Conference Proceedings

NATO and the Challenges of Global Security

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As NATO member governments prepare for the June 2004 Istanbul Summit, their forces are heavily engaged in a range of stability operations and simultaneously are working to enhance their capabilities to respond to future tasks. Panelists assessed NATO's military operations over the past decade and the implications of this record for future Alliance activities outside the transatlantic region. The Symposium explored the range of views on both sides of the Atlantic concerning NATO's suitability and capabilities to address a broad range of global security problems. It also considered other critical issues on the Istanbul Summit agenda including: transformation of Allied military forces, NATO-EU relations, and the future of the Partnership for Peace and NATO's cooperation with Russia and Ukraine.

I. NATO's Record Outside the North Atlantic Treaty Area

The first three panels assessed the implications of NATO military operations outside the North Atlantic Treaty area[i] for Alliance engagement in other global security missions. NATO is at a crossroads: does it find new strategic relevance by becoming more engaged in addressing these "out of area" challenges or does it continue to limit its scope to the transatlantic region.

Lessons of NATO's Balkan Operations

NATO's involvement in the Balkans came at a time when the Alliance was still in the early phases of its post-Cold War adaptation. The Alliance had never undertaken peace support operations when some Balkan leaders called for help in 1991. Alliance engagement was slow to unfold and was a difficult learning experience for member governments and the citizens of the Balkans. This has led some to ask: Did NATO save the Balkans or did the Balkans save NATO? It is clear that the Balkans helped to accelerate a transformation of NATO that is still not complete.

NATO's military capabilities and training, designed for major armored warfare on the Central European plains, were ill suited for challenges of bringing peace to the former Yugoslavia. That said NATO's political cohesion, planning capabilities, integrated military structure, and common training practices and operational standards provided a valuable foundation for the requisite adaptation. In January 1994, after years of hesitation,

Allied leaders took the first step toward a fuller engagement by declaring their willingness to launch air strikes to bring an end to fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Several presenters contended that this strategic initiative set the conditions for the Dayton Accords that brought a cessation of hostilities.
As NATO undertook implementation of the Dayton Accords in 1995, it had to develop concepts for demobilization and disarmament of the former warring parties, engagement in public security, and support to reconstruction activities. The experience that NATO had garnered from its engagement with Partnership for Peace (PFP) countries in Central and Eastern Europe, particularly exercises in the Czech Republic in October 1995, proved essential in preparing the Dayton Implementation Force (IFOR) in Bosnia. The development of NATO-Russia cooperation also proved very helpful in managing peace implementation in Bosnia. NATO and Russia worked well together in Bosnia for three main reasons: common interests of bringing stability to the region, limited political interference from capitals, and the professionalism and familiarity of Allied and Russian armed forces.

NATO's move from IFOR to the longer term Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia in 1997 and followed by the Kosovo peace implementation force (KFOR) in 1999, demonstrated that the Alliance was ***not*** bound by geography and did ***not*** require a UN or other outside political mandates to pursue its security interests outside the North Atlantic treaty region. Common political will and shared threat perception gave NATO's military response decisive effect. While both operations built effective coalitions within the Alliance and with PFP partners, they also demonstrated the strengths and weaknesses in NATO decision-making. While consensus building can make the Alliance strong, it can also prove unwieldy. This was evident during three phases in the Kosovo bombing campaign. While North Atlantic Council approval works well for authorizing peacekeeping operations, problems occur during high intensity military operations. Hence, one panelist suggested, during such contingencies, either the NATO Secretary-General or the major contributors to the military operation should be granted more authority to facilitate decision-making.

Despite the successes in Bosnia and Kosovo, there was broad agreement that NATO still needs new capabilities in its tool-box. In addition to purely military tasks, the Alliance needs a readily available constabulary to maintain public security and civil affairs forces to assist in judicial and correctional activities. Finally, NATO needs teams to support military re-training in post-conflict societies.

Achieving clarity of mission and purpose is a major challenge in dealing with asymmetric threats and with 26 allies and 20 partners. In the case of Bosnia, NATO has completed the main military missions of Dayton implementation. It remains to find a mechanism whereby SFOR's remaining security tasks can be transferred to the EU as it also takes over the maintenance of long-term stability by strengthening civil society, the rule of law, and economic development. Balkan experiences suggest that we need to think about public security in broader terms; that law enforcement missions are an essential part of post-conflict situations. The lack of a Kosovo end-state has inhibited the building of armed

forces there, while some security forces must inevitably be established. The lack of a Kosovo "end-state" makes it difficult to plan for a military "presence" role.

All in all, NATO realized an important evolution in its capabilities, including enhanced coordination with civil authorities, through its involvement in the Balkans. It also identified important issues concerning NATO's crisis decision-making and relationship with the United Nations, issues which continue to be debated today.

NATO's Involvement in Afghanistan

If NATO is to find new strategic relevance through a wider a wider global role, Afghanistan may be the main proving ground. NATO's assumption of command of the International Security Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan has been very challenging operationally and more forces are needed to expand its work outside Kabul. Symposium participants with operational experience in the field agreed that, so far, this Alliance deployment halfway around the world has proceeded fairly well. However, as Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer said in his address to the Symposium:

> "Our first and immediate priority is to get Afghanistan right. We cannot afford to fail. NATO's Afghanistan mission may be halfway around the world, but its success matters to our security right here. If the political process fails, that country will become, once again, a haven for the terrorists who threaten us, for the drugs that end up on our streets. "

Afghanistan is a demanding proving ground for NATO's remote peacekeeping capabilities. The ISAF mission requires flexible, rapidly deployable, and lethal small unit operations with combined arms capability. Allied units deployed thus far have arrived well trained and equipped to take on this mission. Participants agreed that NATO's pre-deployment planning and coordination has been excellent. Key shortages remain in aviation assets and in specialized and low-density operations, such as ground support and air traffic control at the airport. NATO's forces have adapted well to changing security conditions in the difficult terrain. Their agile headquarters is doing well in integrating ground and limited air forces. Command and control has functioned well and interaction with U.S. units has been facilitated by compatible procedures and standards. For effective planning and execution in this environment, the forces in the field must have delegated authority. NATO's assumption of this mission will also provide improved continuity in command as compared with a rotating lead nation.

ISAF under NATO was also assessed to be coordinating well with other organizations on security issues. However, some NGOs have been reluctant to accept the assistance of military personnel assigned to ISAF and Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) for fear of compromising their neutrality.

A critical task for ISAF is to expand security beyond Kabul to the provinces. It was agreed that Allies are committed to reinforcing the credibility and expanding the reach of the

Karzai government. Enhanced security will provide the context to nurture a very fragile political process, building on the success of the recent Loya Jirga, to lay the foundation for free and fair elections in the summer of 2004. ISAF and the rest of the international community need to prevent any attempts by recidivist members of the Taliban to disrupt this process.

To advance these goals, the Alliance has decided to take command of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) throughout the country. NATO has already taken over leadership of one, in Kundoz, and is committed to taking on others. At NATO headquarters, an overall operational plan is being developed. The PRTs are integrated military and civic action forces designed to enhance security and help the central government establish effective governance in the provinces. There are now 8 functioning PRTs in Afghanistan. Prospects are for deployment of 16-20 PRTs among the country's 30 provinces. The conditions are austere and effective communications and logistic support will be a must for the PRTs to succeed.

Despite this good start, the ISAF mission has brought into focus political hesitation and military shortfalls within the Alliance. As Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer noted in his keynote address:

> Look at Afghanistan. I will be honest – we are not flooded with offers of troop contributions to expand into the provinces. Not because NATO members don't want to. But because they are having real trouble coming up with deployable forces to take on this new task. This is already a real problem today. But what about tomorrow? I can guarantee you that Afghanistan will not be the last crisis we face. We need to make the necessary improvements now, to be able to handle the crises and challenges that certainly wait around the corner.

NATO's Evolving Role in Iraq

The role of NATO and Allied national forces in *Operation Iraqi Freedom* (OIF) has been controversial and multifaceted. On a purely national basis, twelve NATO member countries are presently participating in OIF, and a number of these and other Allies provided transit approvals and access ports and airbases to facilitate the movement of U.S. and other Coalition forces into Iraq. Still, not all NATO nations support Coalition operations in Iraq.

On the eve of the war in Iraq, the Alliance undertook a number of measures in accordance with Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which notes that NATO will consult, and could implicitly take actions to address, threats to the security of any member state with no geographic limitation, to ensure the security of Turkey. So too Operation *Active Endeavor*, whereby elements of NATO's Standing Naval Forces have monitored shipping in the eastern Mediterranean in support of counter-terrorist efforts, was expanded in early March

2003, in response to a U.S. request, to include escorting civilian shipping through the Strait of Gibraltar.

On May 21, 2003, the Alliance agreed to support Poland in its leadership of a multinational division (MND) in Iraq. This includes help with force generation, communications, logistics and movements. Spain is a major troop contributor, drawing on its long experience in remote international operations to support the Poles. Thus, it was noted that the NATO procedures for collaboration among multinational forces are working well in Iraq. NATO's decision-making process in support of Poland's Iraq mission was also seen as effective.

As for the future, participants found it very unlikely that NATO would take over all stability operations in Iraq. It was noted that NATO was having difficulty generating sufficient forces to meet the current demands of ISAF in Afghanistan. The size of Iraq and the threat environment would require even greater and more capable forces, which the Allies are unlikely to muster. Moreover, command and control arrangements would be controversial, and the U.S. would certainly insist on unified U.S. command. Three other options seem more likely: 1. NATO might agree to continue to support a multinational division led by Poland or another Ally; 2. An Alliance force contribution could be placed under Coalition command and control; and 3. NATO might agree to take full operational responsibility for a sector, and bring in a multinational NATO division.

The operations of the Polish multinational division in Iraq were explored. Polish armed forces benefited from important logistical and other support from the U.S. and the UK, as well their experience in Afghanistan. Planning of the multinational division required a careful assessment of requirements and the equipment and training of units. This planning has proven quite effective, since over six months of operations, only small losses have been suffered by the contingent. Force protection and sustainability have proven fairly challenging. Improvements are also needed in the training of rotational personnel and protecting them during transit into deployment areas. The first rotation went well and security was provided to almost 600 convoys conveying 65,000 people. Problems with NATO logistical and communications support remain. Spain, which would have preferred to be part of a NATO force in Iraq, will take over command of the MND from Poland.

The Istanbul Summit debate over NATO's role in Iraq will turn on a number of military assessments, including the capability of European Allies to generate and sustain forces that can undertake this difficult mission. Ultimately, participants agreed, this is also a political and resource question, since the Alliance has over 2 million of the best-trained and equipped armed forces in the world.

II. Key Issues on the Istanbul Summit Agenda

The conference also addressed several key issues on the Istanbul Summit agenda.

Developing NATO's Forces for the 21st Century

Panelists noted that the Alliance has made some impressive decisions concerning military capabilities over the past two years, including implementation of a new command structure, launch of the Prague Capabilities Commitments, and development of the NATO Response Force (NRF). It remains to be seen whether these goals will be realized. Procurement plans of most European Allies appear to be lagging because adequate resources are not being devoted to military transformation or defense in general. Half of the European Allies are allocating less than 2 percent of GDP to defense. The capabilities gap between the United States and other Allies is growing. Allies are implementing force structure reductions of 40-50 percent, and governments are likely to reinvest the resources that supported these forces in non-defense programs. It was suggested that Allied governments should pledge to reinvest some percentage of savings from force structure reductions in programs that promote military transformation. It was also suggested that in order to sustain transformation over the next decade, NATO may need to develop a transformation roadmap. Participants agreed that unless European Allies make the necessary commitments to defense transformation, the transatlantic relationship could well fray over an ever-widening capabilities gap.

It was noted that the ill-defined nature of emerging security threats makes NATO's defense planning process very difficult. It is clear that NATO's armed forces must prepare to undertake a diverse range of missions, from war against non-state actors to defense of Alliance territory. NATO's armed forces need to plan for three major types of missions: expeditionary combat; post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction (peacekeeping); and engagement. This argues for maintaining three categories of forces: rapidly deployable intervention forces, lower-readiness main defense forces, and reserve forces that could be reconstituted in the face of a greater than expected threat to Alliance territory.

The NRF, proposed only two years ago, is already up and running with an initial capability and will be fully operational no later than 2006. The NRF will not only give NATO a fast-moving and hard-hitting force, it will also ensure that the Allies can engage together at the most stressful end of military operations.

It was argued that effective use of the NRF will require a more proactive defense strategy, with forces deployed at short notice and prepared to win in short and longer term conflicts. For certain rapid and intense missions, NATO may want to procure Alliance owned and operated logistical assets rather than rely on national assets. European participants contended that in order to support the transformation of their armed forces, the U.S. must review technology transfer policies and make critical technology available to European Allies. Several participants also called for improvements in NATO's exercise program to include greater experimentation under Allied Command Transformation (ACT). ACT also needs to facilitate transfer of lessons the U.S. has learned in its training experiments to

Allies. Another operational shortcoming that must be should be addressed over time is the reintegration of the French armed forces into NATO's military structure. While this seems unlikely in the near term, participants agreed that the door should be kept open should the political authorities in Paris have a change of heart.

A focus by smaller Allies on niche capabilities was called a useful first step, but several participants argued that this approach should not be a substitute for a more robust military posture. Niche capabilities are high demand, low-density and technologically advanced military assets that are deployable, interoperable, and sustainable. It was argued that excessive focus on niche capabilities could reduce a nation's ability to contribute to overall Alliance security. It was also suggested that if European allies overly focus on niche capabilities, they will also facilitate U.S.-led operations with ad hoc coalitions of willing NATO members.

One panelist assessed the niche capabilities of the seven countries joining NATO in 2004 and other Eurasian PFP partners. Of the military capabilities the Prague Summit identified as most urgently needed, the Prague 7 could best offer the following: special forces; nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) defense and consequence management teams; explosive ordinance and demolition teams; logistics specialists; and general infantry. Indeed, it was noted that the Prague 7 have provided some of these kinds of capabilities to Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. While many PFP partners in the Caucuses and Central Asia have some of these gap-filling capabilities, they are generally maintained at a lower level of readiness and have other limitations such that they are unlikely to make a significant net contribution to NATO in the near term. These countries are unable to devote many national resources to defense at this time. It was argued that Allied programs to help these partners build certain niche capabilities could, over time, could yield long-term benefits to NATO and regional stability.

Some participants also contended that in order to address emerging threats effectively, NATO, particularly with the addition of seven new members this year, needs to adapt its procedures to allow for faster decision-making. Several panelists argued that the addition of seven new members this year will not damage Alliance consensus, because the new members share common interests with longtime Allies and want to be seen as team players. One panelist argued that NATO should begin a process to review decision-making, which should move away from consensus to majority voting. Another option worth considering is to have the North Atlantic Council as a whole give broad mandates to smaller coalitions of willing Allies and to give contributing states more flexibility in the conduct of operations. Others noted that NATO's decision-making process has long had great flexibility and that changes have been made to cope with contemporary pressures. Further adaptations of decision-making, it was argued, will likely come as transformation advances.

NATO-EU Relations

Compared with other EU projects, the development of European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) has moved at a brisk pace. The long-term success of ESDP will be determined by whether European governments actually muster the resources required to support the planning, military, and other capabilities required to undertake successfully the more demanding security missions to which they aspire. Maintaining an effective NATO-EU relationship as ESDP evolves will also require good will, patient diplomacy, and possibly new policy instruments to overcome the proclivity on both sides of the Atlantic to see the relationship as a zero sum game. Several European participants also expressed concern that discourse in the U.S. of cooperation "with NATO" in Afghanistan and Iraq, created the impression of delinking of the U.S. from the Alliance.

The EU recognized the inadequacies of its "soft power" instruments as the Bosnian and Kosovo crises unfolded. This sparked the British-French joint declaration at St. Malo (1998), Helsinki Headline Goal (1999) and the subsequent creation of ESDP structures--e.g., Political and Security Committee (PSC), EU Military Committee (EUMC), and EU Military Staff (EUMS) -- which together have begun to give the EU a (limited) capability to deal with security crises.

The EU now has a "track record" of ESDP operations launched in 2003—the EU Police Mission in Bosnia, Operation Concordia in Macedonia (a successor to the NATO-led Operation Allied Harmony, conducted with EU access to NATO common assets and capabilities), and Operation Artemis in Bunia, Democratic Republic of the Congo (an "autonomous" EU-led mission, with France as the framework nation). From an EU perspective, Concordia was a broadly successful application of the Berlin-Plus arrangements for EU access to NATO common assets. However, it also demonstrated the need for greater understanding in NATO's chain of command for the EU's broad-based approach to using civilian as well as military tools to reach a particular political end-state in the Balkans. The EU fully expects to take over the NATO-led SFOR mission in Bosnia over the next year, and to do so in the context of Berlin Plus. It is important, therefore, that NATO develop that greater understanding of the EU's approach to ensure a smooth handover in Bosnia.

The Bunia operation also was successful, both militarily and politically, from the EU's perspective, and U.S. embassies in Africa reportedly welcomed the operation. There is no doubt that the prominent French military role was vital to the rapid establishment and successful conduct of the UN-mandated mission. The Bunia experience probably helped to spur the EU to consider creating a 1500 person "rapid reaction" element (within its 60,000 person Headline Goal capability) that would be able to deploy in 15-30 days (versus 60 days for the entire Headline Goal force.)

Resource constraints continue to inhibit EU efforts to improve military capabilities, and the lack of agreement (to date) on the EU Constitution means that ESDP will proceed with its creaky decision-making processes. There is no turning back the clock, however; ESDP

will remain a permanent and increasingly important part of the EU's movement toward "an ever closer union."

To better understand how NATO-EU cooperation might work in the future one panelist examined two hypothetical (but realistic) EU led crisis management scenarios, one in West Africa and another in the Balkans. It was argued that operations of this nature will almost certainly take place between now and 2010 and could be successful under the following conditions:

1. Europe must develop a strategic culture favoring early and robust action. Europe must operate through projects such as the NATO Response Force (NRF). Combined joint operation and interoperability is important.
2. Political pressure remains to develop capabilities to underpin the strategic culture. The existing EU capabilities group will continue to ensure full transparency and help avoid unnecessary duplication of NATO assets.
3. Cross-pillar civil-military cooperation should be strengthened to capitalize on the EU's unique capabilities.

Seen from the perspective of Italy, there is no conflict between its commitments to NATO and the EU. Indeed, ESDP is consistent with longstanding U.S. insistence that Europe make a greater contribution of capabilities to Euro-Atlantic security. Any temptation within the EU to decouple European security from its transatlantic security bonds—or to suggest that the EU should serve as a counterweight to the U.S.—is unacceptable to Italy. This is one reason why Italy was concerned by the circumstances and results of the April 2003 defense-related Brussels summit of Belgium, France, Germany and Luxembourg. While not opposed to the idea of "autonomous" EU operations, it is the general view in Italy that such operations should not be the first EU option. (In any event, the constraints on EU capabilities make it unlikely that large and/or lengthy EU-led operations will be feasible for some time.) If the EU considers undertaking military missions, Berlin Plus should be the first option. As a rule, Italian forces committed to the NATO Response Force should be available to the EU only if released by the North Atlantic Council.

Viewed from the U.S. Congress, there is no serious, short-term concern about NATO-EU relations; nor is there any fundamental retreat from the longstanding U.S. position of supporting greater European unification. Members of Congress are not so concerned with command structure intricacies. They will judge the seriousness of ESDP on the basis of capabilities that EU member governments actually deliver. That said, U.S. experience with the EU since the early 1990s, in both crisis management in the Balkans and in non-military sectors, has injected a note of caution and even occasional skepticism regarding NATO-EU relations. For example, there are signs that non-military political criteria have played a disproportionate role in EU decision-making affecting ESDP capabilities and operations. Anxious to launch its first military operation (at a time when political divisions over Iraq had become as evident in the EU as in NATO), the EU reportedly pressured the Government of Macedonia to invite it to organize an EU-led follow on to the NATO-led Operation Harmony in early 2003, even though the military rationale for such an operation

seemed weak. Similarly, the French Government reportedly was keen, for political reasons, to launch Artemis as an "autonomous" operation. In sum, while there is a logical basis for a close, cooperative, and complementary relationship between NATO and the EU, this potential might be limited—or even wrecked—by elements within some EU member governments who believe the EU has a "manifest destiny" to become a global power independent of the U.S. That said, the U.S. should not overreact to every EU initiative to develop its ESDP capabilities—including a limited operational planning capability—but perhaps should better apply its leverage bilaterally and within NATO to keep EU members focused on developing additional military capabilities.

Looking ahead to possible future EU-led operations, the EU's readiness to apply Berlin Plus arrangements might be a crucial determinant of U.S. attitudes. The EU's stated willingness to use those arrangements for its potential follow-on mission to SFOR is welcomed by the U.S. (and other non-EU Allies.) For some, however, the EU's unwillingness to explore the use of Berlin Plus for Artemis—and the public insistence by some EU members on the "autonomous" nature of the operation—gives pause. While some in the EU might argue that intensified NATO-EU consultations in the event of a crisis (as specified in the NATO-EU joint declaration on their strategic partnership) would have led to inordinate delays in the case of Artemis, others might respond: If Berlin Plus is not appropriate to use in a crisis, when would it be?

Relations with Partners

Since it's inception over a decade ago, the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program has been an unqualified success in building cooperation with countries on NATO's periphery and preparing certain partners for membership. By the Istanbul Summit, NATO will have enlarged to twenty-six, with ten of the original two-dozen PFP partners having achieved their goal of membership. This transition marks the end of an era, and raises questions about PFP's direction and long-term viability. This success does not mean that PFP's mission is completed.

There was general agreement that the strategic rationale for PFP, enhancing stability among and practical cooperation with the countries along NATO's periphery remains compelling in the context of the Alliance's further enlargement, the war on terrorism, growing Western interests in Southwest and Central Asia, and the rise of authoritarian and neo-imperialist sentiments in Russia. In the post-9/11 era, PFP confronts new security challenges and potential missions over a wider geographic area. The key incentive that animated partner engagement in PFP, its role as the "best path to NATO membership," is now diminished since the remaining partners are either not interested in membership or unlikely to join for many years. That said, PFP has the potential to become an essential tool in combating terrorism, proliferation of WMD and conventional arms, as well as other transnational threats. To meet these new challenges, PFP must be transformed, adequately funded and better integrated with complementary bilateral and regional efforts.

PFP has been very successful in preparing partners for membership. The ten PFP "alumni" have integrated themselves into Alliance political deliberations and adopted NATO

military standards relatively quickly due to the seriousness of their participation in PFP. The countries that embraced PFP as a serious opportunity to reform their military institutions and integrate themselves in the Euroatlantic security structures have been most successful in achieving these goals.

The Istanbul Summit could launch an initiative, backed by funding from individual Allies, to promote new, tailored PFP programs in the Balkans, Greater Black Sea region, and Central Asia, including on military education and training, security sector reforms, border security, and sub-regional military cooperation. NATO infrastructure funds could also be used to improve bases in these regions to facilitate PFP activities and NATO operations relevant to the security of all. Successful programs of sub regional cooperation in Southeastern Europe could also be adapted to or extended across the Black Sea. In this way, PFP can become the best path to Europe's periphery and the best vehicle for these partners to participate in this nucleus for security.

NATO's still fledgling partnership with Russia could bolster efforts to address certain security problems, such as combating terrorism. NATO activities in Central Asia and the wider Middle East will also evolve more smoothly if the Alliance has effective political dialogue and operational cooperation with Russia. Enhancing NATO-Russia cooperation has been an objective of several NATO summits and high-level meetings since the NATO-Russia Final Act was signed in 1995. Some progress has been made in enriching political consultations over the past few months through the development of the NATO-Russia Partnership Council. Russia now has an ambassador to NATO and just having effective communication channels could prove quite valuable in a future crisis. However, there has actually been some backtracking in military cooperation. Since Russian troops withdrew from Balkans peacekeeping missions, where they developed effective modus operandi with their NATO counterparts, there has not been much direct operational contact.

NATO needs to find effective ways to advance its partnership with Ukraine, whose independence remains vital to European security. Ukraine has declared its interest in joining the Alliance, but its internal political situation precludes development of a membership action plan at this point. Ukraine remains an actively engaged in PFP, and this engagement can help promote broader security sector reforms.

NATO's Future Beyond Istanbul

The Istanbul Summit will mark the seventh time heads of state and government have gathered since 1990 to contemplate the future course of the Alliance. Some see Istanbul as an opportunity to continue a successful transformation; others see it as an effort to mask fundamental strains in transatlantic relations. The first school argues that despite current tensions in the aftermath of the Iraq War, the Alliance rests on a bedrock of common values and largely convergent security interests. Others contend that the disparities in power between the Unites States and Europe, differing values, and diverging priorities and strategies for managing global security problems are causing the United States and Europe to drift apart and NATO is headed for an inevitable demise. The last panel explored what

NATO's record in dealing with the Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq, and the war on terrorism suggests about the future of the Alliance and transatlantic relations. Conference participants concluded that the Alliance has enduring value in enhancing security in the transatlantic region and beyond, but should avoid overextension of its geostrategic focus and military capabilities. As Allied governments consider undertaking missions outside the North Atlantic region, engendering public and parliamentary support will be critical given resource the attendant higher risk of casualties and enduring resource constraints.

One panelist noted that over the past 5-7 years, pundits have become obsessed with NATO's future, sometimes characterizing the Alliance as a dinosaur that has outlived its natural purpose. NATO has adapted to the new security environment and clearly has a role to play in contemporary security affairs. The United States and its European allies and partners need a community of institutions, with a continuum of capabilities, to deal with common security challenges. A capable, transformed NATO should be at the core of that community, but it cannot address all these challenges effectively and it should not stray too far from its geographical center and core competencies. In addition to a more productive and less acrimonious relationship with the EU, NATO needs to deepen its dialogue and institutional cooperation with the United Nations. So too, a NATO dialogue with the countries in the Greater Middle East and the Arab League would contribute to stability along the Alliance's southern periphery. Extending dialogue with the Indians, Chinese, and Japanese would also be prudent to enhance transparency and wider understanding of NATO's contributions to international peace and security.

Another speaker discussed how key changes in the international system over the past 5-10 years have put NATO in a different geopolitical context.

- The end of the Cold War made Europe less reliant on the U.S., and U.S. priorities have shifted to East Asia. Now that the major security issues have been addressed in Europe, the challenges that remain are all areas where there are strong transatlantic disagreements – dealing with Iran, Iraq, and the Arab-Israeli peace process. Historically, the U.S. and Europe have always disagreed on "out of area" issues.
- The quantitative and qualitative maturation of the EU has changed the transatlantic power balance. Europe is not a unitary federation, but it isn't a lose group of sovereign states either, it is approaching confederation. In this context, Europe is less willing to fall in behind U.S. leadership as it once did.
- September 11, 2001 also radically altered U.S. strategic priorities. Europe's hesitation about certain U.S. policies made it appear as an obstacle to urgent American objectives. Officials in Washington talk openly about disaggregating and Balkanizing the EU to achieve U.S. goals. Europe has responded by backing away from the U.S. and taking positions that cast it as a counterweight to U.S. power.

- The U.S. faces different domestic pressures and challenges than Europe. September 11 and rising anti-American sentiment across the globe has fed a bipartisan consensus in Washington for a much harder line on defense and foreign policy. At the same time, population shifts from the northeast into the agrarian south and the west has led to the decline of the liberal international wings of the Republican and Democratic parties. Europe is still assessing whether this political shift is a passing phenomenon or a durable reality in American politics.

In this fragile transatlantic political context, it was argued, NATO should embrace a more modest agenda to maintain cohesion, rather than reach too high and fail. The Alliance should North Atlantic Treaty region and its periphery. NATO should continue to contribute to stabilization of Afghanistan and Iraq, but it should not take on global power projection missions. If Washington tries to turn NATO into an instrument for advancing its global agenda, the Alliance will face a major political crisis. We are seeing a new division of labor. The U.S. is focusing on challenges outside of Europe and asking Europe to be a fuller partner. The EU has only been able to take on light tasks. It is too strong to be America's lackey, but too weak to be a full partner in managing global stability. It would be better for the U.S. accept Europe's limited capabilities in global security, while continuing to encourage it to become a more capable partner.

Finally, it was suggested that Europeans and North Americans need to consider establishing a new transatlantic institution, with a broader mandate than NATO. Promoting pluralism in the Islamic World, fighting AIDS, and getting at the causes of terrorism are issues NATO is ill-equipped to address. The current scope of U.S.-EU cooperation on many of these issues is also insufficient. U.S. and the EU governments may need to create a broader institution to develop integrated, comprehensive policies that can address emerging global and transnational security problems.

Another panelist asserted that public and parliamentary support is more important in NATO today than it was during the Cold War because soldiers are loosing their lives in the field and resources are being expended more carefully given the diminished sense of threat. There is general support among the public in Europe and the U.S. that NATO and other institutions must do something to ameliorate conditions in the Greater Middle East. That said, it will be important for Alliance leaders to define clearly what NATO feels it can accomplish in this vast region, if it is to retain public support. But before NATO takes on stabilization of Iraq and reform of the armed forces of its neighbors, it must succeed in Afghanistan, or suffer serious damage to its credibility. Indeed, success in Afghanistan would go a long way to ensuring the long-term future of the alliance.

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[i] Article 6 of the North Atlantic Treaty defines the area of application for the Alliance's collective defense provisions under Article 5. Article 4 is not limited by geography. For many years it was argued that NATO had no mandate or right to take military action outside the Treaty area.