamilton and Kristina Spohr (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2019), pp. 3-56.

3. Rafael Biermann, "Towards a theory of interorganizational networking: The Euro-Atlantic security institutions interacting," *Review of International Organizations* (2008), 3: 2, pp. 151-177.

4. Thierry Tardy, "For a New NATO-EU Bargain," Security Policy Brief 138 (Brussels: Egmont, 2021).

5. Hamilton, "Piece of the Puzzle: NATO and Euro-Atlantic Architecture After the Cold War," pp. 3-56.

6. Laura Chappell, David J. Galbreath and Jocelyn Mawdsley, "Contemporary European Security" (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019); Christian Nünlist, Juhana Aunesluoma and Benno Zogg, "The Road to the Charter of Paris – Historical Narratives and Lessons for the OSCE Today" (OSCE Network of Think Tanks and Academic Institutions, 2017).

7. Richard Holbrooke, "America, a European Power," *Foreign Affairs* (1995), 74: 2, pp. 38-51.

8. Stephanie C. Hofmann, "The politics of overlapping organizations: Hostage-taking, forum-shopping and brokering," *Journal of European Public Policy* (2019), 26: 6, pp. 883-905.

9. Martin Reichard, "The EU-NATO Relationship: A Legal and Political Perspective" (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006).

10. Trine Flockhart, "NATO and EU: A 'Strategic Partnership' or a Practice of 'Muddling Through'?" in *Strategy in NATO*, edited by Liselotte Odgaard (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 75-89.

11. The Berlin Plus arrangements enable the EU to make use of NATO's military assets and capabilities, including its planning capability, for crisis management operations where NATO does not seek to become engaged.

12. EU, "Agreement between the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation on the Security of Information" (Brussels: Official Journal of the European Union, 2003), L80/36.

13. Biermann, "Towards a theory of interorganizational networking: The Euro-Atlantic security institutions interacting," pp. 151-177; Niels van Willigen and Joachim A. Koops, "The EU's Relationship with NATO and the OSCE," in *The SAGE Handbook of European Foreign Policy*, edited by Knut Erik Jorgensen et al. (London: SAGE, 2015), pp. 736–749.

14. Akgul Acikmese and Triantaphyllou, "The NATO-EU-Turkey trilogy: the impact of the Cyprus conundrum," pp. 555-573.

15. Peter van Ham, "EU, NATO, OSCE: Interaction, Cooperation, and Confrontation," in *European Security in Transition*, edited by Gunther Hauser and Franz Kernic (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2006), pp. 23-38.

16. Kristi Raik and Pauli Järvenpää, "A New Era of EU-NATO Cooperation: How to Make the Best of a Marriage of Necessity" (Tallinn: International Centre for Defense and Security, 2017).

17. Here this chapter refers to the Joint Declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization agreed upon on July 8, 2016, and signed on July 10, 2018.

18. Akgul Acikmese and Triantaphyllou, "The NATO-EU-Turkey trilogy: the impact of the Cyprus conundrum," pp. 555-573; Flockhart, "NATO and EU: A 'Strategic Partnership' or a Practice of 'Muddling Through'?" pp. 75-89.

19. EU, "Joint Declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation," signed on July 10, 2018 (https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/36096/nato_eu_final_eng.pdf); NATO, "Joint Declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation," signed on July 8, 2016 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_156626.htm).

20. NATO, "Brussels Summit Communiqué," Brussels, June 14, 2021, (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_185000.htm?selectedLocale=en).

21. Sven Biscop, "EU and NATO Strategy: A Compass, a Concept, and a Concordat," Security Policy Brief no. 141 (Brussels: Egmont, 2021); Tardy, "For a New NATO-EU Bargain."

22. Simon J. Smith, "EU-NATO Cooperation: A Case of Institutional Fatigue?," *European Security* (2011), 20: 2, pp. 243-264; van Ham, "EU, NATO, OSCE: Interaction, Cooperation, and Confrontation," pp. 23-38.

23. Akgul Acikmese and Triantaphyllou, "The NATO-EU-Turkey trilogy: the impact of the Cyprus conundrum," pp. 555-573.

24. Antoine Got, "Turkey's crisis with the West: How a new low in relations risks paralyzing NATO," *War on the Rocks*, November 19, 2020 (https://warontherocks.com/2020/11/turkeys-crisis-with-the-west-how-a-new-low-in-relations-risks-paralyzing-nato).

25. Hans Binnendijk and Gene Germanovich, "NATO needs a European level of ambition," *Defense News*, December 7, 2018 (https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/2018/12/07/nato-needs-a-european-level-of-ambition).

26. Jo Coelmont, "European Strategic Autonomy: Which Military Level of Ambition?" *Security Policy Brief* no.109 (Brussels: Egmont, 2019); EU, "Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe – A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy" (Brussels: EU, 2016).

27. Tardy, "For a New NATO-EU Bargain."

28. Biermann, "Towards a theory of interorganizational networking: The Euro-Atlantic security institutions interacting," pp. 151-177; Biscop, "EU and NATO Strategy: A Compass, a Concept, and a Concordat;" Tardy, "For a New NATO-EU Bargain."

29. Sunniva Tofte, "Non-EU NATO Members and the Issue of Discrimination," in *Defending Europe: The EU, NATO and the Quest for European Autonomy*, edited by Jolyon Howorth and John T.S. Keeler (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 135-156.

30. Sophie Arts and Steven Keil, "Flexible Security Arrangements and the Future of NATO Partnerships," *GMF Policy Brief* (2021), pp. 1-21.

31. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," November 25, 2020, p. 55.

32. NATO, "Brussels Summit Communiqué."

33. Loes Debuysere and Steven Blockmans, "Crisis Responders: Comparing Policy Approaches of the EU, the UN, NATO and OSCE with Experiences in the Field," *European Foreign Affairs Review* (2019), 24: 3, pp. 243-264; van Ham, "EU, NATO, OSCE: Interaction, Cooperation, and Confrontation," pp. 23-38.

34. EU, "Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe – A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy;" Piotr Szymánski, "Towards greater resilience: NATO and the EU on hybrid threats", *OWS Commentary* no. 328 (2020).

35. Hybrid CoE, "European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats," 2021 (https://www.hybridcoe.fi).

36. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 45.

37. Szymánski, "Towards greater resilience: NATO and the EU on hybrid threats."

38. EU, "Fourth progress report on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed by NATO and EU Councils on 6 December 2016 and 5 December 2017" (Brussels: Council of the EU, 2019).

39. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era."

40. NATO, "The North Atlantic Treaty," signed on April 4, 1949 (Washington DC: NATO, 1949).

41. EU, "Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe – A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy;" OSCE, "Decision No. 6/14 – Enhancing Disaster Risk Reduction," December 5, 2014 (Basel: OSCE Ministerial Council).

42. EU, "Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe – A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy," p. 9.

43. Ulrike E. Franke and Tara Varma, "Independence Play: Europe's Pursuit of Strategic Autonomy," *ECFR Flash Scorecard* (European Council on Foreign Relations, 2019).

44. Sebastian Sprenger, "Pentagon pushes to partake in EU military mobility planning," *Defense News*, March 2, 2021 (https://www.defensenews.com/

global/europe/2021/03/02/pentagon-pushes-to-partake-in-eu-military-mobility-planning).

45. Margriet Drent, Kimberley Kruijver and Dick Zandee, "Military Mobility and the EU-NATO Conundrum" (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael, 2019).

46. Council of the European Union, "PESCO: Canada, Norway and the United States will be invited to participate in the project Military Mobility," May 6, 2021 (https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2021/05/06/pesco-canada-norway-and-the-united-states-will-be-invited-to-participate-in-the-project-military-mobility).

47. Sebastian Sprenger, "US-EU cooperation pitch on military mobility gets positive response," *Defense News*, March 15, 2021 (https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2021/03/15/us-eu-cooperation-pitch-on-military-mobility-gets-positive-response).

48. Stoltenberg, "NATO 2030: Future-Proofing the Alliance."

49. Biscop, "EU and NATO Strategy: A Compass, a Concept, and a Concordat;" Tardy, "For a New NATO-EU Bargain."

50. Karl-Heinz Kamp, "Europe's defense project – time for transatlantic rearrangement," *Global Affairs* (2015), 1: 2, pp. 183-191.

51. Arts and Keil, "Flexible Security Arrangements and the Future of NATO Partnerships."

Chapter 4

NATO and the Middle East

Mehmet Yegin

NATO is currently looking for ways to adapt to the changing security environment over the next decade. In these efforts, the NATO 2030 Reflection Group Report[1] is instrumental in initiating a comprehensive discussion. NATO's relationship with the Middle East is a key part of the discussion as the region is crucial for the Alliance's security. Shifts in the region necessitate the Alliance develop new approaches to remain relevant in the near future.

There are pressing political and security developments in the Middle East that complicate NATO protecting its interest of defending alliance territory and projecting stability in the region. Primarily, the region is facing more of the presence of emerging major powers—particularly Russia and China—while witnessing a smaller footprint from the United States. This change is compelling NATO to be more active in the region before the US completes its pivot away, particularly in terms of Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile programs and the ongoing civil war in Syria to avoid inheriting these problems.

Furthermore, the Alliance also needs to put its house in order, increase democratic resilience and achieve cohesion among its Allies regarding the Middle East. For example, democratic backsliding and populism in Turkey—the only Ally located in the Middle East—have brought a perspective focusing exclusively on the political survival of the leader[2] (on democratic backsliding, see the chapter by Flockhart). Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has pursued rapprochement with Russia and military activism in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, and this activism has caused tensions with fellow NATO Allies, including France, Greece, and the United States. Thus, the problem of democratic backsliding is not only a matter of values but also strategy. Lastly, NATO's partnerships need to be more effective and diverse based on shared interests and threat perceptions of the Alliance and

partners in the region, and capacity-building programs need to be extended according to changing and emerging threats in the region.

This chapter analyzes the relations and interactions between NATO and the Middle East in three parts. First, it scrutinizes NATO's interests in the Middle East. Second, it examines major power involvement in the region and local challenges that NATO faces in pursuit of these interests. This chapter concludes by explaining and outlining the possible policies and steps for NATO to manage and solve these problems in the Middle East.

NATO's Interests in the Middle East

The Middle East is an unstable region that is neighbor to much of NATO territory by sea through the Mediterranean, and it also crosses beyond the Alliance's borders by land and covers the Anatolian part of Turkey. The Alliance's primary objective in the region is to protect NATO territory from an outside attack in the context of Article 5. Its second objective is to project stability and prevent spillover effects of instability from the Middle East. According to NATO's official documents, issues in this context are diverse and started with terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) after the Cold War and included rogue states, ballistic missiles, and failed states with massive immigration in time.[3] Due to the increasing presence of Russia and China in the region, there is an emerging objective to deter or contain these countries' (un)intentional intensification of instability that affects NATO members and uses of the region as a base to threaten the Alliance.[4]

In order to project stability in the region, NATO works with its partners and conducts capacity building programs. NATO's partnerships, including the Mediterranean Dialogue and to a limited degree the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, were relatively successful in serving as platforms of dialogue and security cooperation.[5] Nevertheless, NATO partnerships were formed in the post-Cold War unipolar context when the Alliance was unrivaled, as an extension of the main body of member countries. NATO has not formalized these partnerships, and therefore the arrangements do not entail a clear nor

binding responsibility for both the Alliance and the partner states.[6] NATO partnerships are neither designed for a multi-polar world nor for competing with other major powers and security organizations. In this line, the presence of an alternative security organization, namely the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which seems to offer more benefits and a clear path for membership through dialogue, observer, and member statuses, may cause problems for the Alliance as countries are more drawn to the Russian- and Chinese-led organization. NATO partnerships and capacity-building projects in the region necessitate particular attention to increase their effectiveness and make them resilient against the enticing offers from competing major powers.

Major Power Involvement in the Middle East

Although the nature of their involvement and foreign policy toolkits are visibly different, Russian and Chinese engagement in the Middle East has intensified in recent years. This involvement concerns NATO with the risks of worsening instability and the use of the region as a base to threaten the Alliance. Though Russia and the USSR have a long history in the region, Moscow's involvement in the region has taken a situational approach, e.g., by taking advantage of the power vacuum created by the United States to increase its own influence. The piecemeal, opportunistic way in which Russia approaches the region suggests that it does not have a grand strategy for the Middle East.[7] Rather, Russia positions itself as an alternative to the West and offers relationships and support to counterbalance Western interventions. Moscow adopts hard power tools such as military force, arms deals, and energy agreements, and aims to maintain relations with all parties without restricting itself with obligations to remain impartial in conflicts.

China's approach in the region, on the other hand, seems to have been based on genuine long-term plans which have been dominated by economic tools. In contrast to Russia, Beijing is relatively new in the region, and China does not portray itself as an alternative or rival to any other major powers—at least for now—and avoids alienating any regional power for another. As a result, although there is skepticism towards Beijing's future intentions, this does not prevent many countries

from cooperating with China. Regional actors are enthusiastic about receiving investments and funding for major infrastructure projects and taking on roles in China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Maritime Silk Road (MSR).

Russian Expansion to the South

The resurgence of Russian activism in the Middle East coincided with US reluctance to continue dedicating high levels of resources in the region, especially following the 2011 Arab Spring. The power vacuum left as the United States began to signal a shift away from the region provided Russia with an opportunity to project power without significant confrontation. Russia's military involvement in the Syrian crisis in 2015 particularly attracted attention. While Moscow intervened in Syria with a declared goal of fighting terrorism, its intervention subsequently changed the course of events in favor of Bashar al-Assad.[8] More troubling is that Russia used its military presence in Syria to intentionally ignite massive refugee flows that politically destabilize European Allies.[9] Though with less commitment, Russia later intervened in Libya in favor of the Libyan National Army led by Khalifa Haftar against the Government of National Accord. These moves made Russia one of the most significant military actors on the ground and impossible to ignore.

Authoritarian regimes in the region were impressed by Russian steadfast support for Assad and Moscow's triumph in keeping him in power. As an authoritarian power itself, Russia has the advantage of being able to empathize with them and all the more engage in active advocacy against human rights criticisms targeting these regimes.[10] Thus, even US partners sought to develop dialogue with Moscow as the new power broker in the Middle East for possible future assistance. Saudi Arabia and Egypt increased high-level visits with Russia and inked multi-billion-dollar arms deals despite US objections.[11] The same mentality was at play in Erdoğan's insistence on procurement of the Russian S-400 weapons systems despite US sanctions under the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) and removal from the F-35 fighter jet program.[12]

Russia aims to expand its relations with countries in the region via long-term energy projects and naval bases. The Mersin-Akkuyu nuclear power plant and the TurkStream gas pipeline are two such large projects with multi-billion-dollar investments creating long-term interdependence between Ankara and Moscow.[13] Russia also maintains nuclear power, oil, and gas investment agreements with Egypt and Algeria.[14] Moscow seeks to further expand its naval bases beyond Tartus in the Mediterranean and Red Seas. This objective is part of Russian naval strategy to create anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) bubbles based on Mediterranean coasts to, in wartime, throttle and block the logistical flow of its adversaries.[15] Russian A2/AD bubbles are a threat to the freedom of navigation of the NATO members and the ignition of refugee flows is a political attack on the Alliance. Moscow is using its presence in the Middle East to threaten the Alliance, and NATO should deter and contain such actions.

China's Long Game

In comparison to Russia, China has a smaller footprint in the Middle East and its strategy emphasizes a lower profile. In pursuing an approach of "competition without confrontation," China aims to minimize entanglement with regional and international powers.[16] Contrary to the Russian approach, which is about proving parity with the West, necessitating visibility and occasionally daring moves to garner attention, China intentionally avoids making headlines and signs deals with regional countries away from public attention.[17] Furthermore, China does not project itself as an alternative to other global powers, instead pursuing a non-interference policy towards domestic matters of regional countries and eschewing intervening[18] on behalf of the authoritarian regimes in contrast to Russia.

The notion that the Middle East could lose importance with a decreasing oil supply does not apply to China, a dynamic that bodes well for the oil-exporting countries. The Middle East provides 40 percent of Beijing's oil imports, a significant percentage for a country importing 90 percent of energy supplies.[19] In addition, many countries in the region do not share Western suspicion towards the Chinese tech giant Huawei. For example, Bahrain, Egypt, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Iraq, and Turkey—who are all US

partners to a certain degree—are working with Huawei to build their 5G networks, while having little or no concern about China as a future cyber (super-) power.[20] Chinese funds are desirable—particularly for authoritarian elites—as China's 'no strings attached' approach to funding contrasts with Western conditionality, particularly concerning transparency and human rights. China even enjoys a favorable reputation among the democratic Israeli public.[21]

There is ongoing competition among Middle Eastern countries to take a more prominent role in China's BRI and MSR. China has not finalized these megaprojects in detail, and some countries are pushing to have a more central role in planning. For instance, Turkey is pushing for the Middle Corridor as an alternative to the Russian (North) and Iranian (South) corridors for the section of the BRI connecting Europe to the east through Transcaucasia (Georgia and Azerbaijan) and Central Asia.[22] Unlike other regional powers that support China's official line, Turkey has been an exception in making official statements concerning the treatment of Uighurs and Muslims until 2009.[23] Nevertheless, Ankara no longer raise the matter and even recently signed an extradition deal with China affecting Uighurs living in Turkey.[24]

Evaluating the Chinese presence in the Middle East merely in economic terms would be misleading. Chinese acquisition of a military base in Djibouti that can host an aircraft carrier has caught international attention.[25] As a long-term project, China pursues "strategic fulcrums" in the Middle East that will serve as "conduits of Chinese influence" in the economy and military as well as in ideological and political terms.[26] The primary candidates for these strategic fulcrums are Iran, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Israel, and Algeria. Four out of these six states, however, are major regional US partners. Furthermore, China envisions an expanding role for SCO to deal with disputes in the region.[27] Iran already has a member status in the SCO, Turkey is a dialogue partner, and other countries in the region want to follow suit. Because of the ongoing tensions between the US and China, it is likely they will also compete about advancing their alliances and partnership systems in this region. This prospective competition should be taken into consideration with NATO future planning, especially in approaching individual countries in the Middle East.

Regional Developments in the Middle East

In addition to the need to respond to great power involvement in the Middle East, there are several challenges stemming from inside the Middle East requiring a NATO response, including nuclear proliferation, threats from ballistic missiles, non-state armed proxies and terrorism, and migration flows. There are also challenges caused by certain states in the region, particularly those in the Eastern Mediterranean as well as Libya.

Iran's Nuclear and Ballistic Missile Program

The P5+1, which was comprised of four NATO members (France, Germany, the UK, and the United States), Russia, and China, signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran in order to prevent Tehran from building a nuclear bomb until at least 2030.[28] Nonetheless, the Trump administration declared unilateral withdrawal from the agreement in the pursuit of making a better deal that would cover Iran's ballistic missile program and non-state armed proxies. In 2019, regional tensions between Iran (and its proxies) and the United States increased, leading Iran to announce it would recommence enriching uranium.[29]

The 2020 presidential elections in the US have brought another chance to reinstate the JCPOA as the new Biden administration appears willing to revive the diplomatic dialogue. The signals from Iran have also raised expectations, since Iranian officials cautiously took steps in line with the JCPOA mandates that could be interpreted as goodwill and willingness towards further negotiation instead of developing the bomb.[30] Nevertheless, the process has its ups and downs, as Iran first suspended an additional protocol that allows International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors to have expanded access to the facilities in February 2021 and then reinstated it again in May.[31] The incoming Ebrahim Raisi administration may also bring risks. Nonetheless, the talks continue with progress that parties are optimistic about the restoration of JCPOA before the next president takes office in Iran.[32]

Halting the Iranian ballistic program is not as likely as the revival of the nuclear deal. Iran relies heavily on its missiles for its air defense and regards the program as legitimate and indispensable.[33] Addition-

ally, the options such as throttling its supplies, cyberattacks, and sending defective parts would thus have only limited impact on the process since Iran is nearly self-sufficient in producing its ballistic missiles.[34] Last but not least, Iran already has missiles with Maneuvering Reentry Vehicles (MaRV) payload that can change trajectory aerodynamically and in time, expected to develop new generation missiles that are extremely hard to intercept with the defensive missiles.[35] Presence of these missiles itself may trigger proliferation in the region. A failure to stop Iran from developing nuclear weapons or new generation missiles may cause proliferation, instability, and direct military confrontation. In such a scenario, NATO would be obliged to respond with a policy to contain Iran with nuclear weapons, create deterrence to dissuade Iran from threatening NATO and its interests in the region, and assure its Allies and partner countries to prevent further proliferation.[36] All three goals would bring heavy burdens to the Alliance.

Syrian Civil War

In Syria, the active battle has lost its intensity; yet the main actors engaged on the ground have not indicated their readiness to move forward into rapid recovery and transitional justice.[37] Bashar al-Assad was able to take control of the majority of the country's territory with the help of Russia and Iran,[38] and though ISIS lost its momentum as well as some territorial areas, the terrorist organization's command and control remains unbroken.[39] With the number of Syrian refugees reaching an estimated eight million, there are not yet the necessary conditions for refugees to return to their home country and, even more, the regime's reconstruction plans bluntly exclude them.[40] According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there are 6.2 million internally displaced people in Syria—nearly half of them children—and the country's already shattered economy has suffered from sanctions with the situation further exacerbated by the COVID-19 health crisis.[41]

The parameters on the ground suggest that the Assad regime is not likely to collapse, and economic sanctions or reconstruction incentives will not change his hold on power.[42] Furthermore, the Syrian regime and Russia want to move forward towards Idlib, which risks both military confrontations with Turkey and massive refugee flows.[43] Turkey

has already used Article 4 five times to address its concerns about Syria. Even though its jet was shot down and more than three dozen troops were killed, Article 5 was not invoked.[44] NATO has to pursue a fine line to avoid losing credibility or entrapment in an escalated military confrontation.

Turkey and the East Mediterranean Crisis

Turkey's position in the Middle East has transformed from a non-aligned trading state into a highly isolated country over the last two decades. This transformation has diminished Ankara's role as a champion of stability in the Middle East. In the 2000s, Ankara opened channels of communications between the West and Syria. Pursuing policy equidistance with conflicting parties in the region, Turkey assumed the roles of facilitator in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Iran nuclear crisis.[45] However, with Turkey's entanglement in the Israeli-Palestinian dispute and in the inter-Arab division over the Muslim Brotherhood, it subsequently lost this unique diplomatic capability.

Tensions between Turkey and Israel started with the collapse of Turkey's mediation role due to the 2008-2009 Israeli Operation Cast Lead in Gaza, which escalated with diplomatic crises at Davos, including the humiliation of the Turkish Ambassador, peaking in the Gaza flotilla crisis in which a raid by Israeli troops killed eight Turkish citizens.[46] Turkish-Israeli relations never fully recovered—even after the apology from the Israeli Prime Minister—and this has seriously hindered NATO-Israeli cooperation. Another turning point occurred when Turkey sided with the Muslim Brotherhood after the Arab Spring and maintained its position even after the 2013 Egyptian coup. Ankara sought to dominate the region and create an axis with Muslim Brotherhood-led countries after the uprisings, but the project failed and the monarchies struck back, isolating Turkey in the region.[47] Turkey currently has close relations only with Qatar but there is still enmity between Turkey and Egypt, as well as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, all of which but Saudi Arabia participate in NATO's partnerships such as the Mediterranean Dialogue or Istanbul Cooperation Initiative.

Greece capitalized on Turkey's alienation from Israel and Egypt, using this to launch an anti-Turkey camp concerning the production

of hydrocarbon resources in the Mediterranean (see also the chapter by Kunz in this volume). This anti-Turkey group was formalized as the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum, further isolating Ankara. The forum was first initiated by Greece, the Republic of Cyprus, Israel, and Egypt and has expanded to include France, Italy, Jordan, and the Palestinian Authority.[48] The problematic relationship between Turkey and Greece dates back to before their accession to NATO and was re-invigorated by the unresolved Cyprus issue and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) extension of territorial waters from six nautical miles to twelve in the Aegean Sea.[49] The newly found hydrocarbon resources have inflamed this tension due to their conflicting positions on the continental shelf and exclusive economic zone (EEZ).[50] Turkey is not a party to UNCLOS and actively rejects the convention's territorial sea regulations and EEZ demarcations. The persistent objections are symbolic actions intended to prevent UNCLOS from becoming the law of the Aegis, but they also contain further risk of escalation.[51]

Turkey and the Government of National Accord on behalf of Libya, signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Delimitation of the Maritime Jurisdiction Areas in the Mediterranean. Relying on this agreement, Ankara claims the legal position to block the EastMed pipeline.[52] Ankara's involvement in Libya also caused France to vocally and militarily stand against Turkey. The price tag of these developments in the East Mediterranean for NATO triggers unnecessary divergences and tensions among Allies, increases instability in the region, and provides opportunities for Russia to become involved. The problems between Turkey and other NATO partners from both the Mediterranean Dialogue and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, such as Egypt and the UAE, also hamper deeper cooperation between the Alliance and countries in the region.

Turkey's current pursuit of regional hegemony, which utilizes the Muslim Brotherhood as well as military activism, is not in line with conventional Turkish foreign policy. The former mainly relies on the Islamist ideology of the ruling AKP, and the latter is aligned with Erdoğan and his new coalition partners' perspective after the 2016 coup attempt. Thus, the militarization of Turkish foreign policy relies more on Erdoğan and his coalition partners' ultranationalist and Eurasianists'

overreactions to their angst about the state's perseverance, and distrust towards the Allies.[53] Besides, this activism is not sustainable due to the limits of Turkish hard power and the declining support for the Erdoğan regime at home.[54] Additionally, after the election of Joe Biden as US president, Erdoğan saw the limits of his brinkmanship and started signaling that he was ready for open dialogue to end isolation. In this line, Ankara initiated dialogue with Greece under the auspices of Germany.[55] Turkey also suspended all Muslim Brotherhood media criticism towards Egypt as a gesture towards opening dialogue with Cairo[56] and, furthermore, made high-level contacts with Saudi Arabia.[57]

Turkey can be a significant asset for NATO in the Middle East with the precondition that it returns to democracy, resuming conventional Turkish foreign policy that relies on non-intervention and international law. A democratic Turkey would normalize its foreign policy and protect it from the influences of extremist ideologies. In such a scenario, Ankara would act with more restraint, avoid military adventurism, and promote stability in the region to reconstruct its shattered economy. It may also contribute to the capacity-building of fragile states in the region as it has already done in Afghanistan under NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Resolute Support Mission (RSM) engagements. This change may not solve the Cyprus issue and Aegean dispute overnight since these are historically rooted issues. Nonetheless, a normalized Turkey would more eagerly participate in peaceful solutions if NATO develops a positive agenda for a solution that rejects both parties' maximalist positions. This is highly important as a base to secure cohesion and cooperation in the Mediterranean to avoid any disruption of free navigation. Additionally, a solution about Cyprus—in the long run—may mean lifting the barriers to NATO membership of this extremely strategic island in the Mediterranean.

Policy Recommendations to NATO

To safeguard Allies' security and interests in the Middle East, NATO needs to develop responses to three clusters of actors: Russia and China, hostile regional actors, as well as Allies and partners. There are policy recommendations for the Alliance to manage the contemporary challenges more thoroughly.

Responding to Russia and China

In a multi-polar world order, NATO's initial reaction should be pursuing dialogue with Russia and China on the common interests of nuclear non-proliferation and counterterrorism. NATO may also develop indirectly constraining counter-strategies based on Russia and China's particular approaches to the region. Since Russia has exploited the absence of the US to intensify its involvement in the Middle East, NATO might consider increasing its presence in the region, which would decrease Moscow's own maneuvering space. NATO's presence in the region does not have to be military in nature, but rather active diplomatic initiatives and capacity building operations would suffice to limit Russian visibility. As China downplays its visibility and interference in state sovereignty, NATO's counter-strategy may increase awareness about Beijing's presence and the repercussions of its long-term deals on the sovereignty of the signatories in the region.

Despite its merits, a program fixated solely on blocking increasing interactions among the regional actors and major powers would yield limited success. Instead, NATO should particularly focus on its position and partnerships in the region to repair its negatively connoted image as an actor of military interventions or regime change. NATO must ensure its role in the region as an anchor for stability, as well as a reliable partner that supports state capacity and governments' ability to provide services. To bring partners back on a positive footing with NATO, it should be more precise and coherent concerning the targets of current partnerships. It should also better coordinate with the EU and regional organizations, as well as reach out to form new partnerships on a bilateral and mini-lateral basis to endorse its presence in the region.

Dealing with Iran and Syria

NATO's primary goal vis-a-vis Iranian ballistic missiles should be preventing them from being armed with nuclear warheads. Thus, NATO Allies should be supportive of the current diplomatic dialogue efforts to reinstate the JCPOA and should prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons. The nuclear negotiations are on track and NATO's active involvement at this stage is not plausible, but possible exchang-

es on the ballistic missile program pose an opportunity for NATO to project the Alliance's diplomatic power to regional actors and major rival(ling) powers.

Since the chances of hindering Iran's ballistic missile program are low, an alternative plan for putting certain limits on this program might have a better chance. These limits could concern the range of these missiles, thus preventing a direct attack on Europe or the United States. Iranian officials signaled that they are open to negotiating the adoption of a 2000-kilometer limit for the range of their missiles.[58] By taking these steps, NATO should maintain deterrence in the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) and extensions to cover Turkish territory. Regarding defensive capabilities, another limit could be on the capabilities of the missiles. An agreement with Iran to avoid the development of systems with aerodynamic capabilities and post-boost propulsion systems could be a significant achievement to prevent further proliferation in the region.

Concerning the Syrian conflict, NATO should increase its involvement in the matter diplomatically but back it with a credible military plan that would include options to increase costs for Assad and Russia in their noncooperation. This move may provide NATO a better position to negotiate a possible escalation in Idlib with Turkey, refugee flows, and the inclusion of all Syrians in the reconstruction plans. NATO's additional goals should be to prevent the revival of ISIS and the further use of chemical weapons.

Bringing Turkey Back In

Ankara's procurement of Russian S-400 missile systems and Erdoğan's repeated declarations of intention to join the SCO[59] have caused concerns in the Alliance. Turkey's turn to alternative powers is based on perceived existential threats from, or aided by, its Western Allies. Since Turkey has experienced significant democratic backsliding over the last decade, the most critical matter for Erdoğan is to secure his regime's future. The purchase of the S-400s and efforts to bring China into the game are based on the idea of counterbalancing Western influence to ensure his regime's survival as well as his own power position.

Another perceived threat is the US alliance with the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) in Syria. The elite in Turkey is suspicious about US intentions concerning Turkey's unity by forming first a coalition with the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) in the 2003 Iraq War and another coalition with YPG against ISIS.[60] NATO Allies need to either help Turkey convince the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) to lay down their weapons and initiate a peace process or decide between an effective alliance with Turkey and a coalition with the YPG.

More importantly, NATO should not turn a blind eye to the erosion of the rule of law and democratic principles in Turkey. NATO should be clear about what the Alliance expects of Turkey in terms of shared values and, concurrently, Allies should push Ankara to keep these standards. Rather than public criticism of Turkey's democratic and human rights records, these steps should be taken in private talks to prevent a backlash. Thus, promotion of democracy in Turkey and taming the executive branch's excessive powers are necessary.[61] A more democratic Turkey, regardless of its leadership, would anchor it in the NATO Alliance and keep interactions with other major powers limited to trade partnerships.

A Better Vision for Partnerships and Cooperation

The long-term NATO strategy should be to remain the primary partner to crucial actors in the region and to subordinate other major rival powers. While full membership to the Alliance is not an option for many of these countries, NATO nonetheless has to clearly communicate its objectives in the region and provide a clear vision for the future of their partnerships.[62] In doing so, NATO may benefit from the experiences from the Framework Nations Concept as an agile model that brings relevant NATO member countries and partners together in flexible groupings or use NATO+n format that brings alliance members with a particular country without a regional framework.[63] The Alliance may also create and offer a new higher status for appropriate countries, such as Jordan, that will not be at member level but still receive clear benefits. A possible trap in reformulating the partnerships would be evaluating the Middle East with the other partnerships with better prospects for success due to shared threat perceptions, such as Sweden and Finland, as well as Asian countries such as Australia, New

Zealand, Japan, and South Korea.[64] Without a clear shared threat perception or interest, NATO pushing for partnerships for the sake of keeping these countries away from the emerging powers has the risk of repeating the failure of the Baghdad Pact that ended up pushing Egypt further towards Russia.

NATO's primary subject of cooperation that goes beyond its partners in the region is counterterrorism, which will also remain crucial in the foreseeable future. In terms of active counter-terrorism operations, while the main focus is on ISIS in Syria, the growth of the Sinai branch is also reaching an alarming level.[65] Additionally, the dangers of hybrid threats, emerging and disruptive technologies (EDTs), and cyber threats should also be evaluated within the context of terrorism. Particularly in offensive cyber tools, some terrorist organizations have already demonstrated major advancements (on the broader cyber threats facing the Alliance, see Blessing's chapter in this volume).[66] NATO should cooperate with the countries in the region to develop their defensive cyber capabilities, closely monitor the situation and prevent regional adversaries from obtaining offensive cyber tools.[67]

NATO's programs for strengthening security forces, capacity building, and good governance are essential. However, to make them more effective, there is a need to allocate more common funding and make the programs more militarily focused where NATO has a comparative advantage.[68] These programs can also serve to roll back Iranian-sponsored non-state armed groups. These groups—e.g., the Iran Threat Network—are critical sources of instability and pose a threat to the region. The presence of legitimate states with strengthened security forces and the ability to deliver services would constrain the maneuverability of this network. The current NATO program in Iraq and a possible extension in Lebanon would make significant contributions.[69]

The Alliance should seriously consider climate change in the Middle East context and include it in its agenda along with the more pressing at-risk regions, such as the Arctic. This is because the Middle East is one of the regions most vulnerable to the repercussions of global warming.[70] Climate change is one reason for emigration from the region, and it increases the risk of instability and can possibly trigger an armed conflict.[71] NATO Allies may help the countries suffering from

global warming by introducing countermeasures and new technologies to limit its impacts.[72] NATO may develop comprehensive strategy and coordinate the training missions. The Crisis Management and Disaster Response Centre of Excellence in Sofia or a possible future Center for Excellence on Climate and Security may be instrumental in conducting such activities.[73]

Conclusion

In the next decade, the Middle East will continue to be plagued with arms proliferation, terrorism, fragile states, and migration, in addition to the new concerns of hybrid warfare, EDTs, cyber threats, and global warming. Furthermore, the power dynamics in the Middle East are changing with the increasing involvement of Russia and China, and the decreasing military and diplomatic presence foremostly of the US. Under such circumstances, NATO should remain the central platform for Allies to deal with common threats emanating from the region, providing the best setting to communicate and coordinate Allies' individual threat perceptions. It should furthermore pursue an approach that will achieve maximum political cohesion among Allies, more efficient partnership arrangements in the Middle East, and intelligent engagement with regional issues.

Deviation from democratic values further complicates the problem and increases the risk of NATO members acting more unilaterally and using more confrontational paths to deal with intra-alliance differences. This is particularly true concerning Turkey's recent military activism, now based on its hijacked foreign policy by a one-man rule and fringe ideologies. Thus, the efforts to solve intra-alliance disputes should go beyond mediation and facilitation. Alliance members should extend their efforts to create solidarity concerning democracy, freedom of speech, and the rule of law.

Two major powers—China and Russia—have their particular approaches to involvement in the region, and a possible response should be organized accordingly. Nevertheless, rather than spending resources on excluding these actors from the region, NATO should focus on its relations with regional powers and take steps to remain the primary

partner. In this vein, the NATO Alliance needs to clearly define, reorganize, and diversify its partnerships in the Middle East based on its own vital interests.

Overall, the Alliance should prioritize diplomacy to deal with adversaries and maintain capacity building and cooperation with key partners in the region. NATO should pursue a policy to manage rather than insist on complete solutions in both endeavors. Through diplomatic means, the Alliance should prevent the further development of Iran's nuclear program and keep Tehran's ballistic missile program in check. In the case of Syria, the Alliance should focus on stability, prevent the revival of ISIS and stem further flows of refugees without providing legitimacy to the Assad regime. NATO should continue cooperation against terrorism, take new threats into account, use capacity-building programs to counter Iran-sponsored non-state actors, and develop programs that help the countries in the Middle East to develop defensive cyber tools and cope with global warming.

Notes

1. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," November 25, 2020 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf).

2. Merve Tahiroğlu, "Turkish foreign policy hostage to Erdoğan's personal interests,"*Ahvalnews*, September 20, 2020 (https://ahvalnews.com/turkey-usa/turkish-foreign-policy-hostage-erdogans-personal-interests-merve-tahiroglu-pomed).

3. Mohammed Mostafa Orfy, *NATO and the Middle East: The Geopolitical Context post 9/11* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 35-66.

4. Alexander Vershbow and Lauren Speranza, "More in the Med: How NATO Can Refocus its Efforts in the South and Italy Can Lead the Charge," Atlantic Council, October 22, 2019, pp. 4-5.

5. Pierre Rasoux, "The NATO Mediterranean Dialogue at the Crossroads," NATO Defense College, April 2008, p. 2.

6. Marten Zwanenburg, "What's in a Word: Partnerships between NATO and Other International Institutions and Some Issues of Shared Responsibility," *International Organizations Law Review*, vol. 1 (2016), pp. 123-124.

7. Dimitri Trenin, *What is Russia up to in the Middle East* (Cambridge and Malden: Polity, 2018).

8. Pavel Baev, "Why Russia is Failing the 'Syria Test' for Counterterrorism Cooperation with the West," Policy Memos/Ponars Eurasia, May 4, 2018.

9. Vershbow and Speranza, "More in the Med," p. 5.

10. Aron Lund, "Russia in the Middle East," Swedish Institute of International Affairs. 2019, p. 40.

11. Dimitri Trenin, "Russia in the Middle East: Moscow's Objectives, Priorities and Policy Drivers," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2016, p. 3.

12. Mehmet Yegin, "Turkey between NATO and Russia: The Failed Balance," SWP, June 2019.

13. Hasan Selim Özertem, "Turkey and Russia: A Fragile Friendship," *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, vol. 15 (Winter 2017), pp. 130-133.

14. Robert Springborg and F.C. "Pink" Williams, "Russian Security Assistance to Algerian and Egypt," in "Russia in NATO's South: Expansionist Strategy or Defensive Posture?" edited by Chloé Berger and Cynthia Salloum, NATO Defense College, January 2021, pp. 13-14.

15. Pascal Ausseur and Pierre Razoux, "Russian Naval Strategy in NATO's Southern Flank," in "Russia in NATO's South: Expansionist Strategy or Defensive Posture?" edited by Chloé Berger and Cynthia Salloum, NATO Defense College, January 2021, pp. 24-25.

16. Jesse Marks, "China Pursuit of "Strategic Fulcrum" in the Middle East," Middle East Institute, September 15, 2020.

17. Eyck Freyman, "Influence without Entanglement in the Middle East: How China is Outflanking the United States-and Staying under the Radar," *Foreign Policy*, February 25, 2021.

18. Erzsébet N. Rózsa, "Deciphering China in the Middle East," European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS), 2020, p. 3.

19. Steven A Cook, "Major Power Rivalry in the Middle East," Council of Foreign Relations, March 2021, p. 11.

20. Canan Atılgan, "Fast and Furious: China's rise in the Middle East and North Africa," Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, January 2020.

21. Roie Yellinek, "How did China Win Over the Israeli People?" Middle East Institute, February 11, 2020.

22. Selçuk Çolakoğlu, *Turkey and China: Political, Economic and Strategic Aspects of the Relationship* (London: World Scientific, 2021), pp. 125-126.

23. Andrew Scobell, and Alireza Nader, "China in the Middle East: The Wary Dragon," RAND Corporation, 2016, pp. 14-15.

24. Daren Butler, "Looming China Extradition Deal Worries Uighurs Living in Turkey," *Reuters*, March 8, 2021.

25. Tsukasa Hadano, "China adds carrier pier to Djibouti base, extending Indian Ocean reach," *Nikkei Asia*, April 27, 2021 (https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Indo-Pacific/China-adds-carrier-pier-to-Djibouti-base-extending-Indian-Ocean-reach).

26. Marks, "China Pursuit of "Strategic Fulcrum" in the Middle East."

27. Ibid.

28. Philip Gordon, "Trump Is About to Provoke an Unnecessary Crisis with Iran," *The Atlantic*, May 6, 2018.

29. "Iran resumes enriching uranium to 20% purity at Fordo facility," *BBC*, January 4, 2021 (https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-55530366).

30. Kelsey Davenport and Julia Masterson, "The Limits of Breakout Estimates in Assessing Iran's Nuclear Program," Arms Control Associations Issue Brief, August 4, 2020.

31. Kelsey Davenport, Julia Masterson and Sang-Min Kim, "Iran Nuclear Talks Head to Sixth Round," Arms Control Today, June 7, 2021 (https://www.armscontrol.org/blog/2021-06/p4-1-iran-nuclear-deal-alert).

32. Ibid.

33. Bahgat Gawdat, "Iran's Ballistic-Missile and Space Program: an Assessment," *Middle East Policy*, 1(2019), pp. 32.

34. Robert Einhorn and Wann H. Van Diepen, "Constraining Iran's Missile Capabilities," Brookings Institution, March 2019.

35. Steven T. Dunham and Robert S. Wilson, "The Missile Threat: A Taxonomy for Moving Beyond Ballistic," The Aerospace Corporation, Center for Space Policy and Strategy, August 2020, p. 15.

36. Bruno Tertrais, "A Nuclear Iran and NATO," *Survival*, vol. 52 (2010), p. 57.

37. Hilly Moodrick-Even Kehn, Nir T. Boms and Sareta Ashraph, *The Syrian War: Between Justice and Political Reality* (Cambridge and London: Cambridge University Press, 2020), pp. 296-298.

38. "Syrian President Bashar al-Assad: Facing down rebellion," *BBC*, August 31, 2020 (https://www.bbc.com/news/10338256).

39. Robert S. Ford, "The Syrian Civil War: A New Stage but is it the Final One," Middle East Institute, April 2019, p. 17.

40. Leila Vignal, "Perspectives on the return of Syrian refugees. Forced Migration Review," University of Oxford, 2018, pp. 69-71.

41. Salam Said, "Covid-19 and Syrian Economy: Implications for Social Justice," Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, July 2020, pp. 3-4.

42. Muriel Asseburg, "Reconstruction in Syria: Challenges and Policy Options for the EU and its Member States," Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), July 2020, p. 26.

43. Amelie Theussen and Dominika Kunertova, "Why Turkey can't expect military support from NATO over attacks in Syria," *The Conversation*, March 6, 2020 (https://theconversation.com/why-turkey-cant-expect-military-support-from-nato-over-attacks-in-syria-132838).

44. Ibid.

45. Meliha Altunışık and Esra Çuhadar, "Turkey's Search for a Third-Party Role in Arab–Israeli Conflicts: A Neutral Facilitator or a Principal Power Mediator?" *Mediterranean Politics*, vol. 3 (November 2010), pp. 373-374; Aylin Gürzel and Eyüp Ersoy, "Turkey and Iran's Nuclear Program," *Middle East Policy*, vol. 1 (Spring 2012), pp. 40-42.

46. İlker Aytürk, "The Coming of an Ice Age? Turkish–Israeli Relations Since 2002," *Turkish Studies*, vol. 4 (2011), pp. 677-680.

47. Birol Başkan, *Turkey and Qatar in the Tangled Geopolitics of the Middle East* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016), pp. 127-130.

48. Günter Seufert, "Turkey shifts the focus of its foreign policy: from Syria to the eastern Mediterranean and Libya," Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), February 2020, p. 3.

49. Deniz Bölükbaşi, *Turkey and Greece: the Aegean Disputes* (London: Cavendish Publishing, 2004), pp. 30-70.

50. Galip Dalay, "Turkey, Europe, and the Eastern Mediterranean: Charting a Way Out of the Current Deadlock," Brookings Doha Center Policy Briefing, January 2021, p. 1.

51. Yunus Emre Açıkgönül, "Untold Legal Principles Favouring Turkey in Aegean Maritime Dispute," *FeniksPolitik*, February 26, 2021 (https://feniks-spolitik.org/2021/02/26/untold-legal-principles-favouring-turkey-in-aegean-maritime-disputes/).

52. Günter Seufert, "Turkey shifts the focus of its foreign policy," p. 4.

53. Sinem Adar, "Understanding Turkey's Increasingly Militaristic Foreign Policy," *APSA MENA Politics Section: MENA Politics Newsletter*, vol. 1 (Spring 2020), pp. 11,13.

54. Ibid.

55. Lefteris Papadimas and Tuvan Gumrukcu, "Germany says Turkey, Greece ready for dialogue on East Med dispute," *Reuters*, August 25, 2020 (https://www.reuters.com/article/us-greece-germany-idUSKBN25L1DC).

56. Maged Atef, "Turkish-Egyptian Relations after Erdoğan's Sacrifice of the Muslim Brotherhood," *Political Analysis/Fikra Forum*, March 25, 2021.

57. "Turkey's Erdoğan, Saudi King Agree to Solve Issues Through Dialogue: Turkish Presidency," *Reuters*, November 20, 2020 (https://www.reuters.com/article/us-g20-saudi-turkey-idUSKBN2802NO).

58. Paulina Izewicz, "Iran's Ballistic Missile Programme: Its Status and the Way Forward," EU Non-Proliferation Consortium/ Non-Proliferation Papers, April 2017.

59. Çolakoğlu, *Turkey and China*, pp. 138-140.

60. Mehmet Yegin and Hasan Selim Özertem, "Turkey-US Relations: How to Proceed after Obama," The German Marshall Fund of the United States, November 10, 2016.

61. Mehmet Yegin and Salim Çevik, "Would a Farewell to Erdoğan mean Democracy to Turkey?" *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, vol. 20 (Spring 2021), pp. 69-76.

62. Ian Lesser, Charlotte Brandsma, Laura Basagni and Bruno Lété, "The Future of NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue Perspectives on Security, Strategy and Partnership," The German Marshall Fund of the United States, June 2018, p. 33.

63. Sophie Arts and Steven Keil, "Flexible Security Arrangements and the Future of NATO Partnerships," The German Marshall Fund of the United States, February 2021.

64. Ibid.

65. Adel El-Adawy, "Challenges and Potential for NATO-Egypt Partnership," NATO Defense College, November 2018, p. 2.

66. Middle East Institute, "The Biden Administration and the Middle East: Policy Recommendations for a Sustainable Way Forward," Middle East Institute Policy Center, March 2021, p. 52.

67. Ibid.

68. Vershbow and Speranza, "More in the Med," p. 8.

69. Dalia Dasse Kaye and others, "Reimagining US Strategy in the Middle East: Sustainable Partnerships, Strategic Investments," RAND Corporation, 2021, p. 63.

70. Middle East Institute, *The Biden Administration and the Middle East*, p. 50.

71. Erin Sikorsky, and Sherri Goodman, "A Climate Security Plan for NATO: Collective Defense for the 21 Century," *Environmental Affairs*, (Spring 2021), p. 34.

72. Kaye and others, *Reimagining US Strategy in the Middle East*, p. 44.

73. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 42.

Chapter 5

Making NATO's Partnerships More Strategic: Sweden and Finland as Partner Models for Development

Katherine Kjellström Elgin and Anna Wieslander

The strategic environment in which NATO operates is changing, shaped by competing great powers, non-traditional threats, and greater connectivity. In such a world, the security of NATO and its member states and the Alliance's ability to compete with adversaries will be determined not just by developments within its territory, but also by the security of its neighbors and states further afield. Not only will NATO need to ensure its partners are not vulnerable, but it should also recognize that its partners are a strategic advantage in any competition with Russia and China, just as the United States' network of allies is considered a strength for Washington.[1] Taking advantage of these relationships—and working with partners on objectives important to the Alliance—is thus vital. Recognizing the global landscape and the interconnected nature of security, the NATO 2030 Reflection Group Report highlighted the need to reconsider how NATO's partnerships fit into the Alliance's broader strategy, shifting its partnership framework from one driven by the desires of partners to one driven by NATO's own interests.[2]

This chapter explores the proposition of the Reflection Group for interest-driven—as opposed to demand-driven—partnerships and argues that the Alliance needs to develop a more intentional, flexible, and interest-driven partnership strategy that takes advantage of highly capable, dedicated partners. We expand on and refine the analysis of the Reflection Group on partnerships in three dimensions. First, we argue that the suggestion made by the Reflection Group to link partnerships much closer to NATO's overall strategy is *apt but not new*. In fact, NATO's partnerships started as part of the broader strategy of "Europe whole and free," but the approach to partnerships became more diffuse throughout time. Rather than departing on a novel avenue by taking an interest-driven approach to partnerships, NATO would develop such

an approach based on many years of experience. Second, while we are supportive of a more active Alliance stance on the purpose of each partnership, a new strategy should not come at the expense of partners receiving less from NATO. It is not a problem per se that partners have demands of the relationship, however their demands must be matched with a clear strategic response of the Alliance. In addition, partners should be acknowledged not only as in need of support to compensate for vulnerabilities, but as actual or potential security providers. By recognizing partners' strategic value, partnerships can be used by NATO to actively shape the security environment. In moving from a demand-driven to an interest-driven approach, NATO must recognize that the utility of partnerships should be *mutual*. This leads to our third main argument: an interest-driven approach is not only about the Alliance articulating its interests—it is also about partners expressing their national security interests in order to shape the common foundation of the partnership. The foundation should rest on a clear conception of *converging interests* that, in turn, will guide joint activities and actions.

Thus, this chapter argues that the Alliance needs to develop a more intentional, flexible, and interest-driven partnership strategy that is able able to take advantage of highly capable, dedicated partners—while also mutually supporting partners of all levels of interoperability. NATO has a history of pursuing partnerships based on interests; it needs to return its focus to this approach moving forward. To this end, the chapter discusses the Alliance's current partnership program and its limitations before turning to ways in which partnership formats could be improved. We develop an approach that focuses on converging interests, matching NATO's strategic interests with partners' national security interests to find suitable pathways forward for partnership development.

To illustrate the value of interest-based partnerships for the Alliance, we apply the approach to close partners Sweden and Finland. Described by some as "informal allies,"[3] both are highly capable partners who have the capacity to significantly contribute to NATO's objectives, particularly with regards to Russia. In any scenario in the Baltics, they would be necessary partners but also have the ability to contribute to broader goals if the partnerships are well-defined. Sweden and Finland are mentioned by the Reflection Group as "models" for the de-

velopment of NATO partnerships in other regions,[4] and understanding how our converging interests approach would treat these "model" partners thus gives an illustration of how our model could be used to help NATO pursue its broader objectives while developing partnerships. The chapter concludes by arguing that when NATO considers its global strategy, it should prioritize the ways in which partners might contribute to its objectives and work with them to ensure military and political cooperation towards these goals.

The Evolution of Interest-Based Partnerships

A new strategic concept should think strategically about the role of NATO partners as it looks to 2030 and beyond, and the Reflection Group's report outlined several recommendations for partnerships that move in this direction.[5] At the core of these recommendations is a shift from demand-driven to interest-driven partnerships. For much of NATO's partnership history, the partnerships have been what the NATO 2030 Reflection Group calls "demand-driven."[6] That is, non-member states drove the ambition of each partnership, pushing to get out of NATO what they wanted for their own security needs. This contrasts with what the Group calls "interest-driven" partnerships, in which NATO would pursue partnerships and define partnership objectives based on how they would contribute to NATO's own interests and goals.[7]

It is important to note, though, that a NATO partnership strategy driven by interests is not new. After the end of the Cold War, NATO started to engage with partners as a way to build a "Europe whole and free" and create a European community.[8] Another strategy has been related to NATO's ability to lead United Nations-mandated international missions in the Balkans, Libya, and, not least, Afghanistan for more than a decade. Partner interoperability and shared operational responsibilities have been key for NATO's success in this regard. However, in recent years, this linkage between strategic goals and partnership objectives has become more diffuse. NATO has not only had to pursue the goals of creating a European community and conducting international operations, but it has also had to respond to Russia's assertive

behavior as well as growing tensions in the Indo-Pacific and greater engagement of China in Europe.

During the Cold War, NATO was focused on collective defense for members. With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union, in unprecedented ways, NATO began to open up to new relationships and challenges, guided by the US strategy of "Europe whole and free," which aimed to create a community of democracies and to guarantee self-determination for the European continent.[9] NATO became a core vehicle for this mission, opening up for partners through a range of initiatives.[10] In this way, NATO partnerships were driven by NATO's strategic interests as the Alliance worked with new partners to implement the vision of a "Europe whole and free." The Partnership for Peace (PfP) was introduced in January 1994 as a practical and flexible format for a broad range of European states that were interested in closer collaboration with the Alliance. Other early partnership formats, such as the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, were based around regional dialogues. In 1997, PfP was complemented with a political body, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), to provide a consultative framework for all partner nations with the Alliance. Some nations, such as Russia and Ukraine, had additional bilateral programs beyond PfP.

The partner nations included post-Soviet states and former Warsaw Pact states, as well as the European neutrals, like Sweden and Finland. Even Russia joined. Several of these nations wanted to become members of the Alliance, while others had no such ambitions but recognized NATO as an important regional security organization with increasing ambition to lead international peace support missions, particularly in the Balkans. The overall, converging interest of this diverse crowd of partners and the Alliance was the objective of contributing to building a common European security architecture (see the chapter by Ewers-Peters) based on the principles of the Helsinki Final Act—a "common home," as President Bush put it, in the vision of "Europe whole and free."[11]

After the September 11th terrorist attacks, partnerships continued to be developed in the name of a "Europe whole and free," but they also took on new importance in the fight against terrorism. NATO mem-

bers increasingly looked to its "Southern Flank" and pursued partnerships to strengthen security measures in the Mediterranean and the Middle East (see the chapter by Yegin). The Mediterranean Dialogue was upgraded to a full "partnership," and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative was created to increase NATO's engagement with the Gulf states. Furthermore, several partners (including Sweden and Finland) contributed troops to the international NATO mission in Afghanistan, demonstrating their ability to provide security assets for the Alliance and allowing partners to develop greater interoperability with NATO missions.

Around 2005, the convergence around the vision of a "Europe whole and free" had visibly started to erode with transatlantic disagreement about the US war in Iraq and a Russia that increasingly expressed discontent with the global order. A series of developments—including perceived US unilateralism in Iraq and the Color Revolutions in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia—made Moscow nervous, and at his 2007 Munich Security Conference speech, Russian President Vladimir Putin decried the European security order and labelled NATO enlargement a "serious provocation."[12] In August 2008, Russia demonstrated its willingness to contest the European status quo when it invaded Georgia to support separatist movements.[13] Despite attempts to "reset" the relationship between Russia and the United States, and regardless of continued cooperation in Afghanistan and on terrorism, Russian ambitions to defend what the leadership in Moscow saw as the country's interests efficiently worked against the vision of "Europe whole and free," while the United States focused more on combatting international terrorism than pursuing a European strategy. As NATO's approach began to lack focus, so too did partnerships. Notably in the partnership frameworks, participants frequently had conflicting interests and goals, leading to a sense of stagnation in their relationships with NATO.[14]

Recognizing this sense of inertia, the 2010 Strategic Concept aimed to renew partnerships and included both cooperative security and crisis management as main tasks for collaboration with partners. Still, the vision for the partnerships was less clear than before, as was their utility for NATO.[15] By 2010, a large group of former partners had become NATO Allies, and several of them had joined the European Union (EU) as well. In addition, it was clear that the ISAF mission in Af-

ghanistan was beginning to wind down, raising the question of how to maintain interoperability between Allies and partners in absence of joint operations. Accordingly, the Strategic Concept, alongside the 2011 Berlin Partnership Policy, favored individualized partnership formats, recognizing that partners were at differing levels of engagement and ambition concerning their partnerships.[16]

Efforts to reinvigorate partnerships continued at the 2014 Wales Summit with the establishment of the Partnership Interoperability Initiative (PII), which provides measures to ensure participation in and preparation for contributions for NATO-led operations. The PII includes both an Interoperability Platform (a forum for addressing interoperability issues) and the Enhanced Opportunity Partners (EOP), a status which was granted a small group of countries (Sweden, Finland, Georgia, Jordan and Australia, and later Ukraine) to allow for specific opportunities for greater contributions. The EOP status also created new ways for these countries to consult bilaterally with NATO and provide for tailor-made cooperation on specific issues, using a 30+n structure which allows EOP partners (n) to individually collaborate with NATO (30 Allies) or together with another EOP when it is reasonable, desirable, and efficient.

Having frameworks, however, does not mean they are necessarily effective. The effectiveness of NATO's partnerships seems to rest on two assumptions: First, agreement on what problem the partnership is tackling is (for instance, increasing capability to fight terrorism), and second, that the problem is within NATO's (and the partners') power to solve.[17] Kaim argues that the second assumption does not always hold—but, in our estimate, neither does the first one.[18] Since 2011, but especially since 2014, there have been efforts to reinvigorate partnerships, but with less clear objectives. In the first two decades of the post-Cold War era, NATO's partnerships were driven by creating a European community and then by the war in Afghanistan. But the strategic objectives of NATO's partnerships became less obvious as Russia began to resurge, creating a need to focus again on deterrence and defense; as the open-door policy became increasingly contested; and as the operations in Afghanistan began to wane. Partners could offer differing levels of security benefit to the Alliance, and they also each had different reasons themselves for engaging. Gradually, what emerged

was partnerships driven less by NATO interests than pushed by path dependency and the demands of partners.

The demand-driven nature of many NATO partnerships is clear. Notably, for example, the Enhanced Opportunity Partners format came about in part due to Finnish and Swedish efforts, including a joint paper on how to enhance the partnership.[19] In 2014 and 2015 alone, Australia, Austria, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Sweden, and Switzerland made roughly thirty proposals to NATO Headquarters to improve the functioning of partnerships.[20] An additional challenge with the current structure occurs in progressing advanced and close partners, which increasingly resemble informal allies.[21] While the EOP has opened up new doors for cooperation, the format for the future remains unclear.

At the same time, the current approach to partnerships has a tendency to treat many partners as "security takers" rather than potential or actual "security providers."[22] Following the Cold War, an initial focus for many NATO partnerships was increasing the efficacy and accountability of security institutions, a goal that was often tied to individually tailored cooperation programs in the PfP structure.[23] NATO was thus seen as helping these states reach a more developed security level, and this perception continues to this day. These partnerships, too, are seen as demand-driven, with state leadership allegedly choosing which support programs to sign up for based on their own national interests.

That partners actively work to develop their relations with NATO in line with their national security interests is not a problem in and of itself. What is problematic is when NATO lacks a sense of direction with regard to its partners, thus not utilizing the partnership to pursue its strategic interests. It is essential that NATO manages to avoid stagnated formats and epithets, and that it successfully assures that partnerships take advantage of converging interests through joint action. The vision of "Europe whole and free" as a foundation for partnership development was not replaced; it simply faded. The era of developing interoperability for major NATO-led international missions is coming to an end as well, with the withdrawal of US, NATO, and partner troops from Afghanistan. Instead, NATO is moving towards a shift, with strategic competition as the foundation from which most of its activities and policies will develop. If the new Strategic Concept manages

to set the strategic guidance for the Alliance, it will offer an excellent opportunity to move towards interest-driven partnerships once again.

An Approach of Converging Interests

To this end, we suggest that NATO further develops its approach to partnerships so that mutual security interests are clearly at the core of the collaboration. The foundation of the approach should be matching NATO's strategic interests with partners' national security interests to identify the degree of convergence. Through this method, not only the vulnerabilities but also the strengths of partners are illustrated as actual or potential security providers in a world of increasing great power competition. The degree of convergence of interests, as well as the level of mutual benefit and utility of the partnership, should determine the format and activities used for developing the partnership.

A truly interest-based partnership strategy would be guided by a discussion among members and partners about shared objectives of the Alliance and then by matching the objectives to practical means. As the Reflection Group recommended, "NATO should outline a global blueprint for how partnerships in various regions will be utilized to advance NATO strategic interests in a more competitive geopolitical era."[24] The first step, then, would be to identify NATO's interests and objectives both globally and regionally. The updated Strategic Concept will be a central tool in this phase.

NATO planners should then take a broad view of the ways in which partners—both existing and new—could contribute to these interests and objectives. For example, stability in Eastern Europe could be enhanced by the cooperation and support of both Eastern European non-members and states like Sweden and Finland that could contribute knowledge and deterrent capabilities. Importantly, this approach should highlight the ways in which both more advanced and developing security partners contribute. Critical questions include: where does NATO need to support partners to bring greater security? What are the advantages that partners can bring to NATO objectives? How can NATO support the relationship and the partner such that these advantages can be brought to bear?

Notably, each partner should continue to be treated individually, as each will always have a unique set of interests, capabilities, and objectives regarding potential cooperation with NATO. After setting its own objectives, NATO should sit down with each partner to discuss where interests converge and develop an updated individual plan to ensure that these converging interests are brought together. A joint assessment of how the individual partnership would help shape the security environment in favor of mutual interests could be developed, which in turn would clarify each partner's role as actual or potential security provider in a specific context. Partnerships, then, are for mutual benefit, each side helping each other rather than partners simply 'taking' security benefits from NATO.

Sweden and Finland as Models for Development

Looking at the Swedish and Finnish relationship with NATO can help illuminate how such a system would work. Sweden and Finland are among the most developed of NATO's partners, with a high level of interoperability and institutional ties. At the 2014 Wales Summit, Sweden and Finland were among the states that gained the status as EOP. Both countries also signed individual agreements for Host National Support mechanisms, which facilitate NATO troops to use Swedish and Finnish territories for exercises but also as support in the case of crisis or war. Through the EOP, Sweden and Finland have developed their partnerships with NATO in collective defense, an area which was previously exclusive to Allies. Sweden and Finland are already proactive at NATO's policy-level committees and military-level cooperation structures.[25] They understand how NATO works and have experience maneuvering within the system. This, in combination with Sweden and Finland's democratic governance structure and liberal values, makes them easy partners to work with and integrate into new partnership strategies and frameworks.

Despite deep levels of cooperation, a decision by either country to seek NATO membership seems unlikely in the near- to medium-term. Both Sweden and Finland were neutral during the Cold War and have remained militarily nonaligned for a range of reasons, including domestic considerations.[26] However, they both continue to be commit-

ted to increasing cooperation with NATO. This raises some questions about how they can do so without following a path to membership. Our approach of converging interests is helpful in demonstrating the ways in which partners like Sweden and Finland, as well as other partners, can contribute to the Alliance while also achieving their own goals. First, we should identify NATO's strategic objectives. Let us presume, based off the 2030 Reflection Group Report, that NATO prioritizes the following goals:

- Limiting the influence of authoritarian great powers and preserving the rules-based international order;
- Preparing for future conflict;
- Deterring Russian aggression (see the chapter by Simakovsky and Williams);
- And coordinating on a strategy towards China (see the chapter by Bērziņa-Čerenkova).

Sweden and Finland, though separate countries with their own national interests, share a number of objectives with NATO.[27] Primary among them is preserving the rules-based international order, providing clear ground for cooperation on global affairs. Also vital is deterring Russian aggression, which implies both limiting the influence of authoritarian great powers and preparing for future conflict. Thus, the most natural convergence of interests between NATO and these two Nordic states lies in approaching Russia. However, both Sweden and Finland are also concerned about anti-liberal influences from China and might serve as partners for NATO in developing a global strategy in this regard. Below, we examine each of these NATO priorities, the likely means to achieving them, and strategic advantages that Sweden and Finland can offer NATO for each priority.

First, limiting the influence of authoritarian great powers, especially as they seek increasingly non-kinetic or hybrid means of impacting Western societies, requires making member states and partners less vulnerable to attack and thus increasing their resilience. Here, Sweden and Finland offer unique experience and expertise. Total defense (Sweden) or comprehensive security (Finland) is a tradition in both countries that focuses on a whole-of-society approach to security, encompassing both

military and civil society, intended to deter attack by making it difficult to successfully invade.[28] This is closely related to new ideas of societal resilience, built to increase member states' and partners' deterrence by denial capabilities by making their societies less vulnerable to attacks across the conventional and hybrid spectrums.[29] Finland's approach to comprehensive security is well developed, and Finland regularly trains and improves its civil-military cooperation.[30] Though Sweden dismantled its strategy of total defense after the Cold War, Sweden has been rebuilding its total defense capabilities since the Russian annexation of Crimea.[31] For example, in recent years, Sweden has run a series of country-wide total defense exercises, including Aurora 17 and Totalförsvar 2020.[32] In addition to government preparations, the Swedish strategy emphasizes the role of "individual responsibility,"[33] and in 2018, Sweden sent all of its residents a pamphlet outlining steps that citizens can take to prepare themselves for crisis or war.[34] In addition to increasing resilience at home, Sweden and Finland also have an interest in building the resilience of its neighbors and the greater European community—in an interconnected world, if one neighbor is weak, efforts at home are easily undermined. Recognizing the shared interest in resilience, NATO should continue to partner with Sweden and Finland to engage with other member states and partners on societal resilience, to include border control, law enforcement, special forces, intragovernmental communications, and communications with other states and outside organizations. NATO should also partner with Sweden and Finland on newer areas related to resilience, such as cyber, disinformation, and space, as well as developing and securing critical digital infrastructure.

Second, preparing for future conflict means developing strategies to identify and address hybrid threats. Finland in particular can offer lessons in resilience to hybrid threats. Since 2014, Helsinki has become a leader in promoting international cooperation on hybrid threats, recognizing the complex nature of modern conflict that blurs the lines between peace and war.[35] In 2017, it established the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats in Helsinki, open to EU and NATO members. Sweden has also worked to increase its ability to understand and counter hybrid threats, appointing in 2019 its first ambassador and special envoy for countering hybrid threats.[36] Both

Sweden and Finland, actively developing their toolkit against hybrid threats, recognize that situational awareness and learning from others is vital—an approach that NATO should also share.[37] With this converging set of interests, NATO, Sweden, and Finland should work to create venues for better information and intelligence sharing on particular topics and improve representation of these non-aligned states within the command structure and NATO International Staff. Finally, NATO should develop a political consultation mechanism with partners for security challenges that might appear rapidly and require joint operations, in order to prepare for swift action in the case of an Article 4 or Article 5 situation.

Third, maintaining a transatlantic community that is whole and stable against a revisionist Russia requires deterring Russian aggression. Sweden and Finland, as close neighbors of Russia, are deeply concerned about a revisionist Moscow—and the contributions of Sweden and Finland towards a strategy on Russia are clear. Their involvement will be necessary for any defense scenarios in the Baltic, and thus also for deterrence. If the Suwalki Gap were to be blocked, NATO would only be able to reach the Baltic by air and sea, which would potentially be vulnerable to Russian anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD)—requiring Swedish and Finnish coordination and, ideally, cooperation. [38] The challenge would be increased if Russia were able to take control of Gotland, a large Swedish island in the middle of the Baltic that is key to sea lines of communication in the region.[39] In July 2017, Ben Hodges, then the Commanding General for US Army Europe, said, "I do not think there is any island anywhere that is more important."[40] In some ways, Swedish and Finnish value here is already proven: since the Wales Summit, Finland and Sweden have worked together to demonstrate their value in the Baltic Sea region to NATO, and since 2015, both countries have collaborated with NATO authorities to construct common situational awareness in the Baltic region.[41] They have also participated in a series of NATO tabletop exercises focusing on a crisis in the Baltics.[42]

Sweden and Finland can also play a strong role in the Arctic, a region in which Russia has increasingly asserted its presence.[43] Concerned by NATO's potentially limited capacity in the region, Nordic countries—led by Sweden—have already begun exploring joint capabilities to respond to crises and insecurity in the High North.[44] These militaries

have expertise operating in extreme cold and could offer lessons to interested NATO Allies about how to be effective in the Arctic. Finland and Sweden also currently have some of the strongest ice-breaker capabilities in the region, with currently nine and five vessels respectively and expertise in their design and construction, which could help NATO fill gaps in its current capabilities.[45] They furthermore have expertise of and a personal interest in climate issues and economic development in the region and could provide a more direct link to those most impacted by developments in the High North—including the Sami people, who span large parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia.[46]

Sweden and Finland also have proven military capabilities that would be useful in the event of a conflict and for deterrence. Finland's military doctrine aims, based on total defense, to establish a military force capable of deterring any aggression against Finnish territory.[47] Finland is the only Nordic country that could deploy trained reserves in a prolonged conflict, and it has the ability to mobilize some 51,000 military personnel on short notice.[48] Its air force and navy furthermore have a high level of readiness even during peacetime.[49] While Swedish defense weakened after the Cold War, it maintains notable capabilities and has begun investing more deeply in them in recent years. Notably, Sweden has one of the most capable air forces in the Baltic region, with advanced, internationally recognized aircraft and high interoperability with NATO.[50] Furthermore, both Sweden and Finland's national military capabilities are reinforced through a series of interconnecting partnerships with each other and neighboring states.[51] Beyond their use in defense, Sweden and Finland can provide significant expertise and intelligence on Russia. Both countries have long histories of engaging with Russia and have developed impressive intelligence capabilities to understand and anticipate Russian behavior.[52] Sweden is already a member of the so-called '14 Eyes,' an expansion of the Five Eyes intelligence alliance.[53] Furthermore, Sweden has already proven its ability to operate intelligence in NATO operations by providing logistics and intelligence support in Libya.

With deeply shared interests, Sweden and Finland are valuable partners for NATO in deterring and defending from Russia. Exercises should be held regularly with the Nordic and Baltic states, especially practicing deterrence by punishment instead of deterrence by denial.

Swedish security analysis has suggested that a defensive posture may be insufficient to deter Russia and other actors—the ability to strategically and in a controlled fashion escalate conflicts may be more powerful.[54] In the Arctic, Sweden and Finland should work with NATO on increased shared situational awareness and conduct more exercises and planning in the region.

Fourth, minimizing negative Chinese influence implies monitoring and sharing information on Chinese behavior, protecting strategic industries, and critical infrastructure. Both Sweden and Finland have taken actions against China out of security concerns: Sweden by excluding Chinese company Huawei from building its 5G network and Finland by denying China the purchase of an airfield up in the North.[55] Political coordination could also take place on China. For example, Sweden and Finland should be involved in conversations about China's growing role in the Arctic, and what the security implications are of Chinese investments in critical infrastructure, ice breakers, and research in the region.

As illustrated above, a systematic approach to assess common strategic interests can help expand and renew the scope of possible activities for the mutual benefit of both NATO and partners. It is clear how NATO, in an era of increasing strategic competition, can work with Sweden and Finland to shape the security environment in Northern Europe to their favor. By focusing on converging interests, Sweden and Finland are choosing to work with NATO—and vice versa—on specific issues; there is no pressure towards membership.

Furthermore, an interest-based approach would encourage NATO to increase political and military coordination with the multilateral organizations to which Sweden and Finland belong. The Arctic Council is one such entity. NATO could also partner more closely with the Nordic Defense Cooperation (NORDEFCO), an organization consisting of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden to strengthen the joint and national capabilities of the Nordic nations. NORDEFCO's Cyber Warfare Collaboration Project already works with NATO's Cooperative Cyber Defense Centre of Excellence in Estonia, but broader and more formalized coordination could occur.

By adopting a converging interest approach, NATO could use the comparative advantages that Sweden and Finland can offer to more efficiently achieve Alliance objectives. As NATO is confronted with numerous and diverse challenges, it should take advantage of its wide network of partners to jointly combat the threats that like-minded states face. The cases of Sweden and Finland, as advanced NATO partners with significant capabilities, highlight how NATO can benefit from partnering more effectively with non-member states to tackle regional and global issues. As the Reflection Group suggested, "NATO should build upon, and where possible expand, its partnerships with Sweden and Finland as models for the development of its partnerships in other regions."[56] Exploring the partnerships with Sweden and Finland even further, by using the converging interest approach which we have suggested, will strengthen NATO's posture in the strategic competition which it will face in the next decade.

Recommendations for NATO

In the coming decade, NATO will face strategic competition at unprecedented levels. The scope of NATO is likely to increase even further, as geographic considerations will have to span as far as the Indo-Pacific, and the struggle between democracy and autocracy will put increased weight on like-minded countries, whether in Europe, Africa, or Latin America. Thus, it seems likely that the partner group will expand even further, putting even higher demands on NATO to ensure that the purpose of each partnership is clear from a strategic perspective and to develop efficient structures and activities for cooperation. Another major challenge is to find mechanisms for maintaining high levels of interoperability with partners despite the lack of larger international missions such as ISAF in Afghanistan.

By being more pro-active and deliberate in its partnership developments, NATO will be in a better position to shape, rather than merely respond to, its security environment. To this end, NATO should:

- **Apply an approach to partnerships based on converging interests.**
    - Using the strategic interests that NATO will define in the Strategic Concept in 2022 as a point of departure, all partnerships should be revised

according to this approach. During the process, partners would define their national security interests of partnering and discuss with NATO how these relate to NATO's strategic interests, hence shaping a common understanding of the degree of convergence of interests. NATO should also assess and define each partner in terms of actual or potential security provider, and in which context.

- While we have focused here on partnerships with states, a similar approach could be adapted for international organizations such as the EU, the UN and the African Union. Here, NATO should conduct similar assessments, defining and evaluating areas of cooperation, as well as risks for unnecessary duplications (on the NATO-EU relationship in particular, see the chapter by Ewers-Peters).

- **Consider additional partners based on NATO's objectives.**
  - NATO should analyze if there are potential partners of interest for NATO to engage, given its strategic interests, with whom NATO presently has no formal arrangements. This could for instance include democracies in Africa or Latin America, or like-minded countries in the Indo-Pacific. There could also be regional organizations to partner with, for instance, in Asia.

- Given the results of this comprehensive assessment of partners, as well as potential partners, **NATO should adjust its structure and organization for partnerships to match the strategic setting of the coming decade.**
  - The development of partnerships has been hampered in the past by inadequate funding and over-reliance on voluntary trust funds, as pointed out by the Reflection Group. NATO should therefore increase its common funding and invest in adequate resources to encompass more partners and increased level of activities. The principal of individual partnerships should remain at the core.

- **The depth and intensity of the relationship between the partner and NATO should be determined by the degree of converging interests.** In other words, NATO will have the most contact with those partners who match NATO's interests and who are security providers or on a strong track to become such partners.
  - The EOP status should be kept and extended when suitable. NATO would develop its work with the EOPs in tailor-made configurations using the 30+n format, including high-level political consultations, in

order to maximize the strategic utility of each partnership. The EOPs should be trustworthy to the level that they could have liaison officers working in NATO Headquarters International Staff and International Military Staff.

- Other partners, where the converging interest assessment has illustrated lower matching, would be given lower priority and the programs and activities would correspondingly be less intense. Such a process will in many cases come naturally, as has been illustrated with some partners in Central Asia, in pace with the ending of the operation in Afghanistan and halted democratic developments. This does *not* imply tiers of partnerships, but rather a recognition that each individual partner will offer different levels of converging interests.

- **NATO should consider an engagement platform for China.** NATO not only needs to develop a policy towards China, it also needs to consider how to develop a relationship with China. Even though China is not to be considered a "partner" in a traditional sense, and the level of converging interests seems low, NATO has an interest in establishing channels for communication, transparency, and exchange of information, as China is increasingly present and active on NATO territory (see the chapter by Bērziņa-Čerenkova). In a similar manner to the NATO Russia Council, NATO could consider developing its relationship with China through a NATO China Council.

- **NATO should also assess partner formats that might no longer be relevant.** One such format is the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, which has not been active for a long time, and which is unlikely to fulfill a role in the future. Given strained resources, NATO must give priority to those formats that give most strategic value.

As the security environment becomes even more complex, NATO has a comparative advantage through the wide web of relationships developed over the past thirty years. As illustrated in this chapter, partners can be useful in all tasks of the alliance: from collective defense, to fighting terrorism, to safeguarding democracy and the rules-based international order. By applying a more stringent interest-driven partnership strategy, in which partners are also identified in terms of security providers, NATO will fundamentally strengthen its defense posture and readiness to address any future security challenge.

Notes

1. See, for example, Abraham M. Denmark, *U.S. Strategy in the Asian Century: Empowering Allies and Partners* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2020); Kathleen J. McInnis, "The Competitive Advantages and Risks of Alliances," Heritage Foundation, October 30, 2019; Christine Wormuth, "The Role of Allies and Partners in U.S. Military Strategy and Operations," Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, September 23, 2020 (https://doi.org/10.7249/CTA867-1).

2. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," November 25, 2020, p. 58 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf).

3. Anna Wieslander, "What Makes an Ally? Sweden and Finland as NATO's Closest Partners," *Journal of Transatlantic Studies (Springer Nature)* 17, no. 2 (June 2019), pp. 194–222.

4. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 15.

5. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," pp. 58–60.

6. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 58.

7. Ibid.

8. Rebecca R. Moore, "The Purpose of NATO Partnership: Sustaining Liberal Order beyond the Ukraine Crisis," in *NATO's Return to Europe: Engaging Ukraine, Russia, and Beyond*, edited by Rebecca R. Moore and Damon Coletta (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 2017), p. 27.

9. George H.W. Bush, "A Europe Whole and Free," Remarks to the Citizens in Rheingoldhalle, Mainz, Federal Republic of Germany, May 31, 1989 (https://usa.usembassy.de/etexts/ga6-890531.htm).

10. For more on partnerships, see, for example: Håkan Edström, Janne Haaland Matlary, and Magnus Petersson, *NATO: The Power of Partnerships* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Trine Flockhart, *Cooperative Security NATO's Partnership Policy in a Changing World* (Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies, 2014).

11. Bush, "A Europe Whole and Free."

12. Vladimir Putin, "Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy," Office of the President of Russia, Munich Security Conference, February 10, 2007 (http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034).

13. Michael Kofman, "The August War, Ten Years On: A Retrospective on the Russo-Georgian War," *War on the Rocks*, August 17, 2018 (https://warontherocks.com/2018/08/the-august-war-ten-years-on-a-retrospective-on-the-russo-georgian-war).

14. Sophie Arts and Steven Keil, "Flexible Security Arrangements and the Future of NATO Partnerships," *GMF Policy Brief*, 2021, pp. 1-21.

15. Flockhart, *Cooperative Security NATO's Partnership Policy in a Changing World*, pp. 24-26.

16. Heidi Reisinger, "Rearranging Family Life and a Large Circle of Friends," NATO Defense College, 2012.

17. Markus Kaim, "Reforming NATO's Partnerships," *SWP Research Paper*, 2017, pp. 1-23.

18. Ibid.

19. Christopher S. Chivvis et al., "NATO's Northeastern Flank: Emerging Opportunities for Engagement," RAND Corporation, 2017; Wieslander, "What Makes an Ally?"

20. Juha Pyykönen, "How Similar Are Finland and Sweden within NATO Cooperation?" *FIIA Report*, 2016, p. 97.

21. Wieslander, "What Makes an Ally?"

22. Arts and Keil, "Flexible Security Arrangements and the Future of NATO Partnerships;" This language is used by, for example, Ann-Sofie Dahl, "Sweden, Finland and NATO: Security Partners and Security Producers," in *Nordic-Baltic Security in the 21st Century: The Regional Agenda and the Global Role*, edited by Robert Nurick and Magnus Nordenman, Atlantic Council, 2011, pp. 6-11.

23. Flockhart, *Cooperative Security NATO's Partnership Policy in a Changing World*.

24. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 58.

25. Pyykönen, "How Similar Are Finland and Sweden within NATO Cooperation?"

26. Justyna Gotkowska and Piotr Szymański, "Between Co-Operation and Membership: Sweden and Finland's Relations with NATO," trans. Ilona Duchnowicz, *OSW Studies* vol. 62, 2017. See also: Anna Wieslander, "'The Hultqvist doctrine'—Swedish Security and Defence Policy after the Russian Annexation of Crimea," *Defence Studies*, August 16, 2021.

27. See, for example, Ann Linde, "Statement of Government Policy," Parliamentary Debate on Foreign Affairs, February 24, 2021 (https://www.

government.se/492a59/contentassets/51c9f38eca39475597ffbde6430edfc8/statement-of-government-policy.pdf); Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, "Strategic Priority Areas in the Foreign Service," Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2018 (https://um.fi/documents/35732/0/Strategic%20priority%20areas%20in%20the%20Foreign%20Service%2014.3.2018%20%282%29.pdf/8802ce3a-056f-5ca6-08e9-1cb776a7342b?t=1533649959681).

28. Though Sweden recently re-adopted the policy in 2015 after abandoning it after the Cold War, Finland has followed the policy since the Second World War. For more on total defense, see Piotr Szymański, "New Ideas for Total Defence: Comprehensive Security in Finland and Estonia," *OSW Report*, 2020; James Kenneth Wither, "Back to the Future? Nordic Total Defence Concepts," *Defence Studies* 20, no. 1 (2020), pp. 61–81.

29. On Swedish and NATO cooperation on civilian preparedness, see Daniel Jonsson and Ester Veibäck, "Nato och svensk civil beredskap—Ett kunskapsunderlag med fokus på NATO Baseline Requirements och svensk energiförsörjning," n.d., p. 88.

30. Office of the Finnish Prime Minister, "Government's Defence Report," Office of the Finnish Prime Minister, July 2017 (https://www.defmin.fi/files/3688/J07_2017_Governments_Defence_Report_Eng_PLM_160217.pdf); Office of the Finnish Prime Minister, "The Security Strategy for Society," Government Resolution, The Finnish Security Committee, November 2017 (https://turvallisuuskomitea.fi/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/YTS_2017_english.pdf).

31. Swedish Defence Commission Secretariat, "Resilience: The Total Defence Concept and the Development of Civil Defence 2015-2025," Swedish Defence Commission Secretariat, May 2015 (https://www.government.se/press-releases/2017/12/swedish-defence-commission-presents-report-on-total-defence-concept-and-civil-defence/).

32. See, for example, Mike Winnerstig, "The Strategic Ramifications of the Aurora 17 Exercise in Sweden," *ICDS Commentary*, 2017 (https://icds.ee/en/the-strategic-ramifications-of-the-aurora-17-exercise-in-sweden/); Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, "Total Defence Exercise 2020," 2021 (https://www.msb.se/en/training--exercises/exercises-section/total-defence-exercise-2020/).

33. Swedish Defence Commission Secretariat, "Resilience: The Total Defence Concept and the Development of Civil Defence 2015-2025," p. 2.

34. Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, *If Crisis or War Comes: Important Information for the Population of Sweden*, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, 2018 (https://www.msb.se/Upload/Forebyggande/Krisberedskap/Krisberedskapsveckan/Fakta%20om%20broschyren%20Om%20krisen%20eller%20Kriget%20kommer/If%20crises%20or%20war%20comes.pdf).

35. Szymański, "New Ideas for Total Defence: Comprehensive Security in Finland and Estonia," pp. 23–24.

36. Björn von Sydow, "Resilience: Planning for Sweden's 'Total Defence,'" *NATO Review*, April 4, 2018 (https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2018/04/04/resilience-planning-for-swedens-total-defence/index.html).

37. Michael Rühle and Clare Roberts, "Enlarging NATO's Toolbox to Counter Hybrid Threats," *NATO Review*, March 19, 2021 (https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2021/03/19/enlarging-natos-toolbox-to-counter-hybrid-threats/index.html).

38. The threat of Russian A2/AD is frequently overstated but is still a notable challenge. See, for example, Robert Dalsjö, Christofer Berglund, and Michael Jonsson, "Bursting the Bubble? Russian A2/AD in the Baltic Sea Region: Capabilities, Countermeasures, and Implications," Swedish Defense Research Agency, 2019 (https://www.foi.se/rapporter/rapportsammanfattning.html?reportNo=FOI-R--4651--SE).

39. Julianne Smith and Jerry Hendrix, "Assured Resolve: Testing Possible Challenges to Baltic Security," Center for a New American Security, April 2016.

40. N.A., "No Island as Important as Gotland, Says US Military Chief," *The Local*, July 24, 2017 (https://www.thelocal.se/20170724/no-island-as-important-as-gotland-says-us-military-chief-ben-hodges-europe-nato-russia-sweden/).

41. Pyykönen, "How Similar Are Finland and Sweden within NATO Cooperation?" p. 103.

42. Sweden and Finland have participated in the 2016, 2017, and 2019 Crisis Management Exercises (CMX). NATO, "Crisis Management Exercise 2019 - Press Release," May 15, 2019 (http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_165844.htm).

43. See, for example, Kristina Spohr and Daniel S. Hamilton, *The Arctic and World Order* (Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 2020).

44. Gerard O'Dwyer, "Nordic Militaries Rekindle Old Alliances, as Russia Warms to the Region," *Defense News*, June 22, 2020 (https://www.defensenews.com/smr/transatlantic-partnerships/2020/06/22/nordic-militaries-rekindle-old-alliances-as-russia-warms-to-the-region/).

45. N.A., "Finland and Sweden Collaborate to Design Next Generation Icebreaker," *The Maritime Executive*, November 2, 2020 (https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/finland-and-sweden-collaborate-to-design-next-generation-icebreaker).

46. Government Offices of Sweden, "Sweden's Strategy for the Arctic Region," Government Offices of Sweden, 2020 (https://www.government.se/4ab869/contentassets/c197945c0be646a482733275d8b702cd/swedens-strategy-for-the-arctic-region-2020.pdf).

47. Office of the Finnish Prime Minister, "Government's Defense Report."

48. Stefan Forss and Pekka Holopainen, *Breaking the Nordic Defense Deadlock* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, February 2015), p. 42; Hans Binnendijk and Conor Rodihan, "Geometries of Deterrence: Assessing Defense Arrangements in Europe's Northeast," Atlantic Council, 2020, p. 12.

49. Chivvis et al., "NATO's Northeastern Flank," p. 207.

50. See, for example, Chivvis et al., "NATO's Northeastern Flank," pp. 242-247.

51. Binnendijk and Rodihan, "Geometries of Deterrence."

52. Susanne Berger, "The Great Paradox of Swedish Neutrality in the Cold War and Today," *War on the Rocks*, December 28, 2015 (https://warontherocks.com/2015/12/the-great-paradox-of-swedish-neutrality-in-the-cold-war-and-today).

53. Ewen MacAskill and James Ball, "Portrait of the NSA: No Detail Too Small in Quest for Total Surveillance," *The Guardian*, November 2, 2013 (http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/02/nsa-portrait-total-surveillance).

54. Krister Andrén, "Krigsavhållande tröskelförmåga—Det svenska försvarets glömda huvuduppgift?" Swedish Defense Research Agency, 2014; Robert Dalsjö, "Fem dimensioner av tröskelförsvar," FOI-R--4458-SE, Swedish Defense Research Agency, 2017.

55. Johan Ahlander and Supantha Mukherjee, "Swedish Court Upholds Ban on Huawei Selling 5G Network Gear," *Reuters*, June 22, 2021 (https://www.reuters.com/technology/swedish-court-upholds-ban-huawei-selling-5g-network-gear-2021-06-22); N.A., "Defence Ministry Blocked Chinese Plans for Research Airbase in Lapland," *Yle*, March 4, 2021 (https://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/defence_ministry_blocked_chinese_plans_for_research_airbase_in_lapland/11820411).

56. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 59.

Part II

Shifting Internal Dynamics

Chapter 6

The Future US Role in NATO

Hans Binnendijk and Jim Townsend

When writing a chapter describing what the US role might be in NATO a decade from now, the usual underlying assumption is that the United States will continue to play a significant leadership role in the Alliance. The reliability of this assumption can no longer be taken for granted.

During the Cold War, support for a strong US leadership role in NATO was a political imperative. US politicians needed to be seen as strong on defense if they were to be elected to a major office—and that included showing strong support for NATO. While even during the Cold War there was frustration with Allies over issues such as burden sharing, the US commitment to defend its Allies under Article 5 of NATO's North Atlantic Treaty was never seriously in doubt, and certainly not in the White House. US leadership in NATO was never as uncertain as during the administration of former President Donald Trump when the president expressed his view that NATO was obsolete and cast doubt about US commitment to Article 5.

While today the administration of President Joseph R. Biden, the US Congress, and a strong majority of the American people all remain supportive of US involvement in NATO, it is unclear how the current political polarization in the United States may affect future US foreign policy ten years hence, including participation in NATO. Trump's hostility towards NATO was not just a reflection of his personal pique over burden sharing. His negative views were shared by others in his wing of the Republican party who could return to the White House later this decade. Allies rightly question whether the Trump administration's jaundiced view of Europe and NATO was a one-off phenomenon, or if it represents an evolving view of the American voter tired of being the world's policeman.

The foreign policy crises of Biden's first year reinforced those Allied questions, especially as Allies felt the United States was becoming unpredictable and seemingly going off on its own. The secret negotiations between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the US that established the AUKUS defense cooperation arrangement surprised Allies, who expected at least a briefing in advance about such a major geopolitical move by fellow Allies. This surprise added to the unease that Allies were already feeling from the lack of thorough consultations on the US withdrawal from Afghanistan and the chaotic collapse and evacuation of US and Allied personnel from Kabul.

To analyze how the US security partnership with Europe may develop over the next decade, this chapter considers four underlying conditions. The first section begins with American public attitudes towards defense and NATO. Public and Congressional support for NATO seems strong today, but the United States has a century-long history of deep engagement followed by foreign policy retrenchment. If the Trump wing of the Republican party is successful in future national elections, will current support for NATO be strong enough to withstand these cyclical pressures; and what does this mean for NATO?

The second section considers the complex set of global military challenges for the United States from four state powers (Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea) and from large state-sponsored terrorist organizations. Taken together, they provide a challenge unseen by the United States in at least three decades. How capable is the United States military in dealing with these threats? What are America's priorities and strategies in dealing with them? And what is the impact on the NATO Alliance? For NATO, does this mean that the United States will be distracted from its NATO commitments in time of crisis elsewhere?

Next, these state-centric military threats come at a time when a series of new security challenges face the Alliance, causing NATO to widen its threat perception from just military threats to broader security ones where NATO may not be the primary actor. These include new tools and tactics based on advances in cyber technology being used by adversaries under the rubric hybrid war or war in the grey zone. In addition, during the past two decades, instability to NATO's south has stimulated some of the new security threats such as terrorism, piracy,

uncontrolled immigration, and nuclear proliferation. Add to that what might be called "nature's challenges" such as climate change and pandemics, and NATO's plate is overflowing with both military and other security concerns. The third section considers what this all might mean for the future US role in NATO.

The fourth section of the chapter reviews Europe's politics and military cohesion in the face of this full platter and a degree of American overstretch. European political cohesion is at risk as threat assessments differ, democratic backsliding rises, military capabilities remain underdeveloped, and the uncertain trend line in US international engagement strengthens the call by several capitals to seek greater strategic autonomy from the United States and other non-EU nations. Should US contributions to the Alliance be weakened or diffused by US retrenchment, by security commitments elsewhere, or by the increasing array of non-military challenges, this fourth section concludes that thus far Europe seems unready to fill the gap.

Shaped by these underlying conditions, the fifth section posits four alternative futures for the US relationship with NATO:

1. A broad traditional approach with the US taking on major NATO responsibilities across a broad array of core tasks as it has in the past.
2. A narrow collective defense approach in which NATO itself focuses just on major military threats.
3. A US retrenchment approach within NATO which would be a logical follow-on to the Trump administration's policies.
4. A balanced division of labor approach under which Europe would take lead responsibilities for several NATO missions.

The final section concludes that the best outcome of these four alternative futures, given the new challenges and the limits of American power, is the last. This fourth alternative a decade from now would envision an Alliance which embraces a broad scope of core tasks coupled with a new and balanced division of labor. It would include a degree of European strategic autonomy, greater European burden sharing for major power challenges, and Europe leading the Alliance on lesser challenges. Arriving at this outcome will require a high degree

of Alliance adaptability, a new approach to US leadership, and European willingness to spend the resources to be able to take on additional responsibilities. Even this trajectory will be shaped as never before by US politics and who the American people send to the White House in the coming years.

US Domestic Attitudes and US Foreign Policy

There was an audible sigh of relief on both sides of the Atlantic when President Biden was inaugurated on January 20, 2021, ending the presidency of Donald Trump. That relief was particularly apparent during President Biden's visit to Europe for the G-7 and other summits in June 2021. His visit was a major step in the administration's effort to repair and restore the transatlantic relationship. Before he left for Europe, a new Pew poll put wind in his sails, finding that in Europe, "in each of the 16 publics surveyed, more than six-in-ten say they have confidence in Biden to do the right thing in world affairs. Looking at twelve nations surveyed both this year and in 2020, a median of 75% express confidence in Biden, compared with 17% for Trump last year."[1]

While the majority of the Trump administration's unconventional policy approaches were felt in US domestic policy and politics, US foreign policy during the Trump era did have its share of unconventional approaches. For example, the president met with North Korean Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un in Korea (even taking a few steps into North Korea during his visit to Panmunjom), pulled out of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran, withdrew from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and built close personal relationships with some of the globe's more authoritarian rulers, including Russian President Vladimir Putin.

But the battering taken by US-European relations, as well as by institutions such as NATO and the European Union, was the most striking, as many of these Allies and partners had provided the backbone of political and military partnership with the United States since the end of World War II. Germany, the temporary home to hundreds of thousands of deployed US troops since World War II, bore the brunt of President Trump's ire as it was criticized about unfair trade prac-

tices with the US, the Nord Stream 2 pipeline deal with Russia, and especially about low defense spending. The EU, too, was criticized for treating the US "horribly" and was branded a "foe."[2] But NATO seemed especially in President Trump's crosshairs, accusing the Alliance of taking advantage of the United States by not meeting defense spending expectations. According to former Trump National Security Advisor John Bolton, the US came close to withdrawing from NATO.[3] While much of this criticism was also shared by Democrats, Trump delivered it with a bludgeon, which helped tear at the fabric of the transatlantic relationship.

Despite Trump's criticism of NATO, a majority of the American people still held NATO in high regard (for more detail on public opinion dynamics, see Rizzo in this volume). A 2020 poll by the Pew Research Center found that "in four countries with trends that date back to the Obama presidency, the highest ratings for NATO have been measured in the past four years (2016 to 2020), including in the United States. … In 2018, when President Donald Trump was explicitly criticizing the organization's other member states for not contributing enough on defense spending, 64% of Americans expressed a positive view of NATO."[4] A 2020 poll by the Chicago Council is even stronger, finding that of Americans, "[a] majority (73%) want to either maintain the US commitment to NATO or increase it."[5] How sustainable this favorable majority would be in the next ten years, particularly if populism continues to strengthen, is in question.

Beginning with President Biden's inauguration and amplified during his June Summits in Europe, US foreign policy toward Europe began to sound reassuring and familiar as Biden and his top lieutenants repeated their determination to rebuild trust with allies and to work with them to manage the world's problems. In his speech at the 2021 Munich Security Conference, President Biden assured his (virtual) European audience that:

> It comes down to this: The transatlantic alliance is a strong foundation—the strong foundation—on which our collective security and our shared prosperity are built. The partnership between Europe and the United States, in my view, is and must remain the cornerstone of all that we hope to accomplish in the 21st century, just as we did in the 20th century.[6]

Allied reactions were largely positive, but also included skeptics, particularly in Paris and Berlin where both German Chancellor Merkel and French President Macron used the Trump experience to urge that Europe lessen dependence on an unpredictable United States. They fear growing populism could return to the presidency a politician, including potentially Donald Trump himself, who would move a hostile US administration further away from international engagement and into isolationism or unilateralism.

President Biden's decision to withdraw all US troops from Afghanistan was generally consistent with the policies of the Obama and Trump administrations, but operationally things went poorly.[7] Intelligence estimates did not predict the rapid Taliban capture of Kabul. Consultation with Allies on the withdrawal details was imperfect. Military coordination with Allies and partners during the actual evacuation was intense, but there were transatlantic differences over the August 31, 2021 evacuation deadline. The ISIS-K terrorist attack added tragedy to the chaos. The net result is that progress made by Biden's June trip to Europe was undercut, and renewed questions arose about American leadership and commitment.[8]

If the past is any guide, the United States is likely to go through cycles of isolationism and engagement. For the past 120 years, US foreign policy has swung from isolationism to deep engagement and back to retrenchment again. The end of the Cold War found US administrations trying to find the appropriate level of US engagement abroad and in Europe. Retrenchment usually followed unpopular wars or changes in US politics. For example, between 1995 and 1999, Republicans controlled Congress and put conservative Republicans in power, such as House Speaker Newt Gingrich and Senator Jesse Helms, whose unilateralist foreign policies featured views on arms control and multilateralism that foreshadowed those of Donald Trump.

Even in times of retrenchment, NATO has usually enjoyed strong bilateral support in Congress. In 2019, Congressional support was especially in evidence as the Congress was so concerned about President Trump withdrawing from NATO that both the Senate and House passed legislation that put obstacles in front of any Trump effort to withdraw, including prohibiting any funds from being used to withdraw

from NATO.[9] In April 2019, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg was invited to address a joint session of Congress, where he was greeted with loud applause and standing ovations, signaling to the Executive branch that the Congress had NATO's back.

But the populist political force that brought Trump to the presidency was more powerful and ran deeper in the US body politic than those of an earlier period. Organized by social media and fed by conspiracy theories of news outlets, the Trump electoral base was deep and included extremist movements that helped make the current US populist movement strong and active. While the grievances held by US populists are not as focused on US foreign policy as on domestic themes, wary allies see the political power and resilience of the US populist movement and are reluctant to assume the US political storm has blown over and that US internationalism is safe.

The near-term guideposts to help predict US involvement overseas and in NATO in the coming ten years will be the congressional and presidential election cycles. According to the Pew Center, political party affiliations shape American views of NATO: Democrats are more pro-NATO than Republicans. In 2020, seven-in-ten Democrats favored NATO compared to less than half of Republicans.[10] The trajectory of US international engagement will quickly become apparent by which party is in the ascendency in the next few electoral contests.

More generally, American public opinion is once again in flux about the US role in the world, with the nation almost being evenly split. In the 2020 poll, the Chicago Council found,

> (…) there are profound differences between Democrats and Republicans on which foreign policy issues matter most today. And they are even more sharply divided on how the United States should deal with these issues and engage the rest of the world. Generally speaking, Democrats prefer an internationalist approach: cooperating with other countries, amplifying US participation in international organizations and agreements, and providing aid to other nations. In contrast, Republicans prefer a nationalist approach: putting US interests above those of other countries, creating economic self-sufficiency, and taking a unilateral approach to diplomacy and global engagement.[11]

As the Washington Post reported in their review of the Chicago Council finding, "[s]imply put, Democrats and Republicans view the world beyond America's shores very differently, and they favor very different approaches to advancing US interests overseas. … The Chicago Council's report characterizes the views of Democrats as stressing 'diplomacy and cooperation.' In contrast, Republicans favor what the Chicago Council calls a foreign policy of 'self-sufficiency and independence.'"[12]

The good news is that a significant majority of Americans still support international engagement, the bad news is that the nation is split over what that engagement should look like. But even as the American people and their elected representatives of both parties struggle to find the right amount of engagement overseas, NATO retains popular support. However, it is likely fragile and subject to being swept up in a broader wave of political populism that could limit US involvement in Brussels.

Global Military Challenges Facing the United States

The United States today faces a set of military threats that, taken together, present a greater challenge to the US military establishment than at any time since the end of the Cold War. Those threats come from five sources: Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, and large-scale terrorist violence. The Biden administration's Interim National Security Strategy Guidance sums this up as follows:

> The distribution of power across the world is changing, creating new threats. China, in particular, has rapidly become more assertive. It is the only competitor potentially capable of combining its economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to mount a sustained challenge to a stable and open international system. Russia remains determined to enhance its global influence and play a disruptive role on the world stage. Both Beijing and Moscow have invested heavily in efforts meant to check U.S. strengths and prevent us from defending our interests and allies around the world. Regional actors like Iran and North Korea continue to pursue game-changing capabilities and technologies, while threatening U.S. allies and partners and challenging regional stability. (…) Terrorism and violent extremism, both domestic and international, remain significant threats.[13]

NATO directly shares the threat from three of these sources: Russia, Iran, and terrorism (especially after the return of the Taliban to power in Afghanistan). But conflict between the United States in Asia with either China or North Korea would have a fundamental impact on the security of Europe. NATO Allies agreed in the June 2021 Summit communique that China presents, "systemic challenges to the rules-based international order and to areas relevant to Alliance security."[14] It remains to be seen what role Allies believe NATO should have to meet this challenge from China.

The Russian military has become much more formidable in the past decade. While Russian defense budgets remain relatively low by US standards, its regional military strength in and around the Baltic, Black, and Barents Seas gives it advantages of time and distance. It has furthermore learned valuable lessons from its operations in Georgia, Ukraine, and Syria. What is more, the Russian military has deployed "anti-access/area denial" (A2/AD) capabilities in the Kola Peninsula, in Kaliningrad, in Crimea, and increasingly in Syria, which are designed to counter US and NATO military reinforcements that would be required to offset Russia's short-term regional advantages. Once those US and NATO reinforcements are brought to bear and begin to defeat Russian conventional forces, Russia would fall back on its nuclear "escalate to de-escalate" policy hoping to split the NATO Alliance. Russian non-strategic nuclear weapons significantly outnumber those of the United States.

The US role in defeating Russian military aggression against any of NATO's vulnerable areas would be massive conventional reinforcement, likely beginning before an initial Russian assault (to strengthen deterrence) but accelerating afterwards should deterrence fail. The United States has less than a quarter of the number of forward deployed forces in Europe as compared to the Cold War, hence, the early fighting might favor Russia. The United States might have only three or four Army brigade combat teams deployed in Europe when conflict erupts, thus rapid reinforcement would be crucial. In 2020, NATO declared its newly created Joint Force Command Norfolk to be operational, which facilitates this reinforcement. Yet, the American reinforcement effort would be quite demanding.

In contrast to Russia, China's military challenges to the United States are not shared directly by all NATO countries. Chinese defense budgets have increased dramatically and, using purchasing power parity, they may soon rival US defense spending. China is building naval vessels at a record pace. Together with roughly 1,250 tactical missiles and 2,500 combat aircraft, China would—like Russia—have time and distance advantages at least at the outset of a conventional conflict in much of Asia. China also has approximately 150 theater-range nuclear weapons available for use, while the US now deploys none in Asia. The risk of incidents that could escalate is furthermore increased by China's assertive policies and its risky behavior in the South and East China Seas as well as towards Taiwan.

A US conflict with China could be protracted. While conflict with Russia could be largely land-based, war with China would at least initially be sea- and air-based. It presents a demanding challenge for the US Navy. A land war on the Chinese mainland seems unthinkable for the United States. It is not clear how war with China might be terminated.

After years of a counterterrorism focus with extensive counter-insurgency operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, the US military has recently returned its focus to major peer competitors. Fighting either Russia or China—even with allied support—would be taxing for a US military still recovering from years of combat and unable to afford large-scale modernization. Russia and China, both feeling under pressure by US-led allied sanctions and disapproval, are now developing closer political, economic, and military ties. Russian President Vladimir Putin stated recently that a more formal alliance was not needed but, theoretically, quite possible to imagine.[15] China responded warmly. Together, the Russian and Chinese defense budgets total under $300 billion or less than half of the US defense budget. But converted to purchasing power parity, those combined budgets begin to rival the US defense budget. Sino-Russian military cooperation already extends to multiple joint military exercises, including in Europe, and to new levels of defense cooperation. Russia's ability to build quality defense platforms coupled with China's digital capabilities suggests that both militaries will benefit from this defense cooperation, and that both will become increasingly more formidable adversaries as a result.

The United States military today could probably prevail in a conventional war with either Russia or China, even with only limited help from its allies. But it would take time and major US reinforcements to the area of conflict. Fighting either in Europe or Asia would leave the respective other region vulnerable to greater coercion. For NATO, a US conflict with China would leave Europe much more vulnerable to Russian coercion. Such a scenario forces Europe to reconsider whether it can develop the military capability to defend itself against Russia with limited US support should the US be at war with China. By extension, Europe now has greater reason to help the United States deter China in Asia as well as strengthen their military capability in Europe.

Should Russia and China operate in concert with one another against the US military, the challenge for the US and its allies would be very difficult, especially since both Russia and China would have considerable advantages in the opening stages. As a result, the United States would probably need to set priorities, which would put the lower priority region at considerable risk.

But the military challenges do not stop with Russia and China. Both North Korea and Iran are in differing stages of nuclear proliferation. Both threaten neighbors who are US allies or partners. Efforts under the past three US administrations have failed to prevent North Korea from developing nuclear warheads and ICBMs that may soon have the continental US in range. Trump's summits with Kim Jong-un were, in the end, counterproductive. The North Korean military, though ill-equipped, is large and its missiles and artillery hold Seoul hostage. The US security treaty with South Korea, if triggered, would probably require large deployments of US ground forces to meet the challenge. Similarly, the Trump decision to leave the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran has led to new proliferation risks that the Biden administration seeks to slow down. US-Iranian relations may decline further under Iran's new conservative President. While Biden is less belligerent towards Iran than Trump, the prospect of armed conflict remains. To be successful, such a conflict would require large commitments of sea and air forces.

All four of these threats by state actors come from autocratic regimes. They take place in the context of a new global ideological de-

bate about governance and highlight the rivalry of political systems: democratic or authoritarian rule. As during the Cold War, there is an ideological dimension that underlies the risk of war. Those ideological bonds among authoritarian leaders further complicate America's military problems.

The fifth major military challenge discussed in Biden's interim guidance is terrorism. The United States with the help of allies has for two decades fought multiple-trillion dollar "forever wars" in Iraq and Afghanistan and globally against Al Qaeda and ISIS. While the Biden administration has indicated an unwillingness to use armed force to democratize nations, the terrorist threat will nevertheless remain, including in Afghanistan especially after the withdrawal of US and NATO troops. Much of the current US military has spent those two decades focusing on counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and stabilization operations, but the shift back to potential major power competition has begun.

These growing military threats take place, as discussed above, when US defense budgets could be at best flat; when there is a strong desire to end "forever wars" and to meet urgent domestic needs; and when concern about allied contributions to the common defense is bipartisan. What does this mean for the United States' future role in and attitudes toward NATO? As America's global defense portfolio grows, authoritarian nations increasingly collaborate on military affairs, and portions of the US population still support America First policies, its allies may be put at greater risk if they fail to increase contributions to their own defense. NATO may need to consider more effective ways to persuade European nations to provide for a greater proportion of their own defense.

The US and the New Challenges Facing NATO

As was highlighted at the June NATO Summit, the challenges facing the US and NATO come not just from great power competition, but from non-military security threats like climate change that would be unfamiliar to NATO's founders. When NATO was founded in 1949, the threat Allies faced was a strictly military one, and there was no

impulse to widen the threat assessment to include threats that were more *security* in nature. Since its founding, Allies have been reluctant to turn their focus too far away from the military threat. Even with the end of the Warsaw Pact, NATO remained focused on addressing any future military threat, albeit an unknown one at the time. As the years went by, NATO became increasingly a *political alliance* to help reunify Europe by enlarging NATO (and the EU) and also widened its mission to include not just defending Europe at home but out-of-area engagements as well.

With time, NATO's relevancy was increasingly questioned as new generations asked about threats that were less military and more security in nature with terrorism and piracy being some of the first of these new challenges. This called into question the old NATO threat orthodoxy because not only were these threats less military ones, but also military tools, as well as the NATO Alliance itself, did not play a primary role in addressing them. Nations themselves or the EU had the primary responsibility to confront these new security challenges, especially those in Southern Europe which included uncontrolled migration of people into Europe escaping turmoil in the Middle East and Africa. Additionally, as the EU began to widen its influence in Europe and develop a role for itself in European security as part of its Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), a NATO security role became politically contentious as some Allies felt it was inappropriate for NATO to become involved in "civilian" responsibilities, like terrorism, better left to the EU or to the nations.

However, as Allies have come to see the direct military implications that security issues can have and to understand that NATO can work with nations and the EU in addressing security threats, such issues are now more prominent at NATO. The US role in NATO ten years from now will involve continuing to help Southern Allies deal with the security threats that come from migration, counter-proliferation, and terrorism. What is more, the US will play a larger role in helping NATO Allies confront the newest security challenges that come from hybrid or grey zone warfare, such as cyber and disinformation attacks, as well as the security implications of climate change.

The question arises just how much the United States will need to be engaged in the new, non-military security challenges, especially because European dependence on US military power is not as much a factor with security challenges. And will NATO have the capability to handle not only the traditional military threats like Russian aggression, but help address the new security challenges too?

Perhaps the biggest leap into new security challenges is the national security implications of climate change. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg stated at the March 2021 Foreign Ministers meeting that NATO needs to think boldly about confronting climate change, and said he hopes NATO Allies can pledge to make their militaries carbon-neutral by 2050.[16] NATO Heads of State and Government agreed with the Secretary General and at the June Summit pledged to "aim for NATO to become the leading international organization when it comes to understanding and adapting to the impact of climate change on security."[17] The US military has recognized for years that the United States would have to adjust to the changing climate, including operating in extreme temperatures, flooding of naval installations such as Norfolk Naval Base, and extreme storms such as those that leveled Lackland Air Force Base. The US military services have also experimented with substitutes for fossil fuels, such as solar-generated electricity and green fuels. Many of these lessons are applicable to NATO Allies as well. In meeting this new challenge in the coming years, given experience in the US military, the US will likely lead the Alliance especially in exchanging best practices in reducing the effects of climate change on military operations and how best to adapt to extreme weather. Climate change could also have a series of negative security implications that may require NATO to consider future operations to assist victims. These could include massive flooding in some areas and drought in others, or large uncoordinated migrant flows in some countries and heightened political instability elsewhere.

Another impact of climate change could be on public health, especially the occurrence of pandemics. Scientists predict that pandemics could become more prevalent due to climate change.[18] NATO proved during the COVID-19 pandemic that it could play a helpful role in assisting Allies logistically to move patients between nations and provided a joint purchasing capability for Allies to buy medical

supplies together more cheaply in bulk. In the future, NATO will not lead this public health effort but, instead, it can stand ready to help Allies in extreme circumstances such as by stockpiling common medical equipment to assist those Allies who have shortages. This is also an area where the United States could lead in the future, given US lessons learned from meeting logistics challenges dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. This new challenge again shows that unlike military challenges in the past, these security challenges can only be effectively met if done in conjunction with the EU and the nations themselves. Given that these new threats—hybrid challenges, climate change, and pandemics—are less military in nature and belong largely to nations or to the EU, NATO will thus depend less on US military capability to address them, and in the future European allies can take the lead, thereby freeing up the US to focus on other security issues such as challenges in the Asia-Pacific.

Europe's Response to a Changing United States

The three previous sections demonstrate that the US is facing a potentially high degree of national security overstretch which could trigger existing political instincts for retrenchment. This section considers how Europe might be able to respond to this emerging situation. It concludes that Europe is politically too divided and militarily too unready to respond now. But Europe has the potential wealth, technological prowess, military skills, common interests, and common values to fill military vacuums if the military threat to Europe shifts into higher gear.

Europe today is divided and still recovering from its many crises. It has very limited political cohesion (on inter-European disagreements, see the chapter by Kunz). Nations to the east fear Russian military action and political intimidation against them. Consequently, they focus more on traditional defense. Nations to the south are plagued by the consequences of instability in the Middle East and North Africa region but do not fear a Russian attack. Other countries like Germany seek to balance their economic interests with their less intense concerns about Russian (or Chinese) intentions. The European Union has been weakened by Brexit, but also by recalcitrant views from na-

tions like Poland and Hungary. Nations to the south also continue to have serious economic problems and believe wealthier nations like Germany and others have forced excessive austerity on them. Moreover, several European countries have become illiberal democracies with their leadership restricting political and judicial freedoms in order to stay in power (see chapter by Flockhart). Turkey, the key to Black Sea transit and mired in the Syrian conflict, has become especially authoritarian and is developing closer relations with Russia, despite its membership in NATO.

Non-US NATO members have potentially significant military capabilities, but they are largely underdeveloped. They have about 1.8 million active-duty military personnel under arms. Their air forces possess about 2,600 combat aircraft, mostly fourth generation fighters. Their tank force numbers about 7,000, and their navies have about 250 major naval combatants.[19] If modernized, made more ready, placed in the right locations, and coupled with more cohesive command and control, this combined force could begin to deal with a Russian attack. But that is not their status. Readiness levels remain low and significant mobility problems exist, though NATO initiatives are underway to improve both.

Europe, both inside and outside of NATO, has developed a level of independent military capability to deal with small contingencies. Under the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy, a dozen military operations have been conducted along with additional training and policing missions.[20] A small EU command structure, the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC), has been established in Brussels. Two European Battle Groups, battalion-sized combined arms forces on six-month rotation, are to be ready for deployment at any time. However, they have not yet been used operationally. During the chaotic US evacuation from Kabul, many EU nations saw their dependence on the United States to run the military operation and so dictate its terms. As a result, EU High Representative Josep Borrell announced the need to discuss yet another EU force, this one a quick reaction force of 5,000 troops that would break the EU's dependence on the United States.[21]

Greater defense resources will be needed to prepare Europe for a more independent defense role or to fill in should US forces pivot to war-fighting operations elsewhere. That brings us to defense spending. During NATO's history, the burden sharing debate has been a constant refrain from those who felt Europe was free riding on America's defense commitment. During the past seven decades, only twice did European defense spending exceed 75 percent of US defense spending: in 1980 and in 2000 after major US peace dividends were taken by Presidents Carter and Clinton.[22] Today, NATO Europe's defense spending is less than half of that of the United States.

That has begun to improve, but not enough. The Wales NATO Summit in 2014 responded to Russia's annexation of Crimea by setting a defense spending goal of 2 percent of GDP for each member state. Trump used this 2 percent goal to bludgeon European Allies to do more, with both positive and negative effects. On the one hand, the number of NATO countries spending 2 percent of GDP on defense rose from three member states in 2014 to ten in 2020. Between 2016 and 2024, European investments in defense are supposed to increase by a total of $400 billion.[23] On the other hand, this may be reversed as nations instead require higher funds for COVID-19-driven economic stimulus packages, especially since Trump's political pressure is removed. Subsequently, European nations are not yet capable of defending themselves against a concerted Russian attack and may not be for many years. The input measure of 2 percent needs to be supplemented by output measures such as creating specific levels of ambition targets for European NATO Allies.[24] A major increase in its defense spending will be needed if Europe is to lessen its dependency on the US military as a response to perceptions of American unreliability (for more on burden sharing, see Keil in this volume).

The difficult Trump years stimulated in Europe military visions of a European Army and political visions of strategic autonomy. French President Macron's continued focus on European strategic autonomy has become embedded in the European Union. This has led to some transatlantic tensions as Europe's Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and the European Defense Agency (EDA), both designed to increase European defense cooperation, have been seen in Washington as excluding the United States. In Washington, many saw strategic

autonomy as a call for a transatlantic divorce. Macron argues that the impact would be the opposite.

Greater strategic autonomy may become a more attractive concept—even for Washington—if it results in additional European defense capabilities that can provide greater flexibility for US forces. It is unlikely to allow Europe to defend itself alone against Russia. But it may relieve Washington of responsibilities in the Middle East and North Africa that many in the US would like to shed.

Four Potential Outcomes for the Future US Role in NATO

The trends discussed above could lead the Alliance, and the United States' future role in it, in one of four basic directions. The precise outcome is unpredictable but by analyzing each outcome, the Alliance may gain a greater appreciation of what needs to be done and what the future American engagement may be. The four potential outcomes for the future are:

- *A broad traditional approach*: A US-led NATO which embraces a broad scope of core tasks;
- *A narrow collective defense approach:* A US-led NATO which narrows its scope to primarily Article 5 issues, leaving non-Article 5 missions to be addressed by the EU or coalitions of the willing;
- *A US retrenchment approach:* A return of an 'America First' policy which reduces US leadership and participation in NATO and thereby weakens the Alliance; or
- *A balanced division of labor approach:* A NATO that embraces a broad scope of core tasks coupled with a degree of European strategic autonomy, greater European burden sharing, and a balanced division of labor in which the US focuses primarily on the major power threat.

The first outcome, a broad traditional approach, is where many nations would like NATO to be a decade from now. It is the traditional NATO model adjusted for a greater array of new security challenges. Not only would the Alliance deal with a major power threat from Russia plus the instability to NATO's south, but it would expand its scope,

as recommended by the NATO Reflection Group.[25] It would deal increasingly with China, hybrid threats, and the security consequences of natural disasters like climate change and health pandemics. The United States would continue to lead the Alliance in most or all areas and would continue to provide a substantial portion of the financial and military resources. But as the United States is increasingly pulled towards Asia and deals with its own internal political conflicts, the old model may not work as well. Moreover, if European member-states are seen as unwilling to play a larger role as the scope of NATO missions increases, resentment among some in the United States could grow and even stimulate another America First surge.

The second outcome, a narrow collective defense approach, would return to NATO's original core task of collective defense. This would allow the United States to concentrate on the basic defense task and allocate its defense resources accordingly. This would satisfy America's principal strategic interest, i.e., protecting Europe from major power attacks. European nations would also focus their attention on this primary threat, allowing them to allocate defense resources accordingly and maintain current levels of defense spending. Yet, narrowing NATO's core tasks to common defense would make NATO irrelevant to many of the growing number of security problems that face the transatlantic partnership. This lack of relevance could begin to tear away at NATO's fabric and put more responsibility on the shoulders of European nations addressing these problems through the EU or a coalition of the willing.

The third outcome, the US retrenchment approach, is a revival of an 'America First' policy as a result of future US elections. Given the political and cultural divisions evident in the United States today, this is an eventuality that Europeans need to consider. It is not clear that the Alliance could withstand another four years of America First. US retrenchment could stimulate Europe to develop stronger defense capabilities, but under these circumstances it would also probably cause deep transatlantic political divisions. The Alliance would be much weaker as a result.

The fourth outcome, balanced division of labor approach, would keep the Alliance relevant by expanding the scope of its missions

while doubling down on its principal task of collective defense. While it recognizes the United States' limitations—including its domestic divisions and its extended set of global commitments—Europe will need to develop stronger military capabilities, improve political cohesion, and take on new responsibilities to achieve this outcome a decade from now. The US may need to yield to a degree of European strategic autonomy. And a new division of labor may be needed under which Europe takes on the principal responsibility for new security challenges. The United States would continue to guarantee Europe's security against a major power threat while Europe—given its GDP and population—would agree to provide at least half of the military might to accomplish that task.

Determining the Future US Relationship with NATO

The United States' relationship with the Alliance a decade from now will depend upon at least four variables.

First, will the return to solid US support for the Alliance seen during President Biden's Summit meetings in June 2021 be sustained for the next decade, or will US populism grow and return the nation to some form of America First? The outcome is uncertain, but the resurrection of a populist United States cannot be ruled out; Europe needs to begin planning for this contingency.

Second, will the military threats to the United States and its NATO Allies continue to expand? Major power threats from Russia and China appear to be on the rise, with both nations increasing their defense cooperation. North Korea and Iran appear to pose increasing nuclear proliferation risks and are drawing closer to both of these two major power adversaries. The threat of extremism from the Middle East is also likely to continue. America risks being overextended in dealing with these multiple challenges. This dynamic will require that America's global alliances thrive. But since the military challenge in Asia is greatest, the United States might again be forced to pivot much of its attention to Asia.

Third, the scope of the non-military or unconventional challenges facing NATO will probably also continue to expand. These challenges

include cyberattacks, disinformation, other forms of unconventional warfare, coercive diplomacy, global warming, and public health issues. To remain relevant, the scope of NATO's missions will need to continue to expand to address these non-military challenges.

And fourth, with the above three factors in play, the final variable is: can European members of the Alliance increase their political cohesion and their defense contributions to meet their share of these growing challenges? The requirement is there but European willpower is also uncertain.

Given these trends, this chapter recommends seeking a division of labor for NATO's future relationship with the United States. Under this concept, the United States would focus its efforts in Europe primarily on deterring and if necessary defeating the principal major power threat to NATO, that is Russia. But to compensate for US major power responsibilities in Asia, European members of the Alliance would commit to providing half of the military capability required to perform this collective defense task. Addressing the rise of China in Europe, which is not primarily a military challenge as of now, as well as lesser challenges to the Alliance from the south would be the primary responsibility of European members. All nations in the Alliance would contribute to addressing nature's challenges like global warming and health pandemics. To accommodate this balanced division of labor approach, the United States would need to adjust its current negative approach to European defense cooperation and to a degree of European strategic autonomy. Europe, for its share, would need to strengthen its continental defenses, not because of US burden sharing pressure, but because it is in Europe's vital interests to do so. If the future US role in NATO resembles this approach, authors writing about NATO in the future may confidently return to the usual underlying assumption that the US will continue to play a significant leadership role in the Alliance.

Notes

1. Richard Wike et al, "America's Image Abroad Rebounds with Transition from Trump to Biden," Pew Research Center, June 10, 2021 (https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2021/06/10/americas-image-abroad-rebounds-with-transition-from-trump-to-biden/).

2. Quoted in Cat Contiguglia, "Trump: EU is one of United States' Biggest Foes," *Politico*, July 15, 2018 (https://www.politico.eu/article/donald-trump-putin-russia-europe-one-of-united-states-biggest-foes/).

3. John Bolton, *In the Room Where it Happened* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2020), pp. 136-137.

4. Moira Fagan, "NATO Seen in a Positive Light by Many Across Ten Member States," Pew Research Center, November 30, 2020 (https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/11/30/nato-seen-in-a-positive-light-by-many-across-10-member-states/).

5. Dina Smeltz et al, "Divided We Stand: Democrats and Republicans Diverge on US Foreign Policy," The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, September 17, 2020, p. 12.

6. President Joseph R. Biden, "Remarks by President Biden at the 2021 Virtual Munich Security Conference," The White House, February 19, 2021 (www.whitehouse.gov).

7. Hans Binnendijk and Robert Bell, "Here's how Biden could mitigate damage done by the Afghan withdrawal," *Defense News*, August 26, 2021 (https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2021/08/26/heres-how-biden-could-mitigate-damage-done-by-the-afghan-withdrawal/).

8. See, for example: Joshua D. Kertzer, "American Credibility After Afghanistan," *Foreign Affairs*, September 2, 2021 (https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/afghanistan/2021-09-02/american-credibility-after-afghanistan); Ronald R. Krebs and Jennifer Spindel, "Did the Afghanistan Exit Diminish U.S. Credibility Among its Allies? Probably Not," *The Washington Post*, September 1, 2021 (https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/09/01/did-afghanistan-exit-diminish-us-credibility-among-its-allies-probably-not/); Walter Russell Mead, "Biden's Chamberlain Moment in Afghanistan," *Wall Street Journal*, August 16, 2021; Liz Sly, "Afghanistan's Collapse Leaves Allies Questioning U.S. Resolve on Other Fronts," *The Washington Post*, August 15, 2021; Stephen M. Walt, "Afghanistan Hasn't Damaged U.S. Credibility," *Foreign Policy*, August 21, 2021 (https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/08/21/afghanistan-hasnt-damaged-u-s-credibility/).

9. Joe Gould, "Would Trump Drive NATO Exit? Congress Works on Roadblocks," *Defense News*, December 16, 2019 (https://www.defensenews.

com/congress/2019/12/16/would-trump-drive-nato-exit-congress-works-on-roadblocks/).

10. Fagan, "NATO Seen in a Positive Light."

11. Smeltz, "Divided We Stand," p. 2.

12. Quoted in Dan Baltz and Scott Clement, "Poll: Sharp Partisan Differences now exist on Foreign Policy, Views of American Exceptionalism," *Washington Post*, September 17, 2020 (https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/poll-foreign-policy-trump-democrats/2020/09/16/8e2d903e-f836-11ea-be57-d00bb9bc632d_story.html).

13. "President Joseph Biden, Jr, Interim National Security Strategy Guidance," The White House, March 2021, pp. 7-8.

14. "NATO Brussels Summit Communiqué Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Brussels 14 June 2021," NATO, June, 14 2021 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_185000.htm?selectedLocale=en).

15. Vladimir Isachenkov, "Putin: Russia-China military alliance can't be ruled out," *Associated Press*, October 22, 2020 (https://apnews.com/article/beijing-moscow-foreign-policy-russia-vladimir-putin-1d4b112d2fe8cb66192c5225f4d614c4).

16. Michael Birnbaum and Missy Ryan, "Facing Sweltering Soldiers and Flooded Ports, NATO to Focus on Climate Change," *The Washington Post*, March 23, 2021 (https://www.washingtonpost.com//world/europe/nato-climate-change-stoltenberg/2021/03/23/3884fe52-8aa7-11eb-a33e-da28941cb9ac_story.html).

17. "NATO Brussels Summit Communiqué Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Brussels 14 June 2021", NATO, June 14, 2021 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_185000.htm?selectedLocale=en).

18. Abrahm Lustgarten, "How Climate Change is Contributing to Skyrocketing Rates of Infectious Disease," Pro Publica, May 7, 2020 (https://www.propublica.org/article/climate-infectious-diseases).

19. Hans Binnendijk with Magnus Nordenman, "NATO's Value to the United States: By the Numbers," Atlantic Council Issue Brief, April 2018.

20. "Military and civilian missions and operations," EEAS, n.d. (https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/430/Military%20and%20civilian%20missions%20and%20operations).

21. Reis Thebault, "Does the European Union Need its own Army? Afghanistan Withdrawal Revives an Pld Debate," *Washington Post*, September

4, 2021 (https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/afghanistan-eu-army/2021/09/03/ee0f4eea-0c24-11ec-a7c8-61bb7b3bf628_story.html).

22. Hans Binnendijk, "Friends, Foes, and Future Directions; US Partnership in a Turbulent World," RAND Corporation, 2016.

23. "NATO Secretary General announces increased defense spending by Allies," NATO.int, Nov 29, 2019 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_171458.htm).

24. For example, European members of NATO might have the responsibility to deliver half of NATO's overall level of ambition (to conduct two major operations and six smaller operations).

25. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," November 25, 2020 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf).

Chapter 7

There is No "Europe": Disagreements Within NATO Are Not Solely Transatlantic and Pertain to the Fundamentals of European Security

Barbara Kunz

Analyses of transatlantic relations, and security relations in particular, often focus on differences between the United States and its European allies. This clearly is an important factor. Given Europe's dependence on US security guarantees, the United States' continued willingness to engage in the continent's security is the condition *sine qua non* for NATO's survival. US dissatisfaction with European engagement and defense spending has consequently been a key item on intra-Alliance agendas since 1949. US concerns about NATO and its European allies' engagement were indeed voiced openly long before Donald Trump.[1] Debates about burden sharing also trickle down to domestic politics in member states and thus contribute to shaping the general climate within the Alliance, as for instance the 2 percent objective that has featured in several German electoral campaigns.

It is, however, equally important not to overlook structural differences among European Allies. When the Reflection Group appointed by Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg published its report on "NATO 2030" in late 2020, it was no coincidence that Alliance cohesion was among the key points.[2] Indeed, disagreements among Allies have increased in recent years—to the point of famously prompting French president Emmanuel Macron to declare NATO "brain dead" because it is no longer able to adopt common views on key strategic matters.[3] This notably pertains to the role Turkey has been playing in recent years and intra-Alliance rivalries. Other examples include Allies' difficulties to develop a common stance on Libya and different views on NATO's potential role in the Arctic. The latter example is linked to what is certainly the single most important aspect for Euro-Atlantic security in the 21st century: the Alliance and its members' relationship

with Russia. Yet, regarding Russia in particular, ideas on the way ahead vary widely across NATO capitals. What is ultimately at stake are diverging approaches to European and Euro-Atlantic security at large, based on different interpretations of the future direction of the global security environment. The three most relevant issues most likely to trouble NATO in the coming decade may thus be summarized as, first, disagreements among member states on concrete policy issues, most prominently illustrated by Turkey's current foreign policies and its consequences for Alliance cohesion. Second, Allies continue and will continue to hold divergent threat perceptions and consequently place different emphases on security challenges and defense priorities. Third, there is no consensus among European Allies on whether US security guarantees can be considered a viable option in the years and decades to come.

Against this backdrop, this chapter aims at showing that 'Europe' is by no means a monolithic bloc or actor in its own right, but rather a group of states sometimes pursuing different and even incompatible perspectives. In particular, on the Western side of the Atlantic, references to 'Europe' as an actor in transatlantic security relations are a frequent phenomenon. Any analysis or future policy based on the assumption that Europeans are unified in security will, however, be erroneous and impracticable. As the ongoing debate on European strategic autonomy has notably revealed, the primary reason is that Europeans lack a joint vision on how to ensure their continent's security in the future. As this chapter argues, insights gained from this debate pertain to the very fundamentals of European security, beyond petty debates on semantics. Allies' increased difficulties to come to shared views in fact stem from very different takes on the foundational features of European security and divergent readings of structural evolutions in the international system. However, the problem is not only that diverging visions confront each other. Rather, some European governments simply do not have such a vision, cling to the status quo, and sometimes even refuse to think about the possibility that things may have to evolve. These differences come on top of other divergences on issues such as democracy and the rule of law, including within the European Union, involving Hungary and Poland.

Turkey as the Current Problematic Ally

Under current circumstances, the most prominent cases of disputes among NATO members include Turkey, in an overall context of the country's government no longer interested in being an integral part of the 'West.'[4] Tensions occur both at the bilateral level between Turkey and individual members of the Alliance—notably with Turkey's 'traditional' antagonist Greece, but also the United States and France—and at the multilateral level, with Ankara blocking strategic cooperation between the NATO and the European Union or NATO and partner countries such as Armenia, Jordan, or Israel. Greece and Turkey have a longstanding conflict over Cyprus, as well as disputes over natural resources in contested waters. The United States notably ejected Turkey from the F-35 program after Turkey purchased the S-400 air defense system from Russia.[5] Franco-Turkish tensions, finally, are multi-dimensional in nature and range from personal attacks between presidents Erdoğan and Macron, religious and cultural issues, to geo-strategic rivalry.[6] The two countries even came close to a military clash in the Eastern Mediterranean in the summer of 2020. France's frigate *Courbet*, part of NATO's maritime security operation *Sea Guardian*, was illuminated by Turkish targeting radar when approaching a cargo ship suspected of breaching the arms embargo in Libya, escorted by the Turkish navy. As France did not obtain the desired support among other NATO allies in the incident's aftermath, it temporarily withdrew from Operation Sea Guardian.[7] Paris' positioning on Libya, where it unofficially sided with General Haftar, is widely considered to be the cause for this absence of support from other NATO members.

Beyond NATO, these issues also matter in the EU context where Germany and other EU member states blocked the adoption of sanctions against Turkey.[8] Western Europeans are thus not on the same page when it comes to dealing with Turkey, which is hardly surprising given their very different relations with Ankara. Moreover, the fact that the European Union—and Germany as the main actor behind the so-called EU-Turkey refugee deal[9] in particular—has made itself dependent on Turkey to control flows of migration to Europe limits its room for maneuver.[10]

Beyond bilateral conflicts, security dynamics in the Eastern Mediterranean are increasingly a cause for concern.[11] These include, *inter alia*, conflicting territorial claims and conflicts over natural resources or countries' positioning in the Syrian and Libyan wars—with, in all cases, Turkey as a key actor. Likewise, Turkey's actions in the September 2020 flare-up of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict have been analyzed as the country's "pursuing the goal of undermining the current status quo in the region."[12] Ankara's military offensives in Syria against Kurdish-led forces, fighting against ISIS as US allies, also revealed deep rifts among NATO countries and further complicated the situation in the Middle East.[13] All these incidents point toward the structural estrangement between the West, NATO, and Turkey rather than merely differences over policies that can be solved by compromise. They are therefore likely to have long-term implications for the Alliance's cohesion and ability to act, including in shaping a closer relationship between NATO and the European Union as one of the key undertakings of Euro-Atlantic security (see Ewers-Peters' chapter in this volume).

Disagreements Are Not Limited to Individual Countries' Foreign Policies

It would, however, be erroneous to solely limit the analysis of disagreements among NATO members to the actions of Turkey as the current 'problematic ally.' Even Western European Allies sometimes hold positions that are incompatible with each other. Key disagreements pertain to threat perception and hence defense priorities as well as to the likelihood of continued US security guarantees. These disagreements run deep—sometimes so deep that they are not always visible at the surface level of every-day policy issues. Yet, they clearly shape positions, as a closer look at the ongoing European defense debate reveals. In past years, many important aspects of this debate revolved around the notion of European strategic autonomy.

Long known and used in a French national context,[14] the 2016 European Union Global Strategy lifted "strategic autonomy" to the European level. The document "nurtures the ambition of strategic autonomy for the European Union," but does not provide a concise definition of the notion's content or implication.[15] The ensuing and

at times heated debate among Europeans was not particularly enlightening at the conceptual level and is today considered in need of being "detoxified."[16] Yet, the debate has offered many meta-level insights into the various national approaches to European security and defense.

Two variables are key in this context: threat perception and assessments of the likely future of US security guarantees for Europe. Threat perception is an absolute classic in European defense debates: the question of against what or whom Europe needs to be defended. Diverging threat perceptions translate into different and even incompatible views on what policies the Alliance should adopt regarding certain key issues, notably in its relationship with Russia as the single most important issue for Euro-Atlantic security in the 21st century. Moreover, given that threat perception requires translation into defense planning, this is also a debate about allocating capabilities and defining priorities in light of scarce resources. Most important in the context of threat perception is how Europeans should deal with Russia, notably in a wider vision of Euro-Atlantic security. The second variable pertains to the United States and its engagement in European security. Here, the key question is that of the mid- and long-term reliability of US security guarantees and the conclusions Europeans need to draw for their own security cooperation, which, in turn, has ramifications for NATO.

In both the EU and NATO contexts, as well as at national levels, Europeans have in recent years acknowledged on numerous occasions that their security environment is deteriorating. The conclusions drawn from this observation, as well as how to explain its causes, however, vary widely across the continent.

Threat Perception as the Independent Variable

The principal factor explaining divergences among European nations is threat perception. Enumerations of threats and risks in various national strategy documents certainly look very similar at first glance, just as Europeans regularly manage to agree on listings of threats and challenges in joint documents such as the 2016 European Union Global Strategy or NATO Summit Declarations. However, divergences pertain to the prioritization and urgency of these threats. In light of scarce resources, in particular in smaller European countries, it seems almost

self-evident that a genuine 360-degree approach taking into account all threats that would be backed up by actual defense planning and allocated resources is hardly feasible. The usual enumerations are therefore primarily a rhetorical compromise and mere juxtapositions of threats that say little about actual prioritization. In reality, European states hold very different views on what priorities should be and what both national and multinational defense planning and procurement should focus on.

While this categorization obviously lacks sophistication, European states can roughly be divided into two ideal-typical camps. The first one is composed of those countries that consider Russia the main threat to the continent's security. This first group primarily consists of the northern and eastern European countries, i.e., the so-called Eastern flank. Germany also belongs to this group, at least on paper (as illustrated, for example, by the 2018 Conception of the Bundeswehr which switched the official focus back to territorial defense[17]), although concerns about Russia are much less pronounced there than, for example, in the Baltic states or in Poland. The United Kingdom and the Netherlands are part of it, too. The second camp looks primarily to the south and sees the greatest challenges in (Islamist) terrorism, *inter alia* resulting in high levels of political instability in regions such as West Africa. The most prominent representative of this camp is undoubtedly France, but Italy and Spain also share many of the French views.[18]

These two main categories of threats—Russia and terrorism—are the most relevant dividing line in Europe's defense debate. Transnational threats such as climate change or the risk of pandemics are also part of contemporary discourses but are less controversial. The key explanation for this is the fact that primarily the former two require translation into capability requirements in defense planning (such as the NATO Defense Planning Process, NDPP) and thus the allocation of (considerable) means and prioritizations in acquisition decisions. In comparison, the actual military and defense planning implications of, for example, climate change are negligible. Russia and terrorism as main threats, in turn, clearly shape defense planning, military policies, and procurement decisions. They also shape attitudes and expectations

vis-à-vis NATO and the EU's defense activities within the framework of the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP).

Europeans themselves are increasingly aware of these divergences in threat perception and the problems they cause. It is for this reason that the European Union's latest strategy process, the Strategic Compass (launched under the German EU presidency during the second half of 2020 and due to be completed under the French presidency during the first half of 2022)[19] started with a first phase on threat assessment. The result is an unpublished report based on input from EU member states' intelligence agencies (and not governments, in order to 'depoliticize' the document) that details the threats and challenges the EU will likely face in the five to ten years to come. Yet, because threat perceptions are at the heart of defense policies and are not suitable for compromise, it seems unlikely that the Strategic Compass—or any other strategy process or document—will truly overcome intra-European divides that are structural in nature.

What is more, Europeans not only disagree in terms of East versus South. They also perceive threats in varying intensity—and thus sometimes fail to raise awareness among Allies for their concerns. Herein lies another difference between the two categories of threat perception identified above that gives rise to additional tensions: the terrorist threat is mostly met with disinterest and neglect by those who do not consider it their key preoccupation. France thus deplores a lack of active military and political support and even acknowledgement by its European allies for its actions against it, including by its key partner Germany. The European debate on terrorism, particularly over the Sahel region, is therefore mostly a matter of Paris trying to convince other Europeans that they must take the threat seriously and act accordingly. Dissatisfied with NATO's renewed focus on territorial defense, France's recent initiatives outside of existing institutional frameworks, notably its European Intervention Initiative, are largely linked to this factor. Concerning Russia as the other main threat on the European agenda, however, neglect is much less of a feature in the debates. Rather, European countries disagree on the likelihood of an actual armed conflict with Russia and hold at times very different positions on the best approach to adopt vis-à-vis Moscow.

How to Best Deal with Russia?

One concrete implication of threat perception as the independent variable, and certainly the most divisive, means that agreement on how to best deal with Russia is difficult to reach among Europeans. Relations between NATO, its members and Russia, and the question of how the US-Russian security dilemma can be managed are the most important matters for European security in the foreseeable future. Ultimately, the issue at stake is the European security order. Yet, Europeans' differences do not solely relate to the extent and, above all, intensity to which Russia is considered a threat. They also pertain to how to best handle that threat as well as if and how NATO should dialogue with Russia or in what geographic areas, such as the Arctic, NATO should play a role. The Alliance has been united in condemning the annexation of Crimea and taken measures intended to reassure its member states on the Eastern flank.

In Europe, this is not only a matter of relevance in a NATO context, given that twenty-one NATO members are also part of the European Union. EU member states are also bound by the so-called Mogherini principles adopted in 2016 and reaffirmed in 2020,[20] which in essence make normal relations with Russia contingent on the implementation of the Minsk agreement. EU member states also managed to agree on sanctions in 2014 and to renew them every six months since (adding more sanctions as the relationship with Moscow deteriorated further). This nevertheless hides at times deep divergences among Europeans on the matter of how much dialogue should exist. How deep these divergences are became apparent in internal European reactions to EU High Representative Josep Borrell's visit to Moscow in February 2021, who, after having been treated in a very uncourteous manner in Moscow, had to defend himself in front of the European Parliament. As again became clear, particularly harsh stances toward Russia are not a matter of parliamentarians' positioning on the political spectrum, but much more related to countries of origin—in particular the Baltic states and Poland, i.e., the Eastern flank countries.[21]

Disagreement thus runs deep between those who view the current state of affairs with Moscow as a consequence of insufficient dialogue and those who even refuse arms control initiatives—which, it could

be argued, are in Europe's interest—on the basis of not wanting to reward Russia with 'business as usual.' Consequently, absent a consensus, actively improving relations between NATO (or, for that matter, the European Union) and Russia is not currently on the official multilateral agenda. At the Alliance level, this produces a stronger emphasis on deterrence. For example, the Reflection Group's NATO 2030 report states that "NATO should remain open to discussing peaceful co-existence and to reacting positively to constructive changes in Russia's posture and attitude."[22] In other words, the authors of the report consider the ball to be in Russia's court.

The Eastern flank countries insist on 'no business as usual' as the guiding principle of NATO-Russia relations after the annexation of Crimea. Yet, calls for resumed and better dialogue with Russia do exist. As early as 2016, for example, then German State Secretary at the Foreign Office Markus Ederer explained that "No one expects NATO to return to business as usual. But at the same time, we have every interest in managing a highly delicate relationship with a neighboring nuclear power in a way that minimizes the risk of unwanted escalation and enhances predictability to the greatest extent possible."[23] More recently, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, in line with his native Norway's general approach to Russia, argued that:

> Dialogue is important. Especially when times are difficult as they are now, then it is important to sit down and discuss also difficult issues. (…) Even without any improvement in the relationship between NATO allies and Russia, I believe that at least we have to manage a difficult relationship - on transparency, risk reduction and also addressing arms control.[24]

This echoes the calls by US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken[25] as well as Joe Biden's meeting with Vladimir Putin in Geneva on June 16, 2021, and the Strategic Stability Talks launched in its aftermath.

If 'no business as usual' is one end of the European spectrum, it is again France that is at the other end. Europe of course includes openly Russophile governments such as Viktor Orbán's in Hungary. France, however, is at the same time critical of Russia's foreign policy and actively seeking to return to a dialogue with Moscow on matters such as strategic stability. This is why France's approach—and other European

governments' reactions to them—deserves particular attention in trying to understand the current state of the European security debate.

In August 2018, Emmanuel Macron called for a "review of the European defense and security architecture" in his annual speech to French ambassadors—not necessarily at the French diplomatic apparatus' satisfaction given that, in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the wording's closeness to the so-called Medvedev initiative and the problems related to that were immediately understood.[26] The following year, and only days before the G7 Summit in Biarritz, Macron invited Vladimir Putin to a working visit at the French presidential summer residence in Brégançon. He shortly thereafter reiterated the necessity to improve relations with Russia in his 2019 speech to the French ambassadors.[27] France's purely bilateral 'strategic dialogue' with Russia was subsequently launched. It *inter alia* includes meetings in a 2+2 format, i.e., between the respective foreign and defense ministers. Macron named one of France's most senior diplomats, Pierre Vimont, to be 'Special Envoy for the security and trust architecture with Russia' (*architecture de sécurité et de confiance avec la Russie*).

French ambitions in this context are bold. Among the key motivations cited by Macron is that, against the backdrop of the emerging multipolar international system, Russia must be offered strategic partnerships other than with China—simply out of European interest.[28] That said, France firmly stands on the grounds of the 2015 Mogherini principles and frequently underlines that Russia must respect international law.[29] It would therefore be mistaken to interpret Paris' reaching out to Moscow as some kind of 'pro-Russian' or even 'pro-Putin' stance. France's strategic dialogue ambitions are nevertheless criticized, for instance in Poland—*inter alia*, but not only, because there is zero appetite for such a dialogue with Moscow.[30] In a European context, France's gestures also contribute to fears of Paris' unilateralism and its alleged goals of decoupling. Although the latter is not on France's agenda, the fact that the Franco-Russian dialogue initiative was not well explained or even coordinated with European partners clearly did cause suspicions. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Franco-Russian strategic dialogue has so far yielded few tangible outcomes, and where it is headed remains unclear. Even French Minister of the Armed Forces Florence Parly admitted in July 2020 that results were largely missing.[31]

The 2+2 meeting planned for September 2020 was cancelled in the wake of the poisoning of Alexei Navalny and has not been rescheduled. The initiative thus also illustrates the very limited possibilities for a European country to single-handedly work toward strategic stability on the continent.

Needless to say, diverging views on future relations with Russia are an almost insurmountable obstacle in developing a joint vision on the future European and transatlantic security order. They also have considerable ramifications in another field of relevance. Closely related to the question of relations with Russia, European NATO members' attitudes toward arms control indeed also cover a wide range of positions. Notably with respect to conventional arms control, positions range from complete opposition on the grounds of 'no business as usual' to again French attempts at engaging a 'strategic dialogue' with Russia.[32] Divergent European views then also extend into areas such as missile defense. From a wider European security perspective, more obstacles to effectively establishing arms control regimes with Russia may be about to emerge. NATO member Poland as well as NATO partner country Finland acquired precision-guided cruise missiles, while non-aligned Sweden recently decided to join them.[33] These are the exact non-nuclear weapons Russia has repeatedly declared that it wants included in any kind of future arms control agreement. Although the major arms control deals are bilateral between the United States and Russia, the geographic proximity of the above European countries means these weapons are part of the stability equation, potentially complicating the prospects for agreements—likely at the detriment of European security.

Many of these aspects will also matter in adopting a new Strategic Concept for NATO. In the run-up to the 2010 document, Germany had numerous objections to the nuclear character of the Alliance and ended up in an open dispute with France.[34] The issue was eventually sorted out and Berlin agreed, stating that as long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance. With elections in Germany taking place in September 2021, it seems likely that the nuclear-critical Green party may be part of the country's governing coalition. What this would mean for nuclear deterrence in the Alliance obviously remains to be seen, both at the level of nuclear deterrence and when it comes to nuclear sharing and nuclear weapons stationed in Germa-

ny. The Green party's election platform states that it ultimately wants all nuclear weapons to be withdrawn from German territory, just as the Green party faction in the German Bundestag wants Germany to join the Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty.[35] Needless to say, in light of the Alliance's increased focus on deterrence since 2014, differences over nuclear deterrence have an even greater divisive potential in 2021 than they had in 2010.

Confidence in Continued US Security Guarantees

As discussed above, at least part of the suspicions against France's strategic dialogue with Russia, and more broadly European strategic autonomy, arise from fears that Paris may have ambitions to 'decouple' European security from that of the United States. In reality, as noted above, 'decoupling' is not on European capitals' agenda, and thus also not on Paris'. Yet, another aspect over which Europeans disagree is their analyses of long-term prospects for US security guarantees. The debate is consequently about whether Europe needs to start thinking about a 'Plan B' or whether Joe Biden's election as US president means that risks of the United States withdrawing from or reducing its engagement for Europe are off the table.

In this context, threat perception again matters tremendously. The greater the fear of Russia, the greater the fear of decoupling. Depending on the kinds of threats European capitals consider most pressing, their focus is either on expeditionary operations (terrorism) or collective territorial defense (Russia). This leads not only to considerable differences in defense planning and posture as discussed above, but also to different degrees of dependence on the United States. Unsurprisingly, therefore, how vociferously European countries place themselves in the Atlanticist camp correlates strongly with the intensity with which they perceive a Russian threat.

This is not to say that France, which even in this context represents the other end of the European spectrum, does not need the United States. The two countries in fact cooperate closely at the bilateral level. For Paris, US-French cooperation is most valuable and crucial in the Sahel region in the fight against terrorism, where the United States notably provides crucial reconnaissance and surveillance to France's

counter-terrorism operation Barkhane.[36] From a French perspective, this is the most important vector of transatlantic defense cooperation, as again became apparent after the 2020 US elections, when French minister of the Armed Forces Florence Parly expressed her hopes of continued US engagement in that region.[37] Yet, as seen from Paris, the nation's survival is hardly dependent on the United States, as opposed to perceptions in Central Eastern European countries where the US is ultimately considered the guarantor of the nations' existence. Those states that perceive a threat from Russia are at the same time the most convinced Atlanticists who, in view of their situation, rely on the closest possible cooperation with the United States—and are correspondingly skeptical about stronger cooperation in the EU. On the one hand, they are afraid of prompting less US engagement. On the other hand, they want to avoid having to invest scarce resources in the CSDP, which is by definition not about territorial defense.

One key question for the continent's security is: how likely is continued US engagement? Given that US engagement will still be decided in Washington rather than in Paris, Berlin, or Warsaw, how likely is it that US administrations want to maintain US security guarantees for Europe? And how likely is it—provided they have the political will—that they will be able to do so in light of political and budgetary constraints? On this issue, views and assessments again vary across Europe. Once more, France may be considered the outlier. It is fair to argue that the French analysis on future US engagement is the most pessimistic for European security, based on two observations. First, it is often stressed in France that 'Trumpism' is not gone with Donald Trump and that US domestic politics will likely remain volatile.[38] Second, as most recently reiterated in its 2021 Strategic Update, France expects the United States to refocus its security policies toward Asia and away from Europe, notably in light of China's emergence as a strategic rival.[39] The French take is thus both relatively traditional—after all, de Gaulle decided to acquire nuclear weapons because he deemed US security guarantees unreliable—and based on systemic factors. In most other countries, transatlantic security relations tend to be viewed in a much more 'personalized' manner, i.e., with much greater emphasis on the occupant of the White House without explicitly accounting for systemic factors. From such a vantage point, the years of the Trump adminis-

tration are considered an anomaly. With Joe Biden's election, and for instance his speech at the 2021 virtual edition of the Munich Security Conference in which he declared that "America is back,"[40] transatlantic security relations are seen as returning to normal. Joe Biden's accession to the US presidency has therefore already changed one key aspect of Europe's defense debate: the question of whether or not Europe—and the EU in particular—should aspire for more strategic autonomy. With the Biden administration, the French argument that Europe needs to step up its joint defense efforts to compensate for diminished US engagement clearly seems weakened in the eyes of many.

Yet, a considerable portion of the debate on European strategic autonomy is a false debate anyway, at least in its transatlantic dimension. Supporters of strategic autonomy primarily argue that the EU must gain more 'autonomy to' to become more capable of acting, and opponents warn against efforts toward 'autonomy from,' i.e., decoupling European security from that of the United States. Consequently, and quite paradoxically, the two strands also differ in the assumed reference point for European strategic autonomy. Proponents are concerned with more capacity for action for the EU within the framework of the CSDP defined in Article 42 of the Lisbon Treaty. This means military operations outside of EU member states' territory, covering the spectrum of the so-called Petersberg Tasks. Thus, decoupling from the United States was never among the proponents' goals, nor was a role for the EU in collective defense. Opponents, however, primarily assume efforts toward precisely this decoupling and therefore go far beyond the CSDP in their argumentation. French officials, including President Macron, have repeatedly explained that European strategic autonomy and NATO are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, Macron has also said:

> But our commitment within NATO neither prevents nor hinders European strategic autonomy, as I have said and will say again here, quite the contrary, but in order to be respected within NATO, to be credible within NATO, we need a strong, more united, bolder Europe, a Europe that stands by the choices we have made for a little more than three years. We will have to continue in the coming months with the United States of America, reengaged in multilateralism, I hope, reengaged in several places of conflict, we

> will have to convince them of our choices, of their relevance in the long term, and I am deeply committed to this.[41]

In sum, France does not seek to promote decoupling Europe's security from that of the US. Rather, France's reasoning is based on the idea that decoupling, at least in degrees, will inevitably be initiated by Washington and that Europe must act accordingly.

Much of the European defense debate is often theological in nature, and rarely based on solid empirical grounds. The fundamental question remains unanswered and unaddressed: is the *status quo* of European security still an option in the medium to long term? And if it is not, in what way—and in this context, also in what institutional framework(s)—should European security be organized? What would be the United States' role in European security? More than five years into the debate on European strategic autonomy, after the end of the Trump presidency and more than seven years after Russia's annexation of Crimea, European governments still do not have answers to these questions. It is not only the visions in the various European capitals that differ. Many European governments have not developed any vision at all and are stubbornly clinging to options that may simply not be available in the future. The European debate may thus be summarized as follows: one camp argues that, in light of likely less US engagement, Europe needs to start thinking about a plan B before it is too late. The other camp responds that it wants the United States to guarantee Europe's security. A more fruitful debate would be based on clearer ideas on the future of US security engagement in Europe, which in particular would require the United States to take a stance.

Concluding Remarks: Focusing on China is Not the Panacea

In light of the above, the NATO 2030 Reflection Group's call for alliance unity seems well warranted. Turkey's estrangement with the West is clearly not the only problem NATO is facing. Disagreements, sometimes profound disagreements, also persist among the Alliance's European members. That there is no such thing as a unified Europe should be a key takeaway for US policy makers. Differences among Europeans mostly pertain to future policies and approaches to European and transatlantic security. Debates oppose those who wish to preserve

the status quo and those who argue that this option is simply not available, mostly due to change at the international level as well as in US domestic politics.

Against this backdrop, NATO members should also be careful to not overemphasize China as a topic for the Alliance. It may indeed be tempting to focus on the faraway "strategic competitor" as an easy way out of debating different views on transatlantic security affairs. This applies, first, to the hardcore Atlanticists among European allies because they think that this will guarantee that they are viewed favorably by the United States. But it may also, secondly, apply to the Alliance as a whole. Because the China focus is more abstract, it is easier to agree upon than on closer-to-home issues such as dealing with Russia. The Indo-Pacific may be the latest buzzword and great power competition with China may be *en vogue* in Washington, but it must also be kept in mind that Europeans have had past difficulties agreeing on China. More importantly, there are still too many unresolved security issues in the Euro-Atlantic area for too much attention being shifted to the far East. As argued above, Russia is indeed the single most important factor. The fundamental differences outlined in this chapter will not go away, and they will shape intra-Alliance debates in the foreseeable future. Notably divergent threat perceptions cannot be solved by compromise, given the very nature of the matter. Russia's undermining the European security order will remain on the agenda, and consequently territorial defense and deterrence. Likewise, instability and the terrorist threat from the South will not disappear, and hence the necessity for stabilization operations and the like. Against this backdrop, perhaps the most important task for NATO and EU members consists of finally deciding on the division of labor between the two organizations.

Notes

1. See, for example, Robert Gates, "Text of Speech by Robert Gates on the Future of NATO," Atlantic Council, June 10, 2011 (www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/natosource/text-of-speech-by-robert-gates-on-the-future-of-nato/).

2. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," November 25, 2020 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf).

3. Emmanuel Macron, "Emmanuel Macron in his own words (English): The French President's Interview With The Economist," *The Economist*, November 7, 2019 (www.economist.com/europe/2019/11/07/emmanuel-macron-in-his-own-words-english).

4. See, for example, Antoine Got, "Turkey's crisis with the West: How a New Low in Relations Risks Paralyzing NATO," *War on the Rocks*, November 19, 2020 (https://warontherocks.com/2020/11/turkeys-crisis-with-the-west-how-a-new-low-in-relations-risks-paralyzing-nato).

5. Valerie Insinna, "It's official: US Air Force to Buy Turkish F35s," *Defense News*, July 20, 2020 (www.defensenews.com/air/2020/07/20/its-official-us-air-force-to-buy-turkish-f-35s/).

6. See, for example, Piotr Smolar, "La France contre la Turquie, aux racines de l'affrontement," *Le Monde*, July 10, 2020 (www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2020/07/10/la-france-contre-la-turquie-aux-racines-de-l-affrontement_6045775_3210.html).

7. See, for example, N.A., "Libya crisis: France suspends Nato mission role amid Turkey row," *BBC News*, July 2, 2020 (www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-53262725).

8. Sarantis Michalopoulos, "Merkel and Borissov blocked EU sanctions against Turkey at summit: sources," *Euractiv*, December 11, 2020 (www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/merkel-and-borissov-blocked-eu-sanctions-against-turkey-at-summit-sources).

9. European Council, "EU-Turkey Statement", March 18, 2016 (www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement).

10. See, for example, Bernd Riegert, "Opinion: Without a migrant deal with Turkey, the EU is naked," *Deutsche Welle*, March 2, 2020 (www.dw.com/en/opinion-without-a-migrant-deal-with-turkey-the-eu-is-naked/a-52600352).

11. Toni Alaranta, "The Eastern Mediterranean Conflict. From Turkey-Greece Confrontation to Regional Power Struggles," *FIIA Briefing Paper* no. 302, Finnish Institute of International Affairs, March 2021.

12. Daria Isachenko, "Turkey-Russia Partnership in the War over Nagorno-Karabakh," *SWP Comment* 2020/C 53, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, November 2020.

13. See, for example, Ben Hubbard et al., "Abandoned by U.S. in Syria, Kurds Find New Ally in American Foe," *New York Times*, October 13, 2019 (www.nytimes.com/2019/10/13/world/middleeast/syria-turkey-invasion-isis.html).

14. Frédéric Mauro, "Strategic Autonomy under the Spotlight. The New Holy Grail of European Defence," *GRIP Report* no.1, GRIP, 2018.

15. European External Action Service, "Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign And Security Policy," EEAS, 2016 (https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/eu-global-strategy/17304/global-strategy-european-unions-foreign-and-security-policy_en).

16. Claudia Major and Christian Mölling, "Strategische Autonomie Europas: Toxische Wortklauberei, " *Spiegel Online*, November 29, 2020 (www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/eu-und-die-strategische-autonomie-toxische-wortklauberei-a-77a58db9-6dac-48c9-8aa0-8073215234f2).

17. German Ministry of Defense, "Konzeption der Bundeswehr," BMVg, July 20, 2018 (www.bmvg.de/resource/blob/26544/9ceddf6df2f48ca87aa0e3ce2826348d/20180731-konzeption-der-bundeswehr-data.pdf).

18. For a more detailed discussion, see Barbara Kunz, "The Evolving Transatlantic Link: What European Response? *Disentangling* the European Security Debate," in *Alliances and Power Politics in the Trump Era. America in Retreat?* edited by Maud Quessard, Frédéric Heurtebize and Frédérick Gagnon (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), pp. 33-51.

19. Daniel Fiott, "The EU's Strategic Compass for Security and Defence: What type of ambition is the needle pointing to?" *CSDS Policy Brief* no. 2, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy, March 9, 2021.

20. European Council, Foreign Affairs Council, "Main Results," March 14, 2016 (www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/fac/2016/03/14).

21. See, for example, N.A., "A predictable mistake.' MEP's slam Borrell over Moscow trip," *Euronews*, February 9, 2021 (www.euronews.com/2021/02/09/a-predictable-mistake-meps-slam-borrell-over-moscow-trip).

22. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era."

23. German Federal Foreign Office, "The Future of Security in Europe," speech by State Secretary Markus Ederer at a workshop on "Lessons from the Ukrainian Conflict: Fix the European Security Order, or Overhaul it?," *DGAP and Center for the US and Europe at Brookings*, September 20, 2016 (www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/160920sts-e-future-security-europe/283540).

24. N.A., "Engage Russia but remain 'clear-eyed' while doing so, Blinken tells NATO," *Reuters*, March 24, 2021 (www.reuters.com/article/us-nato-russia-idUSKBN2BG2H6).

25. N.A., "Engage Russia but remain 'clear-eyed' while doing so, Blinken tells NATO."

26. Emmanuel Macron, "Speech by President Emmanuel Macron—Ambassadors' Conference 2018," August 27, 2018 (www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/the-ministry-and-its-network/news/ambassadors-week/ambassadors-week-edition-2018/article/speech-by-president-emmanuel-macron-ambassadors-conference-2018).

27. Emmanuel Macron, "Discours du Président de la République à la conférence des ambassadeurs," August 27, 2019 (www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2019/08/27/discours-du-president-de-la-republique-a-la-conference-des-ambassadeurs-1).

28. Ibid.

29. See, for example, the hearing with Pierre Vimont at the French Senate, "Audition de M. Pierre Vimont, envoyé spécial pour la Russie, " Paris, February 19, 2020 (https://uk.ambafrance.org/Point-sur-la-politique-francaise-envers-la-Russie).

30. Joanna Plucinska, "Poland sees limited room for Russia diplomacy, despite Macron overtures," *Reuters*, December 13, 2019 (www.reuters.com/article/us-poland-russia-macron-idUSKBN1YH1YA).

31. Ministère des Armées, "Propos liminaires de Florence Parly, ministre des Armées, devant la sous-commission défense et sécurité du Parlement européen le 2 juillet 2020," July, 2 2020 (www.defense.gouv.fr/fre/salle-de-presse/discours/discours-de-florence-parly/propos-liminaires-de-florence-parly-ministre-des-armees-devant-la-sous-commission-defense-et-securite-du-parlement-europeen-le-2-juillet-2020).

32. Johan Engvall et al., "Conventional Arms Control. A Way Forward or Wishful Thinking?" *FOI Report* FOI-R—4586-SE, Försvarets Forskningsinstitut, April 2018.

33. Swedish Armed Forces, "Försvarsbeslutet lägger grunden för ökad säkerjet och stabilitet," December 15, 2020 (www.forsvarsmakten.se/sv/aktuellt/2020/12/forsvarsbeslutet-lagger-grunden-for-okad-sakerhet-och-stabilitet).

34. Ian Traynor, "Germany and France in nuclear weapons dispute ahead of Nato summit," *The Guardian*, November 18, 2010 (https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/nov/18/nato-summit-nuclear-weapons-row).

35. Bündnis 90/Die Grünen Bundestagsfraktion, "Atomwaffenverbotsvertrag in Kraft," January 22, 2021 (www.gruene-bundestag.de/themen/sicherheitspolitik/nukleare-teilhabe-beenden).

36. Maya Kandel, "Hand in Hand and Eye to Eye? US-French Counterterrorism Cooperation in the Sahel in the Trump-Macron Era," in *Alliances and Power Politics in the Trump Era. America in Retreat?* edited by Maud Quessard,

Frédéric Heurtebize and Frédérick Gagnon (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), pp. 121-136.

37. French Ministry of the Armed Forces, "Discours de Florence Parly, ministre des Armées, lors de son audition devant la commission de la défense nationale et des forces armées de l'Assemblée Nationale," January 12, 2021 (www.defense.gouv.fr/salle-de-presse/discours/discours-de-florence-parly/discours-de-florence-parly-ministre-des-armees-lors-de-son-audition-devant-la-commission-de-la-defense-nationale-et-des-forces-armees-de-l-assemblee-nationale-le-12-janvier-2021).

38. As just one example, see Maya Kandel, "Le trumpisme a un avenir independant de Trump," *Le Monde*, October 16, 2020 (www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2020/10/16/maya-kandel-le-trumpisme-a-un-avenir-independant-de-trump_6056289_3210.html).

39. French Ministry of the Armed Forces, *Strategic Update*, February 10, 2021, p. 19 (www.defense.gouv.fr/dgris/presentation/evenements/actualisation-strategique-2021).

40. The White House, "Remarks by President Biden at the 2021 Virtual Munich Security Conference," February 19, 2021 (www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/02/19/remarks-by-president-biden-at-the-2021-virtual-munich-security-conference).

41. Emmanuel Macron, "Vœux aux armées depuis la Préfecture Maritime de l'Atlantique à Brest, " January 19, 2021 (www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2021/01/19/voeux-aux-armees-depuis-la-prefecture-maritime-de-latlantique-a-brest) [author's translation].

Chapter 8

Democratic Backsliding and Contested Values Within the Alliance

Trine Flockhart

The publication of the report *NATO 2030: United for a New Era*[1] sends the message that one of the major challenges for the Alliance in the new and more challenging security environment is for the Alliance to remain united in its commitment to the values outlined in the preamble to the North Atlantic Treaty: "democracy, individual liberty and rule of law."[2] The authors of the NATO 2030 Report left no doubt about the value of NATO's values by emphasizing that NATO's "shared democratic identity is what distinguishes the Alliance from the principal threats and challenges it faces" and that remaining "wedded to these foundational values is the single most important factor in ensuring the durability of the Alliance."[3] The NATO 2030 Report is rare in its explicit focus on NATO's values, but that NATO is more than just a defensive arrangement was clear already from the very beginning when the US Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, declared that the North Atlantic Treaty was "an affirmation of the moral and spiritual values which we hold in common."[4] Since then, the importance of NATO's value foundations has been emphasized at all NATO gatherings and in the practice of always seeking a united position in all decisions. The June 2021 NATO Brussels Summit is no exception. Not only does the Communiqué, as usual, repeat the importance of NATO's foundational values, and the importance of unity and cohesion,[5] but the commitment to NATO's foundational values was further emphasized in the publication of a new "Strengthening Resilience Commitment," published as one of the official Summit documents, which states clearly that "the foundation of our resilience lies in our shared commitment to the principles of individual liberty, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law."[6] The publication of the new document and the NATO 2030 Report indicate that the time has come for NATO to take its values seriously—not just rhetorically but also in practice.[7]

The authors of the 2030 report are correct in emphasizing the importance of NATO's commitment to shared values, but it must also be recognized that in the current political environment, agreement about those values can no longer be taken for granted—this is the case both within the Alliance, but it is also a wider problem reflecting that there is now a broadly shared consensus that the basic norms underpinning the overall liberal international order are under pressure and that global politics will be shaped by open disagreements about its basic values.[8] The very same challenging international security environment that makes the commitment essential has also stirred political sentiments within the Alliance that may make it difficult—perhaps even impossible—for the Alliance to live up to the commitment. Democracy today is in crisis and NATO's foundational values are contested in several member states such as Hungary, Turkey, and even Poland. In these member states, the possibility of democratic backsliding is today no longer unthinkable—it is already taking place.[9] Even some of the oldest democracies—the United States, Britain, and France—face diminishing confidence in their democratic institutions and significant disruptions in their domestic politics. The rise of right-wing, authoritarian-style populism and an apparent mainstreaming of national(ist) politics[10] is no longer just an abstract threat but a reality that is currently in the process of altering long established cleavage structures in party politics.[11] These changes seem likely to result in new political divisions within the Alliance between *liberal internationalism* and *illiberal nationalism*. Clearly such a situation will have profound ramifications for cohesion within the Alliance and for the continued shared commitment to NATO's foundational values.

This chapter asks if the Alliance can continue to live up to its commitment to "democracy, individual liberty and rule of law" and asks how democratic backsliding may constitute an existential threat to NATO. The chapter consists of four sections. The first section outlines how NATO has historically been able to adapt to a frequently changing external strategic environment to meet a seemingly never-ending stream of crises—qualities that arguably made NATO a resilient institution. In the second section, the chapter attributes NATO's resilience to the ability of the Alliance to balance between two different, but intertwined identities—an identity as a defense alliance and an identity as a com-

munity of values.[12] The chapter demonstrates that historically, NATO's crises, tensions, and contradictions have primarily been associated with the identity as a defense alliance, whereas the value foundation of the Alliance has been continuously reinforced and reified through deeply embedded practices associated with NATO's identity as a community of values. In the third section, the chapter shows that today, the situation has changed fundamentally as the Alliance is doing well in areas that have historically caused the most concern such as its military capabilities, whereas NATO's assumed bedrock of strength—its stable identity, deeply embedded practices, and shared values—is now contested from within its own ranks. In the final section, the chapter turns to contemplating NATO's future and the prospects for NATO not only to return to long-established practices to reinforce the shared values of the Alliance, but also the prospects for the Alliance to reorient itself towards a very different and challenging strategic environment.

NATO—A Model Resilient Institution

It is widely believed that NATO's longevity and resilience can be attributed to both its remarkable ability to 'bounce back' after the many crises that have occurred throughout NATO's history and its ability to adapt to a constantly evolving strategic environment by changing strategic direction and expanding its membership, operational scope, and area of operations. Jens Stoltenberg, NATO's Secretary General, is in no doubt that "NATO is the most successful alliance in history because we have been able to change when the world is changing."[13] However, this reading of NATO's endurance and resilience does not tell the full story, and it does not alert us to why democratic backsliding and contestation of NATO's foundational values should worry us as much—if not more so—than more traditional crises such as those related to burden sharing issues and capability gaps. To fully understand why democratic backsliding and the decreasing salience of NATO's foundational values present an existential threat to NATO, we need to expand our understanding of resilience.

Resilience is often understood in the policy literature as the ability to withstand pressure and adversity and to 'bounce back' to the original position after a crisis, thereby remaining robust in the face of change.[14]

This understanding of resilience originates in ecology and engineering[15] and has entered the social sciences through disaster management studies and the indisputable need to ensure that critical infrastructures would be able to withstand pressure and to quickly return to normal after a crisis. It seems that this is the understanding of resilience used by NATO in its new document from the 2021 Brussels Summit expressing a commitment to strengthening resilience. However, whilst being able to return to the original position is important for an organization to endure, organizations in a changing strategic environment need to do more than simply endure, they need to remain "fit for purpose" by continuously adapting to a constantly changing and highly challenging environment.[16] From this perspective, NATO's resilience should be conceived as a practice of self-governance, in which NATO should be willing and able to embrace change through reflective self-governance strategies to continuously cope with and adapt to change. While some situations may indeed require 'bouncing back' to the original position before a crisis, others will necessitate 'jumping ahead' through adaptation or transformation to remain "fit for purpose" within the new situation.

Throughout NATO's history, the stable point of departure to which the Alliance could always return to has been a reiteration of its fundamental values. These values have routinely been expressed through NATO's official documents, narrative, and actions as a shared vision for the future that contains a shared understanding of what it means to be "fit for purpose." All social domains, including an organization such as NATO—have fundamental values that express their deep social fabric which is further specified through a collection of rules and norms to define what constitutes appropriate behavior by the members of the community. However, the deep social fabric of an organization or community is not suitable for continuous or far-reaching change and adaptation because such change will alter its fundamental character. Resilience from this position is therefore a form of meta-stability which is the "sweet spot" between necessary adaptation and preservation of the values that define the deep social fabric of a community.[17] Importantly, meta-stability allows for adaptation of practices, norms, and rules, provided that these changes can be aligned with the deeper social fabric by being "narratable"—that is possible to be incorporated into the narrative of the community without contradicting or in any

other way compromising its identity.[18] In other words, the foundational values that are closely tied to an organization's identity need to remain fixed or the organization must undertake a considerable effort to ensure that any such changes can be successfully incorporated into the organization's narrative. As will be demonstrated later, this is especially true for NATO, as the Alliance has a particular need for showing cohesion and unity and that all members support its value foundations.

From the perspective outlined here, NATO has been a model of a resilient entity with an impressive level of meta-stability throughout its history. While it has undertaken extensive adaptation over the years through changes to its strategic concepts and operational guidance documents, as well as expansion of its membership and operational scope, the Alliance has made no changes to its treaty base since its foundation in 1949. NATO has, however, not always acted in accordance with its original values, as the Alliance was not always characterized by an "unshakable commitment to democracy." The fact that Portugal under the Salazar regime was a founding member and that Greece and Turkey, despite their ups and downs of democratic commitment, have been NATO members for nearly sixty years, was a clear misalignment between the declared values of the Alliance and its actual practice. However, the misalignment was narratable in the tense environment of the Cold War, which enabled a narrative that emphasized *freedom* rather than *democracy*. With the end of the Cold War, the identity of the Alliance was firmly anchored in democracy and liberal values, which has been expressed in official documents and practice since. Today, NATO's narrative is inextricably linked with the narrative about the liberal international order, and it would neither be possible, nor desirable, for the Alliance to return to its Cold War position where democracy was a secondary, 'nice to have' form of domestic governance. For that reason alone, democratic backsliding represents a major problem for the Alliance.

NATO as a Defense Alliance and as a Community of Values

The resilience literature can shed light on the importance of NATO's ability to adapt and it can show why changes and contestations that go to the heart of the deeper social fabric constitute a serious threat to the Alliance. However, to fully understand the impact of democratic back-

sliding and contestation of NATO's values, I turn to the importance attached to NATO's internal cohesion and NATO's dual-track approach involving both a military and a political component as outlined in the Atlantic Treaty and expressed most clearly in Article 5 and Article 2.[19] The dual approach to security means that NATO is structured around two different identities that can be summarized as 'NATO the defense alliance' and 'NATO the community of values.' The former primarily reflects NATO's performative role in terms of 'what NATO does.' The latter primarily reflects NATO's identity and deeper social fabric in terms of its shared knowledge and values, i.e., 'what NATO is.' The two roles are, however, closely interconnected and must always be aligned with each other. NATO cannot act in ways that contradicts its values, because if it does, it will find itself in an identity crisis or it will appear inconsistent and hypocritical. The two parts of NATO have existed side by side since NATO's formation, with the community of values role serving a primarily internal function with a less public profile, and the defense alliance role being the more up-front public *raison d'être* of the Alliance. Most of NATO's many crises over the course of its history have been associated with the defense alliance role, including crises about nuclear strategy, extended deterrence, conventional capability gaps, burden sharing, crisis management operations, exercises and interoperability, enlargement, and partnerships, and much more.

Crises associated with NATO's role as a community of values have also occurred, although they have been less frequent. When such crises have occurred, they have been deep and long-lasting with no obvious politically feasible solutions. Crises affecting NATO's role as a community of values—for example concerns about the cohesion of the value community and NATO's pernicious worry about the credibility of the US nuclear guarantee—have been a problem of trust rather than capability, yet solutions have been sought by addressing capability issues through military, so-called hardware solutions rather than addressing the trust issue through political, so-called software solutions. The problem was that the credibility of the United States professed willingness to sacrifice New York for Paris cannot be proven politically. NATO therefore spent the entire Cold War seeking military solutions that would not only demonstrate NATO's unity and resolve, but which would also involve strategic planning and procedures that would make

crossing the nuclear threshold and bringing the American nuclear arsenal into the conflict seem very likely, or even inescapable. NATO's decision in 1977 to deploy Cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe was the last of a long row of such military moves to prove that the promise articulated in Article 5 was credible and that NATO remained cohesive. Yet, paradoxically, the attempt at proving cohesion through military solutions exposed deep divisions and on each occasion launched the Alliance into deep crisis.

The need for unity led to the expectation among members to always sing from the same hymn sheet and to do everything they could to display unity and resolve and to demonstrate that the Alliance rested on shared values. This logic led to ingrained alliance practices of (often long-winded) processes of negotiation to achieve consensus and an unspoken rule to never do anything that could bring the unity of the Alliance in doubt and thereby undermine the cohesion of the Alliance. These processes were informal and intended for internal use as necessary measures to mitigate, and perhaps cover, the structural fragility and inconsistencies of an alliance that relied on extended nuclear deterrence underpinned by fundamentally different interests between the European and North American parts of the Alliance on how and when to use the nuclear deterrent.[20] Even though the strategic environment today is quite different, NATO still places very high value on being able to demonstrate cohesion through a strong and unwavering commitment to its fundamental values as expressed in the pre-amble of the Washington Treaty. Unity is still *alpha and omega* in the Alliance.

The importance of values and unity for NATO is often emphasized rhetorically and by routine, but precisely why unity around NATO's values is of such importance is rarely specified. This traditional vagueness around the importance of values was abandoned in the NATO 2030 Report as the authors very clearly ascribed NATO's longevity after the demise of its common enemy to NATO having developed into a community of values.[21] There is little doubt that the dual structure of NATO has meant that the Alliance could maintain a political role and *raison d'être* despite the absence of a concrete military threat. Today, as democratic backsliding is taking place in some member states and as NATO's foundational values appear to be either contested or of fading salience, the question is whether NATO can remain resilient in the

absence of clarity and consensus about what NATO is and what NATO should and could be in a fundamentally altered, highly dynamic, and complex strategic environment.

The Politics of Threat and the Crisis of Democracy

It is widely believed that we live in a transformational moment in history comparable to the scale and magnitude of transformations following the industrial revolution and with shared characteristics to the long-drawn collapse of the multipolar system of the 19th and first half of the 20th century. The foreign policy establishments have long been interested in instability arising from shifting power patterns among the great powers, the decline of the West, and the crisis of the liberal order, but they have been less keenly aware of the consequences of other change processes and challenges, such as climate change, rapid technological and scientific advancement, demographic shifts, digitalization, globalization, and more. Each process of change is singularly significant, but together they interact in complex and unpredictable ways to become key drivers of additional emergent change bringing new challenges to the political, economic, social, and even psychological domains. The current strategic context has aptly been labelled as volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous—also known as the VUCA World.[22] This is a world that feels like it is unravelling socially, fractioning economically, and deteriorating ecologically.[23] Unsurprisingly, the VUCA World has had both political and emotional consequences, which have manifested themselves in (amongst other things) the rise of the "politics of threat" and in a creeping "crisis of democracy" that many worry are signs of a global democratic retreat, or in Samuel Huntington's terms, a "reverse wave of democratization."[24]

Until recently, it was widely assumed that Western societies would be governed by moderate political parties committed to democracy and liberal personal freedoms, free trade, and international cooperation based on multilateralism.[25] Yet, the emergence of professed illiberal forms of governments in a growing number of European countries and not least with the election in 2016 of Donald Trump in the United States, it has become clear that such assumptions are no longer valid and that democracy may be a much more fragile condition than pre-

viously thought. Moreover, it is now clear that the politics of threat and the crisis of democracy exacerbate and reinforce each other. Populists have been remarkably adept in arousing segments of the electorate that, in many cases, may not have been politically active before. They have done this by presenting issues such as globalization, migration (both irregular and legal), technological change, and climate change as threats to the North American, European, and Western ways of life and by fully exploiting these issues politically through targeted forms of internet-based (dis-)information that are highly effective in spreading extreme views and outright lies amongst their followers. These followers are, in surprising numbers, willing to use their electoral clout and to engage in direct forms of political action—in some cases by violent means such as the storming of the US Capitol in January 2021. The new form of politics is a form of radicalization, which seeks to undermine the trust in, and legitimacy of, established structures of political power through anti-establishment appeals, simplistic slogans and sweeping promises. The process constitutes a major crisis of liberal democracy on both sides of the Atlantic, which, once in motion, may be extremely difficult to reverse.[26] As a result, the political center in industrial democracies is in peril today and the trust in established domestic and international institutions is damaged with grave implications for institutions such as NATO.

Analysts and practitioners have been slow to realize the extent and importance of these political changes.[27] The delay was partly a function of an extremely full political agenda, with analysts and decision-makers simply too busy with other, seemingly more important, concerns related to global order, the financial crisis, and regional conflicts requiring demanding stabilization operations. The delay in recognizing the importance and interconnectivity between classic security issues and what has traditionally been regarded as 'low politics' may also have been an outcome of long-standing distinctions between what is viewed as relevant and not relevant issues for security organizations such as NATO. It cannot be denied that both foreign and security policy practitioners and the International Relations discipline long has seen the domestic level as a separate political sphere of lesser importance to the international level, which by implication has also excluded many of the processes of change referred to above because they lie outside the scope of

traditional security concerns. The distinction between domestic and international politics has been costly because it has contributed to the belated realization of the importance of domestic political shifts and of the consequences of the uncertainty flowing from the VUCA World on domestic politics. The problem is that the shared concern of the policy and scholarly community of the crisis of the liberal international order and other liberal internationalist concerns has detracted attention from the negative impacts on individuals and local communities and how the changes of the VUCA World were perceived as a source of loss of status, income, and influence by a large segment of the electorates in Western liberal democracies. The anger felt by those whose livelihoods have been negatively affected by technological change, climate change mitigation, migration, globalization, and neoliberal economics has provided a fertile base for populists to develop counter-narratives to the traditional liberal internationalist narrative. The new narratives emphasize a variety of threats to the Western, European, and North American way of life. The result has been that while the primary concern of the foreign and security establishments were issues such as the crisis in the liberal international order, popular politics saw the liberal international order, its institutions, and decision-makers as not only having failed to protect their livelihoods, status, and way of life, but to have contributed directly—and intentionally—to their loss.

The growing perception that the institutions and the existing order has failed to live up to promises made about prosperity and opportunity has understandably led to political grievances and contestations. Such contestations have traditionally been found on the left of the political spectrum where, for example, the anti-globalization movement has made their view about liberal institutions extremely clear in a number of disruptive events around the world. However, where left-wing contestations against the establishment were expressed in transnational (global) social movements with many turning their backs on the democratic electoral processes, right-wing populism, whose grievances are actually quite similar, embraced the electoral process and used it to awaken the 'silent majority' and to express the will of what they considered ordinary people. Although the contestations against the established order from right-wing populism were less noisy than, for example, the contestations of the anti-globalization movement, Occupy

Wall Street, or Extinction Rebellion, they were no less damaging and they have been on a steady development curve for the past 30 years or so as right-wing contestations against the establishment and the existing order came to the surface gradually in the rise of illiberal forms of nationalism from the 1980s onwards, seen in the growing popularity of parties such as the National Front in the United Kingdom, Front National in France, the Danish People's Party, the Northern League in Italy, and the Austrian Freedom Party. Newcomers have since added to a growing list of right-wing authoritarian and avowedly illiberal parties such as the Law and Justice Party in Poland, Jobbik and Fidesz in Hungary, the Dutch Freedom Party, the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), the Alternative for Germany, the Sweden Democrats, True Finns, and many more. The relatively silent rise of these parties produced surprising electoral results. In Hungary, the combination of Victor Orbán's electoral victory in 2010 with the support of Jobbik and a highly disproportional electoral system facilitated a super-majority that allowed Orbán to prompt constitutional changes and a major assault on civil society and liberal freedoms. Although shocking, Hungary was initially assumed to be an isolated case. However, with the Polish election in 2015, the British referendum on leaving the EU in June 2016, the push-back against the attempted coup d'état in Turkey in 2016, the US presidential election in November 2016, the French presidential election in May 2017, and the German parliamentary elections in September 2017, it was clear that a new trend towards populism had entered Western democratic politics and that the concerns of 'the people' were not the same as the concerns of 'the establishment.'

The emergence and combination of "politics of threat" and the "crisis of democracy" that has been outlined above has given rise to a new situation in which the Alliance—and the party systems of several member states—is increasingly divided between member states whose political positions now fall into two emerging camps that can be summarized as *liberal internationalism* and *illiberal nationalism*.[28] The former advocates open societies, free trade, and multilateralism, while the latter promotes tightly controlled borders, trade restrictions coupled with a preference for unilateralist action, and transactional forms of bilateralism or coalitions of the willing. During the Trump presidency the latter view was clearly the official position of

the US government, advocated by not just the President, but also by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, emphasizing the virtues of nationalism and criticizing multilateralism, the EU, and arguing that "international bodies" which constrain national sovereignty "must be reformed or eliminated."[29] Astonishingly, NATO during the Trump years found itself in a position where the leading state of the Alliance appeared to be more closely aligned with professed illiberal leaders such as Hungary's Victor Orbán, Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, or even Russia's Vladimir Putin. Even with a professed liberal internationalist and supporter of multilateralism in the White House, there is still a real danger that a new cleavage is emerging within the Alliance between defenders and adversaries of the liberal international order and of multilateral diplomacy.

The rise of illiberal nationalism as a potent force in European and US electoral politics, as well as a marked decline in the trust in political and international institutions and widespread contestations against the traditional foundations of foreign policy, is bound to have significant agenda-setting and constraining consequences for the formulation of foreign policy objectives in general and vis-à-vis the transatlantic relationship and NATO in particular. Today, NATO finds itself in the situation where some members of the Alliance hold views that are essentially incompatible with the values and practices underpinning it. This is an entirely new situation, which contains a worrying potential for undermining cohesion in NATO in a way that has not previously been experienced or contemplated and which will be very difficult to incorporate into a coherent narrative based on NATO's fundamental values, unity, and actions.

Towards NATO's Future

The big question is, as always, how should NATO move forward from the current situation. Especially important are questions of how the Alliance may be able to renew itself to remain 'fit for purpose' within a rapidly changing strategic context, how NATO might be able to 'bounce back' after the Trump induced crisis of leadership, and how NATO might be able to 'reflect on and adapt to' the new forms of politics within its member states. Ironically, despite the enormi-

ty of the ongoing changes and transformation in the wider strategic environment, adapting to the VUCA World will be the 'easiest' task because adapting to a changing strategic context is a process that takes place within NATO as the defense alliance, and this is a competence which NATO has excelled at in the past. Moreover, NATO agreed at its June 2021 Brussels Summit to start the process for preparing an updated strategic concept, which should be ready by the planned Madrid Summit in 2022. However, a new changing global strategic environment also brings with it an increased need to develop a common approach for dealing not just with Russia, as the Alliance has been used to for more than 70 years, but also to have a common approach towards China.[30] The June 2021 NATO Summit showed clearly NATO's aspirations to develop a common strategy on China, but the diverging positions on liberal internationalism and illiberal nationalism may well prove to be significant hurdles for achieving such a common position.

The second task of 'bouncing back' after the four disruptive years with Trump in the White House may seem a relatively easy one given that the Trump years are now over. However, the Trump years interrupted the long-established practice of negotiation and dialogue which has been the main vehicle for ensuring unity and cohesion in all NATO's decisions. Despite the determination of NATO's Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg and the leaders of many member states to 'ride out' the Trump presidency, this experience may have caused lasting damage by having opened up the for the possibility of questioning the foundational values of the Alliance—most notably the unshakable commitment to liberal values and liberal internationalism and NATO's role as an essential support structure in the liberal international order.[31] The damage done may not be easy to repair—once established practices have been disturbed, they can be difficult to re-establish. Moreover, it seems likely that European Allies will continue to worry that Trump, or someone like him, could return to power in a United States where political institutions seem weakened and dysfunctional. The trust in American political institutions is clearly at a low-point, not just among right-wing populists—but among the liberal internationalist within NATO. A renewed impetus for European independence in security matters may therefore have been initiated—which although welcomed

in many ways, is not a welcomed development if it is caused by doubts about the stability of American political institutions or by diminishing trust in the American leadership of the Alliance.

The third task, to reflect on and adapt to the new political landscape in NATO's member states, is the most challenging task of all. The crisis of democracy and the politics of threat are issues that, on the one hand, are squarely located in the community of values part of NATO rather than being located as substantive issues *within* NATO as the defense alliance. Moreover, these are national issues and thus not something NATO would comment on or expect to have an influence on. Although the new political dynamics within NATO clearly hold a potential for more widespread democratic backsliding, NATO's available tools for influencing these processes are very limited. Given the uncertainty surrounding future elections, NATO is therefore entering a perilous period as "political divergences within NATO are dangerous because they enable external actors, in particular Russia and China, to exploit intra-Alliance differences and take advantage of individual Allies in ways that endanger their collective interests and security."[32] The authors of the NATO 2030 Report are clearly aware of the problem, because they underline that NATO should reassert its core identity as an Alliance rooted in the principles of democracy and they reiterate that NATO's political cohesion is strongest when its members adhere to these principles.[33] They therefore recommend that NATO should draw a clear political and moral distinction between democracy and the autocratic forms of government that characterize NATO's systemic rivals. Unfortunately, the reality is that NATO's influence as a socializing agent of democratic norms and of established alliance practices extends only to member states that wish to gain status and acceptance within the community of values. If such status is no longer sought, NATO has little influence on the path taken by individual member states.

The distinction between a defense alliance and a community of values is important because the two operate in different ways and offer NATO different options for dealing with crises and for maintaining its resilience. Allies need to be aware that where defense alliances are evaluated according to their capacity to defend against a common threat,

communities of values are sustained through the salience of, and commitment to, shared values. Defense alliances die when they lose their common enemy or their capability to defend against it—communities of value die when their values are no longer salient or shared. Democratic backsliding in NATO's member states is therefore an existential threat to NATO.

Notes

1. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," November 25, 2020, pp. 1-67 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf).

2. The Preamble to the Atlantic Treaty states: "The Parties to this Treaty reaffirm their faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments. They are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. They seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area. They are resolved to unite their efforts for collective defence and for the preservation of peace and security. They therefore agree to this North Atlantic Treaty." Preamble to the *North Atlantic Treaty*, April 4, 1949 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_89597.htm).

3. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 20.

4. US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, North Atlantic Treaty, Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations, April 27-29 and May 2-3, 1949; Quoted in Stanley R. Sloan, *Transatlantic Traumas* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), p. 3.

5. NATO, "Brussels Summit Communiqué," Brussels, June 14, 2021 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_185000.htm).

6. NATO, "Strengthened Resilience Commitment," Brussels, June 14, 2021, (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_185340.htm).

7. Rachel Ellehuus and Pierre Morcos, "NATO should finally take its values seriously," *War on the Rocks*, June 9, 2021 (https://warontherocks.com/2021/06/nato-should-take-its-values-seriously).

8. Tobias Bunde et. al., "Between States of Matter Competition and Cooperation," Munich Security Report, 2021, p. 16.

9. David Runciman, *How Democracy Ends* (London: Profile Books, 2018), p. 3.

10. I am here thinking not only of the Trumpian policy of "America First" and Britain's national(ist) inspired decision to leave the European Union and "take back control," but also the many (lasting) initiatives following the 2015 migration crisis of restricting the Schengen freedoms and more recent COVID-related "vaccine nationalism."

11. Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart outline a new model for cleavages in party competition in Western societies in which the dividing lines are between Authoritarian and Libertarian parties and between Pluralist and Populist parties. See Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Cultural Backlash—Trump, Brexit and Authoritarian Populism* (Cambridge University Press, 2019), p. 222.

12. See, for example, Stanley R. Sloan, *Transatlantic Traumas* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018).

13. Interview by David Vergun with Jens Stoltenberg in *DOD News*, US Department of Defense, December 10, 2020 (https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/2443415/natos-success-depends-on-ability-to-change-as-needed).

14. Resilience in the think tank literature is often seen as the ability of an entity to "bounce back" after a crisis. However, my understanding of resilience is based on the resilience-thinking literature, which sees resilience as not only being able to "bounce back," but also as the ability to reflect on change and adapt in ways that are more akin to "bouncing forward" through adaptation and renewal to remain fit for purpose. See, for example, David Chandler, "Beyond Neo-liberalism: Resilience, the new art of governing complexity," *Resilience*, vol. 2, no. 1 (2014), pp. 47-63; Elena Korosteleva and Trine Flockhart, *Resilience in EU and International Institutions—Redefining Local Ownership in a New Global Governance Agenda* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020).

15. Crawford Stanley Holling, "Resilience and stability of ecological systems," *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics*, vol. 4 (1973), pp. 1-23.

16. Jessica Schmidt, "Intuitively neoliberal? Towards a critical understanding of resilience governance," *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 21, no. 2 (2015), p. 406.

17. Emanuel Adler, *World Ordering—A Social Theory of Cognitive Evolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

18. Felix Ciutâ, "The End(s) of NATO: security, strategic action and narrative transformation," *Contemporary Security Policy*, vol. 23, no. 1 (2002), pp. 35-62.

19. Article 2 is sometimes overlooked compared to the more famous Article 5. Article 2 states that: "The Parties will contribute toward the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles

upon which these institutions are founded, and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being. They will seek to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and will encourage economic collaboration between any or all of them."

20. As explained by David N. Schwartz, *NATO's Nuclear Dilemmas* (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1983), unity in the Alliance is essential to cover or counter the fact that the Alliance has a fragile construction due to its geography (being geographically connected to its main adversary, whilst only being connected to its main defender by treaty) and its unequal distribution of capabilities and resting on the incredible promise to use US strategic nuclear forces in defense of Europe. NATO's nuclear dilemmas mean that Americans and Europeans inevitably have different interests in nuclear arrangements, yet for the nuclear guarantee to appear credible they must at all times appear united.

21. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era."

22. Mathew J. Burrows and Oliver Gnad, "Between 'Muddling Through' and 'Grand Design': Regaining Political Initiative—The Role of Strategic Foresight," *Futures*, vol. 97 (2018), pp. 6-17.

23. Emilian Kavalski, *World Politics at the Edge of Chaos: Reflections on Complexity and Global Life* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2015).

24. See Norris and Inglehart, *Cultural Backlash—Trump, Brexit and Authoritarian Populism*, pp. 209, 409. See also Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave of Democratization* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993).

25. Norris and Inglehart, Cultural Backlash—Trump, Brexit and Authoritarian Populism, p. 409.

26. Ibid, p. 67.

27. Exceptions from this include i.e. Madeleine Albright, *Fascism—A warning* (New York: Harper Collins, 2016); Robert Kagan, "This is how fascism comes to America," *Washington Post*, May 18, 2016 (https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/this-is-how-fascism-comes-to-america/2016/05/17/c4e32c58-1c47-11e6-8c7b-6931e66333e7_story.html).

28. Trine Flockhart, "NATO in crisis: vanishing leadership and distracted allies," in *America's Allies and the Decline of U.S. Hegemony*, edited by Justin Massie and Jonathan Paquin (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020), pp. 161-175.

29. Constanze Stelzenmüller, "America's policy on Europe takes a nationalist turn," *Financial Times*, January 30, 2019 (https://www.ft.com/content/133ef614-23b3-11e9-b20d-5376ca5216eb).

30. Between States of Matter, p. 22.

31. Hans Kundnani, "What is the Liberal International Order?" *GMF Policy Brief*, 2017 (http://www.gmfus.org/publications/what-liberal-international-order).

32. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 50.

33. Ibid, p. 51.

Chapter 9

NATO, Public Opinion, and the Next Generation:
Remaining Relevant, Remaining Strong

Rachel Rizzo

For over seventy years, NATO has existed as the strongest military alliance in history. From its inception in 1949 to the post-Cold War Era and today, allies within NATO, together with their global partners, have worked and stood together in times of challenges and difficulties. As Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said during his joint address to the US Congress in spring 2019: "It is good to have friends."[1] Indeed, a group of likeminded allies who share common values is a good thing. In the long run, however, it is not enough to keep NATO relevant and strong. Going forward, NATO will have to contend with a challenge that it has not faced in the past: emerging generations of Americans and Europeans who largely came of age in the Post-Cold War era. With these new generations come major shifts of opinion on foreign policy.

Millennials (those born between 1981-1996) and Generation Z (those born between 1996-2010 and referred to as "Gen Z" or "zoomers") have differing views of security, defense, and cooperation than the generations who came before them. Young people in the United States differ from their older counterparts over the US's role in the world, and young people around Europe have shifting views about their relationship with and to the United States. Millennials and Generation Z on both sides of the Atlantic are less militaristic. Instead, issues such as climate change, sustainability, human security, and technological interconnectedness are at the forefront of their minds as foreign policy priorities. The next generation of foreign policy thinkers, composed of both millennials and zoomers, is already taking up staffing, and in some cases, decision-making positions within governments in Europe and the United States. With them, they are bringing new ideas, opinions, and lived experiences shaped by forces largely unfamiliar to previous generations.

NATO in particular, with its three-pillar focus on cooperative security, crisis management, and collective defense, must think hard about how to ensure the next generation understands its utility. Too often, NATO is, at best, not well understood by younger Americans and Europeans. At worst, it is viewed as a relic of the Cold War, especially to those who do not focus on foreign policy. The Soviet threat—the reason behind NATO's creation—dissolved decades ago, so for young people, the questions follow: why does NATO still exist? And why should they care about it? Those reasons must be made abundantly clear.

During the 2019 NATO London Summit, Alliance leaders tasked the Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, with undertaking a "forward-looking reflection process to assess ways to strengthen the political dimension of the NATO Alliance" over the next ten years.[2] The group charged with undergoing this reflection process (and comprised of individuals all between the ages of forty and seventy-three[3]) recently released its final report entitled *NATO 2030: United for a New Era*.[4] One of the principal subjects is "the question of how NATO should go about this task of enhancing political cohesion and convergence for the challenges of a new era."[5] The drafters lay out topics to help the Alliance approach the key challenges for the next decade, like Russia's destabilizing activities, the threat of terrorism, sophisticated cyberattacks, disruptive technologies, as well as the rise of China. However, there is one glaring omission from the NATO 2030 Report: the term "next generation." Instead of including next-generation opinions in the primary reflection group, the Alliance enlisted a group of new and emerging thinkers from both sides of the Atlantic to undertake their own reflection process alongside the well-established luminaries.

This approach—separating the two groups—is problematic because the views and opinions of emerging foreign policy practitioners today will translate into the real-world policies and strategies of tomorrow. A better approach would've been to integrate the two groups of thinkers. As Sofie Lilli Stoffel from the Global Public Policy Institute so eloquently wrote, creating "channels for meaningful youth participation, as opposed to creating 'kids' tables', will be crucial for the success of the NATO 2030 initiative's central goals."[6]

Thus, NATO must determine how to integrate today's new leaders without thinking of them as a separate constituency. To do so, it is important to take stock of how NATO is viewed and supported by the public in allied nations, how the next generation thinks about foreign policy writ large, and how NATO must adapt to these changes of vision and opinion without being less effective at its core mission.

When writing the NATO 2030 report, the authors stated that from the beginning NATO was much more than just a military alliance, "it also embraced a political role in unifying Allies behind a common strategic vision, a community of shared values, shared interests, and shared destiny."[7] Given current trends, it seems that this message of community, humanity, and interconnectedness at all levels is the message that will resonate with the next generation. NATO's monumental task ahead is thus to continue strengthening its core missions of defense and deterrence against state actors like Russia and, increasingly, China; tackling new and emerging challenges like cyber, hybrid warfare and disruptive technologies; and, at the same time integrating ideas of the emerging generations on shared values, shared interests, and shared destiny.

NATO and Public Opinion: A Short History

Before focusing specifically on the opinions of next generation thinkers and why they matter for NATO, it is important to take stock of how NATO has dealt with public opinion more broadly throughout history. In reality, NATO is not special in this regard; every country, multinational organization, and company must contend with the reality of public opinion. From technology behemoths like Google and Facebook, to small, family-owned enterprises in rural towns, public opinion shapes the way organizations and institutions think, act, and strategize—as the saying goes, people "vote with their feet," which means that individuals express their preferences through their actions. In today's interconnected world of endless options, institutions can lose customers or supporters if they fail to offer a service that people think is necessary or important.

NATO is no different. Throughout its history, the organization has experienced ebbs and flows in the way it is viewed by allied publics. Many polling organizations and think tanks on both sides of the Atlantic have taken the pulse of citizens of NATO countries on questions ranging from the role of NATO within and beyond its borders, opinions on specific NATO actions such as in Libya, Kosovo, and Afghanistan, and support for NATO's foundational tenants like Article 5.[8] For example, according to the Eurobarometer Public Opinion and European Defence Survey taken in 2000, "more than four Europeans out of ten (43 percent) consider[ed] that the decisions concerning European defense policy should be taken by the European Union. Only 17 percent of the respondents [thought] that NATO should take them."[9] Ten years later, the United States and NATO were mired in the seemingly never-ending and unwinnable conflict in Afghanistan. The 2010 transatlantic trends survey conducted by the German Marshall Fund of the United States showed that publics on both sides of the Atlantic were growing war-weary, but that "majorities or pluralities in all countries surveyed still supported NATO being prepared to act outside of Europe."[10] In fact, when asked whether or not NATO should be prepared to act outside of Europe to defend members from threats to their security, 62 percent of Europeans said "yes," as did 77 percent of Americans.[11] As these polls show, even within a short ten-year timeframe, allied publics shift in terms of what they believe NATO's role is, and how they believe NATO should act.

NATO has also undertaken its own polling efforts in recent years. According to the NATO Secretary General's 2019 report, "81 percent of people across the Alliance believe that the collaboration between Europe and North America on safety and security is important (…), 76 percent agree that other NATO Allies should defend them if attacked and 71 percent agree that their own country should act in defense of another Ally."[12] In addition, "a clear majority—64 percent—would vote to remain in NATO in a referendum."[13] According to the Secretary General's 2020 Report, nearly two-thirds of citizens in NATO member states polled "would vote for their country to remain a NATO member (62 percent), with only 11 percent stating they would vote for their country to leave the Alliance." Additionally, "79 percent of allied citizens continue to believe that "the collaboration between North

America and Europe on safety and security matters."[14] This means that even amidst COVID-19, which has broadened the aperture of traditional security paradigms for member states and shifted the focus for many leaders and citizens toward post-pandemic recovery, support for NATO remains strong.

It is also helpful to further break some of these numbers down by country. According to a Pew Poll from November 2020, 79 percent of those surveyed in Denmark, 66 percent of those in the UK, 59 percent of those in Italy, and 58 percent of those in Germany held positive views of the Alliance.[15] On the other hand, Poland and Hungary's democratic backsliding has created real headaches for internal alliance cohesion, and the two countries seem to have gone in opposite directions in terms of public support for NATO: it is steady in Poland, with 82 percent of its population viewing the Alliance positively. But only 48 percent of Hungarians have positive views of NATO.[16] In that same vein, NATO experiences continuing fluctuations in public opinion in other allied nations. In Pew's latest poll of NATO member states, only 21 percent of Turks favored NATO, while 55 percent had an unfavorable view. Similar results were found in Greece, where 55 percent of its population viewed NATO unfavorably. Obviously, these polling results are not separated by generation and cannot be boiled down to generational shifts of opinion. Whole of society issues like press freedom, rule of law, Russian and Chinese influence, and anti-Americanism contribute to broader sentiment toward NATO in these countries.

The good news is that within NATO's unofficial anchor, the United States, there has traditionally been broad general support for the Alliance, which continues to this day. In Pew's spring 2021 Global Attitudes Survey, 61 percent of Americans had a favorable view of NATO. Even after four years of Donald Trump's America First campaign and attempts to sully the US relationship with NATO, public opinion did not necessarily follow suit. Unfortunately, support for NATO has, at the same time, been a victim of the politically divided atmosphere in the United States today and the anti-NATO faction seems to have taken hold within the Republic party. In the US, 77 percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents have a positive assessment of NATO, whereas only 44 percent of Republicans or Republic-leaning independents hold that view.[17] Throughout Donald Trump's pres-

idency, in addition to divides between Republicans and Democrats regarding the benefits of NATO, there was an increasing number of Republicans who said the United States should withdraw from the Alliance completely. According to YouGov in March 2016, 48 percent of Republicans wanted to remain in NATO, while 17 percent wanted the US to leave. Interestingly, in a July 2018 poll "Republicans were deadlocked on the question, 38 percent to 38 percent."[18]

Even in other key states, like France, leaders have used NATO as a political football. French President Emmanuel Macron famously stated in late 2019 that NATO was experiencing brain death. That same year, support for the Alliance throughout the country fell to 49 percent, from 60 percent in 2017 and 71 percent in 2009.[19] Marine Le Pen, leader of the far-right party National Rally (formerly National Front), is also strongly critical of NATO, and blasts it in a similar way to Donald Trump. Support for Le Pen's party has grown throughout France, and although National Rally had a poor showing in France's June regional elections, there is still the potential for a significant increase in popularity before next year's presidential election. Similar results are occurring in other states—right-wing parties in the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, and Germany have all used anti-NATO language and used the Alliance as an example of corrupt American influence throughout the European continent.

Overall, the broad picture painted by various polls throughout the years is the belief in NATO is strong, and its mission broadly supported by the citizens of allied countries. However, as we have seen over the last decade, internal developments within NATO countries—like shifting societal norms, changing governments, and rising populism—do play a significant role in alliance cohesion. Even if broad support remains steady, the rise and continued popularity of political parties across the Alliance who are critical of NATO, create a broad risk to alliance effectiveness. As the NATO 2030 Report states, "Divergences in threat perception cannot simply be wished away, since they are an expression of a state's own unique interests, geography, and national-political outlook. But arriving at a convergence of political and strategic priorities is possible, necessary, and entirely in keeping with the traditions of the Alliance."[20]

The Next Big Challenge: Shifting Generational Views on Foreign Policy

Clearly, NATO has succeeded in navigating shifting public opinion throughout the years and is still successfully balancing swings of public opinion. Unfortunately, the Alliance is about to experience another challenge with which it does not have previous experience: remaining relevant during a time when foreign policy views among emerging generations differ vastly compared to their older counterparts.

While it is true that we should expect new opinions and ideas to emerge with each generation, the key difference with millennials and zoomers is that many of them no longer the have same personal connections to the other side of the Atlantic as the generations who came before them. Fewer Americans are first- and second-generation immigrants from Europe, and fewer young people in both the United States and Europe have living relatives who fought and/or died in World War II. To take it one step further, no millennial or zoomer has personally experienced life in which the United States and Europe are not each other's closest allies, and today, war between the two sides is next to unthinkable. This has not always been the case. Because personal history plays an outsized role in one's identity, as time goes on, the importance of the transatlantic relationship may not be as obvious to those without the personal identity or experiences upon which to build and strengthen it. Thus, without concerted care and effort of those in the field today, the multinational institutions which comprise the transatlantic relationship could be at risk of suffering.

The generations of zoomers and millennials are more focused on the less conventional aspects of security, and they simply do not view the world the way their predecessors did. As a consequence, NATO risks being misunderstood by younger people today. Perhaps, worse than being simply misunderstood, some young people in member countries are completely unaware of NATO's mandate. For instance, take a 2018 Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of the NATO Association of Canada, in which a group of Canadians were asked to identify NATO by its mission from a list of international organizations; a striking 71 percent of millennials answered the question incorrectly.[21]

Millennials are a fascinating generation. They not only bore the brunt of the 2008 financial crisis both in the US and Europe but now they are also crushed under the weight of billions of dollars in college debt (in the United States, specifically), and must now deal with the fallout of COVID-19 in their 30s, an age that previous generations have marked with a sense of financial and professional security. This comes after earlier years shaped by security measures following the September 11th terrorist attacks in the United States, the Iraq War, seemingly endless conflict in the Middle East, and the constant "fear" of terrorism throughout the 2000s perpetuated and overblown by the proliferation of 24-hour cable news. Generation Z is even more unique. Young people today have lived their entire lives online and are now making careers as "influencers" and "digital nomads" with millions of followers on social media apps like YouTube and TikTok. They have either never experienced or have very little memory of a pre-9/11 world. Together, these two generations have never experienced life (more particularly, adult life for millennials) without every bit of information one could ever imagine at their fingertips. These generations grew of age alongside the internet; Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, and YouTube have played an integral role in how this generation is shaped and, in turn, has shaped society.

It thus follows that their views of foreign policy, and their ideas of how states and societies should interact with each other differ broadly from that of their older counterparts. In 2018, for instance, polling from the Charles Koch Institute and the Chicago Council of Global Affairs showed stark differences in millennial views on foreign policy within the United States. In response to the Chicago Council's standard survey question "do you think it will be best for the future of the country if we [the United States] take an active part in world affairs or stay out of world affairs?" each successive generation since the Silent Generation, i.e., those born between 1928 and 1945, showed less support than the last for active roles of the United States in world affairs.[22] To illustrate, 78 percent of the Silent Generation showed support for the US taking an active role in world affairs, whereas only 51 percent of millennials agreed with that question. In the same poll, millennial respondents were asked to highlight their top five foreign policy goals: 70 percent said protecting American jobs, 64 percent said preventing the

spread of nuclear weapons, and 59 percent said safeguarding adequate supplies of energy.

While these priorities are all well and good, they do not obviously include NATO's main priorities of "safeguard[ing] the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means." In fact, according to a YouGov poll, when asked whether or not NATO continues to serve an "important role in the defense of Western countries," only 35 percent of American millennials agreed with that statement.[23] Compared to their older counterparts, millennials are much less militaristic as "only 44 percent of millennials [in the US] believe maintaining superior military power is a very important goal (…). They also are less supportive of increasing defense spending."[24] More broadly, "[y]oung Americans want their country to become more 'European,' favoring tuition-free education, single-payer health care, and an increased role for the state in the economy."[25]

The divergences of Generation Z are even starker. According to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, "Gen Z will be forced to walk a policy path that it did not chart and repair damage that it did not create."[26] Additionally, "as a generation, zoomers missed both the highs of America's post-Cold War triumphalism and the lows of its post-9/11 stumbles in the Middle East. Instead, Gen Z came of age as America's dominance waned, as its society and economy splintered, and as its challenges abroad multiplied, diversified, and intensified."[27] Further, Generation Z has never lived under the threat of a peer adversary, a truth highlighted by the fact that according to a poll by the Center for American Progress, only 12 percent of zoomers polled said the "US should focus on countering Chinese aggression."[28] As NATO's mandate becomes broader and the Alliance starts thinking more clearly about how it should deal with the rise of China, a generation of people ambivalent toward China seems like it could eventually pose a problem.

At the same time, young Europeans are also shifting the balance in their respective states. In September 2019, millennials and zoomers across Europe packed plazas and parks during Greta Thunberg's "Fridays for Future," one of the largest pro-climate demonstrations in history. Perhaps unsurprisingly, nearly 30 percent of Germans under thirty voted for the Greens in the 2019 European elections, and millennial

Germans rank the environment, climate, and energy as the most important foreign policy challenges. The same can be said for Britain. According to a YouGov poll, 63 percent of British zoomers between ages of 11 and 18 said "the environment and climate change" is the most important issue for their country.[29] Only months after the pro-climate demonstrations in September 2019, many of those same young people marched in the streets again for racial justice in response to the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Missouri. Much like young people in North America, these European generations are driven by aspects of security that fall beyond traditional definitions. Some of the polling is particularly stark: only 33 percent of German millennials, for instance, think that the US military bases in the country are either important or very important, compared to 61 percent of Germans over age 50. A striking 62 percent of German millennials think they are less important or not important at all.[30] In fact, today, more millennials in Germany support reducing the German defense budget than any other group.[31] Political scientist, Ulrike Franke, highlighted in her recent War on the Rocks article: "German millennials struggle with the military — specifically the idea that the military is an element of geopolitical power."[32]

These numbers, both in North America and Europe, show a clear shift away from "hard" security issues. This could pose an eventual challenge for NATO as it attempts to integrate different types of security over the next ten to twenty years.

NATO and the Next Generation

The driving question is: how does NATO deal with the fact that shifting generational views on foreign policy priorities could eventually come home to roost in the Alliance? Ultimately, while NATO must continue its focus on Russia, China, conventional deterrence, and other hard security issues—after all, the Alliance is a military one—it must also successfully balance the more intangible sides of security, which are more relevant and salient to the next generation of foreign policy thinkers, such as climate change, human security, and technological interconnectedness. The primary difficulty is that NATO cannot pick and choose which of these issues it faces, it must tackle all of them at once. The paradoxical difficulty is that NATO then risks doing too

much, which could decrease the Alliance's overall effectiveness as it tries to simultaneously tackle a multitude of global threats.

The good news is that NATO already has solid ideas that will help shape how the Alliance moves forward. In fact, many of the same European polling sentiments mentioned above were reflected in a report by the NATO 2030 young leaders' group entitled *NATO 2030: Embrace the change, guard the values.* This group was tasked with "providing a set of ambitious 'moon-shot' ideas on the future of the Alliance, particularly on the future of defense and deterrence, NATO's values, climate security and green transition, NATO's partnerships, and emerging technologies."[33] Right off the bat, the group highlighted the need for NATO to "broaden and re-conceptualize security," and also acknowledged the fact that "NATO should feature non-traditional security challenges more prominently on its agenda. Hard power alone is already insufficient to respond to today and tomorrow's challenges."[34]

1. A New Strategic Concept

During the June 2021 NATO Summit in Brussels, the Allies invited the Secretary General to lead the development of the next Strategic Concept. The last Strategic Concept, released in 2010, is outdated and does not include roles and responsibilities to match today's security environment. No doubt, drafting a new Strategic Concept will not be easy, and there is a real likelihood that frictions and disagreements between members will bubble to the surface. Countries like Turkey, Hungary, and Poland, who already feel as though NATO is too involved in their internal issues will likely make the process difficult for the entire Alliance. This is expected, and it is not something from which NATO should shy away. In fact, NATO should meet these challenges directly. The opportunity to draft a new Strategic Concept gives it the opportunity to incorporate the views of the next generation into the Alliance's strategy. The suggestions from the NATO young leaders report should feed directly into the new Strategic Concept. For example, it could include a statement that says, "climate change presents an existential threat and a fundamental security risk to the Alliance." The Strategic Concept could also include a section that highlights the need to have an "annual discussion on democratic principles, working towards a written Values Pledge outlining norms and responsibilities that Allies strive to

live by at home and abroad." As Rachel Ellehuus and Pierre Marcos note, "an inattention to the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law in a member country creates societal vulnerabilities that competitors can exploit."[35] These two specific issues are those upon which all generations should be able to agree, but that NATO's Young Leaders, in particular, have placed near the top of their priority list.

2. Subnational Diplomacy

NATO should also greatly increase its efforts at subnational diplomacy, a strategy that "involves state/provincial and/or local leaders claiming political authority in foreign affairs."[36] In fact, the Biden administration's focus on a "foreign policy for the middle class" will lean heavily on subnational diplomacy efforts to understand the views and opinions of those who live far beyond the Washington, DC beltway.

This strategy could be one that NATO emulates. Within its office of Public Diplomacy, and under the guidance of the Assistant Secretary General for Public Diplomacy, NATO should add a Director for Subnational Engagement. This position would also play a key role within NATO's Committee on Public Diplomacy (CPD). The CPD has a few aims: it "analyses the current and long-term challenges in encouraging public understanding of, and support for, the aims of Alliance," and it "co-ordinate(s) national actions to raise public awareness and understanding of NATO's policies and objectives."[37] At the same time, it also coordinates with non-governmental organizations like the Atlantic Treaty Association (ATA), one of the main goals which is to connect with young professionals and students to further the values set forth in the North Atlantic Treaty.[38]

Together these groups and organizations led by a Director of Subnational Engagement could reach out throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe to focus on bringing NATO leaders to different cities to meet with individuals who have established themselves as leaders within their local communities. These conversations should have a next-generation component to them in which NATO officials reach out to local high schools and universities to discuss foreign policy issues with young thought leaders. These conversations could focus on

the issues that the next generation believes are most important, such as human security, climate change, and other hybrid issues.

At the same time, NATO must also discuss issues that do not resonate as much with the next generation according to current polling, e.g., the rise of China, Russian aggression, and military presence throughout Europe. This way, NATO will have a better idea of how to market itself with the next generation. This team should also take this opportunity to make sure people understand *how* NATO functions and *why* it is important. This subnational diplomacy effort will ensure that targeted outreach will allow next generation views to be integrated into alliance priorities. NATO could also undertake similar efforts with young thought leaders within the countries in the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, the Mediterranean Dialogue, and members of Partnership for Peace. The results of these meetings should be highlighted at each NATO Summit by the Secretary General and by the Assistant Secretary General for Public Diplomacy. In addition, NATO could also host side events alongside each NATO Summit and extend invitations to young leaders who have taken part in these local discussions so that they can firsthand how NATO functions and why it is important.

3. Diversifying NATO Recruitment Efforts

NATO must also make itself, i.e., its headquarters staff as well as staff at other NATO outposts around the world, more diverse. This not only means welcoming in a new generation of foreign policy thinkers to help shape the Alliance in decision-making positions, but also reaching out and recruiting amongst historically underrepresented communities on both sides of the Atlantic. One of the problems that permeates the foreign policy space is one of legacy, networking, and connections. Too often, the individuals who make up the next wave of policymakers are those who have connections thanks to their access to top universities in Belgium, France, the UK, and the United States, among others that frequently serve as feeder schools for eventual careers in foreign policy. NATO must undertake a concerted effort to break that cycle, and again, it could use its efforts at subnational diplomacy as a recruiting tool to ensure a more diverse applicant pool. In addition, NATO should specifically advertise its job postings to diverse communities within allied nations and keep job postings open until there are at least

50 percent of applicants, especially at early and mid-career level, who come from an underrepresented community.

4. Utilizing social media

NATO has done a relatively good job at utilizing social media to its advantage. At the time of writing, the Alliance has almost 800,000 Twitter followers, and almost 520,000 Instagram followers. Unfortunately, those numbers are relatively low when compared to the populations of all NATO countries combined, which is close to one billion. In 2018, the Alliance began a campaign called #WeAreNATO, which is "designed to bring together many new elements–including a modernized, simplified funding structure for projects–to ensure that people can see NATO as the essential guarantor of security for all NATO countries and their citizens."[39] NATO has utilized this campaign well, with videos, tweets, and personal stories under the #WeAreNATO moniker, including funding for think tanks, universities, and influencers in this space in 2018. NATO should thus undergo another round of #WeAreNATO funding, this time focusing specifically on millennials and Generation Z. To put it bluntly, if young people are to think NATO is "cool," then other young people need to be the ones selling the NATO message to other young people, which means NATO must have tools available to make this a reality. This project could clearly seek out millennial and Generation Z views on hard security issues that NATO currently faces, including Russia, China, cyberwarfare, and the Arctic as well as security challenges in the Baltic, and Mediterranean regions. NATO should then publicize the results of these projects on its social media accounts and at its meetings at universities and high schools around the United States and Europe.

Conclusion

Overall, NATO has an array of tools at its disposal that it should utilize to ensure the Alliance's continued relevance and resonance with the general public. One of the Alliance's top priorities for the foreseeable future should be creating a strategy and purpose that makes the next generation public opinion a key component of its planning and prioritizing. As the NATO 2030 Young Leaders' Group said:

> NATO also should not risk becoming a victim of its own success: reaching for the hearts and minds of younger generations is imperative. Therefore, NATO needs to double down on smart communication and meaningful engagement about the Alliance's role in ensuring freedom, security and prosperity across the Euro-Atlantic region.[40]

This does not mean that NATO should shift the focus away from its three core pillars of cooperative security, crisis management, and collective defense. Moreover, it definitely does not mean that NATO try to change its own identity or should shirk its responsibilities of deterrence and conventional means to be strong in the face of Russia, and an ever more global China. However, it does mean that in creating policies that support those three pillars, NATO must seriously take into account the views of new and emerging thinkers. It is important to be upfront about the fact that this could get uncomfortable. Bringing in the views and opinions of thinkers whose lives and experiences are shaped so fundamentally differently than many of the Cold Warriors who still inhabit important posts in government on both sides of the Atlantic will require deftness and understanding on behalf of all generations. This is good for everyone since more diverse voices mean the Alliance is better represented, and thus will be able to continue the broad support that it has enjoyed throughout the years. At the end of the day, the next generation is the future, and with them will come new and innovative ideas, passions, and opinions. Those should be welcomed in the halls of NATO.

Notes

1. David Wemer, "The New Atlanticist," The Atlantic Council, Spring 2019 (https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/it-is-good-to-have-friends-nato-secretary-tells-congress).

2. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," November 25, 2020 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf).

3. Sofie Lillie Stofel, "The NATO 2030 Approach to Youth Participation: Nice Try, But Not Enough," Global Public Policy Institute, February 4, 2021 (https://www.gppi.net/2021/02/04/the-nato-2030-approach-to-youth-participation-nice-try-but-not-enough).

4. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era."

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Article 5 of NATO's founding document, the Washington Treaty, "provides that if a NATO Ally is the victim of an armed attack, each and every other member of the Alliance will consider this act of violence as an armed attack against all members and will take the actions it deems necessary to assist the Ally attacked." It is the key article which undergirds the Alliance's goal of collective defense.

9. Special Eurobarometer 146, "Public Opinion and European Defence: Results of a European Opinions Survey," Eurobarometer, Autumn 2000 (https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/archives/ebs/ebs_146_summ_en.pdf).

10. Zsolt Nyiri, "Transatlantic Trends: Public Opinion and NATO," German Marshall Fund of the United States, May 16, 2012 (https://www.gmfus.org/commentary/transatlantic-trends-public-opinion-and-nato).

11. Ibid.

12. "The Secretary General's Annual Report: 2019," NATO, March 2019 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/3/pdf_publications/sgar19-en.pdf).

13. Ibid.

14. "The Secretary General's Annual Report: 2020," NATO, March 2020 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2021/3/pdf/sgar20-en.pdf).

15. Moira Fagan, "NATO seen in positive light across 10 members states," Pew Research Center, November 30, 2020 (https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/11/30/nato-seen-in-a-positive-light-by-many-across-10-member-states/).

16. Moira Fagan and Jacob Poushter, "NATO seen favorable across members states," Pew Research Center, February 9, 2020 (https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2020/02/09/nato-seen-favorably-across-member-states/).

17. Jacob Poushter and Moira Fagan, "NATO continues to be seen in a favorable light by people in member states," Pew Research Center, June 10, 2021 (https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/06/10/nato-continues-to-be-seen-in-a-favorable-light-by-people-in-member-states/).

18. Nathaniel Rakich and Dhrumil Meta, "Is Trump Fueling Republicans' Concerns About NATO, Or Echoing Them?" *FiveThirtyEight*, July 13, 2018 (https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/is-trump-fueling-republicans-concerns-about-nato-or-echoing-them/).

19. "Support for NATO Lowest in Turkey, Declines in France and US," Al Jazeera, February 10, 2020 (https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/2/10/support-for-nato-lowest-in-turkey-declines-in-france-and-us)

20. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era."

21. Public Opinion Poll, "Majority (60%) of Canadians Unaware of NATO's Mission," Ipsos, September 21, 2018 (https://www.ipsos.com/en-ca/news-polls/NATO-Association-of-Canada-NATO-Mission-Poll-Sept-21-2018).

22. Trevor Thrall, Dina Smeltz, Erik Goepner, Will Ruger, Craig Kafura, "The Clash of Generations? Intergenerational Change and American Foreign Policy Views," The Chicago Council on Global Affairs and the Charles Koch Institute, June 2018 (https://www.thechicagocouncil.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/report_clash-of-generations_180625.pdf).

23. Lindley Sanders, "How does America Feel About NATO? Support for Alliance Falls Across Key Western Nations," YouGov, April 4, 2019 (https://today.yougov.com/topics/politics/articles-reports/2019/04/04/how-does-america-feel-about-nato).

24. Bruce Jentleson, "Millennials are so over US domination of world affairs," The Conversation, July 26, 2018 (https://theconversation.com/millennials-are-so-over-us-domination-of-world-affairs-99167).

25. Joseph de Weck and Niall Ferguson, "European Millennials are not like their American Counterparts," *The Atlantic*, September 30, 2019 (https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/09/europes-young-not-so-woke/598783/).

26. Samuell Barnett, Natalie Thompson and Sandy Alkoutami, "How Gen Z Will Shake Up Foreign Policy," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, December 3, 2020 (https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/12/03/how-gen-z-will-shake-up-foreign-policy-pub-83377).

27. Ibid.

28. John Halpin, Brian Katulis, Peter Juul, Karl Agne, Jim Gerstein, and Nisha Jain, "America Adrift: How the US Foreign Policy Debate Misses What Voters Really Want," Center for American Progress, May 5, 2019 (https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/reports/2019/05/05/469218/america-adrift/).

29. "Climate Change top Concern for British Teenagers," Eating Better, November 2019 (https://www.eating-better.org/blog/climate-change-top-concern-for-british-teenagers).

30. Patricia Albermann, "German Millennials, Their Weltanschauung, and the Transatlantic Relationship," The American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, June 2020 (https://www.aicgs.org/2020/07/german-millennials-their-weltanschauung-and-the-transatlantic-relationship/).

31. Deutsche Außenpolitik, "Eine Studie von Kantar im Auftrag der Körber Stiftung," September 2019 (https://www.koerber-stiftung.de/fileadmin/user_upload/koerber-stiftung/redaktion/the-berlin-pulse/pdf/2019/The-Berlin-Pulse-2019_Table-of-Results.pdf).

32. Ulrike Franke, "A Millennial Considers the New German Problem after 30 Years of Peace," *War on the Rocks*, May 19, 2021 (https://warontherocks.com/2021/05/a-millennial-considers-the-new-german-problem-after-30-years-of-peace/).

33. NATO 2030 Young Leaders Report (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2021/2/pdf/210204-NATO2030-YoungLeadersReport.pdf).

34. Ibid. Benjamin Leffel, "Subnational Diplomacy, Climate Governance & Californian Global Leadership," USC Center on Public Diplomacy, March 2018.

35. Rachel Ellehuus and Pierre Marcos, "Lifting up our Values at Home: Revitalizing NATO's Political Cohesion," Center for Strategic and International Studies, March 12, 2021 (https://www.csis.org/analysis/lifting-our-values-home-how-revitalize-natos-political-cohesion).

36. Benjamin Leffel, "Subnational Diplomacy, Climate Governance & Californian Global Leadership," USC Center on Public Diplomacy, March 2018.

37. NATO, Committee on Public Diplomacy, Updated November 2019 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69272.htm).

38. The Atlantic Treaty Association, About Us (http://www.atahq.org/about-us/).

39. "New Opportunities to work with NATO," NATO Website (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_153043.htm).

40. NATO 2030 Young Leaders Report (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2021/2/pdf/210204-NATO2030-YoungLeadersReport.pdf).

Part III

Evolution in Warfare

Chapter 10

NATO Burden Sharing in a New Geopolitical Era

Steven Keil[1]

Today's geopolitical environment has evolved dramatically from the world that informed NATO's current strategic concept from 2010. Russia's territorial aggressions, China's rise and its demands on US foreign policy, the emergence of disruptive technologies, and protracted conflicts and threats in and around Euro-Atlantic area are forcing NATO to adapt to new realities—one of NATO's perennial tasks and strengths.

Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg's NATO 2030 agenda illuminates the many challenges facing NATO over the next decade and beyond with the aim to make NATO fit for purpose. This is, in part, a strategic task: finding convergence among members on the varied regional and global threats facing the Alliance. In another sense, it is technical, i.e., it is about finding solutions and creating or strengthening capacity to meet these threats through investment and planning.

As NATO rethinks its strategic approach, how Allies jointly shoulder responsibility will be crucial in adapting the Alliance. Maximizing resources, enhancing non-US capability and contributions, and sharpening Alliance resolve will be more important than ever. Against this backdrop, NATO can ill afford overly politicized debates that undermine Alliance cohesion. Unfortunately, burden sharing and particularly the 2 percent of GDP spending target have been sticking points in that regard, taking on a particular toxicity during the Trump presidency.

This chapter examines how Allies can reimagine and reframe burden sharing discussions to better reflect and encourage member state contributions as NATO adapts in a new geopolitical era. By first unpacking the shifts in the strategic environment and their impact on the Alliance, the analysis then examines the state of burden sharing—its deficiencies and dangers—and in what way Allies should think about burden shar-

ing in the future. How NATO's burden sharing debate unfolds over the next decade will determine the Alliance's ability to adjust up to 2030 and beyond.

A New Strategic Environment

Adaptation has been NATO's unwritten—yet perhaps most significant—task. Burden sharing has often been NATO's most fraught one. Time and time again, NATO has managed to answer questions about its purpose and relevance in the post-Cold War period, even as burden sharing discussions lagged. But an assessment of the current regional and geopolitical reality reveals that both NATO strategy and burden sharing discussions are deficient and must be updated.

Perhaps the most significant change facing the Alliance at a strategic level is the recalibration of US foreign policy to confront the challenge posed by China in the Indo-Pacific (see Binnendijk and Townsend's chapter in this volume). As the United States adjusts, it forces serious conversations about the future of the US force posture in Europe and difficult questions around fair burden sharing in a new geopolitical era. From President Obama's rebalance to Asia to Trump's 'Great Power Competition,' the trendline in US policy points to an increased prioritization of the Indo-Pacific. Today, there is a need to collectively adapt to the fact that for the first time in the post-Cold War era, the United States—NATO's most capable ally—has a serious near-peer competitor in military, economic, and technological terms. Of course, this has implications for NATO strategy and what the Alliance should do about the China challenge. The 2021 Brussels Summit clarified that China's ambitions and behavior present challenges "relevant to Alliance security."[2] But it also has significant implications for how Allies will share the burden in and along Europe as US foreign policy is increasingly preoccupied with the Indo-Pacific.

The implications of this shift in US policy for NATO need to be clarified, particularly as the Biden administration engages NATO and Europe. In early 2021, President Biden affirmed that "the United States is fully committed to our NATO Alliance" but shortly thereafter welcomed "Europe's growing investment in the military capabilities

that enable our shared defense."[3] This should reassure Allies about US engagement in Europe, but it also places expectations on NATO members to jointly confront the current strategic environment. This will of course require new investments, but it also requires new thinking about shared responsibilities. In addition to confronting China on internal Euro-Atlantic security related to critical infrastructures and misinformation, Canada and European NATO members will likely be asked to take on a greater share of the regional security burden in Europe as the US prioritizes what it has termed a "pacing challenge."[4]

While China has forced the Alliance to consider the impact of challenges outside of the Euro-Atlantic area (as well as China's challenge within), Russian foreign and security policy over the past several years has cemented the need for a common understanding and shared responsibility of deterrence in Europe. Russia's actions in Georgia and Ukraine (both key NATO partners and prospective members) have shown that it is willing to use military force in Europe to change borders. Thus, deterring Russia continues to be the most important priority for NATO. As US foreign policy prioritizes China, maintaining and augmenting key deterrence initiatives such as the Enhanced Forward Presence and readiness efforts like the Four Thirties initiative—which commits Allies to provide 30 battalions, 30 air squadrons, and 30 combat ships to NATO within 30 days—will be crucial. Moreover, Russia's modernization of its nuclear forces requires a commitment from NATO to existing nuclear-deterrence arrangements. From maintaining the nuclear sharing agreement to the Allies' determination to develop advanced radars and interceptors, harden the resilience of dual-capable aircraft, and enhance command and control (C2) assets, these efforts will be critical for NATO to maintain a clear deterrent posture.[5]

In the current geopolitical environment, the systemic challenge posed by China and "existential" threat posed by Russia rise to the top.[6] But other disruptive challenges that have long impacted Euro-Atlantic security remain. Instability in the Middle East, the continued challenge posed by terrorism, and the problems of piracy demonstrate the enduring need for NATO to engage farther afield. Future burden sharing conversations will have to address how best to share responsibility more fairly at an operational level to counter these challenges. This is particularly true as the United States is likely to be less engaged in the

Middle East and North Africa. NATO—or at least key members and partners—will need to be able to successfully conduct capacity building and crisis management efforts with fewer US assets. Sustained support for low-intensity counterterrorism operations and cooperative security in the region, such as capacity building, will directly impact Europe's own security. As such, activities focused on awareness and intelligence, as well as the ability to thwart chemical and biological threats, in this new systemically competitive environment will be an essential. More Allies will need to play a larger role.

Beyond these more traditional issues, NATO members must also consider how to jointly address challenges in disruptive new domains. Advances in big data, artificial intelligence, hypersonic systems, and quantum technologies are reshaping how NATO Allies think about deterrence and conflict, while simultaneously increasing the scope and speed of threats. Concerns around issues like disinformation, infrastructure vulnerabilities, and espionage are being heightened. Specifically, the use of cyber technologies can adversely impact critical infrastructure vital for collective defense (see Blessing's chapter in this volume). In response, leaders endorsed a Cyber Defense Policy at the 2021 Brussels Summit which affirmed the domain's impact on NATO's core tasks and its implications for Article 5 commitments.[7]

Advancement in these new technologies, alongside growing challenges emanating from traditionally non-kinetic or non-military domains like space, will complicate and potentially undermine NATO's territorial defense commitments. The increased militarization of space could create uncertainties around strategic deterrence, while also threatening various communication technologies vital to territorial defense (see Johnson's chapter in this volume). NATO's new military strategy highlights significant risks around many of these technologies and domains, characterizing a "strategic competition for advantage."[8] Assertive developments in Russian foreign policy (e.g., Ukraine and Georgia), alongside its military modernization efforts, will require NATO to assess how its competitive edge maintains deterrence and bolsters collective defense (see the chapter by Simakovsky and Williams in this volume). Russia's investment in more expensive technologies like hypersonic systems and efforts to infuse conventional capabilities with hybrid tactics is one facet of this assertive behavior. China's

military modernization efforts and increased engagement in Europe's neighborhood could also create significant challenges for NATO's core tasks of crisis management and cooperative security (see the chapter by Bērziņa-Čerenkova).

The new security environment poses difficult questions for NATO resilience across core tasks and domains. Consequently, resilience will increasingly be featured as a priority in Alliance thinking.[9] As such, an unclassified read-ahead document for a conference on NATO's Warfighting Capstone Concept (NWCC) argued that to project power, NATO must integrate a multi-domain defense. This means "the Alliance Military Instrument of Power will need to possess a spectrum of non-lethal, non-kinetic to lethal kinetic all-domain options to shape the battlespace to NATO's strengths."[10] The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated key resiliency gaps disrupting NATO's training mission in Iraq, while wreaking havoc on military exercises and readiness. Looking toward the future, other environmental issues like climate change—alongside disruptive technological developments—will transform the security environment. Efforts to increase resilience across all domains will be critical. This should include a focus on layered resilience as outlined by the NWCC that spans military, military-civilian, and civilian spheres.[11] Consequently, NATO member efforts that increase national and broader institutional resilience should be considered important contributions to the Alliance's security.

Burden Sharing for a New Strategic Environment

Shifts in the strategic environment and emerging challenges put pressure on NATO's capacity to service its core tasks and mission. How Allies share the burden in the face of these challenges will be central to NATO's ability to adapt. The toxicity of defense spending debates over the past few years have demonstrated certain deficiencies in the current debate, often putting Alliance disunity on full display and undermining political will within the alliance. Central to these tensions is the frequently discussed spending metric of 2 percent of GDP on defense, which also includes a 20 percent allocation of these funds on major equipment and research and development. Given its pivotal role in Alliance burden sharing discussions its worth unpacking how successful

this target has been and whether it needs to be reassessed as the NATO 2030 process and Strategic Review moves forward.

To start, NATO's burden sharing difficulties are nothing new. They date back to the Alliance's founding and carry throughout its history. In the 1990s, this conversation became increasingly abstract, particularly as Europe aggressively pursued the post-Cold War peace dividend. Gone was the existential Soviet threat that defined NATO's original purpose and with it went the need to think of European security in traditional terms. Disparities in military spending between the United States and its Allies in the early 2000s forced conversations on a more equitable approach.[12] Initial discussions on the 2 percent metric emerged around this time with the US trying and failing to make the 2 percent commitment mandatory at the 2002 Prague Summit, but NATO leaders did verbally commit to the target as early as 2006.[13] Allies initially thought it would be an achievable target given spending levels at the time.[14] The metric found increased traction in ministerial and summit discussions, and at the 2014 Wales Summit, NATO leaders formally pledged to move toward the target within ten years.

When NATO produced the last Strategic Concept, only four members met the 2 percent spending threshold, while six met the 20 percent of defense expenditure on equipment.[15] By the Wales Summit in 2014, the problems of insufficient defense spending was glaringly apparent. Russia's actions in Ukraine forced the Alliance to converge around a concrete metric to demonstrate a clear commitment to defense investment. The 2 percent metric had significant built-in deficiencies, which will be detailed later in the analysis. But given the immediacy of events in Ukraine and the metric's previous informal use, NATO Allies pledged to meet the target by 2024. The rationale behind establishing a concrete measure was valid. It was meant to get Allies to do more, to invest more, to share more of the burden, and to respond to a deteriorating threat environment. However, this was a decision of convenience more than sustainability. The current moment provides a prime opportunity to reexamine the nature of NATO burden sharing—particularly the hyper-focus on the 2 percent metric—including why the current debate should be adjusted, where the burden sharing focus should be, and what burden sharing should look like in the future.

Why Adjust the Burden Sharing Metric?

The proliferation of security challenges detailed above and competing priorities drawing on ally resources demand a more equal and cohesive distribution among NATO Allies in shouldering the massive burdens of NATO's core tasks. There is certainly good reason to encourage Allies to spend more. But this must be done in an effective way that accurately reflects ally contributions and work at cross purpose with Alliance cohesion.

Here, the 2 percent metric is significantly flawed. Above all, the 2 percent goal focuses on measuring input, i.e., how much money is spent, not what it is spent on or what it enables. And while the accompanying 20 percent requirement to make investments in equipment helps facilitate certain directed outputs, it is not necessarily guaranteed. Moreover, output and capability are rarely a central component of public burden sharing debates. Some members of the Alliance, such as Greece, have met the 2 percent mark every year since 2014, but significant portions of their defense budget go to personnel and pensions. Over the same period, Greece never once met the equipment expenditure requirements of the Wales pledge (12.06 percent in 2020).[16] Norway finally met the 2 percent mark in 2020 but had been meeting or exceeding the 20 percent equipment pledge since 2015 (28 percent in 2020).[17]

There is also a lack of standardization—what is being counted and where investments are being spent. For example, when the United States presents its GDP figure, it accounts for all of US global defense spending. What the United States spends in the Euro-Atlantic space—while difficult to determine—would be significantly less. It is consequently disingenuous to compare it with most Allies, which are primarily regional actors.[18] Ultimately, the 2 percent metric fails to give an accurate burden sharing picture, relatively speaking.

Future burden sharing discussions should highlight convergence around strategic interests and shared responsibility, while ameliorating damaging public political debates that undermine alliance unity. Unfortunately, because it can oversimplify what Allies are doing, the 2 percent metric has increasingly done just the opposite.

Discussing the launch of the NATO 2030 Reflection Group report commissioned by Secretary General Stoltenberg, A. Wess Mitchell offered that "NATO has to adapt itself for an era of strategic rivalry with Russia and China, for the return of a geopolitical competition that has a military dimension but also a political one."[19] In this vein, Secretary General Stoltenberg asked the Reflection Group to find recommendations that reinforce allied unity, solidarity, and cohesion; increase political coordination between Allies; and strengthen NATO's political role.[20] Stronger political convergence and cohesion is a top priority, particularly as Allies present a united political front in the face of geopolitical challenges posed by China and Russia. Here, the 2 percent metric also becomes problematic. It is true that cohesion means little without adequate capabilities. But, at the same time, collective capability means little without collective will.

A litany of US officials has publicly exhorted European NATO members to take on a greater share of the burden. These have been politically difficult conversations that have taken on a more confrontational tone over time. President Barack Obama called European Allies "free riders," underscoring the feeling that the United States simply was no longer willing to shoulder the lion's share of the spending burden, but he was not the first in calling out Allies that were lagging behind.[21] Others, like Senator John McCain, urged the importance of increased spending.[22] US Defense Secretary Robert Gates warned of NATO's "collective military irrelevance" if European Allies did not increase investment.[23] But the tenor of this debate took on a far more aggressive tone during the Trump presidency. While collective defense spending continued an upward trajectory beginning at Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2014, Trump's rhetoric often failed to acknowledge this reality which grew costly to NATO's political cohesion. Allies often found themselves on the receiving end of language from a US president that was harsher than that reserved for US adversaries. In some Ally countries, such as Germany, this rhetoric complicated internal security debates on issues crucial to NATO's core tasks, undermining cohesion and putting strategic deterrence efforts in jeopardy.[24] The 2 percent debate was detracting from rather than contributing to NATO's ability to meet core tasks. It became a catch-all criticism for President Trump to berate Allies, and underscore just how much the United States was

"getting ripped off."[25] While NATO is a defense alliance, it is inherently political. Given NATO's role in consultation and coordination among Allies, as well as its consensus-based decision-making process, perceptions of burden sharing—fueled by the 2 percent metric—began to foment disunity and create significant uncertainties around the US commitment to NATO.

Ultimately, investment metrics are essential in producing capability. However, a binary split between meeting the mark or not can oversimplify debates at best or mischaracterize them at worst. A more nuanced discussion would better suit a geopolitical environment with competitors that benefit from and seek ways to fracture Euro-Atlantic unity and cohesion. This is where the analysis will turn next.

Where the Burden Sharing Focus Should Be

The 2 percent fixation yields diminishing returns. Without question, it remains true that NATO members need to invest more in defense and the simplicity of the 2 percent marker makes it a convenient metric for public appeal. But less public berating of Allies and a refocusing on strategic convergence and outputs would likely better serve the Alliance, particularly as political cohesion has grown increasingly fragile. The financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will only further necessitate this shift, as it will likely increase focus on domestic needs and put downward pressure on national defense budgets.[26]

More efficient and targeted spending will be required. Subsequently, more nuanced discussions are needed—discussions that emphasize an ally's ability to meet necessary capability targets rather than seemingly arbitrary spending goals. Cash is only one leg of the three-legged "cash, capabilities, and contributions" burden sharing paradigm—a term often repeated by Secretary General Stoltenberg. Elevating messaging on certain capabilities and contributions, while encouraging Allies to meet key benchmarks publicly, when possible, may be a way to facilitate a more constructive public discussion on burden sharing. Here, the NATO's Defense Planning Process (NDPP) will remain of particular importance.

Every four years, the NDPP translates the strategic priorities vis-à-vis political guidance to multilateral and collective defense planning

requirements as well as national targets. In addition to standardizing objectives, the process creates Minimum Capability Requirements for Allies as well as a follow-on review process for each nation. The current cycle of the NDPP runs from 2019-2023. Given the concurrent thinking around the NATO 2030 process and a new Strategic Concept, NATO is primed to highlight strategic approaches in the NDPP's political guidance which will inform Minimum Capability Requirements.

The NDPP presents a more accurate picture of whether NATO members are producing needed capabilities and meeting burden sharing requirements. It directly connects back to strategic priorities through the political guidance. While more of the NDPP could be made public to encourage accountability, the heavy lifting of the NATO burden sharing discussion must remain private. These discussions are nuanced, difficult, and politically sensitive.

Contrary to the heated public debates, recent history of the NDPP provides some burden sharing optimism. The last NDPP cycle saw Allies agreeing to 100 percent of the national targets, while the US share of various capability burdens was in decline.[27] Although this all happened in the context of a more vocal 2 percent debate, this was likely not the driving factor. Rather it was a delayed effect of NATO members reinvesting in more conventional maneuver warfare capabilities in response to the deteriorating security environment following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2014.[28] The NDPP not only shows that burden sharing is headed in the right direction, but that the process also helps NATO be responsive to the threat environment by encouraging needed capabilities. The political guidance aspect of the process thus becomes a critical factor as it informs the subsequent requirements and targets.

Nevertheless, the lack of certain enabling and high-end capabilities is a continuing problem for NATO. Deficiencies in adequate European munitions in Libya and equipment in Afghanistan pointed to NATO's collective failures in developing certain non-US capabilities.[29] National military capability problems were also apparent in France's operations in Mali.[30] Finding ways for NATO Allies to meet requirements in "low-density, high-demand capabilities—such as strategic lift, air-to-air refueling, and surveillance capabilities," which are tra-

ditionally part of NATO's planning shortfalls[31] and essential in missions like those in Libya and Mali, will continue to be a priority for European NATO capability development (and will meaningfully share the security burden). It is also necessary to focus on critical long-term enabling capabilities such as intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR), and cyber defense.

NATO member state contributions to NATO missions must also be emphasized. The investment and planning to create capabilities are only one part of the burden sharing discussion. The other is the political will to contribute as well as the readiness to do so. The operational contributions of Allies such as Denmark and the Netherlands, which both fail to meet the 2 percent spending mark, in places like Afghanistan and through the Enhanced Forward Presence on NATO's Eastern Flank have been significant, arguably equal to or more so than peers of relative or larger economic size that are spending more or at least meeting the 2 percent mark. This again reinforces that the 2 percent target can be quite misleading, and the discussions needs to be adjusted.

How to Reshape the Burden Sharing Discussion in a New Strategic Environment

The narrative around the Strategic Concept and the Alliance's core tasks in the NATO 2030 era will shape the contours of burden sharing over the coming years. While all core tasks will require NATO's attention, the instability in the European security architecture over the past several years highlights the need to prioritize collective defense. The successes in investment and the NDPP hinge on the fact that NATO is responding to direct threats in territorial defense which had been long neglected. Reshaping the burden sharing debate over the next decade and beyond to reflect and sustain these successes will be critical in making NATO fit for purpose.

A more holistic analysis of recent burden sharing metrics shows that progress toward a more equitable distribution is being made, but that more needs to be done. The United States is still the most significant spender, enabler, and contributor across Alliance activities. While this is unlikely to completely change, transitioning to a 'fairer' balance given demands on US policy, as well as global and regional realities, is a

must. NATO should focus on components of Alliance planning and investment that center on non-US capabilities. As NATO considers how to internally measure the successes of countries in meeting national, collective, or multilateral targets, Allies should give greater weight to the most valuable high-end capabilities including "surveillance drones, precision-guided munitions, mobile air and missile defense, and aerial refueling tankers."[32] This will encourage a meaningful conventional capability contribution and ease the burden on US capabilities.

But discussions around burden sharing should also include ways to value specialized national, contributions in unconventional domains. As such, contributions around emerging and disruptive technologies (EDTs) should also be incorporated into the NATO planning process and burden sharing discussion.[33] Looking at the next decade and beyond, the role of AI in operations and missions should expand.[34] It will also play an important role in NATO's ability to counter hybrid or "gray zone" activities.[35] Understanding and planning for how these technologies complement and challenge NATO's core tasks, particularly in newer NATO domains like space, will be an important part of adaptation. NATO's EDT advisory group's annual report offers a handful of priority areas that will impact the Alliance more broadly, arguing that NATO must seriously invest in this area to "stay at the technology edge."[36] Given the accessibility of some emerging technologies, this must be done in a way that matches the strategic environment and needs of the Alliance identified through its political guidance and driven by the NDPP.

Any national or collective European contribution to NATO should consider both new capabilities required by and through EDTs as well as investments in capabilities like air lift and other perennial conventional needs. This does not mean that every NATO member should be doing the same thing. Fair burden sharing does not mean illogical expectations of Allies. It makes little sense to anticipate the same contribution from every country. It is only natural that Europe turns to an increasingly proportional thinking around its own burden sharing discussion, which should also be coordinated through or informed by the NDPP. This should include considerations about a member state's economic size and the scale of their military. Moreover, specialization given regional and functional expectations of specific capabilities may

be warranted. With a primary focus on collective defense, countries most exposed to the threat should be focusing on hardening defenses while those further from the threat should seek to find ways to deploy forces when needed. This "hub and spoke" model is more likely to produce realistic results responding to geographic realities than an equal expectation of all Allies everywhere.[37] Other capabilities like cyber security and EDTs are functional, and less prone to geographic-centered concerns. A more equitable approach, considering other factors including national economic size, the vibrancy of the local tech sector and receptivity to specialization will be important in determining capability targets. All of these should correspond to the political guidance and capability targets in the NDPP.

While it is not always met, NATO guidance commits that "no single country is expected to provide more than 50 percent of NATO's individual capability targets, with some exceptions."[38] But this type of metric should be emphasized and elevated because it requires more from non-US Allies in meeting NATO's specific needs identified through the NDPP and corresponding political guidance. The good news here is that the US share of various capabilities exceeding 50 percent is declining.[39] Continuing this trend will be more helpful in fairer burden sharing efforts than debates around 2 percent.

Augmenting this metric could also be useful in encouraging European capabilities and contributions to NATO. Scaling up European contributions to NATO beyond specific national capabilities could be an avenue for a more pronounced way to share the burden. This should include creating a European ambition to meet capability and burden sharing targets collectively.[40] These capabilities should not only focus on those enabling crisis management, as is the tendency in European Union (EU) efforts, but also collective defense.[41] Here, NATO and European Allies could revisit and reimagine conversations around the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI). The ESDI suggested creating "separable, but not separate" EU (WEU at the time) capabilities or a "European caucus" in NATO.[42] This would be politically complex and would need to consider the EU's own efforts over the past several years. It would also need to account for the fact that non-US NATO members like Albania, Canada, Iceland, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Turkey, and the United Kingdom are not in the

EU. But building a stronger collective European pillar in NATO and corresponding benchmarks could help alleviate frustrations in burden sharing discussions and enable a more formidable and coherent European force within NATO (as well as an EU capability that can act outside of NATO in more ad hoc, autonomous fashion). NATO could also encourage targets to be focused on operational warfighting capabilities, which could circumvent some of the problems with an investment-focused discussion.[43] To address concerns of non-US NATO members not in the EU, the ESDI model could perhaps be reimagined as a multilateral grouping or flexible format of ESDI+ creating a broader level of ambition and bringing in third-party participants to EU efforts housed within NATO. This again could alleviate pressures from burden sharing discussions but would be admittedly politically difficult, potentially compete with efforts being pursued in the EU, and would certainly need to be formally coordinated.

Tomorrow's Public Burden Sharing Discussions

Public debates on burden sharing are unlikely to go away. What makes the 2 percent metric compelling is that "it is simple, straightforward, and (relatively) easy to measure."[44] It offers a pass-fail binary to see whether Allies are doing their 'fair share.' But it oversimplifies a complicated debate, one that requires more nuance. Altering the tone of the public debate is critical in addition to shifting discussions around NATO planning and strategic guidance.

When focusing on inputs, NATO members would do well to put investment figures in context rather than simply highlight the pass-fail binary. A good example of this is Germany. From 2014 to 2020, Germany's defense spending increased from €34 billion to €51.4 billion.[45] Germany was the second largest troop contributor to Operation Resolute Support in Afghanistan and also leads NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence in Lithuania. It still lags significantly in meeting the 2 percent pledge and should prioritize added investment, but the reality hardly matches the picture often portrayed by 2 percent debates.

Emphasizing capabilities and contributions over cash—or at least giving them equal weight—would also create a more comprehensive burden sharing picture. There should be serious public messaging and

discussions on outputs, particularly in "deployable, ready, sustainable forces."[46] Conversations around planning should also be made more transparent where possible. Contributions to missions, including high-value assets should be more central to the debate.

NATO officials and the United States should also publicly encourage a more serious European ambition laid out above. This should be tied to capabilities. If simple metrics are required, they should focus on what is being produced, e.g., contributions to capability targets *à la* the 50% rule. The security environment requires continued strides forward in non-US contributions. The United States is not seeking to shift away from Europe, but geopolitical realities are requiring more of its resources. The burden sharing debate will not get easier as this trend continues, and Europe will need to do more for its own defense. A serious assessment of how to share the collective regional burden considering this reality as well as the various geopolitical pressures impacting the Euro-Atlantic space will be necessary.

Finally, both sides of the Atlantic need to appreciate that the new geopolitical era requires solidarity, and any metric should not undermine the most important element of the Alliance: political cohesion. Here, it is critical to elevate political messaging that accurately reflects what Allies are doing together—a better public burden sharing discussion will be key. This was the catalyzing component of the NATO 2030 effort. No NATO member can face the looming challenges alone. Problems in the era of simultaneously converging challenges will demand that Europeans take on more responsibility, as Europe, Canada, and the United States augment and innovate their own capabilities in the face of rapidly evolving technological and geopolitical realities. NATO's burden sharing discussion should help Allies confront the evolving threat environment in a coordinated manner and allow them to demonstrate the strength of the Alliance in this new geopolitical era.

Notes

1. Analysis in this chapter was informed by and adapted from an article I authored with Derek Chollet and Chris Skaluba: Derek Chollet, Chris Skaluba, and Steven Keil, "Rethink and Replace Two Percent," NATO 20/2020 Paper Series, Atlantic Council, October 14, 2020 (www.atlanticcouncil.org/content-series/nato20-2020/rethink-and-replace-two-percent/).

2. NATO, "Brussels Summit Communique," June 14, 2021 (www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_185000.htm?selectedLocale=ro).

3. Joseph Biden, "Remarks by President Biden at the 2021 Virtual Munich Security Conference," The White House, February 19, 2021 (www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/02/19/remarks-by-president-biden-at-the-2021-virtual-munich-security-conference/).

4. For more see Terri Moon Cronk, "Austin Outlines His Top Three Priorities on Defense, People, Teamwork," DOD News, U.S. Department of Defense, March 5, 2021 (www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/2526532/austin-outlines-his-top-three-priorities-on-defense-people-teamwork/).

5. For more see, Jens Stoltenberg, "The Secretary General's Annual Report: 2020," p. 31, 56, et al. (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2021/3/pdf/sgar20-en.pdf).

6. Terri Moon Cronk, "Allies, Partners Critical to U.S. European Command," DOD News, U.S. Department of Defense, February 24, 2021 (https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/2514537/allies-partners-critical-to-us-european-command/).

7. NATO, "Brussels Summit Communique."

8. NATO, "NATO Warfighting Capstone Concept (NWCC): Building the Alliance's Decisive Advantage," Read Ahead Material for NWCC Virtual Conference, NATO ACT, June 20, 2020, p. 2.

9. "Noting that resilience remains a national responsibility, we will adopt a more integrated and better coordinated approach, consistent with our collective commitment under Article 3 of the North Atlantic Treaty, to reduce vulnerabilities and ensure our militaries can effectively operate in peace, crisis and conflict." From NATO, "Brussels Summit Communique."

10. NATO, "NATO Warfighting Capstone," p. 4.

11. Ibid, p. 4-5.

12. See NATO, "Financial and Economic Data relating to NATO Defence—Defence Expenditures of NATO Countries (1980-2003)," December 1, 2003 (www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49198.htm).

13. Karl-Heinz Kamp, "Myths Surrounding the Two Percent Debate: On NATO defence spending," *German Federal Academy for Security Policy*, September 2019 (www.baks.bund.de/en/working-papers/2019/myths-surrounding-the-two-percent-debate-on-nato-defence-spending).

14. "Amazingly, the 2/20 yardsticks were intended to be easily reachable. When looking at defence spending 1991-2003, staff at NATO headquarters in Brussels noted that the median was 2.05%—so half the allies already spent over 2%." Sten Rynning, "Why NATO's defence pledge matters," *Friends of Europe*, July 29, 2015 (https://www.friendsofeurope.org/insights/why-natos-defence-pledge-matters/).

15. NATO, "Press Release: Financial and Economic Data Relating to NATO Defence," March 10, 2011, pp. 6, 8 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_03/20110309_PR_CP_2011_027.pdf).

16. NATO, "Press Release: Defense Expenditure of NATO Countries (2013-2020), NATO Public Diplomacy Division," March 16, 2021, pp. 8, 13 (www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2021/3/pdf/210316-pr-2020-30-en.pdf).

17. NATO, "Defense Expenditure of NATO Countries (2013-2020)," pp. 8, 13.

18. Chollet, Skaluba, and Keil, "Rethink and Replace Two Percent," pp. 82-83.

19. Steven Erlanger, "NATO Needs to Adapt Quickly to Stay Relevant for 2030, Report," *The New York Times*, November 30, 2020 (www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/world/europe/nato-2030-russia-china.html).

20. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," November 25, 2020, p. 3 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf).

21. Jeffrey Goldberg, "The Obama Doctrine," *The Atlantic*, April 2016 (www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/04/the-obama-doctrine/471525/).

22. Ramsey Cox, "McCain: NATO allies must spend 2 percent of GDP on defense," *The Hill* (https://thehill.com/blogs/floor-action/senate/203759-mccain-nato-allies-must-spend-2-percent-of-gdp-on-defense).

23. David Alexander, David Brunnstrom, "Gates parting shot warns NATO risks irrelevance," *Reuters*, June 10, 2011 (www.reuters.com/article/

us-usa-nato/gates-parting-shot-warns-nato-risks-irrelevance-idUSTRE-7591JK20110611).

24. Liana Fix and Steven Keil, "Germany's Last Chance to Partner with the United States," *GMF Policy Brief*, March 18, 2021, pp. 3-4 (https://www.gmfus.org/publications/germanys-last-chance-partner-united-states-leadership).

25. Glen Kessler, "Trump's claim that the U.S. pays the 'lion's share' for NATO," *The Washington Post*, March 30, 2016 (https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/wp/2016/03/30/trumps-claim-that-the-u-s-pays-the-lions-share-for-nato/).

26. For more, see Pierre Morcos, "Toward a New 'Lost Decade'? Covid-10 and Defense Spending in Europe," *CSIS*, October 15, 2020 (www.csis.org/analysis/toward-new-lost-decade-covid-19-and-defense-spending-europe).

27. Rachel Ellehuus, "Blueprint for A More Effective NATO," *Breaking Defense*, April 4, 2019 (https://breakingdefense.com/2019/04/blueprint-for-a-more-effective-nato/).

28. John Deni, "There's a Better Way to Press for NATO Burden-Sharing," *Defense One*, March 4, 2021 (www.defenseone.com/ideas/2021/03/theres-better-way-press-nato-burden-sharing/172460/).

29. Alexander Mattelaer, "Revisiting the principles of NATO burden-sharing," *Parameters*, vol. 46, no. 1, Spring 2016, p. 29 (www.ies.be/files/Mattelaer.pdf).

30. Mattelaer, "Revisiting the principles of NATO burden-sharing," p. 30.

31. Ellehuus, "Blueprint for A More Effective NATO."

32. Chollet, Skaluba, and Keil, Rethink and Replace Two Percent," p. 84.

33. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 30.

34. For more, see Edward Hunger Christie, "Artificial Intelligence at NATO: dynamic adoption, responsible use," *NATO Review*, November 24, 2030 (https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2020/11/24/artificial-intelligence-at-nato-dynamic-adoption-responsible-use/index.html).

35. For more, see Michael Rühle and Clare Roberts, "Enlarging NATO's toolbox to counter hybrid threats," *NATO Review*, March 19, 2021 (https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2021/03/19/enlarging-natos-toolbox-to-counter-hybrid-threats/index.html).

36. NATO Advisory Group on Emerging and Disruptive Technologies 2020-2022, "Annual Report 2020," NATO, p. 19 (www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2021/3/pdf/210303-EDT-adv-grp-annual-report-2020.pdf).

37. Mattelaer, "Revisiting the principles of NATO burden-sharing," pp. 32-33.

38. Hans Binnendijk and Gene Germanovich, "NATO needs a European level of ambition," *Defense News*, December 7, 2018 (www.defensenews.com/opinion/2018/12/07/nato-needs-a-european-level-of-ambition/).

39. Ellehuus, "Blueprint for A More Effective NATO."

40. "something that acknowledges the practical need for more pooling of efforts among Europeans to meet their capability targets in NATO," remarks by A. Wess Mitchell, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," GMF Event, March 8, 2021 (www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXJidViWDI4).

41. Jo Coelmont, "European Strategic Autonomy: Which Military Level of Ambition?" *Egmont Security Policy Brief* No. 109, March 26, 2019 (www.egmontinstitute.be/european-strategic-autonomy-which-military-level-of-ambition/).

42. Karl-Heinz Kamp, "Closing Ranks: Aligning NATO and the EU's Strategic Priorities," *GMF Policy Brief*, March 2015, (www.gmfus.org/publications/closing-ranks-aligning-nato-and-eus-strategic-priorities).

43. As Hans Binnendijk and Gene Germanovich argue, "Under a new European level of ambition, NATO's defense planners could be instructed to develop European capabilities needed to conduct one MJO and three SJOs for crisis management with limited or no American support. Alternatively, NATO's European members could commit to providing half the firepower needed to conduct an alliance wide MJO+. The goal would be to achieve this capability by 2024, when European nations have committed to deliver on their 2 percent of GDP defense spending pledge." In Hans Binnendijk and Gene Germanovich, "NATO needs a European level of ambition."

44. John Dowdy, "More tooth, less tail: Getting beyond NATO's 2 percent rule," *McKinsey & Company*, November 29, 2017 (excerpt from "The World Turned Upside Down: Maintaining American Leadership in a Dangerous Age," Aspen Strategy Group, November 2017 (www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/more-tooth-less-tail-getting-beyond-natos-2-percent-rule).

45. Leah Carter, "Germany reports record €53 billion in NATO defense spending," *Deutsche Welle*, February 7, 2021 (https://www.dw.com/en/germany-reports-record-53-billion-in-nato-defense-spending/a-56491017).

46. Dowdy, "More tooth, less tail: Getting beyond NATO's 2 percent rule."

Chapter 11

NATO in Space

Kaitlyn Johnson

Many countries and multilateral organizations are grappling with the unique challenges and opportunities presented by the space domain. By bringing unprecedented connectivity and capability to military forces, outer space has provided key advantages for national security in recent decades. However, countries are recognizing that the space domain is capable of much more than being a secondary element in warfighting and security. Nations are reorganizing their militaries to include or highlight the unique dynamics that the space domain brings to the war room. NATO is no exception to this trend. In 2019, NATO declared outer space a warfighting domain, and, in 2020, the Alliance announced a classified space policy. NATO is not a newcomer to space; however, if the organization wants to ensure its relevance in this global domain, it needs to rethink and possibly reorient itself to better support and act in space.

The early years of space operations were dominated by the former Soviet Union (USSR) and the United States in a competition to display prowess known as the Space Race. While the Space Race led to incredible achievements in human spaceflight, it was also characterized by the collection of intelligence from space, antisatellite (ASAT) tests, and the earliest communication, command, and control satellites. For the United States, and NATO allies, space was critical in supporting a deterrence by punishment posture against the USSR, which included nuclear mutually assured destruction. Since the end of the Cold War, the number of spacefaring nations and other actors has increased dramatically. Space is now more diverse and disordered than ever.

A variety of satellites currently reside in near earth orbits including low-Earth orbit (LEO), medium-Earth orbit (MEO), and geosynchronous orbit (GEO). While there are also a variety of elliptical orbits, most satellites reside in these three orbits and their sizes, missions, and operators grow more diverse every year. The International Space Sta-

tion (ISS), remote sensing, and communications satellites (including WIFI and broadband) are found in the most populated orbit, LEO. MEO is home to many positioning, navigation, and timing (PNT) satellites. GEO is a unique orbit home to the second-most satellites, including those used for nuclear command and control, communications, and satellite television.[1]

For nations with space capabilities integrated into their conventional militaries, satellites have provided incredible benefits including precision guided munitions, direct communications from anywhere on the planet, weather and forecasting predictions, and navigation capabilities facilitated by the Global Positioning Service (GPS). Space is an advantageous enabler. However, with increased benefits comes the desire to restrict or deny access in the case of conflict. Even in the early days of space, the Soviet Union and United States were rapidly pursuing space capabilities as well as ways to disrupt or destroy them. In 1959, only two years after the launch of the first satellite, Sputnik, the United States successfully carried out the Bold Orion test and the first ever ASAT capability. ASAT weapons tests have been carried out with increasing frequency in the years since, particularly in the past decade.[2] In 2019, India conducted a direct-ascent ASAT test that intercepted a satellite in orbit. In 2020, Russia conducted two similar tests, although without the kinetic intercept. There has also been increasing use of ground-based counter-space weapons, such as jamming and spoofing satellites' communications signals.[3]

As a multilateral political and military alliance, NATO will need to address both the space capabilities that will enable and support armies and ASAT weapons that can deny and destroy access. This chapter explores NATO's history in space, performs a capability assessment of NATO member states and major competitors, analyzes current NATO space policy and challenges, and finally, provides recommendations and guidance for the Alliance in space.

NATO's Space History

The first space age, from 1957 to 1991, was characterized by the Cold War, Space Race, and fight for influence over the space domain.[4]

The US and USSR pursued space assets in coordination with expanding nuclear infrastructure in order to detect, track, and react to crises around the world. Nascent satellite imaging, early-warning launch detection, and communications defined a space-capable nation. As an organization designed to combat Russian influence and power, this naturally led to NATO becoming one of the first actors in space. Despite being one of the first entities to operate satellites in space, NATO's involvement in the domain has been relatively quiet in recent years.

For decades, the Alliance owned and operated its own satellite communications (SATCOM) systems. In March 1970, NATO launched its first communications satellite from the Cape Kennedy launch site in the United States. This was the beginning of a tranche of NATO-operated communications satellites launched from the 1970s through the 1990s, with the final satellite launched in December 1993.[5] NATO also operated over twenty ground station terminals around the world, including in Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In the early 2000s, NATO members made the strategic decision for the Alliance to not independently own and operate satellites, but to rely instead on member states for direct access to national satellites.[6] This change was likely due to nations pursuing independent capabilities and the desire to limit redundancy if national capabilities performed the same missions as NATO-specific capabilities. NATO owns and operates the ground segments, i.e., user terminals and stations, that receive SATCOM data, however NATO continues to rely on member states for the satellites themselves and the command and control of those systems.

Regardless of an early leadership role in the space domain, NATO did not formulate an official space policy until 2019, which as of mid-2021 remains classified and has not been released to the public. In October 2020, the Alliance agreed to create a shared NATO Space Center that will re-engage the domain to provide mission support through satellite communications, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR), sharing space situational awareness (SSA) data, and coordinating activities in the domain among member states. The Space Center is to be placed at Allied Air Command in Germany.[7] Even though the Alliance does not currently operate satellites, NATO personnel must be

trained to use space capabilities and consider their efficacy and impact in NATO operations.

Current State of Space

So why is NATO involved in space? Satellites support the modern economy through enabling financial transactions, predicting major weather phenomena, tracking critical packages through GPS-tagging, enabling emergency services to take the fastest route, and providing farmers with data on their crops, rainfall, and soil temperatures. They allow a bird's eye view of human migration and relocation due to conflict and climate change. Satellites also provide incredible insight and capability both in peacetime and wartime that bolsters a nation's security. Space capabilities enable precision-guided munitions, data-sharing across continents, imagery of conflict zones, early warning for missile launches, and command and control for nations with nuclear arsenals. If NATO is to continue its mission "to guarantee the freedom and security of its members through political and military means," space will need to become a more integrated and considered part of the Alliance.[8]

NATO Member Capability

Current NATO doctrine focuses on how to use space as a supporting capability to terrestrial forces but does not address how space capabilities are used independently. Of the thirty member states, about half operate space capabilities for military use. The largest space infrastructure—civil, commercial, and military—is operated by the United States. France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the United Kingdom also have significant national security space infrastructure. NATO nations are supporting unique commercial space capabilities as well. For example, Luxembourg has become a hub for space resourcing and mining companies with clear national laws and support of these missions.

Several NATO members are redefining and investing in national space forces, capabilities, and organizations. The most prominent is the United States, which in 2019 established the US Space Force as a sixth military service focused solely on space. The Space Force's mission is to "organize, train, and equip" US military space forces, including those

that would support NATO operations. The United States also re-established US Space Command, a combatant command responsible for operations in and involving the space domain. US space assets dwarf those of other NATO member states and the country provides much of NATO's current space infrastructure through access to US protected SATCOM, ISR, and GPS. Some US satellite systems, such as Wideband Global SATCOM (WGS) and Advanced Extremely High Frequency (AEHF), are partially funded by other NATO member states which allows these allies more access to WGS and AEHF communications.

Around the same time, France founded the French Space Forces Command, *Commandement de l'Espace* (CdE), a military branch devoted to investing in more space capabilities including possible offensive and defensive weapons in space. France also released a national Space Defense Strategy which recommits national attention to space, as well as establishes space as the fifth warfighting domain.[9] Notably, its leadership has publicly discussed developing bodyguard satellites to protect high-value space assets, such as communications or ISR satellites. In March 2021, CdE conducted an initial space military exercise. Codenamed AsterX, the exercise consists of eighteen simulations, which include tracking and responding to threats to space systems. The US Space Force and the German Aerospace Center (DLR) joined the exercises. CdE expects to have around 500 personnel and invest over $5 billion in space infrastructure by 2025.[10] In January 2021, Toulouse, France was selected by NATO to host a new Center of Excellence focused solely on space. The center is expected to host forty-two personnel, including seventeen foreign nationals, once fully established.[11]

Germany is also investing in national security space infrastructure and recently opened the Air and Space Operations Center (ASOC) in September 2020. ASOC's responsibilities include protecting national space capabilities from accidental collisions and intentional interference. Along with monitoring near-Earth orbits, like LEO and GEO, ASOC will also monitor re-entering spacecraft or debris that could pose a threat to human life on earth.[12] ASOC intends to have about 150 personnel by 2030.[13] Establishing ASOC was likely done in coordination with NATO and in response to the Alliance's call for all member states to begin regarding space as an operational domain for

military activity. In addition, Germany is currently developing a national space policy.[14]

In December 2019, Italy announced a Joint Space Operations Command, which will focus on the SSA mission, to include linking the early warning and missile defense missions with space.[15] The country has also long been at the forefront of satellite communications in Europe and currently operates three military SATCOM satellites in GEO.[16] A fourth is in development and will support the Italian Navy, which increasingly requests communications services.[17] Italy shares several communications satellites with France and receives data from those operated by the European Space Agency (ESA). One French-Italian secure military communications satellite known as Athena-Fidus has likely been a target of the Russian GEO inspector satellite, Luch, which traverses the GEO belt and may be 'listening in' on cross-satellite communications or communications to and from Earth.[18] Italy is developing several earth observation satellites and is also a main partner for the next European launch vehicle, Vega.[19]

Launched in 2018, GovSat-1 is a GEO communications satellite that provides capability to Luxembourg's military and humanitarian efforts worldwide. GovSat-1 contributes greatly to NATO by providing SATCOM capability over Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.[20] Moreover, Luxembourg intends to support the Alliance by providing ISR capability with the National Advanced Optical System (NAOS) satellite, which is expected to launch in 2022 and presents an optical remote sensing satellite.[21] At the 2021 NATO summit in June, Luxembourg pledged to help NATO develop a SSA system to detect and monitor satellites on-orbit. This €6.7 million investment will be integrated into the Alliance's Situation Center (SITCEN), which provides situational awareness to NATO forces.[22]

On April 1, 2021, the United Kingdom established the UK Space Command as a joint command staffed from the navy, army, air force and civil service. This directly stemmed from the UK's Integrated Review published in March 2021, which also requires the development of a national launch capability by 2022.[23] The UK Space Command brings three previously independent missions under one banner namely "space operations; space workforce training and growth; and space

capability (developing and delivering space equipment programmes)." This includes the SSA mission and tracking objects in orbit, early warning and missile launch detection, and the UK's fleet of communications satellites.[24] UK ISR satellites in LEO additionally support NATO operations.[25]

Since many NATO member states are part of the European Union, many national space capabilities have become multinational capabilities directed, funded, and developed by ESA.[26] ESA, for example, operates the European PNT satellite constellation called Galileo, the European equivalent to GPS. While not a military organization, ESA operates several dual-use systems, those that have both civil and military uses, such as the aforementioned Galileo system, and several communications satellites.

Current NATO space capabilities primarily center on access to satellite communications and data sharing. Data sharing is not insignificant, as intelligence and reconnaissance gleaned from these satellites are critical to modern military operations. NATO also announced in 2020 that the Alliance plans to invest over €1 billion in satellite services, such as communications, over the next 15 years. This investment is likely to be towards the acquisition of data and capability from member nations' military space programs.[27]

Defining the Threat

It is commonly accepted that the world is re-entering a time of strategic geopolitics and what US politicians call great power competition. This is likely familiar to NATO leaders and the Alliance culture, due to the founding of NATO after World War II to counter the growing threat posed by the Soviet Union. However, NATO Allies are no longer facing conventional military forces but incredible new tools of irregular warfare such as disinformation, emerging technologies, paramilitaries, and cyber operations.[28] This gray zone competition also involves and impacts space.

Counter-space weapons and denial of satellite services are increasingly common in areas of irregular warfare, including in Ukraine throughout the Crimean conflict with Russia, and Syria in 2015. The Alliance should similarly consider the denial of services to adversaries

for a potential conflict. Ground-based, reversible counter-space weapons like jamming, spoofing, and dazzling are highly effective as they deny services without permanently damaging the system. Cyberattacks on satellites or their ground terminals may also achieve similar effects. The United States has been pursuing cross-domain deterrence for space, or the ability to respond to attacks on space systems in a different domain. This strategy gives greater flexibility of response and mitigates some of the imbalance between the United States' reliance on space assets versus its less-capable adversaries, such as Iran or North Korea.

Deeper discussion on deterrence by denial or punishment in the case of a counter-space attack on NATO must be considered. While NATO may be highly capable of deterring by punishment, or responding to attacks on space systems, the Alliance's deterrence by denial structure should be reinforced.

Competitor Capability

For NATO, the space and counter-space programs of near-peer competitors Russia and China are of particular interest. The security environment in space has changed since NATO was founded and since the height of its space programs in the late 20th century. Russia, China, and others (including commercial industry) are altering the dynamics of operating in space and often pushing against norms that NATO and its member states worked hard to establish. This is reshaping how nations utilize and invest in space to ensure national security. Since a majority of recent counter-space weapons testing and development stems from Russia and China, this section provides a brief overview of both nations' military space organizations, investments, and developments.

Russia. Russia's military space forces are organized within the Russian Aerospace Forces as the Russian Space Forces sub-branch. The Space Forces are responsible for developing, launching, and operating military satellites, the SSA mission, and identifying potential attacks against the Russian homeland from space, to include early warning systems. The Space Forces operate Russia's GLONASS PNT satellite constellation. Russia also has a suite of ISR, communications, and early warning satellites.[29]

Russia inherited much of the Soviet Union's vast space infrastructure, including its counter-space weapons programs. After a couple of decades of decay, the Russian military appears to be revitalizing several of these Cold War-era counter-space weapons programs. In 2020, for example, Russia performed two direct-ascent ASAT tests—missiles launched from earth into space intended to target satellites in orbit. The country has also been testing several on-orbit capabilities that could damage or interfere with satellite operations, including the firing of a projectile from a satellite in LEO. In 2017, a satellite lasing system was delivered to troops for experimental combat duty. What is more, in 2021, it was announced that this same system could be deployed to an airborne platform. If successful, it would become the second airborne counter-space laser system for Russia.[30]

For almost a decade, Russia has been actively using ground-based counter-space systems in areas of irregular warfare, including in Ukraine and Syria, during Russian military exercises, and against NATO and its member states during military exercises in northern Scandinavia. In October and November 2018, Norway hosted the NATO Trident Juncture 18 exercise in its eastern and central regions. Northern airports in Norway, Sweden, and Finland supported the Alliance's participating aircraft and experienced GPS outages throughout the exercise. Later, a NATO spokesperson announced that Russia had been using ground-based jammers to disrupt the GPS signals during the NATO exercise, which was followed by similar GPS disruptions during a UK military exercise in the same region a year later. Again, Russia was suspected of this interference with space assets.[31]

China. Chinese space forces in the People's Liberation Army (PLA) are organized within their information-focused military service, the Strategic Support Force (SSF). In addition to space, the SSF includes cyber and electronic warfare forces. Established in 2015, the SSF is the newest military branch, but because of its information domain focus, is likely to be highly involved with most military operations. Establishing the SSF allowed China to centralize space research, development, and deployment (launch) under one organization, streamlining its military space efforts.

Since the early 2000s, China has been making incredible progress in civil, commercial, and military space assets. China operates its own PNT system called Beidou, which it leverages for both civilian and military use. Critical to a modern military, China has developed highly capable communications satellites able to transmit large amounts of data through space, as well as a suite of ISR satellites in both LEO and GEO which provide the PLA with signals intelligence (SIGINT), earth imagery, and electronic intelligence (ELINT), which are able to monitor radar and radio transmissions.[32]

China has also been at the forefront of counter-space weapons developments and has significant capabilities in direct-ascent ASATs, jamming and spoofing technology, as well as cyber intrusions into space systems. The SSF is also working to develop lasers capable of interfering with satellites. The most notable counter-space test from China came in 2007, when a direct-ascent ASAT destroyed a non-operational weather satellite in LEO. This incident created a cloud of over 3,000 pieces of space debris, many that remain in orbit today. As the largest tracked debris-creation event, China was condemned on the world stage for this blatant disregard for the space environment.[33] Since then, China has continued to test direct-ascent ASAT technology, however, the tests have not impacted satellites on-orbit and caused any more debris.[34] Furthermore, these ground-based direct-ascent ASAT weapons have likely been operationalized and SSF troops actively train on these systems.[35]

Both Russia and China are major space powers and are increasingly cooperating on space activities. Russia has plans to participate and send cosmonauts to the new Chinese space station, which may become the only orbiting space station as the ISS is set to retire this decade. In April 2021, Russia and China signed an agreement to cooperate on a lunar base.[36] While these commitments are for both nations' civil space programs, this type of relationship has the potential to grow into other space missions, such as military partnerships.

Many NATO members are adjusting their space forces and investing in space infrastructure to reflect the shift in the space security environment. Considering Russian and Chinese investments in disruptive space technologies, NATO member states should discuss and decide how the

Alliance wants to invest in and utilize space capabilities in the next few decades. NATO must begin planning and answering key questions of how the Alliance will live up to its commitments in space. Where is the right place for NATO to add value to its members? How must the Alliance reorient itself for the future? And finally, what concrete steps should NATO consider? The following sections of this chapter will work to answer these key questions and provide insight and guidance for future NATO space architecture and policy.

Considerations for Space Deterrence

As previously discussed, NATO's current space deterrence posture relies greatly on deterrence by punishment, but not deterrence by denial. At its core, deterrence by denial in space should influence an adversary's decision calculus that an attack on NATO space infrastructure would be too difficult or costly. This type of deterrence relies on several principles, including communication, strong interoperability and partnerships, defenses for space systems, and norms of behavior in space. NATO has a role to play in each of these principles as they apply to the space domain.

Communication

Effective communication is foundational to deterrence. The deterrer must communicate that they are both capable of response if attacked, and that this response is a credible threat to an adversary. NATO has a couple of clear foundational articles addressed to this. The most prominent, of course, is Article 5 which underpins collective defense and outlines that an armed attack on one NATO member state is considered an equal attack on all NATO member states. At the June 2021 NATO Summit, the Alliance acknowledged that they included attacks from, within, or to space in the Article 5 declaration. However, without clear declaration and public discussion about the thresholds and considerations of specific attacks in or from space, it will allow for a gray operating zone. For example, Russia has already taken advantage of these undefined thresholds by locally jamming GPS signals during a major NATO military exercise. While this was a reversible effect, and did not physically harm the satellites themselves, it certainly denied the

Alliance's access to space. Communicating what is considered an armed attack against space systems is paramount to establishing an effective deterrence strategy. It is also foundational to pursuing strategies for operation and response in the case of a conflict that extends into or involves the space domain.

NATO Article 6 also presents a challenge for defining and responding to attacks on space forces. As stated, an armed attack includes those "…on the forces, vessels, or aircraft of any of the Parties, when in or over these territories or any other area in Europe in which occupation forces of any of the Parties were stationed on the date when the Treaty entered into force or the Mediterranean Sea or the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer."[37] Satellites present a unique challenge to this statement. While they might be considered a force or vessel, satellites in GEO are in orbit over the equator, even if the ground stations they communicate with are in the northern hemisphere. Additionally, satellites in LEO, depending on their orbit and inclination, will always pass over areas not defined above. Would this then indicate that an attack on a satellite does not violate the treaty, so long as it is not orbiting north of the Tropic of Cancer at the moment of the attack? These geographic boundaries clearly do not apply to space assets, yet space assets are the foundation of many modern military capabilities. This discrepancy needs to be publicly addressed by NATO leadership to effectively communicate the Alliance's deterrence strategy for space.

Finally, NATO's first space policy document was produced in 2019, yet as of September 2021, there is no unclassified version released to the public. This missed opportunity stifles communication of NATO's space priorities to the public, other international partners, and adversaries.

Space Defenses

A clear way to bolster deterrence by denial is to ensure that attacks on Alliance members' space systems are difficult to achieve. There are several methods of defending satellites against attack, and not all defenses are useful against every type of attack. Therefore, a varied strategy of passive and active defenses is necessary to ensure the protection of satellites and continued use in a denied environment.

Passive Defenses. Passive defenses loosely fall into three categories: architectural, technical, and operational.[38] Architectural defenses rely on the design of the satellite constellation itself to ensure that the mission and capability can withstand attack or degrade gracefully. A few examples of this are:

1. *Disaggregation* is the separation of capabilities from one platform to several. For example, the US currently operates communication satellites that have both tactical and strategic—i.e., nuclear—signals. Disaggregation would separate these missions to preserve strategic communications in the event of an attack on tactical communications.

2. *Distribution* is when multiple satellites are responsible for providing a capability to the operator. The combined data from several satellites ensures that an adversary would have to target all of these satellites to fully deny the capability.

3. *Proliferation* indicates that a large number of the same satellites are performing the same mission. This increases the overall capacity and size of the constellation and acts as almost a swarm of satellites operating in sync but not reliant on one another to provide capability to the operator.

Technical defenses are those that change the hardware or software of a satellite to protect it against attack. Some of these are commonplace in many operating military satellites today. Examples include:

1. *Shielding* is a key technical defense that protects vulnerable systems from high levels of radiation. Shielding is already, to some degree, used for some military satellites to protect against the radiated space environment and nuclear effects in space. Increased shielding could protect more satellites against electromagnetic pulses or high-powered microwave weapons.

2. *Filtering and shuttering* protect sensors on remote sensing satellites from laser dazzling or blinding. Like a filter or shutter on a camera, this technical defense allows only light of a certain wavelength or level of intensity to reach the sensor.

3. *Jam-resistant waveforms* protect against jamming by encoding the data transmitted on a radio wave to the satellite or back to Earth. Different tactics such as frequency hopping or interleaving may further protect satellites from electronic counter-space weapons.

Finally, operational defenses are those that rely on the operation of the satellite itself. Operational defenses include:

1. *Maneuvering* a satellite may move it out of harm's way of an incoming attack. However, maneuvering often takes time and would expend fuel, which shortens a satellite's operational lifetime.

2. *Reconstitution* allows nations to quickly replace existing space capabilities by launching more satellites or bringing additional ground stations online.

3. *Rapid deployment* calls for the quick launch of space capabilities when needed. The pace of launch would likely require extra satellites to be on hand and in storage, and a launch vehicle to be quickly procured and available.

Passive defenses, like those described above, present the best possible option for NATO deterrence by denial and interoperability across different Alliance member capabilities because of the opportunity for technology and standards sharing, as well as the team-centric nature of resiliency for space missions. Sharing technology and standards across space systems, to include best practices, allows nations with disparate space systems and architectures to ensure that a common standard of protection or defense is assured across the mission-set. Countries that have strong cybersecurity for military missions, to include space systems, lead in establishing NATO strategies for strong space cybersecurity. Likewise, Alliance members with redundant mission capability should take the lead on developing best practices for integration and interoperability to ensure a resilient capability in the case of denial of space services.

Active Defenses. Active defenses are those that target the threat itself, either after the attack has begun or proactive efforts if an attack is deemed imminent. For space systems, this means targeting the counter-space weapon itself, even if it is another satellite. Active defenses against counter-space attacks can either be space- or ground-based.[39]

Space-based active defenses often include capabilities onboard satellites that will target, degrade, destroy, or distract the attacking weapon. Space-based active defenses could also include separate satellites that host these capabilities, which are deployed to guard a high-value space asset. These 'bodyguard' satellites, equipped with onboard active defense systems, have been proposed recently by France.[40] Some options for onboard active defenses systems, either on the satellite itself or on defensive bodyguard satellites include: jamming and spoofing, dazzling or blinding lasers, kinetic shoot-back systems, or even the capability to physically seize the counter-space weapon. Ground-based defenses are systems based on Earth that could target counter-space systems and supporting infrastructure. These include cyberattacks on the command-and-control battle management system, jamming or spoofing, a direct-ascent ASAT, or other kinetic attacks on space or ground infrastructure.

The biggest political challenge with active space defenses is that while the user or defender may view them as defensive measures, some of them could also be used offensively as counter-space weapons. Therefore, nations must seriously weigh the political ramifications of investing in active defenses. For NATO, this means a collective conversation and decision about how to address the growing weaponization of the space domain, and whether the Alliance views active defense measures as deepening weaponization or as valued defenses in an increasingly unstable domain.

Space Situational Awareness. Investing in better knowledge and understanding of the space domain would make a critical impact in decision-making and allow for a better defense of space capabilities. It is difficult to diagnose a disabled or non-responsive satellite. On-orbit servicing satellites (or satellites designed to repair or upgrade other satellites in space) are not yet widely used or available, therefore SSA is critical to determining if a satellite was impaired by an attack or an environmental phenomena like space weather or debris. It is incredibly difficult to accurately characterize and track all satellites in orbit, but without such capability, political leaders are unable to make confident decisions regarding space systems and defenses. Investing in robust optical, infrared, and radar SSA systems requires a network ground-based and space-based systems. For ground systems, regionally based allianc-

es are less effective. For a full view of near-earth space, SSA systems need several radars around the world in each hemisphere. The credibility and effectiveness of deterrence in space is reliant on SSA and the information and ability to make informed characterizations of incidents.

NATO posture to promote deterrence is incredibly regionally based to the European continent. However, in order to track, detect, and characterize all objects in orbit, NATO needs ground station terminals across the globe, not solely in the European theatre. Despite Luxembourg's recent agreement to develop a NATO SSA center, cooperating with allies and partners outside of NATO will be critical to ensure a full view of near-Earth orbits.

Interoperability and Partnerships

Key to any multinational alliance and especially NATO, interoperability of space forces and data must be addressed. Space has traditionally been one of the most classified domains, likely due to its origins supporting nuclear arsenals and the intelligence community during the Cold War. This has greatly impacted the sharing of space-based intelligence and data amongst nations, especially from the US to other Allies and partners. These barriers must be reclassified and lowered to build a more effective and interoperable force. NATO forces from all member states must train with access to space assets and data, as well as train for a space-denied environment.

Since NATO no longer operates its own satellites, interoperability among national space assets must also be addressed. NATO must clearly delineate what assets are available and usable for NATO purposes during peacetime or wartime. Looking forward, NATO members must consider how to reduce redundancy, ensure resiliency, and build a cohesive set of space assets that will enable the warfighter and reassure collective defense. An assessment of threats to NATO space missions and the mosaic of defenses that could be employed to assure capability should be thoroughly assessed in order to determine cross-Alliance space defenses. This will require close collaboration and communication about Alliance space systems capabilities and defenses. Clear expectations and honesty about vulnerabilities of certain space systems

would allow NATO members to collaborate to create complimentary or resilient space architectures to other NATO allies.

Alliances are key to a robust presence in space. NATO has deep understandings and expertise in alliance building and management. However, solely regional alliances are not sufficient since space is a global enterprise and certain satellites require ground stations around the world to be most effective. Furthermore, there are physical advantages to having launch sites near the equatorial plane, such as increased fuel efficiency and easier access to prograde orbits. Currently France operates a spaceport out of French Guiana, which is well-suited for satellites intended for prograde orbits, or orbiting in the same direction that the Earth is rotating. In real terms, this means that a launch vehicle launching out of French Guiana could carry the same satellite as a vehicle launching from Scotland but require less propellant for the satellite to reach its intended orbit.[41] Saving fuel during launch would extend the operational lifetime of the satellite from French Guiana beyond that of the same satellite from Scotland. Similarly, ground stations must also be located in non-NATO countries to have constant communication with satellites as they orbit around the Earth. Therefore, cooperation within and outside of NATO is key for building a robust space enterprise and deterrent.

Norms of Behavior

Setting international norms of behavior or best practices is another key aspect of an encompassing deterrence posture for space. Currently, there are four critical international treaties governing space, a UN-subsidiary organization that allocates radio spectrum and GEO satellite orbital slots, some voluntary guidelines for the space environment, and several ongoing efforts to define, discuss, and curb space weaponization. These create a varied and vague international framework for space and actors' responsibilities for operating in the domain. There are several areas of ongoing discussions on norms building in space, but the discussions on rendezvous and proximity operations, space debris mitigation, and space weaponization all greatly affect NATO member states.

1. *Rendezvous and Proximity Operation (RPO):* RPOs are intentional maneuvers in space that put one satellite in a similar orbit or close to another satellite. RPO is a required technical capability for emerging space technologies like on-orbit servicing and active debris removal. It is also required for docking crew and cargo capsules at the ISS. However, while this technology is neutral in nature, the advanced maneuver capability is also a requirement for co-orbital ASATs. To have a kinetic, or sometimes non-kinetic, effect on a satellite in orbit from another satellite, the attacker must perform an RPO to get close enough to disable or destroy the target.

2. *Space Debris Mitigation:* Space debris is a growing issue for the international community and raises several difficult questions: Which countries are responsible for cleaning the space environment? What technology solutions exist to efficiently and safely clean and sustain orbits? Are there better international standards for debris mitigation to adopt? There has been recent international success in setting voluntary guidelines through the UN, but in practice there are minimal enforceable efforts to hold actors accountable for potentially creating a cascade of space debris that could make entire orbits unusable.

3. *Space Weaponization:* The most controversial norms surround space weapons. There have been a handful of international efforts to curb space weaponization, but so far the only legal statute comes from the Outer Space Treaty (1967) and the Partial Test Ban Treaty (1963), which declare that no nuclear weapons can be tested in or hosted in orbit or on a celestial body. One of the biggest hurdles for the international community is defining a space weapon. There are several challenging factors to consider such as where the weapon is hosted, if it has permanent or reversible effects, how to evaluate a dual-use operation (like RPOs) that could enable new technology in space or be used to destroy another actor's space assets.

Better norms of behavior in space can increase the stability and predictability of the space environment. For NATO, this means that it gives a baseline of activities and actions that can better inform the Alliance of insidious actions, disabled or uncontrolled satellites, or other potential attacks on space infrastructure in orbit or on earth. Norms of behavior can set this baseline that will make unusual or suspicious be-

havior more easily detected, denoted, and decried by the international space community. Establishing this baseline will also clear up gray zone tactics and allow for a stronger deterrence posture from the Alliance in space. Developing positive norms of behavior will assist NATO members in developing a more secure and sustainable space domain.

Recommendations

There are several initiatives for NATO to consider in order to fully capitalize on the advantages of military space systems and to craft a stronger space deterrence posture. The first is to communicate to the public, non-NATO partners, and adversaries about how NATO members view space as part of the Alliance. This includes publishing an unclassified version of the 2019 NATO space policy and further establishing clear declaratory language about how space is considered within NATO Articles 5 and 6. These steps should be adopted with haste.

A cross-domain deterrence strategy for NATO should be considered, as it would allow for the full suite of the Alliance's capabilities, instead of relying on the few space-capable nations. Deciphering how individual space assets and attacks line up in NATO's deterrence framework and calculus is paramount. Differing national perspectives will surely arise on critical issue areas such as permanent versus reversible attacks, the value of strategic versus tactical space systems, and what is deemed an armed attack in space or against space infrastructure of NATO member states. Furthermore, like cyber and remotely crewed systems, most attacks on military space systems do not directly kill operators or other personnel. This makes the proportionality of cross-domain response a challenge, since without the value of human life, often countries will value the system by cost to the taxpayer. NATO should work with member states to accurately value different systems based on their use and value to the warfighter, not solely the monetary value of the system. All of these critical juncture points require deep technically informed discussion by NATO members, including those that do not operate space systems, as cross-domain deterrence could lead to non-space nations' forces being called to respond to space attacks.

NATO should also commission a study on the value of Alliance-specific investments in space technology. The following questions should be examined in such a study:

1. Should NATO once again acquire and independently operate satellites?
2. Are there better paths with less resistance to increase interoperability and data sharing amongst NATO member states?
3. Is there value in NATO building relationships with the growing space commercial sector to purchase space capabilities (i.e., SSA, SATCOM, or remote sensing) as a service?

One of the best investments for NATO is in ground- and space-based SSA. A critical piece of space infrastructure, NATO should evaluate options to either procure its own SSA systems or data or encourage and incentivize its members to do so. Luxembourg's recent pledge is an encouraging start. Other NATO members without space capabilities could serve the Alliance by investing in SSA capabilities, especially by building ground stations to receive and transmit data for NATO operations. SSA not only helps discern attacks on space systems but monitors space debris and space weather. It is also a critical tool for establishing norms of behavior and ensuring they are met by other space actors.

Military space systems are sensitive issues within the Alliance, with several member states having no such systems, and some having other alliances and multilateral obligations, such as the EU or Five Eyes. However, one area where NATO may best establish itself is by coordinating and supporting defensive postures for space missions. NATO should be a leader in the discussion about which combination of defenses for satellites or mission sets should be adopted or pursued across the Alliance. NATO may be the opportune convening place for establishing global or alliance-based standards for passive defenses, such as cyber security measures for satellites. NATO can also be a forum to discuss and offer differing perspectives on the more challenging aspects of space defense, such as active defenses that some NATO members are pursuing. Alliance members may also want to revisit the conversation of NATO acquiring and operating some space systems. Assured access to different missions or capabilities may be necessary in the case of

global conflict where member states may be pulled in many directions simultaneously and space capabilities stretched thin.

Finally, NATO is well placed as a defense and security focused multilateral fora to be a leading voice and build consensus for better norms of behavior that will enable the sustainability of the space environment. This means supporting ongoing efforts in the UN, including those proposed by member states such as the code of conduct entitled "Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviors" recently submitted by the United Kingdom to the UN. Several nations responded to this proposal, including NATO member states.[42] NATO could support the UN and other member states to address concerns and build consensus around this document. Furthermore, NATO can stabilize the space domain through expanded inter-Alliance communication on space norms, as well as building partnerships with non-NATO nations.

There are several methods to promote greater space literacy within the Alliance and to ensure nations are considering the utility of space for NATO missions when investing in national space capabilities. One is to allow NATO officers to liaise with the space-focused military organizations in other NATO member nations, such as the Space Force and Space Command in the United States, the Space Command in the United Kingdom, Space Forces Command in France, or the Joint Space Operations Command in Italy. First-hand experience will be invaluable and allow for better integration of Alliance capability, increasing trust, and creating common understanding of space capabilities and missions. Second, NATO-focused space military exercises and simulations will build understanding in space capability and highlight where capability is needed or desired.[43] These should include all NATO member states, not solely those with space capabilities. Improving space literacy across NATO will allow all nations to better support space missions and discuss the nuances of space offenses and defenses.

Conclusion

For NATO to live up to its security commitments in the next couple of decades, the prioritization of space capability and infrastructure

is paramount. Modern militaries and the global economy are becoming increasingly reliant on space, and NATO must keep pace. Member states and NATO forces will need increased access to SATCOM, ISR, and SSA data as they continue to deter aggression from rising Russia and China. NATO's posture against less-capable nations such as Iran and North Korea will also rely on space capabilities more and more.

Currently, NATO's space capabilities are wholly reliant on member states' capacity and collective defense of space infrastructure. Seamless cooperation amongst NATO member states in data sharing, capability usage, and financial burden sharing, will be of great importance in the decades to come. To better serve the Alliance, NATO should support space through an all-encompassing plan to increase resilience and redundancy of space capabilities and mission sets, as well as bolster its deterrence to better meet the state of space today.

Notes

1. For more detail, see Aerospace Security, "Popular Orbits 101," Center for Strategic and International Studies, (https://aerospace.csis.org/aerospace101/popular-orbits-101/).

2. See Aerospace Security, "Counterspace Timeline, 1961-2020," Center for Strategic and International Studies, (https://aerospace.csis.org/counterspace-timeline/).

3. Ibid.

4. See: Tom Cremins, "A New Space Age," World Economic Forum (https://reports.weforum.org/global-strategic-foresight/thomas-e-cremins-nasa-a-new-space-age/).

5. N2YO, "Satellites by Countries and Organizations: North Atlantic Treaty Organization" (https://www.n2yo.com/satellites/?c=NATO&t=country).

6. NATO, "Defense and Deterrence," (https://www.nato.int/cps/us/natohq/declassified_138278.htm).

7. NATO, "Allied Command Operations (ACO)," October 23, 2020 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_52091.htm).

8. NATO, "What is NATO?" (https://www.nato.int/nato-welcome/).

9. The French Ministry for the Armed Forces, "Space Defense Strategy", 2019 (https://www.defense.gouv.fr/english/layout/set/print/content/down-

load/574375/9839912/version/5/file/%20Space+Defence+Strategy+2019_France.pdf).

10. "France conducts first military exercises in space," *Deutsche Welle*, March 10, 2021 (https://www.dw.com/en/france-conducts-first-military-exercises-in-space/a-56821868).

11. Ministère de l'Europe et des Affairs Étrangères, "Defence – Establishment of the NATO space centre of excellence in Toulouse," Communiqué issued by the Ministry for the Armed Forces, February 5, 2021 (https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/security-disarmament-and-non-proliferation/news/article/defence-establishment-of-the-nato-space-centre-of-excellence-in-toulouse).

12."The German military has set up its own space monitoring centre," Berliner Zeitung, September 22, 2020 (https://www.berliner-zeitung.de/en/the-german-military-is-setting-up-its-own-space-monitoring-centre-li.106681).

13. "German military opens new space operations center," *The Washington Post*, September 21, 2020 (https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/german-military-opens-new-space-operations-center/2020/09/21/9f108446-fc1f-11ea-b0e4-350e4e60cc91_story.html).

14. Dr. Bernhard Schmidt-Tedd, "Germany's National Space Policy, DLR, presentation to 2nd Inter-Regional Space Policy Dialogue between Europe and the Asia-Pacific Region," June 15, 2019, p. 2 (https://espi.or.at/downloads/send/74-workshop/466-germany-s-national-space-policy).

15. Ares Osservatorio Difesa, "The Italian Space Operations Command is getting ready," February 27, 2021 (https://www.aresdifesa.it/the-italian-space-operations-command-is-getting-ready).

16. Gunter's Space Page, "Military Spacecraft - Italy" (https://space.skyrocket.de/directories/sat_mil_ita.htm).

17. Space News, "Italian military mulls smaller GEO satellites so it can launch them on Vega rockets," November 6, 2018 (https://spacenews.com/italian-military-mulls-smaller-geo-satellites-so-it-can-launch-them-on-vega-rockets/).

18. Harrison, et al., "Space Threat Assessment 2019," April 2019, p. 21 (https://aerospace.csis.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/SpaceThreatAssessment2019-compressed.pdf).

19. Gunter's Space Page, "Military Spacecraft – Italy;" and Flight Global, "Italy's space sector seeks new frontiers despite Vega blow," December 23, 2020 (https://www.flightglobal.com/flight-international/italys-space-sector-seeks-new-frontiers-despite-vega-blow/141549.article).

20. Gunter's Space Page, "GovSat 1" (https://space.skyrocket.de/doc_sdat/ses-16.htm).

21. Gunter's Space Page, "NAOS" (https://space.skyrocket.de/doc_sdat/naos.htm).

22. "Bausch Signs €6.7m Deal on NATO Space Project," Delano, June 15, 2021 (https://delano.lu/d/detail/news/bausch-signs-eu67m-deal-nato-space-project/215067).

23. United Kingdom, "Global Britain in a competitive age: The Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy," March 2021, p. 21 (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/975077/Global_Britain_in_a_Competitive_Age-_the_Integrated_Review_of_Security__Defence__Development_and_Foreign_Policy.pdf).

24. UK Ministry of Defence, "Guidance: UK Space Command" (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-space-command#uk-space-command-formation-and-structure).

25. Gunter's Space Page, "Carbonite 2" (https://space.skyrocket.de/doc_sdat/carbonite-2.htm).

26. Despite the United Kingdom leaving the European Union, the nation currently plans to remain a main partner within ESA.

27. NATO, "NATO provides state-of-the-art communication solutions to Allied Navies," May 27, 2020 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_176046.htm).

28. Kathleen Hicks et al., "By Other Means," Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 2019 (https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/Hicks_GrayZone_interior_v4_FULL_WEB_0.pdf).

29. Gunter's Space Page, "Military Spacecraft - USSR / Russia" (https://space.skyrocket.de/directories/sat_mil_ussr_russia.htm).

30. Harrison, et al., "Space Threat Assessment 2021," Center for Strategic and International Studies, April 1, 2021 (https://aerospace.csis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/CSIS_Harrison_SpaceThreatAssessment2021.pdf).

31. Harrison, et al., "Space Threat Assessment 2019," pp. 23-34.

32. The U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, "China's Space and Counterspace Capabilities and Activities," March 30, 2020, p. 28 (https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/2020-05/China_Space_and_Counterspace_Activities.pdf).

33. Brian Weeden, "2007 Chinese Anti-Satellite Test Fact Sheet," last updated November 23, 2010 (https://swfound.org/media/9550/chinese_asat_fact_sheet_updated_2012.pdf).

34. Aerospace Security, "Counterspace Timeline 1961 - 2020."

35. Victoria Samson and Brian Weeden, "Global Counterspace Capabilities," April 1, 2021, p. xv (https://swfound.org/media/207162/swf_global_counterspace_capabilities_2021.pdf).

36. "China, Russia open moon base project to international partners, early details emerge," *Space News*, April 26, 2021 (https://spacenews.com/china-russia-open-moon-base-project-to-international-partners-early-details-emerge/).

37. NATO, The North Atlantic Treaty (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm).

38. For more detail, see: Todd Harrison et. al., "Defense Against the Dark Arts in Space," Center for Strategic and International Studies, February 26, 2021, pp. 10-18 (https://aerospace.csis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/032321_HarrisonJohnsonYoung_DefenseAgainstDarkArtsInSpace_Report_Update-compressed.pdf).

39. For more detail, see: Harrison et. al., "Defense Against the Dark Arts in Space," pp. 18-21.

40. "Espace : la France va armer ses prochains satellites militaires," *Le Point*, July 25, 2019 (https://www.lepoint.fr/societe/espace-la-france-va-armer-ses-prochains-satellites-militaires-25-07-2019-2326872_23.php).

41. Thomas G. Roberts, "Spaceports of the World," March 2019, p. 3 (https://aerospace.csis.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/190313__SpaceportsOfTheWorld.pdf).

42. United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, "Report of the Secretary-General on reducing space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviors (2021)" (https://www.un.org/disarmament/topics/outerspace-sg-report-outer-space-2021/).

43. Air Force Magazine, "Building the New Space Coalition," March 26, 2021 (https://www.airforcemag.com/article/building-the-new-space-coalition/).

Chapter 12

Fail-Deadly, Fail-Safe, and Safe-to-Fail:
The Strategic Necessity of Resilience in the Cyber Domain

Jason Blessing

The last several years have seen calls for NATO to embrace strategic resilience, and the COVID-19 pandemic has both amplified and accelerated debates surrounding resilience. One recommendation that has emerged is that NATO should adopt "comprehensive resilience" as a fourth core task alongside the three existing tasks of collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security laid out in the 2010 Strategic Concept. Resilience has generally referred to the ability to "anticipate, prevent, and…protect against and bounce forward from disruptions to restore critical functions."[1] Comprehensive resilience is thus meant to address a range of challenges facing the Alliance and is necessarily a shared endeavor that can be projected forward outside the membership bounds of NATO.[2] This chapter addresses one dimension of comprehensive resilience by highlighting the Alliance's cybersecurity challenges and the strategic necessity of resilience in the cyber domain.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted that cybersecurity encompasses more than "cyber war"[3] by underscoring the reliance of nations and their economies on cyberspace and digital infrastructures. Massive migrations to online services have occurred with the transition to remote telework and education, among other vital societal activities. NATO itself has been no exception, as the Alliance worked to facilitate remote work by shipping critical communication and information systems items to NATO Communications and Information Agency (NCIA) support teams across various countries. This effort included simultaneously shipping laptops from its Headquarters in Belgium to Allied Command Transformation (ACT) in Virginia, United States and shuttling devices across European borders to Mons, Belgium to ensure business continuity for Allied Command Operations (ACO).[4]

Pandemic-induced shifts into business and operational continuity plans have thus brought to the forefront security issues like threats to digital supply chains, which have become even more salient in the wake of the SolarWinds hack.[5] Recent high-profile ransomware attacks against US companies Colonial Pipeline and JBS Foods have only intensified the need to secure supply chains from digital threats.[6]

Concomitantly, broader questions have arisen about NATO's strategic approach to cyberspace. The most recent Strategic Concept, released in the wake of the 2010 Lisbon Summit, provides few clues as to how collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security relate to cyberspace. In fact, the document only mentions the word "cyber" five times.[7] An urgency to reconsider NATO's efforts in the cyber domain has been evidenced by recommendations from the NATO 2030 Reflection Group, which devoted an entire sub-section of its report to hybrid and cyber threats. In particular, the Reflection Group highlighted the need to develop both greater collective defense capacity in cyberspace and a more robust consultation framework to facilitate collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security in the domain.[8] These concerns were largely echoed by Allies in the recent 2021 Brussels Summit Communiqué.[9]

This chapter argues that for NATO to effectively address the broad range of security challenges emanating from the cyber domain, the Alliance must complement its current collective defense efforts by incorporating resilience and "safe-to-fail" principles into a new Strategic Concept. The unique dynamics of cyberspace mean that resilience must be a shared effort among members, and it must be projected outside the Alliance's borders. This chapter therefore recommends that NATO adopt a fourth core task of comprehensive resilience that includes shared and forward cyber resilience as a major component. While NATO has thus far prioritized the operationalization of collective defense in cyberspace, the strategic logics that underpin collective defense will not apply to the full spectrum of threats presented by the domain. Part of the challenge, then, is to reframe the Alliance's cyber security conversations to acknowledge the limits of collective defense.

NATO's ongoing efforts to operationalize collective defense have relied primarily on 'fail-deadly' and 'fail-safe' logics. On the one hand,

the Alliance has drawn on deterrence principles in attempts to discourage and prevent adversarial actions in and through cyberspace through the imposition of costs that would outweigh potential gains.[10] While denial strategies are vital to cost imposition, deterrence-by-punishment has been the strategic bedrock of NATO's recent initiatives. The threat of retaliatory punishment is traditionally a 'fail-deadly' strategy: should an adversary undertake an undesired action, i.e., deterrence fails, the Alliance responds with the use of deadly force. On the other hand, NATO has also focused on implementing defensive measures to minimize the damage and fallout from an attack in or through cyberspace. Such a 'fail-safe' strategy seeks to ensure that, should deterrence fail, the Alliance and its members retain the ability (albeit degraded) to operate safely and securely in the cyber domain.

Combined, fail-deadly and fail-safe strategies look to prevent and mitigate of the costs of adversarial actions in the cyber domain. In contrast, resilience in cyberspace—the ability to anticipate, withstand, recover from, and adapt to strategic shocks or surprises occurring in or through the cyber domain[11]—emphasizes passive protection, risk-minimization, and forward-looking continuity-of-operations efforts.[12] Unlike NATO's current approach to collective defense, resilience rests on 'safe-to-fail' principles. As a 'safe-to-fail strategy,' resilience is built on the assumption that, despite deterrent and defensive measures, the Alliance may fail to foresee adverse strategic disruptions that remove the ability to operate and coordinate in the cyber domain. To withstand and bounce forward from such disruptions, NATO must ensure that military cyber functions and capabilities fail safely—that is, to fail in ways that do not remove the ability to recover at or above original operating capacity. Resilience thus offers a way for the Alliance to account for a variety of threats and scenarios to which fail-deadly and fail-safe strategies prove ineffective. At the same time, resilience serves to enhance collective defense in the cyber domain: collective defense is more credible if the Alliance is more resilient.

This chapter proceeds in the following sections. The first describes the cyber threats facing the Alliance. The second section outlines NATO's policy and organizational developments related to cyberspace. The third section discusses the limitations of collective defense; in short, collective defense efforts are best suited for countering the small

subset of cyber incidents that reach damage levels analogous to conventional uses of force. The fifth section explores what cyber resilience looks like for NATO and why it must be a shared phenomenon that is projected forward outside the Alliance. The chapter concludes with several recommendations for the Alliance as it looks ahead to 2030 and beyond.

The Cyber Threat Landscape

NATO defines cyberspace as the "global domain consisting of all interconnected communication, information technology and other electronic systems, networks and their data, including those which are separated or independent, which process, store or transmit data."[13] The domain thus has three main components: (1) the physical layer, such as hardware components or undersea cables that are geographically bound; (2) the logical layer, where elements are manifested in code or data through software, firmware, etc.; and (3) the human layer, consisting of the virtual identities of those individuals interacting with the other layers.[14]

Cyberspace operations are operations to defend, attack, or exploit computers, their information, and/or networks. Defensive operations look to maintain the integrity, confidentiality, and availability of computers, information, and networks. Offensive operations seek to disrupt, deny, degrade, or destroy information, computers, and/or networks. Operations focused on exploitation intend to monitor, collect, and exfiltrate data from computers and networks without disruption or destruction.[15] To a certain degree, operations are dependent on physical infrastructure that supports and enables the digital realm, and they can produce territorial effects. Yet, cyber operations are not territorially bound; they can produce near-instantaneous effects that, whether intended or not, can rapidly spread to networks and systems outside the original target. Targeting itself is not limited to state assets, as the private sector is routinely the victim of malicious activity.

Both state and non-state actors can conduct cyberspace operations. Non-state actors can include individuals, criminal organizations, terrorist groups, and 'patriotic hackers' (some of which can be state-affil-

iated or state-sanctioned). State actors primarily include intelligence services and militaries. Operations carried out by states are likely to be more impactful as they are better-financed and better-resourced than non-state actors. While a variety of states can and do make use of cyber operations, NATO Allies emphasized Russia and China as primary threat actors at the 2021 Brussels Summit.[16]

There are three main ways adversaries can utilize cyber operations.[17] First, cyber operations can achieve independent effects in or through the cyber domain. Such operations range from relatively unsophisticated attacks, such as distributed denials of service (DDOS), to the complex deployment of malware by advanced persistent threats (APTs). For example, the 2007 DDOS attacks on Estonia used fairly simple methods to send traffic requests that overwhelmed servers used by the Estonian Parliament, several political parties, institutions in control of the country's internet infrastructure, and a number of financial firms, news organizations, and communications firms.[18] More complex methods were used to produce significant physical damage in the suspected Russian-sponsored compromise of a German steel mill in 2014, in which spear-phishing emails contained malicious attachments that, once opened, accessed and disrupted the industrial controls systems for a blast furnace.[19]

Second, cyberspace operations can act as a military force multiplier. Adversaries can use cyber tools to 'prepare the battlefield' by compromising a target's communications systems, as was the case for the 2008 Russian incursion into Georgia. As the Russian military prepared for a ground invasion, a variety of Russian-linked non-state actors, including criminal organizations, conducted a series of DDOS attacks that degraded the Georgian government's communications systems and froze the National Bank of Georgia. The Russian military invasion benefited greatly, as Georgia was unable to coordinate defense efforts and was delayed in procuring war materials from the private sector.[20] Cyber operations can also be a force multiplier when used in conjunction with traditional military means. For example, Russia's invasion and illegal occupation of Crimea has co-deployed cyber tools with kinetic weapons systems in attempts to bolster the Russian military's effects.[21]

Finally, attacks and exploitation in and through cyberspace can enable broader grey zone operations[22] such as defense industrial espionage and intellectual property theft, compromising critical infrastructure, election meddling, and broader disinformation efforts (see Rebegea and Schmiedl in this volume). Notable examples include cyber operations such as China's theft of F-35 fighter jet design plans from US defense contractor Lockheed Martin in 2009, Russian infiltration of US power grids in 2009, the 2013 Chinese hack of the US Office of Personnel Management, and Russian election meddling in US and European elections.[23]

NATO's Major Cyberspace Efforts to Date

Cyber defense first appeared on NATO's political agenda at the 2002 Prague Summit, and Allies reaffirmed their commitment to securing the Alliance's information systems at the 2006 Riga Summit. After Estonia's 2007 cyber incident, NATO members had a greater urgency to address cyberspace challenges and, in January 2008, approved an initial *Policy on Cyber Defense*. With the release of the 2010 Strategic Concept, the North Atlantic Council (NAC) was tasked with formulating an in-depth cyber defense policy and implementation plan. By June 2011, a second *Policy on Cyber Defense* had been approved by Allied defense ministers. Cyber defense was incorporated into the NATO Defense Planning Process in 2012, and, as part of the Chicago Summit, Allies centralized and enhanced network defense under the NATO Computer Incident Response Team (NCIRC). Subsequently, NATO established the Communications and Information Agency (NCIA) in July of 2012 to house NCIRC.[24] Only in 2014 at the Wales Summit did Allies formally acknowledge cyber defense as part of the collective defense task.[25]

Allies have taken several steps within the last five years to bolster NATO's cyber posture. At the 2016 Warsaw Summit, member nations agreed that the Alliance would recognize cyberspace as an official military operating domain. The agreement also confirmed that NATO's defensive mandate extended to cyberspace. This recognition built on developments from the 2014 Wales Summit, where Allies affirmed the applicability of both international law and Article 5 of the North Atlan-

tic Treaty to cyberspace. The Warsaw Summit thus solidified the ability of member nations to invoke the Alliance's collective defense provision in response to cyber incidents. Signaling their commitment to the *Enhanced NATO Policy on Cyber Defense* adopted at the Wales Summit,[26] the Warsaw Summit also saw Allies agree to the *Cyber Defense Pledge*, a set of seven implementation points for improving national cyber defense capabilities.[27] Shortly after the 2016 Warsaw Summit, NATO also issued a joint declaration with the European Union (EU) aimed in part at developing broader "coordination on cyber security and defence including in the context of…missions and operations, exercises and on education and training."[28] This expanded upon a previous NATO-EU Technical Arrangement on Cyber Defense, signed earlier in the same year to facilitate information sharing and best practices between respective emergency response teams.[29]

The 2018 Brussels Summit provided another important milestone. The resultant communiqué offered several public affirmations of the Alliance's *Cyberspace Roadmap*, a private agreement made among defense ministers in February 2017 to develop the ability to conduct cyberspace operations and achieve mission assurance vis-à-vis the cyber domain.[30] These affirmations included: identifying cyber defense as part of NATO's collective defense efforts; signaling that Allies could volunteer sovereign cyber effects (i.e., effects produced by offensive capabilities) in service of NATO missions; and announcing the establishment of a Cyberspace Operations Centre (CyOC) in Belgium to provide situational awareness and coordinate operational activity.[31] Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg also signed a new *Joint Declaration on EU-NATO Cooperation* that reinforced a commitment to cooperation in cyberspace.[32]

More recently, in 2019, the Alliance agreed to a general framework for integrating sovereign cyber effects and has released a preliminary draft of its *Joint Allied Doctrine for Cyberspace Operations* (as of January 2020). The latter provides the most comprehensive overview of NATO's operation in cyberspace to date.[33] Lastly, at the 2021 Brussels Summit, Allies endorsed the development of the *Comprehensive Cyber Defense Policy* to support the Alliance's three core tasks and increase overall resilience.[34]

The Focus on Operationalizing Collective Defense

Much of NATO's approach to the cyber domain has focused on developing collective defense frameworks. Although the Alliance has outlined a crisis management role for the NCIRC and advanced preliminary cooperative frameworks for malware disclosures and cyber intelligence sharing,[35] operationalizing collective defense has taken priority. Article 5 considerations have been the foundation for NATO's strategic approach to cyberspace, and there are three 'fail-deadly' scenarios in which Article 5 can be applied. First, an ally can invoke Article 5 in response to a cyberattack and the Alliance can respond using in-kind cyber operations as a within-domain retaliatory measure. Second, NATO can utilize cyber operations as a cross-domain retaliatory measure in response to a conventional attack that has triggered Article 5. Finally, the Alliance can utilize conventional military measures in response to a cyberattack on a member state that has subsequently invoked Article 5.

Operationalizing and implementing NATO's ability to address such collective defense scenarios related to the cyber domain has required several organizational changes, the primary being the creation of the Cyber Operations Centre (CyOC) within ACO at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons, Belgium. CyOC is the primary point for planning, coordinating, and executing NATO's cyber operations. For each of these functions, CyOC must rely on Allies to volunteer operational intelligence. CyOC also provides situational awareness and interacts closely with the NCIA through the NCIRC for the 'fail-safe' protection of static networks and extended networks for operationally deployed forces. As with NATO's geographic theater commands, the Director of CyOC reports to the Deputy Chief of Staff for Cyberspace, who provides strategic guidance to the Supreme Allied Commander Europe. Posts within CyOC are rotational and hinge on a bidding process to see which Allies will support which posts.[36]

NATO only conducts defensive cyber operations to secure its own networks and to support Allies and their networks when requested. The Alliance takes a restrictive view of defensive operations, excluding any active defense measures that might seek to disrupt an attack at its source outside of NATO's own networks. Offensive cyber op-

erations must necessarily be conducted by individual member states, though national-level offensive cyber operations can be integrated into NATO operations in two ways. First, member states may independently conduct an offensive cyber operation in support of NATO operations; this is less integrated and more loosely coordinated. Second, under the Sovereign Cyber Effects Provided Voluntarily by Allies (SCEPVA) framework, an operational-level NATO commander may request an offensive cyber effect from allied nations. Unlike with conventional capabilities, authority over cyber capabilities is not directly handed over to NATO commanders. Instead, member states retain the capability, providing only the intended effect. In this way, individual member states maintain secrecy over the sources and methods of creating cyber effects. In these circumstances, CyOC is responsible for coordinating NATO commander requests and the individual member states providing effects. Only five member states have announced that they will make sovereign cyber effects available to the Alliance. These are: Denmark, Estonia, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States.[37]

The Limits of Collective Defense in Cyberspace

There are, however, several dynamics that reveal the limits of the fail-deadly and fail-safe logics underlying NATO's collective defense initiatives. In short, these strategic logics only apply to a narrow set of threats; they will not apply to the full spectrum of threats presented by the cyber domain. Fail-deadly deterrence is only likely to succeed in preventing state-level adversaries from undertaking resource-intensive cyber operations that reach the threshold of armed conflict with physical, destructive effects and that are quickly attributable.[38] Fail-safe defensive measures also face several political and technical challenges, all of which point to a role for cyber resilience.

Three main complications limit the applicability of the fail-deadly logics underpinning collective defense efforts in cyberspace. The first is deciding which actors are to be deterred. Compared to traditional warfighting domains, there are relatively low entry costs for conducting operations in the cyber domain.[39] As such, both state and non-state actors can target the Alliance. There are also asymmetric operational

costs—actors are faced with multiple avenues for potential gains and few risks. This means that it will be near-impossible to change the decision calculus of a malicious actor deploying low-cost, low-risk techniques such as distributed denials of service. Conversely, sophisticated cyber operations that can produce strategic effects equivalent to those of conventional military attacks will have both significant and costly intelligence requirements that can only be borne by state actors. These higher 'start-up' costs mean it may be possible to change the decision calculus of actors seeking to conduct highly sophisticated cyber operations. Due to this asymmetry, only state actors undertaking costly cyber operations are likely to be deterred. In all other circumstances, deterrence will be more prone to failure.[40]

Attribution difficulties present further challenges to the 'who' of deterrence. Adversaries with rapidly changing tactics, techniques, and procedures—along with the ability to easily conceal an operation's origin and perpetrator—can pose hurdles to technical attribution.[41] Technical difficulties can weaken deterrent postures by delaying the timeliness of retaliatory punishment. Moreover, the effects of an operation that a defender notices may actually be second- or third-order effects. This can add additional time between attribution and punishment.[42] The larger attribution issues, however, are political. NATO lacks common standards or guidance for attributing cyber operations in either a technical or political sense. Indeed, attribution remains a member state prerogative. Not only are the targeted member states responsible for attribution, but those members looking to contribute to collective defense must perform independent attribution assessments, and the political decision for a collective defense response must come from the NAC.[43] Reaching a consensus decision to trigger collective defense in response to cyberspace operations is likely to be politically contentious, and member states will have few incentives to risk revealing the intelligence sources and methods that underlie attribution decisions. These dynamics are likely to intensify when additional links in the attribution chain are required, such as when a perpetrator is encouraged or sponsored by an adversarial state but lacks direct ties. Attribution is less likely to be politically controversial across the Alliance once a conventional conflict is underway as contextual clues from kinetic attacks can reduce uncertainty. This discussion points to a greater role

for deterrence-by-denial. Deterring an adversary by taking measures to deny potential gains does not hinge on attribution and thus possesses a potentially wider scope of application.[44]

A second and related hurdle for cyber deterrence is determining which actions the Alliance seeks to deter. Much of the activity in cyberspace falls below the physical effects thresholds associated with the disruption, degradation, or destruction of computers and networks. Such considerations complicate decisions to invoke Article 5—specifically, the types of cyberattacks to which Article 5 should apply. Indeed, cyber operations targeting military assets or critical civilian infrastructure can be incredibly costly but may not reach damage levels associated with conventional attacks.[45] Moreover, espionage via network exploitation is widespread, varied, and falls well below the threshold of armed conflict.[46] Problematically, such exploitation can be nearly indistinguishable from operations that eventually seek to attack computers or networks and produce effects. Network exploitation can even be precursor to conventional military operations.[47]

Determining how to deter presents a third obstacle to NATO's cyber deterrence efforts. Threatening conventional military means in response to cyber operations poses dilemmas of proportionality and can risk unintended escalation.[48] Retaliation with cyber tools carry their own problems. First, the Alliance faces issues of political reliability, particularly in the context of the SCEPVA framework. Legally, Allies retain different constitutional restraints on offensive cyber operations that can hamper the ability to volunteer sovereign effects. Strategically, states may be hesitant to volunteer their 'best' cyber effects for fear of burning an exploit that could have had a greater payoff when used in a national context. Volunteering sovereign effects can also inadvertently give unwanted insight to an adversary regarding an Ally's techniques, tactics, and procedures. Second, the temporary and transient nature of cyber capabilities makes it incredibly difficult to establish repeatable and predictable effects required of deterrent threats.[49] Finally, signaling in cyberspace is generally ambiguous and rarely straightforward.[50] For instance, an adversary may not even recognize a signal, believing it instead to be a technical glitch. Even if a costly signal is received, there is no way to ensure that it has interpreted as intended.

In addition to deterrence, NATO's fail-safe cyber defense efforts face political and technical challenges. Because NATO will not undertake any active defense measures, actions to mitigate the effects of a cyberattack are limited to NATO networks or to individual member state networks when requested. This forecloses the possibility of developing an institutional strategy to mitigate the costs of a cyberattack upstream by disrupting the source of an attack, much like US Cyber Command does with its "defend forward" posture.[51] More problematically, Allies have and will continue to have different legal, strategic, doctrinal, and threat frameworks for cyberspace that complicate defensive measures for the Alliance.

Most immediately this means that Allies will locate resources to different aspects of cyber defense based on individual country circumstances. Different strategic focuses have the potential to intensify disparate threat perceptions, capabilities, and skillsets. This can also exacerbate interoperability problems; for example, during an operation or crisis, some systems will be controlled by NATO while others will be controlled by an ally or a group of allies with different skill and knowledge levels. In the longer term, disparate legal understandings, particularly regarding sovereignty in cyberspace, will become more impactful as a greater number of allied nations develop forward defense strategies and the requisite capabilities for out-of-network operations. An out-of-network operation can in and of itself cause operational friction. However, differing definitions of sovereignty in cyberspace—and what violates it—inevitably create political friction between Allies as some look to operate and produce effects on other Allies' networks.[52] This political friction will contribute to even greater hesitancy over cyber-intelligence sharing and complicate the coordination of defensive mitigation measures across the Alliance.

Even if political barriers were removed, there are technical challenges to Allied implementation of fail-safe measures. Although there are conditions that can favor defense, such as the ability to manipulate the environment,[53] offensive cyber operations can be both unpredictable and undetectable. Moreover, cyberspace presents a large and complex attack surface, where attacks can have unintended, cross-border effects. Given the sheer quantity of daily network probes experienced by NATO and individual member states, it is unlikely that every intrusion

can be successfully countered or even identified. Highly sophisticated cyber operations are also likely to evade most defensive measures. Finally, fail-safe measures cannot effectively mitigate supply chain risks, as computers and systems increasingly rely on commercially available products and internationally based manufacturers. Defensive strategies will have limited utility if hardware or software components have been preloaded with malware.[54] Each of these technical hurdles can contribute to slow-downs in decision-making, coordination, and response times for the Alliance while highlighting the need for greater resilience.

'Safe-to-Fail': Building Cyber Resilience into NATO

The political and technical dynamics discussed in the previous section highlight the necessity of a safe-to-fail strategy for NATO in the cyber domain. Cyber resilience offers a way for the Alliance to address a range of threats below the threshold of armed conflict to which fail-deadly and fail-safe strategies fail to apply—such as ransomware attacks, distributed denials of service, exploitation of digital supply chains, or operations conducted by non-state proxy actors. Moreover, even low-sophistication cyberattacks can produce disruptive and cascading effects across societies with consequences that are difficult to anticipate. Resilience thus offers a broader strategic umbrella for the Alliance to plan for, recover from, and adapt in the wake of unanticipated disruptions from cyberspace.

From a technical perspective, cyber resilience hinges on the ability of key information and communications systems to anticipate and withstand disruptions to service provision by allowing core services and functions to fail without compromising their ability to recover at or above original capacity.[55] These same principles can be applied to the strategic level. As a safe-to-fail strategy, cyber resilience is premised on both the failure to deter and defend against all cyber threats and the failure to foresee all potential strategic disruptions. The goal of cyber resilience is thus to favorably shape the conditions of such failures by forecasting, preparing for, and learning from strategic shocks in or through the cyber domain that can have unanticipated, multiple-order, and spillover effects.

NATO already possesses the strategic foundation for pursuing greater cyber resilience and has recently reiterated its commitment to resilience writ large.[56] At the 2016 Warsaw Summit, Allies agreed to seven baseline requirements for national resilience, one of which seeks to strengthen civil communications systems. This requirement was updated in November 2019 to reflect considerations for 5G.[57] The *Cyber Defense Pledge* offers a more specific platform for linking national capability development to allied resilience. It emphasizes the need for greater resources, more domestic stakeholder interaction and information sharing, and better cyber hygiene and education.[58] However, these initiatives have both been couched in the self-help principle of Article 3 of the North Atlantic Charter, whereby Allies work towards greater resilience "separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid."[59] As such, Allies pursue cyber resilience relatively independently. For example, the Cyber Section of NATO's Emerging Security Challenges Division (ESCD) conducts a regular survey of all member states for the *Cyber Defense Pledge*, but national responses are voluntary and Allies must individually request information from previous surveys.

Yet, fully incorporating safe-to-fail principles into the Alliance necessitates viewing resilience outside of the Article 3 context as a necessarily shared effort among member states. The limitations of collective defense discussed in this chapter highlight the potential for cyber operations to produce unanticipated, cross-boundary effects. Allied resiliency is inextricably interdependent—the digital interconnectedness of allied economic and defense efforts means that the vulnerabilities of one ally become vulnerabilities for all. Entanglement with the private sector is also an important confounding factor for members' self-help efforts. NATO and its members will continue to rely on the private sector and civilian infrastructure for mission-critical systems and new technologies. The speed and spillover of disruptive cyber incidents like the WannaCry ransomware and the NotPetya wiperware-disguised-as-ransomware speak to the insufficiency of relying only on self-help measures to build cyber resilience.[60] Resilience through self-help is therefore only part of the puzzle; safe-to-fail policies require more formalized coordination across NATO. Such efforts can leverage consultation mechanisms and processes derived from Article 4 of

the North Atlantic Treaty,[61] and Article 2 provides a powerful basis for members to coordinate with the private sector and deconflict economic policies underlying cyber resilience.[62]

This shared resilience must also be projected forward outside the bounds of the Alliance to NATO's partners. The same cyber threat dynamics that make resilience a shared endeavor among members also highlight the importance of developments in partner and other third-party states (on partnerships, see Elgin and Wieslander in this volume). Unlike in traditional domains, NATO's resilience and collective defense in the cyber domain are directly affected by the resiliency of non-members. Ukraine serves as a key example, as the country has been a testbed for Russian cyber operations with international implications. For instance, the BlackEnergy Trojan malware deployed against the Ukrainian power grid in 2015 was later found on US power grid networks.[63] In the case of the 2017 cyberattacks on Ukraine, the NotPetya malware self-replicated and spread rapidly and destructively to over 150 countries using the Windows-based exploits.[64] These incidents show the tenuous nature of cyber resilience and the need for the Alliance to aid partners in modernizing and building resilient digital infrastructures. Article 10 of the Treaty already lays the foundation for projecting resilience forward to aspiring members[65] and can be used to set cyber resilience requirements alongside more traditional standards. Forward cyber resilience is in NATO's best interests: the Alliance will be more resilient if its neighbors and partners are more resilient.

Operationalizing shared and forward cyber resilience as a safe-to-fail strategy will require four main lines of effort.[66] First, critical cyber assets, functions, personnel, and intersections and dependencies, must be identified and prioritized. Prioritization hinges on determining the relative exposure and significance of assets, how they may be targeted and attacked, and the areas where greater risks can be assumed. Second and related is risk minimization, particularly in terms of supply chains. One issue that has risen in prominence is the use of 5G infrastructures and networks. For instance, relying on non-allied suppliers of military or other vital communications infrastructures, such as Chinese companies Huawei and ZTE, can entail increased vulnerabilities for the Alliance.[67] Other important aspects of risk minimization include continuous threat monitoring and the development of continuity-of-operations plans for

cyber crises. Continuity plans are particularly crucial for ensuring that adversaries gain fewer and shorter-term payoffs from disruptions like ransomware attacks or sophisticated wiper worms that delete information. Third, foresight and long-term trend analysis are critical for cyber resilience, as strategic and technological change will further complicate an already complex operational environment. Threat actors will continue to develop new doctrines, institutions, and capabilities for the cyber domain. Emerging technologies, such as quantum computing, and the increased use of artificial intelligence will undoubtedly impact the scope, nature, and disruptive potential of cyber threats to the Alliance and its members.[68] In this vein, NATO's proposed establishment of a defense innovation accelerator is an important forward-looking development.[69] Fourth, effective cyber resilience requires not only bouncing back to normal from disruptions, but also bounding forward via adaptation and the institutionalization of 'lessons learned.' Each of these lines of efforts will require institutionalized cooperation among member states and between NATO and its partner countries.

Shared and forward cyber resilience complements collective defense by addressing a range of grey zone threats to which fail-deadly and fail-safe logics do not apply. At the same time, the safe-to-fail logic of resilience can strengthen the Alliance's ability to carry out its other core tasks. Resilience makes collective defense more credible, as the continuity of critical functions and services are crucial for reducing the benefits of disruption for adversaries. For instance, implementing a safe-to-fail strategy helps to reduce the impact of defensive capability gaps between allies in the cyber domain. Resilience efforts also support collective defense by overlapping with deterrence-by-denial measures.[70] Moreover, and particularly in terms of crisis management, cyber resilience can support efforts in traditional domains by ensuring that NATO and Allied land, sea, and air components dependent upon cyberspace can continue to operate with minimal disruption. Projecting cyber resilience forward to NATO's partner countries also provides an avenue from which to strengthen the Alliance's cooperative security engagements. Finally, the future-oriented and adaptive nature of resilience provides an important foundation for collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security in the cyber domain to evolve

with the emergence of new technologies and threats as the Alliance heads into the next decade and beyond.

Recommendations

The Alliance can take several steps to better integrate cyber resilience into its activities as it looks to 2030 and beyond. This section provides five recommendations to help NATO operationalize the main aspects of cyber resilience set forth in the previous section. These are: the adoption of comprehensive resilience as a core task; the formalization of cyber resilience efforts among members; the expansion of the NATO Industry Cyber Partnership; the creation of a NATO Office of Net Assessment; and the longer-term development of a cyber 'code of conduct.'

1. *Update the Strategic Concept and adopt a fourth core task of comprehensive resilience.*

Most pressingly, NATO should update its Strategic Concept to accurately reflect its commitment to collective defense in the cyber domain and to incorporate a fourth core task of comprehensive resilience, of which shared and forward cyber resilience is a component. Given the scant attention to cyber issues in the 2010 Strategic Concept, a new Strategic Concept is needed to tie together and bring further coherence to a decade's worth of strategic developments for cyberspace. Moreover, a revised Strategic Concept is a necessary step for integrating fail-deadly, fail-safe, and safe-to-fail logics into the Alliance's cyberspace initiatives. Given the limits of fail-deadly and fail-safe strategies, safe-to-fail policies that underlie resilience are needed to address a wider range of threats the Alliance faces in and through the cyber domain.

2. *Formalize coordination, consultation, and mutual aid for cyber resilience among Allies.*

Resilience as a core task across the Alliance will require moving past self-help notions of resilience towards a conception of shared resilience. This move should entail the development and use of common defensive metrics,[71] defensive capability standards, and frameworks for reporting major cyber incidents. In this regard, formalizing the 'infor-

mation broker' role of the ESCD's Cyber Division vis-à-vis the *Cyber Defense Pledge* would be a significant initiative. NATO should formalize the ways in which the Cyber Division collects, processes, and disseminates data on Allied cyber resilience. The routine production of qualitative case studies represents an important mechanism for contextualizing trends from quantitative data and identifying policy and technical problems, common deficiencies, 'lessons learned,' and best practices for addressing respective problems. Just as it surveys Allies on cyber resilience, the Cyber Division should also develop survey methods for member states that help identify informational needs – both individually and multilaterally – across the Alliance. The Cyber Division could thus act as a data repository that facilitates issue-centric 'minilaterals' among Allies. Concomitantly, the Cyber Division should explore new avenues for the regular distribution of cyber resilience trends and findings, such as quarterly reports or published case studies for all Allies, which supplement yearly conferences and reporting.

Consultation mechanisms will be crucial transferring skills and expertise among allies, a key component to help build domestic cyber exercise staging capabilities in smaller Allies. One such avenue for greater coordination, consultation, and mutual aid is expanding the scope of NCIRC so that teams are available outside of crisis situations, much like the Resilience Advisory Support Teams. While the NCIA does offer advisory teams, these teams are not formalized like emergency response teams under NCIRC. Should NCIRC be expanded to include formal advisory teams, member states could request these teams as an observing or assessing party for bilateral and multilateral "hunt forward" missions. Such a role can serve to facilitate NATO's broader goals of situational awareness, threat intelligence sharing, and vulnerability assessment.

3. *Expand the NATO Industry Cyber Partnership on a case-by-case basis to include actors in like-minded non-NATO nations.*

Building bridges with key private sector actors in non-NATO member states through the NATO Industry Cyber Partnership[72] will be an important aspect of projecting resilience forward. Companies in Enhanced Opportunity Partner nations, like Ericsson in Sweden and Nokia in Finland, represent natural candidates for expansion. The Al-

liance should also look to broader Interoperability Platform Partners with vibrant telecommunications sectors like South Korea and Japan, home to Samsung and Sony, respectively. Expanding the NATO Industry Cyber Partnership on a case-by-case basis can help build greater resilience into digital supply chains and spur the development of viable alternatives to digital infrastructures and products from companies in countries like China.

4. *Improve cyber foresight and adaptation to future threats by establishing a NATO Office of Net Assessment.*

Resilience requires systematic evaluation of present and future conditions; as such, NATO should establish an Office of Net Assessment to institutionalize the Alliance's future-oriented analysis. A NATO Office of Net Assessment should be tasked with analyzing organizational strengths and weaknesses vis-à-vis adversaries in the cyber domain. Part of this effort should include developing metrics for assessing Allied operational success in cyberspace. Doing so will provide a clearer picture of the current and future threat environment and should help reconcile differential threat assessments by Allies. Additionally, an Office of Net Assessment should play a role in forecasting the impact of emerging cyberspace technologies across a variety of scenarios. This forecasting role should extend to the development of wargaming scenarios specific to the cyber domain as well as for broader cross-domain operational contexts where conventional forces operate in degraded communications environments. This effort can look to leverage the expertise and collaborate with the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defense Center of Excellence located in Estonia, which sponsors the annual Locked Shields and Crossed Swords exercises.[73]

5. *Develop a cyber 'code of conduct.'*

In the longer term, NATO should work to develop a normative 'code of conduct' for states operating in the cyber domain that focuses on behavior and standardization and complements the work of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts. Such a code of conduct could presage a formal policy and would be a critical first step in determining when and how to respond to the cumulative costs of below-threshold cyber incidents over time. A code of conduct could also

be the basis for promoting best practices for cyber hygiene and for outlining responsible applications for artificial intelligence and emerging technologies like quantum computing in military contexts. Likewise, it can be the foundation for developing stances on more contentious issues like out-of-network operations on allied or partner networks and defining violations of sovereignty in cyberspace. This should ultimately be an intra-Alliance agreement, but it should be developed with input from key partner states who can subsequently voluntarily pledge to adhere to the code of conduct.

In addition to behavior, a code of conduct can be used to standardize risk minimization across the Alliance. In this vein, NATO's Standardization Office should be used to develop guidelines for digital supply chain issues like 5G or software investments. It is impossible for NATO and its members to scrutinize every piece of new technology, and formal accreditation or standardization is a slow and financially costly political decision. For instance, software is one of the largest attack surfaces of digital supply chains and is an important component of mission-critical systems. Although it will be nearly impossible to fully obtain compliance throughout the entire supply chain, NATO can introduce transparency and visibility with guidelines addressing supplier, code authors, product components, and versions. The Standardization Office can produce recommended standards for vetting domestic vendors for quality and for screening foreign investments into digital infrastructure, intellectual property, and technology companies.

While collective defense will continue to be a necessary part of NATO's approach to the cyber domain, the Alliance must incorporate resilience into a new Strategic Concept. 'Fail-deadly' and 'fail-safe' logics alone cannot address the myriad of challenges emanating from cyberspace. These recommendations offer potential avenues for the Alliance to implement the 'safe-to-fail' logic underpinning cyber resilience in a way that is shared and extends forward beyond NATO's borders to its partners.

Notes

1. "Democratic Resilience Is Foundational to the Alliance: Testimony by Daniel S. Hamilton before the NATO Parliamentary Assembly," NATO Parliamentary Assembly, May 2021 (https://www.nato-pa.int/download-file?-filename=/sites/default/files/2021-06/Democratic%20Resilience%20is%20Foundational%20to%20the%20Alliance-Daniel%20S.%20Hamilton.pdf).

2. Daniel S. Hamilton, "Going beyond Static Understandings: Resilience Must Be Shared, and It Must Be Projected Forward," in *Forward Resilience: Protecting Society in an Interconnected World* (Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and the Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2017) (https://transatlanticrelations.org/publications/forward-resilience-protecting-society-in-an-interconnected-world/).

3. Erik Gartzke, "The Myth of Cyberwar: Bringing War in Cyberspace Back Down to Earth," *International Security* 38, no. 2 (Fall 2013), pp. 41–73.

4. NATO Communications and Information Agency, "COVID-19 and Teleworking: NATO's Tech Agency Responds," April 15, 2020 (https://www.ncia.nato.int/about-us/newsroom/covid19-and-teleworking-natos-tech-agency-responds.html).

5. Marcus Willett, "Lessons of the SolarWinds Hack," *Survival* 63, no. 2 (May 2021), pp. 7–26.

6. Charlie Osborne, "Colonial Pipeline Attack: Everything You Need to Know," *ZDNet*, May 13, 2021 (https://www.zdnet.com/article/colonial-pipeline-ransomware-attack-everything-you-need-to-know/); Jacon Bunge, "JBS Pain $11 Million to Resolve Ransomware Attack," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 9, 2021 (https://www.wsj.com/articles/jbs-paid-11-million-to-resolve-ransomware-attack-11623280781).

7. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Active Engagement, Modern Defense: Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization," November 20, 2010 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_publications/20120214_strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf).

8. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," November 25, 2020, pp. 45–46 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf).

9. North Atlantic Council, "Brussels Summit Communique," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, June 14, 2021 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_185000.htm).

10. The discussion of deterrence and defense rely on both Glenn H. Snyder, *Deterrence and Defense: Toward a Theory of National Security* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2015) and Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, 2nd ed. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008).

11. Ron Ross et al., "Systems Security Engineering: Cyber Resilience Considerations for Engineering of Trustworthy Secure Systems" (National Institute of Standards and Technology, US Department of Commerce, March 2018), p. 1 (https://csrc.nist.gov/CSRC/media/Publications/sp/800-160/vol-2/ draft/documents/sp800-160-vol2-draft.pdf).

12. Martin C. Libicki, *Cyberspace in Peace and War* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2016).

13. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "NATO Standard Allied Joint Publication (AJP-3.20): Allied Joint Doctrine for Cyberspace Operations" (NATO Standardization Office, January 2020), pp. 1-4 (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/allied-joint-doctrine-for-cyberspace-operations-ajp-320).

14. Ibid, pp. 1-4.

15. Exploitation constitutes an attack if information or systems are destroyed; see: Jason Healey, ed., *A Fierce Domain: Conflict in Cyberspace*, *1986 to 2012* (Arlington, VA: Cyber Conflict Studies Association, 2013), pp. 279–80.

16. North Atlantic Council, "Brussels Summit Communique."

17. Despite severe financial impacts, cybercrime lacks direct political motive and is excluded from this discussion.

18. Jason Richards, "Denial-of-Service: The Estonian Cyberwar and Its Implications for U.S. National Security," *International Affairs Review* 18, no. 2 (2008) (http://www.iar-gwu.org/node/65).

19. Kim Zetter, "A Cyberattack Has Caused Confirmed Physical Damage for the Second Time Ever," *WIRED*, January 8, 2015 (https://www.wired.com/2015/01/german-steel-mill-hack-destruction/). Attribution was determined by the SANS Institute in an internally produce report.

20. Lucas Kello, *The Virtual Weapon and International Order* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017), p. 62.

21. Nadiya Kostyuk and Yuri M. Zhukov, "Invisible Digital Front: Can Cyber Attacks Shape Battlefield Events?," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63, no. 2 (2019): pp. 317–47.

22. For an overview of grey zone operations and broader political warfare, see: Thomas Rid, *Active Measures: The Secret History of Disinformation and Political Warfare* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020).

23. On these and other Russian and Chinese cyber operations, see: Brandon Valeriano, Benjamin Jensen, and Ryan C. Maness, *Cyber Strategy: The Evolving Character of Power and Coercion* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 110-170.

24. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Cyber Defence," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, April 12, 2021 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_78170.htm).

25. North Atlantic Council, "Wales Summit Declaration," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, September 5, 2014 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm). This delayed recognition is notable given the proliferation of military cyber forces among member states during this period; see: Jason Blessing, "The Global Spread of Cyber Forces, 2000-2018," in *2021 13th International Conference on Cyber Conflict*, ed. T. Jančárková et al. (Tallinn, Estonia: NATO CCDCOE Publications, 2021), pp. 233-255.

26. North Atlantic Council, "Warsaw Summit Communique," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, July 9, 2016 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm).

27. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Cyber Defence Pledge," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, July 8, 2016 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133177.htm).

28. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Joint Declaration," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, July 8, 2016 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133163.htm).

29. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Cyber Defence."

30. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Roadmap to Implement Cyberspace as a Domain of Operations," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, February 2017, Classified.

31. North Atlantic Council, "Brussels Summit Declaration," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, August 30, 2018 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_156624.htm).

32. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Joint Declaration on EU-NATO Cooperation," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, July 10, 2018 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_156626.htm).

33. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Framework Mechanism for the Integration of Sovereign Cyber Effects Provided Voluntarily by Allies into Alliance Operations and Missions," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, May 31, 2018. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "NATO Standard Allied Joint Publication (AJP-3.20): Allied Joint Doctrine for Cyberspace Operations."

34. North Atlantic Council, "Brussels Summit Communique."

35. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Sharing Malware Information to Defeat Cyber Attacks," November 29, 2013 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_105485.htm).

36. Don Lewis, "What Is NATO Really Doing in Cyberspace?," *War on the Rocks*, February 4, 2019 (https://warontherocks.com/2019/02/what-is-nato-really-doing-in-cyberspace/); North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "NATO Standard Allied Joint Publication (AJP-3.20): Allied Joint Doctrine for Cyberspace Operations."

37. Wiesław Goździewicz, "Sovereign Cyber Effects Provided Voluntarily by Allies (SCEPVA)," *Cyber Defense Magazine*, November 11, 2019 (https://www.cyberdefensemagazine.com/sovereign-cyber/).

38. Aaron F. Brantly, "The Cyber Deterrence Problem," in *2018 10th International Conference on Cyber Conflict: CyCon X: Maximising Effects*, edited by T Minarik, R. Jakschis, and L. Lindström (Tallinn, Estonia: NATO CCD COE Publications, 2018), p. 44; Jacquelyn Schneider, "Deterrence in and through Cyberspace," in *Cross-Domain Deterrence: Strategy in an Era of Complexity*, edited by Erik Gartzke and John Lindsay (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), p. 111.

39. Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Deterrence and Dissuasion in Cyberspace," *International Security* 41, no. 3 (Winter 2016/2017), pp. 44–71.

40. Schneider, "Deterrence in and through Cyberspace."

41. John Lindsay, "Tipping the Scales: The Attribution Problem and the Feasibility of Deterrence against Cyberattack," *Journal of Cybersecurity* 1, no. 1 (2015), pp. 53-67; Thomas Rid and Benjamin Buchanan, "Attributing Cyber Attacks," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 38, no. 1–2 (2015), pp. 4-37.

42. Brantly, "The Cyber Deterrence Problem," p. 41.

43. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "NATO Standard Allied Joint Publication (AJP-3.20): Allied Joint Doctrine for Cyberspace Operations," p. 22.

44. Schneider, "Deterrence in and through Cyberspace," p. 112.

45. There can of course be exceptions, as the sustained disruption of critical infrastructure like electricity, fresh water and sanitation plants, and hospitals can outweigh the initial impacts of an attack.

46. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "NATO Standard Allied Joint Publication (AJP-3.20): Allied Joint Doctrine for Cyberspace Operations," p. 22.

47. Benjamin Buchanan, *The Cybersecurity Dilemma: Hacking, Trust, and Fear between Nations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 15-96.

48. Schneider, "Deterrence in and through Cyberspace," p. 114.

49. Max Smeets, "A Matter of Time: On the Transitory Nature of Cyberweapons," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 41, no. 1-2 (2018): pp. 6-32.

50. Valeriano, Jensen, and Maness, *Cyber Strategy: The Evolving Character of Power and Coercion*, pp. 13-16.

51. US Cyber Command, "Beyond the Build: Delivering Outcomes through Cyberspace - The Commander's Vision and Guidance for US Cyber Command" (Fort Meade, MD: United States Government, June 3, 2015), The National Security Archive (https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/dc.html?doc=2692135-Document-27).

52. Max Smeets, "NATO Allies Need to Come to Terms With Offensive Cyber Operations," *Lawfare*, October 14, 2019 (https://www.lawfareblog.com/nato-allies-need-come-terms-offensive-cyber-operations).

53. Unlike in traditional domains, defenders in cyberspace can manipulate parts of the environment over time to thwart attackers: As Brantly aptly puts it: "Every aspect of a defender's cyberspace from the structure of the network, to the hardware, firmware, and software within a network, to the access of individuals within and external to that network is manipulable. At every stage of an attack an adversary is always attempting to operate on or against the defender's cyberspace over which it has no control and has limited visibility." Brantly, "The Cyber Deterrence Problem," p. 48.

54. Kello, *The Virtual Weapon and International Order*, pp. 68-74.

55. Igor Linkov, "Fundamental Concepts of Cyber Resilience: Introduction and Overview," in *Cyber Resilience of Systems and Networks*, ed.ited by Alexander Kott and Igor Linkov (Springer International Publishing, 2019), pp. 1-25; Fredrik Björck et al., "Cyber Resilience - Fundamentals for a Definition," in *New Contributions in Information Systems and Technologies*, edited by A. Rocha et al., vol. 353 (Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2015), pp. 311–316.

56. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Strengthened Resilience Commitment," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, June 14, 2021 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_185340.htm?selectedLocale=en).

57. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Resilience and Article 3," June 11, 2021 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_132722.htm); Wolf-Diether Roepke and Thankey Hasit, "Resilience: The First Line of Defence," *NATO Review*, February 27, 2019 (https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2019/02/27/resilience-the-first-line-of-defence/index.html).

58. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Cyber Defence Pledge."

59. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "The North Atlantic Treaty," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, April 4, 1949 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_17120.htm).

60. Alex Hern, "WannaCry, Petya, NotPetya: How Ransomware Hit the Big Time in 2017," *The Guardian*, December 30, 2017 (https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/dec/30/wannacry-petya-notpetya-ransomware).

61. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "The Consultation Process and Article 4," February 28, 2020, p. 4 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49187.htm).

62. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "The North Atlantic Treaty."

63. Andy Greenberg, "How an Entire Nation Became Russia's Test Lab for Cyberwar," *WIRED*, June 20, 2017 (https://www.wired.com/story/russian-hackers-attack-ukraine/).

64. Andy Greenberg, "The Untold Story of NotPetya, the Most Devastating Cyberattack in History," *WIRED*, August 22, 2018 (https://www.wired.com/story/notpetya-cyberattack-ukraine-russia-code-crashed-the-world/#).

65. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "The North Atlantic Treaty."

66. Similar strategic frameworks have been proposed in the US context but have thus far not been elaborated upon. See: Erica D. Borghard, "A Grand Strategy Based on Resilience," *War on the Rocks*, January 4, 2021 (https://warontherocks.com/2021/01/a-grand-strategy-based-on-resilience/).

67. Luiz A. DaSilva et al., "Securing 5G: NATO's Role in Collaborative Risk Assessment and Mitigation," in *Cyber Threats and NATO 2030: Horizon Scanning and Analysis*, edited by A. Ertan et al. (NATO CCD COE Publications, 2020), pp. 74-87 (https://ccdcoe.org/uploads/2020/12/Cyber-Threats-and-NATO-2030_Horizon-Scanning-and-Analysis.pdf); Andrea Gilli and Francesco Bechis, "NATO and the 5G Challenge," *NATO Review*, September 30, 2020 (https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2020/09/30/nato-and-the-5g-challenge/index.html).

68. Jacopo Bellasio and Erik Silfversten, "The Impact of New and Emerging Technologies on the Cyber Threat Landscape and Their Implications for NATO," in *Cyber Threats and NATO 2030: Horizon Scanning and Analysis*, edited by A. Ertan et al. (NATO CCD COE Publications, 2020), pp. 88-107 (https://ccdcoe.org/uploads/2020/12/Cyber-Threats-and-NATO-2030_Horizon-Scanning-and-Analysis.pdf).

69. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Foreign Ministers Prepare the NATO Summit, Exchange Views on NATO 2030," North Atlantic Treaty Or-

ganization, June 1, 2021 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_184453.htm).

70. Piret Pernik and Tomas Jermalavičius, "Resilience as Part of NATO's Strategy: Deterrence by Denial and Cyber Defense," in *Forward Resilience: Protecting Society in an Interconnected World*, edited by Daniel S. Hamilton (Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and the Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2017) (https://transatlanticrelations.org/publications/forward-resilience-protecting-society-in-an-interconnected-world/).

71. On the selection of appropriate metrics, see for example: Deborah Bodeau et al., "Cyber Resiliency Metrics, Measures of Effectiveness, and Scoring: Enabling Systems Engineers and Program Managers to Select the Most Useful Assessment Methods," MITRE Technical Report (Bedford, MA: MITRE, September 2018) (https://www.mitre.org/sites/default/files/publications/pr-18-2579-cyber-resiliency-metrics-measures-of-effectiveness-and-scoring.pdf).

72. NATO Industry Cyber Partnership, "Our Objectives and Principles," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2021 (https://nicp.nato.int/objectives-and-principles/index.html).

73. NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence, "Exercises," 2021 (https://ccdcoe.org/exercises/).

Chapter 13

War by Other Means:
Securing NATO Against Disinformation in the Coming Decade

Corina Rebegea and Carsten Schmiedl

Disinformation, fake news and—since the COVID-19 pandemic erupted in 2020—"infodemics" have been added to the vocabulary of societies across the world. Often conflated with other terms including misinformation, tainted leaks, and propaganda, disinformation is the use of false or manipulated information to distort the truth, weaken trust, and undermine democratic discourse and practices. It has become a catch-all for information manipulation operations and has fundamentally altered the way we view geopolitical competition, warfare, and security.

For NATO, a defensive military alliance based on collective defense—"an attack against one is an attack against all"—disinformation has until recently been rarely discussed, much less considered. Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty, however, underscores that "peaceful and friendly international relations" come not from military strength alone, but strong and free member state institutions and an understanding of the principles behind them.[1] Disinformation, which is part of broader malign influence operations, directly threatens these principles and institutions. Its acceleration in recent years has brought disinformation onto the transatlantic agenda.

In the coming decade, NATO is likely to face an increasingly complex and contested strategic environment. Disinformation will lurk as a force-multiplier, spoiler, and entangler. Russia and China have demonstrated willingness to deploy non-military means against NATO and could intensify the use of disinformation with the benefit of emerging technologies. At the operational level, disinformation could increasingly probe and erode NATO's defense and deterrence. At the strategic level, long-term information operations and narratives skeptical of

NATO's enduring purpose could weaken solidarity and cohesion. To protect its political center-of-gravity, NATO should crystallize where disinformation fits among the multiplicity of threats likely facing the Alliance in the emerging security environment and then further evolve its approach to countering disinformation.

The Threat of Disinformation

Disinformation is used strategically to challenge the very foundations of liberal democracy and of transatlantic relations by affecting political decision-making, societies, and the very functioning of democratic institutions. Political warfare and disinformation allow authoritarian regimes to present the authoritarian governance model—and during COVID-19 its crisis management—as a superior alternative to democracy.[2]

Given the magnitude and resources of their state-owned media operations and global ambitions, Russia and increasingly China are the most prominent authoritarian adversaries for the transatlantic Alliance.[3] But the use of disinformation is proliferating among a multitude of state and nonstate actors, including most notoriously the Islamic State (ISIS). US law enforcement agencies noted in a report about foreign interference in the 2020 elections that Iran, Venezuela, and Cuba are also present in this space, as well as other nonstate actors like Hizballah.[4] Worryingly, various actors within democratic societies and NATO members are also turning to disinformation and information suppression to advance their political goals domestically.[5]

A prominent tool of political warfare during the Cold War—Soviet campaigns of "active measures" and *dezinformatsiya*[6]—propaganda and disinformation went under the radar for the better part of the past 30 years in the West. The Kremlin's military aggression in Ukraine and illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 revealed Russia's use of information as a weapon, amplified and strengthened by modern technologies, social media, and a revamped state-media apparatus. Disinformation campaigns became a central tool for denying, justifying, and supporting its actions in Ukraine. It created an alternate reality meant not only to obscure Russia's involvement, but also to completely discredit the

idea of factuality, truth, and trust in the possibility or mere existence of facts ("implausible deniability").[7] This became a core tactic for the Kremlin's power projection in Europe and particularly in former Soviet or satellite states.

The attempt by pro-Kremlin actors to influence the 2016 US election was another turning point. It revealed the vulnerability of consolidated democracies and the irrelevance of geography when it comes to new modes of political warfare. Disinformation and other means of malign influence build over time, prey on local conditions, prime audiences for future attacks and are mobilized at crucial moments such as elections, requiring significant resources to investigate and uncover them.

Disinformation is deployed as a force multiplier, part of a toolkit of malign influence tactics to ensure the success of broader strategic aims.[8] These can be military operations, such as Russia's war against Georgia and Ukraine or its intervention in Syria, or intelligence operations, such as the Skripal poisoning case in the United Kingdom, whereby the Kremlin sought to provide a cover for its unlawful incursion on UK territory in a cloud of disinformation and competing narratives. During the first peak of the COVID-19 crisis, the use of disinformation, propaganda, and coordinated digital deception by both Russia and China went hand in hand with so-called 'mask diplomacy,' a media strategy accompanying the delivery of medical supplies by Russia and China to Europe.[9] These information operations were meant to highlight the European Union (EU) and NATO's lack of solidarity with their members and incapacity to act swiftly and effectively. China also branded a new, more aggressive approach to engaging with Western counterparts—so-called 'wolf-warrior diplomacy'—both in official communication and by leveraging its state media and an increased social media presence.[10]

Disinformation has become a weapon to undermine and potentially distort the outcomes of democratic elections, introduce wedges in the transatlantic alliance, deepen public health crises, and change the nature of conflict. Thus, the salience of disinformation has grown exponentially among researchers, civil society, and policy makers in civilian and military structures alike. Increasingly, military structures are

starting to incorporate countering disinformation in their strategies[11] because ambiguity and masked intentions could negate readiness and delay reinforcement.[12] Supranational structures like the EU, NATO, and G-7 also have dedicated programming on tackling disinformation. With this, it has become a pressing national and transatlantic security threat and poses a long-term existential challenge to the values and principles underpinning the North Atlantic Treaty.

NATO's Approach to Disinformation

Since its founding, NATO's approach to countering disinformation has evolved alongside the threat environment. The Alliance has always recognized that security and stability derive from military as well as non-military means but has historically prioritized the former over the latter. It took several years and the proliferation of direct disinformation attacks against NATO for the Alliance to recognize the threat and begin operationalizing a response—an ongoing process that continues today.

During the Cold War, NATO prioritized conventional defense and deterrence and only tangentially considered disinformation. The 1956 Committee of Three report acknowledged that Soviet leaders had "been sowing seeds of falsehood" against the Alliance for many years and that some within NATO believed the Alliance was no longer necessary after serving "a useful defensive and deterrent role in the Stalinist era." The report also lamented NATO's failure to inform its member states' publics "of the importance of the part played by NATO in preserving freedom," limited coordination on national information policy, and low financial support for expanding information activities.[13] The 1967 Harmel Report addressed disinformation only indirectly, stating that NATO's main function was "to maintain adequate military strength and political solidarity to deter aggression."[14] Disinformation threatened to undermine solidarity and cohesion, but the existential security threat posed by the Soviet Union led NATO to prioritize conventional defense and deterrence.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the conventional military balance shifted in NATO's favor. The Alliance began focusing on

non-military threats, although not always disinformation. In 2010, an independent expert group commissioned by NATO argued that "the Alliance has ample grounds for confidence" given the lower risk of conventional military aggression and cautioned against unconventional threats but not disinformation specifically.[15] Official communiqués also exemplify this trend. The 2014 Wales Summit Declaration suggested "enhancing strategic communications" to counter hybrid threats without naming disinformation.[16] NATO's current Strategic Concept likewise excludes disinformation from its list of unconventional threats.

Since the Kremlin's illegal and illegitimate invasion of Ukraine and annexation of Crimea in 2014, disinformation narratives targeting NATO have intensified and so-called fake news, manipulated facts, and slanted narratives have become a daily reality.[17] Short-term false narratives have targeted Alliance operations, including a NATO military jet colliding with a Russian commercial airplane,[18] the Alliance assembling 3,600 tanks on Russia's border,[19] and civilians being killed or harmed during NATO military exercises.[20] Other narratives are longer-term, strategic, and target the Alliance's enduring purpose and solidarity, claiming that NATO's exercises are dangerous and threaten Russia's security, defense expenditures are excessive, the Alliance disingenuously justifies new deployments,[21] and that NATO broke a promise by continuing to expand and is encircling Russia.[22] These narratives are not new but their proliferation since 2014 has unambiguously brought disinformation onto NATO's agenda.

While NATO was quick to enhance conventional defense and deterrence along the eastern flank after 2014,[23] there was insufficient support within the Alliance to similarly adapt its non-military means. The 2016 Warsaw Summit Communiqué mentions hybrid threats broadly, and it was not until the 2018 Brussels Summit that an official summit declaration named disinformation specifically. Most recently, the NATO 2030 initiative was launched at the 2019 London Summit—and on the heels of President of France Emmanuel Macron calling the Alliance "brain-dead"[24]—to "further strengthen NATO's political dimension."[25] This was a forewarning of sorts that NATO's non-military malaise could have wider consequences.

This proved prescient during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Kremlin's disinformation has targeted land- and sea-based military exercises and NATO's presence in Lithuania, Latvia, and Poland.[26] Narratives have also claimed *inter alia* that NATO created COVID-19, the pandemic would cause NATO to disintegrate, and the Alliance is inept against the virus.[27] China's increasingly assertive public diplomacy campaign—and outright fabrication, for example, that the virus originated in Italy[28]—aims to undermine trust among Allies, promote its own system over democracy,[29] and increase its influence and standing vis-à-vis Europe.[30] Although Russia and China's disinformation specifically targeted NATO, created narratives blaming troops for spreading the virus,[31] and attempted to undermine the Alliance's public health messaging, NATO's response early in the pandemic was limited to correcting facts and false narratives *ex post* after they had entered the public domain.[32] The volume of NATO's online communication, especially during the first few months of the pandemic, was also far smaller than what hostile actors were able to project through their massive state media and social media networks.[33]

Looking towards the coming decade, three common themes have emerged. First, while NATO has bolstered its public diplomacy and strategic communications in recent years, its response to disinformation has largely remained reactive rather than proactive, focusing primarily on positive messaging and countering narratives after they appear. Its twin-track "understand and engage" model tracks the information environment, tailors communications,[34] corrects facts, and improves media literacy.[35] This likely derives from NATO's defensive strategic culture and is therefore unlikely to fundamentally change. Nonetheless, it has at times placed the Alliance at a distinct disadvantage from the Cold War to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Second, national and Alliance-level efforts are not fully aligned. National militaries are adapting more quickly to counter disinformation and other unconventional threats. US Army Europe has initiated drills to prepare against disinformation and cyberattacks, and implemented a sensor network to monitor news across Europe to increase its speed of response.[36] When the Kremlin's disinformation narratives targeted the Defender 2020 military exercise last year, the US coordinated bilaterally with Allies to respond rather than at the multinational level.[37] The

broader challenge is harmonizing national information policy. The US Department of State's Center for Information Analysis and Response, which collects and analyzes foreign information warfare efforts, and the government of Lithuania's "national information influence identification and analysis ecosystem"[38] are two recent examples which have remained at the national level.

Third, NATO has yet to define precisely where disinformation fits among the constellation of emerging security threats. This is inherently difficult because it presents simultaneous operational, strategic, and existential challenges and is impossible to measure with confidence. The Alliance includes disinformation within hybrid and grey zone threats.[39] For example, the 2018 Brussels Declaration warned that NATO faces "hybrid challenges, including disinformation campaigns and malicious cyber activities."[40] The NATO 2030 Reflection Group's report linked disinformation to grey zone activities, which have "eroded the traditional boundaries of conflict" and "weaken and divide Allies from within by undermining societal cohesion and our way of life."[41] This illustrates a compartmentalized rather than harmonized view of the threat environment, particularly towards non-military threats. The 2021 Brussels Summit Communiqué shows progress by more frequently mentioning disinformation in the context of hybrid threats, highlights the capabilities of Counter Hybrid Support Teams, and recognizes Russia and China as perpetrators of disinformation.[42] Looking to 2030, NATO's non-military approach must continue to evolve.

The Future is Here

Questions about the evolution of the disinformation threat strike at the core of NATO's political mandate as a military alliance and its ability to assess and respond. "Netwar" has changed the nature of conflict with profound implications for disinformation. The term was used in 1992 in a prescient analysis by RAND alluding to both the role that the internet would have in shifting the realities of conflict and national security, and the way that conflict would morph into a structure that relied more on networks than strict hierarchies and command chains.[43] Disinformation and the more general manipulation of the information space (through political, economic, technological, cyber or social engi-

neering tools) have emerged in the past decade as profound mutations in the way we understand security.

First, online conflicts have merged with offline conflicts. War is declared online: social platforms are used to amplify the perception of war or the strength of the enemy, to recruit combatants and report from the battlefield, while at the same time creating far deeper divisions that can in fact expand the causes of war.[44] "Social media has changed not just the message, but the dynamics of conflict" to the extent that researchers are questioning the very definition of war.[45] Both ISIS and Russia offer ample illustrations of how disinformation and digital manipulation are fully integrated with physical aggression and military operations. In the case of Russia, the integration of information operations with war fighting—the so-called "Gerasimov doctrine"— became an important topic for NATO and allied decision-makers.[46]

Second, disinformation and digital deception are used in the battle to achieve cognitive and behavioral outcomes in societies. National militaries are reorienting to also face information warfare. Significantly, domestic politics has also reordered around the ability to create and influence (or manipulate) online constituencies. Political actors in most countries, whether democratic or not, now rely on troll armies and digital influencing campaigns to alter democratic processes.[47] This shift in domestic political debate also has an impact on the Alliance's internal functioning. As political actors in some member states are increasingly utilizing information and digital manipulation, they are not only departing from principles and values NATO is built upon (and clearly outlined under Article 2 of the NATO Charter) but are also creating additional avenues for malign foreign actors to infiltrate democratic societies and weaken them from within.

Third, authoritarian nations attempt to polarize and weaken national security structures, diminish trust in alliances, and thus hamper the cohesion and effectiveness of national and supra-national defense structures. NATO has been a primary target. Anti-NATO narratives and conspiracies are an important tool in the arsenal of digital manipulation campaigns undertaken by pro-Kremlin groups. NATO is portrayed as an alliance that fosters insecurity, rather than protect its members. It is depicted as an extension of the US military-industrial

complex, as a platform for war-mongering elites to demonize Russia and fuel Russophobia, and as a tool in the hands of bigger, more powerful democracies to dominate smaller countries and use them as cannon fodder in case of a conflict. Defense contractors have also come under attack by disinformation perpetrators with the aim to discredit them and deflate public trust in the operations and relevance of these companies.[48] Military personnel and particularly NATO troops are being targeted during military exercises,[49] such as the "Lithuanian Lisa case" and in Defender 21.[50] Similarly, adversaries use cyber and information tactics to collect troves of data over a long period of time that could be used against military targets or during military operations.[51] An underexplored area is also the impact that disinformation might have on intelligence collection and sharing. It is unclear whether disinformation, which targets the integrity of and ability to verify information, could be altering open-source intelligence gathering or hampering exchanges between allies, particularly as some domestic actors engage in disinformation operations themselves. The integrity of the information space is crucial for equalizing threat perception among Allies and accurately defining security threats.

Evolving Challenges

Technological advances tend to be front and center in the discussion about the future of disinformation and digital manipulation. Deepfakes (manipulated audiovisual content), artificial intelligence (AI), and natural language processing (NLP), and their timeline and potential deployment by malign actors are among the potential threats that researchers have been trying to understand. Synthetic online activity has already been piloted by malign actors in different ways online, most notably by Russia's use of completely fake journalist personas who were getting published by different online news outlets.[52] This is a warning of things to come once this technology becomes available and cheap enough for a wider set of malign actors to use.[53] There is also the risk of unintended consequences with new technologies—for example, *NotPetya* malware unexpectedly boomeranged back to Russia and led to billions of dollars of economic loss worldwide. Similar unanticipated scenarios could occur with the rise of technology-backed influence operations, including by weaponizing the discourse around them, which

further weakens trust in sources of information and creates additional burdens to prove authenticity.[54]

Technology is not only a tool in the hands of bad actors. AI and NLP have so far largely been utilized to detect fake news and disinformation and to support research into how disinformation spreads, what type of communities it reaches and map out rhetorical battlefields.[55] Transatlantic militaries are also beginning to take an interest in how these tools might help with strategy and planning.

Technological innovation has also brought about another set of threats that are still underexplored: the ability to collect huge amounts of data. This can serve political warfare purposes, such as data dumps[56] or tainted leaks,[57] political repression and authoritarian strengthening—something that China is currently perfecting and other states, including Russia, are beginning to utilize on a wider scale by benefiting from Western technological innovation enablers, such as internet platforms. Furthermore, the COVID-19 crisis and the use of tracking technologies might have opened the door for another set of technological advances that are likely to further strengthen digital authoritarian practices and regimes.[58] The combination between surveillance, massive troves of data and technologies that make its processing faster and enable the manipulation of the information space will be part of the future in ways that are hard to anticipate.

For now, democracies are still dealing with harms that arise from a combination of known disinformation tactics, existing means of communication and social media platforms, and rapid innovations in this space—including migrating between different social platforms and an increased use of encrypted communication platforms. Analysis of the Russian Main Intelligence Administration's (GRU) operations since 2014 do not show significant technological leaps[59] and similarly in the case of China, existing disinformation and propaganda capabilities are only enhanced by technology, but not necessarily defined by new technologies.[60] The main threat of disinformation stems from its use in conjunction with other tactics like political corruption, use of proxies and unwitting allies, deceit, and human intelligence.[61]

China in particular presents a growing threat, the magnitude and long-term implications of which remain largely unaddressed in the na-

tional and Alliance decision-making circles. The Chinese Communist Party's efforts to manipulate the global information ecosystem in the past decade surpass the ambitions and capabilities of other authoritarian actors. These capabilities include an oversized propaganda machine, disinformation, repressions of information and dissent domestically and abroad, and investments in media markets or "key nodes in the information flow."[62] Adding massive data collection and surveillance technologies to the mix amplifies the potential for a major disruption of the free flow of information and possible major value shifts in global public opinion with long-term implications for democratic values, institutions, and security.

An increasing risk for the transatlantic Alliance also comes from within. Political actors in democracies are imitating and employing tactics widely utilized by foreign malign actors. Disinformation thus becomes not only a weapon against their own populations, but it creates the perfect camouflage for foreign actors to abscond their operations and further their goals. The landscape of disinformation is changing from identifiable external enemies to blurred boundaries between foreign, state, non-state, and domestic actors, making attribution and response increasingly more difficult.

Shifts in the disinformation landscape might also come from unexpected—or underestimated—offline events such as the COVID-19 pandemic that create a global captive audience and a fertile ground for information operations. During the COVID-19 crisis, malign actors (in particular, Russia) utilized many recycled disinformation narratives combined with "traditional" propaganda.[63] The emergence of new actors, in particular China as well as Iran, their resources, and their ability to deploy manipulative tactics seem to evolve faster than their actual technological prowess.

As transatlantic democratic actors are exploring the future of disinformation, the pace and scope of technological innovation will be crucial. But they will also have to grapple with more traditional tools of malign influence. It is yet unclear to what extent foreign authoritarian actors will have the ability to acquire and deploy new technologies at scale, especially as their media and digital deception machinery already seem successful. A key question is also whether deploying such tech-

nologies fits into the geopolitical strategies of malign actors and their approach to global competition. China in particular is an important actor that requires further monitoring. Its capabilities could potentially match doomsday scenarios about innovative technologies, but whether their deployment on a global scale is in China's strategic interest is unclear. To deal with future threats, transatlantic partners and NATO specifically will have to consider disinformation in the context of the complex existing and emerging security threats in order to develop nimble and more proactive approaches.

Policy Recommendations

Update NATO's Strategic Concept to incorporate a forward-looking approach to emerging security challenges including disinformation.

Disinformation changes shape, force-multiplies conventional capabilities and presents a threat to NATO's foundational value system on an indefinite timescale. The challenge is anticipating and managing disinformation rather than eliminating it entirely, without overstating the threat.[64] Disinformation also mirrors adversary thinking and offers a window into the goals and means of malign actors. NATO should develop a more holistic understanding of security that encapsulates shifts in information technologies and use of strategic narratives. NATO currently responds *ex post* to discrete, finite disinformation campaigns at the operational and strategic levels rather than preparing for the inherently unpredictable nature of threats in the emerging security environment. Recognizing that unconventional means could pose an existential threat to the Alliance, NATO's updated Strategic Concept should remove the distinction between conventional and unconventional threats and emphasize that future threats will occur across the spectrum of peace to war. In other words, the Alliance should unambiguously recognize the security implications of non-military means. Effecting such a shift in NATO's strategic thinking would improve overall readiness moving forward.

Encourage greater alignment of national and NATO-level information policy.

Article 3 of the North Atlantic Treaty states that Allies should "maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to re-

sist armed attack,"[65] which should include countering malign influence and disinformation. NATO should create a more cohesive definition of information operations, of which disinformation is a key element, their potential impact, and their role within NATO's understanding of conflict to provide the political impetus for member states to align national security concepts. NATO could create a reporting mechanism for Allies to share developments or publicize progress in addressing disinformation at each NATO summit. The overarching goal is for the North Atlantic Council to become a more frequent forum for consultation on national information policy, thereby creating a more united strategic communications front and enhancing coordination of national and multinational efforts to counter disinformation. NATO should also increase intelligence-sharing—which now occurs primarily between national intelligence services[66]—and mainstream national responses based on shared best practices. Updating the Strategic Concept to reflect these priorities could encourage closer alignment of national information policy.

The Alliance should also expand and integrate the political mandates of NATO divisions and departments focusing on emerging security challenges, including disinformation. Increasing internal coordination would harmonize its organizational approach. NATO could borrow from its approach to hybrid and in particular cyber security threats, as in the Emerging Security Challenges Division (ESCD) and include disinformation and influence operations among other emerging threats. This would first and foremost signify that threats to information integrity would be elevated to the same importance as other types of hybrid aggression. As in the cyber domain,[67] NATO should maintain a degree of ambiguity about whether disinformation constitutes an attack on the Alliance.

While NATO's Public Diplomacy Division (PDD) coordinates Alliance-wide communications, NATO needs to develop a more coherent internal mechanism that deals with information operations at a strategic and policy level. This would be an important step towards equalizing threat perceptions of disinformation within the Alliance and create a set of common denominator policies that would create more national information policy coherence.[68]

Improve proactive, transparent communication to NATO member state publics.

NATO needs to tell its own story better, prevent malign actors from shaping the narrative, and adopt a preventative approach to disinformation that builds on best practices. Disinformation preys on existing vulnerabilities and opportunistically utilizes events or crises. NATO activities are transparent and known in advance (summits, military acquisitions, exercises) so there should be a preemptive effort to gain a first-mover advantage and set the narrative. This can also include open-source intelligence-gathering using social media and other technologies to understand the social context and monitoring how potential target communities attach meaning to or interpret disinformation narratives.

The Alliance should also publish regular fact-based threat assessments of the security environment and NATO's efforts to mitigate them. Public support for NATO generally increases when threats against the Alliance are readily apparent. The challenge is that today's unconventional threats are less visible and therefore perceived as less alarming than for instance conventional or nuclear threats. Nonetheless, the Alliance stands at a "strategic crossroads" and is as relevant as ever.[69] NATO communication already alludes to its enduring purpose but regularly publicizing concise, fact-based threat assessments could help stabilize public support. To this end, it could task the NATO Strategic Communications Center of Excellence (StratCom COE)—an independent multinational organization supported by seven member states—and encourage more Allies to support it.

The Alliance should also consider organizing regular ministerials in Ally capitals other than Brussels. Holding such a prominent multinational event on a rotating basis across capitals could help harmonize public perceptions of NATO's enduring purpose across all member states and increase public engagement particularly where fewer independent media options exist.

Finally, NATO should develop a more robust measure of public opinion in member state populations. The effect of disinformation is inherently difficult to measure. While the EU tracks favorability towards its institutions and policies through annual Eurobarometer polls, NATO relies on piecemeal information. The Alliance should consider a new mechanism to measure public opinion—the Estonian Defense

Ministry's national-level studies[70] could provide one model—at regular intervals combined with other tools to test what might be influencing shifts in public sentiments.

Integrate disinformation into military exercises.

NATO has developed robust public diplomacy efforts around military exercises in Europe, but hybrid threats, including disinformation and attempts to influence behavioral outcomes, should be mainstreamed into regular exercises and simulations. NATO members have already experimented with some tools at the national level. The UK and the US militaries are integrating these tools into regular training[71] and joint exercises have included behavioral science research and embedded experts.[72] However, Allies often resort to bilateral cooperation against disinformation, often leading to uneven efforts among member states which need to be fully applied at the Alliance level. NATO should also regularly exercise scenarios where decision-making is delayed in the face of an ambiguous or unclear information environment.

The Alliance should follow the example of US Army Europe and build upon or establish disinformation sensor networks to monitor news in real time—including potentially viral story lines—during exercises and incorporate response training at the multinational level. NATO StratCom CoE has developed resources and knowledge that have already been utilized in military exercises to expose vulnerabilities. This could become the norm for future deployments.[73] More broadly, Allies should follow the example of Norway and recognize that militaries are not omnipresent and therefore not well-suited to counter emerging threats alone. Folding civilians into joint training exercises at both the national and multinational levels could encourage early recognition of operational ambiguity.[74]

Enhance cooperation with the EU and other national authorities on disinformation by creating a unique contact point.

NATO is the main force shaping European and transatlantic security. It needs to be involved in advancing thinking and planning for future threats, but also participate in setting norms and standards in cooperation with other actors. NATO and the European Union have

an established format of cooperation spanning several critical domains, including hybrid threats.[75] This should expand to include disinformation. With the emerging COVID-19 "infodemic" in 2020, disinformation and propaganda already became a source of increased coordination between NATO and the EU, mainly because the latter already had mechanisms in place and considerable experience in tracking Russian disinformation and propaganda. NATO should establish a unique contact point and a formal process of consultation and coordination with the EU's counterpart which specializes in dealing with information operations. In addition, NATO should be part of the transatlantic conversation on regulations and laws (mainly spearheaded by the EU), particularly for the thriving information manipulation industry that allows malign actors to hide their tracks behind fake engagement.[76]

Establish mechanisms for regular consultation with the private sector.

Attribution is inherently difficult, but enhancing NATO's capacity will increase the Alliance's speed of response to disinformation and mitigate risks to conventional capabilities. NATO's newly-launched Defense Innovation Accelerator and regular talks with private-sector actors could improve NATO's capacity to attribute sources of disinformation, encourage operational resilience, integrate innovative solutions, and design regulations and interventions to secure critical infrastructure (including in information and telecommunications) and investment screening.[77] Promising new tools coming predominantly from the private sector include machine learning to remove fake social media accounts, blockchain technology for secure digital identity systems,[78] 24/7 disinformation monitoring systems driven by artificial intelligence,[79] and software to detect deepfakes.[80] Transatlantic civil society actors have also developed a variety of tools for tracking malign narratives and tactics, and have already piloted technological innovations that could help deepen NATO's broader understanding of the threat.[81] New technologies pose inherent risks but also significant opportunities to enhance security through an operational approach to innovation.[82]

Develop a networked approach to security and resilience.

Collective security and the appropriateness of full-scale NATO responses came under deliberation as cyber aggression became a promi-

nent tool of below-threshold warfare (on cyber challenges, see Blessing in this volume). Like cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns can be launched from anywhere by state and non-state actors, have little or no command structure, can be syndicated or promoted by entrepreneurial patriots, operate in networks, and are difficult to attribute. As the information sphere becomes the critical operational domain for hybrid warfare,[83] the side that masters the network will almost certainly gain an advantage.[84] Greater connectivity in NATO's Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) systems also makes them higher value targets for disinformation, cyber, and physical attacks.[85] For the first time in its history, the Alliance is facing challenges that require partnership with a variety of (private and civil society) actors to increase learning and situational awareness—including, most importantly, an understanding of the role that disinformation plays within an ensemble of influence tools and operations—but also establish a support system that can be mobilized in response to emerging security challenges.[86] This will enhance NATO's anticipatory thinking and its ability to quickly react as crises emerge.

NATO should also use its political dialogue mechanisms to create a coherent methodology across member nations. The Finnish and Swedish total defense and civil preparedness concepts are good models to draw upon at the national and multinational level.[87] This could include the creation of institutional networks, society-oriented activities, infrastructure building, research, education, and training—tools that go beyond mere debunking and strategic communications. The Swedish model of psychological defense also includes crisis modelling drills for a variety of civil actors including media outlets.[88]

Strengthen democratic resilience within NATO.

Threats to transatlantic security come from outside the Alliance, but also from within. Disinformation thrives in weakened democracies where polarization, corruption, weak independent media, and low social cohesion and trust invite foreign authoritarian influence. Just as NATO played a key role in the 1990s and early 2000s in getting Central and Eastern European countries on a stable democratic course, Article 2—which calls for strengthening democratic institutions—should

be brought back to the forefront of political deliberations within the Alliance.

NATO's continued support and cooperation with free and independent media is essential to strengthening resilience. Secretary General Stoltenberg has stated that "the best response to disinformation and propaganda is the free and independent press...when they ask difficult questions, then disinformation and propaganda will never succeed."[89] NATO should therefore encourage journalist exchanges, facilitate media access to activities and exercises, and urge member states to invest in a more robust independent local media presence.

The new Strategic Concept offers an opportunity to establish more baseline consensus on resilience. The Secretary General has often appealed to the values on which the Alliance was founded and should continue to use the clout of his position to advance the conversation inside the North Atlantic Council on how democratic resilience contributes to Allied security.[90] The 2021 Brussels Summit Communiqué highlights the importance of the fight against corruption and good governance for fulfilling the Alliance's mission. A monitoring mechanism inside the Alliance or even sanctioning members[91] will not meet consensus. The Secretary General should work discreetly behind closed doors with member states when gaps are identified. Adopting a code of conduct (as per the recommendations of the NATO 2030 Reflection Group) and working with the EU on a system of incentives and disincentives would also enhance security and trust and consolidate political support.[92] NATO is ultimately a community of norms and derives its resilience to disinformation and influence operations from the political cohesion of its members.

Notes

1. "The North Atlantic Treaty Washington D.C. - 4 April 1949," NATO, April 4, 1949 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm).

2. Jonathan Bright, Hubert Au, et al., "Coronavirus Coverage by State-Backed English-Language News Sources: Understanding Chinese, Iranian, Russian and Turkish Government Media," University of Oxford, April 8, 2020.

3. Jessica Brandt and Bret Schafer, "How China's 'wolf warrior' diplomats use and abuse Twitter," Brookings Institution, October 28, 2020 (www.brookings.edu/techstream/how-chinas-wolf-warrior-diplomats-use-and-abuse-twitter/).

4. "Foreign Threats to the 2020 US Federal Elections," National Intelligence Council, March 10, 2021 (www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/ICA-declass-16MAR21.pdf).

5. Hungary and Poland in particular have come under scrutiny for tactics to silence independent journalism. See "MEPs express concerns over attacks on media in Poland, Hungary and Slovenia," European Parliament, October 3, 2021 (https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20210304IPR99220/meps-express-concerns-over-attacks-on-media-in-poland-hungary-and-slovenia).

6. See Thomas Rid, *Active Measures: The Secret History of Disinformation and Political Warfare* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020).

7. Timothy Snyder, *The Road to Unfreedom: Russia*, *Europe*, *America* (New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2018).

8. Stanisław Żaryn, "Russia's hybrid warfare toolkit has more to offer than propaganda," *DefenseNews*, August 9, 2019 (www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2019/08/09/russias-hybrid-warfare-toolkit-has-more-to-offer-than-propaganda/).

9. Jakub Janda and Richard Kraemer, "Beware a China-Russia Nexus in Central Europe Amid US-EU Neglect," *Just Security*, June 17, 2020 (www.justsecurity.org/70822/beware-a-china-russia-nexus-in-central-europe-amid-us-eu-neglect/).

10. Ben Westcott and Steven Jiang, "China is embracing a new brand of foreign policy. Here's what wolf warrior diplomacy means," *CNN World*, May 29, 2020 (www.cnn.com/2020/05/28/asia/china-wolf-warrior-diplomacy-intl-hnk/index.html).

11. Theresa Hitchens, "New Strategy Aims To Up DoD, IC Game To Counter Disinformation," *Breaking Defense*, March 16, 2021 (https://breaking-

defense.com/2021/03/new-strategy-aims-to-up-dod-ic-game-to-counter-disinformation/).

12. LTG (Ret.) Ben Hodges, Janusz Bugajski and Peter B. Doran, ed. Carsten Schmiedl, "Securing the Suwałki Corridor: Strategy, Statecraft, Deterrence, and Defense," *Center for European Policy Analysis*, July 2018, pp. 6-7; Marta Kepe, "NATO: Prepared for Countering Disinformation Operations in the Baltic States?" RAND Corporation, June 7, 2017.

13. "Committee of Three," NATO, 1956, pp. 5, 6, 9 (www.nato.int/archives/committee_of_three/CT.pdf).

14. "The Future Tasks of the Alliance, Report of the Council - 'The Harmel Report,'" NATO, 1967 (www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_26700.htm).

15. "NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement: Analysis and Recommendations of the Group of Experts on a New Strategic Concept for NATO,'" NATO, 2010, pp. 5, 17 (www.nato.int/strategic-concept/expertsreport.pdf).

16. "Wales Summit Declaration," NATO, September 5, 2014 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm).

17. Barbora Maronkova, "NATO in an Era of Fake News and Disinformation," USC Center on Public Diplomacy, February 1, 2017 (https://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/blog/nato-era-fake-news-and-disinformation).

18. "UPDATE: Russian Airline Denies Its Plane Nearly Collided With NATO Jet," *The Moscow Times*, January 5, 2017 (www.themoscowtimes.com/2017/01/05/after-far-east-near-miss-allegations-of-a-nato-plane-a56735).

19. Ben Nimmo, "Three thousand fake tanks: How a network of conspiracy sites spread a fake story about US reinforcements in Europe," Atlantic Council, January 12, 2017 (https://medium.com/@DFRLab/three-thousand-fake-tanks-575410c4f64d).

20. Gina Harkins, "Fake news is wreaking havoc on the battlefield. Here's what the US military is doing about it," *Task & Purpose*, August 17, 2020 (https://taskandpurpose.com/news/fake-news-military-cyber-operations-2/).

21. "NATO-Russia: Setting the record straight," NATO, May 19, 2020 (www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/115204.htm).

22. Mark Kramer and Mary Elise Sarotte, "No Such Promise," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2014 (www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/eastern-europe-caucasus/no-such-promise); "NATO-Russia relations: the facts,"

NATO, August 9, 2019 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_111767.htm#cl101).

23. General Philip Breedlove and Ambassador Alexander Vershbow, "Permanent Deterrence: Enhancements to the US Military Presence in North Central Europe," Atlantic Council, December 2018 (www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Permanent-Deterrence-Enhancements-to-the-US-Military-Presence-in-North-Central-Europe.pdf).

24. "Emmanuel Macron warns Europe: NATO is becoming brain-dead," *The Economist*, November 7, 2019 (www.economist.com/europe/2019/11/07/emmanuel-macron-warns-europe-nato-is-becoming-brain-dead).

25. "London Declaration: Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in London 3-4 December 2019," NATO, December 4, 2019 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_171584.htm).

26. "NATO's approach to countering disinformation: a focus on COVID-19," NATO, July 17, 2020 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/177273.htm#fn1).

27. "Russia's Top Five Myths about NATO & COVID-19," NATO, April 2020 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/4/pdf/2004-Factsheet-Russia-Myths-COVID-19_en.pdf).

28. Robbie Gramer, "NATO Chief Rebukes China Over Coronavirus Disinformation," *Foreign Policy*, 17 April 2020.

29. "Allied Response to COVID-19: A Conversation with Mircea Geoană," Atlantic Council, April 16, 2020 (www.atlanticcouncil.org/event/allied-response-to-covid-19-a-conversation-with-mircea-geoana/).

30. Bojan Pancevski, "China's Covid-19 Vaccine Diplomacy Boosts Its Influence in Europe," *Wall Street Journal*, February 13, 2021 (www.wsj.com/articles/chinas-covid-19-vaccine-diplomacy-boosts-its-influence-in-europe-11613221201).

31. Patrick Tucker, "Russia Pushing Coronavirus Lies As Part of Anti-NATO Influence Ops in Europe," *DefenseOne*, March 26, 2020 (www.defenseone.com/technology/2020/03/russia-pushing-coronavirus-lies-part-anti-nato-influence-ops-europe/164140/).

32. "How is NATO responding to disinformation on COVID-19?" NATO, May 12, 2020 (www.youtube.com/watch?v=TpbUkXlrmrY); "NATO's approach to countering disinformation: a focus on COVID-19," NATO, July 17, 2020 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/177273.htm#fn1).

33. "Viral Overload: An Analysis of COVID-19 Information Operations," Omelas, May 12, 2020 (www.omelas.io/viral-overload).

34. "NATO's approach to countering disinformation," NATO.

35. "Disinformation is sneaky and not always obvious," NATO, October 15, 2020 (https://twitter.com/NATO/status/1316715193741832193).

36. Joe Snell, "US Army Europe's growing challenge? Fight fake news and misinformation," *DefenseNews*, March 19, 2020 (www.defensenews.com/information-warfare/2020/03/19/us-army-europes-growing-challenge-fight-fake-news-and-misinformation/).

37. Bing Xiao, "US collaborates with NATO to address disinformation challenge in 'Defender 2020,'" *Medill National Security Zone*, March 3, 2020 (https://nationalsecurityzone.medill.northwestern.edu/blog/2020/military/us-collaborates-with-nato-to-address-disinformation-challenge-in-defender-2020/).

38. "The Testimony of the Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania Rolandas Kriščiūnas Before the Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs," Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania, March 7, 2017 (www.appropriations.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/030717-Krisciunas-Lithuania-Testimony1.pdf).

39. "NATO's response to hybrid threats," NATO, March 16, 2021 (www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_156338.htm); NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era: Analysis and Recommendations of the Reflection Group Appointed by the NATO Secretary General," November 25, 2020, p. 48 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf).

40. "Brussels Summit Declaration," NATO, July 11, 2018 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_156624.htm).

41. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era."

42. "Brussels Summit Communiqué," NATO, June 14, 2021 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_185000.htm).

43. John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, "Cyberwar is Coming!," RAND Corporation, 1993 (www.rand.org/pubs/reprints/RP223.html).

44. Emerson T. Brooking and P.W. Singer, "War Goes Viral," *The Atlantic*, November 2016 (www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/11/war-goes-viral/501125/).

45. P.W. Singer and Emerson T. Brooking, *Like War: The Weaponization of Social Media* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, 2018).

46. Joe Gould, "EUCOM commander: US needs stronger response to Russian disinformation," *DefenseNews*, March 23, 2017 (https://www.defensenews.

com/global/europe/2017/03/23/eucom-commander-us-needs-stronger-response-to-russian-disinformation/).

47. See Samantha Bradshaw, Hannah Bailey, and Philip N. Howard, "Industrialized Disinformation: 2020 Global Inventory of Organized Social Media Manipulation," University of Oxford Programme on Democracy & Technology (https://demtech.oii.ox.ac.uk/research/posts/industrialized-disinformation/).

48. "Digital Assault on the U.S. Defense Industrial Base," Omelas, 2020 (www.omelas.io/defense-contractors).

49. Gina Harkins, "Fake news is wreaking havoc on the battlefield. Here's what the US military is doing about it," *Task & Purpose*, August 17, 2020 (https://taskandpurpose.com/news/fake-news-military-cyber-operations-2/).

50. "NATO: Russia targeted German army with fake news campaign," *Deutsche Welle*, February 16, 2017 (https://www.dw.com/en/nato-russia-targeted-german-army-with-fake-news-campaign/a-37591978); "Disinfo: With 'Defender Europe 2021' NATO is Practicing War Against Russia," EU vs. Disinfo, March 29, 2021 (https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/with-defender-europe-2021-nato-is-practicing-war-against-russia).

51. Sebastian Bay and Nora Biteniece, "The Current Digital Arena and its Risks to Serving Military Personnel," NATO StratCom COE, January 2019 (https://stratcomcoe.org/current-digital-arena-and-its-risks-serving-military-personnel).

52. Renée DiResta, "The Supply of Disinformation Will Soon Be Infinite," *The Atlantic*, September 20, 2020 (www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/09/future-propaganda-will-be-computer-generated/616400/).

53. Geoffrey A. Fowler, "Anyone with an iPhone can now make deepfakes," *Washington Post*, March 25, 2021 (www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/03/25/deepfake-video-apps/).

54. Sam Gregory, "Authoritarian Regimes Could Exploit Cries of 'Deepfake,'" *Wired*, February 14, 2021 (www.wired.com/story/opinion-authoritarian-regimes-could-exploit-cries-of-deepfake/).

55. See Joss Fong, "The era of fake writing is upon us," *Vox*, March 4, 2020 (www.vox.com/recode/2020/3/4/21163743/ai-language-generation-fake-text-gpt2); William Marcellino, Kate Cox, Katerina Galai, Linda Slapakova, Amber Jaycocks, and Ruth Harris, "Human–machine detection of online-based malign information," RAND Corporation, 2020 (www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RRA500/RRA519-1/RAND_RRA519-1.pdf).

56. "Report of the Select Committee on Intelligence of the U.S. Senate on Russian Active Measures Campaigns and Interference in the 2016 U.S. Elec-

tions," US Congress, August 18, 2020 (www.intelligence.senate.gov/sites/default/files/documents/report_volume5.pdf).

57. Adam Hulcoop, John Scott-Railton, Peter Tanchak, Matt Brooks, and Ron Deibert, "Tainted Leaks Disinformation and Phishing With a Russian Nexus," *The Citizen Lab*, May 25, 2017 (https://citizenlab.ca/2017/05/tainted-leaks-disinformation-phish/).

58. Nicholas D. Wright, "Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Norms," National Endowment for Democracy, 2020.

59. Renée Diresta and Shelby Grossman, "Potemkin Pages & Personas: Assessing GRU Online Operations, 2014-2019," Stanford Internet Observatory: Cyber Policy Center, 2016 (https://cyber.fsi.stanford.edu/io/news/potemkin-pages-personas-blog).

60. Renée Diresta, Carly Miller, Vanessa Molter, John Pomfret, and Glenn Tiffert, "Telling China's Story: The Chinese Communist Party's Campaign to Shape Global Narratives," Stanford Internet Observatory: Cyber Policy Center, 2020 (https://fsi-live.s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/sio-china_story_white_paper-final.pdf).

61. Jessica Brandt and Amber Frankland, "Leaks, Lies, and Altered Tape: Russia's Maturing Information Manipulation Playbook," Alliance for Securing Democracy, October 14, 2020 (https://securingdemocracy.gmfus.org/russias-maturing-information-manipulation-playbook/).

62. See Sarah Cook, "China's Global Media Footprint. Democratic Responses to Expanding Authoritarian Influence," National Endowment for Democracy, February 2021 (www.ned.org/wp-content/uploads/2021).

63. See "EU vs. Disinfo," European External Action Service (https://euvsdisinfo.eu).

64. Roula Khalaf, "Alex Younger: 'The Russians did not create the things that divide us — we did that,'" *Financial Times*, September 30, 2020 (www.ft.com/content/c544d058-6dad-4549-8319-470975281d0a).

65. "The North Atlantic Treaty Washington D.C. - 4 April 1949," NATO.

66. Stanisław Żaryn, "Fighting Talk," Center for European Policy Analysis, March 27, 2020 (https://cepa.org/fighting-talk/).

67. Jens Stoltenberg, "NATO will defend itself," NATO, August 27, 2019 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_168435.htm?selectedLocale=en).

68. Jamie Shea, "How is NATO Dealing with Emerging Security Challenges?" Institute for European Studies, April 14, 2013.

69. André Lanata, "NATO is at a strategic crossroads," *LinkedIn*, 2021.

70. "Public Opinion and National Defence Report to the Ministry of Defence," *Turu-Uuringute AS*, March 2019 .

71. See "Social Media Environment and Internet Replication" (https://www.smeir.net).

72. "Countering propaganda: NATO spearheads use of behavioural change science," NATO StratCom Center of Excellence, May 12, 2015 (https://stratcomcoe.org/countering-propaganda-nato-spearheads-use-behavioural-change-science).

73. "The Current Digital Arena and its Risks to Serving Military Personnel," NATO StratCom Center of Excellence, January 2019 (https://stratcomcoe.org/current-digital-arena-and-its-risks-serving-military-personnel).

74. Elizabeth Braw, "How Norway Is Folding Civilians into National Defense," *DefenseOne*, March 12, 2021 (www.defenseone.com/ideas/2021/03/how-norway-folding-civilians-national-defense/172630/).

75. "EU-NATO Cooperation," European External Action Service, June 2020 (https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu_nato_factshee_june-2020_3.pdf).

76. "How Social Media Companies are Failing to Combat Inauthentic Behaviour Online," NATO StratCom Center of Excellence, November 2019 (www.stratcomcoe.org/how-social-media-companies-are-failing-combat-inauthentic-behaviour-online).

77. "NATO 2030: NATO-Private Sector Dialogues with GLOBSEC," GLOBSEC, 2021 (www.globsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/NATO-GLOBSEC-Dialogue-4-Policy-Takeaways.pdf).

78. Karen Hao, "How Facebook uses machine learning to detect fake accounts," *MIT Technology Review*, March 4, 2020 (www.technologyreview.com/2020/03/04/905551/how-facebook-uses-machine-learning-to-detect-fake-accounts/).

79. "Final Report," National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence, 2021 (www.nscai.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Final_Report_Executive_Summary.pdf).

80. Tom Burt and Eric Horvitz, "New Steps to Combat Disinformation," Microsoft, September 1, 2020 (https://blogs.microsoft.com/on-the-issues/2020/09/01/disinformation-deepfakes-newsguard-video-authenticator/).

81. See the "Lithuanian Demaskuok project" (https://demaskuok.lt/en/main-page/).

82. André Lanata, "NATO is at a strategic crossroads," *LinkedIn*, 2021.

83. "Science & Technology Trends 2020-2040," NATO, 2020, p. 32 (www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/4/pdf/190422-ST_Tech_Trends_Report_2020-2040.pdf).

84. Arquilla and Ronfeldt, "Cyberwar is Coming!"

85. "Science & Technology Trends 2020-2040," NATO, p. 9.

86. Shea, "How is NATO Dealing with Emerging Security Challenges?"

87. Björn von Sydow, "Resilience: Planning for Sweden's 'Total Defence,'" NATO, April 4, 2018 (www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2018/04/04/resilience-planning-for-swedens-total-defence/index.html).

88. "Lithuanian-Swedish Roundtable Expert Discussions on Social Resilience and Psychological Defence," European Integration Studies Centre, September 2018 (www.eisc.lt/uploads/documents/files/EISC_policy%20brief(1).pdf).

89. "How is NATO responding to disinformation on COVID-19?" NATO, May 12, 2020 (www.youtube.com/watch?v=TpbUkXlrmrY).

90. Reference to democratic institutions and rule of law was made in the 2018 Warsaw Summit and since then the appeal to values shared by Allies has been a constant in Secretary General Stoltenberg's public addresses.

91. Celeste Wallander, "NATO's Enemies Within: How Democratic Decline Could Destroy the Alliance," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2018.

92. Rachel Ellehuus, "'Lifting Up Our Values at Home': How to Revitalize NATO's Political Cohesion," Center for Strategic & International Studies, March 12, 2021 (www.csis.org/analysis/lifting-our-values-home-how-revitalize-natos-political-cohesion).

Chapter 14

NATO 2030: Hybrid Future, Hybrid Readiness?

Karlijn Jans[1]

It is June 18, 2030, 04:00 in Washington, DC / 10:00 in Berlin and senior NATO leadership, military planners, and advisors at NATO Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons gather around a top-secret video display. News has come in that, at a perilous time, hostile activities are confirmed on NATO's northern flank. On the big screens, we see images of large armed unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) swarms approaching Bardufoss Airbase in Northern Norway, the base at which NATO leaders are set to arrive at 11:00 CEST. These images are not live: they have a delay of sixty minutes, as the key satellite has malfunctioned due to an unknown reason, and Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) drones failed to detect the swarms earlier. The viewers are alerted by a message that at the same time underwater drones (UUVs), with early identification coming from the People's Republic of China, have been detected in the GIUK Gap[2] approaching the Norwegian Svalbard Islands, where NATO political leaders are currently holding their annual summit. Communication with contacts on the islands has been difficult during the past days, due to jamming of the Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) in the area. The summit was supposed to send a strategic message to the other Arctic nations that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is still to be upheld, now that both Russia and China claim areas that encompass the Northern Passage. Joint Forces Command Norfolk is not able to respond, because its base has been flooded due to a recent category 5 hurricane and extreme sea tides, damaging infrastructure, and causing a massive power outage wiping out its ability to communicate. Then all screens go black in Mons, and SHAPE is under a large-scale cyberattack.

This, of course, is a fictitious scenario, but extrapolating developments and issues that are on the agenda and up for analysis and discussion in 2021, this might not be fiction in 2030. The question is, is NATO ready for that future?

In 2030, the Alliance will turn eighty-one years old. Whatever the challenges and threats to the Atlantic Alliance, NATO and its members have always been able to adapt and honor commitments and the spirit of the Washington Treaty. Thirty allies have committed themselves to three core tasks: collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security. The most famous clause of the NATO Treaty is Article 5: "an attack on one is an attack on all," the mutual defense clause. This clause has underpinned the political and military committed allies to the Alliance. However, lesser known is Article 3 of the Treaty, which describes the condition of the backbone for mutual defense—having credible, deployable, interoperable, well-equipped, and highly trained forces with cutting edge materiel. Article 3 states:

> In order more effectively to achieve the objectives of this Treaty, the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack.[3]

A myriad of future challenges for the Alliance, conventional and non-conventional, calls for a holistic view on tactical and strategic readiness. NATO's readiness efforts have always relied on organizing, training, and equipping armed forces for combat to ensure success in the field. However, the battlefield is becoming more complex through rapid technological advances, transcending into different, and new, domains including cyber and space. To address this complex picture for the future, the Alliance is working on its adaptation, has consulted with a NATO 2030 Reflection Group led by the NATO Secretary General, and has adopted a comprehensive plan for the future at the 2021 Brussels Summit. At the summit, NATO Allies agreed to renewing its 2010 Strategic Concept, including a current threat assessment into the institution's purpose and fundamental security tasks, to reflect the changing world. Threats no longer come from one primary actor, nor are they limited to 'traditional' domains. Knowing that threats to NATO are becoming a less clear-cut picture than during, for example, the Cold War, working on a broad concept of readiness, meaning the ability and willingness of nations to act, is crucial in dealing with complex security challenges in the future.

Operational readiness becomes a more complex picture towards 2030. The strategic and political challenges facing NATO, including

climate change and threats in the grey zone from hybrid warfare will complicate the Alliance's decision making. The threat, or the enemy, is non-kinetic and invisible. The interpretation of the phrase "their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack" in Article 3 will be challenged in a 2030 perspective. The changing nature of (armed) conflict and the speed of developments in different domains, including emerging and disruptive technologies (EDTs),[4] will have to impact NATO's thinking on readiness. Recognizing that NATO's approach to deterrence and collective defense in 2030 will require a three-dimensional mindset to be ready militarily as well as an institution. Adversaries might challenge the Alliance simultaneously in both nontraditional and traditional domains below the Article 5 threshold and exacerbate existing weaknesses of the Alliance. A form of hybrid readiness will need to be translated into an ability to act towards challenges that transcend boundaries and conventional warfare and diffuses the military and civilian domains. The question, therefore, is: What is NATO getting ready for, and what does this mean for operational and strategic readiness of an eighty-year-old alliance in 2030? What does this mean for operational, institutional, and strategic readiness of the Alliance?

This chapter summarizes advances that NATO has made to increase readiness of its forces in order to address the myriad of challenges it has faced in recent years. It then looks at the shortcomings and challenges for the Alliance in an increasingly complex geopolitical situation, introduces the concept of hybrid readiness, and with that it points to possible solutions or actions that could be taken. It will be paramount to shift NATO's and its members' strategic mindset towards hybrid readiness in order to deal with a 360-degree view on security that requires an increasingly 3D approach, in which hybrid and EDT developments cut across domains and goes beyond borders.

Adaptation and Increasing of NATO's Readiness Throughout the Years: A Changing Environment

The Alliance is in its seventh decade of existence, and the world has evolved and changed since its founding. NATO has endured throughout major historic moments in international relations: the Cold War, the fall of Berlin Wall, the wars in the Balkans, 9/11 and the triggering

of Article 5, the threat of terrorism to the Alliance, and a resurgent Russia on Europe's borders. It also welcomed eighteen new members since the twelve founding nations signed the Washington Treaty in 1949. The concept of collective defense and deterrence was adapted throughout the years, but the foundation remained the same: an alliance ready to act, politically as well as operationally. As has been said by many, including the current Secretary General, NATO should be seen as the most successful alliance in history, exactly because it has been able to adapt to the changing security environment.[5] Major changes in the power balance and evolving threats in the world have forced NATO to change and adapt in the way it conducts its business, how it views collective defense, what its core tasks are, and what type of military posture is needed to defend and deter.

Since its creation, NATO has experienced—and was part of—three periods in which its strategic environment fundamentally changed and to which it adapted its political and military structures and readiness: from territorial defense during the Cold War, to expeditionary forces engaged in out-of-area operations in the 1990s and 2000s, and counter terrorism efforts post-9/11, back to territorial defense and deterrence after the Russian Federation invaded Crimea. Addressing these challenges militarily largely included conventional forces, doctrines, and tactics. During the Cold War, the Alliance focused on defense and deterrence by preparing its forces for large-scale territorial conflict with the Soviet Union. Its readiness efforts matched this challenge. For example, large-scale and annual Return of Forces to Germany (REFORGER) exercises on continental Europe were designed to help prepare Allies for an attack by the Soviet Union on Western Europe. These exercises involved the deployment of an entire US division overseas. In fact, REFORGER 1988 was billed as the largest European ground maneuver since the end of World War II, with 125,000 troops deployed.[6]

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, operations of the Alliance changed in nature. The threat of the Soviet Union disappeared, and this period was characterized by dialogue and cooperation, as well as other new ways of contributing to peace and stability, such as multinational crisis management operations, fundamentally focusing on an expeditionary force posture. For example, the Implementation Force (IFOR), the NATO-led peace force in Bosnia and Herzegovina deployed under

Operation Joint Endeavour, was characterized by close cooperation between NATO and non-NATO members, some being former Soviet Union members. It subsequently became the NATO-led Stabilization Force (SFOR).

Another watershed moment was 9/11, after which NATO shifted efforts and resources to counterterrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Military and political efforts focused on out of area operations and crisis responses. In the words of General James Jones, then-NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe, "NATO will no longer have the large, massed units that were necessary for the Cold War, but will have agile and capable forces at Graduated Readiness levels that will better prepare the Alliance to meet any threat that it is likely to face in this 21st century."[7] The NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan and Operation Ocean Shield in the Gulf of Aden are prime examples of the types of operations NATO conducted during this period.

Since the Russian invasion of Crimea and the rise of the Islamic State on Europe's southern borders and subsequent terrorist attacks on European soil, NATO has been forced to review its conventional defense and deterrence mechanisms politically, institutionally, and militarily. Adapting to this changed security environment directly on NATO's borders, the Alliance adopted a variety of 'assurance measures' to defend and deter. These measures signaled a shift from a focus on 'out of area' operations, and their corresponding military needs, to the need to also respond politically and militarily to a crisis within or near the borders of the Alliance. Since 2014, NATO has undertaken a range of activities and launched plans to increase NATO's readiness to respond to this change of focus. The subsequent NATO summits in Wales (2014), Warsaw (2016), Brussels (2018), and London (2019) were instrumental in cementing efforts to increase readiness of the Alliance stemming from different geographical locations and different domains. NATO has committed itself to a 360-degree approach, addressing threats coming from Russia on the Eastern flank, the threat from terrorism emanating from North Africa and the Middle East, and the changing geopolitical situation in the North Atlantic and High North.

However, threats have gradually become more diffuse and must be addressed in many different domains simultaneously. Readiness of forces in 2021 means that Allies continue to contribute to out of area missions in Iraq and Afghanistan but, at the same time, are also required to fulfill NATO's renewed focus on defense and deterrence, similar to Cold War times, but with the added layer of hybrid and cyber challenges. In 2030, NATO's security challenges will transcend boundaries and conventional warfare, impacting how the Alliance as a whole will look at the readiness of forces and institutions. The challenges to NATO are already and will be increasingly more hybrid in nature and will require a concept of hybrid readiness of its forces as well as its military and institutional structures. Hybrid readiness will be crucial for NATO to withstand (diffuse) challenges and threats in the future. Within this concept, NATO's force posture will have to be scalable, agile, adaptive, and truly interoperable. At the same time, as an institution, NATO will need to have productive and effective linkages with key civilian stakeholders in order to address multi-domain and multi-dimensional challenges.

Readiness in 2021 Towards 2030

Richard Betts describes readiness of forces as "a measure of pre-D-Day status of the force" and "a force's ability to fight with little or no warning."[8] NATO is an alliance and, as such, is the sum of its members. It is reliant on forces and capabilities provided by members and is based on mutual trust and the willingness to act jointly. As an institution, it has committed itself to three core tasks: collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security. NATO's ability to act is dependent on an agile institution, swift decision-making, and forces that are well-trained and equipped. In other words, it needs to be an institution with a toolbox that is operationally as well as structurally ready to act. As defined by Rumbaugh, operational readiness is "the capability of a unit/formation, ship, weapon system, or equipment to perform the missions or functions for which it is organized or designed."[9] Structural readiness is concerned chiefly with how ready the military or service is to conduct its mission. Hence, operational readiness lies mostly in the hands of different allies, sharing the burden and ensuring forces and

equipment are up to speed. Structural readiness relies upon consensus within the North Atlantic Council (NAC), which operationalizes multinational efforts, for example the Joint Commands or rotating battlegroups. As assessed by Sukam, the critical aspect in understanding operational and structural readiness is that choosing one over the other is a choice between capabilities available now and capabilities that will be available in the future.[10] Applying this to NATO, focusing all efforts on conventional defense and deterrence, for example by investing in training and exercising solely on large scale land maneuvers with conventional air support, will lower NATO's readiness in the cyber or hybrid domain.

NATO's military readiness, however, is dependent on joint command of forces provided by its members that is interoperable, held at high readiness, and ready to deploy in any timeframe in any scenario over any distance. Three questions are crucial for readiness: Ready for when? Ready for what? Ready with what?[11] In other words, NATO needs to consider the timeframe, the threat, and the composition of forces. Answering these questions will require reflection and policy choices at NATO and in the capitals and will inform the discussion ahead of the new Strategic Concept.

Readiness is primarily the task of the individual member states; besides the NATO Defense Planning Process (NDPP) and the defense spending pledge, NATO as an institution has limited instruments to influence the factual readiness of its force posture. While we speak about the readiness of NATO forces, what we are talking about principally is the contribution of members individually to collective readiness. As is stated in Article 3 of the Treaty, it is also the responsibility of members individually to maintain and develop their defense capacities.

However, at the same time, it is also the responsibility of NATO collectively embedded in the institution to improve readiness by ensuring that combined forces are deployable. As has been noted before, NATO leaders have recognized the changing security environment and have taken steps to adapt NATO's readiness. Military adaptation has included efforts in the traditional domains of land, sea, air, nuclear—but also in newer operational domains such as cyber and space. The NATO Readiness Action Plan (RAP) has been key in further enhancing readi-

ness of the alliance to address and adapt to new challenges and threats. The plan was launched during the 2014 NATO Wales Summit, the same summit in which leaders signed the 2 percent spending pledge. RAP aims at "ensur[ing] that the Alliance is ready to respond swiftly and firmly to new security challenges from the east and the south."[12] The plan was seen as the largest effort to provide collective defense since the Cold War. Adaptation measures included, for example: tripling the size of the NATO Response Force (NRF) and establishing a Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF), a "spearhead force" within the NRF able to provide a rapid military response to an emerging crisis;[13] and establishing a rotating troop presence on NATO's Eastern flank through Enhanced Forward Presence (EFP) by having battlegroups based in Poland and the Baltics and led by the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, and the United States respectively, that are multinational, combat-ready forces that rotate every six months. In the air, several allies are aiding Romania's and Bulgaria's efforts to protect NATO airspace.[14] NATO also has made strides in bolstering cyber defense, including cyber threats in the hybrid spectrum through, for example, the Cyber Defense Pledge.

Additionally, announced at the 2018 Brussels Summit, the NATO Readiness Initiative (NRI) is intended to further adapt all four military domains and included the '4x30.' In practice, the '4x30' aims to push allies to be able to deploy thirty battalions, thirty air squadrons, and thirty naval combat vessels ready to use within thirty days.[15] By signing this initiative, Allies directly signed up to increasing military readiness to deliver these capabilities on short notice. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg stressed that this new initiative would help to establish "a culture of readiness."[16]

At the same time, NATO worked on its structural readiness by enhancing its command structure in order to address existing gaps in command and control in the domains of cyber, the North Atlantic, and logistics/military mobility. It established a Joint Forces Command to oversee the North Atlantic (JFC-NF) and a Joint Support and Enabling Command (JSEC) that have now been declared operational. These Joint Forces Commands have been added to the network of the NATO's military command structure. These serve NATO operationally and are directed by the Supreme Allied Commander Europe.

Besides introducing and investing in its military posture and corresponding command structure, the Alliance has also looked at the doctrine and conceptual thinking underlying the complication of the threat picture by endorsing the Defense of the Euro-Atlantic Area (DDA) concept. The DDA aims to improve strategic transparency and alignment between military and political activities. It frames the Alliance's response across all domains through a whole of government and whole of Alliance approach and develops the alliance's planning to achieve the operational and strategic intent of its military strategy. It unites national, regional and theatre wide efforts to a common purpose and helps allies to align activities in peace time and in crisis. At the same time, the Alliance is working to implement the Warfighting Concept, which recognizes and stimulates the development of its military and technological advantage as the character of conflict evolves. Work is being done on plans for multiple contingencies. Once the Supreme Allied Commander Europe's (SACEUR) Area of Responsibility is shaped across all domains and all these plans are set, future military requirements for future competition can be solidified.

Major NATO adaptation efforts have focused on operational and structural readiness of conventional force structures, and while readiness is often described in conventional terms, in the future readiness will require thinking more broadly. NATO's future adaptation should not only be seen from a purely military point of view but will also have to address the fundamental requirements for NATO to be ready for current and future threats. This includes adapting NATO as an organization and institution, as well as proper investments in current and future forces, something that allies have committed to in Article 3 of the Washington Treaty. As has been argued by Sukam, an unexplored aspect of structural and operational readiness is the ability for forces and capabilities to be ready for military operations below conflict, in for example a hybrid or cyber scenario that does not meet the conditions of Article 5.[17] Additional to the military aspect of readiness, operationally as well as structurally, is addressing the challenge of future proofing NATO's institutional structures. With the added layers of cyber activities, hybrid tactics, including the application and proliferation of emerging and disruptive technologies (EDTs), the impact of climate change, and the developing threat of militarization of space, readiness

becomes a concept not only to be addressed from a military perspective but will require a more hybrid form of thinking networked into the civilian domain.

Readiness for What? Challenges and Opportunities to Maintaining and Increasing NATO's Readiness

To ensure collective defense abilities and a common understanding of what collective defense means, it is key to NATO's political and strategic credibility that it keeps pace with a dramatically rapid and fundamentally changing security environment.[18] Applying the 'ready for when?; ready for what?; ready with what?' framework to NATO 2030 conversations will help identify shortcomings as well as possible changes and solutions.[19] The 'for when?' can already be easy answered: by 2030.

Concerning the 'ready for what?' question, state and non-state adversaries frequently engage in tactics that do not meet the Article 5 threshold, which creates ambiguities for NATO's Allies and complicates collective defense efforts. It is a given that the world and global power balance will look different in 2030, and threats to collective security and defense of the Alliance are likely to increasingly take place in the grey zone. In its Integrated Operating Concept 2025, the UK Ministry of Defense defines grey zone tactics as "threats [that] blend old elements–competition for resources, territory and political power–with new approaches" and the goal of adversaries is "to win without fighting."[20] This form of fighting has consequences for NATO's readiness and overall posture, it will impact multiple domains at the same time but will also diffuse civil and military activities and responses. As has been concluded by the 2030 Reflection Group:

> The world of the next ten years will be very different from the world that the Alliance inhabited either during the Cold War or the decades that immediately followed. It will be a world of competing great powers, in which assertive authoritarian states with revisionist foreign policy agendas seek to expand their power and influence and in which NATO allies will once again face a systemic challenge cutting across the domains of security and economics.[21]

The 'ready with what?' question refers to transitioning from conventional readiness, and corresponding institutional and defense planning, to a concept of hybrid readiness will require a baseline as to what NATO is ready for and what the shared threat analysis is, as well as more creative thinking towards what is needed for NATO and its Allies to fulfill requirements under Article 3. Making sure the tanks and crews on the battlefield are well-trained, equipped, and interoperable with other NATO forces will be as important as making sure member states' own systems are not vulnerable to a hostile system take over or a cyberattack taking an Ally off the grid and disrupting an entire society. The same goes for political and institutional readiness within NATOs decision-making process, primarily the North Atlantic Council (NAC). Readiness is only useful and relevant if you can make the decision in time and are able to execute it.

NATO's hybrid readiness will have to bank on stimulating and including less conventional ways to adapt and increase readiness. To address the changing answer to getting 'ready for what' and embedding this view into the upcoming Strategic Concept discussions, the Alliance could look to, for example: address security threats that have military and civilian spillover with a natural ally, the European Union; address the detrimental effect of underspending on defense; bank on existing coalitions of the willing to increase operational as well as structural readiness; and recognize that EDTs are core to NATO's future readiness but also pose grave threats to the alliance's security.

Challenging Institutional Readiness: A New Strategic Concept & EU Cooperation

Addressing global challenges that have an extreme impact on local nature such as climate change, threats stemming from EDTs, and perhaps more prominently coming from the cyber, space, and hybrid domains will require a more creative mind-set and approach. The enemy might be non-kinetic and not visible and use dual-use technologies—exacerbating effects in both the civilian-military domain and blurring boundaries. This future strategic picture will require NATO to look at its institutional and structural readiness, and its guidelines for the adaptation of military forces.

The current Strategic Concept of NATO dates back to 2010, prior to the rapid changes to the security and stability on NATO's borders. As rightfully noted by the Reflection Group, an outdated Strategic Concept could impede the process of anticipating threats and increase risks of disagreement or improvisation in fast-paced crisis situations.[22] Allies have agreed to the proposal of the NATO Secretary General to create a new Strategic Concept. Besides the document that will be produced, the process that will lead to a new Strategic Concept will also serve in re-focusing and creating awareness of adding another layer to the 360-degree approach that NATO has committed itself to. Nevertheless, recognizing that NATO's approach to deterrence and collective defense in 2030 will require a three-dimensional mind-set. This will need to be translated to an ability to act towards challenges that transcend boundaries and conventional warfare and diffuses the military and civilian domains. The process will serve to prioritize NATO's efforts as well as have a conversation on threat diversion and actions to further adapt the Alliance.

A part of institutional readiness and an opportunity to cross the challenge of hybrid readiness would be smart partnering (see the chapter by Elgin and Wieslander). Key in preparing for the future is also exercising with partners, such as the European Union, that can deploy (civilian) instruments in hybrid scenarios and have access to means in the diplomatic, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement domains. Innovating the Strategic Concept could therefore serve as an opportunity to invite the EU, which is working on its own strategic calibration, the Strategic Compass, into the conversation as an opportunity to align efforts. This would help bridge conversations on diverging threat perceptions and assessment as well as taking a serious look at investing in needed resources. After all, NATO and the EU share twenty-one members.

Cooperation between these two institutions is key on both the operational-tactical and strategic-political levels. EU-NATO cooperation has been put higher on the political agenda, underscored by the 2016 Joint Declaration, and has made progress in the past few years (see also Ewers-Peters' chapter in this volume).[23] The Joint Declaration between these two institutions provided for a foundation of enhanced cooperation on seven topics, including countering hybrid threats, cyber

security and defense, defense capabilities, and defense industry and research. When looking at available resources, NATO and the EU share an overlapping set of forces, capabilities, talent, intellectual property, and budgets for defense investment and research and development. It is paramount that both institutions are employed in unison to maximize strategic effect.[24] The official NATO-EU cooperation agenda will need unity at the top of the list, senior officials and staffers within both institutions should be in dialogue throughout the process.

Allies' Responsibility: The Issue of Defense Spending Impacting Readiness

Article 3 of the Washington Treaty, taking responsibility for individual and collective readiness to withstand an attack, places the responsibility of readiness on the individual member states: investing in defense and defense capabilities is a national responsibility. As the Reflection Group noted, investing in conventional capabilities is imperative but "NATO and allies must develop more capabilities for operating in the cognitive and virtual dimension, including at the tactical level."[25] Investing in acquiring and developing cutting edge technologies is very costly and will also have to be taken into account for current and future national defense commitments.[26] Obligations under Article 3 cannot be seen as separate from the defense spending pledge. It was formally agreed in 2014 at the Wales Summit that each ally commits to spend at least 2 percent of their GDP on defense, a target which had previously been informal. This directly feeds into NATO agreed guidelines for deployability, sustainability, and other agreed output metrics so that their armed forces can effectively operate together.[27]

Though the pledge has been an integral part of the NATO burden sharing discussion, the majority of Allies have not met the pledge to this date. Since 2015, the defense spending trend has been, on average, positive. However, the majority of Allies have not met both spending targets. For example, even though pundits often focus on the 2 percent mark, many Allies are not meeting the 20 percent investment in major equipment, including on research and development, thus risking further decline of operational and structural readiness. The success and sustainment of the NATO Readiness Initiative or enhanced Forward Presence rotations, for example, are dependent on Allies being able to commit and deliver the needed forces and capabilities. It is therefore

important to align national efforts with alliance efforts to not waste (financial) resources.

At the same time, some have argued that the 2 percent spending target is flawed and should instead reflect the agreed output of allies (for more on the burden sharing and capabilities debate, see Keil in this volume).[28] The NATO Young Leaders Group has called for designing a broader responsibility-sharing metric by 2030, rethinking the 360-degree approach and what represents a defense contribution to the Alliance, addressing the full spectrum of challenges, including for example key investments that climate-proof NATO assets.[29] Perhaps there should indeed be a re-evaluation of what we want Allies and NATO deliver and contribute in facing the multitude of threats that might be hybrid in nature. Spending should reflect hybrid readiness and increase structural and operational readiness of the Alliance. For example, would investing in military and civilian response structures to climate change-induced humanitarian aid count towards increasing NATO's ability to act and therefore contribute to Article 3 and Article 5 of the Washington Treaty? As the NATO Young Leaders Group noted, "the new metric should better incentivize Allies to increase military readiness by measuring defense outputs rather than just spending, and by recognizing investments in their national resilience."[30]

Smaller Coalitions Contributing to NATO Readiness

Besides enhancing readiness of NATO forces through joint training and exercise and through initiatives by NATO as an institution, smaller coalitions of NATO members have also been cooperating more closely through exercises and dialogues. The risk, however, of these small groups is the potential for exacerbating already divergent views among Allies of threats. As was recognized by the Reflection Group, "recent years have seen allies engaged in disputes that partially reflect anxieties about their long-term strategic futures."[31] Nevertheless, some of these smaller initiatives have already provided an opportunity to successfully strengthen the overall readiness of NATO forces by increasing military interoperability, as well as the opportunity for strategic dialogues between NATO members, thus contributing to the operational and structural readiness of the alliance. [32] Coalitions of the willing could serve to align strategic thinking, share capability building efforts and maximize

interoperability, all contributing factors to increasing military and political readiness.

Cooperation in limited partnerships or coalitions has often been borne out of pragmatic necessity, for efficiency or out of operational demand. NATO operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have forged small groupings of allies and partners that have joint combat experience and are comfortable working together. One of these coalitions of the like-minded is the United Kingdom-led Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF).[33] The JEF includes NATO nations Denmark, Estonia, Norway, Latvia, Lithuania, Iceland, and the Netherlands as well as close NATO partners Sweden and Finland. This grouping does not have standing forces assigned but utilizes the UK's joint headquarters and coalition high-readiness forces that have developed mutual trust and procedures by training together. Indeed, in 2019, the members embarked on a large-scale maritime task force deployment in the Baltic region to exercise.[34] The JEF has been working to increase tactical and operational readiness and enhance performance when deployed. More concretely contributing to NATO's readiness as a small group within the bigger group, the UK signed the NATO Readiness Declaration in 2020 and committed the JEF to the Alliance's Readiness Initiative.

Another example is the Northern Group. This grouping is an informal cooperation format bringing together NATO members bordering the Baltic or North Sea. Meetings and discussions take place on policy and ministerial levels and service to exchange views, (doctrinal) developments, and best practices. Although the JEF is focused on bringing together actual capabilities, the Northern Group serves to converge strategic cultures between its members, of which the majority is part of NATO. Additionally, the Visegrád Group (V4) brings together NATO members Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia. This group has been "a platform for political consultations on security and defense related topics with the focus on stimulation of cooperation in various areas of common interest such as joint capabilities development, interoperability of the V4 armed forces (education, training, and exercises) and defense industry (joint procurement and acquisition)."[35] V4 countries also cooperate beyond the security and defense realm, which increases exchanges, trust, and mutual benefits.

Each forum of dialogue serves to enhance NATO's readiness and interoperability by having members exercising together (i.e. Exercise Baltic Protector 2019 or through tabletop exercises) or addressing issues that are current through (policy) dialogues, such as responses to disinformation,[36] climate change, or the pandemic.[37] At the same time it will be key for these 'bottom up' initiatives that are geographically focused in essence, to link into the wider NATO structures to feed into NATO's overall readiness. This could for example be done by inviting other members or NATO observes to exercises in order to increase reciprocity. At the same time NATO will have to ensure that it does not mitigate against or undermine the need for consensus but support institutional readiness and strategic decision making.

EDTs' Impact on NATO's Future Readiness: Risks and Opportunities

Hybrid threats and challenges are not new; however, with the increased dependency on technology, interconnectivity, and reliance on digital communications they add an additional and more complex layer that NATO will need to address. Beyond adopting a strategic mindset, it is paramount that individual allies as well as NATO as an institution consider the impact of EDTs on global strategic shifts, on its own institutional decision making, and on the battle space. Particularly in the realm of hybrid threats, where military and civilian worlds collide and where military and civilian tactics are intertwined, hybrid readiness is key. Exercises with hybrid and multi-domain scenarios while experimenting with EDTs will be imperative but will also expose ethical concerns amongst allies. For example, there are wide raging discussions of the use and implementation of AI in the battle space and the role of human intervention.[38]

The Reflection Group noted that EDTs are a challenge, but it is also an opportunity for the Alliance. Examples are found in innovating surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities. Machine learning can augment existing sensors and assist in decision-making on the battlefield. NATO Allied Command Transformation (NATO ACT) is already involved in investigating military uses of Artificial Intelligence, Automation, and Robotics (AA&R) through the Multinational Capability Development Campaign (MCDC) and has brought together operators, engineers, scientists, academia, and industry representatives.[39]

The implications of AI in the battle space, by NATO or an adversary will create new or exacerbate existing operational (ethical) and strategic challenges. However, apart from the military application, it will also impact traditional (institutional) decision-making processes, by the enormous speed, scale, and intensity of developments and the ability of machine learning by AI applications. Besides the potential for analytics and intelligence (surveillance and reconnaissance), it also signals a risk to heavy dependence on data and information exchange and when manipulated, the credibility and trust of intelligence in the process leading up to decision-making.

EDTs can disrupt, influence, disrupt or enable interference with information that is used to make decisions, on or off the battlefield. For example, data could be manipulated or distorted, and therefore rendered unreliable for intelligence purposes. More concretely, an adversary could spread confusion or break trust if deep fake videos are used for political statements, resulting in manipulating audiences.[40] AI-altered information could influence decisions made by the NAC or undermine trust in intelligence entirely.[41] Moreover, in-time decision-making might become problematic.[42] Awareness, understanding, and increased consultation amongst NATO leadership, i.e., the NAC, of the potential impact of EDTs on institutional decision-making processes in peace time, but most certainly in a crisis, is paramount. A NAC exercise involving an AI scenario, such as the one portrayed in the introduction of the chapter, could serve as an awareness-raising event in terms of readiness of the highest decision-making body of NATO.

Conclusion

On June 18, 2030, the Alliance could be fundamentally tested in all domains, simultaneously, at great speed. Whether NATO, the sum of its members, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack as stated in Article 3 of the Washington Treaty, will be dependent on the choices that the Alliance collectively will make while drafting the new Strategic Concept.

The operational and strategic readiness of forces and NATO's defense posture becomes a more complex picture towards 2030. Adversaries will mix conventional and non-conventional tactics and systems in the military and civilian domain for strategic effect. At the same time, the strategic and political challenges facing NATO, including climate change and threats in the grey zone from hybrid warfare, will complicate the Alliance's decision-making. NATO is at a key moment with implementing the recommendations of the Reflection Group as well as innovating the Strategic Concept that will underpin NATO's adaptation towards 2030.

It is paramount to shift NATO's and its members' strategic mindset towards hybrid readiness to deal with a 360-degree approach in which the Alliance will have to adopt an increasingly 3D approach to hybrid and EDT developments that cut across domains and geographical boundaries. It is imperative that Allies keep innovating their conventional forces but also pay attention to non-conventional defense and deterrence, explore the possibility of cooperation with other actors and institutions such as the EU, and bank on existing formats of strategic dialogue and military readiness amongst allies. This mind-set towards a more hybrid form of readiness needs to be an intrinsic part of operational readiness by exercising and training, which needs to be tested. But at the same time, it needs to be part of structural readiness, readiness thinking, and defense planning, and therefore should be reflected in the new Strategic Concept.

Notes

1. Views expressed are the author's own and do not reflect those of HM Government.

2. The GIUK gap is an area in the northern Atlantic Ocean that forms a naval choke point. Its name is an acronym for Greenland, Iceland, and the United Kingdom.

3. NATO, "The North Atlantic Treaty," April 4, 1949 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm).

4. This includes but is not limited to EDTs in the domains of big data, artificial intelligence, (remote) autonomous systems, space, cloud technologies, hypersonics, quantum technologies, semiconductors, biotechnologies, and human augmentation.

5. NATO, "Statement by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg with US President Donald Trump," December 3, 2019 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_171542.htm?selectedLocale=ru); NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," November 25, 2020, p. 5 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf); Mark Webber, James Sperling, and Martin A. Smith, *What's Wrong with NATO and How to Fix it* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2021).

6. The Stars and Stripes, vol. 47, no. 147, September 12, 1988.

7. "NATO Response Force" (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49755.htm).

8. Richard K. Betts, *Military Readiness: Concepts, Choices, Consequences* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1995) pp. 40, 42; Daniel Sukman, "Reviewing Military Readiness: Thinking About the Three Big Questions," *The Strategy Bridge*, July 3, 2019 (https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2019/7/3/reviewing-military-readiness-thinking-about-the-three-big-questions-of-readiness#:~:text=Three%20Questions,a%20comprehensive%20understanding%20of%20readiness).

9. Russell Rumbaugh, "Defining Readiness: Background and Issues for Congress," Congressional Research Service, June 14, 2017 (https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R44867.pdf).

10. Sukman, "Military Readiness: Thinking About the Three Big Questions."

11. Betts, *Military Readiness: Concepts, Choices, Consequences*; Sukman, "Reviewing Military Readiness: Thinking About the Three Big Questions."

12. NATO, "NATO Readiness Action Plan," 2021 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_119353.htm).

13. NATO, "Response Force," 2021 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49755.htm). This NRF element—about 20,000 strong—includes a multinational land brigade of around 5,000 troops and air, maritime and SOF components. Leading elements are ready to move within two to three days. Allies assume the lead role for the VJTF on a rotational basis.

14. NATO, "Boosting NATO's presence in the east and southeast," 2020 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_136388.htm).

15. NATO, "NATO Readiness Initiative", 2018 (https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_06/20180608_1806-NATO-Readiness-Initiative_en.pdf).

16. NATO, Press conference by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg ahead of the meetings of NATO Defense Ministers, June 2018 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_155245.htm).

17. Sukman, "Reviewing Military Readiness: Thinking About the Three Big Questions."

18. A point which has also been concluded by the Reflection Group.

19. Betts, *Military Readiness: Concepts, Choices, Consequences*; Sukman, "Reviewing Military Readiness: Thinking About the Three Big Questions."

20. UK Ministry of Defense, "Introducing the Integrated Operating Concept 2025" (London: UK Ministry of Defense, 2020).

21. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 5.

22. Ibid, p. 23.

23. NATO, "Joint Declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation," July 10, 2018 (https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/36096/nato_eu_final_eng.pdf).

24. Lauren Speranza and Karlijn Jans, "Bridging the Gap: Time for an EU-NATO Strategic Dialogue on Defense Tech," CEPA, February 17, 2021 (https://cepa.org/bridging-the-gap-time-for-an-eu-nato-strategic-dialogue-on-defense-tech/).

25. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 46.

26. Lewis Sanders IV and Helle Jeppesen, "New technologies drive military spending: SIPRI," *Deutsche Welle*, April 28, 2019 (https://www.dw.com/en/new-technologies-drive-military-spending-sipri/a-48513951).

27. NATO, "Wales Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales," June 2014 (https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm).

28. See, for example, Leonard August Schuette, "Toward a meaningful metric: replacing NATO's 2% defense spending target," *Egmont Security Policy Brief* no.142 (2021); Jan Techau, "The Politics of 2 Percent: NATO and the Security Vacuum in Europe," Carnegie Europe (2015); Jeffrey Rathke, "NATO: Measuring Results, not Dollars, in Transatlantic Security," CSIS, (2018); NATO, "NATO 2030: Embrace the change, guard the values—A report by the NATO 2030 Young Leaders Group—for this generation and the next," (Brussels: NATO, 2020).

29. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 5.

30. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 6.

31. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 5.

32. Karlijn Jans, "Strengthening NATO's readiness through coalitions," King's College London, 2019 (https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/strengthening-natos-readiness-through-coalitions).

33. International partners sign Joint Expeditionary Force agreement, UK Ministry of Defense, September 5, 2014 (https://www.gov.uk/government/news/international-partners-sign-joint-expeditionary-force-agreement).

34. Exercise Baltic Protector, 2019 (https://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/news-and-latest-activity/operations/arctic-and-northern-european-waters/baltic-protector).

35. Visegrád Group Defense Cooperation, n.d. (https://www.visegradgroup.eu/about/cooperation/visegrad-group-defence).

36. UK Government, "UK leads Northern Group response to disinformation," November 14, 2018 (https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-leads-northern-group-response-to-disinformation).

37. The Northern Group, "Joint Statement from the Northern Group Meeting of Defense Minister," November 5, 2020 (https://www.regeringen.se/4ab04b/globalassets/regeringen/dokument/forsvarsdepartementet/norra-gruppen/gemensamt-uttalande-av-ministrarna-i-norra-gruppen-5-november-2020-engelska.pdf?TSPD_101_R0=0840bf68c4ab2000eae290199bcf9b3fb0235221020234127b5c51b0fd8664e06808c95681f6295d08a3788f31143000360ae15f7ba597aa49b57dd3a706b38e9aff94b3161463c3018187e18634c1dce6d35896084280a72ebb7e89787f589e).

38. Ulrike E. Franke, "Artificial divide: How Europe and America could clash over AI," European Council on Foreign Relations, 2021 (https://ecfr.eu/publication/artificial-divide-how-europe-and-america-could-clash-over-ai/).

39. See: NATO, "NATO Allied Command Transformation Operational Experimentation 2020 Fact Sheet and Artificial Intelligence - A Game Changer for the Military," 2019 (https://www.act.nato.int/articles/artificial-intelligence-game-changer-military).

40. Nolan Peterson, "Tom Cruise 'deep fake' videos foretell the future of warfare," *Coffee or Die*, March 1, 2021 (https://coffeeordie.com/cruise-deepfake-national-security/).

41. Tomáš Valášek, "How Artificial Intelligence Could Disrupt Alliances," Carnegie Europe, August 31, 2017 (https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/72966).

42. NATO Reflection Group, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era," p. 11.

About the Authors

Una Aleksandra Bērziņa-Čerenkova is a political scientist, China scholar, Head of Political Science PhD programme and China Studies Centre at Riga Stradins University, Head of the Asia program at the Latvian Institute of International Affairs, and a member of European China research networks. She has held a Senior visiting research scholar position at Fudan University School of Philosophy, Shanghai, and a Fulbright visiting scholar position at CEAS, Stanford University. Bērziņa-Čerenkova is a European China Policy Fellow at MERICS and an affiliate of the Lau Institute at King's College, London. Dr. Bērziņa-Čerenkova publishes on PRC political discourse, contemporary Chinese ideology, EU-China relations, NATO-China, Russia-China, and BRI.

Hans Binnendijk is a distinguished fellow at the Atlantic Council. He has served in senior positions at the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the National Security Council, the State Department, and the National Defense University (where he was Vice President). In academia he was Director of the Institute for National Strategic Studies at NDU, Director of the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy at Georgetown University, and Director of Studies at London's International Institute for Strategic Studies. Binnendijk has published widely in the field of foreign policy and national security (see www.hansbinnendijk.com for publications).

Jason Blessing is a Jeane Kirkpatrick Visiting Research Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. During the 2020-2021 academic year, he served as a DAAD Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Program on "The United States, Europe, and World Order" at the Foreign Policy Institute of Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). Blessing has previously worked as a Consulting Fellow for the Cyber, Space and Future Conflict Programme at the International In-

stitute for Strategic Studies (IISS) and was a USIP-Minerva Peace and Security Scholar with the United States Institute of Peace. He holds a PhD in Political Science from the Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Affairs at Syracuse University, an MA in Political Science from Virginia Tech, and a BA in Government from The College of William & Mary.

Katherine Kjellström Elgin is a Fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments. During the 2020-2021 academic year, she served as a DAAD Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Program on "The United States, Europe, and World Order" at the Foreign Policy Institute of Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). Elgin has previously worked at the Brookings Institution and served as a visiting fellow at the Institute for Security & Development Policy in Stockholm, Sweden. Elgin earned her PhD from Princeton University's School of Public & International Affairs, and she additionally holds an MA in Public Affairs and an AB in Politics from Princeton.

Nele Marianne Ewers-Peters is Lecturer and Research Fellow at Leuphana University Lüneburg, Germany. During the 2020-2021 academic year, she served as a DAAD Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Program on "The United States, Europe, and World Order" at the Foreign Policy Institute of Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). Ewers-Peters has previously worked as Assistant Lecturer at the University of Kent and University College London and gained professional experience at Weltfriedensdienst e.V. and the European Parliament. She holds a PhD in International Relations from the University of Kent and additionally completed studies and conducted research at the universities in Bath, Bremen, Helsinki, and Leuven.

Trine Flockhart is Professor of International Relations in the Department of Political Science and Public Management at the University of Southern Denmark and Co-Director of the Center for War Studies. Trine's research focuses on international order and processes of change and transformation, the crisis in the liberal international order, resilience and NATO and transatlantic relations. Her article 'The Coming Multi-Order World' was awarded the Bernard Brodie Prize in 2016

in *Contemporary Security Policy* and is still one of the most read and cited articles of the journal.

Karlijn Jans is a defense expert. Her areas of expertise include NATO, Dutch, and European security and defense policies, strategic foresight, and the impact of new technologies on defense. Karlijn currently serves as a senior defense policy advisor at the British Embassy in The Hague. She is also a reservist with the Royal Netherlands Air Force. Karlijn holds a Master's degree in European Studies from King's College London and a Master's degree in European and International Law from Maastricht University. She further specialized in defense matters while studying at the Netherlands Defence Academy. She has advised military representatives and NATO commanders on several occasions. Prior to her position at the British Embassy, Karlijn was a strategic analyst at the The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies (HCSS). Karlijn is a member of the WIIS Netherlands Advisory Board. Over the past few years, she spoke frequently at NATO and international think tank conferences and published widely on transatlantic security issues, NATO and European defense policies in the media.

Kaitlyn Johnson is deputy director and fellow of the Aerospace Security Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Ms. Johnson supports the team's strategic planning and research agenda. Her research specializes in topics such as space security, military space systems, and commercial and civil space policy. Ms. Johnson has written on national security space reorganization, threats against space assets, the commercialization of space, escalation and deterrence dynamics, and defense acquisition trends. She is also a cohost of the CSIS podcast *Tech Unmanned*, which features guests with both policy expertise and technical expertise in order to break through the national security jargon and technology hand-waving to get to the core of the technical realities of these emerging capabilities, benefits to development, and the barriers to success. Ms. Johnson holds an MA from American University in US foreign policy and national security studies, with a concentration in defense and space security, and a BS from the Georgia Institute of Technology in international affairs.

Steven Keil is a fellow in GMF's Washington office. His work focuses on transatlantic security, with an emphasis on the U.S., Russia, Germany, and NATO. Prior to joining GMF, Keil was a Robert Bosch Fellow at the CDU/CSU Foreign Policy Working Group in the German Bundestag, as well as in the Eastern European and Eurasian research division at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs. Keil also previously worked in the United States Senate. Keil received his bachelor's from the University of South Dakota in political science, German, and history and holds a master's degree from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service BMW Center of German and European Studies.

Barbara Kunz is a senior researcher at the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg. She specializes in European security and the debates surrounding it, with a special emphasis on France and Germany. Previous affiliations include the French Institute of International Relations (Paris) and the Centre for Baltic and East European Studies (Stockholm). Barbara Kunz holds a PhD in Political Science from Stockholm University and a Master's degree from Sciences Po Paris.

Corina Rebegea is a governance and foreign policy expert. As Director for Democratic Resilience at the Center for European Policy Analysis (CEPA), she led the center's programming on the future of democratic governance and disinformation. Rebegea has extensive experience in the non-profit sector and has overseen rule of law and justice reform focused projects in South East Europe. She has also led research projects focusing on good governance, foreign policy and countering disinformation. A former Fulbright and Open Society Institute/Chevening Scholar, Rebegea holds an MPA degree from Syracuse University, an MA in Human Rights from the University of Manchester, and a BA in Political Science from the University of Bucharest.

Rachel Rizzo serves as Director of Programs at the Truman Center for National Policy. From 2019-2020, she spent a year in Berlin, Germany, as a Robert Bosch Foundation Fellow. Rachel has also spent over five years at the Center for a New American Security as a Research Associate, then as the Andrew J. Bacevich Jr., USA Fellow, and cur-

rently as an Adjunct Fellow with the Transatlantic Security Program. Her research focuses primarily on European security, NATO, and the Transatlantic relationship.

Carsten Schmiedl is Senior Program Officer at the Center for European Policy Analysis (CEPA) in Washington, DC. In 2020, he served as Advisor to the U.S. representative and co-chair of the NATO Reflection Group. He was previously with the Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM) and has consulted for the Government of Canada. He holds an MA from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) and a BA from the University of Southern California.

Mark David Simakovsky is a Non-Resident Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council's Eurasia Center and Vice President at Beacon Global Strategies where he works on a wide array of national security issues. Mr. Simakovsky spent a decade in the U.S. government focused on Russia and Eurasia at the Pentagon, State Department and Congress, playing an integral role shaping the U.S. policy response to the 2008 Russia-Georgia conflict and 2014 Russia-Ukraine conflict. He served as the Europe/NATO Chief of Staff, the Russia Country Director, Eurasia Strategy Advisor and Georgia/Moldova Country Director in the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy and was a Presidential Management Fellow (PMF) in the State Department Office of Russian Affairs. He lived in Georgia as a U.S. Fulbright Scholar in 2005-2006. He received a Masters in Science in Foreign Service, Magna Cum Laude, from Georgetown University in 2005 and received a Bachelor of Arts in Diplomacy and Foreign Affairs from Miami University (Oxford), receiving Phi Beta Kappa, University Honors and Magna Cum Laude in 2002.

Rakel Tiderman is a Research Assistant at the Faculty of Law at the University of Helsinki. During the 2020-2021 academic year, she served as a Visiting Scholar in the Program on "The United States, Europe, and World Order" at the Foreign Policy Institute of Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). Tiderman has previously worked as an assistant adviser at the Finnish Immigration Service and as an assistant at the International Law Commission.

She holds an MA in International Law and Human Rights from Åbo Akademi University and is currently studying Law at the University of Helsinki.

James (Jim) Joye Townsend Jr. is an adjunct senior fellow in the CNAS Transatlantic Security Program. After eight years as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD) for European and NATO Policy, Jim Townsend completed more than two decades of work on European and NATO policy in the Pentagon, at NATO and at the Atlantic Council. His work spanned the Cold War, post-Cold War political reconstruction in Europe and Europe's new challenges including Russia and terrorism. In the 1990s, Jim was the Principal Director of European and NATO Policy, the Director of NATO Policy and the Director of the Defense Plans Division at the US Mission to NATO in Brussels, Belgium. From 2006-2009, Jim was a Vice President in the Atlantic Council of the United States and Director of the Council's Program on International Security. Mr. Townsend earned a BA from Duke University and an MA from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) in International Economics and American Foreign Policy.

Anna Wieslander serves as director for Northern Europe at the Atlantic Council (AC) and as head of the AC office in Stockholm. She is also the Chairman of the Institute for Security and Development Policy (ISDP). Ms. Wieslander concurrently serves as secretary general of the Swedish Defence Association. She is a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of War Sciences. Anna Wieslander has previously served as deputy director at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, as head of Speaker's Office at the Swedish Parliament, as deputy director at the Ministry of Defence and as Secretary of the Defence Commission.

Michael John Williams is Associate Professor of International Affairs at the Maxwell School for Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. Williams' research focuses functionally on international security with a regional concentration on twentieth-century Europe. He has published extensively in both academic and policy outlets on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, as well as on issues of war and technology. His last book was *Science, Law and Liberalism in the*

American Way of War: The Quest for Humanity in Conflict (Cambridge University Press).

Mehmet Yegin is a Visiting Fellow at the Americas Research Division at German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) in Berlin since 2018. He is also Board Member at Netherland-based Stichting FeniksPolitik. Engaged in research at Ankara-based think tank USAK (International Strategic Research Organization) since 2008, Yegin served as the Director of the organization's Center for American Studies from 2012 to 2016. He studied American public opinion on the use of military force in his MA studies at the University of Cincinnati in Ohio, USA. He obtained his PhD from the Political Science Department of Bilkent University in Ankara, Turkey, with a thesis titled "Why Turkey Join or Avoid Joining U.S.-led Military Coalitions?" His interests are alliances, NATO, Turkey-US relations, Turkey's security policy. Yegin authored and co-authored analyses for the German Marshall Fund of the United States, and Security Times of the Munich Security Conference and participated in two NATO-funded projects.