

Lord Robertson
meeting the press
on September 11.



By GEORGE ISLAY MACNEILL ROBERTSON

The collective reaction of the North Atlantic Alliance to the horrific terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 is proof that North America and Europe remain unflinchingly united as a security community. In invoking Article 5 of the founding charter for the first time, all members have agreed that the attack on the United States was an attack on all. Nothing could demonstrate solidarity more than facing common challenges together.

While Article 5 and solidarity are the bedrock of the Alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has remained the central element of European security through five decades by adapting to changing strategic requirements. The implications of the September events will only reveal themselves in full over time. Yet they already make clear that the transatlantic security relationship is undergoing a critical transformation much like the phase that shaped it half a century ago. As in the immediate postwar era, the Alliance must develop a fresh combination of political, economic, and military tools to cope with new challenges. And—again like the immediate

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postwar years—success in managing this adaptation will enable NATO to influence the direction of Euro-Atlantic security for years to come.

The specific role the Alliance can play in fighting terrorism is a key question. It will be an indispensable part of the wider adaptation of the transatlantic security relationship. But the answers to other questions crucial to common security are already apparent.

Patience Is a Virtue

First and foremost, in the Balkans, Europe and North America must continue to work together if the challenges of the region are to be addressed in a sustainable fashion. Some critics portray the Balkan engagement as an endless drain on Allied resources. By doing so, they choose to ignore real progress. Bosnia has a government which is no longer represented by ethnic nationalists and is working towards reconciliation and integration. Kosovo recently held elections, followed by the establishment of self-governing institutions. And who would have thought a year ago that Slobodan Milosevic would be indicted in The Hague and a democratic Yugoslav government would be restoring ties with other countries?

These positive developments were only possible because North America and Europe persevered. Transatlantic

the Alliance is working with aspiring members to improve their defense capabilities and their readiness to work with NATO forces

discord did not prevent the Alliance from acting as it did during the early phases of the Bosnian conflict. Members understood the need to become and remain engaged. They realized that in the Balkans patience is a virtue.

That same patience will carry the day in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. NATO, the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe have worked hand in glove towards a viable political outcome from the outset of the crisis. Devising a long-term solution to the challenges of Macedonia in

purely military terms is impossible. The problems are political and must be met accordingly. That is why NATO will not let the conflicting parties relinquish their responsibility for their country's future. But the Alliance cannot be a passive observer if the peace process is to be sustained. It must remain engaged politically, along with the rest of the international community, to help the country find its way back to normalcy.

Extending Atlanticism

The accession to NATO membership of the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland marked the definitive end of the Cold War division of Europe. But nine countries are currently seeking to join. The Alliance cannot give them or any other state guarantees of rapid acceptance. But neither can it afford to frustrate their ambitions forever, for that would create a new division of

What Is Article 5?

On September 12, 2001, NATO decided that if it was determined that the terrorist attacks against the United States were directed from abroad, it would be regarded as an action covered under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, which states:

The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.

Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security.

The NATO strategic concept recognizes the risks to the Alliance posed by terrorism. Article 5 underpins a fundamental principle of the organization—collective defense. The United States was the object of brutal terrorist attack. It immediately consulted with other member nations. The NATO Secretary General subsequently informed the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the Alliance decision. This is the first time the article has been invoked. By taking this measure, members demonstrated their solidarity with the United States and condemned in the strongest possible way the terrorist attacks of September 11.

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Europe into a secure, confident West and a less secure, less confident East. Enlargement provides an insurance policy against such dangerous divisions. Thus this process must continue. And thus we need to maintain a solid transatlantic consensus going forward.

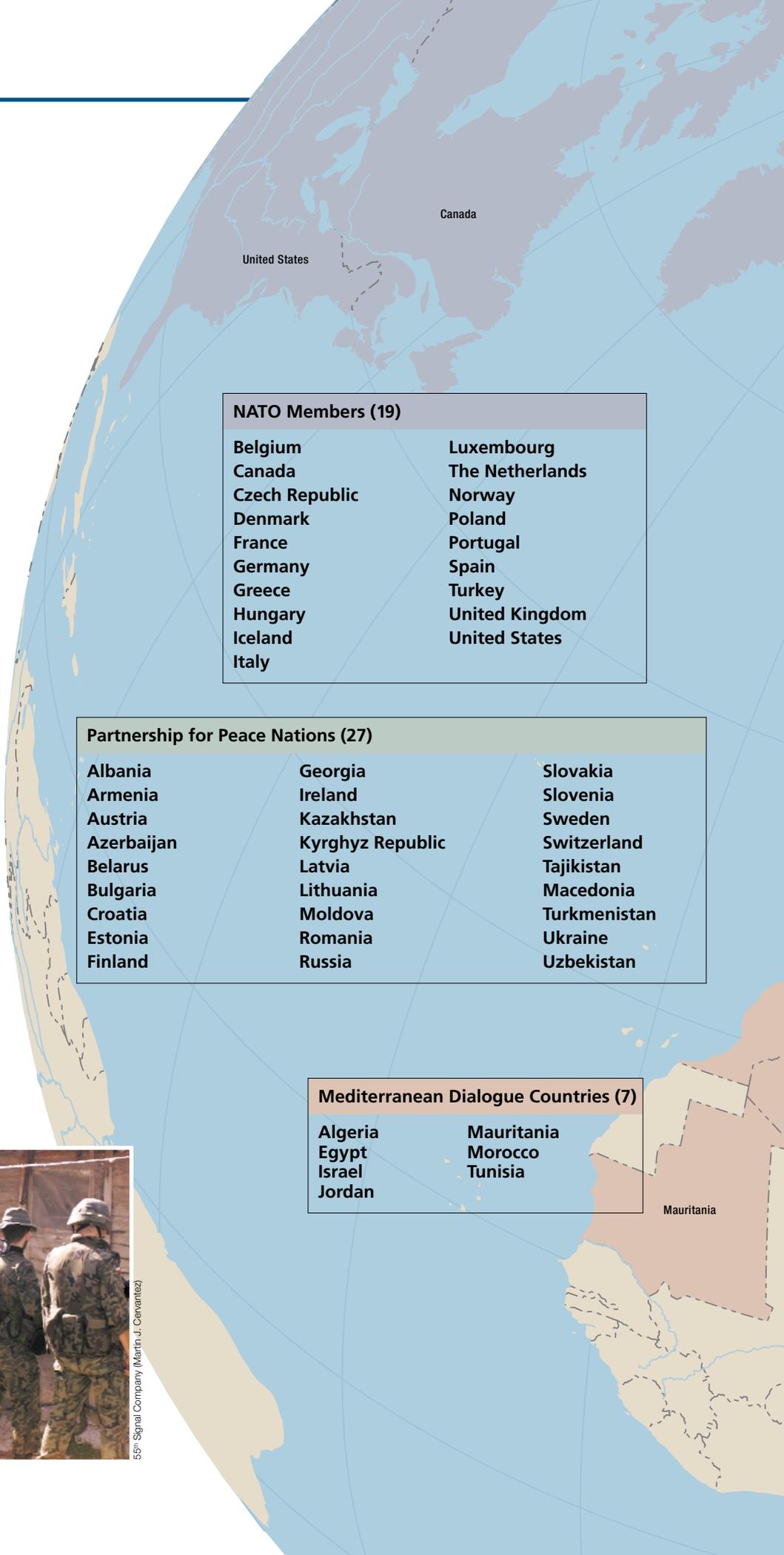
The Alliance is setting the stage for such a consensus. First, the zero option has been taken off the table, meaning there will be invitations. Moreover, NATO has now entered the third cycle of its Membership Action Plan. Through the plan, the Alliance is collaborating directly with the governments and militaries of aspiring members to improve their defense capabilities and their readiness to work with NATO forces on joint missions. That way, by the time they join, they will be net contributors to security, not simply consumers. And the Alliance will be in a better position to evaluate the potential of aspirants once the third cycle ends in spring 2002.

Enlargement will not only be another demonstration of continued growth; it will also enlarge the pool of resources the Atlantic community can draw on to manage crises in Europe. The security burden will be spread more evenly; moreover, the possibilities for the Alliance to decisively influence security developments will grow as well. NATO will reap a sound return on a sound investment.

Partnership

The Balkan operations reveal the extent to which nonmembers have become essential security partners. They not only provide invaluable political support, but also troops and logistics. This close interaction owes much to the Partnership for Peace (PFP) program, which has attracted more than two dozen nations, from Sweden to Kazakhstan, to enter into a cooperative military relationship with NATO, greatly increasing the pool of trained personnel and interoperable military assets for Allies and partners to draw on. This program will continue to evolve, providing a comprehensive set of tools for a wider range of joint and combined operations.

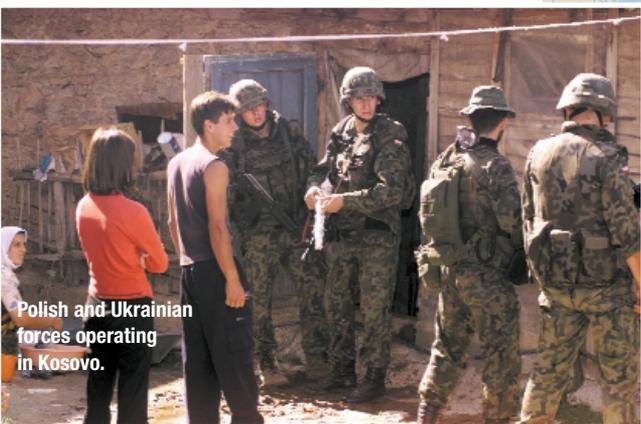
The second major partnership mechanism, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), complements the PFP program by providing a forum for enhanced political dialogue. However, the council is more than a political umbrella for the NATO military partnership. Its agenda includes crisis management, regional issues, arms control, international terrorism, defense planning, and budgets. Civil-emergency and disaster preparedness,



NATO Members (19)	
Belgium	Luxembourg
Canada	The Netherlands
Czech Republic	Norway
Denmark	Poland
France	Portugal
Germany	Spain
Greece	Turkey
Hungary	United Kingdom
Iceland	United States
Italy	

Partnership for Peace Nations (27)		
Albania	Georgia	Slovakia
Armenia	Ireland	Slovenia
Austria	Kazakhstan	Sweden
Azerbaijan	Kyrgyz Republic	Switzerland
Belarus	Latvia	Tajikistan
Bulgaria	Lithuania	Macedonia
Croatia	Moldova	Turkmenistan
Estonia	Romania	Ukraine
Finland	Russia	Uzbekistan

Mediterranean Dialogue Countries (7)	
Algeria	Mauritania
Egypt	Morocco
Israel	Tunisia
Jordan	



Polish and Ukrainian forces operating in Kosovo.

59th Signal Company (Martin J. Cervantes)



Bilateral NATO talks with Russia.

NATO



CH-47 at Camp Able Sentry, Macedonia.

55th Signal Company (Marshall Emerson)



DOD (R.D. Ward)

armaments cooperation, and defense related environmental operations complete this impressive list. In addition to traditional consultations, EAPC flexibility has also allowed innovative approaches to regional security issues, including consultations on the Caucasus and Southeastern Europe.

In from the Cold

How Russia settles into the emerging Euro-Atlantic system will have great impact on the future quality of European security. If Moscow remains on the path towards democratic reform and a market economy and chooses to engage constructively in transatlantic affairs, most European security problems could be solved cooperatively, whether the issue is regional conflict, nuclear safety, or nonproliferation. By contrast, should Russia abandon its European orientation, a true Euro-Atlantic security order would become a more distant prospect. NATO thus has a vested interest in seeing the first option materialize—a cooperative, self-confident Russia.

The Alliance may not be able to play the leading role in bringing Russia into the European mainstream, yet it

must be more than a bystander. It must engage constructively. Above all, it must signal that it takes Moscow seriously as a major security actor. The NATO-Russia Founding Act of 1997 served that purpose. The creation of a permanent joint council reinforced it, setting an agenda ranging from nonproliferation to crisis management.

NATO-Russian cooperation is picking up momentum again as disagreement over the Kosovo crisis fades. But

proliferation is one of the greatest security issues of the new century

going back to the status quo is not enough. Both parties must seek a relationship where disagreement in one area does not lead to a breakdown in others. The council should be seen as a forum where differences can be aired, not just a consultative body for fair weather use. Such a crisis-resilient partnership would not only benefit the relationship between Russia and NATO but be a strategic advantage for the entire Atlantic community.

WMD and Missile Defense

The rapid dissemination of technology and information offers benefits but raises the threat of more states developing weapons of mass destruction. Nuclear tests by India and Pakistan have highlighted this challenge, as have clandestine activities by Iraq and North Korea. Moreover, while nuclear weapons remain difficult to acquire, biological and chemical weapons are more readily obtainable.

Although the military value of such weapons is often questioned, ruthless regimes have demonstrated their willingness to use them. Their availability

will increase the striking power of nonstate actors such as terrorist groups. Thus proliferation is one of the greatest security issues of the new century. Only the combined efforts of North America and Europe can manage it. They must continue consultations on missile defense and develop a common approach. By putting the issue firmly on the NATO agenda, the United States and its Allies have demonstrated that they intend to tackle it in a transatlantic framework. Furthermore, Allied cooperation with

partners, particularly Russia, as well as links with other parties, are valuable assets in searching for an answer to the proliferation problem.

Preserving Competence

The frequent use of buzzwords such as *crisis management* and *peace support* should not obscure the fact that these operations still require advanced military capabilities and possibly, as Kosovo demonstrated, the use of overwhelming force. One of the recognized lessons from the Balkans is that capability gaps between national militaries make coalition operations difficult to mount—the more so when the number of participants increases. Alliance strategy, with its emphasis on interoperability, demands considerable technological equivalence among the units involved in any given effort. State-of-the-art communications systems find it difficult to function with systems designed decades ago.

Interoperability was one reason the Defence Capabilities Initiative was launched at the 1999 Washington Summit. The initiative is helping to identify essential capabilities all members must have to conduct modern operations. Correcting interoperability shortfalls centers on force planning, an Alliance-wide effort. There has already been progress; but changing security structures can take years, especially in countries with forces optimized for Cold War-style territorial defense. That makes it all the more important to live up to new commitments and take the necessary steps now.

Transatlantic Bargain

Last but not least, there is the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), which to some American observers may seem to be driven by the European Union and aimed at securing autonomy from NATO and the United States. But in fact it is a transatlantic project. A European Union that develops capabilities to manage crises where the Alliance as a whole is not engaged is a bonus for transatlantic relations. It will be major progress indeed when there are more options than can be provided by NATO in times of peril.

European Allies who can pull their weight in future coalition operations



are also a bonus for transatlantic relations. More than ten years after the end of the Cold War, it is becoming increasingly difficult to explain why Europe, as an economic powerhouse equal to the United States, is not pulling its weight in managing conflicts on its own doorstep. The asymmetry revealed during the Kosovo campaign, where the United States carried a disproportionate share of the military burden, cannot remain a politically sustainable option.

These factors explain why ESDP, rather than being optional, is increasingly a precondition for a balanced transatlantic relationship—and thus for a healthy Alliance. ESDP is not about institutional competition but rather about broadening the range of crisis response options. The emerging NATO-European Union relationship reflects these realities. There will be no unnecessary duplication between the two bodies. The non-European Union Allies will have an opportunity to participate in European operations. And unlike its many previous incarnations, which were long on rhetoric but short

on results, the European Security and Defence Identity is focused on concrete capabilities. The headline goal of establishing a 60,000-strong rapid reaction corps by 2003 indicates an understanding of the need to go beyond mere institution-building. Some nations have already begun to halt the fall in their defense budgets, and many have set new priorities on procuring the forces required by the new security environment. Such a renewed emphasis on capabilities is most welcome from the NATO point of view because improved European capabilities will also be available to the Alliance itself.

The challenges mentioned are not the only ones on our common transatlantic security agenda. Advancing the NATO relationship with Ukraine, a country of pivotal importance for European security and stability, is another task North America and Europe must pursue together. Building a web of dialogue and cooperation with the nations along the southern shores of the Mediterranean is still another. And the Allies and partners will be relentless in their common efforts to oppose terrorism in all its forms, wherever it occurs.

This agenda is busy but far from unmanageable. After all, North America and Europe comprise the world's most dynamic societies and have proven themselves capable of embracing change and innovation. Working together, there is hardly a security challenge they cannot overcome. The Alliance will face the latest trial, the scourge of terrorism, and defeat it using the enduring strengths that have succeeded for over fifty years—transatlantic solidarity and common action in the face of common threats.

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