

## Assessing NATO Capabilities in a Mission-Based Context

### DETERRENCE AND DEFENSE

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#### 1. OPENING REMARKS

- I am grateful to Hans Binnendijk for having invited me to participate in this conference and to speak before such a distinguished audience.
- It is deeply gratifying to see that our Alliance – the greatest of all alliances – has so many friends and supporters in positions of influence here in this city where NATO was born almost sixty years ago.
- And I would dare to say that any alliance that reaches the mature age of 60 and has an extended family of 26 members, soon to be 28 -- having started with 12 -- plus some 40-odd non-NATO, but like-minded, cousins from around the world -- well, then, there must something inherently sound and inspiring about such an alliance. In a more turbulent world, this is a positive trend.
- But let me turn now to the subject which Hans asked me to address before he kicks-off the discussion – deterrence and defense. You will note that my remarks address as much the how as the what, because in a consensus-based alliance, unlike a coalition, the how often shapes the what, and the how often has an inherent value of its own in sustaining mutual commitments.

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<sup>1</sup> The views expressed in these remarks are the author's own and should not be interpreted to reflect the position of NATO or individual Allies.

- Let me caution that I am speaking here strictly in a personal capacity, to help stimulate our thinking, and my remarks should not be interpreted as reflecting in any way an official NATO position or that of individual Allies.

## 2. DETERRENCE

- NATO is genetically a nuclear alliance, ostensibly because UK and US (and later France) are nuclear powers, and also because they have made extended deterrence an axiomatic part of their nuclear policy and posture.
- But extended deterrence has not only meant the extension of a nuclear guarantee from the few to the many; it also meant a genuine shared ownership of deterrence. Thus, deterrence has been and continues to be an important cement for the cohesion of the Alliance.
- Therefore, I would submit that while NATO should – must – address the what of deterrence in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, it should – it must – be prudent about the how.
- Here, history and legacy are important to shed light on where we go from here.
- NATO has gone through some pivotal periods in its nuclear history. Each has shaped allied attitudes and practices vis-à-vis deterrence. I will focus on three periods very briefly:

-- Firstly, very early on – in the early 1950s – one of the tasks facing SACEUR – starting with Eisenhower, who made it very clear to the JCS and to SAC that he would be a NATO nuclear commander – was how to gain some influence over the USAF's Strategic Air Command and the RAF's Bomber Command. And, the third SACEUR, General Gruenther, recruited General Norstad to work that problem and brought him over from Fontainebleau, south of Paris,

where he was the first Commander of Allied Air Forces, Central Europe, to SHAPE, at Rocquencourt, west of Paris, to be the Air Deputy to SACEUR.

-- Then, in the mid 1950s, the U.S. entered into bilateral, so-called programs of cooperation with individual Allies and started to store tactical nuclear weapons in Europe and to provide Allies with delivery systems, from LACROSSE and HONEST JOHN rockets and NIKE–HERCULES surface-to-air-missiles, to F-84, F-100 and eventually F-104 fighter-bombers.

-- Later, in the late 1950s, when Norstad became SACEUR, he began to push the concept that NATO itself should become a nuclear power with long-range missiles. Nuclear warheads would still be owned by the United States, but release authority would be vested collectively in the NAC. And under this scheme, Norstad got France and the United Kingdom to accept to operate THOR MRBMs, and Italy and Turkey JUPITER MRBMs, but in 1958 De Gaulle came to power and said no to the THOR deployment in France.

-- When the Kennedy Administration came into office, Robert McNamara thought that Norstad's concept was madness and rolled-back the nuclear side of the Alliance in favor of enhanced conventional defense and, in due course, we got Flexible Response. But McNamara offered a series of nuclear "sweeteners" to the Allies which, in effect, were meant to mobilize the Allies in favor of enhanced conventional defense in exchange for a much greater political role in extended deterrence:

1. Made nuclear policy (versus planning alone) a truly multilateral endeavor and a NATO HQ rather than a SHAPE responsibility, through creation of the Nuclear Planning Group.
2. Authorized the appointment of European staff officers to the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff at Omaha, which was just getting underway with the first versions of the SIOP.
3. Supported the appointment of a senior European general officer as Deputy to SACEUR for nuclear affairs.
4. Approved the sale of SARGEANT and PERSHING 1 missiles to West Germany and POLARIS to the UK.

5. And, for a time, the idea was even floated of a NATO Multilateral Force of POLARIS submarines with allied multinational crews.

-- Now, the withdrawal of JUPITER from Italy and Turkey and THOR from the UK, poisoned the well. Because, when 20 years later, the United States wanted to deploy PERSHING 2 and GLCM nuclear missiles to Europe, to respond to the SS-20 threat highlighted by Helmut Schmidt in 1977, the Allies proved willing to host them on their territory, but not to operate them like the THOR and JUPITER.

-- And after the INF Treaty and the end of the Cold War, we find ourselves in terms of NATO's nuclear posture where it all started some 55 years ago: fighter-bombers with gravity bombs – backed-up by UK and US strategic/sub-strategic systems and, of course, the contribution of France as recognized since the 1974 NATO Ottawa declaration.

- Now, as long as:
  - we live in a world with nuclear weapons, and other kinds of Weapons of Mass Destruction; and
  - there is the prospect of a greater, rather than a lesser, number of nuclear powers; and
  - nuclear weapons are perceived in NATO as deterring all kinds of acts of aggression -- nuclear, chemical and radiological, as well as conventional; and
  - the United Kingdom and the United States are willing and able to exercise a policy of extended deterrence,

then I think that NATO should and must continue to be a nuclear alliance, where nuclear risks, roles and responsibilities are shared among all Allies, nuclear and non-nuclear, Allies that operate nuclear delivery systems as well as those that do not.

- Our policy must remain anchored on discouraging and preventing any nuclear and other WMD use and on denying any opponent – state and non-state – the mistaken belief that nuclear weapons can be instruments of policy.
- During the Cold War, our understanding of the Soviet nuclear threat, as well as mutual restraint made collective nuclear arrangements a desirable condition, but, in the end, US/UK and French resolve and capabilities shaped Soviet perceptions/behavior.
- Today, uncertainty over future nuclear risks, over opponent crisis behavior and risk-taking, and over opposing nuclear use thresholds in various possible crisis scenarios, as well as the necessity to underpin NATO's strategic unity, militate for maintaining collective nuclear arrangements.
- It is clear that the tight link that there was during the Cold War between deterrence, defense and territory is unlikely to be as organic in today's and tomorrow's strategic environment.
- NATO could be confronted with nuclear or WMD crises that could involve deterrence without an immediate link to defense and to territory, for instance crises taking place far away from the NATO area that could still affect core security interests of the Alliance or of individual Allies.
- In this context, no one can ignore that any military asset belonging to a nuclear power, directly or indirectly has an inherent nuclear dimension.
- At the same time, ballistic missile defense raises a range of issues regarding the relationship between defense and deterrence, and the sharing of risks, roles and responsibilities in regard to BMD early warning and engagement.
- But we should not lose sight of the fact that in 1960 NATO came to terms with the command and control and political authorization dimensions of building an integrated NATO air defense system (NATINADS) to protect Europe. So, we

have experience in working through some thorny political and operational issues.

- Against all of the above, I suggest that we need to think harder about the conditions for successful nuclear deterrence in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century and I would propose the following four lines of thinking:
  1. -- what (nuclear, WMD, conventional) and who to deter?
  2. -- what possible mix of deterrence by punishment; deterrence by denial; and compellence?
  3. -- what mix of nuclear/non-nuclear, offensive/defensive capabilities?
  4. -- what kinds of systems in 2025?
- At the same time, on nuclear deterrence, more than ever, we need to offer a united and resolute NATO position, at least until such time when there is the prospect of a declining worldwide nuclear/WMD capability and threat. And a united NATO position means one agreed upon between the three (and not just two) nuclear powers of the Alliance, and among nuclear and non-nuclear NATO members.
- This is as much an issue of deterrence, as it is one of reassurance vis-à-vis non-nuclear Allies.

## 2. DEFENSE

- Turning to defense, when considering NATO's requirements for defense, it is important to recognize that defense cannot be circumscribed to just the protection of Alliance territory, as this was the case prior to 9/11.
- In 2002, at the Prague Summit, NATO Heads of State and Government pledged that NATO forces must be prepared to deploy to "wherever they are needed".

- So, today we have a single pool of forces that must be able to operate and, if necessary, defend inside the NATO area, and also well beyond. If NATO is able to deploy forces to Kosovo and as far away as Afghanistan, it should be able to deploy them, if necessary, to every corner of the NATO Treaty area. We must avoid a bifurcation between territorial defense and expeditionary operations. And these considerations must be set against a demanding spectrum of factors:
  - NATO is in high demand
  - multiple, concurrent operations + unknown
  - 2 large operations (KFOR, ISAF), of which 1 land/air at strategic distance + reserves + NRF
  - several concurrent non-NATO operations (UN; EU; coalition; national; etc.)
  - multiple impacts of high-tempo
  - not only what, on paper, is available, possibly deployable, and may even be sustainable, but what can truly be employed on an enduring basis; this is the acid test
  - bottom line is usability
  - but combined with equitable burden-sharing – in an alliance, every ally has to play, and be seen to play, an equitable role.
  
- Expeditionary is a capability, not a mission
  
- ISAF is an ambitious and demanding joint/combined operation and “experiment”: who would have thought eight years ago that NATO and some 30,000 non-U.S. troops would be operating in Afghanistan, well beyond NATO’s traditional center of gravity? ISAF is:
  - among most ambitious and demanding multinational operations since World War 2.
  - mix of kinetic and non-kinetic operations; security, stabilization and security sector reform -- what the U.S. Marine Corps calls «4-block» operations -- in a remote, austere and dispersed configuration.
  - robust baseline for any future NATO operation.

- NRF, and associated graduated readiness forces (GRF), provide a robust set of multinational expeditionary capabilities for defense inside the NATO Treaty area, as well as beyond. Truly, these GRF multinational corps are no longer the old armor-heavy corps of the Cold War.
- But NRF/GRF readiness must be matched by enhanced strategic warning and operational responsiveness (Caucasus crisis of summer 2008 exposed some shortfalls in strategic warning).
- And enhancing NATO's territorial defense posture may require more detailed contingency planning.
- Collective defense remains NATO's bedrock,
- but its scope has widened conceptually, if not legally, to encompass:
  - (i) Traditional territorial defense as set out in Articles 5 and 6 of the North Atlantic Treaty.
  - (ii) Defense beyond the North Atlantic Treaty area though invocation of Article 5 (response to 9/11) in response to long-distance attacks by state and non-state actors.
  - (iii) Defense against limited and localized risks or acts of aggression against allied territories, populations or civilian assets – energy infrastructures; merchant or scientific shipping; etc. -- not involving the threat of large-scale invasion or a catastrophic terrorist attack. This last dimension of collective defense raises the importance of Maritime Security and Energy Security.
- Article 4 is more inclusive than Article 5 and provides a framework for potential collective responses to possible political intimidation or military coercion that may take place below the radar screen of Article 5 or short of an outright attack.  
-- Article 4 complementary to Article 5

-- But NATO must ensure that reliance on Article 4 does not weaken Article 5 commitments.

- Let me conclude with a couple of remarks on the NRF and on the Alliance's political dimension.

### 3. NRF

- NRF has been and is truly transformational; one of the most important military innovations in NATO's six decades, comparable in importance and in impact to General Lemnitzer's setting in place the "layered cake" deployment along West Germany's eastern border in 1963 in support of Forward Defense.
- U.S.-proposed NRF (the backbone) and European-generated GRF (the flesh): this is a 'marriage made in heaven' between an American concept and a European concept.
- Every NRF rotation generates 18,000-22,000 men/women on stand-by
- NRF has elicited a level of allied peacetime commitment to force preparation, training and exercising unprecedented in NATO's 60-year history
- NRF is reaching deep and wide into European multinational formations and headquarters -- I have seen the evidence for making this assertion.
- And, as an aside, I would welcome greater U.S. involvement in the NRF and NATO deployable capabilities:

(a) for instance, with AFRICOM having taken over Africa from EUCOM, there is now an opportunity to refocus EUCOM on playing a greater role in NATO. EUCOM, which is joint, could possibly be offered by the United States as the parent HQ for a NATO Deployable Joint Staff Element;

(b) and with the re-establishment of 7<sup>th</sup> US Army as an operational command at Wiesbaden, there might be scope for the U.S. Army to lead a NATO High Readiness Force (Land) HQ.

- But high operational tempo and low defense spending limit prospects for higher CSJOR fill: current NRF fill rate is a «low-octane compromise».
- There is a paradox in trying to transform in order to operate better, because low defense spending means, in effect, that you can either transform or operate but it is very difficult to do both successfully. And this is a paradox many NATO Allies confront.
- Greatest NRF limitation and vulnerability are NRF/ISAF dichotomy, and failure to use parts of NRF in operational engagements, as an augmentation force for ISAF.
- These are the issues that should be at the heart of the debate on NRF reform, rather than whether Allies fulfil the CJSOR requirement or not on any particular rotation.
- NRF reform must acknowledge that NRF is the high pole in the tent: any threat to NRF concept would risk bringing whole European military capability crashing down

#### 4. POLITICAL DIMENSION

- NATO is intrinsically a political-military alliance: no combined military effectiveness possible without a shared political sense of purpose.
- A more unpredictable, uncertain, turbulent world offers many opportunities for transatlantic and intra-European fragmentation and divisiveness, but also, more importantly, many opportunities for genuine cooperation and shared achievement.

- What Winston Churchill told his Chief of the Imperial General Staff, General Sir Alan Brooke, in April 1945 as they were contemplating the completion of Allied operations in Western Europe -- *“there is only one thing worse than fighting with allies, and that is fighting without them”* – should inspire us to think how that maxim still holds true today, but in a much wider set of circumstances that go well beyond just fighting together to also deterring war, preventing crises from escalating into conflicts, and reconstructing peace together.
- Enhanced, intensified political consultation in indispensable for a vibrant NATO Alliance:
  - Need to look broader (NATO has to have a global mindset intellectually).
  - NATO/NAC have to take a more pro-active and agile stance in addressing the evolving international security environment.
- NATO must also achieve a satisfactory balance between ensuring the relevance of the Alliance and maintaining its distinctiveness → distinctiveness drives relevance. NATO is unique, that is its great value to the International Community
- And our challenge and our opportunity today, as we approach the 2009 Summit next April, is to ensure that the Declaration on Alliance Security to be agreed by our Heads of State and Government at Strasbourg-Kehl is not only a celebration of six decades of success and achievement, but is also – as importantly – a foundational text, a short and inspirational text that sets out, unambiguously, those things – the shared values and the shared interests, but also, as importantly, the **common purposes** – that unite us in NATO – a text that every citizen in our Alliance, every elected representative in political office, can understand and support, in short a Declaration that NATO’s “Founding Fathers” – the famous “Wise Men” who drafted the Washington Treaty -- would applaud as matching the vision and the common resolve set out in the North Atlantic Treaty 60 years ago, nothing less.

- Thank you.