Looking for a 'Berlin-Plus in Reverse'? NATO in Search of a New Strategic Concept

by Arnold Kammel and Benjamin Zyla

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As NATO celebrated its 60th anniversary, its leaders agreed at last year's Strasbourg/Kehl Summit to replace the outdated 1999 Washington Strategic Concept. This was the right decision as events over the past decade rendered the old strategic concept obsolete. New security risks and challenges included terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and global climate change and energy security. While NATO's track record in the 1990s was solid, the question arises: is it time for strategic consolidation and reflection? The answer is yes, and NATO is well advised to not only reduce those strategic deliberations to agreeing on a new Strategic Concept. Rather, with the Albright report on the future of NATO in hand, the new strategic concept offers one of the rare opportunities to re-define when, where, how, and why NATO needs to act and where not, and thus to engage the allies in a continuous process of strategic thinking. In other words, this is the right moment to publicly engage in a debate about a new grand strategic bargain and to consolidate some of the diverging forces in the alliance rather than simply refurbishing the old strategic concepts as was done the last two times around.

Beginning with the events in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), the Western Balkans, and NATO's operation Allied Force in Kosovo, the alliance began to search for a new identity that would justify its continued existence. In the 1990s, NATO kept busy by managing the enlargement of the alliance to its present twenty-eight members, thus extending both its capabilities and commitments across continental Europe. Above all, it managed to control the violence in the Balkans, to engage former enemies in Central and Eastern Europe, and to sustain a counterinsurgency operation in Afghanistan. At the same time, other European organizations such as the European Union (EU) also acquired security functions of their own. As part of the EU integration process, the EU established an autonomous security and defense pillar, the so-called European Security and

Defence Policy (ESDP). It launched its first operations under the ESDP flag in 2003, which were at least partly independent of NATO. In short, the EU became a strategic and operational competitor of NATO.

Moreover, with the Cold War's end, divergent views arose among Atlantic democracies concerning the added value of the alliance. To start with, the United States increasingly saw NATO as a tool to project its own power abroad and beyond Europe.[1] It instrumentalized NATO as a means for dealing with *global security* issues and for pursuing American rather than allied interests, e.g. the "war against terrorism" and the intervention in Iraq in 2003. In contrast, the majority of western European states saw NATO as an instrument for consolidating the project of maintaining peace and security in Europe (*regional security*), contending that the alliance should maintain its regional focus rather than acquiring global mandates. Moreover, the new member states of CEE, particularly the Baltic states, had joined the organisation on the basis of Article 5, expecting that NATO would defend them against threats from Russia. In other words, their understandings of allied security remain grounded in the narrow or Cold War conceptions of *territorial security*. This rift among global, regional, and territorial ambitions of an alliance makes it particularly difficult for military planners to manage the military aspects of the alliance in the years to come.

These facts, along with the increase in the number of new security actors, have resulted in the unintentional transformation of NATO into a hybrid organization without a clear strategic rationale. On the one hand, it remains a military alliance designed to provide mutual assistance for its member states; on the other hand, it became an organisation for international crisis management that would increasingly act beyond its traditional areas of operation.[2] At the same time, NATO it did not fall apart, going from strength to strength while finding new ways to address Europe's new security concerns. However, it did so in the absence of a new strategic vision that would allow it to manage these vast new security tasks. Military operations became the driving force and left little time to think about a new grand strategy.

Ironically, since NATO was busier than ever, its value has become "less obvious to many than in the past."[3] Therefore, a clear definition of what NATO is doing and could do, thereby demonstrating its role in international stability and peace would be vital in order to retain public backing and financial support. The search for NATO's added value should not be limited to the discussions of its future role in international security policy; it must also be placed in the context of its role in the immediate European neighborhood

[1] See e.g. Bacevich, Andrew J. 2010. "Let Europe be Europe: Why the United States must withdraw from NATO." *Foreign Policy* March/April.; Jamie Shea at the 140th Bergedorfer Gesprächskreis, Report by the Körber Stiftung, p. 36. Available at: http://www.koerber-stiftung.de/fileadmin/bg/PDFs/bnd_140_en.pdf, or Gompert, Kugler (1995).

[2] Schreer/Farwick (2009), p. 37.

[3] NATO 2020, p. 5.

(above all Russia and Pakistan) and an instance of international burden-sharing in Afghanistan.

There are at least three arguments for doing so. First, Article 4 of the Washington Treaty has become vitally important for managing an increasingly diverse and complex alliance. Second, in order to remain relevant in international security affairs, NATO needs to solve its complicated and at times competitive relationship with the European Union. Finally, NATO is in need of an overhaul of its current burden sharing regime.

The Core Elements of the Report

With a new U.S. administration in office and France re-joining the military structures of NATO, the moment was ripe at its 60th anniversary to task NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen with developing a new strategic concept by the end of 2010. He selected a group of experts who were tasked with starting an open debate on NATO's future organisation, structure, and purpose. Former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, was appointed as chair of this expert group, and the group began its work in September 2009, conducting seminars and consultations on both sides of the Atlantic. The result was a 'consensus report' rather than one that stressed a new approach. The first interim report was submitted to the North Atlantic Council on 24 November 2009; the final report, entitled *NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement* was presented on 17 May 2010. Although much anticipated, the report contained few surprises for informed observers of transatlantic politics.

The report by the group of experts was *not* the new Strategic Concept per se but rather a detailed summary of the discussions within the group. In that sense, the elaborate analysis in *NATO 2020* was intended to provide recommendations and guidelines for the Secretary General to draft a new Strategic Concept for the November 2010 summit in Lisbon where leaders unanimously adopted the document entitled *Active Engagement, Modern Defence*.

The group was given two central questions to discuss. First, how can NATO deal with the new modern challenges and risks; and second, which added value could NATO as an organisation provide to security in the North-Atlantic sphere and beyond?

NATO 2020 recommends bridging the current divergent strategic conceptions by balancing its growing temptation for global security issues – such as in Afghanistan, Iraq, fighting pirates, and addressing human and humanitarian disasters – with (military) reassurances to its members. In light of the war in Georgia in 2008 this is indeed a major concern. According to this argument, the new strategic concept should *not* strive to redefine but renew and update its sixty-plus years old promise enshrined in Article 5. This "return to the roots," so the argument, would strengthen NATO's internal cohesion and vigor, making it clear that NATO is a *regional* rather than a *global*

organization. The new strategic concept should remind NATO members of their collective defence responsibilities in Europe.

Moreover, allies should be reminded of Article 4 of the Washington Treaty, to "consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened." In other words, Article 4 stresses the need to share information, promote convergence of allied views, and lays the groundwork for collective actions and decisions. It is thus equally important to Article 5.

Beyond strengthening internal coherence, the experts argued that the alliance must also recognize the rapidly changing pace of security issues and threats arising beyond NATO's territory. In line with the previous two strategic concepts, *NATO 2020* recognized that the security environment has changed dramatically since 1999 when the current strategic concept was adopted. Transnational terrorist networks, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, piracy, and electronic cyber attacks, to name only a few, have become the latest additions to contemporary security threats. For defence planners this range of global challenges calls for versatile and efficient military forces with proven expeditionary capabilities.

Yet, the downside of this globally operating NATO clearly is its price tag. Transforming conventional forces into "networked" soldiers costs money that NATO taxpayers especially in times of current fiscal constraints and economic downturns, are unlikely to be willing to spend. The report recommended pooling military resources and logistics as well as specializing in (national) "niche" capabilities, spending scarce defence dollars more efficiently in order to avoid the duplication of common funding for defense projects. Along the same lines, member states were reminded to increase their defence spending up to a minimum of 2 percent of their gross domestic product (GDP).

Recalling NATO's identity, as expressed in the 1999 Strategic Concept, and acknowledging that the requirements for the fulfillment have shifted, the report stresses that NATO's core commitment remains collective defense. Additionally, the alliance must remain vigilant and be prepared to protect its members against unconventional threats that may not reach the level of Article 5. Furthermore, the report emphasizes the need to establish guidelines for operations out of NATO areas defining when and where its resources should be applied.

It goes on to argue that beyond concentrating on Europe, NATO should improve its relations with Russia. NATO officials are advised to employ a "carrot-and-stick-approach" – that is to reassure its new members of the validity of Article 5 while, at the same time, engaging Russia through the NATO-Russia Council (NRC). Moscow should not be portrayed as a potential threat but as a potential partner, especially on issues that are of mutual interest to both. Those include missile defence, counterterrorism, maritime security, the fight against the trade of narcotics, and the proliferation of WMD's.

The report also encourages the alliance to expand on its existing network of partners and friends. NATO, the experts hold, should deepen its partnerships with countries outside of the Euro-Atlantic region by increasing their shared activities and by exploring new links with regional political and security groupings, including the Organisation of American States (OAS), the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. While pursuing those (global) network opportunities, the alliance should be conscious of its own roles and capabilities: it does not need to lead every time a crisis or security issue occurs, and must recognize that it could also well operate in a support function for other organizations and missions.

What is NATO's Added Value?

What is NATO all about? NATO's history illustrates that the alliance tends to react rather than act on security issues before they become a concern. In the 'old days' of the Cold War, NATO doctrine called for absorbing an attack by an external aggressor before responding. Extensive conventional forces equipped with tactical nuclear weapons were postured in Germany precisely to deter a Warsaw Pact attack against Western Europe. NATO's collective responses, however, are no longer so clear-cut. Accordingly, the first thing NATO needs is a new and commonly agreed-upon threat assessment, prioritizing threats from top to bottom and allocating resources accordingly. These ranked threats will then determine the geographical scope of NATO's strategic engagements rather than the other way around. The process of drafting such a list is a political process. It should be regarded as such and be given sufficient space and time.

In addition to ranking threats, NATO needs to increase its visibility in international diplomacy. It should start to prevent and manage new and evolving crises rather than getting involved after a security issue has become problematic. The challenge here, no doubt, is how to broaden strategic consultations and political negotiations with other security actors, and how to improve the coordination of trans-Atlantic policy. The North Atlantic Council is by far the best and most experienced institution for effecting such consultation. The call for better consultations also touches upon a sensitive distinction between Articles 4 and 5 of the NATO Treaty. The former and *not* the latter will be the linchpin in the practice of the new strategic concept, and will serve as a vital tool for identifying areas of common concern, devising appropriate responses, and coordinating NATO actions with partner organizations and states.

Article 4 is praised as an opportunity for information sharing and the promotion of a convergence of views that, at least in theory, pave the way for successful action by the alliance. It is also the context in which "soft" security

issues are to be debated, including questions of energy and cyberspace security, which are understood as criminal acts of sabotage rather than military threats. For example, playing politics with energy supplies poses an economic security risk for allies. However, it is questionable whether this issue requires an Article 5 response or even if it should be discussed in the context of Article 5 at all. Similarly, while the latest strategic competitions in the Arctic clearly pose a national security threat to a number of NATO members, it is not clear as to how and why this should be considered a matter of collective security. The same applies to global initiatives such as "global zero" that attempt to delimit the use of nuclear force. Of course, while Article 5 still remains a centerpiece of the Washington Treaty, its meaning has changed with the end of the Cold War and the terrorist attacks on 9/11.

In addition, the past seven years have shown that Article 5 responses are no longer clear cut. After the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon in 2001, the alliance unanimously invoked Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. In practice, however, this collective defence clause was not reciprocated by the Americans. Washington only grudgingly agreed to accept NATO's collective military assistance. Three years later in 2004, commuter trains were bombed in Madrid, and NATO did not consider this as an attack on the alliance. It refrained from invoking Article 5 even though this incident clearly posed a national security threat to one of its members. Also, during the 2003 Iraq war, Turkey—a NATO member itself—asked its fellow allies for Patriot missile systems to help defend Turkey's airspace. The alliance brushed off Ankara's request and quipped that Turkey's security was not up to Ankara; NATO would be prepared to defend Turkey in case of an attack.

In sum, the difficult question that the practice of the new strategic concept has to answer in the next few years is the question of whether or not NATO wants to narrow or widen the gap between Articles 4 and 5. While the expert report held that there should be no direct linkage between the two, it seems clear that in the twenty-first century, Article 4 has trumped Article 5. Furthermore, NATO should recognize that it is a regional rather than a global organization, that its authority and resources are limited, and that U.S. pressure to move to a more global posture will not change that.

'Berlin plus in reverse?' and global consultative networks. The debate concerning whether NATO is a global or Euro-centric organization is a false one. It frames the discussion as a zero-sum game in which NATO can only be one or the other. The real discussion, however, should be about rebalancing strategic priorities, framing these in a win-win context for both the EU and NATO. The vehicle through which to achieve this is the North Atlantic Council.

The first and foremost priority of the alliance is the protection of its own interests as well as those of its members. A global NATO would dilute this privileged transatlantic bond, and water down the exclusivity of the transatlantic relationship. The real debate, therefore, is not about whether

NATO should be a regional or a global organization but what the constitutive norm[4] of territorial defence means in the 21st century when threats and challenges are increasingly non-territorial. To be sure, NATO's global ambitions should be based on functional rather than regional principles, and should avoid transforming NATO into a full-fledged global organization. Territorial defence should continue to be one of the foremost tasks of a military alliance. If this means that NATO operates primarily in Europe, then so be it. If territorial defence means doing business out-of-area, then clearly NATO has to become engaged there as well. Finally, if security interests (and threats) are of global nature, NATO should be able to act globally if necessary. The 'right' decision depends upon the prioritization of security threats. If indeed NATO decides to go global, that means it has succeeded in its fundamental mission, namely to pacify Europe. This clearly is not the case as, for example, the Balkans showcase. In short, the alliance is well advised to remain a Euro-centric institution while maintaining and managing political relations that permanently bind the EU, the United States, and Canada together.

This recommendation, no doubt, creates a condition of strategic schizophrenia: while on the one hand NATO should strengthen its territorial defence capabilities and reassure existing members – particularly those in Eastern Europe – of that collective commitment, the new strategic concept, on the other hand, should recognize that the principle of territorial defense has become increasingly meaningless in the twenty-first century as the world has become more globalized and interdependent than ever before. National security automatically means international security and vice versa. As a result, what NATO needs to do in the years to come is to conduct a sober analysis of the unwritten rules and structures of international diplomacy, and to address the polarizing questions of transatlantic burden sharing.

If NATO does act globally, however, it is only as good as its contacts. Its network becomes a pivotal resource for being a successful global actor. A network exhibits force multiplier effects, offers an additional source of intelligence information, military planning, consultation, and possibly troop contributions. Currently NATO's ties with non-NATO countries—with the exception for Australia, Finland, Japan, New Zealand, and Sweden—are largely underdeveloped. A proposal introduced by the U.S. to set up a unit at the headquarters in Brussels to nourish these new partnerships was rejected. Some European NATO countries especially feared that NATO would lose its

[4] For a discussion of constitutive norms (see Rawls, John. 1955. "Two Concepts of Justice." *Philosophical Review* 64:3-33; Katzenstein, Peter J. 1996. *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press; Finnemore, Martha, and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change." *International Organization* 52 (4):887-917; Ruggie, John Gerard. 1998. "What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge." *International Organization* 52 (4):855-84; Searle, John R. 1995. *The construction of social reality*. New York: Free Press).

transatlantic focus. The proposal also failed because some EU states were not too fond of an institutionalized partnership. Rather, they preferred "functional institutionalism"—that is deep institutional ties of other international organizations and like-minded states on an ad hoc and issue-by-issue basis. There is some currency to this argument in so far as NATO cannot and should not respond to every global crisis. It should concentrate on cases and issues where it holds a comparative advantage. This increases the chances for success, and averts strategic fatigue. Nonetheless, NATO is in desperate need for better relations with those states *and* institutions, including the United Nations (UN), the World Bank, and the African Union (AU).

The good news is that knitting and maintaining such a global network is, by no means, a novelty for the alliance. It should thus be relatively easy for officials to bolster them. Above all, the organization holds significant experience with engaging like-minded states and institutions. Especially in the regional context, NATO has formed a close—yet distinct—relationship with "other" security actors such as the European Union (EU). Recognizing that the two institutions share common strategic interests, they finalized the so-called 'Berlin-Plus' agreement in 2002, which paved the road for mutual cooperation in the spirit of complementarity and partnership. Specifically, "Berlin Plus" is a comprehensive package of agreements under which the EU is allowed to draw on NATO's military assets in order to conduct its own peace-operations. The use of NATO assets, however, is subject to the "right of refusal"—meaning that NATO must first decline to intervene in a given crisis, and that the approval of the use of those assets has to be made unanimously by all member states. For example, when NATO decided to terminate the Stabilization Force (SFOR) in the Balkans in 2004, the EU took over with EUFOR Althea, an EU-led operation that drew on NATO capabilities. In practice, however, these preconditions have already created difficulties; for example, when Turkey delayed decisions on EUFOR's "Operation Concordia," which replaced NATO's operation "Allied Harmony" in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

That is the theory. However, the reality looks much different. While "Berlin-Plus" allows the EU guaranteed access to NATO's military planning capabilities, NATO is not guaranteed an equivalent access to the EU in return. If NATO indeed decides to become a fully fledged global security organization, its network interests should first and foremost focus on the EU's civilian and financial assets and capabilities. This *mutually* institutionalized access would place the alliance in a unique position to fully furnish military *and* civilian operations. In other words, if NATO wants to gain civilian crisis management capabilities, it needs a 'Berlin-Plus in reverse' agreement—that is guaranteed access to Brussels' civilian capabilities, including its development resources. This guaranteed access would spare the alliance from the tedious debate over whether NATO should acquire so-called "comprehensive capabilities"—that is a combination of military, diplomatic and development resources. To be clear: NATO should not acquire operational comprehensiveness on its own; it should

only do so through the EU. This will avoid the duplication of scarce defence resources.

There are, however, at least two problems with 'Berlin-plus in reverse'. The first is that a number of EU countries including Austria, Sweden and Finland are weary of the EU seeking closer institutional ties with NATO, particularly because they do not own any institutionally guaranteed voting status in NATO and therefore have no room to influence and shape allied decisions. Also, they perceive NATO as the imperial toolbox of the United States, and as an organization that fosters American rather than European interests.[5] By voicing such opposition those EU members want to limit American influence in the EU and to maintain the autonomy of the EU's foreign and security policy. This is an understandable concern as an artificial dominance of the United States over Europe hinders rather than promotes an effective integration of policies in the domain of foreign and security policy in Europe.

A second problem with NATO employing the full extent of a "comprehensive approach" is that it would mean an extended invitation to other international organizations, including the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), as well as non-governmental organizations. This would make NATO's efforts fully "globally comprehensive." However, because these organizations have a tendency to see the military establishment as the problem in running those operations, it seems that the better fit of holding those capabilities rests with the EU rather than NATO. Brussels already exhibits institutionalized relationships with those organizations whereas NATO would have to develop those relationships from scratch.

Third, at the core of the NATO-EU dispute—and contrary to commonly held wisdom—is not the reintegration of France into the military structure of the alliance. Indeed, France is actively supporting an enlargement of the St. Malo agreement, and wants to see a more autonomous and capable EU. The source of tension stems from the ongoing conflict between Turkey and Greece. Athens is concerned that Turkey could use NATO assets to "solve" the Cyprus question as Turkey maintains 35,000 troops in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (KKTC). In turn, Ankara fears that it would be excluded from deliberations of using EU assets that could possibly be turned against Turkish interests. The point is that only if both the EU and NATO are able to solve this dispute will EU-NATO relations become normal.

What NATO should do is to promote and expand already existing networks. Indeed, the greatest and most experienced network that NATO exhibits is the institution of the Partnership for Peace (PfP). It is one of the most valuable assets that the alliance created at the Cold War's end,[6] and one that

[5] For the latest of this line of argumentation (see Bacevich, 2010).

[6] The institutional design of the PfP program was outlined by US Secretary of Defence Les Aspin in Travemünde, Germany, in October 1993. The plans were formally accepted on January 10, 1994 during the NATO Summit in Brussels.

could be easily drawn upon as necessary. PfP not only guarantees NATO institutionalized access to partners but also allows timely consultation on security issues. In addition, it places NATO in the position of being in demand in the sense that partner states naturally are attracted by what NATO has to offer. To this end, a Partnership Coordination Cell (PCC)[7] was established at SHAPE in Mons, Belgium, and stressed transparency as its highest principle. PfP's primary goal was to transform the societies and institutions of PfP countries and to help them adjust to the new socio-economic as well as political and security challenges of the post-Cold War era.[8] In military terms, the PfP network is hugely important for the alliance in questions of interoperability. It can also act as a force multiplier as it did in the Balkans in the 1990s by generating capabilities without necessarily being an operator itself. In other words, there is no logical reason why this causal link cannot be extended to the post-9/11 world. The PfP process implied an expansion as well as an intensification of political and military cooperation among its members.[9] Based on the principles of 'cooperative security,' PfP was a soft power tool of post-1989 diplomacy and designed to manage a diverse club of states inside and outside of Europe. Indeed, its ongoing existence and showcase of being in high demand testifies to the viability of this network as well as the "mother" institution.

International burden sharing. It seems to be commonly held wisdom among analysts that only a few EU-NATO members make a substantial military contribution to the alliance, especially in Afghanistan. The heavy lifting and fighting, so the belief goes, is left to major powers like the United States, Britain, and France. Former U.S. Secretary of Defence Robert M. Gates lamented that this creates a "two-tier alliance" where some allies are willing to fight and others, particularly continental Europeans, remain combat shy.[10] The added value of the EU-NATO states only lies in their ability to tap into the vast civilian resources of the EU. In addressing the threat of global terrorism, for example, the EU is able to combine a range of intelligence assets with mechanisms to disrupt terror financing, and linking them to criminal databases. NATO, as noted above, does not exhibit such capabilities.

While lamenting a "two-tier alliance" may be good politics, the numbers speak a very different language. At the time of writing, out of the 99,752 NATO troops currently deployed in Afghanistan, the U.S. sends by far

[7] For a greater discussion about the role of the PCC (see Lange, G. May 1995. "The PCC - a new player in the development of relations between NATO and partner nations." *NATO Review* 3:3–33).

[8] The White House, National Security Directive 23, September 22 1989. The Bush Library, F 89-191.

[9] PfP also bridged the gap between states that hold membership in the OSCE but not the NACC (or vice versa).

[10] Defence Secretary Robert M. Gates, Munich Conference on Security Policy in Munich, Germany, February 10, 2008, http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1214.

the greatest number of troops (62,415), which equals 62.57 percentage of the total NATO ISAF force. Not counted are non-NATO countries such as Sweden or Finland. The second highest force contributing state is the U.K. (9,500; 9.52 percentage of total), followed by Germany (4,350; 4.36 percent of total), France (3,750; 3.76 of total), Italy (3,300; 3.31 percent of total), and Canada (2,830; 2.84 percent of total). This means that U.S. allies have now deployed more troops than they did in the Balkans in the 1990s. They also have absorbed casualty rates that were consistent with those of the U.S.

Analytically, however, this simple empirical overview is deceptive as it does not reference the ability of states to contribute forces to the collective cause. If one calculates current ISAF deployments as a percentage of the overall force size of the member states, then a much different picture occurs. This is a justifiable exercise because a state is only able to deploy the troops that it has at its total disposal. The numbers show that the U.K. has 5.41 percent of its active forces deployed in Afghanistan, followed by Canada with 4.31 percent, the United States. 3.95 percent, the Netherlands with 3.64%, Estonia with 3.37 percent, Latvia with 2.96 percent, and the Czech Republic with 2.93%. The real free riders are those countries with the smallest percentage of total troops deployed to Afghanistan, including Greece with 0.05 percent, Turkey with 0.35 percent, Portugal with 0.61 percent, and France with 1.06 percent.

This calculation holds significance for the current burden sharing debate in Afghanistan. It also attests to the fact that with the Cold War's end a fundamental change in the meaning of burden sharing has taken place. Traditionally, shouldering the share of the collective weight was calculated as a percentage of the gross domestic product (GDP) that was spent on national defence. In this indicator, the United States, Greece, and Turkey have consistently ranked at the top of the contributors list. The end of the Cold War, however, provided ample opportunities to question this static public goods model. And there is no reason why the same conditions should not apply to a post-9/11 security environment. Critique came from scholars and practitioners alike.[11] Some allies themselves pointed towards the imbalance in the Atlantic burden sharing regime. Germany, for example, has complained for years that its national contributions to the common defence were distorted by the GDP index.[12] Berlin argued that it had shouldered, for example, the costs for protecting American military installations in Germany while these expenses were not reflected in NATO's defence spending/GDP index.

[11] See on the burden-sharing debate, for example, the remarks by Hulsman, John G. "NATO and the EU: The Institutional and Policy Challenges for Euro-Atlantic Organizations and Northeastern and Southeastern Europe" organized by the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C., December 19, 2002 or Scheffer, Jaap de Hoop. "Towards fairer burden-sharing in NATO", *Europe's World*, summer (2008).

[12] See, for example, Joffe, Josef. 1987. *The limited partnership: Europe, the United States, and the burdens of alliance*. Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger Pub. Co. and Joffe, Josef. 1988. "The Trans-Atlantic Numbers Game." *The New York Times*, 18 May, A31.

In addition to that, there are at least four deficiencies that can be listed[13]: (1) while being heavily influenced by rational choice thinking, the public goods model provided limited value for explaining and understanding state behaviour because the material power focus provides little information as to what power is all about. Power is conceived of as a static military component of national statecraft; it is assumed to be one-dimensional. But the contexts in Afghanistan have demonstrated that pure military powers are insufficient to bring about socio-political changes. More specifically, the case of Afghanistan showed that unlike in the Balkans in the 1990s, NATO was hesitant and relatively inexperienced in running a full-blown counterinsurgency operation, and only very recently was able to pony up resources for reconstruction and development. (2) Among NATO allies, there still exist differing accounting practices and methods of aggregating their data. As a result, these diverse practices inherently complicate the collection of comparable statistical data.

A selected group of NATO members, for example, report the incurred costs resulting from conscription as part of their national defence budgets. While not all allies exhibit conscripted armies, a comparison of the aggregated data naturally produces inaccurate results. The United States, for example as well as Britain and Canada service voluntary armies and do not rely on conscription; Germany and Turkey, on the other hand, continue to rely on conscription as part of their national defence postures, which puts them at a disadvantage in terms of measuring the efficiency and effectiveness of their armed forces.[14] (3) Measuring the defence budgets as a percentage of the total national GDP does not reflect the variations in income levels among NATO allies, and thus violates fundamental principles of distributive justice. (4) The GDP benchmark of measuring allied burdens does not provide any indication as to how NATO member states structure their forces in order to be able to execute NATO's missions. This touches upon an old debate on the effectiveness versus efficiency of the armed forces.[15] In the context of Afghanistan, Europe's civilian contribution is a critical asset to American military might.

[13] A more fully developed explanation can be found in Zyla, Benjamin (forthcoming). *Sharing the Burden? NATO and Its Second-Tier Powers*.

[14] Lis, John J., and Zachary A. Selden. 2003. *NATO burdensharing after enlargement*. New York: Novinka Books.

[15] It also relates to the debate on the Revolution of Military Affairs (RMA), which holds that new technological developments have made the application and execution of military might more efficient. See, for example, Bitzinger, Richard. 2009. *The modern defense industry: political, economic, and technological issues*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Praeger, Laird, Robbin F., and Holger H. Mey. 1999. *The revolution in military affairs: allied perspectives*. Washington, D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University. See also Zyla, Benjamin. 2009. "NATO and post-Cold War burden-sharing: Canada the laggard?" *International Journal* 64 (2):337-59 and Zyla, Benjamin. 2010. "Years of free-riding? Canada, the New NATO, and Collective Crisis Management in Europe, 1989-2001." *American Review of Canadian Studies* 40 (1):22-39.

Against this backdrop, there are three conclusions that can be drawn for the current burden sharing debate surrounding the Afghan mission. First, European NATO states do not free-ride on American security provisions in Afghanistan. Second, because of conceptual and methodological deficits of objectively measuring the "true" Atlantic burden, the assumptions of collective action theorists do not hold much explanatory power in the twenty-first century. Indeed, they "obscure a contextualization"[16] of those countries' strategic situations and their commitments made to ease the collective burden. Third, in order to achieve more distributive justice in burden sharing, the alliance is well advised to make use of its functional networks, and to seek greater assistance of international organizations for the reconstruction and redevelopment of Afghanistan. This approach is fully consistent with a "networked security policy." Only if other international organizations including the EU, UN, and the World Bank will accord to Afghanistan the same priority as NATO does, will security and development in Afghanistan be feasible and sustainable. Burden sharing is a multidimensional undertaking, and should be adequately recognized (and calculated) as such. What is needed in Afghanistan are capable forces (civilian & military) who are able to train Afghani security forces within the shortest period of time to become efficient security providers themselves.

Conclusion

The good news is that the new strategic concept that NATO's Secretary General was asked to draft is no more than a strategic commentary on the Washington Treaty. This piece of information should relax fundamental critics of NATO. The nature of such commentary is that is does not have to be too specific, and will provide allies only with general strategic guidelines. In other words, NATO will refrain from being explicit about which world security issues it wishes to address and which ones it does not. The highest and most general principle in practicing this new strategic concept should be that NATO will act regionally unless one of its member states' vital national interests is threatened or severely compromised. To be clear, Islamism is not an existential threat to NATO; the alliance is far more political than that.

The temptation, no doubt, is that NATO becomes a "jack of all trades"—that is an organization that does everything it is being asked to do. No international organization has ever been, nor can ever be, a super-organization. Accordingly, NATO should define what it is best able to do as well as where, when, how and with whom it should be involved in global

[16] Hartley, Keith, and Todd Sandler. 1999. "NATO Burden-Sharing: Past and Future." *Journal of Peace Research* 36 (6):665-80; see also Sandler, Todd, and Keith Hartley. 1999. *The political economy of NATO: past, present, and into the 21st century*. Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge University Press.

security issues. A list of threats would be a first starting point. There is no shame in saying 'no' when the expectations are too high and collective capabilities not sufficiently developed to guarantee a successful operation. If NATO strives to attempt to do all, it runs the risk of acquiring the "jack of all trades and master of none" syndrome. That is to say that it would lack a strategic coherence by being engaged in every single security issue while reaching the limitations of its abilities.

The second danger could be what Jamie Shea has once called the "taxi-company" syndrome.[17] A taxi company is an organization that functions as a service provider for others; it does not have its own mandate. NATO should not operate like a taxi company. It runs its own shop, and is well advised to develop closer relations with other institutions, especially the EU. Indeed, NATO should also strive to become the centre of an international network of like-minded states and organizations. The alliance could be used as a platform for consultation of like-minded states to assess and evaluate security developments on both a regional and a global level. Such classification could be based on the criteria used by NATO for the selection of PfP members. By extending the range of Article 4 of the Washington Treaty, other international or supranational organizations, such as the UN and the EU, could be invited to a security dialogue to identify rising threats and challenges and to provide answers of how to meet them.

Also, by extending its political ambitions to the global level, NATO could develop into a forum of dialogue and debate, like some kind of WTO in the area of security and defense. This does not necessarily mean that the alliance would be called in for action all the time. Rather, it would market itself as a provider for discourse in order to deal with an increasingly volatile international security environment.

Aspiring to become more vigilant with other international players and organizations, especially with the EU, also necessitates an overhaul of the existing burden sharing regime, which does not take into account the geopolitical changes that happened with the end of the Cold War. A new definition of the relationship with the EU in particular might finally lead to a consensus on who is doing what and where. Such a future division of labor could be either functional or geographical; in fact it should be a combination of both factors. Considering NATO's military strength and the EU's capabilities in civilian crisis management, joint action of the two organizations might help to overcome institutional quagmires, lead to more stability in the euro-Atlantic area, and a better understanding of each other. Only when NATO establishes and fosters stable and equal partnerships can it develop a global consultative network. This might be the added value or the new identity NATO is looking

[17] See Jamie Shea at the 140th Bergedorfer Gesprächskreis, Report by the Körber Stiftung, p. 49. Available at: http://www.koerber-stiftung.de/fileadmin/bg/PDFs/bnd_140_en.pdf.

for. It is still a niche where no other organization has been able to firmly establish itself so far. This might be a chance for NATO to develop it.

Therefore, the new Strategic Concept has to answer a series of crucial questions related to the existence of the alliance and its strategic direction. However, the concept must then be translated into practice. As Jamie Shea pointed out: "Just as the ability to learn is more important than what we actually know, so the ability of the new Strategic Concept to engage NATO in a permanent process of self-examination and strategic versatility may be more important than the immediate vision which is set out."[18] This might become the litmus test for the new Strategic Concept to prove to be more successful than its predecessor.

[18] Shea, Jamie. "What will be in NATO's new Strategic Concept?" *Turkish Policy Quarterly*. 9, no.1 (2010): 47-59.