WHY NATO SHOULD TRANSFORM INTO A GLOBAL SECURITY ORGANIZATION

Committee 8

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

WHY NATO SHOULD TRANSFORM TO A GLOBAL SECURITY ORGANIZATION

Executive Summary ............................................................................................................. 3
1. Introduction ..................................................................................................................... 4
  1.1 Background................................................................................................................ 4
  1.2 Thesis and Overview ................................................................................................. 5
2. Why NATO needs to adapt to new security challenges .................................................. 5
  2.1 Changing world, transnational threats ....................................................................... 5
  2.2 Vulnerabilities of the West facing New Threats........................................................ 8
3. Why NATO needs to go Global to Remain Relevant.................................................... 10
  3.1 Evolving from the Cold War Legacy....................................................................... 10
  3.2 Consolidating Peace through Regional Enlargement .............................................. 11
  3.3 Expanded Reach through Partnership...................................................................... 11
  3.4 A “Global” Alliance?............................................................................................... 12
4. Why NATO needs to Include Security.......................................................................... 13
  4.1 NATO’s Core Competency: Collective Defense and Deterrence ........................... 13
  4.2 “Multiple futures”: Drivers of Change .................................................................... 14
  4.3 Article 5: The Evolving Nature of Collective Defense and Deterrence ............... 15
  4.4 Enhancing Article 4 Consultations .......................................................................... 16
  4.5 A Comprehensive Approach: NATO’s Future Role in Security............................. 17
5. Why NATO needs to Remain Effective as a Global Security Organization............... 19
  5.1 Enhancing Effectiveness through Membership, Partnership and Cooperation ...... 19
  5.2 Enhancing Effectiveness in Decision-making and the Consensus Process............. 20
  5.3 Enhancing Effectiveness through Interoperability ............................................... 22
  5.4 Enhancing NATO’s Capabilities .......................................................................... 22
Conclusion ......................................................................................................................... 23
Bibliography ...................................................................................................................... 26
Executive Summary

NATO has undergone continuous change since its foundation in 1949. Throughout its history, the Alliance has been forced to adapt to meet new challenges, including geopolitical developments and advancements in military technology and capabilities. In the past, these challenges were relatively straightforward; however, today complexity and rapid change characterize the current security environment and require innovative responses from global security organizations.

The key question facing NATO is why it should transform from a regional defensive alliance into a security organization prepared to act on the global stage. In answering this crucial question, this paper will first briefly describe the key security challenges facing the Alliance, and then address why NATO should change from a regional focused organization into one prepared to operate globally. The paper will continue by discussing why NATO needs to reassess its understanding of Articles 4 and 5 of the founding Washington Treaty, with a view towards explaining why a collective defense focus needs to be enhanced with a global security perspective. Finally, the paper will then answer the question why the Alliance needs to remain effective while undergoing organizational transformation.

The following quote has guided the formulation of this paper within Committee 8:
"Forget about all the reasons why something may not work. You only need to find one good reason why it will."(Dr. Robert Anthony)
1. Introduction

To date, NATO has been successful in adapting to new political and security circumstances. It provided collective defense to member-states throughout the Cold War and then proceeded to enlarge and incorporate many of the former Warsaw Pact countries within the Alliance. This adaptability has been a key to success; however, today the Alliance needs to understand its potential role in the rapidly changing world. The key questions NATO faces today are why it should transform to fulfill this new role, and why, among existing international organizations, it is the most suitable body to effectively meet the current security requirements of member nations and partners.

1.1 Background

Recent changes in the security environment are key driving factors of NATO’s transformational efforts. The threats, challenges and risks that the Alliance must be prepared to face in the 21st century are increasingly global in nature and scope. These threats are also increasingly complex, and the tools required to meet them are not exclusively military. The world has shrunk to the extent that conflicts in one region may have a direct and deadly impact on the stability of areas located far away. Threats are increasingly losing their local nature and are becoming more global, more difficult to predict, and, as a result, more difficult to manage. The array of challenges threatening global security has expanded tremendously, ranging from old traditional threats to newly emerging ones, such as terrorism, cyber security, and climate change. Globalization is highlighting the importance of a multitude of new security issues and challenges.

One of the central issues facing NATO today is whether it should assume additional global responsibilities and expand its missions to deal with threats emanating from far beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. In an attempt to address the challenges of the rapidly changing security environment, the Alliance has started to review its Strategic Concept, while simultaneously undertaking new roles and responsibilities and building new relationships with potential partners.
1.2 Thesis and Overview

Given the global nature of present and anticipated future threats, the primary issue facing the Alliance is addressing why NATO should transform itself from a regional collective security organization into a global cooperative security organization.

This paper will provide a detailed response to this question in accordance with the thesis: *NATO as an effective global security organization is the best way for its members to comprehensively address the complex security challenges of a rapidly changing world.*

This study project will present arguments in support of this thesis in the following order:

a) Why does NATO need to adapt to new security challenges?
b) Why does NATO need to go global to remain relevant?
c) Why does NATO need to go beyond collective defense and include security?
d) Why does NATO need to remain effective while becoming a global security organization?

2. Why NATO needs to adapt to new security challenges

As a result of globalization, the rapidly changing world will experience the emergence of many new threats to regional and world stability, which will become challenges to NATO member-states and to NATO as an organization. Taking their more probable consequences into account, NATO needs to adapt to these new challenges in order to ensure the security of its members. Given the Alliance’s unique capabilities, wide membership and global partnerships, it is the only organization suited to do so. ¹

2.1 Changing world, transnational threats

Globalization will likely develop well beyond current technological, financial and trade dimensions to include a reallocation of power and changes in the roles of institutions. The complex nature of the world will require nation-states to be increasingly
involved in regional and international organizations, not only to deal with global management issues, but also to exercise collective governance in dealing with security issues emanating from weak states and ungoverned areas.

The world is moving from a uni-polar international system towards multi-polarity, and globalization is driving greater interdependence among states. States will remain the primary actors in the international arena, but instead of protecting national boundaries, they will become increasingly preoccupied in protecting their interests and people. Furthermore, non-state actors - NGOs, international organizations and various social networks - will play more important roles in international politics. The increasing interdependence between states and with non-state actors will result in a progressive erosion of the traditional concept of national sovereignty. Nation-states will not disappear in the future, but will become “postmodern” in that their role in economic, financial, security, cyber and political domains will diminish to some extent and will be increasingly assumed by international institutions. The gap between modern/postmodern states and failing/failed states that are not fully integrated into the global economic system will continue to widen.

Substantial, though primarily isolated, ungoverned areas of the world will be under the control of criminal and fundamentalist religious groups, as well as ideologically/power driven individuals - some of whom may attempt to possess weapons of mass destruction. Unfortunately, international consensus to deal resolutely with the resulting frontier conflicts will be increasingly difficult to obtain unless international financial or trade systems are directly affected or unless the potential negative effects of an intervention can be convincingly shown to be minimal. Widespread access by non-state actors to biological agents and genetic manipulation equipment will require national and international security organizations to be better prepared to rapidly identify, assess and respond to these new types of threats. In addition, the range of possible nuclear, chemical, biological and radiological risks will increase and will require effective responses to be developed.

The “BRIC” countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China) and the rest of Asia will play an increasingly major role in terms of global economics and finance. They will likely try to use their growing influence to strengthen their strategic alliances. This economic
growth will exert enormous pressure on the supply of strategic resources, including on the provision of energy. Oil and gas production will be further concentrated in unstable areas. The world will need to manage a difficult energy transition away from fossil fuels to other forms of energy. This transformation will likely be slow and subject to disruptions and conflicts over securing access to diminishing fossil fuel supplies. The vastly enriched suppliers of these vital resources, in turn, will be promoting their own agendas, which will almost certainly not include democracy, human rights or other values supported by the West.

Regarding demographic developments, global population growth will occur primarily in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The number of migrants leaving disadvantaged countries is likely to increase significantly. Demographic growth resulting from rapid global urbanization will reach a critical level and will be accompanied by a lack of access to water and food. The uneven distribution of natural resources, and their illegal and wasteful exploitation, will exacerbate the risk of disorder and of violent conflict. The shortage of water will have devastating effects for many developing countries for which agriculture is an essential part of their economy.

In addition, cyber attacks will become a major concern of both industry and governments. They are becoming increasingly vulnerable to, and inefficient when facing, these targeted attacks. These factors are further contributing to the weakening of the nation-state on the international stage. Finally, new weapons systems based on nanotechnologies and biological advances will likely make their appearance with very precise volumetric effects, completely different from traditional weapons. To oppose these weapons, new mechanisms and concepts of deterrence will need to be developed.

The emergence of new worldwide state and non-state actors will fragment the international system and might hinder international cooperation. Thus, the risk of the use of nuclear weapons will probably increase. The potential spread of nuclear technologies and expertise may result in the appearance of new nuclear states and the acquisition of nuclear materials by terrorist groups. It is unlikely that terrorism will disappear in the foreseeable future. However, its possible increase could be mitigated if economic growth continues in the Middle East and underdeveloped regions, such as Sub-Saharan Africa, and if educational opportunities increase and young people are given meaningful roles in
their societies. Otherwise, under the opposite and perhaps more likely scenario, conditions will be favorable for the growth of radicalism and the recruitment of young people by terrorist groups, which may be inclined to acquire and use biological, chemical, radiological or nuclear weapons to create massive population and/or economic losses.

2.2 Vulnerabilities of the West facing New Threats

Military actions by western nations will be increasingly limited by publics focused on reducing interventions and minimizing losses, except in the defense of vital national interests. This situation will encourage disaffected states or non-state actors to engage in what is known as fourth generation warfare, in which victory is not necessarily the objective. The fight against terrorism will necessitate worldwide cooperation and an exchange of information between political leaders and diplomats, intelligence services, police, militaries and legal bodies. In this context, at a minimum, armed forces will have to be sufficiently equipped and trained to respond rapidly to mass casualties, crisis situations and humanitarian missions.

All of the factors above represent new risks to the safety of the western world. Inadequate border controls, increased energy dependency, declining birth rates, the heightened influence of the media and of public opinion, the decline of states’ power, and the need for cheap labor, represent potential weaknesses in western societies which could be exploited by terrorists. They might also take advantage of the freedoms of thought, speech, religion, movement, media and assembly offered by democracies to further their objectives. When combined with natural planetary degradation on an unprecedented scale, the overall unpredictable and complex global situation will adversely affect the ability of national governments to develop and implement effective policies that will have the necessary global outcome.

As an example of this interconnectedness, climate change is likely to have significant effects on natural resource systems, and the resulting environmental changes may have an effect on the subsistence and livelihood of human populations. This situation could lead to instability and conflicts, which are often followed by a displacement of populations and changes in demographic distribution and migration. Interlinked with other factors such as
resource scarcity, demography and urban growth, energy dependency, and disruption of societies, climate change could have dramatic consequences on global stability and security, possibly creating both intrastate and interstate conflicts.

Energy security represents another example of these complex relationships. It is becoming increasingly difficult to expand supplies or to find new resources to meet the rising global demand for energy, particularly from China and India. At the same time, both North America and Europe are becoming more dependent on imported energy. Pressure on those resources will grow dramatically in the future. Threats to energy supplies could come from a number of different sources: terrorist attacks, natural disasters, political intimidation, and regional conflicts. Increasingly complex and vulnerable infrastructures (e.g. pipelines, gas terminals) are being created to cope with the rising demand. Energy security is an issue of strategic importance for NATO members, especially with regard to lines of communication and transportation.

The increasingly complex nature of the changing threat environment, as described in this chapter, and the heightened need for capable international security organizations, is compelling NATO to adapt if it wants to remain a relevant security provider for its members and partners. As we will further discuss in chapter 4, this complex security environment increasingly requires comprehensive civilian-military integrated responses, involving military, domestic and foreign intelligence services, police departments, foreign policy personnel, development and humanitarian organizations.

If NATO does not adapt to the new security environment, then it will probably become increasingly irrelevant. The lack of NATO as a capable global security organization might result in a security vacuum, which may be filled by one or more existing organizations or by a new organization. NATO has both advantages and disadvantages in attempting to assume a new role and fill this void. As an alliance of the world’s most capable nations, it can deliver the military dimension of security for its members better than other organizations, such as the EU and the UN. American capabilities increase the potential for the Alliance to develop and implement superior technological means to deal with the changing military and civilian security environment, including preventing terrorist use of weapons of mass destruction by early detection and possible pre-emptive actions. At this point, NATO’s primary disadvantage is its limited ability to provide civilian capabilities
to integrated solutions.

3. Why NATO needs to go Global to Remain Relevant

As NATO’s current involvement in Afghanistan demonstrates, Euro-Atlantic security is closely connected with security and stability in the rest of the world. Local conflicts in places far from the Alliance’s area of responsibility have the potential of spilling over national and regional borders, often with wider security implications. Under these circumstances, it seems unlikely for NATO to remain relevant if it confines itself geographically and is unable to respond “out of area”. An effective international security organization will be needed that can operate globally to deal with these threats.

3.1 Evolving from the Cold War Legacy

During the Cold War, NATO had a clearly defined adversary: the Soviet Union. NATO’s primary objective was to defend member states from the spread of communism in Europe and to defend Western Europe against conventional and nuclear attack. The political and military focus of the Alliance was based almost exclusively on the Soviet threat. The clarity of this objective determined the geographical limits of NATO’s activities, its force deployment, and its military structure in accordance with the Washington Treaty. There was virtually no military involvement of the organization outside of Europe.

When the USSR collapsed, NATO did not suffer the fate of the Warsaw Pact, which fell apart and disappeared. On the contrary, NATO’s mission set has grown significantly in the post-Cold War era. The Alliance has taken on additional responsibilities, which include addressing both instability caused by regional and ethnic conflicts within Europe and threats coming from beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. NATO has taken the path of transformation, adapting to its new security environment, which is no longer exclusively confined to Europe. NATO needs to act not only within the boundaries of its geographical territory, but also where the collective security interests of its members are challenged. In early 1990s, NATO became engaged in the Balkans, where it performed new military tasks focused on crisis management and peacekeeping. Afterwards, the Alliance extended its geographical area of interest to include the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern regions.² Missions in Bosnia and Kosovo were followed by NATO’s first
out-of-area engagements in Afghanistan and, in a more limited way, in Iraq. Both operations raised important questions about NATO’s ability to provide security beyond the borders of the Alliance, and the need to do so. The possible impact of these missions on the future direction of NATO has become a key topic for discussion within the organization. It is evident that the Alliance’s capabilities and political will are both being tested, particularly in Afghanistan. The outcome of the Afghanistan operation will help define NATO’s future level of ambition to provide security, the geographical limits of NATO’s future missions, and NATO’s capacity to act effectively "out of area" in critical regions throughout the world.

3.2 Consolidating Peace through Regional Enlargement

In attempting to better address the regional challenges of the 1990’s, NATO went outside of its traditional geographical boundaries, not only by extending its area of interest into the Balkans, but also by expanding its membership through an enlargement process. The current dilemma is whether it will be able to tackle global issues if it remains a regional organization, or whether it should evolve into a truly global organization. Although NATO’s open door policy will likely continue, the latter approach does not require the acceptance of new members. Previous rounds of enlargement removed the Cold War divisions in Europe and increased the stability that the West was seeking with respect to its immediate eastern neighbors. Although NATO gained some additional political influence in the international arena, the new members did not substantially strengthen NATO militarily. In the 21st century, military capabilities are no longer measured strictly by troop numbers, but also by their flexibility, deployability, and sustainability.

3.3 Expanded Reach through Partnership

To be effective in facing new threats and challenges, NATO requires additional resources, expanded capabilities, and more effective burden sharing arrangements. Since security challenges have become global, their solutions require global efforts. It is evident that NATO alone is unable to cope with the full spectrum of security problems. That is one reason why NATO initiated various partnerships aimed at developing relationships with a number of strategically important countries. It has started looking for reliable partners that share its values and can contribute to its efforts by providing military
forces or logistical support to NATO-led missions. NATO’s operations in the Balkans and Afghanistan have benefited greatly from contributions made by non-NATO members. For example, countries such as Finland, Australia and New Zealand have assumed meaningful roles and sent substantial numbers of troops to Afghanistan in support of efforts by NATO members to stabilize the country. These countries together with Brazil, India, and South Africa have also significantly contributed to peacekeeping operations around the globe. NATO should enhance its partnership program by furthering its pragmatic relationships with contact countries such as Australia, New Zealand, South Korea and Japan, and with other nations relevant to promoting security and stability. These relationships enhance NATO’s legitimacy and capacity to operate on a global stage. NATO will grow stronger with the support of capable partners and will be able to protect its members more effectively. NATO should assume the role of a global player through enhancing partnerships rather than expanding membership outside of the Euro-Atlantic space. Given the success of NATO’s Partnership for Peace activities, this effort could lead to an even more effective system of Euro-Atlantic security. At the same time, NATO should consider developing policies that would enable partner countries engaged in operations to participate in its decision-making process.

3.4 A “Global” Alliance?

Taking a global approach to security does not necessarily mean growing into a global organization. Transitioning from a geographical to a functional security approach could help NATO effectively carry out its missions in different parts of the world. The distinction between the two concepts of “global” was summed up by Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, who stated that “we do not need a global NATO, but a NATO that can protect its members against global threats”, highlighting the distinction between “a global NATO” and “a NATO acting globally”. It is clear that NATO cannot claim to be a global international organization based solely on the geography of its member countries. However, NATO seems to have embraced responsibility for its members’ security by responding to emerging challenges and threats outside of the Euro-Atlantic region.

In its move to bring stability to other parts of the world, the Alliance is extending both its geographic reach and the range of its operations. In recent years, it has been engaged in peacekeeping in Afghanistan, has trained security forces in Iraq, and has given logistical support to the African Union's mission in Darfur. NATO provided supplies to
victims of Hurricane Katrina in the United States and to those of a massive earthquake in Pakistan. NATO forces are involved in different types of combat, peacekeeping, training and education, logistics support and humanitarian relief operations. The threats have become extensively diverse and security is not exclusively a military challenge anymore, but also an economic, political, social, and environmental one. As a response to the complexity and variety of emerging challenges, NATO has been developing a “comprehensive approach” to security.

NATO needs to become a security organization with a global perspective, capable of operating globally because that is where the threats exist. The military capacity of NATO nations cannot be matched by the EU, OSCE or UN. Only NATO has the potential global reach and commitment, through its broad membership, shared values, partnership programs, and advanced military capabilities, to meet the full spectrum of security tasks a truly comprehensive approach demands.

4. Why NATO needs to Include Security

NATO can justly claim to be the most successful military Alliance in history. During the past 60 years, it withstood the threat posed by the Warsaw Pact, and then went on to integrate many of the ex-Warsaw Pact nations into its ranks. In the process, NATO developed comprehensive interoperable, multinational military organizational structures and technologies. During the Cold War, collective defense, as mandated by Article 5 of its founding Washington Treaty, has been the overwhelming focus of the organization’s leadership. However, as the globalised, non-military dimension of 21st Century security challenges become increasingly evident, NATO needs to move beyond traditional notions of collective defense if it wants to continue to provide its members and partners with comprehensive security.

4.1 NATO’s Core Competency: Collective Defense and Deterrence

From the Washington Treaty to the Alliance’s most recent Strategic Concept of 1999, NATO has defined its main purpose as safeguarding the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means. During the Cold War, military concepts known as collective defense and deterrence were the principal approaches to achieve this
objective. Collective defense and deterrence were premised on retaining sufficient numbers of suitably-trained and well-equipped military assets in place to respond rapidly to any armed, large-scale attack on any NATO member. To be effective, deterrence required sufficient responses be available to retaliate against whatever form the original attack might have taken, whether involving conventional weapons or weapons of mass destruction.

4.2 “Multiple futures”: Drivers of Change

However, as described in earlier chapters, globalization is highlighting the importance of a multitude of new security issues and challenges that are not primarily military in nature. Examples of new security issues and challenges include cyber warfare, terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-state actors, as well as environmental impacts and the resulting natural resource conflicts and their effects.

NATO’s understanding of possible future security threats has been developed through the “Multiple-Futures Project”\(^5\), which postulates four possible futures:

1. Dark Side of Exclusivity – Weak and failed states generate instability in areas of interest, and the states of the globalised world are faced with related strategic choices.
3. Clash of Modernities – Advanced, rational networked societies with inherent fragility challenged by external authoritarian regimes.
4. New Power Politics – Increasing number of major powers, competition and proliferation undermine value of international organizations.

The emergence of these new security futures is challenging NATO to reexamine why it should take the leading role in continuing to safeguard the security of its members in this new security environment, in particular, by reassessing the future relevance of Articles 4 and 5 of its founding Washington Treaty.
4.3 Article 5: The Evolving Nature of Collective Defense and Deterrence

With respect to Article 5, the principal question is: why should NATO change its customary responsibilities for collective defense and deterrence, and include the use of military means in the prevention of potential threats? Although prevention and pre-emption are not as straight-forward as they were during the Cold War, they are still important approaches. Their effective application depends on the availability of accurate information permitting preventive steps to be taken, and the ability to deliver a proportionate response to deal with follow-on attacks. Clearly, an effective Alliance is better resourced than any individual nation to develop technological and human information gathering and assessment capabilities. A comprehensive information gathering effort will certainly involve intelligence agencies, but it will also require the development of sophisticated situational awareness of all environments: maritime, terrestrial, aerial, spatial and cyber-spatial. The development and management of technological and human systems has a distinct military flavor, being the evolutionary development of existing capabilities, though an all-of-government focus will clearly be needed.

Effective deterrence, where possible, will need to be intimately linked with the preventive capability and will involve new sophisticated technological systems being developed to allow perpetrators to be traced, their motives and vulnerabilities to be assessed, and effective retaliations to be implemented. NATO is well-suited to evolve to fulfill this role on behalf of Alliance nations, especially compared with other organizations; however, Alliance members would need to be convinced that a collective response (i.e. Article 5) is warranted based on the specific security incident, and whether it constituted an “attack” and warranted a coordinated military and/or security service response. Graduated pre-emption and preventative steps may be possible in some instances, for example in the cyber domain, where repeated attacks tend to occur; however, in the case of weapons of mass destruction, preventive (i.e. through negotiation and protective shields) and deterrence (i.e. inferring massive conventional responses following unsuccessful first strikes) measures would be more acceptable to Western publics and influential on other state actors. However, pre-emptive actions against rogue elements, such as terrorists, may be justified since they tend to perform repeated actions
of increasing severity. As a result, the “one size fits all” deterrence approach is changed into one that is more tailored to fit specific circumstances.\(^6\)

In the case of non-state actors, examples of possible deterrent actions include targeting production facilities for weapons of mass destruction or terrorist camps with conventional weapons. The deterrence message to other potential adversaries would be that there are no “safe havens” in which to hide from physical destruction, or certain ways to avoid detection, and that swift retribution for terrorist actions can be expected.\(^7\) Another example of a possible deterrence approach would apply to radiological material: holding countries responsible for any residual radiation signatures found on their territories resulting from any use of the radiological or nuclear weapons. Both of the above scenarios, and many others that could be developed, fundamentally depend on possessing effective information gathering and intelligence assessment capabilities provided by the necessary supporting technological devices and human intelligence competencies, including advanced language skills, and the will of governments and the public to react.

### 4.4 Enhancing Article 4 Consultations

In addition to reassessing its Article 5 responsibilities, the second fundamental question is why should NATO reassess its understanding of its Article 4 responsibilities when faced with non-military security risks? Article 4 states: “Parties will consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened”.\(^8\) This article can be interpreted as allowing “consultation on whatever security concerns exist, which can certainly lead to decisions about actions, contributions and operations.”\(^9\)

Even if NATO accepts that it may need to change its Article 5 responsibilities to include an expanded understanding of defense and deterrence, as outlined above in Section 4.3, it may still refuse to deal decisively with the implied global implications. But the basic question is, if NATO does not perform this role than who will? The new security issues and challenges mentioned in earlier chapters are global in nature and cannot be dealt with on an individual national basis, so some type of collective action will be necessary. The primary premise is that effective Article 4 consultations and responses are not feasible without effective and intimate knowledge about and involvement with the
world’s “trouble spots”, and the political willingness to react appropriately. Furthermore, since Western publics will increasingly demand humanitarian interventions resulting from environmental degradations and their effects, NATO can either continue to respond to these required interventions on an “ad hoc” basis with diminished effectiveness, or confront them with a prepared, organized approach that would result from having a global perspective and a corresponding capacity for successful involvement.

4.5 A Comprehensive Approach: NATO’s Future Role in Security

If it is considered reasonable that NATO should be involved in providing global security through possessing a global perspective and a capacity for effective engagement, one must consider why it should continue to be a politico-military security alliance that emphasizes the need to work effectively with other security partners. First, a comprehensive politico-military security alliance implies that it is capable of providing (by one means or another) the full range of required security services in conflict and post-conflict situations (including other types of humanitarian intervention situations), including police services, governance coordination, bureaucratic capacity-building, economic management, and humanitarian support services. The pragmatic reality is that, since a true politico-military organization would need to provide the full range of civilian and military capabilities, a partnership arrangement with other suitable organizations such as the European Union is probably the only affordable approach available in order to be both effective and efficient in carrying out the required functions.

The Comprehensive Approach would, therefore, be defined to include NATO providing, or at least managing, all military and non-military capabilities and resources required to successfully complete humanitarian relief, development, governance and reconstruction efforts (or until another agency is willing and able to take over the efforts). It is clear that Afghanistan-type operations will likely become the future norm, and military operations to support failed or failing states suffering from terrorism and extreme environment degradation, or to provide “human security” when genocide or humanitarian catastrophes occur, will require the efficient provision of both effective military and civilian capabilities. NATO’s current “ad hoc” approach to these capabilities, as implied in its Comprehensive Approach pronouncements to date, suggests the management maxim that “failing to plan is planning to fail”. NATO needs to ensure that, in all
deliberations on this subject, adequate military and civilian capability planning is occurring to provide for complete mission success.

With respect to civilian capabilities, a recently published book, *Integrating Instruments of Power and Influence: Lessons Learned and Best Practices*, has advocated that the United States should move in a similar direction and invest in developing non-military, civilian capabilities to deliver reconstruction phases involving effective infrastructure and governance. One of its key recommendations is that NATO and development agencies should obtain “sufficient staff to manage these enhanced coordination responsibilities”. Given the severe budget limitations currently anticipated by NATO nations for the foreseeable future, the question of resource availability for effective civilian capability provision is critical. Not only can NATO not afford to establish a large civilian bureaucracy to provide civilian capabilities, but also it would be unwise to do so. The key to success is for NATO to maximize leverage of UN, EU, and national civilian staffs, and invite NGO and, where appropriate, private contractor participation in providing the actual services. NATO’s role should ideally be limited to determining civilian mission requirements, providing core funding, establishing operating norms and standards, and measuring results to ensure consistency of the provided services throughout all mission areas, e.g. across all Provincial Reconstruction Teams in the case of Afghanistan. This NATO-led inter-agency, “whole-of-government” approach would be pan-mission and would ensure that minimum common standards are met by individual national government PRT efforts, and that best management practices are implemented for effective Alliance organizational learning.

Working with an array of different civilian organizations to achieve a common goal would require NATO’s coordination function to be conducted by highly competent managers using advanced management approaches, including professional program and project management and service level agreement management. NATO would need to be a “smart customer” of the services provided by the other organizations and would need to be highly competent in defining exactly what is required and how “success” would be measured.

The next important issue is whether NATO requires a new security architecture to be developed to allow for a “Comprehensive Approach” to security. The alternative to a
Study Project SC 115 Committee 8

fully developed security architecture would be the present approach of planning ad hoc “coalitions of the willing” among potential partners in the midst of conflict or security situations. A competent Comprehensive Approach would require a structured approach to civilian organizational involvement, including UN agencies, the EU, Alliance/Partner government assets, and NGOs.

5. Why NATO needs to Remain Effective as a Global Security Organization

If in the future, NATO wants to remain an important player in an increasingly globalized world, it will need to continue to be, and to be perceived as, an effective organization. If not, members and partners will, as has already occurred in the recent past, seek solutions for perceived or actual threats through other organizations or other means, such as ad hoc “coalitions of the willing”. The future alliance can thus be seen as ‘effective’ if members and partners primarily rely on it to provide security and stability.

5.1 Enhancing Effectiveness through Membership, Partnership and Cooperation

The end of the Cold War and collapse of the Warsaw Pact brought a consolidation of the zone of peace and prosperity within Europe. Many Central and Eastern European nations sought NATO membership to provide their countries with collective defense. NATO’s Partnership for Peace (PfP) program allowed them to develop relationships with NATO, and to conduct the necessary reforms to allow for eventual membership for those nations seeking it. The success of the PfP program led NATO to enhance consultation and cooperation options with countries outside the Euro-Atlantic region. As a result, the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) were established. In recent years, NATO also integrated forces of contact countries, such as Australia, New Zealand and others, into its Afghanistan mission and other operations. Several of these ‘troop-contributing nations’ have expressed an interest in becoming involved in the operational decision-making process.
NATO’s recent operational experiences, including those in the Balkans and the ongoing ISAF operation in Afghanistan, have demonstrated that large scale operation can benefit greatly from troop contributions from non-member countries. Given that NATO’s Force Generation process frequently suffers from shortfalls of will and capabilities, contributions from partners will remain important. If NATO wants to continue to receive these contributions, it should consider allowing partner countries to take part in the decision-making process. With the demonstrated success of NATO as a provider of defense and security, it is also possible, if not probable, that additional partner countries will seek closer cooperation with, if not membership in, the Alliance.

5.2 Enhancing Effectiveness in Decision-making and the Consensus Process

Decisions within the governing bodies of the Alliance are taken with consensus of all the member-states. If the number of member-states grows or partner countries participate in the process, there is a likelihood that the decision-making process will become even more burdensome and ineffective. However, the consensus rule is much more than a mechanistic procedure; it reflects NATO’s strength as an alliance of independent and sovereign countries, in that “NATO decisions are the expression of the collective will of its member’s governments, arrived at by common consent”.11 In the recent past, the consensus rule has been the subject of critical discussions. Before and during operations in Kosovo, some member states felt that the decision-making process was too slow and the consensus rule hampered its timeliness. Others felt that the application of the rule allowed member states the possibility to find enough common ground to endorse the operation or at least not to block it.

The strength of the consensus rule is seen in the fact that an explicit “yes” or “no” is not required; member-states can remain silent on issues they are unable to support directly. Member states are free to choose the means and extent to contribute or not contribute to a specific operation. A sensible and flexible application of the rule makes short-term decision-making possible. In the given example of Kosovo, decisions by the North Atlantic Council (NAC) during the ongoing operation had a turnaround of 48 hours or less.12 From another point of view, the rule is only sensible if by common consent all member-states are willing to contribute to the aims of the Alliance: providing stability and
security for its members in a cooperative effort and requires the involvement of all members. Again, the Alliance is about providing security, not only consuming it. Although improvements in the effectiveness of the decision-making process by reducing the application of the consensus rule could have undesired side-effects, it is necessary to further research the effects of applying another set of rules for non-Article 5 operations. If the Alliance continues to rely on the support of non-member states and organizations in its operations, these countries and organizations should be entitled to be part of the (article 4) consultations and to participate in the decision-making process for non-Article 5 operations.

In facing these new Article 4 security responsibilities, two fundamental questions arise:

1. Should NATO membership requirements and responsibilities necessarily apply for all potential Article 4 partners and participants?
2. Should the same Article 5 requirement for Alliance consensus be required before Article 4 action is possible?

First, it should be possible for potential partners and participants to have limited influence and decision-making abilities without being full NATO members. In other words, Article 5 collective defense could remain the cornerstone of NATO membership, whereas the Article 4 “partnership” could be more flexible and accept the involvement of non-member nations and other organizations. The answer to the second question follows from the first one: Article 4 consensus would not be necessary and other majority voting or other approaches could be developed to encourage quicker decision-making. This would likely lead to “coalitions of the willing” for specific operations or security responses, and this development should be encouraged. It should be noted that these “coalitions” already exist to an extent within NATO for certain capabilities and shared programs, e.g. the strategic air transport unit. To maintain Alliance coherence, a member’s “veto” on majority-voted Article 4 matters may be necessary.

The strength of the Alliance is embodied by the principle: that all member-states are equally involved in a decision with equal rights and equal strength. That does not imply that improvements in achieving more timely responses are not possible. They should be sought in the development of interoperable and expeditionary forces of the member states.
5.3 Enhancing Effectiveness through Interoperability

The Alliance’s effectiveness in the execution of operations depends to a great extent on the interoperability of its military units. Interoperability is defined as “the ability to operate in synergy in the execution of assigned tasks”. This is primarily found in the use of a common language (English), the routine use of common procedures, and the application of compatible technology, such as communication equipment. Interoperability is also achieved through joint training and ‘standardization’, an effort that in the Alliance’s first 60 years resulted in a multitude of Standardization Agreements (STANAGs). Although countries can consider parts of STANAGs not applicable for their forces, the result of the process is that operations can be conducted in a reasonably standardized and coordinated way. The ISAF operation is a good example of this, with troop contributions from 42 different countries, of which 14 are non-NATO nations. Together they interoperate effectively relying on agreed NATO standards and of course also on the ability and flexibility of the troops on the ground.

NATO can be an effective global security organization if its members are willing and to provide capable forces for operations. The Alliance’s Defense Planning Process is a proven methodology that through Ministerial Guidance, NATO-Force Goals and the Defense Review Process ensures the development of relevant assets. The end results of the process are highly dependent on the budgets that member-countries allocate to defense. Although realizing Force Goals is a slow process, the results are mostly positive. Commitments to operations appear to catalyze the procurement of needed systems and equipment. The NATO Response Force (NRF), which was announced after the Prague Summit, is now a proven method to generate forces, which can be deployed after a relatively short reaction-time. Since the NRF has been in existence, probably the most important lesson has been that the allocation of an adequate readiness-period is essential to generate and improve interoperability between joint and combined forces. Although the availability of forces for the NRF is sometimes problematic, the system has proven to have some real benefits.

5.4 Enhancing NATO’s Capabilities

NATO as a global security organization will be challenged to rebuild stability and
security in situations where the use of military forces can be the start of a solution but can never be the end of it. Based on recent experience, close cooperation with a large number of non-NATO actors will be necessary to accomplish future missions. NATO should prepare for this cooperation by incorporating enhanced knowledge-gathering and other civilian assets into its organization. At the same time, it must seek close cooperation and partnerships with organizations that contribute to tasks such as security sector reform and more specific tasks such as rebuilding justice organizations and police forces.

Based on experiences with existing cooperation programs and the essential contributions non-member countries are providing to current operations, NATO needs to continue these initiatives and find ways to further incorporate partners. Existing standardization agreements make it possible to incorporate new member-states and partner-countries into operations without diminishing military interoperability. The availability of forces will likely remain a weak point for the Alliance, regardless of whether it is a regional or global organization. The incorporation of new members and cooperation with partner countries might improve the availability of expeditionary forces. The NRF is an excellent tool to improve interoperability and to prepare forces for expeditionary joint and combined operations. NATO should seek partnerships with other actors involved in civilian missions.

Conclusion

As NATO reviews its Strategic Concept, it is faced with fundamental questions about its purpose and objectives. Despite challenges, it was highly successful in providing collective defense for its members against a potential Soviet adversary throughout the Cold War, and during the 20 years since the fall of the Iron Curtain. Multiple rounds of enlargement have expanded the zone of peace and prosperity in Europe, and have consolidated and secured the gains of the Cold-War struggle.

However, NATO is now potentially entering into a period of strategic drift. Its traditional regional focus is an anachronism in the current threat environment. To combat this, NATO has developed enhanced partnership mechanisms, including the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI), but it has been
slow to develop its capabilities to act “out of area”. Multiple attempts do so have met with modest success at best. As such, few NATO nations have militaries suited to force projection into the regions where they are most needed. NATO has made steps towards this objective, with initiatives such as establishing Allied Command Transformation and the NATO Response Force, but ultimately, the success of the Alliance’s transformational effort will come down to increasing hard investments in defense capabilities, and developing greater political will to use them. This does not appear likely for the majority of Allies.

The questions addressed in this paper make a compelling case for NATO to transform, and to prepare itself for civil and military tasks on battlefields far from the Euro-Atlantic space, while staying true to its Cold War roots of collective defense. This new approach to security will require leaders and organizations that are prepared to understand and deal with the complexity of a security environment that demands a more comprehensive and integrated approach than was previously exercised. The imperative to cooperate with civilian organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, has been made clear during recent operations in Afghanistan and the Balkans. These modern battlefields reveal that military might alone cannot succeed in achieving desired political end states. The development of effective governance, manifest in governmental institutions, judicial mechanisms, viable economic systems, and basic human services are critical to mission success. NATO partnerships with the United Nations, the European Union, and other capable organizations will be critical to ensuring it is prepared to undertake the missions the 21st century will present. Likewise, NATO’s expanded and energized partnerships – comprised of the Partnership for Peace, Mediterranean Dialogue, Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, and relations with various contact countries – will be vital to expanding NATO’s reach, not just in geographic terms, but also in terms of the capacity to address and effectively deal with problems.

International cooperation by like-minded nations is vital to addressing the security issues that face the Alliance and its member states. The need for NATO’s role as the leader of a community of shared values cannot and should not be underestimated. No other organization has the ability to forge consensus among the world’s leading nations around an issue and then follow it up with action. At least for now, NATO has no peer competitor. It is, and must remain, the “best way for its members to comprehensively
address the complex security challenges of a rapidly changing world”. However, to do so, it must be empowered and able to act globally, and to address the full spectrum of security.


3 For updated national force contributions to NATO’s operation in Afghanistan see http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/placemat.html


11 Leo Michel, “How the “Consensus Rule” Works”, UDC 335.357 (1-622NATO), December 2006

12 ibid


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