

# What do Europeans want from NATO?

Report N° 8  
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This report is based on discussions held at two workshops organised by the EUISS in Brussels and Paris during summer 2010. The workshops brought together academics, experts and politicians, as well as national and EU officials. Many different perspectives on the future of NATO were expressed during those discussions, and the report does not reflect a consensus among the participants. The contributors to this report were all participants in the workshops, and their contributions should be understood as their personal opinions, not a collective view.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The future of the North Atlantic Alliance is of paramount importance for EU foreign policy. Yet no official EU perspective has been publicly formulated on NATO's 2010 strategic concept, or how it should complement the EU's foreign and security policies. This report is a contribution to the debate about NATO's future, and what that may mean for the EU.

- **NATO should remain predominantly a regional alliance.** NATO should develop a more cooperative relationship with Russia and other neighbours in the Euro-Atlantic area. However, NATO should remain able, in exceptional circumstances, to deploy beyond its perimeter if the vital security interests of a member state(s) are at risk. Afghanistan is the exception, not the rule.
- **Collective defence must remain the core business of NATO.** The crucial corollary of this is that every one of its members should enjoy the same level of security guarantee. Particular attention should be paid to instability along NATO's Eastern border and beyond the Turkish border.
- **A military tool for a comprehensive political strategy.** As a military alliance, NATO must develop its missions in close collaboration with organisations with a strong civilian component like the EU or the UN. The comprehensive, strategic approach needed to confront conflict and crisis should be at the core of a reinforced EU-NATO political dialogue.
- **EU-NATO cooperation on military capabilities should be improved.** In a constrained budgetary environment, neither the EU nor NATO members can afford to waste ever scarcer defence funds. Separately, both organisations are encouraging their members to cooperate on developing capabilities, but they should work much more together.
- **NATO should eventually become a military component of a stronger EU-US strategic relationship.** The EU and the US increasingly work together on security issues as well as non-security issues (which sometimes overlap). A much stronger and more strategic EU-US partnership is likely to develop in the coming decade, due to the combination of the emerging multipolar world and the bedding in of the Lisbon Treaty institutional reforms. In that context, NATO would remain a vital military component of the Euro-Atlantic relationship.

# INTRODUCTION: WHY AN EU PERSPECTIVE ON THE NATO STRATEGIC CONCEPT MATTERS

Álvaro de Vasconcelos

Sixty years after its creation NATO is in the process of adopting its seventh strategic concept, the third in the post-Cold War era. The document is to be endorsed by the November 2010 NATO Summit in Lisbon. NATO heads of state and government agreed that a new strategic concept was needed in December 2008. Subsequently, a group of experts headed by former American Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright was appointed to draw up a report intended to lay down the basis for the new strategic concept that was presented to the public under the title *NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement*. This report is a welcome broad-based contribution to the debate on the challenges NATO is likely to face over the next ten years, and what are the most appropriate options to deal with them; the report also deals extensively with how to best shape relations between NATO and CSDP.

The future of the North Atlantic Alliance, and also of the NATO-CSDP framework, is of paramount importance to the EU common foreign and security policy: of NATO's 27 members, 21 are members of the EU, Turkey and Iceland are prospective EU members, and Norway, aside from being part of the European Economic Area and a signatory to the Schengen agreement, participates in a number of EU agencies, notably the European Defence Agency. The Treaty on European Union (TEU) specifically provides for compatibility with NATO membership, stating that the common security and defence policy of the Union 'shall respect the obligations of certain Member States, which see their common defence realised in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), under the North Atlantic Treaty and be compatible with the common security and defence policy established within that framework.'<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the mutual assistance clause binding EU members to the 'obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power' in the event that one of them is the 'victim of armed aggression on their territory' both safeguards neutrality in the same terms and stresses that for its members NATO remains 'the foundation of their collective defence and the forum for its implementation.'<sup>2</sup> The TEU, on the other hand, binds EU members individually (and, by extension, hopefully) to conformity with the general policy guidelines they set forth collectively in the European Union. If the EU21+3 European members of NATO want to guarantee that NATO activities – particularly those that transcend the narrow confines of collective defence – are coherent and consistent with EU strategic objectives and principles, they must be able to ensure that NATO's role conforms to an EU best-interests perspective. In parallel, for the benefit of EU international strategy and ultimately international peace, it is equally important to ensure the further development of CSDP in the new post-Lisbon context.

1. Article 42 of the TEU as amended by the Treaty of Lisbon.

2. Article 42(7) of the TEU as amended by the Treaty of Lisbon.

Over the last ten years, CSDP has made the EU as a whole a relevant actor in crisis management, sometimes in close cooperation with NATO. This implies the need for a clearer definition of the role of each organisation. At the same time, EU involvement in NATO operations makes projecting a vision of NATO that will resonate with the European public opinion extremely important, all the more since public support for NATO has declined due to the continuation of the war in Afghanistan.

The full integration of France into NATO's military structure helps ensure that a distinctive EU perspective on NATO is not mistaken for a weakening of transatlantic solidarity. This is reinforced by the Obama administration's all-out support for EU integration spanning all fields including security and defence: the main obstacle to a common EU voice in NATO is thus removed. The United States is in a category of its own as far as EU strategic allies are concerned, and as stated in the 2003 European Security Strategy, 'NATO is an important expression of this relationship.'

Yet no official EU perspective as such has been formulated on NATO's 2010 strategic concept, nor on the specifics of how it is to be made compatible with the EU's foreign and security policy. There is no comparable European formulation to the one contained in the US 2010 National Security Strategy concerning NATO. It is a fact that not all EU Member States are part of NATO. There were voices from Europe, naturally, in the Albright expert group – and there will be many at the Lisbon Summit. But all the same, there will not be a strong collective European voice. There is a need for an informed debate on the future of NATO over the next decade, taking into consideration the EU's best interests, and this need will not disappear with the approval of a new NATO strategic concept. Indeed, the debate will start in earnest when the Atlantic Alliance focuses its attention on interpreting the results of the consensus reached in Lisbon.

### **A regional organisation with international responsibilities**

Today NATO is involved in the largest ground operation of its history, far beyond the confines of its traditional sphere of influence. But after the nine-year long Afghan war, and as it prepares to disengage from Kosovo, what will be NATO's future role? Taking into consideration the debate in Europe about the war in Afghanistan, and the lack of public support for anything that is seen as a 'Western' military intervention (largely attributable, also, to the public condemnation of the invasion of Iraq), it is easy to predict that Afghanistan-type operations undertaken well beyond the North Atlantic Treaty boundaries will be the exception rather than the rule in NATO's future trajectory.

This indicates that NATO should not try to become a global alliance. It will remain predominantly a regional alliance. Only in exceptional circumstances will there eventually be a need for involvement beyond the vicinity of its perimeter.

There are two main reasons why it is in the European interest for NATO to remain regional: first, because EU NATO members (and the same is true of Turkey) want to keep

the credibility of collective defence against external attack intact in the future, however unlikely such a scenario may sound at present; second, because NATO's going global would be perceived as an attempt of the West to impose its hegemony on the world stage. At this juncture, Europe and the United States need all global players, old and new, to build a new international order. NATO enjoys full legitimacy without appearing as threatening within its regional environment – where its involvement can also be more effective because it is able to mobilise and legitimise 'co-operation among countries closest to the problem', as is stressed in the 2010 US Security Strategy. Unthreatening and effective regional involvement is a substantial contribution to world security.

Furthermore, NATO members face a number of common serious security challenges within the broader confines of the Euro-Atlantic area: missile defence, nuclear disarmament, the threat of proliferation of non-conventional weapons, the challenge of extreme nationalism and with it unresolved conflicts in the Balkans and Eastern Europe, as well as the Middle East. Securing a satisfactory outcome across all these issues also calls for creating an atmosphere of confidence and trust with its neighbours, notably Russia and the Mediterranean.

If the vital interest of one of its members is threatened, as it was the case on 9/11, and if all other means of action are exhausted and a military response is warranted, NATO can then be called upon to intervene wherever the attack has originated. This was the understanding that prompted European NATO members to consider that the attack against the United States, although originating within its own territory, was an attack against all allies under the provisions of Article 5. That this was later refused by the Bush administration out of fear that NATO's multilateral framework would result in a constraint in no way diminishes the prompt display of European solidarity.

### **Renewed centrality of Article 5**

There is a growing consensus that Article 5 – which sets out the collective defence role of the Alliance that is at the root of its creation – must be re-emphasised as enshrining the indispensable core business of NATO. The crucial corollary of this is that each and every one of its members, in Europe and America, should enjoy the same level of security. Two main issues are stressed in this context.

Firstly, although NATO members generally welcome the US 'reset' policy establishing cooperative ties with Russia, this should be accompanied by the EU's own parallel 'reset' capable of reassuring the newer Member States from Central Europe that their own specific concerns are part of the overall political dialogue with Moscow. It should be made clear that this reset policy is not designed to placate Russia, but is rather the result of understanding that European security can best be guaranteed through a two-way pan-European cooperative framework.

Secondly, there is a recognition that potential sources of Article 5 military threats, however improbable, are more likely to emanate from outside of the European continent area rather than from within it. This is certainly the perception in Turkey. It should be stressed – as the 1991 concept did for the first time, and as was reaffirmed in the 1999 concept – that ‘any armed attack on the territory of the Allies, from whatever direction, would be covered by Articles 5 and 6 of the Washington Treaty.’<sup>3</sup> This was not the case during the Cold War, but it should now be made absolutely clear that the border of Turkey coincides with the border of the Alliance.

### **A strategically-driven military alliance at the service of a comprehensive strategy**

NATO should remain essentially a military alliance, and enjoy all the support of EU Member States to perform this role in the most credible way possible. In those exceptional circumstances where the use of force will be necessary NATO should be as effective as the whole of its membership. To say that the use of force will remain exceptional is not to say that it will be confined to the strict limits of armed attack against any of its members. A doctrine for the use of force, whether or not in self-defence, should be based on the principles of human security, which includes the prevention of genocide and the protection of civilians under threat (as in Kosovo in the 1990s). Such a doctrine is essential to make NATO operations consistent with the principles and norms that guide EU foreign policy predicated on the respect of human rights and compliance with international law. The acceptance of collateral damage in warfare, in particular, is incompatible with a human security perspective.

At the same time many crises and conflicts will need to be dealt with primarily with the use of civilian capabilities of crisis management and a combination of diplomatic, economic and social instruments, for which NATO is not well equipped, given the fact that it is intrinsically a military alliance. The EU is able to develop a comprehensive policy, making use of the variety of such instruments, and so are to varying degrees all NATO members, in particular the United States. In future NATO operations, as is already the case today in Afghanistan, the need will always arise for a comprehensive strategy, where the military component assigned to NATO will be just one among others. Allies on both sides of the Atlantic should remain mindful that military action should be guided by the strategic political priorities established to deal with a given crisis, and not the reverse.

### **A Euro-American military alliance adapted to an inclusive world order**

The main reasons for rethinking NATO’s strategic concept are the enormous changes that have taken place in the international system since the Washington Summit, in

3. The North Atlantic Alliance’s Strategic Concept, approved by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington D.C. on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> April 1999.

April 1999, when the last concept was approved. At the end of the 1990s, the world was still predominantly perceived as a Western-dominated world, and the US 'benign hegemony' as a pillar of a stable international order. NATO was then mainly seen as an instrument of that unchallenged leadership. The 1999 concept specifically mentions Russia, Ukraine and the Mediterranean Dialogue countries as potential partners of the Alliance. One decade later, the present international stage is what some have called 'post-Western', with US leadership challenged by a number of rising powers in a world that has moved from unipolarity to multipolarity. This is a shift of enormous consequence for the Atlantic Alliance. In the European continent this means that NATO enlargement has ceased to be a continental process, since Russia has also established her own independent identity and is no longer willing to accept Western hegemony over the continent – which in any case is no longer sought by the United States. The EU's strategic interest, which is obviously shared by the United States, is to avoid a confrontational bipolarity in Europe, and this involves making clear to Moscow that it is clearly understood that the 1990s are well in the past and NATO's strategy shall adapt accordingly. By the same token the once-promoted notion that NATO should stretch outside the Euro-Atlantic space and become a worldwide alliance of democracies is entirely erroneous. This would only serve to resurrect an antagonistic bipolar system in the European continent, and likewise at the global level, by implicitly defining Russia and China as potential enemies.

NATO's strategic concept should reflect and clearly state what is already the basic orientation of both the European and American security strategies: the need to place the Alliance under the international multilateral agenda as a tool for an inclusive global order. In this light, Russia must not be part of the Euro-Atlantic alliance (even if one day it should so wish) for this would inevitably generate the perception of an anti-China alliance. Reopening the discussion on the European security architecture, along the principles based in the Paris Charter of 1990, will allow for NATO to strengthen cooperative relations with Russia under the commonly accepted rules and norms of a European regional multilateral order. Conflict among great powers being extremely unlikely, there is scope to engage in cooperative ventures with world powers such as China, India and Brazil as the occasion may arise.

NATO should not avoid addressing the negative way that the Alliance is now perceived as a consequence of eight years of US unilateral military activism and its adverse impact on US moral leadership, in particular in countries with Muslim majority populations, including Turkey. The Obama administration has begun to confront the issue with some success, and it is now time for NATO to do the same. This calls for a clear explanation of the Alliance's purpose and the goals it seeks to achieve, as well as systematic engagement in confidence building not only with Russia but with Mediterranean countries and also member states, in particular Turkey. Creating an atmosphere of trust should be a major objective for NATO.

## NATO as a component of a larger US-EU strategic partnership

NATO does not cover the full spectrum of EU-US security relations. The time is ripe for a broader framework addressing all aspects of international security, ranging from crisis management to collective defence and from domestic security, freedom and justice to the Responsibility to Protect. NATO, predicated on collective defence, should no longer be seen as the exclusive nor even the essential framework for transatlantic security cooperation, but rather as the effective military component of a broader security relationship. Matters related to NATO's future including CSDP-NATO cooperation should be on the transatlantic security cooperation agenda. The EU and the US should devote their full attention to the obstacles that stand in the way of a smooth CSDP-NATO relationship, namely the Cyprus issue. Consultations with the US but also with Turkey, Canada and Norway, not only on CSDP matters but also on NATO-related issues, should be a regular feature of post-Lisbon EU foreign policy.

More broadly, EU-US relations must adapt to the present international reality: it is time for the current transatlantic consensus on multilateralism to be converted into effective action. The most suitable framework to confront crises from the point of view of lasting international peace should be the key criterion when weighing up the available options. This will dispel perceptions of some kind of competition between the EU and NATO; such clarifications are particularly relevant in the Middle East and the eastern neighbourhood.

It would not seem that conditions are ripe at present for NATO's involvement in the Middle East, which would likely be seen in the region and beyond as yet another stage in the 'war on terror'. CSDP missions would seem more likely, in line with EU missions already on the ground and the strong European involvement in UNIFIL following the cessation of hostilities in Lebanon in 2006. The UN will increasingly be the framework of choice for peace missions conducted outside the European continent, since all emerging powers consider the UN to be indispensable for their involvement. In the eastern neighbourhood, NATO's involvement is for the moment virtually impossible because it would be seen as hostile by Moscow. This could however change with time, especially in Europe, as a cooperative security framework involving NATO allies and Russia takes shape.

The EU has actively engaged in crisis management and has 24 civilian and military missions to its credit since 1999. Its credibility to influence NATO's strategic orientations and priorities has grown as a result. The Lisbon Treaty creates the conditions for a more coherent and powerful EU in the realm of security and defence. All this combined leads to the conclusion that the Union is now in a position to lend its weight to making NATO a more rational, consistent and effective instrument of transatlantic strategic cooperation.

## I. THE EU AND NATO: BEYOND APPEARANCES

Nicole Gnesotto

Appearances can be deceptive. Contrary to the prevailing impression that at the Lisbon Summit the EU and NATO are likely to announce a new era of excellent collaboration, the political relationship between the two organisations is far from satisfactory.

Both the CSDP and NATO are going through a period of great difficulty. In the EU, the political dynamism of the CSDP seems to be deadlocked. The severity of the economic crisis means that the Member States are giving much more priority to trying to shore up their national economies than to consolidating external security. Nor has France's return to the NATO fold given a bold new impetus to the Union's strategic ambitions. For the past fifty years, France has embodied a certain idea of Europe and of its role on the international stage. The change in French policy with regard to NATO does not belie this ambition, at least not on the level of official rhetoric. In reality however, the dynamics are quite different. France has focused on the Atlantic Alliance and its military contribution to the operations in Afghanistan. NATO's European partners are, in contrast, seeking to economise in terms of both means and ambitions: why duplicate in the EU mechanisms that already exist, and work, in NATO? If our security is indeed indivisible, if France is now on the same wavelength as the United States within what the French president refers to as 'the Western family', why persist in trying to give the Union the means to exert its strategic autonomy? Many European governments have concluded that they have neither the means nor, for that matter, the need to do so. As for Great Britain, it has remained impervious: a more pro-NATO France has not induced Britain to become more pro-European. On the contrary: London is now treating bilateral Franco-British co-operation as a priority, to the detriment of any advances that might be made in European defence. In other words, the temptation to 'leave it all to NATO' has therefore once again become the prevailing attitude within the EU. A temptation that is all the stronger now that Obama's victory has ushered in a new American leadership that is intelligent, friendly, even admirable. European defence can certainly progress: but in the shape of a European pillar of NATO, or as a civilian tool for crisis management, not necessarily as an instrument that is vital to the political strengthening of the Union itself.

Confronted with this weakness in CSDP, NATO is naturally seeking to take advantage of the situation. It has to be said that on the institutional level, relations between the EU and NATO are far from harmonious. Between 2003 and 2009, it was fashionable to accuse France of being hostile towards NATO: indeed, many Europeans suspected France of wanting to develop European defence in competition with NATO. But once France rejoined NATO's integrated military command, it became obvious that the problem was not French but Turkish in essence. Turkey refuses to recognise Cyprus,

which is not a member of NATO but which is a member of the EU, and is blocking any security agreements and any possibility of co-operation between the EU and NATO. More ink is being spilt on this ongoing psychodrama in Europe than in America, the Obama administration having distanced itself from its allies' institutional obsessions. This is not the case with the NATO administration: in view of the upcoming Lisbon Summit, the Secretary General of the Organisation regularly upbraids the Europeans, as if they were his subordinates, demanding they change their position of principle and accede to Turkey's demands.<sup>1</sup>

Many observers will therefore be tempted to conclude that the upshot of all this will be the renewed predominance of NATO, spelling the end of the ambitions for an equal partnership between the Union and NATO. However to jump to such a conclusion would be to overlook the fact that NATO is itself mired in a serious and worrying crisis of its own. The Alliance has identified Afghanistan as its absolute priority, but in Afghanistan it has perhaps been brought face-to-face with the limits of what a military organisation that has hardly changed since the end of the Cold War can do. A near decade of military intervention in Afghanistan has demonstrated the inadequacy, indeed the failure, of purely military strategies, in the absence of an essential overarching political strategy. And NATO is first and foremost a military organisation. Co-operation with the Union and its civilian means has thus become the *leitmotif* of the Alliance. Furthermore, the priority given to the mission in Afghanistan leaves very little room, or resources, for NATO interventions elsewhere and no one can predict how the Alliance will survive its lack of success in Afghanistan. In Europe, the crisis in Georgia has also shown that NATO is not the most appropriate framework for crisis management, as in that context it proved itself to be as much a problem as a potential solution. In many other regions of the world, notably in the Middle East, the problem is that public acceptance of the NATO flag is not always guaranteed, as it is too often perceived as synonymous with 'American imperialism'. As for the United States, they maintain an essentially pragmatic attitude of ambiguity towards the organisation: for the Obama administration, NATO is no longer the only or even the primary vector of America's strategic influence in the world.

In other words, while it would appear that the EU is taking a back seat as a strategic actor and that NATO is consolidating, it is important to realise another equally essential fact: European defence is not a project of the past but a modern necessity. Various international developments – the relative decline of military might, the deteriorating situation in Europe's southern neighbourhood, America's new priorities beyond Europe, NATO's structural weakness – mean that an increase in the European Union's strategic responsibility is virtually inevitable. This is all the more the case given that the United States will no longer be able or will no longer be willing to per-

1. The EU would include countries like Turkey in deliberations on its external relations, in particular in Bosnia where Turkey has supplied the second biggest contingent of troops; the EU would conclude a 'security agreement' with Turkey; and it would grant Turkey the same association status as Norway – another NATO country that is a non-member of the EU – in relation to the European Defence Agency. In exchange, there appears to be no requirement that Turkey recognise Cyprus.

form the full range of crisis management tasks in the world. America's diminishing role in this respect will mean that Europe will increasingly be obliged to act. In many ways, even if current trends seem to point towards the EU relinquishing power, the rising tide of globalisation is ultimately bound to sweep the EU into a prominent position as a strategic actor.

## II. THE EU, THE US AND NATO

Jolyon Howorth

Most Europeans have only ever wanted one thing from NATO: the assurance of an American commitment to their security. In the late 1940s, Britain and France beseeched the US to enter into an ‘entangling alliance’. Article 5 of the NATO Charter was the central underpinning of the arrangement, even though subsequent tensions over flexible response rendered the US commitment to collective defence essentially discursive. De Gaulle did not believe for one moment in extended deterrence and took his dissent to its logical conclusion. As Robert McNamara and other architects of the Alliance’s declaratory strategy were later to admit, US strategic nuclear retaliation against a hypothetical Soviet attack on Europe was an elaborate bluff. Fortunately, the bluff was never called and we shall never know what would have happened had push ever come to shove around the Fulda Gap.

Partly as a consequence of this huge unknown, NATO is considered as ‘the greatest alliance in history’, achieving its objective ‘without firing a shot’. Europeans were greatly relieved, but already in the early 1980s had come to the conclusion that some form of *European* security strategy was an inevitable consequence of the shifts in history’s tectonic plates which eventually produced the geopolitical earthquake of 9 November 1989. Hence, the new narrative of ESDP/CSDP, whose keyword, since Saint Malo, has been ‘autonomy’. The 1990s were marked by a sterile transatlantic debate with the Alliance exhorted to go ‘out of area or out of business’, the US seeing little future for NATO if it failed to ‘go global’ and the Europeans seeing little future if it did.

The Prague decision in November 2002 to bestow a global remit upon the Alliance must be understood within its unique and extraordinary context. Post-9/11; post-the initial ‘defeat’ of the Taliban; post-UNSC Resolution 1441; pre-the early 2003 crises over NATO guarantees to Turkey; pre-the second (aborted) UNSC Resolution; and pre-the invasion of Iraq. This tiny ten weeks window constitutes an unprecedented (and never to be repeated) moment of calm consensus within the Alliance. Nobody wished to rock the boat. NATO ‘went global’.

In retrospect, this was clearly a ‘bridge too far’ for most Alliance members. With the notable exception of the European ‘expeditionaries’ (the UK, the Netherlands and Denmark), neither the other long-standing EU-NATO members nor the 2004 incomers really believed in a global alliance. Their strategic concerns were closer to home. For the Baltics, Poland and Norway, a shared border with Russia made Article 5 the alpha and omega of NATO membership, a sensitivity only accentuated by the 2008 Georgia war.<sup>1</sup>

1. Pal Jonson, ‘The debate about Article 5 and its credibility’, *NATO Research Paper* no. 58, May 2010.

For EU-NATO's traditional core on the other hand, a concern to establish a viable strategic relationship with Russia trumped other issues.

The Afghan war is a further complicating factor. EU-NATO members, for the most part, went to Afghanistan believing that they were participating in post-conflict reconstruction and nation-building. When NATO took over the ISAF mission in August 2003, it was still confined to Kabul and the insurgency was barely visible. Within weeks, ISAF expanded beyond the capital and the insurgency erupted with a vengeance. Whatever the debate sparked in Washington over the conduct of the war,<sup>2</sup> over time European publics and governments (with the exception of Denmark) have all come to seek an exit strategy. Their dissent stems not from quarrels over troop numbers or caveats, but from a growing belief that the war is unwinnable. The long-term effects of this realisation on nations which never convincingly 'went global' seem clear. NATO – *as an Alliance* – will not engage in further expeditionary missions in distant fields. Coalitions of the willing may volunteer – the UK, France and Denmark value the experience of interoperability which fighting alongside US forces affords them. This was partly why France returned to the NATO fold. But the Alliance *qua Alliance* will re-gravitate to its geographic birthplace. For the US, this spells irrelevance. Washington has little interest in an entangling alliance with European states unable to agree on fundamentals.

Europeans, partly as a result of Afghanistan, are henceforth more likely to focus whatever energies they can commit to security and defence policy on the EU's nascent role as a purveyor of international crisis management capabilities. The sterile 'debate' about NATO and CSDP has been stymied by the Turkey-Cyprus-Greece problem. That problem is serious, but it is increasingly marginal. Two deeper issues arise to render the EU-US-NATO triptych even more complex. The first is Turkey's growing embrace of a regional role which prioritises relations with Iran and breaks ranks with Washington over the Israeli-Palestinian question. The second (far more significant) factor is the increasing trend in Europe to cut military spending in response to the economic crisis. Even the US's most stalwart partner, the United Kingdom, is drastically revising its future capacity as a martial nation. The only conceivable solution for EU Member States, whose coat and whose cloth no longer measure up, is to embrace European rationalisation. This is already happening – far more extensively than is realised. And rationalisation can take place far more easily inside CSDP than inside NATO. A truism holds that NATO and the EU contain twenty-one of the same nations. But the fact that one of those organisations contains the US, while the other does not, renders them totally different types of actors.

Above all, the Europeans face a strategic void. Baroness Ashton, Herman Van Rompuy, José Manuel Barroso (and just about everybody else) have recently preached the merits of the EU acquiring a strategic vision. Indeed the EU, if it wishes to embrace the twenty-

2. Bob Woodward, *Obama's Wars* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010).

first century rather than run away from it, has no choice.<sup>3</sup> If it seeks to maximise its own potential for crisis management, it has to have a far clearer vision of what it hopes to achieve in the world, where, with what instruments, and how. This debate, when coupled with the need for procurement synergies, may yet transform the EU into a consequential international actor. At that point, Washington may become interested in forging a new and meaningful strategic relationship. Meanwhile, NATO will continue to go through the motions of self-reinvention.

3. Jolyon Howorth, 'The EU as a Global Actor: Grand Strategy for a Global Grand Bargain?', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 48, no. 3, March 2010, pp. 455-74.

### III. THE EU, NATO AND THE USE OF FORCE: A DIVISION OF LABOUR

Stefano Silvestri

The Euro-American alliance today must strike a delicate balance between its two main priorities: guaranteeing European security and keeping the transatlantic relationship alive and dynamic. During the Cold War these two objectives largely coincided; today, however, they are slowly diverging. The European and American allies maintain many common interests, but they are prioritising them differently. While the Americans seem to believe that their first priority is to guarantee global order and to fight asymmetric threats such as terrorism, the Europeans seem to be primarily concerned with securing the stability and security of the European continent.

Since the 9/11 watershed, the transatlantic alliance has been running in reverse gear: for many years, the tide of transatlantic solidarity flowed mainly from America to Europe. Since the destruction of the Twin Towers, however, the trend has been in the opposite direction, from Europe to America. A sense of solidarity led the Europeans to join the US in Afghanistan and later on (albeit less unanimously and with lot of dissent and misgivings) in Iraq. Of course, a common interest in fighting terrorism was also present, but the decision not to challenge American political and military choices, and to join forces with them, was first and foremost a strong expression of allied solidarity. The main reasons motivating the Europeans were the willingness to repay the Americans at least in part for their past commitment to Europe and the overriding interest in maintaining a strong transatlantic partnership for the sake of European security.

In the end, however, this choice has been disappointing for both sides. The Americans criticise the Europeans for being too unforthcoming and the Europeans feel that their contribution is neither understood nor appreciated. Moreover, strategic divergences on what should be done and how are slowly emerging, reinforced by the unsatisfactory results of the military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq and their staggering human and economic costs. At the same time that American forces have been rapidly leaving Europe, American strategic priorities are increasingly focused on non-European territories and the European continent's major nuclear power (and energy export giant), Russia, is developing a worryingly confrontational posture.

A strong, united European community could probably balance 'the Russian bear' alone, although this would involve great expenditure and a high degree of risk. However this is not the case today, and it is unlikely to be for the near future. Nonetheless, should they be obliged to pursue that course, the Europeans would probably also reassess the

value of the transatlantic linkage, and find it grievously wanting. Moreover, in order to effectively rebalance Russia by themselves the Europeans would be obliged to develop fully autonomous capacities to an extent largely incompatible with the present allied structures and strategies.

Thus, it would be better for both the transatlantic alliance and the European Union if NATO were to rediscover that its first and paramount job is to guarantee stable security in the European continent, devising political and military strategies aimed at fostering better cooperation with Russia or, if need be, at containing and deterring it.

Unfortunately this does not seem to be the case today, with Russia increasingly convinced that the enlarged NATO is a long-term potential threat to Russian interests and worried by the likely decision to develop an anti-missile shield – something that Moscow perceives as being as much anti-Russia as anti-Iranian. Strangely enough, these NATO ‘challenges’ are accompanied by a progressive weakening of NATO’s military capabilities in Europe: diminished American presence, decreasing European defence budgets, increasing pressure to withdraw the remaining American nuclear warheads from European soil, etc. Is NATO still ready and capable to effectively deter any possible armed attack (or threat of attack) against its more exposed members?

This does not mean that the Europeans should not participate in the effort to increase security globally, including in far-away theatres. Their contribution however should not come at the expense of European security and Europe’s strategic balance over the long term. Thus, it might be better if NATO remained more clearly and explicitly committed to its main purposes, as identified clearly by the Washington Treaty, with its geographic boundaries (the North Atlantic and European territory) and functional remit (defence against armed attacks) clearly defined, while the willing and able European allies, preferably operating through a common European defence and security policy (as provided by the Lisbon Treaty), would join forces with the Americans on other global operations and against emerging asymmetric or new technological threats.

Such a choice would maintain transatlantic solidarity while at the same time have the merit of capitalising on the comparative advantages of NATO and of the EU. Instead of the current uneasy and inefficient competition between the two organisations in covering the same ground, it could be possible to achieve a more effective division of labour and a better concentration of efforts. Still, this would require some important commitments that some European Member States may be reluctant to accept. A clearer division of labour and a more explicit European commitment to crisis management however would also make it easier to identify the responsibilities of each ally as well as increasing the visibility of national contributions, thus laying the foundations for a more satisfactory performance in the future.

Moreover, such a policy would greatly encourage the European Union to develop its civilian and military crisis management capacities in a more effective way, making a

much-needed contribution to global security and complementing the American global commitment where it is most wanting.

In the end, it should not be difficult to envisage the basis for a better relationship between the European Union and NATO: it might be simply that both organisations need to go back to the drawing board and do what they were originally supposed to do.

## IV. THE EU, NATO AND RUSSIA

Teija Tiilikainen

When the EU's crisis management capability was created, the EU was very different from the EU as we know it today. The single European currency did not exist, nor did common European borders or a gradually emerging border policy.

The EU's political environment was also different. Russia still had a much more co-operative attitude towards the EU and the West in general. The challenges of Afghanistan did not yet exist and strains in the EU-NATO relationship were not yet visible. But potential difficulties in NATO-EU relations were highlighted at the NATO summit in 1998 when the then Secretary of State Madeleine Albright articulated what came to be known as 'the three Ds' – 'no diminution of NATO, no discrimination and no duplication', alluding to the perceived danger that the EU's security and defence policy might overlap with and intrude into NATO's competences.

In such an environment crisis management capability appeared as the natural direction to be given to the EU's security and defence policy. In part, this policy responded to a concrete need that had emerged in particular in the Balkans, where the wars in the early 1990s had demonstrated that a stronger European ability to prevent armed conflicts was urgently needed. In part, the decisions taken in Cologne and Helsinki must be seen in the light of a desire to enhance the EU's political credibility as a nascent political actor. In a world of sovereign states, military capability is still a decisive precondition of power and prestige. The EU must live up to these expectations if it wants to be recognised and respected.

### **New challenges for the CSDP**

The current state-of-play in the EU and its political environment is, however, totally different. Today the need for a genuine and effective common European security and defence policy is even more pressing than was the case in the 1990s. The EU's strategic environment has changed: there are new security policy challenges. But also the EU is significantly different from what it was ten years ago. In this context, it is worth pointing out a couple of changes that demand a new approach to the common security and defence policy.

First, the EU is today a territorial entity to a much larger extent than was the case during the 1990s. Internal borders have basically been abolished and a comprehensive policy in the framework of the area of justice, security and freedom has been created. The EU is gradually moving towards a common border policy covering major issues of border security as well as common visa policies and common immigration and asylum policies.

In this context, the first ever Internal Security Strategy has recently been adopted and the linkages between the EU's internal and external security have become evident. Consequently, the EU's security and defence policy has to reflect the Union's needs in terms of its internal security much more clearly and closer interaction between internal and external policies is required. The EU's external policies must respond to the Union's international responsibility. They do, however, have to link back to the security of the EU's own citizens, too.

Second, after the agreement on the Helsinki Headline Goal the EU's political geography has changed dramatically. Following the second wave of enlargement in 2004, the EU had twelve new Member States and along with them new borders and new neighbourhoods. According to the European Security Strategy (ESS) the protection of the EU's security must begin far beyond its borders. The EU thus tries to manage internal state crises and failing states well before their potential consequences – political instability and armed violence – spread close to its borders. After the recent and ongoing enlargements the EU's borders have moved much closer to regions where failing states and state-internal conflict are real concerns.

As a consequence of the changing geography the EU now has to define the strategic emphases of the Union's external relations. The EU's external stabilisation and crisis-management resources are not unlimited. It is now confronted with a situation where it must take a much more strategic approach to its political environment, not least due to the needs of its internal security. The EU cannot go on developing its defence policy capabilities without formulating a clearer vision of the environments in which they might be used.

A more strategic approach would also be beneficial for the EU's comprehensive role as a promoter of peace and a broader social stability around its borders. It would enable the Union to make full use of its broad set of instruments in order to promote its goals more consistently.

The third factor calling for a change of policy is Russia and the EU's Eastern neighbourhood. The strategic importance of Russia is still very real to the EU and today it is dealing with a different Russia from the Russia of the 1990s. Due to changes in the global distribution of power Russia sees new possibilities for enhancing its clout and international prestige, partly due to its energy resources and partly due to its nuclear capabilities.

At the same time the EU is much more involved in the region between the EU and Russia. The political significance of this involvement has been further emphasised through the Eastern Partnership policy. The challenging post-conflict stabilisation role that the EU has in Georgia is another element of this new involvement. The EU's dependence on Russian energy and the various ways in which Russia seeks to exploit this dependency could be mentioned as another new dimension in EU-Russia relations.

What do Russia's resurgence and the growing role of the common neighbourhood mean for the EU's security and defence policy? The argument here is not that Russia has begun to appear as a threat to the EU to which the Union should try to respond. The point is simply that from the EU's point of view the relationship with Russia has become much more demanding and that there is a security policy dimension to it. In these conditions it is no longer possible for the EU to develop its external relations – and the CFSP as a component therein – primarily by reacting to changes in its political environment. The EU must take a much more proactive approach to Russia as well as to the common neighbourhood in general. This requires careful policy-planning and complete solidarity and commitment to the common policy from all EU members.

## Conclusions

There are a couple of conclusions to be drawn concerning the challenges facing the EU's common security and defence policy and its relationship with NATO.

First, the conditions for the future development of the CSDP are different from those in which the policy originally started to emerge. The EU has changed and its immediate political environment has also changed. How has this been taken into account in the EU's policy-planning? The discourse on institutions and capabilities should take account of this change.

The EU obviously needs a much more comprehensive and well-planned approach to its security policy. In the definition of the overall goals of the Union's security policy the needs of internal and external security must be synergised. These needs shall serve as the starting point for security and defence policy planning in a new perspective that overcomes old taboos and national sensitivities.

In the formulation of the EU's defence policy, the EU and NATO should no longer be perceived as competitors or as embodying alternatives in their role as instruments for European security policy. The EU and NATO are inherently different and irrespective of their overlapping competences in crisis-management each is suited to respond to different kinds of security challenges. Cooperation between them must be improved simply from the point of view of complementarity.

Better coordinated complementarity between the two organisations is also essential from the point of view of the management of Europe's strategic partnerships. The EU and NATO clearly play different security policy roles in their immediate European neighbourhood. In Russia, NATO is still perceived as a part of the global power game with issues of military security at its core. Russia links NATO with the CFE talks and with plans to set up a missile defence system in Europe. Russia's distrust of NATO has led it to adopt a more assertive foreign policy posture, in which it seeks to safeguard its traditional sphere of interest, as shown for example by its protection of Russian minorities living outside Russian borders.

The EU could well become the mediator in the complex security policy relations between Russia and the West. The EU clearly provides a security policy agenda that Russia regards as more pragmatic and less confrontational than NATO's. Many joint regional concerns and many possibilities for cooperation exist if only the dialogue would function properly. From the Russian point of view the major problem with this dialogue is the unequal role that the EU offers to its partners in comparison with its full members. Russia does not understand – or does not want to understand – the EU's distinctive brand of multilateralism and the opportunities of this dialogue remain unexploited.

With the asset of two powerful organisations, the EU and NATO, Europe should be able to manage its strategic partnerships better. The fact that this is not the case is another sign that this complex relationship urgently needs to be rehabilitated.

Again, the need for more effective planning seems to be the key here in many respects. Enhanced security-policy planning in the EU would enable the Member States to efficiently manage their participation in both EU and NATO frameworks. Furthermore, common European research and development projects in the field of defence equipment policy and a more efficient pooling of resources would diminish the financial burden incurred by the Member States.

## V. THE EU, NATO AND MILITARY CAPABILITIES: COORDINATING WINDMILLS

Sven Biscop

Having largely the same European Member States, NATO and the EU have logically identified the same shortfalls in their members' military inventory. These shortfalls sharply limit the deployability and sustainability of European armed forces, in spite of their impressive overall numbers. Consequently, both NATO and the EU have launched a series of initiatives and guidelines to stimulate capability development. They have not always done so in close coordination, because the so-called NATO-EU Capabilities Group, like so many other bodies for consultation between the two organisations, has remained a rather sterile affair, due to the usual political stumbling blocks.

Not that the lack of coordination matters much, for in the end most Member States ignore the two organisations anyway. In practice, Member States still make decisions on national defence planning with little or no reference to either NATO or the EU, whose guidelines are often trumped by considerations of prestige, national defence industry and budget. The result is a very fragmented defence effort. As Member States insist on remaining active in a wide range of capability areas, in spite of the decreasing size of their armed forces and defence budgets, a plethora of small-scale capabilities, of limited deployability and low cost-effectiveness, is scattered across Europe. The strategic enablers required to achieve the transformation to expeditionary operations are being developed only very slowly, if at all. At the same time, massive duplications and redundancies are maintained in areas of limited usefulness.

The current financial crisis and the resulting pressure on defence budgets threaten to aggravate this already bad situation. Some Member States have announced cuts in their defence budgets of up to 25 percent. The worst that could happen now is practice as usual: each Member State deciding unilaterally and without any coordination with fellow members of NATO and the EU where the cuts will be made. The great risk is that Member States will scale down or axe altogether ongoing and future projects, meant to generate the indispensable strategic enablers, while hanging on to capabilities that are cheaper to maintain but that are already redundant. If that is allowed to happen, the inevitable end-result will be that the sum total of European capabilities will be even less coherent, and even less employable, than is the case today.

If this worst-case scenario is to be avoided, at the very least European Ministers of Defence should sit down together urgently, before the end of the year, even if only at an informal meeting, and exchange information on their intentions. Such a first tentative dialogue could be a stepping-stone to more systematic consultation and eventually coordination between them. It is this lack of systematic coordination, and the unwill-

ingness to adapt national defence planning in function of fellow members' plans and programmes and the overall objectives at the EU and NATO level, that is at the heart of the current fragmentation. As long as Member States cannot be sure that if they abandon a capability area, it will be reliably taken care of by a fellow member, they will continue to struggle – counter-productively – to maintain a broad range of capabilities each on their own.

Ideally, therefore, consultation between Defence Ministers should be much more permanent and structured in order to produce genuine cooperation. With Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) the Lisbon Treaty provides a new mechanism that would allow the EU Member States to do exactly that.

There is a lot of resistance towards PESCO, for fear that it will just add a new layer of bureaucracy, which would cost more money, while the existing institutions of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) could achieve much more if Member States made better use of them. The point is though that they do not. The aim of PESCO therefore is not to replace or supplement existing mechanisms for capability development, but to try and create a new political stimulus that would incite Member States to make the most of the existing institutions. Without creating new institutions, PESCO has the potential to launch a serious capability development effort by the EU Member States that volunteer to join it.

On the one hand, participating Member States would commit to comply with a set of binding criteria to be agreed among themselves, by a fixed deadline. The core criterion must be output-oriented: to increase the number of deployable and sustainable capabilities. Participation, in function of GDP, in multinational programmes of the European Defence Agency (EDA), a minimal threshold for defence spending, and participation in all CSDP operations are further possible criteria. PESCO can be maximally inclusive by allowing every Member State that is willing to sign up to this commitment to join.

On the other hand, PESCO can serve as a 'permanent capability conference', where participating Member States coordinate and revisit their defence planning by focusing on the list of commonly identified shortfalls, inspired by the model of a force generation conference when a specific operation is to be launched. While all existing bottom-up initiatives are useful, PESCO can complement these with top-down coordination in order to fill in the gaps left between them. Here lies the real added value for Member States. Rather than maintaining a wide range of small, unemployable and therefore irrelevant capabilities, through permanent and structured coordination they could safely focus on a smaller number of capability areas that are relevant to the overall targets of CSDP. That would allow them to contribute with militarily relevant capabilities to every operation. And thus they would be politically relevant.

If they wish, participating Member States could at the same time opt for far-reaching forms of pooling in the areas in which they do remain active. The resulting capabilities could in any case be deployed for CSDP as well as NATO operations. Not each individual

Member State, but Member States as a collective entity, ought to be comprehensively capable. If windmills cannot be fought, they cannot be coordinated either. Rather than vainly trying to coordinate existing EU and NATO mechanisms that are ineffective anyway, in future NATO defence planning could eventually deal with the 'PESCO-pillar' as a whole. For the answer to Europe's military fragmentation is European integration, for which CSDP is the logical platform.

## CONCLUSION: THE EU AND NATO'S FUTURE

Daniel Keohane

There is a lot of overlap between the NATO and EU agendas. NATO's new strategic concept could help advance three political goals, which would also benefit the EU. First, it could help restore confidence with Russia, building on the recent thaw in Polish-Russian relations, by offering to develop a more constructive partnership on security issues with Moscow. Second, NATO could play a stronger role in Europe's neighbourhood (including North Africa and the Middle East), as a complement to EU efforts to encourage political reform. NATO has much experience of encouraging countries to reform their armed forces and impose democratic civilian control, which may be relevant for some of Europe's neighbours. Third, NATO should continue to develop its political and operational partnerships with other international organisations, such as the UN, the OSCE, and, of course, the EU.

It is much more difficult to prescribe what the new strategic concept could say about future NATO operations, and what that may mean for the EU's security and defence policy. What will NATO be doing post-Afghanistan? There are at least three reasons why this is difficult to predict: strategic trends; public support; and the budgetary crisis.

Current strategic trends suggest that NATO may not be very active beyond Europe's neighbourhood in the future. The US is already stretched thin due to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Plus, Washington is increasingly focused on South and East Asia (as well as the Middle East), which is the region with the most potential for major strategic trouble in the next 20 years. Witness the rapid growth in Chinese, Indian, Japanese and Korean defence spending (compared with decreasing European defence budgets). More importantly for NATO, the US is an Asian power, but the Europeans are not. The geographic focus of EU operations already conforms to this emerging strategic trend: 22 out of 24 EU peace operations initiated so far have taken place in its neighbourhood, namely in the Balkans, the Caucasus, the Middle East and Africa.

In addition, European public support for international peacekeeping is falling, for a number of reasons. The Iraq war in 2003 greatly damaged the credibility of international military interventions. Since then, NATO's Afghanistan campaign has also become unpopular in most of Europe and some EU Member States plan to pull out in the coming years. Due to their experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan, many Europeans no longer want to follow the US on military operations if their core security interest is unclear, and/or if they think they have little say over strategy.

Moreover, public apathy in Europe increasingly extends to defence policy in general, not only international peacekeeping. Most Europeans currently do not feel militarily

threatened by a non-EU state – although they are still concerned about non-military threats to their livelihoods such as terrorist attacks, gas supply cuts, cyber-attacks, organised crime or the potential security implications of climate change. The economic crisis makes it even more difficult for politicians to explain why defence policy matters relative to jobs, pensions, health or education.

The third factor that will affect NATO's operational future is the current budgetary crisis faced by every European defence ministry. Even if Europeans had more appetite for international peacekeeping, they will not be able to greatly improve their military capabilities in the coming years. At best some badly-needed equipment programmes will be delayed or reduced, and some will be cut altogether. American complaints about Europe's lack of military capabilities will not be addressed anytime soon. Indeed, because of public apathy towards peacekeeping, European governments may increasingly invest scarcer defence funds in national and/or homeland defence capacities instead of equipment useful for external deployments.

None of this is to say that NATO will not carry out military operations after (or in addition to) Afghanistan and Kosovo. However, in the event of a future crisis in Europe's neighbourhood requiring a military response, if the US cannot or will not act, then the EU – not NATO – would probably have to respond. But a note of caution should be sounded here: while strategic trends suggest that there may be more (and perhaps larger and more politically difficult) EU operations in the future, the mix of public apathy and budgetary cuts will hamper the EU's ability to respond to future crises at least as much as it is already affecting NATO's operation in Afghanistan. Both the EU and NATO need to think harder and together about how to re-invigorate European defence policies.

Another area where NATO and the EU should improve their dialogue concerns their relationships with Russia. The EU is trying to develop its own strategic partnership with Russia, which already includes some cooperation on security issues, such as counter-terrorism and peacekeeping (the EU used Russian helicopters in Chad and Russian ships work with the EU off Somalia). German Chancellor Merkel suggested at the Meseberg Summit in June that the EU and Russia should even create their own joint 'Political and Security Council', but it is unclear how this would complement the NATO-Russia Council.

The final aspect of NATO's future that deserves more attention is the EU-US relationship. The EU and the US increasingly work on a host of international security issues together (some of which overlap with NATO), such as counter-terrorism, the arms embargo on China and the Iranian nuclear programme. There is growing interest in Washington in EU operations, both civilian and military. The US has contributed around 80 personnel to EULEX Kosovo, and has been happy to be coordinated by EUNAVFOR *Atalanta* on the seas off Somalia.

Some in Europe would like to see a much stronger and more effective EU-US partnership, which could in time set strategic objectives for transatlantic cooperation, while

NATO would remain a powerful military option for their implementation. This idea probably seems either fantastical or offensive to some Atlanticists. Everyone knows that the problem in the EU-US relationship is on the EU side, which may be one reason President Obama decided not to attend an EU-US summit earlier this year (although he will attend one in Lisbon after the NATO summit in November 2010). Europeanists, for their part, hope that the changes contained in the Lisbon Treaty will promote more common EU policies on international affairs, but that will ultimately depend on EU governments.

However, Atlanticists should worry more about EU weakness rather than strength. Given the combination of emerging changes in Washington's strategic focus, some diverging transatlantic security priorities, and the growing relative weakness of European military power, NATO will not have much of a political future unless the EU becomes a stronger international actor. If the EU remains weak, then the European parts of NATO will remain weak, and everyone loses.

## *Abbreviations*

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<b>CFE</b>	Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe
<b>CFSP</b>	Common Foreign and Security Policy
<b>CSDP</b>	Common Security and Defence Policy
<b>EDA</b>	European Defence Agency
<b>ESDP</b>	European Security and Defence Policy
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>ISAF</b>	International Security and Assistance Force
<b>NATO</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
<b>OSCE</b>	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
<b>PESCO</b>	Permanent Structured Co-operation
<b>TEU</b>	Treaty on European Union
<b>UNIFIL</b>	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
<b>UNSC</b>	United Nations Security Council

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