# CONNECTIONS

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## Research Articles

**Research Article**

# NATO Nuclear Deterrence: The Warsaw Summit and Beyond

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**Abstract**: NATO's Deterrence and Defense Posture Review (DDPR, 2012), concluded that "the Alliance's nuclear force posture currently meets the criteria for an effective deterrence and defense posture." In addition to the strategic nuclear forces of France, the United Kingdom, and the United States, NATO's "posture" notably included, then and now, some 200 B-61 "tactical" nuclear bombs stored at sites in five longtime member states. Since release of the DDPR, NATO relations with Russia have deteriorated. It would appear that the American B-61 nukes, soon to be improved through a multibillion-dollar life extension program, are destined to stay in Europe. Beneath the surface, however, linger disquieting questions about the fabled three-C's of NATO's deterrence – its military capability, its credibility and its communication to potential adversaries and partners alike. This paper suggests six nuclear deterrence reforms that NATO should consider following the Warsaw Summit in July 2016 in order to regain the credibility it once had during the Cold War.

**Keywords**: NATO, Nuclear, Warsaw, B-61, Deterrence, Dual Capable Aircraft, Tactical Nuclear Weapons.

## Introduction

> *NATO, for its part, has consciously and conspicuously de-emphasized nuclear weapons in its defense policy and posture since the end of the Cold War. As a consequence, the Alliance now lacks the policies and capabilities needed to deter, and if necessary to respond to, a limited Russian nuclear strike.*
>
> – Dr. Matthew Kroenig, 2015, US Senate testimony [1]

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[1]  Matthew Kroenig, *The Renewed Russian Nuclear Threat and NATO Nuclear Deterrence Posture* (Washington, DC: Atlantic Council, 2016), accessed February 24, 2016,

With NATO's Warsaw Summit of July 2016 comes the next opportunity to initiate a much-needed review of the Alliance's nuclear policy. The end of the Cold War saw the Alliance shift its emphasis from collective defense and deterrence to crisis management operations, as witnessed most clearly in the Balkans and Afghanistan. In the process, many argue NATO has neglected traditional nuclear deterrence since the fall of the Berlin Wall over twenty-five years ago.[2] However, in 2014, everything changed. After Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, and active support of separatists in Eastern Ukraine, NATO stated, "Russia's aggressive actions against Ukraine have fundamentally challenged our vision of a Europe whole, free, and at peace."[3] The Syrian Civil War (and associated European refugee crisis), the attacks by the "Islamic State" (IS) in Paris, Istanbul and Brussels and the Turkish downing of a Russian fighter are all events that have forced NATO to address security challenges both to its east and to its south, challenges posed both by state as well as non-state agents. These mean that NATO is spread thin at a time when Russia continues to rattle its nuclear saber with increasing volume. While recent reforms dominate the headlines in the run-up to the Warsaw Summit, the credibility of NATO's nuclear deterrence remains in question in the face of developing threats. This begs the question: what does NATO need to do at the Warsaw Summit to clarify and reinforce its nuclear deterrence posture?

NATO should consider making the following six changes to its nuclear deterrence posture to ensure that it will both offer a credible deterrent to twenty-first century adversaries and maintain cohesion among its members. These six changes fall under the umbrella of NATO's "three Cs" required for effective deterrence: Capability, Credibility and Communication.[4] The six recommendations include:

- Adding dual-capable aircraft (DCA) and nuclear strike missions in Poland and Turkey

- Incorporating the Heavy Airlift Wing C-17s into the Prime Nuclear Airlift Force

- Maintaining the status quo in terms of B-61 locations and quantities

- Increasing nuclear readiness (response times) at dual-capable aircraft bases

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http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/publications/Russian_Nuclear_Threat_0203_web.pdf.

2    Michael Rühle, *The Broader Context of NATO's Nuclear Policy and Posture* (Rome: NATO Defense College, 2013).

3    NATO, Wales Summit Declaration, September 5, 2014, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm.

4    Mr. Heinrich Brauss, NATO Assistant Secretary General for Defence Policy and Planning, reiterated the importance of the "3 Cs of Deterrence" (Capability, Credibility and Communications) at the NATO Defence Planning Symposium, February 23–25, 2016, NATO School Oberammergau.

- Creating a "NATO Strategic Deterrence Fund"
- Drafting a NATO nuclear declaratory statement.

## Recent NATO Nuclear History

> *Unlike the United States and NATO, Russia has placed an increased emphasis on nuclear weapons in its national security planning since the end of the Cold War.*
>
> – Matthew Kroenig

In 1954, the Alliance's first nuclear weapons were stationed in Europe, a move that was unanimously welcomed by NATO.[5] At that time, the initial purpose of these weapons was to counter the overwhelming conventional advantage the Soviet Union had over the Alliance. Since then, the quantities and types of nuclear weapons in Europe have changed dramatically. However, the US B-61 gravity bomb, designed to be dropped by "dual-capable" fighter/bomber aircraft, has remained the only American nuclear weapon in Europe since 1991.[6]

Despite lobbying attempts by certain Allies who wish to withdraw the B-61 from Europe, this controversial "tactical" nuclear weapon has kept its place on the continent thanks to NATO's 2012 Deterrence and Defense Posture Review (DDPR).[7] Ulrich Kahn explains why the lobbying did not work: "They [the lobbying efforts] have failed, mostly due to the concerns of NATO's easternmost allies who attach a highly symbolic/political value to the only American nuclear weapons currently stationed in Europe."[8] Moreover, in January 2014, the US Congress offered full funding for a $10 billion life extension program (upgrade) for the B-61, with the new version (B-61, mod 12) expected to arrive in 2020.[9] With an upgraded weapon on the horizon, Turkey, Italy and the Netherlands have committed to replacing their DCA aircraft with the American-made F-35 Stealth Fighter/Bomber. As regards replacing their strike platforms, Belgium and Germany, however, have yet to either make a decision or express firm commitment.[10]

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[5]  George Mindling and Robert Bolton, *U.S. Air Force Tactical Missiles 1949-1969: The Pioneers* (Morrisville, North Carolina: Lulu.com Publishing, 2011).

[6]  Hans Kristensen, *U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe: A Review of Post-Cold War Policy, Force Levels and War Planning* (Washington, DC: Natural Resources Defense Council, 2005).

[7]  "NATO's Nuclear Deterrence Policy and Forces," December 3, 2015, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50068.htm.

[8]  Ulrich Kühn, "With or Without You: Germany and NATO," *War on the Rocks*, November 3, 2015, accessed May 10, 2016, http://warontherocks.com/2015/11/with-or-without-you-germany-and-nato/.

[9]  Ibid.

[10]  Hans Kristensen, "Polish F-16s in NATO Nuclear Exercise in Italy," Federation of American Scientists (FAS), October 27, 2014, accessed March 23, 2016, https://fas.org/blogs/security/2014/10/steadfastnoon/.

## The 3 "Cs" of NATO's Current Deterrence Policy

> *The DDPR was based on two principles: Russia is firstly a NATO partner and, secondly, will not direct its sizeable nuclear stockpile in Europe against the Alliance. Neither of these assumptions holds true anymore.*
>
> – Karl-Heinz Kamp

### A Changed Security Environment

Today's security environment is completely different from that with which the Alliance was faced in 2012, especially from a nuclear perspective. NATO's publication of the DDPR in 2012 put to rest the public debate over the withdrawal of US nuclear weapons from Europe, initiated in 2009 by Guido Westerwelle, who was Germany's foreign minister at the time. However, according to Karl-Heinz Kamp, Academic Director of the German Federal Academy for Security Policy in Berlin, the DDPR "was based on two principles: Russia is firstly a NATO partner and, secondly, will not direct its sizeable nuclear stockpile in Europe against the Alliance. Neither of these assumptions holds true anymore."[11] Further, Kamp explained in 2015 that "the Russian military is using exercises to simulate the use of nuclear weapons against Poland, is threatening to station ballistic missiles in Kaliningrad and is violating NATO airspace with nuclear-capable aircraft."[12] This is especially troubling considering Russia's current military policy, which President Vladimir Putin supervised and signed in 2000. "According to this 'escalate to de-escalate,' or 'escalation control' concept, Moscow will use the threat of, or even carry out, limited nuclear strikes in a conventional conflict to force its opponent to capitulate to its terms for peace,"[13] explains Kroenig. This game-changing policy of de-escalation, put into practice in 2014 in Ukraine and Crimea, once again places nuclear deterrence at the top of NATO's agenda.

More specifically, the security environment NATO faces today primarily focuses on threats from two regions: the eastern flank and the southern flank. NATO members in Eastern Europe hope that the Warsaw Summit will focus on implementing and improving the military capabilities agreed upon in Wales in 2014 in order to "improve the deterrence and defence capabilities of NATO vis-à-vis Russia."[14] A report by the Rand Corporation dated February 2016 concludes that "A Russian offensive on NATO territory in the Baltics would overwhelm underarmed alliance forces in a matter of hours, leaving NATO with a

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[11] Karl-Heinz Kamp, "The Agenda of the NATO Summit in Warsaw" (working paper, Federal Academy for Security Policy, Berlin, 2015), accessed May 5, 2016, https://www.baks.bund.de/sites/baks010/files/working_paper_security_policy_9_2015.pdf.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Kroenig, *The Renewed Russian Nuclear Threat and NATO Nuclear Deterrence Posture*.

[14] Kamp, "The Agenda of the NATO Summit in Warsaw."

harsh dilemma: Launch a long, bloody counteroffensive or concede defeat." [15] While the southern NATO countries acknowledge the concerns held by the eastern members, they do not want the Alliance to lose sight of its focus on what NATO has dubbed "MENA" (Middle East and Northern Africa). [16] MENA contains threats such as the "Islamic State," failing states, and the unforeseeable fallout of the refugee crisis. These two major issues do not overshadow the future of NATO's nuclear deterrence posture.

### The First "C": Capability

The first "C" of traditional deterrence is capability. Specifically, military capability. It is inadvisable to attempt to understand the issue of deterrence in its entirety without first highlighting the conventional (non-nuclear) and nuclear capabilities currently available to the Alliance. Frankly, they leave much to be desired. "As currently postured, NATO cannot successfully defend the territory of its most exposed members," [17] claims the 2016 RAND study. From NATO's perspective, the line between conventional and nuclear warfare in today's security environment is arguably clearer than it was previously, during the Cold War. This is exemplified by the fact that NATO no longer makes reference to a "continuum" stretching from conventional to nuclear war. [18] However, Russia's "escalate to deescalate" doctrine has blurred this dividing line. [19] The situation today is replete with gray areas such as hybrid warfare, cyber warfare, advanced A2AD (anti-access aerial denial) and terrorist attacks ranging from aircraft hijackings to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) attacks. In theory, in times of war, each of the twenty-eight NATO Allies makes their forces available to the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), a position traditionally held by a US four-star general or admiral. In practice, each nation's political leaders determine when, where, and in what precise capacity they deploy their forces under the NATO flag. We have seen this dynamic in action for over a decade in Afghanistan.

From an overall deterrence perspective, this arrangement proves challenging, as not even the military planners in Brussels know what forces will be available to them at any given time. While admittedly different from an Article V situation in the Baltics, operations in Afghanistan and the Balkans have proven that members are permitted to contribute forces "with caveats," or restrictions. This presents challenges in terms of meeting mission requirements.

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[15] John Vandiver, "Report: Russia Defeats NATO in Baltic War Game," *Stars and Stripes*, February 5, 2016, accessed May 6, 2016, http://www.military.com/daily-news/2016/02/05/report-russia-defeats-nato-in-baltic-war-game.html?ESRC=airforce_160209.nl.

[16] Kamp, "The Agenda of the NATO Summit in Warsaw."

[17] Vandiver, "Russia Defeats NATO in Baltic War Game."

[18] Anthony Stroup (Chief, Nuclear, CBRN Defence and Arms Control Policy Branch, NATO International Military Staff), interviewed by the author, May 6, 2016.

[19] Kroenig, *The Renewed Russian Nuclear Threat and NATO Nuclear Deterrence Posture*.

Russia's revisionist course of action in the East, however, prompted the Alliance to effect a small number of wholesale changes to make its forces more visible to any potential adversary. Speaking at the Munich Security Conference in February 2016, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg declared that, in the face of a "more assertive Russia," NATO needed "to send a powerful signal to deter any aggression or intimidation."[20] Since the last Summit in 2014, NATO has sent most of these signals via conventional means.

### Conventional

From a conventional perspective, NATO's focus since the Wales Summit of 2014 has been on implementing the Readiness Action Plan (RAP). The Allies created the RAP to "assure frontline allies that NATO was willing and able to defend their sovereignty against Russian aggression."[21] NATO describes the plan as containing two pillars: 1) assurance measures and 2) adaptation measures. Assurance measures comprise actions that increase military presence and activity for the purposes of assurance and deterrence, such as raising the number of air policing fighter jets in the Baltics from four to sixteen. Adaptation measures include changes to the Alliance's long-term military posture and capabilities, such as enhancing the responsiveness and capabilities of the NATO Response Force (NRF).[22]

More recently, in February 2016, NATO decided to enhance this presence via multinational rotational contingents. Rotational, or, in NATO lingo, "persistent" forces, as opposed to "permanently" stationed forces, remain an important distinction in the eyes of the Alliance – as well as in the eyes of Moscow. The 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act, agreed upon two years before the first Central and Eastern European (CEE) democracies joined NATO, states that NATO could defend its (enlarged) territory without the "additional permanent stationing of substantial combat forces."[23] Therefore, in order to not "violate" the act and by extension, potentially escalate tensions with Russia, NATO intends to keep these forces rotational, avoiding the more controversial, "permanent" label. Stoltenberg underscored the importance of the implementation of the RAP in February 2016 at the Meeting of NATO Ministers of Defense in Brussels, stating:

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[20] "Speech by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the Munich Security Conference," February 13, 2016, accessed March 9, 2016, http://nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_128047.htm.

[21] Alberto Perez Vadillo, "From Munich to Warsaw: NATO rethinks deterrence," British American Security Information Council, February 22, 2016, accessed March 9, 2016, www.basicint.org/blogs/alberto-perez-vadillo-eu-non-proliferation-consortium-researcher/02/2016/munich-warsaw-nato.

[22] "NATO's Readiness Action Plan. Fact Sheet," December 2014, accessed March 9, 2016, http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2014_12/20141202_141202-facstsheet-rap-en.pdf.

[23] Provided Moscow exercised restraint in its conventional deployments – see Vadillo, "From Munich to Warsaw."

We have increased NATO's presence in the eastern part of the Alliance, with enhanced air policing, maritime patrols and robust exercises. We have agreed assurance measures for Turkey – with Patriot batteries, AWACS surveillance planes, and an enhanced maritime presence in the Eastern Mediterranean and in the Black Sea. We have tripled the size of the NATO Response Force to more than 40,000 troops, with the new Spearhead Force at its core.[24]

The actual execution of the RAP and other conventional commitments will no doubt be topics high on the agenda at the upcoming Warsaw Summit.

From a purely American perspective, President Barack Obama announced the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI) in June 2014. Washington originally intended this to be a one-year, $1 billion "emergency response to Russian aggression."[25] However, the president's fiscal year (FY) 2017 budget proposes quadrupling funding for the ERI to $3.4 billion, up from $789 million in FY 2016.[26] This funding represents a step in the right direction. It not only helps deter adversaries, but also reassures allies. While these significant improvements on a conventional level undoubtedly send a message, why is this message not reinforced in a nuclear dimension?

### *Nuclear*

Despite NATO's claims of self-transformation, it appears to be ignoring one of the main pillars of its collective security. In other words, despite Russia's continued nuclear saber-rattling, NATO has failed to highlight any changes to its nuclear deterrence posture or policies – the Allies have remained silent. Nevertheless, this may be intentional, signaling that NATO need not cross the nuclear threshold to fulfill its obligations to its allies in scenarios less than all-out war.[27] However, further analysis of NATO's nuclear posture underscores the need for reform in the nuclear arena.

NATO's nuclear posture has remained unchanged for years. Technically, it comprises the independent strategic forces of the three nuclear powers of the Alliance: the United States, United Kingdom and France – about 7,800 nuclear weapons in total.[28] These "strategic" forces include the traditional nuclear triad of bombers, Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), and submarines. At any

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[24] "NATO boosts its defence and deterrence posture," February 10, 2016, accessed March 9, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_127834.htm.

[25] Mark F. Cancian and Lisa Sawyer Samp, "The European Reassurance Initiative," Center for Strategic and International Studies, February 9, 2016, accessed March 30, 2016, https://csis.org/publication/european-reassurance-initiative.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Schuyler Foerster (Brent Scowcroft Professor of National Security Studies, Eisenhower Center for Space and Defense Studies), interviewed by the author, May 2, 2016.

[28] "Nuclear Force Reductions and Modernizations Continue; Peace Operations Increase," Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, June 15, 2015, accessed April 19, 2016, http://www.sipri.org/media/pressreleases/2015/yb-june-2015.

given time, these three countries could employ their strategic nuclear forces autonomously, or make them available to the Alliance in a NATO capacity. However, NATO doctrine concedes that the "supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies is provided by the strategic nuclear forces of the Alliance, particularly those of the United States."[29]

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's (SIPRI) Yearbook Summary of June 2015, nine countries currently possess nuclear weapons.[30] At first glance, the overall balance between NATO countries and Russia appears relatively even. However, the Allies do not generally consider the strategic forces of the US, UK and France to be "NATO" nuclear weapons. This is firstly significant because France refuses to participate in any nuclear planning within NATO and secondly because a Cold War-style strategic nuclear exchange is not the threat NATO worries about. Most experts label these "NATO" weapons, the aforementioned B-61 gravity bombs, "tactical" or non-strategic nuclear weapons (NSW). The imbalance in terms of "tactical" weapons greatly favors Russia, with an alarming ratio of about 6:1.[31] This sizeable disparity in capability can be easily rectified with a few changes to readiness and posture by the Alliance – recommendations which will be addressed later in this paper.

While the three NATO nuclear powers, and their political leaders, always retain possession of and authority over their own national weapons, the Alliance also maintains a unique capability described as "nuclear sharing." In general, "The idea is that one solution to the 'free-rider' problem in NATO's defense is to insist that NATO allies bear some of the financial and political burden of keeping NATO a 'nuclear alliance' by housing forward-deployed U.S. nuclear weapons," explains Jeffrey Lewis.[32] Under this arrangement, which was "grandfathered in" before the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1970, the US stores approximately 180 B-61 nuclear gravity (tactical) bombs on five NATO members' soil.[33]

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[29] Katarzyna Kubiak and Oliver Meier, "Updating NATO's nuclear posture: Necessary? Feasible? Desirable?" European Leadership Network, November 12, 2015, accessed April 19, 2016, http://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/updating-natos-nuclear-posture-necessary-feasible-desirable_3312.html.

[30] "World nuclear forces," in *SIPRI Yearbook 2015*, chapter 11, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, accessed April 19, 2016, https://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2015/11.

[31] Robert S. Norris and Hans M. Kristensen, "US tactical nuclear weapons in Europe, 2011," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 67, no. 1 (2011): 64–73, accessed January 5, 2016, http://bos.sagepub.com/content/67/1/64.full.

[32] Jeffrey Lewis, "A Steal at $10 Billion," *Foreign Policy*, September 5, 2012, accessed March 30, 2016, http://foreignpolicy.com/2012/09/05/a-steal-at-10-billion/.

[33] George Perkovich, Malcolm Chalmers, Steven Pifer, Paul Schulte, and Jaclyn Tandler, *Looking Beyond The Chicago Summit: Nuclear Weapons in Europe and the Future of NATO* (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2012).

These "tactical" nuclear bombs, first built in the 1960s, are considered to be the oldest nuclear weapons in the US inventory, and are fully funded by the US taxpayer.[34] The US plans to modernize the B-61 via a "Life Extension Program" (LEP) costing $10 billion – consolidating four versions of the bomb into one single modification, the controversial B-61 Mod 12.[35] The "controversy" is twofold. In the US, the controversy is rooted in the fact that the estimated cost of the program has ballooned from an initial $4 billion to a now-realistic $10 billion. Internationally, critics argue that the B-61 LEP, with its increased accuracy and lower yield, makes the weapon appear more usable to military planners.[36] This, in turn, adds a destabilizing element to the weapon.

Under the nuclear sharing arrangement, in times of war, the US transfers custody of the B-61 to the NATO host nation, which then employs its DCA to drop the weapon on enemy territory. Unfortunately, the DCA "are rapidly reaching the end of their normal service lives, however, and are the only means by which NATO shares the threat of nuclear attack on potential opponents in times of crisis among several Allied nations."[37] Belgium and the Netherlands currently use the F-16 and Germany and Italy use the Tornado.

The logic behind this arrangement is simple. The Allies share the political and tactical "burden" of actually using nuclear weapons against an adversary. Even allies not directly involved in DCA strike missions regularly contribute via nuclear consultation in the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG). In times of war, these allies cast their vote in favor of, or against, the use of a nuclear strike. Other members, such as Poland with its F-16s, contribute to the nuclear mission in what NATO terms a "SNOWCAT" role. These allies provide non-nuclear capabilities such as the suppression of enemy air defense (SEAD).[38] SNOWCAT can be anything from the command and control of nuclear forces to the security of weapons on the ground. Put simply, German, Dutch, Belgian or Italian fighter pilots would load American nuclear bombs (stored on European soil) and drop them on the adversary, if called upon. While this concept sounds simple in theory, it has not been devoid of controversy over the past decade.

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[34] "B61 Bombs in Europe and the US Life Extension Program," British American Security Information Council, March 2016, accessed March 30, 2016, www.basicint.org/sites/default/files/BASIC_B61_briefing_Mar2016.pdf.

[35] Lewis, "A Steal at $10 Billion."

[36] "B61 Bombs in Europe and the US Life Extension Program."

[37] Edmond E. Seay, *Countdown to Chaos? Timelines and Implications of Procurement Decisions for NATO's Dual-Capable Aircraft* (Hamburg: British American Security Information Council (BASIC), 2013), accessed January 19, 2016, www.basicint.org/sites/default/files/nuclear_policy_paper_no_14_final.pdf.

[38] Kristensen, "Polish F-16s in NATO Nuclear Exercise in Italy."

### The 2nd "C": Credibility

*Recent Nuclear Debates*

Credibility is the second "C" of deterrence, often termed a measure of the political will to use the military capability available. In order to understand where NATO currently stands in terms of its nuclear credibility, it is important to expand on where it has stood in the recent past. NATO is no stranger to debates on nuclear issues. There is an obvious benefit to frank, internal discussions on issues of debate within the Alliance. Public debates, however, within NATO, can have a negative effect on the Alliance's credibility. This holds especially true if these debates plant seeds of doubt in the adversary's mind. While the newer members of NATO generally value the nuclear status quo, many Western European nations have preferred, in the recent past, to reduce the role of nuclear weapons significantly.[39] In 2014, Dr. Robert Czulda explained the background behind the thinking of one proponent of this mindset, Germany:

> The biggest political advocate of a complete withdrawal is Germany, which would be the first casualty of tactical nuclear weapons during the Cold War, just like Poland. According to the analysis of NATO in the 1950s (*Carte Blanche* 1955 and *Lion Noire* 1957 exercises), in the case of aggression by the Warsaw Pact on Western Europe, even a limited use of nuclear weapons would render German territory uninhabitable due to both the explosion and radiation. This fear and the pacifist movement that has been growing since the 1970s have made the Germans the biggest opponents of nuclear weapons in Europe.[40]

This "pacifist" movement surfaced again in 2009 when Germany led the call to withdraw US nuclear weapons from Europe. Referencing Obama's Prague speech of 2009, Germany's Foreign Minister, Guido Westerwelle, called for Germany to be "free of nuclear weapons" and added,

> We will take President Obama at his word and enter talks with our allies so that the last of the nuclear weapons still stationed in Germany, relics of the Cold War, can finally be removed.[41]

To be fair, this view was only held by one junior faction within the German government, not the country as a whole. While the German public is predominantly anti-nuclear, its government generally recognizes the importance of nuclear sharing within the Alliance.[42] Nonetheless, Belgium, Norway, Luxembourg

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[39] Robert Czulda, "NATO Tactical Nuclear Weapons in Europe – towards Modernisation or Withdrawal?" *Baltic Security and Defence Review* 17, no. 2 (2014): 80–111.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Sonia Phalnikar, "New German government to seek removal of US nuclear weapons," *Deutsche Welle*, October 25, 2009, accessed January 19, 2016, http://www.dw.com/en/new-german-government-to-seek-removal-of-us-nuclear-weapons/a-4824174.

[42] Dr. Jeffrey Larsen (Director, Research Division, NATO Defense College, Rome, Italy), email message to author, February 24, 2016.

and the Netherlands supported Berlin's bold initiative heading into NATO's 2010 Lisbon Summit. However, the US secretary of state at the time, Hillary Clinton, announced a key policy principle at a meeting of NATO foreign ministers in April 2010 (prior to the Lisbon Summit) in Tallinn, Estonia – namely, that US tactical nuclear weapons would remain in Europe, avoiding "consternation" throughout the Alliance.[43] Later in 2010, NATO released its "Strategic Concept," which specifies that NATO's deterrence will be based on an appropriate combination of nuclear and conventional capabilities.[44]

The Alliance followed this up with the release of the DDPR in 2012. The DDPR, announced at the Chicago Summit, does not recommend any changes to NATO's nuclear posture. Instead, it simply glosses over the "conflicting nuclear interests within NATO"[45] by stating that "nuclear weapons are a core component of NATO's overall capabilities for deterrence and defence" and that "the Alliance's nuclear posture currently meets the criteria for an effective deterrence and defence posture."[46] Aside from these public documents, however, NATO members have often avoided public discussions on nuclear weapons as domestic disputes continue to heat up.[47] This proves worrying in light of Moscow's recent rattling of its nuclear saber.

### NATO's Current Nuclear Policy

Nuclear policy, set by heads of state, plays a major role in determining NATO's credibility and political will. In fact, Michael Rühle, current Head of the Energy Security Section of NATO's international staff, argues, "Nuclear policy always trumps posture. It demonstrates solidarity amongst all twenty-eight members from the Head of State level. Nothing is more powerful in the eyes of an adversary."[48] Historically, since the formation of the Alliance in 1949, NATO summits have served as the primary opportunity for the NATO heads of state to evaluate and provide strategic direction for Alliance activities. These are not regular meetings, but simply an important part of the Alliance's decision-making process. For example, NATO uses summits to introduce new policy, invite new

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[43] Damon V. Coletta, "Deterrence Logic and NATO's Nuclear Posture," *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 7 (Spring 2013): 69–92.

[44] NATO, "Active Engagement, Modern Defence," November 19, 2010, accessed May 12, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_68580.htm.

[45] Kamp, "NATO Summit in Warsaw."

[46] NATO, "Deterrence and Defence Posture Review," May 20, 2012, accessed May 12, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-4E5D5633-EACD44C0/natolive/official_texts_87597.htm.

[47] Rachel Staley Grant, "Rethinking nuclear deterrence and burden-sharing," British American Security Information Council (BASIC), July 22, 2013, accessed January 19, 2016, http://www.basicint.org/news/2013/rethinking-nuclear-deterrence-and-burden-sharing.

[48] Michael Rühle, "The Broader Context of NATO's Nuclear Policy and Posture," Working Paper No. 89 (Rome: NATO Defense College, January 2013).

members, or even show a coordinated response to a specific opponent's actions. Since NATO's inception, there have only been 26 NATO summits.[49] Traditionally, the declaration made at the conclusion of each summit announces significant changes or anticipated statements. Naturally, any changes to the Alliance's nuclear posture would be included in these declarations. For example, in 2010 the Lisbon Summit saw the publication of a new Strategic Concept (typically used as a 10-year road map) and called for the creation of a DDPR. These two documents serve as the basis for NATO's nuclear policy. Key statements include:

- "The fundamental purpose of NATO's nuclear forces is deterrence."

- "Deterrence, based on an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional capabilities, remains a core element of NATO's overall strategy."

- "Nuclear weapons are a core component of the Alliance's overall capabilities for deterrence and defense alongside conventional and missile-defense forces."

- "NATO is committed to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, but as long as nuclear weapons exist, it will remain a nuclear alliance."

- "The Nuclear Planning Group provides the forum for consultation on NATO's nuclear deterrence."[50]

On May 22, 2015 Stoltenberg announced that the next summit would take place on July 8, 2016 in Warsaw. To this end, he stated, "We are already implementing the biggest reinforcement of our collective defence since the end of the Cold War. In Warsaw, we will chart the course for the Alliance's adaptation to the new security environment, so that NATO remains ready to defend all Allies against any threat from any direction."[51] While much of the focus in the run-up to Warsaw has been on the recent RAP and Exercise Trident Juncture, both conventional improvements to the Alliance, public discussions from NATO on its nuclear initiatives remain muted.

The concept that the Alliance has no enemies is one current policy that weakens the credibility of NATO's deterrence posture. This defies the traditional logic of deterrence logic. In order to deter an adversary, one must first identify its adversary. The politically convenient stance of "NATO has no enemies" deters nobody. NATO must define what and whom, exactly, it believes constitute the greatest threats to the Alliance. Is there a need to deter not only

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[49] NATO, "Summit Meetings," November 6, 2015, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50115.htm.

[50] NATO, "NATO's Nuclear Deterrence Policy and Forces," December 3, 2015, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50068.htm.

[51] NATO, "NATO Secretary General announces dates for 2016 Warsaw Summit," May 22, 2015, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_120085.htm.

state actors such as Russia, North Korea, Pakistan and China, but also non-state actors such as IS as well? By doing so, NATO can then identify the corresponding requirements in terms of force, policies and budget to overcome these adversary-specific threats. Warsaw, and its unique geographical location, provides the ideal opportunity to make the necessary reforms to add credibility to NATO's nuclear deterrence.

## The 3rd "C": Communication

*Bridging the Strategic Communication Gap*

The final "C" is communication. For NATO to deter an adversary successfully it must communicate its capabilities and credibility in a manner the adversary understands. Without this, the first two "Cs" are arguably worthless. For example Russia, and especially Putin, have consistently demonstrated that strength is what is understood and respected. While diplomacy should be the first port of call, NATO must always enter diplomatic negotiations from a position of strength. Stoltenberg underlined this in January 2016 saying, "There is no contradiction between increasing the strength of NATO and engaging with Russia. Indeed, it is only by being strong that we can develop a cooperative and constructive relationship."[52]

In order to do this, NATO must improve its strategic communication. Specifically, it must change its nuclear mindset and "must not consider discussion of nuclear developments as off limits because of its controversial nature."[53] This is not a new idea. In fact, prior to the 2012 summit in Chicago, members of the Carnegie Endowment wrote, "To avoid such a cascading loss of confidence, NATO leaders must prepare the Alliance to reach some fundamental decisions on its deterrence and defense posture after the Chicago Summit."[54] If this is not accomplished, however, as George Perkovich explains, "it will begin to lose its ability to take collective decisions on NATO's nuclear capabilities and policies."[55] Only then will the Alliance avoid the inevitable "disarmament by default" of not addressing the need for modernization in the nuclear arena.[56] One example of this "disarmament by default" is Germany's reluctance to replace Tornado aircraft for the nuclear strike mission. While it has agreed to extend the life of the Tornado, Germany risks losing the ability to perform nuclear strike mission completely if it does not decide on a Tornado replacement soon.

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[52] *The Secretary General's Annual Report 2015* (Brussels: NATO Public Diplomacy Division, 2016), accessed May 12, 2016, http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2016_01/20160128_SG_AnnualReport_2015_en.pdf#page=27.

[53] Rühle, "The Broader Context of NATO's Nuclear Policy and Posture."

[54] Perkovich et al., *Looking Beyond The Chicago Summit*.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Steven Pifer, "NATO, Nuclear Weapons and Arms Control," Arms Control Series, Report 7 (Brookings, July 2011), accessed January 20, 2016, https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/0719_arms_control_pifer.pdf.

This, however, would require public discussion on the funding of a nuclear-capable aircraft – a topic that political leaders want to avoid. Germany identified the DCA capability gap well over a decade ago, yet is still dragging its feet with regard to identifying a replacement. This, in and of itself, is communicating intentions to adversaries that erode the overall effect of deterrence.

NATO's continued silence on the nuclear front may also prove troubling to those Allies and partner nations looking for reassurance in the face of Russia's recent posturing. Denis Healey, the British defense minister in the late 1960s, once said, "It takes only five percent credibility of American retaliation to deter the Russians, but ninety-five percent credibility to reassure the Europeans."[57] Healey's "deterrence theory" still rings true nearly fifty years later as NATO continues to struggle to achieve a balance between deterrence and reassurance. For example, the Alliance's 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act states the "three nos," claiming it had "'no intention, no plan, and no reason' to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new member states."[58] This statement was intended to reassure Moscow that the expansion from sixteen to twenty-eight members was non-threatening. However, Matthew Karnitschnig, in his 2014 article, claims "NATO's Baltic members and Poland argue that Russia is in clear violation of the act and that the Alliance is no longer obliged to adhere to it."[59] Furthermore, John Kornblum, a former US assistant secretary of state for European affairs who helped draft and negotiate the act, explained a rarely discussed nuance to the agreement: "It says if conditions change, all bets are off. There are all kinds of escape clauses if the other side isn't sticking to its commitment. Clearly, the Russians have broken virtually all of theirs. There's no way you can say the conditions are as harmonious as when it was signed."[60] Expanding the nuclear strike mission to include a Central or Eastern European country, for example, could help reassure the Allies to the east, yet not violate the Founding Act.

Newer NATO members, especially many of the CEE countries, view the presence of American B-61s in Europe as their symbolic link to the US. This link, without question, enticed these recent members to join the Alliance in the first place. Publically accessible sources claim that there are approximately 150-200 American B-61 gravity bombs located in Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy and Turkey.[61] For the CEE countries, the weapons serve as a daily reminder that this transatlantic partnership is still alive and well. This partnership

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[57] Denis Healey, *The Time of My Life* (London: Michael Joseph, 1989), 243.

[58] Luis Simón, "NATO," in *Tactical Nuclear Weapons and Euro-Atlantic Security: The Future of NATO*, ed. Paolo Foradori (New York: Routledge, 2013), 107–124.

[59] Matthew Karnitschnig, "Pact With Russia Keeps NATO Bases at a Distance, But Should It?" *Wall Street Journal*, September 3, 2014, accessed February 29, 2016, http://blogs.wsj.com/brussels/2014/09/03/qa-1997s-nato-russia-founding-act/tab/print/.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Norris and Kristensen, "US tactical nuclear weapons in Europe, 2011."

is critical to the credibility of the "an attack on one, is an attack on all" policy, or Article V of the North Atlantic treaty. From the perspective of CEE, this political reassurance cannot be understated at a time when the Obama administration continues to pursue its explicit efforts to "pivot" to the Pacific. In addition, the CEE countries fear that Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and of Georgia in 2008, "may not be isolated incidents, but rather symptomatic of a grander ambition in Moscow to restore a Russian sphere of influence in the area of the former Soviet Union, and that these plans could come to threaten regional stability and NATO members directly."[62] Improved nuclear strategic communication improves the perception of political will, and therefore improves deterrence.

## *Money Talks*

Spending money wisely on defense is yet another means by which the third "C" can be effectively used to communicate intentions, and thereby deter adversaries. It demonstrates political will as well as effectively communicates resolve and priorities. Stoltenberg highlights this in the Secretary General's Annual Report for 2016: "While there are many ways in which Allies demonstrate solidarity, one is through investing in defence."[63] Unfortunately, the lack of spending on defense also sends a message to adversaries. Former US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates put Europe on alert in 2011, saying "The blunt reality is that there will be dwindling appetite and patience in the US Congress—and in the American body politic writ large—to expend increasingly precious funds on behalf of nations that are apparently unwilling to devote the necessary resources or make the necessary changes to be serious and capable partners in their own defense."[64] This statement, combined with initiatives such as the German-led proposal to remove American B-61s from Europe, continues to chip away at confidence in the true cohesion of the Alliance. Even the front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination, Donald Trump, fired a warning shot across NATO's bow at a rally in Wisconsin in May 2016, saying that Allies "are not paying their fair share" and that "either they pay up, including past deficiencies, or they have to get out. And if it breaks up NATO, it breaks up NATO."[65] Comments like this from Trump, despite their context, only add fuel to the fire of Russian attempts to capitalize on ways to divide the Alliance.

NATO sets a target for members to spend at least 2% of their gross domestic product (GDP) on defense, and for at least 20% of that defense spending to

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[62] Matthew Kroenig, "Facing Reality: Getting NATO Ready for a New Cold War," *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 57, no. 1 (February–March 2015): 49–70.

[63] *The Secretary General's Annual Report 2015.*

[64] Robert Burns, "Gates blasts NATO, questions future of alliance," *Associated Press*, June 10, 2011, http://www.salon.com/2011/06/10/eu_gates_nato_doomed/.

[65] "Trump Fine With 'Breakup' of NATO," *Newsmax*, May 2, 2016, accessed May 2, 2016, www.newsmax.com/Headline/trump-nato-break-up/2016/04/02/id/722004/.

be on major equipment, including research and development.[66] Since very few members meet this target, the declaration following the 2014 Wales Summit watered down the commitment by agreeing that those not meeting the 2% pledge must at least:

- Halt any decline in defense expenditure
- Aim to increase defense expenditure in real terms as GDP grows
- Aim to move towards the 2% guideline within a decade.[67]

In the 2016 report, Stoltenberg further released information to show how each country within NATO was progressing towards this goal, nearly eighteen months after the pledge. In the report, he says:

> Against the 2% and 20% goals combined, only three [out of 28] NATO countries met the guideline to which all NATO members have agreed. Despite the fact that many NATO countries increased their defence spending in 2015, cuts by some with larger economies meant that overall NATO defence spending is estimated to have decreased in 2015.[68]

Herein lies the problem. Why are so many American leaders unhappy with the financial imbalance across the Alliance? Again, Stoltenberg explains, "In 2015, the US accounted for 50% of Alliance Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 72% for the total NATO defense expenditures."[69] As US Vice President Joe Biden has said many times throughout his political career, "Don't tell me what you value. Show me your budget, and I'll tell you what you value."[70] Frankly, the US has always borne a disproportionate amount of NATO's defense investment. However, since the end of the Cold War, this imbalance has grown markedly.[71]

While many NATO countries argue that the "output" of a country is more important than an objective metric like percentage of GDP, GDP is the yardstick NATO has chosen. Perhaps more telling from an adversary's perspective are trends in defense spending within specific countries, especially those within NATO that are supposed to be "united" and recommitted the 2% metric in the wake of the 2014 Wales Summit. In a piece published in *Defense One* in 2015, Kedar Pavgi shows the percentage change in defense spending since the 2014 Ukraine crisis and Wales 2% pledge. Namely, Pavgi highlights that the easternmost countries in NATO have shown the biggest increases in defense spending

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[66] NATO, Wales Summit Declaration.
[67] Ibid.
[68] *The Secretary General's Annual Report 2015.*
[69] Ibid.
[70] "Biden's Remarks on McCain's Policies," *New York Times*, September 15, 2008, accessed May 2, 2016, www.nytimes.com/2008/09/15/us/politics/15text-biden.html.
[71] *The Secretary General's Annual Report 2015.*

since Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and occupation of eastern Ukraine.[72] This is an encouraging sign that countries are taking the threat seriously and are trying to adjust their defense spending accordingly. Unfortunately, countries such as Ukraine and Georgia recently learned that it is impossible to create professional militaries overnight. More recent reports suggest that trends might be changing for the better. According to Marc Champion, "NATO members have, finally, begun to reverse declines in defense spending. The US pays 22 percent of NATO's roughly $2.3 billion common budget (a reasonable share given that the US accounts for 50 percent of total alliance GDP). It continues to shoulder far too much of actual spending, but dissolving the alliance makes sense only if the US can afford to walk away from European commitments. It can't."[73] Continued emphasis on appropriate levels of defense spending speaks volumes to adversaries as they see improved capabilities that demonstrate political will. Poland, as an ally that has "put its money where its mouth is," provides the perfect venue not only to continue with current reforms, but also to expand these reforms to the nuclear arena.

## Recommendations

Work by traditional nuclear deterrence theorists like Brodie,[74] Snyder[75] and Schelling[76] remains relevant to NATO in the twenty-first century, though these theorists all hold slightly different viewpoints. NATO combines and simplifies these deterrence theorists' varying approaches by continuing in its use of the "Three Cs" as a means to gauge deterrence. Proving a negative, such as why deterrence actually works, remains nearly impossible. However, considering the aforementioned deficiencies in these three pillars, below are six changes that NATO should consider making to its posture of nuclear deterrence in Warsaw.

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[72] Kedar Pavgi, "NATO Member's Defense Spending, in Two Charts," *Defense One*, June 22, 2015, accessed April 29, 2016, http://www.defenseone.com/politics/2015/06/nato-members-defense-spending-two-charts/116008/.

[73] Marc Champion, "Trump Asks a Good Question About NATO (and Botches It)," *Bloomberg View*, April 5, 2016, accessed April 29, 2016, www.bloombergview.com/articles/2016-04-05/trump-asks-right-question-botches-answer-on-nato.

[74] Bernard Brodie, ed., *The Absolute Weapon: Atomic Power and World Order* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1946); Bernard Brodie, *Strategy in the Missile Age* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959).

[75] Glenn Snyder, *Deterrence and Defense: Toward a Theory of National Security* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961).

[76] Thomas Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960); Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966).

### #1: Adding DCA and strike missions in Poland and Turkey

The 2016 RAND study publicly identifies a glaring weakness in NATO's capabilities in the Baltic region: "As presently postured, NATO cannot successfully defend the territory of its most exposed members."[77] "The outcome was, bluntly, a disaster for NATO," the report said. "Across multiple plays of the game, Russian forces eliminated or bypassed all resistance and were at the gates of or actually entering Riga, Tallinn, or both, between 36 and 60 hours after the start of hostilities."[78] Tweaking the region's nuclear posture would quickly shrink this gap. Such a move is not unprecedented in NATO's history. In fact, conventional military disadvantage, by comparison to the USSR, is the reason why the US placed nuclear weapons in Europe in the first place.

Adding a NATO nuclear strike mission to Polish F-16s would both reassure the Allies on the eastern flank and deter Russia by showing strength and solidarity within the Alliance. Since NATO would not be moving any weapons or creating nuclear storage facilities in Poland, it would not be in violation of the NATO-Russia Founding Act of 1997. Under a bilateral US-Polish treaty, the Alliance already uses the Lask Air Base as the primary base for NATO aircraft deploying to Poland on a temporary rotational basis. In addition, Polish F-16s already participate in the annual NATO Steadfast Noon-STRIKEVAL exercises in a non-nuclear role.[79] Polish aircraft would simply need to be made nuclear capable and, with minimal training, they would be operational.

Critics of NATO tactical nuclear weapons often point to the unrealistic ability of DCA aircraft to cover the distance required in an actual strike scenario. Primarily, crossing long distances from Western European bases to combative environments containing modern Anti-Access/Aerial Denial (A2AD) systems seems not merely unrealistic, but also suicidal. However, Lask Air Base in Poland solves this geometry problem. It is located just 178 miles from the Belarusian border and 201 miles from the Russian border at Kaliningrad Oblast. As Hans Kristensen describes, "At a speed of 1,800 kilometers per hour (1,110 mile/hour, or Mach 1.47), an F-16 launched from Lask AB would be able to reach Kaliningrad in 12 minutes and Moscow in less than an hour."[80]

How realistic this recommendation politically may be is debatable. In December 2015, the new Polish government raised eyebrows when the undersecretary of state, Tomasz Szatkowski, told Polsat News 2 that Poland was taking "concrete steps" towards joining NATO's nuclear sharing arrangement.[81] On the other hand, the Polish ministry of defense promptly denied this, saying that

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[77]  Vandiver, "Russia Defeats NATO in Baltic War Game."

[78]  Ibid.

[79]  Kristensen, "Polish F-16s in NATO Nuclear Exercise in Italy."

[80]  Vandiver, "Russia Defeats NATO in Baltic War Game."

[81]  Hans M. Kristensen, "Adjusting NATO's Nuclear Posture," *Federation of American Scientists*, December 7, 2015, accessed March 23, 2016, http://fas.org/blogs/security/2015/12/poland/.

"Poland is not engaged in any work aimed at joining NATO's nuclear sharing program."[82] One might logically conclude that Szatkowski's statement demonstrates the deepening of discussions within the Alliance. On the other hand, it may simply represent a statement of political interest by an official of a new government. Either way, the subsequent Polish denial speaks volumes in terms of the continued secrecy of all things nuclear within NATO. As one NATO official said to *The Guardian* in 2015, "We cannot go into detail on our nuclear discussions. These are internal, sensitive and classified matters. What I can say is that NATO continuously assess all aspects of Russia's military activities, including Russia's nuclear rhetoric."[83]

Turkey's return to the nuclear strike mission the Turkish Air Force previously maintained for would prove much simpler, and would only require approximately one year to become operational again.[84] Given Russia's recent actions in Syria, it makes sense to maintain a nuclear capability in the southeast portion of the Alliance. Most experts agree that full-scale nuclear war is not what keeps them up at night. Rather, is regional conflicts escalating between nuclear powers by means of an accident or mistake. Turkey's shooting down of a Russian fighter aircraft in November 2015 following a violation of airspace lasting seventeen seconds, captured on video, perfectly illustrates how such a scenario could unfold. Given Russia's expression of willingness to use nuclear weapons as a "de-escalation" technique, maintaining a strike role in this region would be prudent. If Russia knew that a NATO nuclear option was present in the area, it may deter such "de-escalating" nuclear options. Locating nuclear capability in Turkey would also provide NATO with options to counter unpredictable actions by Iran, Pakistan and India, if necessary in the future.

### #2: Incorporating the Heavy Airlift Wing C-17s into the Prime Nuclear Airlift Force

Finding creative ways for newer members to contribute to the nuclear mission remains difficult. Russia interprets most moves in this direction as escalatory by nature. Adding the twelve-nation Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC), operated by the multinational Heavy Airlift Wing (HAW), to the US's Prime Nuclear Airlift Force (PNAF) provides the Alliance with a means to rapidly airlift Europe-based US tactical nuclear weapons to any airfield in the theater of operations. This recommendation would save money both from a strategic and a tactical perspective, and would not be perceived as escalatory. It would also enable NATO to solve the aforementioned geometry problem by giving the SACEUR the ability to launch nuclear strike missions from any airfield, not just the six bases cur-

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[82] Ibid.

[83] Ewen MacAskill, "NATO to review nuclear weapon policy as attitude to Russia hardens," *Guardian*, June 24, 2015, accessed March 23, 2016, www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/24/nato-to-review-nuclear-weapon-policy-as-attitude-to-russia-hardens.

[84] Hans Kristensen, interviewed by the author, April 1, 2016.

rently housing the B-61s. NATO could quickly transfer the B-61s to the C-17, and store them there on a short-term basis – essentially serving as a temporary vault. This dispersal concept offers a very visible signal that would also be a means by which to deter Russia and provide escalatory options to the Alliance, without actually generating strike *sorties*.

By expanding nuclear airlift capabilities to the twelve SAC nations, the Alliance would also create an alternative, non-escalatory form of nuclear sharing. This sharing would simultaneously ensure wider participation in the nuclear mission, reassure those states seen as most vulnerable to external threat and relieve the US of shouldering the entire financial load of nuclear airlifting. These twelve SAC nations include ten NATO members and two NATO Partnership for Peace nations that are generally not involved in NATO's nuclear posture. The NATO participants already include the program's host, Hungary, as well as Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and the US. Sweden and Finland make up the two Partnership for Peace nations already committed to the SAC.[85] Many of these nations do not currently participate in NATO's nuclear posture other than by their membership in the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG). This allows them to contribute in a highly concrete manner. As for Sweden and Finland, this is a non-escalatory manner to put "skin in NATO's nuclear game" in a manner never seen before.

This option may indeed be realistic. The HAW achieved Full Operational Capability (FOC) in 2012 and already includes former crew members from the US Air Force's 4th Airlift Squadron, the Department of Defense's (DoD) only nuclear airlift squadron.[86] The SAC concept represents a groundbreaking initiative in the field of smart defense and the pooling and sharing of defense capabilities. It provides a blueprint for the cost-effective sharing of capability and capacity that NATO could adopt in other areas as well. According to its website,

> The Strategic Airlift Capability, established in September 2008, is an independent and multinational program that provides this crucial capability to its 12 partner nations by owning and operating three Boeing C-17 Globemaster III long-range cargo jets. SAC is based at the Hungarian Defence Forces (HDF) Papa Air Base in Papa, Western Hungary.[87]

Essentially, the twelve nations share the available flight hours of the three aircraft that can "be used for missions without the prerequisite to consult with the other participants to serve the needs of their national defense, NATO, EU or UN commitments and humanitarian relief efforts."[88] In order to make the

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[85] "The Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC)," SAC website, accessed March 23, 2016, https://www.sacprogram.org/en/Pages/The%20Strategic%20Airlift%20Capability.aspx. The Strategic Airlift Capability is operated by the Heavy Airlift Wing in Hungary with 3 C-17s.

[86] Blake Jones, interviewed by the author, March 22, 2016.

[87] "The Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC)."

[88] Ibid.

nuclear airlift proposal a reality, however, the US would need to "share" with, and trust, its Allies to an unprecedented extent.

Currently, the US Prime Nuclear Airlift Force (PNAF) crews maintain strict standards of accountability via the Personnel Reliability Program (PRP). PRP is the DoD's mechanism to ensure that all personnel who interact directly with nuclear weapons are of essentially sound body and mind. Obviously, in order to expand the PRP to NATO Allies, administrative changes, involving significant risk analysis, are required. While custody and possession of the weapons would likely remain with an American courier crew member, the remaining crew positions of pilot and loadmaster could be filled by other HAW nations. Ultimately, what better "reassurance" can the United States give to its concerned NATO Allies than allowing them access to and responsibility for transporting its most devastating weapons? A precedent already exists by which the Department of Energy and the DoD each honor the other's version of PRP in order to accomplish their mission.

There could not be a more ideal time to launch the training required to incorporate the HAW C-17 crew members and maintainers into the nuclear airlift business. In 2020, the US will begin to replace its current B-61 nuclear bombs in Europe with a new B-61-12 version.[89] This massive nuclear airlift of approximately 200 B-61s to and from Europe from the US will serve as strong deterrence in and of itself. The B-61-12 model, seen as controversial by pacifists due to its new combination of low yield and guided tail kit upgrades, would surely be better received by the European public if the SAC (as opposed to the US) executed the swap-out.

### #3: Maintaining the status quo in terms of B-61 locations and quantities

While nuclear disarmament talks have subsided as a result of the current security environment, the tide will surely turn once relations with current adversaries shift. Looking back at the "Russia is a strategic partner" era of 2009, the Alliance is wise to have made the collective decision not to disarm. By maintaining the current B-61 tactical nuclear weapon posture in all five of the current host nations, NATO scores easy political and operational points. Firstly, the Alliance maintains the moral high ground (and potential future diplomatic advantage) by honoring the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act, as it has not placed nuclear weapons on any "new" member's soil. This may seem trivial, but the minute Russia violated Ukraine's territorial integrity, it also violated the 1994 Budapest Memorandum, which included security assurances for Ukraine.[90] Avoiding tempting "tit for tat" violations gives the Alliance, and the US, future leverage in arms treaties when dealing with Russia. This could prove fruitful

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[89]  British American Security Information Council, "B61 Bombs in Europe and the US Life Extension Program."

[90]  Steven Pifer, "Mr. Lavrov, Russia, and the Budapest Memorandum," *Brookings*, January 28, 2016, accessed April 1, 2016, http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/order-from-chaos/posts/2016/01/28-russia-lavrov-budapest-memorandum-pifer.

when NATO eventually addresses the massive difference in tactical nuclear weapon stockpiles between the US and Russia. Kristensen and Robert Norris estimate that Russia maintains three-thousand tactical nukes, while the US maintains approximately five-hundred.[91] Secondly, NATO stands firm with regard to its continued public narrative on the importance of the nuclear dimension of the Alliance. Finally, it keeps Western European skin in the game. At a time when there is obvious disagreement on the value of these weapons in Europe, this cannot be understated. Dr. Jeffrey Larsen's 2006 report for the NATO Public Diplomacy Division describes the unique relationship between the United States and the host nations:

> It appears that the United States maintains its nuclear weapons in Europe primarily because it thinks its European allies want it to continue to do so. The European DCA states, on the other hand, remain committed to the nuclear mission largely because they think the United States expects them to do so, remaining reluctant partners in the DCA mission. There is no consensus on the need for nuclear weapons in the Alliance. Both sides are talking past one another – or more accurately, *not* talking to one another. Nobody wants to rock the boat.

Admittedly, Larsen's quote is somewhat outdated. The security environment has changed drastically over the last decade. However, one thing remains the same: Germany has still not decided on a replacement aircraft for its nuclear-capable Tornado. Instead, it has kicked the can down the road by means of a life-extension program. It is safe to assume, therefore, that while Germany has proven its support for the nuclear mission on a passive level, it has yet to invest the required resources to convince the naysayers that it is serious about its long-term commitment to the nuclear strike mission. If Germany is allowed to "disarm by default," then it may lead the other DCA nations down a similar path.

### #4: Increasing nuclear readiness (decreasing response times) at DCA bases

According to the 2011 GAO report, "Although NATO has no standing operational plans for the use of nuclear weapons, the United States and certain NATO allies provide forces and are required to maintain the ability to be on alert for nuclear operations within a 30-day, 180-day, or 365-day period."[92] When asked about these numbers, Kristensen expanded on the GAO report by saying, "They don't explain what that means, but as far as I have been able to gauge, it looks like the United States' DCA in Europe is one month, Turkey is

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[91] Norris and Kristensen, "US tactical nuclear weapons in Europe."

[92] Gene Aloise and John Pendleton, *Nuclear Weapons: DoD and NNSA Need to Better Manage Scope of Future Refurbishments and Risks to Maintaining U.S. Commitments to NATO*, GAO 11-387 report to congressional requesters (Washington DC: United States Government Accountability Office, 2011), 5–10, accessed April 4, 2016, http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11387.pdf.

one year, and the other European host nations' readiness is at six months."[93] It makes little difference whether or not these figures are precise. In fact, it is for the best that exact readiness levels are difficult to find in publically accessible sources. However, this does not change the capability gap. Given the well-documented conventional advantage Russia maintains on the eastern flank, a tactical nuclear DCA option could truly be the only one available in an immediate crisis. However, if it really takes NATO a minimum of thirty days to generate a tactical nuclear strike *sortie*, this option is neither realistic nor credible.

Considering the time and distance scenarios potentially available to Russia, this low level of readiness does not provide a credible deterrent. This is one area in which nuclear transparency is not beneficial – NATO must make its readiness levels classified. NORAD thirty-day response times in the US and Canada may be overkill, but nonetheless, these readiness levels all need to be increased beyond the timeframe of one month to be rendered credible. However, they should also not all be the same. By varying the readiness levels, host nations are able to maintain predictable schedules, allowing for any necessary training and reconstitution of forces. Meanwhile, the increased readiness levels provide the Alliance with short-notice capability and a credible deterrent. With the addition of Turkey and Poland, the Alliance could easily maintain two "high" readiness (less than forty-eight hours) units, four "moderate" readiness (less than thirty days) units, and one "low" readiness unit at all times. If indications and warnings ever prompt the Alliance to adjust these levels, the forces will be ready to meet the task.

### #5: Creating a "NATO Strategic Deterrence Fund"

Spending money, and specifically, earmarking it for nuclear deterrence, ticks all three boxes of deterrence: capability, credibility and communication. A creative 2016 American budget proposal could possibly serve as a blueprint for NATO's nuclear deterrence funding as well. US Secretary of Defense Ash Carter, appearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee in March 2016, gave public support to the idea of a national nuclear modernization fund for the first time.[94] In theory, this unique proposal appropriates the desired capacities and capabilities of the nuclear triad while avoiding placing a heavy burden on the Air Force and Navy. According to the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies report in January of 2014, "Over the next thirty years, the United States plans to spend approximately $1 trillion maintaining the current arsenal, buying replacement systems, and upgrading existing nuclear bombs and warheads."[95]

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[93]  Hans Kristensen, interviewed by the author, April 1, 2016.

[94]  Aaron Mehta, "Carter Open to DoD-wide Nuclear Weapons Fund," *Defense News*, March 18, 2016, accessed April 4, 2016, http://www.defensenews.com/story/ defense/policy-budget/budget/2016/03/18/carter-open-department-wide-nuclear-weapons-fund/81972126/.

[95]  Jon Wolfsthal, Jeffrey Lewis, and Marc Quint, *The Trillion Dollar Nuclear Triad* (Monterey, California: James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, January 2014),

This "strategic deterrence fund" concept could serve a very useful and timely purpose within NATO. The highly publicized financial contributions to NATO on a national level, most recently highlighted by Trump, but more importantly by the last three American secretaries of defense, become the elephant in the room at every NATO summit.

Implementing this "nuclear tax" across all twenty-eight nations accomplishes multiple objectives. Strategically, it allows the Alliance to plan for and fund strategic deterrence, regardless of whether this entails nuclear weapons, for decades to come. Operationally, it first removes the financial burden borne by the five host nations in terms of funding DCA missions all by themselves. These missions are expensive, incurring costs for continued modernization and/or replacement of aging DCA, security and storage for weapons, training and education etc. This fund could also help the US regain some of the $10 billion it is spending on the B-61 LEP.[96] Most importantly, similar to following the money trail left behind by terrorists, having individual nations funding the nuclear program gives nations ownership of the nuclear mission. Politically, it forces nations to have the long overdue, publicly debated discussions on what being part of a nuclear alliance means to the public – and whether it is worth paying for.

Realistically, however, those levying this "tax" on themselves, namely the twenty-eight heads of state, would likely never approve such a concept. Instead, they would likely point to the fact that non-US NATO alliance members, as former NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Admiral James Stavridis, describes: "spend a total of $300 billion on defense – more than Russia and China's total defense spending."[97] It will take the US, leading from the front, not the rear, along with the nuclear-capable UK and France, to push the Alliance in this direction in Warsaw. Even if each nation only contributed one euro to the fund, that one euro would open valuable discussions within parliaments and in the public arena on the issue of appropriating money towards nuclear matters. The end result would be an open and honest discussion about being a nuclear alliance and whether or not individual countries are willing to pay for this capability – even if it is only one euro at stake.

## #6: Creating a NATO nuclear declaratory statement

By publishing a clear declaratory statement, NATO would further deter potential adversaries and reassure allies. Malcolm Chalmers describes the value of statements of this nature:

> Actions speak louder than words, and the reality that no state has used nuclear weapons for more than six decades speaks more eloquently than any

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accessed April 4, 2016, https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/140107_trillion_dollar_nuclear_triad.pdf.

[96] Lewis, "A Steal at $10 Billion."

[97] Joseph J. Schatz and Benjamin Oreskes, "Europe to US: Ignore Donald Trump, we need NATO," *Politico*, April 1, 2016, accessed April 29, 2016, http://www.politico.eu/article/europe-us-trump-we-need-nato-spending-military-alliance-cuts-russia/.

declaratory policy could ever do. Yet, despite this reality—and indeed, to an extent, because of it—the statements that governments make about when, and for what purpose, they might use weapons remain a key element in deterrence and disarmament discourses.[98]

A NATO declaratory statement could help open the door to more transparent nuclear discussions within the Alliance, and within national governments as well. Just as the security environment changed after the Cold War, and again after Russia's actions in Crimea and Ukraine, NATO's declaratory statement should reflect these changes. Specifically, the statement should include language that includes a statement to the effect that "the use of any nuclear rhetoric or coercion during a crisis would immediately change the nature of the crisis." In addition, it should state that "the use of 'de-escalatory' nuclear strikes is unacceptable behavior that immediately changes the nature of a situation or conflict."

It should avoid being too narrow, such as proposing a "No First Use" policy. This is the exact policy Russia abandoned in 2000.[99] This rules out the possibility of first use even at times where the existence of a nation state and its people are under immediate threat. At the same time, it should avoid being too broad in concept, stating that the "sole purpose" of the nuclear weapons are to be the deterrence of the use of such weapons, as in the policy held by China and India. An example of this in practice would be the use of nuclear weapons to destroy the nuclear forces of another state in order to prevent their use. While a pre-emptive (different from preventative) attack may seem logical and appropriate, it is nearly impossible to distinguish such an attack from a disarming first strike. In the end, a clear, nuclear declaratory statement, based on security vs. disarmament or non-proliferation, backed by the political will of twenty-eight nations, speaks volumes. As Chalmers also wrote, "It is a diplomatic norm that the sincerest form of declaration is one that is repeated often and at the highest level."[100] Words matter. Communication is one of the "big three" of deterrence strategy. In an effort to counter Russia's nuclear saber-rattling, there is no better time to publish a powerful declaratory statement than at the Warsaw Summit.

The bottom line: NATO must improve its communication. Most importantly, national leaders have to speak up and explain the advantages of solid nuclear policies and posture. NATO's information factsheets are worthless if national politicians do not make the case for necessary change.

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[98] Malcolm Chalmers, *Nuclear Narratives: Reflections on Declaratory Policy* (London: Royal United Services Institute, 2010), 3, accessed April 4, 2016, https://rusi.org/sites/default/files/201005_whr_nuclear_narratives_0.pdf.

[99] Kroenig, *The Renewed Russian Nuclear Threat and NATO Nuclear Deterrence Posture*.

[100] Chalmers, *Nuclear Narratives*, 8.

## Conclusion

In sum, this paper has considered the role and future of nuclear deterrence in the North Atlantic Alliance. The recommendations given cover a range of views, including military capabilities, political credibility and strategic communication. While the recommendations put forward range from the strategic to the tactical, they all aim to improve the overall health of deterrence. Given the growing threats from the east and the south with which the Alliance is faced, it is high time for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to address the gaps and weak points in its nuclear deterrence strategy. Failure to do so puts the Alliance's primary mission, collective defense, at risk.

Following the Warsaw Summit of 2016, NATO must redefine and publicly declare what it means to be a "nuclear alliance." Simply maintaining a small stock of aging tactical nuclear weapons and aircraft in Europe neither deters adversaries nor reassures allies. In fact, it occasionally creates unwelcome political problems – as shown in 2009 by Germany's insistence on removing the weapons, then sudden *volte-face* and insistence that they should remain for the time being. Admittedly, nuclear deterrence forms only one part of NATO's overall deterrence strategy. However, these weapons have provided a successful transatlantic link for over five decades. They have linked Europe's freedom to the US's "supreme guarantee," the commitment to fight and die in a nuclear war to defend that freedom. Implementing significant changes to nuclear deterrence posture will no doubt be difficult, but it will not be impossible. Either way, the topic is not going to leave the table—no matter how badly the Alliance does not want to "deal" with a nuclear adversary—because in the end, the enemy always gets a vote. At the Warsaw Summit, NATO should set a course similar to that of the 2012 DDPR initiative: to modernize its nuclear deterrence in a manner that clearly communicates its credibility (political will) and military capability to any potential adversary today, or in the future.

## Disclaimer

The author solely used open source, unclassified information for data collection on location and quantities of nuclear weapons, none of which were personally verified. The views expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Air Force, Department of Defense, or the US Government.

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**Research Article**

# A Changing Security Paradigm. New Roles for New Actors – The Russian Approach

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**Abstract**: The success of the Russian Federation in Ukraine and the an-
nexation of Crimea attest to the fact that the hybrid warfare constitutes
an effective tool for achieving political objectives. This article evaluates
the nature of hybrid warfare based on theoretical publications on the art
of war and doctrinal documents of the Russian Federation, and charac-
terizes the practical dimensions of hybrid warfare. It can be concluded on
that basis that hybrid warfare and organized crime constitute real threats
to European safety and security. International organizations such as
NATO and the European Union so far have not drawn up neither the
strategy nor effective tools for countering these phenomena.

**Keywords**: Hybrid warfare, organized crime, threats, Russian Federation,
NATO, European Union.

## Introduction

In 2014, the Russian Federation conducted two separate phases of operations
in Ukraine. Despite substantial differences in the objectives of and methods
used within the operations, it is worth noting that their natures have much in
common. Both operations were planned and conducted in accordance with the
doctrine followed by Gerasimov and on the basis of the concept hybrid war-
fare. The successes achieved indicate that hybrid war is an effective tool that
enables the Russian Federation to realize its strategy and achieve its national
goals. On the other hand, it should be recognized that, in breaching the territo-
rial integrity of Ukraine during annexation of Crimea, international law was vi-
olated. Nonetheless, Russia was able to reach its goals by using hybrid tactics
and without issuing an explicit declaration of war, and exerts pressure with
regular army sub-units stationed along the border with Ukraine. This proves its

determination to use armed force when non-military measures fail.[1] Through its actions, Russia gives rise to concerns among neighboring countries who have issued official notice of the use of hybrid warfare against them.[2] Moreover, Russia is attempting to give its geostrategic position and autocratic, centralized regime superpower status. Its approach to large-scale conflict involves coordinated diplomatic, informative, cybernetic, economic and military operations, and the core of its strategy aims at impacting on the center of gravity of an adversary in all possible dimensions, while maintaining self-protection.[3] In western publications the model of planned aggregate impact in various spheres is often referred to as "unconventional or political war."[4] Large-scale destabilization of neighborhoods, multiplicity of ambiguous, masked threats and tough, unambiguous aggression not only have a negative influence on regional security, but also cause internal divisions within international organizations.[5]

  This article aims to assess the hybrid threats to European security. The article presents the results of research developed by exploring the following issues: 1) How is the concept of hybrid warfare expressed and what role does organized crime play in hybrid warfare? 2) What kind of challenges and threats does hybrid warfare pose for NATO and the EU and what is the reaction of these organizations to it?

## Hybrid Warfare in Theory and Practice

Hybrid warfare as a particular combination of conventional and irregular operations has been known for centuries. Since ancient times, one of the main aspects of military warfare has been correctly recognizing the current situation and adapting one's conduct accordingly.[6] It is unavoidable that, while the nature of war is unchangeable, the methods of warfare as well as the methods of winning have undergone some transformation to certain extent.[7] Modern armed forces must face up to new challenges, risks and threats, including asymmetric ones. Hybrid operations can be a combination of select forms of

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[1]  Dave Johnson, *Russia's Approach to Conflict – Implications for NATO's Deterrence and Defence* (Rome: NATO Defense College, 2015), 2.

[2]  Mike Winnerstig*, Tools of Destabilization. Russian Soft Power and Non-Military Influence in the Baltic States* (Stockholm: FOI, 2014), accessed June 15, 2015, www.foi.se/en/Search/ Abstract/?rNo=FOI-R--3990--SE.

[3]  Johnson, *Russia's Approach to Conflict*, 2.

[4]  Frank Hoffman, *On Not-So-New Warfare: Political Warfare vs. Hybrid Threats* (4 August 2014), 2, accessed June 15, 2015, http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Articles/Detail/?id=182335.

[5]  *Countering Hybrid Threats*, Food-for-thought paper, European External Action Service (EEAS), Council of the European Union, 8887/15 (Brussels, 13 May 2015), 2.

[6]  Sun Tzu, *Sztuka wojny* (Gliwice, 2004).

[7]  John Keegan*, A History of Warfare* (London, 1993), 11.

symmetric[8] and asymmetric wars[9] in which the sides involved conduct classical military operations and make firm attempts to take control of the local people in the combat area, while simultaneously ensuring security and stability.[10]

Frank Hoffman claims that the characteristics of hybrid wars are frequent terrorist acts and various forms of criminal activity.[11] He defines hybrid warfare as involving an adversary who simultaneously and adaptively uses an integrated combination of conventional weapon and irregular tactics, terrorism and criminal elements in the arena of war in order to reach political goals.[12] The definition above indicates two types of actors: state and non-state ones, applying a broad range of models of war, although it should be understood that many of these models are applied simultaneously. Hoffman accords significant importance to the role of organized crime in the hybrid warfare**.** The existence of a large number of objects makes coordinating these operations challenging. It is not clear whether the war model is attached to one object or whether all objects are associated with one model. Is a structural or an operational model more important? Certainly, simultaneity of action does indeed matter. In turn, it is not clear whether criminal actors are the participants or the source of financing. The definition completely loses its meaning in the case of operations that do not involve violations. It does not refer to the use of diplomatic, economic, or financial instruments, subversive operations, non-governmental organizations, information operations, the use of false portals and internet addresses (trolls) or newspapers and radio and television stations. Nathan Freier, John McCuen, and Helmut Habermayer propose similar definitions. The core of these definitions can be boiled down to the possibility of the simultaneous and effective deployment of various forms of warfare.[13] NATO proposes a very general definition of hybrid threats, suggesting that these stand out by virtue of their multidimensional character**.** However, it says nothing about organized

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[8]  Piotr Gawliczek and Jacek Pawłowski, *Zagrożenia asymetryczne* (Warsaw: AON, 2003), 11.

[9]  John Russell, "Asymmetric Warfare," in *The Big Issue: Command and Combat in the Information Age*, ed. David Potts (London: Strategic & Combat Studies Institute, 2002), 120–122.

[10]  John J. McCuen, "Hybrid Wars," *Military Review* 2 (2008), 108.

[11]  Frank G. Hoffman*, Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars* (Virginia: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies Arlington, 2007), 5.

[12]  Frank G. Hoffman, "Hybrid vs. compound war. The Janus choice: Defining today's multifaceted conflict," *Armed Forces Journal* (October 2009), accessed May 28, 2015, http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/hybrid-vs-compound-war.

[13]  Nathan P. Freier, *Strategic Competition and Resistance in the 21st Century: Irregular, Catastrophic, Traditional, and Hybrid Challenges in Context* (Carlisle, PA: United States Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2007); McCuen, "Hybrid Wars," 107–113; Helmut Habermayer, "Hybrid Threats and a Possible Counter-Strategy," in *Hybrid and Cyber War as Consequences of the Asymmetry: A Comprehensive Approach Answering Hybrid Actors and Activities in Cyberspace*, ed. Josef Schröfl and Bahram M. Rajaee (New York: Peter Lang, 2011), 249–272.

crime. Hybrid threats are threats that involve the possibility of simultaneous and adaptive application of conventional and unconventional measures in order to reach the objectives intended.[14] The concept of counteraction against hybrid threats made against NATO requires a complex approach promoting the coordinated deployment of all available Allied resources, i.e. diplomatic, economic, intelligence resources, etc.

New options of waging war and resolving crisis situations are given in the 2010 Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation and they tend to refer to the characteristics of present-day conflicts. The doctrine hints at the integrated use of military and non-military instruments alongside their resources. It highlights the cosmic and informative dimensions. It assumes that the information war allows political objectives to be reached without the use of armed force or that it can shape the conditions for the use of armed force.[15] In the 2014 Russian doctrine on asymmetrical operational methods, it was revealed that the doctrine allows an adversary's advantage to be eliminated, in a conflict situation, by the participation of irregular subdivisions of the armed forces and private military companies.[16] The use of political and social powers, providing management and finances from outside,[17] was stressed as an important factor. The changes in view of Russian strategists in terms of conducting war are reflected in the articles and public speeches written and given by the Chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, General Gerasimov. In February 2013, he wrote that, in the twenty-first century, it is possible to observe the blurring of borders between war and peace in terms of the classical understanding of these notions. From this perspective, one should recognize that various operations pursued by the Russian Federation in the diplomatic, economic, and military realms, as well as in terms of subversive operations and the organized crime which takes place in Baltic States, Black Sea, and Mediterranean region, should be interpreted as an element of a campaign that has been implemented for a long time and that is only broadly defined.[18]

Leszek Sykulski highlights that sabotage groups taking part in operations cannot possess any identification markers and that their members cannot be

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[14] Michael Miklauci, "NATO Countering the Hybrid Threat," 23 September 2011, accessed June 3, 2015, http://www.act.nato.int/nato-countering-the-hybrid-threat.

[15] *The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation* (approved by Russian Federation presidential edict on 5 February 2010), 7, accessed May 31, 2015, http://carnegieendowment.org/files/2010russia_military_doctrine.pdf.

[16] Juliusz Sabak, "W Rosji Powstają Prywatne Armie," *Defence24*, 28 June 2014, accessed May 31, 2015, http://www.defence24.pl/news_w-rosji-powstaja-prywatne-armie.

[17] *Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation*, December 30, 2014, accessed May 31, 2015, https://www.offiziere.ch/wp-content/uploads-001/2015/08/Russia-s-2014-Military-Doctrine.pdf.

[18] "British Defense Minister Says Russia's Putin Poses 'Danger' to Baltic States," *The Moscow Times*, 19 February 2015, accessed June 16, 2015, http://www.themoscowtimes.com/article.php? id=516203.

treated as members of an armed force under international law. A situation of this nature enables the initiating state to distance itself, officially speaking, from these types of operations when events spin out of control.[19] War is not declared, but merely starts with obscure, unpredictable events (no well-known schemas). On the basis of the color revolution as experienced in North Africa and the Near East, he argues that within a period of a few months or even days, a well-functioning state can be subject to immense upheaval, experience humanitarian catastrophe, or even fall into civil war as a result of armed conflict and foreign intervention.[20] The above-mentioned concept leads one to the conclusion that Russia is able to overthrow and destroy for example Baltic States without direct large-scale military intervention.

Gerasimov states that the significance of non-military measures is fluid and their effectiveness, in many cases, surpasses the use of regular weapons. Moscow does not have to bring its military units onto a state's territory in the event of what it dubs civil war. It can, however, use substitute methods. One of these may be armed combat, e.g. by the special forces, which can defend the interests of Russian citizens in the territory of one of the countries of Russian impact. It can also finance organizations that are involved in the conflict and act in the name of Russia. These actions can attempt to create a permanent threat and long-lasting weaknesses, through organized crime for instance, in countries of low economic potential. Consequently, Russia may also encourage minorities to take further steps in playing legally a larger role within the state, or even encourage and support separatists to create illegally an independent, separate state, such as those appearing in Ukraine. In this way, the Russian Federation could influence nations, discourage them from joining NATO and the European Union, and conversely, lay down conditions for integration into Russia and the Eurasian Union.[21]

Gerasimov pays a lot of attention to conducting special operations against internal opposition in order to create a continuously acting front across the entire hostile state, supported by information operations. Regular armed forces can be used under the cover of peace operations in a specific stage of conflict only, and only then for the achievement of an ultimate victory. Gerasimov sees the role and significance of political, diplomatic, economic and other impact factors, with the assistance of organized crime, including, for example, those of a secret nature, as well as the use of international non-state organizations, as

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[19] Leszek Sykulski, "Rosyjska koncepcja wojen buntowniczych Jewgienija Messnera," *Przegląd Geopolityczny* 11 (2015): 109, accessed May 28, 2015, http://przeglad.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Przeglad_Geopolityczny_tom_11.pdf.

[20] Valery Gerasimov, "The Value of Science in Prediction," *Military-Industrial Kurier*, 27 February 2013, accessed May 31, 2015, https://inmoscowsshadows.wordpress.com/2014/07/06/the-gerasimov-doctrine-and-russian-non-linear-war/.

[21] Michael E. Lambert, "Hybrid War at Work in The Post-Soviet Space," *Estonian World*, 24 May 2015, accessed June 14, 2015, http://estonianworld.com/security/hybrid-war-at-work-in-the-post-soviet-space/.

the ways in which to reach political and military objectives.[22] Gerasimov has dubbed future wars as new generation wars or *non-linear wars* in which the right of the other would be applicable. Military operations would start in peacetime with small units and with the application of aggression below the level of all-out war. New generation wars will involve non-contact clashes between accurately maneuvered hybrid units and precise strikes on the military and civil infrastructure aimed at defeating the armed forces of the adversary and weakening its economic power.[23]

The actions of the Russian Federation present a great challenge for NATO because the Russian approach to the conflict undoubtedly includes measures of a political, diplomatic, economic, and non-linear nature, without the use of force, so that hybrid operations and organized crime are conducted below the level of a declared war. With regard to Russian involvement in Ukraine, one theory should be that plans assume the use of armed force and large groups of armies at the borders with Ukraine.[24] If so, from a Moscow standpoint, the fiasco of a non-military, non-linear hybrid campaign in the strategic interest would be followed by a sudden escalation of the conflict through the use of armed force and the option of shifting the conflict from a non-military to a military stage of the conflict. Conflict escalation by the large-scale use of armed force will prove that Moscow is ready for warfare with the West. For NATO it will constitute a great challenge because the more instable and volatile the security environment, the greater, according to Gerasimov's pronouncements, the reaction time between taking political-diplomatic measures and taking military measures.[25] Russia also has the capacity to coordinate military and non-military operations across a wide spectrum of potential crisis situations. It allows for a combination of the autocratic system of power and a specialized process of decision making and thus improves the civil-military command and control system. Large-scale exercises indicate that the Russian command and

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[22] Valery Gerasimov, *The role of the General Staff in the defence of the country in accordance with the new regulations on the General Staff approved by the President of the Russian Federation*, speech at the meeting of members of the Academy of Military Sciences on 26 January 2013, accessed May 31, 2015, http://www.avnrf.ru/ index.php/vse-novosti-sajta/620-rol-generalnogo-shtaba-v-organizatsii-oborony-strany-v-sootvetstvii-s-novym-polozheniem-o-generalnom-shtabe-utverzhdjonnym-prezidentom-rossijskoj-federatsii.

[23] Valery Gerasimov, *The Value of Science is in Foresight: New Challenges Demand Rethinking the Forms and Methods of Carrying out Combat Operations*, Originally published in *Military-Industrial Kurier*, February 27, 2013, accessed May 31, 2015, http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_2016 0228_art008.pdf.

[24] Heidi Reisinger and Aleksandr Golts, *Russia's Hybrid Warfare – Waging War below the Radar of Traditional Collective Defence* (Rome: NDC, 2014), accessed June 12, 2015, www.ndc.nato.int/news/current_news.php?icode=732.

[25] Gerasimov, *The role of the General Staff in the defence of the country in accordance with the new regulations on the General Staff*.

control system allows the country to reach the ability to simultaneously direct and control large military operations, and some small ones, within a short space of time.[26] Events in Ukraine also suggest that the Russian approach to armed conflict include preparation for intimidation by leveraging its nuclear capabilities and treating them as cover, as well as protecting subdued territory through non-military and military operations. In the light of the arguments citied above it is obvious that, according to the concepts put forward by the military leaders of the Russian Federation, it is to be expected that operations will occur with the use of non-military measures, i.e. diplomatic, political, economic, and informational ones, in connection with military measures, i.e. kinetic, non-kinetic, conventional militaries, special militaries, paramilitary forces, non-nuclear weapons (conventional precision-guided missiles) and nuclear weapons.[27]

Coordinated and synchronized Russian operations involving the application of many different instruments create strategic ambiguity. Russia uses complex, multidimensional impact factors to deliberately send the wrong signals and mask its real intentions, confound adversaries, impede decision-making processes and make their response ineffective. Resorting to non-linear and asymmetric operations can escalate ambiguities, distort the chronology of operational order as known and may cause many difficulties in recognizing the pattern of aggression. Consequently, post factum (after a couple of years) one may discern that pressure was intentionally applied, e.g. that diplomatic pressure, pressure in terms of energy supply, the deployment of organized crime elements or encouragement of ethnic divisions were part of a long-standing campaign. Observation of the conflict in the Ukraine indicates that the presence of "green men" does not denote the beginning of a conflict in the slightest: rather, it is more of an indicator of the end of the first stage that is usually of a military nature. According to assessments of Gerasimov's doctrine it denotes a violent escalation in which the dominating player can apply regular force.[28]

Russian operations in Ukraine unambiguously indicate that the security environment in Europe has become unpredictable. The aim of Russian hybrid impact and organized crime is to pressurize and destabilize neighboring countries without needing to seize the territory. Combining and synchronizing camouflaged military operations lead to the surprise effect and hinder an adequate reaction, especially for international organizations operating on the premise that a consensus must be reached. Hybrid warfare is unpredictable because it is simple and cheap for the external aggressor, but has expensive and negative effects for the defending parties.[29] Blackmail in terms of the use of nuclear

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[26] Johnson, *Russia's Approach to Conflict*, 9.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid., 12.

[29] Nicu Popescu, *Hybrid Tactics: Neither New Nor Only Russian* (European Union Institute for Security Studies, 2015), 2, accessed June 12, 2015, www.iss.europa.eu/ uploads/media/Alert_4_hybrid_warfare.pdf.

weapons by the Russian Federation (annexation of the Crimea) as well as the application of militaries as a large-scale, conventional weapon, and creating frozen conflicts (eastern Ukraine) along with organized crime, present a substantial challenge to the security of the Euro-Atlantic area. Preventative operations are essential to nip large-scale crises in the bud. The division of roles between the target state, states on the western borders of the Union and other allies, as well as between NATO, EU and the UN, should be clearly marked out.[30]

## NATO in the Face of Hybrid Threats

Taking into consideration the arguments mentioned above, there can be no doubt of the importance of the issue of hybrid warfare and organized crime for the international community, regardless of whether the tactics applied are old or new. The momentum and scale of military operations conducted by the Russian Federation are deliberately restricted and maintained at an ambiguous level: namely, the level below regular, open war.[31] The aim of subliminal aggression lies in achieving goals, with ambiguity creating difficulties in reaching a decisive consensus within international security organizations. NATO has many difficulties in a response because the level of aggression is kept mounting below that of the criteria for classical threats and the response must be coordinated, including non-military institutions. In the aspect of the military operation that was held in the Crimea and that was not an armed aggression but a new form of operational warfare it is possible to raise a question: are the current NATO legal provisions and available reaction instruments adequate to the requirements of the contemporary warfares called by Gerasimov the warfares of a new generation? Jānis Bērziņš questions the relevance of Article 5 in a situation lacking an armed attack. He wonders what NATO would do if Russia defended the rights of Russian-speaking minorities residing in Baltic States with other methods and referred to democratic law for self-determination as evidenced in Kosovo or in Crimea. How should one respond to a situation of this nature: politically or militarily? He subsequently argues that NATO armed forces would probably be inclined to fight, but that it is highly likely that this would be blocked by politicians.[32] There is much concern as to whether armed forces possess the capabilities needed to withstand new forms of hybrid opera-

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[30] Merle Maigre, "Nothing New in Hybrid Warfare: The Estonian Experience and Recommendations for NATO," Policy Brief (German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2015), 4, accessed June 12, 2015, http://www.gmfus.org/publications/nothing-new-hybrid-warfare-estonian-experience-and-recommendations-nato.

[31] Stanisław Koziej, "Musimy się przygotować na wojnę hybrydową," *Newsweek Polska*, March 2, 2015, accessed May 28, 2015, http://polska.newsweek.pl/koziej-musimy-sie-przygotowac-na-wojne-hybrydowa,artykuly,358198,1.html.

[32] Jānis Bērziņš, *Russia's New Generation Warfare in Ukraine: Implications for Latvian Defense Policy* (National Defence Academy of Latvia, 2014), 8, accessed June 4, 2015, http://www.naa.mil.lv/~/media/NAA/AZPC/Publikacijas/PP%2002-2014.ashx.

tions and organized crime and as to the application of non-kinetic forms of fighting: it would probably be difficult to reach a consensus on this matter.[33] Undoubtedly, breaches of the applicable provisions of international law and the existence of legal doubts as to the relevance of Article 5 on the part of NATO will have serious implications for the strategies of nations on the eastern flank. The more often that Baltic States are subject to the Russian campaign of strategic communication including information, psychological operations, operational misleading etc., the more these implications will increase. These states should not wait until NATO begins to act: rather, they should change their national security strategies to be able to respond to the hybrid threat in the best way, and seek to reduce their vulnerabilities. Such a defense would include a mix of preparedness, deterrence, and responsiveness. Indeed, the perception of threats is not universally the same, and neither is the assessment of threats. Despite the actions taken by member nations, NATO, as an organization, is obliged to draw up a concept detailing which bases should be involved within the strategy of withstanding hybrid threats and organized crime. In my opinion, the alliance should also adopt a new strategic concept that better reflects views of the security threat posed by Russia (NATO's current strategic concept was adopted in 2010). In the experts' of international law assessment remains a matter of recalling the decisions of Article 5, and if it will be necessary to make deeper changes in the Washington Treaty. In conclusion one can say that effectiveness of withstanding threats is dependent on quickly developing and implementing doctrinal documents, training people in them, and, first and foremost, changing the mentality of military leaders.

Of course, while it was not NATO that caused the crisis in Ukraine, nobody probably expected the Alliance to become militarily involved. Ukraine is not a NATO member and nobody at all would like direct confrontation with Russia. Secondly, the war was not explicitly declared, so officially Russia was not a party involved in the conflict. Without a doubt, and in connection with the issue of the distortion of the international security environment, everyone expected NATO to take the plunge and place the hybrid threats coming from Eastern Europe high on the agenda at the NATO summit in Wales. This did not happen, and Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) turned out to be a priority. NATO is attempting to adapt to the new challenges posed by hybrid war and organized crime, but, nevertheless, one can certainly say that these actions are inadequate. There remains a lack of specific information in terms of the military response. The problem could be partly solved by the joint development and implementation of strategy with the EU, specifying which tasks NATO is responsible for. It is worth remembering that, for NATO, the most pressing threat is the one posed by ISIL. For NATO, the challenge is to determine an appropriate ratio of resources and tools dedicated to the threats coming from the East

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[33]  Nicholas Watt, "UK seeking to ensure Russia sanctions do not harm City of London," *The Guardian*, March 3, 2014, accessed June 12, 2015, www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/03/uk-seeks-russia-harm-city-london-document.

and the threats coming from the South. NATO has to assess the structure of the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) as it should be flexible and capable of adapting to a broad range of hybrid threats and organized crime. It should include specialist units. New capabilities will also be required, including the ability to combat organized crime, wage war in cyberspace, conduct psychological operations, to counteract propaganda, support local societies and more. The key will be building situational awareness in the regions in which the missions are taking place, and this can be provided by intelligence and military reconnaissance.

## European Union in the Face of Hybrid Threats

Russian aggression as seen in the annexation of Crimea presents a serious challenge both for international organizations and international law. Russia deploys large-scale well-coordinated operations of a hybrid nature in a sophisticated manner, leading to destabilization and the breaching of the territorial integrity of Ukraine, which is still destabilizing the surrounding environment. The EU has not issued an outright response to the events. One of the culprits for this is the lack of a definition of hybrid warfare and an unambiguous understanding of the concept of its usage. Nevertheless, official EU documents do mention the characteristics of this new phenomenon and explain the context of its use. Similar to NATO, the EU points out the variety of the impact instruments applied. Hybrid warfare is described as centrally planned and directed, hidden and open, aggression using military and non-military measures that include: intelligence operations, organized crime, cyberspace operations, and economic pressure as well as the use of regular armed force. Using hybrid tactics, the attacking party tries to discredit and destabilize its adversary through repression and subversion. It also uses a variety of forms of sabotage, destabilizing the functionalities of communication devices and devices that transport energy. The aggressor can reach its goals by inspiring separatist groups or hiding aggression under the cover of humanitarian intervention. The element inherent to all hybrid campaigns is large-scale disinformation aimed at painting a false picture of a situation in the eyes of society. All the above-mentioned undertakings are not accidental. They are used as part of a unified strategy targeted at reaching political impact or even domination over the state.[34] The most important aspect of hybrid war in the assessment of the EU is generating ambiguity both within the society of the attacked state and within international society. The aim of information impact is the masking of what is currently happening in order to lose the ability to recognize the border between war and peace. Omnipresent ambiguities and a lack of explicit attributes on the part of the aggressor can paralyze the mobilization of an effective reaction and defense because it is not clear who, in fact, stands behind the attack. What is

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[34] *Countering Hybrid Threats*, Food-for-thought paper, European External Action Service, 2.

more, ambiguities can divide the international community and, primarily, slow down and limit the scope of reaction to aggression.[35]

The European Union states that hybrid threats and organized crime will undergo evolution along with the development of new technologies. It considers that action should also be taken to protect sensitive elements of the security system of a state. A psychological defense against hybrid warfare and organized crime lies in gathering complex reconnaissance of the effects that can result from hybrid warfare, and then building a system capable of withstanding the threats. It seems to be true that a hybrid strike is designed and oriented to attack the most vulnerable elements of a state. In the case of Ukraine, critically vulnerable areas included:[36] 1) Weak government, state institutions and corruption; 2) Weak security structures and state defense; 3) Marginalization of Russian-speaking populations; 4) Heavy dependency on the Russian gas and oil supplies.

The defense system of Ukraine, similar to that of other EU member states, was traditionally designed to defend against regular armed force perpetrating state borders. It transpired that it did not meet the requirements laid down by non-state actors conducting what could be termed *proxy war*. It proved the hypothesis that sensitive areas and areas crucial for the functioning of the state are: the economy, the energy and fuel sector, critical infrastructure, the financial system, the communication system, and transport. In this regard, the securing of energy provision by supplying new energy from outside and diverting its source will be particularly important for the EU. Recognizing one's own weaknesses constitutes the foundation upon which to build an effective security and defense system to protect against hybrid threats and organized crime.[37]

In counteracting hybrid threats, one must consider the aggressor's conviction in the consequences of its actions and the price it will have to pay for them. A deterrent can be established in two ways: firstly, the consequences of sanctions can be expressed by subversive operations and as a result can cause large damage to the attacking party, with the outcome that an attack turns out to be economically unviable. Secondly, the level of critical infrastructure can be increased significantly and prepare society for the consequences of an unpredictable, negative event. There is a big area for improvement in searching the methods of cooperation between the EU and NATO, and in preparing a complex set of tools for countering hybrid threats. Integrating the actions of these organizations into common doctrine could become the fundamental pillar of deterrence in the future.

In conclusion, it should be stated that the complexity of hybrid threats and organized crime require a strategy based on which policy should be shaped and

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[35]  Ibid., 3.

[36]  Ibid., 4.

[37]  Ibid., 5.

guidelines for taking inherent actions within the EU should be drawn up. The conclusions drawn from the debate on hybrid threats must be reflected in a new EU security strategy. If the EU and NATO common strategy for countering hybrid threats fails to be developed, the EU strategy should be complementary with the NATO strategy. The common strategy of countering hybrid threats is a big chance for improving relations between the EU and NATO. It shall constitute the basis of the mutual support. With regard to counteracting hybrid threats, EU common security and defense policy should form the basis for the exchange of intelligence information, the development of new capabilities, including situational awareness, conducting training sessions and exercises. The priority for the EU is establishing a cell collating information on hybrid threats. It will play a key role in issuing warnings about threats and preparing a suitable response. Communication strategy will be significant in underlining the message directed at the Russian Federation as well as in preparing responses to any disinformation.

## Conclusion

It seems unlikely that Russia's armed forces will cross the NATO border, nevertheless, it should be expected that Russia will try to destabilize both NATO and the EU with non-military operations. An effective response to hybrid operations and organized crime will require coordinated actions on the part of both organizations. In order to provide this, it is essential to possess common doctrine to counteract hybrid threats. NATO should play the role of leader in areas such as preparing a military response, intelligence and deterrence and in emergency intervention. It seems that, in a time of peace, the best deterrence is the permanent presence of NATO militaries on the territory of the nations most at threat. The EU should take responsibility for counteracting organized crime in cyberspace, energy and migration policy and propaganda. It is necessary to seek out synergies for the integrated deployment of the instruments at the disposal of both organizations.

A substantial challenge for both organizations and member states, especially those most at threat, will be the reduction in sensitivity and vulnerability to hybrid threats. Neither NATO nor the EU guarantee the absolute security of member states in the face of hybrid threats and organized crime, but these organizations will surely help in building resistance to them. Particular countries should develop and implement their own non-standard strategies for the national security which enable self-countering both the classic threats and hybrid ones, as well as modifying their own defensive structures. Absolutely crucial are the capabilities and provision of resources needed for their gathering. The capabilities of countering hybrid threats should provide the opportunity for deterrence operations, preparation for defense and effective response in case they occur.

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**Research Article**

# From Wales to Warsaw and Beyond: NATO's Strategic Adaptation to the Russian Resurgence on Europe's Eastern Flank

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**Abstract**: The illegal annexation of Crimea in the spring of 2014 changed dramatically security perceptions and increased the anxiety in Eastern Europe even among NATO member states. NATO reacted quickly by adopting the Readiness Action Plan, transforming the NATO Response Force, and deciding to establish command control centers, or NATO Force Integration Units (NFIUs), in six countries on its Eastern flank. In light of the forthcoming Summit in Warsaw, the author reasons that despite such significant security measures, NATO capabilities and actions are still insufficient to adequately face the current level of uncertainty and challenges on the Eastern side of Europe and to reassure its members. This article explores requirements and options in deepening the sense of security of the eastern NATO members who face Russian classical military as well as hybrid threats. The focus is on developing a two prong deterrence strategy – punishment-based and deterrence by denial, strengthening Host Nation Support military infrastructure, streamlining operational decision making by empowering the SACEUR, and intensifying cooperation with the European Union and non-NATO Baltic counties.

**Keywords**: NATO, European Security, hybrid warfare, strategic risk, deterrence, Readiness Action Plan, NFIU, multinational formations.

## Introduction

On March 30, 2016, the Polish minister of defense launched a one-hundred-day countdown that will run until NATO's summit in Warsaw, which will likely have a significant impact on the Alliance's future. At the same time, and in light of Russia's increasingly aggressive resurgent actions targeted at shattering West-

ern unity, the US administration has decided to send an armored brigade combat team to Europe in February 2017. This team will offer a rotational forward presence and bolster NATO's deterrence, thereby reassuring its members on the eastern flank. Since its last summit in Wales in 2014, NATO has changed its posture significantly, moving away from reassurance. It has strengthened the NATO Response Forces (NRF) and regionally aligned command structures, stepped up its exercises and training sessions, and even decided to bulk up its military presence through the establishment of a rotational, multinational brigade-sized component.

Unfortunately, these security measures have not yet gone far enough to meet the expectations of the Baltic states and Poland. In view of the provocative actions of the Russian Federation, they are calling for a stronger NATO presence, achieved through the creation of permanent military bases on their territories. For these nations, the upcoming NATO summit, due to take place on July 8-9, 2016, will likely only bring dissatisfaction in its wake. This particular Alliance-internal disagreement raises a range of relevant questions in terms of the extent to which NATO has been able to adapt on a strategic level to the new security environment, which was primarily changed by Russia as a result of its illegal annexation of Ukrainian Crimea. Questions will also be posed as to what NATO should do next to reinforce a sense of security among its eastern members, who are faced with both classic military threats and the risk of hybrid attacks.

## Russia's Hybrid Warfare with Ukraine and the West

With the annexation of Crimea in March 2014, Russia launched its neo-imperialist mission and attempt to position itself globally as one of the world's unquestioned superpowers. Moscow unleashed its hybrid military beast on Ukraine and the West, perceiving the Western world as its key opponent, the former Soviet bloc as a crucial sphere of influence, and NATO as a strategic national security threat.

Russia exploited Ukraine's weaknesses, namely its transatlantic relationship and solidarity as the center of gravity of Western power, and launched an assault on morale, physical might, and freedom of action. Russia pulled out all the stops, seeking a strategic victory via the use of both material and immaterial, military and non-military, legal and illegal, and direct and indirect onslaughts on the West and Kyiv. This objective was reached without the overt application of substantial military force.

Exploiting institutional weak spots and legal pressure points, historical and ethnic tensions, as well as financial and business opportunities, Russia's hybrid strategy was not only successful in Ukraine, but also had influence on the international level. This influence was also directed at Russia's own population, with the aim of consolidating the Kremlin's power and providing it with national legitimacy for unrestricted policies and action. While ensuring that the warfare was kept simmering below the boiling point of conventional war, Mos-

cow advanced both kinetic and non-kinetic lines of operation, wearing down its enemy not through a decisive battle in the classic, Clausewitzian military sense, but rather through the attrition of morale. Non-kinetic efforts include political indoctrination, siege tactics, conspiracy theories tinged with anti-Semitism, the labeling of individuals as "Nazis," the exploitation of the diaspora, and the influence of the Orthodox Church. This uncompromising information struggle saw Moscow exploit the influence of state media, online "troll armies," pro-Kremlin extremist narratives from political movements, think tanks, anti-globalist groups, and even various NGOs.

In the economic domain, Russia began to conduct financial warfare in the form of currency speculation and the destabilization of monetary systems, as well as trade warfare by blackmailing companies and energy providers and manipulating energy prices. In the cyber sphere, Moscow continued its cyber-attacks against critical public and private infrastructure networks, as well as cyberespionage activities.

The Kremlin's kinetic actions had been achieved by executing direct military deterrence tactics, including the massing of large conventional forces along the eastern border with Ukraine; conducting aggressive and provocative aviation incursions into European airspace (the Baltics, Sweden, Finland, Poland); threatening to use weapons of mass destruction (deployment of nuclear weapons in Crimea); organizing "snap" ground exercises on a large scale or military inspections without notice; continuously providing information about plans to deploy new weapons systems to the areas bordering NATO member states (e.g. deployment of Iskander—the mobile short-range ballistic missile system capable to carry nuclear warheads—to Kaliningrad Oblast) or about ambitious plans to modernize the armed forces.

Indirectly, Moscow had deployed covert "paramilitary proxies," dubbed "little green men" (Russian military personnel operating without insignia and official affiliation), to assist pro-Russian separatists, act as a diversion, apply sabotage or even terrorist tactics, as well as provide them with heavy military equipment – tanks, self-propelled artillery, and air defense systems.

## European Security Context Following Russia's Illegal Annexation of Crimea

Russia's blitzkrieg annexation of Crimea and the subsequent surge in pro-Russian separatists in south-east Ukraine, provoked and backed by Moscow, shook the foundations of the post-Cold War security environment in Europe. Its open show of force caught the Western community and NATO by surprise, and put NATO's eastern European members in a vulnerable position.

Moscow's hybrid strategy enables it to achieve its strategic objectives by using all available means of power and engaging both regular and non-regular troops on a limited scale and in an indirect manner, thus keeping its actions below the threshold of international war, and below the threshold required to provoke a NATO response. The risks associated with this kind of strategy gave

eastern European nations real cause for concern. In their view, this particular non-linear approach would be very problematic in terms of a NATO response, the crux of which would be reaching a political-military consensus among the Alliance in terms of how to respond collectively to such a threat, if necessary. They also believed that the consequences of a failure to do so, in the worst-case scenario, might lead to the undermining of NATO's Article 5.

Security concerns to which NATO members on the Alliance's eastern flank were exposed resulted in the strengthening of the Alliance's air-policing mission and deployments of US rotational land and special operations forces to the Baltics and Poland. Thanks to this commitment NATO was able to increase interoperability through training sessions and exercises, demonstrate persistent US military commitment, and show its adherence to Article 5 of the Washington Treaty.[1]

Despite this incontrovertible sign of solidarity among NATO members, the security situation failed to improve. This led to the uncovering of a series of discrepancies in terms of national attitudes, policies, and approaches vis-à-vis Russia's unpredictability. Russia continued to apply the pressure in the form of its hybrid offensive, and even divisions between Europeans began to show. Fault lines also started to appear across key geopolitical platforms such as the Visegrad Group and the Weimar Triangle. In some cases, the Western states' reluctance to oppose Russia's non-linear actions, as well as their inclination to focus on reassuring their own domestic interests, especially from an economic perspective, started eating away at Europe's solidarity and strength. Importantly, the new security context once again revealed Europe's military weakness and inability to reassure its members without US-backed military support. This also reinforced the desire of those NATO members on the eastern flank for a significant and permanent US military presence in their territories.

The West finally managed to impose diplomatic, economic, and financial sanctions on Moscow in July 2014 in response to Russia's seizure of Crimea. These sanctions were tightened in December 2014.[2] Sanctions began to contribute to the overarching policy aim of containing Russia's behavior, with the objective of imposing sufficient costs to Russia's economy while at the same time limiting any negative macroeconomic effects on the US and Europe.[3] Unfortunately, all diplomatic solutions intending to bring peace to eastern

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[1] Senate Armed Services Committee, *Statement of General Philip Breedlove, Commander U.S. Forces Europe*, April 30, 2015, accessed July 17, 2016, http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Breedlove_04-30-15.pdf.

[2] Robin Emmott and Dmitry Solovyov, "EU urges more countries to impose sanctions on Russia over Crimea," *Reuters*, March 18, 2016, accessed July 17, 2016, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-eu-crimea-idUSKCN0WK167.

[3] "Remarks of Secretary Lew on the Evolution of Sanctions & Lessons for the Future at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace," *United States Mission to the European Union*, March 30, 2016, accessed July 17, 2016, http://useu.usmission.gov/speech33016.html.

Ukraine proved to be insufficient. The Minsk Protocol of September 2014, for example, signed by Kyiv authorities and pro-Russian separatists, stipulates the implementation of a ceasefire and the establishment of a demilitarized buffer zone but was flawed from the start. In Newport, Wales, also in September 2014, NATO resolved to make substantial changes to its posture, modus operandi, and force structure to ensure that it would be able to face new security challenges effectively and relieve its member states in Eastern Europe of their defense concerns.

## NATO's Strategic Adaptation: From Reassurance to a Deterrence Posture

The summit saw the announcement of a Readiness Action Plan (RAP), which details the implementation of necessary security and defense measures. This comprehensive package is divided into assurance and adaptation measures[4] with the objective of reinforcing the Alliance's presence and military activity in Eastern Europe and introducing substantial long-term changes to NATO's force posture, enabling it to respond more quickly to future challenges and threats.[5] Further, the package calls for the fundamental reconstruction of the NRF. To make its forces more responsive and capable, the Alliance decided to set up a new rapid response "spearhead force": the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF), with forward-deployed multinational commands (NATO Force Integration Units [NFIUs]) that enable forces to be activated and deployed across the territories of NATO's eastern members. It was presumed that the VJTF would be formed as a brigade-sized combat group consisting of several thousand soldiers, including a substantial land component backed by air, maritime, and special forces units. It would consist of three to five maneuver battalions and remain ready for action at five or seven days' notice. One of its battalions, consisting of approximately 650 soldiers, would be ready to deploy within two to three days' notice. NFIUs would handle the synchronization and reception of the VJTF in eastern European territories. Aside from these duties, each NFIU would also be charged with coordinating exercises and joint planning. To ensure adequate host nation support (HNS) post-deployment, NATO decided to improve pre-positioning infrastructure, such as airfields, ports, and specific bases to ensure the reception of the VJTF and NRF runs smoothly.

The adaptation measure also encompasses raising the readiness level of the Multinational Corps North East (MNC NE) headquarters in Szczecin (Poland), as well as enhancing its role in potential NATO operations on the eastern flank. Finally, NATO members decided to update contingency plans for Eastern Europe. They also agreed to halt cuts in defense spending and gradually increase it to

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[4]  "NATO's Readiness Action Plan," Fact Sheet, May 2015, accessed July 17, 2016, http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2015_05/20150508_1505-Factsheet-RAP-en.pdf.

[5]  Ibid.

the expected 2 percent of GDP over the next decade. All the countermeasures undertaken served to emphasize the desire to strengthen not only NATO's collective defense capabilities, but also its crisis management mechanism.

The implementation of the assurance measures involved the Alliance maintaining an increased number of fighter jets on air-policing patrols over the Baltic states and deploying fighter jets to Poland and Romania. Simultaneously, along NATO's eastern borders, an Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) continued regular surveillance missions. Intensified maritime forces started patrolling the Baltic, Black, and Mediterranean Sea. Following the implementation of the assurance measure, by late 2014 NATO had stepped up its crisis management strategy and its collective defense training sessions and exercises. In the meantime, initiatives conducted both by individual states and on a joint-state basis also started to contribute to NATO's assurance package. The US provided significant support in this area. Its European Reassurance Initiative (ERI) was designed to reassure NATO members as well as other non-NATO partners that felt most threatened by Russia's actions. The initiative includes increasing US military presence in the region, invigorating bilateral and multilateral exercises and training sessions, improving the necessary infrastructure, enhancing the pre-positioning of US equipment, and intensifying efforts to build up partner capacity.[6] In December 2014, the US Congress approved funds amounting to $810 million for the program, as well as an additional $175 million for the provision of military assistance to Ukraine and the Baltic states.[7] By 2015, NATO established the interim VJTF. Led by Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, and supported by other Allies, it was put through a series of exercises and evaluations.

In January and February 2015, the Allies refined the overarching VJTF concept. In April and June 2015, during an exercise dubbed "Noble Jump," NATO evaluated the VJTF's ability to deploy at short notice in response to an evolving crisis. Then, in October and November 2015 during maneuvers nicknamed "Trident Juncture," the Allies demonstrated the VJTF's capacity to deploy within a matter of days from across the Alliance.

Despite the fact that NATO was vigorously implementing both assurance and adaptation countermeasures, a lack of significant security improvements in the Baltic region forced the military authorities of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia to request in May 2015 that SACEUR establish a rotational, brigade-sized combat unit on their territories as a deterrence force against Russia. Although a formal decision was been taken, in June 2015 NATO defense ministers decided to beef up the NRF, now totaling forty thousand as opposed to the previous thirteen thousand. Furthermore, they granted SACEUR new powers to prepare forces in advance that could be deployed in the event of a potential crisis, fur-

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6  *European Reassurance Initiative – Department of Defense Budget Fiscal Year (FY) 2016*, February 2015, accessed July 17, 2016, http://comptroller.defense.gov/ Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2016/FY2016_ERI_J-Book.pdf.

7  Ibid.

ther maximizing its responsiveness. Finally, they directed the MNC NE to reach full operational capability as a high-readiness headquarters by the next NATO summit as well as to be able to coordinate the NFIU's functions and command the VJTF.

By September 2015, all six new NFIUs were active with the aim of reaching operational status prior to the summit in Warsaw. The Joint Force Command (JFC) Naples took operational control of NFIUs established in Bucharest and Sofia, while the NFIUs in Riga, Tallinn, Vilnius and Bydgoszcz were subordinated to MNC NE.

In December 2015, the US Army started moving sets of equipment, known as the European Activity Sets (EAS), to the first forward-positioned sites in Bulgaria, Romania, and Lithuania. The equipment, used by the army's regionally aligned force for the purpose of training and exercises with Allies under Operation Atlantic Resolve, is ultimately to be stored in seven locations across Eastern Europe.[8]

Also in December 2015, due to the expansion of Russia's military potential in the Black Sea region as well as the militarization of annexed Crimea, NATO set up the Multinational Division Southeast (MND SE) headquarters in Romania. This addition is designed to facilitate the command of Allied forces deployed in the southeastern part of Europe.

The meeting of NATO defense ministers of February 2016 resulted in additional reinforcements to the Alliance's eastern flank. They decided to beef up military presence in the area through the establishment of a multinational force rotation. There was little desire to have forces stationed there on a permanent basis, and NATO military planners started calculating the size and composition of troops required, as well as how to rotate them in and out of the Eastern European members' territories.[9]

These NATO ministerial decisions followed an announcement by the US administration a week prior that revealed plans to increase spending on the ERI to a level four times higher than that of 2016, pending the approval of the $3.4 billion defense budget for the fiscal year of 2017.[10] If approved, an increase in troop rotations and military exercises in Europe will follow, due to the fact that approximately $2.8 billion of the budget is to be allocated to the US Army in

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[8] "Tanks, heavy vehicles to be fully positioned in Eastern Europe next year," *Stars and Stripes*, December 10, 2015, accessed July 17, 2016, http://www.stripes.com/news/europe/tanks-heavy-vehicles-to-be-fully-positioned-in-eastern-europe-next-year-1.383125.

[9] "NATO ministers approve new reinforcements for eastern Europe," *MailOnline*, February 10, 2016, accessed July 19, 2016, http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-3440315/NATO-chief-expects-OK-greater-forward-presence.html.

[10] Jim Garamone, "Gorenc Discusses European Reassurance Initiative, Air Police Mission," *U.S. Department of Defense*, April 5, 2015, accessed July 17, 2016, http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/713722/gorenc-discusses-european-reassurance-initiative-air-police-mission.

Europe.[11] With these funds the Army plans to deploy an additional rotational armored brigade combat team on the European stage in February 2017, and reinforce pre-positioned stocks to ensure one set of combat-ready equipment is available to support another armored brigade, if deployed, as well as division-level enablers.[12] By the end of 2017, the US Army plans to have a continuous presence of three fully-equipped army brigade combat teams in Europe.[13]

The reassurance and adaptation measures put into place have significantly contributed to assuaging NATO's Eastern European members. The expanded NATO exercises carried out throughout the course of 2015[14] have had the expected effect and are to be continued throughout 2016. NATO's primary reaction tool, the NRF has seen substantial improvement. Comprising three separate elements, NRF was strengthened by the establishment of the very high-readiness joint force at its core, which enabled it to leverage its responsiveness and reach peak swiftness and operational agility. The VJTF concept is to be tested through a number of exercises throughout 2016 to reach its full operational status, such as "Brilliant Jump," "Trident Joust" and "Brilliant Capability."[15] "Brilliant Jump" will be the final VJTF examination directly prior to the NATO summit. Its operational status must be demonstrated through the deployment of force in NATO's eastern member states.

As soon as the first indication of a crisis reveals itself, the NRF, supported by a network of new headquarters (MNC NE, MND SE, NFIUs) spread across the eastern Alliance territories, will be able to deploy and engage troops quickly to fulfill the collective defense mission.[16] By 2018, MNC NE will be able to command the NRF and lead combined defensive operations on a large scale on the

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[11] Senate Armed Services Committee, *Statement of General Philip Breedlove, Commander U.S. Forces Europe*, March 1, 2016, http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/ imo/media/doc/Breedlove_03-01-16.pdf.

[12] "Eucom announces European reassurance initiative implementation plan," *Eucom Live*, March 30, 2016, accessed July 17, 2016, http://eucom.dodlive.mil/2016/03/ eucom-announces-european-reassurance-initiative-implementation-plan/.

[13] Two of them are already permanently stationed in Western Europe (a Stryker brigade and an Airborne brigade).

[14] Major exercises in 2015 include: Joint Warrior (11–23 April: naval exercise in the North Atlantic, 13,000 troops); Dynamic Mongoose (4–15 May: antisubmarine warfare exercise off Norway, 5,000 troops); Baltops (5–20 June: naval and amphibious exercise in the Baltic Sea, 4,500 troops); Sabre Strike (8–19 June: land exercise in the Baltic states and Poland, 3,000 troops); Noble Jump (10–21 June: first deployment test for the new high readiness force to Poland, 2,100 troops); Trident Joust (17–28 June: headquarter exercise in Bulgaria, Romania and Italy, 1,500 troops) and Trident Juncture (21 October–6 November: Italy, Portugal and Spain, 25,000 troops). Cf. "NATO's Readiness Action Plan. Fact Sheet."

[15] "NATO Response Force (NRF) Fact Sheet," accessed July 17, 2016, https://jfcbs.nato.int/page5725819/nato-response-force-nrf-fact-sheet.

[16] "Projecting Stability: Charting NATO's Future. Speech by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg to the Atlantic Council, Washington, D.C.," April 6, 2016, accessed July 17, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_129758.htm.

Alliance's northeastern flank. All six NFIUs are expected to achieve a fully operational status shortly prior to the upcoming NATO summit.[17] Subsequently, two additional NFIUs are to be set up in Slovakia (2016) and Hungary (2017).[18] Decisions regarding the forces to be subordinated to the MND SE are to be taken following the Warsaw Summit.[19] The command is expected to reach initial operational capabilities in 2016, and full operational capabilities in 2018. Sites in Poland, Estonia, and Latvia, as part of the EAS concept, are expected to be available in 2016, supplemented by an additional location in Hungary in 2017.[20]

All these actions and countermeasures implemented by NATO have managed, to some extent, to repair the unity and solidarity of the Alliance and significantly reassure its vulnerable eastern members in the face of Russia's potential classic military threats and hybrid actions. However, as long as Russia follows its neo-imperialist strategy and tests NATO's credibility, the main concerns of NATO's eastern member states, particularly those in the Baltics, remain only partially allayed.

## Russia's Response to NATO's Strategic Adaptation

All the actions undertaken by NATO to reassure its eastern Allies are perceived by Moscow as NATO's "expansion by stealth" into Eastern Europe: an expansion that has to be stopped. As a result, the security situation in that region is still predominantly determined and shaped by Russia's attitudes and actions, which are highly uncertain and unpredictable. The Kremlin continues to employ a non-linear, hybrid strategy that, to some extent, seems to be an antithesis to the comprehensive approach to military operations as used by the West. While using all available methods of force (political, economic, military, information, etc.), Moscow maintains a level of  tension/aggression below the threshold of war by engaging troops as a deterrence tool or on a limited scale and in an indirect manner, allowing Russia to achieve its strategic objectives. Russia further threatens and intimidates the international community by implication, provoking and escalating tensions not only in Eastern Europe but across the world, and importantly, constantly manipulating international public opinion by ascribing responsibility for the effects of its actions to the West.

Despite the county's deteriorating economic situation, the effect of long-term Western sanctions and a decline in oil and gas prices, a strong political determination to strengthen its military potential and to improve its combat responsiveness and readiness is still visible. The Russian air force continues to

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[17]  NATO Force Integration Units (NFIU), accessed July 17, 2016, https://jfcbs.nato.int/page5725819/nato-force-integration-units.

[18]  "NATO Response Force (NRF) Fact Sheet."

[19]  Tadeusz Wróbel, "Sojusz w Bukareszcie," *Polska Zbrojna.pl*, December 10, 2015, accessed July 17, 2016, http://www.polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/17942?t= Sojusz-w-Bukareszcie.

[20]  "Tanks, heavy vehicles."

routinely violate the airspace of sovereign states on the eastern and southern flank of the Alliance, which leads to unnecessary incidents, even provoking international crises and bringing with it a significant risk of open confrontation, as occurred in November 2015 when Turkey shot down a Russian warplane.

In Kaliningrad Oblast, for instance, Russia has managed to expand its offensive anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD), and also expeditionary, potential.[21] This allows Moscow to hamper any Allied air and naval access there, restrict Allied freedom of movement, and even cut off the Baltic states from NATO's support by blocking the sole land supply route from Poland, namely the "Suwałki Gap." Limiting the counteroffensive military capabilities of the Baltic states has allowed Moscow to maneuver itself into a position from which it could potentially execute a rapid seizure of the territory with the use of approximately twenty-two battalions from the Western Military District and Kaliningrad.[22] Such a scenario may force NATO into a position whereby it is required to conduct a very difficult, costly, and time-consuming strategic counteroffensive operation.

Moscow is deliberately keeping the conflict in eastern Ukraine in a frozen state, where it escalates and deescalates tensions there at will. After a relatively calm period in early 2016, the significant military activity in Donbas has increased again.[23] Russia is still supporting the separatists with command and control, fire support, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), communications assistance, and surface-to-air missile systems.[24] By keeping the territories occupied by pro-Russian separatists in a permanent state of uncertainty, Moscow is able to maintain the strategic maneuverability necessary to exert pressure on Kyiv and the West.

According to NATO's SACEUR, Russia has been deliberately using the flood of Syrian refugees to destabilize Europe and deplete its instruments of humanitarian aid and social care. Russia's entry into the Syrian conflict has substantially changed the dynamic of the war, causing a displacement of more than half a million Syrians since September 2015. The refugee crisis is expected to escalate further, likely destabilizing the security environment in Turkey, the Eu-

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[21] A2/AD capabilities include the most advanced air defense mobile systems (S-400 Triumf / SA-21 Growler with an operational range of up to 400 km) and dual-capable (classic and nuclear) mobile short-range ballistic missile systems (Iskander-M / SS-26 Stone with an operation range of up to 500 km).

[22] According to a report published by the RAND Corporation, getting to Riga or Tallinn would take Russian forces 36 to 60 hours. Cf. David A. Shlapak and Michael V. Johnson, *Reinforcing Deterrence on Nato's Eastern Flank* (RAND Corporation, 2016), accessed July 17, 2016, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1200/RR1253/RAND_RR1253.pdf.

[23] "Department of Defense Press Briefing by Gen. Breedlove in the Pentagon Briefing Room," *U.S. Department of Defense*, March 1, 2016, accessed July 17, 2016, http://www.defense.gov/News/News-Trans/Tran-View/Article/683817/department-of-defense-press-briefing-by-gen-breedlove-in-the-pentagon-briefing.

[24] Ibid.

ropean Union, and NATO even more. However, the crisis will also enable Russia to consolidate its influence on the West and leverage its position for negotiations in the future.

In 2016, Russia plans to increase its military potential and posture still further. Due to the dynamically changing and uncertain situation in its close vicinity, Moscow intends to implement significant defensive countermeasures. Moscow wants to beef up its nuclear deterrence posture by installing new "nuclear triad" systems and improving the effectiveness of its warning system against missile attacks. Over 95 percent of all nuclear forces are to be held in a state of constant combat readiness. The number of intercontinental ballistic missile tests will be doubled to sixteen attempts, compared to eight tests in 2015.

One area of high priority reinforcement is the combat troops operating in the Western, Southwestern and Arctic Military District. Land forces are to form four additional divisions, based on existing brigades. Three of them are likely to be set up in the Western Military District, and one in the central area. Meanwhile, unannounced inspections will be held to check the combat readiness of all military districts, military services and branches. Air defense readiness is obliged to maintain the highest priority level. The essential maneuver for the Russian armed forces will be the "Caucasus 2016" strategic exercise, due to take place in September 2016. It will play out in the Southern Military District, North Caucasia and Crimea. The main focus will be on the creation of a large formation of troops and their deployment over long distances. Operational readiness and responsiveness has been granted "high priority" status. Allegedly, Russian General Staff have laid down the gauntlet and requested that sixty-five thousand troops are to be moved over a distance of three thousand kilometers in seventy-two hours.

In 2016, Moscow will also continue an intensive technical modernization of its armed forces. The modern equipment is to constitute 51 percent of the overall set and the level of its efficiency is to reach 92 percent. It is expected to put in service two brigade missile sets (Iskander-M and Tornado-C), one brigade air-defense complex (Buk-M3), and re-arm six battalions with new tanks and infantry combat vehicles. Airspace forces are to receive two hundred new and modernized types of aircraft and five air-defense regiments will be re-armed with S-400 systems. The navy will be provided with two new multi-purpose submarines and seven surface warships. With an intensive modernization drive on this scale, Moscow wants to position the military-industrial complex as the engine of its entire national economy and transportation infrastructure.

Year after year, public support continues to grow for the Kremlin's continuing anti-Western policy. As surveys of the Russian public show, a growing number of individuals still support an increase in defense spending, even if this comes at the cost of weakening the country's economic condition. In 2013, support for this amounted to 46 percent, while in 2015, this rose to 53 percent. This trend is unlikely to reverse as long as the impact of Russia's information

policy towards its own people remains in place with the same scope and at the same level of intensity.

## Potential Improvements to NATO's Eastern Flank

NATO's journey from the Wales Summit to the Warsaw Summit has been long and arduous. The Alliance initially adapted to the new security environment with a policing mission, subsequently adopting a reassurance posture, and finally settling on a deterrence posture. Due to the implementation of a series of effective reassurance and adaptation measures, NATO has become more politically united, military agile and responsive, and, last but not least, persuasive as a whole. Almost all the strategic goals established in Wales have been met or are on the cusp of concluding their timelines in the run-up to the next NATO Summit in Warsaw.

However, despite the significant achievements mentioned above, NATO must continue with its strategic adaptation to be able to face all future challenges, whether classic or hybrid, with success. There are still a number of ways in which NATO could enhance its reassurance and deterrence posture on the eastern flank of the Alliance. Below are twelve broad-brush methods that are worthy of reflection and implementation.

### 1. *Leveraging Internal Solidarity and Strategic Empathy*

Until the annexation of Crimea, European allies suffered as a result of a serious lack of strategic consensus in terms of the extent to which NATO should be focused on territorial defense, and to what degree these nations are to assign their resources to expeditionary operations. Due to Russia's actions, the perspective of NATO members is now somewhat united, though there are still differences with regard to how strategic issues are perceived, notably how to handle Russia. These differences are noticeable not only at the level of government, but also among the public in western NATO states. In a survey of public opinion conducted last year, 58 percent of German, 53 percent of French and 51 percent of Italian respondents were against sending their soldiers to defend NATO members such as Poland or the Baltic states if they were attacked by Russia. This trend in terms of general public opinion is not likely to change.[25] NATO's lack of a consistent strategy towards Russia will presumably have as a result that the Warsaw Summit sees the Allies not reaching the conclusion the Eastern European members want and expect, namely the establishment of permanent military bases on their territories.[26] This challenge calls for the members states to leverage internal solidarity and strategic empathy so

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[25] *Frayed Partnership. German public opinion on Russia* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2016), accessed July 17, 2016, http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/user_upload/EZ_Frayed_Partnership_2016_ENG.pdf.

[26] Judy Dempsey, "Judy Asks: Is NATO Doing Enough in Europe?" *Judy Dempsey's Strategic Europe*, March 23, 2016, http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/?fa=63093.

that they can understand each other better. Western European nations must try to understand the perspective of the member states on the eastern flank, and come to grips with their rhetoric of these states as a "buffer zone" or NATO's strategic depth.

## 2. Developing a Two-pronged Deterrence Strategy

To offer eastern NATO members more reassurance, the Alliance should develop a two-pronged deterrence strategy. First up: a punishment-based strategy, reactive by nature, and functioning on the premise that the West/NATO will be able to defeat an adversary with a devastating counterattack, including the potential of nuclear response. Hot on its heels: deterrence by denial, proactive from the start, seeking to make it physically harder for an opponent to attack by making the overall costs of continuing higher than the predicted gains.[27]

The use of NATO's nuclear posture as a central factor in an Allied punishment-based deterrence strategy needs to be rethought and updated. Russian national security strategy, as it stands in 2015, does not mention a preemptive nuclear strike. It only suggests applying this force in retaliation for an attack against Russia or its allies with nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction (WMD), or in the event of conventional aggression that might endanger the existence of the state itself. However, at present Moscow is making increasing use of its nuclear posture as a way to get its message across. NATO flank members are faced with nuclear-capable bombers (TU-95) flying close to their borders. They are being informed about the deployment of a nuclear-capable tactical missile (Iskander) to Kaliningrad Oblast or about nuclear elements to conventional exercises in the Baltic region.[28] These intimidation tactics need to be evaluated as part of NATO's nuclear doctrine.

Furthermore, since 2014, the US has been raising concerns about Russia's compliance with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.[29] There is a risk that Russian cruise missiles meet the definition given in the INF Treaty of

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[27] A. Wess Mitchell, "A Bold New Baltic Strategy for NATO," *The National Interest*, January 6, 2016, accessed July 17, 2016, http://nationalinterest.org/feature/bold-new-baltic-strategy-nato-14818?page=3.

[28] Michal Baranowski and Bruno Lété, *NATO in a World of Disorder: Making the Alliance Ready for Warsaw* (Washington, DC: The German Marshall fund of the United States, 2016), 10; http://www.gmfus.org/publications/nato-world-disorder-making-alliance-ready-warsaw.

[29] The United States and Soviet Union signed the INF Treaty in December 1987. They agreed that they would prohibit all land-based ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometers. This agreement would apply to missiles with nuclear or conventional warheads, but not to sea-based or air-delivered missiles. Cf. Amy F. Woolf, *Russian Compliance with the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty: Background and Issues for Congress* (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, 2016), accessed July 17, 2016, https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/nuke/R43832.pdf.

a ground-launched cruise missile with a range capability of five hundred kilometers to 5,500 kilometers, and as such, all missiles of this type, as well as all launchers for the missiles, are prohibited under the provisions of the agreement. Although Russia denies a violation of this nature, NATO must draw up a course of action detailing how to respond if Russia withdraws from the INF Treaty and deploys new INF missiles that would enable it to target or threaten most of NATO's European members.

Deterrence by denial includes embracing a sizable force presence, an A2/AD concept and capabilities, as well as a long-term resistance approach prioritizing a territorial defense mindset, strategy, capabilities, structure, and forces. This particular method should be adapted and kept up to standard by NATO countries on the eastern flank that are facing Russia's aggressive policy. There should be the intention to form four new divisions to achieve the ability to conduct intensive military operations on a large scale on NATO's eastern flank, as well as offer a permanent improvement in terms of A2/AD capabilities in a heavily militarized Kaliningrad Oblast.[30] The process of developing a new strategy should culminate in the revision or update of NATO's Strategic Concept. Changes should reflect NATO's doctrine and amend its contingency plans accordingly, and clarify NATO's defense plans.

### 3. Beefing up Ground Forces in the Baltic Region

It is in the Baltic Sea region that NATO's existence as a whole is most at risk. Any potential conflict with Russia in the region would leave the West/NATO with a strategic dilemma: risk a war on a large scale with a nuclear power, or lose credibility.[31] NATO has increased its military presence on the Alliance's eastern flank through the establishment of a multinational rotational force in the form of an armored brigade of between three to five thousand soldiers, and has thus suggestively contributed to deference posture. However, this solution does not offer significant alterations to the unfavorable ratio of Alliance forces in the northeastern part of NATO. Bearing in mind that SACEUR considers the overwhelming force benchmark in that region to be ten-to-one for Russia,[32] the rotational NATO brigade at its current security status seems insuffi-

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[30] Major Russian units in the Kaliningrad Oblast (part of the Russian Western Military District) are: Baltic Fleet (56 ships, including 2 Kilo-class and 1 Lada-class submarines, as well as 3 frigates, 2 destroyers, 26 corvettes, 9 landing ships and 12 minesweepers), 336th Naval Infantry Brigade, 398th Independent Air Transport Squadron (An-2, An-12, An-24, An-26, Be-12, Mi-8); 689th Independent Naval Fighter Aviation Regiment (Su-27); 4th Independent Assault Aviation Regiment (Su-24); 125th Independent Helicopter Squadron (Mi-8, Mi-12); 396th Independent Shipborne Anti-Submarine Helicopter Squadron (Ka-27); 79th Motorized Rifle Brigade, 7th Motorized Rifle Regiment, 183rd Fleet Ground Forces Rocket Regiment, 244th Artillery Brigade; 152th Missile Brigade.

[31] Baranowski and Lété, *NATO in a World of Disorder.*

[32] Ibid.

cient to offer adequate deterrence and has to be perceived as a temporary answer that needs to be gradually reinforced after the Warsaw Summit.

European NATO members must also realize that although the US has sent additional brigade combat teams to Europe, this is not a marker that its security policy towards Europe has changed. Its strategy still revolves around a limited, rotational forward presence and is based on strategic deployment from the American continent in the event of a conflict.[33] It should be also recognized that ERI is funded through the annual budget allocated for conducting US operations abroad, not a permanent budget. This means that ERI is not a long-term solution to the issues in Eastern Europe. Rather, it offers a temporary fix that may fluctuate over time and shift to account for the strategic security context. The US has also called on NATO's eastern members to do more to secure themselves.

The strategic imbalance of power in the Baltic region raises a persistent risk that a lack of substantial troop presence as well as the absence of necessary defense capabilities and military installations will likely provoke Russia to test NATO's credibility even further. Thereafter, if NATO members want to establish credible deterrence at a level able to discourage potential adversaries, they should opt to deploy at least two rotational combat-ready brigade-sized components—one in the Baltics and one in Poland close to the recognized weakness of the "Suwałki Gap"[34]—with long-term plans to have at least one brigade permanently stationed in the Baltics.

## 4. Setting Up Air Dominance in NATO's Northeastern Corner

In light of Russia's robust A2/AD capabilities in the Baltic region, NATO has had to shift the focus of its air doctrine from an air policing concept to that of comprehensive air defense. To preserve its air dominancy, it has to rebuild air defense to include a multi-layered, medium-range, and fully integrated system with air combat components, surface-to-air components, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems, as well as airspace assets.[35] This will enable NATO to conduct high-velocity operations[36] and provide sufficient air support to forces on the ground as well. To meet this objective, Baltic nations will have to intensify cooperation and modernization processes on an individual level by acquiring air and missile defense assets. On a NATO level, they will also have to

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[33] Artur Kacprzyk, "USA mobilizuje NATO do wzmocnienia wschodniej flanki," *Polska Zbrojna*, February 17, 2016, accessed July 17, 2016, www.polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/18509?t=USA-mobilizuje-NATO-do-wzmocnienia-wschodniej-flanki.

[34] Baranowski and Lété, *NATO in a World of Disorder*.

[35] Jim Garamone, "Gorenc Discusses European Reassurance Initiative, Air Police Mission," *U.S. Department of Defense*, April 5, 2016, accessed July 17, 2016, www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/713722/gorenc-discusses-european-reassurance-initiative-air-police-mission.

[36] Ibid.

actively participate in "smart defense programs" like the NATO Missile Defense, Alliance Ground Surveillance, or NATO Air Policing programs.

## 5. Strengthen Host Nation Support for Military Infrastructure

NATO members on the eastern flank must step up their efforts to improve the infrastructure required to secure the sustainability of positioning Alliance forces on eastern NATO nations' territories in the long-term, as well as the protection of the smooth flow of reinforcements for pre-positioned forces in the region.[37] These members need to invest in HNS capabilities, military installations including ports of aerial and sea debarkation, depots, and other facilities needed for the basing and sustaining of troops and their training.

## 6. Granting Authorization to Conduct No-notice NATO Exercises

Although the Alliance has intensified the exercises it carries out, the NATO-Russia "exercise gap" still remains as far as scale and speed are concerned. In February 2014, just before the annexation of Crimea, Russia mobilized 150,000 troops under the pretext of an anti-terror exercise. Many of the units were then deployed along Ukraine's border just as Russia started its invasion of Crimea. In September, as part of a Vostok-14 exercise, Russia engaged 155,000 troops. At same time, NATO's largest exercises, Anakonda-14 (October) and Bold Alligator-14 (October-November), saw the participation of 13,250 troops and 15,000 troops respectively. This asymmetric status should be neutralized by keeping military exercises on the highest relative level of intensity. The second problem that needs to be addressed at Alliance level is the ability to organize "snap" military maneuvers without notice. In December 2014, Moscow launched an unexpected exercise in Kaliningrad Oblast involving 9,000 troops without notice.[38] By demonstrating its ability to mobilize such a large number of men so quickly, Moscow keeps the concerns of Central European nations running high in terms of the risk of a limited strike against their territories. While NATO is keeping its transparency policy vis-à-vis its military exercises, given Russia's no-notice approach, Alliance authorities should decide to organize similar activities, and, if necessary, conduct them as a deterrence measure.

## 7. Empowering SACEUR to Speed Up Force Reaction Times

The flash annexation of Crimea showed the world that signs indicative of a conflict or crisis might not be recognizable in advance. Furthermore, every NATO response decision relies on the consensus of its members, which in turn need time to debate and reflect. As a result, NATO must improve its decision-making process, at least on an operational level. Although SACEUR has been granted the authority to initiate the preparation of VJTF deployment, the

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[37] "Department of Defense Press Briefing by Gen. Breedlove."

[38] Ian J. Brzezinski and Nicholas Varangis, "The NATO-Russia Exercise Gap," *Atlantic Council*, February 23, 2015, accessed July 17, 2016, http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/natosource/the-nato-russia-exercise-gap.

movement of troops still depends on NATO's political authorities. To face this issue effectively, and speed up force reaction times, NATO nations should agree to give SACEUR more powers, flexibility, and responsibilities. SACEUR should not only prepare and activate Allied reaction forces, but also deploy them in NATO's theater of war, if necessary. Granting permission of this nature might support NATO's deterrence posture as well as have the expected effect in the initial phase when a crisis breaks,[39] and may let reaction forces act more preventively to avoid a situation whereby they are bogged down in a battle with no better operative options.[40] Ultimately, NATO's political authorities should give SACEUR power to conduct "snap" exercises as a deterrence tool.

## 8.  *Intensifying Military Cooperation with Non-NATO Baltic Countries*

NATO partners Sweden and Finland make a valuable contribution to the Alliance. Both nations' armed forces have an impressive background in terms of cooperation and a relatively high degree of interoperability with NATO. Sweden has contributed its forces to Afghanistan and its air component to Libya. Its forces have been taking part in the NRF. The same is true of Finland: its forces have participated in NATO-led operations in the Balkans and Afghanistan. In 2012, Finland also launched its troops' contribution to the NRF. Both also share various multinational security and defense projects and they are equally concerned about Russia's military resurgence. Therefore, NATO must maintain strong relationships with both nations in terms of exercise, training sessions, and building capability. NATO should improve both nations' processes of information and intelligence-sharing, and leverage the current level of operational awareness. In terms of combined capability-building, the allies should put the emphasis on developing assets such as intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance, electronic warfare, and precision engagement. NATO also needs to heighten cooperation with regard to issues such as countering propaganda, disinformation, cyber defense, and strategic narratives.

## 9.  *Leveraging Comprehensive Cooperation with the EU to Cope with Hybrid Threats*

It is impossible to strengthen NATO's eastern flank, strategically speaking, without the involvement of the EU and its Common Security and Defence Policy. As a result, the NATO Summit in Warsaw should not overshadow the importance of the European Council meeting due to take place in June 2016 that will determine the future direction in which EU security and defense policy is headed. These two strategic security components—the EU and NATO—have to

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[39]  Sidney J. Freedberg, Jr., "Wargame Warns NATO Unready for Baltic Crisis," *Breaking Defense*, April 12, 2016.

[40]  Tomasz Kowalik, "NATO on the Right Path from Assurance to Deterrence," *The German Marshall Fund of the United States,* December 15, 2015, accessed July 17, 2016, http://www.gmfus.org/blog/2015/12/15/nato-right-path-assurance-deterrence.

mutually reinforce and complement each other in terms of actions, procedures, structures, competences, and capabilities.

A new EU Global Strategy should emphasize integrated, comprehensive, and synchronized cooperation with NATO with an emphasis on how to cope with hybrid threats as well as how to respond to the refugee and migrant crisis. In December 2015, NATO drew up an anti-hybrid strategy to enable it to respond effectively to a non-linear attack. The Alliance is currently developing a comprehensive set of specific early warning indicators that can trigger a number of different types of crisis-response options.[41] NATO should invite the EU to be part of this work in order to share knowledge, experience, and best practices. This cooperation has to set itself apart by addressing non-military elements such as business, finance, media, cyber, or energy – all of which are important issues that may by impacted by a hybrid attack. Both organizations have to emphasize the importance of cyber security, strategic communications, border control, enhanced information and intelligence-sharing.

While the West seems unable to offer a strategic narrative that is as convincing as those presented by its opponents,[42] the EU and NATO must unite their unique capabilities and start dispelling disinformation and propaganda, as well as exposing the lies and myths that confuse public opinion, aggravate social tensions, and undermine the trust put in governments.

## 10. Showing Full Solidarity with the Southern Flank

It is the obligation of NATO's eastern members to show the other Allies that security cannot be achieved on their territory without peace and stability in the southern section of the Alliance or in other parts of the Euro-Atlantic area. Even though the very existence of these nations is under threat from Russia, they should still mobilize themselves to ensure the security of the nations on NATO's southern flank. Especially as current trends suggest an increase in the numbers of refugees coming to Europe, these nations must be ready to back the stabilization efforts in southern Europe, support anti-ISIL coalition campaigns, and ultimately support Turkey's security, should this be unexpectedly required.

## 11. Accomplishing the 2 percent Defense Spending Pledge

The decision was made in Newport to halt cuts in defense spending and gradually increase its level to the expected 2 percent of GDP over the next decade. However, this decision has only gone a small way towards meeting the objective. Although twenty-one Allies halted or gradually reversed declines in defense investment in 2015,[43] one year on from the Wales Summit, up to ten na-

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[41] Jamie Shea, "Resilience: a core element of collective defence," *NATO Review Magazine*, accessed July 17, 2016, http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2016/Also-in-2016/nato-defence-cyber-resilience/EN/index.htm.

[42] Dempsey, "Is NATO Doing Enough in Europe?"

[43] Statement of General Philip Breedlove.

tions spent less than 1 percent of GDP on defense, and up to 16 nations spent 1.2 percent. At present, there are only five NATO members meeting the 2 percent benchmark (Estonia, Great Britain, Greece, Poland and the US).

It therefore seems unlikely that more than half of NATO's members will double their defense budgets over the next decade even if it is assumed that the current unfavorable security conditions in Europe remain. The failure to comply with the 2 percent defense spending threshold could have strategic implications for the future of the Alliance. In the short term, this could further irritate the US authorities and interfere with RAP operationalization. In the long term, it could affect, and even reduce NATO's political-military ambitions and significantly restrict the execution of the Alliance's full mission spectrum. Eastern NATO members, and in particular those demanding that NATO build permanent garrisons on their soil, should lead by example for the rest of the Alliance by meeting the 2 percent demand.

## 12. Resume Constructive Dialogue with Russia

Relations between the West/NATO and Russia are currently treading on thin ice, risking progressing from hybrid warfare to limited conventional warfare.[44] To stop this process, NATO must engage with Russia in constructive dialogue. By virtue of its engagement in the Syrian conflict, Russia has managed, to some extent, to break free from its position of international isolation. By securing itself a crucial role in the process of resolution of the Middle East conflict, Moscow has managed to get a foot in the door to normalize relations with the West. Despite NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg's assurance that there is little chance of a return to "business as usual" in terms of cooperation with Russia,[45] the last NATO-Russia Council meeting of April 2016, after almost two years of silence, signals that NATO wants to resume political dialogue with Moscow. However, it should be noted that such negotiations make sense only if NATO conducts them from a position of strength. Moscow will always see diplomacy without deterrence as the weakness of NATO/the West, thus encouraging the Kremlin to continue its neo-imperialist behavior. As a result, NATO must continue strengthening the Alliance's military presence on the eastern flank, while at same time engaging diplomatically to find solutions to implement the Minsk Protocol in full, to improve military transparency, and to reduce potential military risks.

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[44] Frank Hoffman, *The Contemporary Spectrum of Conflict. Protracted, Gray Zone, Ambiguous, and Hybrid Modes of War* (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 2016), accessed July 17, 2016, http://index.heritage.org/military/2016/essays/contemporary-spectrum-of-conflict/.

[45] Martin Banks, "'Business as Usual' With Russia Unlikely, NATO Leader Says," *DefenseNews*, April 11, 2016, accessed July 17, 2016, http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/policy-budget/policy/2016/04/11/business-usual-russia-unlikely-nato-leader-says/82902184/.

## Conclusions

Strengthened NATO Response Forces and a more powerful Allied presence, created through the establishment of a rotational multinational brigade-sized component supported by scattered command centers on NATO's eastern flank, only go so far in terms of safeguarding the security of the easternmost parts of the Alliance. Russia's current policy trends and the ratio of forces in the region leave no option but to assume that there is still a very high probability that Moscow will continue to seek ways, including asymmetric methods, in which to breach the international security mechanisms put in place by NATO and the EU to guarantee today's stability in the Euro-Atlantic region.

NATO must continue with its process of strategic adaptation: its adversaries' abilities to adapt permanently and skillfully to the new security conditions, as their ceaseless tendency to test NATO's credibility leave no other course of action. To begin, the Alliance must leverage its internal solidarity and strategic empathy to offer intra-Alliance reassurance. It should develop a two-pronged deterrence strategy based both on punishment as well as denial. It must continue beefing-up ground forces in the Baltic region to total of two rotational combat-ready brigade-sized components, with the long-term objective of having at least one brigade permanently stationed in the Baltic states. It should establish air dominance over the Baltic region and improve HNS infrastructure to enable to absorb massive re-enforcements from the Allies swiftly. NATO must grant SACEUR new powers, namely in terms of speeding up force reaction times and conducting no-notice exercises, to ensure NATO forces remain responsive and its deterrence posture remains strong. In the international arena, the Alliance must intensify its military cooperation with non-NATO Baltic countries and intensify its comprehensive cooperation with the EU to enable it to cope successfully with hybrid threats. NATO members on the eastern flank must show complete solidarity with NATO members on the southern flank that are currently suffering from the ongoing migration crisis. All nations must show their commitment to reaching the 2 percent defense spending obligation. Finally, NATO must resume and conduct constructive dialogue with Russia with the aim of deescalating the current security situation. All these directives may contribute significantly to ensuring that NATO maintains an effective and credible deterrence posture, and, by extension, to increasing the probability that Europe's future will see greater security certainty.

The upcoming Warsaw Summit must, therefore, be seen as merely the end phase of NATO's long-term process of adapting to the new challenges currently posed by the aggressive military resurgence of the Russian Federation. The Alliance must constantly be evolving: action–reaction–counteraction must continue in an endless cycle. As part of this strategic process, NATO must permanently evaluate its policy, strategy, structures, capabilities, and forces. The strategic shift from reassurance, to reinforcement, to deterrence, launched at the Wales Summit, must continue even after the Warsaw Summit is over.

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**Research Article**

# Towards More Effective Cooperation? The Role of States in Shaping NATO-EU Interaction and Cooperation

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**Abstract**: Effective cooperation between the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is not only desirable, but rather mandatory in this interdependent and interlinked World. The contemporary multifaceted security threats and challenges have diminished the importance of the national borders and made the members of the institutions almost equally vulnerable. Due to the inherited similarities among organizations, the perception of burden sharing seems natural. However, the existing cooperation framework leaves a big room for improvement. The article explores the factors limiting effective cooperation between the organizations and the analysis is derived from studying individual states' (dual and non-dual members) behavior in shaping institutions' interaction. The paper analyzes the roles of the EU and NATO during the Libyan crisis in the neighborhood of Europe and their interaction in Afghanistan – beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. The findings of the analysis show that some of the non-dual members of the organization "hold institutions hostage"[1]; fragmented positions of the dual members impede the elaboration of a holistic EU policy on crisis management (CSDP) and eventually, hamper formation of a joint EU-NATO strategic vision. Furthermore, lack of division of labor on the ground leads to overlapping of functions to certain extent and cooperation among institutions is better on operational rather than on the strategic level.

**Keywords**: NATO, European Union, security policy, Libya, NATO-EU Cooperation.

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[1] Jolyon Howorth, *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 130.

## Introduction

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century the international system faces extremely dynamic, multifaceted and complex threats and challenges which require a comprehensive and holistic approach to be tackled. There are no purely military or civilian solutions to the challenges; combination and rational use of the existing capabilities by the institutions and states seems to be the only option leading to a more peaceful world.

Therefore, studying the interaction between two key institutions such as NATO and the EU in the interconnected world is crucial as they play the important role in the global security architecture. The article will mainly focus on analyzing relations among the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and NATO.

There are inherited similarities between these two organizations which naturally push them towards cooperation and enhance perception of a burden-sharing: both organizations share the so-called "Western Values" associated with the democratic norms and principles; face similar multidimensional security threats and challenges; exercise the comprehensive approach in the field of crisis management, conduct operations in the same countries throughout the world; are responsible for the European security and, most importantly, share twenty two members in common out of twenty eight states.[2]

The EU and NATO have undergone different phases of cooperation since the 1990s. The dynamic of relations show that their cooperation in early 2000s was more fruitful than in the following years. In 2003 the Berlin Plus Agreement (allowing the EU to use NATO assets for crisis management operations) was finalized and translated into two successful operations in Balkans.[3] Since then, institutional cooperation has not been enriched either within Berlin Plus Arrangement or beyond its framework.

In the official documents institutions portray their relations as a "strategic partnership"[4]; in reality NATO and the EU share common strategic interests but without common strategic agenda.

As Herman Van Rompuy, the former President of the European Council, stated, "the ability of our two organizations to shape our future security environment would be enormous if they worked together. It is time to break down the remaining walls between them."[5] The paper will analyze why this "remain-

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[2] "Montenegro is in the process of joining NATO," accessed October, 11, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49736.htm.

[3] "About CSDP-The Berlin Plus Agreement," accessed April 17, 2016, http://eeas.europa.eu/csdp/about-csdp/berlin/index_en.htm.

[4] "Wales Summit Declaration, 5 September, 2014," accessed April 1, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm.

[5] "Remarks by Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council," Lisbon Summit, 2010, accessed January 20, 2016, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/117890.pdf.

ing walls" still exist and why organizations are not very successful in combining efforts to support international peace and stability in a rational, cost-effective and mutually beneficial way.

Consequently, the article will seek to answer the following question: What are the factors limiting an effective cooperation between the EU and NATO?

The NATO-EU relation is a complex phenomenon and therefore cannot be limited to the inter-institutional, bilateral format; multilateral dynamics orchestrated by the specific countries define their cooperation to the largest extent. Therefore, the EU-NATO interaction will be analyzed from the individual states' angle (dual and non-dual members) rather than from the institutions' perspective.

The article will investigate the following hypothesis: 1. Some of the non-dual member countries hold "institutions hostage";[6] 2. Divergent positions among dual members towards the EU's CSDP policy contribute to the lack of a NATO-EU joint strategic vision. Under both conditions, effective cooperation of the institutions is undermined.

As it was mentioned, NATO and the EU share twenty two members in common and twelve states[7] remain only on the one side of the institutional framework (see the Annex A). This asymmetric membership has different impact on NATO-EU relations: some of the non-dual members play more positive role (Canada, Sweden, Finland, Norway) while others contribute to the limited cooperation.

Due to the large number and complex interaction between the non-dual members, the research will concentrate on Turkey and Cyprus constantly and significantly affecting the organizations' relations due to their political dispute.

Within the non-dual members the role of the US is also remarkable, however as the US position towards EU's security and defense policy evolved throughout the years from skepticism towards necessary burden-sharing, it will not directly fall within the scope of the article.

The paper will also discuss the divergent positions' of the dual member states of the institutions and argue that European countries' reluctance to elaborate a holistic and coherent CSDP has its negative implication on the EU-NATO collaboration. Division among the dual member countries between so-called "Atlanticist"[8] and "Europeanist" lays out the solid ground for different foreign and security policy priorities.

The fragmented position of the European states within CSDP serves as the root cause of the challenge among institutions and necessary precondition for cooperation.

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[6]  Howorth, *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union*, 130.

[7]  "Members of NATO and not EU," http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_52044.htm; http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/member-countries/, accessed April 17, 2016.

[8]  Howorth, *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union*, 120.

The article will analyze relations between the EU and NATO in Afghanistan and Libya, which are two totally different cases; nevertheless, they provide a comprehensive picture of the institutions' interaction on different levels, at different places and under different conditions.

The structure of the paper will be presented accordingly: firstly, the existing institutional framework of cooperation between the EU and NATO will be outlined; secondly, the role of Turkey and Cyprus will be discussed in shaping organizations' behavior; thirdly, relations among institutions in Afghanistan will be addressed and fourthly, the organizations' performance will be examined during the Libyan crisis, thus questioning the relevance of the Berlin Plus agreement.

### Methodology

As it was noted, the article will limit itself to the analysis of the impact Turkey and Cyprus are having on NATO-CSDP relations due to the political dispute between the countries and the right of the so-called "veto power" they exercise within the institutions. Cyprus is the only country among the non-dual members of the EU, which is not part of the NATO "Partnership for Peace" program and thus does not have security agreement with the Alliance.[9]

The research will address relations among the EU and NATO in Afghanistan, beyond the Euro-Atlantic area, and during the Libyan crisis, in the immediate neighborhood of Europe.

| Libya | Afghanistan |
|---|---|
| European neighborhood | Beyond Euro-Atlantic Area |
| Threat to Europe | No direct threat |
| Military Operation – initially | Civilian Mission (EU) – Training Mission (NATO) |
| Urgency | No Urgency |
| None of them present | Both of them present |

In the case of Afghanistan both organizations were simultaneously present in the theater of operation aimed at training Afghan Police Forces; carrying out non-combatant missions and as a precondition, NATO dominated the security environment. The urgency to establish the mission in Afghanistan was low compared to Libya.

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9   Stephanie C. Hofmann, "Overlapping Institutions in the Realm of International Security: The Case of NATO and ESDP," *Perspectives on Politics* 7, no. 1 (March 2009): 45-52, quote on p. 46.

In the Libyan case the crisis took place at the doorstep of Europe making the EU vulnerable to the threat coming from the south. Besides, the sense of urgency existed: NATO, the EU and individual states felt the responsibility to undertake concrete measures in a timely manner; the EU was supposed to implement military operation after its high ambition and strengthened CSDP pillar, while initially NATO was reluctant to be engaged in Libya and finally, none of the organizations were on the ground before the crisis erupted.

These case studies lay out the solid basis for analyzing peculiarities of the institutions' defense and security postures and reveal inter-institutional challenges as well as deficiencies within the CSDP.

## Existing Cooperation Framework

Two key millstones can be identified in NATO-CSDP development: Europe's quest to develop autonomy in security and defense dimension in 1998 and the signature of the Berlin Plus Agreement in 2002.

Initially, NATO and especially, the US were skeptical towards Saint-Malo Declaration (French-UK Summit, 1998)[10] stating that "the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by the credible military forces" and resulting in construction of a common European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP).[11] The basic reason was the threat of duplication with the NATO assets resulting in potential competition.

Hereby, the UK's position is very interesting, as it was regarded to be the most "Atlanticist" ally among the dual members. The UK supported the development of the European "military arm" to keep an eye on the ESDP and make sure that its development would not contradict NATO's interests.

The US initial suspicious was translated into Secretary of State Madeline Albright's "3D"[12] provisions giving a green light to the ESDP under certain conditions such *as no decoupling, no duplication and no discrimination.* In 2000 the US position was further reinforced by statement that "NATO remains their first choice when it comes to the military force."[13]

In the following years the US skepticism was replaced by high need of burden sharing and development of a strong European military capabilities reinforcing NATO rather than competing with it.[14] Europe was pushed to take more responsibility for maintaining peace and security within its borders in order to relieve the US troops from Europe.

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[10] Joint Declaration issued at the British-French Summit, Saint Malo, France, December 3-4, 1998.

[11] Jolyon Howorth and John T.S. Keeler, *Defending Europe: The EU, NATO and the Quest for European Autonomy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 10.

[12] Howorth, *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union*, 112.

[13] Ibid., 113. Philip Gordon, Former Director for European Affairs at the National Security Council.

[14] John Baylis and Jon Roper, *The United States and Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 120.

In parallel, NATO and the EU have been conducting operations and missions in various parts of the world. There are substantial differences in military (human resources, logistic) and operational (structural) capabilities of the organizations. This cannot be considered as undermining factor of cooperation, rather the opposite, as it creates the basis of burden sharing between them.

Unlike NATO, the EU lacks a permanent operational headquarters (HQ) to effectively execute military operations. Due to the fact that EU does not have a strategic planning capability embedded in Military Staff and a permanent headquarters,[15] CSDP missions are organized from the ad-hoc HQs.

The only institutional framework of cooperation (on strategic level) between the organizations is the "Berlin Plus" Agreement[16] of 2003 enabling the EU to use NATO assets and capabilities for the crisis management operation.

It took three years of complicated negotiations to conclude the agreement between organizations. One of the key reasons of the lingering rounds of consultations was the Turkish position,[17] which feared that once asset-borrowing policy was agreed, the national security interests' near its borders would be jeopardized. Finally, Turkey allowed reaching agreement under specific circumstances:[18] ESDP will not be used against NATO allies, Berlin Plus will refer only to dual members of the EU and NATO and parties of the "Partnership for Peace" having bilateral security agreement with the Alliance, Cyprus (and Malta) would not contribute to the operations under Berlin plus arrangements once it had become EU member. The Agreement was signed in December 2002[19] and Cyprus became member of EU in May, 2004[20] within the large round of enlargement.

Another reason for launching Berlin Plus Agreement was Turkey's high expectation on approaching the EU. In 2002 Greece softened its position towards Turkey's membership to the organization and the EU identified a timeframe as of December 2004[21] to start accession talks with Turkey. The following years have clearly showed that these processes have not been very successful and the reasons behind the non-reactivation of the Berlin Plus can be linked to this fact as well.

Additional and most important factor paving a way towards agreement was the unified position of the European countries on threat perception coming from the Balkans, high need to undertake concrete measures and the US readi-

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[15] Ibid., 34.

[16] Martin Reichard, *The EU-NATO Relations: A Legal and Political Perspective* (Aldershot, Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006), 275.

[17] Ibid., 287.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Reichard, *The EU-NATO Relations: A Legal and Political Perspective*, 275.

[20] "EU member countries," accessed March 3, 2016, http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/member-countries/index_en.htm.

[21] Reichard, *The EU-NATO Relations: A Legal and Political Perspective*, 287.

ness to disengage from Europe and mobilize its troops for deployment to the East.

Since its inception two operations have been undertaken within the framework of the Berlin Plus Agreement: military operation (Concordia) in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in 2003[22] and second military operation (Althea) in Bosnia-Herzegovina since 2004, which is the only ongoing operation under the Berlin Plus umbrella.

On operational level, institutions have managed to establish more effective cooperation framework than on the strategic level. In 2005, NATO Permanent Liaison Team[23] was established at the EU Military Staff and the EU Cell has been operational at SHAPE (NATO's strategic command for cooperation in Mons, Belgium) since 2006. Thus, the Berlin Plus Agreement provides a unique opportunity for the EU to utilize already existing structures of the Alliance for crisis management operations.

In the era of austerity, both organizations have realized the significance of sharing capabilities, but on intra-institutional and not inter-institutional level: NATO has elaborated the Smart Defence Initiative[24] while the EU has developed a Pooling and Sharing Initiative.[25] Hence, reluctance of the organizations to share resources eventually leads them to the acquisition of additional capabilities and to certain extent, overlapping of their functions.

Another crucial factor is the double responsibility of the dual member states within both organizations. They are obliged to contribute to NATO as well as the EU operations separately. The dual members sometimes have to make choices among organizations' activities resulting in the zero-sum contributions and "in a world of shrinking resources, everybody recognizes European forces and capacity, whether deployed via NATO or via CSDP, are all drawn from the same pool."[26]

Hence, existing NATO-EU legal cooperation framework allows organizations to share their capabilities and conduct successful operations, if the political will is present.

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[22] "Mission Description," accessed March 3, 2016, www.eeas.europa.eu/archives/ csdp/missions-and-operations/concordia/mission-description/index_ en.htm.

[23] "NATO-EU: Strategic Partnership, Framework for Cooperation," accessed February 26, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49217.htm.

[24] "Smart Defence," accessed January 9, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/ topics_84268.htm.

[25] "EDA's Pooling and Sharing," accessed January 9, 2016, https://www.eda.europa.eu/ docs/default-source/eda-factsheets/final-p-s_30012013_factsheet_cs5_gris.

[26] Howorth, *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union*, 141.

## The Role of the Non-dual Members in Shaping Institutions' Interaction

### *Turkey and Cyprus*

The political dispute between Turkey and Cyprus is a clear demonstration of how individual non-dual states can have a big impact on institutions' relations. Unresolved problems between Turkey and Greece over Aegean airspace, territorial waters and the divided island of Cyprus[27] are the root causes of the tense relations between the countries.

The asymmetric memberships of Turkey (member of NATO and not the EU) and Cyprus (member of EU and not NATO) and the right of "veto power" (within CSDP and NATO) are the key factors contributing to the limited cooperation among institutions. As the French representative to NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) noted, relations between the EU and NATO resemble a "cat and mouse game," in which both of them blame each other and in the end of the day they have to interact "somehow."[28]

Turkey's initial skepticism towards CSDP paved a way towards more complicated relations with the EU after the accession of Cyprus in 2004.[29] Turkey became concerned about EU military capability development due to two main reasons: threat of being excluded from the European security architecture; especially, having a little impact on designing stability of its immediate neighborhood, deprived of the right to participate in the decision making process of the Political and Security Committee (PSC) unlike its important role in the Western European Union (WEU), and EU's reluctance to consider Turkey's accession.

Once Cyprus became the member of the EU, the "veto game" was launched between the countries resulting in limiting the possible areas of cooperation among organizations.[30]

Due to the Cypriot veto, Turkey faced obstacles to participate or being consulted on CSDP missions, which was the case before under the umbrella of ESDP: Turkey was the third contributor to the operation "Althea" in Bosnia-Herzegovina and even expressed its readiness to participate in the EU Battle Groups;[31] Cyprus blocked Turkey's involvement in the European Defence Agency (EDA).[32] The EU refused to sign agreement with Turkey on exchange of

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[27] Ibid., 131.

[28] French Representative to Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe. Interviewed by the author Tinatin Aghniashvili, Geneva, Switzerland, March 2016.

[29] Richard Whitman and Stefan Wolff, *The European Union as a Global Conflict Manager* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 53.

[30] Belgium Representative to NATO HQ. Interviewed by the author Tinatin Aghniashvili, Geneva, Switzerland, March, 2016.

[31] Adam Szymanski and Marcin Terlikowski, "The Policy of Turkey towards EU-NATO Cooperation" (Warsaw: The Polish Institute of International Affairs, 2010).

[32] Howorth, *Security and Defence Policy in European Union*, 132.

classified information. Moreover, Turkey's aspiration to join the EU was ham-pered by Cyprus.[33]

On its side, Turkey banned the sharing of NATO's intelligence information to the EU, limited attempts to discuss the issues beyond the Berlin Plus Agree-ment and formal or informal engagement of Cyprus in EU-NATO cooperation.[34]

Throughout the years high level decision makers from both sides of the EU and NATO have been dedicating their efforts to overcome "veto policy," but all rounds of negotiations have failed.[35] In 2010, NATO Secretary General pro-posed the EU-Turkey agreement to break the deadlock between institutions[36] which envisaged exchange of the classified information, Turkish participation in EDA and Cyprus participation in both organizations' activities on a technical level. However, the rounds of consultations have failed.

Turkey has been extensively supported by the US representing a key power within the NATO framework. Turkey's strategic importance has been signifi-cantly increased for the US after the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001 followed by the military operation in Afghanistan.[37] The Muslim country's en-gagement in the anti-terrorist coalition has been highly appreciated; however, the US does not have direct influence on EU's decisions.

Based on this analysis, it can be concluded that Turkey and Cyprus are influ-encing cooperation between the EU and NATO, and as the first hypothesis of the article states, are "holding the institutions hostage."[38]

However, the challenges of the EU-NATO strategic cooperation cannot be limited only to Turkey and Cyprus exercising their "veto power." The picture is much more complex and comprehensive and is derived from the divergent po-sitions of the dual member states.

## Police Training in Afghanistan

Afghanistan provides an interesting venue where the relationship of the EU and NATO is worth observing due to a couple of reasons: both organizations were engaged beyond transatlantic area, simultaneously performing their duties; having a long term commitment towards Afghanistan and in need of each oth-ers' capabilities for successful accomplishment of the assigned objectives.

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[33] Kashmeri, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union's Common Security and Defense Policy: Intersecting Trajectories*, 33.

[34] Münevver Cebeci, "NATO-EU Cooperation and Turkey," *Turkish Policy Quarterly* 10, no. 3 (2011): 93-103, 100, accessed March 11, 2016, http://turkishpolicy.com/pdf/vol_10-no_3-cebeci.pdf.

[35] Representative to the NATO International Staff. Interviewed by the author Tinatin Aghniashvili, Geneva, Switzerland, March 2016.

[36] Szymanski and Terlikowski, "The Policy of Turkey towards EU-NATO Cooperation," 2010.

[37] Howorth and Keeler, *Defending Europe: The EU, NATO and the Quest for European Autonomy*, 113.

[38] Howorth, *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union*, 130.

Hence, Afghanistan offered a unique opportunity for enhanced cooperation, as well as a venue to reveal the deficiencies between the institutions on the strategic, operational and tactical levels.

The case study specifically concentrates on the interaction between the EU and NATO in Afghanistan throughout 2007-2014, when both institutions have been involved in the training of the Afghan National Police (ANP) along with the other duties on the ground. Since 2007, the EU has been running the civilian Police Mission (EUPOL) in Afghanistan under the CSDP framework.[39] The mandate of the mission has been extended until December 2016.[40]

In parallel, NATO has been conducting the Training Mission in Afghanistan (NTM-A)[41] during 2009-2014, with a primary focus on training recruits and building the institutional training capacity of the Afghan Security Forces (Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police (ANP)).

The large number of ANP (by the end of 2014, ANP reached the strength of around 153,000)[42] clearly demonstrated the need for burden sharing among organizations and the importance of a holistic approach.

### *Overcrowded International Presence and Poor Coordination*

Due to the fact that one of the highest priorities of the Afghan government is the development of the professional police forces, the international community has been very active in providing support in this domain within bilateral as well as multilateral formats.

Over 13 years, more than 37 international donors (states and organizations) were engaged to assist Afghan Police reform, most of them contributing to the EUPOL, NTM-A, or both.[43] The UN, the EU, NATO, the US and Germany can be identified among key actors simultaneously performing their duties. Germany took leadership of assisting the Afghan Police forces after the UN Conference in 2002 on Security Sector Reform of Afghanistan.[44] Even more, in 2007 the International Police Coordination Board was established to facilitate effective coordination of the foreign contributions, but with a little progress.[45]

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[39] "What is EUPOL Afghanistan," accessed March 1, 2016, http://www.eupol-afg.eu/node/37.

[40] Ibid.

[41] "NATO and Afghanistan," accessed March 1, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_8189.htm.

[42] Ibid.

[43] European Court of Auditors, "The EU Police Mission in Afghanistan: Mixed Results," *Special Report* no. 7 (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2015), 19, accessed March 1, 2016, http://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/SR15_07/SR_EUPOL_AFGHANISTAN_EN.pdf.

[44] Eva Gross and Ana E. Juncos, *EU Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management: Roles, Institutions, and Policies* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 121.

[45] European Court of Auditors, "The EU Police Mission in Afghanistan," 19.

Along with the multiplicity of the actors, there was a lack of leadership and insufficient coordination to synchronize the donors' assistance. Due to the absence of coherent policy in this multidimensional environment, implementation of the Afghan police reform became very complicated, thus resulting in introduction of different types of trainings (in some cases contradictory and less effective)[46] by various donors.

Hence, on one hand the multiplicity of the donors on the ground can be regarded as advantage, but on the other – in the absence of a coordinated mechanism and a tough security environment, it can become even more challenging for the host government and might lead to the irrational use of the external resources.

### Internal and External Challenges of EUPOL

The EU's engagement in the overcrowded international landscape of Afghanistan has been marked with uncertainty from the initial phase. Establishment of the EUPOL was largely defined by German pressure (as a leading nation) to strengthen police reform under the EU umbrella as well as the US willingness for the burden sharing.[47]

The challenges of the EUPOL mission in Afghanistan can be summarized accordingly: lack of human resources, logistic capabilities and a clear guidance, insufficient funding, incoherence among the EU institutions, preferences of the EU member states to contribute to other missions, small contributions depriving from the right to undertake a coordination function, tough security environment, high level of illiteracy of the Afghan police forces and a lack of strategic agreement with NATO responsible for maintaining security on the ground.

Although the Council made a decision to launch the EUPOL, the EU members showed reluctance to contribute to the mission. Two months after the Council's decision, the EUPOL had only four staff officers operating in Kabul.[48] The deployment process lingered and it has never reached the threshold of required human resources: The initial plan of deploying 200 experts has not been achieved until 2009 (after two years) and when in 2008 the Council decided to double the staff to 400, the maximum number of the experts reached 350 in 2012.[49] Even though the number of the EU member states engaged in EUPOL has been gradually increased over the years,[50] the size of their contributions remained very small and therefore did not have a big impact on the successful execution of the mission's objectives. Important factor is that Canada and Nor-

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[46] Whitman and Wolff, *The European Union as a Global Conflict Manager*, 112.

[47] Panos Koutrakos, *The EU Common Security and Defense Policy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 147.

[48] European Court of Auditors, "The EU Police Mission in Afghanistan," 15.

[49] Ibid., 16.

[50] 19 EU states in 2009, 22 states in 2010, 23 states in 2012. See House of Lords, "The EU's Afghan Police Mission," London, 2011; "EUPOL Afghanistan, Factsheet," accessed April 22, 2016, http://moi.gov.af/Content/files/eupol-eng-factsheet.pdf.
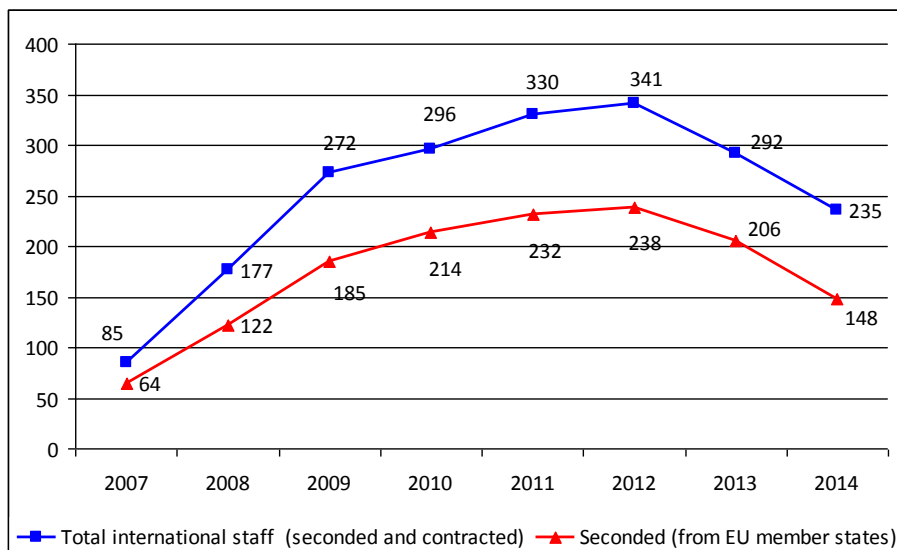
**Figure 1: Total international (seconded and contracted) and EU seconded staff in EUPOL on 31 December of each year from 2007 to 2014.**

way (members of NATO and not EU) have also contributed to the EUPOL[51] and demonstrated that non-dual members can be reliable partners as well.

The EUPOL was not very successful in recruiting seconded personnel due to the competition with other CSDP missions, NTM-A and the UN missions.[52]

Moreover, leadership and logistic problems further affected the credibility of the mission. During the first 18 months the head of the mission has changed three times.[53]

Another obstacle was lack of a clear guidance from Brussels on EUPOL's mission and functions. Mandate has been regularly adjusted to the changing priorities and situation on the ground.[54] This fact demonstrated the shortfalls in a common and coherent policy of the CSDP civilian mission in Afghanistan.

Moreover, EUPOL revealed the institutional challenges and insufficient co-ordination among the EU bodies operating within Afghanistan and beyond its borders. Lack of funds for the mission can be attributed to the weak interaction between the EUPOL and the European Commission, which is responsible for fund raising.[55]

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[51] Ibid.

[52] European Court of Auditors, "The EU Police Mission in Afghanistan," 17.

[53] Ibid., 5.

[54] Ibid., 8.

[55] Koutrakos, *The EU Common Security and Defense Policy*, 148.

One of the additional objectives of the EUPOL was coordination of the international efforts contributing to the Afghan police reform.[56] EUPOL was not able to accomplish this goal and bring together all European actors under a single framework,[57] even though it has contributed to enhancing cooperation among EU members on the ground.

Another important obstacle for EUPOL was the fact that many EU member countries continued their preferred activities in Afghanistan within the bilateral format.[58] Concrete states wanted to maintain their influence in specific directions as individual nations and not as the members of the organizations.

Shortcomings of the EUPOL mission can be attributed not only to internal, but external factors as well: challenging security environment on the ground, ineffective coordination among international donors and high level of illiteracy among the Afghan Police Forces (up to 80 %)[59] limited successful accomplishment of the assigned objectives.

However, the overall role of the EUPOL in Afghanistan should not be underestimated. The EUPOL managed to achieve concrete results. According to the European Court of Auditors,[60] EUPOL has been partially effective in delivering its mandate: mission has been more successful in training related activities and less in mentoring and advising. Once the shortfalls have been identified, the EU was tasked to produce detailed guidance for CSDP missions. Progress has been made in creating conceptual base for the Ministry of Interior, developing training courses and establishing the Police Staff College as a key training facility.[61] By the end of 2014, EUPOL has conducted 1,400 training courses for 31,000 trainees.[62]

Hence, launching a CSDP civilian mission in Afghanistan was a political decision initiated by an individual European country – Germany. Supremacy of the individual countries interests over institutions' objectives has been clearly demonstrated in Afghanistan.

## NATO-EU Interaction – Complex Mosaic

The NATO-EU relation in Afghanistan resembles a complex mosaic with variable attitudes. Relation among institutions, especially in the prism of the Afghan Police training, has been launched on a positive note. The Alliance pushed the EU to contribute to the development of Afghanistan and paved the way to the establishment of the EUPOL mission in 2007.[63]

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[56] Ibid.

[57] European Court of Auditors, "The EU Police Mission in Afghanistan," 8.

[58] Ibid., 18.

[59] Ibid., 15.

[60] Ibid., 7.

[61] Ibid., 23.

[62] Ibid., 24.

[63] Flanagan Stephen, T.J. Cipoletti, and Amanda Tuninetti, "Afghanistan: A Stress Test for Transatlantic Security Cooperation," in *The Transatlantic Relationship and EU-*

While conducting the largest and most challenging operation throughout its history – the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), the Alliance realized the further need of the civilian capabilities. The aim of the Alliance's first "out of area" operation was to ensure security and assist the Government of Afghanistan in building up professional Afghan Security Forces.[64] The large number of military troops deployed on the ground could not have guaranteed success of the operation due to multidimensional nature of the security challenges. Cooperation with civil society, implementation of the economic projects, the civilian reconstruction and, most importantly, the training of the Afghan police forces necessitated the enhanced cooperation with the EU.

The need of burden sharing beyond the Euro-Atlantic area became visible and both institutions, on political level, realized the importance of contributing the assets in which they exercised their comparative advantages.

However, the relations among the organizations in the theater of operation clearly revealed the existing shortfalls, which can be attributed to the lack of joint strategic vision, absence of technical agreements and division of labor. These obstacles laid out the solid ground towards duplicating the functions and in the end resulted in providing different kind of police training to the Afghan government.

Once activated, EUPOL had to cooperate with NATO as a key provider of the security in Afghanistan. Apart from the Berlin Plus Agreement (which was not referred to in case of Afghanistan as EUPOL is a civilian mission and not military operation), there was no formal agreement between the institutions facilitating successful cooperation for mutual needs.

Insufficient cooperation on the strategic level had its effect on the operational and tactical levels. Afghanistan has not been on the agenda of meetings between PSC and the NAC.[65] And this resulted in the absence of joint strategic agenda.

There was significant difference in the size of EUPOL and NTM-A. The EUPOL was a small mission unable to set or impact the strategic agenda on police training while NTM-A represented a larger scale mission with the ambition of training Afghan Security Forces. The NTM-A aimed at bringing Afghan Army and police training under one single umbrella[66] and was more focused on building the so-called "counter insurgency forces."

EUPOL was concentrated more on the civilian policing, while NTM-A was oriented on building more "military type" police forces claiming that it was more suitable for the existing environment in Afghanistan. These different ap-

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*U.S. Cooperation in Security*, Report (CSIS, May 2011), accessed March 11, 2016, https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy_files/files/publication/110501_Flanagan_EUUSSecurity_Issue%204.pdf, 193.

[64] "NATO and Afghanistan."

[65] Whitman and Wolff, *The European Union as a Global Conflict Manager*, 113.

[66] "NATO Training Mission."

proaches resulted in a contradictory advice/training provided to the Ministry of Interior and could have been avoided if a joint strategic vision existed.

On the operational level, the need and willingness for cooperation among the EUPOL and NATO was more visible. The EUPOL staff once deployed in Kabul,[67] regional commands and the provinces, needed protection on the ground, which was provided by NATO.

Deployments in the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) run by NATO have been suspended due to the absence of formal agreements between institutions. Therefore, the only solution was to initiate technical agreements with the individual lead (framework) nations resulting in a time consuming process. Besides, Turkey did not sign technical agreement with the EUPOL and consequently, the EU staff was not presented in the provinces controlled by Turkey.[68]

Moreover, due to the lack of the EU agreement with NATO on sharing classified information, the EUPOL's situational awareness and operations in a dangerous operating environment was restricted.[69] Therefore, a lack of strategic agenda not only hampered cooperation between organizations, but impeded the execution of the EUPOL mandate to a certain extent.

To conclude, the analysis of the interaction between the EU and NATO in Afghanistan revealed a couple of important challenges and findings. Obstacles among the organizations can be attributed to the lack of a joint strategic agenda, technical agreements and sharing of classified information; moreover, the challenges of the EUPOL mission demonstrated the divergent positions of the European countries and revealed the deficiencies of the CSDP as an individual instrument. The lack of division of labor between the EU and NATO has led to the overlap of functions on the ground and resulted in providing contradictory training to the Afghan Government.

Overall, the cooperation between the EU and NATO beyond the Euro-Atlantic area, with less urgent precondition and non-military dimension (Police training) was not very successful. NATO was dominant in relations and shaped the interaction accordingly. However, it is of utmost importance to underline, that cooperation on the operational level was more effective and efficient than on the strategic level. Within the existing formal constrains organizations still cooperated at the maximum possible extent and managed to deliver the concrete result such as "agreement to jointly establish Professional Training Board responsible for the development and accreditation of police training curricula."[70]

Hence, the results derived from the Afghan case analysis underline different positions of the dual members (within EU) and a lack of common strategic vi-

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67 Whitman and Wolff, *The European Union as a Global Conflict Manager*, 116.

68 European Court of Auditors, "The EU Police Mission in Afghanistan," 17.

69 Flanagan, Cipoletti, and Tuninetti, "Afghanistan: A Stress Test for Transatlantic Security Cooperation," 193.

70 European Court of Auditors, "The EU Police Mission in Afghanistan," 19.

sion, which contributes to the reduced effectiveness of cooperation among organizations.

## The Libyan Crisis

This section is dedicated to a study on the performance of the EU and NATO in the Libyan crisis, discussing the reasons behind the limited inter-institutional cooperation, as well as the challenges within the CSDP. Thus it reveals the preferences of the national interests over institutional needs.

As the French representative to SHAPE noted, NATO's operation in Libya has been characterized as the "Berlin Plus operation with the capabilities of the Alliance, with the European states' participation, but without the EU label."[71]

Hence, during the crisis in Libya the expectations and need of burden sharing between the EU and NATO under the existing legal framework such as the Berlin Plus have been very high. However, the Agreement has not been activated due to the divergent positions of the European countries, which underlines the relevance of the research paper's hypothesis. The EU has to officially submit request to NATO on implementation of the Berlin plus, but this did not happen in the case of Libya.

The Libyan crisis took place at the doorstep of Europe making the EU vulnerable to the threat coming from the south. Besides, the sense of urgency was obvious – NATO, the EU and individual states felt the responsibility to undertake concrete actions in a timely manner. In sum, four operations were designed during the Libyan crisis and three of them activated: Operation Odyssey Dawn led by the coalition forces, NATO's Operation Unified Protector and EU civilian mission EUBAM Libya came into force and the EU military Operation EUFOR Libya was left behind the scene.

In order to understand the complexity of the crisis, it is important to cast a glance at the positions of the foreign actors, whether states or institutions.

The operation in Libya was mandated by the UN and supported by regional organizations, therefore events developed rapidly. The Libyan crisis was "one of the pieces of the broader puzzle of the Arab Spring."[72] After rebellion movements took place against Muammar Qaddafi regime[73] in 2011, the Arab League issued a resolution[74] calling on the UN Security Council (UNSC) to undertake all necessary measures and impose a non-fly zone. After the outbreak of the rev-

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[71] French Representative to Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe. Interviewed by the author Tinatin Aghniashvili, Geneva, Switzerland, March 2016.

[72] Maxime H.A. Larivé, *Debating European Security and Defense Policy: Understanding the Complexity* (Farnham, Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2014), 209.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Joel Peters, ed., *The European Union and the Arab Spring: Promoting Democracy and Human Rights in the Middle East* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012), 40.

olution and the death of 2000 civilians,[75] on March 17 UNSC issued the resolution on establishing a "no fly zone" over Libya and authorized the use of all necessary means to protect civilians.[76]

European countries, such as UK and France were the first ones to initiate implementation of the UN resolutions. On March 19, Operation Odyssey Dawn[77] was launched under the supervision of the US and supported by the European countries. Hence, it showed the political will and readiness of France and UK to take responsibility in maintaining peace and security in their neighborhood. Despite the fact that UK is regarded to be more "Atlanticist" ally and France – "Europeanist," their positions were united. However, this was not sufficient precondition for the whole EU to come up with a unified and holistic position with regard to the Libyan crisis.

The US treated the crisis in Northern Africa with a very careful attitude trying to obtain a legal mandate on the actions undertaken. It did not qualify the operation conducted in Libya as war.[78] Decisive was the country's position to involve NATO and lead a coalition of the willing. However, in the case of Libya, many critics argued that the US was "leading from behind."[79]

### The Libyan Crisis and NATO

Three key reasons can be identified to understand NATO's engagement in the Libyan crisis, which was not on its security agenda: most importantly, the US pushed the involvement of the Alliance for political reasons (once it has been already engaged); from the operational point of view, NATO assets were needed and on the strategic level, the EU showed clear reluctance to be engaged.

It is important to outline, that NATO for the first time throughout its existence launched an operation against an Arab country. Contrary to the EU, Africa has never been in the orbit of NATO's vital interest. Throughout its long history the Alliance has a very poor record of being involved in African continent.

Despite this fact, on March 31, 2011 NATO officially took control over the military operation in Libya under the UN resolutions and launched the Operation Unified Protector (OUP) with the aim to implement an arms embargo, a

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[75] Florence Gaub, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Libya: Reviewing Operation Unified Protector* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, 2013), 2.

[76] Security Council Resolution 1973 (2011) on Libya, accessed April 3, 2016; http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_03/20110927_110311-UN-SCR-1973.pdf.

[77] Joe Quartararo, Sr., Michael Rovenolt, and Randy White, "Libya's Operation Odyssey Dawn: Command and Control," *Prism* 3, no. 2, accessed April 2, 2016, https://www.ciaonet.org/attachments/20162/uploads.

[78] Gaub, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Libya*, 4.

[79] Patricia A. Weitsman, *Waging War, Alliances, Coalitions and Institutions of Interstate Violence* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014), 177.

no-fly zone and protect civilians from attack or threat of attack.[80] Within the frames of OUP, 2/3 of the strike sorties were carried out by France and UK and the rest by Italy, Canada, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Belgium.[81] The regional actors were also involved in the operation, but to a limited extent: the United Arab Emirates, Jordan and Qatar[82] mostly remained in a supportive role. During the operation only air and naval capabilities of the Alliance and individual member states were used and OUP was officially ended in October 31, 2011.[83]

The OUP achieved its mission defined by the UN without casualties and therefore was characterized as a successful operation. The OUP mandate did not envisage regime change in Libya and NATO's involvement in post-conflict reconstruction efforts. From a legal perspective, the UN's resolutions and notion of "Responsibility to Protect" (which has been first invoked by a unanimous UNSC vote)[84] legitimized the Alliance's engagement in Libya.

The operation's immediate goals were reached in short term, but in medium and long run Libya went far from establishing peace and security. The regime of Colonel Qaddafi had been toppled, militias took over the responsibility of maintaining security, and instability grew by the day.[85] Many critics described NATO's engagement in Libya as "war of choice" rather than "war of necessity."[86]

### EU and Libya

After implementation of a non-fly zone by NATO, the EU felt that it was supposed to "somehow" contribute to the stabilization of the crisis on its doorsteps and demonstrate unity of Europe. The EU-designed military operation was followed by the civilian mission in Libya, but with little success.

In April 2011, the European Council made a decision to launch a military operation EUFOR Libya aimed at supporting humanitarian operations in Libya.[87] However, the EUFOR could be activated only based on the request of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs,[88] which had never been considered, due to the security reasons on the ground. Cancellation of the

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[80] NATO, "Operation Unified Protector: Final Mission Stats," accessed April 12, 2016, http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_11/20111108_111107-factsheet_up_factsfigures_en.pdf.

[81] Gaub, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Libya*, 7.

[82] Ibid.

[83] NATO, "Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR: Final Mission Stats."

[84] Weitsman, *Waging War: Alliances, Coalitions and Institutions of Interstate Violence*, 184.

[85] Gaub, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Libya*, 28.

[86] Ibid., 3.

[87] "EUFOR Libya," accessed March 3, 2016, http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/csdp/missions-and-operations/eufor-libya/index_en.htm.

[88] Larivé, *Debating European Security and Defense Policy*, 209.

EUFOR largely undermined the credibility of CSDP to lead and conduct an effective military operation in its neighborhood.

After two years, EU attempts still continued and in 2013 resulted in designing a new civilian mission EUBAM Libya[89] – Integrated Border Assistance Mission under the auspices of the CSDP. The headquarters of the mission was in Tripoli but due to the deteriorating security conditions, since August 2014 the EUBAM has been operating from Tunisia with a very limited capacity.[90]

The EU and especially CSDP have been largely criticized for the failure to respond to the Libyan crisis in a timely and adequate manner. The high expectations on the EU's engagement in Libya were derived from the internal and external factors: special attribution of the EU towards Africa, the increased ambition of CSDP after Lisbon and the existence of the Berlin Plus Arrangement as a legal tool for a division of labor between the EU and NATO. From an external point of view, the legal tools (UN Resolutions), support from the regional organizations (Arab League) and the US unwillingness to lead the operations, were present.

After the inception of the CSDP, the EU has been very active on the African continent. Of the seventeen[91] ongoing missions nine are conducted in Africa. EU has already implemented fifteen missions out of which eight operations (civilian and military) were carried out on the African continent.[92] Execution of the majority CSDP operations in Africa is a crystal demonstration of EU's special attitude towards this continent. Moreover, this statistics highlights the EU's capacity to effectively undertake military operations when political will is present and contribute civilian assets to the peace-building and peacemaking process of the countries in need.

Another important factor is the credibility of CSDP. Since the Lisbon Treaty came into force in 2009,[93] the Libyan crisis was the biggest threat in the backyard of Europe. The treaty aimed at further strengthening the EU's foreign and security capabilities. Despite the increased quest and ambition of EU, after two years it turned out to be less capable to contribute to the peace making process, provide appropriate military assistance and consolidate the positions of the member countries when needed.

The third important factor is the existence of the Berlin Plus Arrangement. If the EU lacked the capabilities to undertake a military operation in Libya, it could have pushed for activation of the burden sharing tool with NATO. But a request has not been formally made by the EU side. The root cause of the

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[89] "EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) in Libya," accessed March 3, 2016, http://eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/eubam-libya/index_en.htm.

[90] Ibid.

[91] "Ongoing Missions and Operations."

[92] Ibid.

[93] European Union, Treaty of Lisbon, 2007, accessed March 3, 2016, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3Aai0033.

challenge lies in the divergent positions among the European countries towards the CSDP. The perfect example is the German policy in this regard.

From the initial planning stage, Germany was against any kind of military operation in Libya and had abstained from the UNSC vote on the Libyan resolution, along with Russia and China.[94] Economic factors were crucial in defining the country's political position. In 2009 Germany represented one of the major markets for the Libyan export;[95] besides, the majority of the business contracts were negotiated with Gaddafi family. Therefore, Germany was skeptical to participate in the military campaign against Libya and the decision was backed up by the public.[96]

Meanwhile other European states such as UK and France were the ones who pushed for initiation of the first military operation in Libya due to political and security reasons. Unlike Germany, they were less concerned of the economic cooperation with Libya. Interesting is the position of Italy, which initially refused to impose sanctions against Libya due to its trade relations and business contracts, but later on "reluctantly joined France and the UK once a military operation was seen as unavoidable."[97]

These different approaches towards EU's security policy clearly undermine the credibility of CSDP and reveal a couple of important shortfalls: incoherence of European institutions, lack of capabilities and primacy of the national interest over the institution's objectives derived from the divergent positions among European states.

Overall, the EU and NATO cooperation in Libya would have been logical, relevant and cost-effective. However, it has not been even discussed on formal level due to the fragmented position of the European states and the inability to come up with a unified position.

### Is the Berlin Plus Agreement still relevant?

After the Libyan crisis, the relevance of the Berlin Plus Arrangement has been questioned again. The agreement has not been re-activated since December 2004, while the necessity of burden sharing between the institutions in this complex world is visible.

To the largest extent, Berlin Plus as a cooperation format has been designed for the Balkans. European countries felt threatened and vulnerable due to the instability at their doorsteps. From NATO and the US perspective, the Agreement was a convenient opportunity to retain a footprint on the Balkans and be involved in the ongoing operation through SHAPE.

Long discussions on further activation of the Agreement have been taking place throughout the years, but without concrete delivery. Even more so, in

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[94] Koutrakos, *The EU Common Security and Defense Policy*, 131.

[95] Peters, ed., *The European Union and the Arab Spring*, 42.

[96] Ibid.

[97] Ibid.

2005 the notion of the "Berlin Plus in Reverse" [98] was promoted, which implied utilization of the EU civilian assets and capabilities by NATO in crisis management operations. However, decision has not been reached due to the different positions among the EU members.

Hence, the Berlin Plus agreement has not been reapplied for two reasons: internal and external. As it was mentioned, the Berlin plus allows NATO-EU cooperation only in the military domain and under the conditions when the one of the organizations officially requests its activation. Hereby, the unity of the European states is decisive. As the case studies on Libya and Afghanistan showed, EU members' positions are fragmented and nationally driven when it comes to the foreign and security policy. Therefore, the internal challenges of the CSDP decrease the possibility of further implementation of the agreement. On external level, even if the EU comes with a united position, the activation of the agreement can be hampered by the non-dual member states such as Turkey and Cyprus and impeded by the lack of common strategic vision among institutions.

To conclude, the Berlin Plus agreement, representing the only institutional framework between the organizations, exists as a tool, but not as an effective instrument to be further utilized. From an operational point of view, it is still relevant (ongoing operation "Althea" in Bosnia-Herzegovina). From legal perspective, the agreement is in place and can be activated once decided. But from political and strategic angle it suffers serious problems and remains as a façade rather than efficient mechanism.

## Conclusion

Contemporary security threats and challenges necessitate and naturally push NATO-EU relations towards more effective cooperation. With the largest membership of the Western Community, complementary capabilities and common agenda they can efficiently contribute to maintaining peace and stability throughout the world. Thorough analysis of the factors limiting an effective cooperation among institutions will help policy makers to better address those challenges.

The article examined the impact of the dual and non-dual member states on shaping organizations' interaction and identified key millstones in existing strategic, political and legal framework of cooperation.

The article focused on Turkey and Cyprus from the non-dual members, and analyzed to what extent the dual members influence the interaction between the organizations in the cases of Libya and Afghanistan.

According to the case studies analysis following findings can be formulated.

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[98] Erwan Lagadec, *Transatlantic Relations in the 21 Century: Europe, America and the Rise of the Rest* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 120, 121.

Some of the non-dual member countries "hold institutions hostage"[99] due to their national interests; Turkey and Cyprus, having a political dispute between them, are using "veto power" and contribute to the limited cooperation to a certain extent.

Divergent position of the dual member states with regard to the CSDP is translated into the lack of a NATO-EU joint strategic vision.[100] Hence, the fragmented position of the European states within CSDP serves as the root cause of the limited cooperation among organizations. In reality, dual members even do not strive to develop a unified, holistic and a clear EU policy on crisis management and are comfortable with the existing uncertainty among the institutions because they do not want to limit the flexibility in utilizing the organizations capabilities according to their preferences.

The case studies of Libya and Afghanistan clearly revealed that whether threat is imminent or not, at the doorsteps of Europe or beyond its borders, cooperation is required in military or non-combatant direction, organizations' interaction is not very successful. The EU and NATO deal with the concrete crisis situations on a case by case basis without having a common strategic approach.

Absence of division of labor among the institutions leads to the duplication of functions to a certain extent. Overlap in the functions between institutions is derived from exogenous and endogenous factors: current crisis management situations require utilization of the civilian and military capabilities simultaneously; internally, due to the lack of division of labor, organizations strive to develop additional capabilities (EU – military; NATO – civilian) resulting in duplication.

The Berlin Plus Agreement is still relevant on legal and operational level but outdated on the strategic-political level. Cooperation among institutions is better in the theater of operation rather than on the strategic level.

Based on the results of analysis, it can be argued that EU and NATO can transform their relations into more fruitful and mutually beneficial cooperation if they address the following areas: the EU should elaborate more clear guidance or policy on CSDP concentrating on two key directions: (1). Definition of the area and conditions under which CSDP operation/missions are activated; (2). Provision of sufficient human and logistic capabilities in a timely and rational manner. Furthermore, the EU should enhance the coordination among its structures to smoothly implement assigned tasks and objectives; strive to develop cooperation framework with NATO beyond the Berlin Plus agreement, which inherently limits itself to the military collaboration. Both institutions should mobilize efforts leading to the resolution of the Cyprus issue in a way acceptable to Turkey and Cyprus (Greece) and contribute to the elaboration of a joint EU-NATO strategic vision with clear division of responsibilities.

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[99] Howorth, *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union*, 130.

[100] UK's vote to leave European Union is again a clear demonstration of the fragmented position of the European states.

Hence, there is a high need for burden sharing between the EU and NATO in the existing complex security landscape. Furthermore, the potential of two institutions to contribute to crisis management in more effective and efficient ways is also present and vital. Therefore, for the sake of peace and stability "the EU and NATO should and can play complementary and reinforcing roles."[101]

## ANNEX A

## 22 members in common



**Members of NATO and not EU:** Albania**,** Canada, Iceland, Norway, Turkey, USA.

**Members of EU and not NATO:** Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Ireland, Malta, Sweden.[102]

**Dual members:** Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark,[103] Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, UK.

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[101] NATO, "Active Engagement, Modern Defence – Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization," accessed April 11, 2016, http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/pdf/Strat_Concept_web_ en.pdf.

[102] Denmark opted out of ESDP; Stephanie C. Hofmann, "Overlapping Institutions in the Realm of International Security: The Case of NATO and ESDP," *Perspectives on Politics* 7, no. 1 (March 2009): 45-52.

[103] Hofmann, "Overlapping Institutions in the Realm of International Security."

## About the author

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# The Rise and Consolidation of Islamic State: External Intervention and Sectarian Conflict

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**Abstract**: This research paper examines the extent to which both the United States (US) intervention in 2003 and sectarian conflict in Iraq and the region contributed to the rise and consolidation of the Islamic State (IS). It is argued that the US intervention contributed to the rise of IS by creating a strategic cause for mobilization of insurgency while insufficient counterinsurgency resources and doctrine, and the lack of a post-war plan enabled the insurgency to consolidate. Although the US adapted its strategy and deployed additional resources as part of the "surge," which succeeded in weakening of the insurgents significantly, the premature withdrawal of US troops allowed for a revival of the insurgency which eventually evolved into IS. The sectarian conflict in Iraq and the region further contributed to the rise and consolidation of IS by helping in proliferation of the group's underlying ideology, increasing funding opportunities for the insurgents and driving the Sunni communities to support the Islamic State.

**Keywords**: counterinsurgency, insurgency, Iraq, ISIS, Islamic State, sectarian conflict, US intervention.

## Introduction

In August 2014, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) stunned the world by capturing Iraq's second largest city, Mosul, sending shockwaves across the world. About 800 ISIS fighters routed an estimated 30,000 Iraqi Security Forces, who threw away their weapons and uniforms, and fled for safety. In a matter of weeks ISIS fighters had captured several other Sunni dominated provinces including Nineveh, Salahuddin, and parts of Diyala, reaching the outskirts of Iraqi capital, Baghdad. Even more shocking was the massacre of 1,700 Iraqi soldiers and the displacement of roughly half a million people who escaped the atroci-

ties of the terrorist group in the wake of its sweeping advances. Shortly after taking Mosul, the group formally changed its name to the Islamic State, inviting all Muslims to immigrate to the newly founded Caliphate. The atrocities committed by the IS caused one of the most serious refugee and humanitarian crises since the end of World War II and the group is considered as one of the most serious threats to international security.

This paper addresses two parallel issues: How—and to what extent—did both the US intervention in 2003 and sectarian conflict contribute to the rise and consolidation of Islamic State? Using a case study methodology, the research focuses on abovementioned factors for the following three reasons. First, there is an academic and research gap regarding these two factors in Iraq's case. Many papers have been written on IS which discuss different aspects of the group and many politicians have blamed the US intervention and sectarian policies of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki of Iraq for the rise of the group. However, there is little systematic analysis in academic literature regarding these two factors and their contributing mechanism. Second, these two factors are considered the most important contributors to the rise and consolidation of IS. And third, research and analysis on these two factors could have significant policy implications not only in dealing with IS but also for future external interventions in the region.

## The US Intervention and the Rise of Insurgency

The US intervention in Iraq and its aftermath contributed to the rise and strengthening of an insurgency that eventually evolved into IS. It could be argued that, in many ways, the fall of Saddam Hussain and his Ba'athist regime was inevitable and just a matter of time. He was one of the longest ruling dictators of modern times, who invaded two neighboring states, destroyed and impoverished his country in unnecessary confrontations with his neighbors and the West, and was not shy to use chemical weapons against his own people. He came from the Sunni community of Iraq, who make up about 20 percent of the Iraqi population, and persecuted the country's Shias and Kurds who constitute about 60-65 and 15-20 percent of Iraqi population respectively. He might have been overthrown by the Arab Spring as was the case with Mubarak, Qaddafi and Ben Ali or may have faced an insurgency like Bashar al-Assad in neighboring Syria. It will never be known, as is the case with all counterfactual incidents. However, it may be said with confidence that with him in power the world would not have witnessed a large scale Sunni insurgency which eventually evolved into Islamic State.

While al-Qaeda was a by-product of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the rise of IS was facilitated by the US intervention in Iraq in 2003. The Soviet invasion, which lasted for a decade from 1979 to 1989, led to an Islamists-led insurgency, attracting thousands of Afghan and foreign fighters. The US and its Western allies supported the Afghan Mujahedeen against the Soviets by providing them money, arms and training through the Pakistani Inter-Services

Intelligence (ISI). During this period, many Arab fighters, among them Osama Bin Laden, came to Afghanistan to take part in Jihad against the Soviet Union. When the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan, many of these fighters returned to their countries to form or join radical groups to fight their governments. Using contacts and reputation built in Afghanistan, Osama Bin Laden founded Al-Qaeda in 1991 to wage a global war against the West.

   Abu Musaab al-Zarqawi was one of the radicals who met with Bin Laden and his lieutenants in Afghanistan and ran a training camp in the western Afghanistan province of Herat. He returned to Iraq to found the radical movement, Jama 'at Tawhid Wal Jihad (the Group of Unity and Jihad) in 1999. This was the movement which continued to evolve into Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), Islamic State in Iraq, Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and finally the Islamic State (IS).[1]

## The US Intervention as a Strategic Cause for Insurgents

According to French counterinsurgency scholar, David Galula, the first prerequisite of a successful insurgency is the existence of a strategic cause that can attract a significant number of people.[2] This is because the insurgent leaders have to find potential supporters among the population and convince them to actively or passively support the insurgency. For instance, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was an attractive strategic cause not only for the insurgents from within the country but also from around the Muslim world, from where many fighters joined the insurgency. In the same way, the US intervention in Iraq provided the insurgents with a strategic cause to attract fighters and funding. Insurgents' resources, power and capabilities were in no way comparable to those of the US, but they had a valuable intangible asset – the cause to fight foreign invasion – which helped them attract a significant number of supporters, fight and continue to evolve.

### *The US Intervention and the Popularity; Zarqawi and His Group*

Although Jama'at Tawhid Wal Jihad group (the Group of Unity and Jihad) was founded in 1999, it was the 2003 US intervention in Iraq which provided the group and its leader Zarqawi the opportunity to lead a large scale insurgency with a strategic cause of fighting external invasion. The first time Zarqawi came to headlines was following the attacks on the Jordanian Embassy and the United Nation compound in Baghdad in August 2003.[3] The group was initially

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[1]   Mohammad-Mahmoud Ould Mohamedou, "ISIS and the Deceptive Rebooting of al Qaeda," GCSP Policy Paper 2014/5 (Geneva: GCSP, August 2014), accessed August 3, 2016, http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ISIS%20and%20the%20 Deceptive%20Rebooting%20of%20Al%20Qaeda.pdf, 2.

[2]   David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2006), 17.

[3]   Ould Mohamedou, "ISIS and the Deceptive Rebooting of al Qaeda."

founded to fight against the existing secular governments, but the cause was not attractive enough to mobilize a significant number of people.

As the insurgency gained momentum after the US 2003 intervention, so did Zarqawi's group's activities. Between 2003 and 2005 the group was responsible for 42 percent of all suicide bombings which made up the bulk of casualties.[4] The First Battle of Falluja, where the insurgents showed stiff resistance and bled the world's strongest army, led to an increased public appeal and strength of Tawhid Wal-Jihad group in Iraq. In October 2004, al-Zarqawi pledged his allegiance to Osama Bin Laden, the leader of Al-Qaeda, and changed the name of the group to Tanzim Qaedat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn, or al-Qaeda in the Land of the Two Rivers, referred to as al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). The Second Battle of Falluja that began in early November 2004 and lasted for six weeks further added to the notoriety of al-Zarqawi and AQI. The battle was tactically won by the US military who took the city with more than 2000 casualties to the insurgents compared with only 70 US marines' casualties. However, the destruction of the city and the displacement of civilians provided a valuable propaganda tool for the rebels.[5]

Al-Zarqawi was killed in an American air strike on 7 June 2016, but AQI continued to fight and evolve. In October 2006, the AQI was joined by some other insurgent groups to form the Islamic State in Iraq (ISI). As the external intervention and sectarian conflict continued to fuel the insurgency, deceased leaders were replaced by others and the group continued to evolve. The table below shows evolution of the Islamic State overtime.

**Table 1. The evolution of ISIS.**

| Configuration | Period | Leader(s) |
|---|---|---|
| Jama'at al Tawhid wal Jihad | Late 1999 – 17 October 2004 | Abu Mus'ab al Zargawi |
| Al Qaeda fi Bilad al Rafidayn | 17 October 2004 – 15 January 2006 | Abu Mus'ab al Zargawi<br>Abu Omar al Baghdadi |
| Majlis al Shura al Mujahideen | 15 January 2006 – 15 October 2006 | Abu Hamza al Muhajir |
| Islamic State of Iraq | 15 October 2006 – 9 April 2013 | Abu Hamza al Muhajir<br>Abu Ayuub al Masri<br>Abu Bakr al Baghdadi |
| Islamic State of Iraq and al Shaam | 15 October 2006 – 29 June 2014 | Abu Bakr al Baghdadi |
| The Islamic State | 29 June 2014 – present | Abu Bakr al Baghdadi |

Source: GCSP Policy Paper 2014/5 – August 2014

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[4] Patrick Cockburn, *The Rise of Islamic State: ISIS and the New Sunni Revolution* (New York: Verso Books, 2015), 28.

[5] Ibid., 34–35.

## Weakness of the Counterinsurgents, an Opportunity for Insurgency to Expand

Another prerequisite for a successful insurgency, according to Galula, is the weakness of counterinsurgent or government forces.[6] The weakness could be political such as weak legitimacy, administrative such as the inability to provide good governance and jobs, or military weakness such as insufficient resources and troops. Despite the US intervention providing a strategic cause for the insurgency, the rise of IS was not inevitable and a well-planned and resourced COIN campaign could have defeated the rebels. However there were political, military and administrative weaknesses of the US COIN campaign which allowed the insurgency to rise and consolidate.

### *Political Weakness and the Problem of Legitimacy*

The US intervention in Iraq was challenged on legal grounds and suffered from a problem of legitimacy from the very start. It was not approved by a UN Security Council Resolution (UNSC), whose permanent members, France, Russia and China, were opposed to the intervention. Moreover, many US allies in the region and around the world, including Germany, Turkey, Canada, Saudi Arabia and Jordan, opposed the invasion. In an interview with *BBC News* on 16 September 2004, the then UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan said that "[the war] is not in conformity with the UN Charter, from our point of view and from the Charter point of view it was illegal."[7]

The US President G.W. Bush announced that "our mission is clear, to disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction, to end Saddam Hussein's support for terrorism, and to free the Iraqi people."[8] However, the US military failed to uncover any weapons of a mass destruction program, and even the US government was accused of manipulating intelligence to support the invasion despite knowing that such a program did not exist. On the other hand, not only did the intervention not reduce terrorism, it also changed the terrorists from thugs and extremists to freedom fighters in many people's eyes.

A counter-insurgency is primarily a political campaign to gain legitimacy and win over the population. While the insurgents have a superior cause, the counterinsurgents have the resources to provide security, governance and services to the population and gain their support. The political dimension of the Iraq war, however, was largely neglected and there was no plan for post-intervention stability operations after the defeat of Iraqi military and overthrow of Sad-

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[6]   Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, 17.

[7]   Kofi Annan, "Excerpts: Annan Interview," *BBC News*, September 16, 2004, accessed March 20, 2016, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3661640.stm.

[8]   George W. Bush, Radio Address, March 22, 2003, White House Archives, accessed March 20, 2016, http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030322.html.

dam Hussain regime. Neither was there a political road map for the country's political future before the intervention. As was noted by Anthony Cordesman, "the US government failed to draft a serious or effective plan for phase 4 of the war: the period of conflict termination and creation of an effective nation building office."[9]

Thus the US legitimacy among the Iraqi population was further undermined when the fall of Baghdad was followed by widespread disorder, looting and lawlessness. The US Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld was criticized for the chaos following the intervention, whose response was illustrative of the severity of the problem: "Freedom's untidy, and free people are free to make mistakes and commit crimes and do bad things. They're also free to live their lives and do wonderful things. And that's what's going to happen here."[10]

The lack of coordination between the US Department of Defense (DOD) and Department of State (DOS) in the post intervention period further added to the problem leading to a window of opportunity being lost to win over credibility and support of the population.[11]

### Poor Policy Decisions: De-Ba'athification and Disbanding the Iraqi Army

Instead of winning the hearts and minds and support of the population, some decisions of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in the initial phase of intervention were counterproductive and instead strengthened the insurgency. Two of the most ill-fated and problematic policy decisions which injected life and blood to the insurgency and whose effects continue to the present was the de-Ba'athification of Iraqi society and the dissolution of Iraqi security forces.

The very first Order issued by Paul Bremer, head of the CPA, was about de-Ba'athification of Iraqi society. According to that order, members of Ba'ath Party were dismissed from their positions and banned from future employment in government. In addition, individuals holding positions at ministries or other government institutions, including universities and hospitals were to be interviewed and removed from their jobs if found to be linked to Ba'ath Party.[12] This practically targeted the Iraqi Sunni community who made up the bulk of the Ba'ath party membership and senior government positions, leaving them no option but to fight back.

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9   Anthony H. Cordesman, "Iraq: Too uncertain to call" (Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 2003), 2.

10  Sean Loughlin, "Rumsfeld on looting in Iraq: 'Stuff happens,'" *CNN*, April 12, 2003, accessed March 20, 2016, http://edition.cnn.com/2003/US/04/11/sprj.irq.pentagon.

11  Bruce Hoffman, "Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 29, no. 2 (2006): 103–121, quote on pages 2–3.

12  Paul L. Bremer, "Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number 1: De-Ba'athification of Iraqi Society" (Coalition Provisional Authority, 2003), accessed March 1, 2016, http://www.iraqcoalition.org/regulations/20030516_CPAORD_1_DeBa_athification_ of_Iraqi_Society_.pdf.

The second CPA order issued on 23 May, 2003, dissolved the Iraqi army and other security institutions and cancelled "any military or other rank, title, or status granted to a former employee or functionary of a Dissolved Entity by the former regime."[13] This left some 230,000 former Iraqi military officers and Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO's) on the streets, explicitly ruling out any hope for a future employment or career. Well-trained and armed, many of them joined the insurgency led by al-Zarqawi or other insurgent groups. Since then, Ba'athists and former army officers have formed the backbone of the insurgency throughout the years. In 2006, 99 out of 200 generals of the old Iraqi Army "were probably active in the insurgency."[14] When Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi took over the leadership of the group, he started an aggressive campaign in 2010 to recruit former Ba'athists and army officers to revitalize the weakened insurgency. For instance, 34 out of 42 senior AQI leaders were killed in a very short time, and al-Baghdadi used this opportunity to fill those vacancies by former Ba'athists and military officers, in what was seen as "Iraqization" of IS.[15]

According to Brig. Gen. Hassan Dulaimi, a former intelligence officer in the old Iraqi Army, "The people in charge of military operations in the Islamic State were the best officers in the former Iraqi army, and that is why the Islamic State beats us in intelligence and on the battlefield."[16] According to Sajad Jiyad, a senior analyst and researcher at the al-Bayan Centre for Studies & Planning in Baghdad, more than 25 of out of 40 most prominent leaders in 2014-15 were former Ba'ath Party members or military officers. He believes "ISIL, as an organization, would not exist without former Baathists."[17]

Many US military and civilian leaders realized the negative impacts of de-Ba'athification and dissolution of Iraqi security institutions over time, but they could not reverse or stop the process. A de-Ba'athification commission continued to function and played a role in disqualification of many important Sunni leaders in the 2010 parliamentary elections. Prime Minister Maliki arrested a

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[13] Paul L. Bremer, "Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number 2: Dissolution of Entities," Baghdad, May 23, 2003, accessed March 1, 2016, www.iraqcoalition.org/regulations/20030823_CPAORD_2_Dissolution_of_Entities_with_Annex_A.pdf.

[14] Bruce R. Pirnie and Edward O'Connell, *Counterinsurgency in Iraq (2003–2006)*, Volume 2 (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2008), 26.

[15] Michael Weiss and Hassan Hassan, *ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015), 120–21.

[16] Liz Sly, "The hidden hand behind the Islamic State militants? Saddam Hussein's," *Washington Post,* April 4, 2015, accessed February 14, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/the-hidden-hand-behind-the-islamic-state-militants-saddam-husseins/2015/04/04/aa97676c-cc32-11e4-8730-4f473416e759_story.html.

[17] Davide Mastracci, "How the catastrophic American decision to disband Saddam's military helped fuel the rise of ISIL," *National Post*, May 23, 2015, accessed February 14, 2016, http://news.nationalpost.com/news/world/how-the-catastrophic-american-decision-to-disband-saddams-military-helped-fuel-the-rise-of-isil.

large number of alleged Ba'athists even as late as 2011.[18] Some Ba'athist and former army officers had joined the Awakening Movement and fought Al-Qaeda during the "surge" in 2007. However, once the US troops left, the Iraqi government abandoned the Awakening Movement and started harassing its leaders who were once again left with no option but to join IS.[19]

## Military Weakness: Inability to Protect the Population

The US intervention in Iraq not only suffered from political legitimacy and miscalculations but also from insufficient resources and poor counterinsurgency efforts in the early stages. While known to be the best conventional military with unprecedented advanced technology and firepower, the US army was not ready for countering an insurgency. It "went into Iraq in March 2003 without any of the doctrine, training, or other preparations."[20] Lessons learned in Vietnam had not been internalized and were discarded. And the Bush administration was not ready to commit the required number of troops to maintain security and order in post-Saddam Iraq.

The US Army and Marines Counterinsurgency Field Manual suggests a minimum of 20 troops per thousand population for a successful COIN campaign, as has been proposed in COIN literature elsewhere.[21] For example, the British deployed troops at a ratio of 20 counterinsurgents per 1,000 population in Northern Ireland and Malaya campaigns. Similarly, NATO started its multinational operation in Bosnia with a ratio of more than 20 troops per 1000 population.[22] According to this ratio, with more than 30 million population, about 600,000 troops would have been required to defeat the insurgency in Iraq. However, in early 2004 there were 115,000 US troops deployed to Iraq and it did not exceed 171,000 (182,000 with British forces) even at the peak of the "surge."

Insufficient resources meant that the US forces were not able to protect the population and gain their support, the key to success according to counterinsurgency theories. It also meant that the US military commanders were not willing to confront the Shia militias and trouble makers, especially Muqtada al-Sadr and his Mahdi Army, which contributed to sectarian problems and loss of

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[18] W. Andrew Terrill, *Lessons of the Iraqi De-Ba'athification Program for Iraq's Future and the Arab Revolutions* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, May 2012), accessed April 12, 2016, http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a560673.pdf, p. x.

[19] Sly, "The hidden hand behind the Islamic State militants?"

[20] Brian Burton and John Nagl, "Learning as we go: the US army adapts to counterinsurgency in Iraq, July 2004–December 2006," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 19, no. 3 (September 2008): 303–27.

[21] John A. Nagl, et al., *The US Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual* (University of Chicago Press, 2008), 23.

[22] James T. Quinlivan, "Burden of Victory: The Painful Arithmetic of Stability Operations," *Rand Review* 27, no. 2 (2003): 28–29.

credibility for both the US and Iraqi governments. Moreover, insufficient troops and resources rendered the US troops and Iraqi government unable to provide rule of law and basic services – means that could have earned them legitimacy and support of the populace.

In short, weakness of the counterinsurgents, in this case the US and Iraqi governments, including weak legitimacy, problematic policy decisions, lack of a COIN doctrine and insufficient resources and troops led to a deterioration of security and an exponential increase of violence in Iraq. The number of attacks by insurgents increased to 26,496 in 2004 and to 34,131 in 2005. In late 2005, the number of improvised explosive devices (IED) attacks reached to about 1,800 per month. Al-Zarqawi was targeting the Shias indiscriminately to provoke sectarian conflict while the Shia-dominated security forces were responsible for incidents of torture and extra-judicial killings of the Sunnis and suspected insurgents. With the bombing of the Samarra Shrine, which is the most sacred shrine among the Shias, in February 2006, the insurgency turned to a large scale sectarian violent conflict. The Shia death squads entered in the Sunni areas, indiscriminately killing civilians while the Sunni extremists continued to target Shia civilians by suicide bombings, increasing the civilian casualties to 34,000.[23]

### The "Surge:" and the Awakening Movement

As the insurgency and violence continued to intensify, the US military continued to learn and adapt. When General Petraeus was appointed as the top American command in Iraq, he helped publish the US Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual (FM 3-24). In January 2007, the US President, G.W. Bush, ordered the deployment of more than 20,000 additional troops to Iraq which was termed as the "Surge," while at the same time commanders of on the ground changed their counterinsurgency strategy.

According to Australian COIN expert, David Kilcullen, "the surge is not the strategy – the switch to population security and a residential, high-force-density, long-term approach is what matters here."[24] The same can be concluded from President Bush's State of the Union address in January 2007, when he outlined the purpose of the surge as: *"*Our troops will have a well-defined mission: to help Iraqis clear and secure neighbourhoods, to help them protect the local population, and to help ensure that the Iraqi forces left behind are capable of providing the security that Baghdad needs."[25] Major General Joseph Fil, commander of Multi-National Division – Baghdad, who oversaw the implemen-

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[23] Burton and Nagl, "Learning as we go: the US army adapts to counterinsurgency in Iraq."

[24] David Kilcullen, "Don't Confuse the 'Surge' with the Strategy," *Small Wars Journal* (January 2007), accessed March 5, 2016, http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/dont-confuse-the-surge-with-the-strategy.

[25] Ibid.

tation of Baghdad Security Plan in February 2007, described the objectives of the plan as: "through this operation, the government of Iraq is seeking to show the Iraqi people and the international community that it is able to protect all its citizens, regardless of sect or ethnicity."[26] At the same time, the US commanders worked with Sunni tribes and the general population as part of the Sahwa or Awakening Movement, which succeeded in turning them against AQI until the US troops withdrew from Iraq.

It could be argued that the change in strategy which was aimed at protecting and gaining the support of the population worked. From its highest point in late 2006, by November 2007, violence and insurgents' attacks had dropped to their lowest levels since 2004. While there were 300 attacks in al-Anbar province per week prior to the "surge," their number had dropped to about 20 per week in late 2007. There was a dramatic improvement in Baghdad security as well. The civilian deaths which reached 3,000 in December 2006 was lowered by 70% by November 2007. The number of attacks was down by 60%, and sectarian violence had plummeted by 90%.[27]

A significant part of the reduction in violence could be attributed to efforts at fixing the political challenges, including the inclusiveness and legitimacy of the Iraqi government. The Sunni Awakening or Sahwa Movement, a US supported program to arm the Sunni tribes to defend themselves, was very effective in turning them against Al-Qaeda and consequently reducing violence and weakening of the insurgency significantly.

### The US Withdrawal and Return of the Insurgents

While the "surge" brought significant resources and the right population-centric COIN strategy, which succeeded in reducing the violence and weakening the insurgency, support for the war in the US had plummeted to its lowest point since the start of intervention. From the political perspective, it was difficult to commit to a long term presence of US troops in the country. At the same time, the Iraqi government had little interest to extend the presence of US troops in Iraq. A US-Iraq Status of Force Agreement (SOFA) was signed by President Bush and Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki in 2008, according to which all US troops withdrew from Iraq by the end of December 2011.

Although there have been disagreements, it could be argued that there were mainly two plausible contributing factors for improvement in security in Iraq in 2007. First, the "surge" and the application of a population centric counterinsurgency enabled the American and Iraqi troops to protect the population from the insurgents, who could no longer terrorize them into cooperation. The

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[26] Kimberly Kagan, *Iraq Report* (Washington, D.C.: The Institute for the Study of War, 2007).

[27] Raymond T. Odierno, "The Surge in Iraq: One Year Later," Lecture #1068 on National Security and Defense (Heritage Foundation, 13 March 2008), accessed March 12, 2016, http://www.heritage.org/research/lecture/the-surge-in-iraq-one-year-later.

increase in violence and casualties of US and Iraqi forces in the initial stages of the "surge" shows that insurgents and Shia militias did not just decide to stop fighting – rather the new strategy severely restricted their abilities to continue to fight. Second, the combined effects of Sahwa Movement and the protection of the population removed the sectarian security dilemma faced by the Sunnis. As a result, the Sunni communities turned against AQI and other extremists, leading to a significant weakening of the insurgency. However, given that the Iraqi government could not maintain the support of the population due to its weaknesses and sectarian policies, the premature withdrawal of US troops allowed a revival of insurgency which eventually evolved into IS.

### Administrative Weakness: Inability to Provide Services

According to COIN theories, the population is the center of gravity and its support – the key to success for either side. In addition to political and military measures, the counterinsurgents aim to gain this support through delivering administrative services such as education, jobs, healthcare etc. In post-Saddam Iraq, however, the Iraqi government was not able to provide basic services to the population properly. De-Ba'athification had removed many skilled and experienced individuals from different ministries, crippling the government functioning. On the other hand, De-Ba'athification and dissolution of Iraqi security institutions had also left hundreds of thousands Iraqis, including "tens of thousands" of schools teachers unemployed.[28] All this presented significant administrative challenges to the Iraqi government and curtailed its ability to provide services and gain support of the people.

### Indoctrination and Networking in Detention Facilities

The "surge" and the consequent shift to a population-centric strategy meant more combat and kinetic operations, leading to the arrest of thousands of insurgents who were detained in US run detention facilities. These detention facilities were used by ISI as "Jihadi Universities" for recruiting, indoctrinating, networking and transferring skills among the fighters. One of the major detention centers was Camp Bucca, which housed 26,000 insurgents in 2007, and funneled some 100,000 detainees including many of the top leaders of IS.[29]

Besides Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi who spent five years in Camp Bucca, nine other member of IS senior leadership, including al-Baghdadi's deputy, Abu Muslim al-Turkmani, IS senior military leader Haji Bakr (who was killed), and the leader of foreign fighters Abu Qasim served time in the facility. Given that insurgents could not get together for fear of being targeted by American troops, Camp Bucca was a great opportunity for them to stay together for months and in some cases years to develop their plans. Many of the people

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[28]  Andrew Terrill, *Lessons of the Iraqi De-Ba'athification Program for Iraq's Future and the Arab Revolutions*, 24.

[29]  Weiss and Hassan, *ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror*, 83.

who served in this Camp had some links to insurgents, which was why they were there in the first place. However, even accidental guerrillas or former Ba'athists who had nothing in common with IS ideology were turned into hard-liners while serving there with many radical ideologues.[30]

According to Richard Barret, Camp Bucca facilitated and strengthened the alliance between members of AQI and ex-Ba'athists. Many Ba'athists whose time in prison overlapped with Abu-Bakr al-Baghdadi became senior leaders of IS.[31] Over the years, inmates who were released went back to join the insurgency with much better skills and wider network of contacts. After the prison was transferred to Iraqi authorities following the withdrawal of US troops, the remaining inmates were released, which had a significant negative consequence for the insurgency in Iraq and the evolution of IS.[32]

In short, the years in Camp Bucca were formative for IS. The radical Islamists who provided the ideology intermingled and cemented their alliance with Ba'athists who had the military planning, strategic and governance skills. This was something that eventually changed IS into a powerful and deadly organization, a pseudo-state which has out-governed many of the Syrian rebel groups and perhaps even the Syrian and Iraqi governments.

To sum up, the US intervention in Iraq in 2003 contributed to the rise and consolidation of IS by serving as a strategic cause for the insurgency, while ineffective US and Iraqi government COIN strategy and insufficient resources allowed the insurgency to expand. Although the US troops' "surge" and change of the US COIN strategy succeeded in weakening the insurgency, the lack of a long-term commitment and the premature withdrawal of US troops led to a revival of the insurgents. And finally, poor management of US-run detention facilities played an important role in the rise and consolidation of the Islamic State by facilitating networking and indoctrination of insurgents in custody.

## Sectarian Conflict and the Rise of Islamic State

Sectarian or ethnic conflict, which is referred to the conflict between Shias and Sunnis in Iraq and the region is another important factor that contributed to the rise and consolidation of IS. To analyze this hypothesis the paper will be relying on theories of ethnic conflict. Although technically ethnicity and religious sects are different, for the purposes of this article the two terms will be

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[30] Terrence McCoy, "Camp Bucca: The US prison that became the birthplace of Isis," *Independent*, November 4, 2014, accessed April 12, 2016, www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/camp-bucca-the-us-prison-that-became-the-birthplace-of-isis-9838905.html.

[31] Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group Report, November 2014, accessed April 5, 2016, http://soufangroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/TSG-The-Islamic-State-Nov14.pdf.

[32] Cockburn, *The Rise of Islamic State: ISIS and the New Sunni revolution*, 88.

used synonymously, and Shiism and Sunnism will be used as two separate identities similar to ethnicity.

## Historical Background of the Sectarian Conflict

Traditionally, Sunnis have dominated political power in the Islamic world. Ever since the Islamic Revolution in Iran, Shias have continued to increase their power and influence in different countries, causing concerns among the Sunni regimes in the Middle East. The Iran-Syria alliance strengthened the position of the two countries against their Sunni dominated neighbors.[33] The creation of Hezbollah and its emergence as a strong player in Lebanon and in resistance against Israel further boosted the confidence of Shias in the region and beyond. Finally, the fall of Saddam's regime and its replacement by a Shia dominated government changed the balance of power in this traditionally Sunni domi-nated region, intensifying concerns and anxiety, which has been expressed by Sunni leaders.

In late 2004, King Abdullah of Jordan expressed concern that if the Shias dominate the post-intervention Iraqi government, "a new crescent of dominant Shia movements or governments stretching from Iran into Iraq, Syria, and Leb-anon could emerge …"[34] In September 2005, Saudi Foreign Minister, Saud bin Faisal, criticized the war in Iraq as "handover of Iraq to Iran" and expressed concern about Iranian influence among the Iraqi Shias. In a similar trend, in April 2006, Hosni Mobarak, the then President of Egypt criticized Iraqi and other countries' Shias for being more loyal to Iran than their own country.[35]

To counter the Iranian influence, the Saudis have attempted to proliferate their anti-Shia Wahhabi ideology by funding of mosques, madrasas and educa-tional institutions throughout the world.[36] Between 1982 and 2005, Saudi Ara-bia financed 210 Islamic centers, 1500 mosques, 202 Islamic faculties and 2000 schools around the world. In 2013, the country provided 35 billion USD funding for schools in South Asia which is home to around one billion of the world 1.6 billion Muslims.[37] While this may be partly because Saudis believe in Wahha-bism and therefore do so for religious purposes, one cannot disregard the fact that Shia-Sunni sectarian consideration also plays a part in this.

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[33] Vali Nasr, *The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2007).

[34] Amir M. Haji-Yousefi, "Whose Agenda Is Served by the Idea of a Shia Crescent?" *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations* 8, no. 1 (Spring 2009): 114–35.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Nasr, *The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future*.

[37] Bouthaina Shaaban, "The Rise of ISIS and Other Extremist Groups: the role of the West and Regional Powers" *The Canadian Charger*, February 19, 2016, accessed April 12, 2016, http://www.thecanadiancharger.com/page.php?id=5&a=1967.

Thanks to generous funding, Saudi Wahhabi teaching and influence has spread throughout the world. This is the ideology which provides intellectual foundation and inspiration for most of the militant extremist groups today. In Sami Moubayed's words, without Wahhabism "there would be no Saudi Arabia, no Islamic State in al-Raqqa today and no talk of al-Qaeda or ISIS." [38]

### Sectarian Conflict in the Region and Support for IS

The sectarian conflict in the region has benefited IS in two ways. First, it has led to generous funding for the insurgent groups, which has directly or indirectly benefited IS. Second, the sectarian support of the Sunni tribes for IS has strengthened the group against the Iraqi and Syrian governments. Moreover, sectarian motivated conflict in Syria led to weakening of the Assad regime, leaving a gap where IS could expand.

Sunni regimes in the region have been concerned about a potential uprising and insurgency among their Shia populations since the late 1970s. One could argue that one of the main reasons for Suddam's war against the nascent Islamic Republic of Iran was the fear of the export of the Shia revolution to Iraq. [39] Given that Iraq is a Shia majority country, a security dilemma for Saddam may have been either to attack and destroy the Shia regime while it was weak or face a Shia revolution at home inspired or supported by the Islamic Republic of Iran. However, while Saddam did not succeed in overthrowing the Shia revolutionary regime, the balance of forces was such that Iran could not export its revolution to Iraq or to any other major Sunni dominated countries. Despite that, mutual suspicions between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Sunni countries continued.

Since the overthrow of Saddam which disturbed the sectarian balance of power, sectarian considerations in the region have helped funnel millions of dollars from the Sunni countries of the Gulf region to Islamic State. The Gulf countries and Turkey have directly or indirectly supported the Sunni insurgent groups in Syria, hoping to balance the replacement of Saddam's regime by a Shia government, with the replacement of al-Assad regime with a Sunni extremist group.

Saudi Arabia has continued to be a major source of funding for extremist groups worldwide. According to a cable from WikiLeaks, the US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton wrote in December 2009 that "Saudi Arabia remains a critical financial support base for al-Qaeda [...] and other terrorist groups." In 2007, Stuart Levey, the US Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Traf-

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[38] Sami Moubayed, *Under the Black Flag: At the Frontier of the New Jihad* (I.B. Tauris, November 2015), 11.

[39] Thom Workman, "The Social Origins of the Iran-Iraq War," CISS Working Paper #5 (Downsview, Ontario: York University, Centre for International and Strategic Studies, 1991).

ficking said in an interview: "if I could somehow snap my fingers and cut off the funding from one country, it would be Saudi Arabia."[40]

In addition to direct government funding, these countries have turned a blind eye on funds flowing from wealthy individuals, charitable foundations and other networks to insurgent groups. In 2012-2013, bags of cash filled with millions of dollars were channeled to insurgents groups through Turkey on regular basis. In 2013 and 2014, IS received as much as 40 million USD from the gulf countries.[41] Given its problems with al-Assad regime, Turkey has had little interest to prevent flow of funds, arms and fighters to the insurgents in Syria.

### Sectarian Conflict in Iraq and the Rise of Islamic State

The US intervention in Iraq and the fall of Saddam changed the political equation of the country. After years of suffering from discrimination and persecution, now the Shias were the rulers in the new democratic Iraq. They considered themselves entitled to it according to the principle of rule of majority, and were not ready to lose it at any cost. At the same time, de-Ba'athification and dissolution of the Iraqi army in practice meant deprivation of Sunnis from political power, something that was unacceptable for the Sunni community. As proposed by Lars-Eric Cederman, Andreas Wimmer and Brian Min, ethnic groups are more likely to fight if they have lost power recently.[42] Thus this was a motivating factor for Sunnis to join the insurgents and fight the Shia-dominated government and its foreign supporters.

Another but perhaps more important factor for sectarian violence was a sectarian security dilemma which was created after the fall of Saddam. When an empire, state or central authority falls or becomes so weak that it cannot provide for order and security of its citizens, a security dilemma is created for ethnic or other identity groups. In such a situation, each group assumes responsibility for its own security, and tries to provide for it by acquiring arms or establishing its own ethnic army to defend itself.[43] In Iraq, not only was such a sectarian security dilemma created due to the fall of Saddam and the subsequent dissolution of security institutions, but was also provoked and intensified by AQI.

Zarqawi, like many other Takfirists, had a violent contempt for the Shias but he was also "exploiting what was an incipient but real problem in Iraq's political

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[40] Moubayed, *Under the Black Flag: At the Frontier of the New Jihad*, 11–12.

[41] Matthew Levitt, "Terrorist Financing and the Islamic State," Testimony submitted to the House Committee on Financial Services, November 13, 2014, Washington Institute, accessed March 29, 2016, www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/testimony/LevittTestimony20141113.pdf

[42] Lars-Erik Cederman, Andreas Wimmer, and Brian Min, "Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis," *World Politics* 62, no. 1 (January 2010): 87–119.

[43] Michael E. Brown, ed., *Ethnic Conflict and International Security* (Princeton University Press, 1993), 103–10.

evolution: namely the creeping takeover of state institutions by chauvinistic Shia politicians."[44] With the fall of Saddam's regime, the dissolution of the old Iraqi Army and de-Ba'athification program, the Sunni community thought they were left at the mercy of Iranian supported Shia opponents. Zarqawi was trying to intensify this sectarian security dilemma and draw Sunnis to the insurgency. As his letter to Bin-Laden in 2004 illustrates, his intention was to spark a wide-spread sectarian violence in Iraq so that the Sunnis had no other option but to turn to AQI as their protector:

> [by] targeting and hitting [Shia] in [their] religious, political, and military depth [to] provoke them to show the Sunnis their rabies and bare the teeth of the hidden rancor working in their breast. If we succeeded in dragging them into the arena of sectarian war, it will become possible to awaken the inattentive Sunnis as they feel imminent danger and annihilating death at the hands of these Sabeans.[45]

By 2006 Iraq was in the midst of a ruthless and violent sectarian conflict. The bombing of the Shia sacred Shrine of Samarra led to an unprecedented hike in sectarian violence where civilians of both Shia and Sunni communities were targeted by the death squads of the other side. Shia militias started moving into Sunni residential areas and killing hundreds in retaliation to the bombing of the shrine while the Sunni extremists targeted Shias by suicide bombings. Mass murders and abductions were the order of the day and bodies were thrown into the streets. The death toll reached to 34,000 in 2006.[46] By the end of 2006, the Sunni community were pushed into a corner and believed that the only protector and savior against the brutal death in the hands of the Shia militias were the AQI and other Sunni extremist groups.[47] As shown in the chart below, the total number of terrorist attacks exceeded 5,000 in November 2006.[48]

It was at the peak of sectarian violence that the "surge" and Sahwa (or the Awakening Movement of the Sunnis), were implemented. The strategic aim of both was to protect the population and address the underlying sectarian security dilemma. Now the Sons of Iraq, a coalition of Iraqi tribes armed and financed by the US military, provided security to the Sunni communities. No longer dependent on Al-Qaeda for security against the Shia militia, the Sunni

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44 Cockburn, *The Rise of Islamic State: ISIS and the New Sunni Revolution*, 29.

45 Ibid.

46 Burton and Nagl, "Learning as we go: the US army adapts to counterinsurgency in Iraq."

47 David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 127.

48 Michael E. O'Hanlon and Jason H. Campbell, *Iraq Index – Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security in Post-Saddam Iraq,* Brookings Institution Report (December 2008), accessed March 29, 2016, https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/index20081218.pdf.
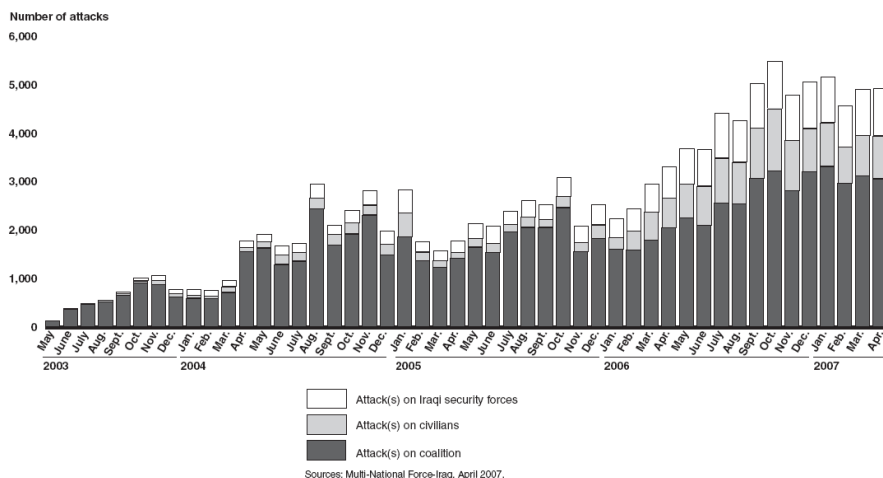
**Figure 1: Enemy-initiated attacks against the coalition and its partners.**

tribes turned against it, leading to a significant reduction in violence and weakening of the insurgency.

However, once the US troops left and Awakening Movement was abandoned by Iraqi government, the sectarian security dilemma intensified once again, pushing the Sunnis towards the IS. Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi used the same strategy of provoking a sectarian security dilemma by using the "sectarian-existential grammar" of Zarqawi, while presenting itself as the protector and defender of the Sunnis in Iraq and Syria.[49] The terrorist group continued to slaughter Iraqi civilians as well as Iraqi security forces on a sectarian basis. In June 2014, IS executed 1,700 Shia soldiers after occupying Mosul.[50] Similarly, after capturing Tikrit, IS fighters divided the surrendered soldiers into two groups of Shias and Sunnis, and the Shias were all killed. These factors of course intensified sectarian conflicts with serious consequences for the region and the world.

## *Sectarian Policies of Prime Minister Maliki and the Return of the Insurgents*

With the decrease of the US presence and influence in Iraq, the Maliki government became increasingly sectarian. The Awakening Movement was gradually put to an end and its leaders were harassed by the Shia dominant security forces. The situation in Diyala province was the most problematic. After the

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[49]  Weiss and Hassan, *ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror*, 29.

[50]  Simon Tomlinson and Amy White, *Mail Online,* 13 June 2014, accessed August 4, 2016, www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2656905/ISIS-jihadists-seize-two-towns-bear-Baghdad-U-S-tanks-helicopters-stolen-fleeing-western-trained-Iraqi-forces.html.

Prime Minister dispatched Iraqi Special Operations Forces to arrest the President of Diyala University and a local council man, which resulted in the death of governor's press secretary, the situation in the province went out of control.[51]

In Anbar province, Colonel Saad Abbas Mohammad, a commander of 3,000 Sons of Iraq, was the target of about 25 assassination attempts according to his own account. A program designed by the United States to transition about 30,000 Awakening Movement volunteers to state employment was not realized. Members of the Awakening Movement started to return to the insurgency now led by a more ambitious leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. According to Mullah Nadim Jibouri, in 2010 40 percent of AQI was composed of former Sons of Iraq who had defected due to fissures re-emerging between the government and Sunni tribes.[52]

Whilst one could ascertain that Maliki was playing the sectarian card in order to strengthen his support base among the Shia community for election purposes, the consequences for the country were destructive. In 2010 parliamentary elections Mr. Maliki won two seats less than his rival, Ayad Allawi's block. Nevertheless he managed to form the government with Iranian support and intervention. Henceforth, he became even more sectarian. In December 2011, he ordered the arrest of two of the most senior Sunni leaders, Rafi Al-Issawi, the Finance Minister, and Tariq al-Hashimi, the Vice President of Iraq on charges of terrorism. Mr. Hashimi fled to Kurdistan and was sentenced to death in absentia. These and other sectarian policies by Maliki led to demonstrations in Sunni-dominated areas of Iraq. On April 2013, the Iraqi Army stormed a peace camp at Hawijah, west of Kirkuk, killing more than fifty peaceful Sunnis. This incident and other underlying grievances turned the protests into an insurgency and widespread violence throughout Iraq, leading to al-Qaeda style attacks on Shia sites as well as attacks on Sunni mosques.[53]

While Mr. Maliki's fear-mongering sectarian political campaign which was built around a Sunni counter-revolution helped him to succeed in 2014 elections, it helped Baghdadi too. A little more than a year following the start of widespread Sunni protest, during which Maliki refused to give any concessions, IS was at the outskirts of Baghdad. By June 2014, with the help of local Sunnis, IS had captured Sunni dominated provinces of Nineveh, Salahuddin and parts of Diyala, and proclaimed its Caliphate.[54]

## Conclusion

This research paper examined the extent to which both the US intervention in Iraq in 2003 and sectarian conflict in the country and the region contributed to

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[51]  Weiss and Hassan, *ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror*, 90.

[52]  Ibid., 91.

[53]  Ibid., 96–97.

[54]  Cockburn, *The Rise of Islamic State: ISIS and the New Sunni Revolution*, 48.

the rise and consolidation of IS. Based on the above analysis, both the US intervention in 2003 and ethnic conflict in Iraq and the region did contribute to the rise and consolidation of IS. While the US intervention contributed to the rise, popularity and strengthening of the insurgency, sectarian conflict contributed to the consolidation and sustainment of the group.

It was argued that the US intervention in Iraq and its aftermath contributed to the rise and consolidation of IS in the following ways: First, it created a strategic cause for mobilization and popularity of the insurgency that eventually evolved to IS. Second, weakness of the counterinsurgents, deemed as a prerequisite of a successful insurgency, allowed a strengthening of the insurgency. Political weakness of counterinsurgents included the weak legitimacy, the lack of a post-intervention plan and poor policy decisions such as de-Ba'athification and disbanding of the Iraqi army. Military weakness referred to the challenges of insufficient troops and the lack of a COIN doctrine in the initial phase of the intervention.

While the US military adapted its strategy and extra troops were deployed, which succeeded in reducing violence and weakening the insurgency, the lack of a long-term commitment from the US, unwelcoming attitude of Iraqi government and premature withdrawal of US troops led to a revival of the insurgency. Finally, administrative weakness, including inability to provide services to the people, limited government's ability to win over the population. Further it was argued that the US-run detention facilities served as Jihadi universities for indoctrination of fighters and networking among senior AQI leaders who, later on, assumed leadership responsibilities in the Islamic State.

Sectarian conflict in Iraq and the region, it was argued, contributed to the rise and consolidation of IS in the following ways. First, a sectarian security dilemma in the region following the Islamic revolution of Iran prompted Saudi Arabia's decision to fund the proliferation of Salafism/Wahhabism – an ideology that inspires extremist groups and provides the intellectual foundations for IS. Secondly, the overthrow of Saddam further intensified the sectarian security dilemma and funding from Saudi Arabia and its allies to Sunni insurgent groups to balance the shift of power to Shias in the region. The resultant continuation of conflict in Syria enabled IS to capture large swaths of territory and declare al-Raqqa its capital. Finally, sectarian policies of Prime Minister Maliki and exclusion of Iraqi Sunni communities from power led to their support for IS, enhancing its capabilities to capture Sunni-dominated provinces in Iraq and eventually proclaim its Caliphate.

There are a number of lessons learned and policy implications that may be drawn from this analysis. The Islamic State is a very sophisticated political, military and ideological terrorist group that has used the sectarian conflict and external intervention to mobilize fighters and justify its atrocities. To defeat this group, the right political solution, a strong will and long-term commitment will be required. Firstly, a political solution which could address the security dilemma as well as the political, economic and religious rights of Sunni communi-

ties in Iraq and Syria is a precondition for the defeat of the terrorist group. Secondly, a population-centric counterinsurgency strategy which could clear the territories of IS and keep the terrorists out by protecting the population and providing them security will be required over a long period of time to succeed. Thirdly, a regional agreement which addresses the security concerns of the main regional players such as Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey is needed for long-term security and stability in the region.

Another lesson learned is that external intervention creates a strategic cause for mobilization and may strengthen insurgencies. COIN campaigns require long-term commitment and considerable resources, which is oftentimes difficult to make or put in place. Therefore, it is better not to intervene in the first place where possible. However, wherever inevitable, the intervention should be well-planned and well-resourced with a legitimacy and long-term commitment to convince the people and insurgents that the government will eventually win. As the "surge" and some other cases of intervention such as Northern Ireland, Malaya and NATO intervention in Bosnia showed, a well-planned and resourced counterinsurgency campaign with long-term commitment could in fact succeed in stabilizing the situation and defeating the insurgency.

## About the author

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**Research Article**

# A Euro Border Guard and Hybrid Warfare. An Art Theft Perspective: Human Dimensions and a Moral Imperative

## *Charles Hill*

**Abstract**: Art theft, particularly the looting of works of art from antiquity, is an element of today's terrorism. Stealing and looting art works, including theft by destruction, are ancient and continuing practices. To counter art theft, modern hybrid, multifaceted or multidimensional warfare requires innovation. Integrated with the human dimension in countering art theft, there is an enduring moral imperative to combat and contain the worst effects of looting and the theft of art through anti-terrorism work. The idea of a European Army may be better thought of and developed as a Euro Border Guard, a gendarmerie with anti-smuggling art and antiquities training, leaving NATO to continue its mission.

**Keywords**: Human dimension, moral imperative, art, antiquities, Sun Tzu, Liddell Hart, Huba Wass de Czege.

Before 9/11, when Mohammed Atta was at Hamburg's Technical University, Atta made an attempt to sell stolen Afghan antiquities to subsidize the cost of his flying school training in the United States. The archaeologist at the University of Gottingen to whom he made his approach in 1999 declined it, but it is indicative of one Islamist fanatic's mindset.[1] Atta was not alone in his thinking.

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[1] Atta's attempted antiquities dealings are reported by Heather Pringle, "New Evidence Ties Illegal Antiquities Trade to Terrorism, Violent Crime," *National Geographic Magazine* 6, no. 13 (June 2014), accessed August 23, 2016, http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/06/140613-looting-antiquities-archaeology-cambodia-trafficking-culture/, derived from German intelligence service sources, the Bundesnachrichtendienst.

Antiquities from the Middle East, North Africa and Central and South Asia are useful in the world of Islamist fanaticism as potential money earners and for iconoclasm.

For centuries, theft in the art world has been of basically two types, stealing or looting in a conventional sense and theft by deception. In English law,[2] "theft itself is dishonestly appropriating the property belonging to another with the intention of permanently depriving the owner of it; and the terms 'thief' and 'steal' are construed accordingly." Theft by deception includes fakes, forgeries, and frauds of all kinds, including theft through intentionally bogus provenance and wrongful attribution. This art fraud category of crime is where money is made by art crooks. However, there has been an upsurge in another kind of theft through the rise of international terrorism in recent decades – theft by destruction. (A development of cyber crime in the future may well develop art fraud and theft by algorithm as well.) But curiously, art theft also often presents an Achilles' heel for thieves in terrorist organizations, organized crime and for disorganized criminals.

Theft by destruction is a relatively new expression for an old concept. It occurs when art objects are destroyed and objects of cultural history are extirpated by their destruction. In recent decades, the Bamiyan buddhas in Afghanistan were destroyed by the Taliban, many medieval Sufi shrines were smashed by Ansar Dine (an Al Qaeda franchise) in Timbuktu, Mali in 2012, and important buildings and objects in Palmyra, Syria were destroyed by Da'esh in 2015. The dismal list goes on and on, with religious shrines of many varieties in Pakistan, Iraq and elsewhere blown up in the past two decades, often with devotees, pilgrims and tourists around them massacred. The World Trade Center's Twin Towers in New York on 9/11 can be viewed as theft by destruction of those examples of architectural art, whatever their value as shrines of mammon to the Al Qaeda fanatics who destroyed them, or to others who viewed them on the Manhattan skyline.

In Western Judaeo-Christian civilization with its great input from medieval Islam, a human and moral basis for countering theft begins with the *Book of Genesis* concept of stewardship, and is explicit in one of the Ten Commandments, "Thou shalt not steal" (in the English words in the 1611 *King James Version* of the *Bible*). The concept of stewardship is a moral imperative rather than a morally relative matter, and extends to the worldly domain in which we live, in which our ancestors lived and our descendants will. It is a teaching among Koranic *People of the Book*, the monotheists of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and we influence one another and many who do not share it with us.

Hybrid or multifaceted warfare is seen in the calculations of Sun Tzu's *Art of War*, Captain Basil Liddell Hart's *Indirect Approach*, and Captain Wass' *Jedi*

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2    The definition of theft in English law can be found in *Section 1 (1), Theft Act 1968*. See J.C. Smith, *The Law of Theft*, Second Edition (London: Butterworths, 1972), 8ff. Also in English law, the Criminal Damage Act 1971 deals inadequately with the destruction of art.

*Knight* ideas. All provide insights into where we are today, and with them here in this article comes an added art crime perspective. The use of the word hybrid is convenient shorthand for multifaceted warfare. Multidimensional may be better.

Sun Tzu was a Chinese warrior who wrote about military strategy roughly two and a half millennia ago. Of the many *Art of War* translations and commentaries in English, Samuel B. Griffith's translation with a foreword by B.H. Liddell Hart (Oxford, 1963) is comprehensive, especially about the crucial use of informants and information to develop war fighting intelligence.[3] Reading Clausewitz is the alternative, for what it's worth in our era of warfare with terrorists that may last a long time.

Captain Liddell Hart served as a British Army infantry officer in the First World War. The horrors of trench warfare prompted him to design his ideas of the indirect approach which he published early in the Second World War. His strategy was essentially that armies should advance and fight along lines of least resistance and leaders should be innovative.[4]

Captain Wass – Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege (US Army Retired) was the company commander of A Company in the 3d Battalion of the 503d Parachute Infantry Regiment, 173d Airborne Brigade in 1968-69, based at Bao Loc in the Central Highlands of Vietnam. I know that because I was a 11B2P[5] in November Platoon, C Company, the 3d of the 503d at that time. Wass was an innovative thinker and carried an impressive Bowie knife. My own company

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3   A more recent translation of Sun Tzu's *Art of War* by John Minford (Penguin, 2002) is terse and trenchant, but conveys a comparable strength of character as a text and the ambition to be an instruction book, although it is more oriented to business managers than to soldiers' leaders. A coffee table size edition is also available from the Folio Society in London (2007). It is essentially a reprint of Roger Ames' translation published by Ballantine Books of Random House in 1993, but with a preface by General Sir Rupert Smith applying Sun Tzu's ideas to his command of UN forces in the 1995 relief of Sarajevo. Sun Tzu is worth reading in whatever form you find his thoughts about multifaceted and hybrid aspects of warfare, and especially on gathering information and developing that into intelligence through the use of agents. For that, see Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, translated by Samuel B. Griffiths (Oxford: OUP, 1963), 144–149.

4   Basil Liddell Hart, *The Way to Win Wars: The Indirect Approach* (London: Faber and Faber, 1942). Sir Basil was controversial among fellow historians in his later writing on strategy because he interviewed German generals after the war and is supposed to have convinced them to say to him that they implemented his ideas in their *Blitzkrieg*, a term that he coined for them. Although there may be some truth to that gibe, who knows? What is known as *Sayre's Law*, named after a Columbia University political scientist, is "Academic politics is the most vicious and bitter form of politics because the stakes are so low."

5   11B2P is a Military Occupational Specialty (MOS), Light Weapons Infantry, Junior NCO, Parachute qualified. The TOE (Tables of Organization and Equipment) of the 173d Airborne Brigade Combat Team today has two battalions of airborne infantry, and plenty of artillery, armored vehicles, helicopter units and support services.

commander was Captain Harold Crowe, a Green Beret survivor. Both were heroes to men who fought under them.

Captain Wass, instead of sticking to jungle paths to search out the enemy, who for us were an assortment of Viet Cong and North Vietnamese units, used to get his men to cut up and down streams and rivers, blue lines on the maps we had, and intercept enemy forces that way. It was all small unit fighting at the squad and platoon level to fit the terrain and enemy, and the basic equipment we had. The rest of us, in other line companies, hacked our way through the vine-entwined hell of triple canopy rain forest with machetes, making a lot of noise and generally going nowhere, slowly following the fantasy trails and contours drawn by army cartographers. There is no point in overly complaining about our soldiering substance and style then. That's the way it was.

Captain Wass went on from Vietnam to become one of the innovators of the post-Vietnam US Army.[6] He became known as a *Jedi Knight* at the time of the first Iraq War in Operation Desert Storm, and he had ideas which integrated AirLand Battle Doctrine into small wars much more effectively than we had seen in the Central Highlands years before. In retirement, he is still involved in hybrid warfare thinking as a civilian military strategist and consultant at the School of Advanced Military Studies at the United States Army Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth.[7]

Captain Wass was a Sun Tzu-thinking, inspirational kind of leader, and a follower of Liddell Hart's indirect approach. The present 173d Airborne Brigade Combat Team, based in Vincenza, Italy owes much to him in the way it is organized, equipped and ready to fight, as does the modern US Army.

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[6] Joe Kubert, *Dong Xoai, Vietnam 1965* (New York: DC Comics Library, 2010). This book is called a graphic novel. Captain Crowe is Carter in this illustrated book (for no apparent reason), but his role in the battle and his real name do appear in the Detachment A-342 appendix.

[7] Colonel Huba Wass de Czege, US Army, "How to Change an Army," *Military Review* LXIV, no. 11 (November 1984): 33–49. From this seminal article, General Norman Schwarzkopf's *Jedi Knights* prepared for battle in the First Gulf War. The only aspect of Captain Wass' trenchant views on reforming the US Army after Vietnam that are questioned by this loyal admirer of his, US 51668287 Hill, is his reliance on highly trained officers. Good enlisted men, particularly NCOs, are worth their weight in gold in small wars: read Matti Friedman's *Pumpkin Flowers* (Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books, 2016) about an Israeli Defense Force infantry outpost on a hill in Lebanon in 1998. Friedman also wrote *The Aleppo Codex* (Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books, 2013) about pages of a book that went missing after it was recovered from the Great Synagogue of Aleppo in 1947. The missing pages went missing in the 1950s with the remainder of it now in the Shrine of the Book in Jerusalem. The entire manuscript codex had been stolen by Frankish knights in the First Crusade (in 1099, during the sack of Jerusalem) but Saladin had dispossessed them of it and kept it in Alexandria (where Maimonides consulted it) until the merchants of Aleppo bought the Codex back from him. The Codex was the first complete Hebrew bible, and known as *The Crown*. The worst of Crusaders' theft and destruction of art, however, was their sacking of Constantinople in 1204 at the start of the Fourth Crusade.

The connection with Italy and hybrid warfare is striking and continues. In October 1969, Caravaggio's famous painting of the *Nativity with St. Francis and St. Lawrence* was stolen in Palermo from the Oratory of St. Lawrence. Within days, an attempt to steal another Sicilian Caravaggio from the Church of St. Lucy in Syracuse Cathedral square was made. In both cases, the Mafia was rightly blamed, but their apologists claimed that these art crimes were committed because of actions by the oppressive Italian State against them.[8] That is nonsensical self-justification which we need to fight.

To make their own point clearer, in May 1993, *La Cosa Nostra* exploded a car bomb outside the Uffizi Gallery in Florence that killed six people and destroyed three 17th century paintings. Those six dead were simply disregarded as collateral damage by the Mafia in what they considered to be their armed struggle with the Italian government, or at least that part of the government they had not already suborned. The Uffizi is one of the two major art museums in Florence and it was targeted for its importance to Italian society and to national and international culture.[9]

In 1974, an IRA gang stole masterpiece paintings from Russborough, a Palladian mansion in the Dublin Mountains, County Wicklow.[10] That theft of art included works by Vermeer, Rubens and Goya. It was fortunate that the leader of the gang, Eddie Gallagher, had a posh debutante girlfriend, Bridget Rose Dugdale. The paintings were recovered within months in the west of Ireland at her parents' summer house. At her trial the English Rose said that she and her accomplices stole the paintings in order to get two IRA prisoners serving their sentences in England repatriated to prisons in Ireland. Two others in that gang later went on to Colombia to instruct FARC in the use of mortars and explosives. In 1986, a Dublin gang with connections to both the IRA and Northern Irish Protestant terrorists in the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) again hit Russborough and stole the same paintings.[11] That gang was led by Martin Cahill, known as *The General*, about whom two Hollywood gangster films have been made. By 1993, all of the paintings stolen by Cahill's gang had been recovered except for two small Francesco Guardi *capriccio* scenes, and this success was due to the sensible use of criminal informants. I know that because I dealt with those informants.

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[8] Giovanni Falcone, with Marcelle Padovani, *Men of Honour: The Truth about the Mafia* (London: Fourth Estate, 1992), 161–162. This book is Judge Falcone's last testament before he was murdered by the Mafia in May 1992. Also, Bill Emmott, *Good Italy, Bad Italy: Why Italy Must Conquer Its Demons to Face the Future* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2012). Emmott was the editor of *The Economist* magazine and made himself unpopular with Silvio Berlusconi with this book.

[9] Falcone, *Men of Honour*.

[10] Edward Dolnick, *The Rescue Artist* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005); and, in the UK as *Stealing the Scream* (Cambridge: Icon Books, 2007).

[11] Dolnick, *The Rescue Artist / Stealing the Scream,* "The General," 56–60. Michael Burleigh, *Blood & Rage: A Cultural History of Terrorism* (London: Harper, 2008), 342.

On the night of St. Patrick's Day 1990, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston was robbed at gunpoint by two men wearing Boston Police Department uniforms.[12] The haul of paintings and two other items they stole are worth purportedly half a billion dollars, making this in dollar terms the highest value art crime ever. In the following years to the present, the FBI has pursued leads indicating that Italian Americans with Mafia connections committed that art robbery. The FBI's *Top Echelon Informant* in 1990 was a Boston Irishman named Whitey Bulger, one of whose brothers had close personal connections with the IRA hierarchy. The informants for the FBI in this case appear to have been counter-productive. It will become a case study in ineffective informant handling one day.

It would seem that the FBI took the wrong road twenty-five years ago. The Bureau has been pursuing the wrong trail to recover the Gardner Museum works of art: it was probably not the American-linked *Cosa Nostra* but the pre-*Good Friday Agreement* IRA that was involved. Of course, it may have been other thieves, freelance operators, neither Mafia- nor IRA-related, but there are many open and unanswered questions about the FBI's investigation over the past quarter of a century. The significant aspect of that art robbery was the copy-cat nature to Martin Cahill's art crimes. It may be that the wrong people have influenced the Gardner investigation. In 1994, Cahill was murdered by the IRA for his links to the Protestant terrorist UVF.

Also in 1994, at the start of the Winter Olympics held in Lillehammer, Norway, the original version of Edvard Munch's *Scream* was stolen from the National Gallery in Oslo. Again in 2004, also in Oslo but from the Munch Museum, another version of *The Scream* was stolen. The 1994 set of thieves were local thugs, but the 2004 set were largely Kosovar Albanians living in Gothenburg, Sweden who had committed an armed robbery on a NOKAS cash in transit vehicle in Stavanger, Norway a few months earlier, wearing camouflage clothes with automatic weapons. They murdered a local police officer. To be a distraction crime, they organized that armed robbery of the second version of *The Scream*. With colleagues from Oslo and London, I was an undercover police officer in the 1994 recovery, but as a retired cop in 2004, my activities and interest in the second art crime were spurned when I pointed out the multinational nature of the people involved in the crime. However, the Oslo police did recover that second version of *The Scream* two years later in 2006 with a blandishment of a million M&Ms reward to one of the organizers of the crime, a chocoholic of Albanian background named David Toska. Informants are key to solving art crime, and the wider the informants' international links are, the more useful they can be. Of course, they can be self-serving liars too.

In the months before 9/11, giant Buddha statues were destroyed by the Taliban in Bamiyan, a remote area of central Afghanistan. One had been in

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[12]  Ulrich Boser, *The Gardner Heist* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008), 113ff.

place for over eighteen hundred years.[13] Although there is no authority in the Koran to destroy images such as those giant stone buddhas, there are a few religious texts (*hadiths*) from Islamic antiquity that positively advise against representation in art. Fanatics in Islam are therefore comparable to the fanatics in the sixteenth and seventeenth century Protestant Reformation who destroyed the images of medieval Catholic Christianity, or the iconoclasts within the Greek Orthodox Church in the eighth and ninth centuries. The secular French Revolution and the Russian Revolution were both destructive and iconoclastic. Historical perspective tends to help winnow out theft fads from ideological or theological madness.

The American War of Independence was neither destructive nor iconoclastic. The significance of that was summed up about a hundred and sixty years after the American Revolution by General Eisenhower at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York on April 2, 1946, "... I do know that for democracy, at least, there always stand beyond the materialism and destructiveness of war the ideals for which it is fought." He then went on to speak about a post-war resurgence of attention to cultural values.[14]

Interestingly, when Al Qaeda bands (known locally as Ansar Dine) came out of the Sahara Desert and attacked Timbuktu, Mali, in 2012, they were hell-bent on destroying the Muslim shrines of medieval Sufi saints and the Islamic librar-

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[13]  K. Warikoo, ed., *Bamiyan: Challenge to World Heritage* (New Delhi: Third Eye, 2002), xi and 14; see also, Rohan Gunaratna and Khuram Iqbal, *Pakistan: Terrorism Ground Zero* (London: Reaktion Books, 2011). See on p. 91 a list of targets. It is worth comparing the Taliban/Al Qaeda/Da'esh mentalities with Protestant Reformation fanatics in Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002); Noah Charney, ed., *Art Crime: Terrorists, Tomb Raiders*, *Forgers and Thieves* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), containing Matthew Bogdanos, "Thieves of Baghdad: And the Terrorists They Finance," 118–131. This chapter is adapted from Colonel Bogdanos' book, *Thieves of Baghdad* (New York and London: Bloomsbury, 2005). Jason Burke, *The New Threat from Islamic Militancy* (London: The Bodley Head, 2015), 44–45 for the Wahhabi sect's cult of destruction. Alan Besancon's *The Forbidden Image: An Intellectual History of Iconoclasm*, translated by Jane Marie Todd (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 78–79. *The Art Newspaper* online, 27 September 2016 for al-Madhi's sentence.

[14]  A photograph in the US National Archives from the year before his Metropolitan Museum speech (April 12, 1945) showed General Eisenhower in the Merkers saltmine near the Harz Mountains in his Class A military uniform (flat hat, tie and belted trench coat look) with General Bradley and General Patton in their helmet liners and ODs (olive drab fatigues – or BDU, battle dress uniform) looking at loot the Nazis had stolen from millions of murdered Jews, and others. Compare that photo with available archive photographs of Field Marshall Herman Goering looking at his looted art collection. The year after Ike's Metropolitan Museum speech (General Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Art in Peace and War" in *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* (New Series) 4, no. 9 (May, 1946), 221–223), in May 1947 to alumni at the Harvard University graduation, General Marshall unveiled his Plan to rebuild Western European civilization. Now we need to preserve it and to help others rebuild.

ies that had been collected from over half a millennium. Recently, at the International Court of Justice at The Hague, an Al Qaeda leader in Timbuktu, Ahmad al-Faqi al Madi, appealed to the Court that he had seen the light and repented of his iconoclasm. The Court decided to convict and sentenced him to nine years' imprisonment. It will be worth knowing what his fellow iconoclasts in Al Qaeda and Da'esh make of that repentance and his sentence, if anything.

Da'esh attempted to destroy the antiquities of Palmyra in 2015/16 but they were then forced to retreat back towards Raqqa on the Euphrates near Iraq. In August 2016, to celebrate their victory over Da'esh, Russians brought a symphony orchestra to Palmyra and played music where Da'esh had tortured, beheaded and crucified the torso of Khaled al-Asaad, the 83 year old archaeologist and caretaker of the site a few months earlier. From Damascus itself, the Syrian Antiquities director-general, visiting an International Cultural Summit in Edinburgh, said that three-quarters of the looted antiquities seized in anti-smuggling operations have proved to be fakes. They include fake ancient Bibles and Korans.[15] Remember that theft by deception is still theft.

Hybrid, multifaceted, multidimensional warfare, requires consideration of both cultural and anti-cultural elements in conflict, just as General Eisenhower spoke about it directly after the Second World War, and just as the Russians with their symphony orchestra in Palmyra in midsummer 2016 played it. Art theft by destruction, with art theft of all kinds, is a part of our wider world of warfare.

What is to be done?[16] Those old words of Lenin translated into English suggest that something should be done, and as Ike suggested in 1946, things can be done with positive outcomes. The Marshall Plan helped to achieve those. Today that means innovation integrated with our resources, perhaps best through an indirect approach to the problems of art theft by Islamist fanatics. Sun Tzu, Captain Basil Liddell Hart and Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege reveal that intellectual grasp.

For a start we could improve policing, particularly at borders (including ports and airports). In paramilitary policing contexts, where objects are being transported across boundaries and they are either in the direct control of art thieves and dishonest handlers, or conveyed by their proxies.

Stolen art and looted antiquities can feature more prominently in terms of stop, search, arrest and seizure where necessary. Talking sensibly to the person stopped and searched is highly important.

Second, anti-theft laws can be tightened internationally, and more importantly nationally. Law enforcement could be directed to consider the significance of art crime as a potential Achilles' heel to criminal organizations, whether specifically terrorist-oriented or against quasi-gangster state opera-

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[15] Tim Cornwell, "Three-quarters of seized artefacts are fakes, says Syrian official," *The Art Newspaper*, no. 282 (September 2016), 5.

[16] Vladimir I. Lenin, "What is to be done," *Iskra*, no. 4 (May 1901); and in paperback (London: CreateSpace, 2014), p. 196 of Leninism.

tions. Military units in conflict zones can assist paramilitary border forces with that objective.

Third, a far better use of live informants could and should be encouraged for law enforcement officials. In each of the stolen art recoveries mentioned above in this article, all those operations were informant-led. That means the informants did not run the operations but they did provide crucial information. Better training in the use and handling of informants is the key to successful recoveries for stolen art and looted antiquities. Also, an under-used kind of information gathering is through Open Source, or Internet-related, material that does not require an Interception of Communications Warrant. The development of electronic eavesdropping can corroborate what human source informants say, and provide established links to others, and their locations.

The EU Commission's recent bright idea of a European Army (2015-16) [17] could be more effectively re-figured as an effective paramilitary border guard given the right training and organization. In fact, Retired Brigadier General Wass de Czege (once a Staff Officer at NATO in Brussels) should be consulted. He would know how to do it. His key to successful innovation is integration. The EU Commission's best bet would be to complement NATO, and not to try organizing a parallel universe.

What used to be referred to as consciousness-raising is an integral part of educating and assisting in the fight against art crime; against looting, stealing and faking in all of their guises. Although stolen art in wartime and in small wars against terrorists is not a central issue in the War on Terror, it is a significant peripheral matter and one that can assist democratic societies to order their priorities in the fight and when the fight is over. After all, what are we fighting for if not a civilized society for our own and future generations, and as an acknowledgement of past disasters in human civilizations?

Kenneth Clark was an eminent aesthete in the late twentieth century who produced a book and TV series called *Civilization*. In it he wrote and said to camera, "...order is better than chaos, creation better than destruction. I prefer gentleness to violence, forgiveness to vendetta. On the whole I think that knowledge is preferable to ignorance, and I am sure that human sympathy is more valuable than ideology. I believe that in spite of the recent triumphs of science, men haven't changed much in the last two thousand years; and in consequence we must try to learn from history. History is ourselves." And then he added, "Above all, I believe in the God-given genius of certain individuals, and I value a society that makes their existence possible." [18] (By certain individuals he meant the great artists of antiquity, of yesterday and today.)

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[17]  Andrew Sparrow, "Jean-Claude Juncker calls for EU Army," *The Guardian online*, March 8, 2015 (in order to save face with Russia), accessed August 7, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/mar/08/jean-claude-juncker-calls-for-eu-army-european-commission-miltary.

[18]  Kenneth Clark, *Civilisation* (London: John Murray, 2005) (first published by the BBC in 1969), 245–246. A warning when we win our War on Terror in Alistair Horne, *Hubris:*

We need to work on innovative ideas and indirect approaches that will enable us to achieve that. Preserving major works of art from antiquity to our present, and for our future, necessitates it.

## About the author

Charles Hill served two years in the US Army, after volunteering for the Draft (conscription) in 1967 he had basic, infantry and parachute training. On returning from Vietnam, he received a BA in History from George Washington University (Washington, DC) and was a Fulbright Scholar at Trinity College Dublin. Having retired as a Detective Chief Inspector from the Metropolitan Police (New Scotland Yard) in London in 1997, he works at recovering stolen and looted works of art worldwide. *E-mail:* hillartrisk@aol.com.

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*The Tragedy of War in the Twentieth Century* (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2015).