



NATO: CONFRONTING REGIONAL AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES



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Contents

Introduction	1
Professor Yonah Alexander	1
NATO: An Overview	9
Professor Yonah Alexander and Richard Prosen	9
NATO and the Balkans: A Case Study	13
Dr. Raffi Gregorian	13
NATO and Russia: A Case Study	17
Dr. Patrick Murphy	17
NATO's Future	22
General (Ret.) Wesley Clark	22

Introduction

Professor Yonah Alexander*

Recorded history has repeatedly provided tactical and strategic lessons on the nature of political relations within, between, and among nations. Numerous universal postulates for the conduct of statecraft have been offered by philosophers, politicians, scholars, and other observers reflecting on the experiences of diverse societies regarding what does and does not work.

These collective insights focus on perceived realities of national, regional, and global matters, including the role of history, the supremacy of self-interest, the cost of wars, the benefits of peace, the nature of diplomacy in the struggle for power, and the value of multinational alliances in securing a stable world order based on the rule of law, the protection of human rights, and the advancement of economic progress and prosperity.

As NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, celebrates its 67th anniversary, it still represents the most significant defensive and offensive alliance in the past two centuries. And yet, in early 2016 its twenty-eight nation-state members are still facing a broad range of old and new horizontal and vertical challenges. These include piracy, terrorism, regional conflicts, humanitarian crises, high-seas piracy, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), and cyber threats. Indeed, the status quo and combined deterrence and containment of the forty-years' Cold War have been replaced by the realities of the changed world from Europe to the Middle East and beyond. Suffice it to mention the ongoing Russian military operations in Ukraine and now in Syria, the escalation of radicalization and violence perpetuated by an array of state and sub-state actors such as al-Qa'ida affiliates, and the ominous emergence of the newly declared caliphate by the "Islamic State" (also known as ISIS, ISIL, and Daesh).

In the face of these and other related strategic threats elsewhere, the key question arises as to whether NATO at this stage of its development is capable of completing its transformation from an earlier static defense alliance into a proactive global security provider.

To answer this question at least partially, a discussion of the Wales Summit held in the United Kingdom (September 4-5, 2014) and its aftermath is in order.¹

The twenty-sixth NATO Summit and its aftermath highlight current challenges and future strategic responses of the Alliance. The following discussion surveys several case studies. First is the Ukraine crisis that involves NATO-Russia relations. More specifically, since the inception of the Permanent Joint Council (PJC) in 1997, the NATO-Russia

* Professor Yonah Alexander is the Director of the Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies. This section includes selected segments from the "Conclusion" of *NATO: From Regional to Global Security Provider* (Lexington Books, 2015), edited by Yonah Alexander and Richard Prosen. The "Conclusion" was authored by Yonah Alexander.

relationship has been marked by disappointment and frustration. A number of international crises have complicated relations between Russia and NATO and given the relationship an adversarial dynamic. In the wake of the Kosovo war in 1999, Russia suspended its ties to NATO, and in 2008 NATO broke its ties with Russia in response to the Russian invasion of Georgia. The foundation of NATO-Russian polarization may be rooted in a fundamental misunderstanding between the two parties, one where each group believes it can drastically influence the other's decision-making. While the perhaps best outcome of a relationship between both parties would be a transparent and predictable strategic partnership, it has been suggested by analysts that both NATO and Russia must first engage in confidence-building measures to overcome decades of mistrust. In order to return to a broad cooperation agenda, both must participate in a broad political dialogue addressing the interests of all parties. Only through one reassuring the other can the strategic partnership between NATO and Russia yield tangible results.²

It is against this background that the Ukraine crisis must be assessed. Thus, on February 18, 2015, NATO's Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg expressed his "deep concern" over the deteriorating security situation and urged Russia to end its support of the "separatists" and to withdraw its forces and military equipment from Eastern Ukraine in accordance with international commitments.

The second challenge relates to Libya. During the Wales Summit in September 2014 NATO released a report calling on "all parties" to "cease all violence and engage without delay in constructive efforts aimed at fostering an inclusive political dialogue in the interest of the entire Libyan people, as part of the democratic process."³

The report further stated that "our Operation Unified Protector demonstrated NATO's determination, together with regional Arab partners, to protect the Libyan people. On the basis of NATO's decision in October 2013, following a request by the Libyan authorities, we continue to stand ready to support Libya with advice on defence and security institution building and to develop a long-term partnership, possibly leading to Libya's membership in the Mediterranean Dialogue, which would be a natural framework for our cooperation."⁴

By the end of 2014, Libya had become the country most affected by terrorist attacks in North Africa. This trend also continued in early 2015 with the emergence of an "Islamic State Province" in the country. Following the beheading of twenty-one Christian Egyptian nationals by Daesh operatives, NATO was urged by Italy, the former colonial power in Libya, to intervene "for the future of the Western world. ISIS is at the door. . . . There is no time to waste."⁵ An anonymous NATO official responded that "there is no discussion within NATO on taking military action in Libya . . . [NATO stood ready] to support Libya with advice on defense and security institution building."⁶

NATO's Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has provided a rationale for the Alliance's policy vis-a-vis the Libyan situation. He stated: "We have to remember that the NATO operation of Libya was an operation with a clear UN mandate. It was about protecting civilians against attacks from the regime and we did that." He further asserted, "I think the challenge has been what happened afterwards. There should

have been more follow up, more presence of the international community, but that's not only a NATO responsibility."⁷

A related third security challenge is the alarming threats posed by the "Islamic State" in Iraq and Syria. The Wales Summit specifically reaffirmed NATO's continued security commitment to that region. It asserted:

. . . we will revitalise our effort to help Iraq build more effective security forces. That partnership encompasses, within the existing Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme, cooperation in the areas of: political dialogue; education and training; response to terrorism; defence institution building; border security; and communications strategy. Allies and partners should continue to help coordinate humanitarian assistance to Iraq through the appropriate channels. We welcome the role that the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre is playing. We have also agreed that NATO will help coordinate among Allies and partners security assistance support to Iraq; this could also include helping coordinate the provision of lift to deliver assistance. Should the Iraqi government request it, NATO will stand ready to consider measures in the framework of NATO's Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative with an eye to launching such an effort in the near term. NATO will support ongoing bilateral efforts of Allies and partners by soliciting and coordinating, on a voluntary basis, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance assets. Additionally, Allies will seek to enhance their cooperation in exchange information on returning foreign fighters.⁸

Moreover, in response to Iraq's call for NATO assistance in training its forces, NATO stated that "anything that NATO might do in support of Iraq's defense capacity building would need to be complementary to the considerable efforts already undertaken by the U.S.-led coalition and individual NATO allies."⁹

In a specific reference to the ongoing crisis in Syria, the Wales Summit stated:

We condemn in the strongest terms the campaign of violence against the Syrian people by the Assad regime, which caused the current chaos and devastation in this country. We call on the Syrian government to fully comply with the provisions of all relevant UNSCRs [United Nations Security Council Resolutions] and to immediately commit to a genuine political transition in accordance with the June 30, 2012 Geneva Communiqué. We believe a negotiated political transition is essential to bring an end to the bloodshed. We highlight the important role of the moderate opposition to protect communities against the dual threats of the Syrian regime's tyranny and ISIL's extremism. More than three years of fighting have had dramatic humanitarian consequences and a growing impact on the security of regional countries. Despite possible destabilising effects on their economies and societies, NATO member Turkey, our regional partner Jordan, as well as neighbouring Lebanon, are generously hosting millions of refugees and displaced Syrians. The deployment of Patriot

missiles to defend the population and territory of Turkey is a strong demonstration of NATO's resolve and ability to defend and deter any potential threat against any Ally."¹⁰

In sum, the Wales declaration reflects NATO's response to the overall security threats to the region and beyond. It states:

ISIL has, with its recent advance into Iraq, become a transnational threat. The Assad regime has contributed to the emergence of ISIL in Syria and its expansion beyond. ISIL's presence in both Syria and Iraq is a threat to regional stability. It has become a key obstacle to political settlement in Syria and a serious risk to the stability and territorial integrity of Iraq. The people of Syria and Iraq and elsewhere in the region need the support of the international community to counter this threat. A coordinated international approach is required.¹¹

And on February 5, 2015, the NATO defense ministries agreed to double the size of the Alliance Response Force and create rapid-reaction troops to meet the challenges in the region and beyond.¹²

To be sure, in addition to the foregoing case studies of Ukraine, Libya, Iraq, and Syria, other NATO concerns are noteworthy; the current strategic situation in Afghanistan comes to mind. Thus, at the end of December 2014, the NATO-led military alliance formally ended its thirteen year long combat mission. The International Security Assistance Force leaves the relatively undertrained Afghan National Security Force to fight the Taliban insurgency largely on its own, though a non-combat/training mission, Resolute Support, began in early January 2015.¹³ That mission consists of 12,000 personnel, from both NATO and partner nations, who will be deployed to Afghanistan in support of the mission. The mission will function in the central hub (Kabul/Bagram), as well as in four "spokes" (Mazar-e-Sharif, Herat, Kandahar, and Laghman). The functions of the program are to aid in supporting planning, programming, budgeting; assuring transparency, accountability, and oversight; supporting the adherence to the principles of rule of law and good governance; and supporting the establishment and sustainment of such processes as force generation, recruiting, training, managing, and development of personnel.¹⁴

Mention should also be made of other NATO regional interests, such as the Balkans area. The Kosovo Force (KFOR) as a source for regional stability has been a successful mission. NATO also continues to cooperate with other Balkan states, namely Bosnia, Montenegro, and Macedonia, on membership to the alliance. It maintains an "open door policy" for all Eastern European countries interested in joining NATO, subject to meeting its membership criteria.

Aside from concerns over territorial issues such as Ukraine, Libya, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, and the Balkans, NATO contributes significantly to dealing with a broad range of challenges. Piracy threats spring to mind. Indeed, operations "Allied Provider," "Allied Protector," and "Ocean Shield" have provided maritime security and surveillance in the Gulf of Aden. It may be recalled that the U.N. Security Council

Resolution 1816 authorized states to enter Somalia's waters for the purpose of repressing acts of piracy. And since January 2015 NATO ships have contributed to the counter-piracy effort through a "focused presence," in accordance with the decision taken at the Wales Summit.

The latest NATO counter-terrorism efforts are also noteworthy. For instance, in response to the escalation of terrorist operations in Europe (e.g., the attack on the Charlie Hebdo staff and kosher supermarket in Paris), NATO declared that the best defense is "through open societies."¹⁵ Also, the Patriot anti-ballistic missile system on Turkey's border with Syria remains an important component in combating terrorist groups, particularly the "Islamic State."¹⁶ Finally, since terrorist groups have actively sought weapons of mass destruction in order to cause a higher level of mortality than through conventional weapons, NATO hosted a consequence-management training course on 12 November 2014 at the CBRN Defence Center Vyškov, Czech Republic, for thirty military and civilian participants.¹⁷

Another important area of horizontal concern is cyber threats. Cyber terrorism, for example, can disrupt governments' attempts to train, equip, mobilize, or hinder access to resources that are electronically controlled. Improving cyber security is a high priority for NATO.¹⁸ The Alliance therefore adopted a new enhanced policy and action plan which was endorsed at the Wales Summit. It "establishes that cyber defence is part of the Alliance's core task of collective defence, confirms that international law applies to cyberspace and intensifies NATO's cooperation with industry. The top priority is the protection of the communications systems owned and operated by the alliance."¹⁹ Furthermore, this policy streamlines cyber defense governance, enhances procedures to provide assistance to allied countries, and integrates cyber defense into operational planning. Also, it looks towards boosting NATO's cooperation with industry.²⁰

In conclusion, reading this foregoing discussion can lead academics, policy makers, and the general public to be rather pessimistic about the manifold short- and long-term strategic challenges facing societies. These threats include organized crime (e.g., trafficking in humans, drugs, and arms), piracy, terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, cyber attacks, and political and humanitarian crises around the world. The Cold War dangers, including a nuclear calamity between the antagonists, have been removed, and since the collapse of the Soviet Union the Alliance has been engaged continuously in confronting the manifold new vertical and horizontal challenges.

The growing dire political and strategic instability and uncertainties we have discussed underscore once again urgency in deploying NATO's assets and capabilities not only regionally but perhaps with greater frequency internationally. For example, on the regional level NATO's reassurances for Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), as outlined at the Wales Summit in September 2014, are considered balanced, flexible and scalable, and provide the Alliance greater visibility in that territory.²¹ Furthermore, individual member states through the European Union (EU) framework, along with the Arab states, are focusing, *inter alia*, on better police cooperation between their countries in combating "Islamic State" terrorism.²²

On the inter-regional level it is apparent that NATO is currently involved in multiple activities in the Middle East. Some are more complementary to those “considerable efforts already undertaken by the U.S. led coalition and individuals NATO allies.”²³ More direct working relationships with NATO include countries such as Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Kuwait.

Finally, NATO has proved in the past to be both resilient and adaptive. Currently, the Alliance is taking both the short- and long-term views in solidifying its capabilities and focusing on collective defense, while retaining its power projection abilities for crisis management and seeking regional and global security guarantees that underscore democratic values and collective prosperity.

On the basis of a nearly 70-year record, one can expect that NATO in the coming decades will continue to be guided by hard power, soft power, and smart power strategies in contributing to a safer and more peaceful changing world.²⁴

The Current Report

The current report on “NATO: Confronting Regional and Global Challenges” is a modest academic effort to provide a context for the Alliance’s political and military missions in the coming months and years. For example, NATO’s Warsaw Summit to be held during July 8-9, 2016, promises to serve as the next stepping stone in its future evolution.

Thus, our report is nourished intellectually and practically from two major sources. The first is the decades-long record of interdisciplinary briefs, seminars, workshops, and conferences focusing on NATO-related issues, held at universities and think tanks in the United States and internationally. Additionally, several NATO-designated institutions in Europe and elsewhere have provided academic frameworks for our research and educational activities. For example, NATO’s Center of Excellence-Defence Against Terrorism (COE-DAT) in Ankara facilitated useful courses and workshops on different security concerns. Moreover, the Center of Excellence: Partnership for Peace, also operating under NATO’s auspices in Ankara, has organized similar relevant activities. One noted event was the Silk Road 2010 Flag Officers seminar on “Towards a New Strategic Concept: The Future of NATO-Partners,” held in Çanakkale, Turkey. Over 130 generals, admirals, other senior officers, and ambassadors from some forty countries participated at the gathering (selected papers presented at the seminar were published in *Partnership for Peace Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall 2010).

The second essential resource for the current report is the recent book *NATO: From Regional to Global Security Provider* (Lexington Books, 2015), edited by Yonah Alexander and Richard Prosen. More specifically, conceptually and organizationally the book is divided into four segments: Part One, titled “Horizontal Security Challenges: Emerging Security Challenges and Threats,” consists of four chapters focusing on “Asymmetric Threats and New Security Challenges,” “NATO’s Cyber Decade,” “Counter-Piracy: NATO and Cooperative Maritime Security,” and “The New NATO Policy Guidelines on Counterterrorism.” Part Two on “Vertical Security Challenges: National, Regional and Operational,” covers three chapters dealing with “NATO and the

Balkans," "Operation Unified Protector," and "NATO and Afghanistan: Partnership and Setbacks." The third part, "NATO's Assets and Capabilities," incorporates two chapters that discuss "Capabilities Development and Common Funding" and "NATO's Ballistic Missile Defense." The final part on "NATO: Quo Vadis?" totals six chapters and deals with topics such as "NATO-Russian Relations: Ukraine and Other Unfinished Business," "The Changing Parameters of the Transatlantic Security Relationship: Case of Afghanistan," "Partnership for Peace Consortium: An Innovative Approach to Defense Education and Institution Building," "NATO Partnerships into the Future," "NATO as a Security Exporter," and "Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations."

Contributors to this volume include not only the co-editors but also other current and former U.S. Government officials as well as American and foreign academics. The participants include James Henry Bergeron, Derrick Busse, Georgiana Cavendish, Natividad Carpintero-Santamaría, Paul Dodge, R. David Edelman, Raffi Gregorian, Enrico Mueller, Patrick Murphy, Leslie Ordeman, Raphael Perl, Stefano Santamato, Carrie Shirtz, George Sinks, Bruce Weinrod, Richard Weitz, and Michael Ziemke.

In sum, this report consists of valuable insights drawn from numerous educational and professional meetings over several decades as well as the research conducted on the latest NATO volume. In fact, selected excerpts from the book written by both co-editors and other members of the team are incorporated in this report. Additionally, General (Ret.) Wesley Clark, a former NATO Supreme Allied Commander, contribution on "NATO's Future" is also published in this report.

Some acknowledgements are in order.

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Yonah Alexander
January 31, 2016

¹ This section is based on official documents provided by NATO's Headquarters in Brussels.

² This section is drawn from an initial unpublished draft prepared by Isabelle Francois (formerly at the National Defense University).

³ "Wales Summit Declaration," *NATO.int*, 5 September 2014, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Cassandra Vinograd, "Libya Faces ISIS Crisis: Italy Wants NATO Intervention," *NBC News*, February 16, 2015, <http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/isis-terror/libyafaces-isis-crisis-italy-wants-nato-intervention-n306896>.

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¹⁸ "Cyber security," *NATO.int*, 19 January 2015, accessed 27 January 2015, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_78170.htm.

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²² Birnbaum, Michael. "In EU, a Drive to Share Data," *The Washington Post*, January 20, 2015.

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²⁴ For some views by Professor Hans Morgenthau on the subject see his works *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 3rd Edition, Alfred A. Knopf Publisher (1965) and *Politics Among Nations: Brief Edition* (revised by Kenneth W. Thompson), McGraw-Hill (1993).

NATO: An Overview

Professor Yonah Alexander and Richard Prosen*

NATO represents the most significant defensive and offensive alliance in the annals of history. Given the current breadth, depth, and scope of security challenges facing the Euro-Atlantic community, NATO is as relevant today as it was at the height of the Cold War.

The common state and non-state threats facing the twenty-eight Allies range from piracy, terrorism, regional conflicts and humanitarian crises, to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), and cyber attacks. Indeed, NATO must respond to the new realities of a transformed Europe and a globalized world. These strategic trends demonstrate a radical shift from the Cold War, when superpowers projected hard power in the form of a major arms race; credible military forces, significant resources devoted to research and development of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons stockpiles; and the status quo provided by mutual assured destruction (MAD).

Today, for example, Russia's ongoing aggression in Ukraine and Crimea is a stark reminder that NATO cannot take its deterrence against nuclear equipped and conventional foes for granted, even while engaging in asymmetric confrontations elsewhere. Moreover, the unfolding, unprecedented uprisings in North Africa (e.g., Libya) and the Middle East (e.g., Syria) and dramatic manifestations (e.g., the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and other terrorist movements) underscore the reality that the only certainty is a future of uncertainties and continued challenges.

The appropriate response to the escalating old-new challenges requires a more efficient, effective, and flexible common security strategy. Such an approach must necessarily be based on intensified interdependence and engagement, as well as on concerted efforts to expand global security cooperation. Initial steps in this direction have been undertaken by increasing numbers of small and large nations, as well as by regional and inter-regional bodies. For its part, NATO has emerged as a proactive global security provider.

Evolution of NATO: Past, Present, and Future Phases of the Alliance (1949–2014)

NATO should be assessed on the basis of its key developments, the security challenges it has faced, and the tactical and strategic responses the Alliance has crafted.

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Any close examination of the Alliance, beginning with its formation based on the North Atlantic Treaty signed in Washington, D.C., on April 4, 1949 (popularly known as the “Washington Treaty”), recognizes three specific evolutionary phases:

First, the Cold War Period that lasted forty 40 years (1949–1989) during which NATO became the most critical player in the political and strategic confrontation with the Soviet Union in Europe.

Second, the transition period (1989–1994) that covered the adversary’s collapse and the shift of security concern to outside Western Europe.

Third, two decades of expanding partnerships, evolving policies, and continuous, high-tempo operations, and most importantly, developing new strategic concepts (1994–2014). During this latest phase of NATO’s evolutionary development, several steps are particularly noteworthy:

Expansion of Partnerships

NATO expanded its partnership engagement significantly, beginning with the Partnership for Peace (Eastern Europe, former USSR) and Mediterranean Dialogue (North Africa and Levant) in 1994, NATO-Russia Founding Act in 1997, and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (Gulf States) in 2004.

Continuous Operations

NATO responded to instability on its periphery and beyond, beginning with the Balkans, first in Bosnia, later in Kosovo. Then, in the wake of September 11, 2001, NATO invoked Article 5 (the Alliance’s mutual defense clause) for the first time ever, not as intended by the founders of the Alliance as a response to an attack in Europe by the USSR, but in response to an attack on the U.S. by terrorists. This led to NATO combat operations in Afghanistan beginning in 2003. Meanwhile, NATO conducted maritime operations in the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean, and, in 2011, air operations over Libya.

Summit Meetings

As NATO is transiting out of its most extensive and longest military operation in Afghanistan as Afghan forces take responsibility to confront security changes, the Alliance’s future posture priorities and configurations take center stage.

It is against this brief historical background of NATO that a more detailed discussion of the past twenty-six summit meetings of the Alliance is in order. NATO summit meetings provide periodic opportunities for heads of state and government of member countries to evaluate and provide strategic direction for Alliance activities.

These are not regular meetings, but rather important junctures in the Alliance’s decision-making process. For instance, summits have been used to introduce new

policy, invite new members into the Alliance, launch major new initiatives, and build partnerships with non-NATO countries.

Due to the political significance of summit meetings, agenda items typically address issues of overarching political or strategic importance. Items typically relate to the internal functioning of the Alliance as well as to NATO's relations with external partners.

Many of NATO's summit meetings can be considered as milestones in the evolution of the Alliance. For instance, the first post-Cold War summit was held in London in 1990, and outlined proposals for developing relations with the ex-Communist Central and Eastern European countries. A year later, in Rome, NATO heads of state and government published a new Strategic Concept that reflected the new security environment. This document was issued as a public document for the first time in NATO's history. At the same summit, NATO established the Partnership for Peace Council (PfPC)—a forum that officially brought together NATO and partner countries from Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the Caucasus.

In 1997 the Madrid and Paris Summits invited the first countries of the former Warsaw Pact—the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland—to join NATO, and established partnerships between NATO and Russia and Ukraine. The 2002 Prague Summit saw major commitments to improving NATO's capabilities; transformation of the military command structure including, invitation of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia to begin accession talks; reaffirmation of NATO's Open Door Policy; adoption of a series of new measures to improve military capabilities (The Prague Capabilities Commitment and the NATO Response Force); adoption of a Military Concept for Defence against Terrorism; decision to support NATO member countries in Afghanistan; and an endorsement of a package of initiatives to forge new relationships with partners.

Typically, the decisions made at a summit meeting are issued in declarations and communiques. These are public documents that explain the Alliance's decisions and reaffirm Allies' support for aspects of NATO policies.

Summits are convened upon approval by the NAC at the level of permanent representatives (or ambassadors) or foreign and defense ministers. They are usually held approximately every two years, but also on an as required basis due to evolving political and security situations.

From the founding of NATO until the end of the Cold War—over forty years—there were ten summit meetings. Since 1990, their frequency has increased considerably, in order to meet the pace of changes brought on by new security challenges. In total, twenty-six NATO summits have taken place from 1949 to today.

NATO summit meetings are held in one of the member countries, including Belgium, at NATO Headquarters. Members volunteer to host summit meetings, and, after evaluating all offers, the NAC makes the final decision concerning the location.

Locations have been highly symbolic. For example, the Washington Summit of 1999 commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in that city. The Prague Summit of 2002 was the first summit held in a post-Socialist country, and the Riga Summit of 2006 was first summit held in a newly independent state that was formerly a Soviet Socialist Republic. Istanbul—which hosted a summit meeting in 2004—connects Europe and Asia and is where the Alliance launched the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative. This initiative is intended to foster linkages between NATO and the broader Middle East.

The Wales Summit (September 4-5, 2014) was considered to be the most important since the last meeting hosted by the United Kingdom in 1990, a previous inflection point as the Alliance emerged after the Cold War. The main themes on the summit agenda were: current and emerging challenges (Ukraine-Russia, instability in Syria-Iraq and Libya, cyber and ballistic missile threats), and addressing questions such as: How does NATO respond to these challenges? Is there an increased role for partnership and capabilities activities? What did we learn from the last two decades of operations? What are the implications for the future? And can the Alliance reverse the trend of falling defense expenditures during the past several years?

NATO and the Balkans: A Case Study

Dr. Raffi Gregorian*

The last 25 years of NATO's experience in the Balkans, and some of the highlights and contexts in which NATO found itself in the beginning of the breakup of Yugoslavia, turn out to be relevant even today. Not only in terms of NATO's preparation for everything that came afterwards in Afghanistan and so on, but even today one can see what is going on in the Balkans and the migrant flow and how countries that were on the verge of failing or becoming authoritarian are now handling the migrant crisis in a way that is perhaps much more laudable than some of their northern neighbors that are ensconced in "old Europe."

Also, it is worth noting that recently the Montenegro parliament voted overwhelmingly to join NATO. I think around two-thirds of parliament voted for that. We can expect some good news regarding an invitation for Montenegro to join NATO, perhaps sometime this year or early next year. And that would continue to complete the process that I will describe to you briefly here.

The first thing is to bear in mind where NATO was in 1990 and 1991 when Yugoslavia began to break up and the Cold War was just ending. The Alliance was on the verge of possibly dissolving. In NATO--recall if you will, hard to believe--there was actually a debate whether or not to terminate NATO as an alliance. It was no longer needed, some people said, because the reason it was created in the first place had disappeared. Others were thinking about turning European security over to the Western European Union or the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) or looking at a reinvigorated United Nations that had been freed from the shackles of Soviet and U.S. confrontation in the Security Council.

Against that backdrop there is the breakup of Yugoslavia: the first short war in Slovenia, then the conflict in Croatia, and then spreading to Bosnia. It was not at all clear NATO would or should have a role there. Some of you may remember the debates on the issue of the so called "out of area," and that it took quite a few years for the allies themselves to really form a new consensus. And that new consensus was not possible without repeated failures in the Balkans, principally by UN peacekeeping forces. But also it reflected a doctrinal challenge for both military and political leaders about what kinds of operations NATO would be taking on in the "out of area" sphere. You can see that reflected in the fact that it took about four years for NATO to develop a doctrine for peace support operations; actually SHAPE developed it, but it remained a draft for more than five years after that. So even after troops had deployed into the Balkans--into Bosnia first then Kosovo--the Allies did not have an official peace support

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operations doctrine. That is not surprising, because there was continued disagreement about what to do and how to do it. This was a debate that was going on globally, as well. The United Nations' revamped peacekeeping operations under Chapter VII mandates in places like Somalia demonstrated the types of environments in which the Security Council members, the United States chief amongst them, felt we ought to be applying international resources and forces there. There were limits to all that, in doctrinal terms as well as political terms. So it was a struggle to figure out what is the appropriate use of force in such conflict areas or whether or not they should be employed at all.

In the case of NATO in the Balkans, there was a creeping incremental move towards intervention based on the conditions on the ground, principally in Bosnia. The images on everyone's television screens each night of shelling and ethnic cleansing and refugee flows had a major effect on Allies' publics. (While those were astonishing images back then in the 90's, they have been greatly eclipsed by what is happening right now in the span of just a few weeks, with Syrian refugees flowing into Europe.) So you get to the point where NATO allies have worked out an arrangement with the United Nations to support peacekeepers on the ground with air power. Those peacekeepers, also drawn from many NATO countries, were faced with a seemingly impossible task and a really Hobbesian choice as to what to do between the mandated task of protecting the delivery of humanitarian aid as opposed to the people that were the intended recipients of that aid. It was a really difficult time for the peacekeepers and it was not until the establishment of the UN Safe Areas in Bosnia and some of them being overrun--most notably in Srebrenica--that the alliance reached the point politically that its members had to act on their threats to take action against ceasefire violations and create the conditions for a peace process to take hold, which eventually led to the Dayton Peace Accords

It took something really horrible like the genocide of Srebrenica to be the watershed event for the Alliance. Most people do not know this; the story, the narrative, that people have in their heads about the Dutch peacekeepers there who let the Serbs come in and separate the men and the boys from the women and then killed all the men. That is what happened but there was a lot more too. There was, at the time, an entire NATO strike package flying over Srebrenica for a period of days waiting for the orders to conduct airstrikes to support the Dutch. The Dutch made repeated requests for close air support. That clearly was a horrific event for NATO, and of course for the people who suffered, but it really demonstrated the need to do something. It was at that moment that the alliance really changed course and decided to intervene in a demonstrable way. It was a couple weeks later that intensive airstrikes under Operation DELIBERATE FORCE were launched against Serb forces, which, as mentioned before, eventually led to the Dayton Peace Accords.

That being said, when the Peace Accords themselves were developed there was still an inclination on the part of many Allies, including to some degree the United States as well, that there had to be a clear separation between military and civilian tasks. That is, that the military would be led by NATO, the so-called Implementation Force (IFOR), would go in conduct very specific tasks in terms of disarming and demobilizing soldiers, demarcating the Zone of Separation, and that was going to be it for the military side. I

think history bears out quite clearly that that was not going to be the case and that such a separation of the military and civilian tasks would not work in terms of implementing Dayton. NATO agreed in the end to extend the presence of IFOR and changed it into a Stabilization Force (SFOR). There was a recognition by many of the key allies which sat on the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board for Bosnia that there had to be a new way of doing things--that there had to be an active and more forceful way of *enforcing* the peace, because doctrinally it was considered a peace enforcement mission but it meant most importantly working with the civilian authorities and principally the High Representative in Bosnia to achieve shared aims related to peacebuilding and enforcement of the Peace Accords themselves.

So you begin to see NATO-led forces being much more active in taking on paramilitary groups. A select group of allies begins to launch secret operations to locate and apprehend persons indicted as war criminals, whereas just as a year or two before people like Karadžić and Mladić were able to drive through NATO checkpoints. Now the forces were going after them deliberately and over the course of a number of years brought them all to justice in The Hague. So I think what we see by the early 2000s in Bosnia, and then as a result of the experience in Kosovo, the alignment of political and military will and capability now working much better. The decisions to intervene in Kosovo are taken much more quickly, with very positive results, that is, the limiting of the amount of killing and destruction, at least as compared to what happened in Bosnia.

You also see a big change politically in the region, with the departure of authoritarian regimes in Croatia and Serbia in particular, but also in moderate governments being elected in their place. In Bosnia, freed from major political interference by its neighbors, the government's orientation demonstrably turned more pro-Western. That creates new opportunities for NATO as a political alliance to start using some of its engagement tools, such as the Partnership for Peace (PfP), Membership Action Plan, and so on, to start engaging both politically and militarily with the armed forces of that region. We see how these tools could be best used in one particular incident, on which Richard Prosen and I worked quite extensively, which was the Defense Reform Commission in Bosnia. There the U.S.-led component of SFOR, acting on information that sanctioned military goods were reaching Iraq from Bosnia (fighter jet engines!), caught the Bosnian Serbs red-handed.

We used the political moment of that scandal to drive massive reform at the state level. Eventually over the course of two years, we managed to negotiate the disbanding of the former warring armies in Bosnia as well as the creation of a NATO-oriented, multiethnic, single armed force for Bosnia. Throughout the region we saw the establishment of NATO headquarters, usually led by a senior military representative (but in some cases by a senior civilian representative), focused on defense reform, security sector reform, and helping these Balkan countries which are now at this point all members of PFP to orient themselves toward NATO membership. By the time you get to the conflict in Macedonia, in the early 2000s, and the insurgency in the Preševo Valley in Southern Serbia, NATO has more or less hit its stride. I think that it is working very effectively; it intervenes early enough in Macedonia that major military forces are not needed, and helps support the development of a framework agreement for peace

there as well. It is still holding, and I believe that what NATO directly or indirectly contributed looks is pretty good.

Just think of all the positive things that have happened in terms of marquee issues. We have Slovenia, Croatia, Albania, all now members of NATO. Bosnia has conditional acceptance for a Membership Action Plan, Serbia is in PfP, and Kosovo is committed to and cooperating closely with NATO. And, as I mentioned in the beginning, Montenegro is at the doorstep of joining the Alliance, while all countries are either in the EU or in the process of accession negotiations or at least have a stabilization association agreement with the goal of European Union membership. With the exception of Kosovo, all states contribute to one degree or another to UN, NATO, or EU peace operations in a variety of theaters. Not bad to go from massive international security consumers to now the exporters of it! I just hope that what we have been able to accomplish there over the last 20 years or so stands the test of what is going on now with the huge flow of refugees through the area.

NATO and Russia: A Case Study

Dr. Patrick Murphy*

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was established in the first place as a bulwark against the Soviet Union, Russia in its then guise. After more than a decade of engagement in Afghanistan (as Defense Secretary Ashton Carter explicitly notes below), NATO is coming full circle, once again organizing the defense of Europe against Russia. By May 2015 there was talk of a new Russian offensive taking place in Ukraine in the summer of 2015.¹ And yet, things have actually been rather quiet on the Ukrainian front.

The trouble in Ukraine began in February 2014, when the elected Ukrainian President, Viktor Yanukovich, who was backed by the Kremlin, was pushed out of power by a kind of coup, but a coup with enormous popular backing, after he suspended talks on a trade agreement with the European Union. Within a few days Russian President Vladimir Putin took over the Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine and illegally annexed it. This was the first forcible change of borders in Europe since World War II, and cost Putin and Russia the \$40-50 billion in goodwill they had just paid for by supporting the winter Olympics in Sochi. In early April 2014 pro-Russian separatists, together with “little green men” without insignia on them—i.e., Russian soldiers—began operations to take over the Donbas region in Eastern Ukraine, the heart of Ukraine’s industrial area, specifically the oblasts or provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk. On July 17 a Malaysian Airlines plane was shot down over Eastern Ukraine, killing 298 people. There has never been a complete investigation because of Russian and pro-Russian separatist resistance, but it appears without doubt that the plane was shot down, presumably by mistake, by either the separatists or the Russians.

In September 2014, Ukraine did in fact reach an Association Agreement with the European Union, establishing much closer relations with Europe and distancing Ukraine from its Russian invader (Russia was able to get full implementation of the agreement postponed till the beginning of 2016, hoping to cause further mischief, but it seems to have been unable to really cause much trouble). Of course, this successful negotiation negated the moves by Yanukovich against the agreement the previous February, which gave Putin the excuse for provoking all of the Russian-Ukrainian problems in the first place.² Though this agreement did not involve NATO in any official capacity, most EU members are also members of NATO; thus there is a direct parallelism between the two organizations, and Ukraine would certainly like to join both if that becomes possible.

The Minsk I and Minsk II agreements, from September 2014 and February 2015, have had some effect on the level of fighting. The United States has refused to give Ukraine “lethal” weaponry, even “defensive” lethal weapons, but is providing, for instance,

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3,000 radios with various levels of encryption to Ukrainian forces, as well as counter-artillery radar to help Ukrainians respond more accurately to separatist shelling.³

As to NATO's involvement in the Ukrainian crisis, it should be remembered that although Ukraine is not a member of NATO, several countries bordering on Ukraine, such as Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania, are members of the alliance. But NATO has not played a very direct role in the Ukrainian-Russian dispute. It has, however, at times, e.g., in June 2015, made promises of aid. On June 25 the Stars and Stripes reported,

NATO members agreed . . . to step up support for Ukraine with more air traffic data and assistance in countering roadside bombs, but member states stopped short of offensive weapons, which Kiev has sought in its battle with Russian-backed separatists.

A new trust fund to be established "will aim at de-mining and also on countering improvised explosive devices. And this is vital for saving lives," NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg told a news conference after a meeting of the NATO-Ukraine commission.⁴

Note that there was no dollar amount for the trust fund mentioned in the article just cited, and it is not clear whether there has been any follow through. On the other hand, U.S. and European Union sanctions against Russia because of Ukraine continue in place and definitely appear to be having a negative effect on Russia in a variety of ways, not just economic.

But the lack of very much NATO aid to Ukraine does not mean that NATO, and especially its more easterly members, are not extremely concerned about events in that country. In June 2014 thousands of NATO troops were in training in Poland, the Baltic states, and Romania, including the first-ever training by the new rapid reaction NATO "spearhead" force. Both NATO's civilian Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, and its military commander, U.S. General Philip Breedlove, were in attendance, to underline that NATO "meant business." In parallel, there were much beefed-up annual NATO naval exercises in the Baltic Sea. Poland, Romania, and the Baltic countries would all prefer permanent NATO bases, including U.S. forces, on their territories, and that may yet come.⁵

During the summer and early fall of 2015 conditions on the Donbas front have remained relatively quiet; there was no large-scale Russian invasion as was forecast in May, and even the Ukrainian port of Mariupol, close to separatist-held territory and subject to shelling, is still nonetheless fully in pro-Ukrainian hands. But the fact remained that by early August about 6,800 people had been killed in the conflict, most of them apparently civilians.⁶ At the same time there were events taking place in Ukraine itself which were both positive and negative for the Ukrainian people.

On August 27, Ukraine's main creditors agreed to forgive a portion, about 20 percent, of bonds held by Ukraine's private creditors, an important lift to Ukraine's war-burdened economy, which had already showed signs of life after a bad winter. The free-trade agreement with the European Union also goes into effect January 1, 2016,

which is a strong positive for Ukraine, both economically and politically. It now seems likely that the remainder of a \$25 billion bailout from the International Monetary Fund, the United States, and Europe, will soon be released to Ukraine.⁷

On the other side, and directly related to the situation in Eastern Ukraine, a hand grenade was thrown into a crowd outside of Ukraine's parliament building August 31, killing one police officer and wounding 122 people. The occasion was the preliminary approval by the Ukrainian Parliament of a bill which would allow a devolution of some powers from the central government to individual provincial governments, a requirement of the Minsk II agreement of February 2015. The hand grenade was thrown by a member of the Svoboda nationalist crowd, which felt that Kyiv was giving too much power to the provinces, including rebellious Donetsk and Luhansk. By the way, the people who were injured were all police officers and reporters, not members of Svoboda. The hand grenade thrower was caught, but both Ukrainian nationalists and Moscow and its Eastern Ukrainian allies have expressed dissatisfaction with the law, for opposite reasons.⁸ Such events do not contribute to the stability of the Ukrainian Government.

One more comment on Ukraine: whatever else Putin has accomplished there, he has certainly cemented Ukraine's strong attachment to the West. Russian-speaking areas under Ukrainian Government control openly fly the blue and yellow Ukrainian flag, and it is said that most of the people left in pro-Russian Donetsk and Luhansk are either too old or sick to travel, or they would already have left for Ukrainian-held areas. For now the Ukrainian conflict appears to be "frozen," like Putin's landgrabs in Georgia and Moldova. This is especially the case since Putin has begun military operations in Syria.

Aggressive actions by Putin, including also the buzzing of NATO aircraft by Russian planes over the last several months, and the kidnapping by the Russians—from Estonian territory—and trial of an Estonian intelligence officer, have alarmed NATO and its leader, the United States. We have already discussed the NATO exercises in Russia's "near abroad" (Poland, etc.). U.S. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter recently stated, presumably with the backing of the Administration,

. . . Russia poses a [sic] existential threat to the United States by virtue simply of the size of the nuclear arsenal that it's had. Now, that's not new. . . . Vladimir Putin's Russia behaves, in many respects, as – in some respects and in very important respects, as an antagonist. That is new [W]e are adjusting our capabilities qualitative and in terms of their deployments, to take account of this behavior of Russia. We are also working with NATO in new ways, a new playbook, so to speak, for NATO, which has been preoccupied with Afghanistan for the last decade or so, more oriented towards deterrence on its eastern border and with hardening countries at the – on the borders of Russia, NATO member and non-NATO members, to the kind of hybrid warfare influence or little green man kind of influence that we see associated with Russia in Ukraine.

He went on to note that the U.S. is still cooperating with Russia in areas of common interest, such as counterterrorism, North Korea, and Iran.⁹

We turn now to Syria. As you know, hundreds of thousands of Syrians are trying to get away from the civil war in their country, to some quiet place in Europe, preferably Germany. Once again, NATO as such is not directly involved with this refugee stream, the largest since World War II, but its European counterpart, the European Union, certainly is, and the United States, NATO's leader, has announced that it also may take 10,000 Syrian refugees over the next year, as compared with less than 1,500 up to now.¹⁰

But perhaps NATO soon will be somehow involved—in Syria itself. It appears that Russia recently began bombing raids in Syria to aid Syrian President Assad, supposedly on ISIS but really mainly on non-ISIS “moderate” opponents of the regime. It is almost as if, as some speculate, Russia has changed fronts, from Ukraine to Syria.¹¹ It built an air traffic control tower and modular housing units for hundreds of military personnel near Syria's Mediterranean port of Latakia,¹² and then began flying its bombing raids. There is always the danger of run-ins with U.S. warplanes attacking ISIS, even though Russia itself says it is strongly opposed to ISIS. After the terrorist attacks in Paris in November 2015, both France and the United Kingdom, both NATO members, began their own air raids in Syria, though so far NATO itself as an organization does not seem to be involved in that country.

The U.S. asked NATO ally Greece to deny its airspace to Russian planes headed for Syria, and NATO ally Germany has also expressed concern about reports that Russia was involved in an arms build-up in Syria.¹³ And Bulgaria, another NATO member (and formerly part of the Soviet bloc) has already refused overflight rights to Russian planes.¹⁴ On September 13 Russian news agencies quoted Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov as saying that Russia will continue providing military supplies to Syria.¹⁵ And on September 15, to quote the Washington Post, “President Vladimir Putin on the 16th defended Russia's military support for Syria, saying it was necessary to defeat the Islamic State and ‘terrorist aggression.’”¹⁶ At the same time Secretary of State John Kerry was saying that the Russians had suggested “military-to-military” conversations to discuss ways to avoid the kind of possible Russian-U.S. aircraft interference mentioned above. The Washington Post said that Kerry still thought that “meaningful” Russian help could contribute to a political solution in Syria.¹⁷

It would appear that Putin wishes to establish an anti-Islamic State coalition in which the Assad regime could or would play a leading part. It is difficult to imagine the United States officially joining such a coalition, or even unofficially acceding to one, given that shortly after the beginning of the war 4 ½ years ago President Obama said Assad must be removed from office, even if Obama does not seem to have done anything to make this happen. The Washington Post quoted Secretary Kerry as saying on September 19 that “‘Assad has to go,’” but that there “was some flexibility in the ‘modality’ and timing of his departure.” Alluding to the refugee crisis in Europe, Kerry noted, “I just know that the people of Syria have already spoken with their feet. They are leaving Syria.”¹⁸ Of course, most recently, in early 2016, the United States has given the impression that it might tolerate Assad's remaining in office for the time being. And

Russia for its part has said at least once that it could give asylum to Assad, should he leave office

Thus it appears that the old saying, "The more things change, the more they remain the same," is also true in regard to NATO and Russia. If Putin were to go, Russia might change. But we all hoped for that back in the early Nineties as well. We shall see.

¹ <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/05/17/new-putin-invasion-coming-this-summer.html>.

² <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/ukraine/11100419/Ukraine-approves-historic-EU-deal-breaking-ties-with-Moscow.html>.

³ "Separatists muffle Ukrainian army's communications," Thomas Gibbons-Neff, Washington Post, September 1, 2015, p. A7.

⁴ <http://www.stripes.com/news/europe/nato-to-offer-more-aid-to-ukraine-but-no-offensive-weapons-1.354534>.

⁵ <http://www.startribune.com/new-nato-force-trains-in-poland-to-assure-eastern-flank/307853361>.

⁶ <http://www.dw.com/en/casualties-in-ukraine-ahead-of-renewed-peace-talks/a-18625013>.

⁷ "Ukraine, creditors agree on deal to lighten financial load," by Michael Birnbaum, Washington Post, August 28, 2015, p. A10.

⁸ "Blast at Ukraine protest kills officer, injures 122," by the Associated Press, Washington Post, September 1, 2015, p. A7.

⁹ <http://www.defense.gov/News/News-Transcripts/Transcript-View/Article/614330/department-of-defense-press-briefing-with-secretary-carter-in-the-pentagon-pres>.

¹⁰ <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/11/world/middleeast/obama-directs-administration-to-accept-10000-syrian-refugees.html>.

¹¹ https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/putin-shifts-fronts-in-syria-and-ukraine/2015/09/13/ab872574-57ea-11e5-abe9-27d53f250b11_story.html.

¹² <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/russia-appears-to-be-ramping-up-its-presence-in-syria/>.

¹³ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/09/07/us-mideast-crisis-syria-russia-idUSKCN0R70WT20150907>.

¹⁴ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/09/bulgaria-denies-air-access-syria-bound-russia-planes-150908132827726.html>.

¹⁵ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/09/13/us-russia-syria-lavrov-idUSKCN0RD0DV20150913>.

¹⁶ https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/putin-defends-deliveries-of-russian-weapons-to-syrian-army/2015/09/15/ad032c4e-0eda-4e17-a2b9-205157128df4_story.html.

¹⁷ https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/administration-searches-for-new-approach-to-aiding-rebels-in-syria/2015/09/16/938fd336-5c9e-11e5-8e9e-dce8a2a2a679_story.html.

¹⁸ "Kerry: Syria's president has to go, but U.S. is flexible on date," by Carol Morello, Washington Post, September 20, 2015, p. A18.

NATO's Future

General (Ret.) Wesley Clark*

Founded in 1949, NATO could now be said to be entering old age. But at a time when people of similar age are retiring, NATO is likely to be as necessary in the future as it has proved vital in the past. Over sixty-five years, NATO has survived challenge after challenge to its purpose and structure to prove itself a critical foundation for global security. New, and increasingly complex problems now face the nations of NATO—the subject of this book—and to survive and succeed, NATO must underscore its fundamental principles, learn from the challenges of the past, and then adapt to the current environment.

NATO is a political alliance, first and foremost—not a military alliance. It was formed in post-World War II Europe to deter conflict and help preserve the peace, not to engage in armed combat, though its founders understood that its military potential and capabilities were vital components of deterrence and conflict prevention. Its formation was testimony to the failure of the earlier notions of “collective security,” embodied in the League of Nations, to prevent the aggression by Italy, Germany and Japan that gave rise to World War II. Instead, NATO's fundamental principle is “collective defense,” captured in the NATO Charter's legally binding, famed Article V, which states “that an armed attack against one or more of them (member states) in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them . . . will assist the Party or Parties so attacked . . . including the use of armed force . . .” There can be no stronger mutual pledge among nations.

When it was constructed the Charter was written to avoid entanglement in our European allies' colonial problems, whether in Indochina or the Mid East, so NATO appeared geographically bounded. The word “attack” was deliberately chosen to emphasize the defensive and deterrent nature of the Alliance.

A second NATO principle has been the right of consultation, written in Article IV, which states that “The Parties will consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened.” In practice, this has meant that NATO sits in judgment in appraising the international environment, including geostrategic threats, and any other factors, that might affect the security of their member states. It also wisely provides that NATO must look beyond conventional attacks to include all elements that impact a member nation's “security.”

And finally, there is the principle that NATO can only act through the consensus of its member states. All actions are taken on the basis of unanimity, so, each state has under the NATO founding act an equal voice in decision-making.

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However, with the best of intentions, respective national interests of NATO member states are invariably different. Holding an alliance together in the face of diverging and competing national interests has always been the fundamental challenge for NATO. And as the decades passed, challenge after challenge emerged, driven by differing national perspectives. In democracies, these differences in perspective are often intensified by the political processes, and they become part of the continuing environment in which NATO has operated.

One of the continuing differences has been “burden sharing:” which nation provides what in support of Alliance goals. This was an argument that surfaced early in the Alliance’s history. European nations were consumed at the time in decolonization. As Europe became more prosperous, these nations became accustomed to reliance on the peacetime preponderance of U.S. forces, while they themselves hosted forces on their territory, and promised enhanced commitments from reserve and mobilized forces in the case of conflict. In the post-Cold War period, nations reached for their “peace dividend,” with most European member states drawing down their force structures and defense investments, even in the face of security challenges. Again and again the U.S. has requested, strategized and chided its European allies in pursuit of greater European military commitments, usually with limited effect. However, its outsized contribution also gives the United States a de facto greater influence in NATO than the principle of one vote-one state and unanimous decision-making would imply, a factor that the Americans use and Europeans sometimes resent.

Another diverging interest has lain in the Mid East. When France and the United Kingdom invaded Egypt in 1956, to protest Egyptian seizure of the Aswan Dam, U.S. President Eisenhower demanded their withdrawal. Conversely, U.S. support for Israel has always been stronger for Israel than that of most European nations. In the 2003 invasion of Iraq, NATO members France and Germany actually objected to the U.S.-led invasion and refused to participate.

Then there was the nuclear issue. The heart of NATO’s deterrent strategy was to couple the U.S. strategic nuclear force to the land-based defense of Europe. This strategy has undergone decades of analysis and refinement. Would the U.S., by its intervention in Europe, actually “trade” New York for Hamburg if conflict with the Soviet Union escalated to a nuclear exchange? Deterrence depended not only on forces, but also on the “credibility” that those forces would be used. One ploy was to have multinational NATO crews on ships that could launch nuclear missiles—the so-called Multilateral Force. But the U.S. then withdrew its offer of shared nuclear weapons control through the Multilateral Force; consequently France in anger left the integrated military structure of NATO, and the NATO headquarters left France and moved to Belgium. In the late 1970’s the Alliance anguished to craft a response to the Soviet’s deployment of the mobile, solid-fueled, intermediate-range SS20 missile into Eastern Europe. After several years—amid vociferous public comment and objections—NATO planned deployment of countervailing cruise and ballistic missiles to Europe, while, simultaneously the U.S.-led Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty resulted in the so-called “zero-zero” option, in which both sides withdrew or cancelled planned deployments.

Trouble in the Balkans in the 1990's constituted another set of divergent issues, with European nations much more directly impacted by the factional fighting and refugee flows than the United States. Facing the challenges there, NATO resolved to go "out-of-area." Forces were raised and committed outside the territory of NATO members, first in a quarantine and patrol, and later to actual bombing strikes. Still, a cross-Atlantic gap in perspectives and engagement persisted for almost four years, with the U.S. refusing to commit its ground forces under UN auspices. And the conflict continued. Only when the United States stepped into the lead with a seven-point peace plan and the promise to commit 25,000 U.S. ground troops was the conflict able to be ended through the leadership of the Dayton Peace Talks and the NATO Stabilization Forces in Bosnia. Later, the United States took the lead in the diplomatic and military efforts with its leadership of the Kosovo Air campaign. Indeed, the Kosovo Campaign was the Alliance's first major military test. It provided proof positive that NATO member nations could, working together, overcome separate political challenges internally to maintain resolve in a crisis.

Then there was the competition from other institutions. The emergence of the European Union, a European Security and Defense Identity was created, without the U.S. as a member, of course, competed with NATO. Especially after the demonstration of U.S. power in the Balkans in the late 1990's, there were repeated calls for a European Rapid Reaction Force, European strategic lift, and other measures to reduce Europe's reliance on the United States. This was an episodic irritant and distraction for NATO—arising whenever political leaders in certain NATO states saw political gain in espousing such ideas – but has never been sufficiently resourced to replace NATO's indispensable contribution in Europe.

More recently, we witnessed the challenge of 9/11, and the Western response. NATO invoked Article V for the first time after the terrorist strikes. Under a U.S.-led coalition, NATO nations poured assistance into the U.S. efforts in Afghanistan, after quick U.S. military action toppled the Taliban regime. But NATO was not united in supporting the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. There were strong voices of criticism from several allies. Subsequently, however, NATO came together to deploy its stabilization force into Afghanistan to broaden support for the U.S.-led efforts here.

Holding NATO together while dealing with these challenges has never been easy. Over the decades, voices have been raised, impassioned missives sent, reputations made and broken; but from it has emerged the stark reality: NATO is a kind of "consensus engine." Through its anguishing and sometimes tedious debates, multilayered committee structures, and considerations and reconsideration of policies, statements and positions, and with the leadership of its able statesmen and senior military leadership, NATO takes divergent national perspectives and creates consensus policies that have enabled NATO not only to survive but thus far to succeed in assuring security in the EuroAtlantic area.

Nevertheless, these threats continue to evolve. From 9/11 came a stunning recognition of the dangers of transnational terrorism, in this case, claiming inspiration from religious sources, which are still bedeviling the United States and its European allies. The explosion of the internet into the critical medium of worldwide transactions brought

a new array of threats through cyber networks – everything from thefts of funds and intellectual property, to wholesale attacks on critical national infrastructure, by individuals, criminal gangs, or rival states – without the movement of a single person across an international border. NATO has created a cyber “center of excellence” and implemented other cyber defense policies and measures in response. Then there are more subtle threats – corruption, political manipulation from abroad, migrants, internal insurrection, and, increasingly, a new set of geostrategic challenges centered around Russia, on the one hand, and the conflict between Iran and Sunni Muslim states to the South.

These new challenges and NATO’s striving to adapt are the subjects of this book. And adapt NATO will, so long as one element remains constant—the imperative of TransAtlantic unity in security matters. For the United States this means retaining the fundamental lesson of twentieth-century geostrategy—that there could be no security for the United States if Europe (however defined) was under the sway of a hostile power. For Europe, it means resisting the siren call of new Eurovisions or national pride to recognize that the TransAtlantic security linkage to the United States has been the fundamental factor in preserving Europe’s freedom and assuring Europe’s prosperity since World War II. The U.S. and Europe share a common history of security, much common culture, and deep economic and personal ties. And it is this that has made NATO both possible and essential. Read about the issues contained herein, and prepare for continuing struggle as the consensus engine of NATO meshes different national perspectives to provide security for the EuroAtlantic region in the decades ahead.

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Established in 1994, the activities of IUCTS are guided by an International Research Council that offers recommendations for study on different aspects of terrorism, both conventional and unconventional. IUCTS is cooperating academically with universities and think tanks in over 40 countries, as well as with governmental, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental bodies.

International Center for Terrorism Studies (ICTS)

Established in 1998 by the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, in Arlington, VA, ICTS administers IUCTS activities and sponsors an internship program in terrorism studies.

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