



DIIS  
REPORT

Trine Flockhart (editor)

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Cooperative Security:  
NATO's Partnership Policy  
in a Changing World

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## Abbreviations

6PT	Six Party Talks
ABCA	America, Britain, Canada, Australia
ADF	Australian Defence Force
AL	Arab League
ANZUS	New Zealand and the United States
APEC	AsiaPacific Economic Cooperation
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	African Union
C4	Command, Control, Computers and Communication
CFI	The Connected Forces Initiative
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
DIIS	Danish Institute for International Studies
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
DWP	Defence White Paper
EAPC	EuroAtlantic Partnership Council
EAS	East Asia Summit
EC	European Council
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EDA	European Defence Community
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EU	European Union
FDPA	Five Powers Defence Arrangements
HQ	NATO Headquarters
IADS	Integrated Air Defence System
ICI	Istanbul Cooperation Initiative
ICP	Individual Cooperation Programme
ICPC	Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme

IPP	the Individual Partnership Programme
ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
ISTAR	Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance
JOAC	Joint Operational Access Concept
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
LWO	Liberal World Order
MAP	Membership Action Plan
MD	Mediterranean Dialogue
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NACC	North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NIC	National Intelligence Council
NRC	NATORussia Council
NRF	NATO Response Force
NSHQ	NATO Special Operations Headquarters
OCC	Operational Capabilities Concept
PfP	Partnership for peace
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic of China
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
PSC	Political Security Committee
RPA/RPA	Remotely piloted aircrafts /vehicles
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander Europe
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
SecGen	NATO Secretary General
SOTG	Special Operations Task Group
STANAGS	Standardization Agreements
TCP	Tailored Cooperation Packages

TPP	TransPacific Partnership
TTIP	Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership
UN	United Nations
US	United States
UNPROFOR	UN Protection Force
VNC	Voluntary National Contribution
WEAG	Western European Armaments Group
WFP	World Food Programme
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WTO	World Trade Organization

## Contributors

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*Friis Arne Petersen* has been the Danish Ambassador to China since September 2010, prior to which he was Ambassador to the US (2005-2010). Previously he was Head of the Foreign Ministry and Permanent Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1997-2005).

*Sten Rynning* is Professor of International Relations at the Department of Political Science, University of Southern Denmark, where he also heads the Center for War Studies. He is President of the Nordic International Studies Association and serves on the advisory board of the Danish Center for Military Studies. He is the author of numerous books and articles, among them *NATO in Afghanistan: The Liberal Disconnect* (Stanford University Press 2012), *Transforming Military Power since the Cold War: Britain, France, and the United States, 1991-2012* (co-authored with Theo Farrell and Terry Terriff; Cambridge University Press 2013) and *Germany is More than Europe Can Handle: Or, Why NATO Remains a Pacifier* (NDC Research Paper no. 96, September 2013).

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*Ole Wæver* is Professor of International Relations at the Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen, as well as Director of CAST (Centre for Advanced Security Theory), and of CRIC (Centre for Resolution of International Conflicts). Internationally he is mostly known for coining within security theory the concept of 'securitization' and as one of the main figures in developing what is often referred to as the 'Copenhagen School' in security studies. His most recent



writings in relation to securitization have applied the theory to religion and climate change. Ole Wæver was elected to the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters in 2007.

## **Abstracts**

### **Introduction**

#### **Changing Partnerships in a changing World**

*Trine Flockhart*

The introductory chapter outlines the context within which NATO's new partnership policy has been formulated, especially the changing security and political context for partnerships in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the anticipated effects of changing global power constellations and the prospects for change in the so-called liberal world order. The chapter introduces a conceptualization of 'the international' understood as consisting of three components (international structure, primary and secondary institutions) which are each likely to change in different ways over the coming years. The chapter briefly outlines the development of NATO's engagement with a wide variety of partners since the initial partnership structure was set up in 1991 and categorizes the different forms of partnership initiatives by dividing NATO's partnership initiatives into four different 'streams', which, although they progress in parallel, also coexist and intermingle.

### **I. The Future of NATO's Partnerships**

*James Appathurai*

The chapter provides a comprehensive overview of NATO's partnership policy as it has evolved following a number of inflection points. The chapter argues that, as new and emerging threats are not stopped by border checkpoints and as no one country, no matter how powerful it might be, can deal them with them effectively, security today is necessarily a team sport, played across a global field, with almost every country and organisation playing a potentially important role. Moreover, as the mission in Afghanistan draws to a close and the international security environment continues to change, the potential is there for the Alliance to transform itself again and to lock in the *acquis* of the partnerships forged in the Hindu Kush, to engage partners in new cooperation and to take on new challenges together with them, to our mutual benefit. At a time when resources (human and financial) are limited, the questions to be asked are therefore where should we prioritise, what should we be doing together and with whom? The chapter addresses these questions

by focusing on three main tracks that NATO must now follow: preparing together, consulting together and acting together.

## **2. Cooperative Security: A New Concept?**

*Ole Wæver*

The chapter investigates the concept of ‘cooperative security’ from a logical, a strategic and a systemic perspective. It will start by looking at cooperative security as yet another concept of security and ask if it provides what a concept of security should? Secondly, and very briefly, the chapter will ask what is it strategically we are trying to do by launching this concept? Then, in the third step the chapter will look systemically at cooperative security by situating the concept in international reality, asking the pertinent question? What are the chances of it working if other actors out there are doing things as well? What will the concept realistically do in practice? Concepts such as ‘cooperative security’ become real simply by being invented, and we tend to assume that we can project our concepts on to others in a one-directional manner. However, this may not be the case. The chapter argues that it is necessary to place our own actions in context, leading to the difficult question, what will our doings do when others do their things?

## **3. The Partnerfication of NATO: From Wall-building to Bridge-building?**

*Magnus Christiansson*

This chapter tries to supplement some of the early efforts to interpret the development of NATO’s partnership policy, as well as to widen it somewhat into a military operational perspective. Three official speeches on the executive level in the US are analyzed, including their references to military doctrines, in order to find the strategic rationale that underpins the new globalized partnership agenda. Two operational frameworks can be identified for the US: networking and access. Networking is centered on the decapitation of enemies and is being pursued in an on-going global or transnational shadow war. Access is centered on deterrence in Asia. Both frameworks rest on the concept of partnerships, and this is a contributory factor for their growing importance in the Alliance. This ‘partnerfication’ of NATO will certainly contribute to flexibility, but there is a clear risk that it will not be in the interests of all European states, members or partners alike.

#### **4. Partners, the Pivot and Liberal Order**

*Rebecca R. Moore*

NATO's new partnership policy, adopted in Berlin in 2011, reflects the United States' interest in making the Alliance's partnerships both more functional and more global. Indeed, the new policy opens up opportunities for dialogue and practical cooperation with NATO to a broad and diverse set of partners. Despite a general consensus within the Alliance in favor of global partners, however, the United States and its NATO allies have yet to fully address the issue of how the Alliance might utilize its partners – particularly its like-minded powers in Asia – to sustain the liberal order in a strategic environment in which the power of the Asia-Pacific region is on the rise.

#### **5. China and NATO: Room for a Partnership?**

*Mads Kjeldsen and Friis Arne Petersen*

The relationship between NATO and China is still rather new, takes place primarily on the political level, and is focused on information sharing and exchange, though with limited military cooperation over counter-piracy in the Gulf of Aden. There is the potential for increased cooperation, as shared interests exist within a number of areas, such as counter-piracy, counter-narcotics, cyber-security and the future of developments in Afghanistan, where the NATO involvement in the war has brought NATO closer to China's borders. However, it is argued that in Beijing there is still a fundamental scepticism of NATO, grounded primarily in the dominance of the US in the alliance and a difference in how to approach conflict resolution. Furthermore, understanding and appreciation of the regional strategic context of China, including the changing strategic configuration of power, especially between China and Japan but also with the US, is a key requirement if NATO wishes to promote relations further with China.

#### **6. As good as it gets? Australia and NATO beyond Afghanistan**

*Ben Schreer*

As a Western liberal democracy, Australia is often perceived as a prototype of NATO's 'partners across the globe'. It has been a steadfast supporter of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. Furthermore,

since 2001 ties between Australia and the Atlantic Alliance have markedly improved. However, it is unlikely that the degree of cooperation can be sustained in the post-Afghanistan era. The key rationale for the relationship has been the joint intervention in Afghanistan, which is drawing to a close. Now, the power shift from West to East is causing Europe's NATO allies and Australia to refocus themselves on their respective regions. Indeed, the US rebalancing towards Asia reduces the incentives for both actors for much closer cooperation. As long as NATO does not play a greater role in Asia-Pacific security, the relationship will probably revert back to lower levels of interactions.

## **7. Partnerships in the Middle East: interventionist endeavors?**

*Jakob Aarøe Jørgensen*

This chapter evaluates NATO's two Middle Eastern partnerships, the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI). More specifically, it will be argued that, thus far, NATO has attained only limited success and that key obstacles to more successful partnerships in the Middle East region persist. Judging from the history of the MD and ICI, it seems that success in deepening cooperation is likely to emerge primarily in the practical field of cooperation rather than in the political field. Lastly, the possible impact of the new flexible partnership policy on the Middle Eastern partnerships will be assessed. Though the full impact of the new partnership policy is not yet visible, the chapter shows that the new flexible format is likely to create opportunities for NATO and Middle Eastern partners to focus more on practical areas of cooperation, which in turn may lay new foundations for a more constructive relationship between NATO and partners in the Middle East.

## **8. NATO's Cooperation with the EU doesn't work and it doesn't really matter ... yet!**

*Thierry Legendre*

With the adoption of a new Strategic Concept at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, NATO agreed on an ambitious text that places the European Union (EU) at the highest level of its partnership hierarchy. Three years later, cooperation between the two organizations is still not living up to the expectations raised in Lisbon, partly because the Turkish-Cypriot relationship is hampering this. With emerging

security challenges, decreasing defence budgets and American re-orientation towards the Pacific, there should be enough incentives for both the EU and NATO to identify synergies and address the lack of Europe's key-enabling capabilities. Both organizations being instrumental to the Liberal World Order, a comprehensive use of their military and civilian expertise and capabilities should be reflected in tackling emerging challenges and in crisis management. The big question, however, is whether the EU–NATO partnership is politically attractive enough to stimulate the debates on efficiency and on Europe's strategic positioning.

## **9. Cooperative Security and NATO's Grand Alternatives**

*Sten Rynning*

Cooperative security has become one of the levelers of NATO's renewal after more than a decade of grueling expeditionary warfare, promising both diplomatic prominence and punch. But cooperative security is caught up in a larger struggle over the Alliance's *raison d'être*, the outcome of which will largely shape the kind of punch that cooperative security can deliver. This larger struggle and its impact are examined here. The chapter traces the struggle between two grand ideals for the Alliance within NATO's strategic charter, the 2010 Strategic Concept. The chapter argues that this is basically a struggle to define the West in a globalizing era. It cautions that the current model for refashioning NATO for a global engagement is incomplete and argues for a greater and more comprehensive Atlantic bargain.

## **Foreword**

*Secretary General of NATO, Anders Fogh Rasmussen*

NATO's partner countries have played a vital role in the Alliance's achievements over the past two decades. By engaging in dialogue and cooperation with more than forty partner countries all over the world, NATO has developed a cooperative approach to security. Well beyond the Euro-Atlantic area, its partners contribute to the political legitimacy of our actions, and today strong partnerships are as important for NATO as modern military hardware and flexible forces. They are part of NATO's core business.

The NATO-led International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan is a strong example. With 22 partners at the height of our combat operations, it represents one of the largest coalitions in recent history, and partner countries have made a very valuable contribution to its success. We are now working with several of them to prepare a new mission – Operation Resolute Support – to train, advise and assist the Afghan security forces after ISAF's mission is completed at the end of 2014.

As our engagement in Afghanistan winds down, other security challenges remain. Piracy, missile proliferation and cyber attacks know no borders, and they affect allies and partners alike. To tackle such challenges effectively, NATO, together with partners, must be ready to act well beyond its borders. We must therefore continue to strengthen our network of security partnerships.

This is not about NATO expanding its footprint into other parts of the world or assuming global responsibilities. It is about NATO being globally aware, globally connected and globally capable. I believe there is still considerable scope for strengthening our Alliance in such a way.

First, we should enhance our political consultations with our partners by making them more frequent and focused on specific subjects of common concern.

Second, we can work more with our partners by building on our experience in operations and defence reforms. For example, we could enhance our cooperation on military training, defence education and exercises to ensure our readiness and capacity to meet future contingencies together. This is the aim of our Connected Forces Initiative and of other defence training programs we are developing.

NATO and its partner nations could also work more closely together on multinational capability projects. With our Smart Defence initiative, we are encouraging allies to work together to ensure critical capabilities even at a time of deep budget cuts, including intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance drones, strategic airlift and air-to-air refueling aircraft. We are already working with partners in building such capabilities, for example, in the C17 strategic transportation programme. There is scope for doing more, with clear benefits for both allies and partners to plug into such projects, to share expertise and get the most value and the most security out of limited resources.

Finally, as well as expanding the range of issues on which we cooperate, we must also be prepared to increase the number of nations with whom we engage. Earlier this year, I paid the first ever visit by a NATO Secretary General to South Korea. I have also travelled to Japan and Australia to sign important agreements. China and India are also playing an important global role. By intensifying our dialogues, we will better understand each other's security concerns and lay a foundation for concrete, mutually beneficial cooperation.

As we look to deepen and broaden NATO's network of security partnerships, we must not and will not overlook our other responsibilities. The Alliance's new Strategic Concept makes it very clear that, in addition to cooperative security, both collective defence and crisis management remain core tasks for NATO.

I am deeply convinced that, in order to deal successfully with today's global security challenges, our Alliance must be engaged wherever our security is at stake – in Europe, across the Euro-Atlantic area and beyond. Our partnerships have been, and will remain, essential in that engagement.

*Anders Fogh Rasmussen  
Brussels, September 2013*



## **Introduction**

### **Changing Partnerships in a Changing World**

*Trine Flockhart*

When NATO leaders met in London more than two decades ago, they decided that the Alliance would ‘stretch out the hand of friendship’ to former foes in Central and Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Undoubtedly the leaders were well aware of the boldness of the wording in the London Declaration<sup>1</sup> and they certainly intended their decision to lead to change in the emerging security environment in the aftermath of the Cold War. Even so, few would have imagined the extensive nature of NATO’s partnerships two decades later or that ‘cooperative security’ would have become one of the main defining features of the Alliance. With hindsight, the London Declaration can now be seen as the start of a dynamic and increasingly extensive partnership program, which has resulted in the enlargement of the Alliance to its current 28 members and the establishment of an extensive and varied partnership network. The culmination so far is the new Strategic Concept agreed in Lisbon in November 2010, which elevated ‘cooperative security’ to one of NATO’s core tasks on a par with ‘collective security’ and ‘crisis management’, and which prepared the Alliance for the adoption in April 2011 of a partnership policy document entitled *Active Engagement in Cooperative Security: A More Efficient and Flexible Partnership Policy*.<sup>2</sup>

Important though the decision in London has turned out to be, it would be a mistake to assume that NATO’s new Partnership Policy can be seen as simply a continuation of the process that was started back in June 1990. The development of NATO’s partnerships has always been a response to the international environment and to tensions and different perspectives within the Alliance, although in the end policy has tended to express European support for American foreign-policy objectives and grand strategy. NATO’s new partnership policy is no exception to this pattern, reflecting that both foreign-policy objectives and the international security context have changed significantly. Whereas NATO’s partnership policy during the ‘liberal decade’ of the 1990s was informed by the euphoric belief that the West had ‘won’ the Cold War, the partnership policy at the beginning of the second millennium was characterized by the Bush Administration’s emphasis on coalitions of the willing and a view of partnerships as an expression of support for the Administration’s controversial policies.

The current partnership policy under the Obama Administration is fundamentally different, as on the one hand it can be seen as an attempt to restore the legitimacy of American leadership of the liberal world order (Ikenberry 2011: 4). On the other hand, it seeks to use partnerships as a (geopolitical) tool for sustaining essential features of the liberal order, as well as trying to change that order in a way that will make it more acceptable to emerging powers that do not share the liberal values underpinning it. In this light, partnerships and cooperation can be seen as the center-piece of American foreign policy priorities, expressed by former Secretary of State Hilary Clinton as a policy that ‘reflects the world as it is – not as it used to be’, a world in which America ‘will lead by inducing greater cooperation among a greater number of actors and reducing competition, tilting the balance away from a multi-polar world and toward a multi-partner world’ (Clinton, 2009). It is argued in this report that it is within this context of American grand strategy that NATO’s new partnership policy and new emphasis on ‘cooperative security’ must be understood.

The aim of the report is to bring some clarity to how NATO’s partnership policy can be understood historically, in particular within the context of the emerging security environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The focus of the report is NATO’s new approach to partnerships and the increasing move towards what NATO conceives as ‘cooperative security’. In that sense, the focus of the report is how we should perceive NATO’s approach to partnership within the security environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century rather than within the very differently perceived security environment of the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The report does not however, attempt to determine whether partnerships may actually be useful as a tool of American grand strategy – only that this seems to be the way the current partnership policy should be understood.

The report brings together security researchers and practitioners who all have in-depth expertise on NATO and NATO’s partnerships. With a few exceptions, the report is based on papers presented and discussed at a conference held in Copenhagen in June 2013 in cooperation between DIIS and the Centre for War Studies at the University of Southern Denmark. The aim of the conference was to focus on NATO’s new partnership policy and the role (and meaning) of its new concept of ‘cooperative security’. Each chapter contained in this report homes in on a particular aspect of the new partnership policy and/or the concept of ‘cooperative security’, or it presents a particular national or regional perspective. Inevitably, however, there are gaps that have not been covered, and the collection of topics included in this report should not be seen as either comprehensive or as an expression of any particular importance being attached to certain partnerships. For example, for a number of practical reasons,

the report does not contain chapters on Russia, on partners in Central and Eastern Europe or on European Partners within the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), even though these topics were discussed at the conference and it was agreed (as James Appathurai emphasizes in this report) that the partnership with Russia is perhaps NATO's most important partnership.

During the preparation of this report we have received help as well as practical and financial support for the project from many individuals and organisations. Special thanks are due to former Defence Minister Nick Hækkerup, Karsten Jakob Møller, Fabrice Pothier, Asmae Badr Ibrahim, Jette Kristensen and Christina Lin. We are grateful for financial support from the Danish Institute of International Studies and from the University of Southern Denmark. The report is part of the series of DIIS reports funded by a grant from the Danish Ministry of Defence. The findings and conclusions of the report do not, however, necessarily represent the views of the Danish Ministry of Defence or any of the institutions to which contributing authors are affiliated.

This introductory chapter has four main aims:

1. To outline the context within which NATO's new partnership policy has been formulated, especially the changing security and political context for partnerships in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the anticipated effects of changing global power constellations
2. To briefly outline the development of NATO's engagement with a wide variety of partners since the initial partnership structure was set up in 1991
3. To categorize the different forms of partnership initiatives by dividing NATO's initiatives into four different 'streams', which, although they progress in parallel, also coexist and intermingle.
4. To provide an outline of the structure and content of the report

### **The Changing International Security Environment**

Few will disagree that we live in an era of sweeping change and that it can be difficult to get a grasp of precisely where the changes are taking us. It does, however, seem certain that American power will decline relatively over the coming years, whilst a number of new or (re)-emerging powers will rise. The days of American hegemony – and hence influence – are therefore assumed to be numbered, a change that is regarded with some trepidation. Moreover, whilst American hegemony is fading, the challenges facing us are common to all, but too complex to be met by any one nation alone.<sup>3</sup>

That sweeping change is to be expected is also clearly recognized in the latest *Global Trends Report 2030* published by the National Intelligence Council (NIC) (NIC, 2012). The report does not offer specific predictions but suggests that changes over the next couple of decades are likely to be substantial and that Western-dominated structures (including NATO) are likely to be significantly transformed. Moreover, the NIC outlines a number of possible 'future worlds' in which the best case 'future world' is clearly in line with the foreign-policy objectives of the Obama Administration as it stresses the importance of increased cooperation, especially between the United States and China. The NIC suggests that one of the most important variables in the future shape of the global order is how the United States' international role evolves during the next fifteen to twenty years and that much will depend on whether the US will be able to work with new partners to reinvent the international system (NIC 2012: x).

The point to note here is that, although it is widely believed that the basic structure of the international system has not changed since the sweeping changes following the end of the Cold War transformed the structure of the international system from bipolar to unipolar, the expectations of the main actors are that the system will change. Moreover, as suggested in the chapter by Ole Wæver, it could also be argued that the international system has already changed into a system with a more diffuse distribution of power combined with a densely integrated and interdependent global system, which has been characterized by Barry Buzan as 'decentered globalism' (Buzan 2011:21). Whether or not the system has already changed, or is about to do so, some changes are clearly visible. Where the 1990s could be characterized as 'the liberal decade' confidently expecting a continued expansion of the liberal system, the new millennium brought a degree of realism – perhaps even of despondency – as expectations about the future of an international system based on liberal ideas emphasizing democracy and human rights seem much less certain. Change is therefore most definitely on the horizon: the questions are 'what kind of change?' and 'to what extent can the change be managed and steered in a particular direction?'

This is not the place to give a full account of the anticipated changes in the international system. Instead what is provided here is a conceptual framework providing an overview of the changes that are either in the making or can be expected to take place in the years to come, and which can provide a 'map' for understanding where policy initiatives such as NATO's new partnership policy may be able to contribute towards steering these changes in a strategic manner towards a desirable goal. In doing so, the report conceptualizes 'the international' as consisting of three inter-connected components, each of which is likely to

see different dynamics of change and to require different approaches for their management. The components are:

1. The overall global international system/society and its power structure. Since the end of the Cold War, the systemic characteristic of the international system has been unipolarity under American hegemony, but this system is almost certainly undergoing change at the moment.
2. A normatively and practice-based primary institution which contains the durable and recognized patterns of shared practices rooted in shared values. The primary institution has been the liberal order established under American leadership in the aftermath of the Second World War. With the advent of unipolarity after the end of the Cold War, the reach of the liberal order expanded and is now referred to as the Liberal World Order or a 'rule-based order'.<sup>4</sup> However, in the future it is doubtful that the order can both remain liberal and have a 'world reach' at the same time.
3. A number of secondary institutions (NATO, UN, WTO etc.), which each perform the organizational and bureaucratic functions and practical implementation of policies which follow from the shared ideas and practices contained in the primary institution. These institutions are all facing pressures of various kinds to adapt to a changing system and primary institution.

The framework is set out graphically in Figure 1 below; the current order is summarized in brackets. The main concepts are explained in textbox 1.

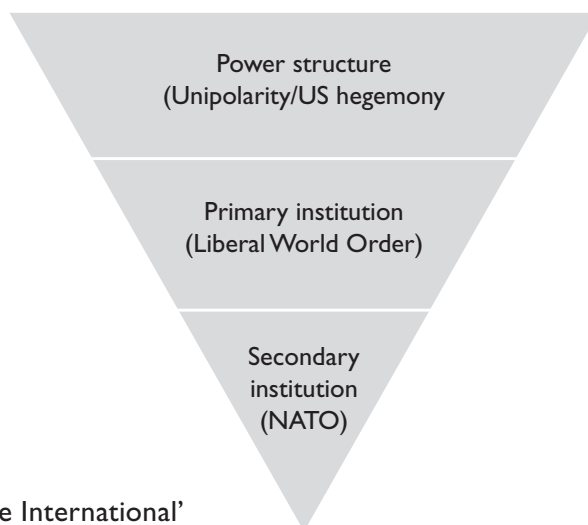


Figure 1. 'The International'

As suggested by the NIC *Global Trends 2030* report, it is widely assumed that changes in the power structure are inevitable in the coming years, and that they will necessarily lead to changes, even crises, in both the primary institution and the secondary institutions. However, although this is certainly not disputed, it might also be argued that, until such changes in the power structure have actually taken place (which may already have occurred, although this might not be widely recognized), there exists a significant potential for undertaking planned and strategic action in both the primary and secondary institutions, which may make these two levels more resilient to change in the power structure. In this conceptualization, the crisis of the liberal order and the widely perceived crises of relevance in the secondary institutions take on a different meaning. Moreover, as crisis has often in the past been a precursor for undertaking strategic action for maintaining and further

### Key concepts

*Liberal World Order (LWO)* is the institutional order established in the aftermath of the Second World War, and which during the Cold War comprised Western states, but which after the end of the Cold War has arguably been a global order with only few exceptions.

According to G. John Ikenberry (2012), the LWO is characterized as:

- An open and rule-based order built around multilateral institutions, alliances, strategic partners and client states.
- Order-making within the LWO is based on consent and organized around agreed rules and institutions that allocate rights and limit the exercise of power
- Order-making outside the LWO is maintained through bilateral relationships in a 'hub-and-spoke' system (currently) with the US as the 'hub'.

*Primary institutions* are durable and recognized patterns of shared practices rooted in values held commonly by the members of the order and embodying a mix of relatively fundamental norms, rules and principles. In this sense, the LWO is a primary institution of the international system (Bull 1977; Buzan 2004: 181).

*Secondary institutions* are bureaucratic organizations, like the UN, NATO and the EU. They are considered to be secondary in the sense that their function is to support the norms, rules and principles of the primary institution and to manage and implement practical policies based on the ideational framework of the primary institution (Bull 1977; Buzan 2004: 166).

embedding liberal ordering practices, such as institutional practices and practices of restraint and negotiation,<sup>5</sup> this may well be expected again. If such a change can be achieved and if it is able to contribute to a reformed version of the current liberal world order, the order may also be more resilient in years to come. The American foreign policy objective to move to a 'multi-partner rather than a multi-polar' world should be seen in this light, that is, as a move towards an international system which is likely to be more diffuse and more pluralistic (though not necessarily multi-polar), but also to be informed by a (reformed) primary institutional structure that emphasizes partnership and cooperation and which is supported by a number of reformed (even transformed) secondary institutions that are able to support and implement an international architecture based on cooperation and partnership.

In this conceptualization, NATO's partnership policy can be seen as intended as a 'tool' for strengthening the resilience of the liberal norms and practices of the primary institution and for diffusing such practices into a wider circle of states *before* American influence has faded beyond a point where such diffusion will no longer be possible. For that reason a network of partnerships and new strategic bargains with a broad range of partners will take on a much more important role, as the Alliance plays its part in achieving the overall strategic objective to sustain the continued resilience of LWO. It is argued in this report that NATO's new network-based partnership approach should be seen in this light.

### **The Development of NATO's Approach to Partnerships**

The suggestion made here that NATO's partnership policy can be seen as a 'tool' for supporting overall strategic objectives – primarily American foreign-policy objectives – should not be surprising. NATO's approach to partnership has always been flexible, adaptive and pragmatic, within a context of shared but US-led foreign-policy objectives. As a result, and as suggested by Sten Rynning (2011), NATO's partnerships are complex constructions with multiple and overlapping rationales, and the scope, function and level of ambition with these partnerships have changed significantly over the more than two decades in which the Alliance has been engaged with partners. In the following, this link will be further explored through the historical development of NATO's engagement with its partners.

In the first instance, the original decision to stretch out the hand of friendship led to the establishment of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) in 1991. However, NACC did not satisfy requirements for long, as it unexpectedly



developed from what was originally intended as a quite small forum consisting of the sixteen NATO members and the seven former Warsaw Pact members into a much larger forum of more than fifty states, including former Soviet republics in Central Asia. The growth of NACC was a direct consequence of the implosion of the Soviet Union, which meant that NATO's engagement with partners became more far-reaching than originally planned, but it also soon led to demands for change in the institutional structures for handling NATO's engagement with countries in closer geographical and cultural proximity to the Alliance. In 1997 NACC was replaced by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC).

Like NACC, the development of NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) program has also been rather haphazard. In the first instance PfP was a pragmatic solution to the problem that had arisen from the unanticipated large size of NACC, which led the Central and East European countries to press for full membership. However, the Alliance as a whole was not yet ready to offer membership. Instead a compromise was offered in the form of PfP, which became a halfway house between the two, its primary benefit being that it permitted a more differentiated and bilateral process, which could cater better for the needs of those countries that had aspirations for membership. In 1999 PfP was complemented with the new tool, the Membership Action Plan (MAP), which highlighted the distinction between (semi)-permanent partners and those with aspirations for membership.

In addition to the establishment of NACC, PfP, EAPC and MAP, the 1990s also saw the establishment of relationships with NATO's so-called 'Southern Flank', with the setting up of the 'Mediterranean Dialogue' (MD) in 1994 in order to enhance security and stability in the Mediterranean region and to dispel distrust towards NATO. However, it seems fair to say that initially the MD program received relatively little interest either within the Alliance or among the participating states. Indeed it has been characterized as merely a 'diplomatic talking shop' (Malmvig 2006). Interest in NATO's 'Southern Flank' and in the Middle East more generally did, however, develop in the wake of 9/11. At the Prague Summit in 2002, the Alliance decided to upgrade substantially the political and practical dimensions of the MD to be a more integral part of the Alliance's cooperative approach to security. This was followed up at the Istanbul Summit in 2004, where the MD was elevated to what was described as 'a genuine partnership', though the term '*Dialogue*' was not replaced with '*Partnership*'. On the same occasion, the MD was supplemented by the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI), which broadened the geographical scope of NATO's relationships with the Arab Gulf states.<sup>6</sup>



If 9/11 was important for realizing the significance of partnerships in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, the mission in Afghanistan, which also resulted from 9/11, fundamentally altered the status of partners, especially those able and willing to contribute forces to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Indeed, as Rebecca Moore suggests, from NATO's perspective at this point partnership was no longer simply about what NATO could do for its partners, but rather what its partners could do for NATO (Moore 2012: 58). As a result, the importance NATO attached to so-called 'global partners'<sup>7</sup> increased significantly as it became clear that they were both able and willing to contribute to the ISAF mission in an operational capacity. Moreover, the new importance attached to the operational contributions of non-NATO members endowed the neutral PfP countries<sup>8</sup> with increased significance. In fact, with the new focus on 'what partners could do for NATO', not only did 'global partners' and 'European neutrals' increase in significance, but so did EAPC partners in geographical proximity to Afghanistan and those MD and ICI countries that were willing to take on an operational role.

In addition to the collective partnership forums described so far, the Alliance has also over the years entered into a number of special bilateral partnerships with both states and international organizations. This process started with the special relationships established with Russia (NATO-Russia Permanent Council) and Ukraine (NATO-Ukraine Commission). The NATO-Russia Permanent Council was, however, replaced (and sought to be revitalized) in 2002 with the current NATO-Russia Council (NRC). NATO also established special relations with Georgia (NATO-Georgia Commission) in the aftermath of the Russo-Georgian war in 2008, and the Lisbon Summit in 2010 established a so-called 'enduring partnership' with Afghanistan (Rynning 2011). Moreover, the new Strategic Concept also agreed at Lisbon did not really seem to distinguish between relationships with countries and with organizations – both were described as making 'a concrete and valued contribution to the success of NATO's fundamental tasks' (NATO, 2010, para. 28). Yet, despite many similar pledges, it must be said that especially the relationships with Russia, the Middle East and the EU have not yet lived up to expectations and seem unlikely to do so for the foreseeable future.

The culmination so far in the institutional development of NATO's partnership engagement came in April 2011, when the Allies followed up on the decisions from the Lisbon Summit by agreeing a new 'more flexible and efficient' partnership policy. The new policy signaled a shift in NATO's thinking about partnerships by treating all NATO's many and varied partnerships, dialogues, councils and

special relationships under one general heading with the single overarching aim of contributing to security through cooperation. In so doing, two moves were simultaneously made – on the one hand a reiteration of the need for a variety of partners ‘across the globe’, and on the other hand the reduced importance attached to the geographical location of partners. The latter is underscored by the use of the more functional term ‘operational partners’ to describe those countries that participate in NATO missions and are ‘contributors of security’. In doing so, NATO’s partnership policy was brought into line with the policy formulations of the Obama Administration.

The emphasis on partners as contributors to security was further reiterated at the Chicago Summit in May 2012. The Summit was the clearest statement so far that, although the Alliance may not (yet) be a two-tier alliance, NATO’s partnership structure is certainly moving in that direction. This was demonstrated by the Summit Declaration paying particular attention to partners’ contributions to NATO’s missions, and by hosting an unprecedented meeting with thirteen specially invited partners ‘who have recently made particular political, operational and financial contributions to NATO-led operations.’<sup>9</sup> The thirteen countries were Australia, Austria, Finland, Georgia, Japan, Jordan, Republic of Korea, Morocco, New Zealand, Qatar, Sweden, Switzerland and United Arab Emirates. The list illustrates well that what now matters in NATO’s partnership relations is no longer geographical situation or shared values and political systems, but rather the willingness and ability to contribute to missions that NATO as a whole has decided to engage in. This is a major change in NATO’s approach to partnership. However, it cannot be said that there is clarity in the NATO documents as to what precisely the purpose of this shift in NATO’s partnership policy is. For that clarity, it is necessary to examine American foreign-policy documents.

### **Categorizing the Function and Rationales of NATO’s Partnerships**

As suggested by the above description of NATO’s various partnership initiatives over the past couple of decades, the development of NATO’s partnerships has been far from linear and appears to be based on shifting logics and different forms of functionality, as new partnership initiatives have been responses to specific events and specific security issues on the agenda at the time. Moreover, it is not always clear what the utility is of some of the partnerships for NATO, or for that matter what the utility is for some of the partners.<sup>10</sup> However, as a starting point in adding to

increased clarity on the development, purpose and utility of NATO's partnerships, it is possible to identify four different 'streams' of partnership initiatives<sup>11</sup> which have been added at different times in response to specific events or changes in the security environment. These 'streams' are:

Table 1. 'Streams' of partnership initiatives

Stream 1 - 1990	End of Cold War
Stream 2 - 1995	Balkan operations
Stream 3 - 2001	9/11
Stream 4 - 2010	New global challenges and shifting power

The initiatives are referred to as 'streams' to highlight their continuation once they have been started, and that they continue and coexist, sometimes in parallel and sometimes intermingling under the overall heading of NATO's partnership program. Without appreciating this basic feature of the development of NATO's partnership engagement, one cannot obtain a clear picture of the overall partnership engagement.

In addition to different 'streams' of partnership initiative, NATO's overall partnership engagement is also murky because it is difficult to ascertain precisely what rationales are associated with the different partnerships and what their functionality and their expected outcomes are likely to be. For the sake of overview and parsimony, this report suggests that it is possible to identify three different ideal-types of rationales with different functionalities and outcomes that have influenced NATO's engagement with its partners. However, as is the case with the four streams, the three ideal types coexist and intermingle. Nevertheless the three categories suggested here are:

- An *integrationalist* rationale in which the aim is to continue the process of making Europe 'whole and free' by including more states in the Euro-Atlantic Community or drawing other neighboring states closer to the Alliance. This rationale has a value-based dimension, where it is expected that partners take on Western values and engage in various forms of enhanced cooperation leading to increased understanding. This was the initial conceptualization of partnership

and the rationale behind the establishment of NACC, PfP, MAP and, albeit to a lesser degree, EAPC. It is also to some extent the rationale of the NRC and the Ukraine and Georgia Commissions. The intended functionality/outcome is the strengthening and expansion of the Euro-Atlantic Community and membership of the liberal order.

- An *interventionist* rationale in which partners cooperate with the Alliance in missions and interventions in areas of conflict and instability or in facing a number of security challenges, such as piracy, cyber threats or other security issues of relevance to the Alliance and its partners. This rationale is almost entirely interest-based, although the decision to undertake intervention may be value-based. The interventionist rationale was evident in the interventions in the Balkans in which the neutral countries participated. This rationale became more prominent after the 9/11 attacks with NATO's missions in Afghanistan, the Mediterranean, the Gulf of Aden and Libya, all of which contain a significant input from partner countries in varying forms of interventionist operation. The functionality/outcome of this category is an enhanced capability to meet global and regional security challenges through cooperation.
- An *influentialist* rationale in which engagement with partners provides NATO with either direct or indirect influence in a way that is of benefit to the Alliance. This rationale is both interest- and value-based, as it may involve the promotion of Western values and practices, or it may simply involve cooperation on specific issues where shared interests exist in the hope that cooperation, negotiation and persuasion might lead to a desired outcome. This rationale is found in all NATO's structured partnership forums and is probably the main rationale for the development of relations with partners that do not share Western values. The functionality/outcome of this category is to achieve both value-based and interest-based influence in tangible issue areas, as well as less tangible forms of influence that may contribute to sustaining existing practices of the liberal world order into the future.

The line between the three types of rationale is not always clear, and arguably an intervention may be combined with, or be followed by, both 'influence' and 'integration' rationales, as has been the case in the Balkans. Moreover, 'influence' can take many forms, including some initiatives that may involve limited, but highly integrated areas of cooperation such as between NATO and Russia, or simply hoping that through closer engagement the partner may choose to mimic certain administrative practices or accept certain NATO procedures. Moreover, underlying all of NATO's varied approaches to partnerships is a fundamental belief that 'it is

good to talk’ and that the familiarity it may bring over time contributes to better relations all round. The interesting point, however, is that the influence rationale seems to be gaining in importance, from having been seen mostly as a by-product of a variety of engagements, to now (seemingly) being approached in a much more strategic manner.

Tentatively the ‘elements’ in each of the four ‘streams’ can be summarized as follows:

Table 2. Overview of ‘streams’, functionality/outcome and rationale

<i>Stream/Year</i>	<i>Trigger</i>	<i>Functionality/Outcome</i>	<i>Rationale</i>
1/1990	End of Cold War	Expansion and strengthening of the Euro-Atlantic Community	Integration Influence
2/1995	Balkan operations	Partner participation in operations	Intervention
3/2001	9/11	Meeting global security challenges	Influence Intervention
4/2010	Global security challenges and shifts in the power balance	Sustaining the practices of liberal world order	Integration Influence Intervention

### **NATO’s Partnership Policy and US Grand Strategy**

Although at first glance NATO’s partnership policy over the past couple of decades may appear to have been a case of ‘muddling through’, the connection with American strategic thinking has actually been quite striking. Roughly speaking, it is possible to say that thinking about partnerships in the Alliance during the ‘liberal decade’ of the 1990s was closely aligned with the Clinton Administration’s foreign-policy priority of promoting democracy and liberal internationalism, followed in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century by the Bush Administration’s focus on influence and intervention through regime change (a more robust form of promoting democracy) and politically induced relationships such as the push for closer relations with Georgia and Ukraine. This trend was replaced by a much more pragmatic approach to foreign policy where American priorities shifted to ‘putting their own house in order’ and towards the Asia Pacific region with the Obama Administration’s foreign-

policy goal of moving towards a new international structure based on cooperation and partnership (Kay 2011).

The link between the fourth stream and US grand strategy is particularly clear in policy statements such as former Secretary of State Hilary Clinton's speech to the Council of Foreign Relations in 2009, followed up in the National Security Strategy from 2010, and further elaborated in the 2012 Strategic Guidance Document (with the telling title *Sustaining US Global Leadership*),<sup>12</sup> which together combine to express the overall strategic thinking on how to meet new challenges and how to prepare the Alliance for a role in contributing to ensuring the continuation and perhaps expansion of the current institutional system under the new conditions of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, just as 'it takes two to tango, the same is true about partnerships: although the American strategy assumes that other nations are willing to partner with NATO, this is not necessarily the case. Indeed one of the biggest challenges facing NATO's new partnership policy may be that NATO is more eager to enter into new partnerships than new partners are eager to partner NATO.

Much attention has been devoted to the two American strategic documents mentioned above, but the focus has been almost exclusively on the so-called 'pivot' (now renamed 'rebalance') towards Asia, whilst the many references in the documents and speeches to 'partnerships', 'old alliances' and 'cooperative approaches' have received much less attention. Yet the picture that emerges from a balanced reading of the documents is one that suggests that the tasks for the future are to safeguard what has been achieved in the past through 'transforming the international system over the past sixty-five years' and to 'prepare for the future, while forging cooperative approaches among nations that can yield results'. The Defence Guidance Document states that '(w)orking closely with our network of allies and partners, we will continue to promote the rules-based international order that ensures underlying stability and encourages the peaceful rise of new powers, economic dynamism and constructive defence cooperation'.

Despite the many references to 'partnerships' in both documents, however, it would be a mistake to assume that partnerships in their own right are the intended outcome. The National Security Strategy clearly states that 'This engagement is no end in itself'. Rather, what is of interest to NATO – and in particular to the United States – are the benefits that partnerships might bring in the much wider context of sustaining American leadership and with it the resilience of the liberal world

order so as to construct a security architecture that is able to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century – challenges that no single nation is likely to be able to meet alone, but which also probably cannot be met without some degree of American involvement.

The picture that has been presented here is that NATO's new partnership policy should be understood in the context of anticipated changes in the structure of the international system in the coming years, and the acknowledgement that change will have to be undertaken at both the primary institutional level and the secondary institutional level. Within this context, the strategic objective is to maintain a degree of control over the changes and to try to steer them in a direction that maintains as much as possible of the liberal world order whilst simultaneously making the order more inclusive and based on partnership and cooperation with a wider circle of global actors than has been the case under the previous decades of American hegemony. The practices of partnership and cooperation are to be implemented through the system's secondary institutions – amongst others NATO and its new, much more open and inclusive partnership policy – but also through other partnerships such as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) currently being negotiated. In the NATO context, the process can be conceptualized as a three-step approach in which the establishment of a wide network of partnerships through NATO can contribute to the sustainability of the liberal world order, which *inter alia* is assumed will contribute to sustaining US global leadership in an increasingly de-centered and pluralistic world (Buzan, 2011), one which, however, is based on a culture of partnership and cooperation, rather than on a culture of conflict and the balance of power.

### **Structure of the Report**

In the following chapters, the report will examine the development of NATO's new partnership policy and the increased importance attached to cooperative security, with attention to specific aspects of NATO's engagement with partners, particularly those partners that primarily fall under the influentialist or interventionist strategy.<sup>13</sup> The report starts out with two chapters focusing on the main elements under investigation in this report – NATO's new partnership policy and the concept of 'cooperative security'. In Chapter one *James Appathurai* offers a perspective from within NATO in which he outlines the particular process as well as the challenges and opportunities experienced in setting up NATO's new partnership policy, whilst



in Chapter two *Ole Wæver* adopts a more conceptual perspective and considers the meaning and implications of the new concept in NATO's vocabulary of 'cooperative security'. In Chapter three *Magnus Christiansson* traces the development of NATO's partnership policy from a military operational perspective in order to identify the strategic rationale that underpins the new globalized partnership agenda, which has arguably led to the 'partnerfication' of the Alliance. In Chapter four *Rebecca Moore* provides a more detailed account of the American perspective on NATO's partnership approach, in particular in relation to the possibilities for establishing partnerships between NATO and countries in the Asia-Pacific – a topic which is dealt with in further detail in Chapter five, in which *Mads Kjeldsen and Friis Arne Petersen* provide an up-to-date analysis of the emerging relationship between NATO and China. In Chapter six, *Ben Schreer* raises the question of whether the current relationship between NATO and Australia is 'as good as it gets', especially given persistent questions about the utility of NATO partnership from an Australian perspective. The prospects of the end of the shared mission in Afghanistan might lead to reduced enthusiasm for keeping the partnership going at its current level. In Chapter seven the report moves to consider some of the more challenging partnerships, as *Jakob Aaroe Jørgensen* investigates the challenges and opportunities in taking NATO's relationships with the MD and ICI further. Like Schreer, Jørgensen is somewhat pessimistic about the potential for further developing partnerships in the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA), although he does concur that the two current partnership forums do bring benefits to the Alliance, as well as to the partners in the MENA region. In Chapter eight the report looks at the inter-institutional relationship between NATO and the EU, another partnership that has so far not fulfilled the expectations attached to it in the new Strategic Concept. Although *Thierry Legendre* agrees with this, he also suggests that, at least for the time being, it doesn't really matter. Finally in Chapter nine, *Sten Rynning* draws out the new emphasis in NATO on partnership and cooperative security from the perspective of NATO's own overall process of transformation. He particularly considers the position of partnership and cooperative security within two grand narratives labeled *Regional Bulwark* and *Global Agility* and draws out the tensions between the two. As the Alliance looks to the future, and in particular to the London Summit in 2014, partnership and cooperative security may well once again be on the agenda, and the *Regional Bulwark* narrative can certainly not be discounted, as NATO still needs to find its place somewhere in between the two.

As this introduction started out by suggesting, the development of NATO's partnerships has always been a response to both the international environment and



internal tensions within the Alliance, although in the end it seems that the agreed position has mostly ended up being closely aligned with American foreign-policy objectives and grand strategy. There is no reason to expect that this pattern will change anytime soon, but it may be that the international structure will change more quickly than NATO is able to adapt to the changes. Either way it seems certain that pursuing partnerships and emphasizing cooperative security are steps in a positive direction. However, whether increased attention to a whole host of different partnerships - in NATO and elsewhere - really can fulfill the demanding role as a tool for sustaining the liberal world order into the 21<sup>st</sup> century is a question that will depend on many as yet unknown factors. Time will tell – this report is unlikely to be the last word in what is bound to continue to be an evolving process.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> London Declaration, *Declaration on a Transformed Atlantic Alliance*, issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council, 5 June, 1990. Available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-11B39914-2512F101/natolive/official\\_texts\\_23693.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-11B39914-2512F101/natolive/official_texts_23693.htm)

<sup>2</sup> Available at [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2011\\_04/20110415\\_110415-Partnership-Policy.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_04/20110415_110415-Partnership-Policy.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Hilary Clinton has summarized the effects of the anticipated changes as two essential points: 1) that the issues facing the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are so complex that no nation can meet the world's challenges alone; and 2) that most nations are concerned about the same global threats. Outlined by Hilary Clinton in a speech at the Council for Foreign Relations, Washington DC, 15 June 2009. Available at <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/july/126071.htm>

<sup>4</sup> The word 'liberal' is clearly contested and is likely to evoke negative reactions among international actors that do not subscribe to liberal values. As a result, there is currently a growing tendency to refer to the order as a 'rule-based order' (RBO).

<sup>5</sup> This argument is developed in the chapter by Emanuel Adler 'Resilient Liberal Practices' in Dunne & Flockhart (eds), *Liberal World Orders*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013. The volume also gives a fuller account of the historical development and the crisis facing liberal world order.

<sup>6</sup> Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

<sup>7</sup> The terms 'global partners' and 'global partnerships' appear in quotation marks throughout the report because there is strictly speaking no such grouping of partners. 'Global partners' have also been referred to as 'Contact Countries', 'Triple-non countries', or 'Partners across the Globe'. Whichever name for this group of countries is selected, it mostly refers to relations with Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea, but is also sometimes used to refer to the development of relationships with Pakistan, Iraq, Afghanistan and Mongolia, and lately NATO has expressed an interest in developing more extensive dialogues with China, India, Singapore, Malaysia and Columbia.

<sup>8</sup> A number of European neutral countries (Sweden, Finland, Austria, Switzerland and Ireland) had joined the PfP program during the mid-1990s, mainly in order to be able to participate in the NATO-led operations in the Balkans.

<sup>9</sup> Official text: Chicago Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Chicago on 20 May 2012, §24. Available at [http://nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_87593.htm](http://nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_87593.htm)

<sup>10</sup> This question is addressed in Håkon Edström, Janne Haaland Matlary and Magnus Petersson (eds.) in *The Power of Partnerships*, Palgrave, 2011.

<sup>11</sup> Gulnur Aybet identified four stages in 'The four stages of NATO's Partnership Frameworks: Rethinking Regional Partnerships with the Middle East and North Africa', in Riccardo Alcaro and Sonia Lucarelli (eds.) *Dynamic Change: Rethinking NATO's Capabilities, Operations and Partnerships*, NATO Allied Command

Transformation, University of Bologna and Institute of International Affairs, 2013. I prefer the term 'streams' in recognition that one does not replace the other, but that initiatives continue in parallel.

<sup>12</sup> Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for the 21st Century Defense, United States of America, Department of Defence, January 2012. Available at [http://www.defense.gov/news/Defense\\_Strategic\\_Guidance.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/news/Defense_Strategic_Guidance.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> The report does not include chapters on partnership countries with the potential for membership, as this form of partnership has been explored extensively over the past twenty years of research on NATO's partnership relations.

## **I. The Future of NATO's Partnerships**

*James Appathurai*

Like any longstanding international organisation, NATO has experienced not only steady evolution, but also occasional inflection points – key moments which generated transformational change. The fall of the Berlin Wall, and then of the Soviet Union, allowed NATO to reach out to former adversaries and build peace through dialogue and cooperation. The Balkan wars forced the Alliance to take on an active operational role as the only international organisation with the military capacity to enforce peace. The war in Afghanistan broadened NATO's horizons substantially, all the way to Asia. As more than one op-ed editor has written, today's Atlantic Alliance 'ain't your daddy's NATO'.

That applies very much to NATO's partnerships. During the Cold War, there was only one security game that mattered, with two major adversaries and clearly defined rules: NATO and the Soviet Union were like two gigantic sumo wrestlers, with everyone else watching and betting on who would push the other out of the ring. Today's world is, of course, completely different. There is a range of threats to international security, from instability in areas of strategic importance like the Middle East to international terrorism to cyber attacks. These threats are not stopped by border checkpoints, and no one country, no matter how powerful it might be, can deal them with them effectively. Security today is a team sport played on a global field, with almost every country and organisation exercising a potentially important role.

NATO is uniquely placed to make a significant contribution to this team. The Afghanistan operation has been gruelling and costly, but one positive effect has been to forge the most capable, most experienced and most interoperable forces in the world, and possibly in history. The International Security Assistance Force has also become a network connecting NATO to partners around the world, militarily and politically. Through steady, quiet diplomacy, NATO has agreed partnership cooperation programs with over two dozen countries and deepened relations with major international organisations. Also, evolutions in NATO's core policies, starting with the 2010 Strategic Concept, have granted the Alliance the mandates to take on a range of new roles and address a range of new global challenges, from missile proliferation to cyber defence to energy security.

For NATO, therefore, the end of the combat mission in Afghanistan, at the end of 2014, has become another historical inflection point. The potential is there for the

Alliance to transform itself again – to lock in the ‘acquis’ of partnerships forged in the Hindu Kush, to engage partners in new cooperation and to take on new challenges together with them, to our mutual benefit. At a time when resources (human and financial) are limited, the questions to be asked are therefore where should we prioritise, what should we be doing together and with whom?

These questions are being debated throughout NATO as part of the overall reflections on its future. There is certainly no consensus yet on the answers (which can only reinforce the fact that the views expressed here are those of the author alone). Yet the general direction of travel of NATO’s partnerships seems likely to follow three main tracks: preparing together, consulting together, and acting together.

### **Preparing Together**

As the ISAF mission draws to a close and NATO prepares for a new, much smaller ‘Train, Advise and Assist mission’ in Afghanistan, the Alliance is preparing to move to a new posture. After more than a decade of major military operations, from Bosnia-Herzegovina to Kosovo to Afghanistan (and many smaller ones, including counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia), we can envision a period with a much lower operational tempo. For many, this will come as a relief: our publics do not wish to see any more body bags coming home, our militaries have expended huge effort, and finance ministers need the money for other pressing requirements.

But there have been two very substantial benefits from all this operational experience. First, as mentioned above, our forces are at an unparalleled level of capability and interoperability with each other. Secondly, the NATO standard of interoperability is now the global gold standard, shared or aspired to by countries around the globe. This is positive, and not only for NATO. By definition having one standard makes sense for multinational military operations: troops working together from different countries need to be able to speak to each other in a common language, through radios and computers that connect, and to conduct military operations according to shared tactics, techniques and procedures. Even where NATO as an Alliance is not involved, individual Allies often are, including in coalitions of the willing or United Nations-mandated operations, as was the case in the early stages of the Libya operation in 2012. And, as the later phase of the Libya operation also showed, NATO remains the only organisation capable of commanding and controlling a large multinational combat operation, which means there will be more NATO operations in future.

For all these reasons, the Alliance is determined not to lose the high level of interoperability it has built in Afghanistan. Its partners are generally equally determined, for the same reasons; indeed, countries like Australia have been vocal (by Australian standards, which is saying something) in insisting on the maximum possible interoperability, in all senses, if they are to cooperate with NATO militarily – something they want to continue doing in future. NATO shares this aim. We know that, in future, we will be working with partners in the field again, in one configuration or another. We know that we have to invest now to ensure that we have the tools to help make that possible.

One of the most important of those tools is the Political-Military Framework, agreed at the Berlin meeting of Foreign Ministers in 2010. In essence, the Political-Military Framework enshrines what the partners fought for in ISAF – the fullest possible role in shaping the decisions taken in NATO-led operations to which they contribute forces. Libya showed that NATO honours this commitment; the day after partners were confirmed as contributors to the operation, their ambassadors took their place around the NATO table, in alphabetical order with the Allies, taking part in all discussions (without exception) on the conduct of the operation. This is the new NATO standard, which outstrips what any other international organisation offers its operational partners.

The Connected Forces Initiative (CFI), agreed at the Chicago Summit in 2012, will also be a key tool to maintain interoperability with partners. CFI will comprise a series of exercises, training and education focused on ensuring connectivity both between Allies and with partners. Moreover, the NATO Response Force (NRF) offers another vehicle for promoting connectivity with partners. The NRF is designed to be a hothouse for testing and sharing the latest technology and doctrine, as well as being a rapid reaction force for the Alliance. A few partners have already signed up to contribute forces to the NRF for future six-month rotations, which will expose them to the cutting edge of NATO's military evolution.

Preparing together is also clearly visible in the Smart Defence initiative, which offers the opportunity to partners to work closely with groups of Allies on developing capabilities together. In a time of austerity, many countries find it impossible to buy capabilities alone; through Smart Defence, they are pooling the resources to develop and purchase capabilities together. Partners are already part of this process, which not only promotes political solidarity, but also enhances interoperability: it is easier, logistically and in terms of doctrine, for armed forces to work together if they operate the same equipment.

Finally, the Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC), a little-known tool that has already helped to enhance interoperability with partners, has the real potential to make a substantially enhanced contribution. The OCC is a system in which partners identify the unit or units which are to be interoperable with NATO according to an objective set of criteria and to different levels of interoperability. NATO's operational headquarters, based in Mons, Belgium, certifies whether the unit meets the standard. When it does, it becomes a 'plug and play' function with NATO forces. For instance, the day after it was agreed that Sweden would join the Libya operation, Swedish Gripens were in the air - wing to wing with NATO fighters. This achievement was possible because they were at OCC level 2.

All the tools listed here will prove valuable in future. As NATO moves to a 'readiness' posture, so must our partnerships. We must train together, exercise together, learn together and develop capabilities together, so that when the next crisis hits and NATO is called upon to contribute, the Alliance can play its full role in bringing together an effective, capable coalition.

### **Consulting together**

Military interoperability is the 'operating system' of multinational military operations; it goes on behind the scenes, of concern mostly to experts. But while it is necessary, it is not sufficient. Contributing effectively to international peace and security also require political interoperability, that is, a common understanding of the problem, and of the solution. The importance of this was enshrined in the Strategic Concept, which commits NATO to be open to consultation with partners on issues of common concern.

NATO has three main avenues in which to conduct political consultations. All three have real potential, but they also face real hurdles. The most active channel for general political discussions has been bilateral, where NATO engages directly with an individual country. Each of the Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programs agreed between the Alliance and our partners includes the commitment to consult, and we do so. The Alliance has actively invited partners to meet with Allies at NATO headquarters to share their views on the regional security challenges they face and the international challenges they feel we need to address together. For example, Azerbaijan has shared its view of the (many) security challenges in the South Caucasus, Australia has done the same with regard to Asia-Pacific security, and Jordan has done so on Middle East issues. NATO will make every effort to step this up in

future because we all benefit from better understanding of the shared challenges, as well as the differing perspectives.

The second avenue for consultation is what NATO informally calls '28+n', that is, discussions with selected groups of partners across and beyond existing formats, to address a specific issue or challenge, with invitation based on the specific interest of the partner in the issue, or the partners ability to contribute to addressing it. This, too, was an idea launched in Berlin by Foreign Ministers. Since then, it has met with some success – but only some.

Consultations have taken place around specific pressing challenges: for example, the five Central Asian states came to NATO to share their particular concerns about the transition in Afghanistan. Similar 'flexible format' meetings have also been held to discuss counter-piracy, cyber defence and capability development. The advantages and potential of such meetings are clear. The most relevant countries are around the table – China, for example, participated in the meeting on counter-piracy. The participants address a concrete issue, which helps to focus the discussion. And the flexibility of the format allows membership to evolve as the challenge, and the solution, evolves as well.

However, the reality since Berlin has also been that the potential of 28+n has not yet been fully met. Partners are often most interested in discussing emerging security challenges where the Alliance has not yet fully come to terms internally with what NATO will do, let alone what we might do with partners. This is particularly clear when it comes to cyber defence, where Allies do not conceptually agree (yet) on what NATO's mandates and roles should be and because cooperation with non-Allies in this particular field risks exposing NATO defences even at an early stage of cooperation. It is also the case with regard to energy security, another area of strong interest to partners in the Caucasus, the Middle East and Central Asia, but where NATO's mandates and roles are still subject to strong debate within the Alliance. Because of this disconnect, it has proven difficult to meet partners' aspirations for 'flexible format' meetings with NATO, leading to some frustration. There has also been little concrete follow-up from the meetings.

These, however, are teething problems. As time goes by, NATO is coming to define the parameters of its roles in meeting emerging security challenges and the modalities for cooperating with partners. That will help launch a new phase of 'flexible' consultation on the real 21st century challenges, with the right partners, in a pragmatic and results-oriented way. This new phase is beginning already and should gather pace.

The third main avenue for consultation is the so called ‘traditional formats: the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI). Each of these has played an important role in contributing to international understanding and cooperation. Each celebrates important anniversaries in 2014: fifteen years for the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, ten years each for the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative. But even as those milestones are commemorated, each format faces challenges.

The EAPC was formed as the political umbrella for the Partnership for Peace, NATO’s post-Cold War program to reach out to countries across Europe, through the Caucasus and into Central Asia. It has proved a valuable venue for a broad range of countries to meet and discuss common challenges. For countries which do not have soldiers operating under NATO command in the field (for example, Switzerland), it is an important mechanism to engage with the Alliance, and, using NATO as a framework, to contribute to non-military projects such as training, education or demining.

However, over time, it has proved difficult to give enough substance to the EAPC. Many of its most active participants, like those from the Western Balkans, have become full members of the Alliance. The remaining members have had difficulty in agreeing on concrete cooperative projects, largely because countries come from very different geographical areas and face very different regional challenges. And it is sometime difficult to stimulate truly open political dialogue in such a varied group. Despite these challenges – and with the fifteen-year anniversary in mind – Allies and Partners are working to rejuvenate the EAPC. The core of this effort is a more flexible approach: ‘tiger teams’ are now part of the EAPC, small groups of countries, including always at least one Ally and one partner, which come together to develop a proposal for an initiative that might be of interest to the wider group: for example, to develop and agree common standards for the employment of private security companies in military operations. These ‘tiger teams’ are giving the EAPC new energy, and with effort and imagination, they can deliver real results.

The Mediterranean Dialogue (MD), which included Israel and six important North African countries, has also experienced complications. As the MD is a framework which brings together countries directly affected by the turmoil in the Middle East, complication is inevitable. But there is also a powerful potential for progress. Bilateral relations with MD countries are practical, political and productive. NATO has agreed individual programmes of cooperation with all seven members and consults with



them individually on political issues. The Alliance is helping them modernise their defence establishments by making them more affordable, more accountable and better able to work with each other – efforts which are all the more relevant during a time of transition in many countries. NATO also works with its MD partners to address some of their most pressing security challenges, including, for example, clearing minefields. For their part, they all contribute, in one way or another, to NATO-led operations and missions.

The multilateral dimension, however, has proved complicated. NATO neither has nor seeks a role in the Middle East Peace Process and has made every effort to keep the issue off the NATO agenda and out of the Mediterranean Dialogue. To a certain extent this has been possible: meetings of all seven with the 28 Allies do take place, at all levels, which offers what may be a unique venue for Israel and the other Arab countries to sit down together and discuss security cooperation.

Overall, though, the differences between the members have made real consultation and cooperation within the MD format difficult, particularly at the political level. The difficulties have been compounded by the unrest sweeping the region, which has focused the attention of Mediterranean Dialogue countries on their own internal developments and raised fundamental differences of view on how to handle major challenges such as the violence sweeping Syria. That said, the Mediterranean Dialogue is even now delivering solid practical results for all participants, as well as for the Alliance. Its political value as a meeting venue for its members is clear, as is its potential as a framework for future cooperation amongst countries facing many similar challenges, once the political conditions become more propitious.

The Istanbul Cooperation Initiative has also delivered results for its members. Here too, however, there is some frustration among its members that more has not been accomplished. On a bilateral basis, cooperation between NATO and ICI countries is good, focused on supporting reform and mutual understanding. Indeed, Kuwait has taken the decision to open a NATO ICI Centre, which would be the first NATO facility in the Gulf, at which NATO and our Gulf partners could carry out training and education on areas of common interest, including language training, cultural awareness and security consultation. This should prove highly valuable in future, as will the more profound bilateral security cooperation agreements we aim to agree.

However, for many years the main security concerns of NATO's Gulf partners have been, first, energy security, and second, Iran – which are, of course, related, as Iran

has repeatedly threatened publicly to block the transit of shipping through the Straits of Hormuz, the vital corridor through which Gulf energy heads to its markets. ICI partners would welcome a stronger NATO role in addressing these challenges; for the moment, though, Allies support our Gulf partners through their bilateral channels, rather than using NATO as a primary forum. As long as that is the case, the ICI has natural limits as to how far it can go to meet the main security concerns of its members, even as we continue to cooperate in supporting reform and modernisation.

There is another 'category' of partners which do not fall into any particular format, but have only bilateral, individual relations with NATO: what the Alliance calls 'global partners', currently comprising Afghanistan, Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Pakistan, Mongolia and New Zealand. Clearly, these were partnerships born out of the ISAF operation, but they will endure beyond it, because each of these individual partners shares NATO's interest in maintaining the relationship and building on it, both politically and practically. Indeed, in the case of many of these countries, they are particularly focused on concrete, practical cooperation: what NATO and our partners will do together post-2014.

### **Acting together**

Preparing together – ensuring we can cooperate effectively; and consulting together – helping to ensure we share common views about the challenges we face: these are activities which NATO and its partners are already pursuing and will step up. But with those foundations in place, what makes the most impact is when we act together.

Of course, no one can predict if, when or where NATO and its partners will take military action together again. But it seems almost inevitable that that will be the case. When it comes to commanding and carrying out medium or high-end multinational military operations, or operations which threaten to escalate to high levels, NATO has the capability. And where NATO might get engaged, recent history demonstrates that the Alliance is most effective when it has partners.

But there is plenty of work aside from the military operations already underway – work which shows how much more can be accomplished in cooperation between the Alliance and its partners. Capacity building is one such area. For example, NATO has personnel in the military headquarters of the African Union, helping it develop its skills in running large-scale multinational military operations – an area in which the African Union is only now spreading its wings, and where the Atlantic Alliance

clearly has expertise and experience to share. NATO's training missions in Iraq and Afghanistan included a strong effort to develop capacity in Ministries to allow them to run their countries – in both efforts, other NATO partners have contributed to the effort.

On the 'softer' side, NATO also helps to promote educational reform. Through the Defence Education Enhancement Program, NATO advises partners on how to build, develop and reform educational institutions in the security and defence domain. NATO also helps bring partners' Training and Education Centres together with those of Allies to exchange best practices. Through the Building Integrity Program, Allies and partners together help interested countries – in particular in South East Europe and Afghanistan – to strengthen good governance and improve transparency and accountability in defence institutions. And through a number of large Trust Funds, NATO and its partners are together contributing to projects in many countries to help clear mines, destroy unwanted or obsolete munitions, or retrain military personnel made redundant through reform to find new jobs.

Finally, there is likely to be more cooperation between NATO and its partners when it comes to meeting emerging security challenges, which clearly requires broad cooperation to be effective. The most obvious example is cyber-defence. While nations have the primary and main responsibility for cyber security, there will likely be situations in which cooperation has added value, for example, to share early warning of impending cyber attack, or to provide support to a nation whose defences are being overwhelmed. While all aspects of any potential NATO role would need to be agreed by all the Allies, it seems as if there is an emerging consensus that the Alliance can have a concrete added value, including when it comes to cooperation with partners. Considering the scale of the cyber challenge and the stakes for national security of a major and successful cyber attack, this only makes sense.

Taken together, these three broad categories of work – preparing together, consulting together and acting together – will guide much of what NATO does with partners post-2014 as the Alliance adjusts to its own new, post-ISAF posture.

### **Russia**

Russia is, without doubt, NATO's most important partner. Through the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), the 29 countries have a structure of committees and working

groups at NATO headquarters in Brussels that is unlike, and dwarfs, NATO's partnership with any other country. Despite all the political ups and downs of the relationship – often influenced by outside issues – the NATO-Russia Council will remain an essential bridge across the Euro-Atlantic area.

Politically, there are number of areas of friction. Russia remains deeply unhappy about NATO's plans to build missile defence in Europe (not against Russia, but against threats emanating from outside of Europe) and has rejected US and NATO offers to cooperate; this is likely to remain a cloud over relations for some time. NATO's calls for increased transparency on military issues such as military exercises and sub-strategic nuclear weapons have also been rejected by Moscow. Finally, bilateral US-Russia tensions inevitably spill over into the NRC as well.

Those tensions are what get the headlines. On a practical level, however, a lot is going on which should get more visibility. Because of the shared interest in stabilising Afghanistan, Russia has offered reliable and affordable transit routes for supplies in and out of the country for the ISAF mission. Through the NRC, NATO, Russia and partners have trained thousands of counter-narcotics officials from the Central Asian states, Afghanistan and Pakistan – officials who have been instrumental in making seizures of drugs which would otherwise have ended up in Russia and Western Europe. Together, NATO and Russia are helping to supply the Afghan army with helicopters, a crucial capability, especially when ISAF ends.

Beyond that, NATO and Russia have agreed around twenty core areas of cooperation, including the fight against terrorism, counter-piracy and disaster relief. In each area there are concrete projects underway, for example, the development of technology to detect explosives in public areas, or to track together aircraft that might be under the control of terrorists in the airspace bordering NATO and Russia.

Considering how often political winds buffet the NATO-Russia relationship, it is remarkable that, throughout the years, the practical cooperation has continued. But it has, and NATO is determined to continue and enhance that track. We believe there is plenty more we can do together, always to the mutual benefit of both. We also hope that the high-level political dialogue in the NRC, at ministerial level, will continue to be a place where concerns can be expressed openly and clearly – something which Russia has consistently done, and which we welcome.

### **Ukraine and Georgia**

Two more important partnerships will be relevant to NATO's future – the partnerships with Ukraine and with Georgia. In fact, the future orientation of both countries will be relevant for the future of Europe as a whole – and in both cases, NATO will have a part to play.

In the case of Ukraine – a major European nation – the key question is the direction in which Ukraine chooses to orient itself. That decision is for Ukraine to make for itself, free of pressure from any outside party. NATO's position is clear: we offer partnership without imposition, and assistance with reform without any requirement for political fealty. We do, however, wish to see Ukraine meet European standards when it comes to democracy and justice; NATO will keep making that case in future. Ukraine, for its part, continues to make a major contribution to Alliance operations and missions; we hope and expect that this will continue as well.

Georgia is a small country that is making a heroic effort to break free of its Soviet past and choose a new path towards Western values and standards. Its progress has been remarkable, and its success will be a bellwether throughout the South Caucasus and beyond. NATO has committed itself to Georgia becoming a member – of course, if it so desires, and when it meets the standards. This, too, is an irritant between NATO and Russia, and will remain so. But put simply, Russia cannot be allowed to impose its decisions on a free and democratic neighbour; Georgia must be allowed to choose its future for itself. NATO will continue to invest in Georgia's reform, to welcome Georgia's contributions to NATO-led operations and to make our case clearly to Russia.

### **Other Organisations**

NATO's relations with other international organisations have undergone a sea change over the past two decades. From '(not-so) splendid isolation', NATO has reached out to the European Union and the United Nations in particular. While there are many hurdles still to overcome, the future of cooperation with these two organisations in particular clearly has potential to develop to the mutual benefit of all concerned.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon and NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer signed together a political declaration which enshrined existing cooperation, which had developed principally through cooperation over the Balkan wars. The declaration also set the stage for what was to come: the establishment of a NATO

Liaison Officer at UN New York, regular staff talks, increasing cooperation in the field in Afghanistan and NATO support to UN personnel deploying on missions. There is clearly scope for more, since the UN faces enormous challenges where NATO might be able to provide technical assistance, on request: for example, the Alliance has provided counter-improvised explosive device training to UN personnel deploying to operations in Africa. While there is still hesitation in some UN circles about closer cooperation with an Alliance that is still seen by some in an outdated Cold War context, over time both organisations should do much more together.

The European Union should, without doubt, be the organisation with which NATO cooperates most closely and actively. Twenty-two countries are members of both organisations, and both organisations are developing capabilities which would be paid for and used by the same member states. Both have personnel deployed in the same theatres of operation, from the Balkans to Afghanistan to the seas off the coast of Somalia. It is, to use the vernacular, a 'no brainer'. However, currently cooperation is hamstrung by political difficulties that are essentially external to both organisations. When those difficulties are removed – as inevitably they will be – it will unlock a level of political consultation, military cooperation and coordinated capability development which European taxpayers should have received for quite some time already.

## **Conclusion**

NATO's partnerships are a largely unseen, but hugely important part of the Alliance today. They contribute to the success of peace operations, support reform and stabilisation around the world, and provide the forum for consultations to build trust and meet common challenges together. This is an *acquis* well worth preserving.

As is the case for NATO itself, these partnerships face a fork in the road. In one direction, the end of ISAF may sap energy and direction from our partnerships so that they drift to a lower level of relevance, activity and output; the result would be less effective operations, slower reform, less understanding and a less stable world. In the other direction, we would build on the foundations we have already established and modernise our partnerships to deliver security in a post-ISAF but still very complicated security environment. With energy, focus and a shared understanding of the importance of partnership, that is the road we will travel.

## 2. Cooperative Security: A New Concept?

Ole Wæver

I have been given the task of examining the *concept* of cooperative security. This is an assignment that is both obvious and unreasonable – obvious, because for decades I have been talking perhaps too much about ‘concepts of security’ (e.g. Wæver 1997, 2012); unreasonable, because it will probably appear to many to be both unfair and unrealistically ambitious to expose a concept from the policy world to such an academic exercise. But then the whole idea behind the conference that was held in Copenhagen in June of this year was precisely to confront policy research with academic studies and vice versa. In this chapter I will therefore play my assigned role as the ‘hyper-academic’ looking at the NATO concept of ‘cooperative security’ as if it was really a concept of security. How does it fit into our thinking of security? Is this a new concept for how to think about security? What are the other concepts, and what is new about this concept?

In the following I will first look at cooperative security *logically as a concept* (yet another concept of security), asking whether it provides what a concept of security should. Secondly, and very briefly, I ask how we see cooperative security *strategically*, that is, *as an attempt*: what is it we are trying to do by launching this concept? The third step will be to look *systemically* at cooperative security by placing the concept in international reality, that is, what are the chances it will work if other actors out there are doing things as well? What will the concept realistically do in practice? It is not enough to consider the matter abstractly (as in the first part) because ‘as if concepts’ become real simply by being invented, or to assume, ideally and wishfully (as in the second part), that we can project our concept on to others in a one-directional manner. In addition, it is necessary to place our own actions in context as only one part of a larger reality. Then the difficult question is, what will our doings do when others do their things, that is, when we end up interacting with others?

### The Concept of Cooperative Security

So first, what is a concept of security? What does a concept of security do, and what do we expect of it? As emerged from the discussion on human security, it is potentially unfair to treat a policy concept as if it was an academic concept. A lot of academics have written long critiques of the concept of human security

as if it was a theoretical concept, as if it could be assessed in terms of its ability to play a key role in an explanatory theory or to clarify the essence of security in a manner that makes it possible to deduce the response to specific challenges consistently and unequivocally (i.e. outside politics) (see Paris 2001). Reacting to such criticism, practitioners from the UN have responded that this is not what the concept was meant to be. It was meant to be a guide and to provide a structure – even a vision – to crystallize decisions and policies. It does tell us something, they say.

Actually that is part of what we should ask of a concept. Concepts of security typically do two things. First, they say something about what security is – there is always an implicit or explicit statement about the nature of security involved in these concepts. Secondly, they are simultaneously saying something about how to bring it about, what it is we are supposed to do. Often the concept does not provide a solid bridge from one to the other. It is not really the case that, by producing a ‘definition’ of security, policies follow logically. Rather, a ‘concept of security’ evokes a certain sense of security in terms of both its core content and its praxeology (Aron 1966), that is, the preferability and problems of different possible strategies.

If we look at one of the classic concepts of security like collective security, this says that security is about having guarantees, having protection (cf. Wolfers 1940). The way to attain this is by means of a universal institution with mechanisms

Table 1. What is a concept of security? What does a concept of security do?

	What? What is security?	How? How do you get security?
<i>Collective security</i>	Guarantee/ protection	Universal institution, automatic mechanism
<i>Alliance security (collective defense)</i>	Defense	Sufficiently powerful group
<i>Environmental/economic/ political... security</i>	Substance/content	Functional solution, deal with the issue
<i>Human security</i>	Individual in last instance	Development! UN, states and NGOs together
<i>Cooperative security</i>	?	?



that automatically provide protection. This is in continuity with what security historically meant before the twentieth century, emphasising the ‘guarantee’ element more than later concepts that increasingly shifted the emphasis to defence and then to the necessity for extraordinary measures in general (Wæver 2012). Alliance security in turn defines defence as what security is about. And if you are in a sufficiently powerful group, this can be handled. Then come all the concepts discussed in the last thirty years, with an ever growing number of qualifiers in front of the word ‘security: we have environmental security, economic security, political security and societal security, which all point to the substance of security. Security is all about content, about dealing with different kinds of functional issues, often highlighted by this or that qualifier. For instance, ‘environmental security’ implies that, if you deal with the environment, you are providing security. Human security has been mentioned already. Its claim about the nature of security is that it is ultimately about the individual. It is not sufficient to bring security to all states – we have to measure policies in terms of how well they make people more secure. The accompanying guiding principles for policy are that in the long run ‘development is security’, and more immediately success demands bringing different actors together: getting the UN, states and non-state actors into synergy. (Again: I am not saying this policy is a supremely logical deduction from the ‘definition’, only that this is how the tune is played.)

Then what about cooperative security? Does it have an idea of *what security is* and what it is supposed *to do*? Technically, in the various key NATO documents mentioned throughout this publication, cooperative security is only one of three concepts, and it is not necessarily the overarching one. The Strategic Concept adopted November 2010 specifies three core tasks: collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security (NATO 2010: 7f). However, ‘cooperative security’ is often treated as if it is the overarching concept (as in this publication) because in some sense it is the most visionary and far-reaching idea. The two other concepts are well worn, and in some sense they tell what has been already achieved and institutionalised – they are not really ways to produce security for the future. Thus, ‘cooperative security’ is the intriguing new suggestion that deserves to be examined as to its carrying capacity.

One of the aims of this chapter is to be able to fill in the two empty boxes in the lower row of the table above – what is security, and how do you get security in the case of cooperative security (the new concept of security)?

## **Cooperative Security as a Strategy**

The second point can be dealt with briefly because I follow quite closely what Trine Flockhart has written in the introduction to this report. The strategy of cooperative security has to be seen in relation to a picture of a constellation of power, institutions and order. It is generally placed on a 'map' depicting a system where US power is an anchor of international order, with liberal institutions around this core, and around that again a certain world order. This is a very useful perspective to elaborate on, as Trine Flockhart and colleagues have shown in a number of publications. The argument is somewhat similar to Keohane's (1984) Hegemonic Stability Theory, which was popular in the 1980s (the last time the United States was perceived to be in decline) and which argued that cooperation was difficult to create without a hegemon, though once it had been created it could more easily be continued even after the hegemon's decline .

It is argued now that the 'Liberal World Order' is both a product of the power constellation with the US at the centre, and at the same time something distinct and more than this order. It has an independent ability to shape behaviour and events, and it can be modified and thus prolonged by creative policies regarding more specific institutions in the traditional sense of the word (secondary institutions in the theory outlined in the introduction; cf. Buzan 2004). Now specifically in relation to cooperative security, US power is retreating and part of the attempt to deal with this is to mobilize more partners. That strategy is entirely understandable, but on the other hand it is obviously a somewhat paradoxical and not eternally sustainable strategy because it is about trying to build on something that is being undermined at the same time. The strategy can work up to a certain tipping point, when the world is not centred anymore. The reasonable advice in this strategy is that, in a general pattern with the US at the centre, it is possible to some extent to compensate for the retreat of US power by strengthening other elements of the liberal order. However, this builds on a vision in which the world is sufficiently similar to the known one, because it has the US at its centre, around which the rest of the world is distributed.

In principle the tipping point can therefore be defined quite precisely, even if empirical observation of this will be complicated. When does a strategy devised as a holding operation for the waning centre lose its viability? The answer would appear to be when the centre is no longer the centre. When will we get to that point? Well, the uncomfortable and probably surprising answer is that we passed it half a decade ago! The strategy of cooperative security as presented here is thus

building on a picture of the past! We live in a multi-centred world already, and we have probably done so since 2008. The problems in relation to the big military operations of the West then merged with the financial crisis. The point is not whether the West is ultimately 'winning' or 'losing' in Afghanistan and Iraq (that will be a multi-dimensional question with several answers for years to come), but that the operations have disproved what they were intended to demonstrate regarding global power. The Iraq war in particular was designed by its main creators to show how easy it was for the US to put down any disobedient middle power, and how this would create a self-reinforcing process of states flocking to the pole of power as the rational strategy. Whether or not ultimately successful regarding Iraq and Afghanistan, both operations demonstrated clearly that this is not something the US can do quickly, easily or at will. Thus the message in relation to the distribution of global power and rational positioning turned out to be the opposite of the intended one. The message in the region, in other regions, in the US and for other great powers eventually became: the US *cannot* do such operations often and painlessly. Similarly, the economic crisis has broken the spell of the so-called 'Washington Consensus', where it would be self-punishing to challenge the authority of the centre regarding economic policy. With a global economic crisis sown in the US and nurtured by the EU, countries in the rest of the world are demonstrably disinclined to listen to instructions from the previous centre regarding their own economies.

'Cooperative security' as a strategy is wedded to a centred world (and can be clarified further through concepts like Flockhart's 'Liberal World Order' plus primary and secondary institutions). The terminology in the first part of the strategic concept does not sound 'centred' or 'hierarchical' – it is almost fully symmetrical, stressing that NATO is 'affected by and can affect' developments beyond its borders, will form 'partnerships' and contribute actively to arms control etc. However, when the concept is spelled out in the last third of the policy paper (NATO 2010: 23-32), symmetry is gone. The 'wide network of partner relations' is not such that one could equally turn the picture around and see any of the partners as the centre and NATO as one of the branches – it is a picture of others coalescing around NATO. This becomes most clear through the continued role of the enlargement perspective, that is, the consolidation of gradually more actors around one centre. However, it is short-sighted to keep devising policies that are built on a centred picture of the world. A familiar (and often unfair) saying has generals preparing for the previous war. It is probably more correct to say that civilian experts 'predict' the last international transformation and that leaders

coin a concept for the period we are about to leave. It would therefore be more helpful to have a clear picture of the kind of international system we may be entering, and more likely are already living in.

### Systemically as Global Reality

In the new picture of a world that is increasingly ‘un-centred’ and which, as Charles Kupchan (2012) suggests, ‘belongs to no one’, the challenges for cooperative security will look very different. Table 2 probably overstates the changes a little, but this is methodologically justified by the nature of power. International power is always about the situation to come. States act not necessarily on the basis of the power distribution today, but on what they think it will be in the future, because the latter is the basis for future rewards and punishment, protection and dependence. Therefore, future power already starts to count a bit before it arrives (in Danish history this has been displayed very clearly in periods when Germany was not at its full strength, but Danish decision-makers nonetheless acted on the assumption that it would eventually be more powerful). Therefore, what matters is generally the *direction* of power shifts and the anticipations of decision-makers.

Table 2. Change in the international system

<i>Post Cold War System (1990-2008)</i>	<i>Post-Western World (2008-)</i>
Near Unipolarity (1 superpower + 4 great powers + regions)	No superpower
Centred	Decentred globalism
Global dynamics	Weak global level
Appeals upwards	Regional + do-it-yourself
Moral authority of the West (Washington consensus)	Fix your own economic crisis! (and don't lecture us)
Values and principles	Historical justice; postcolonial climate
Power is in the future: You can be next on the US agenda	Power is in the future: BRICS and other forces of the East and the South

The basic structure of the emerging system is defined by the feature that there will be *no superpower*. Importantly, therefore, unipolarity is not giving way to a new bipolarity or a new multipolarity (which is what our existing predominant theoretical frameworks would lead us to expect) and which is often imagined in the form of a mixture of new powers arriving to challenge the existing superpower. What is likely to happen is rather that the US is leaving the league of superpowers (pulled by domestic concerns rather than pushed down by global rivals) and that no one else wants to (or is able to) be the superpower. Crucially too, there is no tight inter-linkage between the different global powers.

This is why the emerging order is not a global order based on multipolarity or a global bipolarity, but basically a system where all the major powers are anchored in different parts of the world and are all mostly concerned about internal and regional issues, but occasionally by interregional issues (i.e. neighbouring regions) or global issues when they want to be, though not consistently, systematically or predictably. Concepts like bipolarity or multipolarity can only capture the global distribution of power if these powers constitute amongst themselves a global level sub-system where they are of primary concern to each other. Historically, unipolarity, bipolarity and multipolarity happened at the regional level (notably in Europe, where the concepts were coined) in situations where the powers did define their policy in terms of the constellation they formed, and the (regional) balance of power was a systemic feature of immediate importance to these powers. They saw their national security as tied up directly with the evolution of this balance between the designated powers. The global level has been active in previous centuries because first the powers of one region (Europe) were so dominant that their direct competition could cover the entire world, then during the Cold War the two superpowers engaged in rivalry on a global scale, and finally, during the short 'post-Cold War era' (1990-2008), the US as the one superpower was the centre of a global order. However, we have for quite a while been drifting towards a situation where security becomes more regional (each region is mostly determined by its own actors) and the global level becomes weaker (no superpower remains, and the largest global powers will engage in global affairs only inconsistently) (Buzan and Wæver 2003).

This world can be characterised as one of decentred globalism (Buzan 2011) or as 'no one's world' (Kupchan, 2012). It is one that is basically weak at the global level in the sense that, where we have been used to always expecting that global powers are primarily driven by their relationship to each other, this is not the case to the same extent. The good news is that there is no global power rivalry as the driving endgame.

The bad news is that, whenever you want global cooperation, it will be very difficult to bring it about, because very few are willing to assume responsibility globally.

In this international system, there is no natural expectation that one part of the world has the privilege of always defining the terms, determining what is right and wrong and what is the truth of a situation. Whether or not this means the end of universal values depends on diligent diplomacy – it will not be settled by Western voices just insisting. The moral and epistemic authority of the West has declined. In the future, there will be different interpretations coming out of different parts of the world. For instance, in climate-change discussions, the Western press takes it for granted that ‘justice’ and ‘responsibility’ can be measured out in terms of ‘who emits how much CO<sub>2</sub>’. However, other parts of the world talk about historical justice, that is, cumulative emissions (Penetrante 2011). They also point to emissions per capita, but it is probably of more principled importance here that Western perspectives focus on abstract here-and-now principles, whereas other powers take a perspective that corresponds to post-colonial theory, in the sense that the world today can only be understood as one where both ‘centre’ and ‘periphery’ are products of their common, colonial history. This is even more easily observable on explicit ‘value’ issues, where the West presents abstract principles (for example, freedom of speech and freedom of the press), and some others (say Muslim countries) will look at a particular crisis in the light of who the parties are and what the historical relationship is. In the new world it will become increasingly clear that there are different ways of addressing issues, and ours will no longer necessarily be the defining one. This matters also in the military domain, because the pattern of conflicts will be shaped by the way the main actors define themselves and their counterparts (Wæver, forthcoming).

Geopolitically, however, the most important point is that this international system is neither a US-centred order nor a new global rivalry. *Both would make NATO automatically important, but in different ways.* It is rather a decentred globalism, a world of regions and equality in status. We might be at the centre of our own world, but we are not at the centre of others’ worlds. This offers a very different vision for NATO.

### **NATO – and its ‘Partners’**

There is a temptation to interpret NATO as primarily a political institution. It has been a recurring slogan since the end of the Cold War that NATO is now

less military and more political. This is basically wrong. NATO has become more military and less political in the sense that its unique qualification is obviously that it is a military institution matched by no one and has qualities and quantities that no one else can rival. NATO has an importance because of that. But seen as a political institution it is not very powerful (except in those rather few cases where the Alliance functions as a magnetic pole for other actors, which implies that its actual power is co-produced by and between NATO and those others). The Alliance cannot make decisions very efficiently, and automaticity as the expected political decision-making procedure is almost forgotten. Politically, NATO works as a rather loose coalition in shifting patterns, often in strange constellations, where not all members have to take part and where external partners sometimes are present too. This is all very well, but it begs the question of why NATO is able to do something like that. The answer is that as a military institution NATO can 'do stuff', and therefore there is a practical and material core that the shifting coalitions want to meet around. The bottom line is that it is the military qualities of the organisation, the unique competences and relevance, which make some members and partners want to define operations in relation to NATO and to draw on NATO.

The problem is that NATO's strength as a political organization, no longer matches its strength as a military organization. The easy way to see that is always to remember the question, could NATO be created today? No: if we were in the situation we are in today and we said, we would like to build NATO, we could not – it would be impossible to overcome the concerns about sovereignty and different economic interests. We have NATO today because we have inherited it from the past, based on the structure of that past, and for that we should count ourselves fortunate. We should be glad, and we should do all kinds of things to prevent or slow down the undermining that the new structure could cause, but we should recognize that NATO is the outcome of a structure that no longer fits the world of today.<sup>1</sup> Therefore it is not easy to make the accompanying political decisions. The hard questions relate to the incredible depth of integration that NATO has achieved in the military domain.

NATO is historically unique – the world has never seen anything like it. Usually countries cooperating on anything military will do so at a distance (and alliances were mostly pieces of paper of doubtful value). You could never get very intimate on something so dear to a country as the military. NATO has created unusually deep integration in the military domain, and it has overcome national resistances in



the past. Can we do it today? Can we actually do the same thing? Yes, in operations like Afghanistan to some extent we can bring in new countries on the established kinds of inter-operability. Can we recreate the integration by moving into relevant new areas? If we say that Special Forces are a very important domain today and that intelligence is increasingly important, do we achieve the depth of integration and overcoming of sovereignty concerns in the new areas in the same ways that NATO did in the past in the then relevant areas? No! It is politically difficult to create deep international cooperation in these fields, and without a threat of Soviet dimensions, it is impossible to create the 'necessity' needed to overcome national concerns. We cannot regenerate NATO. We can keep the NATO we have, but we cannot reinvent and recreate the 'NATO effect' as the importance of areas shift, and therefore we see a net effect of decline.

Addressing the visions of 'cooperative security' and 'partnerships' now calls for a more specific assessment of who can do what together with NATO. *Who will be partners and in what respects?* First come three things that are relatively nice to talk about – after that the task becomes increasingly difficult:

1. You can '*do NATO kind of things*' with new countries. There have been impressive examples in the recent past of having European neutrals or a country like Qatar come along as partners in specific military operations. Such achievements receive much public attention – this becomes the immediate image of 'partnerships' and 'cooperative security', but it is also the relatively easy part, using existing structures, doing familiar things, adding new participants on an ad hoc basis.
2. A more recent NATO mission is that of *shaping military and to some extent political structures* in countries by bringing them into NATO processes. This has been a great success in relation to Eastern Europe, and it might be replicated in other places. The importance of this effect should not be underestimated. It is easy to forget when viewing the world from a NATO country, but for most of history the military profession has been a core national and often nationalist factor in domestic politics, a primary locus of narrow and often confrontational approaches focused on national honour and history. NATO changed this, first in the original member states, and during enlargement increasingly in new countries too. In the NATO area, the military profession has become transnational, defined by professionalism and very conscious about appropriate civil–military relations. This is a valuable export article, and in a changing Middle East (even with the many contradictory developments), there will probably be possibilities for repeating this achievement.



3. To some extent, there is an expectation that *NATO leads international cooperation over new threats* such as WMD and cyber war. As other chapters in this volume outline, this is not without its successes, but it is still doubtful how far this can be pushed in a more multi-centred world.
4. Can we actually *redo NATO in the new military fields* and get the new countries to partake not only in *using* NATO, but also in *regenerating* what we are using in operations? Who will be part of new kinds of deep integration? Here the structural, causal effects kick in. Who is it the US is willing to do the sensitive kind of cooperation with, for example, in intelligence? Some of the neutrals in Europe (including Scandinavia) will sometimes be trusted more than some NATO members. But closest of all are probably the Anglo group of countries, the US, Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Canada, also known as the 'five eyes' intelligence community (FVEY, partly corresponding to AUSCANNZUKUS) (McGregor 2013). Most likely a very limited and informal group will attempt this kind of frontier integration with NATO. Such a development is very different from the original production of NATO as a form of deep military integration which covered the sensitive fields of that age for the whole membership group. In this respect, NATO seems unable to produce the sufficient cooperation both among members and in partnerships, except with a very few, very atypical countries. These select partners are sometimes mentioned in general presentations of the value and breadth of the general partnership development, but this hides the highly problematic tendency for the alliance to tilt towards a privileged cross-cutting constellation of intelligence insiders. The recent revelations about NSA and especially its internet activities are likely to generate intensified mistrust of this intelligence elite with structural advantages given the technological infrastructure of global communication in the internet age – a fault line that was actually detectable before Snowden and the press stories (Deibert 2013). It seems plausible that intensified cooperation on an alliance-wide scale will only be more difficult in a climate like this.
5. Finally we must ask the question of partners in the sense of who is going to *tolerate NATO* – to let NATO do things. In the Lisbon Declaration on the Strategic Concept (NATO 2010) and the different documents that flesh out our concept on the agenda (e.g. NATO 2011), 'cooperative security' includes disarmament and nuclear arms control. This implies that 'partnership' also means dealing with somewhat more difficult countries. An irony is that the same Lisbon Summit that put cooperative security (partly with Russia) on the agenda also included decisions on missile defence as another headline issue that drove Russia away at the same time. Similarly, the same Libya operation that serves as one of the

primary proofs of type 1 partnership (inclusion of surprising non-members in military operations) antagonised China and Russia (with a huge price to be paid by Syrians for the Chinese and Russian ‘lesson’ of not trusting again the US, NATO or the West to act on a UN mandate). Enacting cooperative security in relation to real powers that are needed for arms control, non-proliferation and UN mandates for operations, it becomes increasingly clear – not least with the 2013 developments over Syria – that progress comes only when cooperation is less hierarchical than in the past.

### **Cooperative Security?**

Now is the time to fill in the missing lower line of Table 1. What does the concept of ‘cooperative security’ say about the nature of security? It says something very valuable and true: that security is ultimately *relational*. (Write in the first empty box: ‘Relational’!) We do not have a security problem by, or with, ourselves. It will always be about others, so security is always relational, in the sense that it involves relations between different actors; ‘our security’ is not ours. Nor is security systemic, in the sense that one can define security top-down for a group, region or globally and solve it at the aggregate level. Security is something we each define for ourselves: each state defines what it sees as threats, what is the threshold for acceptable insecurity and what are the necessary actions to take when insecure. In that sense it is a relational concept anchored in units and their relations, not in the system, nor in the one political unit. It is a classic insight that the main problem in security is the security dilemma – how to manage the interaction of different insecurities. In that sense, a relational definition of the concept of security is actually in many ways better than classical national security, better than collective security and collective defence, and better than all the environmental, functional kinds of hyphenated security. *This is because cooperative security generates a focus on the relationships.* Cooperative security has an important message about the nature of security – generally valid, and particularly relevant in the current situation, where illusions are fading of how order can be imposed by one centre on the rest of the system.

But what does cooperative security tell us about what to do? I think what we have missed here is basically that cooperative security tells us to *listen*. (To be written in the second empty box.) You have to listen to the others because you really need to get the relationships right. But you also have to listen to the word itself: *co-operate!* Doing ‘stuff’ together. It is not about projecting anything from some place to another, nor about shaping. In the NATO declarations, most of the words

that flesh out cooperate security are quite one-directional, defined at the centre and telling what we are doing to or for the others and trying to get them to join in. Nothing moves the other way. That is not the nature of co-operation (or for that matter partnership). Co-operation (and partnership) means that you are coming together from different starting points. It means that sometimes actions originate on the outside, not the inside.

Cooperative security, the concept on our agenda, indicates that NATO is at an extremely important and interesting point in its history: security can be provided in the future only to the extent that the Alliance adapts to a world where it has no longer a privileged position. This might make it in some respects only more important, because the position of the West will be more precarious. But successes will year by year be less achievable by ‘projecting’, ‘shaping’ and ‘imposing’, and they will emerge instead from the relationships, from what different centres are able to co-produce, what operations can be operated together. Somehow an *intuition* of this has found its way into NATO jargon through concepts like cooperative security and partnerships, while they have so far predominantly been specified in ways that fit a previous age of first, bipolar rivalry, then unipolar dominance. In the emerging international system – after the post-Cold War system – the post-Western world of no superpowers and belonging to no one, the suggested means and tactics will not be able to deliver this kind of security, even though it has correctly been identified as the appropriate one. The headlines got it right, the texts got it wrong. That is, however, a promising development.

Cooperative security? Yes, that would be an excellent idea!

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> For this reason, today analytically minded scholars across theoretical positions tend to agree that NATO would be well advised to avoid overly ambitious projects, to convince politicians and publics of the value of the institution and to adjust to uphill conditions. Anecdotally, this might be illustrated by Kupchan (1998). In this publication, Charles Kupchan wanted the three primary theoretical schools in International Relations to be pinned out in different analyses of NATO. Dutifully, we demonstrated this – Stephen Walt as the neorealist, Charles Kupchan stood for liberal theory and I represented constructivism (and Europe!). Twenty years later Kupchan hid a reunion of the authors inside a NATO anniversary, and the three theorists now gave a surprisingly similar message to the conference (Wæver 2009) – one that, by the way, most policy-makers could agree to disagree with. Looking at NATO in the international system with more or less any imaginable theoretical perspective led to a recommendation of modesty; and policy-makers were more concerned about the need to generate high profile projects in order to keep up the momentum and commitment.

### **3. The ‘Partnerfication’ of NATO: From Wall-building to Bridge-building?**

*Magnus Christiansson*

Recently, NATO’s new partnership policy has become a hot topic in transatlantic studies.<sup>1</sup> It has often been regarded as a product of changing geopolitical factors, or, in the words of one scholar, ‘due to a dramatic decline in American power’<sup>2</sup>. This is a perspective that has dominated the debate over the past few years, and it is of course essential for the story we tell about NATO’s new partnership policy. It is notable that the foundation for this reasoning is the idea that major shifts in NATO’s doctrine must be related to strategic initiatives from the US. This is not to say that the US is imposing an alliance of democracies, but rather that it is the key actor in any process of major change in doctrine and strategy.

However, ‘American decline’ is too rough a term for fully understanding the emergence of cooperative security and the new partnership agenda. In this chapter, I will try to make the case that there are also other factors driving the new globalized partnership agenda. According to senior US leaders, partnership arrangements are becoming an integrated part of contemporary military operations. I will illustrate this through a short analysis of three official speeches on the executive level in the US. These speeches are noteworthy as they form a discursive chain of command from the Commander-in-Chief via the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander Europe around the period when cooperative security and the new partnership agenda were starting to be implemented. Furthermore, they are instrumental in the interpretation of the various military doctrines that are a part of the new globalized partnership agenda. In the last section of this chapter, I will make a few critical remarks about the potential consequences of the new partnership policy for NATO.

First, we need to conclude that there is something vital missing in current research on NATO’s partnerships.<sup>3</sup> The main focus has been on questions about the degree of strategy or pragmatism involved in the Alliance’s policy. One of the most important conclusions is that there have been many different calculations of utility by both partners and NATO. Four different forms of partnership arrangement are identified: as complement to a US relationship (like Australia, Egypt and Israel), as potential members (like Georgia and Ukraine), as complement to EU

membership (like Austria, Finland and Sweden) and as potential NATO partners (like Argentina and Pakistan). Another important conclusion is that there does not seem to have been much strategy involved in the building of partnerships. This lack of strategy has created a relatively generous role for partners and suggests a predominantly 'partner-driven' or 'consumer-driven' process.<sup>4</sup>

However, there have been no systematic attempts to include the New Partnership Policy or the Lisbon Summit in 2010 or the US strategic guidance of 2012.<sup>5</sup> As Trine Flockhart concludes in the introductory chapter of this report, the 'fourth stream' of partnership initiatives after the Lisbon Summit is indeed different because they are regarded as a means for the Alliance to shape an international liberal order. The term 'partnership' is perhaps a bit misleading as it originates from the early 1990s, but it has a completely different connotation in the 2010 Strategic Concept. It needs to be situated in a changing strategic context.

The intellectual roots for the 'fourth stream' can be traced back to the late years of George W. Bush's presidency (2006-2009). The idea of a 'Global NATO' was advocated by think-tankers Ivo Daalder and James Goldgeiger, really as a confirmation of what was already happening: 'With little fanfare – and even less notice – the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has gone global.'<sup>6</sup> However, there was actually a bit of fanfare as the idea of a global NATO was pushed diplomatically at the Riga Summit in November 2006.<sup>7</sup> These were early signals of a break from the established US strategic formula that had been practiced since WWII of 'Europe first'.

It should be noted that this agenda continued after the presidential election of 2008. When Barack Obama did not attend the celebrations over the fall of the Berlin Wall or the memorial of the outbreak of WWII in 2009, and later cancelled his attendance at the US-EU summit in 2010, it was reasonable to conclude that the US had other global priorities. It became obvious that bridging the transatlantic rift would not mean going back to the transatlantic bonds of the latter part of the twentieth century. In rhetoric this global focus was signalled by a more frequent use of the term 'partners', in contrast to the traditional term 'allies'. The standard phrasing of 'friends and allies' commonly used by US presidents slowly gave way to a more loose discourse about global partners. Ultimately the US effort was successful, and at the 2009 Strasbourg/Kehl summit the phrase 'partners across the globe' was introduced with reference to countries like Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea.

At the Lisbon Summit in 2010 a new task, cooperative security, was introduced alongside collective defence and international crisis management. Cooperative security is accomplished through 'a wide network of partner relationships with countries and organizations around the globe.'<sup>8</sup> The 'Berlin package' adopted in April 2011 by the foreign ministers in Berlin created one single menu of partnership activities for a flexible and pragmatic approach beyond the geographically based partnership groupings.<sup>9</sup> The rationale has several times been underscored by Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen: 'In today's world we need global cooperation to ensure peace and stability.'<sup>10</sup>

When the strategic priorities of the US were articulated in 2011 and 2012 (two key events were Obama's speech to the Australian parliament in November 2011 and the release of the Strategic Guidance in January 2012), it became obvious that the new partnership agenda in the Alliance was closely connected to what the media picked up as the 'pivot to Asia'. As the neo-realists would have it, the changing distribution of power produces different forms of behaviour among the units in the system. Geopolitical changes have been a driver for change, and the US has adjusted its policy for the Alliance. 'Pivot to Asia' is close to a textbook example.

However, in the following section I will briefly expand on a few additional factors that re-focus our attention somewhat on a military operational perspective. These factors are related to what Clausewitzian scholars call 'the changing character of war'. Entirely unlike earlier research, this indicates that the new partnership policy is not partner-driven, but rather US-driven.

### **The Military Perspective: Networking and Access**

In current research on partnerships, there is often a rough distinction between 'political utility' and 'military utility'.<sup>11</sup> The argument is that the early partnership efforts were driven by the former, while the period after 9/11 made the latter more important. Admittedly it is widely recognized that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the two, but more importantly it is also clear that 'political' versus 'military' utility does not fully capture the driving factors of the 'fourth stream'. Rather than being seen as military contributions to US-led interventions (burden-sharing), the notion of military utility must be connected to a new set of emerging military operational doctrines. As we will note in the following, in the eyes of senior US officials, partners are increasingly becoming indispensable for the battlefields of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

*General Martin Dempsey (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff)*

On 1 May 2012, General Martin Dempsey gave a talk at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.<sup>12</sup> The theme was how to make strategy work, with an obvious reference to the Strategic Guidance. Making strategy work is based on three ways of working: rebalancing, partnerships and integration of capabilities.<sup>13</sup> The first way relates to the geostrategic changes. However, the second way of building partners is 'not of necessity because we'll be doing less'. Dempsey elaborates on this as follows:

I've described it as a security paradox, where although evolutionary – we're at an evolutionary low in violence in the world right now. But it doesn't feel like that really, does it? And it doesn't feel like that because the – there's a proliferation of capabilities, technologies to middle-weight actors, non-state actors that actually make the world feel and potentially be more dangerous than any time I remember in uniform ... And it's not a paradox that necessarily has to be met with bigger military forces. I think it's a paradox that has to be met with different military forces. And among the things that will make that work are our ability to build on existing partnerships around the globe, notably the North Atlantic Alliance – others as well, but – and then emerging partners around the globe.<sup>14</sup>

The security paradox that Dempsey is describing is a paradoxical operational environment that implies a hidden dimension of conflict. The notion of a 'security paradox' rests on the assumption of a calm surface and a confrontation under the surface. In order to confront actors with harmful capabilities, the US is working in a more decentralized way with partners around the globe. But this new way of operating requires not only partners for 'intelligence sharing, technology transfer, and foreign military sales'.<sup>15</sup> The US is trying to develop a new type of warfare that integrates different parts of government, different sorts of military capabilities and its partners across the globe – 'a global networked approach to warfare'.<sup>16</sup>

Different concepts of 'networks' in warfare have been around since the end of the Cold War. Many of these visions have rarely been more than technocratic dreams wrapped up in buzzwords. They have probably been a vaccine for an entire generation of Western officers that now protects them from Power Point-driven fantasies about future warfare. However, as Dempsey pointed out, today there are robust technological systems with capabilities that '15 years ago certainly would



have been the stuff of a science fiction novel.<sup>17</sup> Simply, networks have moved from the Power-Point slides to become a part of operational practices.

*Admiral James Stavridis (Supreme Allied Commander Europe, SACEUR)*

On 26 June 2012 Admiral James Stavridis gave a speech in Edinburgh with the title 'Open-source Security'.<sup>18</sup> Starting with a *tour de force* of twentieth-century security, he gave a very rhapsodic account of some battlefields of the past and the tendency to create defensive walls of different sort. However, looking at the contemporary security situation, his conclusion was that 'We continue to build walls ... The Maginot Line, The Berlin Wall, the Iron Curtain. But walls don't work.'<sup>19</sup> It might seem somewhat counter-intuitive to describe a liberal alliance that confronted the creators of an Iron Curtain as wall-builders. It is certainly a misguided metaphor for describing the late-modern societies of NATO during the Cold War. But from a strategic angle, NATO's defence posture of a Forward Defence 'layer cake' actually made entire countries part of a fortification system designed for a military confrontation.<sup>20</sup> In using the metaphor of wall-building, Stavridis seemed to refer to the tendency to create static defence systems to protect territory.

Using a reference to the bridge of the Drina River in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Stavridis made the point that 'instead of building walls to create security we need to build bridges.'<sup>21</sup> The metaphor of building bridges is central to the concept of open-source security, but it is not only about building bridges between former adversaries (like in the Balkans). Rather, 'Open-source security is about connecting the international, the inter-agency, the private/public, and lashing it together with strategic communication.'<sup>22</sup> In essence, this is very similar to the idea of developing new capabilities for warfare expressed by General Dempsey. They point in a similar direction: new military capabilities that need to be networked rather than being static. Much like the 'security paradox', open-source security is driven by a concern for US interests in globalization. Admiral Stavridis put this in the following words: 'Our global commons are under attack. None of the sources of threat to the global commons will be solved by building walls.'<sup>23</sup> The key role of the global commons is also central to the Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC)<sup>24</sup> that was adopted in January 2012. The global commons is the area that belongs to no one state. Hence, the term refers to a vital operational location where the Liberal World Order is to be defended and maintained.

According to JOAC, partners are critical for US operational performance. Their value is not only related to intelligence, but to the access to forward bases that 'can



assure partners and deter adversaries.<sup>25</sup> This take on partnerships is related to the notion of A2/AD (Anti-Access/Area Denial) that is very similar to Dempsey's argument about the proliferation of technology that threatens US ability to move into a theatre and permit operational manoeuvres there.<sup>26</sup> The implications are rather bleak: there are no safe havens any more. In a crisis situation, from the moment US carrier groups leave their bases they will be subject to A2/AD systems. This makes it difficult to reach an operational area (like the South China Sea), but also it becomes increasingly difficult to move and operate in targeted areas. It is tempting to regard JOAC as a 'strike doctrine' rather than a doctrine for a slow build-up, and this strongly suggests that the US will actively hit any threats to operational access. However, it is worth noting that this is not an American solo act. According to JOAC, a key precept is 'engagement activities' (exercises, basing and transit rights, roles and responsibilities and more).<sup>27</sup> The value of partners thus represents a different military utility than burden-sharing in, for example, Afghanistan.

#### *President Barack Obama*

Finally, on 23 May 2013 President Obama gave a speech at the National Defence University at Fort McNair, Washington D.C.<sup>28</sup> In this speech Obama communicated a 'comprehensive strategy'.<sup>29</sup> The strategic aim is to deny terrorists access to resources, be it territory, funding or manpower. The tools and methods of the strategy are based on four components: targeted action against terrorists, effective partnerships, diplomatic engagement and assistance. Thus, the strategic idea is to build operational methods that combine and integrate elements to deal with US security challenges. It is not based on a liberal ideological offensive (Global War on Terror) or grand-scale social engineering of foreign societies (Afghanistan), but rather on a global continuous, flexible disruption campaign:

Beyond Afghanistan, we must define our effort not as a boundless 'global war on terror' – but rather as a series of persistent, targeted efforts to dismantle specific networks of violent extremists that threaten America. In many cases, this will involve partnerships with other countries.<sup>30</sup>

These 'targeted efforts to dismantle specific networks of violent extremists' have been at the heart of a heated debate in the US. Perhaps the most controversial aspect has been the remotely piloted vehicles/aircrafts (RPV or RPA, often referred to as drones) and the ethical and legal issues related to their use. The US president has developed operational procedures to make specific as well as area attacks (signature strikes) using RPVs to stress and disrupt the leadership of terrorist networks. The

critical debate about ‘Obama’s drone war’ pressed the administration to explain and clarify its policy in public.<sup>31</sup> However, it is worth noting that RPVs are just one technical system among others and that the US uses a whole range of capabilities in this struggle: from Special Forces via cyber systems to human intelligence. In essence, in his speech President Obama is referring to something similar to open-source security and a networked approach to warfare.

To conclude, we can identify two US operational frameworks: networking and access (Figure 1 below).

Figure 1. US Operational Frameworks

	<i>Networking</i>	<i>Access</i>
<i>Focus</i>	Decapitation	Deterrence
<i>Concept</i>	Transnational shadow war (a global networked approach to warfare)	Strike concept (JOAC)
<i>Execution</i>	Surveillance/policing (dismantle specific networks of violent extremists)	Engagement activities (bridge-building)
<i>Common features</i>	Global commons, intelligence, partners	

Both frameworks are summarized in JOAC as ‘the ability to project force both into the global commons to ensure their use and into foreign territory as required.’<sup>32</sup> Operational networking is centred on the ‘decapitation’ of enemies. From the deserts of Yemen to the mountains of Waziristan, the US is engaged in a global or transnational ‘shadow war.’<sup>33</sup> This is not ‘international crisis management’ in NATO vocabulary, but rather something similar to the colonial policing activities of the nineteenth century. It is intelligence-driven (without it there will be no targets), and partner-based (without local base logistics and intelligence it would be impossible). Moreover, operational access is centred on deterrence in Asia, and across the Pacific region the US is now focused on building bases and a credible presence to deter any Chinese aggression. As such the approach is geopolitically driven and partner-based. Thus, partnerships are central to both frameworks. Just as collective defence was the backbone of the containment strategy during the Cold War, so are partnerships

the backbone of the contemporary US strategy. In rhetorical terms: partners are created by building bridges, not walls. This is the strategic context, and arguably one of the main drivers of the new partnership policy in NATO. In the final part of this chapter, I will briefly discuss a few implications of this policy.

### **The 'Partnerfication' of NATO**

The strategic logic of NATO's new partnership policy is to make NATO the benchmark for cooperation with numerous partners that the US needs for its strategy. The new partnership policy seeks to keep NATO on the agenda in an era when military operations are making global partnerships necessary. Essentially, according to this logic there is no enemy or threat that could be handled without partners.<sup>34</sup> This is why one can make an argument about a 'partnerfication' of NATO.

In the strict sense of the word the Alliance is not falling apart. NATO is actually being used as a tool by the US, albeit with the difference that there is a new *modus operandi* involved. The US seeks to build on a security organization (with firm credentials) in which it has a leading role in order to avoid pushing NATO into strategic irrelevance. This is an important answer to the question of why the US prefers to use NATO instead of only establishing bilateral relations. This development makes it unlikely that NATO post-ISAF will return to a 'more introvert, regional, and classic military Alliance'.<sup>35</sup> As indicated in the previous parts of this chapter, the alternative to international crisis management has not been to withdraw from global engagement, but rather to secure global interests in other ways. Furthermore, the character of the driving military requirements (networking and access) is partly an explanation of why it is problematic to address a strategic narrative for the Alliance beyond 2014.<sup>36</sup>

The process of 'partnerfication' makes it necessary to revisit the strategic logic of 'contribution to operations'. Geographical location or liberal virtues are not the governing principles, but rather whether partner countries can contribute to either networking and/or access. That is why it is very misleading to only have state-building operations and contributions to counterinsurgencies when measuring the value of partnerships.<sup>37</sup>

If the 'partnerfication' is successful, it will certainly make the Alliance more flexible. Partnerships and bridge-building are more adaptable than wall-building among a

fixed set of allies. A successful 'partnerfication' could also mean that NATO becomes the 'defender of the crown' in that it secures the global commons. Globalization would still be based on a Liberal World Order, and the US would maintain a leading position in the world's security governance. This agenda is often supported by long-term trend analysis: for example, in a recent strategic scenario for 2025, it is argued that 'expeditionary warfare' against an 'aggressive regime in the Middle East' is highly likely, while 'territorial defence' against 'threats to the European homeland' is less likely.<sup>38</sup>

However, a fundamental problem with this development is that the rhetoric of 'increasingly global security challenges'<sup>39</sup> reflects the world view in Washington and London, but not in Tallinn, Riga or Vilnius.<sup>40</sup> Partnerfication is built on bridge-building, but there are still many allies that identify a need for solid wall-building. In particular, countries like Norway, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland have pushed for a renewed emphasis on Article V, Planning and Exercise, while countries like the UK and Denmark have had an active policy for the globalized agenda. Clearly, to some member states there are threats that must be met without any partners. To them pragmatic partnership with Russia is not enough, perhaps not even a good idea. They want allies and credible reassurance, not partners and flexibility. While this split in world views is relatively easy to detect, its implications are far more complex to calculate.

The US perspective is based on the assumption that major military operations in Europe will not be necessary for the foreseeable future and that American capabilities could be sent at a moment of crisis. The US military presence in Europe is relatively limited, and its planned participation in, for example, the Article V exercise 'Steadfast Jazz' in 2013 is arguably symbolic.<sup>41</sup> Even if some allies want to return NATO to being merely a regional defence organization with its primary focus on territorial defence, the lack of solid US backing for such a project makes this a vision with little connection to reality.

Rather, if NATO's primary role is to set the benchmark for standards and operations among US partners around the world, then it will continue to be a weak political entity and a 'dispersed toolbox'<sup>42</sup> that participants in military operations can plug into. A dispersed toolbox is the equilibrium of a lack of American leadership in European security, a fragmented Europe and diverging threat perceptions across the Atlantic. While this situation is not a concern from a US perspective, there are several aspects of this development that could be a cause for concern in the years ahead.

The main reason for concern is that it is quite possible to tell another story of the geopolitical situation in Europe: the US is pivoting to Asia, while the economic crisis is resulting in a 'centrifugal Europe'<sup>43</sup> where Germany is becoming the centre and Russia is becoming politically unstable and more authoritarian, with growing military capabilities. This situation is actually the reverse of Lord Ismay's famous dictum: the Americans are out, the Germans are up and the Russians are in. Seen from this perspective, the agenda of 'increasingly global security challenges' becomes more problematic, making possible a critical perspective of the 'partnerfication' of NATO: is this the time to abandon Europe militarily? What role will the wall-builders have in a world without clear leadership? The geopolitical situation in Europe suggests that the 'partnerfication' of NATO is problematic for many European countries.

This alternative take on contemporary geopolitics in the strategic context relates to what seems to be the end of the Obama administration's 'reset policy' towards Russia, following the cancelled summit with Vladimir Putin in the summer of 2013. After some initial success with the 'reset' (transit agreement to Afghanistan, a new START of nuclear reductions and Russian membership in WTO), recent developments have strained US-Russian relations severely. The plans for missile defence in Europe, the Libyan campaign in 2011, the Snowden affair and not least the situation in Syria has contributed to a cooler geopolitical climate. The slowly evolving policy alternative to the failing relationship with the Kremlin has so far been influenced by an ambition not to let Russia get in the way of other pressing foreign-policy priorities.

Partnerships have, to a large extent, been in the interests of the European partners. This has given them the opportunity to contribute to NATO's conventional military operations and thus gain a certain strategic influence in return. The partner countries' self-perception is often that they are 'security partners and security producers'.<sup>44</sup> The first official visit of a US president to Sweden in September 2013, combined with a working dinner in the US-Nordic format, has reinforced the 'partnerfication' trend. From a strategic point of view, the signal could be read as appreciation for a country that has been an active partner but has remained outside Article V, or as former US Deputy Undersecretary of Defense Dov Zakheim recently put it, 'synergizing with friends in addition to NATO'.<sup>45</sup> How the changing geopolitical climate and the Article V exercises in the Baltic Sea region will affect the partner countries is an open question: both Finland and Sweden will take part in NATO Response Force (NRF) exercises, and Sweden actually hosted the 'Northern Coats' 2013 exercise.

But a close relationship to the Alliance has not resulted in an active debate about membership. Thus, one implication of the ‘partnerfication’ could be that some of the European partners are returning to a historically well-known pattern of discreet defence cooperation with NATO.

To conclude, as ‘partnerfication’ is essentially a Washington-driven process, much of its impact and many of its future prospects are dependent on the general status of the US in the international system. Though there will be many uncertainties in the coming years, it seems likely that the drivers for ‘partnerfication’ (geopolitical changes and the changing character of war) are here to stay. Thus, it is time for the small European countries to draw strategic conclusions from this development. After all, the fundamental strategic question for any small country is which major power(s) to cooperate with when dealing with its security challenges. There are at least four reasons why the ‘partnerfication’ process challenges many of the small European countries – members and partners alike – in a profound way.

First, a solid US military presence is not on the agenda, which means that the credibility of Article V is in question. Secondly, the conventional international crisis management operations are not on the agenda, ruling out the relatively easy way of gaining some strategic influence. Thirdly, many of the small European countries do not have the capabilities that are necessary for the operational framework’s networking and access. Fourthly, many of the small European countries do not have the political room for manoeuvre to take an active part in a transnational shadow war.

The wall-builders in Europe are likely to advocate some sort of strategic return to Europe. The idea of a fully-fledged ‘offshore balancing’ (as put forward by John Mearsheimer<sup>46</sup>) in NATO is intellectually coherent, but it rests on the notion that Europe can be a good fort on the border before the US cavalry arrives. However, Europe’s dwindling defence capabilities make it difficult to project it as a proper military bastion. And it might just be that whatever US cavalry is left will be busy somewhere else in a time of crisis. On the other hand, the great challenge for the bridge-builders in Europe is to keep up with the technological and political demands of networking and access. While many European governments lack the military hardware or political stomach for many operations in the global shadow war, there might be a limited role in protecting other parts of the global commons. The key to bridge-builders, it seems, is to rethink the very meaning of military utility.

### 3. The 'Partnerfication' of NATO: From Wall-building to Bridge-building?

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The author would like to thank Jan Ångström, Magnus Petersson, Ann-Sofie Dahl, Kjell Engelbrekt and Charlotte Wagnsson for their comments on an earlier draft of this chapter.

<sup>2</sup> Sean Kay, 'Partnerships and Power in American Grand Strategy', in Håkan Edström, Janne Haaland Matlary and Magnus Petersson (eds.), *NATO: The Power of Partnerships*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Arguably the first systematic attempt to deal with partnerships is the anthology *The Power of Partnerships*, *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Håkan Edström, Janne Haaland Matlary and Magnus Petersson, 'Utility for NATO – Utility of NATO?', in Edström, Haaland Matlary and Petersson, *NATO: The Power of Partnerships*, p. 12.

<sup>5</sup> In *The Power of Partnerships*, the authors try to write the history and categorize the development of the partnership agenda in the Alliance. While an original contribution, the communique of the 2009 Strasbourg/Kehl Summit is considered to be 'the latest': Stephan Frühling and Benjamin Schreer, 'The "Natural Ally"? The "Natural Partner"? Australia and the Atlantic Alliance', in Edström, Haaland Matlary and Petersson (eds.), *NATO: The Power of Partnerships*, p. 45.

<sup>6</sup> Ivo Daalder and James Goldgeiger, 'Global NATO', *Foreign Affairs* September/October 2006.

<sup>7</sup> However, in the words of former NATO spokesperson Jamie Shea, it 'did not fly' (conversation at NATO HQ, Brussels, September 2006.) In many ways the Riga Summit continued a process that had already started at the Istanbul Summit in 2004.

<sup>8</sup> Lisbon Summit Declaration, Press Release (2010) 155, 20 November 2010.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Heidi Reisinger, *Rearranging Family Life and a Large Circle of Friends: Reforming NATO's Partnership Programmes*, NATO Defense College Research Paper no. 72 January 2012, p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> Anders Fogh Rasmussen, *Push for Partnership Progress*, Secretary General's blog, 18 July 2012.

<sup>11</sup> Edström, Haaland Matlary and Petersson (eds.), *NATO: The Power of Partnerships*, chapter 1, *passim*.

<sup>12</sup> Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *A conversation with General Martin Dempsey* Washington: Carnegie, 2012 (<http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/05/01/conversation-with-general-martin-dempsey/acqo>).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> ACUS, *Video: How NATO's Supreme Commander thinks about global security*, (<http://www.acus.org/natosource/video-how-natos-supreme-commander-thinks-about-global-security>)

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> More can be found on the Forward Defence doctrine in Richard L. Kugler, *NATO's Future Defence Strategy in Central Europe Theater Employment Doctrine for the Post-Cold War Era*, RAND, 1991.

<sup>21</sup> ACUS, *Video: How NATO's Supreme Commander thinks about global security*.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Department of Defense, *Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC)* (Washington: DoD, 2012).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7. See also p. 18. The operational area must be prepared long before any military engagement. Any force commander must engage with partners to find common ground and create a favourable operational environment.

<sup>26</sup> The position of partners is shown in an illustration in *ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>28</sup> The White House, *Remarks by the President at the National Defence University*, Washington: The White House, 2013.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> One example is John Brennan's speech at Wilson Center, 'The efficacy and ethics of U.S. counter terrorism strategy', 30 April 2012; see <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/the-efficacy-and-ethics-us-counterterrorism-strategy>.

<sup>32</sup> Department of Defense, *Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC)*, p. 2.

<sup>33</sup> The term is elaborated by Andrew Bacevich, Professor of history and international relations at Boston University, in his 'America's Rising Shadow Wars' (<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2012/05/special-operations->



military-obama-global-war-ussocom). In a recent book he settles for the term 'permanent war'; see Andrew Bacevich, *Washington Rules: America's Path to Permanent War*, Metropolitan, 2010. Steve Niva uses the term 'transnational shadow war'; see Steve Niva, 'Disappearing violence: JSOC and the Pentagon's new cartography of networked warfare', in *Security Dialogue* 44(3), p. 186. A few useful references to the global shadow war include Brian Glyn Williams, 'CIA's Covert Predator Drone War in Pakistan, 2004–2010: The History of an Assassination Campaign', in *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 33 (10): 871-892; Michael J. Boyle, 'The costs and consequences of drone warfare', in *International Affairs* 89/1 (2013): 1–29; and Caroline Holmqvist, 'Undoing War: War Ontologies and the Materiality of Drone Warfare', in *Millennium – Journal of International Studies* (2013) 41: 535.

<sup>34</sup> This was clearly expressed in a recent speech by former British Chief of the Defence Staff, General Sir David Richards: 'Whoever the enemy, wherever the threat, we will need partners', Ministry of Defence, *Chief of the Defence Staff General Sir David Richards speech to the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI)* London: Ministry of Defence, 2012.

<sup>35</sup> Magnus Petersson, 'NATO's "Neutral" Partners Post ISAF: Back to the Future?' in *Strategie und Sicherheit 2013: Chancen und Grenzen europäischer militärischer Integration*, Wien, Köln and Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2013.

<sup>36</sup> The need for a narrative has been addressed in Karl-Heinz Kamp, *NATO's 2014 Summit Agenda*, NATO Defense College Research Paper no. 97, 2013, p. 8.

<sup>37</sup> An example includes Karl-Heinz Kamp and Heidi Resinger, *NATO's Partnerships After 2014: Go West!* NATO Defense College Research Paper no. 92 May 2013, p. 5.

<sup>38</sup> Antonio Missiroli (ed.), *Enabling the future. European capabilities 2013-2025: challenges and avenues*, Brussels: EUISS, 2013, p. 26.

<sup>39</sup> Rebecca R. Moore, 'Lisbon and the Evolution of NATO's New Partnership Policy', *PERCEPTIONS*, Spring 2012, Volume XVII, Number 1, p. 56.

<sup>40</sup> The different strategic positions in the Alliance are covered in Timo Noetzel and Benjamin Schreer, 'Does a multi-tier NATO matter? The Atlantic Alliance and the process of strategic change', *International Affairs*, Vol. 85, No. 2, 2009, pp. 211-226; and Timo Noetzel and Benjamin Schreer, 'NATOs Vietnam? Afghanistan and the Future of the Atlantic Alliance' *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 30, No. 3, 2009, pp. 529-547.

<sup>41</sup> Luke Coffey, 'Steadfast Jazz 2013 and America's Commitment to NATO', The Heritage Foundation, *Issue Brief #3921*, 2013.

<sup>42</sup> Stephan de Spiegeleire and Rem Korteweg, 'Future NATOs', in *NATO Review* Summer 2006.

<sup>43</sup> Charles A. Kupchan, "Centrifugal Europe" *Survival*, Vol. 54, No. 1 2012.

<sup>44</sup> Ann-Sofie Dahl and Pauli Jarvenpää (eds.), *Northern Security and Global Politics: Nordic-Baltic strategic influence in a post-unipolar world*, Routledge, 2013, Chapter 10.

<sup>45</sup> Expressed in conversation in Stockholm at the Swedish National Defence College, 24 September 2013. As Zakheim also pointed out, 'Half of NATO is not working with us'.

<sup>46</sup> See, for example, John J. Mearsheimer, 'Imperial by Design', *The National Interest*, January-February 2011.



## **4. Partners, the Pivot, and Liberal Order**

*Rebecca R. Moore*

Seeking to implement NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept, which designated cooperative security as one of the Alliance's three 'essential core tasks', the Allies adopted a new partnership policy in Berlin in April 2011, aimed at facilitating 'more efficient and flexible' partnership arrangements with a growing and increasingly diverse assortment of partners.<sup>1</sup> In extending opportunities for practical cooperation and dialogue with NATO to partners beyond and across existing partnership frameworks, the Berlin agreement also reflected the United States' insistence that existing and prospective NATO partnerships must become more functional and that NATO's overall focus must become more global. Indeed, in its own 2010 National Security Strategy, the Obama administration argued that responding effectively to an increasingly global array of security challenges and, ultimately, 'promoting a just and sustainable international order' would require engagement with a diverse assortment of partners, ranging from traditional liberal democratic allies to 'other 21<sup>st</sup> century centers of influence – including China, India, and Russia.'<sup>2</sup>

Simply opening the door to a broader range of partners, however, has not necessarily served to resolve key issues that have long plagued intra-alliance debates over the form and function of NATO's partnerships. Not only has developing new and old partnerships under the Berlin policy proved more difficult than some originally anticipated, new concerns have also arisen as to how the Alliance will sustain its relationships with Asia-Pacific partners after 2014, when the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan is scheduled to end and regular meetings with partner contributors to that mission will cease. Although NATO has made significant efforts to engage key contributors to the ISAF mission in political dialogue, such as Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea, its principal focus has been the operational value of these partners. Consequently, the Allies have devoted relatively little attention to the purpose of these partnerships beyond Afghanistan, including a possible role for Asian partners in sustaining an international order grounded in the liberal democratic values enshrined in the preamble to the original NATO Treaty. Indeed, despite a general consensus at NATO in favour of global partners, the Allies have yet to reach a consensus regarding the ultimate purpose of NATO's partnerships in a strategic environment in which threats are increasingly global and the Asia-Pacific region is enjoying rapid growth in its political, economic and military power. Although not all of NATO's

European members have been as enthusiastic as the United States regarding a more globally oriented NATO, the key issue that neither the United States nor its European allies have fully resolved has to do not so much with whether NATO needs global partners, but rather with the role of these partners in sustaining the liberal order to which NATO has dedicated itself since its inception in 1949.

### **The Multiple Functions of NATO's Partnerships**

Since the establishment of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) in 1994, NATO's partnerships have served multiple functions, which have varied over time and by geographical location. NATO's initial partnership efforts were aimed primarily at the democratization of Central and Eastern Europe and enlargement of the liberal security order constructed in Western Europe during the Cold War years. Both PfP and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) – particularly following the decision to admit new members in 1994 – served as critical instruments for assisting aspirant states in implementing the liberal democratic practices expected of NATO members. In the wake of September 11, however, the United States encouraged NATO to devote more attention to enhancing relations with existing partners in the Caucasus and Central Asia, as well as to deepening or developing new partnerships in the Middle East (i.e., the Mediterranean Dialogue [MD] and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative [ICI]) in the interest of equipping NATO for increasingly global threats such as terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, illegal arms-trafficking and piracy. While NATO's partnership efforts in Central and Eastern Europe during the 1990s focused on 'projecting stability' eastward, largely by encouraging changes in the internal behaviour of prospective NATO members, partnership in the post-September 11 era was aimed primarily at projecting stability beyond Europe by encouraging partners – both those with and those without membership aspirations – to contribute in some capacity to NATO's military missions in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq. In short, partnership was now as much about what partners could do for NATO as it was about what NATO could do for partners (Moore 2007).

NATO's adoption of the ISAF mission in Afghanistan in 2003 also prompted greater interest in non-European partners, beginning with the five Central Asian members of the PfP (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan), all of which had provided various forms of assistance (e.g. military bases, transit routes, refuelling facilities and cooperation on border security) critical to NATO's ability to operate effectively in Afghanistan. Additionally, the mission served to enlarge the

circle of NATO partnerships to include liberal democratic allies in Asia, including Australia, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea, all of which had emerged as key contributors to the Afghanistan mission at a time when many NATO members were reluctant to provide the troops or other resources deemed critical by NATO commanders. Although these states, now commonly known as ‘global partners’, were not part of any of NATO’s formal partnership frameworks such as the PfP, EAPC, MD or ICI, their commitment to liberal democratic values, along with their operational contributions to the ISAF mission, motivated NATO to enhance its relations with them and other non-NATO, non-European Union states. Prompted by the expressed desire of Australia in particular for a greater voice in NATO’s decision-making and operational planning for the ISAF mission, NATO agreed during its 2006 Riga summit to open established partnership tools and activities to a broader range of partners and to give those partners a greater voice in NATO’s operational decision-making and planning by providing new opportunities for dialogue and practical cooperation across the various partnership frameworks, as well as between NATO and those partners which are not participating in any formal partnership framework.<sup>3</sup> This effort included the introduction of Tailored Cooperation Packages (TCP’s) with Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea, which were similar to the Individual Cooperation Programmes (ICPs) that had been offered to MD and ICI partners. TCPs were essentially lists of cooperative activities designed to serve both the interests of partner states and NATO’s own priorities.<sup>4</sup> NATO later also agreed to offer Pakistan and Afghanistan the additional access to NATO’s partnership activities or ‘toolbox’ previously granted to MD and ICI partners.

### **Partnership Redefined**

Although the various initiatives were undoubtedly a step forward, they did not ultimately resolve significant disagreements within NATO as to the precise form or function of its partnerships. These differences had been particularly evident just prior to the Riga summit, when the United States and Britain jointly proposed the creation of a new political framework designed to draw global partners – in particular, Australia, Japan, South Korea, Finland and Sweden - closer to NATO. That proposal generated significant opposition among key Allies, some of whom feared that deepening political ties between NATO and states well beyond the transatlantic area would transform the very nature of the Alliance and shift its focus away from Europe. (Aybet and Moore 2010: 228-231) Notably, the proposed framework also represented a significant departure from NATO’s existing partnerships in seeking to structure partnership on a functional rather than geographical basis.

The new partnership policy approved in Berlin in 2011 sought to move the Alliance beyond these disagreements. Rather than focus on the geographically based multilateral frameworks such as EAPC, MD and ICI, around which NATO had historically organized its partnerships, the Berlin agreement sought to build new relationships principally on a bilateral basis. It also created new opportunities for those partners not participating in any of NATO's existing multilateral partnership frameworks to consult on issues of common concern with NATO and other partners 'across and beyond existing frameworks', utilizing what the Alliance refers to as its '28+n' format.<sup>5</sup>

The new policy also served to support greater practical cooperation with partners by committing NATO to a single Partnership Cooperation Menu aimed at consolidating and harmonizing the various partnership activities (e.g. military-to-military cooperation and exercises, defence policy and planning, training and education, and civil-military relations) that comprise NATO's 'toolbox'. As a result, partnership tools once available to members of only one of NATO's formal partnership frameworks are now potentially available to all partners. NATO also agreed to harmonize the process through which partner states identify the partnership activities in which they wish to participate by creating a single Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (IPCP) to replace earlier cooperation programs that were unique to individual partnership frameworks, including the Individual Partnership Programme (IPP), established for PfP/EAPC members; the Individual Cooperation Programme (ICP) extended to NATO's MD and ICI partners; and the Tailored Cooperation Packages (TCP) made available to NATO's global partners.<sup>6</sup>

Significantly, the Berlin agreement also offers opportunities for expanding and deepening dialogue with emerging powers such as China and India, utilizing the 28+n formula.<sup>7</sup> Although neither state currently participates in any of NATO's formal partnership structures, the Alliance has been working to develop relationships with both on the basis of common interests. Since 2002, NATO and China have exchanged annual staff-level visits on a range of security issues, including Afghanistan, North Korea, proliferation, counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden and other emerging security threats.<sup>8</sup> China's counter-piracy efforts and indirect cooperation with NATO off the Horn of Africa and in the Gulf of Aden, where NATO maintains a counter-piracy mission known as Operation Ocean Shield, also led to its inclusion in a counter-piracy meeting held at NATO Headquarters in September 2011, which utilized the 28+n formula

and the 'flexible frameworks' mechanism offered by the new partnership policy.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, China has participated in training programs at the NATO Defense College and has expressed some interest in a parallel military-to-military dialogue with NATO.<sup>10</sup> Although the Alliance has shown interest in developing a closer relationship with India as well, that relationship remains less developed than the NATO–China relationship largely due to India's own ambivalence regarding the virtues of closer cooperation with the Alliance.<sup>11</sup>

Although the Berlin agreement had not yet been formally adopted when NATO agreed to assume responsibility for Operation Unified Protector in Libya in late March 2011, the Alliance's success in enlisting the operational support of a number of regional partners already participating in its existing regional partnership frameworks – specifically, the Mediterranean Dialogue (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia) and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates) – affirmed the importance of having in place mechanisms for engaging partners both within and across existing frameworks. In short, the new policy created opportunities for dialogue and practical cooperation with states outside of NATO's formal partnership frameworks by differentiating less or blurring the line between those states that are actual members of these formal structures and those that are not party to any existing multilateral framework. NATO had in effect redefined what it means to be a partner. Under the Berlin policy, partnership was no longer to be limited by geography or constrained by outdated structures. Partners would also have a greater capacity to shape their own relationships with NATO by expressing a desire for dialogue and identifying from the Alliance's menu of practical cooperation activities those particular areas in which they sought cooperation with NATO.

### **Continuing Challenges**

As noted earlier, the new policy has proved more difficult to implement than was perhaps originally anticipated, and key partnership issues remain unresolved. One of these difficulties stems from the partner-driven aspect of NATO's approach to partnership. While the Alliance may have an interest in closer cooperation with particular prospective partners, the prospective partner's interest might lag behind that of the Alliance, as in the case of the NATO–India relationship.

NATO's relations with Asian partners following the conclusion of the ISAF mission in 2014 presents yet another challenge for the Alliance. As noted previously,

the operational contributions to that mission of partners such as Australia, New Zealand, South Korea and Japan served as the principal impetus for enhanced political dialogue and practical cooperation between these states and NATO. Not surprisingly, this dialogue has focused primarily on the ISAF mission as exemplified by a meeting at the 2012 Chicago summit, which included thirteen partner states that had been deemed core contributors to NATO-led operations in Afghanistan.<sup>12</sup> Given that the operational support of these ISAF partners might again be required at some future date and in a different context, the United States is particularly keen to maintain the gains achieved in terms of interoperability between NATO forces and the forces of these key operational contributors. However, due to the time, energy and resources demanded by the ISAF mission, NATO's high-level decision-makers have yet to devote any sustained attention to the role of partners outside Afghanistan. Although the Alliance and its liberal democratic partners in the Asia-Pacific region have shown an interest in closer cooperation regarding special forces and in dealing with emerging security challenges such as maritime security, energy security and cyber security, the form and purpose of these relationships beyond Afghanistan remains unclear.

That said, NATO and at least some of its Asia-Pacific partners have been working to provide a more solid footing for their relationships, leading to the establishment of IPCPs between NATO and New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Mongolia and Australia.<sup>13</sup> Following the signing of a joint political declaration in April 2013, NATO and Japan also began work on an IPCP. Still, NATO has no formal, permanent, multilateral framework for dialogue with its partners in the Asia-Pacific region. Given that the Alliance will be without a significant platform for regular and frequent meetings with its global partners once the ISAF mission ends, these relationships will be sustained primarily in a bilateral context, although NATO can always invite multiple partners together for the discussion of select topics. The fear remains, however, that, without continuing operational cooperation, the political momentum underpinning NATO's relations with its Asian partners will begin to wane.<sup>14</sup>

Additionally, the status of NATO's existing partnership frameworks remains a source of disagreement within the Alliance. Although the Berlin agreement diminished the importance of existing regional partnership frameworks by focusing on facilitating the development of bilateral relationships, both the 2010 Strategic Concept and the new partnership policy state that the 'specificity' of NATO's existing partnership frameworks will be preserved. In other words, NATO has not eliminated or merged

any of its existing partnership structures, largely because the issue remains one marked by different perspectives within the Alliance. NATO Secretary General Rasmussen was, in fact, still emphasizing in mid-2012 that NATO's interest in its Asian partners was 'not about replacing our existing partnerships' or 'global responsibilities', but rather 'expanding our foot-print into other parts of the world' and 'assuming a global perspective'.<sup>15</sup>

The controversy itself dates back to the 2006 Riga summit and the worry expressed by some NATO members that the Alliance's acquisition of global partners might well constitute a first step toward a NATO whose membership was no longer limited to the Euro-Atlantic region. In fact, a number of scholars and commentators, including Ivo Daalder, who would later become the US Ambassador to NATO, had explicitly called for NATO opening its door to any liberal democratic state willing to contribute to NATO's responsibilities (Daalder and Goldgeier 2006: 106). As a candidate for the US Presidency in 2008, John McCain also praised the promotion of NATO's 'global partnerships' and urged the United States to 'go further and start bringing democratic peoples and nations from around the world into one common organization, a worldwide League of Democracies'.<sup>16</sup>

Although there is currently little enthusiasm within the Obama administration or among other Alliance members in favour of new multilateral frameworks, the existing multilateral partnership structures remain troublesome. The more flexible partnership arrangements that NATO sought through the Berlin agreement are, in fact, themselves an acknowledgment of the deficiencies of existing frameworks, especially the EAPC. Due to the accession of many of its earliest members to the Alliance, this institution is now comprised of two disparate groups of partners: the non-NATO, European Union states, and the far less democratic and less developed former Soviet republics. The absence of common interests and values within the EAPC has led to the perception that it serves as a forum for dialogue, but one that facilitates only very limited practical cooperation. NATO has encountered a similar, albeit different problem in orchestrating political dialogue among the members of the Mediterranean Dialogue, due largely to the reluctance of some MD members to engage in concrete multilateral engagement with Israel.<sup>17</sup>

#### **Equal in Theory but not in Practice?**

NATO's response to these difficulties, as reflected in the Berlin policy, was to build new partnerships on a primarily bilateral basis, and to regard all partners,



whether or not they participate in an existing partnership framework, as at least theoretically equal. Thus far, in terms of access to cooperative activities and training, NATO has also declined to prefer those partners that share its liberal democratic values over those that have failed to demonstrate such a commitment. Some have suggested, however, that NATO should be differentiating more rather than less among its partners, and possibly even instituting new frameworks. The Atlantic Council, in two reports issued in 2012 and 2013, proposed the creation of a 'Pacific Peace Partnership' aimed at 'bind[ing] NATO to important U.S. allies with shared values and common interests, including Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan, and Singapore'.<sup>18</sup> In a similar vein, Karl-Heinz Kamp and Heidi Reisinger at the NATO Defense College have criticized the Berlin agreement for failing to differentiate between those partners that share NATO's liberal democratic values and contribute significantly to its missions and those that do neither. As they put it: 'Despite NATO's attempts to avoid prioritization and hierarchy, everybody is aware that in day-to-day business there are partners and *partners*.' Kamp and Reisinger argue that the latter (those that *do* share NATO values and contribute to its missions) should be accorded a 'privileged partnerships status' that extends to practical cooperation with NATO (Kamp and Reisinger 2013).

Kamp and Reisinger also advocate devising new frameworks to facilitate the institutionalization of 'close operational cooperation' between NATO and the Alliance's longest-standing and most like-minded partners. Ultimately, they propose a new partnership model involving three concentric circles, with the inner circle, that closest to NATO, comprised of its like-minded partners. These states would form an 'Advanced Partners Council' and convene with the North Atlantic Council (NAC) on a regular basis. A second circle might include 'Cooperation Partners', understood as 'countries actively interested in partnership and in cooperating with NATO, to the mutual benefit of both sides, in certain areas of common concern'. The final circle would encompass 'Dialogue Countries', possibly including China and India, and serve to 'correct mutual misperceptions and build trust' (Kamp and Reisinger 2013).

### **An Inclusive Rather Than Exclusive Approach to Partnership**

The current direction of NATO's partnership policy, however, suggests that the Alliance is moving in a different direction. For now, at least, NATO has clearly opted for global partners rather than global members, while at the same



time engaging with non-liberal as well as liberal states. Indeed, partnership arrangements that prefer certain partners, including through new institutions or frameworks, are directly at odds with the sort of cooperative engagement NATO pledged to pursue in its 2010 Strategic Concept. As Noetzel and Schreer have observed, ‘this is an inclusive, pragmatic approach to building up NATO’s nodes in an emerging global security network, potentially comprising a wide array of cooperation partners’, which is ‘markedly different from previous attempts to perceive the alliance as an exclusive club of like-minded global democracies’ (Noetzel and Schreer 2012: 27). The question remains, however: Do recent trends with respect to NATO’s evolving partnership policy suggest a waning commitment to liberal order on the part of the United States and the Alliance? How might the inclusion of non-liberal states in a NATO-centred network of partnerships influence NATO’s own identity, which, since the end of the Cold War, has increasingly been linked to the liberal democratic values its members share? Finally, how might a shift in global power from West to East influence the role of NATO’s partners in sustaining liberal order?

To some degree the answer to these questions depends on the operative definition of liberal order. In his book *Liberal Leviathan*, John Ikenberry (2011) broadly defines liberal order ‘as order that is open and loosely rule-based’, while at the same time observing that its specific features can ‘vary widely’. Although this order revolved largely around ‘a commitment to open trade, the gold standard, and great power accommodation’ during the nineteenth century, Ikenberry asserts that in the twentieth it was characterized by ‘notions of cooperative security, democratic community, collective problem solving, universal rights, and shared sovereignty’ (Ikenberry 2011: 18-19).

NATO’s commitment to constructing a global network of partnerships fully supports liberal order building broadly defined in so far as it aims to facilitate a rule- and institution-based, non-exclusive, cooperative security order. At the same time, however, the decision to move in the direction of less differentiation between partners might be construed as reflecting not so much the values-based conception of security that NATO sought to promote during the 1990s, but rather a realist vision of security in which the emphasis is on common interests rather than shared liberal-democratic values. Indeed, the security order that NATO established internally during the Cold War and then sought to extend eastwards during the 1990s was not simply an open, rule-based system, it was an order in which liberal democratic values played an absolutely integral role.

## Partnership and the Pivot

Although the promotion of these liberal democratic values remains a stated objective of all of NATO's partnership agreements, the extent to which concern for these values will influence NATO's approach to partnership in a rapidly changing strategic environment is not yet clear. What is clear is that the rise of Asian powers – China and India in particular – is creating a powerful incentive for the United States and NATO to seek more cooperative security arrangements in Asia. As articulated by President Barack Obama in a speech before the Australian parliament in November 2011, the pivot encompasses the maintenance of a strong military presence in Asia, strengthened alliances with a broad range of states, re-engagement with regional organizations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), continued efforts to build a cooperative relationship with China, and the pursuit of an open economic system and economic partnerships, including the Trans-Pacific partnership (Obama 2011).

Although this 'rebalancing' towards Asia has generated some concern that the United States is turning away from Europe, US officials have insisted that they are looking to European allies 'to help improve security and build new economic relationships in Asia.' As former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton put it in mid-2012, the US pivot was 'not a pivot away from Europe'. Rather, the United States was looking to Europe 'to engage more in Asia, along with us to see the region not only as a market, but as a focus of common strategic engagement'. It was time, she argued, for the United States and Europe to act as partners in the region by engaging in a 'robust dialogue' regarding the 'opportunities that lie ahead in the Pacific-Asia region' (Clinton, May 2013).

Speaking at King's College in London in early 2013, then US Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta similarly insisted that the Alliance 'must broaden the scope of our alliance security discussions beyond Europe and beyond regional issues' and that Europe should 'join the United States in increasing and deepening our defense engagement with the Asia Pacific region'. Although he acknowledged European concerns regarding the pivot, he too stressed that the US was not turning away from NATO. 'It is in the interests of both the United States and Europe for the NATO alliance to become more outwardly focused and engaged in helping to strengthen security institutions in Asia, like ASEAN', Panetta explained. He added that it was in the interests of the United States and Europe 'to expand the defense dialogue and exchanges with a full range of nations, including China' (Panetta 2013).

Indeed, from the US perspective, NATO now constitutes ‘the hub of a global security network’ to which others want to be connected. As former US Ambassador to NATO Ivo Daalder put it in an address to the Chicago Council on Global Affairs in 2012, ‘NATO remains the fundamental core of our engagement in the world because it is where partners can come together and work with us in a fair and burden-sharing way to achieve the objectives that we have set ourselves.’<sup>19</sup> That said, NATO’s efforts to engage new partners in Asia, while complementary to US interests and initiatives, are not exclusively the product of the Obama administration’s strategic turn in the region. Rather, the cooperative relationships that NATO has developed in Asia stem from the contributions these partners have made to the ISAF mission, as well as from NATO’s own appreciation of the possible implications of seemingly significant changes in the global distribution of power. As Rasmussen framed the challenge in July 2012, ‘How can the Trans-Atlantic community keep its global power of attraction and influence? And as the world shifts, how do we embrace that shift and help shape it?’ (Rasmussen, July, 2012).

Despite the resistance of some NATO members to a more global focus at NATO and Eurocentric sentiments driven by continuing financial challenges, a general consensus has emerged among the Allies that global partners are now an imperative if NATO is to address global threats effectively.<sup>20</sup> NATO’s own Parliamentary Assembly has also called upon the Alliance to ‘actively embrace the US pivot’ toward Asia and to ‘consider enabling NATO to develop an Asian outreach of its own,’ possibly leading to greater institutionalization of the security dialogue between NATO and the states of the region (NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 2013). Additionally, NATO has demonstrated a willingness to cultivate and support multilateral dialogue in the region. For example, in mid-2013 the Alliance participated for the third time in the Shangri-La Dialogue, an annual security forum in Singapore involving key security and defence personnel from throughout the Asia-Pacific region. From NATO’s perspective, the event, to which it sent General Knud Bartels, the chairman of NATO’s Military Committee, provided an opportunity for discussion of common security interests with military representatives from the region, including China.<sup>21</sup>

#### **Partners and the Promotion of a Liberal Security Order**

Arguably, the partnership that is most critical for responding to Asia’s rise is the one institutionalized by NATO itself: the partnership between the United States and Europe. As the Obama administration’s advocacy of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) has recently illustrated, this relationship is grounded

in part on critical economic ties across the Atlantic. Even more fundamentally, however, it remains rooted in the liberal democratic values that all NATO members share. Speaking at the Munich Security Conference in 2012, Hillary Clinton called these values the ‘bedrock’ of the transatlantic community and urged the United States and Europe ‘to vigorously promote these [values] together around the world, especially in this time of transformational political change’ (Clinton, February 2012). Just how the United States and Europe intend to function as partners in preserving and promoting liberal order in a rapidly changing strategic environment or how they might utilize those partners in Asia that share their liberal democratic values in sustaining this order is not yet clear. As Michito Tsuruoka, an advocate of closer relations between NATO and Japan, has put it, NATO has yet to engage in ‘full-fledged efforts to formulate a political strategy for using new partnerships outside the Euro-Atlantic region, including Japan, in shaping a new world order’ (Tsuruoka 2012: 67).

As noted earlier, NATO has instead emphasized its commitment to engaging with liberal and non-liberal states. The commitment to cooperation with the latter is not a new one. Indeed, virtually all of NATO’s partners in Central Asia, the Mediterranean and the Middle East are not liberal democracies. In the wake of September 11, NATO – with a significant push from the United States – deemed these relationships necessary to equip NATO for a new era of increasingly global and far less predictable threats. NATO readily acknowledges, however, that non-liberal partners have created something of a conundrum for the Alliance, precisely because their domestic political practices are deeply at odds with the liberal democratic values that NATO has pledged to defend. While effectively combating new threats to liberal order requires engagement with non-liberal states, it is not necessarily clear that these relationships will actually support the principles at the heart of the order that NATO has pledged to defend. This dilemma is likely to be particularly acute with respect to China. Not only does the Chinese government reject the Allies’ liberal democratic values, it also has far greater potential than other non-democratic partners to shape the international order in a direction that is very different from the values-based order that NATO favours.

The tension resulting from the imperative to engage a broad range of partners while at the same time remaining true to NATO’s identity as an institution grounded on liberal democratic values is one that will inevitably persist. The fact that NATO has partners in Asia that *do* share its values, however, should inspire the Allies to think creatively about how they might work with these like-minded

partners to shape rather than merely respond to the emerging global security order. Differentiating less between partners and opening up opportunities for dialogue and cooperation to a significantly broader range of possible partners has clearly served to move NATO beyond disagreements regarding multilateral frameworks to facilitate the cooperative security efforts that are deemed so critical under the new strategic concept. However, the time has come for the United States, together with its NATO allies, to consider more fully how to maintain the inclusive nature of the new partnership policy, while at the same time identifying a role for liberal democratic partners outside Europe in sustaining a liberal order in which they too are now heavily invested.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> *Active Engagement in Cooperative Security: A More Efficient and Flexible Partnership Policy*, April 15, 2011. Available at [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2011\\_04/20110415\\_110415-Partnership-Policy.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_04/20110415_110415-Partnership-Policy.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> *National Security Strategy*, Washington, DC, White House, May 2010. Available at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss\\_viewer/national\\_security\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Riga Summit Declaration, Press Release (2006) 150, November 29, 2006. Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2006/p06-150e.htm>. Author interview with U.S. Department of State official, January 2007.

<sup>4</sup> Bucharest Summit Declaration, Press Release (2008) 049, April 3, 2008. Available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_8443.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_8443.htm). Author e-mail interview with NATO International Staff Member, January, 2009.

<sup>5</sup> *Active Engagement in Cooperative Security*.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. Author telephone interviews with U.S. Department of State official, February and August 2011.

<sup>7</sup> In his 2010 speech at the Munich Security Conference, NATO Secretary General Rasmussen called for the establishment of a 'security dialogue' with both India and China. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, 'NATO in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Towards Global Connectivity', Munich Security Conference, February 7, 2010.

<sup>8</sup> Author interviews with US Department of State officials, February 2011 and June 2013, and with NATO International Staff, February 2011.

<sup>9</sup> Author interviews with NATO International Staff and US Department of State official, February 2012. See also 'NATO Engages Partners Around the Global in Counter-Piracy Dialogue', September 14, 2011. Available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news\\_78064.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_78064.htm).

<sup>10</sup> Author interview with NATO International Staff member, June 2013.

<sup>11</sup> For a helpful assessment of the issues surrounding US–India relations, see NATO Defense College, *NATO-India: Prospects of a Partnership*, NATO Research Paper No. 73, February 2012.

<sup>12</sup> NATO, *Chicago Summit Declaration*, May 20, 2012.

<sup>13</sup> The IPCP between NATO and New Zealand was signed on June 4, 2012, followed by IPCPs with Mongolia in March 2012, the Republic of South Korea in September 2012 and Australia on February 21, 2013. The IPCP between NATO and Australia was preceded by a Joint Political Declaration agreed in June 2012.

<sup>14</sup> Author interview with NATO International Staff member, June 2013.

<sup>15</sup> Anders Fogh Rasmussen, *Delivering Security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Address in London, July 4, 2012.

<sup>16</sup> John McCain, Speech at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, May 1, 2007.

<sup>17</sup> Author interviews with US Department of State and NATO International Staff officials, June 2013.

<sup>18</sup> See R. Nicholas Burns, Damon M. Wilson, and Jeff Lightfoot, *Anchoring the Alliance*, Atlantic Council (May 2012); and Franklin Kramer, *NATO Global Partnerships: Strategic Opportunities and Imperatives in a Globalized World*, Atlantic Council (March 2013).

<sup>19</sup> Ivo Daalder, 'NATO and the Transatlantic Alliance: The American Perspective', Remarks in

Chicago, Illinois, March 1, 2012. Available at [http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/files/Event/FY\\_12\\_Events/Transcripts/NATO\\_and\\_the\\_Transatlantic\\_Alliance\\_\\_The\\_American\\_Perspective.aspx](http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/files/Event/FY_12_Events/Transcripts/NATO_and_the_Transatlantic_Alliance__The_American_Perspective.aspx)

<sup>20</sup> Author telephone interview with NATO International Staff member, June 20, 2013.

<sup>21</sup> NATO, Asian countries together at the Shangri-La Dialogue, May 31 – June 2, 2013, at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news\\_100984.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_100984.htm)

## **5. China and NATO: Room for Partnership?**

*Mads Kjeldsen and Friis Arne Petersen*

‘As well as expanding the range of issues where we cooperate, we must also expand the range of nations with whom we engage. Take China, for example. It is a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. It is playing an increasingly important global role. And as an organization, which is driven by the UN Charter of Principles, NATO needs to better understand China and define areas where we can work together to guarantee peace and stability. This is why I believe we need to hold a more active dialogue with China.’

*NATO General Secretary, Anders Fogh Rasmussen,  
at Chatham House, London, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2012.*

Like the rest of the General Secretary’s speech at Chatham House, the quote above reflects the enormous change that NATO as an alliance has undergone in recent years, especially since the end of the Cold War. Not many years ago a quote like the above would have been unimaginable, as the NATO alliance was perceived as a regionally oriented defence alliance, and nothing ‘out of area’, meaning the transatlantic region, was a security concern. Besides reflecting the need for NATO to adapt to a changing and increasingly global political and security world order, the quote also reflects the appreciation and recognition of the importance of China as a global player and the need for NATO to engage with China in order to stay relevant in this new, and still emerging, world order in security and foreign policy.

In this chapter we turn attention to the only permanent member of the UN Security Council with which NATO does not have a partnership, namely China. With more than 20 per cent of the world’s population, the world’s second largest economy, its largest army, its second highest military budget, its third largest country, with land borders with fourteen countries and maritime borders with six, China obviously has a great influence on an increasing number of global issues with many implications that are of great importance to NATO as well. Therefore knowledge and understanding of China’s development and strategic thinking are increasing the demands on NATO, as the NATO General Secretary himself emphasized. The Secretary General’s speech represents a new and more timely global vision without which NATO’s future influence might well be marginalized in the most important global security and defence policy discussions.



There is an obvious potential for cooperation and engagement with China that NATO can leverage in the coming years to create a more stable and predictable international situation. We are also seeing an increasing level of dialogue and exchange. However, the dialogue and practical cooperation are still on a rather limited scale and are for a number of reasons likely to remain so in the foreseeable future. But the basic situation requires a new global approach and policies if the European part of NATO in particular wants to remain relevant and vigilant.

This chapter argues that, despite the potential mutual gain and benefit derived from a significantly higher level of cooperation, there is a basic Chinese scepticism about working in defence and security-related alliances. Furthermore, there is a Chinese deep-rooted mistrust as Beijing still regards NATO as being led and controlled by the US. America's belief in its own exceptionalism and its (so far) firm commitment to world policing worries a China that thinks in terms of multilateral solutions and international organizations. Especially in a situation such as we have seen in recent years, where the mutual strategic mistrust between China and the US is high following US scepticism concerning China's intentions as the world's second largest economy and increasing international influence, as well as Chinese concern over the US launch of the 'pivot to Asia' and the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP), it is difficult to imagine a strategic partnership developing between China and NATO. However, the close coordination between the US and China on the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula, as well as the relaxed yet very symbolic meeting between the US President Barack Obama and the Chinese President Xi Jinping in California in June, appear to be indicative of a Chinese willingness and creativity in forging a new type of superpower relationship between China and the US. But from that kind of relationship to fully engaging in partnership with NATO is another great leap. It must also be noted that China has a different approach to international conflict resolution, one that emphasizes the safeguarding of principles such as sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-intervention. This does not mean that attempts at creating dialogue and cooperation between NATO and China should not be continued and pursued. On the contrary – but in order to be successful, it should take the form of a step by step approach and take into account the different concerns that China has about NATO as an alliance and about developments in the US security strategy in general and specifically as it relates to China. NATO also has to take into account the broader regional security context, as the security situation in East Asia is characterized by a changing power structure accompanied with growing tensions and strategic mistrust.



In this chapter we will first discuss China's development by focusing on its defence strategy and the regional and international strategic and security policy context of China with the aim of showing why it is important that NATO develops and maintains its focus on China, and the importance of understanding how China perceives its strategic environment. Secondly, we provide a brief account of NATO-China relations, as well as a short description of the existing cooperation activities. Thirdly, we will discuss the potential gains for both China and NATO from a deeper engagement between the two. Fourthly, the reason for China's underlying scepticism about NATO as an organization and an alliance will be analysed aimed at providing an assessment of what we can expect China to be willing to do in terms of cooperation with NATO.

### **China's Development: Defence Strategy and its Regional and International Strategic Context**

China's rapid economic and social development since the launch of the economic reforms and opening up in the late 1970s is well known. Average annual economic growth rates of ten per cent for more than thirty years have turned China into the world's second largest economy and on a clear trajectory, within the foreseeable future, to overtake the US as the world's largest economy. This makes China uniquely important. Its economic development has been sustained by vast social and some political changes in the country, giving rise to an increasing number of socio-political challenges, on which both the former and the existing leadership appear to be focusing. The most notable of these challenges are problems such as a rapidly ageing population, serious energy, environmental and climate problems, increasing inequality, unequal growth among different regions in China and widespread corruption, all potential threats to the stability of the country. For the same reasons, the new Chinese government appears to be keeping China on a track of reform that primarily focuses on solving these internal and domestic problems before venturing into engagement internationally.

In China, foreign policy is regarded more as a residual element than for other big powers and is seen as a tool to be used as an instrument to help solve domestic problems. Even though the new Chinese leaders are likely to bolster China's foreign affairs credentials in the future, the fundamental priority given to national economic issues is not likely to change. Moreover, China's economic development is more than ever a function of international cooperation and interdependence and thus merits increased international attention.

The defence strategy of the People's Republic of China (PRC) since the establishment of the PRC has been inward-looking, focusing on maintaining internal stability and preventing attacks from the outside. The strategy has centred on ground forces, with less focus on the navy and air force (Nødskov 2009: 19-25). This changed when on 24 December 2004 Hu Jintao defined a new set of historic missions for the People's Liberation Army (PLA). These were the 'The New Historic Missions', also known as the 'three provides and one role'<sup>1</sup>, whereby the PLA, in addition to its traditional focus on party consolidation and national development, is also requested to provide 'powerful strategic support for safeguarding national interests', as well as 'playing an important role in safeguarding world peace and promoting common development' (Mulvenon 2009: 1-2). This new historic mission set the tone for the modernization of both the PLA Navy and PLA Air Force, as well as the strategic thinking within the military, with a greater focus and emphasis on the role the PLA needs to play outside China's own borders following more global challenges and demands. This new thinking is also reflected in the Chinese White Papers on national defence from 2008, 2010 and 2013, which contain entire sections on 'safeguarding world peace and regional stability', focusing on the Chinese contribution and the necessity for China to engage in international cooperation. The latest White Paper from 2013 contains a reference to the mutual exchange of visits Chinese and NATO commanders to each other's naval ships (China Government White Papers 2008, 2010, 2013). From a strategic and security policy point of view, China's focus is centred on safeguarding its own continental security, the region and neighbouring countries, with whom China aims to develop peaceful and friendly relations, with the overall purpose of creating the best possible environment for continued domestic economic growth.

From the point of view of its continental security, China has unresolved land-border disputes with only two out of the fourteen countries on its borders, namely India and Bhutan, relations with the latter not really creating tensions (Nødskov 2009: 27-8). The dispute with India, on the other hand, is characterized by regular cross-border incidents which rarely rise to real tensions. With regard to its maritime borders, China has unresolved border disputes with Japan over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea, with tensions running high, especially since the Japanese purchase of the remaining three islands in the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands in September 2012. There is also disagreement with the group of South East Asian nations that claim territorial rights over various islands in the South China Sea, over a vast area of which China claims territorial rights. Tensions in the South China Sea are running particularly high between China and Vietnam and between China and

the Philippines respectively (International Crisis Group 2012, 2013). However, it is worth recalling, from M. Taylor Fravel's (2008) thorough work on border disputes, that the majority of China's land border disputes have been resolved peacefully through a great deal of compromise from the Chinese side. Therefore, based on recent historical and empirical evidence, China is not predisposed to take an assertive stand on the outcome of these issues. The compromises already made actually point in a direction where diplomatic solutions and stability appear to reign.

Besides the continental and maritime border issues, there are a number of regional hotspots. The situation on the Korean Peninsula is a continuing cause for concern and frustration in China. Internal stability in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) is the key priority for China to avoid chaos and a potential wave of refugees into its north-east. China increased its pressure on DPRK after the satellite launch in December 2012 and the third nuclear test in spring 2013. Since Secretary of State John Kerry took office, China and the USA have increasingly coordinated their stance on the issue. China fundamentally still believes that a real breakthrough will only be possible when DPRK and the US start talking directly to each other. In addition, it should be noted that instability in Central Asia – especially the war in Afghanistan and the consequences and effects of the withdrawal of the international coalition forces – is an increasing concern for China, with potentially negative effects on the country. China is concerned with internal stability in Afghanistan after the international forces leave and is asking whether this will have a negative influence on the ethnically complex province of Xinjiang China's north-west. As will be discussed later, the war in Afghanistan is a factor that has brought NATO and China closer due to NATO's involvement.

Finally, a very important factor shaping China's policy is the regional strategic and security context in East Asia, especially in North East Asia. The dispute surrounding the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands is arguably part of a wider adjustment in the underlying power structure in the region, most notably between Japan, China and the US. The importance of China in economic, political and military terms will clearly increase, and this will have an effect on the triangular relationship between the US, Japan and China, and also for the Japan-US alliance (Swaine et al. 2013). This does not mean that conflict is inevitable, but it does mean that both the US and Japan will need to reassess the current framework, and so will China. The alliance between Japan and the US is historic and developed into a very strong alliance after WWII. However, given the growing structural and serious economic challenges for both the US and Japan, the US will need to take into account its own future in a manner based on

realpolitik. Since it recognized modern China, the US has sought to engage and accommodate a growing China. This has been approached differently by different US presidents, but it has played an increasingly important role for the US's own economic development. One could argue that this process has been intensified under the new Chinese and Japanese leaders, and thus the very different outcomes of the visits by Shinzo Abe and Xi Jinping respectively in 2013 reflect this trend. In the coming years, this could define a new big power relationship between China and the US and simultaneously create a new overall context for the US–Japan relationship. China's rise seems inevitably a key characteristic feature of this future relationship.

It is important to appreciate this regional strategic context in which China is situated and to bear it in mind when discussing the potential for strengthened relations and increased cooperation between China and NATO, as it is the regional strategic context that is China's primary concern. As NATO, in following the new partnership approach, seeks to develop and/or strengthen partnerships and cooperation in the region, it is important that NATO understands how China thinks and also that it appreciates the power dynamics, especially in North East Asia, such as the relationship, history and 'tension-trickers' between Japan and China, but also to realize the importance of maintaining continental security.

### **Brief Overview of the Development of China–NATO Relations**

The relationship between China and NATO is of a fairly recent nature. During much of the Cold War, such relations were non-existent, which also was the case for most of the 1990s. The most significant event was the accidental bombing by NATO forces of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, which led to widespread protests and demonstrations in China directed especially towards the US (NATO 2011c). NATO involvement in the Afghanistan war brought the organization closer to China, and made China more interested in its operations and commitments, as the alliance was now operational on the border to China. In 2002 the Chinese Ambassador to Belgium met with the NATO General Secretary to inquire about the structure, development and objectives of NATO, and since then a political dialogue has gradually evolved with high-level talks taking place semi-annually, and in recent years also cooperation on a military-to-military level (Lin 2012)

The latest round of high-level talks took place on 17-18 April 2013, when NATO and China held the 7th Round of High Level talks in Beijing. From NATO, Assistant Secretary General Brengelmanns participated. In Beijing he met with

the Chinese Minister for Foreign Affairs, Wang Yi, and Vice Foreign Minister, Song Tao. China clearly welcomes these dialogues and considers the talks to be beneficial, and China has expressed an interest in further developing and deepening them, including increased exchange of information within the following focus areas: high-level exchange visits; the establishment of working level discussions and consultations; increased cooperation within areas of common interest such as counter-terrorism, counter-piracy, counter-narcotics, cyber-security and disaster relief; and exchanges of military personnel.<sup>2</sup> These are areas on which the Chinese military is increasingly focusing and where the PLA clearly sees a benefit in increased dialogue and cooperation with NATO. This follows from the afore-mentioned 'new set of historic missions', giving the PLA a role in countering global and cross-border threats and challenges.

Nonetheless the relationship between NATO and China is still largely on a political level. Not until June 2010 did a delegation of senior military officials from the PLA visit NATO Headquarters in Brussels. But since then increasing dialogue and also cooperation has taken place on the military level. In March 2011 the Chinese Navy engaged with NATO in conducting counter-piracy missions in the Gulf of Aden, and the two have exchanged visits to each other's naval vessels. In 2012, a delegation led by NATO Director General of International Military Staff, Lt Gen Jurgen Bornemann, was invited to Beijing by the Chinese military authorities (Lin 2012). Despite these activities, military-to-military contacts have been limited and cooperation and dialogue are mainly developed and take place on the political level, focused on information sharing more than on actual practical cooperation, as also reflected in the recent high-level talks. However, following the new historic mission, as reflected in the Chinese Defence White Papers, there is room for further development of the relationship and even joint operational activities.

### **Is there the Potential for Increased Cooperation or even a Partnership?**

China's involvement in multilateral cooperative engagements such as in the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) has changed dramatically over the past ten to fifteen years. From original scepticism of multilateral arrangements, China now fully appreciates the value of multilateral cooperation and is engaged in a large number of multilateral institutions, such as ASEAN + 1, ASEAN + 3, ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), East Asia Summit (EAS), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Six Party

Talks (6PT) and as observer in South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). China is influential in these multilateral forums and recognizes the value of multilateral political and security cooperation, which is a good basis for developing the relationship between NATO and China further.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is worth dwelling on, as so far it is the only Central Asian regional multilateral organization for political cooperation. China has all along been the driving force in SCO with an interest in turning it into an organization focused on economic development and aiming to improve the economies of Central Asia to the benefit of China's northwest region, especially Xinjiang. The situation in Afghanistan is also a key concern and an issue high on the SCO agenda. The development of SCO is interesting for NATO as well. At the summit which took place in China in the spring of 2013, Afghanistan was accepted as permanent observer and Turkey was invited as special dialogue partner. In total fifteen countries from Russia to India and from China to Turkey are now connected to various degrees in this cooperative network of very different countries. As Turkey is a member of NATO, this, of course, is also a matter of interest for NATO, emphasizing Turkey's position as a country located between different regions and the only country with strong connections to both NATO and SCO.

Besides the issues mentioned during the recent high-level talks, such as counter-piracy, counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics, the potential in increased practical cooperation and a possible future partnership between NATO and China is significant. These years China is modernizing the PLA, especially the Navy and the Air Force, which is of interest to NATO, not only in terms of concrete and practical cooperation, but also in order to obtain a better insight and understanding of civil–military relations in China. Even though the military to military contact is still of a rather limited nature, there is room for strengthening this cooperation, which is arguably also in the interests of the PLA itself following the outward-looking strategy it has been asked to adopt. Furthermore, the increasing Chinese demand for oil and natural resources has resulted in an increased Chinese presence and interests globally. This has placed increased pressure on the Chinese government and military, as the demand for the protection of overseas interests, as well as Chinese citizens working abroad, only continues to increase. There have been several cases of Chinese workers having been kidnapped, resulting in strong public pressure on the government to provide adequate levels of protection. The evacuation of 35,000 Chinese citizens from Libya in 2011 was an eye-opener to many and was seen as a clear success for the Chinese military. This is an area where China can learn from NATO forces and NATO experience.

Especially when it comes to Afghanistan, NATO and China have shared interests. The NATO operation in Afghanistan has been instrumental in furthering contacts and relations between China and NATO. China has not been involved in any security operations related to the war in Afghanistan, but it has focused on cooperation with and stabilization in Afghanistan in terms of investment, especially in resources such as oil and mining. However, although there is recognition of the current value of the NATO forces in Afghanistan and the stability this has provided, there is now also concern for the prospects when the coalition finally leaves (Swaine 2010). In recent years China has changed its approach to Afghanistan, partly in recognition of the withdrawal of the international forces. As a reflection of this, China has established trilateral consultations between Afghanistan, Pakistan and China on the future development in the region. China has also engaged in trilateral cooperation projects with the US and Afghanistan. Though still small-scale in nature, these developments are significant and reflect an interest in exploring new ways of cooperating in the approach to Afghanistan.

Finally, increased cooperation between NATO and China in peace-keeping operations also contains potential, as for a number of years China has been one of the very large contributors of personnel to UN-led peace-keeping operations. According to the Chinese White Paper on *The Diversified Employment of China's Armed Forces* from 2013, the PLA has dispatched 22,000 military personnel to 23 UN peacekeeping operations (China Government White Paper 2013). This has traditionally take the form of providing logistical and medical personnel. Chinese support to the UN operation in Mali, however, has marked a shift in this approach, as China dispatched actual security forces to help maintain the peace. As Chen Jian, the head of the UN Association of China, said at the beginning of the mission, 'This is a major breakthrough in our participation in peacekeeping' (*The Diplomat* 2013). This development could be further explored by NATO as well, as it indicates that China may be increasingly willing to take on greater responsibility when it comes to international military operations.

However, as we shall see in the following section, despite the potential for increased cooperation there remains scepticism in China concerning NATO, which it will be crucial to address if the cooperation is to be strengthened.

### **China's Perception of NATO**

The accidental NATO bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade in 1999 was sharply criticized at the time and also led to a public outburst, including



demonstrations in China against NATO, in particular the US. Though the Belgrade bombing does not seem to have had any lasting effect on the relationship today, it is still a factor when Chinese analysts address the issue of NATO. Many researchers and academics still express scepticism when it comes to increased cooperation with NATO. There are a number of reasons for this. First, the alliance is considered to be too heavily dominated by the US and that the US uses the alliance to promote and advocate US-based norms and standards and projects US unilateralism. This view sees the US, in relation to China, using NATO and the global partnership approach to establish partnerships and build an international security system, with the West and especially the US at the centre (Carnegie-Tsinghua 2013). Second, China questions whether the large-scale expansion of new NATO members since the end of the Cold War has created more internal, institutional problems than NATO can digest and manage, raising doubts about NATO's operational ability. Third there is the issue of Russia's perception on NATO enlargement and NATO's new concept of global partnerships. As one interlocutor<sup>3</sup> in Beijing emphasized, according to Confucius you have to consider the views and feelings of the other, referring to the fact that all European countries can join NATO. But what does Russia think? It is necessary to consider the role and perception of Russia when discussing enlargement in order to safeguard a sustainable and peaceful global environment in the long term. Fourth, concern is also raised when NATO establishes partnerships with China's neighbours. For China this is not a problem as such, but it is still something that NATO should take into account. What does it mean when your neighbours enter into a cooperative partnership with a military alliance led by the US? How does it affect the regional environment in that particularly area? Fifth, many Chinese researchers think that NATO has an unclear strategy in terms of military engagement, basically underlining that NATO does what the US wishes it to do. In addition, from a Chinese perspective the interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan were not sufficiently well-grounded in international law, and the result in both cases has not been successful. In NATO's new strategy, it mentioned that NATO should take note of lessons learned in Afghanistan, but the operation in Libya in 2011 shows that this has not been the case. Finally, the recent visit in April 2013 of the NATO General Secretary to the Republic of Korea and Japan just when the tensions at the Korean Peninsula were at its peak also sent a signal that fed into the scepticism in China, as this was perceived as NATO taking a stand in delicate regional matters, which NATO consistently claims it will not do. In addition to this, Chinese scholars also point to a sense of confusion as to what NATO's real objectives and intentions are in Asia, as the purpose of NATO has historically been to serve as a security alliance facing a common enemy.



For the above reasons, several scholars have pointed out that it would be more natural and logical for China to look into and work with the different European countries individually on those elements where defence and military-related cooperation is possible, despite the existing weapons embargo.<sup>4</sup> This is an important argument and a development that requires NATO's attention. China is currently expanding its bilateral strategic partnerships and has recently entered into such a partnership with Australia. Many other European countries that are not members of NATO would also be interesting for China to enter into strategic partnerships with. Such a development would reduce Chinese interest in strengthening cooperation with NATO.

### **Conclusion**

NATO has already come a long way in terms of dialogue and cooperation with China. This is to be commended and reflects a vision in NATO, a willingness and a striving to make NATO adapt to the circumstances and challenges of the 21st century. Globalization and interdependence must be recognized and reckoned with. However, it must also be remembered that China has its own history and trajectory. In accordance with a general interest in increasing channels of multilateral cooperation, China welcomes mutual and increased cooperation with NATO. However, this cannot be done in a hasty way. Therefore, despite the political dialogue and small scale of military-to-military cooperation, deepening of the dialogue and strengthening the existing level of cooperation, maybe even to partnership level, would demand that the Chinese mistrust of NATO is addressed and gradually converted into trust. NATO's past military affiliations and the dominance of the US in the alliance seem to be major factors in this continued Chinese mistrust of NATO.

In addition, developments in the East Asian strategic and security configuration, especially in North East Asia, cannot be seen in isolation – everything here is interrelated. This is due to historic factors and a high level of mutual mistrust among the countries in the region. The actions of individual countries affect the strategic and security concerns of others and create security dilemmas among the countries in the whole region. Therefore NATO must tread carefully when entering into partnerships and cooperation activities. This is not to say that partnerships should not be entered into, but such steps must be carefully analysed to determine how a possible partnership is perceived by other countries in the region. From the Chinese point of view, it will be an absolute prerequisite that NATO does not become a new

player by itself in the region. This means that NATO cannot be seen as taking sides in any of the territorial disputes in either the East China Sea or the South China Sea. It also means that NATO cannot expand its alliance with ASEAN members. Finally, the triangular power dynamics in USA–China–Japan relations are of particular importance, as these three countries are the worlds’ three largest economies. Changes and instability in this triangle may have global effects and consequences.

These caveats should not, however, prevent or discourage NATO from developing its relationship with China further. If NATO is intent on remaining a significant, trustworthy and influential partner and player in the international system, then it cannot avoid developing and promoting its relations with China.

### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup> The ‘three provides and one role’ are defined as follows: ‘(1) providing an important guarantee of strength for the party to consolidate its ruling position, (2) providing a strong security guarantee for safeguarding the period of important strategic opportunity for national development, (3) providing a powerful strategic support for safeguarding national interests, and (4) playing an important role in safeguarding world peace and promoting common development.’ (Mulvenon, 2009: 2)

<sup>2</sup> Interview, official, Beijing, 19.04.2013.

<sup>3</sup> Interview, academic scholar, Beijing, 15.04.2013.

<sup>4</sup> Interview, academic scholar, Shanghai, 10.04.2013.

## **6. As good as it gets? Australia and NATO beyond Afghanistan**

*Ben Schreer*

Australia is typically regarded as a prototype for the Alliance's concept of 'cooperative security', which is to underpin its relationships with 'partners across the globe'. As a Western democracy, it shares the interest in a liberal international order. It is also a close ally of the United States (US) and the Australian Defence Force (ADF) is highly interoperable with NATO forces. Moreover, as the largest non-NATO troop contributor to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), Australia has proved a steadfast partner in the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. Some analysts have therefore described Australia as a 'natural partner' for the Alliance (Myrli 2008).

However, as the ISAF operation comes to a close, the future degree of Australia–NATO cooperation is far from clear. In fact, Afghanistan could well have been the peak in the relationship. As a decade of Western interventionism in the Greater Middle East ends, Australia has begun to refocus its strategic attention back to its immediate Asian neighbourhood. Meanwhile, both Australia and NATO allies face defence budget pressures and wariness about getting involved in lengthy and expensive commitments abroad. Finally, the US is 'rebalancing' towards the Asia-Pacific region, a move welcomed by Australia but feared by America's European allies because of the real prospect of decreased US security engagement in the Euro-Atlantic area.

Against this background, the chapter analyses the future role that Australia can play as a NATO partner in the post-Afghanistan period. It is organised in four parts. The first part situates NATO's relations with Australia in the broader context of this report. It argues that the 'interventionist' rationale outlined by Trine Flockhart in her introductory chapter to this report (Flockhart 2013) is the best way of explaining Australia–NATO relations. The second section traces the historical evolution of these relations. It shows that, while there was sporadic, mostly indirect cooperation already during the Cold War, it took the events of 9/11 to trigger much greater interaction. The third section looks at the challenges to sustaining the high degree of cooperation in the post-Afghanistan period. The key message is that if the Alliance does not play a more active role in the 'Indo-Pacific' region, direct security cooperation will probably be limited. The concluding section ends with some suggestions for how to move the relationship forward.

## **The ‘interventionist’ rationale behind NATO–Australia relations**

NATO’s relationship with Australia has both a value- and an interest-based rationale. As a Western democracy, Australia shares NATO’s goal of preserving and strengthening a liberal, rules-based international order. Consecutive Australian defence white papers have made it a goal of the ADF to contribute to a ‘stable, rules-based global order’ (for example, Commonwealth of Australia 2013: 26). Just as for European NATO allies, support for a US-led world order is a critical element of Australia’s foreign- and security-policy doctrine.

Nevertheless, when applying Flockhart’s useful trichotomy of NATO’s partnership rationales, it becomes clear that the ‘interventionist’ approach is the best way of characterising the relationship. The ‘integrationalist’ rationale does not fit Australia–NATO ties, as Australia is already a Western liberal democracy and geographically outside the Euro-Atlantic community. The ‘influentialist’ rationale comes a little closer. It could be argued that cooperation between NATO and Australia in the context of Afghanistan met the criteria of ‘cooperation on specific issues where shared interests exist’ (Flockhart, this report). Yet NATO’s ‘direct as well as indirect influence’ on Australia’s strategic policy is nonetheless very limited.

Furthermore, selective cooperation guided by ‘shared interests’ is also part of the ‘interventionist’ rationale. According to Flockhart, this approach is ‘almost entirely interest-based, although the decision to undertake intervention may be value-based’ (Flockhart, this report). First, as will be demonstrated later on, it took the 2001 terrorist attacks on America to trigger much intensified cooperation between NATO and Australia in the subsequent Afghanistan intervention, as well as counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden. Moreover, Australia’s primary utility for NATO has been to enhance support for NATO-led operations.

Secondly, for Australia NATO’s utility has been predominantly interest-based. Global ADF engagements such as that in Afghanistan must be seen in the context of Australia’s alliance with the US. A key characteristic of Australia’s strategic history has been its deployment alongside its British and (since the Second World War) US ally to global theatres in return for security guarantees from the much more powerful Anglo-Saxon protector against potential threats closer to home. Canberra’s global defence engagement is thus intimately tied to the demands and expectations of its US ally. The post ‘9/11’ era was no different, and Australia’s increased practical cooperation with NATO has essentially been a ‘temporary complement’ (Frühling and Schreer 2011: 54) to the US alliance relationship.

This finding is supported by the fact that, since the early 1990s, Australia's strategic and defence planning has reflected a concept of strategic interests based on a model of concentric circles (White 2008). Evident, with slight variations, in the Defence White Papers of 2000 (Commonwealth of Australia 2000), 2009 (Commonwealth of Australia 2009) and 2013 (Commonwealth of Australia 2013), the hierarchy of Australia's strategic interests can be explained as follows:

- the key strategic interest and principal force structure determinant is the defence of Australia against a direct attack;
- the second strategic priority is the security of the immediate neighbourhood, e.g. the South Pacific and Timor-Leste;
- the third strategic priority is the stability of the broader Asia-Pacific region. Indonesia is key in this regard, followed by the rest of Southeast Asia and, to a lesser degree, contributions to US-led operations in Northeast Asia. The 2013 Defence White Paper introduced the term 'Indo-Pacific', whose possible implications for NATO–Australia relations will be discussed below;
- only the fourth and last strategic priority is to maintain a 'stable, rules-based global order'. As the 2013 Defence White Paper (DWP) points out, the scale of Australia's contributions to such operations 'will be determined by our national interests and the limits of our capacity, given the priority of our other tasks' (Commonwealth of Australia 2013: 32).

This list of priorities is appropriate given Australia's strategic circumstances. Its armed forces are comparatively small: the current ADF only comprises about 57,000 active personnel (IISS 2013: 279). This means that the ADF is limited in its ability to make major contributions to manpower-intensive operations. Moreover, the 'centre of gravity' in global strategic affairs is shifting from the West towards Asia (Layne 2012), Australia's very own region. In a post-Afghanistan era, this combination makes Australian decision-makers less inclined to spend significant resources on the fourth strategic priority. Furthermore, from the Australian perspective, supporting the US 'rebalance' to Asia strengthens efforts to promote a 'rules-based global order.'

Because of the 'interventionist' rationale guiding NATO–Australia relations, the degree of cooperation between the two depends significantly on the degree of commonality regarding strategic interests, rather than on a commonality of values (even though it helps). In other words, the 'interventionist' rationale behind the relationship makes NATO–Australia ties prone to fluctuation: in times of US-led

global interventions like that in Afghanistan, both sides have greater incentives to cooperate. When those operations end or draw down, incentives for cooperation decrease. This hypothesis is supported by the history of the partnership, which displays patterns of low levels of cooperation prior to 2001, followed by a significant increase in activities between 2001 and 2012.

### **A Short History of NATO–Australia Relations**

Australia has a long tradition of operating alongside European and North American forces. Indeed, participation in global wars on the side of its Anglo-Saxon allies is an integral part of Australia's strategic history and culture (Evans 2005). For example, as part of the Commonwealth, Australian troops fought on the Western Front during the First World War. During the Second World War, the threat posed by Imperial Japan required a concentration of Australian forces in the Pacific theatre of operations. Moreover, after Great Britain failed to prevent the fall of Singapore in 1942, Australia turned to the US as its main ally. This relationship was codified in the 1951 'Security Treaty between Australia, New Zealand and the United States' (ANZUS), whose Article 4 is very similar to Article 5 of NATO's 'Washington Treaty' with regard to collective defence. However, despite some practical cooperation during the Cold War and the 1990s, it took the US-led intervention in Afghanistan in 2001 to trigger much closer ties.

#### *The Cold War and the 1990s*

During the Cold War, Australia did not participate in Allied efforts to defend Western Europe against the Warsaw Pact. Canberra remained outside the political commitments of the Washington Treaty and thus did not take part in the technical and operational integration of Western forces through the Alliance. Nevertheless, it maintained or developed closer defence ties with some NATO members. Apart from the US and the United Kingdom (UK), this included France, which was part of ultimately failed attempts to establish an 'Asian NATO' in the form of the 1954 Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). In addition, Australia cooperated with the UK (plus New Zealand) in the Five Powers Defence Arrangements (FDPA) in order to assist in the defence of Malaysia and Singapore through an Integrated Air Defence System (IADS) on the Malay Peninsula, an arrangement that continues to be useful for Southeast Asian security today (Tan, 2008).

Through the 'America, Britain, Canada, Australia' (ABCA) arrangements, the ADF also laid the foundations for closer interoperability with NATO forces.

ABCA coordination and standardisation programs across a range of military areas closely correspond with NATO's Standardisation Agreements (STANAGS). This enabled Australia to benefit from NATO STANAGS while cooperating in a less formalised, familiar Anglo-Saxon ABCA environment. It also cooperated with a number of European nations on defence projects, including French *Mirage III* combat aircraft, German *Leopard* tanks and *ANZAC* frigates, and Swedish-designed *Collins*-class submarines. Still, Australia's interaction with NATO remained limited and sporadic. While Australian forces were deployed alongside some European NATO members in several United Nations (UN) peace-keeping operations (Namibia 1989/90; Cambodia 1991-93; Somalia 1992-93; and Rwanda 1994-95), the rationale behind these missions was not to improve relations with NATO. They also did not have a significant political priority for Canberra. Finally, whereas New Zealand sent forces to participate in the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992-2007), Australia did not and was also absent from NATO's intervention in Kosovo in 1999.

In sum, up until 2001 the overlap of strategic interests and activities between NATO and Australia was 'simply very small: Australia was not involved in any of the security issues in the Euro-Atlantic area that preoccupied NATO attention' (Frühling and Schreer, 2011: 49). Likewise, NATO had not much to contribute to security developments in the Asia-Pacific region, Australia's key area of concern.

### **NATO–Australia Cooperation in a Decade of Western Interventionism**

The terrorist attacks on the United States in September 2001 and subsequent US-led interventions suddenly provided the basis for much closer relations between Australia and the Alliance. The Australian government of Prime Minister John Howard fully supported US-led interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, including through the provision of troops. Stability in the Middle East became a 'vital interest' of the government (Commonwealth of Australia, 2005: 8-9). Yet, it is important to understand that the political intention behind Australia's contribution to those operations, including in Afghanistan, reflected traditional patterns of paying an 'alliance premium' to its US ally in response to ongoing American security commitments in Asia.

Although they were divided on Iraq, European NATO allies also deployed forces to Afghanistan. In an internally sometimes very painful process (Kamp, 2006), the



Alliance also began to reach out to 'like-minded' partners such as Australia. For example, the 2004 Istanbul Summit identified Australia as a key 'contact country' with which to improve relationships (NATO 2004). The next summit in Riga in 2006 made it quite clear that the biggest political and operational value of partners like Australia lay in their troop contributions to the Afghanistan campaign (NATO 2006). Put differently, the 'interventionist' rationale formed the core basis of the bilateral relationship, not only for Australia but also for NATO itself.

Afghanistan (and to a lesser extent counter-piracy operations) provided the foundation for intensified political, operational and technological cooperation. From 2004 onwards, senior Australian decision-makers frequently travelled to NATO Headquarters (HQ) for discussions with the respective NATO Secretary General (SecGen) and to address the North Atlantic Council (NAC). Also, in 2005 the then NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, visited Australia, the first ever visit of such a kind. Both sides reached an agreement on the exchange of classified military information. Australia also appointed a military attaché to NATO (and the EU) to improve cooperation; this position has since been upgraded to the 'two-star' level. Recently, Canberra also provided a Voluntary National Contribution (VNC) to work with NATO HQ.

In 2006, Australia deployed about 1,550 troops to work with a Dutch Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in the southern province of Oruzgan, setting the context for a further increase in operational cooperation. NATO allies praised the high standard and performance of the ADF. This included an ADF Special Operations Task Group (SOTG), one of ISAF's largest special operations contingents, which established close working relations with the newly established NATO Special Operations Headquarters (NSHQ). Canberra was a driving force behind creating NATO mechanisms to give non-NATO troop contributors a role in 'shaping' decision-making in joint operations. Eventually, the 2011 'Political Military Framework For Partner Involvement in NATO-Led Operations' (NATO 2011a) met this objective. Apart from the Afghanistan operation, Australia cooperated with NATO's Counter Piracy Task Force off the coast of Somalia. Finally, Australia increased its participation in NATO technical working groups related to areas such as anti-terrorism, research and technology, non-proliferation initiatives and defence logistics.

The Afghanistan mission exemplified the 'interventionist' rationale as a guiding principle of NATO–Australia ties. Obviously, this raises the key issue of what



happens next in the relationship as this operation draws to a close. Of course, if there is another major US-led operation in the Middle East or Africa, both NATO and Australia could find themselves working side by side again. However, the appetite of Western countries to become engaged in further protracted military operations is very low. It is notable, for example, that Australia did not offer troop contributions to NATO's *Operation Unified Protector* in Libya in 2011. Unforeseen joint interventions aside, the key issue for the NATO–Australia relationship is whether there will be ways to move it forward without a joint operation acting as a stimulus.

### **A Role for NATO in the Asia-Pacific Region?**

NATO has recognised the need to put relations with 'partners across the globe' on a broader footing to allow for cooperation beyond Afghanistan. In 2011, the Alliance launched a new 'partnership package' in the context of its new 'Active Engagement in Cooperative Security' document. From an Australian perspective, the key 'strategic objectives' include:

- Promoting regional security and cooperation;
- Facilitating mutually beneficial cooperation on issues of common security interest, including international efforts to meet emerging security challenges;
- Enhancing support for NATO-led operations and missions;
- Enhancing awareness of security developments, including through early warning, with a view to preventing crisis; and
- Building confidence and achieving better mutual understanding, including about NATO's role and activities, particularly through enhanced public diplomacy (NATO 2011b).

As Trine Flockhart observes, this list implies that the 'influence rationale seems to be gaining in importance' (Flockhart, this report) for NATO's future partnerships. Only one out of the five objectives falls into the 'interventionist' category.

However, while this approach is sensible in a post-interventionist period, the scope for direct cooperation with Australia post-Afghanistan could be limited as a result. In order to maintain a sufficient overlap of strategic interests, NATO would need to develop a more active profile in Asian security to tick some of the boxes in the aforementioned list of cooperative security objectives. Some analysts have argued to this effect and called on NATO to become the spider in a 'global

security web', including closer ties with Asia (Brzesinski 2009). The current NATO Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, has also stressed the importance of a NATO that is 'globally aware, globally connected and globally capable' and has mentioned relations with Australia as one good example (NATO 2012a). Yet, for understandable reasons he stopped short of embracing Asia as a region for increased Alliance engagement.

There is still no consensus over NATO's future level of ambition in global security affairs. The fact is that some key European allies such as Germany, France or Norway remain unpersuaded by the idea of investing more resources in developing NATO's global profile. Consequently, the Alliance has had major difficulties in formulating a clear and coherent policy on what it aims to achieve from its 'partnerships across the globe' beyond these countries' operational contributions to ISAF and other missions. As a result, it has ended up with a 'customer approach' to 'global partnerships, leaving it up to individual partners to define their level of ambition in working with NATO. This approach suited Australia well, as its core priority was to improve operational effectiveness in ISAF, as opposed to joining an institutionalised political partnership forum. Yet, in the post-Afghanistan era, there will be less demand for cooperation with NATO unless the Alliance is willing and able to play a more active role in Asia-Pacific security.

Yet, despite the recognition that the power shifts in Asia might have repercussions for Euro-Atlantic security, NATO so far has no clear vision for any engagement in Asia (Masala, 2010). The 'rebalance' of its US ally towards Asia is unlikely to change this. Indeed, faced with financial austerity and growing US expectations that they step up to the plate with regard to security in Europe and its periphery, European allies are predominantly concerned with how to deal with an 'American-lite' approach to Euro-Atlantic security (Stokes and Whitman, 2013). Thus, just like Australia, European allies are likely to focus on security challenges and risks much closer to home. And a good argument can be made that this approach is entirely sensible. Rather than wasting resources in playing some role in Asia-Pacific security, by backfilling for US assets in the Euro-Atlantic area, European allies can free up American military assets, which can then be shifted towards the Asian theatre, thereby contributing to efforts to upholding a US-led, liberal global order.

Moreover, even if NATO allies could agree on engagement in the Asia-Pacific as a priority, it is doubtful whether such a role would be welcomed by key regional players, the main exception being Japan, which for political-strategic reasons has

been most supportive (Tsuruoka 2011). Just like Australia, New Zealand and South Korea (the other two ‘like-minded’ Asian partners) have pursued an interest-based approach in working with the Alliance, and Afghanistan has provided the key rationale for the relationship (Schreer, 2012). Given the uncertainty about the future balance of power in Asia, for example, in the form of China’s challenge to a US-dominated regional security order, most Asian countries would probably not welcome NATO’s involvement in the region.

Particularly in maritime Asia, the key challenges are increasingly related to naval balances and questions related to ‘hard power’, despite frequent references to non-traditional maritime security issues. As a Western defensive alliance, any talk of NATO in Asia thus immediately triggers images of yet another element in a US ‘containment’ strategy against China, regardless of whether this reflects actual policy or not. China would certainly perceive it this way. China’s limited interactions with the Alliance, for example, were predominantly at the technical working group level and did not signal Beijing’s desire for much closer cooperation. In addition, ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries are highly guarded against adding more external actors to an already complex Southeast Asian security architecture.

In sum, it is unlikely that NATO will become an active player in the Asian balance of power any time soon (Frühling and Schreer, 2009). If this assumption is correct, new impetus for greater cooperation with Australia could be hard to come by.

### **Australia’s ‘Rebalance’ and its Implications for Relations with NATO**

Australia is in the midst of its own ‘rebalance’ towards its Asia-Pacific neighbourhood. Apart from the draw-down in Afghanistan, the ADF has ended its two other major missions in Timor-Leste and the Solomon Islands. As the new 2013 Defence White Paper (DWP) makes clear, after more than a decade of high-tempo operations, the ADF is to regroup and refocus on security challenges much closer to home, particularly in the South Pacific and Southeast Asia. This includes a renewed emphasis on traditional war-fighting skills (in anticipation of the emerging major power competition between its US ally and China); investments in capabilities for stabilisation operations, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief and reconstruction operations, particularly in the South Pacific; a new amphibious capability; and strengthening the ADF presence in Northern Australia (Commonwealth of Australia 2013: 39).

Moreover, the White Paper emphasises the importance of supporting the US rebalance through even closer defence cooperation. Indeed, US expectations of its Australian ally in terms of 'burden-sharing' have shifted from participation in global operations like Afghanistan to contributing to an emerging US military posture which will prepare for the possibility of a conflict with China (Schreer 2013). The US rebalance therefore reduces the incentive for Australia to deploy forces on global operations, including those involving NATO. Australia's willingness for global engagement is further reduced by the fact that, like most other Western powers (including Europe and the US), it also faces growing pressure on the defence budget. It is common wisdom in the Australian strategic community that a huge gap exists between strategy, force structure plans and available resources. The new government of Prime Minister Tony Abbott will soon face hard choices on defence capability cuts (ASPI, 2013). This fiscal environment is not conducive to investing significant resources for use in military activities beyond Asia.

These strategic and fiscal dynamics have implications for how Australia views the future utility of the Alliance. The 2013 DWP discusses relations with NATO only after sections on Africa, the United Kingdom, Spain (important because of shipbuilding cooperation), Canada and Latin America. Moreover, it expresses a clear expectation that European NATO allies will focus on their near abroad by stating that the Alliance 'will continue to be important in leading crises *within Europe's region of strategic interest*' (Commonwealth of Australia 2013: 67, emphasis added). As a result, Australia's defence engagement with NATO 'will focus on understanding these dynamics and developing our capacity to work effectively with [the Alliance] *where it is in Australia's national interest to do so*' (ibid.). Australia's current strategic policy is thus based on the expectation that the commonality of strategic interests between Australia and NATO will probably be reduced in the post-Afghanistan era.

However, the DWP 2013 lists some avenues for future cooperation between Australia and NATO. As mentioned earlier, the document introduces the term 'Indo-Pacific', as opposed to the traditional 'Asia-Pacific' region. The rationale behind this broadened understanding, according to the DWP, is the increasing importance of maritime trade and energy routes. It also recognises the growing importance of India and Southeast Asia, the 'geographical centre' of this emerging 'Indo-Pacific strategic arc' (Commonwealth of Australia 2013: 7-8). Given the vast mass that is the Indian Ocean, it is at least conceivable that NATO and Australia might cooperate in the conduct of joint maritime patrols, alongside emerging

regional naval powers such as India or China. However, this will depend not only on NATO's ability to establish closer relations with India (Rühle 2011b), but also on its willingness to deploy warships in this region. Moreover, it is not entirely clear at this point to what degree Australia will make the Indian Ocean an operational priority for the ADF.

Finally, Australia has an interest in retaining the good working ties it has developed over the past decade. The DWP 2013 explicitly mentions the 'Joint Political Declaration' signed by then Prime Minister Julia Gillard and Secretary General Rasmussen in June 2012, which set the foundations for further cooperation on Afghanistan, counter-terrorism and emerging security challenges such as cyber attacks (NATO 2012b). This emphasis on practical cooperation was re-confirmed in an 'Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme' (IPCP) in early 2013 (Department of Defence Australia 2013). Nevertheless, these initiatives will not receive the same degree of political attention as the ISAF mission. Moreover, increased cooperation between NATO and Australia on cyber security and other emerging security challenges critically depends on the Alliance's ability to develop 'coherent policies to define its role in addressing the emerging security challenges' (Rühle 2011a: 81).

## **Conclusion**

Australia–NATO ties are a good example of the distinct possibility that the current changes in the global order might not necessarily create the conditions for intensified cooperation on 'global security challenges' between the Alliance and 'partners across the globe'. Quite the contrary, the current power shifts in the international system could even strengthen patterns of security regionalism (Buzan and Wæver, 2003), where the security actors – individual nations or institutions such as NATO – keep or return to a strong focus on their own region.

This pattern is a very likely prospect for NATO–Australia relations. The US rebalance to Asia increases the incentive for European NATO allies to invest more in their own security. Further, for them partnerships that strengthen their capacity to safeguard the European continent and its periphery will likely be more attractive than partnerships 'across the globe' that only partially and indirectly contribute to this objective. Moreover, because of the real possibility of major power competition in Asia, NATO's involvement in the region could potentially prove more costly than beneficial.

For Australia, the power shifts towards and within Asia also decrease the incentive for global operations. Instead, they cement the fact that Australia's strategic priorities are in the region. Moreover, while it certainly has an interest in the security of Europe and its periphery, it rightly expects its European allies to carry this burden themselves. Consequently, while Australia has an interest in retaining some working relationships with the Alliance, the overall relevance of these ties will probably decline.

In the post-Afghanistan era, the rationale of the relationship has shifted for both NATO and Australia. The 'interventionist' rationale, which facilitated a high degree of cooperation, has been replaced with a much less binding 'influentialist' foundation. As a result, the utility of the relationship has changed as well. For NATO, Australia will turn from an important troop-contributor into a like-minded partner useful if and when the Alliance should engage in the wider Asia-Pacific region. For Australia, the Alliance will turn from a critical enabler for the US-led operation in Afghanistan into a valuable partner for flexible, lower-level defence cooperation. Pragmatism will again become the defining feature in the relationship. That said, the last decade has proved to both sides that they can work together very effectively. Also, the institutional framework has been created to do so again in the future, which is certainly no small achievement.

## **7. Partnerships in the Middle East: Interventionist Endeavors?**

*Jakob Aarøe Jørgensen*

In line with the broader goals of this report, this chapter aims to analyse NATO's two Middle Eastern and North African (MENA)<sup>1</sup> partnership programmes – the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI). The chapter aims to answer the questions: (1) why does NATO engage with MENA partners; (2) what are the obstacles that MD and ICI face, and; (3) is the new flexible partnership policy a step towards more constructive Middle Eastern partnerships?

The reasons why it is important to address cooperative security in the geographical MENA region are twofold. First, the region is located geographically close to the NATO area, and thus the security environment of that region is bound to affect NATO member states a great deal. The 2010 NATO Strategic Concept outlines some of the most pressing threats towards its members as follows:

The proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, and their means of delivery, threatens incalculable consequences for global stability and prosperity [...] Terrorism poses a direct threat to the security of the citizens of NATO countries and to international stability and prosperity more broadly [...] Instability or conflict beyond the NATO borders can directly threaten Alliance Security, including by fostering extremism, terrorism, and trans-national illegal activities ...<sup>2</sup>

All of these threats to NATO states are closely connected to the Middle East because it is likely that the threats would originate from that region. Therefore, evaluating partnerships in the MENA region is essential in order to understand the opportunities created by the current cooperative security structure in enabling NATO to address the security challenges it currently faces.

Secondly, the chapter focuses on the MENA region because so far the MD and ICI have received rather negative reviews on their adequacy in addressing the region's security issues.. The chapter therefore discusses whether or not the new partnership policy will allow for more useful partnerships in MENA, and it seeks to identify the key reasons for the modest achievements observed so far in the relationship between NATO and its regional partners.



The chapter starts by briefly explaining the MD and ICI. The first section will demonstrate that thus far, the MD and ICI have been only modest successes. The political dimension has been almost non-existent, although some achievements have been reached in the practical areas of cooperation. The chapter then argues that particularly four broadly defined obstacles are creating difficult circumstances for NATO's partnerships in the Middle East. This is certainly not to say that the two partnership programmes have been without value: they have contributed significantly to the interoperability between NATO forces and partnership forces, resulting in some partners having contributed to NATO operations in the Middle East. Subsequently, the chapter draws on the theoretical framework outlined in the introduction of this report, to answer why NATO has maintained the MD and ICI in spite of their less than favourable reviews. Lastly, the 'new flexible format' of the partnership policy adopted in 2011 will be assessed, suggesting that the new flexible format may offer the best available solution, since it allows NATO and the its Middle Eastern partners to work from different cultural and value-based perspectives whilst focusing on practical levels of cooperation in areas of shared interests.

### **The Two Partnership Programmes: Useful or Not?**

The MD currently comprises Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. Established in 1994, the MD was originally a partnership framework designed to 'use the Oslo peace process between Israel and Palestine as a basis for supporting cooperation between NATO and the countries on the southern shores of the Mediterranean' (Kamp and Reisinger 2013: 3). But the peace process broke down shortly thereafter, and thus the MD never got off to a flying start (*ibid.*). The programme has three broad aims: 'contribute to regional security and stability, achieve better mutual understanding, dispel any misconceptions about NATO among Dialogue countries'.<sup>3</sup> In practical terms, the MD functions through a wide range of activities and cooperation, such as seminars, joint exercises and consultations on terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).<sup>4</sup> In political terms, NATO and its MD partners consult in both a NATO+1 and a NATO+7 format, which 'represent an opportunity for two-way political consultations between NATO and MD partners'.<sup>5</sup>

The ICI was established in 2004 and comprises Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. Although the broad aim is not very clearly expressed, NATO does state that the 'ICI focuses on practical cooperation in areas where NATO can



add value, notably in the security field. Based on the principle of inclusiveness, the Initiative is, however, open to all interested countries of the broader Middle East region who subscribe to its aims and content, including the fight against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.<sup>6</sup> The ICI works primarily on a bilateral basis. Its activities include, among many others, advice on defence transformation, defence planning and civil-military operations, and military-to-military cooperation aimed at military interoperability with NATO forces.<sup>7</sup>

The usefulness of both the ICI and the MD in contributing to NATO security has been debated quite a bit since their establishment. It is fair to say that throughout the literature there has been a degree of scepticism as to how effective the two frameworks are. Labelling the MD a 'diplomatic talking shop' in 2004, Helle Malmvig argued that many impute to the MD a modest success at best, especially if compared with NATO's Partnership for Peace programme, and that this limited success is primarily because the partners have been reluctant to engage in either military or political cooperation (Malmvig 2004: 4). More recently, in May 2013, Kamp and Reisinger have argued that 'The MD is not in good shape either' and that 'the ICI, too, appears paralyzed. Unlike the MD, it is not burdened with any major contentious issue. It has nevertheless failed to fulfill [sic.] the hopes which accompanied its inauguration in 2004' (Kamp and Reisinger 2013: 3).

To be fair, some degree of success has been reached, primarily in the practical area of cooperation, with the political dimension lagging behind. Especially in recent years and in the realm of military burden-sharing, NATO has reached some successes with partners. Among concrete examples of success are the participation of some ICI and MD partners in the NATO operations Unified Protector and Active Endeavour (Jørgensen 2013: 68). These show that, at least in the practical realm, the partnerships have brought some progress and that Middle Eastern partners are willing to carry some of the burden of stability and security in their own region. But as Samaan argues, even though concrete examples of military interoperability can be found, the 'criticisms expressed by its stakeholders, such as the absence of a comprehensive and truly regional approach, or the lack of consistency in the political and military agenda are, in fact, very similar to the initial lukewarm assessments published in the first years of the ICI' (Samaan 2012: 1). Overall, therefore, it must be said that the achievements of the MD and ICI so far are not outstanding, and it seems that the two Middle Eastern partnerships are at best modest successes.

## **Main obstacles for successful MD and ICI partnerships**

The reasons why the achievements so far have been modest are both complex and far-reaching. However, broadly speaking, it seems possible to identify four major challenges in approaching NATO's Middle Eastern partners successfully. The list is not exhaustive, but the four discussed below are broad enough to incorporate the many and varied obstacles that seem to have stood in the way of the development of successful partnership programmes in MENA. The four broad groups of obstacles are:

1. Historical relations between MENA and the West
2. Lack of a clear vision
3. Inadequate attractiveness of partnerships
4. Internal NATO divisions

### *Historical relations between MENA and the West*

The history between states in the MENA region and the West is characterized by domination and encroachments into Middle Eastern affairs. The problematic relationship between MENA and the West can be traced especially to the British and French having dominated the region, sometimes through direct control, such as France in Algeria,<sup>8</sup> or through League of Nations mandates such as both countries had in the region in the interwar years<sup>9</sup> Western support for establishing the state of Israel after World War II further strengthened the negative perception of the West as being dominant and as enforcing its will despite strong Arab resentment of a Jewish state in the Middle East. This perception of the West as interfering in Middle Eastern politics continued during the Cold War.<sup>10</sup> In the post-Cold War world, the USA especially has continued to play a significant role in the region, interfering several times militarily (Mearsheimer 2011). Moreover, being a Western alliance and comprising the western states that have been most active in dominating MENA, NATO has so far faced significant challenges in approaching Middle Eastern partners and in creating willingness for them to commit to the partnerships. The Middle Eastern regimes are very well aware of the history between MENA and the West and are wary of NATO's 'true' objectives with its partnership programmes, while also afraid of how their domestic populations would respond to a closer rapprochement with Western states, which are often not highly regarded in the Arab world. Samaan argues that Middle Eastern leaders were wary of the 'ICI's 'hidden agenda' [...] as being no more than a mechanism by which the West can continue to control the region' (Samaan 2012: 6). Thus the wariness based on the history between the West and MENA creates a sense of mistrust about NATO's 'true' intentions. This is an image that the Alliance constantly has working against

its deeper involvement in the region, since the regimes in the region are concerned not to be viewed as too Western friendly in the eyes of their own populations.

### *Lack of a clear vision for the partnerships*

The ultimate goals of the MD and ICI are not altogether clear, in turn making it difficult to assess the overall success of the two programmes, since measuring how well the partnerships have lived up to a certain goal is not possible. Moreover, the fact that the vision of the two partnerships is not clearly defined may serve as an obstacle to success in its own right because this creates confusion among NATO states, as well as among partners, as to what broad purpose the partnership programmes are to fulfil and in which direction they are headed. For example, does NATO envisage full practical and political cooperation from partnerships, or what is the Alliance actually working towards? A possible reason for the lack of a clear vision may simply be that the partners in each programme are so diverse that no clear vision or unified approach to addressing the security challenges of the region can be defined (François 2011: 9). This means that the partnership programmes make sense only from a geographical perspective, and even then not when it comes to the interests of the partner states because these interests are so diverse. This experience contrasts somewhat with the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme, in which some partners were very interested in engaging in deeper partnerships and had a clear vision of what they wanted to get out of it. In the PfP, several states embodied a clear vision of eventually joining the Alliance, in turn creating a *raison d'être* for the PfP and a clear reachable goal towards which the partners could work. But membership of the Alliance is not a feasible overall vision for the MENA partnerships, both because of the geographical location of partners and because NATO will not be willing to commit Article Five security guarantees to states in the region. Samaan points to the same obstacles that the lack of a clear vision may pose: 'Strengthening cooperation in the operational domain could have been effective if there had been a clear common perception of the ICI's *raison d'être*', and some GCC officials see the ICI as 'a partnership without a cause' (Samaan 2012: 6-7). In line with this, Rebecca Moore argues that this is a broader problem affecting NATO partnerships: 'Ultimately, the issue that NATO has yet to resolve revolves around the fundamental purpose of the partnerships [...] NATO will first have to clarify the longer-term function that partnerships are intended to serve' (Moore 2012: 57).

### *Inadequate attractiveness of partnerships*

A third obstacle is that what NATO brings to the table in the partnership programmes is not necessarily what the partner states need or would like. NATO is a security

alliance, and its attractiveness to members is primarily the security benefits they reap from membership. One would expect that some sort of security guarantee is also what partners would expect to gain if they are to spend resources on partnership activities: 'many ICI or MD partners seem to assume that partnership with the Alliance entails some sort of NATO security commitment for the region – something which is definitely not intended by any Alliance member' (Reisinger 2012: 3). Consequently, the main attractiveness to members – security guarantees – is not available to partners. The most pertinent external threat to partners, particularly in the ICI, is Iran, especially after Saddam Hussein was toppled in 2003. But what can the small Gulf kingdoms expect from NATO if Iran were to act as an aggressor? In the current partnership arrangement the disappointing answer is probably nothing at all! Rather, the small ICI states will do better to rely on local allies, such as Saudi Arabia, for security guarantees against external threats because Saudi Arabia is more committed to preventing a surge in Iranian influence in the region.

The Arab Spring brought to light another issue of relevance to security guarantees. Many of the Middle Eastern partners are authoritarian regimes, and the liberal democratic values embodied in NATO are directly opposed to this type of regime. Therefore, NATO played a very hesitant role during much of the Arab Spring, from which it emerged that one of the greatest threats to the partners was internal, namely popular uprisings. Given NATO's position as a Western alliance founded on liberal democratic values, it cannot make any security guarantees to regimes against internal threats either, in the face of which partnership states are more ready to rely on local allies rather than NATO.<sup>11</sup> It therefore seems that NATO finds itself with a difficult conundrum in that it knows what its partners may want and what the regimes feel they need, but is not willing to cover these needs in exchange for deepened partnerships. This means that NATO partners will be reluctant to deepen their partnerships to a more useful level simply because they do not see the big need for NATO without some form of security commitments from the Alliance.<sup>12</sup>

### *Internal NATO divisions*

Throughout NATO's history, the out-of-area debate, especially regarding the Middle East, has caused much division within the Alliance. During most of the Cold War, NATO regularly debated the Middle Eastern issue, but engagement with the region was always highly contentious. Larger member states such as the US, France, Great Britain and the Federal Republic of Germany often had widely diverging opinions of NATO's role in the Middle East; some wanted NATO to engage, while others saw no role for NATO in this out-of-area region. It was some of the member states

geographically closest to the region – Spain, Italy and Portugal – that initially favoured the establishment of relations with MENA (Orfy 2011: 92). With the end of the Cold War, the out-of-area debate acquired a more prominent position, as the Alliance struggled with questions such as the inclusion of several Eastern European states, the issue of a global NATO versus an Article Five NATO, and the newer members primarily fearing the colossus to the East and thus remaining concerned with Article Five instead of NATO's southern flank. However, 9/11 and the subsequent focus on terrorism, instability and nuclear proliferation have created agreement within NATO that the Middle East is a key region for security, and in turn members agree that NATO needs to engage with states in the region in order to address these security challenges proactively.<sup>13</sup> But the obstacles to a more active role for the Alliance in MENA have not been fully resolved, and some member states are still more reluctant to engage in the region than others.

Though there is agreement that the region is of great importance, lately one NATO state has been the cause of internal division, especially with regard to the MD. Turkey, the NATO member geographically closest to the region, has had a strained relationship with Israel: 'Since the Israeli raid against the so-called "Gaza Freedom Flotilla"<sup>14</sup> in spring 2010, one NATO member [Turkey] has strongly opposed partnership activities with Israel in the MD framework. The result is that, despite the Israeli apology, the MD seems permanently paralyzed by the Israeli-Arab question [...]' (Kamp and Reisinger 2013: 3). As long as Turkey is unwilling to have NATO engage in MD activities, this internal division over the MD will continue to render that programme moribund and of little use as a tool for NATO to engage in the region.

### **The MD and ICI as tools for sustaining the liberal world order?**

The introduction to this report suggests that NATO's new partnership policy should be seen as part of an overall strategy to secure the continued resilience of the liberal world order, albeit probably in a changed format. If there ever was an idea that NATO could use the two Middle Eastern forums as a means of promoting liberal ideas and values (the *integrationalist* perspective), as was the case with several of the PfP countries in the aftermath of the Cold War, such ideas have now receded into the background. Indeed, even though some of the states in the region are now faced with major transitions following the Arab Spring, it seems unlikely that the Middle Eastern partners will commit themselves to partnerships that imply an integrationalist agenda in which Western values are brought to the forefront. Moreover, judging from the obstacles outlined above, it would seem that the

MENA region is likely to be one of the most difficult regions in which to undertake actions to sustain LWO. The MENA partnership regimes and large segments of their populations are generally sceptical not only about the liberal world order, but also about NATO and its agenda regarding the MD and ICI. It is precisely for this reason that the best future potential of the two partnership programmes is likely to be found in practical cooperation in areas of shared interests, rather than in political, value-based commitments. Nevertheless, even if it is only the practical areas of cooperation that function in the MENA partnerships, the security and stability of the Middle East will in the future be tied to the Western Alliance. So while the political liberal order – values – may not be directly promoted through the MD and ICI, NATO will still advance itself as a hub for Middle Eastern stability through cooperation in the practical sphere.

Although the integrationalist perspective may not carry much weight in the MENA region today, from an influentialist and to some extent an interventionist perspective, the ICI and MD are useful tools for addressing 21<sup>st</sup>-century security challenges. The relationships forged through the MD and ICI are mainly *influentialist* inasmuch as NATO seeks influence through cooperation on issues of shared interests. From the influentialist perspective, NATO has also achieved a limited number of benefits, such as the modernization of defence establishments in the region (Appathurai, this report), civil-military relations and other ‘best practice’ governance issues. In addition, Flockhart suggests in the introduction of this report, the *interventionist* rationale is to engage in partnerships in order to be able to team with partners in interventions, as is the case in, for example, military interoperability programmes with partners. Within the interventionist rationale, NATO has been fairly successful in forging military interoperability with some of its Middle Eastern partners, with some partners participating actively in both Operation Unified Protector and Operation Active Endeavour.

Once the current political obstacles in the aftermath of the ‘flotilla’ incident have receded into the background, it seems likely that practical cooperation in the transitioning societies will offer new opportunities for cooperation with a (limited) potential for influence. Although NATO’s vision for its partnerships in the MENA region may not be clearly articulated and be hampered by a number of obstacles, the more general intention in the region, in the words of a senior NATO official, is ‘to reinforce success rather than reinforcing failure’ and ‘to seek influence through successful cooperation’. The point is that the MD and ICI will continue to explore primarily practical levels of cooperation, rather than emphasize NATO



values such as democratization, individual liberty and the rule of law.<sup>15</sup> To be sure, NATO would like these values to spread to the MD and ICI, but the Alliance is well aware that this will be very difficult and probably unwelcome to most regimes. NATO should therefore continue to promote practical levels of cooperation and seek to influence the region in areas where shared interests can be identified. The partnerships have certainly brought value to NATO, and it is worth pursuing even deeper military interoperability with Middle Eastern partners in the future, since having the possibility of military cooperation with local Middle East regimes is an important factor if NATO is to conduct more operations in the region. This creates legitimacy, but also the practical aspects of such operations will run more smoothly if local partners are willing to assist.

### **The effects of the new partnership policy on the MD and ICI**

One of the clear benefits of the new ‘more efficient and flexible’ partnership policy is that it provides a single menu of partnership activities – both practical and political – from which partners can pick and choose. As most of the MENA partners so far are autocratic regimes, there is reason to believe that the new policy will have a positive effect on both the MD and ICI because they can steer clear of political activities that involve NATO values. With the new partnership policy and its clear commitment to engage in partnerships with ‘countries across the globe that share NATO *interests* in a peaceful world’, it is no longer an important requirement that partnering countries share NATO values, as was the case for many PfP countries in the 1990s. As long as some Middle Eastern partners are willing to support NATO operations and willing to contribute with capabilities to uphold stability and security in the region, NATO will gain from the partnerships. Though the promotion of values is no longer at the forefront in the MD and ICI, the more flexible framework will allow the MENA partners to choose from a wider range of practical activities than previously and to do so at their own pace and in their own domains of cooperation in the partnerships. In that sense, the new flexible partnership format is a positive addition to ‘NATO’s toolbox’ because it will allow developed and deepened partnerships based on each MENA states’ individual interests. Further, the reduced emphasis on value-based activities should lead to greater confidence that NATO does not have a hidden agenda. This could overcome some of the suspicions discussed as the first obstacle. However, neither the second obstacle, the lack of a clear vision, nor the third, the lack of security guarantees, can be overcome with the new flexible policy. On the contrary, allowing each member to work towards its own individual ambition will make it very difficult to formulate any clear vision for the MD and ICI on the role NATO wants

the partnerships to play except that it will primarily be focused on the influentialist and interventionist rationales. Therefore, although the new partnership policy is certainly a step in the right direction, further development of the two programmes is likely to be a slow process.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The term 'MENA' will be used interchangeably with the term 'Middle East'. This region is hard to define once and for all, since different authors apply different definitions. For the purpose at hand, it suffices to argue that in this chapter MENA/Middle East refers to states located as far west as Mauritania, as far east as Iran, as far north as Syria as far south as Yemen. For an elaborate discussion of the concept of the Middle East, see Bonine, et al., 2012: *Is There a Middle East? The Evolution of a Geopolitical Concept*. See also Orfy, M. M., 2011: *NATO and the Middle East: The Geopolitical Context Post-9/11*, pp. 35-39.

<sup>2</sup> NATO, 2010b: Strategic concept, paragraphs 9-11. Available at [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_publications/20120214\\_strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_publications/20120214_strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf) Accessed on July 12, 2013

<sup>3</sup> NATO website, topic MD: [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_60021.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_60021.htm)? Accessed on July 12, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> NATO website, topic MD: [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_60021.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_60021.htm)? Accessed on July 12, 2013.

<sup>5</sup> NATO website, topic MD: [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_60021.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_60021.htm)? Accessed on July 12, 2013.

<sup>6</sup> NATO website, topic ICI: [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_58787.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_58787.htm)? Accessed on July 13, 2013.

<sup>7</sup> NATO website, topic ICI: [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_58787.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_58787.htm)? Accessed on July 13, 2013.

<sup>8</sup> France's Algerian possessions were such an integrated part of French society that the Washington Treaty states in Article 6: *'For the purpose of Article 5, an armed attack on one or more of the Parties is deemed to include an armed attack: on the territory of any of the Parties in Europe or North America, on the Algerian Departments of France'* (Washington Treaty, Article 6). This clause became inapplicable from 1962, when Algeria gained its independence.

<sup>9</sup> The Sykes-Picot Agreement between France and Great Britain was the most concrete example of this. After World War I, Great Britain and France made an agreement, despite promises made to Arabs on gaining independence for their revolts against the Ottoman Empire, to carve the Middle East up into protectorates and spheres of interest, thus disregarding the will of the local populations.

<sup>10</sup> Briefly, the USA, France and Britain considered themselves to have vital interests in the region, whether from a Cold War perspective or because of their colonial past in the region or sometimes both. For an elaborate account of West-Middle East relations, see, for example, Möckli, D and Mauer, V (eds.), 2011: *European-American Relations and the Middle East: From Suez to Iraq*. Or see Kupchan, C., 2011: *The Persian Gulf and the West*, pp.177-209.

<sup>11</sup> A good example is the case of Bahrain during the Arab Spring. The GCC, and especially Saudi Arabia, was keen to provide military forces to protect the Sunni Islamic al-Khalifa regime against an overthrow, fearing that a Shi'a Muslim regime would take over, thus enhancing Iran's role in the Gulf.

<sup>12</sup> Not all agree that a lack of security guarantees should be a problem. For example, Samaan argues, 'The depth and the number of bilateral defense agreements in the region have meant that the issue has never been a lack of security guarantees but rather a risk of congestion' (Samaan 2012: 6). From his perspective, the partners do not necessarily want NATO security guarantees, since these are covered by local alliances with, for example, Saudi Arabia.

<sup>13</sup> The importance of threats emerging especially from the Middle East region is also confirmed clearly in the 2010 Strategic Concept, in which the described security environment places much emphasis on terrorism, the proliferation of WMDs and instability (paragraphs 9-11). This is a clear sign that a consensus is emerging on the importance of these threats vis-à-vis a conventional attack on the North Atlantic area.

<sup>14</sup> The Gaza Freedom Flotilla raid was a 2010 Israeli military operation in which Israeli forces raided the *Mavi Marmara*, a flotilla organized to ship supplies to the Gaza Strip. During the raid nine Turks were killed, an incident that resulted in very strained relationship between Turkey and Israel (Schleifer 2011).

<sup>15</sup> NATO, 1949: North Atlantic Treaty preamble: available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_17120.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm) accessed on July 14, 2013. The preamble emphasizes particularly these values.



## **8. NATO's Cooperation with the EU doesn't work and it doesn't really matter ... yet!**

*Thierry Legendre*

The United States has always supported European integration because it remained convinced that a Europe that could cooperate would be infinitely more capable of providing for its own security, while at the same time complementing NATO (Brimmer 2007). As a result, the idea of a strengthened and integrated Europe has been supported by the United States since the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in the early 1950s. Importantly American support for European integration was not confined to matters of defence, as is well illustrated by the words of Dean Acheson, US Secretary of State, who outlined the American position in the aftermath of the dramatic events of 1952, when the European Defence Community (EDC) failed and NATO de facto became the privileged choice of the United States.

A continuance of American interest and effort in Europe on the scale of the past six years depended upon the continuance of policies designed to create a community united politically and strong economically and militarily. Such a community we could and would support as a central point in our foreign policy. However, if the European effort should fall apart, the whole basis of our supporting effort would disintegrate. That effort was worthwhile and necessary if it helped Europeans build a new and strong Europe. It would be quixotic to continue it if the Europeans were giving up the struggle. If the European Defense Community went to pieces, I foresaw great difficulties for the new administration. (Acheson 1969)

The relationship between NATO and the EU should be perceived in this perspective. NATO's Partnership with the European Union is different in nature from its geographical and more traditional partnerships such as Partnership for Peace (PfP), Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) or Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI). The traditional partnership toolbox and its plethora of acronyms is not, for instance, used with the EU. The reason for this is most probably that the concept of the Comprehensive Approach – another phrase for working together with other international organizations in crisis management – needed a so-called 'packaging' before one of the Summits in the late 2000s, asking should it be linked to capabilities, operations or partnerships? Some smart policy-planners close to NATO's Secretary

General came up with a new label, namely ‘institutional partnerships’, which from the outset included the EU and the UN. At the same time the use of more flexible partnership meeting formats and a more flexible use of the partnership toolbox were launched in an overall attempt to make NATO’s cooperation policies more globally oriented. With the adoption of the new Strategic Concept at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, NATO’s heads of states and governments agreed on an ambitious text that places the EU at the highest level of its partnership hierarchy (NATO 2010). However, cooperation between the two organizations is currently not living up to the expectations expressed in the Strategic Concept and is far from fulfilling its full potential.

From the very beginning of his mandate in August 2009, NATO’s Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, made cooperation between NATO and the EU one of the top three priorities for his mandate. The EU’s High Representative, Catherine Ashton, has also shown an explicit interest in enhancing cooperation between the two organizations. In a letter to Rasmussen in February 2010, she expressed her willingness to strengthen NATO–EU relations in an effective and pragmatic way, while awaiting momentum on the wider political agenda. Hence, working groups have been established in order to find ways to improve cooperation in a pragmatic fashion. Consequently, staff to staff talks and contacts have increased in number and improved in quality. Furthermore, shortly after Ashton’s letter, Rasmussen participated in the EU Foreign Minister’s meeting in Palma de Mallorca, where he invited the EU to address some of the legitimate concerns of non-EU NATO members by emphasising transparency and inclusiveness. Since the meeting in Palma, Rasmussen and Ashton have participated in each other’s informal ministerial meetings and are meeting informally on regular basis.

### **The Obstacles**

Despite some flexibility in the preparations for the NATO Summit in Lisbon in November 2010, for the last decade cooperation with the EU has suffered from both structural and bureaucratic challenges, and from time to time even from personal factors. Cooperation between two different organizations such as the EU and NATO would of necessity present certain challenges. However, by far the most serious of the obstacles is the political blockages arising from the uneven membership in which Turkey is a member of NATO but not of the EU, and Cyprus is a member of the EU but not of NATO. First of all, the exclusion of Turkey from the European Defence Agency (EDA) has from the beginning of its creation been a

'show stopper': Turkey used to be a member of the EDA's predecessor, the Western European Armaments Group (WEAG), which was closed in 2005. Furthermore, in the NATO context, Turkey is unsatisfied with the lack of reciprocity from the EU's side in connection with Turkish participation in operations where NATO is contributing with its capabilities. More specifically there is disagreement over the interpretation of the so-called Berlin Plus agreement from 2003. This constitutes the framework for the formal cooperation procedures related to military crisis management, that is, consultations between NATO and the EU in crisis situations and the EU's access to NATO's planning capacity. The Berlin Plus Agreement is primarily designed for situations where the EU is using NATO assets to carry out military operations such as the EU's operation ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and it stipulates that only those EU member states that have signed a security agreement with NATO can take part in the consultations between NATO's North Atlantic Council (NAC) and the EU's Political and Security Committee (PSC). This de facto excludes Cyprus. The consequences of the impasse have so far been disagreements and serious limitations in the coordination of NATO and EU missions and operations at the political-strategic level. At the operational level, however, there seems to be a certain understanding by both Cyprus and Turkey of the need for such coordination and cooperation where these interventions are running in parallel, as in Kosovo, Afghanistan or on the Horn of Africa.

### *Competing Attitudes and Institutional Cultures*

The Cyprus–Turkey deadlock is not the only obstacle. For more than a decade a certain competitive attitude evolved between the EU and NATO, although that has been less the case in recent years. Former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's critical attitude towards European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) in 2001 and the strife over Iraq between Europe and the United States from 2003 froze the relationship between the US and Europe, which also impacted negatively on EU-NATO relations, with growing competition between the two as a result. In the last decade it also used to be an open secret in Brussels that Javier Solana, at that time the EU's High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, and the then Secretary General of NATO Jaap de Hoop Scheffer periodically had a challenged relationship with each other and did not meet often. These factors undoubtedly had a negative impact on cooperation, and one can still find 'Atlanticist' and 'Europeanist' attitudes and cultural differences reflected within the two bureaucracies. The different cultures even have a tendency to influence national diplomatic representations. These would normally aim at reflecting the same national policy in the two organizations, decided in the respective capitals.

Meanwhile, there happen to be noticeable differences at least in the way these are presented by national representatives, depending on whether these are presented in the EU or in NATO.

To sum up: cooperation between the EU and NATO is not working well primarily because of the Turkey–Cyprus disagreement and secondly because of competitive attitudes. However, and perhaps paradoxically, at this stage it probably doesn't really matter. For now the political incentives and rewards are not high enough to engage decision-makers in coming up with solutions, and both organizations seem to have enough on their respective agendas both with regard to crisis management and in the important question of creating relevant capabilities for the future in times of scarce financial means.

### **Why we need to improve: the strategic context**

Of 28 NATO allies, 22 are also members of the EU. On the face of it, it would therefore seem reasonable to develop a strategic partnership and bring cooperation between the two organizations to a whole new level. In Europe there is only one set of forces, and the security challenges are most often similar or shared. With emerging security challenges, the repercussions of the international financial crisis on defence budgets in Europe and some degree of American re-orientation towards the Pacific, the EU and NATO should find ways to ensure a better use of resources, identify synergies and address the lack of European key-enabling capabilities. Both organizations being instrumental to the Liberal World Order (as described by Trine Flockhart in the introduction of this report), a comprehensive use of both organizations' military and civilian expertise and capabilities should be reflected in the way the emerging security challenges and crisis management are tackled.

### *Crisis Management*

The security challenges of the future call for a more holistic approach to crisis resolution. Since the end of the Cold War, both NATO and the EU have regularly been engaged in crisis management. For both organizations, crisis management has become an important part of their *raison d'être*. Experience from operational theatres clearly shows the need for more efficient comprehensive approaches, where diplomacy, civilian action, development policies and the use of military force can play along with each other in concerted planning processes and actions. Closer cooperation between NATO and the EU would contribute substantially to such an approach, taking into account NATO's military potential and the EU's substantial

civilian capacity both within the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and when it comes to development and reconstruction aid. The EU provides sixty per cent of global aid, which is three times as much as the United States. There is therefore clearly more in the toolbox than military means, but you also need the latter to pave the way and link up with other policy areas and together develop realistic and effective exit strategies. Paradoxically the EU's discussions on a comprehensive approach are primarily focused on how to delineate the European Council's CSDP missions vis-à-vis the European Commission's development and reconstruction policies and substantial funds. This intra-organizational bureaucratic exercise is important for the EU, but it should not overshadow the obvious complementarity between it and the military and political strength of NATO.

### *Emerging Security Challenges*

NATO and the EU are not only faced with issues of crisis management and conflict resolution: the two organizations are increasingly faced with what is often referred to as 'emerging security challenges', a label typically covering topics like cyber-attacks, terrorism, piracy and security of supplies, including energy security. Some of these threats are as old as history but have changed form and increased their impact. Terrorism, for example, is not a new threat, but from a contemporary view point it has become more deadly and spectacular during the last fifteen years and has changed its nature. It has also become global and therefore calls for multinational approaches.

Piracy is another topic that many would associate with Captain Hook and the eighteenth century, but the dramatic increase in piracy attacks off the Horn of Africa since the mid-2000s and recent increases in the Gulf of Guinea give a clear indication of the challenge for international shipping and in securing supplies of primary products to our societies. Both NATO and the EU have addressed this challenge in a rather robust way in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions. NATO launched its counter-piracy mission Operation Ocean Shield in 2008, initially to protect the World Food Program (WFP), and it is helping to deter and disrupt pirate attacks against vulnerable traffic in the region. The EU also launched its Operation ATALANTA (EUNAVFOR) in 2008. Besides protection to WFP, deterrence and the protection of vulnerable shipping, the mission also gives protection to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Operation ATALANTA is part of an EU comprehensive approach (Strategic Framework for the Horn of Africa) not only involving counter-piracy off shore, but also dealing with the root causes on shore by combining military action

with political and diplomatic efforts, development assistance and legal action. As part of a regional approach to counter-piracy operations, the EU has also launched a training mission in Somalia (EUTM Somalia) in order to strengthen the Transitional Federal Government in Somalia through the training of 3000 troops at all levels, plus a capacity-building mission (EUCAP NESTOR) in order to build up a naval capacity in the region. Furthermore an EU Senior Representative to the Horn of Africa was appointed in January 2012 to push forward the political and diplomatic process. EUNAVFOR has registered a decrease in attacks from 163 in 2009 to three in 2013, of which 46 counted as piracy in 2009 and none in 2013 (EUNAVFOR, 2013). This indicates a successful approach (EUNAVFOR, 2013), though the effects of NATO's Operation Ocean Shield should not be ignored.

A third area that is increasingly moving up the list of new challenges is cybercrime and attacks, a new topic and growth area. Today there are almost three billion users of the Internet, or forty per cent of the global population (EEAS 2013). Most critical infrastructure and most of our public and private administrations now rely on complex computer programs and uninterrupted information flows and databases. The health sector, transport, energy, banking sector and stock exchanges are just a few examples of key areas of our societies that are sensitive to cyber attacks or other irregularities, not to mention cyber-crime that costs hundreds of billions of Euros every year. In that perspective, cyber security is becoming one of the biggest security challenges for our societies. Today cyber attacks on governments and major international organizations are a daily reality. In NATO a Cooperative Cyber-Defence Centre of Excellence was established in 2008, and at the NATO Summit in Lisbon in 2010 (NATO, 2010) it was decided to enable the Alliance to continue to provide collective security within this area as well and to develop policies as well as concrete capabilities, such as a NATO Computer Incident Response Capability. There is recognition amongst policy-makers that this is already a challenge that asks for whole-of-government approaches, where both military and civilian institutions must be involved. The EU launched a cyber-strategy in 2013 that aims at reducing cybercrime, as well as to establish an international cyber-space policy for the EU. This means both improving cooperation between different policy areas and promoting coordination between military and civilian actors, as well as with other international partners, the private sector and civil society.

A main trend seems to be that globalization draws foreign zones of instability closer to the relatively peaceful European zone. The emerging security challenges have the potential to affect the heart of our communities and to have serious societal

consequences. Thus, disruption of supplies of energy or other vital resources, interruption of critical infrastructure, terrorist attacks or a combination of these call for complex solutions and unity of forces. The complexity of threats and their potential consequences for societal security should in themselves be an incentive for establishing a real partnership between NATO and the EU.

### *Other Factors*

Cooperation between NATO and the EU within crisis management and tackling the emerging security challenges is something we might want to consider in order to improve entrance and exit strategies and ensure a comprehensive whole-of-government approach to more volatile and complex threats. Considering the strategic backdrop to these threats and challenges, European decision-makers might want to look at this earlier rather than later. Thus the consequences of the financial crisis on public spending in general, and on defence budgets in particular, specifically calls for action. Furthermore, China is on the rise and increased its defence spending by 170 per cent from 2002 to 2011 (EUISS, 2013). Consequently the United States has begun to reorient its focus towards the Pacific. The Obama administration has clearly indicated that the Asian theatre is a priority, and a re-allocation of sixty per cent of the US Navy by 2020 is already in the pipeline pending congressional approval and budgetary allocations during the coming years (EUISS 2013).

The US disengagement or strategic re-balance means that Europe will increasingly have to take care of its own security. But not only have defence budgets in Europe dropped by between ten and twenty per cent in the last couple of years, unfortunately they have done so in an uncoordinated way. From 2001 to 2010, EU defence spending declined from 251 billion Euros to 194 billion Euros (European Commission 2013). Although Europe still has a considerable number of fighter planes and battle tanks – Europe has about 5,000 – its ability to deploy rapidly, even with smaller contingents, remains a challenge. Even larger European countries that have transformed their force structures from *a priori* Cold War to deployable expeditionary capabilities face some challenges in deploying forces into conflict theatres. Hence experience from the NATO air campaign in Libya, Operation Unified Protector in 2011, showed substantial European dependence on US capabilities. The United States adopted a stance of limited involvement but did in fact deliver decisive support through its Operation Odyssey Dawn, which suppressed Libya's air defences and its surface-to-air missile capability, as well as its situational awareness through ISR or Intelligence Surveillance Reconnaissance. The



troubling thing is that these are capabilities that only the United States possesses in the quantities required for such operations. During the French-led Operation Serval in Mali, France, with support from a smaller coalition, engaged in an impressive campaign in order to avoid the country falling into the hands of Islamic rebel groups. Although the air campaign and the deployment of forces (including a substantive component of special forces) were impressive, the US supported with key capabilities without which the operation would have been very difficult to carry out, not to say impossible. In the cases of both Libya and Mali, therefore, although European countries have shown a clear sense of ownership and a willingness to take their share of the operational burden, this has only been possible with key support from the United States in what has been called ‘leadership from behind’.

The lessons of these two operations are obvious: Europe needs capabilities and in particular the so-called key enablers. They are well known as capability shortfalls and comprise strategic air- and sea lift, tactical transport, air-to-air refuelling, ISTAR (Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance), C4 (Command, Control, Computers and Communications), medical facilities and precision-guided munitions (EUISS 2013). Besides, Europe is also struggling with force structure problems and an excess of certain military capabilities like combat tanks, fighter aircraft, infantry vehicles and even manpower. Finally, Europe will also need to engage in the acquisition of modern technologies.

To sum up, the strategic context has changed for most members of the EU and NATO. The American rebalancing towards the Asia-Pacific region and the impact of the financial crisis on European defence spending puts pressure on Europe’s capabilities and defence structures. Meanwhile the demand for crisis management in Europe’s neighbourhood and the immediate zone of influence is not decreasing. Furthermore, emerging security challenges have the potential to affect the heart of our societies and the everyday lives of European citizens. This should constitute enough incentives to consider establishing a strategic partnership between the EU and NATO, allowing for a comprehensive use of military and civilian capabilities and expertise.

### **What’s needed?**

As indicated earlier, so far there hasn’t been much political traction in the question of a NATO–EU partnership, nor a willingness to address seriously the main obstacles to achieving an enhanced relationship between the two organizations.

To break the political deadlock between Turkey and Cyprus, a lot of political pressure and capital would have to be spent on both countries. That would, among many aspects, be highly unlikely to work vis-à-vis Turkey with the current developments in Syria and equally unlikely vis-à-vis Cyprus with the current Euro crisis. Meanwhile an attempt to identify small negotiable openings should be explored. Perhaps a Cypriot candidacy could be traded for the increased inclusiveness of Cyprus in NATO operations or a special observer arrangement for Turkey with the EDA like Norway has. It would probably be difficult but not impossible if sufficient political will could be generated.

After the deeper disagreements in the first part of last decade, some of the competitive attitudes between the two organizations have diminished to a level where they do not constitute an obstacle on their own. This can on the one hand be attributed to improved relations at the top level and the personal devotion of both EU High Representative Ashton and NATO Secretary General Rasmussen to try to make this work. And indeed the reciprocal participation in each other's ministerial meetings is a sound indication. The Lisbon Treaty and the creation of the European External Action Service might also have produced a slightly more pragmatic and mature attitude between the EU and NATO, not least at the bureaucratic level.

At a time when relations between the EU and the United States are increasingly focused on the EU-United States agreement known as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and at a time where we stand in the middle of a financial crisis, we need an efficiency debate. The discussion on the lack of strategic key enablers and the need to transform force structures further is fundamentally a European debate, but it is not a debate that can be limited to the EU: it also needs to take place within NATO. The lack of deployability and usability of forces, as well as the lack of key enablers, is a common challenge. Thus, a common or parallel debate on efficiency and multinational solutions could give momentum to NATO initiatives within the capability field in the initiatives on 'Smart Defence' and 'Connected Forces', as well as the EU's 'Pooling and Sharing' initiative. The European Council in December (EC), which will address the issue of CSDP, might present itself as a good opportunity to reaffirm the importance of a close partnership between the EU and NATO and to take the efficiency debate to a higher level. NATO's Secretary General has followed the debate closely and takes part in it when he is invited to the EU Ministers of Defence meetings. He will most probably also be present at the European Council in December.

The preparation of the 2013 European Council has focused on three strands of work or clusters. Cluster 1 aims at increasing the effectiveness, visibility and impact of CSDP in its missions. The idea is to develop further the comprehensive approach to crisis management. Although this sounds very promising, the main focus is on improving Commission and Council relations. Other elements of cluster 1 are an increased focus on the emerging security challenges with a focus on networked security (i.e. space, cyber and energy), maritime security, developing an early warning system and creating a more holistic approach to missions, with a focus also on rapid civilian deployment.

Cluster 2 aims at enhancing the development of capabilities, both focusing on support to member states in developing and acquiring capabilities together and making the best use of economies of scale. To this extent, the well-known concept of 'Pooling and Sharing' and its code of conduct are encouraged, as well as synergies between bilateral, sub-regional and multilateral cooperation. The aim is to achieve de-confliction on capability development and a closer coordination between the EU's 'Pooling and Sharing' initiative and NATO's 'Smart Defence' initiative. Under cluster 2 it is also the intention to commit to major projects on some of the key enablers, including air-to-air refuelling, drones, cyber issues and satellite communication.

Cluster 3 aims at strengthening Europe's defence industry by focusing on a strong and competitive European Defence and Technological Industrial Base. This area has the Commission in the lead. It will address questions of security of supply and demand, standardization and certification in its work. The European defence industry had a turnover of 96 billion Euros in 2012 (172 billion for the entire European Aerospace and Defence Industries and 734,000 jobs), directly employing 400,000 people and generating up to another 960,000 indirect jobs (European Commission, July 2013). Europe can therefore not afford to lose high-tech jobs, or indeed to lag behind.

It is probably unlikely that the European Council in December will constitute a step-change for the NATO-EU relations, although it is high on the wish lists of both Rasmussen and Ashton. However, at the declaratory level it might provide an opportunity to boost and better coordinate the respective capability debates, as well as to relate them to an agenda, taking into account the emerging security challenges relating to societal security. The European Council can also be an opportunity to send a clear message to the United States that Europe is ready to re-balance NATO

and assume greater responsibility for its own security, both from within NATO and by deepening the relationship between the Alliance and the EU.

### **Conclusions**

We need to move away from the doom and gloom or what the French call *un déclassément stratégique*. Europe is not at a point of no return, and the EU as a whole is still the second biggest military power, with two nuclear powers amongst its member states, and it still maintains a high degree of force projection capability, even at the strategic level. But the strategic environment is changing, and the time seems ripe to re-balance Europe and strengthen the EU–NATO partnership. The obstacles to such a partnership will not disappear by themselves, but at the nexus between lower budgets, American disengagement from Europe and emerging security challenges, a reinvigorated partnership might emerge between the two organizations that is able to address societal security issues and crisis management in Europe and its zone of influence. Hopefully the up-coming European Council in December 2013 will be the first step in that direction.

## **9. Cooperative Security and NATO's Grand Alternatives**

*Sten Rynning*

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization has an opportunity to remake itself and reinvigorate its foundations now that it is about to conclude its extensive and often brutal combat mission in Afghanistan. Cooperative security and partnership are key facets of this opportunity, because it offers greater scope for diplomacy and peaceful cooperation and is vastly different from the gruelling grind of expeditionary warfare.

However, in spite of a political desire to move in this direction, the Alliance will not be moved easily. Single issues such as partnership are caught up in the tangle of multiple NATO issues, which reflect the complex geopolitics of the Alliance. Some allies will continue to value operations and operational capacity, if nothing else because they believe this capacity to be the foundation for the Alliance's deterrence and political credibility. No single issue will be allowed to drive the Alliance, therefore, and to gain their full weight, partnership and cooperative security must be placed within a renewed 'Atlantic narrative'.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter will look at partnership within this wider context. It will 'clarify the alternatives' and stimulate the 'reflection, which must precede rational and purposeful choice'.<sup>2</sup> In particular, it will identify the grand political ideals that compete to control and shape NATO, emphasize the issues at stake in the development of cooperative security and evaluate the solidity of NATO's effort to become more global and more politically connected.

The chapter proceeds as follows. It will first demonstrate how distinct ideas regarding NATO were layered into the 2010 Strategic Concept, in which cooperative security is one of three defining pillars. The first section will examine each of the three pillars to demonstrate how a certain trend runs through them all. Section two then provides a summary overview of this trend or, more appropriately, the two grand ideals that compete for influence inside the Alliance. These two ideals co-exist, but one is gaining in influence. The implications thereof are picked up in Section three, which emphasizes the underlying balance of power politics and how the struggle for NATO ties in with a broader struggle to define the West. It cautions that the current model for refashioning NATO is incomplete and argues for a greater and more comprehensive Atlantic bargain.

## **The Battle of Ideals and NATO's Strategic Concept**

This section will situate cooperative security and partnership within the context of NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept.<sup>3</sup> I shall trace the main issues of contention and debate with regard to each of the three main pillars of the Concept, respectively, and following the order of the Strategic Concept – collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security.

### *Collective Defence*

The geographical reach of the NATO defence clause (Article 5) was once a matter of controversy. If NATO did not go 'out-of-area,' the argument in favour of change went, then it would go 'out-of-business.' In 1999, when NATO revised its 1991 Strategic Concept, it agreed to stretch the geography a bit and focus on the Euro-Atlantic area.

The war in Afghanistan would seem to have settled the issue of geography in favour of there being no limits. Since Al Qaeda, which attacked the United States, was mainly based in Afghanistan, and since NATO did invoke its Article 5 on September 12, 2001, there was no reason to uphold the past 'Euro-Atlantic' zoning of that Article. Logically, the Strategic Concept of 2010 does not define a geographical area of relevance for Article 5. However, Afghanistan is not an Article 5 operation. In September 2001 the United States declined to define it as such, and NATO's Afghan mandate continues to be one of stability, not collective defence.<sup>4</sup> Like Libya, where in 2011 NATO undertook *Operation Unified Protector*, Afghanistan therefore raises the question of when and how a crisis – however defined – can blossom into a NATO military engagement that for all intents and purposes resembles an Article 5 engagement.

The debate inside NATO has turned on Article 5's relationship to Article 4, the clause stipulating that any ally, when threatened, has a right to call for consultations. Article 4 can either be seen as a stepping stone to Article 5 or as a means through which NATO can engage in security matters that no longer touch on the defence of its territory. Allies who predominantly focus on NATO as an Article 5 alliance want a high threshold for Article 4 consultations – to make them difficult to engage – because this underscores the sanctity of Article 5. One should not formally consult on all matters of security, but only on those issues that potentially threaten the territory. Not all Allies agree, however. Seeking NATO's renewal and wider engagement, they are in favour of lowering the Article 4 threshold as much as possible.

The debate continues, but the engagement camp won the first round: NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept promises to 'broaden and intensify' consultations on a regular basis at all stages of a crisis.<sup>5</sup> The opponents thereof did leave a mark, though, because the precursor to the Strategic Concept, the so-called Albright Report of May 2010, called for the 'more creative and regular use' of Article 4 consultations that 'need not await an imminent Article 5 threat.'<sup>6</sup> The compromise language of the Strategic Concept went in this direction but not all the way.

Article 4, proponents continue, is particularly well suited for an environment defined by unconventional threats, and we are witnessing a greater emphasis being placed on such threats in the Strategic Concept, which is to say that NATO's gaze has widened. There is a counter-balancing item in the text, though, which is the statement that NATO's Article 5 commitment can be invoked only when 'the fundamental security' of allies is threatened: it will therefore take more than one cyber-attack to activate it.<sup>7</sup> Still, NATO has adopted a more dynamic approach to the environment and Article 4, and in so doing has loosened the connection between Articles 4 and 5. The Article 4 threshold had been lowered, that of Article 5 raised (or kept high).

### *Crisis Management*

It is by implication clear that NATO has adopted a more dynamic and flexible policy with regard to the second dimension we shall address: crisis management. In the Strategic Concept, we see several new initiatives that promise to build up NATO's capacity for this type of engagement: among them are an improved ability to 'monitor and analyse' the international environment, the organization of a 'an appropriate but modest civilian crisis management capability', the ability 'to train and develop local forces in crisis zones', and also the capacity to 'identify and train civilian specialists from member states, made available for rapid deployment'. These initiatives mostly concern organizational development, but the political implications remain significant because they involve NATO in complex contingencies, not just in standard military conflicts.

Still, crisis management is to a great extent marked by compromise, more so than collective defence. This is the case first of all because NATO's management capability will be 'modest', which is to say within a division of labour with civilian organizations, such as the UN or the EU. Moreover, the training of local forces does not amount to engagement in a full security-sector reform, which again keeps NATO boxed in: while NATO does some training, the UN and the EU will do



good governance, judicial reform and development. Finally, NATO's role in training civilian specialists is fully based on voluntary contributions because this is what the allies could agree to.

The underlying compromise is therefore to engage NATO, but as a predominantly military actor. It is a fragile position because it suits neither the United States nor France: the former had wanted a real NATO capacity, the latter none at all. In fact, Franco-American divergence explains NATO's inability to move forward on this issue of crisis management at all in the years 2004-2010. The NATO compromise will have to be validated by practice, but it is worth keeping in mind that neither NATO's intervention in Libya in 2011 nor France's intervention in Mali in 2013 called on this institutionalized civil-military capacity: in Libya there was no follow-on mission, while in Mali it is in the hands of the UN and the EU, not NATO.

### *Cooperative Security*

Finally, in relation to cooperative security and partnerships, NATO aims to establish 'a wide network of partner relationships with countries and organizations around the globe', and it has adapted its partnership policy accordingly.<sup>8</sup> The revised policy agreed in Berlin in April 2011 builds on a toolbox, which mainly concerns internal management, and then two frameworks, one for policy consultations and one for operational decision-making. The latter – a Political-Military Framework (PMF) – has been driven by partners' demands for the institutionalization of the consultation that has developed inside ISAF and whereby all operational issues are considered in partner format and not, as was previously the case, first in NATO format, then in partner format.<sup>9</sup> This NATO has agreed to, thus strengthening its institutional capacity to serve as a type of coalition-building vehicle.

The final leg of partnerships concerns general political consultations, which are thus outside NATO operations, and the two positions in the debate were either to preserve the regional forums for partnership (EAPC, MD, and ICI) and layer most consultations into these, or, conversely, to downgrade or simply scrap these forums and allow consultations by any partner on any issue. The former was geopolitical in the sense that it focused on organizing the geographical 'approaches' to Europe and tied them to NATO's structure. The latter was likewise geopolitical but in a globalizing framework whereby NATO had to improve its ability to structure political relations across the Eurasian chessboard. The aforementioned Albright

Report opted for change in the latter direction, seeing the regional forum option as an *acquis* that had grown unwieldy.<sup>10</sup> Instead of having partnership driven by the calendar of big and formal forums, it should be driven by partners' concerns, which implies a much more flexible and dynamic policy.

NATO largely went in the direction of flexibility. Its new policy is a '28+n' policy that has no geographical limits. Still, it is layered on top of the old partnership tool, the regional forums, which NATO could not decide to do away with. Moreover, flexibility, even if embedded by institutional design, can be fundamentally hampered by political differences: NATO has yet to remove mutual vetoes exercised by Turkey and its critics over partnership activities on the issue of Israel and the failed breaking of the Gaza blockade by a Turkish ship in 2010. Some progress has been made in light of the quid pro quo over NATO missiles deployed to Turkey in response to the civil war in Syria, but partnership remains a political minefield.

### **NATO's Grand Alternatives**

The grand alternatives for NATO involvement are ideal types that can be extracted from the complexity of the Strategic Concept. Each ideal type represents an ideal for the Alliance, which attracts political allegiance and is able to shape issues at headquarters. The ideal type is not a reality, therefore, but an image of a goal and as such a driver of NATO affairs. It is by extracting these ideals that we can understand the most fundamental drivers of Alliance affairs.

The two ideal types found inside NATO and the Strategic Concept can be labelled *Global Agility* and *Regional Bulwark*. The former foresees continuing globalization and the marginalization of geography in favour of the international and indeed global management of threats and political relationships. The latter is premised on the continued relevance of geography in general and the importance of the North Atlantic area in particular.

*Global Agility* foresees an Alliance in which NATO becomes relevant and capable with regard to every global security and defence issue of importance. As these issues do vary, and as different actors are involved in different issues, NATO must above all be agile. Organizations are by nature focused on a limited range of issues and tend to act according to procedure, but agility can nonetheless be built into NATO's organization:

- NATO's collective defence commitment (Article 5) can be focused on new unconventional threats;
- NATO can be opened up to new types of civil–military interaction;
- And NATO can build up a flexible framework of political consultations.

*Regional Bulwark* foresees an Alliance that maintains a focus on the particular defence needs of the North Atlantic region, which is to say its territorial defence dimension and how neighbouring regions impact on them. The organization can be shaped accordingly:

- NATO can privilege the collective preparation for major military contingencies in the Euro-Atlantic area, which is also intended to embed expeditionary warfare within the collective command structure;
- NATO can be open to civil–military interaction but must devise ways and means of safeguarding its military competences;
- And NATO can anchor its partnerships in a distinct geographical framework.

These ideal types vie for control inside NATO, albeit in complex ways. It is not a simple question of one group of allies supporting one ideal type and another group of allies supporting the other, or of one ideal type winning while the other is losing. Ideal types can attract allegiance from all allies, but to varying degrees.

That said, the trend is towards *Global Agility*. Several factors account for this, among them the decade-long challenge of fighting a land war (or a brutal stabilization mission) in Afghanistan, which has required considerable political and military agility. Another factor is the continuing rise of China and other Asian countries, all of whom gain in weight vis-à-vis NATO's diplomacy in places such as Afghanistan and Africa and whose internal competition for Asian influence could well affect NATO allies' security. Moreover, the downside of globalization is an enhanced vulnerability to disruptive technologies (missiles, cyber, etc.) and ideologies (terrorist movements etc.). Finally, the United States as the Alliance leader and a global power would obviously benefit from an Atlantic Alliance that can support its policies flexibly and with weight.

Trend is not destiny, however. The end of Afghan combat is also a return home; Russia is an ongoing concern, particularly for those allies located in its proximity, and the Arab Spring and ensuing regional turbulence, if not outright civil war as in Syria, highlight the importance of securing the Alliance's heartland as well as its geographical approaches.

The key challenge for NATO allies as a whole is to manage this balance of ideals. They should not act on the assumption that one ideal can simply be privileged; rather, they should provide for the co-existence of strategic rationales and, as will be argued below, revise the current trend and give more emphasis to *Regional Bulwark* NATO.

### **Balance of Power Implications for NATO and Europe**

The argument that, if the security environment is fluid, so must NATO be fluid is quite common. It comes in distinct flavours. One is that of risk society: here the future is determined largely by our anxious anticipation of it, which leads to the argument that NATO should relax and seek to be networked and adaptive.<sup>11</sup> Another is that of a community of practice: it argues that political stability can emerge from political networks that shape members' cognition and cause them to cooperate, which is to say that NATO networks must widen and deepen.<sup>12</sup> A final flavour is liberal: it argues that, because democracies are wired for cooperation, NATO has a built-in, self-healing crisis management capacity, which is also to say that NATO should network with the democracies of this world.<sup>13</sup>

Fluid and adaptable networks – of whatever flavour – have something going for them, but they are not the answer to the challenge of managing the balance of ideals. This requires above all an appreciation of the way in which these ideals are rooted in the geopolitical diversity of the Alliance and how this diversity requires an Alliance management that reflects NATO foundations, as much as environmental trends in the direction of risk and adaptability. Going out-of-area may take NATO out-of-business, as James Sperling and Mark Webber have noted.<sup>14</sup> Or, in crude terms, if *Global Agility* becomes *the* business model of the Atlantic community, then NATO will lose its balance and become a risk to itself.

*Global Agility* ties in with an active use of Article 4, extended crisis management capacities and flexible partnerships, but it is also rooted in the geopolitical experience of Eurasian power management *at a distance*. It is in particular the experience of the sea powers Great Britain and the United States. The argument is at heart simple: As the Eurasian centre of gravity moves east, and as globalization makes Eurasia one coherent lump for power management, then NATO must adapt accordingly and become better at assisting in this power management. This is a legacy of sea power traditions. Water may to a degree have stopping power and encourage the offshore balancing of power strategies, but it seems above all to encourage an almost exclusively

utilitarian view of institutions: they must be shaped to respond to predominant threats.<sup>15</sup> While intuitively reasonable, the approach is associated with two political dangers whose common denominator is that of Alliance fragmentation.

### *Taking Care of Outliers*

The first is that of the alienation of outliers. At issue are the political outliers of the Alliance as seen from the perspective of the sea powers: France is one outlier, Turkey another. What they have in common is an opposition to *Global Agility* and also a deep-seated concern for the NATO–EU balance. France is flexible on Article 4 consultations, but does not want to see NATO develop into a comprehensive crisis management framework that sustains coalitions of the willing: it would crowd out the crisis management space that France hopes the EU will occupy, and which is an aim of the EU's recent Lisbon treaty. France was a willing coalition-driver in Libya and Mali but deliberately did not want to connect its coalition to NATO. This connection was established in the case of Libya, under Operation Unified Protector, but it happened despite, not because of French policy.

Turkey shares the concern for NATO–EU relations but as a frustrated NATO ally standing in the queue for EU membership. Turkey and France have split on this issue, with France threatening to veto Turkey's entry into the EU. Turkey has also parted company with the expeditionary core of the Alliance because of its concern for its territorial integrity. This relates to the position of the Kurds but also – a bone of contention with France – the Armenian minority and its history, and it is also concerned about its geographical proximity to the unrest in the Middle East. Turkey's parliament turned down the United States' request for Turkish acquiescence to a second and northern front in the 2003 Iraq war, and Turkey's foreign-policy doctrine of 'strategic depth' – defined by its geopolitical location and historical ties to neighbouring regions – has since become more pronounced. This explains Turkey's refusal to endorse the authority of the French-led coalition in the early phase of the Libya intervention, as well as its criticism of the unilateralism of the French intervention in Mali, which, it felt, was not authorized by the UN Security Council's backing of an African option.

A stringent push in favour of *Global Agility* will alienate outliers such as France and Turkey further, radicalizing their foreign-policy doctrines, which already have marked histories of opposition (to NATO and the EU respectively). If important allies such as France and Turkey tear at the seams, the negative impact could be severe. It is worth emphasizing that the agile Alliance that intervened in Libya in

2011 in fact had only eight 'strike nations' out of a total of 28 allies. In the words of former US NATO ambassador Kurt Volker, in Libya NATO solidarity 'went out the window'.<sup>16</sup>

### *Nationalization and the German Question*

The second danger is that of security nationalization. To the extent that NATO becomes a handmaid of coalitions labouring for security and development in faraway regions, some European allies will be tempted to rely increasingly on their own efforts to provide for their national security. This can happen in distinct ways.

One is the Eastern European tendency to attract American allegiance by deploying forces in US operations while remaining strategically focused on the national territory. Poland is perhaps the most outstanding case of this: it became the most prominent European nation in the Iraq coalition next to Britain, deploying 2,500 troops and commanding the (ill-fated) Multinational Division Central-South from 2003 to 2008, while its Afghan commitment reached a level of 2,000 troops in 2008 as Poland took command of Ghazni province. Poland also backed the controversial Bush missile defence policy and agreed – also in 2008 – to host interceptor missiles, upsetting Russia but hoping to gain ironclad relations with the United States. However, the American shift of emphasis in missile defence policy under President Obama – announced in September 2009 with slight regard for Polish sensitivities – goes in the reverse direction.<sup>17</sup> The United States has offered Poland compensation in the form of a permanent but small deployment of a US Air Force detachment to periodic deployments of US Patriot missiles and F-16 fighters (the latter moved from Italy), but the message is clear: the United States is looking for more flexible options, including the capacity to 'lead from behind' and be less directly engaged. Poland has in consequence come to question NATO as a solution to its national security and instead begun investing unambiguously in EU security and defence policy.<sup>18</sup> Symptomatically, Poland did not bother to invest in NATO's Libya campaign but instead stepped up EU efforts under its EU presidency in the fall of 2011.

Germany is at the heart of the second way in which security nationalization can come about. This concerns the inability of the institutional frameworks – EU as well as NATO – to embed German policy in common policies.<sup>19</sup> Following unification in 1990, Germany is once again the largest power in Europe west of Russia, and the prevalent answer to this development, with its distinct potential to re-introduce balance of power politics in Europe, has been the institutionalization of Germany

in both the EU and NATO. For as long as these institutions are strong and Germany is committed to them, Germany's neighbours need not fear her, and thus Europe's security dilemma can be overcome.

This model is being challenged, NATO's out-of-area drive being one source of this, the recent financial crisis being another. Germany is at the forefront of the effort to rescue the common currency, the Euro, but in ways that – justifiably or not – are painful for the periphery of the Euro-zone, which must engineer austerity policies to obtain international aid. The Euro crisis has de facto exposed an underlying power structure in Germany's favour, casting a different light on Germany's drive to be given a seat on the UN Security Council and its obstructionism with regard to Libya.<sup>20</sup> Europe's security dilemma could awaken not because Germany has a visible plan for continental dominance, which it does not, but because a combination of fear and resentment could nourish a distrust of Europe's institutions.

None of the operations of the Western allies – Afghanistan, Libya or Mali – indicates that Germany is going expeditionary or is likely to bandwagon with *Global Agility* NATO. In Afghanistan, Germany has deployed more than 4,000 troops and took the lead in 2003 in bringing ISAF out of its Kabul confines, but it remains focused on stability missions within an institutional framework (ISAF) and has no heart for combat missions. *Regional Bulwark* NATO appeals to Germany not on the grounds that NATO must counter a Russian threat, but because a bulwark is what Germany and its neighbours need to maintain the common institutions that foster cooperation as opposed to competition.

### *The Future is Geopolitical*

In sum, the drive to develop *Global Agility* NATO and with it a new flexible framework of cooperative security and partnership is commonsensical from the perspective of global threat management, but not unproblematic. It alienates important outliers such as France and Turkey from the Alliance, and it encourages in subtle but critical ways the nationalization of security policy. Ultimately, it could reignite the type of balance of power dynamic that once predominated in Europe and which ultimately proved unmanageable.

Policy-makers may choose to live with these consequences, perhaps because they accept the idea that America's disengagement from Europe's institutions is inevitable.<sup>21</sup> In this future world of offshore balancing, the United States would still be able to form coalitions for Eurasian operations, but Europe would come to



lack strong institutions. In one scenario Europe would revert to balance of power diplomacy, whereby France, Britain, Italy and Russia would jostle to counterbalance Germany – a bleak scenario wholly bereft of political appeal.<sup>22</sup> In another scenario, the European allies stay united but without the capacity to confront the key questions of national primacy and collective leadership: they would be pulled to ignore power politics and cultivate their liberal impulse.<sup>23</sup> Disunited, the allies will face balance of power politics; united, they will march off in search of monsters to destroy.

Policy-makers should therefore seek to blend realist principles and idealist values differently. There are three complementary possibilities for doing so. One is to encourage NATO to engage the strategic pivots of Eurasia and become a hub in a global power network.<sup>24</sup> The idea is not to tie NATO into the UN network, which lacks power, nor to make NATO an actor on a par with Russia, India and China, because NATO is an alliance of states, not a great power. Rather, the idea is to make NATO the interlocutor of Russia and China's alliances, which are the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

This policy option is attractive on several accounts. It turns NATO away from the military operations that encourage a split between coalitions and institutions and instead engages NATO in a diplomatic dialogue that encourages collective – institutional – cohesion. Moreover, by having the power centres of the world interact in this fashion, NATO enables a dialogue on conceptions of international power and order across political and cultural boundaries, which to prominent realists always represented the essence of power management anyway.<sup>25</sup> This would be a diplomatic version of *Global Agility* NATO, but one suited to bolstering the coherence of NATO as a distinct and regional alliance.

The other opportunity concerns *Regional Bulwark* NATO and its geopolitical anchoring.<sup>26</sup> As an ideal, it calls for a NATO engagement that speaks to regional concerns and the political desire to uphold strong institutions that enable dialogue across the Atlantic while saving the European construction. This would be the case if NATO focused not only on CSTO and SCO – vehicles for connecting NATO to US global security policy – but also on the Arab League (AL) and the African Union (AU). Partnerships here would speak to Europe's concerns in its near abroad and implicate the European Union in a NATO–EU partnership to bring security and development to the Middle East and Africa. Both NATO and the EU have

various partnerships in these regions, including with the AL and AU, but they are timid, disconnected and lacking in priority.

Finally, there is an opportunity to strengthen NATO's ability to deliver real capacities for policy within its regional context, which can include both the Arctic and Africa. Sometimes these will call on high-end expeditionary military forces and sometimes on crisis management packages involving military forces along with development and governance tools. NATO already has an organization to deliver this, but it is imperfect: it needs to shift the emphasis from planning driven by Level of Ambitions to one driven by training, simulation, and exercise – to a regime that to a greater extent exposes the lacunas and vulnerabilities of allies. NATO should not discard its Level of Ambition – too much planning hinges on it – but it should shape this Level according to real and simulated war games, which it should prioritize generally. The key is to invest in visible and credible military options, and to build partnership policy around this credibility.

In short, *Global Agility* NATO is in favour but could fragment the Alliance. However, there are options to prevent fragmentation. One is to maintain the Alliance's globalized engagement but to direct it towards diplomacy and the establishment of a network of global security dialogues among great powers' alliances. Another is to complement this redirection with an enhanced dialogue with the regions close to Europe in an effort to solidify the NATO–EU institutional framework. Finally, the allies can do more to enhance the training and gaming that will result in credible force packages and that in turn will strengthen the credibility on which partnership policy must rest.

### **Conclusion**

Makers of peace confront an intractable problem, which is that peace is conditional, while expectations of it are absolute.<sup>27</sup> To last, peace arrangements require both political willingness and ability, and NATO's durability is testimony to both. It is also a reminder that NATO survives as an alliance because it serves the national interests of its members and that, although it is said to be labouring in favour of peace, it actually labours in favour of a certain political order as well.

If NATO leaders wish to continue NATO as a particular peace arrangement, therefore, they must be willing to contemplate the grand ideals that exist in their midst. They must not heedlessly promote issues such as cooperative security on

account of certain trends in the security environment: they must above all manage the Alliance's balance of grand ideals. We have seen how two ideals – *Global Agility* and *Regional Bulwark* – compete for influence in NATO, how they have been layered into the 2010 Strategic Concept and how this Concept is reflective of the tendency to emphasize *Global Agility*. Finally, we have seen how, in its own way, this development could fragment the Alliance by alienating outliers and nationalizing security policy.

NATO heads of state are now looking ahead to the 2014 London summit, and they must place cooperative security and other issues in a wider strategic context. They must above all confront the challenge of reframing NATO's grand 'narrative'. By implication, they must ponder NATO's diverse geopolitical reality: the alliance is Western, but not in the unitary form that it is sometimes said to embody; it is *plural* and tied to a European security order that includes also the EU and Russia. NATO needs to rediscover this plural and Western character if it is to thrive and become capable of sustained and meaningful cooperative security. In terms of this chapter, this presupposes a renewed political engagement with *Regional Bulwark* NATO, which remains a vital part of the geographical and military foundation on which cooperative security rests.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> For the argument that 'narrative' is NATO's top priority for 2014, see Karl-Heinz Kamp, 'NATO's 2014 Summit Agenda,' *NDC Research Paper* no. 97, September 2013.

<sup>2</sup> David P. Calleo, *Europe's Future: The Grand Alternatives* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1967), 18-19. On the balance of ideals, see also Damon Coletta and Sten Rynning, 'NATO from Kabul to Earth Orbit: Can the Alliance Cope?,' *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 10/1 (2012), 26-44; on coalition leadership, see Sten Rynning, *NATO in Afghanistan: The Liberal Disconnect* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), and Sten Rynning, 'The New Strategic Reality of Armed Intervention,' *International Affairs* 89/1 (2013), 53-68.

<sup>3</sup> NATO, *Strategic Concept*, November 2010, <http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/index.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Properly speaking NATO has only one Article 5 operation, *Operation Active Endeavor*, a patrol mission in the Mediterranean.

<sup>5</sup> *Strategic Concept*, last bullet point of paragraph 22.

<sup>6</sup> Group of Experts, *NATO 2020: Assured Security, Dynamic Engagement*, 17 May 2010, <http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/expertsreport.pdf>, p. 9.

<sup>7</sup> *Strategic Concept*, paragraph 4.

<sup>8</sup> For the ambition, see *Strategic Concept*, paragraph 28. For more on the new partnership policy, see Sten Rynning, 'NATO's Network: On the Purpose and Challenge of Partnerships,' *Studia Diplomatica*, forthcoming; also Heidi Reisinger, 'Rearranging Family Life and a Large Circle of Friends: Reforming NATO's Partnership Programmes,' *NDC Research Paper*, no. 72, January 2012.

<sup>9</sup> Interview by author with NATO officials, April 6-7, 2011.

<sup>10</sup> Group of Experts, *NATO 2020*, 22-23.

<sup>11</sup> Ulrik Beck, *World at Risk* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009); Christopher Coker, *War in an Age of Risk* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009); Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen, 'Reflexive Security: NATO and International Risk Society,' *Millennium* 30/2 2001, 285-309.

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- <sup>12</sup> Emmanuel Adler, 'The Spread of Security Communities: Communities of Practice, Self-Restraint, and NATO's Post-Cold War Transformation,' *European Journal of International Relations* 14/2 (June 2008), 195-230; Veronica M. Kitchen, 'Argument and Identity Change in the Atlantic Community,' *Security Dialogue* 14/1 (February 2009), 95-114; Vincent Pouliot, *International Security in Practice: The Politics of NATO-Russia Diplomacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
- <sup>13</sup> Wallace J. Thies, *Why NATO Endures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Ivo Daalder and James Goldgeier, 'Global NATO,' *Foreign Affairs* 85/5 (September/October 2006), 105-113; Ivo Daalder and James Lindsay, 'Democracies of the World, Unite,' *Public Policy Research* 14/1 (March-May 2007), 47-58.
- <sup>14</sup> James Sperling and Mark Webber, 'NATO: From Kosovo to Kabul,' *International Affairs* 85/3 (2009), 491-511.
- <sup>15</sup> For the argument that water has stopping power and only allows regional as opposed to global hegemony, see John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: Norton, 2003).
- <sup>16</sup> Kurt Volker, 'Don't Call it a Comeback: Four reasons why Libya doesn't equal success for NATO,' *Foreign Policy*, August 23, 2011, [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/08/23/dont\\_call\\_it\\_a\\_comeback](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/08/23/dont_call_it_a_comeback).
- <sup>17</sup> The Obama preference for a different and so-called phased adaptive approach to missile defence leaked prior to its announcement on September 17, 2009, with no indication of any compensation for Poland. Moreover, the date of the announcement was the 70th anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Poland. Polish Prime Minister Tusk reportedly refused to take a call from President Obama on the eve of the announcement: Ben Smith, 'Polish PM Wouldn't Take US Call,' *Politico*, September 17, 2009, [http://www.politico.com/blogs/bensmith/0909/Polish\\_PM\\_wouldnt\\_take\\_US\\_calls.html](http://www.politico.com/blogs/bensmith/0909/Polish_PM_wouldnt_take_US_calls.html).
- <sup>18</sup> Clara Marina O'Donnell, 'Poland's U-turn on European Defense: A Missed Opportunity?,' *Brookings US-Europe Analysis* no. 53, March 6, 2012; *The Economist*, 'Poland's Ebbing Atlanticism,' March 25, 2011, [http://www.economist.com/blogs/easternapproaches/2011/05/obama\\_poland](http://www.economist.com/blogs/easternapproaches/2011/05/obama_poland).
- <sup>19</sup> Sten Rynning, 'Germany is More than Europe Can Handle: or, Why NATO Remains a Pacifier,' *NDC Research Report* no. 96, September 2013.
- <sup>20</sup> Naturally, its abstention over Libya hardly squares with it having a UNSC seat, but that did not seem to be of particular concern to Foreign Minister Westerwelle, and the point here is that in both instances we observe controversial German claims for influence.
- <sup>21</sup> President Obama's military strategy of January 2012 argued that the United States 'of necessity' will 'rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region.' Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Defense* (Washington, January 2012), 2. On the alleged necessity of pulling back more generally, see Barry Posen, 'Pull Back: The Case for a Less Activist Foreign Policy,' *Foreign Affairs* 92/1 (January/February 2013), 116-128.
- <sup>22</sup> Germany would go nuclear and compete with Russia for control of Central Europe; France, Britain and Italy would re-arm to gain a measure of control; and the United States would intervene only if the four are unable to balance the one. John J. Mearsheimer, 'The Future of the American Pacifier,' *Foreign Affairs* 80/5 (September-October 2001), 46-61; also *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*.
- <sup>23</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, 'Why is Europe Peaceful Today?,' *European Political Science* 9/3 (September 2010), 387-397; also Christopher Layne, *The Peace of Illusions: American Grand Strategy from 1940 to the Present* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2006).
- <sup>24</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, 'An Agenda for NATO: Toward a Global Security Web,' *Foreign Affairs* (September-October 2009), 'NATO and World Security,' *New York Times*, August 19, 2009; 'Balancing the East, Upgrading the West,' *Foreign Affairs* (Jan-Feb 2012); *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostategic Imperatives* (New York: Basic Books, 1997).
- <sup>25</sup> For realist assessments of Europe and the Atlantic, see Henry A. Kissinger, *A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh, and the Problems of Peace, 1812-1822* (Phoenix Press, 2000); and David P. Calleo, *Europe's Future and also Rethinking Europe's Future* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001). For such an assessment with regard to a rising power, see Henry A. Kissinger, *On China* (Penguin Press, 2011).
- <sup>26</sup> See especially the books by Calleo, *ibid*.
- <sup>27</sup> Williamson Murray, 'Introduction: Searching for Peace,' in Williamson Murray and Jim Lacey, eds., *The Making of Peace: Rulers, States, and the Aftermath of War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 23.

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