

# **From Protecting Some to Securing Many**

NATO's Journey from a Military  
Alliance to a Security Manager

Charly Salonijs-Pasternak (ed.)



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Charly Salonius-Pasternak (ed.)

[charly.salonius-pasternak@upi-fia.fi](mailto:charly.salonius-pasternak@upi-fia.fi)



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**The Finnish Institute of  
International Affairs**

Kruunuvuorenkatu 4  
FIN-00161 Helsinki  
Tel. +358 20 611 1700  
Fax +358 20 611 1799  
<http://www.upi-fia.fi>  
e-mail: [firstname.surname@upi-fia.fi](mailto:firstname.surname@upi-fia.fi)

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## Foreword

The report in your hands is the communal response of researchers<sup>1</sup> at The Finnish Institute of International Affairs to a question I posed in the spring of this year: What is NATO? The question arose out of observations that although NATO is the subject of frequent debate in Finland, the topic – NATO – is frequently not understood. The discussion in Finland has simply not kept up with the metamorphosis the Alliance has undergone during the past decade.

This report does not take a position on Finnish membership in NATO. Rather, it focuses on themes we feel are most critical when trying to understand how and into what NATO is changing. This was felt to be a far more useful contribution to the Finnish debate, and was also dictated by the fact that the authors represent a broad spectrum of opinions on Finnish foreign, security and defence policy.

While writing we have tried to keep in mind our audience: the Parliament, other policy makers and citizens who take part in the foreign and security policy debate. Accordingly, the most knowledgeable NATO experts in Finland and abroad may find little new information in the facts presented, but perhaps will discover some new perspectives on a subject they know well. We at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs want to produce policy relevant information and insights that will enhance our understanding of the world.

*Raimo Väyrynen*  
*Director, The Finnish Institute of International Affairs*

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<sup>1</sup> Laura Aho, Toby Archer, Hiski Haukkala, Henriikki Heikka, Arkady Moshes, Hanna Ojanen, Mikko Patokallio, Charly Saloniuss-Pasternak, Eero Vuohula and Raimo Väyrynen all participated in and contributed to the project. The project has been coordinated and the report edited by Charly Saloniuss-Pasternak.



# Executive Summary

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has changed dramatically since the end of the Cold War. While keeping its collective defence commitments, NATO has taken on new roles and tasks, enlarged its membership and created a network of partner states, all with the aim of increasing the security of member and non-member states. It is because of these changes that NATO has remained relevant and useful to its diverse membership. NATO also continues to be the most important defence related organization in Europe, and is a concrete part of the transatlantic relationship.

During the Cold War NATO focused on its military alliance role by preparing for collective defence in the event of a Warsaw Pact attack against Western Europe. Collective defence obligations still form the basis of the Alliance. However, no longer facing a conventional military threat, NATO has since the mid-1990s also taken on a security manager role. In this role it has engaged in a range of activities in which the organization's military competence supports broader efforts to increase the security of member and non-member states. These include military exchange, assistance and disarmament programmes, as well as humanitarian assistance and crisis management operations. This shift of emphasis from preparing for Article 5 based collective defence to non-Article 5 crisis management operations has generated debate within the alliance. NATO members have differing views about the advisability of engaging in protracted operations far beyond the borders of the Alliance. These discussions have become particularly important in light of experiences in Afghanistan. There the Alliance has had trouble gathering and sustaining troops requested by commanders because the members cannot agree on the strategic importance of Afghanistan.

As part of this broader security manager role, NATO has also built a large number of cooperative relationships with non-

member states. Many of these relationships are institutionalized through NATO's partnership programmes, which have expanded the organization's influence beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. These programmes have also blurred the line between members and non-members, as many NATO activities have been opened to non-members. Finland has taken advantage of this blurring and has for over a decade actively participated in NATO activities through the largest of the partnership programmes, Partnership for Peace (PfP).

In addition to taking on new roles and missions, NATO has also expanded its membership from 16 members to 26. The addition of ten new members between 1999 and 2004 made the membership increasingly diverse and increased the military capacity and political legitimacy of NATO in Europe. These enlargements, in conjunction with EU enlargement, have significantly reduced the likelihood of conventional large-scale war in Europe – a historic achievement. NATO will continue to increase its membership as well as continue its efforts to create a truly global partner network.

Continuing commitment of the United States to NATO is central to the continued relevance of the organization. Particularly during the past eight years the United States has pushed NATO to change so that it is in a better position to help members address post-cold war security challenges. For this reason, the US also has a serious interest in making NATO the dominant forum for discussing any security related issues that are important to member and partner states, i.e. a forum for discussing all transatlantic security related issues. Due to the consensus based decision-making mechanism in NATO, the US cannot force NATO or any individual state to take actions they do not want to take. Nonetheless, the United States has much influence when the overall strategic direction of NATO is determined.

European NATO members have many different perspectives about how the Alliance is developing. These varied perspectives are a result of different conceptions about the nature of security, and differing approaches regarding the EU and the United States. What is clear to all the members is that Europe's collective defence is realized through NATO. Irrespective of the status of the European Union's potential security guarantees, the EU does not have the capabilities required to plan and execute collective defence; nor is

it planning to acquire them. Current cooperation between the EU and NATO is limited to operational aspects of crisis management efforts. A better functioning relationship between NATO and the EU would be beneficial to all NATO and EU member states. However, improved cooperation can only be expected if France rejoins the military structures of NATO, and it along with Greece, Cyprus, and Turkey resolves to work for cooperation between the EU and NATO instead of inhibiting it.

Although officially a partnership, the relationship between Russia and NATO is strained. The single largest point of contention is potential enlargement further east, primarily regarding Georgia and Ukraine. Finnish membership in NATO would temporarily annoy Russia, but the relationship is likely in due course to return to normal.

As NATO and the implications of membership or non-membership are debated in Finland, it is important to recognize that NATO will continue to change – much as the European Union has changed since Finland joined it. Despite the nearly exclusive focus on non-Article 5 crisis operations, collective defence responsibilities remain at the core of the Alliance. Therefore, Finland should only seek NATO membership if it is ready to assist other members if they are attacked, and conversely benefit from receiving assistance from other Alliance members if it is ever attacked.

Most critically, a better understanding of NATO is important so that the organization can be properly placed within the broader context of Finland's security and defence policies. The debate about how these policies need to be changed cannot properly be held as long as "NATO" is effectively a swearword in Finnish society.

# The North Atlantic Treaty Organization

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization has changed dramatically since the end of the Cold War. Today NATO plays a significant role as a global security provider, is a concrete embodiment of the transatlantic relationship, and is still the most important defence related organization in Europe. It has remained relevant and useful to its diverse membership because it has been able to change and adjust to the post-Cold War world. These changes and their implications have not been well understood outside of the small group of individuals that work in or with NATO.

This report endeavours to illuminate the most significant changes and their implications, and as such does not take a position on Finnish membership in NATO. The report is divided into three sections. The first chapter explains the rationale behind choosing to focus on four major themes when trying to understand NATO and the way it may evolve in the future. It then briefly describes Finland's relationship with NATO. Chapters 2 through 5 address the four major themes, while the final chapter analyses the implications for Finland.

*Theme 1: Expansion of the Alliance.* NATO has expanded its roster of members ever since its inception. This increasing number of members has changed the nature of the Alliance, most recently with the ten new members joining between 1999 and 2004. This process of enlargement has had a number of repercussions both on the changes undertaken by the Alliance itself and on its relationship with other actors and states. Through the most recent enlargements the Alliance has also come to include a large number of states that still regard security far more traditionally and regionally compared to some of the older Alliance members.

This means that the Alliance must currently contend with numerous “camps”, which have different preferences on the future direction of NATO. These camps, which typically do not correspond to crude “Old Europe” and “New Europe” labels, affect deliberations regarding NATO operations, as well as the overall direction of its change. Clear differences exist on a number of central questions, such as the primacy of collective defence over crisis management operations.

Since the end of the Cold War, the Alliance has also built formal relationships with non-member states. These relationships range from multilateral programmes such as the Partnership for Peace (PfP) and Mediterranean Dialogue programmes to bilateral ones such as the NATO Russia Council (NRC) and the NATO-Ukraine Commission. In particular, the PfP deserves attention as it has changed from a “membership waiting room” to a collection of countries that either do not want to or cannot currently join NATO, but all of whom cooperate with NATO on a wide range of security related issues.

Understanding the dynamics of these expansions, how, why and for what reasons they occurred and what implications they carry for both old and new members is instructive when analysing the expansion of the Alliance from a transatlantic one to a global one. Although the debate is still in its infancy, in the wake of “globalizing” its activities it is likely that an increasing number of countries that are not from the Euro-Atlantic region will bilaterally or through programmes similar to the PfP forge ever closer ties with NATO.

*Theme 2: The Expanding Roles and Missions of NATO.* National priorities and requirements have caused member states to emphasize and prioritize the various roles and missions of NATO differently, causing extensive debates between the members. These debates include discussions on the status and applicability of the Article 5 mutual defence clause to non-conventional attacks. Article 5 of the Washington Treaty obligates members to provide support to members in need of assistance, but there is debate about how it should be interpreted to apply to cyber-attacks or acts of terrorism. The desirability of engaging in or further expanding NATO’s crisis management activities<sup>2</sup>, and how binding

<sup>2</sup> NATO uses the term ‘Crisis Response’ instead of ‘Crisis Management’, but for purposes of consistency, this report uses the term ‘Crisis Management’ throughout.

participation should be for members, as well as whether NATO should seek new global partners as it engages in fields such as cyber-security, counter-terrorism and energy security, also form a part of the debate on future roles and missions.

The debates are fuelled by different understandings of whether NATO is primarily a military or political alliance as well as by varying interpretations of the changing nature of security. Afghanistan has become the prism through which many of these debates are viewed. The concrete difficulties involved in a long-term “out-of-area” operation where there is little consensus on what the security interests at stake are, and the fact that the future relevance of NATO is said to be tied to success in Afghanistan, speak for addressing the operation in greater detail. The Afghanistan operation serves as a concrete manifestation of the broader debates on the roles and missions NATO has executed and can or should undertake.

A more nuanced understanding of the various perspectives on these issues within the Alliance is important because they go to the heart of addressing questions about what membership in NATO could concretely mean. They also illuminate the fact that these different perspectives do not reflect previous divisions over matters such as nuclear policy or the 2003 Invasion of Iraq.

*Theme 3: Relationship Between the United States and NATO.* Discussion on the future direction of NATO is ongoing in all member states; it is, however, the hand of the United States that will steer the Alliance’s strategic direction. Without strong engagement by the US the Alliance is weakened. However, the US will only engage if it sees that NATO can be used to further the security of both its Allies and itself. Nevertheless, because the Alliance is important to its European members, on the grounds of consensus they will, reluctantly or not, agree to proceed in the general direction preferred by the United States. To date, no country has taken advantage of Article 13 and left the Treaty. Although American policy towards NATO since the end of World War II has generally varied between activism and detachment, NATO will remain the United States’ main multilateral institution for security issues. Since the end of the Cold War two very different activist foreign policy perspectives have prevailed, with the attention given to diplomatic efforts aimed at gaining support from institutional (NATO) al-

lies being replaced by a preference for *ad hoc* -coalitions. Both of these approaches have affected the way the United States views the transatlantic relationship as a whole, and more specifically, how it views NATO.

Positions on the future of NATO and the kind of relationship the United States should maintain with the organization vary in the United States. Some feel that NATO should remain a fundamentally transatlantic alliance through which the United States can continue to influence European politics. Others envisage NATO's end-state as a global military alliance of democratic states, and yet others as a global political organization that specializes in the use of military force. NATO is also viewed by some as the premier "legitimacy granting" organization in the world. A sub-group of these individuals see legitimacy granting as the only benefit of NATO, they are therefore frustrated by the Alliance's failure to rubberstamp some US actions, such as the invasion of Iraq. Finally, a growing group – the "post-Atlanticists" – no longer view the transatlantic relationship as unique, which has unpredictable consequences for NATO. Clearly, these varied attitudes have created uncertainty about the directions in which NATO will develop. This not only has implications for NATO but also for the European Union as well as the vitality of the transatlantic relationship as a whole.

*Theme 4: NATO's Interaction with Other Actors.* Currently NATO maintains active relationships and interacts with a large number of non-member states as well as other international organizations and actors. Two sets of relationships stand out in particular: NATO-EU and NATO-Russia.

NATO and the EU tally 21 members belonging to both organizations. In addition to the opinions of the states which belong to only one of the organizations, the diversity of perspectives these overlapping members hold requires that both the European member states' perceptions on NATO and the institutional relationship between NATO and the EU be taken into account.

The relationship between NATO and Russia is unique in many ways and is unavoidably relevant to the Finnish debate on NATO. Since the end of the Cold War, periods of rapprochement and mutual frustration have repeatedly succeeded each other in the NATO-Russia relations. A negative momentum seems to be

gaining strength once again. However, a return to the large-scale confrontational and adversarial type of Cold War relationship is highly unlikely for the near and mid-term future. Nevertheless, cooperation will be limited and *ad hoc*, producing few meaningful results, if any. This does not amount to a genuine partnership. The single-most important point of contention in this relationship is NATO's open door policy and the potential further eastern enlargement of NATO.

## A Brief History of NATO

*NATO During the Cold War.* A theme that is common to the many excellent histories of NATO is that the Alliance has continued to change throughout its existence<sup>3</sup>. The perception of a static Cold War-era NATO is incorrect. During the first period from 1949 to 1950-51, what would become NATO can aptly be described as a political alliance. This changed when the Soviet Union signed bilateral security agreements with its East European allies in the late 1940s, and with the militarization of the Cold War through the Korean War. This led treaty signatories to develop organizational structures for the Alliance which were needed for collective defence.

The next turning point can be found in 1955, with the integration of West Germany into NATO and the establishment of the Warsaw Pact. This further hastened the development of NATO into an effective military alliance. As a result, the European security system entered an era of full-fledged, polarized military alliances from which very few countries abstained.

Prodded by the United States, the military strategy of NATO also changed in the early 1960's, from *massive retaliation* to *flexible response*. The massive retaliation doctrine was based on the logic that any military aggression on the part of the Warsaw Pact would be met with an immediate all-out counterattack, including the use of nuclear weapons. Due to advancements in especially ballistic missile technology, the United States felt that a flexible response doctrine, which allowed for proportionate and escalat-

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<sup>3</sup> For example, see Lawrence S. Kaplan's *The Long Entanglement – NATO's First Fifty Years* (1999) and *NATO Divided, NATO United: The Evolution of an Alliance* (2004), as well as *A History of NATO: The First Fifty Years* (2001) edited by Gustav Schmidt.

ing responses, would be more appropriate and sensible. Many of the European allies feared that this change in doctrine was a sign of weakness and questioned American determination to come to the aid of (or protect, depending on one's perspective) Europe in case of an attack by the Warsaw Pact.

The "Harmel Report"<sup>4</sup> in 1967 symbolizes the third turning point, after which East-West détente and cooperation rose to NATO's agenda as legitimate topics alongside defensive military preparations. The late 1960s also saw the smaller non-UN Security Council member states reassert themselves within the Alliance, as well as extensive disagreements on the use and "ownership" of nuclear forces. France left the integrated military structures of NATO in 1966 in part because of these disagreements. In the first half of the 1980s, the deterioration of East-West and transatlantic relations resulted in tension among NATO members. Yet, the period from 1967 through 1990 is nevertheless often considered a single phase in NATO's history.

During this time, NATO tried to counter the Soviet grand strategy for Western Europe, which seems to have been using the mere threat of an invasion as a bargaining chip against Western European countries. Soviet leadership hoped this would give the Soviet Union the ability to significantly interfere in the domestic politics of Western European states. Archival research has revealed that Soviet/Warsaw Pact forces had no strategic defensive plans regarding Europe. They only had offensive plans, which included attacks through neutral Austria and the use of tactical nuclear weapons to open up invasion corridors. That this invasion threat was not sufficient to blackmail Western European countries is predominantly due to the evolution of the North Atlantic Treaty from a political commitment into a military organization – NATO.

*NATO After the Cold War.* The end of the Cold War left NATO searching for a threat or mission that would serve to unify its membership. The NATO Strategic Concept (NSC) of 1991 identified crisis management and an increased focus on political dialogue as important future activities. By the time the following Strategic Concept was published in 1999 much had changed: NATO had enlarged, created partnership programmes and

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<sup>4</sup> The Harmel Report, officially "The Future Tasks of the Alliance", was named after Belgian foreign Minister Pierre Harmel.

engaged in its first combat operations. However, other than an increased focus on crisis management brought on by experiences in the Balkans, there was little agreement on the future direction of the Alliance or on the concrete actions that would lead it into one of many potential directions. The eight years since then have seen a reorientation of NATO, both in terms of its role as an international actor, the composition of its membership and expanded partnerships, and in its internal structures.

When NATO launched its 78-day war against Serbia in 1999, it was an organization increasingly focused on crisis management. The capabilities of the Alliance were far less impressive than its rhetoric would have suggested. Approximately 95% of the sorties were flown by the US Air Force. The European members' forces were still largely structured as they had been during the Cold War. With the exception of Britain and France, there was a nearly complete inability to deploy forces abroad and interoperability between various militaries was inconsistent below division level.

Since then, the changing geopolitical landscape, which made enlargement possible and made it necessary for the organization to explore new roles it could play to enhance its members' security, has resulted in changes within the organization. Because of the intergovernmental nature of NATO, it is necessary to differentiate between changes to the organization itself, such as enlargement and reorganized command structures, and changes that have taken place within member states. For both members and partners NATO has worked as a catalyst for change, with member states making individual decisions based on joint commitments (such as the Prague Capability Commitments) to improve national military capabilities.

In 2002 NATO officially began a continuous process it calls *Transformation*, the purpose of which is to make both the organization and member states' armed forces more responsive to the tasks and threat scenarios that now guide planning in NATO. To emphasize the unlimited duration of the transformation, NATO created a separate command to manage it, the Allied Command Transformation (ACT). Of the various changes in its command structure, which mostly focus on reducing the fixed command structure of NATO, ACT is the most interesting. The permanent nature of ACT suggests that, like many successful private sector organizations, NATO will in the future operate on the basis of

“continual change”, always striving to adjust to changes in its surroundings.

One of the challenges facing NATO and ACT is encouraging its members to conduct defence and operational planning through a new concept: *effects based planning and operations*. The idea behind effects based planning is to develop troops, equipment and doctrines so that they can be used to address a wide range of potential scenarios. This concept became necessary after a readily identifiable threat disappeared and was replaced by multiple minor threats and unpredictable future challenges. For example, since strategic airlift is a critical component of many different scenarios, under effects based planning the focus will be on improving strategic airlift and its integration.

On the operational front, the most significant change has been the creation of the NATO Response Force (NRF). Planned prior to significant commitments in Afghanistan, the original NRF concept envisioned a force of at most 25 000 troops, that would aid in the transformation of national militaries, and provide NATO with a sizeable force for use in crisis management, including peace enforcement or humanitarian operations. Facing a troop shortage in Afghanistan and a clear unwillingness by some members to authorize new operations that would require 25 000 troops, NATO has in the fall of 2007 changed the NRF concept. The size of the force has been reduced, while making it more useful for member and partner states’ own national defence planning efforts. Even at its original full strength, the NRF was not structured to be used as an “invasion army”. At less than 10 000 troops for its core components, its potential tasks are therefore nearly identical to those of the EU Battle Groups.

As with the debate on NATO’s roles, the debate on the direction and purpose of the NRF is coloured by a diversity of member-state opinions and perspectives. For example, for some states the NATO Response Force (NRF) is a convenient tool through which national militaries can be modernized and improved. For others, preparation for and participation in the force serves as a tangible demonstration of support for NATO and its goals. What is clear is that while the NRF will change member states’ troops, it is events in Afghanistan that are forcing deep political discussions in member states’ capitals about the nature and culture of NATO – something the NRF could never have accomplished by itself.

Although traditionally viewed as a military alliance, the ability of NATO to change along with the dramatically changing geopolitical landscape during the past two decades suggests that it is more than a military alliance. Historically, military alliances have usually ceased to exist when the primary threat that led to their creation disappeared. That this has not happened suggests that the term military alliance is an apt but not sufficient term when describing the NATO of today. Based on the history of the Alliance, it is likely that NATO will continue to adjust and change in response to changes that are external to the organization itself as well as in response to internal pressures that arise from changes in membership and differing perspectives on how to enhance security in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## Finland and NATO

Finland's official relationship with NATO began in 1992, when it became an observer in the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC). Two years later Finland joined the Partnership for Peace programme, and a year later participated in the first NATO led crisis management operation in the Balkans. This partnership has expanded into many avenues of cooperation in the past decade.

During the Cold War, NATO affected Finland's security in multiple ways (as it affected Sweden's, which seemed to have *de facto* belonged to NATO's defensive sphere). The Soviet Union was nervous about NATO's military plans in the Arctic region and the Baltic Sea, particularly in the case of the proposed Multilateral Force (MLF) at the beginning of the 1960s. Such plans prompted Moscow to pressure Finland in 1958, 1961, and again in the late 1960s and the early 1970s, to ensure that it would remain on its established foreign policy course.

The established course had been institutionalized in the Finnish-Soviet Agreement on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance (FCMA), which was concluded in 1948 and abrogated in 1991. The Agreement enabled Moscow to curtail Finland's freedom of movement regarding the West, and even to manipulate the domestic politics of Finland. On the other hand, the United States presence in Europe through NATO created an indirect deterrence that restrained Soviet policy choices. It is only natural that in the domestic political debates since the 1990s, the beneficial effects

of NATO on Finland's security during the Cold War have been emphasized more strongly than during earlier, more constrained times. The majority of Finns have, however, been reluctant to commit the country to an organization in which the United States wields considerable influence, perhaps fearing Finland would thereby bind itself to activities that could tarnish its image or harm its national security. Yet, understanding the importance of NATO as an organization, as early as 1991 Finland applied for observer membership in the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. The initial application was rejected but it served as a signal that Finland wanted to move closer to the core Western security institution. However, because Finns have strongly associated military non-alignment with maintaining manoeuvring room in politics, the deepening and expanding relationship with NATO has, since 1992, frequently been understated: each additional cooperative activity is described as "not a new development" or as "something Finland has in practice already been doing". In reality, Finland has been very engaged across a broad spectrum of activities, being one of the most active partner countries. This, however, has not in itself brought Finland closer to membership.

Currently Finland participates in a broad range of activities under the auspices of NATO. These activities are coordinated by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on the basis of Finland's membership in the Partnership for Peace programme. The primary political forum for Finland is the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), which consists of 26 NATO members and 23 partner states.

Participation in UN mandated and NATO led operations in the Balkans and Afghanistan are the most visible NATO activities for Finland. Through the Implementation Force (IFOR), Stabilisation Force (SFOR), and Kosovo Force (KFOR), Finland has contributed to the development of new techniques and approaches to crisis management. For example, the increased attention given to civilian crisis management and civil-military cooperation, both of which have their roots in Finnish EU policy, have gained appreciation within NATO. Participation in NATO led operations has also given other militaries a more positive opinion of the capabilities and effectiveness of the Finnish Defence Forces. Without participation in these operations the national defence capabilities of Finland would not be as advanced, nor would they be as highly regarded by outside observers.

Although the Foreign and Defence ministries are the primary points of contact between Finland and NATO, the Ministry of the Interior, The Ministry of Transport and Communications, and the National Emergency Supply Agency have also established contacts and they work with various civilian NATO components.<sup>5</sup> Whether this cooperation expands into other fields or becomes deeper is dependent on both NATO – what it offers a selective group of its partners – and on what Finland feels relevant and important in furthering its national security interests.

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<sup>5</sup> The Ministry for Foreign Affairs annually publishes a memo which details the various activities that the Finnish state has participated in under the auspices of the Partnership for Peace program.

# The Expanding NATO

NATO increased its roster of members three separate times during the Cold War and has continued to take in new members, most recently in 2004. In addition to this, the organization has created a network of partners that has successfully expanded NATO's influence beyond its members and increased stability and cooperation between states that previously had not cooperated in security issues.

The Alliance has also expanded its operational remit and added crisis management, along with partnership, to collective defence as a core alliance task. The expansion of NATO's roles and missions is addressed in the next chapter. With membership currently limited to transatlantic and European states, there are still over a dozen states that can become NATO members without a significant amendment to the Washington Treaty. It is therefore likely that, while continuing to admit new members, NATO will expand its partnership efforts across the globe, ensuring that it can accommodate institutional cooperation with any suitable state on terms that both sides are comfortable with. It is this "global expansion" that deserves the most focus, as both the recent expansion of the membership and the historical development of particularly the Partnership for Peace programme have been well documented elsewhere.

## **Enlargement: The Expanding NATO Membership**

During the Cold War NATO took in four new members. Greece and Turkey joined in 1952, mainly to contain the expansion of Soviet influence and protect the southern flank of the Alliance. In 1955 the Federal Republic of Germany ("West Germany") joined the Alliance, despite initial protests by both France and the Soviet Union. Upon Reunification, former "East-German" territories

also came under NATO. Spain joined in 1982, with the application process generating heated domestic discussion when the conservative government applied for membership in contradiction to a previous consensus to not seek membership. After four years of membership, a referendum was organized by the socialist government in power to see whether Spain should withdraw from NATO. Since none of the negative consequences of membership that had been predicted had happened, the vote resulted in Spain's remaining in the Alliance. These expansions show that openness to accepting new members preceded the end of the Cold War and serve as a reminder that enlargement has also previously been opposed by members and non-members alike.

The enlargements that took place in 1999 and 2004, which brought in ten new members, were the capstones to a decade long process initiated by the United States. The aim of the processes was to increase the stability of Europe and ultimately transform Europe from an object of American military planning into a stable and capable partner able to address a broader range of future challenges.<sup>6</sup> In combination with the expanding EU membership, these enlargements have made a traditional large-scale war between European states extremely improbable and have increased the ability of all European states to jointly meet potential future security challenges.

Despite some similarities to the Cold War era expansion, the 1999 and 2004 enlargements<sup>7</sup> were qualitatively and quantitatively different from the previous enlargements. Quantitatively, in the space of five years, the number of NATO members rose from 16 to 26. The enlargements significantly extended the "alliance border areas" adjoining with Russia, and increased the size of the area under the collective security umbrella in Europe by nearly 30%. The Russian perspectives on this are explored in the chapter "NATO and Other Actors".

Qualitatively, through the most recent enlargements, the Alliance came to include a number of states that because of their historical experiences and geographical closeness to Russia view

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<sup>6</sup> *Opening NATO's Door – How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era* by Ronald D. Asmus provides a perspective on the goals and processes involved in the 1999 enlargement of NATO. *Almost NATO*, edited by Charles Krupnick describes the process from the perspective of some new members

<sup>7</sup> Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic joined in 1999, while Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia joined in 2004.

security more traditionally and regionally than most older Alliance members do. So, while the Alliance of 16 had moved towards an expanded view of security, many of the new members regard security in traditional territorial and military terms. Critics also point out that in practice the enlargement decreased the interoperability of the Alliance troops. While this is partially true, such criticism ignores the real efforts by some of the new members to change their militaries. It also overestimates the actual level of interoperability below brigade level among the older Alliance members. The enlargement did, however, bring into NATO a number of states that had different perspectives and historical experiences regarding civil-military relations.

The NATO enlargement rounds of 1999 and 2004 and subsequent EU enlargements resulted in 21 states being members of both NATO and the EU. This has further cemented NATO's role as the foundation on which European collective defence cooperation is built. That some of the new members feel territorially threatened and have regional and limited security perspectives means that enlargement has also had the effect of ensuring that collective defence against traditional military pressure or attack will remain one of NATO's tasks.

Perhaps surprisingly, the increase in membership has not materially affected the central decision-making process in NATO. Strengthened informal consultations and the peculiar but effective "silent consensus or voice your grievances" method of arriving at a decision in the North Atlantic Council have meant that the open consensus model of decision-making has been able to accommodate the increased membership.

## **Partnerships: Expanding NATO's Influence and Increasing Cooperation**

Through various partnership programmes NATO has since 1994 gained 23 partners, in addition to which 10 former partners are now members. The expansion of the scope of cooperation is equally impressive. It has blurred the line between being a NATO member and not being one. Partnering has been one of NATO's most successful post-Cold War activities. NATO's partnership efforts have built relationships and expanded the organization's influence far beyond the transatlantic area. Moreover, it would

be impossible to discuss NATO's post-Cold War expansion as a whole without discussing its partnership programmes.

These relationships range from multilateral programmes such as the Partnership for Peace (PfP) and Mediterranean Dialogue, to bilateral ones such as the NATO Russia Council (NRC) and the NATO-Ukraine Commission. PfP has also contributed to the blurring of lines between membership and non-membership as PfP-members can participate, to some extent, in most NATO activities. More specifically, such options range from practical military matters (such as airspace and border control), training and defence reform, participation in NATO operations/ NRF to political consultations – all areas formerly not open to non-members.

Such a blurring of membership lines is a result of the initial purpose of the Partnership for Peace programme. It was initially designed as a way to accommodate the Eastern European countries' desires for security, without having to grant them membership too quickly. The PfP-programme was strengthened and expanded in 1997, 1999 and 2004, with the scope of possible cooperation with NATO expanding into new areas each time. It is likely that the programme will be further expanded in 2008, perhaps through the more active global use of Individual Partnership Action Plans (IPAP), which are highly tailored and specialized versions of PfP-membership.

The expanding scope of potential avenues of cooperation combined with the diverse nature of partner states means that NATO has to accommodate many different levels of participation. A few partners are overtly clamouring to become NATO members, these aim to prepare for membership by participating in the Membership Action Plan (MAP). Some may not want membership but are interested in participating in the NRF while others are happy to participate only in other NATO operations. Some partners are only interested in training initiatives and the (few) remaining ones only in general cooperation with NATO. This can be depicted with a bull's-eye chart of concentric squares, with NATO membership being the centre, enveloped by rings towards the periphery indicating lower levels of involvement (see next page).

As all of the rings used to only be open to NATO members, it can be seen how PfP has proceeded into the benefits of membership. NATO benefits from this blurring as well. PfP has opened up avenues for cooperation with countries unwilling/unable/unsure



about wanting to join NATO. Partner programmes have increased general stability and security between non-members and members. Higher up, beyond helping some partners become members, it has provided NATO with resources and manpower for operations, without the obligations that it would entail for NATO members – in effect, free manpower.

The blurring of membership and non-membership has resulted in some partner states, such as Finland and Sweden, complaining of not having full access to NATO operational planning information or intelligence and, for domestic consumption, suggesting that Article 5 security guarantees would *in extremis* – because of EU membership – also be extended to non-members. While itself playing an active role in blurring the distinction between members and non-members, NATO has wisely ensured that even extensive partnership does not amount to membership. Not all of NATO's expertise, knowledge or intelligence is available to PfP-countries. Partners lack a political voice in NATO – including the ability to prevent any NATO operation from being launched – and partners are not included in Article 5 based collective security arrangements.

NATO's partnerships were initially limited to areas in and around Europe, but have since then expanded to Africa, the

Middle-East and Central Asia. Future partnerships may make NATO's partner network global. Countries such as Japan, Australia, and New Zealand already have partner-like relationships with NATO and are involved in some NATO operations. Some signs indicating a deeper connection with these "contact countries" have appeared. In 2007 NATO and Japan held their first high-level visits. Australia has already agreed to share classified information with NATO (in 2005), and both Australia and New Zealand have announced their intention to forge closer ties with NATO. Some support the formation of a clear institutional link between these Pacific countries and NATO.<sup>8</sup> It must be stressed that some of these relationships are still in their infancy, but they can – together with the opening up of NATO's field of operations – provide more rich ground on which NATO can grow.

### **A Global NATO – What Might It Be?**

Historically, NATO has been regarded as a regional alliance linking North America and Europe. The regional character of the Alliance has been strongly associated with collective defence obligations against external threats. With the demise of the Cold War, the regional character of NATO has been diluted and global elements have been introduced into its activities. In the views of some, NATO has become, or at least should become, a global alliance.<sup>9</sup>

In the development from a regional to a global alliance, there are two landmarks. First, in August 2003, NATO took charge of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) that operates in Afghanistan under a UN mandate. Second, in Political Guidelines adopted in the Riga summit in 2006, NATO deleted the reference to "out-of-area" operations, meaning that its area of operation is now the whole world.

NATO is already today a global network. The complex and changing nature of political and military cooperation in light of redefined national security strategies in the Asia-Pacific, and the potential challenges posed by North Korea have caused an increased interest in deepening these partnerships. NATO also has contacts with China, which historically sees the Alliance as the

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<sup>8</sup> Membership, however, would require an amendment to the foundational treaty.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Ivo Daalder & James Goldgeier, "Global NATO" *Foreign Affairs* 2006.

tool of US politics and prefers its cooperation in peacekeeping operations for example in Darfur to take place under UN auspices. Japan has recently been particularly active in regard to NATO: the then Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited NATO headquarters in Brussels in January 2007 and Japan participates in many ways in NATO operations for example in Afghanistan.

Why is NATO going global? Some argue that it is because the United States needs a multilateral instrument under its control to participate in the formation of a new balance of power in the Asia-Pacific. Another line of argumentation contends that many partners located in the Asia-Pacific face security problems of their own and the Alliance could provide some assistance to them. Although this may be correct for some, South Korea and Japan already have strong bilateral security agreements with the United States. It also does not explain NATO's motivation. Three realistic explanations, thus, emerge: (1) NATO institutionally wants to continue leading crisis management operations, and as the EU is assuming more responsibility for operations in Europe, the Alliance is focusing where there is more need; (2) the unexpectedly heavy requirements of the Afghanistan operation mean that NATO needs more partners to share the burden of extensive crisis management commitments; and (3) a desire by some members to give NATO a global political role.

NATO has institutionally committed itself to playing an active role in international crisis management operations. As NATO has let the increasingly capable European Union take on more responsibility for operations in the Balkans, it has been able to focus its efforts beyond Europe. However, NATO's commitments in crisis management operations, particularly in Afghanistan, have expanded faster than the actual resources available for operations have. To cope with the disjuncture, the type and size of commitments need to be reduced or new resources have to be found. One way of raising resources is to find new partners that are ready to share the burden in various operations. Past experiences show that practical cooperation in operations between NATO and its partners is feasible and often beneficial to the operation as a whole.

Some NATO members also hope that NATO could play a global political role, with time, evolving into a "Global Alliance of Democracies". However, many members are wary of these aspirations to give NATO a more global political role. They reason that the

Alliance itself would then become a political actor, whose choices have consequences. For instance, a closer relationship with Japan, and potentially with India, could stir reactions from China that are not entirely positive for the Alliance. Considering the nature of consensus based decision-making in NATO, it is likely that NATO's efforts to become global will focus on practical cooperation, not on endowing NATO with a more political role in world politics.

The expansion of NATO, in terms of membership and partnership, was central to the organization remaining relevant to the United States, and Europe – particularly in light of the growing and expanding European Union. Partnership programmes have increased understanding and cooperation between various states, and contributed to greater stability. The development of NATO into a global actor may carry similar benefits, but also far greater pitfalls than the expansion of NATO's network of member and partner states since the end of the Cold War.

While considering the benefits and potential pitfalls of expanding its roster of members and globalising its partnership network, the Alliance has in parallel expanded the roles and missions that it has undertaken. Just as with the membership enlargement, the members of the Alliance have presented a number of perspectives on this expansion of roles and missions. It is to these new and expanded roles and missions we now turn.

# NATO's Roles and Missions

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization has taken on a number of new tasks and missions since the end of the Cold War. While NATO is in the process of transforming itself and developing the capabilities needed for these new tasks, debate continues on the new tasks as well as on the balance between the different roles. It is important to understand how these different roles have emerged, continue to evolve, and what implications they have for the Alliance, its members and partners.

During the Cold War, ensuring the security and freedom of member states required NATO to emphasize its role as a *military alliance* with a collective defence obligation, as expressed in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. Today, the organization itself emphasizes its role as a *security manager*<sup>10</sup>. As a security manager, the organization and its member states use the organization as a discussion forum for politico-military issues, create partnership structures to improve cooperation between member and non-member states, and prepare for and participate in so-called “non-Article 5” activities. These non-Article 5 activities include crisis management, humanitarian assistance, disarmament, environmental issues such as destruction of obsolete rocket fuel and preparation for disaster response operations.

Despite these different roles, the Alliance's fundamental purpose remains “to safeguard the freedom and security of its member countries by political and military means.”<sup>11</sup> To achieve this, members have, in the 1999 NATO Strategic Concept, agreed to five fundamental security tasks: (1) Security, (2) Consultation, (3) Deterrence and Defence, (4) Crisis Management, and (5) Partnership. The Comprehensive Political Guidance document published in 2006 provides a more updated evaluation of future security

<sup>10</sup> p. 44 in *NATO transformed*, www.nato.int document #: NATOTRAENG0604

<sup>11</sup> p. 15 in *NATO Handbook*, NATO: Brussels. ISBN: 92-845-0178-4. Originally under different formulation in Washington Treaty.

challenges, the types of operations that may be required to meet those challenges, and the capabilities that NATO and its member states should develop in the next 10-15 years. The focus is on improving the expeditionary capability of national militaries, which serves primarily to improve crisis management capabilities, but also includes improving the ability of member states to provide each other military assistance under Article 5 operations.

Domestic priorities and experiences from ongoing operations, particularly from Afghanistan, cause member states to nationally emphasize and prioritize NATO's multiple roles and missions differently. Therefore, while discussions between member states predominantly focus on matters of practical cooperation, the most significant existential debate can be framed as a discussion on the complex relationship and appropriate balance between the basic essence of NATO, i.e. either military alliance (Article 5 based collective defence) or security manager (non-Article 5 activities, such as crisis management). The fundamental difference between these roles is that the former currently involves more passive, conventional means for achieving security (Article 5, deterrent value) and the latter more active means (non-Article 5 out-of-area, crisis management, and humanitarian operations). Whether the active means actually generate more long-term security is, however, not evident to all member states, and especially not to critics of the organization. For this reason, we now turn to evaluating the meaning and evolution of Article 5, and then to how the provision of military crisis management expertise and capabilities has in practice become NATO's primary operational activity.

## **The Military Alliance Role of NATO: Article 5 and Collective Defence**

Collective defence responsibilities, based on Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, remain at the core of NATO. The Treaty is explicit in the recognition of collective responsibility for defence, but the exact nature of these responsibilities is ambiguous. In practice, the responsibilities were very clear during the Cold War – individual German, Dutch, Danish etc. military units were well aware of their responsibilities. Currently NATO does not arrange large military exercises to practice collective defence efforts, but members do

not question the commitment of others to assist militarily and politically if Article 5 were to be invoked.

The text of the treaty is explicit about the fact that the commitment is geographically limited to attacks on North America and Europe, or islands and vessels under the jurisdiction of member countries that are located north of the Tropic of Cancer (Article 6). Furthermore, members are not obliged to join any strategically offensive actions. Any decision to launch an operation must be reached on the basis of consensus between all member states, but all members are expected to participate in operations carried out under Article 5.

Article 5 has been invoked only once, in response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States. The invocation of Article 5 in response to this unconventional attack was politically meaningful, yet militarily largely symbolic. Consequently then, the “strength” of Article 5 is untested in the sense the treaty originally intended (conventional state vs. state warfare). However, the willingness of Alliance members to consider the provision of Article 5 based assistance in situations that do not involve conventional state against state warfare was clearly demonstrated. The invocation also demonstrates that the Alliance is ready to adjust the interpretation of the treaty to better suit emerging security challenges. More broadly, the specific implementation of Article 5 is necessarily dependent on international conditions: bi-polarity vs. multi-polarity; the level of international tension; and the emergence of conventional military threats.

Currently NATO conducts little operational planning for Article 5 based collective defence, although such efforts may increase slightly due to Polish and Baltic pressure for more concrete collective defence planning. It is planning like this that would at least give an indication of the type of military assistance that member states could give each other if a conventional war broke out between an Alliance member and a non-member. The low activity in such planning is indicative of the absence of concrete traditional military threats requiring collective defence, not of an absence of planning capacity.

The September 12, 2001 invocation also serves to prove that NATO member states' concepts of what security is, and how it is achieved, have changed since the end of the Cold War. Naturally, this has been reflected in NATO, where the concept of security

### *Nuclear Weapons and Deterrence in NATO*

Since the end of the Cold War the three NATO member states that possess nuclear weapons, the United States, the United Kingdom and France, have reduced the size and readiness of their nuclear forces. However, the United States, Great Britain and France will continue to maintain independent nuclear arsenals for strategic deterrence purposes. While NATO is often referred to as a nuclear deterrence alliance because its ultimate deterrence is based on nuclear weapons, and three of its members possess declared nuclear weapons, it is the United States that gives "the nuclear guarantees" that form the backbone of deterrence in NATO.

Within NATO the highest authority in matters pertaining to nuclear weapons is the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG), which sets the policies of nuclear forces. As is the case throughout NATO, the NPG operates on the basis of consensus giving all members that are a part of NATO's integrated military structure a voice in Alliance nuclear policies. The NPG discusses a broad range of issues, including safety, security and survivability of nuclear attacks, associated information systems, and deployment policies. The NPG also has a remit to address questions on nuclear proliferation and nuclear arms control. Although the issue has been discussed, NATO has yet to announce a policy of no-first use of nuclear weapons. At least the United States and the United Kingdom have publicly stated that they could use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states.

has been expanded beyond its traditional realm of collective defence. As an institution, NATO has started to redefine its concept of Euro-Atlantic security, recognizing that if it only continued its military alliance role the organization would not be able to respond to the security challenges of its members. This change began after the Cold War, but was spurred on by the asymmetric nature of "9/11". Member states' differing evaluations of actual security threats pose challenges to the future interpretation of Article 5, its "appropriate" invocations, and the nature of assistance that such an invocation would result in.

The cyber-attacks directed against Estonian computer networks in the spring of 2007 provided a concrete example of the differing and ambiguous interpretations of Article 5. Because the damage caused by a society-wide cyber-attack can exceed the damage done by a limited conventional military strike, some member states

wanted to discuss invoking Article 5. Other member states were unwilling to “lower the bar” for invoking Article 5 fearing, among other things, that invocations would become commonplace, or that it would become acceptable to send only limited assistance – e.g. in the form of some computer experts – in response to the invocation of Article 5.

Article 5-type collective security, NATO’s military alliance role, has historically been and remains important to Alliance members. Because member states base their national defence preparations and planning on the continued military alliance function of NATO, there is no indication that the military alliance role of NATO will cease to exist. Even the emergence of the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy will not change this; the new Reform Treaty clearly states that NATO “remains the foundation of [the members’] collective defence and the forum for its implementation.”<sup>12</sup>

Based on the continually changing political context in which NATO members must interpret their obligations, it is, however, likely that the nature, applicability and scope of Article 5 and its attendant obligations will evolve. Its only invocation to date suggests a willingness to consider extending Article 5-type obligations to spheres beyond conventional military attacks.

Recent comments made by various representatives of Alliance member states suggest that the solidarity that undergirds the Article 5 collective defence obligations should also be present throughout Alliance activities. It is likely that the expectation of solidarity will increase as the Alliance becomes more comfortable with its security manager role: the governing principle would be that if all members agreed to start an operation, then all should participate “equally” and everyone should also leave together. It is, however, unlikely that security manager activities (non-Article 5) will become as legally binding as military alliance (Article 5) activities.

## **The Security Manager Role of NATO: Non-Article 5 Operations**

In its security manager role, crisis management, humanitarian assistance, disarmament, and a forum for discussing politico-

<sup>12</sup> Page 31 of CIG 1/1/07 REV 1 (EN)

military issues are all tasks NATO engages in. Of these, from the perspective of resource commitment and operational activity, crisis management has in the past decade become the fundamental security task that NATO engages in outside of the Alliance member's own borders. During this time, the Alliance has played a significant role in Afghanistan and four crisis management operations in the Balkans. It has also provided logistics and training support to the African Union operation in Darfur.

The NATO Strategic Concept of 1991 mentioned crisis management, but in a broad context, noting only that military forces of Alliance members could be "called upon to contribute to global stability and peace by providing forces for United Nations missions."<sup>13</sup> NATO provided assistance to United Nations forces in the Balkan wars and, after the Dayton peace agreement, ultimately took on responsibility for executing the military component of the agreement in the form of the initial Implementation Force (IFOR) and the follow-up Stabilisation Force (SFOR). Because NATO felt that the Implementation Force and the Stabilisation Force were successful in demonstrating the usefulness of crisis management as a central post-Cold War task for the organization, the Alliance increased its focus on crisis management, although initially only focusing on the Euro-Atlantic area.

This form of non-Article 5 operations was enshrined as one of the new fundamental security tasks of the Alliance in the 1999 NATO Strategic Concept. In addition, difficulties in deploying troops suitable for crisis management operations even within Europe had by 1999 made it clear to Alliance members that it was necessary to improve the availability, deployability and capabilities of members' national military forces. To this end, the Strategic Concept called for the Alliance as a whole to develop its forces so that they could still meet national and collective defence obligations, but also be more useable in crisis management operations.

By 2002 when NATO launched its broad strategy of Transformation, a part of which is focused on developing national forces, member states' forces were still predominantly configured for Article 5 type operations. The introduction of the NATO Response Force and more critically experiences in Afghanistan have caused changes and resulted in improvements *vis-à-vis* crisis manage-

<sup>13</sup> Paragraph 41 in 1991 NATO Strategic Concept.

### *NATO Response Force*

The NATO Response Force (NRF) concept was agreed to by the member states at the Prague Summit in 2002. It reached initial operational capability in 2004, and at Riga in 2006 was declared to have reached full operational capability. Particularly due to commitments in Afghanistan, the NRF is currently only approximately 70% of its original maximum strength of 25 000 troops, divided into sea-, air- and land-components.

In the fall of 2007 NATO refocused the NRF concept. The NRF will have a core of 8 000 to 10 000 troops, providing each rotation with the same basic capabilities. For each of the rotations, member and partner countries can then provide additional troops and capabilities to the NRF. This ensures that the force always has a minimum level of crisis management capabilities but can sometimes have additional ones. Members will also jointly develop and field command and control as well as logistics backbones that will in the future be used by all NRF rotations.

The NRF has two general purposes. One is to act as a force where new operational tactics and doctrines can be evaluated and incorporated, and thus improve European military capacities as European armed forces rotate and certify their troops through NRF readiness cycles. The NRF also provides NATO with an operational force, which it can utilize in a broad range of operations. Although the NRF is capable of engaging in peace-enforcement operations, many members are clearly unwilling to use it for such operations. To date, elements of the NRF have been used for humanitarian assistance operations (New Orleans floods and Pakistan earthquakes in 2005) and to support election (Afghanistan 2004) and Olympic (Athens 2004) security operations.

Even at its reduced size the NRF will change national NATO troops. However, it is clear that Afghanistan–ISAF is currently a stronger catalyst for change within NATO. The very challenges of Afghanistan have caused the Alliance to reconsider the size and tasking of the NRF, but in its improved form the NRF will remain in NATO's inventory of tools, both for operational and development purposes.

ment capabilities of participating states. Due to the overlapping membership of the two organizations, these improvements have also been reflected in the European Union's crisis management capacity.

This process of change started in 2002 (Transformation) and the consensus that has developed regarding some aspects of crisis management are reflected in the Comprehensive Political Guidance issued in 2006. The Political Guidance expands the potential range of non-Article 5 operations from the Euro-Atlantic area to cover, in principle, the whole world. This expansion reflects changed political realities, and also the fact that the Alliance had by 2006 engaged in two distant “out-of-area” crisis management operations, Afghanistan and Darfur. The Political Guidance confirms that the debate on whether the Alliance should engage in “out-of-area” crisis management operations is officially over. There are no longer any “out-of-area” operations. However, Alliance experiences in Afghanistan have brought up a new set of issues and debates on different approaches to crisis management and what the appropriate crisis management profile of the Alliance is.

## **NATO and Afghanistan**

The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan has become the primary crisis management challenge for NATO. In 2003 when NATO agreed to lead the United Nations mandated operation, the Alliance became active in its first distant “out-of-area” crisis management operation. The extent and intensity of the combat that NATO forces have been engaged in during operations in Afghanistan has led to some significant rifts within the Alliance. These divisions do not follow previous lines, such as those between the European allies and the United States or between members who supported the United States’ invasion of Iraq and those who did not. The widely diverging national perspectives among member states have resulted in ongoing debates about what the genuine security interests at stake are and how NATO should engage in crisis management in a global context. As a result, what happens in Afghanistan has important implications for NATO both in the immediate future and in the longer term.

The major source of disagreement is the varying willingness of NATO member states to commit troops to the most violent areas and regions of Afghanistan. Some NATO members, such as Britain, Canada, the United States and the Netherlands argue, that because NATO collectively and unanimously decided to engage in Afghanistan and lead the ISAF operation, that all member states

### *A "North-South Divide" in Afghanistan*

The majority of the fighting that ISAF has conducted has taken place in the southern provinces of Kandahar and Helmand. In Kandahar, Canadian and Dutch troops have been involved in heavy fighting with the Taliban, while in Helmand the British Army has provided the bulk of the troops, with a few companies being added by Denmark. The level of the fighting with the Taliban in the summer of 2006 led to the British commander of ISAF at that time saying that it was the most intense combat that the British army had taken part in since the Korean War. The ferocity of the fighting has brought the Afghan commitment to the front of the political debate in the UK. Similar discussions have taken place in Holland and Canada, leading ultimately, in the spring of 2007, to a debate in the Canadian Senate as to whether the country should withdraw all its troops from ISAF unless other NATO states come to its aid.

The anger that has been expressed in the UK and Canada has been particularly aimed at the restrictions imposed by national governments of other NATO member states; those that limit where and how their troops can be deployed in Afghanistan. For example, the German army has a major presence in Afghanistan, but it has been prevented by the German parliament from being involved in combat operations in the south. In the late summer of 2006, the situation reached the point where even the secretary general of NATO, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, spoke out to say that there were NATO members who had to ask themselves, "Shouldn't we do more?"

The activity of some members, especially those that have involved themselves in the fighting to the greatest extent, may be explainable by specific national circumstances. The British followed an activist foreign policy under Tony Blair. Whilst much focus has been on the United Kingdom's part in the Iraq invasion, the UK had before entering Afghanistan or Iraq more positive experiences of intervening in Sierra Leone and Kosovo. The Netherlands went through a period of profound introspection after Dutch UN troops in 1995 failed to defend Srebrenica in Bosnia, thereby becoming witnesses to the worst act of genocide in Europe since World War II. The Canadian government has proposed a new international moral principle, the "Responsibility to Protect". One of the key figures in the discussion that led to this stance was the Canadian General, Roméo Dallaire, who, in 1994, was in command of the United Nations peacekeepers in Rwanda at the time of the genocide. These three states have all adopted foreign policies that at least pay lip service to some normative position beyond that of national interest.

are obliged to "fully support" the mission in Afghanistan, including sending combat troops to more deadly southern and eastern regions of the country. This has created a "North-South divide" based on where member states' soldiers are stationed.

Secondary problems have arisen from the rotating command of ISAF, with different ISAF members bringing very differing strategies and command styles to their 6-month period of leading the mission. A related issue has been that although the United States contributes significant forces to the ISAF mission, it also leads a separate multinational force in Afghanistan, designed to pursue and destroy al-Qaeda elements. The operations of the non-NATO US-led force sometimes conflict with the goals of the ISAF mission. In particular, the extensive use of air power in these "counter-terrorism" operations has led to the unintentional but still numerous killings of Afghan civilians. For NATO, operating in the same area and attempting to win the support of local populations, these killings have been a strategic setback.

Another major point of discussion is to what extent ISAF should also follow a counter-narcotics policy and destroy the major cash crop of the region. Some feel this is not just a distraction but actively alienates locals from the central government as no other form of economic activity is viable. Others feel that the opium produced from poppies is a major factor in the country's instability, financing the warlords and their various private armies.

Just as was seen over Kosovo in the spring of 1999, NATO members can fight together but operations reveal significant differences between the member states of the Alliance. These differences exist not only in terms of their military capabilities but, perhaps more importantly, in their domestic political settings, and the world-views of their leaders and policy makers. It is therefore not surprising that not all member states are ready to lift national restrictions on the use of their troops in Afghanistan. It says little about how they view crisis management *per se*; rather, it suggests that, public speeches notwithstanding, members cannot agree on the tactical-operational implementation of the operation, or on the importance of the Afghanistan operation as a whole.

Different member states have constructed their ideas of what ISAF is in very different ways. Some believe that the value of "winning" in Afghanistan is not worth the probable costs to their country, be that in the lives of their troops, tax revenues spent, or in their moral

view of themselves as an actor in the international environment. Others believe that if NATO fails in Afghanistan then it has failed as an alliance. Some have even declared that the relevance of NATO itself is put into question if the Alliance leaves Afghanistan before “winning”. These arguments have an institutional and humanitarian basis. The institutional argument is that if NATO members have jointly agreed that Afghanistan is the organization’s primary challenge and the Alliance nonetheless is unable to succeed, then “what is it good for?” The humanitarian argument is that NATO forces are needed to protect the vulnerable civilian population that in the fall of 2007 overwhelmingly wanted the international forces to remain in the country. However, because NATO is perceived as useful in both its military alliance and security manager roles, even if members decide to withdraw from Afghanistan and temporarily reduce their attention to the security manager role of NATO, the organization will not become irrelevant.

Afghanistan will remain for some time the prism through which many of the debates about the appropriate balance between the military alliance and security manager roles are viewed. These debates go to the heart of the Alliance’s efforts to transform itself from a collective defence organization to a “security manager in the broadest sense.”<sup>14</sup> The discussion about what the security interests at stake are in Afghanistan is equally relevant to any number of other regions in the world. While all NATO members and most partner countries agree that crisis management is an important task for NATO, and a role it should take on with the currently diminished likelihood of active Article 5 operations, the organization will continue to struggle to find a genuine consensus on what the national security benefits are of engaging in difficult long-term crisis management operations.

While debate continues on the appropriate balance between the different tasks, based on concrete operational activity, NATO is currently focusing on its security manager role by providing units for military crisis management operations mandated by the United Nations Security Council. The organization has committed itself to a process of change, emphasizing its role as a security manager, while remaining a military alliance through which its collective defence commitments form the foundation of its members’ national defence planning.

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<sup>14</sup> p. 44 in *NATO Transformed* (2004), document #: NATOTRAENG0604. Available at: [www.nato.int](http://www.nato.int)

# The United States and NATO

The chapter begins with a summary of the evolution of US policy regarding NATO during the Cold War, showing how the US commitment to NATO fluctuated as advocates of activism and isolationism vied for power in Washington. It then proceeds to show how the needs of the volatile post-Cold War security environment added another contentious dimension to the NATO debates in Washington: the question of NATO's role in legitimising American-led military interventions.

Next, the chapter analyses US policy towards NATO in the post-Cold War years and argues that it can be divided into two phases. The first one, coinciding roughly with Bill Clinton's presidency, was characterized by the rise and decline of the *liberal hawks*, who, despite many practical problems and controversies, supported an activist foreign policy combined with considerable diplomatic efforts aimed at gaining support from European allies. The second phase, coinciding roughly with the George W. Bush presidency, has seen the balance of power in Washington shift from liberal hawks to *primacists*, who advocate an assertive unilateralist foreign policy and preferred *ad-hoc* coalitions over static alliances. The chapter ends by looking at trends that are likely to affect US policy towards NATO in the future and analyses the implications they might have for the transatlantic relationship.

## The Cold War: Activism vs. Isolationism

When NATO was established the United States made a historical decision to abandon the principle of non-alliance, a tenet that had been guiding its foreign policy for over 150 years. Since the end of the World War II there had been a growing will in the US to protect Europe from the threat of communism and potential Soviet expansion. The signing of the Brussels Treaty, the 1948 *coup*

*d'état* in Prague, and Soviet pressure on Norway to sign a non-aggression pact, all contributed to the US's conclusion to end its policy of non-alliance.

As the North Atlantic Treaty's formulation regarding assistance was being negotiated, the United States ensured that it became a qualified commitment. In case of an attack, every member state was only obliged to assist the attacked party or parties by taking "such action as it deems necessary". This was a disappointment to Europeans who wanted a commitment from the United States that it would automatically give full military assistance to other members. Despite the ambiguous choice of words in the Treaty, during the Cold War deployment and military plans were clearly defined in practice. The Brussels Treaty countries were also unhappy that the United States invited Portugal, Iceland, Norway, and Denmark to join NATO, because they feared that these countries' membership would dilute the military aid that would otherwise be confined to the five "core" members. The US had nevertheless set its mind on giving a true "Atlantic" flavour to the Alliance, along with creating "defensible lines" and borders for the Alliance, and it succeeded in doing so.

The Korean War (1950-53) along with the disappearance of the American nuclear monopoly in September 1949 caused concrete changes in the emerging Alliance. Its southern flank was strengthened when Greece and Turkey became members in 1952. US military presence in Europe was still perceived as central to the military credibility of the Alliance. The German issue was confronted by admitting the Federal Republic of Germany into the Alliance, albeit with restrictions imposed on its sovereignty and armaments. This was in line with the US goal of initially containing and then integrating Germany into the West.

During the early 1960s NATO faced serious internal schisms. The Kennedy Administration (1961-63) wanted to raise the threshold at which nuclear weapons would be used. The new "flexible response" strategy would replace the "massive retaliation" doctrine, resulting in many potential escalation steps prior to the use of nuclear weapons. Flexible response remained one of the key strategic concepts of NATO until the end of the Cold War, but was initially opposed by many European member states who interpreted it as a sign of weakening US commitment to the defence of Europe. The Cuban missile crisis in 1962 increased

the internal unity of the Alliance by reminding members about the common Soviet threat. The Anglo-Saxon nuclear monopoly and the US's will to more tightly centralize the control of NATO nuclear operations sustained the European resentment towards the US and set off the French withdrawal from the military structure of NATO in 1966.

The Harmel Report in 1967 marked a major change in the history of NATO by introducing *détente* as a complementary, not contradictory, policy to defence. The report also had profound implications for the internal relations of the Alliance when smaller member countries were allowed to have more voice in political matters. The US looked kindly upon this development, but nevertheless stressed in a State Department report that the “special responsibilities” of a superpower required its “involvement in all phases of eventual negotiations on European security.”

Even though the Johnson Administration (1963-69) was highly concerned by the possible US relapse into isolationism at the end of the 1960s, NATO policy was rarely at the top of the US agenda. Fighting an unpopular and cumbersome war in Vietnam, the US was deeply disappointed with its European allies and their reluctance to share the burden of defending the Western bloc. Europe, on the other hand, was having increasing doubts about the US's commitment. The Nixon Doctrine in 1969 was partly aimed at easing European angst by referring to the continent as “the cornerstone of the structure for a durable peace” and distinguishing NATO from other regions in US commitments. Nevertheless, the US version of *détente* can be seen as efforts to reduce its obligations to the Alliance. As the 1970s went forward and no incidents that might have evoked Western solidarity occurred, the most important factor keeping NATO together from the US point of view was the absence of alternatives. Compared to Europeans, who still saw NATO as the most significant vehicle for ensuring their security, there was an immense difference in perspectives across the Atlantic.

If US leadership was being questioned within NATO during the Carter Administration (1977-81), for instance for its ruling against deployment of the neutron bomb in large part over the morality of the weapon, the Alliance saw more leadership than it had anticipated when Ronald Reagan became president in 1981. The harsh rhetoric combined with massive defence expenditures

and military build-up were enough to unsettle Europeans, and to have them wonder whether US policy could even be detrimental to their own security. In 1983 the US unveiled the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) – more commonly known as “Star Wars”. Consequently, European NATO members became increasingly anxious because they feared that if the US became invulnerable to nuclear attacks there would be a fair possibility that it would become even more aggressive against the Soviet-block, or embrace isolationism once again.

Predictions on the demise of NATO were persistent during the whole of the 1980s and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Arms Reduction (INF) Treaty signed by the US and the Soviet Union in 1987 raised a new wave of suspicion about the future of the Alliance. The collapse of the Soviet Union combined with the advancement of European unity signified US victory in the Cold War but, for NATO, it also caused the greatest identity crisis in its 40-year-old history by putting its entire existence into question.

## The Post-Cold War Era: Schools of Thought

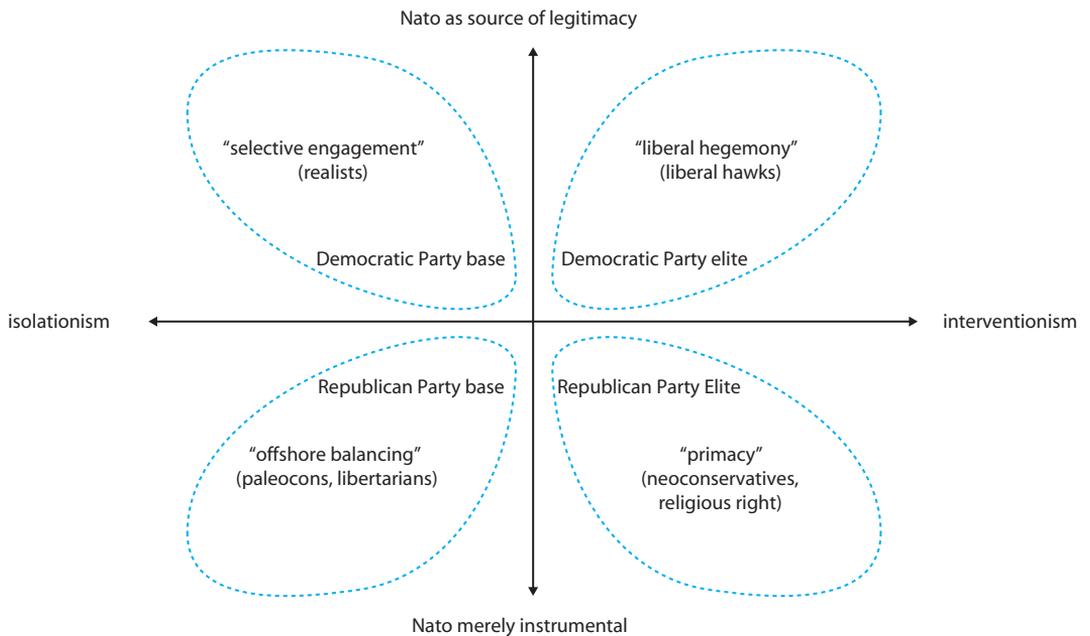
The collapse of the Soviet Union shook NATO’s foundations severely. It also caused confusion in the United States. America had “overnight” become the lone global superpower, and NATO had effectively lost its *raison d’être*. There was great uncertainty about what use NATO would be in this new environment, or even if it would continue to exist. What the United States should do with its lone superpower status also became a much debated foreign policy issue.

While some argued that the United States should withdraw from Europe, seeing little benefits from engaging internationally, others considered the unique opportunity the United States had been given, and wondered how NATO could be used to help. The strategic opportunity was to ensure that Eastern Europe and former Soviet republics would be integrated into the West, thereby creating a stable Europe that would not lapse into historic patterns of competition and warfare, but would become powerful enough to become a partner of the United States. This partnership could then, through NATO, meet emerging military and security challenges. Russia’s view on this is addressed in greater detail in the next chapter, but basically Russia saw NATO’s eastward

expansion as a transfer of geopolitical dividing lines aimed against its interests.

These debates were, at that time, partially about differences in the desired level of activism in US foreign policy, but they were also about differing views on the role and usefulness of NATO to the United States. This later debate, about how and when NATO was useful to the United States, became increasingly relevant due to the number of post-Cold War military interventions that the US engaged in – some of which raised the issue of legitimacy to the forefront.

To understand the implications that the post-Cold War grand strategy debates in Washington had on US-NATO relations, it is useful to balance the already-mentioned isolationism vs. activism axis with another axis concerning different players' views on NATO.



At the upper end of the axis we find policy-makers for whom NATO's role is constitutive. For them, the Alliance serves as a pool of democratic peers whose support is crucial in establishing the legitimacy of US military operations. At the lower end of this axis we find policy-makers for whom NATO's value is merely instrumental. For them, the Alliance serves as a pool of nations from which the US can cherry-pick partners for *ad-hoc* coalitions.

For these individuals, the lack of globally expeditionary military power is a serious blow to the relevance of NATO, and shows the lack of commitment by European member states to reach politically agreed upon goals.

In the upper right hand corner we have policy-makers who advocated an activist foreign policy tempered with multilateral diplomacy. These liberal hawks saw the United States as an “indispensable nation” with a special role to play in global politics. They were nevertheless keen to maintain NATO as a pool of like-minded democracies whose support lent legitimacy to US-led interventions, especially in situations when the United Nations Security Council was unable to act.

In the upper left hand corner we find policymakers with a more narrowly defined view of US national interests. While less willing than the liberal hawks to commit US troops to humanitarian military operations abroad, the proponents of “selective engagement” were nevertheless willing to work within existing multilateral institutions. The advocates of this school of thought argued for the continuing importance of NATO as part of a *realpolitik*+ strategy. In practice, this implied maintaining America’s existing military alliances primarily in order to keep the peace in Western and Eastern parts of Eurasia and, secondarily, to promote democracy, human rights and free markets.

In the lower part of the matrix we find advocates of isolationism and of primacy. While they differed sharply regarding the desired level of activism in US foreign policy, they both regard NATO in an instrumental way. Isolationists, who had already been sceptical of NATO during the Cold War, argued that the collapse of the Soviet Union meant that NATO had lost all of its usefulness to the United States. Isolationists argued for a return to a minimalist “offshore balancing” strategy where the United States would let regional powers shoulder the responsibility for containing potential aggressors, and only engage globally when its security interests were genuinely threatened.

Advocates of primacy also approached NATO from an instrumental perspective but came to exactly the opposite conclusion as the isolationists. Primacists argued that American hegemony was desirable and durable and that the United States should use its hegemonic position unashamedly to promote democracy around the world. From this perspective NATO should be maintained as

an instrument of American global hegemony and as an alternative to a more independent European defence capability.

### **The 1990s: Rise and Decline of Liberal Hawks**

The US entered the immediate post-Cold War environment carefully by using multilateral means. Without a discernible threat, Article 5 seemed unimportant and with it NATO's importance from a military standpoint was judged minimal. The obvious prescription for the US was to withdraw considerable numbers of troops from western Europe – a process which is still ongoing as a part of American global re-posturing of military forces. For the United States, during the 1990s NATO was primarily important as a political – rather than a military – alliance. This fact is underlined by the significant political efforts by the United States to enlarge the Alliance. This effort to “make Europe whole and free” is described in more detail in the second chapter, but for the United States, the enlargements would provide it with European allies that were more supportive of American foreign policy goals than some older member states.

The end of the Cold War also changed the dynamics of the transatlantic relationship. Europe became less dependent on the US. The lack of a clear institutional link also led to the EU and NATO becoming rivals of sort – despite their similar goals. This weakened the transatlantic “glue” and increased the likelihood of transatlantic tensions. The first major problem would be over the Balkans.

In addition to the new emerging political role being adopted by NATO, the military dimension of NATO was also changing. Successive crises in Bosnia (1992-1995) and Kosovo (1998-99) led to NATO engaging in its first-ever combat operations. Although important in that these operations moved NATO away from its rigid Cold War era collective defence role, neither operations in Bosnia, nor Operation Allied Force in Kosovo were from the US perspective particularly encouraging experiences.

The military reality for NATO had been dismal. Gathering sufficient numbers of troops for the IFOR and SFOR operations took great effort, mainly due to foot dragging by European NATO members. European reluctance ensured that initially the US had to be disproportionately responsible for the operations.

While in Bosnia, Europe wouldn't play ball; in Kosovo, Europe couldn't play ball. The US executed an overwhelming majority of the air strikes, as other NATO members were either unable or unequipped to participate in the new sort of air war being pioneered by the US. The inability of European NATO powers to make a meaningful military contribution alongside the Americans significantly eroded the military value of the alliance for the US. The lack of interoperability with the rapidly modernising American military led to the logical conclusion in the US that the American military would perform better unilaterally, i.e. without NATO.

Collective security optimists from the end of the Cold War became jaded watching the long drawn-out process leading to peace in the Balkans. Multilateral intervention had proven a slow and complex affair. The failure of successive multilateral institutions (the UN and the EC/EU) to do much, seemingly demonstrated their lack of relevance.

Pulling NATO together for joint action was equally difficult, and even once peace was achieved it was not seen to be a result of NATO operations but rather of US action. The Balkan experiences supported the perspective of many in the US that NATO was neither particularly capable nor relevant as a military alliance. Despite a successful initial foray into crisis management, the political importance of the Alliance was rapidly declining for the US. Nonetheless, under President Bill Clinton the US continued to pursue an active multilateral foreign policy that was generally favourable to NATO.

However, the defeat of the Democratic Party in the 2000 presidential elections signalled a shift of political winds, against multilateralism.

## **The Bush Era: Primacy in Crisis**

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 changed the United States' security outlook radically – and thus, United States-NATO relations. Politically and militarily, transatlantic solidarity was at a highpoint in the aftermath of 9/11. A new sense of purpose began to emerge in speeches and communiqués NATO-wide. A new alliance-unifying mission had potentially been discovered: to fight terrorism in all of its myriad forms. However, this invigorated alliance soon began to run into trouble. The US spurned NATO offers for assistance

in the follow-up of 9/11. The US invaded Afghanistan with a few international and some local allies – and did so successfully. This new direction for US policy boded ill for US-NATO relations in the short term.

The shift to a less multilateral approach was less unexpected than it would seem. Rather, it was the sum of changing US military perceptions and a change of political winds in favour of unilateralism. Multilateral negotiation was seen as cumbersome and multilateral action as weak. American strategists had taken to heart the lessons of the Balkans, particularly the difficulties Operation Allied Force had encountered: fighting wars by consensus was not acceptable to them. Thus, multilateral alliances were seen as ineffective. Yet, isolationism was not politically credible following 9/11; rather, the school of foreign policy thought that motivated policy circles was that of *primacy*. America had unmatched power that it could use to attain certain national and general goals. Non-US NATO's limited ability to project military power globally, combined with the difficulties of consensus politics decreased NATO's importance among US policy makers, and for some, NATO as a whole was considered more of a hindrance than help.

Despite this, the United States has worked to generate a new, more relevant NATO. This work began at the Prague Summit in 2002. In Prague, NATO agreed to further enlargement, to create a NATO Response Force and to improve the independent military capability of European NATO states (the Prague Capabilities Commitment). A more streamlined command structure and a military concept against terrorism were also endorsed. In 2002 and 2003, the task of combating terrorism garnered most US interest and gave the alliance much needed relevance for the US. However, the US has taken a very expansive view of counter-terrorism, willing to include in it many traditional military operations under that rubric. With both the war in Iraq and the counter-insurgency operations in Afghanistan all being trumpeted as “fronts” of the “Global War on Terrorism” by many in the US, this means that some Americans see a military role for NATO in what they perceive to be counter-terrorism.

Many other NATO member states resist this expansive view, seeing counter-terrorism as predominantly a question of domestic policing and international intelligence cooperation. This

means they see NATO as having a very marginal role in counter-terrorism. These efforts to remake NATO were interrupted by the acrimony over the US decision to invade Iraq in March 2003.

The lead-up and conduct of the Iraq War from the US side deserves some illumination. By using force in a pre-emptive fashion, primacists saw a way to eliminate threats to America with little risk (material or political).

Iraq was a hybrid of Kosovo and Afghanistan, i.e. part political negotiation and part sabre rattling, leading towards rapid military action by willing states with an appropriate (albeit not legitimate) *casus belli*. It is thus not surprising that the US sought to apply the strategy that it did against Iraq. Intellectual, political and military currents all led to it.

The outcome was the largest crisis within NATO since the end of the Cold War and resulted in the crisis becoming particularly inflamed due to the “divide and conquer” tactics of the Bush Administration and severe disagreements over potential defensive preparations for Turkey.<sup>15</sup> The purpose of NATO – and having a fixed set of allies – was brought into question by the Bush Administration and the fallout, including the invasion itself, soured transatlantic relations.

In spite of the rift’s depth, it has healed both well and surprisingly quickly. Both sides have to a large degree reconciled their differences and begun the difficult work of rebuilding relations. The biggest factor in the healing of relations has been the defeat of the US-faction that advocated NATO’s irrelevance. The spectacular failure of the follow-through in Iraq rendered unilateralism in general, and primacy specifically, unsupportable. The lack of legitimacy of the invasion of Iraq severely damaged America’s reputation and Washington has recognized the importance of allies. The US has returned to a more multilateral approach in addressing international challenges, and European allies have adopted a more conciliatory and less anti-American approach.

The healing of transatlantic relations has also enabled NATO to continue its transformation. The conclusion of the “out-of-

<sup>15</sup> Turkey invoked Article 4 (the first and only time it has happened in NATO’s history) over the possible threat presented to it by a war in Iraq. This led to two weeks during which transatlantic tensions paralysed the alliance. The arguments concerning the issue revolved around the timing of the possible invasion of Iraq – rather than the actual deployment – with Germany, France and Belgium (who saw the issue as a *de facto* approval of a possible invasion of Iraq) breaking the consensus. A consensual agreement finally led to a small NATO deployment (Display Deterrence) to bolster Turkish defences.

area” debate (in favour of global operations), the deployment of NATO troops in Afghanistan (ISAF), and the creation of the NATO Response Force all met with a favourable US response. The Istanbul (2004) and Riga (2006) summits have further healed earlier wounds and signalled areas of regional interest (the Middle East and Russia, respectively) shared by both NATO and the US. In this sense NATO is rather close to being back to ”business as usual”, with its usual disagreements and complaints. The serious disagreements about Alliance solidarity in Afghanistan are the major exception to this.

### **The United States and NATO: What Next?**

The Prague Summit decisions, subsequently reinforced in the Istanbul and Riga Summits, are a “step in the right direction” for the US, with NATO developing into a political-military alliance that is not limited by geography, neither in operations or in partnerships.

In Afghanistan, as well as globally, the United States is eager for its European Allies to take on more responsibilities regarding global security challenges. In Europe, reluctance to commit resources to generate the capacity to take on these responsibilities is considerable. Without considerable European investment in developing independent or complementary military capacity, NATO will increasingly become a political alliance for the United States.

Despite these uncertainties, NATO still has value for the United States. American military planning still uses Europe as a major basing area for global operations. The transatlantic political alliance has been strengthened due to external events, and the importance of a fixed forum to discuss common security challenges, such as the North Atlantic Council, is well recognized and appreciated on both sides of the Atlantic. NATO will remain the United States’ main multilateral institution for security issues.

In the long term, US policy towards NATO will be affected by several trends, two of which are particularly noteworthy. One is the growing role ascribed to US allies in providing a platform of legitimacy for US military operations. The second is the challenge of a “post-Atlanticist” NATO, with new elites rising to power in the US.

The first trend is itself a product of several developments. As hinted above, the dichotomy between liberal hawks and primacists seems to be waning. The American political elite as a whole seems to have learned both of the lessons of the 1990s: that the willingness and capability of European allies to support US military interventions is limited even in cases where European interests are at stake – and the more recent lesson that legitimacy matters and that a unilateralist go-alone strategy has considerable political costs for US leaders, both internationally and domestically.

This development might over time lead to the emergence of a hybrid grand strategy incorporating elements from both primacy and activist multilateralism. Elements of this new strategy can already be seen in American debate, where the idea of all states' "responsibility to prevent" the emergence of security threats in their territory has – along with the "responsibility to protect" – emerged as a possible universal norm. Should the norm of "responsibility to prevent" gain acceptance by key states, it could form the basis for a broad consensus on conditions under which preventive military action may be justified. Because of continuing authoritarianism in Russia and China, the United Nations Security Council will probably remain divided on this question and it is not likely that it will provide its blessing for military interventions based on the idea of "responsibility to prevent" in the coming years.

In the absence of a UN mandate, support from the community of liberal democracies is a compelling alternative for the United States. In practice, this means that NATO might gain an increasingly important role as a bargaining table where the community of liberal democracies discuss the legitimacy of military interventions in cases where the UN Security Council is paralysed. However, for much of the world, the United Nations remains the only organization that can legitimize an international military operation. Thus, an operation with only a NATO or EU mandate would face an inevitable political backlash. To American chagrin, this would potentially dissuade some members from joining efforts to give NATO the role of legitimizing military interventions. In any case, the obvious prerequisite for American willingness to listen to Europeans is that European allies have concrete capabilities to contribute to the operations themselves.

The second trend is that the new political forces that we have seen exerting an important influence on American foreign policy during the last few years are likely to grow even more important in the future. These forces include foreign policy elites not from the East Coast, but from the rapidly growing Southern and Western parts of the country, as well as elite lobbies such as the neoconservatives and nationwide grassroots movements such as the religious right.

These new forces present challenges for NATO and transatlantic cooperation since they are not integrated into the existing informal networks of cooperation forged over the decades by (Western) European political elites and the American East Coast political elite. Tempering the influence of these new political forces through constructive dialogue and smart networking will test the skills of European political elites in the coming years.

# NATO and Other Actors

## European Perspectives on NATO and NATO-EU Relationship

There is no single “European view” of what NATO is, nor is there a “European NATO”. European members of NATO can nonetheless be divided into separate groups. These more or less stable groups help to explain the tensions between the different roles that NATO should play, and they also partially help to explain the state of the institutional relationship between the European Union and NATO.

*NATO from European perspectives.* All but two NATO member states are located in Europe. The varying geographical locations of these members and differing historical experiences ensure a diverse set of perspectives on NATO as an organization as well as the rights and responsibilities that membership in the organization bestows on members. Members can be grouped according to a broad range of attributes. Nevertheless, when trying to discern how these different perspectives can affect the future of the Alliance, four attributes are particularly interesting:

- (a) Whether the state gives more emphasis to NATO’s military alliance (Article 5 collective defence) or to its security manager role (primarily non-Article 5 crisis management),
- (b) The threat perception, local/regional vs. global,
- (c) How the state sees NATO’s geographical dimension: transatlantic, European, global, or any combination of these, and,
- (d) The emphasis on NATO as a multilateral institution vs. importance of bilateral relations with the United States.

Evaluating NATO member states along these dimensions results in a number of different groups.

The first group sees NATO primarily as a military alliance, and wants the organization's focus to be collective defence. These members have a regional security focus and see NATO as a transatlantic alliance. The states in this group, therefore, do not wish to see NATO expand its membership or activities on a global scale. However, this group of states understands that, especially to keep the United States engaged in NATO, it is important to support an expansion of NATO's security manager role. Because Article 5 based guarantees of assistance are so important to this group of countries, and they are rightfully sceptical of European members' capacity to provide robust military support, they also emphasize the importance of bilateral relations with the United States. Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Bulgaria form the core of this group.

The second group thinks that for NATO to remain relevant it must expand its capacity to act as a global security manager. States in this group do not perceive significant local or regional traditional military threats, at least in the short and medium term. They identify risks and threats based on a broad understanding of security and, therefore, see NATO's appropriate geographical dimension as being global. However, these states also see the transatlantic link as being centrally important – beyond NATO – to enable members to address future security challenges. The United Kingdom and to some degree Norway, are examples of states in this group.

The third group does not feel threatened by traditional military attacks and feels it desirable that the security manager role be emphasized over the military alliance role of NATO. Fundamentally "euro-centric", these states feel that the EU is better suited to address a broad range of security issues, but think that NATO is the only realistic vehicle through which collective defence related security issues in Europe can be addressed. These states feel it is important to keep the United States engaged in NATO, but place less weight on bilateral military cooperation with the U. S. They want to develop European military capabilities and are willing to do so within either the EU or NATO. Currently, crisis management operations provide both the operational framework and in some cases *raison d'être* for the national militaries of some of the states in this group. If the EU were to begin development of an independent defence capability, the strongest supporters of such

moves would probably emerge from this third group. Belgium, Slovenia and Germany are examples of states belonging to this group.

The fourth group is made up of Turkey and Greece. Both have a strong regional security focus, paradoxically perceiving each other as a security threat. This has led to a situation in which they proportionally spend significantly more on their militaries than other NATO members, except the United States. NATO also cannot be a security provider for either country as both are members and NATO has pledged not to take sides in any conflict between them.

France does not easily fit into any of these groups. Since 1966, when it left the integrated military planning component of NATO, France has sought to emphasize its independent military capacity. It has, when possible, pushed for the development of an independent European military crisis management capability and, since 1998, has been one of the engines of such developments. That France is once again considering returning to NATO suggests it is moving closer to group number three.

*The NATO-EU Relationship.* The relationship between NATO and the European Union focuses on developing cooperation in the sphere of crisis management. The EU and NATO arrived at crisis management as a task from very different perspectives and backgrounds. For NATO, crisis management is a new *raison d'être* in a post-Cold War world, where the likelihood of a traditional military attack on a member state is almost non-existent and where many members have changed the way they define security away from an exclusively territorial-regional focus. For the EU, crisis management is a component of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) and, hence, important for the Union as it attempts to build a common foreign and security policy.

Since the 1990s, NATO and the EU have in parallel sought to develop their own crisis management capabilities. The prospect of a European military identity and common foreign and security policies were already included in the 1992 Maastricht treaty, but there was little impetus to develop actual capabilities. That Europe was not able to intervene in the massacres of Bosnia until the United States agreed to take a leading role, pushed Britain and France to jointly agree in 1998 to work for an increased

European military crisis management capacity. The Helsinki Headline Goals were introduced in 1999. They aimed to give the EU the capacity to deploy up to 60 000 troops for a year-long operation, suggesting that concrete capabilities were being developed.

At the same time, in 1999, NATO published its new Strategic Concept and set initial guidelines on how the European Alliance members, in particular, would have to develop their militaries to make them more suitable for crisis management operations. Yet, despite this parallel development and growth of crisis management as an important foreign policy tool, there was little movement to improve strategic level cooperation between the EU and NATO.

The relationship is hampered by two main issues: the historical desire of France to create from the EU an international actor that is independent of NATO, and the lack of political pressure to address the Greece/Turkey/Cyprus problem. As long as the latter issue remains unsolved, the strategic level interaction between NATO and the EU will remain *ad hoc*.

Both organizations have adopted a similarly broad view of security and consequently have proceeded to develop increasingly similar solutions when preparing for crisis management operations – even imitating the other when necessary. Both have developed their own rapid reaction forces, which have similar potential mission profiles, although their capacities are on a different level of magnitude. Due to the overlapping membership, both forces use NATO standards for evaluating training, operational readiness, equipment, and command and control, etc. This has had the effect that while members support the development of crisis management capabilities for both the EU and NATO, often the newly created capacity is meant to be shared between the two on a “first come first served” basis. For example, if the Netherlands has developed a special forces capability that is useful for crisis management, it may put it into the crisis management force registries of both NATO and the EU. Whoever first starts an operation that could use the Dutch forces would get to use them, pending the decision of the government.

This has a further implication, a practical example of which could be observed when the EU launched Operation Althea to take over responsibility of NATO’s SFOR operation in the Bal-

kans. Few additional troops were “released” for service elsewhere – a significant concern for NATO considering difficulties in finding troops for its operation in Afghanistan – because many of the troops simply switched shoulder badges (from NATO SFOR to EU Althea).

### *Berlin + and Reverse*

The “Berlin Plus” (Berlin +) agreements from 2002-2003 between NATO and the European Union essentially include the possibility to lend NATO assets to EU-led operations. The purpose of the agreements was to avoid unnecessary duplication of resources, especially in planning and command structures needed for crisis management operations; subsequently the EU has developed some independent command capabilities. Interpretations of the agreement itself have been diverse, leaving both EU and NATO members in disagreement over what Berlin + actually means. A new interpretation that has lately gained ground can be called “Berlin + reversed”, whereby NATO could borrow EU assets for its operations.

So that European crisis management capabilities can be genuinely developed, the finite and limited political, military and financial resources of states should be coordinated and pooled more effectively. Signs of this are already visible, with French President Nicholas Sarkozy’s proposal for, among other things, increased cooperation between the European Defence Agency (EDA) and NATO’s planning cells. Because it is increasingly functioning as a forum for developing pan-European defence cooperation in arms development and purchasing, the EDA is in a position to strongly influence the capabilities that national militaries will develop for future international operations. To ensure maximum interoperability in crisis management operations and higher levels of efficiency in defence spending, EU and NATO leaders aim to ensure that both the EU and NATO are consulted by the EDA on the types of capabilities that national forces should develop. Because of the dominant nature of NATO, it is likely that future EU/EDA capability development will comply with NATO standards.

Initially such cooperation is focused on improving crisis management capabilities. This is logical, for 21 EU members NATO is the mechanism through which collective defence efforts take place. NATO provides the practical cooperation and the legal framework for those 21 members to engage in collective defence.

Duplicating the large planning and operational staffs, standards and intelligence capabilities needed for an actual collective defence capability to exist has not even been suggested by any EU member. The EU has, however, developed its own operational headquarters that can support crisis management operations.

As both the EU and NATO continue to evolve, the changes will also impact the nature of membership in each. Individual states will bring their own perspectives to the debates, irrespective of whether the forum is NATO or the EU. So, while the future of NATO-EU cooperation is still unclear, member states will face similar security challenges and it is up to them to decide through which mechanisms they address them.

### **NATO and Russia**

During the first decade after the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union the relations between NATO and the new Russia were very unstable and oscillated between selective and, often, declamatory cooperation and open crises. In 1992 Russia, along with several other post-Soviet states, formally succeeded the USSR and joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, which was later transformed into the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. In 1994 Russia, although not without hesitation, joined the Partnership for Peace programme (PfP). In the mid-1990s Russian and NATO troops cooperated in carrying out peacekeeping missions in Bosnia (SFOR and IFOR), although the Russian contingent was formally subordinate directly to the Supreme Allied Commander Europe and not to NATO's local chain of command.

Prospects for further cooperation were undermined when, during preparation for the first wave of the NATO eastward expansion, it became clear that the PfP would not be an alternative to the enlargement, which Russia viewed as a simple transfer of geopolitical dividing lines aimed against its interests. The compromise, initially agreed upon at the US-Russian summit in Helsinki in March 1997, included an economic assistance package to Russia and a list of security and confidence-building measures. It resulted, in May of the same year, in the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security. The Act has since served as a legal framework for Russia-NATO relations. A bilateral Per-

manent Joint Council (PJC) was set up according to the formula “16+1”, later “19+1”. The deficiencies of the whole arrangement were, however, too obvious to be able to count on its viability. The Founding Act declared certain intentions of NATO (no nuclear deployment or forward conventional deployment on the territory of the new member states) to pacify Russia’s concerns but contained no legally binding commitments. The legacy of the bloc confrontation revealed itself in the setting of the PJC (which was often referred to in the Russian debate as “nineteen minus one”). Not surprisingly, after the whole mechanism proved unable to give Russia a say in the decision on the allied bombing campaign against Yugoslavia in 1999, the relations froze.

Changes at the top Russian leadership level caused contacts to be intensified again. In 2001 the NATO Information Bureau was opened in Moscow and in 2002 the Liaison Mission arrived. The same year in Rome heads of Russia and NATO member states signed a document, which declared a new quality of relations that reflected the improvement of ties in the aftermath of 9/11. The Permanent Joint Council was replaced with a NATO-Russia Council (NRC) – a different mechanism for permanent political consultations, based on national participation (NATO “at 20”, intended to overcome the “bloc” legacy and emphasize full sovereignty of the member states), consensus in taking decisions, and primacy of international law (UN Charter, Helsinki Final Act, OSCE Security Charter). The Council does not discuss domestic affairs or political values of its members. This undoubtedly makes it more attractive to Russia, relative to other institutional mechanisms – such as the OSCE – through which it interacts with the West.

In relative terms, if compared with PJC, the activity of the NRC and the development of Russia-NATO relations since the moment they were established can be assessed fairly positively, although it never lived up to the optimism expressed by many analysts in the early stages. The Council withstood the controversies caused by the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the second wave of NATO’s eastern enlargement in 2004 (leading, among other things, to the patrolling of the airspace of the Baltic States by other NATO countries aircrews, which was (unofficially) interpreted in Russia as non-compliance with the Founding Act). It, indeed, served as a forum to deal with the collision between Russia and

the West during the Orange revolution in Ukraine: whereas the OSCE summit in Sofia in December 2004 failed to produce any kind of a declaration, NRC came up with a joint statement.

Furthermore, NRC was successful in promoting practical cooperation in several areas. In February 2003 Russia and NATO signed an agreement on cooperation in sea search and rescue, which enabled Russia to receive assistance from the British military, who rescued a Russian mini-submarine in the Far East in August 2005. A major part of the practical work has been in the field of combating terrorism. In December 2004 in Brussels, the parties adopted a comprehensive action plan of activities in this field. Russia agreed to participate in joint naval patrols set up by NATO's operation Active Endeavour – maritime cooperation to protect against terrorism in the Mediterranean Sea. A series of exercises on dealing with emergency situations were held near Moscow, in the Kaliningrad area as well as in the Murmansk area. In April 2005, the NATO Partnership for Peace Status of Forces Agreement was concluded at the NRC ministerial, which regulates the legal status of the armed forces on each other's territory. Last but not least, Russia and NATO had in-depth discussions on an issue as sensitive as Theatre Missile Defence.

There were three major driving factors behind Russia's turn towards more cooperation with NATO in the beginning of the current decade. The first one was general Russian realignment with the West (sometimes also called "Russia's European Choice"), which President Vladimir Putin is believed to have been following in his first years in office, for as long as his administration considered the West to be the major potential source of Russia's economic growth and overall modernization. This kind of general understanding of Russia's future warranted cooperation, rather than tension, with the leading institutions of the West. Second, directly threatened and attacked by terrorists, Russian leadership tended to view the security interests of the country as being close to or even the same as those of the West. It saw clear benefits in being a partner of the West in the war against terrorism and for this reason acquiesced to the US military presence in Central Asia. Thirdly, Russia had no possibility in practice to stop the second wave of NATO enlargement. The new US administration signalled clearly that it would ignore Russia's earlier "red line" rhetoric regarding the NATO membership of the Baltic States and would go

ahead with the enlargement despite Russia's protests. Under these circumstances, to treat the stoppage of enlargement as a *sine qua non* for cooperation would be against Russia's interests, so it made sense to strive for the benefits or compensations that the West would be ready to offer.

In the second half of the decade, however, all these drivers seem to have lost their power. Russian realignment with the West proved to be short-lived. A widening value gap between Russia and Western democracies on the one hand and the financial resources received due to high world energy prices on the other, created in Russia the impression, whether illusory or not, of the possibility of restoring the status of leading power. One that would not need permanent allies but only temporary partners or even clients and would deserve an exclusive sphere of interest in its own immediate neighbourhood – a vision that the West can hardly share. The return of anti-Western pronouncements in general and statements which call Islamist terrorists merely instruments in the hands of those in the West who do not like a strong Russia, in particular, make it no longer possible to understand whether Russia intends to guarantee its security *primarily together with the West, or against the West*.

Regarding the future waves of NATO enlargement, the countries around Russia are not bound to join the Alliance: Belarus is not likely, Finland is not officially an aspirant country, the Ukrainian public opinion is against it, and Georgia and Azerbaijan have unresolved ethnic conflicts. This makes Russian opposition to NATO expansion a tempting tactic in the domestic context and a symbol of regained international weight.

In addition to these, several other factors warrant a sceptical forecast as to Russia-NATO cooperation. Most importantly, confidence between the partners remains at a low level. In Russia in particular, NATO's claim of transformation is not accepted and the Alliance is, to a large extent, perceived as a relic of the Cold War. Although this is naturally not pronounced officially, it can be easily sensed in the public discussion in Russia that NATO's traditional territorial defence mission can only be targeted, even if only potentially, against Russia. Moreover, it is felt that the territorial defence component of the Alliance has grown much stronger after it enlarged eastwards and included countries that had strong fears of Russia and problematic relations with it. Continuous

opinion polls reveal that at least one third of the Russian respondents consider NATO a threat to Russia and a platform for Western expansion.

Practical cooperation “in the field”, which could lead to the erosion of negative stereotypes, remains insufficient, especially after Russia in 2003 decided to withdraw its troops from the Balkans. The NATO-Russia Council failed to become, and in most likelihood could not have become, a gathering of countries in their national capacity, as it is only logical that NATO states adhere to the same position. It can be added that, from the psychological point of view, Russia would be reluctant to discuss important security issues with countries with which it has difficult bilateral relations, especially from Central Europe. It is easier, in fact, for Moscow to interact bilaterally with Washington. At the same time, many NATO members are not willing to give Russia a real say on issues that matter to them. The NRC, therefore, even institutionally looks like a discussion club, not a decision-making body. Finally, the more NATO’s role as a European and global security provider finds itself in jeopardy, the less relevant it will look for Russia and the more stagnant and bureaucratic the whole relationship will be.

There are three major issues where Russia’s and NATO’s approaches are in direct conflict. The one that has been the longest on the agenda is the entry into force of the adapted CFE treaty, signed in 1999. NATO countries refuse to ratify it until Russia completes the withdrawal of its troops from Georgia and Moldova. Russia, which ratified the adopted treaty in 2004, considers this demand a far-fetched pretext. Russia, in turn, insists that the Baltic States and Slovenia, which were not parties of the original CFE signed in 1990, join the treaty. In April 2007 president Vladimir Putin announced Russia’s intention to introduce a moratorium on the unilateral implementation of the treaty if demands to have the document enter into force are further neglected. As diplomatic efforts that followed in the summer of 2007 did not bring the two sides any closer to mutual understanding, Russia’s complete withdrawal from the CFE regime is a realistic possibility because it makes no sense for Russia to leave the updated treaty while complying with the original, less favourable, regime. In strict military terms, the problem will not be dramatic as the actual holdings of the parties are much lower than the treaty ceilings stipulate and

cannot be raised quickly. However, Russia's complete withdrawal from the treaty regime may eventually destroy the whole system of inspections and confidence-building measures in the sphere of conventional weapons in Europe.

Reconfiguration of the US military presence in Europe is another concern for Russia. Earlier on, it focused on the relocation of US troops to Romania and Bulgaria, to which Moscow could be less sensitive, but currently the planned deployment of elements of a US ballistic missile defence in Poland and the Czech Republic is a source of major friction. Formally, although these are not NATO issues, they can be raised at the NRC, but it is highly unlikely that the United States and its Central European partners will agree to have a substantive discussion in that format.

The single-most important conflict-prone issue is further eastern enlargement of NATO. The Alliance has an open door policy and, indeed, promotes the membership aspirations of Georgia and Ukraine, whose eventual accession to NATO is possible. Russian reaction to such developments is difficult to predict at the moment, as it will depend on Russia's domestic evolution in the meanwhile, but acquiescence, as in the case with Baltic States, is not likely. On the contrary, certain military build-up in the Black Sea region, in general, and the strengthening Russian military presence in Crimea, in particular, should not be ruled out. Such a build-up is to be expected in any case. The significance of potential Russian actions in the region should therefore not be overemphasized.

To sum up, today's NATO-Russia relations are controversial. On the one hand, partnership has been declared. On the other hand, confidence is absent and the respective policies are often not accepted. In the short term, a trend towards maintaining *ad hoc* selective collaboration is likely to prevail over the existing controversies, but in the longer run, in view of the widening value gap between Russia and the West and differing security perceptions, producing meaningful results will be increasingly difficult.

# Implications for Finland

The changes in NATO described in the preceding pages have already had an impact on Finland. The nature of Finland's relationship with NATO will also change – whether or not Finland becomes a member. Perhaps the most fundamental implication is that because NATO is changing and will continue to change, *any decision in Finland on seeking NATO membership must be made with the expectation that NATO will continue to change* – much like the EU has changed since Finland joined. During the time that NATO membership has been discussed in Finland, NATO has changed the focus of its activities from preparing for collective defence to crisis management, emphasizing its security manager role over its military alliance role.

There is no consensus among the Alliance members on the appropriate balance between the security manager and military alliance roles. A numeric percentage based consensus is unlikely to be agreed upon due to the varying geopolitical contexts of the member states. If global crisis management, including the possibility of warfighting, increasingly becomes a NATO focus, Finland must consider at which stage of future operations it should contribute. Not being a NATO member, Finland can freely choose to participate only in reconstruction activities. In the case of new operations, as a member Finland would be likely to face increased pressure to contribute to formations that are capable of militarily more demanding operations. Whether or not Finland is a member, the new NRF concept will enable Finland to ensure that its national defence planning and strategy directly benefit from any NRF related preparations, made under the aegis of the security manager role of NATO. This is in stark contrast to the resources spent preparing for the EU Battle Groups, which had no genuine link to national defence preparations.

The lack of consensus on what the appropriate balance is and what NATO will look like in the future has a direct bearing on cen-

tral questions that Finnish decision-makers must address: How would Finnish security be affected by membership? What does Finland stand to gain or lose by remaining militarily non-allied? The answers to these questions depend partially on what NATO will look like in the future. Possibilities include: (1) expanding but fundamentally remaining a transatlantic collective security organization; or, (2) becoming a global political organization that specializes in the use of military force; or, (3) eventually forming the foundation of a global alliance of democratic states. The answers also depend on political developments in Russia and on how the European Union evolves.

Because NATO is still changing, the *nature of NATO membership is in flux*. Discussions on what the rights and responsibilities of members are, and should have, have just started, especially regarding solidarity and equal burden sharing in non-Article 5 operations. Even though the present Finnish participation already exceeds that of some NATO member states, for Finland, membership in NATO would undoubtedly increase the pressure to participate in new NATO operations and activities; about which Finland, as a member, would be in a position to decide. Increased pressure to participate as a member may be less about direct political pressure, and more a result of the feeling of commonality – the difference between what you do because you are a part of a group, rather than (exclusively) being actively pressured to do something. Although solidarity in Article 5 based operations is taken for granted, it is unclear what effects the lack of solidarity in non-Article 5 operations – when NATO plays its security manager role – will have on the Alliance in the long term.

Article 5 based collective defence will remain one of the rights and responsibilities of membership. If neither Finnish political decision makers, nor the population at large, feel that an attack on Istanbul, Washington D.C., or Tallinn should require Finland to immediately provide aid, potentially in the form of military units, to assist the member in need, then Finland should not join NATO. Concretely, it also means that Finland should not expect others to come to its aid. Even if such aid would be forthcoming, as a non-member the aid cannot in advance be included in Finnish national defence planning and preparation.

Finland likes to group itself with western European states. But, when comparing it to other states on issues such as: global vs.

regional threat perception, importance of defence vs. crisis management, weighing “soft” vs. “hard” security outlooks, Finland looks to be “the odd one out”. Yet, the diversity of membership, especially after the most recent rounds of enlargement, means that as a member Finland could reliably find at least some members with whom it could jointly work to achieve policy goals.

It also means that although Finland has a history of attempting to be “the model student”, the diversity of member perspectives on a broad variety of issues means it *is* possible to vary the level of participation or support without being obviously singled out. Even if Finland were to oppose plans or operations that larger NATO states argue for, it would likely not have to oppose such plans or operations on its own. Moreover, as the case of the Baltic states’ refusal to ratify the CFE treaty shows, despite pressure to ratify, it is possible for small countries to indefinitely postpone outcomes they do not agree with. Of course, such opposition would have consequences that are hard to foresee, but that is always the nature of politics. On the positive side, Estonia has been able to raise the profile of cyber defence within the Alliance quite significantly, despite being a small member state.

The shift in US concerns, from Europe to Asia and from Europe as an “object” of activity to a “partner” has implications: European NATO members will increasingly have to shoulder the burden of providing for and paying for the defence of Europe. Moreover, to be considered a true partner by the US, the European members of NATO and the EU must clearly show what military and non-military capabilities they can contribute. It also suggests that while NATO will remain an important institutional setting for managing relationships between Europe and the United States, it is increasingly important to also develop strong bilateral relationships with the United States.

NATO remains the vehicle through which collective defence is organized in Europe. If France rejoins the military infrastructure of NATO, it will further solidify the primacy of NATO as the foundation of Europe’s collective defence planning. In Europe, only NATO has the structural capacity to help member states through military assistance. This structural capacity includes standards on training, equipment, planning procedures, and the actual headquarters planning and intelligence capabilities that form the basic building blocks of a defence planning capacity. The European

Union does not currently have any capacity to organize a collective defence of its membership and until a significant portion of “dual-members” take steps to create such a capacity, any military security guarantees it provides are largely theoretical.

The future nature of the relationship between the European Union and NATO is still unclear. *Central questions therefore are where will European states anchor their: (a) Foreign, (b) Security, (c) Defence policies?* The results depend on how much weight they give to national abilities, bilateral relations, and their relationships with the EU and/or NATO. As both NATO and the EU continue their evolution they will, like their members, deal with many of the same challenges. Outside of collective defence cooperation it remains to be seen which organization becomes the preferred “forum” for issues that have national, global, civilian and military implications.

The relationship between Russia and NATO has some implications for Finland, especially if Finland were to seek membership in NATO. Finland’s defence and security cooperation with NATO, however active but *without* opening the accession perspective does not seem to cause major concerns in Russia. If Finland chose to join NATO, the political relations between the two countries would almost inevitably suffer to some degree, and some limited military remonstrations in the vicinity of the Finnish borders (which are now hard to specify) could occur. Officially, Russia might question whether threat scenarios had changed or why military non-alignment is no longer sufficient for Finland.

The effects, however, would hardly extend beyond the short-to-medium term and they would not necessarily be intensive but gradually disappear after accession. First, Moscow can hardly be interested in a protracted conflict with an important contributor to the European Union’s policy on Russia. The economic relationship with the EU is vitally important for Russia. Second, Russian opposition to the NATO enlargement is to a large degree psychological and stems from its reluctance to admit the on-going shrinking of its once exclusive sphere of influence. Finland in Russian public perceptions, all references to history notwithstanding, falls into a different category than Central and Eastern Europe, let alone post-Soviet states. Its belonging to the political “West” was finalized with its entry into the EU in 1995. In this regard, the psychological effects would be much lighter. Third, due to a rather

positive tradition of bilateral relations, Moscow has little reason to expect that Finland's entry into NATO would strengthen either the "old NATO" (read: Russia-hostile) or the Atlanticist elements in the doctrine and practice of the Alliance, as this is seen to have happened as a result of the previous two waves of its eastern enlargement.

Finland's relationship with NATO now and into the future will be a political issue because the debate is more than just about the alliance, it is about how we see ourselves. The debate is over what we think Finland's role in the world is and should be. There are no 'objectively' right or wrong answers to these questions, only opinions based on deeply held ethical positions. However, no matter what view one takes of NATO, it is essential to approach the issue with an up-to-date and nuanced view of the organization. The most important implication may thus be that a better understanding of NATO is important, so that the organization can be properly placed within the broader context of Finland's security and defence policies. The debate about how these policies need to be changed cannot be held properly as long as 'NATO' is effectively a swearword within Finnish society.

## Abbreviations

<b>ACT</b>	Allied Command Transformation
<b>CFE</b>	Conventional (Armed) Forces in Europe
<b>EC</b>	European Community
<b>EDA</b>	European Defence Agency
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>IFOR</b>	Implementation Force (in Bosnia)
<b>ISAF</b>	International Security Assistance Force (in Afghanistan)
<b>KFOR</b>	Kosovo Force
<b>NATO</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
<b>NPG</b>	Nuclear Planning Group
<b>NRC</b>	NATO Russia Council
<b>NRF</b>	NATO Response Force
<b>OSCE</b>	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
<b>PfP</b>	Partnership for Peace
<b>PJC</b>	Permanent Joint Council
<b>SFOR</b>	Stabilisation Force (in Bosnia)
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UN SC</b>	United Nations Security Council
<b>US</b>	United States (of America)
<b>USSR</b>	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

## **From Protecting Some to Securing Many**

### NATO's Journey from a Military Alliance to a Security Manager

Charly Salonius-Pasternak (ed.)

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has changed dramatically since the end of the Cold War. While keeping its collective defence commitments, NATO has taken on new roles and tasks, enlarged its membership and created a network of partner states, all with the aim of increasing the security of member and partner states. NATO has thus remained relevant and useful to its increasingly diverse membership. The organization will continue to change, becoming what its members collectively make of it.

Finland's relationship with NATO will also continue to change, whether or not it ever joins the Alliance. Finland must independently evaluate and make its defence and security policy related decisions. However, these debates and subsequent decisions cannot be engaged in as long as a key part of the European and transatlantic defence framework – NATO – is not understood.

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