

# Anchoring the Alliance



**R. Nicholas Burns, Project Chairman**  
**Damon M. Wilson, Project Director**  
**Jeff Lightfoot, Rapporteur**

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Ambassador R. Nicholas Burns is a board director at the Atlantic Council and professor of the practice of diplomacy and international politics at the Harvard Kennedy School. Burns served in the United States Foreign Service for twenty-seven years until his retirement in April 2008. He was under secretary of state for political affairs (2005–08); US ambassador to NATO (2001–05) and to Greece (1997–01) and State Department spokesman (1995–97). He worked for five years (1990–95) on the National Security Council at the White House where he was senior director for Russia, Ukraine, and Eurasia affairs; special assistant to President Clinton; and director for Soviet Affairs for President George H.W. Bush.

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Damon M. Wilson is executive vice president at the Atlantic Council. His work is committed to advancing a Europe whole, free, and at peace to include Europe's east, the Western Balkans, and the Black Sea region; to strengthening the NATO Alliance; and to fostering a transatlantic partnership capable of tackling global challenges and promoting its common values. From 2007 to 2009, Wilson served as special assistant to the president and senior director for European Affairs at the National Security Council; as executive secretary and chief of staff at the US Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq; and as director for Central, Eastern, and Northern European Affairs on the National Security Council (2004-06). From 2001 to 2004, Mr. Wilson served as Deputy Director of the Private Office of the NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson.

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# Review Board

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Members of the review board welcome this report as an important contribution to the NATO debate and support its overall conclusions. Review board members contributed intellectually to this report. However, not all of the report recommendations reflect the views of all members of the review board. Individuals reviewed the report in their private capacity; affiliations are provided for identification purposes only.

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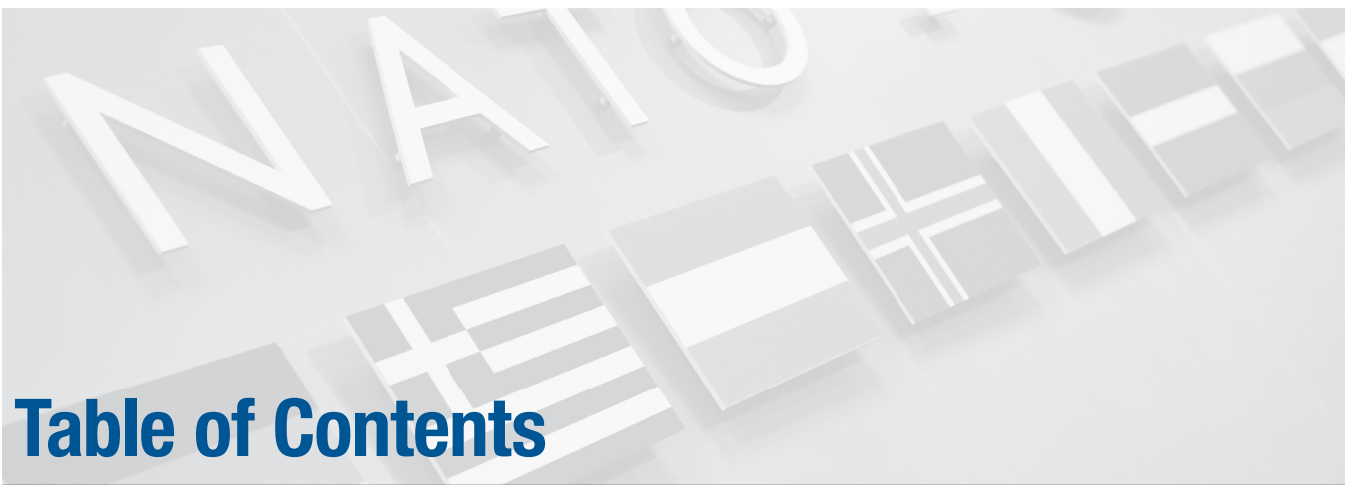
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Less than two years ago at NATO's Lisbon summit, the Alliance adopted a new Strategic Concept intended to chart NATO's course for the coming decade. Yet since then, the members of the Alliance have weathered a dramatic financial crisis, precipitating deep cuts in defense. NATO succeeded in Libya, but faces continuing challenges in Afghanistan. Many allies hanker for the good-old-days, an Alliance more focused on traditional collective defense, while others believe the best course would be for the transatlantic Alliance to serve as a force for global security and stability, together with regional actors, as it did in Libya.

NATO, as the world's foremost military alliance, bears a heavy burden. It must ensure the collective defense and security of its members, address 'out-of-area' crises as they arise, and foster cooperative security among an expanding network of partners. Across these three core tasks, Alliance leaders will have plenty to talk about at Chicago—Afghanistan, 'Smart Defense,' NATO's relationship with Russia, and global partnerships. This report is not about those issues but rather about the leadership required to achieve any of them. It is about restoring the major allies' ambition to lead.

In 2011, NATO won a war that lasted only seven months and cost the alliance just \$1.2 billion, or the equivalent of one week of operations in Afghanistan. And yet it was during this military campaign that US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates warned of the potential of a "two-tier alliance"—one capable and one not—and predicted a "dim if not dismal future" for NATO if current trends were left unchecked. He pointed to the fact that only five allies were at that time spending two percent or more of GDP on defense and the proportion of US defense spending within the Alliance has shifted from an even 50-50 split during the Cold War to a lopsided 75-25 share today. He observed that he was among the last of a generation of policymakers whose worldviews were shaped

by the Cold War and the centrality of Europe in American foreign policy. His comments built on his earlier message warning of the "demilitarization of Europe."

This was followed by the Obama administration's announcement of a strategic rebalancing to Asia. The message seems to be that the Asia-Pacific is the future; the region is key to global security and the global economy. Against this backdrop, Gates' message takes on even deeper implications: some policy makers argue Europe is the past. Asia is the future, so what's the point of NATO?

Yet Gates' intention was to call the Alliance to action, not to abandon Atlanticism. US President Barack Obama laid out the right policy framework to the British Parliament in May 2011 when he said, "At a time when threats and challenges require nations to work in concert with one another, [the transatlantic community remains] the greatest catalyst for global action." He went on to say that "America's transatlantic Alliance is the cornerstone of our engagement in the world."

So does the Atlantic community face a dim if not dismal future, or can it remain a catalyst for global action? That depends on leadership, and that's what this report is about.

This report argues that NATO remains the most successful alliance in modern history. Its future is in doubt if its members do not change their ways. The aim of this project is to offer concrete suggestions for steps allies can take individually and collectively to ensure the new Strategic Concept does not become a document reflecting overly ambitious goals for an alliance that lacks political will. Like all work on NATO and transatlantic security at the Atlantic Council, this project has benefited from the insights of the Council's Strategic Advisors Group, which is ably chaired by Dr. Thomas Enders and Senator Chuck Hagel and enjoys the generous support of EADS North America and Airbus.

I am deeply grateful for the leadership and thoughtful engagement of Ambassador R. Nicholas Burns, former Under Secretary of State and Professor of the Practice of Diplomacy and International Politics at the Harvard Kennedy School, in chairing this effort. The Council is fortunate to have an Atlanticist of his stature and ability as a director of the Atlantic Council board and as chairman of this report.

I would also like to recognize the prominent individuals who agreed to offer their thoughts on the state of the Alliance to inform the substance of the report. Each of them is listed on the acknowledgements page. While this report does not necessarily reflect their views or represent their opinions entirely, it benefited enormously from their insights and enjoys their endorsement.

I would also like to thank Atlantic Council Executive Vice President Damon Wilson who served as project director of this effort and is a force behind many of the report's ideas. Finally, I want to recognize Jeff Lightfoot, deputy director of the International Security Program, who expertly guided this project from beginning to end and visiting fellow A.J. Wilson for his diligent assistance with the production of this report.

I hope you will find this report lively, thoughtful, and provocative.



Frederick Kempe  
President and CEO  
Atlantic Council



The image shows the NATO logo in large, white, 3D block letters at the top left. Below and to the right of the logo are several NATO member flags, including those of the United States, Canada, and various European nations, arranged in a perspective view. The background is a light gray gradient.

# Executive Summary

**N**ATO leaders will gather in Chicago in May to discuss the war in Afghanistan, defense capabilities, and global partnerships. These are crucial issues for the Alliance, but they will not address the “dim and dismal” outlook warned against by former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates in his June 2011 farewell speech in Brussels. That outcome is not preordained. It can be avoided if individual allies recommit to the Alliance and take the necessary steps to reinforce, or ‘anchor,’ the NATO Alliance in the decade ahead.

We seek in this report to offer a concise prescription for how the NATO allies can strengthen the Alliance for the many challenges ahead. This is not a comprehensive assessment of NATO or its future missions, but a look at its most important component—its leadership. During the last seven months, we talked to senior NATO and allied officials on both sides of the Atlantic and to scores of former officials. These conversations informed our views of how NATO’s leading members can recommit to the Alliance to ensure it is prepared to tackle the full range of security challenges it will face in the future.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, NATO is not yesterday’s story. Far from it. The basic bargain that NATO offered North Americans and Europeans at its birth in 1949 is important and true today. Indeed, emerging powers, non-state actors, and the complex challenges of today’s globalized security landscape are likely to push North America and Europe closer together rather than drive us apart in the years ahead. The United States and its transatlantic allies are committed to each others’ security and defense in a volatile world. We form the world’s strongest military alliance. Our capacity to fight together, keep the peace in Europe, and respond to threats in the Middle East and Asia is a unique and irreplaceable asset. America’s democratic allies in Canada and Europe, in partnership with America’s Asia-Pacific

allies, are a crucial asset to the United States. The United States needs NATO in the twenty-first century and must do everything it can to keep it healthy and united.

In this sense, NATO is the essential bridge uniting the United States, Canada, and twenty-six European nations in the world’s most democratic and powerful alliance. NATO’s North Atlantic Council provides a unique venue for allies to discuss the most important security challenges we face. The Alliance’s three core tasks of collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security are as essential today as they have ever been. Since the end of the Cold War, the Alliance has repeatedly shown that it has the flexibility to respond to a diverse array of security challenges—stopping war and securing the peace in Bosnia and Kosovo, rallying to support the United States after 9/11, and providing the core military effort in Afghanistan. And in the midst of a serious financial crisis, it is important to bear in mind that robust security is itself a key factor in fostering a strong economic future.

Indeed, NATO will remain critical to North American and European strength in a world of emerging powers, contested values, constrained budgets, and global threats. For all its flaws, the transatlantic alliance remains home to the United States’ most capable and loyal allies. NATO members account for fifty percent of global economic output and two-thirds of world defense spending, and represent the greatest concentration of liberal democracies on the planet. NATO’s involvement in Afghanistan, its successful mission in Libya, and its ballistic missile defense system against Iran all demonstrate that the Alliance is central to core US interests and international security.

Of course, in NATO all allies are equal, and each is expected to contribute according to its abilities. Some smaller allies, particularly Denmark, Norway, Romania, Canada,

## Anchoring the Alliance

the Netherlands, and others, delivered extraordinary performances in Afghanistan or Libya. NATO's fate, however, will largely be determined by the quality of leadership demonstrated by its largest and most influential allies: the United States, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and Turkey; and, to a lesser extent, Poland, Italy, Spain, and Canada. Unfortunately, the deepest economic downturn and political crisis to hit Europe since World War II have sapped many European allies of their strategic ambition and resulted in a 'race to the bottom' to cut defense budgets. Only three of NATO's twenty-eight members spend more than the agreed two percent of GDP on defense.

Democratic and Republican administrations since the end of the Cold War have defended NATO's centrality in American foreign policy. The Obama Administration has provided needed leadership and creative policy ideas on a number of issues. A blunt accounting of NATO's shortcomings, however, must also address the United States' own disproportionate responsibility for the Alliance's continued vitality. Remarks about "handing off" operations to NATO and isolationist campaign rhetoric by some Republican primary candidates have left many European and Canadian officials questioning Washington's enduring commitment to the transatlantic Alliance. For Europe to remain the global player that Washington needs it to be, the United States will also have to demonstrate its continued commitment to Europe's security. This is a joint responsibility of both the administration and Congress and of the Republican and Democratic parties. The United States is a leading European power, and must remain so, even as it focuses more on Asia and the Middle East.

This report outlines a prescription for how NATO's major allies can lead the Alliance to a better future in the decade ahead. It entails ambitious steps that will require the same vision and political will from which the Alliance has benefited in previous times of challenge. But the payoff will be a vital contribution to the security and prosperity of all members of the transatlantic community.

- **The United States** must continue its indispensable role as NATO's leader, maintain a robust diplomatic and military presence in Europe, and ensure that it 'pivots' to Asia with Europe. The Alliance falters without US leadership. Congress must therefore avoid at all costs going beyond the planned \$487 billion in defense spending reductions by cutting an additional \$492 billion from future military budgets under sequestration. Such a reduction would weaken US military power and NATO at a time when the United States must remain the world's

strongest country to meet the terrorist threat globally, end the war successfully in Afghanistan, and remain the predominant military power in the Asia-Pacific region.

- ▶ The United States should demonstrate its leadership of the transatlantic community by building an economic partnership as strong as our security alliance through a new **Transatlantic Partnership** including all NATO and European Union nations. Creating such a partnership, to include a comprehensive single transatlantic marketplace, would boost economic growth on both sides of the Atlantic and demonstrate that the transatlantic relationship is as important to the United States as its Pacific allies are.

- **Germany** needs to rededicate its attention to NATO. NATO needs a much stronger, more strategically ambitious, and more capable Germany to remain a healthy alliance. Germany today is an economic powerhouse, but a second-rate military power. It has shown determination during the Euro debt crisis, but its lack of political will weakens its military contributions in NATO. The European and American leaders we consulted for this report are in near unanimous agreement that Germany must lead with more confidence and strength. German military weakness is NATO's most significant problem. A stronger Germany would be the greatest boost to NATO's future.
- **The United Kingdom's** deep defense reductions risk undermining its special status as one of NATO's most capable members. The Cameron government must meet its pledge to renew defense investments and should consider deploying the second of the two newly-ordered *Queen Elizabeth* class aircraft carriers with NATO or the United States after 2018, if it cannot deploy it nationally.
- **France**, under the leadership of a newly inaugurated President François Hollande, must ensure that its return to NATO's integrated command structure and its newfound Atlanticist instincts—both legacies of Nicolas Sarkozy—become enduring elements of French strategic culture. The United States, in particular, will benefit from continued French leadership in NATO and on Iran and Syria. Hollande's campaign pledge to withdraw French troops from Afghanistan by the end of 2012 would break ranks with the allies who agreed to stay together until 2014; and his campaign's questioning of NATO's missile defense is worrisome. Hollande must avoid a return to the difficult and disengaged France of the past.

- **Turkey** should be considered for leadership roles in the Alliance for the first time. Turkey is Europe's only rising power and its political influence in the Middle East is now greater than that of Germany, France, or the United Kingdom. The United States and Europe should consider a Turk as a future NATO Secretary General. For too long, Turkey has been consigned to NATO's back bench. That must change. At the same time, Ankara is unwise to block deeper NATO cooperation with both the European Union and Israel, and the Erdogan government should act more decisively to protect and deepen democratic freedoms and continue efforts to normalize relations with its neighbors. The assault on press freedoms in Turkey, and the government's arrest of more than one hundred generals is deeply worrisome.
- Other leading allies—**Poland, Italy, Spain, and Canada**—play a critical role within the Alliance. As they bear more of the burden of NATO operations and outreach, they should be rewarded with a role in an expanded informal Alliance leadership structure.
- NATO must look beyond its members to develop stronger **global partnerships** to meet new geopolitical realities. The Alliance should bind America's Atlantic allies with its Pacific allies in a **Pacific Peace Partnership** and build durable ties with other key regional partners in the **Middle**

**East** such as the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Jordan, and Morocco. The most integrated partners, such as Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, and Finland, should gain a role in Alliance operational decision-making.

- Closer to home, the Alliance should continue to welcome new members while building a stronger partnership with **Russia**. NATO should continue its effort to work amicably with Moscow on matters of mutual interest, including missile defense, the fight against terrorism, and piracy and humanitarian operations, while maintaining the aspiration of a more comprehensive partnership with a more democratic Russia in the longer term.

If the key allies carry out these recommendations decisively, the Alliance will be better prepared to tackle its complex agenda: concluding the war in Afghanistan, preserving core capabilities for future missions, creating a comprehensive partnership with the European Union, completing a Europe 'whole and free' through continuing enlargement and forging a strategic partnership with Russia, supporting democratic transition in the Middle East and North Africa, and building effective global partnerships with like-minded powers. These are NATO's most urgent challenges for the next decade. All are achievable, but only with renewed leadership and commitment to the Alliance from its members.



# Anchoring the Alliance

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

Robert M. Gates, June 10, 2011

It was the shot heard around the Alliance.

In a hard-hitting farewell speech delivered in Brussels just days before his retirement as US Secretary of Defense on July 1, 2011, Robert Gates offered a tough-love message to America’s NATO allies. He warned that future US policymakers, and the American public, would lose interest in the Alliance if Europe and Canada failed to make the investments and tough political choices needed to remain America’s ‘go-to partners’ for global challenges.

This May, leaders of the twenty-eight NATO allies will gather in Chicago for the first US-hosted NATO summit since 1999. The summit agenda will focus on diminishing defense capabilities in an era of budget cuts, the future of the troubled NATO mission in Afghanistan, and developing strategic global partnerships by working more with partners in Asia and the Middle East. But it is an open question whether the allies are actually prepared to meet the challenges facing the Atlantic community.

In the past year, NATO nations have faced two major tests—a debt crisis and rapidly declining military budgets—in nearly every country, including the United States. The cohesion of the Atlantic community is under strain from economic crisis, political paralysis, and the emergence of new global powers in Asia. The Eurozone crisis has plunged Europe into a new era of internal soul-searching and structural reform, distracting it from focusing on the demands of the global agenda. A wave of economic

austerity is sweeping across the Alliance, resulting in a race to the bottom to cut defense spending and military capabilities. These cuts threaten to further weaken Europe’s militaries. While NATO succeeded in Libya, the campaign demonstrated worrisome shortcomings in Europe’s defense capabilities and reliance on American military support. Enhanced specialization among the allies—including Smart Defense and pooling and sharing—will be essential to minimize the impact of defense cuts in the midst of the economic crisis. Indeed, the upside of the current predicament may be that it spurs allies to further efficiencies in these areas. When Europe emerges from the depths of the financial crisis and its current period of severe austerity, the allies must show a renewed commitment to investing in defense to remain capable members of NATO. Allies must always remember that robust security is itself a prerequisite for a strong economy.

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*For the United States to achieve its international aims in a competitive and resource-constrained world, it needs a strong, capable, and ambitious Europe as its leading partner.*

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It is not just Europe’s commitment to the future of the Atlantic Alliance that is in question. Unsustainable levels of debt in the United States have forced significant cuts to defense spending. After a decade of bounty, the Pentagon

## Anchoring the Alliance

now faces close to half a trillion dollars in cuts over the next decade and perhaps more, forcing tough choices about US defense priorities. A Pentagon focused on the implications of a rising China has chosen to ‘rebalance’ its force posture and withdraw two brigade combat teams from Europe. While these moves are understood among many allies in NATO, others fear they reflect US inattention to Europe and drift within the Atlantic Alliance.

It would be a historic mistake if a Europe preoccupied with its own economic woes and a United States distracted by internal political dysfunction were to set the Alliance adrift just when it is needed most to defend our interests in Afghanistan and the Middle East. For all its flaws, the transatlantic community is home to the United States’ most loyal, capable, and effective global allies and represents the largest concentration of market-oriented democracies in the world. Too many forget that the United States and Europe account for the largest share of military power, economic heft, and democratic governance on the planet today. Despite legitimate concerns over cuts to Europe’s defense budgets, the transatlantic community alone accounted for over two-thirds of the world’s defense spending in 2010. Similarly, the transatlantic economy today accounts for over fifty-four percent of global output. Europe alone provides over fifty percent of global development assistance. Europe is also America’s largest trade partner, its largest investor, and the greatest single global market.

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*It would be a historic mistake if a preoccupied Europe and a distracted United States were to set the Alliance adrift just when it is needed most to defend our interests in Afghanistan and the Middle East.*

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The United States should consider itself fortunate indeed to have such prosperous, capable, and like-minded allies at its side, because it needs friends now more than ever before. If NATO did not exist today, transatlantic leaders would be trying to create it from scratch. The hard truth for Americans is that isolationism and unilateralism are twin recipes for failure in our foreign policy. Particularly at a time when globalization presents new challenges and new countries are rising to global power, the United States needs all the help it can get to maintain its power and effectiveness and to help preserve international stability and peace. In this sense, NATO is our twenty-first century foundation for American power and prosperity.

For the United States to achieve its international aims in a competitive and resource-constrained twenty-first century, it needs a strong, capable, and ambitious Europe as its leading partner within a robust NATO Alliance. Moreover, in the years to come, the Alliance will actually grow in importance to the United States as a force-multiplier worldwide.

The aim of this study is to offer a strategic response for how the Atlantic community can avoid the dim and dismal future it can ill afford. Such an outcome is not preordained. But it is possible if allies do not take dramatic steps to reinforce the NATO Alliance in the decade ahead.

## The United States Must Lead

Despite their importance, key European allies cannot sustain a vigorous and effective NATO without an involved and committed United States. The United States remains the ‘essential’ power in Europe and the only country capable of providing effective leadership of the Atlantic Alliance. For Europe to take its full place as a global partner of the United States, the United States will have to remain at the forefront of leading NATO.

The United States has been a European power since World War II. The farsighted decision by President Truman and his successors to commit to Europe’s long-term future helped to transform Europe into the world’s most peaceful and prosperous region. At the end of the Cold War, visionary leaders including George H.W. Bush, Helmut Kohl, Francois Mitterrand, and Margaret Thatcher set the goal of building a Europe “whole, free, and at peace.” While important work remains to be completed in the Western Balkans and Europe’s East, their vision has in large part become a reality.

Despite this transatlantic triumph, America cannot declare ‘mission accomplished,’ pivot to other parts of the world, and walk away from Europe. Some American political leaders, however, believe the contrary—that Europe is too wealthy, too secure, or too feckless to merit further American investment. This attitude is shortsighted and self-defeating.

Many American leaders complain that Europe and Canada are not doing their fair share militarily to strengthen NATO. The truth is, however, that the Alliance has always been unbalanced; since 1949, NATO has never enjoyed military equilibrium among its members. The United States has always been stronger, always spent more, and always been more capable. And it will remain that way—that is the reality

### Summary—The United States

The United States is the ‘essential’ power in Europe. It must therefore:

- Maintain the primacy of the transatlantic allies as ‘go-to’ partners, even as it focuses additional resources on Asia.
- Avoid the additional draconian cuts to defense spending potentially required by sequestration.
- Make the investment needed for joint US-European training, to ensure long-term interoperability.
- Strongly repudiate calls at home for neo-isolationism and unilateralism.
- Build an economic partnership with Europe commensurate with our security partnership by embracing a single transatlantic marketplace.

of an alliance with a superpower as its core leader. When Washington abdicates that role, Europe flounders. The same is true for NATO as well.

While European leadership during the Libya campaign was impressive, the reality is that NATO would not have succeeded without key air and intelligence support from the US military. Europe still depends on American military power. More often than not, the United States and Europe will have to act together. That demands continued American leadership. Rather than seek to “hand off” responsibilities to NATO, the United States must remember that there will be no capable Alliance without persistent US attention, commitment, and leadership. The United States is the essential member of NATO. It cannot “lead from behind.” American leadership should leverage greater European and Canadian contributions, but they are not substitutes for American involvement, purpose, and power.

The United States must also continue to recognize Europe’s importance to US security in the aftermath of the announced ‘pivot’ to Asia and the Middle East. Secretary of State Clinton and Secretary of Defense Panetta travelled to the February 2012 Munich Security Conference to reinforce the primacy of Europe as America’s go-to partners. This was a helpful development. But as former UK Foreign Secretary David Miliband noted in consultations to inform this report, “the US pivot could have been more powerful if it had been done with the European allies.” This would have reassured allies nervous of flagging US commitment to the Alliance.

The United States can back up its words with concrete deeds by acting on calls from key European leaders to establish a single transatlantic marketplace. Both Chancellor Merkel and Prime Minister Cameron called for such an agreement at Davos in January 2012, and other European governments have shown interest as well. A transatlantic single marketplace would serve as the economic counterpart to the security pillar embodied by NATO and would bring much needed growth to the transatlantic economy. Moreover, a major project such as a single transatlantic marketplace would dispel doubts among European allies about the importance of the transatlantic relationship in light of the ‘pivot.’

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*The essence of the transatlantic bargain today is that United States must recommit to European security and, in turn, America’s NATO allies must recommit to partnering with Washington on global challenges.*

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A robust American investment in Europe’s security and prosperity will prove to be an investment in American security by strengthening Washington’s relationships with its most capable and effective allies. The essence of the transatlantic bargain today is that the United States must recommit to European security and, in turn, America’s NATO allies must recommit to partnering with Washington on global challenges. Therefore, in the wake of the withdrawal of two brigade combat teams stationed in Europe, and despite its lofty price tag, the United States must make the investments needed to rotate US forces into Europe for exercises to maintain interoperability with European forces.

Finally, the United States can only lead the transatlantic community if its own political leadership is willing to make difficult choices at home. While America’s allies do not question its intentions, they do worry that political gridlock has weakened the United States and undermined its ability to think and act strategically. Neo-isolationist views expressed by some American political figures have also left some European allies fearful of a US turn inward and away from its traditional role of global leadership. Just as US political leaders brought a reluctant United States into a role of global responsibility after World War II, today’s generation of politicians must convince the American people of the value of leading the transatlantic alliance in a globalized world. Isolation and disengagement from world affairs would weaken the United States and undermine its interests.

## Europe: From Partner in Crisis to Global Partner

If the transatlantic alliance is going to build a brighter future in the decade ahead, Europe will have to regain the ambition to shape international affairs that it demonstrated in decades past.

Since Europeans began to build a single Europe after World War II, their leaders have sought an expanded role on the world stage. In the past, there were divisions between those who wanted to build a strong Europe as a counterweight to American power and those that sought to achieve their ambitions in partnership with Washington. Europe was ambitious and successful. Europeans built the European Union, established the Euro as a powerful global currency, sought to ratify a constitution, and spoke of a 'European model' of soft power. The United States watched the growth of Europe with ambivalence, fearing that a Europe too strong and independent could forsake the transatlantic link with the United States and Canada and weaken NATO.

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What a difference a decade makes. Europeans today worry more about a weakened America than one that is too influential. Today, European leaders are worried about saving the Euro. European attention is fixated on the urgent need to preserve the common currency and the supranational solidarity that underpins the Euro's credibility. Hardening borders to deter migrants has displaced defense against foreign forces as the top security concern. The importance of strong transatlantic ties is no longer contested in major European capitals, even in France, which has resumed its full place in the NATO Alliance. Washington, for its part, has pursued a singular Obama-Bush policy of encouraging a strong Europe capable of acting in concert with the United States on issues of global concern. Multilaterally, the work of creating a comprehensive and effective partnership between NATO and the European Union should continue.

The end of past theological disputes between Washington and its European allies should mark a positive and optimistic era in the transatlantic relationship. Instead, today's Europe is on the verge of losing the capabilities to be Washington's

primary global partner. But the European crisis is also one of will and ambition. As the economic crisis has spread, Europe's global political vision and energy has diminished.

The United States cannot afford to lose a vigorous, confident, and outward-looking Europe. From the Arab uprisings to Iran's nuclear program to climate change and the rise of China, there are too many challenges to Euro-Atlantic interests and values for Europe to turn inward for too long. Europe must maintain its global vision, even as it faces the urgent tasks of saving the Eurozone and designing a more sustainable European Union. NATO is an alliance of sovereign equals, each of which is expected to commit to the Alliance and contribute according to its abilities. But Europe's fate as a global player and valued strategic partner of the United States will depend by and large on the future development of the Alliance's most important members: Germany, the United Kingdom, France, and Turkey.

## A Stronger Germany

For NATO to succeed in the future, the Alliance needs a stronger Germany. One senior Alliance official labeled Germany a "lost nation" in its political and military leadership. Europe's future relevance as a global strategic partner of the United States is contingent on Germany taking its full place as a much stronger political and military leader within Europe and the transatlantic Alliance.

Modern Germany is an extraordinary success story whose current and future role in Europe must be placed in its unique historic context. The country has undergone a remarkable transformation since the end of World War II. The 'German problem' that plagued European affairs from the country's birth under Otto von Bismarck in 1871 to its reunification on October 3, 1990 has finally been resolved. A united and democratic Germany has taken its full place within the European Union and NATO. Long a source of insecurity and instability, Germany is today the essential guarantor of the European common currency and the keystone European country of the NATO Alliance.

The key strategic question facing Germany today is whether it can take the next step in its historic postwar transformation by becoming a more influential global power and a stronger military and political leader of Europe. American and European leaders we surveyed are in near unanimous agreement that Germany must make a determined effort to lead more confidently and with greater purpose. Here again, it is worth putting Germany's accomplishments into context.

### Summary—Germany

German weakness is NATO's most significant problem. To address it, Germany must:

- Demonstrate a level of strategic ambition commensurate with its stature as Europe's largest and most prosperous country.
- Play a leading military role in future Alliance operations.
- Fund and equip the Bundeswehr to serve as a capable expeditionary force.

In 1955, the NATO allies invited West Germany to join the Alliance and permit the country's careful rearmament to defend against possible Soviet invasion. Since the end of the Cold War and reunification, Germany has come to view its national defense in a more international context. German political leaders have sent the Bundeswehr to participate in peacekeeping missions in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, and to support Operation Enduring Freedom and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. This represented an extraordinary transformation of German foreign and defense policy, made possible only through Germany's secure place in NATO and the European Union and through a more confident political leadership prepared to assume greater international responsibility.

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*A stronger Germany would be the greatest boost to NATO's future.*

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Former Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder took a major political risk in linking his coalition's survival to the Bundestag's willingness to approve a deployment of German troops to Afghanistan in November 2001. Germany needs similarly decisive leadership and ambition today to take the next step in its transformation as an influential nation in global affairs. Just as NATO could not succeed without welcoming Germany as a member in 1955, Europe cannot now remain relevant as a global actor if Germany does not show a greater commitment to lead.

But Germany's central role in resolving the Eurozone crisis has consumed a great deal of the government's political capital, and left Berlin wary of further displays of clout and

international stature. As a result, today the United States' ambitions for Germany as a global power exceed those of Germany itself. The United States is not alone in wanting to see more German leadership. Polish Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski said memorably in a major speech on November 28, 2011, "I will probably be the first Polish foreign minister in history to say so, but here it is: I fear German power less than I am beginning to fear its inactivity."

A weak Germany that lacks a capacity to act globally will inevitably weaken NATO. Europe cannot remain a major force within the NATO Alliance if a country of Germany's size, geography, and prosperity makes the kind of deep reductions in defense spending announced by Chancellor Angela Merkel's government in 2011. Reform of the Bundeswehr to modernize its capability and capacity to participate in international missions is welcome. But major cuts to multilateral arms purchases, like the A400M strategic airlift program, undermine European defense projects and restrict Germany's future deployment options. Germany should instead commit to an acquisition plan that would equip a reformed Bundeswehr to make significant contributions to NATO and European Union military operations.

More importantly, Germany will handicap Europe's ability to play a leading global security role if Berlin continues to shy away from political leadership within NATO. Germany's refusal to deploy its troops to the areas of most intense fighting in Afghanistan since 2003 has weakened the NATO effort there. While Berlin has increased its contingents in Afghanistan and Kosovo, Germany's decision to opt out of NATO's Libya operation and side with Russia and China in the United Nations Security Council against the United States, France, and the United Kingdom was a serious mistake. As NATO charts its future, Berlin needs to be working hand-in-glove with Washington, Paris, London, and Ankara to drive Alliance policy and to lead Alliance operations. Today, Germany is an economic powerhouse, but a second-rate political and military power. German weakness is NATO's most significant problem. A stronger Germany would be the greatest boost to NATO's future.

## An Ambitious and Capable United Kingdom

A successful NATO also demands that the United Kingdom retain the ambition and military capability that have made it one of the world's most influential countries in recent decades. The United States has no better or more capable



ally than the United Kingdom. There is indeed a ‘special relationship’ between the two nations based on shared heritage and a willingness to act in pursuit of a common strategic vision. But the operational nature of the ‘special relationship’ is at risk. Under great pressure to restore the United Kingdom’s public finances after the financial crisis, Prime Minister David Cameron has adopted a drastic austerity program that includes defense cuts of 7.5 percent over a five-year period. These cuts will result in personnel reductions of up to ten percent and will leave the United Kingdom without a carrier strike capability until 2020. The economic impact of the government’s austerity program remains unclear, but the trend lines for the capabilities of the UK military are worrisome.

For sure, the UK Ministry of Defense needed reforms and spending cuts to fill funding shortfalls that resulted from unfunded purchases of weapons. And to the government’s credit, the armed forces will benefit from an increase to the equipment budget by one percent per year after 2015 and will feature a new aircraft carrier equipped with the new Joint Strike Fighter after 2020. But until then, the United States will find its most capable partner for global action weakened. To illustrate the point, last summer London had to delay the scheduled decommissioning of Tornado fighter jets that it needed to operate in NATO’s air campaign over Libya.

Moreover, Prime Minister Cameron’s coalition government has yet to develop a coherent strategic vision for the United Kingdom’s role in a changing global landscape. His coalition has downplayed the term ‘special relationship’ with the United States at the same time his government has weakened its ties to Europe. Cameron’s handling of a decisive December 2011 European summit threatens to leave London isolated as Europe pursues further fiscal integration. Aside from pursuing a policy of ‘commercial diplomacy’ and robust development assistance, British foreign policy vision and strategy remain unclear. London must demonstrate the ambition and capability to be a leading global security actor in concert with the United States and other NATO allies.

Defense austerity has, however, focused London on cooperative initiatives that would maximize its defense capabilities in the midst of this downturn. The November 2010 UK-France defense cooperation treaty sets an example for other powers of similar size and geography in Europe. The treaty strengthens coordination between Britain and France on operational matters, acquisition, logistics, and nuclear research.

### Summary—The United Kingdom

The United Kingdom must not let shrinking defense budgets shrink its global ambition. Instead, it must:

- Rededicate itself to preserving its unique military capabilities and its global aspirations.
- Meet commitments to increase defense investments by one percent per year in real terms after 2015 to ensure a capable, expeditionary force of global scope.
- Seek to operate its second *Queen Elizabeth* class aircraft carrier jointly with the United States or NATO from 2018, if it cannot be deployed nationally.

The United Kingdom and the United States should seek to form their own unique cooperative defense initiative by jointly operating the United Kingdom’s second aircraft carrier, due to be operational by 2018, if Britain is unable to operate the carrier nationally. Two *Queen Elizabeth* class aircraft carriers are currently under construction in the United Kingdom, with the first scheduled to be completed in 2016 and the second to come on line in 2018. While the first carrier is equipped to carry the naval version of the new Joint Strike Fighter, the second carrier may be put in mothballs just after it is dedicated. The United Kingdom should consider a proposal by former UK Ambassador to the United States Sir David Manning and former Pentagon official Frank Miller to operate the second carrier jointly with the United States or through NATO. A jointly operated carrier would reduce the financial burden for Whitehall while keeping the capability in the hands of the Atlantic community.

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To be successful, NATO and the United States need a strong and self-confident United Kingdom. The key issue is whether the Cameron government will act to revive Britain’s irreplaceable military capacity. The United Kingdom’s future global role depends on it.

## An Atlanticist France

For over sixty years, an ambivalent France sat at the center of the Alliance. For NATO to thrive in the decades ahead, it needs an energetic France to sustain its Atlanticist instincts. That is particularly important now that François Hollande has been elected as France's new President. One of Nicolas Sarkozy's most notable accomplishments as president was to strengthen France's influence in Washington and to normalize the French role in the Alliance. Hollande's commitment to keep France within NATO's integrated military command will be an important early commitment. The key question for France's allies is whether France will continue to pursue its national interests working through the Alliance and in partnership with allies when appropriate, or revert to a strategy of distancing itself from NATO and the United States. An Atlanticist France does not, of course, mean Paris must always work through NATO; but it should seek to do so when partnering with the United States to respond to key global security issues.

The reintegration of France into the integrated military command in 2009 was a triumph that concluded two years of delicate negotiations between President Sarkozy and Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama. In dramatic fashion, Sarkozy courageously overturned de Gaulle's infamous March 1966 decision to weaken France's defense commitment to NATO. Previous attempts at normalizing the France-NATO relationship had failed because of the politically sensitive position NATO occupies in French political life, as well as the hesitancy of other allies to make room for France within the integrated command.

Under Sarkozy's presidency, France found that its national interests and fundamental global purpose can be pursued within NATO, rather than in opposition to the Alliance and the United States. The Libya campaign was the most effective demonstration of the benefit of France's leadership in NATO. President Sarkozy demonstrated French international leadership during the Libyan uprising, putting Paris on the right side of the Arab uprisings, even though France and other allies were ill-prepared for the sustained nature of the operation. Paris' first instinct was to advocate a French-led coalition of the willing to enforce UN Security Council Resolution 1973. The Elysée acceded to allied and partner requests that the operation be conducted under NATO auspices. Nevertheless, France found that by providing constructive leadership within the Alliance, it could both achieve its aims and enhance its international profile.

### Summary—France

France should continue to pursue its national interests through the Alliance. It must:

- Make permanent its return to NATO's integrated military command structure.
- Keep its Lisbon commitment to remain in Afghanistan through 2014.
- Commit to first consider leading operations within the Alliance rather than unilaterally.
- Maintain a posture of cooperation—not competition—with Washington.

Furthermore, the limited US role in Libya demonstrated that NATO must have European leadership, as well as American, to be truly effective.

President Sarkozy's *rapprochement* with NATO coincided with a strategic convergence between Paris and Washington on key issues. Paris emerged as the Atlantic community's toughest opponent of Iran's nuclear program. Despite Sarkozy's recent announcement of France's accelerated departure from Afghanistan, under his leadership, France 'surged' troops to Afghanistan in 2008 to coincide with the United States' new counterinsurgency strategy. France has also served as an effective leader in crisis management, from brokering a flawed but important cease-fire in the Russia-Georgia war in 2008 to providing political leadership in the Eurozone crisis. Paris' closer ties with the Alliance and Washington have made France a more effective partner and a more influential member of the Atlantic community.

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France's new president, François Hollande, will head to the NATO Chicago summit just two weeks after his victory at the polls. His approach will determine whether France remains aligned with Washington on major strategic issues such as Iran and Syria. Will France undermine Alliance cohesion in Afghanistan by removing French troops in 2012 as President

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Hollande has promised, or will it keep its commitments to NATO to remain through 2014? And will he keep France united with its NATO allies on missile defense against Iran?

These are critical issues for the future of France and the place it occupies within the Atlantic Alliance. For Europe to remain an effective partner of the United States, it needs a strong, strategically savvy, and ambitious France, especially because of the unique contribution France is able to make in the Middle East and Africa, whether acting within NATO or alone. Europe and the Atlantic community need Paris to sustain its current Atlanticist commitments, regardless of which personality and party govern France throughout the coming decade.

## A Path to Turkish Leadership in the Alliance

If NATO hopes to maintain a central role in shaping its strategic neighborhood, it will need Turkey to take on a position of leadership within the Alliance. Within the next decade, a Turkish Secretary General should lead the Alliance. But for that to happen Turkey will have to act like the responsible power it should become, and Europe will have to be willing to accept a leading Turkish role in European affairs.

The Atlantic community is much stronger because it can count Turkey among its members. Turkey is the only power within the Alliance that is rapidly gaining influence on the global stage. Turkey's economy is booming, its demographic profile is positive, and its active diplomacy has bolstered its clout regionally and internationally. Today, Turkey is the most influential European country in the pivotal Middle East. This is a tremendous asset for the Alliance.

By inviting Turkey to join the Alliance in 1952, NATO allies not only secured Europe's southern flank from Soviet influence and prevented regional rivalries with Greece from flaring into conflict, but also laid the groundwork for Turkey's peaceful ascent to its historic role as a European and Middle Eastern power, extending NATO's influence into a volatile and strategic region.

The growing turmoil in the Middle East and North Africa has made Turkey even more important to the Atlantic community. Turkey's unique geography and culture make it a privileged interlocutor with the Middle East and North Africa, while also exposing it to greater security threats than any other country in the Alliance.

### Summary—Turkey

Turkey, an indispensable ally, deserves leadership in NATO and membership in the EU. It must, in return:

- Refrain from burdening the Alliance with regional disputes, such as those with Israel.
- Demonstrate more democracy, transparency, and pluralism domestically.
- Bring to NATO a cooperative spirit, as befits its position as a geographic and cultural bridge.

For too long, Turkey has been relegated to NATO's back bench. Turkey has been excluded from NATO's traditional ruling circle, the 'Quad' (the United States, France, the United Kingdom, and Germany). No Turk has ever been considered to lead NATO. This must change. A Turk should become NATO Secretary General within the decade.

Turkey, however, will have to earn its place of leadership within the Atlantic community. First, Turkey must bring a spirit of cooperative leadership to NATO, seeking to build consensus, rather than burdening NATO by blocking cooperation with the European Union and preventing Israel from working closely with NATO. Turkey can earn newfound leadership within NATO by recommitting to internal democratic reform, improving its relations with its ethnic minorities, pursuing peace with Cyprus, continuing efforts to normalize relations with its neighbors, and lowering tensions with Israel.

The challenge does not lie with Turkey alone; Europe has responsibilities too. If Turkey is able to advance reforms and fully embrace the values embodied by the transatlantic community, Europe has to be willing to welcome Turkey into a position of leadership within the Alliance and ultimately in the European Union.

Unfortunately, Europe has rejected Turkey for decades, causing Ankara to turn its attention to the East. There Prime Minister Erdogan has found greater receptivity to his leadership and diplomatic energy. Modern Turkey's unique blend of Islamism, secularism, and democracy serves as an inspiration for transitioning states in the region. President Obama has embraced Turkey's rise through close personal engagement with Prime Minister Erdogan. While Turkey remains a difficult partner in NATO and elsewhere, the United States has reaped impressive gains through its engagement with Ankara. President Obama has secured

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Turkey's agreement to host a NATO radar as part of its approach to missile defense and Turkish support for a tough line against the crackdowns of authoritarian regimes in the Middle East, especially Syria.

Europe should follow Washington's lead and think more openly about how to encourage Turkey to lead. Just as Europe was able to shape the democratic development of Central and Eastern Europe through its reform-minded support for European Union enlargement, Europe can regain its flagging influence with Turkey by reversing its de facto rejection of Ankara's application for European Union membership. France and Germany are most responsible for Europe's current path and can do the most to reverse this major strategic error in policy by reconsidering Turkish membership in the Union.

German and French hostility toward Turkish membership in the European Union minimizes Europe's influence in pushing for continued reforms in Turkey. Prime Minister Erdogan has reformed Turkish politics by exerting civilian control over the military. But summary arrests of Turkish generals and restrictions on the media have raised serious concerns about his ultimate aims. Erdogan's efforts to ensure that democratic principles apply to Turkey's military and judiciary do not give carte blanche to persecute political enemies, restrict free speech, or imprison military officials and journalists. A more open road to the European Union might help check negative tendencies while reinforcing progressive policies.

## Other Allies Stepping Up

For NATO to enjoy a more effective future, the Alliance's other leading powers—Poland, Italy, Spain, and Canada—must be offered—and must be willing to earn—more responsibility within the Alliance.

NATO is an alliance of twenty-eight nations of dramatically varying size and capability. To be effective and to sustain a sense of solidarity, each ally needs to perceive the other as contributing to, not only consuming, security. In many respects, the recent Libya operation demonstrated the value of smaller allies. While too many in Washington dismiss the contributions of most of America's allies, Belgium, Canada,

### Summary—Poland, Italy, Spain, and Canada

It is time to abolish the Quad and bring these other leading powers into NATO's leadership structures. But they must earn this by:

- Bearing a more proportionate share of the burden in Alliance operations.
- Committing to joint projects such as AWACS and Alliance Ground Surveillance.

Denmark, and Norway contributed much to the fight. At one point, Nordic allies conducted twenty-five percent of all strike sorties, punching well above their weight. These allies can continue to play an important role by developing niche capabilities and pursuing innovative multinational defense cooperation, as well as continuing to contribute to Alliance operations.

But while many smaller allies more than proved their worth in Libya, some larger, more capable allies such as Poland and Spain either sat out the operation or provided minimal contributions.

Traditionally, the Alliance's direction has been led informally by the 'Quad': the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany. While NATO is an alliance of sovereign equals, any organization functions well when it has clear leadership. In recent years, Washington opened the door to more ambitious leadership roles for other important and capable allies: Italy, Poland, and Spain. Yet to varying degrees, each of these nations has not lived up to expectations, largely because of insufficient military budgets and political will, as well as limited strategic outlooks.

*If NATO is to be effective in a century in which its leading nations represent a far smaller share of global political, economic, and military weight, the Alliance needs its potential leading allies to step up and assume a larger burden of responsibility.*

It is time to abolish the 'Quad' and replace it with a more modern if still informal leadership structure for the Alliance that recognizes the important role other leading powers can play in shaping NATO's future. Such a structure would include Italy, Poland, Spain, and Canada in its ranks, as well

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as Turkey. But for this structure to work, these allies must recognize that leadership comes with responsibilities to bear an equal share of the burden in Alliance activities.

If NATO is to be effective in a century in which its leading nations represent a smaller share of global political, economic, and military weight, the Alliance needs its potential leading allies to assume a larger burden of responsibility. While Italy and Spain, in particular, are struggling with the impact of the financial crisis, leaders in these capitals along with Warsaw have the capability to play a greater role and thereby strengthen the Alliance overall. Poland's absence in the Libya operation was particularly disappointing, considering its important contributions in Afghanistan. Its absence led some to question its potential as the most important Central European member. Similarly, Canada made a major contribution to NATO's Afghan operations by agreeing to play a lead role in combat in the most dangerous parts of southern Afghanistan; but its decision to withdraw from Alliance flagship projects, such as NATO's AWACS fleet and Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS), undermines its claim to a larger leadership role with the Alliance.

## Building Partnerships

It is ultimately the responsibility of NATO's member states to make the difficult political choices and investments in their security necessary to ensure the health of the Alliance. But to address the challenges of a globalized security landscape, the Alliance also needs to do more with partners outside the Euro-Atlantic area who share its interests and values and make valued contributions to international security. This partnership agenda should include the formation of a Pacific Peace Partnership to bind America's Atlantic allies with its Pacific allies and a concerted effort to support transitions and forge stronger ties with key partners in the Middle East.

However, even as the Alliance looks to build new partnerships in the Pacific and Middle East, it must also address the important task of enhancing practical security cooperation with Russia. Russia has a home in the Euro-Atlantic security space, and the members of the Alliance should maintain the long-term aspiration that Russia should someday undertake the reforms needed to assume its place in the Atlantic community of shared values. In the near term, however, NATO and Russia face many security challenges together which require a more practical security partnership on issues such as missile defense, Afghanistan, preventing

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Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, and counter narcotics. This vision will require a newly inaugurated President Putin to forge a more constructive relationship with NATO, rather than view the Alliance through the paranoid, Cold War perspective of the past.

Just as it is difficult to imagine scenarios in which the United States will engage in combat without allies, NATO is unlikely to undertake future operations without the participation and support of key partners from outside the Alliance. The involvement of NATO partners in operations and missions has become the 'new normal' for the Alliance operating in an ever more connected world. One of the most important partnerships for the Alliance is with the European Union, which shares twenty-one members in common with the Alliance and offers complementary capabilities to NATO. The importance of this partnership makes all the more urgent the need to address the lingering conflict between Turkey and Cyprus that hampers closer cooperation between the two institutions.

Partners from beyond Europe have played a crucial role in supporting NATO's two most recent and important military operations in Afghanistan and Libya. No fewer than twenty-two countries from outside the NATO Alliance—from Tonga to New Zealand—participate in the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. Some partners, such as Australia, Georgia, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates, bring real combat or niche capabilities to the mission. NATO has recognized the valued contributions of partners to ISAF and has invited contributors to NATO summits to integrate partners into the Alliance's decision-shaping process.

The Libyan operation demonstrated the important role NATO's peacetime partnerships can play in integrating non-member states during a time of hostilities. Partners such as the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Sweden provided not only important political support to the Libya mission, but also contributed meaningful capabilities. Yet these partners chose to participate in the operation only if it was led by NATO because they were familiar with how to operate and communicate with the Alliance through prior training and military exercises.

NATO must build on this success. With the Libya mission completed and ISAF scheduled to conclude after 2014, NATO's challenge is to devise a means of maintaining relationships with these valued partners. Washington is therefore correct to insist that partnerships occupy a primary place at the 2012 summit.

But for NATO to operate more effectively in a world in which security challenges can be of a global scale, the Alliance must think more creatively and ambitiously about how it engages its partners to make these relationships more meaningful and permanent. If NATO hopes to keep its most valued partners like Australia, the United Arab Emirates, Sweden, and Finland heavily engaged in its affairs, it will have to develop a way of providing those allies with a means of participating in decisions and shaping policy short of full membership.

NATO should adopt a much more ambitious plan by agreeing to closer links with Washington's allies in the Pacific and the Middle East. A Pacific Peace Partnership would bind NATO to important US allies with shared values and common interests, including Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan, and Singapore. Such a relationship would further the important goal of multilateralizing the US alliance system while permitting NATO to strengthen interoperability with like-minded, capable allies and increase collaboration on shared challenges of borderless scope, like cybersecurity. Furthermore, closer European linkages with key US Pacific partners will help ensure that European allies retain the capacity to shape security in a region toward which the global balance of power is rapidly tilting. After all, few allies would have imagined in 2000 that they would soon spend the next decade fighting the Taliban in South Asia. It would be better for NATO proactively to build stronger links with like-minded and capable Pacific partners rather than be caught flat-footed in a future contingency.

Similarly, NATO allies must not miss the historic window of opportunity to defuse their greatest security threat by launching a partnership initiative to help political and economic transformations in the Middle East and North Africa succeed, while forging closer partnerships with Arab nations which choose to participate in NATO operations.

The circumstances differ dramatically among Arab nations, and the Alliance must therefore develop and offer an approach tailored to each. NATO allies need to be working with governments in the region now to help them develop and articulate requests for assistance. In each Arab nation in transition, the role of the military has been critical in

determining the trajectory and level of violence during the uprisings, and will likely be decisive in determining the success or failure of these transitions. While NATO nations will often take the lead bilaterally or work through other international institutions, NATO must play a role in opening up the toolkit that proved so effective in assisting the transition of nations in Central and Eastern Europe. Even as NATO focuses on assisting Arab nations in transition, it should also build upon its partnerships with those nations most interested working with the Alliance, as demonstrated by their track records of support in Libya and Afghanistan. UAE, Qatar, Jordan, and Morocco should enjoy an avenue to closer cooperation with the Alliance, beyond the current formality of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative and the Mediterranean Dialogue.

## Conclusion

NATO's future matters because, in an uncertain, multipolar world, its core tasks of collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security are more important than ever. A successful NATO summit in Chicago this May will be an important chance for the Alliance to tackle the current agenda of ensuring a smooth transition in Afghanistan, shoring up declining military capabilities, and engaging partners from around the world. But for NATO to be relevant for the agenda of 2020, the leading allies that make up the bulk of its military spending and capability must redouble their commitments to the Alliance. All allies are equal, and the contribution of each is unique and essential; but the responsibility for NATO's future vitality falls disproportionately heavily on the United States, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Turkey, and—to a lesser but still important extent—Italy, Poland, Canada, and Spain, and the steps they now take toward recommitting to the Alliance and its role for the decade to come.

The right mix of political leadership and solidarity among NATO member states will position the Alliance to address the ambitious agenda that lies beyond what will be discussed at Chicago. This includes a major transatlantic response to the historic events of the Arab uprisings, whose outcome will have a direct impact on Europe's security. It includes completing the vision of a 'Europe whole, free and at peace' by continuing the enlargement agenda for NATO and the European Union in the Western Balkans, Europe's East, and the South Caucasus, as countries in these regions become willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership by deepening and consolidating their democratic and defense reforms. Such a vision should

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include Russia by focusing on pragmatic cooperation in the short run while working toward eventually bringing a democratic Russia into the Atlantic family of nations in the long run. A stronger sense of solidarity within NATO would enable the Alliance to complete a Pacific Partnership agenda that would bind the transatlantic Alliance to the United States' Asian allies and ensure that the US 'pivot' does not come at the expense of NATO. Finally, and importantly, recommitment to NATO requires an effort on the part of the democratically elected leaders of all allies to make the case for the Alliance positively to their publics.

Americans should never forget the power of allies stepping forward in solidarity in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks to invoke Article 5 of the Washington Treaty declaring the attack on the United States as an attack on all allies. Nations like China and Russia, and other emerging powers, do not have genuine allies today. It is a great boost to America's national security that the United States does. Washington should keep them close, push them to do more, and grow the base. The United States should start by keeping NATO healthy, strong, and at the core of US national security policy.

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