



NATO

RETHINK - REALIGN - REACT

TACKLING SECURITY CHALLENGES TOGETHER

edited by: Kinga Redłowska

Fota • Karber • Lafond • Larsen • Petersen • Šlekys
Stuchtey • Tučkutė • Żurawski vel Grajewski

**On the eve of Warsaw
NATO summit**



Ministry
of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Poland

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Preface

The forthcoming NATO summit in Warsaw will face historic challenges. The context of the summit is no less historic. No nation would seem better-placed to understand the complexity of the turbulences of history than the Poles and city would seem placed to talk about the breakthrough in NATO strategies for future than Warsaw.

What we can assume in the run-up to the meeting is that the summit will signal the renewal of NATO as a military alliance or at least remind us of its primary task – territorial defense. The war in Ukraine and the occupation of Crimea, the crisis in the Middle East and mass migration to Europe along with the rise of new threats, like terrorism, all give a new urgency to the search for a new security paradigm – a paradigm of a resilient alliance that is ready to face the sad fact that war has once again become part of the spectrum of modern statecraft.

The United States remains the leading power of the Alliance but, as François Lafond notes, it is with increasing frequency that questions about burden-sharing are being raised. The White House is pressing European NATO members to contribute more towards their own security. And Europe must pursue its integration, including in the military sphere, without jeopardizing NATO.

Building up modern security no longer means concentrating solely on tanks and jet fighters, though in his article Tim Stuchtey accurately highlights the necessity to advance modern military solutions and combine military effectiveness with more than just an eye on economic efficiency. Lithuanian experts - Greta Tučkutė and Deividas Šlekys indicate the threats posed to public order, democratic values and peace in NATO countries by hybrid measures. The Baltic states fully understand that, thanks to years of high oil prices and firm leadership, Russia has been able to develop a capacity to match its ambitions. Therefore Tučkutė and Šlekys underline the psychological aspects as a vulnerable area of defense.

Two main fronts of discussion at the NATO Warsaw summit will be, on the one hand, the Eastern Flank and NATO relations with Russia, and on the other, the less linear but more complex challenges of the Islamists in the South. As pointed out by Przemysław Żurawski vel Grajewski, the NATO summit in Warsaw will be a forum for debating these threats, taking the different natures of each and the different sensitivities of individual Alliance member states to them into account.

What is the balance between the East and the South? Phillip Karber and Phillip Petersen of the American think-tank The Potomac Foundation expose the fact that the countries most vulnerable to large-scale Russian aggression are the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Their history, geography and demographics all contribute to the insecurity in the region. A growing sense of threat is accompanied by requests for a stronger NATO military presence in the region. Iulian Fota points to another crucial area - the Black Sea region, which, he argues, remains the center of the process of reshaping relationships between Russia and the West. As Fota claims, a Black Sea closed to access from international community would be nothing more than a "Russian lake." At the same time he ponders the idea of global realignment introduced by Zbigniew Brzezinski and how it will influence the upcoming NATO summit.

Today, when the overoptimistic period in relations between the West and Russia is history and as new challenges emerge in the South, the heads of NATO member states, soon to meet in Warsaw, have to decide what form NATO 3.0 will assume – or in other words, what shape modern deterrence will take. I hope that the articles collected in this volume will inspire readers and provide a deeper insight into the complexity of the current security challenges.

Kinga Redłowska
Director
International Cooperation Department
Institute for Eastern Studies

Foreword

Poland, European Security, and the Warsaw Summit

Jeffrey A. Larsen

In July 2016 Warsaw will host a meeting of Heads of State and Government of the North Atlantic Alliance. This book represents one of the intellectual contributions to that Summit. “NATO: Rethink Realign React—Tackling Security Challenges Together” is a product of the Foundation Institute for Eastern Studies, and represents part of a larger project on “Cooperation in the Field of Public Diplomacy 2016” sponsored by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Since the end of the Cold War Poland has played a central role in building the Euro-Atlantic security architecture. Poland joined NATO in 1999. In so doing, it placed its faith in the hands of an international alliance that had won the Cold War. Yet given Poland's history of conquest and occupation, some doubts about those security guarantees remained. These have recently been fanned by American calls for a pivot toward the Asia-Pacific, by the emphasis within the Alliance on expeditionary operations to the detriment of forces necessary for collective defense in Europe, and by growing Russian military strength that appears to be aligned with larger political ambitions. Further, some of Poland's allies seem unwilling to stand up to these Russia challenges. Poland feels concerned that it may one day find itself alone in having to ensure its security against major power aggression. For that reason Poland has changed its military focus in recent years to emphasize defense against ground, air, and ballistic missile attack. To accomplish this, Poland has increased its defense spending and is debating whether it needs a more robust national deterrent (building on the Technical Modernization Program).

Underlying all of this is the question whether Warsaw should focus on national defense or on continued support to the Alliance more broadly. The decisions announced at the 2016 Warsaw Summit may have some role in determining Poland's direction. Perhaps the Poles can afford to do both, or at least ensure that their national forces are designed to also support NATO's requirements. But as one recent analyst put it, “Investing in a strong NATO and working towards maximizing the likelihood for a common response of the Alliance to any future threats will remain the best deterrence policy for Poland. And while Warsaw should act swiftly to establish its own defensive capabilities, it is crucial that these are framed within NATO's wider deterrence posture.”¹ The danger of doing otherwise is that an outsider may interpret the emphasis on national defense as a sign of uncertainty or doubt as to the resolve of the Alliance.

Several events made 2014 a seminal year for European security. Russia's behaviour on the international scene changed the nature of the debate about the future of European relations with Moscow. At the same time, a new and dangerous threat arose in the deserts

1 Lukasz Kulesa, “Poland's Deterrence and Defense Posture: Preparing for 21st Century Threats,” Defense Intelligence Brief No. 4, Center for European Policy Analysis, May 2016, p. 9.

of the Middle East, one that has the potential to provide a long-term challenge to Europe and its interests in the Mediterranean region.

These two threats led to a significant shift in thinking within the Alliance, away from the pillar of NATO security that focused on cooperative security and back to greater emphasis on collective defense as the core of its security responsibilities. This reflects a broad shift toward the view long held by Poland and some of its neighbor states in Central Europe. The rest of Europe, it would seem, is finally coming to the realization that Polish concerns about Russia were valid.

The July 2016 NATO Summit will address a large number of agenda items, all of them part of the larger process of adaptation that the Alliance is undergoing to prepare for the near- to mid-term future. These can be categorized in three baskets: political, military, and institutional. The issues addressed at the summit will include relations with Russia, deterrence and defense, the rise of new threats on the Southern flank, assuring allies in Central Europe and the South, and dealing with hybrid warfare, terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and cyber security.

This volume covers disparate topics, all of which are important to the Alliance in today's more challenging security environment. They examine Russia's aggressive behavior and options for NATO response; the importance of the Black Sea region as the epicenter of the contest over the post-Cold War liberal international order; the dangers posed by terrorism, cyber threats, and propaganda; the continued importance of and challenges to domestic defense industries; and a philosophical discussion on the norms and values that make up the Alliance, and whether those reflect American or European views.

The ultimate goal of the Warsaw Summit – and this volume – is to highlight Alliance cohesion and resolve in the face of all these challenges.

Jeffrey A. Larsen



He became Director of the Research Division at the NATO Defense College in 2013. Previously he served as a Senior Scientist with Science Applications International Corporation, president of Larsen Consulting Group in Colorado Springs, and as a Lt Colonel in the US Air Force where he held positions as a command pilot in Strategic Air Command, associate professor at the Air Force Academy, and first director of the Air Force Institute for National Security Studies. He has been an Adjunct Professor at Denver, Northwestern, and Texas A&M universities. In 2005 he was selected as NATO's Manfred Wörner Fellow, and previously served as a Fulbright NATO Research Fellow. He twice won SAIC's annual publications award. He has served as a consultant to Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories, US Strategic Command, US Northern Command, the US Air Force, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, and the Defense Nuclear Weapons School. Dr. Larsen is the author or editor of more than 100 books, articles, and monographs on current issues in national security. He earned his PhD in politics from Princeton University, writing his dissertation on the politics of NATO nuclear modernization.

The NATO Summit in Warsaw. New Perspectives

Przemysław Żurawski vel Grajewski

Since 2014 NATO has faced challenges it had considered consigned to history. The post cold war formula adopted in 1990s - 'out-of-area' or 'out-of-business' has been replaced by the new one - 'in-area' or 'in-troubles'. This shift came with the Russian Federation's invasion and annexation of Crimea and with its armed aggression in the Donbass in 2014. This was followed in 2015 with the migrant crisis born in the Middle East – taking place against the backdrop of ISIS and Islamic terrorism.

The Islamic state in Syria and Iraq is a proof of the USA's ineffective world leadership and Europe's military weakness. The crisis also has a Russian dimension, beginning in 2013 with Russia's political victory over the USA in Syria¹ and confirmed by Moscow's military intervention in that country in 2015; it affects the NATO's southern flank member states and the core EU countries, as well as jeopardizes the security of the Alliance's eastern flank. The geographical extent of the crisis tempts the West to consider Russia an ally in the fight against radical Islam². And for the first time in history it has turned the Mediterranean into the Federal Republic of Germany's top security priority³. Unsurprisingly, since the migrants are mainly heading towards Germany, threatening a shake up the country's political scene and change its position within both the EU and NATO.

The reflections that follow concerning the Alliance's prospects after the NATO summit in Warsaw focus on answering these questions: 1) Why have we been surprised by the current situation and why are we so unprepared for it, forced to improvise and play for time? 2) Against which negative scenarios must we safeguard ourselves? 3) What possible ways out are there?

Sources of omissions

The NATO summit in Warsaw will be the second since Russia's invasion of Crimea and the start of Russia's war against Ukraine. The previous summit in Newport⁴ was a turning point – a reaction against Russia's second armed revision of borders within Europe since 2008. It was an ad hoc reaction arising out of the neglect of Russian aggression in Georgia six years earlier. That aggression was to a great extent provoked by a decision NATO took at the Bucharest summit to postpone the issue of MAPs for Georgia and Ukraine until the next meeting in order not to "aggravate" Russia⁵. This decision was nothing less

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- 1 E. Moore, R. Zarate, 4 Reasons the U.S.-Russia Deal on Syria Is Bad News, "U.S. News & World Report", Oct. 29, 2013. Comp. W. Rodkiewicz, Russia's diplomatic offensive over Syria, "Analyses" OSW, 11.09.2013 and M. Menkiszak, Responsibility to protect... itself? Russia's strategy towards the crisis in Syria, FIIA Briefing Paper 131 May 2013, pp.10.
 - 2 W Rodkiewicz, Russia's game in Syria, "Analyses" OSW, 30.09.2015.
 - 3 J. Gotkowska, K. Frymark, Germany's engagement in the resolution of the Syrian conflict, "Commentary" OSW, No 194, 25.01.2016, p.1-8.
 - 4 NATO Wales Summit 2014, Wales, United Kingdom, 4 Sept. 2014 - 5 Sept. 2014, NATO, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/events_112136.htm?selectedLocale=en.
 - 5 R. D. Asmus, Mała wojna, która wstrząsnęła światem. Gruzja, Rosja i przyszłość Zachodu [The Little War that Shook the World. Georgia, Russia and the Future of the West], Warsaw 2010, pp. 222-228 and Bucharest

than a telegram to the Kremlin saying: "Wrap it up by December". In 2009 the USA began its reset of its relations with Russia and the European powers re-armed the aggressor. In 2011, the German company Rheinmetall began building a land forces training center in Mulino near Nizhny Novgorod, while France signed a contract with Moscow for Mistral class amphibious assault ships⁶. Warning signals sent by the Alliance's eastern flank were deemed symptomatic of "Polish and Baltic Russophobia". NATO's neglect of the tragedy of Chechnya and its failure to deal with Russia's aggression in Georgia only encouraged the Kremlin to continue imposing its will. Referring to the Western reaction to the Russian Federation Council's decision authorizing Putin to send the army into Ukraine (1 March 2014)⁷, one delegate stated from the podium of the upper chamber of the Russian parliament: "Пошумят, пошумят и перестанут" ("They'll shout and shout and then they'll stop.") This stance was echoed by CPRF leader Gennady Zyuganov and LDPR leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy in comments on the sanctions imposed on Russia by the West⁸. Moscow had become convinced of NATO's inertia and of its own impunity. If those sanctions are lifted, or if the Alliance's eastern flank does not receive military reinforcement, the Kremlin will take this as confirming its reading of the situation – and as consent to further expansion. The result of a policy not to "aggravate" Russia and instead to seek "constructive dialogue" will be war.

Moscow's aggression against sovereign European states has been a fact since the collapse of the USSR. An initial 'hot' phase was followed by a stage of frozen conflicts - in Transnistria⁹, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and indirectly in Nagorno-Karabakh too¹⁰. Since 2008, 'old' conflicts (in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan) have resurfaced¹¹, and to these Moscow has added new ones - in Ukraine and Syria. It is also continually waging

Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Bucharest on 3 April 2008, Press Release (2008) 049 Issued on 3 Apr. 2008, NATO Home Page, Official Texts, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_8443.htm.

- 6 A. Wilk, P. Zochowski, Francja i Niemcy zacieśniają współpracę wojskową z Rosją [France and Germany Strengthen Military Cooperation with Russia], „Tydzień na Wschodzie” [“Eastern Week”] OSW 2011, No. 22(182), pp.3–4. Comp. V. Socor, Arms Transfers to Russia: An Internal Challenge to NATO, „Eurasia Daily Monitor”, June 2011, vol. 8, No. 125 and Г. Поволоцкий, Российско-французское военное сотрудничество: «Мистраль» наполнил паруса доверия, „Международная жизнь”, 5 | 2011, <http://inter-affairs.ru/read.php?item=552>. The Germans broke that contract in August 2014. (Niemcy nie ukończą centrum szkoleniowego w Rosji [Germans won't finish training centre in Russia], Defence24, 4.08.2014, http://www.defence24.pl/news_niemcy-nie-ukoncza-centrum-szkoleniowego-w-rosji), and France in August 2015 - one and a half years after the Russian invasion of Crimea! (Koniec sagi mistrali. Rosja otrzyma od Francji „pełną rekompensatę” [End of the Mistral saga. Russia to receive “full compensation” from France], Fakty [Facts], tvn24, 5.08.2015).
- 7 Совет Федерации дал согласие на использование Вооруженных Сил России на территории Украины, 1 марта 2014, Совет Федерации Федерального Собрания Российской Федерации, <http://council.gov.ru/press-center/news/39851/>.
- 8 Жириновский: США пошумят, и все забудут, а мы уедем отдыхать в Крым, „Life News”, 17 March 2014, <http://lifenews.ru/news/129278> and Зюганов про санкции против России: „пошумят и успокоятся”, РИА Новости, 27 March 2014, <http://ria.ru/world/20140327/1001277535.html>. Zhuganov pointed to German business interests which, in his judgment, will not permit any real economic sanctions against Russia. This is how he understood Angela Merkel's position in this regard.
- 9 I. Baban, The Transnistrian Conflict in the Context of the Ukrainian Crisis, ISN ETH Zurich, 12 January 2016, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Articles/Detail/?id=195538>.
- 10 W. Bartuzi, K. Pełczyńska-Nałęcz, K. Strachota, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh: unfrozen conflicts between Russia and the West, “OSW Report”, 15.07.2008.
- 11 A. Jarosiewicz, M. Falkowski, The four day war in Nagorno-Karabakh, “Analyses” OSW, 06.04.2016 and M. Falkowski, Russia's “Neighbourhood Policy”: the case of Abkhazia, “Analyses” OSW, 26.11.2014.

an information and propaganda war against its nearest and more distant neighbors¹². In recent years, it has concentrated on discrediting the Baltic states and Poland as “historically-motivated Russophobes”¹³, and on using propaganda to lay the groundwork for further aggression, by portraying its victims as irresponsible adventurers – either mentally ill (Georgia)¹⁴ or neo-Nazi sympathizers (Ukraine)¹⁵. Moscow has also strived to maintain or revive memories of historical conflicts among its neighbors (Poland and Ukraine, Poland and Lithuania, Hungary and Slovakia, Hungary and Romania, Romania and Ukraine, etc.). The crowning achievement of this campaign was a proposal for the partition of Ukraine submitted by the Vice Chairman of the State Duma, printed on the official letterhead of the Russian parliament and sent to the foreign ministers of Poland, Hungary and Romania¹⁶. In recent months, Germany has also experienced this type of aggression, with Kremlin attempts to inflame conflicts against the backdrop of the migration crisis¹⁷.

Challenges

Russia has four main ‘export goods’: natural gas, crude oil, corruption and destabilization. The first two need no clarification. A symbol of the third was Gerhard Schröder; today it is radical parties in Europe, from the National Front of Marie Le Pen to Syriza and Podemos¹⁸. Examples of the fourth run from support for Milošević’s Serbia to the promotion of separatists in Georgia and Moldavia, to the attempt to destabilize Estonia in 2007¹⁹ and to the current aggression in Ukraine. Stabilization marginalizes Russia in the international arena, while destabilization strengthens it. This rule has been confirmed by experience in the former Yugoslavia, the Caucasus, Moldavia, Afghanistan, Ukraine and Syria. Against this backdrop it is therefore puzzling why hope of the Kremlin playing a constructive role persists in Western discourse.

Since 2007 Russia has been arming itself intensively; 4% of Russian GDP is now allocated for that purpose. Since 2011 the country’s expenditures on land forces have tripled, from slightly more than 94 billion rubles to over 285 billion. Since February 2013, its army has been exercising intensively and remains at a high level of combat readiness. Provoca-

12 J. Darczewska, The devil is in the details. Information warfare in the light of Russia’s military doctrine, “Point of View” OSW, No. 50, Warsaw May 2015, pp.39.

13 J. Darczewska, P. Żochowski, Russophobia in the Kremlin’s strategy. A weapon of mass destruction, “Point of View” OSW, No. 56, Warsaw, October 2015, p.29.

14 Russian Paper Claims Saakashvili Is Crazy, Sweetness & Light, Aug. 19, 2008, <http://sweetness-light.com/archive/russian-paper-says-saakashvili-is-crazy>.

15 J. Darczewska, The anatomy of Russian information warfare. The Crimean operation, a case study, “Point of View” OSW, No. 42, Warsaw, May 2014, p.37.

16 Zhirinovsky’s “lunatic” status does nothing to undo the seriousness of a campaign, when this is understood not as an attempt to carry out aggression against Ukraine jointly with the above-mentioned states, but as an instrument of an information war - a tool for evoking distrust between them and the victim of Russian aggression. Rosja proponuje Polsce rozbiór Ukrainy - MSZ dostało oficjalne pismo [Russia proposes partition of Ukraine to Poland]. Nałęcz: Kuriozum [An Oddity]. Należałoby przesłać do psychiatry [Should be sent to a psychiatrist], Gazeta.pl, 23.03.2014.

17 Russland-Deutsche demonstrieren nach angeblicher Vergewaltigung, „Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung”. Agenturmeldungen, 24.01.2016 i M. Wehner, Unser Mädchen Lisa. Russlands Informationskrieg, „Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung” Politik, 31.01.2016.

18 Russia’s European supporters. In the Kremlin’s pocket, Who backs Putin, and why, “The Economist”, 14 February 2015.

19 Russia’s Involvement in the Tallinn Disturbances, International Centre for Defence Studies in Tallinn, Eesti.pl, 10 maja 2007, <http://www.eesti.pl/russias-involvement-in-the-tallinn-disturbances-1254.html> and P. Torsti, Why do History Politics Matter? The Case of the Estonian Bronze Soldier. [in:] J. Aunesluoma, P. Ketunen (ed.), The Cold War and the Politics of History, Helsinki 2008, pp. 19-35.

tions by Russian aircraft and submarines violating the airspace and territorial waters of both NATO states and the neutral Scandinavian countries are on the increase. There is a growing Russian military presence in the Arctic and the Middle East. Since 2009, Russian military maneuvers have been organized on the assumption of carrying out aggression in the Baltic Sea, up to and including a “de-escalating” nuclear strike²⁰. Russia’s military potential does not equal that of NATO, but unlike the Alliance, it maintains its army at a high level of combat readiness and demonstrates its determination to employ that army. Adapted to waging war against the regular forces of other states, Russia’s armed forces stand in contrast to those of NATO, which have for years been involved in counter-insurgency and consequently being deprived of an organic anti-aircraft component within the armed and mechanized brigades²¹. The enhancement of Russia’s A2/AD (Anti-Access/Area Denial) capabilities in respect of the Baltic states and Poland also increases Russia’s advantage at the beginning of a potential conflict, effectively hindering the transfer of NATO troops to the combat region. In these conditions, any sign at all of weakness on NATO’s part may be interpreted by the Kremlin as a green light to initiate a “little, victorious war”, covering Putin in new glory at home.

Russia is not governed in accordance with the national interest of the Russian state, nor has the Russian government ever been known for its concern over its citizens. No basis for suspecting things had changed was provided by Russia’s bombardment of Grozny, full of ethnic Russians²², its poisoning of the hostages in the theater in Dubrowka²³, or its response to Western sanctions with counter-sanctions whose main impact was on ordinary Russians²⁴. Russia is governed in line with the interests of the siloviks - a handful of strongmen – the former officers of KGB and GRU gathered around Putin and Sechin. It is therefore capable of provoking conflicts externally that are contrary to its own state interests if its rulers judge those conflicts essential to the management of the internal systemic crisis. For the political and economic system of Russia has already exhausted its capacity to develop, and the country is inevitably sinking into a state of crisis. The only means of dealing with this available to the Kremlin is external conflict. The NATO summit in Warsaw will have to address this reality.

For NATO, the challenge Russia poses is military and political; for the states on the Alliance’s eastern flank it is existential. Destabilization in the south and ISIS are political challenges - a matter for special forces and a military problem only to a small extent. There is no shortage of NATO military potential on its southern flank; the shortage is rather of political will to bear the costs of joint action, and of ideas on how to put such an action into operation. In the east, though, there is a shortage of troops - at least four additional brigades are needed to defend the Baltic states. There is also a shortage of air defense and anti-missile systems for those troops and their theater of operations - the territory of those countries and Poland. In the event of a Russian invasion, the rapid and, at present,

20 A. Wilk, Is Russia making preparations for a great war?, “Analyses” OSW, 24.09.2014 and N. de Larrinaga, Return of the Bear. Russian Ground Forces Modernization, “HIS Jane’s Defence Weekly”, Vol. 53, Issue 11, 16 March 2016, pp. 23-24.

21 N. de Larrinaga, op.cit., p. 25 and D. A. Shlapak, M. Johnson, Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO’s Eastern Flank. Wargaming the Defense of the Baltics, Rand Corporation 2016, p.9.

22 M. Kuleba, Czeceński specnaz. Taktyka działań specjalnych [Chechnya spetsnaz. Special Forces Tactics], Warszawa 2001, pp. 29 and 387.

23 A. Krechetnikov, Moscow theatre siege: Questions remain unanswered, BBC News, 24 October 2012, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-20067384>.

24 E. Fischer, The Russian embargo is affecting Russia, “Analyses” OSW, 20.08.2014.

militarily inevitable loss of the Baltic states would leave NATO facing an unenviable choice between a bloody counteroffensive that could escalate into a world war and the admission of its own powerlessness, which in exposing NATO's inability to defend the integrity and/or existence of its member states would trigger the Alliance's collapse²⁵.

Gloomy scenarios

The crisis in Russia is the result of its having a one-dimensional economy based on raw materials, the drop in oil and gas prices on the global market, the sanctions imposed by the West²⁶, demographic weakness, excessive pride resulting in conflicts with its neighbors, corruption, a lack of democratic responsibility among the elites, and the absence of any vision for the country's role among the population at large that is not an imperial vision. Russia can no longer avoid the crisis, and Putin cannot blame his predecessors – he has been in power for too long. To explain the growing shortages Russians face every day, Putin must resort to a “conspiracy of imperialists”, and make amends through the imperial successes of his own governments.

The year 2016 will be an especially risky one. In May, at a conference of national parliamentary leaders of EU member states, acting on the basis of the Rome Declaration of 14 September 2015 issued by the presidents of the national assemblies of Germany, France, Italy and Luxembourg²⁷, member states will certainly be called upon to deepen EU integration, up to federalization of the “28”. After the entanglement of the Prime Minister of Great Britain (the face of the “Remain” campaign in Britain's coming in-out referendum on EU membership) in the Panama Papers affair, this will be the second blow to the UK's EU membership, and will in effect mean that in the referendum on 23 June the British will be choosing between Brexit and EU federalization. If the British say “No” to the European Union, the NATO summit in Warsaw will be held in an atmosphere of shock. The question of independence for Scotland could arise again, and if Scotland secedes, Catalonia might do too. Combined with the election campaign in the USA and the Olympic Games in Brazil (itself a reminder of the 2008 games, which took place at the time of Russia's invasion of Georgia), the summer of 2016 promises to be an interesting one. Of course, this scenario may not come true, but it cannot be ruled out. In 2017 we will see parliamentary elections in Germany and a presidential election in France - both in the context of the stubborn euro zone financial crisis and the migration crisis. Those crises are fueling the growing importance of the radical parties in both countries – which Moscow will take advantage of, exacerbating the migration crisis by intensifying the conflict in Syria and steering streams of immigrants towards Scandinavia²⁸. Every new terrorist attack will provide cover for the threat posed by Russia. Russia will play on these tensions, and inspire them. Putin will stop at nothing, as shown by the bomb attacks in Moscow, Volgodonsk and Buynaksk in 1999²⁹ and the death of Aleksander Litvinenko, who disclosed those stories³⁰. Russia's worsening

25 D. A. Shlapak, M. Johnson, op.cit., pp.1-16.

26 M. Domańska, S. Kardaś, The consequences of the Western financial sanctions on the Russian economy, “Commentary” OSW, No. 203, 23.03.2016, pp.1-8.

27 “Greater European Integration: The Way Forward” Rome, 14 September Declaration, <http://www.ipex.eu/IPEXL-WEB/dossier/files/download/082dbcc552a994f70152ab871b4e015a.do>.

28 P. Szymański, P. Żochowski, W. Rodkiewicz, Enforced cooperation: the Finnish-Russian migration crisis, “Analyses” OSW, 06.04.2016.

29 A. Litwinienko, J. Felsztynski, *Wysadzić Rosję [Blow Russia Up]*, Poznan 2007, p.351.

30 W. Rodkiewicz, Russia's restrained reaction to British report on Litvinenko's death, “Analyses” OSW, 27.01.2016.

economic output will result in the closing door syndrome. The Kremlin, seeking to revise the post-Cold War international order, has only two or three years to do so. Thereafter it will weaken, while the NATO decisions taken in Newport and hopefully in Warsaw will affect the military reality in Europe in favor of the West. From the Kremlin's point of view, the existing window of opportunity will close. If Russia is to disrupt international security – which is its goal – it must act quickly. The essence of such a campaign will not be to defeat NATO, but to compromise it, divide it, and in doing so lead to the internal collapse of the Alliance into 'old' states and 'new' states on the southern and eastern flanks, into 'Atlantics' and 'Europeans', into supporters of 'cooperation with Russia in the context of the common Islamic threat' and those for whom such an idea is as absurd as an alliance with ISIS, which could limit Russia's power in the Caucasus and Central Asia. We must avoid such divisions. The democratic governments of the NATO countries can only act within the scope voters approve of, and those voters do not and will not have a uniform evaluation of the threats they face. Their assessments will differ, depending on their geographical location and historical experience, as well as on how things are developing at the time (further Russian acts of aggression in a region, terrorist attacks, waves of migrants, etc.).

Ways out

In 1952, Lord Ismay, the First Secretary General of the Alliance, said: "The task can be expressed in four words: to preserve the peace! Peace first, peace last, peace all the time... We recognize that weakness is merely an invitation to an aggressor³¹". Maintaining peace is the fundamental goal of NATO, but the way to achieve that goal is effective deterrent. In order to actually discourage the Kremlin from waging a "short, victorious war" against the United States, which is "sinking into isolationism" or "preoccupied with the issue of China", and against "decadent Gayrope", symbolized by the "Wurst girl" and "expecting Russia to save them from belligerent Islam", that discouragement must be backed up by military force, not declarations. Forces must be deployed throughout areas of potential conflict so that the Russians will not need to "take our word for it" that the Alliance will rush in to help any member state that is attacked, but when planning any invasion will have to take account of a serious presence of international NATO forces, including units of the leading member states, in any potential theater of war. Only then will we achieve the effect we seek, and which was achieved this way during the years of the Cold War - the absence of a Russian decision to carry out aggression, and consequently - peace.

The NATO summit in Warsaw will be a forum for debating the two main threats described above - from Russia in the east and Islamists in the south, taking account of the different natures of each of these threats and the different sensitivities of individual Alliance member states to each of those challenges. The challenge created by Russia requires intensifying armament, loading NATO's eastern flank with equipment and personnel ready to act immediately, and being ready to rapidly support them with additional forces adapted to doing battle with the Russian army. The costs associated with these burdens will be borne by the countries along NATO's eastern flank and by the leading powers of the Alliance - mainly the USA. This challenge also requires NATO to develop its political resistance to the Russian propaganda war effort that will accompany any aggression, depicting its victims as being themselves at fault, morally loathsome and unworthy of the help of civilized nations, and depicting Russia as a bastion of stability, a valuable ally cru-

31 Lord Ismay's Brussels Broadcast. Radio talk on Belgium radio, 13 November 1953, NATO Speeches, On-line-Library, NATO, 19 Dec. 2001, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1953/s19531113.htm>.

cial to resolving other problems. That propaganda war is already under way – and calls for a response in the public media.

The challenge in the south is a military, immigration and anti-terrorist challenge. The military dimension comprises out-of-area operations resulting from the military need to break ISIS. That work is being carried out by third states, with support from NATO within the scope of C4ITS, aerial support, intelligence and special operations. The only NATO country in the region, Turkey, has enough potential to quickly crush an aggressor in the event of an attack. The problem in an open contest with ISIS will be post-conflict stabilization, not the military victory itself. The other countries of the Alliance will engage in that effort on the scale and at a time they themselves decide.

The immigration challenge pertains to policing borders, engaging border guards, coast guards and, in a policing, not combat, role, certain units of the navies of NATO countries. Here as well, the Alliance's capability is sufficient. The issue is one of disposal, not construction.

The anti-terrorist dimension is a task for the special services. Involving NATO's military structures will not be essential, though there will be political competition with the challenge from the east.

People in France and Belgium are already being killed in terrorist attacks, and we can expect this to happen soon in other countries as well. Citizens of the countries of NATO's eastern flank may die in much larger numbers from Russian shells, but only tomorrow. The number of victims of terrorist attacks, while appalling, is only a fraction of the potential number of victims of a war in the east. But such a war is at present only a possibility, while terrorist attacks are already very real. They naturally raise a public outcry, highlighting the drastic nature of the problem, and they provide a useful background for Russian propaganda, which can paint a picture to the nations of Western and Southern Europe that the fears of the nations of the eastern flank of the Alliance are the result of a historically-conditioned anti-Russian phobia, and not a realistic evaluation of dangers. NATO's leaders must understand the psychological nature of this situation, for it offers the Kremlin an opportunity to play an effective game of dividing the Alliance from within, something that must be prevented. Mutual understanding within the Alliance is vital to the success of the NATO summit in Warsaw.

In respect of each of the dimensions of the challenge from the south, the countries of NATO's eastern flank must provide appropriate forces and means, and must stand in solidarity with their Mediterranean allies when, together with the USA, those allies specify their expectations and determine a plan of action. In turn, the countries of the Alliance's southern flank must recognize the reality of the Russian threat, and not be deluded by the mirage of an anti-terrorist and anti-Islamist alliance with the Kremlin. When it deems it advantageous, the Kremlin is capable of supporting both terrorists and Islamists. The southern NATO countries must not object to strengthening the NATO military presence in the east. It is obvious that Ceuta, Melilla, Lampedusa and Lesbos are not going to evoke the same emotions on NATO's eastern flank as Narva, Latgale or the Suwalki Gap, and that the Baltic states, Poland and Romania, vulnerable to Russian attack, are not the main topic of conversation in the cafes of Grenada, Palermo and Thessaloniki.

The NATO summit in Warsaw must confirm the principle of the Alliance's doors being open to countries that meet its membership criteria. In the coming years that policy may be realistically applied to Finland and Sweden. If their governments and citizens decide

to join NATO, the Alliance should accept both of those countries without any unnecessary and dangerous delays. In the meantime, existing cooperation with Stockholm and Helsinki³² should be extended, and become one of the pillars of NATO's Baltic security policy.

After the Warsaw summit, the North Atlantic Alliance will be strengthened, and will carry out its mission of preserving the peace within the treaty area through the effective military deterrence of a potential aggressor, if it demonstrates by actions, and not mere declarations, that in the event of an attack on any NATO member state whatsoever, the allies will not be found wanting in either capability or solidarity. Illusions as to a possible renewal of cooperation with Russia under pre-2014 rules must be discarded, never to return as long as Russia continues its military occupation of parts of Georgia, Ukraine and Moldavia, and flouts international law on a scale not seen in Europe since 1945. The idea of not "aggravating" Russia must also be discarded, since it is Russia that decides what it finds aggravating or not – and what it finds particularly aggravating is the very existence of some NATO member states as independent countries. Realism and pragmatism towards an aggressor do not consist in signaling one's readiness to normalize mutual relations without initial conditions being met, as has been suggested in certain analytical circles³³, and even by the foreign minister of the Federal Republic of Germany³⁴. This is not pragmatism, but appeasement – encouragement to further aggression. The NATO summit in Warsaw will either reject the course of "forgiving" Moscow, or will confirm Russians' opinion of the West as cited above ("They'll shout and shout and then they'll stop"), thereby provoking more misfortune. NATO Secretary General Paul-Henri Spaak stated in 1958: "We must make peace with the Russians - a very sound idea. To make peace with Russians there is a precondition – and here the reasoning is already a little more difficult to follow - the Soviet Union must be asked to evacuate all the territories of East Germany, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia³⁵." Spaak was not a "Russophobic Pole or Balt". He was speaking not of Alliance member states but of the causes of their feeling threatened. He saw reality for what it was. We must also cast off wishful thinking on the subject of "pragmatic cooperation" with a Russia that is conquering its neighbors. For NATO to again treat Russia as a normal member of the international community, it must lay down conditions similar to those of 1958 and, along with Spaak, state: Russia must be asked to evacuate Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Crimea and the Donbass.

32 J. Gotkowska, P. Szymański, Proamerykańska bezaliansowość. Szwecja i Finlandia rozszerzają współpracę wojskową z USA [Pro-American Non-Alliance. Sweden and Finland Expand Military Cooperation with the USA], „Commentary OSW”, No. 205, 31.03.2016, pp.7. Comp. J. Gotkowska, New quality in Finland's cooperation with NATO, "Analyses" OSW, 19.10.2012.

33 T. Etzold, C. Opitz, The Baltic Sea Region: Challenges and Game Changers, 17th Baltic Development Forum Summit, Copenhagen, 23 November 2015, pp. 2-3.

34 German Foreign Minister: Russia should be returned to G8, UT Ukraine Today, 10 April 2016, <http://uatoday.tv/politics/german-foreign-minister-russia-should-be-returned-to-g8-627906.html>.

35 "The Case for the West". Speech delivered by General Secretary M. Paul-Henri Spaak, Palais des Academies, Brussels, Belgium, 10 February 1958, NATO Speeches, On-line-Library, NATO, 20 Jun. 2002, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1958/s19580210.htm>.



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NATO's Ideological Core: How Much of America, How Much of Europe?

François Lafond

The forthcoming NATO summit, to be held on 8-9 July 2016 in Warsaw, affords yet another excellent opportunity to ponder the role of the Atlantic Alliance, its relevance in the context of previous summits, and its further evolution. It will also be the right time to look into an issue which is inherently imbedded in the history of NATO, a military and political organization that has been driving transatlantic relations over the past 67 years as a unique platform for the US presence in Europe.

The question "How much of America, how much of Europe is there in NATO?" is far from easy to answer, precisely because it is the international context that heavily determines the scope of reciprocal presence. The general assumption is that NATO's ideological core may merely be the result of certain parameters that evolve over time, including US foreign policy in full redevelopment, and the configuration of power in Europe - with its national diplomatic particularities, but also with its collective ambition as symbolized by the European Union, and especially by the emergence of a common foreign and security policy. In other words, my purpose here is to take a snapshot of NATO, to find out, by following its trajectory, what it has come to represent today, and to grasp its evolution in today's world. While putting together an accurate picture is quite a challenge, some perspectives and thoughts can nevertheless be proposed.

A one-sided beginning

Literature is not wanting in studies demonstrating and explaining how the US has been the leading power of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization ever since NATO was established to counter the Warsaw Pact Organization. It has been commonplace to see the European allies working systematically in concert with the US, the world's superpower, to serve security goals that have been fully implemented and embraced by the United States. In fact, the Washington Treaty of 1949 was based on a very few simple premises. In the face of the Soviet threat and communist hegemonic aspirations, Europe appeared incapable of defending itself on its own, as shown by the fate of the European Defence Community (EDC) initiative, which failed in 1954, four years after it was proposed by its six founding states. This type of failure is something that that part of Europe under perpetual threat from its Soviet neighbor experienced frequently as some states moved towards greater independence. Against this background, the Atlantic Alliance was expected to guarantee the military protection of Western Europe and to support the economic development of the continent. One opinion went so far as to say that NATO "became an instrument of power strategy, since Washington - having held it up as the sine qua non of its European involvement - succeeded in denationalizing the defense policies of the Alliance's European members" (Boyer, 2010).

Only France chose to "go it alone", leaving NATO's integrated military command in 1966 in a bid to recover its sovereignty, that is, the power to use its territory as it saw fit, to cease assigning its military forces to NATO, and above all, to pursue its own defense strategy based on nuclear deterrence. France is now fully back into NATO, having re-entered

the Alliance's military structure in 2009. By making the decision to rejoin NATO as a full-fledged member, President Nicolas Sarkozy meant to demonstrate his "ideological closeness" with the United States. At the same time, France acknowledged and pinpointed its existing collaboration with NATO and its participation in NATO missions ever since the outbreak of civil war in the former Yugoslavia in 1993. In fact, by fully returning to NATO, France was determined to make its presence felt and to increase its clout in the collective security instrument that is NATO, while at the same time upholding its willingness to reinvigorate European defense. Even though the Atlantic Alliance and European defense capacity are often considered mutually exclusive, in particular by the British government, the former was supposed to make the best of the latter, and of initiatives aimed to bolster it. This is because often - too often - the European continent has not been able to develop the tools needed to defend Europe, since this was seen as a potential attempt to move away from NATO, or at least to diverge from the course set by the United States. Tensions arose out of the concerns of some over duplicating what could be done faster and better within a transatlantic framework. Optimistically, these fears are about to disappear.

Different strategic concepts

NATO's evolution, and the US's and its European partners' respective leverage, can be understood through the prism of different strategic concepts adopted over time which reveal how the international context impinges on the collective defense system that is NATO. Since the time of the first Strategic Concept for the Defense of the North Atlantic Area of January 1950, NATO's underlying aim has always been to deter aggression. The Korean War, waged far from the European continent, provided an opportunity to strengthen various military structures, including through the creation of an integrated military command. Then, in December 1952, the second Strategic Concept aimed to "ensure the defense of the NATO area and to destroy the will and capability of the Soviet Union and its satellites to wage war." The Strategic Concepts adopted in May 1957 and January 1968 further corroborated the US's influence on Europe, both conceptually - with the nuclear deterrence strategy of "flexible response" - and geographically, as Greece and Turkey acceded to membership in 1952, followed by the Federal Republic of Germany in 1955. What made the military doctrine comprehensive was its three key features: direct defense, deliberate escalation, and general nuclear response.

The fall of the Iron Curtain opened a new chapter in the history of NATO. The Warsaw Pact was dissolved on 25 February 1991 by a single decision of the Foreign and Defense ministers of its member states. As a result, the major catalyst for the strong continued presence of the United States in Europe, as well as the Alliance's *raison d'être*, disappeared, leaving room for questions about the role of an organization that had managed to recreate itself organically on an ongoing basis. A new Strategic Concept adopted in November 1991 came as a response to the new situation, and one of its flagship proposals was to establish partnerships with former adversaries. Nuclear disarmament and NATO's transformation towards crisis management and conflict prevention were soon well under way. But the 1990s were also marked by the bloodshed in the Balkans. As a military organization, NATO was bound to demonstrate its operational ability to counteract the impotence of Europe in the face of the unrelenting carnage. The interventions in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Macedonia made it possible to put an end to the protracted hostilities. NATO became a privileged tool for the international community to overcome inertia in a quest to build a fragile peace. The United States, obviously, was the prime architect of that strategy.

But lessons were well learnt, and the Washington NATO Summit in 1999, which marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Alliance, resulted in a new Strategic Concept extending the definition of security beyond mutual defense. The enlargement process was resumed, becoming one of the Alliance's measures of success. The summit celebrated the accession of three new members: Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, formerly members of the enemy block. NATO's geographic expansion continued opening up new horizons for those who had shaken off the communist yoke. Paradoxically, NATO is becoming largely European, judging by the number of its European members after another two post-Cold War enlargement rounds: Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia (2004), and Albania and Croatia (2009). The next in line is Montenegro, set to be given an entrance ticket at the upcoming 2016 summit in Warsaw, while some other countries are also making efforts in the hope of also being admitted at some point in the future.

NATO's enlargements should be seen in reference to the liberal vision of the international order that free nations wish to promote across Europe. This conception has been one of the fixed characteristics of US diplomacy since the 1950s. The prospect of enlargement itself, as in the case of the European Union, should be considered as a factor enhancing stability and security on the continent. Hence, the recurring affirmation that NATO's door remains wide open to all European democracies, on a voluntary basis.

The most recent Strategic Concept (Active Engagement, Modern Defense), in force since the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, was forged by an expert group chaired by Madeleine Albright. The 10-page document provides a compendium of NATO's fundamental principles, assigned objectives, and the means of achieving these. Common values (liberty, democracy, human rights and the rule of law) remain the building blocks of the Alliance, today as much as ever. They are cited both at the beginning and at the end of the document: "NATO thrives as a source of hope," especially since these values, as well as the protection of the allies' liberty and security, are considered "universal and perpetual". Finally, the document reaffirms that "NATO remains the unique and essential transatlantic forum for consultations on all matters that affect the territorial integrity, political independence and security of its members."

NATO and the European Union: an intricate relationship

The weight of Europe within NATO also depends on the ability of its members to take on responsibility for their own security, as opposed to behaving as if it were incumbent on other members to bear most of the burden of collective security. There can always be "free riders", an unavoidable risk in times of economic crisis, and because providing security without conditionality is one of the core tenets of the Alliance. Article 5 is of key importance here, stipulating that each and every ally is obliged to intervene should one ally be endangered.

Such a formulation of the NATO-EU relationship has long been ambiguous, difficult to go beyond, and hardly helpful when it comes to forming a clear division of tasks between the two organizations. Some countries have feared that the further development of European defense capacity would undermine the role of the transatlantic Alliance. And so there have been obstructions and reservations, and especially, the resounding fiasco which was the campaign to establish in Brussels an embryo of the EU's own military headquarters that would build on its existing military missions. Over time, though, as in any intergovernmental organization, the difficulties involved in unanimous decision-making

become tiresome, and mindsets evolve.

NATO's most recent 2010 Strategic Concept devotes one paragraph to the European Union, recognizing the innovations ushered in by the Lisbon Treaty (December 2009), especially those concerning institutional arrangements aimed at promoting the emergence of a common foreign and security policy. From this perspective, the European External Action Service (EEAS) can be considered as the embryo of a specialized administration consisting of government-appointed officials and European officials already familiar with the ins and outs of the Brussels labyrinth. The structure, led by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who also serves as Vice-President of the European Commission, is expected to be endowed with a new "global strategy" by mid-2016. This new diplomatic roadmap for the 28 member states is set to replace the previous one entitled "A Secure Europe in a Better World", which was developed in 2003 - in an international situation very different from today's.

As the EU and NATO share the same values, "a stronger and more capable European defense" would be to NATO's advantage. Moreover, NATO's Strategic Concept recognizes the complementary nature of the two organizations, and wants to strengthen that partnership "to minimize unnecessary duplication and maximize cost-effectiveness."

The US critical evolution

Since 2009, the US Presidency of Barack Obama has marked another turning point for NATO and transatlantic relations. The political elites in EU capitals certainly did not fail to notice a change in tone, a seeming disinterest in the European continent - in brief, a shift in US foreign policy. There has been much discussion on the continent on why the new US administration's stance was so low-profile towards countries - in particular new members of the Alliance - which were so keen to benefit from this new defense guarantee. It is too early to assess the real impact and long-term consequences of this, but the US factor in NATO is in the process of change. Some were quick to consider that it was "time for a post-American Europe", explaining the situation as follows: "It is one thing for Europeans to assert the continuing vital importance of the North Atlantic Alliance, quite another for them to default to the conclusion that 'ultimately, it is the US that guarantees our security'. In believing this, Europeans are avoiding not only taking proper responsibility for their own security but also asserting themselves vis-à-vis the US as and when their interests require" (Shapiro and Witney, 2009).

In this context, the agenda set out by the US ambassador to NATO in Brussels in 2009 unveiled three priorities: accelerating the dismantling of Al Qaeda in Afghanistan in order to speed up the withdrawal of US and NATO troops, creating a more productive NATO-Russia relationship, and developing a renewed transatlantic partnership able to respond to evolving challenges. Simple and clear enough for the European partners to realize that European defense had dropped in rank on America's diplomatic agenda.

The withdrawal from Afghanistan was not a mere election promise. It also represented the White House's determination to find the best way to transfer security and power to local authorities. While all members of the Atlantic Alliance contributed to its largest military mission ever, it was not possible to claim success. The role of the United States was instrumental in initiating the operation, in managing it, and in finally making a decision to pull out. This "military failure" is a source of recurring questions about the lessons of such an out-of-area operation whose initial objective has not been achieved. Arguably,

though, this long war did make it possible to develop weapons and combat tactics in an extremely hostile environment, as well as coordination and cooperation skills within the allied structures.

Yet public opinion in both Europe and the US had grown tired of the war, especially since the preceding military entanglement – in Iraq – had taken its toll as well. Even more importantly, the Iraq conflict created a serious rift among NATO members, since two of them - Germany and Turkey, both significant partners of the United States - decided to side with France (and Russia) to oppose what they considered an unjustified war. US leadership was thereby called into question. And lastingly so, because here too, despite the massive and continued military and human engagement, the outcome was disappointing, and led to the emergence of the Daesh phenomenon.

Under the US influence, and despite reluctance from its newer members, NATO has made efforts to reset its relationship with the Russian Federation - but to no avail. The policy of making friendly overtures has actually had an opposite effect. Two US presidential terms later, and Russia seems as threatening as ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union, defying international law, blithely trampling on the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of some of its close neighbors, and reviving the propaganda of bygone times. Paradoxically, while NATO was looking for new roles after the 1989 geopolitical breakthrough, it is President Vladimir Putin who has caused the Alliance to wake up from its lethargy. He has made it take on a new existential rationale and regain vigor, even though the present confrontation, whose possible risks include hybrid warfare and cyber attacks, has nothing to do with the Cold War. The fact remains that NATO's incorporation of states which for decades belonged to the Warsaw Pact is certainly something President Putin cannot ignore insofar as he is determined to restore Russia to its former magnitude, with a regional influence that its economy is no longer able to offer.

Burden sharing: that is the question

As early as 2012 and during the run-up to the NATO summit in Chicago, the United States was vocal not only about the withdrawal from Afghanistan, but also about defense investment inadequacies on the part of its European allies. The US has stated that European NATO members should contribute more towards their own security. Granted, the economic crisis has strongly affected Europe, but the purpose of significant US investment in Europe's security is being explicitly questioned. Why should the US continue to spend almost 4.7 percent of GDP on defense when the European average is a mere 1.7 percent? Why is the US now financing up to 70-75 percent of NATO's budget, whereas a decade ago its contribution was only 50percent? At the last NATO summit in Newport in September 2014, the European allies pledged to increase their defense spending up to 2 percent of GDP within a decade, with 20 percent of that share on military equipment. As of now, only 5 of the 28 members have met the 2 percent target, but what will the situation be in 10 years?

Questions about burden sharing are being raised increasingly frequently. This has been especially true since the intervention in Libya, to cite the most recent example of the inability of the European allies to act fully autonomously, or without US logistical support at the very least. This is further evidence of the crucial role the United States plays in the Alliance - not only because of its commitment to transatlantic diplomatic, military and political exchanges, but also because, in addition to providing the bulk of funding, the

US is the only member which possesses a range of military capabilities sufficient to carry out an intervention on its own, and is the only member having all the means necessary to ensure itself of a global presence.

The US's reluctance to intervene in Libya has given rise to a lively debate among experts over whether there can really be talk of a new way of conducting operations, termed "leading from behind". Some argue that it is inconceivable for the US not to be the leading force of any NATO operation. For many countries, including some EU members, it must be hard to imagine that the role played by the United States in the collective security of Europe and its immediate vicinity could be that of a partner, rather than the leader, as has always been the case.

Finally, the intervention in Libya, conducted too hastily, was not followed up with adequate support to ensure continuity of the state and prevent this rich country at Europe's gates from breaking up and degenerating into a breeding ground for Daesh and other extremists. The development of post-conflict capacity and a multidimensional approach to the country's reconstruction requires the genuine collective political will to become involved, something that has not been a priority for the United States, committed elsewhere. In fact, the US Administration is focused on what is regarded in Washington as an "existential threat", and this encourages a foreign policy whose overall priorities are reoriented towards Asia.

In 2016, perhaps NATO no longer has the same relevance it once had for the United States, and its European members are visibly having difficulty adapting to Washington's new diplomacy. The approximately 80,000 US troops deployed in military bases throughout Europe, the US's potential recourse to NATO as justification for military action, and the political benefits of further enlargement remain unique advantages. Clearly, the United States has no intention of compromising its identity as a member of the great transatlantic alliance, but the increasing talk of equitable "burden sharing" is no doubt meant to urge Europe to make a bigger contribution and take on more responsibility for its own security.

Moving forward

That is where Europe must pursue its integration, including in the military sphere - without jeopardizing NATO. The build-up of the European Defense Agency and the Alliance's ongoing military operations, such as in Africa and at sea, as well as its efforts towards a better understanding of security and development support tools, should stand as guidelines to be followed by the European Union in order to provide the United States, within the Atlantic Alliance, with added value that will be appreciated, because it is expected as part of defending the values that for decades have formed the cornerstone of the Atlantic partnership. Those values continue to determine the way we perceive the world, beyond elections and political partisanship, in both Europe and the United States.

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Pressing Challenges: Terrorism, Cyber Security, Propaganda

Greta Monika Tučkutė and Deividas Šlekys

The crisis in the Middle East and the outbreak of mass migration into Europe, the rise of ISIS (Islamic State), the war in Ukraine and occupation of Crimea, and the terrorist attacks in Paris, Brussels, Istanbul and other cities, have revealed areas of weakness and pose serious challenges to public order, democratic values, fundamental principles and peace in NATO countries and among their neighbors. Russia's attack on Ukraine involved a full range of hybrid measures - "little green men" paramilitary groups, cyber attacks, propaganda, erroneous interpretations of international law, and threats to energy security.

The complexity of these dangers and their potential consequences have impelled NATO countries to react at various levels - nationally, multilaterally and collectively. The need for a robust and effective response was emphasized in the Wales Summit Declaration in 2014, and resulted in the NATO Readiness Action Plan.

The aim of this article is to examine pressing challenges such as terrorism, cyber security and propaganda, as well as the measures used to combat them.

Fighting terrorism - mission (im)possible?

Chaos, anxiety and paralyzing fear - these are the consequences of terrorist attacks. The perverse belief that political objectives can be achieved by targeting innocent civilians, disrupting the existing order and sending out a message violently - this is how terrorist groups function. At first glance, it might seem easy to define and identify terrorism, but in fact, with so many differences in people's geopolitical situations, traditions and world perceptions, no universally-accepted definition of terrorism has yet been formulated.

There are many existing definitions. Walter Laqueur calls terrorism the illegitimate use of force to achieve a political objective by targeting innocent people¹. Similarly, Tore Bjorgo calls terrorism a set of methods of combat rather than an identifiable ideology or movement, which involves the premeditated use of violence against (primarily) non-combatants in order to engender psychological fear in people other than the immediate targets².

NATO defines terrorism as "the unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence against individuals or property in an attempt to coerce or intimidate governments or societies to achieve political, religious or ideological objectives"³.

The need to have a universal definition on terrorism has been discussed for many years, but the United Nations has not yet approved any final definition due to the difficulty in reaching a consensus among nations with divergent perceptions. Yet, in 2006 the UN did manage to adopt the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (with

1 Laqueur, W., 1977, *Terrorism*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson

2 Bjorgo, T. (Editor), Gupta, D. K., Maleckova, J., Horgan, J., Post, J., Merari, A., (. . .) Silke, A. 2005 *Root Causes of Terrorism*, Routledge

3 NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions, AAP-06 Edition 2012 Version 2.

review resolutions in 2008 and 2010) - a milestone in enhancing international cooperation against terrorism. The strategy includes addressing those conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, bolstering the capacity of individual states and the role of the UN system in combating terrorism, and promoting respect for human rights and the rule of law⁴.

The EU established a definition of terrorism in its Council Framework Decision of June 13, 2002 on combating terrorism. This is a cornerstone of EU counterterrorism policy and strategy. Article 1 of the Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism defines terrorism as any act that “may seriously damage a country or an international organization where committed with the aim of: seriously intimidating a population; or unduly compelling a Government or international organization to perform or abstain from performing any act; or seriously destabilizing or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organization.”⁵

Terrorism is combated not only legislatively and academically, but also practically. In 2001, NATO launched its first (and to date only) collective campaign under Article 5, after the United States of America was attacked by Al Qaeda. This was followed by a multinational military operation conducted in Afghanistan. The tragic events of September 11th led to the enactment of anti-terrorist legislation and the creation of law enforcement bodies and security structures on both national and international levels.

However, it seems that the tremendous anti-terrorist efforts made have had only a modest outcome when we look at global security today. The rise of ISIS is a global threat that has already affected millions of people: the refugees who have had to leave their homes, the host countries where those refugees are seeking shelter, and of course, the victims of terrorist attacks, the number of which has increased dramatically of late.

Currently, the incidence of terrorism globally is gradually increasing - an alarming trend. For instance, a recent report by Europol shows increasing numbers being arrested in the EU on suspicion of religiously-inspired terrorism. The figure for 2014 was 395 persons, as opposed to 216 in 2013 and only 122 in 2011⁶. The 2015 Global Terrorism Index highlights that the number of terrorist attacks is also rising. The total number of deaths from terrorism in 2014 was 32,685, an 80 per cent increase over the 18,111 deaths in the previous year. This is the highest number ever recorded. A large majority of those deaths, over 78 per cent, occurred in just five countries: Iraq, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Syria.

While terrorism is highly concentrated in a small number of countries, the number of countries that have experienced a terrorist attack has also been increasing year on year since 2011. In 2013 the figure rose to 88 countries, and in 2014 to 93 countries.

What we face today is a situation in which the scale of the problem and the capabilities of terrorist organizations are unprecedented. While Al Qaeda had only hundreds of active numbers, ISIS numbers about 30-35,000⁷, and commands a territory that gives it control over oil fields in Syria, through which it is able to finance its activities. With the

4 European Parliament, Members' Research Service, At a glance, November 2015.

5 Council Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism, Council of the European Union, Brussels, 18 April 2002, Art. 1.

6 Europol, TE-SAT 2015, page 26.

7 Cronin A. K. "ISIS Is Not a Terrorist Group. Why Counterterrorism Won't Stop the Latest Jihadist Threat", www.foreignaffairs.com ESSAY March/April 2015 Issue.

flow of migrants into Europe, some ISIS members have an opportunity to infiltrate groups entering the continent and thus the societies they wish to target.

Another alarming aspect is that terrorism has become part of the hybrid attack strategy used by some states against other countries. The NATO Parliamentary Assembly indicated this clearly in its report of October 2015 : “... the use of hybrid tactics by Russia poses a clear challenge to the Alliance and the regional disruption of non-state armed groups will continue to affect Alliance security at its borders and from within in the form of terrorism. The Defense and Security Committee committed to the study of this changing strategic security environment for 2015. A fitting motto for NATO in the face of these dual challenges should in fact be – adopt, adapt, adept. As the Alliance adopts new strategies to deal with the new state and non-state challenges to the East and South, it will need to adapt its structure and readiness to become adept at handling the new challenges it faces”⁸.

Terrorism on the international level is being combated by means of political initiatives, such as the Coalition against ISIS. NATO has its Defense Against Terrorism Program of Work (DAT POW), which aims to protect troops, civilians and critical infrastructure against attacks perpetrated by terrorists, such as suicide attacks, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), rocket attacks against aircraft and helicopters, and attacks using chemical, biological or radiological materials. In spite of these efforts, terrorism is developing and finding new ways; it makes use of all the opportunities and capabilities provided by new technologies and media, financial instruments, globalization and modern psychology in order to attract new supporters and make them do what its leaders want.

Nationally, regionally and globally, there must be a clear division of responsibilities and tasks among institutions responsible for security and defense, because only in this way is an effective use of resources possible. For instance, after the Wales Summit, NATO “neither came up with a collective strategy against ISIS nor did it define a clear idea of NATO’s contribution to the international efforts to degrade and destroy it”⁹. The Brussels terrorist attacks proved that national security institutions had not been paying enough attention to outside information, and had not taken sufficient measures to prevent terror attacks. These are only two examples of situations in which problems were not dealt with successfully when they ought to have been.

When fighting terrorism, decisions must be taken that are difficult and often painful. This was very much evident during the campaign in Afghanistan. It is extremely hard for democratically-elected governments or the heads of institutions to take radical, unpopular decisions, such as to wage a military campaign against a terrorist organization. It often turns out, then, that they confine themselves to solving and dealing with the consequences of terrorist acts rather than taking pro-active measures.

Finally, with hybrid warfare, or as the Russians call it, “non-linear” warfare, terrorism is being used as another tactic for weakening an opponent. The conflict in Ukraine stands as an example of terrorism being used as an instrument for disrupting and destroying another sovereign country.

8 NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Defense and Security Committee, Hybrid Warfare: NATO’s New Challenge? General Report, 10 October 2015, p. 9.

9 Jacobs A., Samman J.L., Player at the sidelines: NATO and the fight against ISIS. NATO’s Response to Hybrid Threats.

Cyber security

With the use of information technology in all spheres of life, cyber security has gained critical importance. Cyber security and cyber threats have changed rules of war known for thousands of years. Today, cyber protection and defense is as important as physical defense. In an article entitled “Cyberwar and Peace” (in the November/December 2013 issue of *Foreign Affairs*), Thomas Rid distinguished cyber attacks from conventional warfare in that they do not meet all three of Clausewitz’s definitions of war as 1) violent, 2) instrumental, and 3) attributable to one side as an action taken for a political goal. Rid wrote that “cyber war has never happened in the past, it is not occurring in the present, and it is highly unlikely that it will disturb the future¹⁰”.

Yet cyber attacks are already taking place with increasing frequency. In his annual report, NATO’s Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg emphasized that an average of 320 cyber attacks per month NATO-wide in 2014 represented an increase of 20% over the previous year. In 2013, NATO dealt with over 2,500 significant cyber attacks, while the Crimea crisis in March 2014 was accompanied by attacks from pro-Russian hacktivists that brought down several Alliance websites¹¹.

Cyber security first began to be clearly identified as a NATO priority after the cyber attacks against Estonia in 2007. In the Bucharest Summit declaration in 2008, NATO was one of the first to announce a cyber defense policy¹². A Cooperative Cyber Defense (CCD) Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Tallinn, Estonia was established in 2008. Since then, a number of projects and policy documents have been initiated within NATO countries. On June 8, 2011, NATO Defense Ministers adopted a new cyber defense policy, and on June 4, 2013 they agreed that the Alliance’s cyber defense capabilities should be fully operational by the autumn of 2013. Cyber has been recognized as a priority in NATO’s Strategic Concept, and this was reiterated in the two most recent Summit Declarations (Chicago 2010 and Wales 2014). NATO policy holds that cyber defense is part of the Alliance’s core task of collective defense, confirms that international law applies in cyberspace, and intensifies NATO’s cooperation with industry. The top priority is the protection of the communications systems owned and operated by the Alliance.

Cyber security initiatives and programs focus primarily on fighting physical cyber attacks. Another threat that cyber attacks pose is control of the media, especially social networks, which are being used for propaganda, brainwashing and psycho-programming. These tools are very dangerous, for they utilize attributes of crowd psychology to manipulate people’s emotions and psychological needs.

Information war

A few decades ago, French philosopher P. Virilio wrote that in the future “the aim of battle will shift from territorial, economic, and material gains to the immaterial, perceptual field, the war of spectacle will begin to replace the spectacle of war”.¹³ In other words, the war of images and perceptions was to become more important than the physical

10 Rid T., Limnell J., Is Cyberwar Real? Gauging the Threats <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/global-commons/2014-02-12/cyberwar-real>

11 NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Defense and Security Committee, Hybrid Warfare: NATO’s New Challenge? General Report, 10 October 2015

12 Dissertation published by Tartu University Press in 2011, Comprehensive Legal Approach to Cyber Security by Eneken Tikk

13 virilio

destruction of the enemy's troops and materiel on the battlefield. Voices were heard that the domination of Carl von Clausewitz and his call for the violent, physical destruction of the enemy was now a bygone era. Sun Tzu and his concept of winning a war before battle is commenced dethroned the German thinker. To some extent, this should not come as a surprise. Clausewitz himself, after all, taught us to see war in its social, political and cultural context. Some people use the word "information" as the best description of the mentality of our times. Better, probably, are the words "image" or "brand". Contemporary societies emphasize aesthetics, not ethics. We are societies of fast-moving pictures, of visual spectacle. In such a socio-political-cultural context, the battle over perception, over the grand narrative, is becoming the essential goal, and the military domain will ignore it at its peril.

In reviewing military practice of the last decade or so around the world, it is hard not to agree, at least partially, with Virilio's perspective. The military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the spiraling violence during and after the Arab Spring, and the Russian aggression in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine provide more than enough proof of the changing dynamics of war.

Probably the best way to approach these changes is examine the relationship between kinetic and non-kinetic operations. The conventional interpretation will argue that kinetic operations, the physical destruction of the enemy and its resources, is the essence of war, and that non-kinetic operations: information campaigns, winning over hearts and minds, and so forth, are only auxiliary force multipliers. The new interpretation says the opposite: non-kinetic operations are now the essence of war, and kinetic operations have been relegated to the position of force multipliers. The American debate over COIN, and Russian military policy in Ukraine, very well illustrate the stakes and challenges involved in this contest.

After a successful, record-breaking operation on Iraqi soil in the spring of 2003, the Americans ran into trouble, and spent the next few years trying to figure out how to win against the insurgents. By the end of 2005 it seemed they had found a solution, in the form of the famous Counterinsurgency Field Manual. In essence, its creators and advocates, General David Petraeus and his team, were saying that, in order to achieve military success, you first have to win the hearts and minds both in the region of the fighting and on the home front. In tactical and operational terms, this means less use of firepower, more patrolling, and most importantly, establishing friendly contact with the local population and gaining their trust. This means winning the war at the level of perceptions, winning the information war against the Taliban, Al Qaeda and other hostile players. Those who argued this way, who became known as Coindinistas, demanded radical changes in the structure of the military, in education and training, while their critics argued it was imprudent to implement all of those changes because of ad hoc operational needs. In other words, Petraeus's opponents insisted on the physical destruction of the adversary. Eventually, the traditional interpretation prevailed. All non-kinetic operations were seen as force multipliers, not as a major form of warfare.

In a way, this explains why Western states have difficulty understanding the Russian modus operandi in Ukraine. The annexation of Crimea and the de facto separation of Eastern Ukraine was conducted in a manner that perplexed Western military planners, analysts and commentators. Concepts such as hybrid war, Gerasimov's doctrine and non-linear war became household words - used and misused in countless reports, articles and

meetings. The Russian success was explained and rationalized by emphasizing its ongoing military reform, support of the population in the areas of operations, and the use of political subversion and propaganda. What is certain is that Moscow's decisions and actions did not fit into the Western conceptual framework. Probably the best illustration of this is the question of the application of Article 5 of the NATO treaty when such a situation emerges.

However, in order to understand the Russian rationale, we have to think differently about war. It seems that what is a force multiplier for Western states is a major form of war for the Russians. For them, non-kinetic operations, particularly political subversion and the use of propaganda through information warfare, are the chief instruments of war, while physical destruction is seen as a force multiplier.

From this perspective, the fight in the domain of information is essential to winning a war. Historically, of course, propaganda and information campaigns are nothing new. However, in the past they always were seen as a secondary front, not the main front.

When examining the Russo-Ukraine war or ISIS campaigns, it seems that physical fighting or destruction is only an excuse, a pretext for starting the real fight in the domain of perception through Facebook posts, Twitter tweets, YouTube videos and other forms of information. On the other hand, we have to remember that dominance in the realm of information will not completely eliminate the need to destroy an opponent physically. In the future, the debate will center on this question: Do you need to kill thousands of enemy fighters to force your enemy to accept new political conditions, or is it enough to spill the blood of only a few and use that information to create perceptions that enable you to achieve your political goals?

Conclusions

The worst aspect of the problem is that the grave threats we face are way ahead of international/national legislation and the means employed to deal with those threats. The Western conceptual framework is losing the battle, because it has difficulty in fitting current security challenges into existing norms. The application of Article 5 of the NATO Treaty may pose the biggest challenge to the organization should the need arise to interpret it in the face of an unconventional attack. Although cyber threats have been addressed in NATO's strategy such that Article 5 may be triggered, it would seem there is still a need to review, and possibly expand, the Alliance's collective defense clause as pertains to cyber attacks.

It is vital to increase resilience and decrease reaction time. Existing structures and measures are already capable of addressing physical challenges, but psychological aspects remain the most vulnerable area of defense. The psychological impact that propaganda can have by means of trolling farms, social networks, media, and public movements is capable of harming any nation through individual citizens or activist groups. This aspect of psychology raises many issues, which, when a threat arises, cannot be dealt with only by the same measures as those used in the past.



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The Eastern Front in NATO Strategy — End of the Interregnum

*Philip A. Karber, Phillip A. Petersen**

It has been a quarter of a century since the end of the Cold War and when the Baltic Republics, Belarus, Ukraine and Russia withdrew from the Soviet Union. During this interregnum, the Western Allies have treated Russia as a “security partner,” extended membership in NATO to former Warsaw Pact and Soviet Republics as a vehicle for “military reform,” as well as drastically cut defense budgets and dramatically reduced their military forces. But this twenty-five year “holiday from history” is now morphing into a post-interregnum era where the rhyme of time takes on a more militant rhythm.¹

For the third time in a hundred years, storm clouds of war are once again darkening over Eastern Europe. Once again a major power has invaded and occupied territory of its neighbor. Once again a sovereign nation - one identifying with the West and attempting to build its democracy - is under continuous attack, and despite various Western negotiated “ceasefires” the victim of aggression continues to bleed. Once again a major power is making threatening statements and military demonstrations against the Western Allies, with provocative maneuvers and dangerous flyovers becoming commonplace. Nuclear weapons once thought irrelevant and on the path to extinction, are once again being moved forward and targeted on Europe against a background of threats and heavy-handed intimidation against NATO members and neutral countries.

The “interregnum” is over but it is not clear what follows. It is tempting to call it a “new Cold War,”² but that is too facile. Russia’s challenge to the West is not predicated on the unifying ideology of communism but the effective and divisive appeal of nationalism. Its alliance system is not a dominated Warsaw Pact but an incipient move for a Eurasian coalition with China - a powerful competitor with its own interests. Its economy is no longer autarkic and capable of centralized mobilization but divided into oligarchic fiefdoms and held hostage to single sector export dependency. Its offensive military potential is not the mass of the old Red Army capable of steam-rolling on multiple fronts simultaneously but a downsized military whose success is contingent on exploiting opponent weaknesses with sequential moves on limited axes. Its “superpower status” still resides in the ability to inflict existential catastrophe on a global scale, but that nuclear sword cuts both ways and the risks of unsheathing should inhibit its political expediency to any but the daft or maniacal.

Whichever moniker this new era earns, the current competition for Eastern Europe is

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1 Margaret MacMillan, *The Rhyme of History: Lessons of the Great War*, (Washington, DC: Brookings, 2013).

2 For example: Edward Lucas, *The New Cold War: Putin’s Russia and the Threat to the West*, (New York, NY: St. Martin’s Press, revised 2114); and Marvin Kalb, *Imperial Gamble: Putin, Ukraine, and the New Cold War*, (Washington, DC: Brookings, 2015).

not just between the strong and the weak or the revisionist against the status quo. It is also a battle between incompatible philosophies of international relations – the tragedy of great power politics in the pursuit of condominium³ versus the right of a people for self-determination. If the West falters in defense of the latter, it loses more than territory, it imperils its very soul.⁴

Russian challenge to NATO's Eastern front

For most of the interregnum NATO has viewed Eastern Europe as a “flank”. A military sideshow focused on reform of defense establishments, downsizing forces and saving money for struggling economies. Threats were perceived as “out of area” – political disintegration of artificial states, peripheral contingencies, and of course, the never-ending “war on terror.” Russia had been promised that Western forces would not fill the military vacuum left in the wake of its withdrawal from Eastern Europe, and it was scrupulously observed even as former Warsaw Pact members and Soviet Republics began applying for NATO membership. Expansion of the Alliance offered new democracies struggling with economic reform both a stabilizing environment and sense of community.

Nevertheless, the lofty motives and political economic success associated with NATO enlargement was not “accompanied by a necessary robust debate among the NATO members as to how the Alliance’s strategy, procedures, and tactics should evolve in the face of new members and new threats.”⁵ That neglect, coupled with the unanticipated challenge of a politically re-assertive and militarily resurgent Russia, poses a serious security challenge.

From the Arctic Circle to the Caucasus, front-line NATO members are feeling the hot breath of the Russian bear and expressing anxiety. Across a 4,500 kilometer arc a surprisingly large number of both NATO members and associate “partners” are feeling insecure: Armenia,⁶ Azerbaijan,⁷ Belarus,⁸ Denmark,⁹ Estonia,¹⁰ Finland,¹¹ Georgia,¹² Latvia,¹³

- 3 John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, (New York, NY: W. W. Norton, revised edition, 2014).
- 4 For an erudite and nuanced perspective on the development of this human right in history, see: Jorg Fisch and Anita Mage, *The Right of Self-Determination of Peoples: The Domestication of an Illusion*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press; 2015).
- 5 Julianne Smith & Jerry Hendrix, *Assured Resolve: Testing Possible Challenges to Baltic Security*, (monograph; Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, April 2016): p. 5.
- 6 Naira Hayrumyan, “Responsibility for Region: Russia says Armenia has “special place” in CSTO Security,” *Armenia Now*, (14.03.16), at < https://www.armenianow.com/commentary/analysis/70530/armenia_russia_naryshkin_visit_region_karabakh_azerbaijan_csto >.
- 7 Anar Valiyev, “Azerbaijan-Russian Relations after the Five-Day War, Friendship, Enmity, Pragmatism?” *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, vol. 10, no. 3, (Fall 2011), presciently observes: “Russia continues to believe that if Karabakh conflict gets solved at all, Baku would immediately rush into anti-Russian alliances or NATO. The unresolved Karabakh conflict remains the only leverage that Russia can use against Azerbaijan in order to keep the latter from unfriendly actions.”
- 8 Joshua Kucera, “Behind The Scenes, Belarus Resisting Russian Missile Deployment,” *EurAsiaNet*, (29 May 2016), at < <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/78976> >.
- 9 Teis Jensen, “Russia threatens to Aim Nuclear Missiles at Denmark ships if it joins NATO shield,” *Reuters*, (22.03.16), at < <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-denmark-russia-idUSKBN0MI0ML20150322> >.
- 10 “Estonia Intelligence: Russia biggest Threat to the Regional Security,” *Estonian World*, (09.03.16), at < <http://estonianworld.com/security/estonian-intelligence-russia-biggest-threat-to-the-regional-security/> >. See also: “International Security and Estonia: 2016,” (Tallin, EST: Estonian Intelligence Service, 2016).
- 11 Matti Huhtanen, “Finland could expect “harsh” reactions from Russia if it decided to join NATO, but would be better off doing so together with neighboring Sweden,” *Associated Press*, (29.04.16), at < >.
- 12 David J. Kramer, “Renewed Confrontation in Georgia,” (Contingency Planning Memorandum No. 28; New York, NY: Council on Foreign Relations, March 2016).
- 13 Michael Fallon, “Russia ‘Danger’ to Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia,” *BBC Interview*, (19.02.15), at < <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-31528981> >.

Lithuania,¹⁴ Moldova,¹⁵ Norway,¹⁶ Poland,¹⁷ Romania,¹⁸ Sweden,¹⁹ Turkey²⁰ and Ukraine. In some cases Russia isn't causing the conflict as much as it is exacerbating it. In some cases Russia can be viewed as reacting (over reacting) to events that got beyond its control. But in Eastern Europe, and particularly with respect to the NATO members in the Baltic region, Russian behavior is egregious - as unnecessarily belligerent as it politically counter-productive – unadulterated revanchism motivated by irredentist nationalism.

In the two years since the summit in Wales, the Western Alliance is being shaken awake from its “end of history” slumber and dream of everlasting harmony in a Europe whole and free. NATO is becoming reenergized and refocused on its primary mission of defending the sovereignty of its members. An Alliance summit always produces a series of somber missives and new initiatives and the Warsaw convocation will undoubtedly be accompanied with an uptick in “assurance and deterrence” messaging. But those threatened aren't looking for warm hugs; they are worried about defending their countries. If Russia were truly “deterred” by NATO rhetoric they would not be making threats against its members, let alone initiating war against pro-Western countries bordering the Alliance. This raises the question – if symbolic “assurance” and verbal “deterrence” are not working what does it take to defend Eastern Europe from Russian aggression?

Because of Russian militarized behavior, Eastern Europe has become a Theater of War from the Baltic to the Black Sea. It is no longer a “flank” but a “front” - a contested armed frontier between opposing forces. Currently there are two major hot spots of direct relevance to NATO – the Ukraine Front and the Baltic Front. Obviously there are significant differences. Unlike Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, Ukraine is not a NATO member. But it does provide a forward glacis protecting the Black Sea Alliance members and its fall would have dramatic security and humanitarian implications for Central European members of NATO if the war, or post-Russian occupation insurgency, comes to their borders along with millions more refugees. Likewise, precedents set with respect to Ukraine as a non-member of NATO have ominous implications for Baltic non-members Finland and Sweden; as would the failure to enforce a Western proctored ceasefire have for Alliance negotiating credibility.

Stopping war on the Ukraine front

There is a number of key NATO members who would like nothing better than to ignore Ukraine at the Warsaw summit or at least confine it to the back of the codicils follow-

14 Andrius Sytas, “Spooked by Russia, Lithuania spares no money for Defense,” Reuters, (29.04.16), at < <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-lithuania-russia-idUSKCN0XP2FX> >.

15 “NATO warns of Russian threat to Moldova,” Reuters, (24.03.14), at < <http://www.euractiv.com/section/europe-s-east/news/nato-warns-of-russian-threat-to-moldova/> >; and Steven Hall, “Why the West Should Pay More Attention to Moldova,” STRATFOR, (11.02.16), at < <https://www.stratfor.com/weekly/why-west-should-pay-more-attention-moldova> >.

16 Jacob Bojesson, “Russia’s Growing Threat to Norway and the North Atlantic,” NATOSource, (25.03.16), at < <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/natosource/russia-s-growing-threat-to-norway-and-the-north-atlantic> >.

17 Denis Dyomkin, “Putin says Romania, Poland may now be in Russia’s cross-hairs,” Reuters, (27.05.16), at < <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-europe-shield-idUSKCN0Y12ER> >.

18 Ibid.

19 “Sweden wants Answers from Russia after Lavrov’s Threats,” UAToday, (29.04.16), at < <http://uatoday.tv/politics/sweden-wants-answers-from-russia-after-lavrov-s-threats-640790.html> >.

20 Joshua Kucera, “Erdogan, In Plea To NATO, Says Black Sea Has Become “Russian Lake,” EurAsiaNet, (11 May 2016), at < <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/78741> >.

ing the endless and meaningless “where as” and “where fore’s” that have come to typify modern summitry. To the extent that the issue comes up they hope to portray the Minsk II Ceasefire as a hallmark of their statesmanship, a paragon of conflict mitigation, and an excuse to remove or reduce the economic sanctions placed on Russia for its invasion of Crimea, state sponsored terrorism, and overt intervention in the Donbas. But it will be an ill wind that blows if the Russo-Ukraine War is swept under the Warsaw rug. There are very real security issues coming out of that conflict that have profound implications for the Alliance – problems that will not get fixed, challenges that will not be met if ignored.

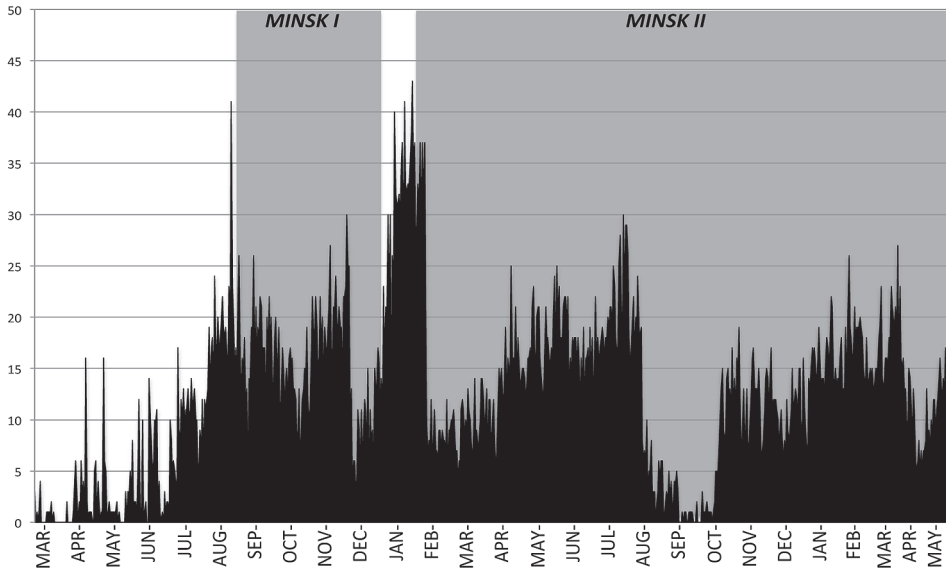
MINSK II CEASEFIRE: Repeatedly throughout the conflict Western leaders in Berlin, Paris and Washington have advised, cajoled, even coerced Ukraine to refrain from taking action necessitated by its own security and sovereignty interests in the name of “not being ‘provocative’ or ‘getting to yes.’”²¹ If this same caution and deference to Russian sensitivities were applied to non-NATO member Finland or Sweden in the event of direct attack, not to mention the Baltic states if under sub-rosa assault from “little green men” or “separatists,” the results would be catastrophic. Likewise, Minsk II is a dangerous precedent for NATO members who may find themselves in a conflict as both an armistice and arms control agreement:

As illustrated in Figure 1 Violence in Ukraine, the “Ceasefire” has been anything but – it has not produced a “frozen conflict” but instead has manufactured a “bleeding asymmetry” where one side is at liberty to continually violate it,²² even use it as an opportunity to conduct major military breakouts,²³ but the victim is restrained by its Western interlocutors.

Over the course of the Russo-Ukraine War the level of violence as ebbed and flowed,²⁴ but nevertheless the daily incidents reveal several interesting patterns, some of which are seldom mentioned in public discussion. First, the data demonstrates a two-year campaign of violence that few armies have sufficient resources to sustain.²⁵ Second, while Minsk II clearly shows an effect in reducing the daily violence, it does not show the cost of maintaining an Army in the field – estimated at a minimum of \$5,000,000 a day without violence - which is necessitated by an opponent intent on violating and exploiting the

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- 21 Blatant and documentable examples being: FEB 2014 – cautioning resistance to the Russian occupation of Crimea – in the early days of which, Ukraine forces had the capability to block key passes from both Sevastopol and the Kerch Peninsula; APR 2014 – cautioning against employing the Army and Air Force to stop the Russian Spetsnaz led takeover of Government facilities in key cities of the Donbas; JUL 2014 - Ukraine “Plan B” counter-offensive to liberate the cities of Donbas from minority People’s Republic tyranny – where Western displeasure was on public display; JUL/AUG 2014 – when Ukraine was pressured not to respond to massive Russian cross-border artillery and missile fires because that would be striking the aggressors homeland; FEB 2014 – when Ukraine was pressured to accept the Minsk II agreement, including onerous constitutional and economic infringement on its sovereignty while Russian operational forces violated the ceasefire to encircle the beleaguered Ukrainian garrison at Debaltsevo in one of the most costly battles of the war for Ukraine.
 - 22 The daily situation reports and records of the group responsible for monitoring it, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
 - 23 Note the repeated attacks at Mariupol, Marinka and Avdivika, to just name the major breakout attempts, all of which occurred across the Ceasefire demarcation line
 - 24 The daily list of incidents, collected from the OSCE reports and official Ukrainian situation maps and episodic opposition statements, records the location, target and weaponry for major terrorist attacks (political assassination, large bombing, etc.), company level or larger engagements and battery size or larger artillery/missile exchanges.
 - 25 Ukraine alone, as the beneficiary deployment area of massive post-Cold War Soviet stocks stored there, has fired more artillery than currently available in NATO’s entire Central European stockpile.

Violence in Ukraine (major attacks 2014-2016)



agreement. Third, the data shows an interesting anomaly over a two month period in the Fall of 2015, when the fighting suddenly drops for a two month period to where it should be under a working ceasefire. Lest there be any doubt about who is responsible for and capable of controlling the violence, it should be pointed out that the sudden drop correlates to the day when Russia sent its ambassadors to NATO countries asking for over-flight rights to Syria and began their diplomatic effort to create a coalition with the West, but, when rebuffed suddenly returns to the “old normal.”

The Minsk II ceasefire is also a bad precedent as an arms control device. To get agreement for inspection by the OSCE, almost a third of the area of the Donetsk and Luhansk People’s Republics was awarded “restricted access;”²⁶ some of it along the border prohibiting observation altogether which obviates monitoring of resupply, reequipping or reinforcement. Other designated areas for storage or offensive staging were given off-limits for 50% or more of the time and requiring advance notification and permission for inspection. This means that there is an enormous asymmetry in visibility, with OSCE inspectors geographically and temporally handicapped while Russian participants can have virtual free-rein over the Ukrainian defenses, and have been caught marking key location coordinates with their cell phones for use in precise artillery targeting latter. The size of the OSCE inspection team (less than 400) is one tenth that required to adequately and consistently monitor Minsk II, and the unarmed civilians who take substantial risk trying to do their job have been arrested, harassed, threatened, had their vehicles burned and surveillance drones shot out of the sky by Russian proxies.

Minsk II implemented a “no fly zone” over the Donbas for the Ukrainian air force while long-range Russian Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) flying reconnaissance from Russia and short-range Russian supplied weapons carrying drones fly with impunity recording

26 Nearly fifty times the “restricted area” given to Ukraine.

the locations and bombing Ukrainian positions. By imposing the withdrawal of heavy weapons – tanks and artillery back from the front – but not adequately monitoring them in real time, Minsk II carries high destabilization potential because it gives an incentive for significant cheating and provides a preemptive incentive for rapid armored blitzkrieg against the defender's infantry before their tanks and artillery can be brought back to the front. In short Minsk II is neither enforced nor, as currently constructed, enforceable. A multinational Brigade of neutral but armed "peace keepers" with unrestricted access throughout the Donbas would be required to make it work.

Minsk II has also been an asymmetrical political weapon by which Russia has been able to use the Western leaders who promoted and endorsed it as surrogate enforcers, putting pressure on Kiev to implement the constitutional, political and economic provisions even though the "clock for implementation" should never have started because the violence has never stopped. It is impossible to implement the subsequent protocols of the Minsk II agreement – such as holding free elections or providing reconstruction support for the Donbas – at the current levels of violence yet that does not keep Ukraine from being pressured to implement them, and then blamed for its failure when the objective end-state has not materialized. Now, just weeks before the Warsaw summit, the Russian President has launched a new charm offensive promoting the Minsk II, and unilaterally reversing the order of implementation by saying that Ukraine has to implement all the secondary measures before the violence ceases. Given the benign neglect of the Western promoters of Minsk II with respect to the continued violence, one wonders whether any of the attendees at Warsaw will notice or care.

SANCTIONS: The pain of economic sanctions on Russia has received far more Western attention than the Ukrainian blood spilled from the ineffectual Minsk II ceasefire. Now, prior to Warsaw, there is a transparent attempt by some West European members of NATO to drop or reduce the sanctions on Russia. There is no evidence that the imposed sanctions had any impact on the war in Ukraine. Whatever effect the sanctions have had on Russian decision-making, truth be told, it was the drop in oil prices that inflicted far more pain on the Russian economy.

In fact, the most effective sanction of the entire war has not been on the aggressor, but a virtual complete embargo on "lethal aid" to the victim. In the name of "not being provocative" this blockade has stopped Ukraine from acquiring the Western technology they need to off-set the hundreds of modern systems being brought into the Donbas by Russia. The most obvious is the Javelin tandem warhead Anti-tank Guided Missile versus the reactive armor of Russian tanks that has greatly degraded the effectiveness of Ukrainian anti-tank defenses. Even worse, it has had an eviscerating effect on the defender's ability to acquire replacement and spare parts for Soviet era equipment. This virtual embargo is not just established by the big weapons manufacturing countries of NATO, but enforced by them on all the other members of the Alliance who are dependent upon their systems. If the current economic sanctions are to be reduced this summer for the aggressor, then a serious item for discussion at the Warsaw summit should be the correlate lifting of the asymmetric and onerous "lethal aid" embargo on the victim.

LESSONS OF THE RUSSO-UKRAINE WAR: The conflict on NATO's eastern front also portends a number of military lessons that ought to be the point of serious discussion at Warsaw because they have grave implications for the future viability of Allied defense capability.

First, the Russian military is not ten feet (or three meters) tall. The massive Red Army of the Soviet era, with its 200 plus division and five million men under arms is gone. The manning of the military is at 20% of Cold War levels. The downsized maneuver units, most of which are Motorized Infantry Brigades, have significant shortages of trained manpower with approximately 70% of their cadre conscripted troops of short duration. They are poorly treated, weakly motivated, and with limited training have a pattern of poor performance in post-Cold War conflicts. In fact, since 1999, they have generally be relegated to second echelon roles in the Second Chechen War, Georgia invasion, and Russo-Ukraine War. While various units can be cannibalized of their contract “professional” soldiers who have demonstrated competitive combat skills in those same conflicts, this means that less than half of the existing Brigades spread across eleven time zones in Russia can be considered ready for a fight without months of reserve mobilization, training and redeployment.

Second, the Russians have recognized that weakness, and within limited resources, addressed it by placing much higher emphasis on their elite and special forces, modernizing their armored combined-arms formations with not only competitive tanks and artillery, but leveraging them with an extensive array of electronic warfare, the proliferation of UAV’s, linked with an integrated command and control system that is focused on conducting rapid precision targeting with long-range massed fires. The Russian “learning cycle” has been fast since their obvious limitations during the invasion of Georgia and speeded up during the Ukraine War. They are lowering the level of combined-arms integration to the battalion level, while simultaneously bringing back Division and Corps level structures to provide the fire, logistics and coordination support to fast moving armored formations and deep operating elite units. As a backstop, they have also retained a serious tactical and theater nuclear arsenal, designed to support the armored and elite forces – a capability that derives is coercive potential from the radical reduction and much delayed modernization of similar American systems available to NATO.

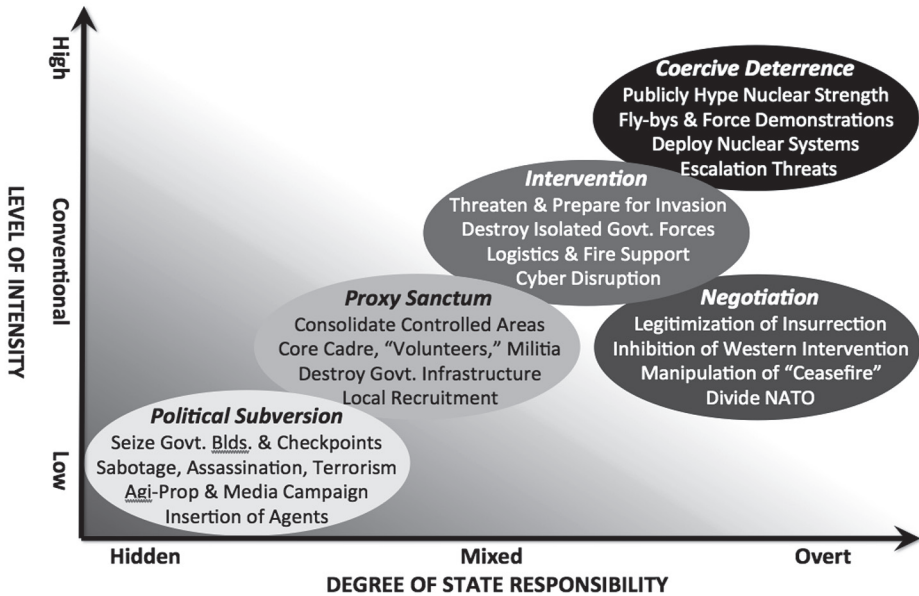
Third, unlike the Cold War, when the Soviet Army contemplated multiple offensives in multiple theaters at the same time, today’s Russian Military would be stretched to conduct a major offensive campaign against NATO’s Baltic Front while simultaneously fighting a serious war with Ukraine. Recognizing that, it is also important to note how they have tried to offset that reduced capability with innovation.

Like various Western armies, Russia has recognized the “hybrid” trend in various third world conflicts while at the same time viewing modern war across a much fuller spectrum of conflict that includes not only adding irregulars but exploring new domains like space and cyber. Unlike the West, which has been focused on mirroring the narrow self-delimited regime of low and slow “hybrid conflict,” the Russian’s plan on employing the full spectrum simultaneously – going high-intensity and fast. Some Russian military authors call this “New Generation War” but what they call it, if it has a *nom de guerre*, is less important than not confusing it with the Western construct of “hybrid war.” As illustrated in Figure 2, Russian “New Generation Warfare” represents a noxious brew that combines information war, subversion, insurgency, blitzkrieg, aerial envelopment, massed fires, deep strikes, the threat of nuclear use and political negotiations all combined in one orchestrated *bouillabaisse*. And if the evidence of its partial employment in Ukraine is any indication, NATO’s Baltic Front is not ready for it.²⁷

The Russian military realize they still have to deal with multiple theaters and multiple

27 Phillip Karber and Joshua Thibeault, “Russia’s New Generation Warfare,” ARMY, (May 2016).

Russian full spectrum “New Generation Warfare”



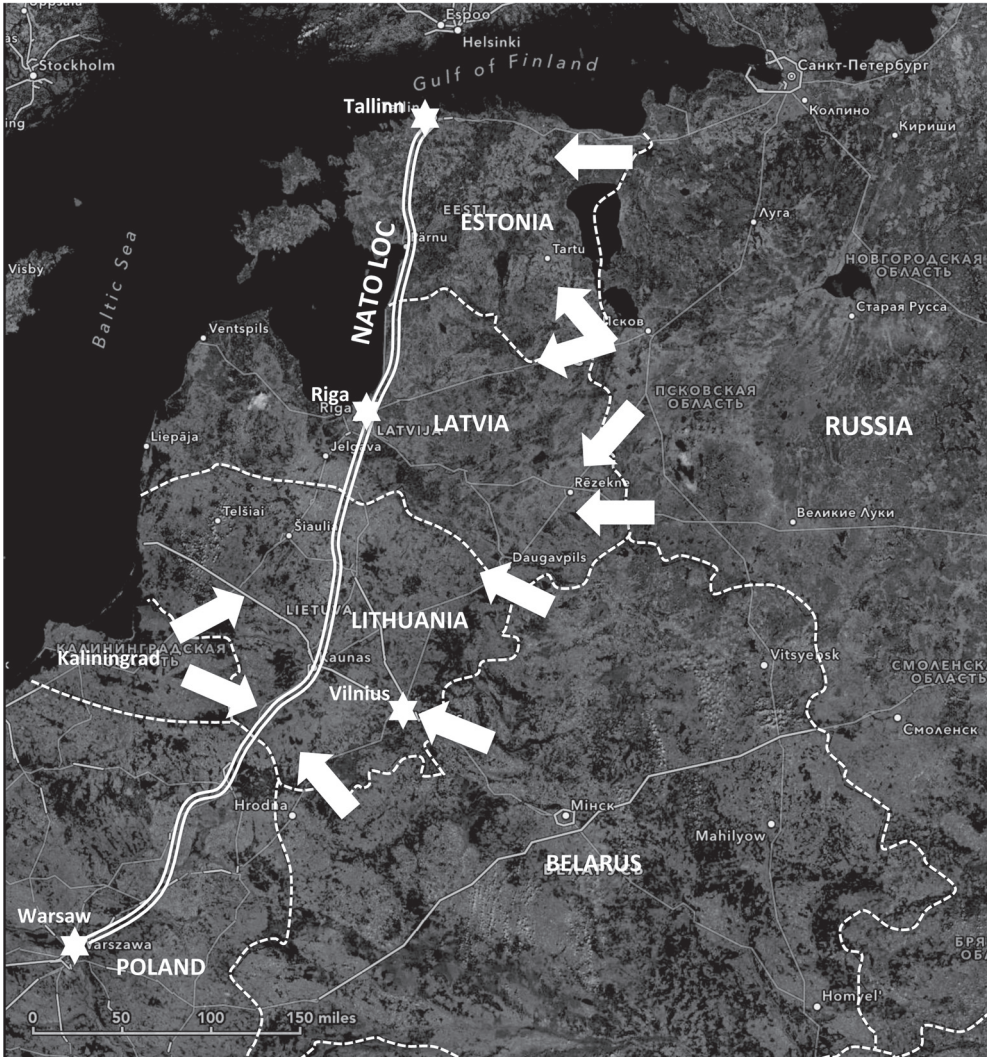
fronts, but, with restricted assets, front level offensive campaigns have to be fought sequentially. For the duration of that campaign, that front will be the center of gravity and focus of their concentration, the schwerpunkt aimed at the weak links in the opponent’s defense - whether political, economic or military. This requires a willingness to employ deception, duplicity and denial to catch the defender off guard and achieve surprise. In order to achieve early War Termination on favorable terms may require months, even years of War Preparation against the opponent where all the tools of the military, internal security and covert agencies are focused on providing the opportunity for decisive action.

Preventing war on the Baltic front

There is a very real and deep security concern among the NATO members and “partners” situated around the Baltic Sea and for several good reasons. First is Russia’s willingness to break crockery and bring war to Eastern Europe. No longer can revanchist claims and aggressive military posturing be dismissed as only political displays – they have to be taken seriously because they have been shown to lead to war. Second, Russia’s invasion of Crimea in a sudden fait accompli, utilization of the covert and lower intensity techniques of New Generation War to promote and exploit a rabid form of nationalism, then followed by large-scale direct attack by combined-arms formation in high-intensity combat highlights a range of vulnerabilities for which the Baltic states are not immune. Indeed, each of those capabilities can be applied to them. As illustrated in Figure 3, Baltic Terrain & Major Axes of Attack, the Baltic area has very defensible terrain which forces any invading force to operate on multiple but relatively small axes of advance which can be blocked or ambushed. Given the current strength of Baltic defenders there are just too many of them, coming from too many different directions for local light-infantry forces, with limited maneuver and only light combined-arms capability, too cope.

Baltic Terrain & Major Axes of Attack

(darker the image = more restrictive the Terrain)



Third, the Russian leadership has gone out of its way to act the bully against the Baltics for no apparent reason or political payoff other than to demand submission to Moscow's security interests while ignoring everyone else's. Fourth, the Western response to the Russo-Ukraine War hardly builds confidence that "old Europe" is willing to treat attacks on "new Europe" the way that they expected the Alliance under strong American leadership to react in protecting them during the Cold War. Last, but equally important, the lack of realistic NATO war planning for the East European theater, the military weaknesses of the Baltic countries themselves, and lack of nearby or fast reinforcement compound their sense of insecurity. If they feel isolated and have doubts about the decisiveness and effectiveness of the Alliance in the face of potential aggression they cannot help but wonder

whether the aggressor likewise senses that - and sees an opportunity for malevolence.

Over the last several months there has been no shortage of serious “think tank” and expert studies focused on Russian challenge to Baltic security.²⁸ Despite coming from a variety of perspectives, their assessments of the security situation and recommendations have a consistent message of serious concern over the dangers of the existing military imbalance and are in general agreement on recommendations for urgent remediation.

- Although each of the Baltic countries have recently made serious efforts to expand their military capabilities and modernize their forces, neither individually nor in concert can they match the strength of Russian offensive potential focused on the Baltic Front with sufficient readiness, operational depth, reserves and sustainability for a credible defense across a range of potential contingencies.
- Adjacent Russian armored combined-arms forces, complimented by supporting air, surface-to-surface missile, air-assault, naval, amphibious and special operations assets offer the allure of preemptive options for surprise attack.
- While that immediately proximate force may not be sufficient to consolidate and control the entire region - and certain areas, including the capitals of the Baltic states, are likely to offer extended resistance - Russia has the ability to rapidly reinforce the initial advance on multiple invasion axes with follow-on heavy forces – including its newly recreated 1st Guards Tank Army – one of the most modern and potent offensive formations in Europe today.
- Thus, Baltic security depends upon external military support from the Alliance in order to defend both their territorial integrity as well as the aerial and naval domains influencing their prospects. “Much of NATO’s post-2014 assurance for its Eastern members is based on the understanding that countries at risk could be rapidly re-inforced,” however, Russia’s qualitative and quantity advantage when concentrated on this front, “can impede access to, and constrain freedom of action in the Baltic region” that “raises questions around this plan as well as the Alliance’s capabilities in Europe,”²⁹ In particular, the forward deployment of Russian S-400 air defense missile system, Iskander SS-26 surface-to-surface missile system,³⁰ and shore based cruise missiles into Kaliningrad threaten and inhibit NATO surface reinforcement to the Baltics as well as diverting and limiting the effectiveness of Western air assets.
- Weaknesses in local and reinforcing air defenses means that the primary opposition to Russian air attack must come from NATO combat air patrols which can be “overwhelmed by sheer numbers.” In this contested airspace, adjacent Russian air force and army aviation ground attack assets are sufficiently powerful to resist NATO’s quest for air superiority for several days - “creating ‘bubbles’ in space and time to launch massed waves of air attacks”³¹ - and thus impede both the survivability of defending light infantry as well as the maneuverability of heavier reinforcing forces.

In summary, the three Baltic states do not have sufficient “ready” forces to cover the

28 David A. Shlapak and Michael W. Johnson, Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO’s Eastern Flank: Wargaming the Defense of the Baltics, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2016);

29 Director of International Institute of Strategic Studies, John Chipman, quoted in “Deployment of Russia’s armaments in Kaliningrad region limits NATO’s Capabilities,” TASS, (09.02.2016), at < <http://tass.ru/en/defense/855511> >.

30 “During a snap exercise in early 2015, Moscow moved Iskander-M short-range ballistic missiles into Kaliningrad. Ibid.

31 Shlapak and Johnson, Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO’s Eastern Flank: op cit: p. 9

border and prevent deep penetrations in short-warning contingencies; their reserve formations are structured as light-infantry and neither have the armor or artillery assets to hold out against a stronger Russian forces; and NATO's reinforcing forces are too late in arriving, too vulnerable in driving north up the 500km Line of Communication that links the Baltic members with the rest of the Alliance, and too dependent on a level of air support that may not be available.

The recommendations from the various studies also cluster nicely in identifying important remedial actions that need to be taken sooner, rather than later:

- Creation of a multinational command structure integrating all the forces in the Baltics and capable of planning and executing a "complex, fast-moving, highly fluid air-land campaign," one "that can be safely be left to a pickup team (to do on the day); it requires careful preparation" – and recommending that this be at the Corps level;³²
- Existing Baltic defenses need to be supplemented with Allied assets of "at least three heavy brigades" and "supported by adequate artillery, air defenses, and logistics capabilities, on the ground an ready to fight at the onset of hostilities appears able to avoid losing the war within the first few days;"³³
- Both the local and reinforcing forces need to be augmented with additional armor and firepower to allow their maneuver battalions to avoid being overrun by Russian tanks or overwhelmed by multiple battalions of tube and rocket artillery.
- "An incursion by an outside power against a NATO member will be timed for when that member and NATO as a whole are least prepared to respond. To better confront this contingency, NATO must empower the supreme allied commander in Europe, (SACEUR) with the authority to call snap exercises for the alliance to test and build the organization's ability to respond in crisis."³⁴

Surprisingly, as difficult as the challenge appears, the opportunity to provide a realistic defense is not out of reach if the Alliance takes a collective approach. This is an operating environment where a credible defense wins or loses on the margin. Local weakness and NATO inaction have stacked the deck against the defenders, but a series of near term remedial actions implementing the above recommendations are affordable and do what words and symbolism do not – make Russian planners hedge by adding more forces from other fronts which buys time for propitious NATO reinforcement and adds inhibiting anxiety to a General Staff that knows it is opening up its own vulnerabilities elsewhere.

QUO VADIS - NATO Strategy?

The issue is not so much the role of Eastern Europe in NATO's strategy, but the role of NATO's strategy in securing Eastern Europe, for it is in Eastern Europe that Russia claims its

32 Shlapak and Johnson, Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO's Eastern Flank, op cit: p. 9

: p. 9. Smith and Hendrix, report observes that: "Only by working together on consistent basis can they learn to seamlessly integrate their disparate capabilities sets and form and form a truly effective combat team." Smith and Hendrix, Assured Resolve, op cit: p. 11.

33 Shlapak and Johnson, Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO's Eastern Flank, op cit: p. 8. The CNAS study, argued for the "return of two Armored Brigade Combat Teams to Europe that were removed in 2012 by the Obama Administration.

34 .Smith and Hendrix, Assured Resolve, op cit: pp. 12-13. This recommendation is echoed by the recent US Army study: LTC R. Reed Anderson, COL Patrick J. Ellis, LTC Antonio M. Paz, LTC Kyle A. Reed, LTC Lendy Renegar and LTC John T. Vaughan, : [Xx; "NATO should re-examine its Supreme Allied Commander Europe's (SACEUR) authority to reposition forces in Europe."

imperial ambition and sphere of dominance should trump human aspirations. It is there that the West's commitment to its foundational value of "self-determination" will be won or lost. The peoples of Eastern Europe have issued the call to arms. The issues for the West are: 1) How should NATO respond to the Russian threat to Eastern European security – with what strategy? 2) What forces and structure are needed? 3) Who is going to participate in providing what? Answering these questions is far beyond the scope or depth of a NATO summit, but at Warsaw this year it is time to raise them.

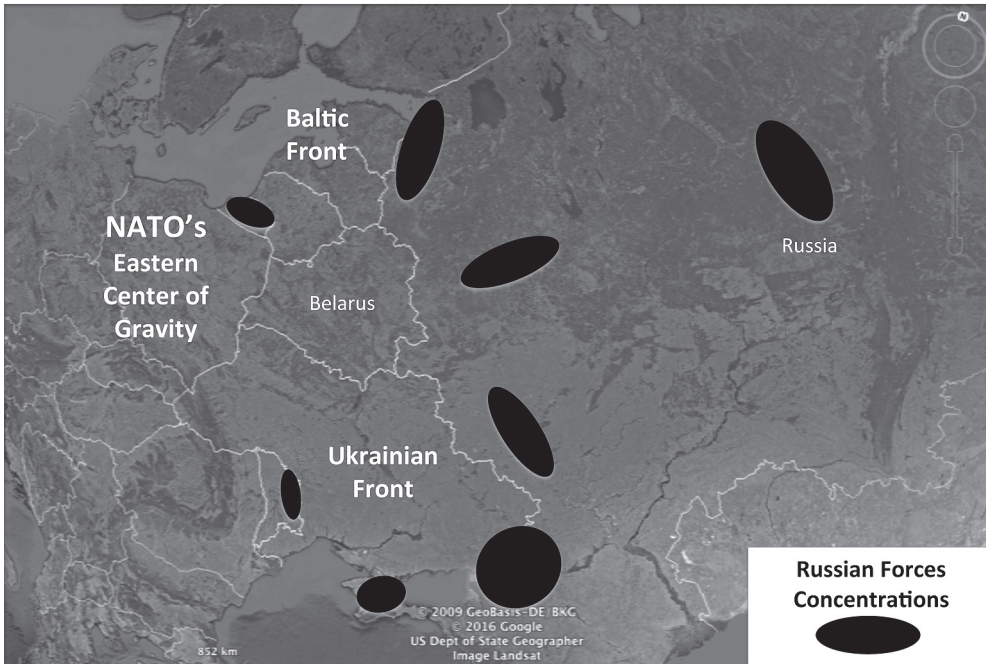
NATO needs a new Strategy. Its current "Strategic Concept" was adopted in 2010 and is predicated on the assumption of a "Security Environment", that "the Euro-Atlantic area is at peace and the threat of a conventional attack against NATO territory is low."³⁵ Based on that, the focus was on "Crisis Management ... beyond NATO's borders,"³⁶ arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation with Russia as a security partner, as well as military "reform and transformation" in order to "streamline structures, improve working methods and maximize efficiency."

General Breedlove, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe, was the first to address the lacuna in the Alliance's strategy for the post-interregnum, with his new "Theater Strategy."³⁷ Written under the aegis of his dual-hat role as Commander of U.S. Forces in Europe, this document is the first articulation of the need for a new strategy "confronting the most profound negative change in the European security environment since the end of the Cold War ... a revanchist Russia."³⁸ Breedlove's replacement, General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, in calling this "a pivotal moment within the European Command area of responsibility as it faces numerous threats and strategic challenges,"³⁹ highlighted the challenge of a "resurgent Russia" and stressed the need "to fight if deterrence fails," noting that "General Breedlove's priorities remain in force."⁴⁰

The first issue that will be raised in addressing a new strategy will be who is committing what for how much.⁴¹ But finances should be last. Rather, NATO's new strategy should start with a map.

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- 35 Based on NATO "Political Guidance" adopted in 2006, the last strategy published was: "Strategic Concept: The Defence and Security for the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization," (Adopted by Heads of State and Government at the NATO Summit; Lisbon, POR: NATO Headquarters, 19-20 Nov. 2010), available at < http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_publications/20120214_strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf >.
- 36 "The best way to manage conflicts is to prevent them from happening. NATO will continually monitor and analyze the international environment to anticipate crises and, where appropriate, take active steps to prevent them from becoming larger conflicts. Where conflict prevention proves unsuccessful, NATO will be prepared and capable to manage ongoing hostilities. NATO has unique conflict management capacities, including the unparalleled capability to deploy and sustain robust military forces in the field." Ibid: p. 6.
- 37 GEN Curtis Scaparrotti, "SACEUR General Scaparrotti Remarks at SACEUR Change of Command Ceremony," Defense Media, (4 MAY 2016), at < <https://www.dvidshub.net/video/461964/saceur-general-scaparrotti-remarks-saceur-change-command-ceremony#.VzQ2l6vfZEc> >.,
- 38 The others in order of expressed concern being: "mass migration from other regions, foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) transiting through Europe, cyber-attacks, the lingering effects from a global financial crisis, and underfunded defense budgets all jeopardize European security;" Ibid: p. 1.
- 39 Cheryl Pellerin, "Eucom Nominee Scaparrotti Testifies Before Senate Panel," DoD News, (21 APR 2016), at < <http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/740054/eucom-nominee-scaparrotti-testifies-before-senate-panel> >.
- 40 GEN Curtis Scaparrotti, "SACEUR General Scaparrotti Remarks at SACEUR Change of Command Ceremony," Defense Media, (4 MAY 2016), at < <https://www.dvidshub.net/video/461964/saceur-general-scaparrotti-remarks-saceur-change-command-ceremony#.VzQ2l6vfZEc> >.,
- 41 GEN Curtis Scaparrotti, "SACEUR General Scaparrotti Remarks at SACEUR Change of Command Ceremony," Defense Media, (4 MAY 2016), at < <https://www.dvidshub.net/video/461964/saceur-general-scaparrotti-remarks-saceur-change-command-ceremony#.VzQ2l6vfZEc> >.,

Eastern Front & NATO Theater Strategy



As shown in Figure 4, the Eastern European Theater, the strategic situation is actually very clear and can be articulated in a few hypotheses:

- Russian ground forces are over committed, and under-strength in terms of trained professionals versus conscripts; they can only attack on one Front with full support at one time without denuding other volatile areas or taking months to mobilize reserves;
- NATO's Eastern European Theater actually has three Fronts:
- the Baltic Front which is under threat;
- the Ukrainian/Black Sea Front which is under attack;
- the Central Front – Poland along its border with Belarus (which has been primarily dormant since the Russo-Ukraine War began.
- The Central Front is the center of gravity for the entire Theater, and dramatically affects both the Baltic and Ukrainian/Black Sea Fronts as well.
- Russia cannot invade the Baltic states rapidly and with full force without first deploying into Belarus. NATO cannot effectively add significant reinforcements to either the Baltic or southern fronts without Poland.
- NATO needs to make every political and economic effort to try to convince Belarus that it is not in its interest to be a facilitator of Russian aggression and a target of NATO interdiction.
- NATO needs to realize that Russia will increasingly view Poland as the West's center of gravity for defense of Eastern Europe, and will do everything possible to dissuade or deny it from successfully fulfilling that role – including nuclear intimidation.

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- Ukraine provides a valuable forward defense for both NATO's central and southern regions; it is not in NATO's interest to see Ukraine defeated by direct Russian invasion or bled to death due to a lack of sufficient enforcement of the Minsk II ceasefire.

If the NATO summit in Warsaw is willing to debate these kinds of issues and create a meaningful coalition of those willing to support a new strategy, it will be one of the most memorable Alliance gatherings, and a turning point in NATO's already proven track record of keeping the peace and defending self-determination for its members and adjacent "partners."

Eastern Europe is not the only NATO theater nor region where there are challenging issues – it is, however, the only area where there is a clear and present military threat that can be addressed with a military solution.

Russia's repeated bombastic nuclear threats need to be treated with the respect they deserve – ignored publicly but taken seriously militarily, with appropriate American countermeasures.

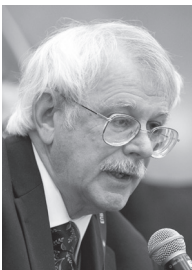
In the last hundred years, the United States has played a critical role in ending two European wars and preventing a third. Americans and their leadership need to take pride in that accomplishment, and not squander their strategic view with budgetary debates over freeloading in the Alliance – the issue is not just the future of the NATO Alliance, but the fate and self-determination of more than 150 million people.

If the NATO summit in Warsaw is willing to debate these kinds of issues and create a meaningful "coalition of the willing" to support a new strategy, it will be one of the most memorable Alliance gatherings and turning points in an already proven long-term performance by NATO in keeping the peace and defending self-determination for its members and adjacent "partners."



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He is President of the Potomac Foundation. He has served the United States Government in a number of senior level defense and intelligence positions over his career, among them at the Pentagon and National Defense University. Dr. Karber is an internationally recognized expert in defense and national security matters; an accomplished business executive; and a university professor.



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Absolute vs. Comparative Advantage of Defense Industries in NATO Countries

Tim Stuchtey

It's not news that, in the long run, a strong economy is a necessary precondition for military strength. Governments therefore often argue that investment in military hardware can help stimulate economic development and strengthen domestic innovation. And so, countries try to source weapons from domestic suppliers where possible. They argue that domestic producers make a country more independent from foreign suppliers and thus more sovereign.

In this paper we question this reasoning. We argue that NATO's push for European member states to pool and share their military resources will result in the armed forces being equipped more interoperably. We also contend that, by procuring a larger number of a single weapons system within NATO, the average cost per unit will drop. Also, looking beyond an individual country's industrial base when procuring military equipment potentially provides greater variety and a higher quality of supply - simply put, more bang per euro. Finally, we discuss the consequences for domestic industry. In the absence of guaranteed procurement by a home government, domestic industry should be allowed to specialize according to its real comparative advantage. In this way, new opportunities to become integrated within pan-European value chains would be likely to occur once pooling and sharing becomes more of a reality.

The European security and defense environment

European security and stability are threatened from the South by failed states and transnational terrorism; threats are emerging in the east due to Russian aggression. However, dangers to the Alliance do not only come from various different geographic regions and adversaries, they also vary in nature. With regard to defense, changes can be anticipated as a result of non-traditional threats to international security ("emerging threats" in NATO-parlance). These threats are accelerating and require varied responses, and thus, different or adaptable equipment. It is also necessary to develop next generation weapons systems (such as cyber, robotic and unmanned technology) in order to remain technologically ahead of potential adversaries. At the same time, there is a need to reduce ever-increasing costs of major individual defense systems and other defense materiel.

The cost of new systems and growth in acquisition costs has been a long-standing concern of policymakers and governments in all NATO member countries, in particular in times of non-traditional warfare. National austerity measures have already affected military capabilities in many NATO countries. Recent operations, like that in Libya, have demonstrated the decline of NATO's defense capacity, and have revealed critical gaps in European military capability. The spiraling costs of military hardware and the shrinking procurement quantity this entails means that NATO member states have ever fewer programs and less equipment to support missions. Sustained austerity is expected to continue to shape available defense spending for the foreseeable future, although last year did see a slight turnaround.

After years of decline, defense spending in Europe increased in 2015 in nominal terms in most countries; yet it will remain flat at 1.5 percent of GDP, or approximately 85.5 percent of its 2007 pre-financial crisis level.¹ In other words, since the financial crisis, in aggregate the military of a sizable European state has been scrapped.

At the moment, defense budgets in Europe are largely being spent on personnel and the maintenance of domestic bases; they are not being invested into the capabilities Europe needs.² Thus, European countries will have fewer assets, and the European defense industry is shrinking.

At the same time, government cooperation on defense matters is decreasing due partly to different perceptions of risk and threats, and partly to increasing competition on defense industry issues. Europe's Defense Technological and Industrial Base (DTIB) in Europe has contracted further due to national consolidation. While this consolidation process is welcomed by many analysts, some emerging NATO member countries are building up new capacities with the heavy application of industrial policy.

At the same time, the expectation that NATO member countries should spend 2 percent of GDP on defense, is the political policy driving the debate on defense spending, capability problems, readiness and burden-sharing within the Alliance. That debate should not focus solely on increased spending, but also on wise spending. Simply spending more permits other priorities to continue to take priority over capabilities without regard for gains in efficiency.³ Efficiency, in fact, is not only an economic imperative, but is also vital for defense and military effectiveness.

Combining military effectiveness with economic efficiency

From a military perspective, NATO members seek technological dominance on the battlefield. From an industrial policy perspective, countries want to secure high-paying jobs in the defense industry. Ultimately, responsible leaders need to strike a balance between these two – sometimes competing – goals.

However, the military goal of maximizing performance, at least for an organized Western military, also means increased costs. Nevertheless, as indicated above, when building strong European defense capabilities, the economic realities must be considered. States need to meet their defense and security aims while at the same time satisfying their economic needs. In this regard, it is important not to lose sight of the bigger picture.

It is a common paradigm that in the long run economic power is needed for military strength. Wealth underpins military power, while military power is needed to protect wealth. At the same time, if too many state resources are allocated towards security and defense at the expense of investing in revenue-raising capacities, national power is likely to be weakened.

It has been a historic dilemma for countries that, even as their economic strength weakens, growing security challenges threaten their geopolitical position, forcing them to devote more resources to military spending, leading to a downward economic spiral. A smaller budget usually means smaller ambitions. Yet NATO states want to have a bigger

1 Conley/De Galbert (2015); Stanley-Lockman/Wolf (2016), p.1. On global defense expenditure, see also recent data published in IHS Jane's Defense Weekly, Vol 53, Issue 6, 10 February 2016, pp. 22-27.

2 Strategic airlift, refueling or intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (Conley/Leed 2013, p. 2).

3 See the Carnegie Europe Debate on this topic: <http://carnegieeurope.eu/specialprojects/NATOs2Percent-Pledge/>

international footprint than before.⁴

The current policy of some NATO (and other) countries of subsidizing defense companies to make them competitive, thereby adding to the over-supply in different weapons systems, is neither economically nor militarily advisable.⁵ Already in Europe, the number of different tanks, ships and planes in each category surpasses the number in North America. Compared to the US, Europe deploys six times as many different weapons systems, though it spends only 40 percent as much on them. Additionally, Europe has twice as many competitors in 40 percent of all defense sub-sectors. As the number of models grow so do maintenance costs. For example, according to a McKinsey study, “sharing the deep depot-level maintenance of 12 major aircraft platforms would yield an estimated savings potential of about EUR 500-600 million annually.”⁶

Countries are purchasing capabilities just to support and maintain their own domestic defense industries. This undifferentiated support of national defense companies not only undermines proposed pooling and sharing arrangements at the EU and NATO levels, it is also resulting in European military capabilities that are duplicated, fragmented, and excessively costly with members unable to use an ally’s equipment, parts, or ammunition.

Consequently, NATO member states are required to deal with the challenge of balancing budget pressures and austerity measures against current security challenges. They are forced to choose between more immediate military security and longer-term economic growth, while the former is necessary for the latter. As a result, those countries must strike the right balance between defense spending and investment in economic productivity. The challenge is to figure out what kind of DTIB current political and economic realities call for to get ‘more bang for the euro’.

Rationally, the best way to get more “bang” for the same amount of money would be to specialize in defense roles. Pooling and sharing military capabilities is a policy NATO has wanted its European members to adopt for a long time. If NATO wants to achieve better effectiveness and a more capable force, its member-states must divide up their military roles on the basis of comparative advantage. But the same is true for member-states’ national industrial bases.

On the battlefield, absolute military and technological dominance is the winning strategy, but this does not fully hold for the defense industry. Obviously, not every NATO member can build the technologically most advanced battle tank - only one company or consortium can. Or more precisely: a value chain that includes suppliers, possibly across borders, can. And if production quantities increase due to a pooling of demand, economies of scale will allow for the average unit price to fall. But since all resources in Europe are to be put to productive use, countries need to allow their economies to specialize. Even if that means that they lose industrial autonomy, as they would with the military pooling and sharing strategy.

But if countries are willing to allow other nations to provide their air-lifting capabilities, why should they seek to build their own transport planes? The result is a higher cost per plane, and by allocating tax-payers’ money towards a risky investment, while diverting

4 The rise and fall of great powers: http://vedpuriswar.org/Book_Review/General/The%20rise%20and%20fall%20of%20the%20great%20powers.pdf

5 <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Articles/Detail/?Ing=en&id=155836>

6 McKinsey&Company: The Future of European Defence: Tackling the Productivity Challenge. <http://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-sector/our-insights/enlisting-productivity-to-reinforce-european-defense>

resources from other uses (education, health care, etc.). Instead, those countries could allow their economies to specialize, at the cost of becoming dependent on imports of some ally's weapons system. But at the same time, that ally would become dependent on - let's say - the country's pharmaceutical products, or even parts of the same weapons system.

This approach implies allowing markets to incentivize specialization in certain industries or technologies. With these specializations it will be much easier to integrate the value chains of future defense systems and to thereby be part of a strong European DTIB. European NATO member states should allow their defense companies to specialize and consolidate. Having sufficient research and development funding available can ease the way into a future in which though only parts of a tank come from a domestic supplier, that tank's performance is unrivaled. Thus, at least among NATO members and like-minded states, trade needs to be unrestricted. That should include, of course, a more harmonized export regime.

This means that European states need to identify the key technologies and products of their national defense industries for which their innovation cluster is sufficiently favorable to be internationally competitive. Doing so would help to reorganize and reenergize competition between the remaining European companies to generate more efficiency from spending, and to reduce costs by activating economies of scale within European defense acquisition.

NATO's Smart Defense initiative is based around these two principles: specialization and cooperation. But the Smart Defense framework is tricky to apply. The defense industrial field heavily politicized, and cooperation not easy. Though the primary framework for military cooperation among Western states, NATO remains an alliance of independent states – each with its own budget, spending priorities, defense industries and political interest groups. Despite using watchwords such as competition, efficiency and productivity, the defense industry remains characterized by state intervention, with governments playing a central role as both customer and regulator.⁷

Even so, creating or securing jobs, or beefing up domestic industry, are not the only goals driving countries to purchase their military equipment from domestic suppliers. States also see a strong national defense sector as key to maintaining their sovereignty and military independence. Governments demand a constant flow of defense materiel and services in case another state blocks delivery of the means of waging war. They remain reluctant to rely on others, even NATO allies, for the supply of defense materiel. Thus, the role division outlined above requires faith in the transatlantic and European partnership – and a belief that it can be relied upon in times of crisis. States also need to acknowledge that when a foreign supplier's weapons system delivers superior performance, it adds value. In this context, a look at the relationship between civil and defense technologies and industries might be helpful.

7 Outside NATO, the above argumentation is underlined by Saudi Arabia's "Vision 2030" plan announced in April 2016, which aims at diversifying the Saudi economy and weaning the state off oil dependence. The plan unveiled a strategy for military self-sufficiency as part of broader economic reform, and envisages a domestic defense industry that is to be built up to account for as much as 50% of military spending, from the current two percent. Stimulating the home-grown defense industry is also seen in the plan as a way of helping reduce military spending while encouraging other sectors and creating jobs. See also www.defencenews.com, www.alaraby.co.uk.

Defense and civil technology integration

European markets for goods and services are, in general, well integrated. Governments and citizens rarely question the security of supply of any essential commercial or civil goods or services. The size of the market, the variety of suppliers, and the Europeanization of value chains have all created confidence that the markets will guarantee the security of supply while at the same time offering enough competition to incite producers to innovate.

However, this seems not to be the case for defense products, where nation-states often still seek sovereignty and autonomy, for which, they often have too small a market, and inferior products. One way then to achieve more of a consensus for strengthening both security and the economy in Europe, may lie in increasing market size through greater integration between defense technologies and civil technologies.

The traditional defense industry is already struggling to survive in an environment of defense budget cuts, market entries from international defense companies, and companies that have until now not sold their products or services to the military. Under the classical defense-industrial paradigm, defense companies operate in technological isolation from the broader commercial economy; innovations only flow from the defense sector into the civilian sector.

However, increasingly, defense and security resources are being shifted into non-defense areas because of modern security challenges. Civilian technology (i.e. digitalization) is becoming ever more crucial for economic competitiveness. IT, electronics, robotics and other products are produced by civilian companies, and the center of gravity of innovation has shifted from the defense sector to the civilian sector.⁸ The role of dual-use and civil enterprises, particularly those in the IT sector, in delivering the technologies needed has increased. Civilian technologies not only allow for the better performance of military products, but increasingly, military products result from developments in civilian technologies. The flow of ideas is no longer a one-way street. The defense industry has become dependent on civilian supply chains, and the strict division between military defense products and civil security products is becoming ever more blurred.

Modern weapons rely heavily for their effectiveness on technological developments, especially in the IT sector. The growing technological complexity of weapons systems, and rapid technological change, are exacerbating the problems of rising costs and shrinking procurement as the anticipation of future improvements leads to smaller production runs. There also is an incentive to wait longer to incorporate more advanced technology.

Yet, for a technology company, market timing is everything. Only companies that succeed in grabbing a large enough market share to drive down unit costs and make use of network effects can survive. For those companies, serving the military consumers is often just a small portion of their overall business portfolio. This relative independence of suppliers not only changes the conditions for competition and the context of defense innovation as new suppliers arise, it also poses the question of how to adopt new technologies coming out of SMEs into military systems. For this, civil-military system integrators are still essential. Subcontractors have the potential to act as multipliers and transmission mechanisms for innovation, no matter which direction the technology moves - from defense sector to the civil sector, or vice-versa.

⁸ http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR478z1.html

Given limited resources, defense spending frequently raises cost concerns. Arguing in favor of closer integration of the civil security industry and the defense industry is also a way of putting this in perspective. Strategic alliances and long-term inter-firm contractual relationships, particularly in knowledge-intensive, high-technology production, allow companies to share research and development costs, pool knowledge, and share the risks associated with developing new products. In this context, the fields of information technology and cyber technology can play an important role.

The cyber and information technology dimension

A meaningful process for beginning this type of industrial construction and cooperation can be put in place in the area of cyber capabilities. Technological innovation especially from the IT sector has affected all markets, including the defense sector. NATO and its member countries rely heavily on IT and cyber technology to achieve superiority in the field. However, with the proliferation of technologies, the Alliance's comparative technological advantage will shrink as other states make significant investments in advanced technologies and non-state actors also gain access to capabilities previously only available to states. The evolution of warfare is inevitably intertwined with these technical advances, and will significantly affect the defense policy of nation-states as well as their defense industries. Nonetheless, a focus on twenty-first-century strategic capabilities such as cyber security will help maintain a technological lead and information superiority in the field. Investments in the development of cutting-edge defense capabilities to counter future threats are essential.

Information and communication technology in this regard is central to all military systems today/. The sector itself is a key driver of innovation and has the potential to disrupt the current technological threat and defense landscape. In contrast with the traditional defense industry, the role of the IT industry is unique, and much of the internet's infrastructure is privately owned. It is often the private, commercial sector that ultimately conceives and builds the products, services and infrastructure that enable the digital world.

The IT and cyber security industries play an important role for defense in several ways: through the development of the latest technologies that can be used for civil and military purposes, the collection of information and the observation of the evolution of the threat landscape, engagement in public-private partnerships, evolving theater-based communication, and providing technologies and serving capacity-building efforts.

Cyber is also one of the rare areas where NATO countries do have a common threat assessment. Many nations are developing military cyber technologies and the capacity to conduct military cyber operations with their armed forces. This is an area where greater transparency and coordination can be achieved.

NATO has been adapting to this security challenge since 2008, when it adopted its first formal "NATO Policy on Cyber Defense". One key aspect of its cyberspace policy is non-duplication. From this perspective, cyber defense and cyber security are perfect silo-busting activities, and could offer valuable opportunities for DTIB and defense acquisition reform in Europe. The IT industry could play an integral role in the European defense market by dealing with specialized information technology and systems integration applications. On the other hand, defense demands can provide the basis for critical industry skills development. Innovation and information technology is the key to making the European defense industry more competitive and productive, to expanding research capaci-

ties and increasing incentives for innovation in business. This, however, would necessitate a change from defense industry policy to innovation policy. It also implies seeing European partner countries as technology resources rather than as competitors.

Résumé: pragmatism is needed

As discussed above, building a strong European defense requires strategic choices on two inseparable levels: the military level and the economic level. While ambition and the number of security threats are critical to shaping joint defense in the short term, in the medium-to-long term it is national economic and fiscal strength that will be decisive. European NATO members, therefore, must focus on the need to combine military and economic effectiveness and efficiency, and balance domestic industrial developments against the costs and quality of their defense capabilities. In this regard, the interplay of European and national legislation will be important. Several scenarios are possible but all require both industry and governments to adopt appropriate mindsets and strategies.

Allowing security objectives and concerns to lead considerations is preferable, from both defense and economic perspectives. At the same time, the argument for maintaining national sovereignty questions the basis on which NATO was founded: “one for all, and all for one”.

National governments, which constitute both the demand side of the market and the regulators of the defense industry, have many levers shaping the future design of the European defense industry at their disposal. In this regard, pragmatic ideas can provide a starting point. These include, for instance, allowing larger nations to drive cooperation with other nations to plan and produce specific military capabilities. Such pragmatic efforts can help improve cooperation and secure military capability objectives within tighter budgets, while strengthening the European DTIB. In turn, a stronger European DTIB and a pan-European defense industry can be a better partner for the US military and US industry and enhance transatlantic collaboration within NATO.



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The Global Realignment in the Black Sea

Iulian Fota

The idea of Europe being “whole, free and at peace” has already been contested twice by the Russian Federation, through the wars Moscow conducted against Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014, both of which took place in the Black Sea region. The consequences of Russia’s provocations can be seen as well in the Baltic Sea, in the Arctic zone, and even in the Eastern Mediterranean and throughout the Middle East. Yet the epicenter of the earthquake that is the process of challenging the liberal international order established after the end of the Cold War has been, and continues to be, in the Black Sea region.

Following Russia’s illegal annexation of Crimea and its aggression against Eastern Ukraine, Western administrations went to great lengths to evaluate, identify and counter potential Russian threats against Poland and the Baltic states. This seemed reasonable, since the scenario applied in the Donbass could have been replicated in northern Europe as well, given that the Baltic states have a large Russian-speaking population and border Russia. On the other hand, focusing solely on the security of the northern flank could turn out to be a strategic error. Today, the Black Sea is more important to Russia than the Baltic Sea since, geopolitically, it fills in the gaps on the Mediterranean-Caspian Sea axis, which Russia considers it must control.

The ‘hot’ conflict in Eastern Ukraine, the Russian Federation’s continued aggression against Ukraine, the artificial perpetuation of the frozen conflicts in the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, and the information war that Moscow is waging against the Europeanization of countries in Central and Eastern Europe all point to the Black Sea remaining at the center of the process of reshaping relationships between Russia and the West.

Part of that behavior is conditioned by Moscow’s desire to prevent foreigners, and particularly foreigners from the West, from entering the Black Sea, in keeping with the strategic action principle of “the Black Sea only for littoral states”. One of Russia’s persistent reproaches against Romania has been Bucharest’s ability to repeatedly invite non-littoral states to send ships, and particularly warships, into the Black Sea to conduct joint military exercises.

What we need to keep in mind is that a Black Sea closed to access from the international community would be nothing more than a ‘Russian lake’, a danger about which former Romanian President Traian Băsescu warned of as early as 2006.

On the other hand, through an increasing Asian diplomatic and economic presence in this region, especially through Chinese development, and by defining a new role for Iran in the region, the Black Sea is also becoming relevant for understanding what the West finds in the phenomenon of ‘global realignment’, as recently analyzed by Zbigniew Brzezinski in an article published in the magazine *The American Interest*. The post-soviet geopolitical space can no longer be considered to be of interest only to the West and Russia. Over the last few years, we have witnessed the rise of China, which is asserting itself as a new, important regional player, particularly - but not only - economically, a China on its way to building its own ‘Greater Eurasia’. Even if the Chinese strategy is predominantly a diplomatic and economic one, Beijing is certainly not neglecting military manifestations,

as well. This was noticeable in July 2012 when, invited by Ukraine, three Chinese warships entered the Black Sea for the first time in history, their itinerary including visits to some of the most important regional harbors, such as Sevastopol and Constanta.

As a result of the new international situation in the Black Sea region, the West needs to manage the double challenge of manifestations of both hard and soft power. First and foremost, the 'hard power' military challenge is that of Russia's ascension in the area and its will to reverse, or at least weaken, the process of westernization taking place in certain countries in the region - including by making direct military threats. Second, the 'soft power' challenge is a diplomatic one, and is related to how the West will deal with growing Asian, and especially Chinese, involvement in the Black Sea region.

The main responsibility for tackling the first challenge lies with NATO, the only Western institution capable of deterring the Russian Federation and protecting the strategic interests of the Western world.

NATO also has a role to play in the second challenge because of the specific nature of the issues involved, but another key player is the European Union, especially given the fact that China's Black Sea region strategy is designed to be compatible with the overall relationship between it and the EU, as laid out in the EU-China 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation.

China's recent diplomatic and economic actions in Central Europe and the Black Sea area are reshaping the geopolitics of the region, completing a triangle of international rivalry - the West vs. Russia vs. China. From a strategic point of view, China's stance on the process of European integration and EU expansion has been different from that of Russia, as has been its position on Central Europe and the Black Sea region. Where Russia has constantly tried to obstruct or impede the process of European economic and political integration, favouring bilateral cooperation formats instead of multilateral ones, China has supported the EU as an opportunity to move towards a multi-polar world. Historical documents, recently analysed at the Woodrow Wilson Centre for International Scholars' Modern History Project, show that China's positive stance towards the EU dates back to the reign of Mao Zedong.

When talking about the most recent and complex conflict in the Black Sea region - Russia's war against Ukraine - China's position differs from that of Moscow. The Chinese leaders have stated their opposition to taking countries over by military means, to referendums organised at short notice, and to unilateral annexations. In fact, despite its good relationship with Russia, China showed no public support for Moscow during the latter's 2008 war with Georgia. If one considers the consequences of the conflicts in Georgia and Ukraine, it could be said that it is neither Russia nor the US, but China, who has emerged as the winner.

Russia and the militarization of Black Sea geopolitics

From a geopolitical perspective, Russia is reviving old behaviors it developed during its imperial age. These are based on an Anti-Western, revanchist and irredentist attitude, and include territorial annexations accomplished through abuses of military power. As a minimum, the Russian Federation hopes to recover the sphere of influence the USSR once possessed, thus rectifying "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century".

Through the surprise use of military force against inferior opponents, supported by cunning, well-prepared diplomatic efforts taking full advantage of its knowledge of in-

ternational issues, Moscow has achieved a series of tactical victories which have made its delight at power more visible than ever before. The country is currently rediscovering the benefits and pleasures of imperialistic behavior derived from a time when it professed to be on a divine mission to protect orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire, with Moscow as the “third Rome”.

Ever since 2007, Russia has been looking towards the Black Sea region as part of its strategy for reasserting its hegemony. In February 2007, during the Munich Security Conference, President Vladimir Putin showed himself reluctant to tolerate a series of NATO actions he deemed unfriendly. This was the beginning of what in that same year Sergey Karaganov called “a new epoch of confrontation”. In the spring, Russia decided to resume long-range strategic bomber patrols, including over the Black Sea region. When, in my position as national security advisor to Romanian President Traian Basescu, I insisted on bringing those new developments up during conversations with my NATO counterparts, I was told to take it easy, to do away with “my traditional Romanian Russophobia”. “Russia is too weak to represent a threat” was the standard answer I was given by a number of high-level representatives of NATO members.

In 2008, although Russia’s Black Sea Fleet played a marginal role in the war against Georgia, the Russians learnt the right lessons from those events. They lacked the naval capability to control the Georgian sea coastline, yet they understood that their new power status could not be maintained without a strong naval presence, and so the plan to acquire Mistral class ships became part of that new vision. After the war Russia’s naval chief, Admiral Vladimir Vysotsky, told *The Economist* that such ships would have enabled the Russian Navy to carry out its missions in forty minutes rather than twenty-six hours.

In the fall of that same year, the Russian admiralty announced its ambitions to expand its Black Sea Fleet’s capabilities and duties. Russian naval forces in the Black Sea had to be able to perform missions beyond their area of responsibility, also including in the Mediterranean Sea, through a regular presence. In a press release, Navy spokesman Captain Igor Dygalo defined the objective of that Russian presence: “flying the St. Andrew flag” in the Eastern Mediterranean. Furthermore, plans to build the Novorossiysk military port were approved; at that time, under an agreement with Ukraine, Russia was restricted from increasing the number of its ships in Sevastopol.

The illegal annexation of Crimea brought multiple geopolitical advantages to Russia, especially in terms of naval and air power. Once the territory of Crimea was part of Russia, Moscow no longer had to observe the restrictions imposed by the Ukrainian government when extending the lease of Sevastopol port facilities. That freedom to maneuver helped Russia accelerate its plans to expand its Black Sea Fleet, turning Crimea into a real strategic Russian outpost looking towards the Balkan region, the Levant, and the Mediterranean Sea. All the measures taken to streamline and build up naval and air capability in Crimea were meant to allow Russia to:

- dominate the region, guaranteeing freedom of navigation for Russian ships and safeguarding Russian gas and oil transportation networks;
- develop new power projection capabilities, including in the Mediterranean Sea and the Levant;
- intimidate potential competitors, particularly Romania, Bulgaria, and Turkey (NATO members);

-
- develop A2/AD tactics to prevent access by NATO forces to the Black Sea region.

The plan to expand the Black Sea Fleet was approved by President Vladimir Putin in April 2014, together with measures to increase the presence of Russian military aviation and to monitor NATO's naval and air military presence, especially that of US forces. Disturbed by the increasing number of NATO ships in the Black Sea, and taking advantage of its good relationship at the time with Turkey, Moscow urged Ankara to ban access by military ships which did not belong to Black Sea riparian countries, which Turkey was able to do under the Montreux Convention. Faithful, though, to its commitments as a NATO member, Turkey commendably rejected Russia's request.

In 2015, Defense Minister Sergey Shoygu announced that the Russian Federation would spend 2.4 billion dollars by 2020 to provide its Black Sea Fleet with state-of-the-art ships, submarines, air defense systems, and naval infantry. A naval detachment for the Mediterranean Sea and the Gulf region, named the Mediterranean Task Force, was to be set up within the Black Sea Fleet. Moreover, for the first time since the end of the Cold War, Russia decided to adapt some ships and submarines to operate in the much warmer waters of the Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea, and Gulf of Aden. This made it possible for the Rostov-on-Don submarine, which left from Novorossiysk, to fire Kalibr cruise missiles at ISIS targets in Syria on 8 December 2015, directly from the Mediterranean Sea. After having used its ships in the Caspian Sea, Russia returned in full force to the Eastern Mediterranean. Russia's Caspian Sea-Black Sea-Mediterranean Sea axis was operational, bringing geopolitical benefits to Moscow.

Russian official documents released so far contain a figure of thirty new ships that are to be supplied to the Black Sea Fleet, of which there will be six new frigates, six new submarines, and other smaller vessels, including for naval infantry landing. Although the Russians were dealt a hard blow when France refused to deliver the two Mistral ships ordered, if their current plans are accomplished, Russia will have full control over the Black Sea by 2020, and will be able to enforce its anti-access strategy (A2/AD) against NATO forces. These would no longer be allowed to operate in the Black Sea region or conduct aerial reconnaissance missions.

According to the Jamestown Foundation in the September 22, 2014 issue of its main publication, Eurasia Daily Monitor, apart from those naval measures, Russia also decided to bolster its air force capabilities, with Crimea being put to use as an aircraft carrier. SU-27SM and MIG-29 fighters, SU-25M ground attack aircraft, IL-38N maritime patrol and anti-submarine warfare aircraft, KA-52K attack helicopters and KA-27 ASW helicopters were deployed, with others still to come to the peninsula. A regiment of TU-22M3 strategic bombers, which can be used as platforms for various high-precision missiles, will be deployed at Gvardeyskoye airfield, 15 kilometers northwest of Simferopol. Together with the new naval infantry and special forces units, some of which have already been used as tools in the hybrid war, Russia will possess a huge strike force which can help it execute various military scenarios in the Black Sea and beyond.

NATO and the Black Sea

After 1989, the Black Sea once again captured the attention of the West, because of two important events. 1991 saw the collapse of the USSR and the disappearance of the 'Russian lake', and this had multiple consequences for the region. First, with the appearance of the independent states of Ukraine, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova, the

number of littoral states rose from four to seven. Second, Russia's Black Sea coastline in comparison with that of the USSR diminished significantly, notably with a loss of control over the mouths of the Danube, the Crimean Peninsula, and the port of Sevastopol. Third, the Black Sea started to appear increasingly often on the agendas of international chancelleries, along with the appearance of frozen conflicts, that is, military conflicts generated and supported by Moscow in order to create a belt of instability around the Black Sea. This was the manner in which newly-independent states were blackmailed and their cooperation with the West obstructed - not only former members of the USSR, but Warsaw Pact countries as well.

In the period 1991-2004, the West did not consider it necessary to develop a special strategy for the Black Sea region, thereby committing a serious strategic error - especially in the absence of any instrument for managing the frozen conflicts. From an institutional point of view, the most notable activity was that of NATO which, through the instruments of cooperation it developed - PFP, EAPC and the NATO-Russia Council - contributed, at least for a time, to overcoming old adversities dating back to the Cold War. Especially because of the frozen conflicts, however, the overall security situation did not improve, with tensions between East and West remaining. Littoral states such as Turkey, and those in the geographic vicinity of the Black Sea, such as Greece, have shown some initiative, proposing a number of formats for regional cooperation, such as the Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) or the International Center for Black Sea Studies in Athens. Yet, in the absence of a coherent response to these from the major Western states, and amid Russia's continued hostility towards any attempt to internationalize the issue of the Black Sea, the results achieved have been modest, both economically and in terms of regional stability.

The second event that marked the return of the Black Sea to the attention of the West was the West's decision to integrate Romania and Bulgaria into NATO, and subsequently into the EU. These two former communist states were invited to join the Alliance in 2002, and became members in 2004. EU membership followed for both in 2007. The Black Sea was once more the eastern border of the West. All of this took place amid the increased attention that the West had to pay to the Middle East and Central Asia, two geopolitical axes intersecting in the Black Sea region. Because of the need to combat Al Qaeda and the jihadism it promotes, the West, and the US in particular, became increasingly involved in the problems of the Middle East. In the same context, though, under the provisions of Article 5, NATO committed itself to an important mission in Afghanistan, in the very heart of Central Asia.

It is no coincidence, then, that in addition to the revolutionary concept of the Greater Middle East proposed by the American intellectuals in 2002 for a more integrated management of Middle East issues, in 2004 the concept of the Wider Black Sea Area was also launched. The creators of this syntagm - Bruce Jackson and Ron Asmus - thus extended this area of interest to include not only the littoral states, but also the Republic of Moldova, as well as Armenia and Azerbaijan from the important region of the Caucasus. The Wider Black Sea Area, then, was becoming a pivotal area, linking - through the Black Sea - the Balkans and the Caucasus. According to Ron Asmus, the managing of the "arch of instability" from Marrakech to Bangladesh could not be efficient without a Western strategy that encompassed the Black Sea. In their analysis, the two authors emphasized the need for the West to have a coherent, relevant strategy for this region. Neither the US nor the major

European powers had yet identified their strategic goals in this respect.

During this second stage, at Romania's insistence, the two major organizations of the West – NATO and the EU – started to pay official attention to the Black Sea area. At the conclusion of the NATO summit in Istanbul, on June 29, 2004, in its final communiqué, NATO made its first reference to the Black Sea: "We note the importance of the Black Sea region for Euro-Atlantic security". However, because of the opposition of some member states, NATO did not assume a direct role in tackling these security issues, but only began "to explore means to complement these efforts". The main burden still had to be borne by the littoral states.

Representatives of Romania have continually warned of the existence of the difficult situation in the Eastern part of the European continent, in the Black Sea region. In a speech delivered at Stanford University in September 2005, Romanian President Traian Basescu warned about the Black Sea being turned into a "Russian lake". Then, just as today, Russia opposed the internationalization of the region, and rejected the region's cooperation with the international community in order to keep it isolated within Russia's sphere of influence. President Basescu also argued that Western democracies should focus on the Black Sea region "before it's too late". Ten years later, that statement seems almost prophetic. It is extremely unfortunate that Western administrations have ignored the anti-Western developments in the region in recent years.

Things began to change in 2014, but only after Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and its attacks in the Donbass. The West was forced to acknowledge the new strategic reality. At the Wales Summit, NATO's concluding statement mentioned for the first time that the security turmoil in the Black Sea had been sparked by Russia. Because of this, in addition to other measures NATO decided to boost its naval presence in the Black Sea, to send AWACS to Romania, Bulgaria, and Turkey, and to pay more attention to Russia's military decisions concerning this European hotspot.

Several NATO member states pulled together to develop national programs focused on the new security needs of the Black Sea region. In this context, the US effort is indicative. Recently, in a speech given at Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, the US Ambassador to Romania stated that "besides aggression over Ukraine and its consequences on our Baltic allies' defense and security, we are also worried about its effects over the Black Sea region. That's an issue Romania has urged NATO to thoroughly examine". Russian activism in the Black Sea region has finally been noticed.

Paradoxically, this will have a positive effect on relations generally between the West and Russia, which, as always, are governed by the Latin saying "Si vis pacem para bellum".



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