

The EU and NATO's new Strategic Concept

*Discussion based on a Breakfast Meeting with
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NATO has undergone profound changes since the end of the Cold War due to the **transformation of threats and Allies' commitment**:

- the aim is not to prevent a war in the middle of the European continent anymore but to **manage crises** in the Middle East and Central Asia, which have a direct impact on the Allies' energy and civil security (terrorism);
- the **spectrum of threats has extended** to nuclear and biological proliferation, new forms of terrorism, and potential devastating attacks on information systems;
- drafted in 1999, the **current NATO strategic concept** was driven by the **lessons learned from crisis in the Balkans**: allies' security may be threatened by destabilization of States fragilized by ethnic conflicts, religious or nationalist ideologies, and terrorism in all its aspects;
- the **historic Strasbourg/Kehl Summit of 3 and 4 April 2009** consecrated France's full adhesion despite its long-lasting rejection of a too atlantic European defence system;
- the **Strasbourg Summit** instructed the Secretary-General to develop a **new concept ahead of the Lisbon Summit** (19-20 novembre 2010) and to set up a **group of experts**. This group, chaired by Madeleine Albright, was composed of 12 personalities from NATO, the civil society and the private and academic sectors. The final report was released on 17 May 2010.

The NATO 2020 report

This proposal for a new strategic concept draws the lessons from 9/11 and Afghanistan. **It aims at reinforcing the Alliance's visibility and centrality**. It also shatters some of the ideas put forward in previous years: gathering all Western nations within an alliance of values, certain containment of Russia, considering the EU as a soft-power and accelerated enlargement.

- **Reminder of NATO's fundamental commitment**: article 5 of the NATO Treaty and collective defence (core business). Security has first to be redesigned.
- **Plea for expeditionary and out-of-area capabilities**: going beyond its borders is essential for NATO in order to respond to new threats (terrorism, piracy, ballistic and nuclear proliferation, cyber-attacks, and threats to energy resources). Intervention in Afghanistan allowed NATO to progress in various fields and to test out new procedures (targeted training, civil and environmental challenges).
- **Focus on partnerships** with third countries and international organisations.
⇒ NATO-EU: enhance complementarity and cooperation towards a "truly comprehensive partnership", unique and essential. The aim is to avoid a specialization of both organisations, according to Kagan's terminology (military, *hard-power* for NATO and non-military, *soft-power* for the EU).

- ⇒ NATO-Russia: two-fold approach for a "constructive re-engagement with Russia" which is establishing a collaborative relationship through a policy of engagement, and reassuring Allies about their safety. NATO is open to cooperation at all levels.
- **Reforming the Alliance**: encouraging the Secretary-General to carry out a broad reform programme.
 - ⇒ Rationalize the international Secretariat, reviewing the financial rules, reducing functioning costs and the number of committees and agencies.
 - ⇒ Extend the Secretary-General's powers to implement the reform.
- **Comprehensive approach in crisis management**: civil-military combination, in cooperation with all relevant actors.
 - ⇒ Set up a civil planning unit
 - ⇒ Integrated civ-mil formations
- **Augmentation of NATO common funding**: spend more but better. This is the critical point: the objective of dedicating 2% of the GDP to defence matters is only respected by 6 Allies out of 28. Besides, many of them foresee further reductions of military spendings.
- **Maintaining nuclear arsenal**: NATO must preserve a nuclear force.
- **Antimissile defence**: it is clearly defined as a new mission for NATO in response to the threat of a possible ballistic missile attack (Iran is formally targeted in the report).
- **Open door policy**: vis-à-vis membership candidates (Western Balkans, Georgia, Ukraine), while emphasizing the principles of 1995. However, to avoid irritating Russia, the recommendations tend to focus on partnerships with these countries mainly through the NATP-Ukraine and NATO-Georgia committees.

The group of experts report outlines an ambitious reform for NATO, which raises issues regarding the EU and CSDP:

- For the EU:

- ⇒ at a time of NATO's developing partnerships with Russia, Gulf countries, Pakistan, India and soon the Shanghai organisation, **will the EU be able to keep its place without a greater effort?**
- ⇒ how to build a **more consistent relationship with the United States without first strengthening cooperation and sharing responsibilities with them within NATO?**
- ⇒ EU and NATO enlargement always went together. **The EU has great interest in strengthening its political weight in the Alliance in order to influence the enlargement agenda.**

- For NATO :

- ⇒ what are the real implications of the Lisbon Treaty for NATO? **Will the EU have a faster decision-making process and the opportunity to speak with a single voice in the defence area, in which State sovereignty and unanimity remain dominant?**
- ⇒ how to balance the Allies' security demands and necessary ad hoc cooperations with partners who may also be considered as dangerous to some other Allies?

Other issues are pending:

- **Future of the EU "comprehensive approach"**
What will be the EU added-value if NATO, military alliance if any, endows civilian components? EU's concept of comprehensive approach (synergy of a whole range of planning instruments) differed from NATO's (cooperation with international organisations which provide civil capabilities). What if

NATO gets a civil planning unit?

- **Increase of funding, in particular in the area of missile defence**

Spend more and better: is this recommendation consistent with the current context which promotes fiscal restraints and downsizing?

- **Management of new capabilities**

Are we heading towards a NATO-EU agency? What will be the impact on EU's decision-making process? What about the EDA?

- **Implication of Turkey in EU-OTAN relationships**

The report calls for the resolution of dissensions, but without giving any operational detail. The Secretary-General clarified this point during a meeting with HR/VP Catherine Ashton on 25 May, mentioning the possible conclusion of a security agreement with Turkey, involving the EDA, and engaging talks with Cyprus

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