

Executive Summary Background

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Principles and Proposals for NATO Reform

Sally McNamara

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, NATO has had to confront the possibility of major asymmetric attacks as well as the threat of traditional military confrontation. However, the alliance has been found wanting in many respects, challenged by both some members' lack of leadership and others' lack of commitment.

NATO remains essential to transatlantic security and a vital element of America's alliance architecture. But it will require strong U.S. leadership and a substantial reform effort to inject the energy necessary to revitalize the flagging alliance.

NATO's membership and organization must not remain static. With regard to its size and structure, NATO needs to make better decisions, faster. It also needs to focus on confronting new challenges, such as ballistic missile attack, cyberterrorism, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Underpinning these reforms must be a new agreement among alliance members to share the burdens of common defense more fairly.

Radical problems require radical solutions. Global security and stability can only be realistically pursued if America and Europe remain strong and reliable allies to one another. Therefore, the NATO Alliance must reform and revitalize itself if it is to be as strategically relevant as it was in defeating the Soviet Empire.

Burden Sharing. The heart and soul of NATO continues to rest on the deterrence value of its Article V commitment, in which an attack on one member constitutes an attack on the entire alliance. If

Article V is to have value both as a deterrent and as a shared defense commitment, military capacity and preparedness matter significantly.

Yet just 2.7 percent of Europe's 2 million military personnel are capable of overseas deployment, compared to NATO's goal that 40 percent of its land forces be deployable.

Defense spending is also lagging. Just four (Bulgaria, France, Greece, and the U.K.) of the 21 EU-NATO members spend the NATO benchmark of 2 percent of gross domestic product on defense, and average EU defense spending has significantly decreased over the past 10 years.

NATO also needs to address the question of national caveats. The mission in Afghanistan is virtually creating a two-tiered alliance, in which many nations commit troops only with specific provisos, including that their troops not be sent into combat zones. This is significantly harming the overall health of the alliance and is an absurd way to fight a war.

What NATO Members Should Do. To reform and revitalize NATO to meet the challenges and threats of the 21st century, NATO should:

- Agree to a Declaration on Allied Security at the Strasbourg Summit in 2009 that includes a new

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threat perception restating existing threats as well as new ones, such as cyberterrorism and ballistic missile attack. The declaration should also make concrete recommendations to address each threat.

- Follow the U.S. example of explicitly restating NATO's open-door policy and endorsing this message by working closely with Georgia and Ukraine to ensure timely accessions where appropriate.
- Reaffirm NATO as the cornerstone of the transatlantic alliance and the primary actor in European security.
- Readmit France into NATO's integrated military command structures only if Paris is willing to uphold the primacy of NATO in European defense cooperation and if the alliance can be confident that France will be a cooperative rather than confrontational partner.
- Agree to new decision-making rules based on a "coalitions-of-the-willing-and-able" approach, in which contributors to a coalition are authorized to undertake the planning and management of the operation among themselves.
- Agree to new burden-sharing rules. Specifically, the benchmark of spending at least 2 percent of GDP on defense by NATO members should be an enforced requirement for gaining membership and for retaining full voting rights within the alliance.

In addition to these actions by NATO as a whole:

- Each alliance member should commit to eliminate the vast majority of operational caveats on its missions.
- The European Union should announce that the European Security and Defense Policy will be a

civilian component in Europe's security architecture and will provide additional resources.

- The U.S. should reserve NATO resources exclusively for NATO missions. All European military missions should be funded exclusively by EU member states.

Conclusion. NATO remains central to transatlantic security and the crowning glory of America's alliance architecture. Few formal alliances, if any, can boast the successes that NATO has enjoyed throughout its history. However, NATO is an alliance in need of reform and revitalization to accommodate new security policies and defense strategies. This will require both Europe and America to put their full weight behind this process. Europe needs to demonstrate its commitment to NATO in terms of both spending and manpower. A small number of NATO members cannot continue to bear a disproportionate share of the burden, such as in Afghanistan, if the alliance is to remain unified. For its part, the United States must continue to exercise strong leadership of both existing and new transformation initiatives, so that the alliance is ready to confront current and emerging threats.

In the past decade, NATO has undertaken out-of-area missions, invoked Article V, and enlarged to 26 members. The next decade will likely see equally big challenges for NATO—challenges that the alliance must defeat for the sake of global security and stability.

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Radical problems require radical solutions. Global security and stability can only be realistically pursued if America and Europe remain strong and reliable allies to one another. Therefore, the NATO Alliance must reform and revitalize itself if it is to be as strategically relevant as it was in defeating the Soviet Empire.

Talking Points

- In the post-9/11 world, NATO faces an evolving set of challenges and threats, including terrorism, ballistic missile attack, cyberterrorism, and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as well as traditional military challenges.
- NATO remains essential to transatlantic security and a vital element of America's alliance architecture, but it will require strong U.S. leadership and a substantial reform effort to revitalize the flagging alliance.
- NATO should maintain its open-door policy on enlargement and endorse this message by working closely with Georgia and Ukraine to ensure timely accessions where appropriate.
- NATO should readmit France into its integrated military command structures only if Paris is willing to uphold the primacy of NATO in European defense cooperation.
- NATO members should agree to new burden-sharing rules, including commitments to increase defense spending and to reduce national operational caveats.

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NATO's Threat Perception

For most of NATO's history the strategic problem was easily defined: we could predict where we might fight and under what conditions...

But today we have a much different problem... We do not know who the enemy might be, and we do not know where we will fight.

—Supreme Allied Commander Europe
General Joseph Ralston, October 4, 2002¹

America's understanding of security fundamentally changed on 9/11, and seemingly, so did Europe's. As a collective defensive military alliance, NATO rightly invoked Article V following al-Qaeda's attacks on New York and Washington, D.C.² That summer, the alliance went further when its Defense Ministerial Summit agreed to undertake long-term, out-of-area operations to achieve NATO's objectives and agreed to fundamental reform in pursuit of global security.³ The alliance stated:

The Alliance, which embodies the transatlantic link that binds North America and Europe in a unique defence and security partnership, must, and will continue to adapt itself, to be better able to perform its fundamental security tasks and to strengthen security right across the Euro-Atlantic area.⁴

However, this initial unity of purpose is showing some cracks. The mission in Afghanistan has demonstrated that neither NATO as an organization nor its individual members have succeeded in articulating a long-term message on exactly what new threats NATO must confront and why it continues

to commit blood and treasure to fighting wars in faraway lands. Even in the United Kingdom, which has been unwavering in its political commitment to Afghanistan, a public poll showed that more than two-thirds (68 percent) of those questioned said that the U.K. should withdraw its troops within a year.⁵ The question remains whether this reflects merely a failure of messaging or a deep disconnect between the allies about the nature of the threats confronting the alliance.

The Terrorist Threat. Europe has faced terrorist atrocities similar to 9/11, notably in London and Madrid, but the European allies still tend to regard terrorism as merely a law and order problem. In fact, the U.K.'s March 2008 National Security Strategy states: "While terrorism represents a threat to all our communities, and an attack on our values and our way of life, it does not at present amount to a strategic threat."⁶

This contrasts sharply with America's rigorous pursuit of the war on terrorism and its intention to shape NATO into a modern security alliance. Europe's failure to appreciate the threat that Islamist terrorism poses to Western civilization also sits uncomfortably with the catalogue of successful and thwarted al-Qaeda terrorist attacks on Britain and Europe since 9/11.⁷ The nature of the terrorist threat facing NATO allies is undoubtedly strategic, and downplaying it as a tactical issue or matter of law and order will prove counterproductive. Until the alliance can mutually agree and articulate a common threat perception to confront terrorism and other evolving threats, it will not be able to

1. General Joseph Ralston, "Keeping NATO's Military Edge Intact in the 21st Century," luncheon address at NATO/GMFUS Conference, October 4, 2002, at <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s021003d.htm> (November 3, 2008).
2. Press release, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, October 4, 2001, at <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2001/s011004b.htm> (November 3, 2008).
3. North Atlantic Council, Ministerial Meeting, "Final Communiqué," Reykjavik, May 14, 2002, para. 5, at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2002/p02-059e.htm> (November 3, 2008).
4. *Ibid.*
5. BBC News, "Should Troops Leave Afghanistan?" November 13, 2008, at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/7714828.stm (November 19, 2008).
6. U.K. Cabinet Office, *The National Security Strategy of the United Kingdom: Security in an Interdependent World*, March 2008, p. 11, at http://interactive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/documents/security/national_security_strategy.pdf (November 3, 2008).
7. Sally McNamara, "Why NATO Must Win in Afghanistan: A Central Front in the War on Terrorism," Heritage Foundation Backgrounder No. 2148, June 23, 2008, at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Europe/bg2148.cfm>.

make the case publicly for expeditionary operations or for confronting new security challenges such as ballistic missile attack and cyberterrorism.

It is therefore important for NATO to adjust to the post-9/11 world by agreeing on a common position about the types of threats that it faces, starting with terrorism, and by outlining robust proposals to confront them. The threat to life and liberty has become a somewhat perfunctory phrase when talking about global security, and NATO needs to do a better job of explaining the threat to the West's common values.

The Strasbourg Summit. NATO's 60th anniversary summit in 2009 would be an opportune time for the alliance to agree on a new threat perception. The Strasbourg-Kehl Summit in April 2009 will produce a Declaration on Allied Security outlining NATO's purpose and could pave the way for a new strategic concept for the alliance. NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer has described the declaration as "a major deliverable" of the summit.⁸ A new threat perception that meaningfully addresses security challenges, such as cyberterrorism, ballistic missile attack, and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction would be a very positive start in revitalizing NATO as it enters its seventh decade.

Missile Defense. NATO has already made significant progress in addressing some of the challenges posed by the threat of ballistic missile attack. At the Bucharest Summit in April 2008, NATO leaders endorsed U.S. plans for a missile defense system to be based in Poland and the Czech Republic and agreed to explore ways to link the U.S. system "with current NATO missile defence efforts...to ensure that it would be an integral part of any future NATO-wide missile defence architecture."⁹ NATO must continue to solidly explore its own options on

missile defense, which will be ready for analysis and discussion at its defense ministerial in Krakow next February. The alliance must then be ready to move forward with a firm recommendation by the Strasbourg Summit, giving it a concrete mandate and a timeline in the summit's final communiqué.

Iran's reported successful launch of a two-stage, solid-fuel rocket capable of hitting Europe, combined with its advancing illicit nuclear weapons program, makes missile defense all the more pressing.¹⁰ Ultimately, Russia is unlikely to be placated on the issue of missile defense because its objections to the third-site installations are clearly objections to NATO *per se*, rather than related to any genuine concerns about its strategic forces. NATO must not be tempted to submit to Russian intimidation on missile defenses and must pursue a clear and timely policy to advance this vitally important defense project.

Cyber Defense. NATO also has a valuable role to play in complementing members' capabilities in cyber defenses and electronic warfare. The Bucharest Summit paved the way for the establishment of the Tallinn-based NATO Cooperative Cyber Defense Centre of Excellence (COE),¹¹ which concentrates on protecting vital systems and countering cyber attacks similar to the attacks on Estonia in spring 2007.¹² With limited staff and a small number of sponsoring countries, progress has been slow in this vital area.

Protecting NATO's infrastructure from cyber attacks was initially placed on the agenda at the Prague Summit in 2002, and NATO has since concluded that the alliance has a vital role to play in adding capacity and increasing members' cyber defense interoperability.¹³ U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates announced in November 2008 that

8. NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, speech at seminar on EU-NATO relations, Paris, July 7, 2008, at <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2008/s080707b.html> (September 28, 2008).

9. North Atlantic Council, "Bucharest Summit Declaration," April 3, 2008, at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2008/p08-049e.html> (December 4, 2008).

10. Borzou Daragahi, "U.S. Denounces Iran over Long-Range Missile Test," *Los Angeles Times*, November 13, 2008, at <http://www.latimes.com/news/printedition/asection/la-fg-iran13-2008nov13,0,4051889.story> (November 18, 2008).

11. North Atlantic Council, "Bucharest Summit Declaration," para. 47.

12. BBC News, "The Cyber Raiders Hitting Estonia," May 17, 2007, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6665195.stm> (November 19, 2008).

the U.S. fully supports the COE initiative, which gained full accreditation as a formal international military organization in early November 2008.¹⁴ America and Britain should demonstrate their support by contributing a small number of specialists and becoming sponsoring nations of this valuable intergovernmental initiative.

Evolving Threats. NATO's 1999 Strategic Concept and the numerous subsequent communiqués have identified various evolving security threats to allied security. The Strasbourg Summit is an opportunity to bring them all together and focus more sharply on the threats that NATO is facing. This does not mean that the threat of traditional military confrontation has disappeared. Russia's immoral and illegitimate invasion of Georgia in August 2008, demonstrated that the threat of conventional warfare remains real. Therefore, the alliance must reaffirm the full range of the threats that it faces and how best to approach them.

Enlargement

As a pillar of the international security system, NATO remains indispensable, and its enlargement needs to continue. NATO enlargement has spread security far beyond its 12 founding members and is a concrete example of the alliance's enduring contribution to global stability. The fourth and fifth waves of accessions from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) were especially significant because they secured NATO's post-Cold War democratic gains and fostered a sense of normalcy for those countries.¹⁵ NATO is undoubtedly both a defense and political organization, and membership represents a significant tool of soft power in the West's arsenal.

Georgia and Ukraine. NATO enlargement is a story of success. Bruce Jackson, president of the Project on Transitional Democracies, argues that "we have never had cause to regret an expansion decision."¹⁶ Equally, a substantial case can be argued that failing to offer Membership Action Plans (MAPs) to Georgia and Ukraine at the Bucharest Summit was a huge geostrategic mistake and that the repercussions of that mistake are still playing out. Moscow successfully pressured Germany to form a coalition to deny Georgian and Ukrainian accession to MAP. Then, despite Chancellor Angela Merkel's August trip to Tbilisi where she publicly affirmed Germany's support for Georgia's membership in NATO, she reversed position again, stating that Germany is prepared to veto Georgia's MAP accession in December.¹⁷

NATO's prevarication on MAP accession for Georgia and Ukraine at the Bucharest Summit was set against a dramatic sequence of events. For the first time since the NATO-Russia Council was created in 2002, President Vladimir Putin attended the annual NATO summit, primarily to intimidate and threaten Georgia and Ukraine. He even threatened to aim nuclear missiles at Ukraine if it sought NATO membership.¹⁸ Since then, a short but brutal war erupted between Russia and Georgia, and the Ukrainian parliament has been dissolved after ferocious infighting between the pro-NATO president and the pro-Russian prime minister.

The uncertainty surrounding Georgia and Ukraine's integration into the Euro-Atlantic family contrasts sharply with the very stable situation enjoyed by their neighbors in Central and Eastern Europe. The United States demonstrated leader-

13. For a short history of NATO's policy on cyber defenses, see North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Defending Against Cyber Attacks," updated June 26, 2008, at http://www.nato.int/issues/cyber_defence/index.html (November 18, 2008).

14. "Estonia: Prime Minister Met with United States Secretary of Defence Robert Gates," US Fed News, November 12, 2008.

15. In the fourth wave of accession, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland acceded to NATO in 1999. In the fifth wave of accession, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia acceded in 2004.

16. Bruce P. Jackson, "At NATO, No Time for Cold Feet," *The Washington Post*, February 4, 2008, p. A21, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/02/03/AR2008020302357.html> (November 3, 2008).

17. Marc Champion, "Merkel Slows NATO Bids by Georgia and Ukraine," *The Wall Street Journal*, October 3, 2008, at <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122297151270999027.html> (November 19, 2008).

18. Peter Finn, "Putin Threatens Ukraine on NATO," *The Washington Post*, February 13, 2008, p. A8, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/02/12/AR2008021201658.html> (November 24, 2008).

ship to the rest of the NATO alliance by supporting CEE accessions early on, when it was considered somewhat controversial. Throughout the Bush Administration, the United States has continued to restate the case for NATO's open-door policy and to send the message that the alliance is open for business and a vital part of the transatlantic security architecture. The United States should work closely with its allies to make that case equally strongly in Europe, specifically to find a way forward for Georgian and Ukrainian membership. If the U.S. supports a Europe whole and free, then NATO enlargement must continue.

The French Question. The possible reintegration of France into NATO's integrated military command structure is a big-ticket agenda item currently under consideration for the Strasbourg Summit. President Nicolas Sarkozy has revived President Jacques Chirac's unsuccessful effort in 1997 to fully rejoin NATO at the Bucharest Summit, but is demanding American support for an independent European defense identity in exchange for France fully rejoining NATO's structures.¹⁹ Despite a dramatic U.S. policy reversal supporting an autonomous EU defense identity, which the U.S. ambassador to NATO announced in a major speech to the Press Club in Paris, the French government was unable to conclude negotiations in time for the Bucharest Summit.²⁰ However, the full development of an independent European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) is a long-term French foreign policy goal, and negotiations are advancing to conclude the deal in time to announce it in Strasbourg in April 2009.

Within NATO, France has repeatedly engaged in deliberately obstructionist behavior, and until NATO can be sure that it will not do so in the future,

NATO should not be afraid to frustrate Paris's demands. In 2003, France led Germany and Belgium in a coalition to deny America's request to provide NATO defensive systems to Turkey in the event of an attack during the liberation of Iraq, as allowed for under Article IV of the North Atlantic Treaty. The United States managed to sideline France by taking the decision to the Defense Planning Committee where France does not have a vote. The German-Belgian coalition collapsed, and Article IV was ultimately honored. Under plans to reintegrate France into the full military command, the United States would no longer have this option.

Equally, France's exclusion from NATO's integrated military command structures does not prevent it from being a full and active member of the alliance. France is a key NATO member. Approximately one-third of its 10,000 forward-deployed troops are under NATO command,²¹ and more than 2,600 French troops are participating in NATO's mission in Afghanistan,²² including an additional 700 troops sent to eastern Afghanistan earlier this year.²³ Detachment from NATO's military command structures, following President Charles de Gaulle's withdrawal in 1966, merely excludes Paris from NATO's overall defense planning. It is a full member of all key decision-making bodies and transformation initiatives, including the Military Committee, Allied Command Transformations, and the NATO Response Force.

Although Washington is keen to cement the recent détente with Paris, it needs to recognize that France's relatively recent enthusiasm for the transatlantic alliance is potentially only skin deep. The United States should not assume that this short-term entente represents a fundamental change on France's part. Although President Sarkozy has u-

19. Nicolas Sarkozy, speech before the U.S. Congress, November 7, 2007, at http://www.ambafrance-uk.org/President-Sarkozy-s-speech-to-US.html#sommaire_2 (December 4, 2008).

20. Victoria Nuland, speech in Paris, February 22, 2008, at <http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2008/February/20080222183349eaiifas0.5647394.html> (December 4, 2008).

21. "En Garde," *The Economist*, January 19, 2008, at http://www.economist.com/world/europe/displaystory.cfm?story_id=10534515 (December 4, 2008).

22. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "International Security Assistance Force," September 1, 2008, at http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/isaf_placemat.pdf (November 18, 2008).

23. Roman Kozhevnikov, "Kouchner Sees 3,000 French Troops in Afghanistan," Reuters, April 11, 2008, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSL1155919920080411> (November 19, 2008).

ered in an improvement in Franco–American relations, especially when compared to relations during Chirac’s presidency, French foreign policy remains focused on achieving goals that will ultimately prove inimical to American interests, such as a common EU foreign policy and an autonomous EU defense identity.

This was clearly demonstrated by President Sarkozy’s call for a temporary moratorium on America’s missile defense deployments in Poland and the Czech Republic,²⁴ a project that NATO had endorsed at the Bucharest Summit.²⁵ Having engineered a return to “business as usual” between the EU and Russia, Sarkozy has sent a clear message to the United States that he intends to push for a closer relationship between Brussels and Moscow with the possibility of a new EU–Russia security dimension, regardless of Washington’s or NATO’s interests. As long as France continues to be an unpredictable ally with interests clearly at odds with those of NATO, Washington should resist its reintegration into NATO structures. Washington should similarly demand a French commitment to the supremacy of NATO in European defense, rather than concede to the duplication and decoupling of NATO and the EU through the ESDP.

Decision Making

It is important that NATO continues to enlarge, and as its geographical reach expands, it must become more flexible in its decision making. NATO boasts that one of its greatest strengths is its consensus-voting model, whereby no official votes are taken and all decisions can be interpreted as the alliance speaking with one voice. NATO’s invocation, by consensus, of Article V on September 12, 2001, was indeed an extremely powerful political signal. However, that level of political and diplomatic solidarity is unlikely to be replicated on a sustained basis, nor is it necessary in less dramatic circumstances or, more importantly, at every level of the organization.

Coalitions of members within the alliance should be able to pursue missions under a NATO banner in which not all members participate. It is anathema to assume that all members should have a de facto veto over the planning and management of a NATO operation in which they are not participating. Equally, as an intergovernmental alliance of sovereign nation-states, the differing national rules of each NATO member make coalitions within the alliance essential in a security environment in which speed and efficiency are often essential to operational success.

At present, consensus decision making reigns throughout NATO bodies from the North Atlantic Council (NAC) to the Military Committee and from the Defense Planning Committee to the working groups. NATO’s undertaking to stop Serbian President Slobodan Milošević’s ethnic cleansing in Kosovo in 1999 exposed the shortcomings and limitations of NATO’s decision-making process. Operation Allied Force employed a three-phase air campaign, with each phase representing an escalation of the previous. However, each phase had to be separately authorized by the NAC on a consensus basis. Several alliance members objected to giving Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) General Wesley Clark responsibility for choosing the targets of the air campaign; therefore, NAC took operational control of the campaign, utilizing the protracted consensus decision-making procedure in what became labeled “war by committee.”²⁶

With seven more members than in 1999 and two accessions pending, NATO cannot hope to pursue such a strategy in future. It is also unlikely that all NATO members will see national value in undertaking every single mission. To avoid a pitfall of the EU system—specifically, that foreign policy tends to reflect the lowest common denominator of action—NATO must embrace a “coalitions of the willing and capable” mentality while at the same time preserving the alliance as a whole.²⁷

24. Marc Champion, “Sarkozy Urges U.S., Russia to Delay Missile Defense,” *The Wall Street Journal*, November 15, 2008, at <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122671339527430157.html> (November 17, 2008).

25. North Atlantic Council, “Bucharest Summit Declaration.”

26. See Pail Gallis, “NATO’s Decision-Making Procedure,” Congressional Research Service *Report for Congress*, updated May 5, 2003, at <http://www.fas.org/man/crs/RS21510.pdf> (October, 29, 2008).

NATO should adopt a new principle on decision making that only those countries that substantially contribute to a mission—with troops, assets, or civilians—will be involved in the planning and execution of the mission. As defense analyst Leo Michel argues, a model that allows for contributing coalitions within the alliance ensures that the contributors have “a significant role in decisionmaking, commensurate with their contributions.”²⁸

Matching decision-making responsibilities with members’ level of contribution to a mission is a model substantially endorsed in a key 2007 report on NATO by former senior officers in the alliance, including General John Shalikashvili, a former chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff.²⁹ The report argues:

[O]nly those nations that contribute to a mission—that is, military forces in a military operation—should have the right to a say in the process of the operation. This structure would highlight the need and the opportunity for commitment, and commitment would be rewarded at the table.³⁰

Nor would a coalition need to be static. Countries could choose to join the contributing coalition at a later stage, subject to the approval of existing contributors. The contributing coalition should be responsible for military planning and determine the level of SACEUR’s operational control.

The NAC should not be sidelined in this process, nor should the regular and thorough consultation procedures be abandoned. The contributing coalition should apprise the NAC of its mission in broad terms in advance, and at that stage non-contributing members may place any formal objection on the record, if necessary. Since the NAC is not being asked for formal approval of the mission or

for a compulsory contribution from non-participating members, this should reduce the political pressure for non-participating members to object to the mission.

If no formal objection is received, the contributing coalition should be allowed access to NATO assets, including AWACS aircraft, NATO’s Situation Center, and other important resources. Use of the NATO Response Force should also remain an option, where appropriate, and authorization for its use could be requested during the contributors’ briefing to the NAC.

Major NATO decisions such as enlargement and Article V will continue to remain exclusively within the NAC’s orbit and subject to consensus. NATO’s founding treaty precludes enlargement decisions by anything other than unanimous approval.³¹ However, the widespread application of consensus decision making has been formed in practice rather than law over the years, so adapting it to today’s strategic environment should not prove too difficult.

One of the EU’s largest failings is that it has become less flexible as it has grown in size. In answer to the national differences that have emerged between its increased numbers, the European Union has pursued a policy of unfettered supranationalization. This has had the effect of creating internal divisions and external hostilities. NATO must not follow this flawed policy model of searching for an inevitably unpopular one-size-fits-all approach.

An all-or-nothing approach to decision making makes little sense in a modern security environment. The NATO brand should be more readily available to coalitions undertaking missions in which the alliance is not acting as a whole. As one of the most successful multilateral alliances in modern

27. *Ibid.*

28. Leo G. Michel, “NATO Decisionmaking: Au Revoir to the Consensus Rule?” National Defense University, Institute for National Strategic Studies *Strategic Forum* No. 202, August 2003, at <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/Strforum/SF202/SF202.pdf> (October 29, 2008).

29. General Klaus Naumann, General John Shalikashvili, Field Marshal The Lord Inge, Admiral Jacques Lanxade, and General Henk van den Breemen, “Towards a Grand Strategy for an Uncertain World: Renewing Transatlantic Partnership,” Noaber Foundation, 2007, at http://www.csis.org/media/csis/events/080110_grand_strategy.pdf (November 24, 2008).

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 125–126.

31. The North Atlantic Treaty, April 4, 1949, art. 10, at <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/treaty.htm> (November 3, 2008).

history, NATO is robust enough to make this necessary adaptation, while retaining the indivisibility of the security of all members.

NATO–EU Relations

Traditionally, NATO has been the primary alliance architecture in which to discuss Europe's security. However, when France assumed the six-month EU presidency on July 1, 2008, it made advancing a military identity anchored within enhanced EU power structures, independent of NATO, a top priority. With the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) in existence for nearly a decade, average European defense spending has decreased. The ESDP has provided NATO with little or no valuable complementarity, and serious questions remain about the EU's motivation in pursuing a military identity. NATO needs to reassess the structural and organizational relationship between the EU and NATO, including the purpose and value of pursuing further integration.

NATO–EU relations are underpinned by the Berlin Plus Agreement signed in December 2002 and implemented in March 2003. It is easy to see why Washington thought it was receiving a good deal out of Berlin Plus: While the agreement assured the EU access to NATO's planning capabilities and assets for EU-led crisis management operations, the United States also anticipated a bigger commitment by the EU to upgrading its military capabilities. The premise of Berlin Plus was essentially that the ESDP would reinforce NATO, not undermine it, and uphold the long-held American policy doctrine of the "three Ds": no decoupling from NATO, no duplication of NATO resources, and no discrimination against NATO members that are not part of the EU.

Yet the Europeans have not increased their defense commitment in terms of spending or manpower, and significant evidence indicates that the EU has long since abandoned the three Ds. It has become clear that the European Union signed Berlin Plus to elevate its own status and gain access to

NATO assets (which are largely American) with no genuine commitment to increase defense spending.

France's insistence that the EU should have its own permanent operational planning cell exemplifies French aspirations in this field. Berlin Plus was negotiated specifically on the understanding that autonomous EU operations would be directed from national capitals or from Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in Belgium. Prime Minister Tony Blair was adamant on this point when drawing up the St. Malo Declaration with French President Chirac. For Blair, a permanent EU planning cell represented not just a wasteful duplication of NATO assets, but a definite decoupling of the two organizations. Of course, Chirac likely intended these very consequences, but gave way to Blair initially, knowing that the centralization of power within the European Union moves in only one direction.

Chirac was correct that the St. Malo agreement was only the beginning of the EU's wholesale centralization of defense policy. The EU's Brussels-based operations center opened on January 1, 2007, and was tested in a fictional exercise in June of that year. It is a separate, non-permanent EU operational headquarters, which is intended for civilian or civilian–military operations, but only under limited circumstances. These limitations were put in place after British objections failed to eliminate the idea completely, but they will certainly be removed as the EU military identity takes shape. The French white paper "Defense and National Security" explicitly states that one EU priority is to:

Reinforce considerably European planning and command capability. The EU must have an independent European standing strategic planning capability. The growing number of EU interventions abroad also requires more military operational planning and command capability.³²

The creation of EU battle groups epitomizes the EU's quest for power at the expense of NATO. Without new defense euros and new European soldiers, the battle groups should be seen as nothing less

32. Office of the President of France, "Défense et Sécurité nationale" (Defense and national security), June 2008, chap. 7, at http://www.ambafrance-ca.org/IMG/pdf/livre_blanc.pdf (December 5, 2008). English version at http://www.ambafrance-ca.org/IMG/pdf/Livre_blanc_Press_kit_english_version.pdf (December 5, 2008).

than a direct duplication of the NATO Response Force and a challenge to NATO's transformational initiative.

Given that the decade-long ESDP experiment has been unsuccessful in advancing NATO or U.S. interests, NATO should review the terms of the Berlin Plus Agreement to find a solution to NATO–EU relations that adds to global security, rather than detracts from it.

The Strasbourg Summit should clarify NATO–EU relations, not in the vein of accelerating an EU military identity, but by explicitly stating two non-negotiable points:

- NATO's primacy in the transatlantic security alliance is supreme.
- The EU's relationship to NATO is as a civilian complement, and the EU is defined as a civilian actor in the transatlantic security alliance.

A new category must be formulated to define the EU's relationship status with NATO. Since conflict resolution requires a comprehensive approach, the EU offers the possibility of being primarily a deployable, civilian complement to the NATO alliance. The momentum for NATO and the EU to work together in the military field is fraught with problems and driven by a desire to secure an EU power base. The EU has an army of bureaucrats, police trainers, aid workers, and jurists that could complement NATO in a more cohesive approach to reconstruction and development. As Afghanistan has demonstrated, it is often necessary for these professionals to work alongside the military. Civilian missions, especially stabilization and reconstruction are tasks that the EU naturally favors and that the EU has some capacity to perform. It should play to its strengths and undertake the role of an additional civilian instrument as part of NATO's comprehensive approach to war and peacemaking.

However, if the EU wants to act in areas of the world where NATO does not, NATO should not be expected to provide its resources for these missions. If the EU genuinely believes that global security is

enhanced by engaging in military missions without NATO, then it should pay for such missions exclusively from European budgets and use European assets and manpower. Furthermore, in determining a new NATO–EU relationship, the assets and resources for exclusively European missions must be provided *in addition to*—not instead of—the members' contributions to NATO. Any investment in the ESDP must not obfuscate members' commitments to NATO or allow for the creation of a two-tiered alliance.

Burden Sharing

The heart and soul of NATO continues to rest on the deterrence value of its Article V commitment, in which an attack on one member constitutes an attack on the entire alliance. This commitment implies obligations. Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty clearly states that, if one member is attacked, the other members “will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.”

If Article V is to have value both as a deterrent and as a shared defense commitment, military capacity and preparedness are priorities. In fact, if the NATO Alliance is to be seen as a credible instrument for both Article V and non–Article V missions, its collective security relies on sharing responsibilities and having the military resources to support NATO's strategy.

America's position as the world's only superpower has naturally assigned it the role of NATO's de facto leader. However, the inequitable sharing of risks and responsibilities within the alliance, playing out so clearly in Afghanistan, has raised considerable unease about NATO's genuine commitment to shared defenses. In a recent report, the International Institute for Strategic Studies found that just 2.7 percent of Europe's 2 million military personnel are capable of overseas deployment.³³ This con-

33. Press release, “European Military Capabilities: Building Armed Forces for Modern Operations,” International Institute for Strategic Studies, July 9, 2008, at <http://www.iiss.org/publications/strategic-dossiers/european-military-capabilities/press-statement> (November 24, 2008).

trasts sharply with NATO's goal that 40 percent of its land forces be deployable, which in itself was a modest and underreaching goal in the first place.

Another NATO benchmark that has not been reached is defense spending. Just four (Bulgaria, France, Greece, and the U.K.) of the 21 EU-NATO members spend the NATO benchmark of 2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) on defense, and average EU defense spending has significantly decreased over the past 10 years.

Inequitable investment in high-end military equipment is even more startling, as evidenced by the considerable gap between American and allied capabilities during NATO's air campaign against Yugoslavia in 1999. The United States provided 100 percent of NATO's jamming capability, 90 percent of the air-to-ground surveillance, and 80 percent of the air refueling tankers, and U.S. fighters and bombers delivered 90 percent of the precision-guided munitions.³⁴

NATO needs to find a more equitable solution to the questions of manpower, equipment, and resources. In today's challenging economic environment, the United States should not be expected to carry Europe's load. NATO should enforce its 2 percent benchmark with corresponding consequences: If a member's defense spending falls below 2 percent of GDP for more than three consecutive years, its voting rights should be suspended in both the NAC and the Defense Planning Committee until its defense budget increases to 2 percent. Naming and shaming alone has not created credible defense spending; therefore, tougher ramifications are needed. Spending 2 percent of GDP on defense for the previous three

years should also be made a requirement for accession to NATO.

NATO also needs to address the question of national caveats. The mission in Afghanistan is virtually creating a two-tiered alliance, in which many nations commit troops only with specific provisos, including that their troops not be sent into combat zones. One caveat bars Southern European troops from fighting in snow, and one member prohibits troops from other nations from flying in its aircraft.³⁵

This is significantly harming the overall health of the alliance and is an absurd way to fight a war. U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates bluntly described this phenomenon as "some allies willing to fight and die to protect people's security and others who are not."³⁶ To the alliance's humiliation, earlier this year, its European members proved unwilling to muster an additional 3,200 troops to send to southern Afghanistan as requested by Secretary Gates.³⁷ U.S. Under Secretary of State Nicholas Burns has noted that nine NATO members are carrying 95 percent of the burden in Afghanistan.³⁸

National caveats are also a potential danger to the success of the Afghanistan mission. For example, German troops are restricted to relatively peaceful northern Afghanistan, and operate under such ludicrous restrictions that a senior Taliban commander responsible for attacking coalition convoys and organizing a Baghlan bomb blast that killed 79 people in November 2007 escaped from German special forces because they are forbidden to shoot except in self-defense.³⁹

The NATO Alliance was built on the enduring values of civilized democracies and solidarity among the member states to export, not just con-

34. Robert G. Bell, "NATO's Transformation Scorecard," *NATO Review*, Spring 2005, at <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2005/issue1/english/art3.html> (November 3, 2008).

35. Reuters, "Restrictions on NATO Troops in Afghanistan," AlertNet, November 26, 2006, at <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L26451165.htm> (November 24, 2008).

36. Roger Cohen, "The Long Haul in Afghanistan," *International Herald Tribune*, February 27, 2008, at <http://www.ihf.com/articles/2008/02/27/opinion/edcohen.php> (November 24, 2008).

37. CNN, "Germans Reject U.S. Troops Request," February 1, 2008, at <http://www.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/europe/02/01/germany.afghanistan> (November 24, 2008). Ultimately, the U.S. relieved the manpower shortage by providing the needed troops.

38. Luke Baker, "Clock Running on NATO's Stretched Afghan Operation," Reuters, February 13, 2008, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/featuredCrisis/idUSL1298198> (November 24, 2008).

sume, security. To have large, wealthy nations refuse to pull their weight at the expense of the other members is fundamentally wrong. As NATO spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Rejean Duchesneau notes, “If you sign on to the mission, you should sign on to the whole package.”⁴⁰ Alliance members need to commit to eliminate all operational caveats on its missions henceforth.

Sharing burdens increases trust, cooperation, and mutual reliance. The intelligence-sharing relationship between the U.K. and the U.S. is built on these very principles. The U.K.-based effort to increase NATO intelligence sharing at the Intelligence Fusion Center at RAF Molesworth can only be sustained in the longer term if the principle of the indivisibility of security among allies is maintained.

What NATO Members Should Do

To reform and revitalize NATO to meet the challenges and threats of the 21st century, NATO should:

- Agree to a Declaration on Allied Security at the Strasbourg Summit in 2009 that includes a new threat perception restating existing threats as well as new ones, such as cyberterrorism and ballistic missile attack. The declaration should also make concrete recommendations to address each threat.
- Follow the U.S. example of explicitly restating NATO’s open-door policy and endorsing this message by working closely with Georgia and Ukraine to ensure timely accessions where appropriate.
- Reaffirm NATO as the cornerstone of the transatlantic alliance and the primary actor in European security.
- Readmit France into NATO’s integrated military command structures only if Paris is willing to uphold the primacy of NATO in European defense cooperation and if the alliance can be

confident that France will be a cooperative rather than confrontational partner.

- Agree to new decision-making rules based on a “coalitions-of-the-willing-and-able” approach, in which contributors to a coalition are authorized to undertake the planning and management of the operation among themselves.
 - Agree to new burden-sharing rules. Specifically, the benchmark of spending at least 2 percent of GDP on defense by NATO members should be made an enforced requirement for gaining membership and for retaining full voting rights within the alliance.
- In addition to these actions by NATO as a whole:
- Each alliance member should commit to eliminate the vast majority of operational caveats on its missions.
 - The European Union should announce that the European Security and Defense Policy will be a civilian component in Europe’s security architecture and will provide additional resources.
 - The U.S. should reserve NATO resources exclusively for NATO missions. All European military missions should be funded exclusively by EU member states.

Conclusion

NATO remains central to transatlantic security and the crowning glory of America’s alliance architecture. Few formal alliances, if any, can boast the successes that NATO has enjoyed throughout its history. However, NATO is an alliance in need of reform and revitalization to accommodate new security policies and defense strategies. This will require both Europe and America to put their full weight behind this process.

Europe needs to demonstrate its commitment to NATO in terms of both spending and manpower. A small number of NATO members cannot con-

39. Allan Hall and Matthew Hickley, “German Army Officers Allow Top Taliban Commander to Escape... Because They Are Not Allowed to Use Lethal Force,” *Daily Mail*, May 20, 2008, at <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1020488/German-army-officers-allow-Taliban-commander-escape—allowed-use-lethal-force.html> (November 24, 2008).

40. Jim Michaels, “Nations Limit Use of NATO Forces,” *USA Today*, September 28, 2006, at http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2006-09-28-afghanistan-nato-caveats_x.htm (November 24, 2008).

tinue to bear a disproportionate share of the burden, such as in Afghanistan, if the alliance is to remain unified.⁴¹ For its part, the United States must continue to exercise strong leadership of both existing and new transformation initiatives, so that the alliance is ready to confront current and emerging threats.

In the past decade, NATO has undertaken out-of-area missions, invoked Article V, and enlarged to 26 members. The next decade will likely see

equally large challenges for NATO—challenges that the alliance must defeat for the sake of global security and stability.

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41. U.K. House of Commons, Select Committee on Defence, “Ninth Report,” at <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmdfence/111/11106.htm> (November 24, 2008).