

per Concordiam

Journal of European Security and Defense Issues

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A complex NATO agenda requires fresh thinking

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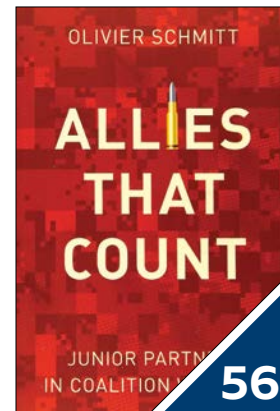
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Book Review



Allies That Count: Junior Partners in Coalition Warfare

Written by: **Olivier Schmitt**

Reviewed by: **Patrick Swan**,
per Concordiam contributor

Junior partners can bring intangible benefits to a coalition operation and, in some cases, concrete political advantages. But they must demonstrate how they improve the chances for coalition success.



On the Cover



NATO members must remain unified to protect against an evolving threat environment.

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GEORGE C. MARSHALL
EUROPEAN CENTER FOR SECURITY STUDIES

Welcome to the 46th edition of *per Concordiam*. More than 70 years after NATO's founding, the Alliance is busy adapting to a changing security environment. NATO adopted a new Strategic Concept in 2022 that sets out the Alliance's priorities for the next decade. The last such document was approved in November 2010 and stood the test of time. It presented a fine balance between collective defense, crisis management and cooperative security. Remarkably, it required no revision despite Russia's Crimea annexation and aggression in Ukraine, the global war on terror and emerging strategic competition. But now is the time for the Alliance to revisit official NATO guidance on many levels.

The articles in this issue provide an overview of some of the most important challenges on NATO's agenda. Most authors presented herein are true Alliance insiders who served in many assignments during their rich careers. Czech Deputy Defense Minister Jan Havránek writes about the many challenges NATO must confront while focusing on great power competition, including out-of-area operations after the Afghanistan withdrawal, relations between the Alliance and the European Union, energy security and environmental change. Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Hans-Werner Wiermann, former director general of the NATO International Military Staff, explains NATO-EU relations in broad terms before turning to the complex implications of cooperation between the two institutions as it relates to military mobility.

A contribution by Dr. Matthew Rhodes and Dr. Ralf Roloff of the Marshall Center compares notes concerning the approaches the U.S. and Germany take toward NATO. Icelandic diplomat Snorri Matthiasson, on assignment at NATO's Allied Command Transformation, puts the importance of the High North into context. Two Italian colleagues, Col. Giuseppe De Magistris and Chief Warrant Officer Stefano Bergonzini, introduce readers to an area that few are following closely — stability policing — and ask whether NATO is missing an opportunity. Dr. Sari Arho Havrén, a fellow at the Mercator Institute of China Studies, explores China's strategy for Europe over the next decade.

I recommend this issue as we prepare for the next stage of the Alliance's evolution. NATO's new Strategic Concept and the documents that will follow can guide us through the 2020s and into the 2030s. As always, the Marshall Center welcomes comments. Please feel free to contact us at editor@perconcordiam.org

Sincerely,

Barre R. Seguin
Director



Barre R. Seguin

*Director, George C. Marshall
European Center for Security
Studies*

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NATO

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THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

NATO prepares for the 2030s and beyond

By **Dr. Pál Dunay** and **Dr. Matthew Rhodes**, Marshall Center professors

NATO is often called the most successful alliance in history. This is indicated by the Alliance's continued cohesion and its members' confidence that it enhances their security. That more than 70 years have passed since the Washington Treaty was signed by 12 states in 1949 speaks for itself. Maybe more important, the Alliance has never had to invoke collective defense in an interstate contingency; action under Article 5 of the treaty was taken only once, immediately after the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States. This is perhaps the best evidence that deterrence has worked, even at the height of the Cold War. The fact that nuclear weapons formed part and parcel of deterrence, underwriting NATO's security guarantee to its members, most probably contributed to a "long peace," as historian John Lewis Gaddis put it.

NATO's historical success can be attributed to its ability to adapt and find its role in international security, according to the needs of its members. As the 40 years of the Cold War have receded into historical perspective, we tend to see that period as a time of "simple" confrontation between Western democracy and communist dictatorship. However, that era required responses from the Western Alliance that were reflected in various doctrines, such as flexible response, that survived the Cold War. The need for collective defense was and remains clear. The end of the Cold War led to uncertainty regarding the main challenges facing the Alliance. Still, NATO's necessity was rarely questioned. It remained the prime forum for political coordination in the West, even if that coordination was occasionally weakened. That decade of uncertainty abruptly ended with the 9/11 terrorist attacks. NATO reasserted itself as the prime forum, invoking Article 5 as the war on terror became the most important security objective. With this, NATO had to find a balance between new and old security threats.

It was the 2010 NATO Strategic Concept that kept such a balance between Article 5-based security guarantees and the global war on terror, as well as between a more global and regional security posture. This was extremely fortunate



NATO headquarters in Brussels THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

because it contributed to the Strategic Concept's ability to hold both postures during the war on terror's greatest prominence as well as when that gave way to the fast-emerging (or as NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg put it, "emerged") threat of aggressive Russian revanchism in 2014.

NATO began preparations for the future in November 2020 with the publication of "NATO 2030: United for a New Era." It was like a *travail préparatoire* for the new Strategic Concept that will guide NATO for the next decade. A similar process preceded the passing of the 2010 Strategic Concept, with the work done by a group of experts led by former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. A strategic concept signals the position of the Alliance to multiple audiences. This makes the task of drafting such a concept extremely delicate. It must credibly demonstrate the determination of NATO, backed by the shared will of the 30 member states, without either overestimating its possibilities or underselling its message. The former may result in

escalation by NATO's self-declared adversaries, while the latter could be interpreted as indecision. NATO's signaling must serve also as a compass to the members and NATO institutions that will use it as a basis for drafting additional documents in the public and nonpublic domains.

The single most important issue on NATO's agenda for the next decade is the relationship between collective defense, cooperative security and crisis management, the three core tasks of the Alliance. Because of the NATO members' shared perception that there are states, primarily Russia, that present a threat to the Alliance, the temptation to put primary emphasis on collective defense is significant. Moreover, this would lead NATO back to its roots of addressing interstate security contingencies. The Strategic Concept of 2022 somewhat changed the terminology used in 2010 and identifies the core tasks as "deterrence and defence; crisis prevention and management; and cooperative security." This creates natural links in that collective defense and crisis management have to be applied, respectively, when deterrence and prevention fail. Still, the fundamentals of NATO's core tasks have remained largely unchanged.

It is a shared view that Moscow presents a military and perhaps hybrid threat but less of a challenge on nonmilitary matters. Russia would be extremely ill-advised to challenge a member directly and test the determination and cohesion of the Alliance. Moscow therefore works to create ambiguous situations from which there is no favorable way out for its opponent, an approach that aligns well with the professional intelligence backgrounds of much of Russia's leadership. As seen most dramatically in the cases of Ukraine and Georgia, the Kremlin aims to deprive foreign-policy freedom to other states, especially with regard to joining NATO. Of course, the status of NATO member states differs from partner states, particularly regarding the applicability of Article 5. Short of an unexpected, fundamental change in Russian policy, NATO will have to cope with the threat Russia presents and the difficulties it causes. Rather than directly challenging NATO members, Moscow

would probably seek to punish NATO partner states not included under the Article 5 collective defense umbrella. Furthermore, by provoking hostile relationships with countries such as Georgia and Ukraine, which face territorial integrity issues due to Russian occupation and *de facto* or *de jure* control over parts of their territories, Russia impedes the willingness of several NATO members to agree to Georgian or Ukrainian accession to the Alliance and thereby import a volatile collective security situation.

In the end, Russia dramatically escalated its war of aggression against Ukraine on February 24, 2022. Its aim was to further reduce Ukraine's territorial integrity and political independence by occupying the country's territory and installing a pro-Russian puppet government — both stringent violations of the fundamentals of the international system, including the basic principles of the United Nations Charter. To the surprise of many, Russia has apparently failed in this attempt. Nevertheless, a renewed large-scale war in Europe, bordering several NATO member-states, presented a challenge in finalizing the new Strategic Concept that had to reflect the circumstances under which it was adopted and also have long-term relevance for at least a decade. The Strategic Concept of 2022 reflected the former, unambiguously stating that "[t]he Russian Federation is the most significant and direct threat to Allies' security and to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area" while also emphasizing that "NATO does not seek confrontation and poses no threat to the Russian Federation." Resolve, coordination, unity and responsible reaction are the foundations of the strengthened Allied approach to Russia that historically echoes "flexible response."

For various reasons, it is more difficult to identify the Alliance's position on China, which has only recently emerged on NATO's agenda. The Alliance does not have much experience with Beijing as a challenger. In addition, China is beyond the geographic area of application of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. However, China is now impossible to ignore in international politics and in the

Norwegian, Belgian, Dutch and Estonian warships form a convoy during a 2014 deployment along Germany's Baltic Sea coast as part of the standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group One, which was reactivated to enhance collective defense in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



security arena. Here we arrive at a major formative question for future NATO policy: Should China be regarded as a security threat, or as a lasting, major, complex challenge that has security aspects? It is apparent that for the U.S., a global power, China is a security threat. This stems from Beijing's behavior in the Asia-Pacific and to some extent in the Indian Ocean. On the one hand, the U.S. and the larger European members think strategically in global terms and are ready to act beyond the European continent while, on the other hand, most of the small- and medium-size members have a more regional focus or are laser-focused on their own security deficit vis-à-vis Russia. The new Strategic Concept maintains the terms used at the NATO summit in June 2021, continuing to regard China as a "challenge" (i.e., not a threat) to NATO's "interests, security and values." With this, the Alliance retains flexibility in its eventual response to China, which is dependent both on further evolution of China-Euro-Atlantic relations and whatever consensus can be achieved among the member states.

Both Russia and China present a nuclear challenge. They are modernizing — and in China's case also enlarging — their nuclear arsenals. Moscow accompanies this with threats and rejection of Western missile-defense efforts. It insists on maintaining a nuclear capacity that cannot be defeated by defensive means. Russia most often thinks in terms of a symmetrical response to Western military developments. However, this may not be in its interest, bearing in mind the significantly smaller resources at its disposal. (U.S. gross domestic product is 12 times larger in nominal terms than Russia's, and the total gross domestic product of the NATO allies is more than 20 times greater.) The Alliance has an interest in de-escalation with Russia in nuclear matters and eventually in returning to strategic arms control, even though the conditions for the latter are not currently favorable. This is clearly outlined in the NATO 2030 report.

Following U.S. demands that allies spend more on their own defense and thus be better able to contribute to NATO's collective efforts, defense appropriations increased in every member state. Only three member states spent more than 2% of gross domestic product on defense in the early 2010s, while today there are nine that meet that standard, which was agreed to at the 2014 Wales summit. Seventeen members also meet the standard of spending more than 20% of their defense budgets for defense procurement and modernization of major weapon systems. Clearly, NATO has become more serious about its own defense capacity, as 29 of 30 member states increased the share of their defense expenditure in their GDP between 2014 and 2021, and in the face of Russia's unfortunate further increase of hostility, this trend should continue.

Enlargement has been among NATO's lasting successes. Since the end of the Cold War, 14 states — nearly half the membership — have joined NATO, as states found their security better guaranteed within the Alliance. Most of them modernized their defense sectors and contributed to the

Alliance's international deployments and other common endeavors. Accordingly, official NATO documents have regularly reiterated the commitment to an open-door policy, and no change is expected on that front. However, there are objections to enlargement, both inside and outside the Alliance. Russia, especially, vociferously protests and threatens to create a deteriorating security situation if enlargement continues, particularly if it includes any more former Soviet states. Russia's latest war of aggression against Ukraine has prompted Finland and Sweden — feeling their security better served with NATO membership than with military nonalignment — to apply for membership and both are expected to join the Alliance, doubling its size from the 16 members at end of the Cold War. As of October 2022, 28 member states ratified the accession protocol of Finland and Sweden. Now, as Secretary-General Stoltenberg stated, Russia faces more, rather than less, NATO.

Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at the instruction of President Vladimir Putin, outlined a set of red lines in a draft treaty about security guarantees between Russia and the U.S. and in a draft agreement between Russia and NATO in December 2021. The documents resembled an ultimatum, as they stipulated NATO not "deploy military forces and weaponry on the territory of any" state where they were not present as of May 27, 1997, (the day the NATO-Russia Founding Act was signed). In practice, this would divide NATO into two classes, and some of the states most vulnerable to Russian threats would not be allowed to host military reinforcements from other NATO members. It also excluded "any further enlargement of NATO, including the accession of Ukraine as well as other states." Accepting these demands would mean the end of NATO's open-door policy. Understandably, the feverish diplomatic exchanges that followed did not result in an agreement on these two issues that Russia clearly found highly important.

Although the Strategic Concept primarily focuses on deterrence and defense against state-based threats and challenges, it addresses other threats. Terrorism is identified as the "most direct asymmetric threat to the security of our citizens and to international peace and prosperity." At a time when some member-states are adjudicating terrorist attacks (e.g., Belgium, France) and others (e.g., Turkey) are directly concerned about it, fighting terrorism must not be overshadowed by more immediate concerns, challenges and threats.

Finally, the increased focus on resilience may help the Alliance and its members find balance among the three pillars of deterrence and defense, crisis prevention and management, and cooperative security. Current challenges and the needs of several member states will drive NATO to continue focusing more on collective defense for now. Nonetheless, future security challenges, or as former U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld put it, both "known unknowns" and "unknown unknowns," will maintain the importance of cooperative security and crisis management, because the world has not become a less dangerous place. □

The
ATLANTIC

ALLIANCE

Toward a New Strategic Concept

By **Jan Havránek**, deputy minister for defence policy and strategy, the Czech Republic

PHOTOS BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The adoption of a new Strategic Concept is a logical step for NATO. The Alliance, as well as the global security environment, has fundamentally changed over the past 10 years. The world has become less predictable and more complex to navigate, and the Euro-Atlantic partners must now adapt. That is why, at the June 2021 NATO Summit, the allies agreed to develop a new Strategic Concept, sending a strong message of trans-Atlantic unity and a signal to friends and potential adversaries that NATO is strong and relevant.

This article highlights the main reasons NATO needs a new strategic document, one that better reflects today's realities and will help the Alliance effectively face those realities. It is not a complete list of the Czech Ministry of Defence's priorities; rather, it highlights the key tenets and gives insight into the ministry's positions on highly debated issues.



NATO defense ministers discuss spending in 2017 in Brussels.

Reasons for a new concept

Debates about the need for a new Strategic Concept have been underway since at least NATO's 2016 Warsaw Summit. At that time, the Alliance was already facing immense pressure to deal with challenges that have since become even more pronounced. In retrospect, however, these debates were premature. NATO had only just started its military adaptation, its institutional adaptation was stagnating and its political adaptation was virtually nonexistent. Furthermore, the Alliance was waiting with anticipation for the 2016 presidential election in the United States and the policies a new administration might introduce. Donald Trump's victory and his stance on NATO shook the very basis of the

trans-Atlantic setup. Therefore, as NATO approached the Brussels Summit in 2018, there was an unspoken agreement among allies (and experts alike) that discussions about a new Strategic Concept during the Trump years could be detrimental to NATO. This thinking prevailed until U.S. President Joe Biden was elected in 2020 and he proclaimed a return to multilateralism, which rekindled the strategic debate.

Other factors also prompted NATO to take the next step in creating a new Strategic Concept:

- **First**, the power balance is shifting among major world players amid fast-paced technological advances. Russia, China, and other state and nonstate actors have stepped up their malign activities against the West and its allies. The sharp increase in hybrid interference (cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns, proxy forces) has become a major threat to the Alliance's cohesion and a real test of NATO's resilience. Issues such as emerging and disruptive technologies, the security implications of climate change, the Iran nuclear deal conundrum and space as a new domain have made this NATO agenda perhaps its most complex ever. In this security environment, the challenge is to ensure a well-balanced threat perception, free from bilateral disputes among allies.
- **Second**, the relationship between the two sides of the Atlantic has experienced several dynamic years. The U.S. pivot to the Indo-Pacific, coupled with Trump's criticism of defense spending levels by NATO members, left some Europeans frustrated and questioning the U.S.'s commitment. The criticism during Trump's presidency overshadowed a key fact: Between 2016 and 2020, defense spending by NATO countries increased along with the U.S. military presence in Europe. Internal disputes also shook the Alliance. For example, French President Emmanuel Macron's comment about NATO experiencing "brain death" caused a lot of headaches in the run-up to the 2019 NATO Summit in London. Yet, it became a catalyst for the strategic revision, which was initially called a reflection process but later rebranded to the forward-looking NATO 2030 agenda.
- **Third**, the discussion about NATO's future was escalated by the U.S. decision to end its (and consequently, NATO's) presence in Afghanistan. The turn of events during the pullout from the country also brought to the forefront issues of trust and the balance of power within the Alliance. After such a turbulent ending to NATO's longest mission — and the only engagement

triggered by Article 5 of the Washington Treaty — the Alliance must now find answers to some very difficult questions, such as how to address the persistent capability gap between the U.S. and the rest of NATO and how to reposition the Alliance to counter terrorism.

- **The final** significant components that contributed to the quest for the Alliance’s new formula were the policies inspired by NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg — or the Stoltenberg Doctrine, if you will. Fundamental changes have been made during his tenure to all three pillars of the Alliance — defense, crisis management and partnerships. NATO has embraced a new direction and integrated its various ambitions and approaches into one overarching policy. With the new Strategic Concept, Stoltenberg is simply bringing the proverbial cows home.



French President Emmanuel Macron speaks at a NATO meeting in 2019 in England, where he said NATO was experiencing “brain death.”

Priorities in deterrence and defense

The Czech Republic considers it crucial that the Strategic Concept address deterrence and defense issues. Recent transformations in the security environment have changed the requirements for maintaining a strong deterrence and defense posture. Even though many of these factors have already been reflected in the Alliance’s activities and policies, the new Strategic Concept must provide a comprehensive strategy that is up to date and effective. Together, the allies must find a way to successfully counter the ever-more-frequent malign activities coming from Russia, China and other adversaries. That also requires finding a common language on China. A solid start can be found in the 2021 Brussels Communique and in NATO’s internal policies. But even with that foundation, the China issue presents real challenges. Unlike the U.S., not all allies see China as a significant rival. And some voices within the Alliance consider collective defense to be NATO’s main purpose, specifically defense of the European territory of the Alliance. This thinking, however, is not sustainable. When NATO’s

strongest ally perceives China as an existential threat, and when Chinese malign activities in the areas of finance, cyber and commerce target Europe, the Alliance must react.

In addition to China and Russia, NATO must focus on a number of other challenges that are becoming ever more pronounced. Topics such as climate change and its security implications, crisis prevention and management, resource allocation, cyber and space domains, and disinformation will be central. The Alliance must make sure it adapts and takes strong positions regarding these matters.

After the experience in Afghanistan, the Alliance must also reflect on its out-of-area deployments, consider the future of military intervention and review the effectiveness of its longtime endeavor of promoting stability in the Euro-Atlantic neighborhood. The lessons from the mission show the complex nature of the U.S.’s and NATO’s roles abroad, and the difficulty of state-building. Any future endeavors must put less emphasis on military aspects and more on the wider, political and societal realities. Moreover, the Afghanistan experience raised many questions for other ongoing stabilization and state-building efforts. Europe’s and the U.S.’s missions in the Sahel, Iraq and other places in Africa and the Middle East should undergo a review to amend their future form. The allies must do their best to enhance NATO’s credibility around the world and at home. Only by doing that can the ghosts of Afghanistan be prevented from haunting them in the future. The Alliance must also find the answers to a number of other issues, such as: What will NATO’s counterterrorism military footprint look like? Will NATO be ready to use kinetic power against terrorist groups? Or will its role be reduced to assistance, training and capacity-building? If so, will this diminish the differences between NATO, the European Union and the United Nations?

NATO’s new Strategic Concept must include a strategy that will allow the Alliance to respond to “traditional” threats and to develop a new set of tools that will be used in countering hybrid interference. Finding the right balance between continuing a traditional deterrence and defense posture and adapting to new challenges will be critical. At the same time, Europe must become more independent in taking action in its immediate neighborhood. That means it will have to strengthen its posture against threats from the East and in the Sahel region. The EU’s defense ambitions should include a way to increase Europe’s capability to act, mainly by enhancing Europe’s crisis management toolbox.

NATO-EU cooperation

Like 20 other European countries, the Czech Republic is a member of both NATO and the EU. It is therefore logical that one of the Czech Republic’s main priorities is to ensure the goals set out in the Alliance’s new strategic document are adopted in cooperation with the EU to guarantee that the defense burden is shared more equally between North America and Europe. Over the past decade, Europe has learned that to remain relevant it needs to take responsibility for its share of the burden. The



U.S. soldiers in Kunar province, Afghanistan, sit beneath a U.S. flag raised to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.

U.S. focus has shifted from European affairs to the Indo-Pacific and the rivalry with China. The traditional trans-Atlantic bargain,

where the U.S. provides for Europe's security in exchange for Europe's assistance in crisis management, requires a change. The EU has set out to become more independent in its security and defense. But as discussions continue on the future shape of European defense, a new trans-Atlantic dilemma for both sides of the Atlantic emerges: The U.S. seeking more European independence risks too much of Europe drifting away from, or weakening, NATO. And for many Europeans, a diminishing of the U.S. footprint in European security and defense is not acceptable. Thus, the new trans-Atlantic bargain will require a constant calibration of the two approaches, with NATO-EU cooperation being the central pillar.

The goal is to create a partnership between the two sides of the Atlantic that is more equal and more effective. The way to strengthen the European pillar within NATO is by allowing the EU to become a platform through which Europe can level the scale. Simply put, a European action in defense that is complementary to NATO can be the solution to the issue at hand. NATO's new Strategic Concept must take this into account and make close NATO-EU cooperation the prerequisite for any future activity, strategy or policy.

The allies' main task now is to figure out the practical

attributes of the partnership. Going forward, America's role in Europe is expected to be primarily centered on NATO's core tasks, i.e., collective defense and crisis management related to traditional threats (e.g., Russia or terrorism), and new domains and trends (cyber, hybrid, space, technology). It will focus on assisting Europe in enhancing its capabilities. The question is whether the EU can be autonomous in this area. The goal should not be to build the best European tank or aircraft. Europe should instead forge ahead in the new technologies sphere. It has the necessary technological know-how and, on the EU level, the financial and legal instruments needed to make a quick impact. It has the potential to keep up with the U.S.'s own strategic autonomy in this regard. Europe, in turn, will be expected to align its interests with the U.S., especially on the question of China. These realities must be considered in Europe's next steps regarding capacity building, capability development and resource allocation.

In practical terms, this process must be based on a close, well-structured coordination between NATO and the EU that prevents duplications of effort and resources. Only such an approach can help form a system where Europe can work both independently of the U.S., if needed, and as its equal partner. If done right, NATO-EU cooperation can become the underlying force that helps the trans-Atlantic region review its shortfalls, revise its policies and prepare the West for any future challenges. Specific issues for which a strong NATO-EU cooperation can be beneficial include

military mobility, information sharing, situational awareness, and new domains and threats.

New domains and threats

The need to improve capacity-building is clear, particularly with the emergence of new domains (such as space), new threats and new technologies. NATO must continue its collective capability development and innovation to boost its position as a global leader. This is especially important for the European members of the Alliance that have lagged in this field. NATO should aspire to acquire a leadership position in the technology sphere and to be a sovereign and capable player that sets the principles for responsible use. The Alliance should establish funding mechanisms and other incentives to foster research and development and technological innovation. Furthermore, NATO and the EU should establish a system for assessing the security implications of emerging and disruptive technologies. Such a system would better prepare Europe for any looming dangers or threats. An example of a successful step forward is NATO's plan to launch its Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic by 2023. It will add to the digital literacy of NATO members, boost cooperation on critical technologies and allow NATO to work more closely with the private sector and academia. It should

also complement existing efforts by the European Defence Agency, which has been fostering public-private cooperation on innovation for the past couple of years.

In the space domain and the information space, NATO must establish itself as a strong and independent force that is capable of challenging its rivals, mainly China, various private companies and other nonstate actors. Key steps will be building a space situational awareness framework and a data-sharing network, and introducing rules and principles for working in outer space. And finally, the EU can complement NATO by providing tools that are not purely military, such as economic, political or legal instruments. Together, the two organizations can use their already existing structures, including NATO's defense planning process and the EU's Coordinated Annual Review on Defence, to create a functioning mechanism that will encourage reciprocity and prevent a duplication of work.

Consultations and resilience

NATO should add consultations and resilience as key functions enabling its core tasks of collective defense, crisis management and cooperative security. Consultations as a new core task would ensure better-coordinated communication among individual countries and between the North American and European blocks. For NATO to find a consensus regarding its priorities and to be able to carry out its policies successfully, increasing the importance of consultations is vital. It is particularly important in the context of NATO's role as a world power. Alliance members must act as one when facing adversaries and when creating new partnerships and nurturing those that already exist. NATO has no other choice than to work toward greater unity because failure might mean the end

A rocket carrying three Chinese astronauts in a Shenzhou-12 spaceship lifts off in June 2021. The astronauts docked with a Chinese space station that is expected to be fully operational in 2023.





British soldiers with the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission check an ambulance after an attack in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 2020.

of its existence. Increased consultations should become a tool to address internal disagreements or disputes. Considering the

variety of outlooks and preferred defense policy approaches among individual member states, an efficient conflict-resolution framework is just what the doctor prescribed. NATO has long evaded controversial topics that could, from the outside, make it seem weak or even on the verge of breaking up. However, avoiding uncomfortable conversations is sure to do more damage in the long run.

Establishing resilience as another NATO mission is no less crucial. Building a resilient society and institutions is more essential than ever, especially in the context of NATO's adversaries' constant attempts to weaken and fracture the Alliance. Boosting our resilience is also vital for a credible deterrence and defense. We are experiencing an increase in hybrid interference, a decrease of public trust in Western governments and institutions, and targeted disinformation campaigns. Our resilience must improve in these fields and toward the global pandemic as well. We must adopt a strategy of prevention and of coordinated responses to both military and nonmilitary situations.

Defense spending

If NATO is to succeed in its current adaptation and meet the goals it will set out in the new Strategic Concept, it

must ensure sufficient resources, both human and financial. At NATO's Wales Summit in 2014, the allies adopted the Defence Investment Pledge, committing to reaching the 2% of gross domestic product threshold in defense spending by 2024. Meeting this deadline may be difficult for many countries, the Czech Republic included, and will not be possible without sufficient political will and a coordinated approach by all allies. Appropriate funding will be needed for a continued modernization of allied armed forces, in developing new capabilities, and maintaining NATO's deterrence and defense posture. Without it, NATO's plans for the future may only exist on paper.

Conclusion

The expected outcome of the NATO 2030 process is the adoption of the new Strategic Concept. The allies must reach an agreement, show cohesion and send a strong message to the world; anything less could mean the end of NATO. In the end, the ultimate precondition for a successful Strategic Concept is a strong political will underpinned by resources — financial, material and human. The responsibility lies with the leaders and the governments of all member states. Their inaction could otherwise paralyze the trans-Atlantic bond, make Europe irrelevant and weaken the entire Euro-Atlantic region. □

Editor's note: This article was completed prior to Russia's illegal escalation of aggression against Ukraine in February 2022 and the NATO summit in June 2022.

THE NATO-EU *Partnership*





COOPERATION IS ESSENTIAL TO EUROPEAN AND GLOBAL SECURITY

By Lt. Gen. Hans-Werner Wiermann, German Bundeswehr, NATO International Military Staff director general

“NATO is the strongest and most successful Alliance in history. It guarantees the security of our territory and our one billion citizens, our freedom, and the values we share, including individual liberty, human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. We are bound together by our common values, enshrined in the Washington Treaty, the bedrock of our unity, solidarity, and cohesion. We commit to fulfilling our responsibilities as Allies accordingly. We reaffirm our adherence to the purposes and principles of the United Nations (UN) Charter. We are committed to the rules-based international order. We commit to reinforce consultations when the security or stability of an Ally is threatened or when our fundamental values and principles are at risk.”

— Brussels Summit Communiqué, June 14, 2021

Today, NATO faces multifaceted threats, systemic competition from assertive and authoritarian powers, as well as growing security challenges to our countries and our nations’ citizens from all strategic directions. The evolving security environment increasingly requires us to address threats and challenges through the use of military and nonmilitary tools in a deliberate, coherent and sustained manner.

Russia has turned from partner to competitor and continues to challenge the rules-based order across domains, regions and functions. NATO’s relationship with Russia is at its lowest point since the Cold War ended, and Moscow’s aggressive actions are a threat to our security. The Brussels Summit Communiqué cautions: “Russia’s growing multi-domain military buildup, more assertive posture, novel military capabilities and provocative activities, including near NATO borders, as well as its large-scale no-notice and snap exercises, the continued military build-up in Crimea, the deployment of modern dual-capable missiles in Kaliningrad, military integration with Belarus and repeated violations of NATO Allied airspace, increasingly threaten the security of the Euro-Atlantic area and contribute to instability along NATO borders and beyond.”

NATO nations and partners continue to face the challenges of violent extremism and international terrorism. The 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks in New York and attacks in New Zealand and Israel demonstrate that no

nation is safe from terror, especially while the Islamic State group and other terrorist groups continue to operate. There is growing instability in the Middle East and Africa, displacing entire communities from their homes and countries in pursuit of safety and security. The dramatic developments in Afghanistan — the complete collapse of the Afghan government and infrastructure and the subsequent takeover by the Taliban — surprised the world. These are a bitter turn of events for the whole international community.

In addition, the continued rise of China is fundamentally shifting the global balance of power. China is heating up the race for economic and technological supremacy, investing in new military capabilities and increasing the competition over our values and way of life. China is rapidly becoming a dominant global player, including in the international security environment, while implementing its military modernization and expanding its nuclear arsenal with more warheads and a larger number of sophisticated delivery systems. NATO allies are concerned by China’s coercive policies, which stand in contrast to the fundamental values enshrined in the Washington Treaty. China is a great power that does not share our values.

Deterrence and defense remain crucial to our security and continue to drive forward NATO’s ongoing adaptation. Since 2014, the Alliance has undertaken the biggest adaptation in a generation — strengthening its collective defense by enhancing its ability to defend all allies on land, at sea, in the air, in cyberspace and in space, and by responding to new challenges. While NATO has remained a pillar of stability for more than 70 years, we must continuously ensure that the Alliance remains credible, coherent and resilient

Spanish Army soldiers prepare to clear a structure as part of urban operations training during exercise Steadfast Defender in Romania in 2021. NATO INTERNATIONAL MILITARY STAFF

in the face of a changing security environment. NATO must prepare for a world of growing geopolitical and systemic competition and advancing authoritarianism.

At the 2019 summit in London, allied leaders asked the secretary-general to carry out a forward-looking reflection process to further strengthen NATO's political dimension, including consultations. Two years later, in Brussels, allied leaders agreed to launch the NATO 2030 initiative — a trans-Atlantic agenda for the future. Additionally, the allies consented to strengthen NATO's relationships with like-minded partners and international organizations. To that end, the leaders agreed to enhance NATO's ability to contribute to preserving and shaping the rules-based international order in areas that are important to allied security. NATO will increase its dialogue and practical cooperation with existing partners, including with the European Union.

“Throughout its history, NATO has continuously adapted to a changing security environment. The NATO 2030 agenda complements and builds on our ongoing political and military adaptation, strengthens our ability to deliver on the three core tasks and contributes to making our strong Alliance even stronger and ready for the future. ... The NATO 2030 agenda sets a higher level of ambition for NATO. It provides clear guidelines for further adaptation to address existing, new and future threats and challenges, building on the ongoing political and military adaptation of the Alliance.”

— Brussels Summit Communiqué

Built on a foundation of common interests and challenges, NATO-EU cooperation has grown into a strong and mutually beneficial partnership. This relationship was initiated in the 1990s and institutionalized a decade later with the 2002 NATO-EU Declaration on European Security and Defence Policy. This milestone set out common political principles and reaffirmed the EU's access to NATO's planning capabilities for its own military operations. In 2003, the “Berlin Plus” arrangements set the basis for the Alliance to support EU-led operations in which NATO as a whole is not engaged.

At the 2010 Lisbon Summit, the allies underlined their determination to improve the NATO-EU strategic partnership. The 2010 Strategic Concept committed the Alliance to work more closely with other international organizations to prevent crises, manage conflicts and stabilize post-conflict situations. One of the key tenets of EU-NATO cooperation remains the single set of forces. This means that common members need not have two sets of capability requirements to support each organization, but only a single set to ensure efficiency and avoid duplication.

Each subsequent NATO summit has further enriched this cooperation. In Warsaw, in July 2016, the two organizations outlined areas for strengthened cooperation in light of the common emerging security threats to the east and south,

including countering hybrid threats, enhancing resilience, defense capacity building, cyber defense, maritime security and exercises.

Two years later, in Brussels, both institutions agreed, through a joint declaration, to focus on areas such as military mobility, counterterrorism and strengthening resilience to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risks, as well as promoting NATO's Women, Peace and Security agenda. Today, NATO-EU cooperation includes 74 projects to promote European security, capacity-building, crisis management and training.

Over the past five years, the two organizations have developed a closer cooperation, focused on concrete results and improved security for European citizens. The importance of this unique and essential partnership was further emphasized during the 2021 Brussels Summit, where allied leaders highlighted the tangible results of cooperating on hybrid and cyber threats, strategic communications, and operational cooperation (including maritime issues, military mobility, defense capabilities and defense industry), and on research, exercises, counterterrorism and defense, and security capacity building. The development of coherent, complementary and interoperable defense capabilities remains key for the two organizations' joint efforts to make the Euro-Atlantic area safer.

“The European Union remains a unique and essential partner for NATO. The NATO-EU strategic partnership is essential for the security and prosperity of our nations and of the Euro-Atlantic area. NATO recognises the importance of a stronger and more capable European defence. The development of coherent, complementary and interoperable defence capabilities, avoiding unnecessary duplication, is key in our joint efforts to make the Euro-Atlantic area safer. Such efforts, including recent developments, will lead to a stronger NATO, help enhance our common security, contribute to transatlantic burden sharing, help deliver needed capabilities, and support an overall increase in defence spending.”

— Brussels Summit Communiqué

Bridging the gap between NATO and the EU has been an important element in the development of an international, comprehensive approach to crisis management, especially for the COVID-19 crisis, which has required the application of military and civilian means. This crisis has shown the key role that militaries can play in support of national civilian efforts and the importance of NATO mechanisms to coordinate assistance. Across the Alliance and the EU, national armed forces have been supporting the civilian response, deploying military medics to assist overrun civilian facilities, constructing almost 100 field hospitals, evacuating patients and repatriating citizens, securing borders, and helping with testing and transport of medical supplies. The pandemic has seen the largest peacetime military deployment in history.

Furthermore, allied leaders underscored the requirement to deepen this cooperation through the full implementation of the common set of 74 proposals. These contribute to coherence and look at evolving security challenges, such as resilience, emerging and disruptive technologies, the security implications of climate change, disinformation, and growing geostrategic competition. Allied leaders also recognized that the ongoing distinct strategic processes within NATO and the EU offer an opportunity for further intensification of consultations and cooperation between the two organizations.



Lt. Gen. Hans-Werner Wiermann speaks during a biannual conference with the European Union Military Staff.

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As NATO marks the fifth anniversary of its Enhanced Forward Presence mission in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland — the embodiment of a reliable deterrence and defense posture — the ongoing work between the two institutions on military mobility has been essential. Military mobility is a logical and critical step for NATO's 21st century conventional defense and deterrence posture. Improved military mobility in Europe is key to a more credible deterrence and defense posture and has become one of the flagships of EU-NATO cooperation. NATO and EU staffs continue to work together not only to ensure a coherent and complementary approach, but also to achieve synergies wherever possible, including military mobility-related procedures that apply to all allies equally.

The Brussels Summit Communiqué recognizes that an important aspect of this comprehensive approach, with respect to ensuring enablement of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe's (SACEUR) area of responsibility, has been to reinforce NATO's efforts to ensure a coherent approach and synergies with the EU in the area of military mobility, including military mobility procedures that should apply to all allies equally. Through legislative measures, the simplification of procedures and diplomatic clearances to enable rapid crossing of borders on land, in the air and at

sea, NATO has been able to improve the readiness of its forces, as well as increase their ability to move within Europe in peacetime, crisis or conflict.

NATO and the EU featured military mobility for the first time in a set of common cooperation proposals laid out in the joint declaration signed by their political leaders in December 2017. Since then, NATO and the EU have adopted several engagements on military mobility at the highest political levels. Both organizations emphasized the importance of NATO-EU cooperation for military mobility at the EU

Foreign Affairs and Defence Ministers meeting in June 2018, as well as in the July 2018 and 2021 NATO Summit Communiqués. Military mobility has been a cornerstone of NATO-EU cooperation with strong expectations from a number of allies in terms of deliverables.

Throughout 2018 and 2019, NATO and the EU shared their respective military requirements for infrastructure. Following NATO's transmission of its updated infrastructure parameters to the EU in March 2019, the EU Council approved an update to the transport infrastructure parameters and the geographical data of military requirements within and beyond the EU in July 2019.

Furthermore, NATO agreed to

the public disclosure of its standard regarding transportation of dangerous goods to support the EU's work in this area. In early 2021, the Alliance transmitted its maps of NATO Main Supply Routes — representing roads and rails used to move forces and materiel from, though and to allies' territories — to the EU to help ensure coherence and avoid duplication. Because NATO and the EU largely rely on similar military forces and capabilities, these maps will allow for stronger synergies between the two organizations.

Continuing their collaboration, staffs of the respective networks exchanged national points of contact for military mobility. On the one hand, NATO provided its single national Points of Contact list in a whole-of-government approach for the national regulations and civil arrangements, as established by the NATO Civil Emergency Planning Committee. On the other hand, the EU provided the EU Member States' National Points of Contact list for military mobility, developed by the EU Military Staff. Furthermore, NATO is establishing a 24/7 Movement Control network between NATO and national entities that includes civil and military sectors. The network will operate in peacetime with the capability to surge during crisis or conflict.

With NATO's reliance on a rapid-reinforcement strategy to defend its eastern flank, strong and enduring military

mobility capabilities are even more essential for Europe's defense and deterrence posture. Essentially, ensuring that the Alliance's defense capabilities are mobile, rapid and survivable reduces the likelihood of conflict. By strengthening force enablement and military mobility, NATO can bolster its security posture for decades to come, ensuring a credible deterrence and defense posture in the long term.

With NATO fully committed to a 360-degree defense approach, efforts to enhance mobility must focus not only on the threat to the east and north, but also address the south and the growing rear-area security concerns of allies in Central

Europe. Due to this outlook, NATO and the EU now generally recognize that their strong cooperation is critical to develop a coordinated military and civilian solution to potential threats.

Therefore, strong cooperation between NATO and the EU is essential to support military mobility. The dialogue on military mobility brings together relevant NATO and EU staffs and has contributed to information sharing in key areas of military requirements, including transportation infrastructure, transportation of dangerous goods, customs, cross-border movement permissions, communication (command and control) and communication information systems. This

engagement will continue to facilitate coherence and mutual reinforcement of efforts to improve military mobility as well as achieve synergies and efficiencies wherever possible.

A key element is the institutional challenge facing both organizations and the difference in their missions and priorities. While NATO is primarily focused on deterrence and defense and emphasizes military logistics and sustainment in geographical Europe, as SACEUR's area of responsibility, the EU is focused on the conduct of civil-military crisis management beyond Europe and on commercial rules, regulations and infrastructure development inside Europe. Due to these differences, NATO and the EU have a common responsibility to establish the conditions needed for the movement of forces throughout Europe. Furthermore, 21 nations belong to both organizations and must address military mobility as a part of their own national political processes, while balancing competing priorities from two separate organizations. In addition to the aforementioned challenges hampering cooperation activities, moving forces also presents a common challenge for both organizations.

NATO is facing obstacles in four major fields when addressing military mobility. The first challenge is framed by national authority and legislation. It is essential that all allies establish a cross-border movement approval process and lift existing



Romanian Special Forces participate in Steadfast Defender exercises in Romania in 2021.

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restrictions in national legislation. In this arena, NATO has implemented a legal framework through technical arrangements signed by all allies and some Partnership for Peace nations. Encouraging allies to facilitate forces' movements in Europe allows the armed forces to cross borders and territory (including airspace) at the relevant speed required for every NATO operation, mission or operational commitment. Authorization for movement of dangerous goods, such as ammunition, is a particular challenge in this field. NATO recognizes the EU's significant role in alleviating customs, legal and administrative procedures to reduce the time required to move military cargo across Europe, owing to the role of civilian institutions and organizations in the management of transport infrastructure and transport capabilities.

The second challenge is the command and control organization. Command and control remains key to manage the flow of different types of forces and materiel. All those very particular movements require seamless coordination, be they military or civilian actors. The existing and continuously improving military movement network is part of the global command and control network. As mentioned previously, NATO developed a single national points of contact network at the political level to support coordination between military and civilians. They are the entry points for deconflicting movement request issues and are responsible for processing them within their respective nations.

The third challenge is the capacities of military and civilian assets. Moving troops with their materiel requires the support of civilian companies, institutional and private. Coordinated planning of deployment and sustainment flow allows NATO to avoid competition between nations amid limited capacities and increasing costs. It is necessary to deconflict military requirements to balance between the need and availability of national capacities.

The fourth and last challenge is infrastructure, which has suffered since the end of the Cold War. Upgrading existing transportation infrastructure, such as port facilities, railroads, roads and bridges that can support the weight of military equipment, and all supporting infrastructures (e.g., accommodations, parking) for troops hosted in Europe represents a financial burden for the allied nations. One prominent example is the difference in the gauge of railways in Western Europe and Eastern Europe.

Despite these obstacles, military mobility efforts are improving. With respect to the EU's Trans-European Transport Network, initiated to develop transportation infrastructures to connect Western and Eastern Europe, three of the nine EU transportation corridors are of particular relevance to NATO for deployment, reinforcement and sustainment of forces. Moreover, the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027, which also covers military mobility, provides a key opportunity for those allies that are also EU member states to propose projects that meet NATO requirements. Therefore, the Alliance needs to ensure that the transportation infrastructure addresses the military needs of both organizations to the greatest extent possible.

In addition, NATO encourages all allies or groups of allies to propose creative solutions and share best practices for overcoming bureaucratic processes when moving troops and materiel. As a good example, the Netherlands has taken the initiative to support elements of NATO's enablement work with a military mobility focus. NATO believes this could contribute greatly to achieving the alignment of workstrands, processes and procedures because the Netherlands is also leading the EU's Permanent Structured Cooperation project.

NATO also welcomes the request by Canada, Norway and the United States to participate in the EU project on military mobility. The numerous threats that Europe and North America are facing have highlighted the need to stand together. The EU Council has agreed to NATO's request to be informed about discussions and decisions regarding the three countries' participation. This contributes to exchanging knowledge, experiences and best practices between both organizations to improve transport infrastructure, strategic lift capacity, command and control, cyber and network resilience, and military transit procedures.

Lastly, efforts are ongoing to identify projects in which standardization could be harmonized. NATO invites EU staff to participate in the NATO Standardisation Staff Group, thus providing another forum to harmonize efforts to advance interoperability and to avoid duplicating development of standards.

For the past 30 years, this partnership has grown, promoting peace, security and economic stability while avoiding duplication. This is partly due to a better understanding of the role of each organization, but also because there has been a flexibility to adapt and evolve. To improve on the delivery of their respective missions, NATO and the EU have undertaken a process of self-examination to ensure they remain fit for purpose. For NATO, it takes the form of the NATO 2030 process, which aims to provide a more integrated approach to resilience, more investment in technology, closer partnerships and a focus on the security implications of climate change. For the EU, the Strategic Compass will strengthen common European security by defining future threats, goals and ambitions in defense. But most of all it is an opportunity to align and expand our ambitions for NATO-EU cooperation, to look to the future together and develop a common understanding of the challenges and opportunities that we face.

“NATO is an Alliance that constantly modernises and adapts to new threats and challenges. NATO is also adapting as an institution. ... We will continuously pursue greater coherence, improved effectiveness, and new efficiencies, in support of the flexibility and responsiveness we need as an Alliance.”

- Brussels Summit Communiqué □

Editor's note: This article was completed prior to Russia's illegal escalation of aggression against Ukraine in February 2022. Lt. Gen. Wiermann's term as director general of the NATO International Military Staff ended in July 2022.



PER CONCORDIAM ILLUSTRATION

Germany-United States NATO RELATIONS

Perspectives After the German Elections

By Dr. Ralf Roloff and Dr. Matthew Rhodes, Marshall Center professors

The following dialogue is adapted from the “Germany Votes” edition of the contributors’ quarterly “Transatlantic Talk” audio podcast. It was recorded September 27, 2021.

DR. MATTHEW RHODES: Ralf, the months leading up to the German parliamentary elections saw an outpouring of reflection on the legacy of Angela Merkel as chancellor after 16 years in office. Some of that commentary was sharply critical. For example, the cover of *The Economist* magazine that came out on the Friday before the election had the title “The Mess Merkel Leaves Behind.” There was also an opinion piece in *The Wall Street Journal* that concluded that Merkel’s real legacy is a weaker West. From your standpoint, what were the most important developments under Merkel for German foreign policy in general and for trans-Atlantic relations in particular?

DR. RALF ROLOFF: Thank you, Matt. Indeed, 16 years is a long time to be the head of government. Angela Merkel is certainly one of the longest serving heads of government that we have recently seen internationally as well as one of the longest serving chancellors in German history. So, her final months in office were kind of a long goodbye. From my perspective, what Merkel leaves behind in German foreign policy reflects the time that she had to go through. She will be remembered as a chancellor, if not *the* chancellor, of crisis management.

At least 10 of Merkel’s 16 years in the chancellery were filled with crises, whether it was the finance, the refugee or the COVID crisis, to name only three of them. Relatively early after she came into office, it was the

financial and Euro crisis, then she had to deal with the Arab Spring, the exit from nuclear energy, the migration crisis, the climate crisis and the Paris Accord, Georgia and Ukraine and Russia, Brexit, and the Iran deal. All this gives you a turbulent time in terms of international relations and foreign policy. So, crisis management and the way she managed to deal with crises, that’s certainly one of the legacies for which she will be remembered.

She also had a very pragmatic sense of doing politics that I would even say was free from the kind of vanity that we usually see with leaders. She was more interested in getting problems solved, and through that she managed to strengthen Germany’s role as a dominant, if not preeminent, power in Europe, particularly within the European Union, and the Western Alliance (NATO) as well. This was not always seen in a positive way — during the Euro crisis, she became the most hated politician in some EU member countries. However, her clear, analytical, personal approach is certainly something that will remain.

Dealing with the content of most crises also meant dealing with NATO and trans-Atlantic relations. During Merkel’s 16 years as chancellor, she had to work with four very different U.S. presidents. She went through ups and downs in German-U.S. relations. She came into office at one of the lowest points during the President George W. Bush administration, after the Iraq war. She then went through the President Barack Obama time, and I still recall the nice pictures from the 2015 G7 summit



Then-German Chancellor Angela Merkel and NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg meet in Berlin in 2020 following a summit of EU defense ministers. Merkel played a major role in NATO and EU policies and managed multiple crises during her 16 years leading Western Europe's most populous nation and largest economy. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

near Garmisch at Schloss Elmau, which was really a G2 summit between Merkel and Obama. Then she went through the turmoil with the Donald Trump presidency during which the key U.S. ally was seen as more of a challenge. She always tried to steer through that with a clear, analytical view rather than big emotions.

What Merkel will finally leave behind as a heritage in German foreign policy is the overall multilateral approach based on fixed integration into the EU and NATO, multilateral cooperation in the context of the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and in particular, new forms of informal leadership through the G7, G20, the Normandy format, and other 2+X formats through which she worked behind the scenes in a very smart way. And I'm quite convinced that this kind of crisis management is something that we will miss.

So my perspective looks much more positive than The Economist's. What's your take, Matt, on how Merkel's legacy is viewed in the United States?

RHODES: From my perspective as an American, there were some of the similar kinds of perceptions that you talked about. And I think most centrally, across all these different events, different crises, different presidents over 16 years, is the way that, also in the U.S., Germany became seen as the dominant power in Europe and the most important European ally of the U.S., and that Merkel personally — in part because of her longevity and some of the leadership characteristics you talked about — also became the most visible, most recognizable European leader for the general American public.

Back in the 1990s or the early years of this century,

under the Bill Clinton and George W. Bush administrations, that role was still very much with Great Britain and Tony Blair. Under Merkel, you saw a clear shift, though as you said, in both a positive and negative sense. You mentioned the smiling pictures of Merkel and Obama from the Schloss Elmau G7 summit and it's interesting, in terms of the cycle of these things, that Germany is due to take over the G7 chair position again next year. I also recall a quote from President Obama at the very end of his presidency, before boarding Air Force One for a final trip to Berlin, in which he told reporters that he considered Chancellor Merkel his most important international partner during his time in office.

Similarly, looking at U.S. President Joe Biden now, it was notable that he made time in the very first weeks after his inauguration to participate together with Merkel in the virtual Munich Security Conference and that Chancellor Merkel was also the first European leader that he invited to the White House.

But, as you already mentioned, it was very different during the four years of the Trump administration. During this time, President Trump seemed almost to go out of his way to single out Germany and Merkel personally for very negative public criticism. Even during the election campaign in 2016, one of Trump's typical lines at rallies was that Angela Merkel was "ruining Germany" because she had let in too many migrants. Trump also called out Germany over low defense spending and what he saw as protectionist EU trade practices throughout his time in office. But if you accept the old saying that there is no such thing as bad publicity, either way, Germany and Merkel were getting a lot of attention.

We have seen that spill over in the U.S. and internationally in terms of interest in Germany's election campaign. Again, reflecting Germany's new prominence and a certain amount of suspense about what would happen or change after 16 years of a single leader, there has been more attention in the media and among people just talking about this election than I can remember for any others during my time at the Marshall Center. Part of the attention has been to foreign policy, including the position of some of the parties toward NATO. The leftist Die Linke party's call for withdrawal from NATO and the Green Party's call to reject the 2% of gross domestic product (GDP) defense spending target both fueled speculation about what a new government might bring.

Ralf, what role do you think foreign policy played in the campaign, and what do the initial results mean for European security?

ROLOFF: It's interesting to hear that the German elections were very prominent with the U.S. media and public, which indicates the importance of Germany to the U.S. and American foreign policy. I have to admit, though, that in Germany itself, throughout the campaign, the role of foreign policy was close to zero. Foreign policy is rarely the biggest issue in campaigns,



but normally at least some of the key topics are important. Four years ago, it was the migration issue, and before that we had the Euro crisis. Then everything was overshadowed by COVID and climate change. Even if you took at the so-called triad debates between the three main candidates for chancellor, it was hard to find discussion of any foreign policy issue. They did not talk beyond the margins about the EU, trans-Atlantic relations, Russia or China, which was really striking. The popular “Wahlomat” online tool to inform the electorate about parties’ platforms also only included about four questions related to foreign policy out of 40, and that gives another clear indication that this election was basically about domestic politics.

In the meantime, we don’t yet know what the results really mean. One thing that is quite obvious is that the big loser of this election was Merkel’s Christian Democratic party and its local Bavarian ally the Christian Social Union, which lost a large number of its direct mandates. On the other hand, we can see two strong winners, the Greens and the Liberals, which in terms of demography, attracted the most votes from the younger generation in a demand for change. The exact direction of the change is not quite clear, even in terms of foreign policy, but it is a demand for change.

German and French soldiers stand side by side during a ceremony in Sarajevo transferring command of the peacekeeping mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina from NATO to the European Union in 2004. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

One final remark is that all three of these parties are very critical about what we perceive as great power competition, which they see as one of the major threats to German and European security. Their way of thinking about international relations is not a traditional realist approach, focusing on power and balances of power, but rather more on the two main issues, particularly for the younger generation: climate change, for one, and digitalization and the renewal of the international economy in a way that allows the younger generation to pursue a positive future, for the other. For both, this power competition seems to stand in the way of a successful policy. It will be interesting to see how discussions with our trans-Atlantic partners turn out in terms of how to overcome great power competition without investing too much effort, time and money, at the expense of other problems.

RHODES: That’s an interesting take, especially regarding the idea of great power competition, or what the Biden administration describes in most of its documents

with the slightly different phrase, “strategic competition.” This will be a key issue being watched from Washington also as the countries proceed with drafting a new Strategic Concept for NATO that responds partly to a more assertive, aggressive Russia, but especially to the rise of China as a priority for the U.S.

We had a taste of how these issues can sometimes lead to tensions in the broader trans-Atlantic field, potentially including political leaders here in Germany, with the deal just before the German elections between Australia, the United Kingdom and the U.S. to form a new strategic partnership in the Indo-Pacific and whose first major initiative was the purchase of nuclear-powered submarines by Australia, canceling an existing deal with France for diesel ones.

The view in the U.S. seems to be that the protests from France and from some EU politicians about this will not be a major stumbling block for trans-Atlantic cooperation. There have been some signs of this in the weeks just before and after the German elections. There was this kind of olive branch when the Biden administration finally announced that it would allow travel again from Europe, from the Schengen zone, into the U.S. for vaccinated travelers. There was also a make-up phone call between President Biden and President Emmanuel

Macron to say, “Yes, we could have handled this better and had more consultations, but more unites us than divides us, and we’ll talk more in the months ahead.” It is also symbolic that despite initial French moves to postpone the first meeting of the new trans-Atlantic U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council in Pittsburgh, it went ahead, with the idea that on some issues regarding the digital economy and emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, it’s still important for the partners to talk in a formalized framework.

Even so, there is still concern from the U.S. that domestic politics on both sides of the Atlantic will exert heavy influence on the ability of the governments to make real progress on this agenda, under whatever scenario eventually emerges for a new government in Germany. This includes influence on climate, on further progress with the COVID pandemic, and especially on some kind of common approach on China and strategic competition.

And here there are a couple of concurrent developments in the U.S. that are worth highlighting. Maybe the most immediate and most urgent, as we record this today, is the question of the U.S. Congress reaching an agreement to extend the U.S. government’s authority to continue to spend and borrow money. There were two parallel calendars for those two aspects of the budget, but both are winding down fairly quickly. If the centerpiece of the Biden foreign policy, including toward strategic competition, is the idea of proving that democracies are fit for the 21st century and able to solve 21st century problems, nothing would be more discouraging and likely to divide trans-Atlantic allies than a new economic crisis

Serbian, Croatian, Chinese and Bosnian flags fly at a trade fair in Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina, in April 2019. Chinese investment has boomed throughout Central and Eastern Europe’s cash-strapped developing countries, even as European Union officials scramble to counter Beijing’s mounting economic and political influence. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



triggered by a failure on these budget and debt agreements. It is a little bit out of the headlines, but another underlying issue concerns the ability to get nominees from the Biden administration for senior foreign and security policy positions into place.

This has been much slower than in most administrations, partly because of slowness in naming nominees, but also because of blockage within the U.S. Senate in considering and voting to approve different people. There was a small step forward, also in the last week or so after the German election, in which one major figure, Karen Donfried, the outgoing president of the German Marshall Fund nongovernmental organization, was approved to be the new senior State Department official leading relations with Europe. Given her background, this will be at least someone who is very experienced in the trans-Atlantic relationship. But most ambassador nominations and others remain stuck. For supporters of the administration, there's a complaint that this inability to put a full team in place is one of the things that is making it more difficult to coordinate on a higher level with counterparts in Europe. Career officials can certainly manage in acting capacity on an interim basis, but they lack the full credibility and authority of confirmed nominees. They perhaps lack the ability to carry out the kind of "relentless diplomacy" to solve global problems that President Biden talked about in his speech to the U.N. General Assembly. You need people in place to really make that a success.

And so, these kind of prolonged delays on the U.S. side, even nine or 10 months since the Biden administration took office, may now overlap with the government transition period in Germany. This could be shorter than some people predict, but in any case, it will take some months while coalition negotiations continue until new senior people can start to be put in place. The hope is that this kind of overlapping or successive delay does not too much hinder progress on finding formulas to address the highest priority issues, so that next year in NATO's new Strategic Concept and the EU's parallel Strategic Compass, there is at least a complementary approach.

Looking at some of the different scenarios that you sketched out for the new German coalition, I can also see a potential paradox. Certainly, you could imagine under some constellations, whether it's the traffic-light or something else, in which a new German government is even closer to the current American position than was the outgoing government led by Chancellor Merkel on at least some priorities, such as China or even the approach toward democracy and human rights. However, that government could very well be less firmly grounded, either internally because it is a more diverse coalition, or internationally because it doesn't have quite the longevity and prestige that Merkel brought within European politics. In that case, it might be closer to the U.S. position on paper but less able to deliver tangible support, either in forging some kind of consensus on issues within Europe



German infantry soldiers participate in the European Challenge 2005 joint military exercises in Bergen, Germany. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

or in terms of supporting increased military capabilities for collective defense relative to Russia or other threats. So, you could get a situation of "on the one hand, and on the other," but it matters where this balance might lie in the new government.

ROLOFF: One of the key questions is definitely related to defense and capability building. The basic argument is that it doesn't make sense to talk about 2% of GDP for defense without taking into account another 2% in spending for development. A more comprehensive perspective on security changes the equation.

We certainly will see these kinds of debates much more often in the future, as that is how the Greens and parts of the Social Democrats look at foreign and security policy. And that certainly might also become an interesting discussion within the U.S. Democratic Party, where I see this kind of split in views on international relations as well.

RHODES: This is certainly going to be an ongoing challenge. The U.S., Germany and other NATO members face the necessity of adapting defense in the midst of really fundamental changes in the economy, and in technology and social relationships. □

NATO

IN THE

NORTH



PER CONCORDIAM ILLUSTRATION

Adopting a balanced approach

By **Snorri Matthíasson**, Icelandic Foreign Service officer and political advisor to NATO Joint Task Force Command Norfolk

PHOTOS BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Norway and the United States were original signatories to the Washington Treaty, placing nearly half the Arctic Circle within NATO territory upon the Alliance's founding in 1949. Aside from neutral Finland and Sweden, the remaining Arctic territory was the Soviet Union's. With the Soviet Navy otherwise bottled up in the Baltic and Black seas, its Arctic ports offered unobstructed avenues for its naval forces to project power into the Atlantic. As intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs),

During the Cold War, the allies invested heavily in military capabilities and infrastructure to deter and, if necessary, defend against potential Soviet threats emanating from the Kola Peninsula. Primarily centered on northern Norway and the Greenland-Iceland-United Kingdom (GIUK) Gap, NATO's approach to the High North was comprehensive despite the otherwise land-centric focus of the Alliance. The GIUK Gap, a naval chokepoint between the three countries, represented the defensive line separating the bulk

of Soviet maritime forces from the all-important trans-Atlantic lines of communication. In World War II, the Battle of the Atlantic had been the longest campaign of the war, with nearly disastrous results for the Allies, and had already prompted the U.S. to heavily invest in infrastructure in the High North. To deter Soviet attempts to disrupt the trans-Atlantic lines of communication, the Allies developed not just the capabilities, but also the structures and facilities required to prevail in a potential third battle of the Atlantic. NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic and his subordinate commanders played a key role in developing awareness of the Soviet submarine threat in an Alliance often criticized for its "sea blindness." Toward the end of the Cold War, the U.S. Navy shifted its approach by applying

pressure on the Soviet Navy farther north through its 1980 Maritime Strategy, forcing the Soviets to rethink assumptions about a potential conflict with the West.

ARCTIC CHANGE

The fall of the Soviet Union saw this confrontational dynamic soften considerably. NATO understandably shifted its approach to the new Russian Federation and developed partnerships with former Warsaw Pact members. Indeed, the post-Cold War NATO-Russia Founding Act, signed in 1997, was specifically aimed at recasting this relationship in terms of consultation and cooperation. The challenges

ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) and long-range aviation grew in importance, the region was heavily securitized by both sides throughout the Cold War. While North America falls under NATO's territory as defined by Article 6 of the North Atlantic Treaty, the defense of the North American continent quickly became a bilateral matter between the U.S. and Canada. The seeds of this bilateral arrangement were sown during World War II, and the relationship remains perhaps the most integrated in the Alliance today. Thus, NATO's northern focus was from an early stage (and continues to be) centered on what is sometimes referred to as the European Arctic or the High North.



A boat navigates near icebergs in eastern Greenland. As ice retreats, the region grows in geopolitical and economic importance.

of the post-Soviet Russian economy necessitated drastic cuts in defense spending, and the Russian Northern Fleet reduced both the numbers of platforms and the operational activity of those that survived. Overall, relations with Russia underwent fundamental changes that left the North Atlantic largely uncontested. NATO members took full advantage of the peace dividend, reducing their own defense budgets and gradually disbanding elements of the NATO Command Structure (NCS) that had focused on the Soviet threat throughout the Cold War.

Owing to an olive branch initially extended by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1987, the Arctic benefited from a vacation from geopolitics that allowed for cross-border cooperation and peaceful dialogue between former adversaries keen to reset relations. Much of this cooperation

accelerating effects of climate change and the growing global reach of China opening up new avenues for strategic competition. This creates a new transpolar geopolitical dynamic in the Arctic; as Rebecca Pincus, assistant professor at the U.S. Naval War College, has convincingly argued, the GIUK Gap that was once the heart of an East-West confrontation is now increasingly the venue of an additional North-South dynamic. As accelerating climate change offers the prospect of new shipping lanes through previously impassable routes that could drastically shorten the journey time from Asia to Europe, the eyes of the world have turned to the Arctic.

RUSSIA AND CHINA IN THE ARCTIC

While cooperation with Russia has all but collapsed in other areas since its invasion and annexation of Crimea in 2014, the Arctic states have had remarkable success in maintaining cooperation and dialogue. Owing in part to the exclusion of military affairs from the Arctic Council's mandate, cooperation has continued, and the region remains well governed, all things considered. In the frenzied coverage of the Arctic "heating up," it is often forgotten that a stable, secure Arctic is fundamentally in the interests of all the Arctic states, including Russia, and that is reflected in all their Arctic policies. The Russian Federation has 60,000 kilometers of international borders, and a soon-to-be navigable Northeast Passage offers not just a new and attractive alternative to the Suez Canal, but also a 25,000-kilometer frontier to securitize and defend.

Though scholars and experts are divided on the intent behind the redevelopment of Russia's military infrastructure along the Northeast Passage, there can be no doubt as to the capabilities of its assets in the region and Russia's disregard for international law elsewhere in Europe. Norway has led the way in analyzing the modern Russian Bastion Defense Concept and raised concerns about its potential impact on allied security. When U.S. Navy Adm. James Foggo, then commander of the U.S. 6th Fleet, spoke of Russian submarines "prowling the Atlantic, testing our defenses" he was referring to the assets of Russia's revamped Northern Fleet, sailing from the Kola Peninsula through the Bear Gap and GIUK Gap into the Atlantic.

CHINA'S PRESENCE

Discussions of Chinese activity in the Arctic, while especially prone to exaggerations and half-truths, have led to concerns in Arctic capitals about long-term Chinese intent. This was crystallized in the approach of then-U.S. President Donald Trump's administration at the 2019 Arctic Council ministerial meeting in Rovaniemi, Finland, that has been carried



Greenland is seen from the air as an aircraft approaches Kangerlussuaq Airport in May 2021.

revolved around overdue environmental protections that could be implemented through the newfound spirit of cooperation and eventually culminated in the founding of the Arctic Council, as well as the Barents Euro-Atlantic Council and the Council of the Baltic Sea States. All three provided venues for constructive dialogue with Russia under the auspices of regional cooperation, building trust, reducing tension and tackling common problems. The Arctic Council was not mandated to discuss military issues, but that did not cause many headlines at the time given the cordial relations with Russia. Though, in truth, the founding of the Arctic Council in 1996 did not generate many headlines at all because the world was focused on other issues and regions. This dialogue and the new structures ushered in an era of quiet cooperation that has been accurately described as "High North, low tension."

But this view of the Arctic is increasingly coming under scrutiny from experts and observers as the region shifts from the quiet cooperation of the 1990s to a growing state of strategic importance today. The region has changed with the



Chinese troops march in 2018 during a joint exercise with Russia that spanned Siberia, the Far East and the Arctic.

through to current U.S. President Joe Biden’s administration and resonates with many allies. As NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg often says of China: “We see them in Africa, we see them in the Arctic.” China has increased its economic, scientific and diplomatic activity in the High North, often under the banner of a “Polar Silk Road” — the northern component to its Belt and Road program. China’s infamous self-designation as a “near-Arctic state” caused concern — and not just among the Arctic NATO members. At the 2021 Brussels summit, NATO leaders approved a communique that spoke explicitly to allied concerns about China’s stated ambitions, assertive behavior and the potential threat to the rules-based international order.

REACTING TO CHANGE

To ignore these developments in the High North would be unwise. But at the same time, to overreact to the natural evolution of changing national interests in the Arctic would be counterproductive and could even cause inadvertent escalation. Most threat assessments, both national and academic, consider the threat of conflict in the Arctic to be low, but note that the outbreak of conflict elsewhere would likely spill over into the vulnerable Arctic. Early considerations of the post-Cold War Arctic were met with divergent views among allies on what role NATO should play, if any. Initially, the focus was on less than conventional (but no less pressing) security issues such as the implications of climate change or search and rescue coordination in

isolated regions. But over the past decade, this divergence of views has gradually been bridged, driven by allied concerns about rapidly accelerating climate change, Russian activity and increased international interest in the region. At the 2009 Strasbourg-Kehl summit, NATO included a reference to developments in the High North, noting the increased international attention and security-related developments (including climate change) after a high-level symposium on Arctic security hosted by Iceland.

In 2008, Norway initiated the Core Area Initiative, a campaign to strengthen and regionalize the NCS and revitalize collective defense in Europe. Its view was that while out-of-area operations were important to maintain the security of the Euro-Atlantic area, this should *not* result in forgetting or ignoring the core area. The initiative was supported by Norwegian threat assessments, academic writings and active lobbying by Norwegian civilian and military leadership. Six years later, the Core Area Initiative felt rather prophetic as events in Ukraine fundamentally changed assumptions about a Europe whole, free and secure.

As the Arctic has grown in strategic importance, there has been a proliferation of writing on the region that has some journalists and think tank experts whipped into a near frenzy. In fact, there are so many ill-conceived hot takes on the cold region that there exists a subculture among Arctic experts poking fun at the oversimplifications and exaggerated conclusions drawn about Russian or Chinese plots for world domination through melting sea ice or endless supplies

of hydrocarbons awaiting extraction from the North Pole. (See for example Heather Exnot-Pirot's 2018 article, "How to write an Arctic story in 5 easy steps," on the ArcticToday website.) A lot of this Arctic writing is highly prescriptive, with detailed suggestions for what NATO should do, or what new structures or standing Arctic forces it should establish to deal with the conflict that appears to be already underway. However, the reality on the ground does not necessarily reflect some of these dramatic descriptions. The same writing often criticizes the Alliance for inaction, but NATO's considered approach to the Arctic reflects the benefit of an Alliance whose actions are driven by regular political consultations on security issues among its 30 members. This has allowed the Arctic allies to collectively guard against the risk of overreaction in a delicate region. Still, with time the Alliance has taken a series of measured steps to ensure the freedom and security of its members' citizens in the High North, both in terms of the decisions made by the Alliance and by the actions taken by allies.

NATO'S ROLE

The first step for NATO was to increase situational awareness in a changing Arctic. In a vast region largely covered by ocean, and with limited infrastructure and population, it is crucial that the Alliance does not allow an adversary to accrue any advantage through undetected activity. Improved situational awareness is being pursued through the increased presence of allied nations in terms of new investments in intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities, anti-submarine warfare (ASW) platforms and deployments that test the ability of existing forces to operate in austere conditions. Changes to the NCS have

also enabled NATO to play a coordinating role for national activity, improving the effectiveness of Alliance forces and reducing the risk of miscalculation. This will help the allies and NATO's principal committees make informed decisions in peace, crisis and conflict.

In 2016, leaders at the Warsaw summit initiated the NATO Command Structure Adaptation with the aim of making the NCS once again fit for purpose in a changed security environment. Two years later, the allies agreed to establish two new commands: Joint Support and Enabling Command, to ensure freedom of operation and sustainment in the rear area, and Joint Force Command (JFC) Norfolk, to focus on protecting the trans-Atlantic lines of communication. At the same time, the U.S. Navy reestablished the 2nd Fleet, closely integrated with JFC Norfolk through its dual-hatted commander. That same year, NATO held Trident Juncture 2018 (TRJE18), its largest exercise since the end of the Cold War. In hosting TRJE18, Norway had an opportunity to exercise its own national defense plans, Host Nation Concept Support and Total Defense Concept. Other exercises, both NATO and national, continue to look north as allied forces develop their capability to operate in this austere and challenging environment. Dynamic Mongoose, a NATO-led ASW exercise, is now hosted in Iceland or Norway in alternating years. National-led exercises such as Cold Response, Joint Warrior and Northern Viking have been reestablished or reinvigorated. In 2019, NATO adopted a new military strategy as part of the broader adaptation to the changed security environment. Based on this strategy, the allies have approved both a concept for operationalizing the strategy, as well as a framework for the development of NATO's military instrument of



A Russian soldier walks by a radar facility near Nagurskoye, Russia. The country's northernmost military outpost is bristling with missiles, radar and military aircraft, projecting Moscow's influence in the Arctic.

power. This approach is fundamentally theaterwide, taking into consideration not just a single region but, crucially, the totality of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe's area of responsibility. As such, NATO is able to address regional concerns and the interplay between regions, consistent with NATO's fundamental values of shared purpose and a 360-degree approach to collective defense.

ALLIED ACTION

In addition to NATO's structural adaptation, the allies have steadily increased defense budgets since 2014 in accordance with the Defense Investment Pledge. This is a crucial step, since many of the capabilities and platforms required for successful deterrence in the North Atlantic were retired after the Cold War, with key expertise allowed to atrophy. Several allies have dedicated funding to the type of capabilities and platforms crucial to the Cold War confrontation in the North Atlantic and Arctic. Today, as during the Cold War, the overwhelming majority of military activity in the North Atlantic is conducted on a national basis, rather than formally under a NATO operation. However, allies are increasingly coordinating those national activities under a NATO umbrella and enabling information sharing that contributes to overall Alliance readiness and situational awareness. This activity, led by national military headquarters, is then combined and coordinated with NATO activity, such as regular air policing missions in Iceland or the flexible NATO standing naval forces.

The U.S. has led the way in the High North, increasing military deployments to Arctic allies and partners since 2014. These efforts are supported by a flurry of Arctic strategies as land, amphibious, naval and air forces have all been deployed north to develop their abilities to operate in the region and strengthen the deterrence and defense posture. The U.S. has also reinvigorated existing economic and diplomatic ties that underpin Alliance cohesion (recall Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty), signed a nonbinding trilateral security agreement with Finland and Sweden in 2018, and developed a relationship with the Greenlandic government. And while neither the United Kingdom nor France are Arctic nations, both have taken an interest in developments in the north, working with allies to develop cold weather capabilities and conducting cooperative deployments. This is particularly the case in the maritime domain, where UK vessels have operated in the Barents Sea, and in 2018, the French ship BSAH Rhône sailed through the Northeast Passage.

Smaller allies, such as Norway and Denmark, have by virtue of geography always maintained a military presence in the High North and retained capabilities that other allies retired. Norway's Cold Response 2022 will, according to the country's Chief of Defense, be the largest military exercise inside the Arctic Circle in Norway since the 1980s, involving 40,000 soldiers. Norway also maintains the NATO Centre of Excellence - Cold Weather Operations, focusing on developing the Alliance's ability to conduct operations in the extreme cold. In 2020, the Danish Joint Arctic Command in Nuuk,

Greenland, signed a memorandum of understanding with Allied Maritime Command to develop shared situational understanding in the region. In February 2021, Denmark announced a new Arctic Capability package of \$240 million to develop intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and increase its footprint in and around Greenland and the Faroe Islands, set to be firmly rooted in a NATO effort.

The 2021 Brussels summit set the stage for NATO's continued adaptation to the ever-changing security environment. Allied leaders agreed to strengthen political consultations and address the security impact of climate change, decisions that will continue to improve its ability to deal with issues in the High North. The revision of the Strategic Concept offers an opportunity for the allies to reflect on and review NATO's approach to not just the North, but also the East, South and West. The communique included a careful reference to the High North, wherein NATO "will continue to undertake necessary, calibrated, and coordinated activities in support of the Alliance's security interests." The statement was not isolated from other regions, but was part of an assessment of the challenging security environment across Supreme Allied Commander in Europe's AOR. This is consistent with NATO's 360-degree approach to security and defense.

CONCLUSION

NATO is fundamentally based on the concept of one for all, all for one. NATO should, and does, concern itself with the security and defense of the High North, just as it concerns itself with security and defense elsewhere. It does so with an emphasis on a balanced approach that recognizes regional sensitivities and leverages local, nuanced understandings to avoid provocation or escalation. In the context of the High North, this has been underlined on numerous occasions by NATO's senior leaders and is helped by the active work of the five Arctic allies within the committees and hallways of NATO headquarters and in the NCS. These five nations would also be likely leaders in developing situational awareness in any brewing crisis, enabling the North Atlantic Council to reach timely and informed consensus.

The challenge for NATO in the High North is simple: Don't believe the hype, but don't ignore it either. Through consensus-based decisions, NATO is adopting a balanced approach to the changes that can ensure the freedom and security of its member states' citizens while maintaining low tensions in the High North. By giving even the smallest member a chance to apply the brakes, NATO ensures that all its decisions and actions represent the collective will of its 30 allies. No doubt, this seems slow and inefficient at times, but when it comes to formulating policy and doctrine, it allows for a careful and coordinated adaptation that will inform the North Atlantic Council in times of crisis. This "slow and steady wins the race" approach is one of the key reasons for the enduring success of the Alliance. □

Editor's note: This article was completed prior to Russia's illegal escalation of aggression against Ukraine in February 2022, and before Finland and Sweden were invited to join NATO.

STABILITY POLICING

IS NATO MISSING AN OPPORTUNITY?

By **Col. Giuseppe De Magistris**, director, NATO Stability Policing Centre of Excellence,
and **Stefano Bergonzini**, staff assistant, NATO Stability Policing Centre of Excellence



The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is a political-military international organization that applies innovation and transformation to stay fit for purpose. This is a fundamental aspect of what is considered the most successful alliance in history. “The Alliance works,” NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said in 2019, “because through the decades, its members kept the commitment to protect and defend each other and adapted as the world around them changed.” Indeed, security challenges such as hybrid threats, the crime-war overlap as well as terrorism and insurgency, threats to human rights, human security and cultural property are significant and likely to become more relevant in the future. This can also be said for what the authors of the 2016 book, “Outplayed: Regaining Strategic Initiative in the Gray Zone,” called the “gray zone challenges, which are unique defense-relevant issues sharing three common characteristics — hybridity, menace to defense and military convention, and profound and paralyzing risk-confusion.” Intermediate force capabilities also are needed beyond presence but below the threshold of lethal force to deliver security without creating excessive collateral damage.

These challenges require innovative approaches and Stability Policing (SP) — police-related activities intended to reinforce or temporarily replace the indigenous police to contribute to the restoration and/or upholding of public order and security, rule of law, and the protection of human rights — represents one of NATO’s cutting-edge capabilities. It constitutes a flexible and adaptive tool, overcomes a rigid combat-only approach, and offers innovative and scalable responses by expanding the reach of the military instrument into the realm of policing and actively contributing to a comprehensive approach.

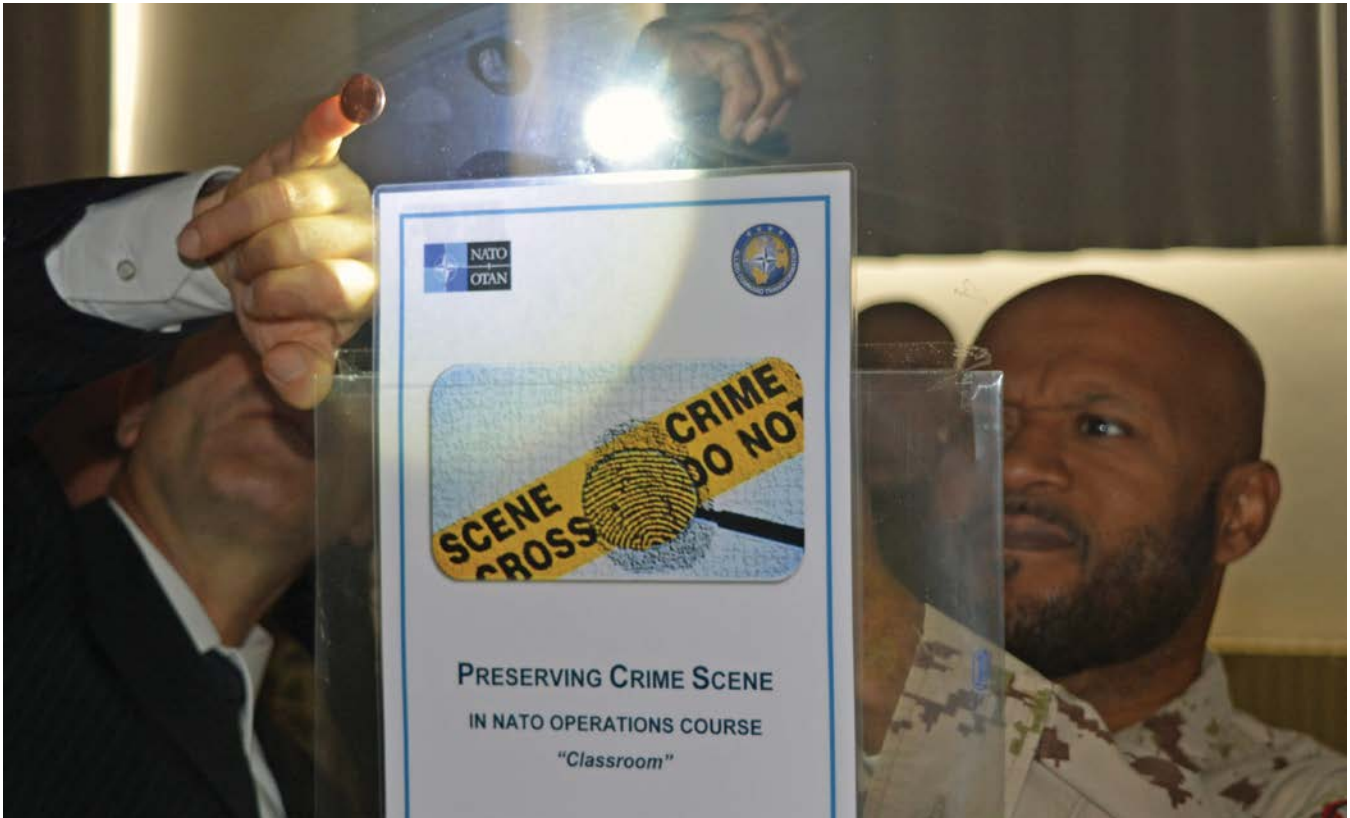
The ‘policing gap’ and the origins of SP

SP *ante litteram* was born with the deployment of the first Multinational Specialized Unit (MSU) to Bosnia in August 1998 as part of the NATO Stabilization Force (SFOR). At that time, the Alliance realized that neither its military might, nor the local police, nor the United Nations civilian police force were able to respond adequately to the security and policing-related needs of the local population. The MSU — envisioned, designed and led by the Italian Carabinieri with the support of Argentina, the Netherlands and the United States — represented the only

Participants learn techniques for controlling crowds and engaging rioters at a training facility in Vicenza, Italy.

NATO STABILITY POLICING CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE





Students learn about fingerprinting in a course on preserving crime scenes. NATO STABILITY POLICING CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

policing tool within SFOR that was flexible and robust enough to fill the law enforcement vacuum in a hostile environment. That would include the capability void between the populace's security needs and the inability or unwillingness of any indigenous police forces (IPF), other relevant actors (U.N., European Union, African Union, *et similia*) and NATO conventional, combat and warfighting means to properly address these challenges.

The authors of this article take pride in having served as NATO Military Police (MP) officers. It is an uncontroverted fact that military police existed previously within NATO and the U.N., but neither of those international organizations had pursued an increase, expansion or improvement of their MP capabilities to bridge the policing gap. In fact, they sought a more poignant, inclusive instrument, a tool inspired by a new vision, namely SP. Both SP and MP are united in a policing dimension that contributes to the improvement of the overall performance of NATO as a military instrument by adding a policing perspective that hitherto was often underestimated or neglected.

In 2016, NATO promulgated the Allied Joint Doctrine for Stability Policing (AJP-3.22). It states that SP can bridge the policing gap through one or a combination of its two missions. One of those missions, the reinforcement of the IPF, entails intervening to increase their capabilities and capacity and raise overall performance to acceptable levels,

and encompasses monitoring, mentoring, advising, reforming, training and partnering. The other mission, temporary replacement of the IPF, may be required if the local force is missing or unwilling to carry out its duties. Normally a U.N. mandate initiates a North Atlantic Council decision to deploy personnel under an executive policing mandate. This might be necessary when other actors are not able, willing or ready to intervene. In fact, when a rapid policing intervention is required, especially in a nonpermissive environment, NATO SP could be the most suitable or actually the only viable solution until other actors from the international community can intervene, support and/or take over as a follow-on force, depending on a U.N. Security Council resolution or host-nation request.

SP can create new avenues to address traditional and emerging military problems with different policing means. Lethal/kinetic tools and procedures are supported, where appropriate, by policing, nonkinetic and less than lethal ones, significantly broadening flexibility in the use of force and applying intermediate force capabilities. These tools are aimed at war criminals, organized crime and transnational criminals, terrorists and insurgents, and violators of host-nation and international laws. This legal targeting affects adversaries by enforcing international and host-nation laws through investigation or arrest, limiting/restricting the mobility and liberty of offenders, seizing their assets and financial

means, and dismantling their networks and structures. Dedicated SP lines of operation or SP elements within established lines of operation can deter, identify, locate, target and engage adversaries or spoilers, disrupt their networks and help attain objectives at tactical, operational and strategic levels in a military campaign.

An added benefit of this approach lies in further reducing the use of force and decreasing collateral damage while responding to the population's security needs. Moreover, it epitomizes a constructive approach to security and contributes to improved acceptance and legitimacy, from the local level to the international level, while enhancing mission sustainability. SP further identifies, collects and analyzes law enforcement and crime information and disseminates intelligence, improving understanding of the operating environment. A number of factors can weaken the performance of the IPF in fragile states, including past, present and developing conflicts, and manmade or natural disasters. A weak or missing rule-of-law system in which individuals, public and private entities and the state are not accountable to the law, combined with a frail justice sector (police, judiciary and corrections) is likely to affect the efficacy of local police forces. Such a situation is likely to hamper governance and generate power and enforcement vacuums, which might be exploited by irregular actors, such as criminals, terrorists and insurgents, and produce considerable levels of insecurity and instability.

As a military capability that emphasizes a populace-oriented approach, SP operates within the area of stabilization and reconstruction and as a military capability for crisis management, striving for a comprehensive approach and human security. In fact, it fosters and seeks the best possible level of interaction with other international organizations, the host nation, and especially with the IPF, the populace and other actors, including nongovernmental organizations.

SP: When, where, how and who?

Does SP contribute to projecting stability? It has been argued that SP cannot contribute to the three NATO core tasks of collective defense, crisis management and cooperative security because it is framed solely within stability operations to bridge the policing gap. Yet, the evolving doctrinal framework contemplates that offensive, defensive and stability operations all encompass stability, enabling defensive and offensive activities that could be extended to SP, although limiting them to the policing realm.

Indeed, history shows that SP can and should be conducted throughout the full spectrum of conflicts and crises in all operational themes (from peacetime military engagement to warfighting), and before, during and after armed conflicts and manmade and natural disasters because the fragile host nation and its populace may require help to bridge policing gaps. By the same token, SP contributes to winning the war by affecting adversaries and enemies and by building peace, an aspect of fundamental importance in a connected, globalized world. Projecting stability is key to preventing and

detering crises, including armed conflict, and cannot be overlooked when addressing policing requirements. To this aim, SP is credible, instrumental and complementary to other actors' efforts; this reasoning has often been demonstrated in NATO operations and missions.

Although "land heavy," SP is not limited to a specific domain. To pursue criminals, terrorists and insurgents, it must be active on land, sea, in the air, in cyberspace and in the information environment. Urban and littoral settings are where most people live and where they will increasingly live. Since conflicts break out among people, and police are often the first responders to these crises, acquiring and using their experience and expertise is increasingly significant. This implies that urban challenges may progressively blur police and military functions as these areas of responsibility overlap. In turn, conducting military operations among dense civilian populations will require military personnel to have policing-like skills. In general, successful interaction between conventional military and policing components will require interoperability to ensure they can be ready, available and jointly deployable to permissive and nonpermissive environments.



NATO Military Police learn how to preserve a crime scene at the Longare Training Area in Vicenza, Italy. NATO STABILITY POLICING CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

An essential principle of SP states that "everyone can contribute to SP, but not everyone can do everything." Policing is indeed very different from soldiering, especially in a fragile state. Basic SP activities and tasks — such as presence patrols, critical site security and election security — can be conducted by any trained, equipped and tasked unit. Higher level SP, such as investigating organized crime, disrupting international terrorist networks or mentoring host-nation senior leaders, requires a considerable level of expertise, experience and skill. A vast array of forces can and should contribute to SP, including gendarmerie-type forces — which are the first choice — MP and other military forces. Under a comprehensive approach, SP activities may include nonmilitary actors, such as police forces with civilian



A Royal Netherlands Air Force F-16, seen through the window of another aircraft, participates in NATO's Baltic Air Policing Mission in Lithuanian airspace in 2017. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

status, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations and contractors. This inclusiveness fosters interoperability, aims at enabling the Alliance to select the most suitable asset, and avoids missing opportunities.

The 'missing' capability: Why NATO needs an SP Concept
NATO lacks a capability that precisely defines the requirements for SP across the doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, personnel, facilities and interoperability (DOTMLPFI) framework. During a force generation process, nations may provide the Alliance with SP contributions that lack police expertise since SP is not yet acknowledged as a capability within the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP). History shows that SP should be included in the planning process from the beginning and that a lack of expert and experienced policing personnel to reinforce or temporarily replace the IPF can have disastrous consequences. Considering a dedicated SP unit's requirements during the next NDPP cycle and designating these requirements to

specific NATO member states would ensure the capabilities will be available during any force-generation process. Within NATO, a concept is an instrument to coherently fill a capability gap. Unfortunately, a concept has yet to be adopted for SP.

There are inherent difficulties on the path toward an approved SP concept, including the differences between NATO nations' police forces (military/civilian status, powers, jurisdictions, legal frameworks and national caveats). The guiding principle should always be that the Alliance's strength lies in its cohesion and in the combined diversity of the contributions from all members, which is vastly greater than the sum of all the nations' individual capabilities. It has been argued that the existence of AJP-3.22 suffices and a dedicated SP concept is not needed. But a doctrine is only one of the eight DOTMLPFI aspects needed to define a capability.

The NATO Stability Policing Centre of Excellence

The NATO Stability Policing Centre of Excellence (NSPCoE) is a think tank that encompasses a directorate and three pillars:



Col. Giuseppe De Magistris, director of the NATO Stability Policing Centre of Excellence, addresses participants in a course in Vicenza, Italy, on preserving crime scenes. NATO STABILITY POLICING CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

the Doctrine and Standardization Branch, which develops concepts and contributes to improving the NATO doctrinal corpus with SP inputs and considerations, including developing the SP concept, reviewing AJP-3.22 and drafting ATP-103 (an allied, tactical-level publication); the Education, Training and Exercise Branch, which designs training curricula and hosts courses about SP and participates in exercises; and the Lessons Learned Branch, which gathers best practices and works the lessons-learned cycle to feed experiences garnered in operations and training into a database and ultimately into doctrine. The NSPCoE is the NATO hub of expertise for SP and strives to be the Alliance's interface with international organizations and non-NATO institutions in the SP arena. The Czech Republic, France, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain and Turkey contribute to the NSPCoE.

What can SP do for NATO?

SP has existed under different names for more than two decades in NATO-led operations, often in hostile settings. Other international organizations, such as the U.N., the EU and the African Union, all possible partners for NATO SP, have performed and still perform SP operations, albeit under different names and perspectives. Despite this, SP is not yet sufficiently known, understood and adopted, even across NATO.

Policing local populations or re-/building IPFs have not been immediate concerns of NATO decision-makers. In some instances, they are considered the exclusive remit of other actors, including civilian organizations. That is an erroneous stance, especially considering that the latter cannot be deployed in nonpermissive environments, which could generate/deteriorate the policing gap. This attitude is gradually changing but too slowly. Lessons learned have shown that overlooking or delaying coordinated actions to address the policing gap inevitably affects the mission, delays

or hinders the attainment of the desired NATO end state and may prevent NATO forces from disengaging. The police are the most visible manifestation of any government, being the institution that works for the population to provide security, to enforce the law and to respond to the public's requests for assistance on a variety of issues. The lack of an effective, capable and trustworthy police force undermines the credibility of any government, with detrimental effects on its legitimacy and overall stability. Often, the burden for these shortcomings is carried mostly by a suffering civilian population. These situations are found especially in fragile states and in crisis or conflict areas, where the international community, including NATO, may be called to prevent crisis escalation and support peace restoration.

NATO military operations benefit from the inclusion of SP as a substantial contribution focusing on the IPF and the local populace. The aim of SP is to support the establishment or reestablishment of a safe and secure environment — restoring public order and security — and to contribute to creating the conditions for meeting longer-term needs with respect to governance and development (especially through security sector reform). In practice, SP supports nation building but also contributes to development of an IPF to answer the population's security needs and increase cohesion and resilience. In the long term, the Alliance as a whole (its people as well as the structure, institution and processes) would profit from acquiring a more police-like mindset. The desired NATO end state might be better attained by not focusing solely on the conventional defeat of the adversary, but rather more on integrating noncombat approaches. This is particularly true in heavily populated environments such as in urban and littoral settings, where the attitude of the populace is to be taken into particular consideration and expertise in policing among civilians is clearly advantageous.



A Red Cross worker helps a migrant exit a Norwegian tanker ship that rescued him in the southern Mediterranean Sea in 2016, a busy human trafficking route linking North Africa to Europe. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

To protect civilians, as identified by the Policy on the Protection of Civilians (PoC), which includes an SP dimension, “all feasible measures must be taken to avoid, minimize and mitigate harm to civilians,” and SP can significantly contribute to this purpose in particular and to human security in general. Moreover, cultural property protection is one cross-cutting topic within PoC, one in which a policing approach is critical to preventing and deterring relevant illicit activities. SP investigates related crimes, apprehends the perpetrators, and recovers the cultural property and the illicitly accrued wealth as restitution. Therefore, SP not only deprives the criminals of funding but also restores these funds to the host-nation economy, supporting its development overall and ultimately contributing to the battle of narratives. Among other significant niche areas in which SP can contribute to PoC are combating the trafficking of human beings, narcotics and weapons, enforcing antipollution and environmental protection laws, and countering labor exploitation.

In the book “Unrestricted Warfare,” by Col. Qiao Liang and Col. Wang Xiangsui of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army, and in the so-called Gerasimov doctrine and countless papers on insurgency and modern warfare, terrorism and conflict, the commission of crimes is envisioned as a way to undermine the

enemy. This is where SP embodies an innovation of paramount importance in tackling these crossbred perils. Current conflicts and crises present the traditional warfighter with complex challenges, including asymmetric warfare, hybrid threats, insurgency, lawfare, war-crime overlap, use of ambiguity, unconventional means, covert activities by state and nonstate actors, adversary communications (media, information operations, psychological operations, battles of narratives) and cyber threats, which cannot be addressed solely by combat and the use of lethal force.

In this vein, the Alliance is constantly assessing, evaluating and analyzing possible threats — particularly security-related ones — to devise appropriate responses. NATO’s Deterrence and Defence of the Euro-Atlantic Area Concept focuses on pervasive instability, interoperability, a multidomain and 360-degree approach, and unconventional actors, while the NATO Warfighting Capstone Concept highlights the allies’ constant effort to innovate and adapt to remain fit for purpose. Moreover, the 2017 Strategic Foresight Analysis, looking at a time frame until 2035, includes insights and implications from probable interventions in heavily concentrated urban areas and the participation of a wide range of security actors. Likewise, the 2018 Framework for Future Alliance Operations looks at shorter-term challenges,



Members of the Italian Carabinieri carry out a mission in Iraq as part of a multinational specialized unit in 2005. NATO STABILITY POLICING CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

particularly within warfighting and warfare development, to increasing the availability and number of SP personnel, to strengthening the capacity of existing MP capabilities and to generating policing-like skills to enable interaction with civilian populations as fundamental efforts. Finally, the NATO 2030: United for a New Era endeavor calls for periodic exercising of response options to hybrid threats and the closest possible cooperation within the enlarged DIMEFIL framework that, in addition to diplomatic, information, military and economic pillars, adds financial, intelligence and — most important for SP — law enforcement.

The overall evolution of the military problem needs tailored responses. One of them should be SP, an instrument endowed with an inherent flexibility within the force continuum. In fact, negotiation and mediation are envisaged together with a correct presence and posture to avoid the use of force, particularly lethal force, whenever practicable. This in turn implies that the Alliance embrace a transformation of its military instrument. Developing this capability and enhancing interoperability will require a concept to define SP in all its aspects and enable its full integration.

An additional step sees SP enhancing the role of the Alliance by taking advantage of existing expertise,

experience and networks in the field of policing and interfacing with relevant actors at different levels, especially the IPF and the local populace. SP is often misunderstood and sometimes downplayed if observed from a misinformed, outdated and exclusively combat-focused perspective. On the other hand, SP is an opportunity that the Alliance should not miss if it aims at moving forward in unison, remaining fit for purpose, and embracing innovation and transformation that possesses capabilities to carry out its tasks in a 360-degree approach.

Once approved, the SP concept will significantly enhance the outlook of the Alliance's success, because the public security gap will be closed at the beginning of an operation, during the so-called critical golden hour. This is a crucial step that NATO must take to transition successfully to a follow-on mission, coupled with developing an assessment methodology to identify in advance the potential spoilers of the mission's mandate. This is the very aim of the NSPCoE — to seize the moment for the benefit of the Alliance and the people we serve. □

Editor's note: This article was completed prior to the NATO summit in June 2022.

CHINA'S STRATEGY

FOR EUROPE IN
2035



Chinese President Xi Jinping, left, and then-Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte celebrate the signing of a memorandum of understanding in Rome in 2019 in support of Beijing's Belt and Road program.

A Look at What the Future May Hold

By **Dr. Sari Arho Havrén**, Europe-China policy fellow at Mercator Institute of China Studies (MERICS), visiting researcher, University of Helsinki

PHOTOS BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

During the 19th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 2017, President Xi Jinping introduced a strategic plan to achieve socialist modernization. The plan envisions a country that by 2049 is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious. A midpoint objective was set for 2035. The CCP has since outlined plans for a comprehensive economic restructuring that includes making China one of the most technologically advanced countries, advancing the standard of living with a focus on sustainability, boosting per capita gross domestic product and reducing the gap between urban and rural areas.

Demand would be the primary driver of economic growth under a strategy that aims to strengthen self-reliance. In 2021, the National People's Congress (NPC) endorsed the 14th Five-Year Plan, covering the years 2021-2025. Its

objectives — closing the rural-urban income gap, promoting global leadership in technological innovation and increasing the pace toward low-carbon development — can be found within China Vision 2035. To reach socialist modernization by 2035, China would need to double its economic output, a challenging target considering the slow pace of current economic growth. Additionally, the 2035 goals cannot happen in a vacuum; they are intertwined with the country's military capabilities and international reach.

China's strategy for Europe, or the lack thereof, is hard to pinpoint precisely but could easily be summarized as “divide and rule.” It is in Beijing's interest to see a weak, divided European Union that is susceptible to China's efforts to secure its own power base and achieve its 2035 goals. Driving a wedge between trans-Atlantic allies would help China attain its goals. Beijing's toolkit to influence Europe includes strategic investments, access to the Chinese market as leverage, cultural diplomacy and ambassadors who can be cuddly pandas or aggressive wolf warriors, depending on the situation.

The CCP does not consider the EU a serious institution and thus continues undermining it. Policy papers or reports on China's intentions in Europe are difficult to find. By contrast, multiple studies are available regarding China's strategies to displace the United States as the leading nation of the global order. This future-oriented research paper

examines China's strategic long-term intent in Europe in the framework of its global strategic future objectives. It considers two scenarios: China's influence in Europe strengthens, and China's influence in Europe diminishes. It looks at various forces, drivers and future signals to shed light on China's ambitions and what they mean for Europe. Signals, as referenced in this paper, are phenomena that have the capacity to impact or change the future on their own, or when pooled with supporting signals.

Scenario: China's Influence in Europe Strengthens

The baseline assumption behind this scenario is that Beijing's core interests and consequent strategies prevent it from making substantial diplomatic compromises, and that EU institutions and its member states are unable to push back in a meaningful manner. In this scenario, Europe has not maintained unity and solidarity, and China has successfully managed to prevent Europeans from forming a common front to counter China.

Signal 1: Common prosperity has replaced economic liberalization and openness as the party ideology.

Wang Huning, considered Xi's chief strategist, has successfully argued that China must resist "global liberal influence" and has called for "a culturally unified and self-confident

nation governed by a strong, centralized party-state" that is "immune to Western liberalism." Xi is said to share Wang's thinking. Xi is equally repulsed by commercialization, the new rich and what is perceived as a loss of values. These are seen as deriving from Western liberal capitalism and are considered symbols of decadence and existential threats. Xi wants to direct the nation back onto what he sees as the righteous path with a common prosperity campaign. He has framed the concept of common prosperity as a prominent political issue, not just an economic one. In practice, common prosperity is why Chinese technology giants and video gaming have been targeted by the government, why rent increases have been capped and why being rich is no longer considered glorious.

What does this mean for Europe?

Western liberal culture is increasingly seen as a source of vice and decadence. Making Chinese public opinion immune to Western (including European) soft power would further alienate the cultures and make Europeans appear suspicious and potentially inferior. European high-end consumer brands could become viewed as symbols of exhibitionism, losing their allure. China is already reducing its dependency on the outside world and this can easily spill over to include European brands. More important, China's moves to educate citizens with socialist core values — and shift the technology talent pool away from gaming and consumer ventures and toward hardcore technologies — makes it easier for Beijing to achieve its goal of being the world's leader in future technologies, which increases Europe's dependency on China and widens the technological gap. Leading in technology can allow

A cargo train in Mombasa, Kenya, moves along a Chinese-backed railway system that cost nearly \$3.3 billion to build, one of the country's largest infrastructure projects.



China closed the Lithuanian Embassy in Beijing after the European Union nation opened a Taiwanese representative office in Vilnius.

China to utilize European data sources, opening the way for greater influence over values and opinions, and potentially an increase in surveillance operations.

Signal 2: China has begun to align its domestic development with its international relations.

China's leadership is expanding its influence and working toward larger goals through the Belt and Road corridors in the Middle East, Africa, Russia, Eastern Europe — and even within the EU. Beijing knows that to achieve its goals it must shift its relations with the world. The CCP claims to be preparing for the new global economic paradigm and is aligning its domestic development not only through Belt and Road, but also through such instruments as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. China has also increased its influence in multilateral organizations and institutions.

Furthermore, China aims to become the world's leading technological standard-setter. Through China's influence corridors, the best minds from friendly countries come to Chinese universities and are exposed to nationalistic and patriotic narratives. In addition, according to China Observers in Central and Eastern Europe, a multinational consortium known as CHOICE, China may be targeting youth in Central and Eastern European countries through educational programs.

What does this mean for Europe?

Europe could gradually lose influence in the region while China's influence could increase within the EU and in its member states. Simultaneously, China has an opportunity — by using soft power or surveillance, intimidation or fake news — to turn public opinion in these areas in support of China's aims. Another real threat is that China systematically targets the next European generation. As China observer Liisi Karindi writes in an article published on the CHOICE website, "impacting the next generation of talent and leaders means, in essence, buying the future of Europe."

Signal 3: China's core interests leave little, if any, room for diplomacy.

Xi has said he will never compromise on China's sovereignty, security or development interests. He sees Western influence as a risk to national security and warns against the "infiltration of universal values." Free speech and free press are risks that must be under the CCP's control. The CCP elite does not see this type of control as a sign of insecurity — as is often the case in the West — but a means to reach policy objectives.



What does this mean for Europe?

China's ambiguous core interests, together with a perception that democracies are weak and unable to deliver security and prosperity to their citizens, allows it to take a strong position in its international relations. Reasons to negotiate and compromise diminish, and European nations have to accept that China's core interests are nonnegotiable. Fear of offending Beijing and igniting tensions has already led EU member states and European organizations and companies to yield to Beijing's pressure. China uses its market access to pressure government and businesses to lobby on its behalf.

Lithuania offers an example of the consequences of crossing China's interests and of China's expanding reach. Sovereign countries are challenged to define their foreign policy independently when dealing with China's interests. In retaliation for Lithuania opening a Taiwanese representative office in Vilnius, China stopped Lithuanian imports and exports by removing Lithuania from its customs list and demanded that multinationals either stop trading with Lithuania or risk losing China's business. At least one European multinational has submitted to Beijing's demands, and the German Baltic Chamber of Commerce took Beijing's side in the schism, according to the South China Morning Post. Other EU member states have been unable to come to Lithuania's support in any meaningful way, except for the demonstration of solidarity by Estonia and Latvia in withdrawing in August 2022 from the 16 +1 framework established by China. From Beijing's view, its strategy has worked by testing the EU's unity and showing that the bloc cannot effectively defend its member states.

Signal 4: China is confident in its own power.

China believes the East is rising and the West is declining. And because China's image in the West is souring, some scholars suggest that Beijing might think its window of opportunity is

shrinking to exploit, for instance, a risky military maneuver against Taiwan. However, very little information out of Beijing would indicate that the CCP's leaders see themselves in such a narrow vista. Although Western democracies question the relativity of Chinese omnipotence, Chinese leaders remain confident. After all, the 14th Five-Year Plan emphasizes “institutional superiority,” “social stability” and “administrative efficiency.”

China has also been strategic in preparing for future challenges. For example, China already dominates global battery processing even though, domestically, it does not have all the required minerals, such as cobalt and lithium. As a result of the crackdown that limited gaming and e-commerce, and that resulted in layoffs, coders and tech experts are free to work in strategic areas, such as quantum computing and artificial intelligence (AI). The party's leaders are confident that they can handle critical national challenges, such as inequality, an aging society, climate change, a slowing economy and great power competition.

What does this mean for Europe?

China's current policies, especially those reining in technology companies and diverting talent from entertainment technology sectors into more strategic and productive economic sectors

and manufacturing — to reach 2035 goals — may widen the gap between China and Europe. European policymakers and business owners have been reluctant to form a unified front to counter China. Psychologically, European single economies may fear China's countermeasures, especially if the EU's inability to defend Lithuania is seen as a precedent.

Signal 5: China is weakening the structures that maintain the American-led global order while strengthening those of a Chinese alternative.

China prefers bilateral relations with European states over relations with a unified, strong EU. However, China also embraces European strategic autonomy because it sees it as a counterforce to the U.S. and a buffer against its own deteriorating relations with the U.S. Beijing uses traditional divide-and-rule tactics to drive a wedge between the U.S. and its European allies. In March 2021, Chinese Defense Minister Wei Fenghe visited four European countries, including Hungary and Greece — two EU member states that are also NATO allies — and boldly suggested including military cooperation in the deepening strategic partnership agenda. China's state media and its foreign ministry suggest the EU should think about what



matters more, its trade with China or its alliance with the U.S. And when the EU acts against Beijing's interests, Chinese sources claim the EU allows Washington to dictate its foreign policy.

What does this mean for Europe?

Europe plays an essential role here, especially because China wants to gain a more prominent role in international organizations and split Western alliances. Chinese hegemony in the developing world and countries surrounding Europe would further weaken the EU and leave fewer global choices to the EU and its member states both economically and politically.

Signal 6: China's new data security law forms a legal basis to build a comprehensive global surveillance system.

An amendment to China's security law defines "national core data" as all data concerning national security, the national economy, people's livelihoods and significant public interests. It reads: "When data handling activities outside the mainland territory of the PRC harm the national security, the public interest, or the lawful rights and interests of citizens or organizations of the PRC, legal liability is to be pursued according to the law." As is common with other Chinese laws, this one is ambiguous by not defining when one actually crosses a line.

The technological surveillance system has been extensively tested and used in China's treatment of Uyghurs in Xinjiang. The outcome encouraged the extension of AI surveillance across China and beyond. China's digital infrastructure and the control mechanisms are almost limitless. The system can control people throughout the world like nothing before. China has been exporting its surveillance technology to multiple autocracies and weak states worldwide. It is a matter of time before these technologies will be integrated into one holistic system, to which the CCP eventually has access. In an article in *The Atlantic* magazine, Deputy Editor Ross



Surveillance cameras and a police officer monitor visitors to Tiananmen Square in Beijing.

Protesters stand outside the Chinese Embassy in London after an independent report concluded that China committed human rights abuses against the Uyghur people.



Andersen wrote that the “emergence of an AI-powered authoritarian bloc led by China could warp the geopolitics of this century. It could prevent billions of people, across large swaths of the globe, from ever securing any measure of political freedom.”

What does this mean for Europe?

Andersen quoted an official who worked in the administration of former U.S. President Donald Trump who warned of the consequences of failing to lead in emerging technologies. China is well on its way to acquiring enormous amounts of user data from foreign citizens and integrating it into government databases. The Chinese technology company Alibaba has been tasked with building the AI-powered software City Brain, a sort of nerve center. These steps will enable future forms of integrated surveillance. Anderson gives examples of how the Chinese government could harvest data: through automobile cameras creating 3D models of cities, through drones collecting data to identify people and through technology that might one day read people’s thoughts. Once these technologies are integrated, an authoritarian government has enormous opportunities to control its use. It is practically impossible to prevent this from happening because Chinese firms and foreign firms operating in China are legally required to assist the Chinese government. Eventually, all information, buying habits, communications, connections, health data and DNA could be synergized. In Europe, Huawei has built research sites known as innovation centers in multiple cities,

and in Serbia it is building a surveillance system aimed at detecting crimes.

Meanwhile, the race for talent intensifies. Huawei established an innovation center in Finland with local universities to tap into the Finnish engineering talent pool. The Chinese technology company Baidu has publicly signaled that the top talent pool for AI can be found in the West. If China can surpass the U.S. in technology and in the AI race, it will strengthen its geopolitical power.

Signal 7: China does not accept the EU defining it as a rival.

China points to the EU’s 2019 China Policy document, which describes China as a partner, a competitor and a systemic rival. Wang Yi, China’s minister for foreign affairs, has repeatedly expressed China’s discontent with the EU, referring to it as a systemic rival. Chinese envoys have since adopted this narrative. For instance, Ambassador Zhang Ming, head of the Chinese mission to the EU, has said that labeling China a rival is a misjudgment of EU-China relations and creates barriers. China has pressured the EU and member states to stop using the term rival. The Chinese mission to the EU claims that European businesses want to separate economic interests from political interests and therefore do not want to define China as a rival.

What does this mean for Europe?

Pressure, demands, and carrots and sticks influence vulnerable EU member states. China is using both sweet talk and brutal

criticism. Zhang calls China and the EU “responsible major powers,” a wording that undoubtedly pleases EU leaders in their quest to place the bloc as the third multilateral power. On other issues, Beijing is quick to issue stern warnings to the EU and individual member states. For instance, when European Parliament members visited Taiwan, Wang warned that the European countries would pay a price for developing closer ties with Taiwan. These tactics are meant to make European governments wary of losing their access to the Chinese market.

Signal 8: Beijing uses German businesses to lobby on its behalf.

China has multifaceted resources to influence European leaders, policymakers, political parties, lobbyists, industries, universities and media using technology, human resources and other hybrid means. One powerful tool is to use the German business elite to lobby on behalf of Beijing in Germany and in the EU. German industry leaders, such as Volkswagen Group CEO Herbert Diess, have called for more cooperation with China, not less. “It would be very damaging if Germany or the EU wanted to decouple from China,” he wrote on Twitter. Germany’s dependency on the Chinese market is a rare but influential case and a risk to the EU because, as Karindi reports on the CHOICE website, 44% of EU exports to China originate from Germany. In the case of Lithuania, China has evidently used the German connection to pressure the Baltic nation. First, China pressured German automotive parts manufacturer Continental to stop using components made in Lithuania. Soon after, the German-Baltic Chamber of Commerce warned that plants in Lithuania with German investors may close unless Lithuanian-Chinese relations were restored, giving the appearance that Germany’s business elite is being pressured to act on China’s behalf.

Elite capture in Europe goes beyond businesses. Beijing also sends envoys to Europe to meet with China-friendly scholars and politicians. In Greece, for instance, a Chinese representative’s talk about “contributing the wisdom of ancient Eastern and Western civilizations to building a community with a shared future for mankind” was well received by Greek elites, according to a Carnegie Endowment paper. Even young future elites don’t go unnoticed. They are presented with educational opportunities and then profitable business deals. For Hungarian journalists and academics, Beijing offers study tours and opportunities for scholarship programs. In return, the alumni are expected to advocate for closer political, commercial and cultural ties.

What does this mean for Europe?

Beijing’s pressure on individuals and businesses shapes the behavior of these actors. Multinational corporations find it easier to succumb, self-censor and adjust rather than risk losing access to the Chinese market. In return, Beijing rewards them with some positive policy changes, such as the recent removal of limits on foreign ownership of passenger car manufacturers. All these actions strengthen the symbiosis between German multinationals and the PRC, which in turn translates into more intensified lobbying in Europe to advance relations with the Chinese government.

Signal 9: China focuses on Europe instead of the U.S. in science, technology and innovation.

China’s economic influence in Europe is significant, especially in Germany, and it successfully uses that influence as leverage. At the same time, China needs access to European technology, markets and universities, mainly because it is a long way from becoming self-reliant in all technology verticals, such as semiconductors, advanced machinery and in some digital fields. In addition to increasing its spending on research and development to become the world leader in science, technology and innovation by 2050, and in AI by 2030, China must seek international cooperation to access these critical technologies abroad.

What does this mean for Europe?

Europe lacks the legislation, regulations and means to identify problematic ties with Chinese influence operations and research collaboration. European parties are not equipped to even notice when their technologies are transferred and used in sensitive areas, such as contributing to human right abuses or dual-use technology purposes.

Germany is the largest European investor in China, according to a study by the China International Promotion Agency. China can use trade and investment dependencies to its advantage (an example being Chinese diplomats hinting of consequences unless Germany accepted Huawei’s 5G technology).

Certain Chinese investors will be mandated to invest in strategic assets in Europe. These investors will primarily be state-owned enterprises with funds and access to offshore capital, according to the Rhodium Group, an independent research firm. The desired investment targets include high-tech, commodities and infrastructure investments that China needs to achieve its 2035 goals. The Rhodium Group forecasts that under “current circumstances it is most likely that Chinese buyers will target small- and medium-size technology firms in countries with less robust screening systems and relatively friendly relations with China.”

That puts Europe in a vulnerable position because the U.S. has made it more difficult for Chinese entities to operate there. Northern Europe has become a focus of China’s interest because of their open economies and dependence on foreign trade.

Signal 10: Western democracy is seen as an enemy.

U.S. President Joe Biden’s Summit for Democracy in December 2021, and the inclusion of Taiwan as a participant, sparked a fierce response from Beijing that included a counterconference on democracy and a campaign that sought to convince the world that China’s governance model represents a superior form of democracy. China’s aim to redefine democracy is not a new phenomenon, but its efforts intensified in 2021, partly because democracies have been weakened. China has taken advantage of the circumstances. It has also had some success in convincing people around the world that its model is superior.

What does this mean for Europe?

China's actions blur the definition of democracy and aim to convince people at home and abroad that China's alternative model of governance is superior to Western democracies. This, in turn, allows China to justify its authoritarian model of governance and rule. All these actions fall on fertile territory in Europe, where disinformation and misinformation campaigns by various state and nonstate actors, including Chinese, have weakened social media literacy skills.

Scenario: China's Influence in Europe Decreases

The research here concentrates on signals deriving from China's policy initiatives, guidelines and internal developments in various areas that impact Europe. Signals that point toward pushback or countering China's actions by the EU or member states are not covered.

Signal 1: Beijing may reconsider its Belt and Road commitments.

China's foreign investment levels have declined since 2016 and many expected benefits have not materialized. According to Elizabeth Economy, a senior fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution, a review of the top 10 recipients of Belt and Road investments reveals that the level of investment does not directly correlate to the recipient country's support for China on critical issues. Instead, China must resort to coercion to achieve its goals.

China's shrinking economy, partly impacted by COVID-19, has forced the country to reduce Belt and Road projects. As reported by Business Standard magazine, investments dropped 54% in one year. And the overall slowing of the economy has caused Beijing to tighten its fiscal policies, which could lead to further slowdowns on Belt and Road projects.

What does this mean for Europe?

China will likely turn its attention away from Europe and toward fulfilling its current projects elsewhere. For instance, in Pakistan, only 32 of 122 Belt and Road projects have been completed, according to Business Standard. Because Belt and Road is China's central policy tool for expanding its international influence and connectivity, Europe has time to push its own initiative, the Global Gateway. With its 300 billion euro infrastructure budget, the EU could strengthen its supply chains and trade, especially in strategic geographies in Europe and, for instance, Africa.

Signal 2: China's hubris is not based in reality.

The Chinese government has shown almost dangerous overconfidence in its ability to take over the world. Economy, the Hoover Institution senior fellow, thinks this excessive pride may prevent CCP leaders from recognizing the resistance and realities abroad and could lead to serious miscalculations in Beijing. It has also been argued that because of internal challenges — an aging population and slowing economy — Beijing might see its window of opportunity narrowing and take unnecessary risks.

What does this mean for Europe?

Any premature risks would likely occur in the Indo-Pacific or internally. Europe would not be the focus of Beijing's concerns, giving leverage to the EU and its member states to potentially negotiate more equal terms in overall relations with China.

Signal 3: The 17+1 format is stagnating.

China has not delivered on its promises under the 17+1 (or the current 16+1) format, Beijing's plan to promote business with Central and Eastern European countries. Some Eastern European countries are disappointed that Beijing has not followed up on its promises.

What does this mean for Europe?

Beijing has been using the 17+1 format as one of its tools to divide the EU and to induce the economically weaker European nations to advance its interests in Europe. Considerable stagnation of the format could potentially allow EU member states to form a more unified stance against China.

Signal 4: The focus is primarily on the Indo-Pacific.

Strategically, Beijing aims at freeing Asia from the influence of the U.S. and other Western powers. Xi's shared community and connectivity plans are centered on China, while other Asian countries are left being China's subordinates. As China has not been able to cement this vision in the Asia Pacific entirely, it remains possible that Beijing may see a need to concentrate more resources and focus on the area, which the U.S. started pivoting toward during President Barack Obama's administration.

In China's view, the U.S. is traditionally an Atlantic power. Although it is in China's interest to divide Europe and weaken the trans-Atlantic alliance, China might put more emphasis on building a more substantial base in the Indo-Pacific, especially as it relates to Taiwan and the South China Sea nine-dash line.

What does this mean for Europe?

China will see that the cost is too high to try to pull geographically distant Europe into its orbit while its primary targets are closer to home. However, the EU, NATO and many individual EU member states are concerned about China's actions and rising power in the Indo-Pacific. Thus, this scenario could pull multiple European nations to increase their presence in the Indo-Pacific, which would likely increase China's counteractions in Europe, at least to some extent.

Signal 5: There is turbulence in Zhongnanhai.

Every now and then, leaks coming out of Beijing suggest that Xi has not cemented his power quite as tightly as he planned. Renowned Xi researcher Willy Wo-Lap Lam has argued that Xi will face substantial opposition in the 20th Party Congress in 2022. Lam suggests that it remains unclear how effectively Xi can reinforce his power among senior party cadres as well as in the People's Liberation Army, where opposition clearly looms, and whether he can purge these forces that could eventually challenge his supremacy.



The Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market, the possible origin of the COVID-19 virus, sits closed in Wuhan in central China's Hubei province more than two years into the pandemic.

What does this mean for Europe?

A potential regime change in Beijing is a wild card that would require multiple preparedness scenarios to understand the potential consequences. In any case, turbulence would follow and Beijing's influence on Europe would temporarily stall.

Signal 6: China's economy is under growing pressure.

China's economy is the source of never-ending speculation. New data restrictions have made it increasingly difficult to understand what is happening with the Chinese economy. Crackdowns on private education and on the technology and property sectors have led analysts to question where China's next growth engine will come from because consumers alone will not supplement the decade-old growth model of infrastructure investments. The opacity of the Chinese economy and what is happening inside the country create a level of distrust.

COVID-19 and the consequent lockdown of the country had severe economic consequences. At the end of 2021, the Chinese economy suffered from a prolonged property slump, supply chain shocks and weak consumption. Calls for Beijing to support the economy have increased. During 2022, the government is expected to adopt fiscal policy measures, but uncertainty remains.

Conclusion

Accepting the baseline that China aims to replace the U.S. as the global leader would mean that it is in China's fundamental interests to divide Europe and thereby drive a wedge between trans-Atlantic allies. The future signals presented in this

foresight study attest to this strategy's existence.

The pools of binary opposite signals are naturally inadequate, and arguably multiple other phenomena could have been included in both categories. However, both signal pools paint scenarios that work as a base for strategic preparedness, which is the preferred outcome of foresight activities.

From Beijing's point of view, only the first scenario is acceptable: China wants to strengthen its influence in Europe, which would serve its overall policy objectives. China aims at eroding the legitimacy of universal human rights while portraying itself as a modern model of governance that can quickly react to the changing global order and foster stability at home.

Based on the signal pool that points toward China's strengthening influence in Europe, it can be assumed that China's clout in Europe will have increased by 2035 — provided that the European member states have not been able to unite to counter China's growing hybrid and multilevel influence actions. Most European countries would still be democracies, but China would require that "Finlandization" and self-censorship become a norm throughout European institutions, academia and governments. Universal human rights would be adjusted to China's definition of human rights, which would lack, for instance, freedom of speech and civil and political rights. The signal pool that strengthens China's influence in Europe is stronger than the pool of signals with the opposite impact. However, each signal that would weaken China's influence is also powerful alone and could turn the trajectory. □

Author's note: This is a scenario-based projection, and no projection is perfect. Therefore, based on the signals and if nothing changes, these are potential outcomes.



The
RETURN *of*
V CORPS

PER CONCORDIAM PHOTO ILLUSTRATION



Lt. Gen. John S. Kolasheski assumed command of U.S. Army V Corps in Fort Knox, Kentucky, in the United States, in 2020. Formerly known as the Fifth Corps, the V Corps was active during World War I, World War II, the Cold War, the Kosovo peacekeeping mission and the war on terror.

► *Let's start with a brief look at V Corps. Where did it begin, where has it participated over the years, and why was it reactivated?*

Lt. Gen. Kolasheski: Thanks for the opportunity to discuss Victory Corps. As you probably know, V Corps has a long history in Europe and has supported the European theater for just over 100 years, so this is kind of a “Back to the Future” moment. It’s an exciting moment. Since its founding on July 7, 1918, V Corps has served in some of the most important and difficult campaigns. It was instrumental in World War I, where it saw action in the Lorraine, St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne campaigns. The Corps earned the name Victory Corps as a result of the heroic efforts of soldiers during these battles. In World War II, V Corps took part in the D-Day invasion, and ultimately the liberation of Europe. Our allies and partners, as well as many others across Europe, are excited to see Victory Corps again.

V Corps was reactivated after strong demand signals from both U.S. European Command (EUCOM) and the U.S. Army Europe and Africa to provide a needed level of command and control, focused on synchronizing U.S. Army, allied and partner nation formations operating in Europe. Our senior leaders have made clear that V Corps’ return is about demonstrating the U.S. commitment to Europe, to NATO, and to our allies and partners in the region. At the same time, the reactivation also serves as a reminder that the operating environment has changed; competition is the norm, and V Corps’ existence is a testament to our recognition of that.

► *As you say, a renewed focus on competition has been a catalyst for change within both Europe and the U.S. defense establishment. From your perspective, what does the reestablishment of V Corps mean to U.S. European Command, U.S. Army Europe and Africa, and NATO allies and partners?*

Lt. Gen. Kolasheski: V Corps provides a ready and rapidly deployable, three-star, warfighting headquarters capable of operational planning, mission command and oversight of rotational forces in Europe. V Corps’ reactivation is a big, big deal for U.S. European Command, the Army, Forces Command, U.S. Army Europe and Africa, and our allies and partners. The reactivation of Victory Corps is clear and tangible evidence of the U.S. commitment to NATO and the European community of nations.



Lt. Gen. Kolasheski, right, greets German Army Brig. Gen. Uwe Becker during a meeting of U.S. Army land forces commanders for Europe and Africa and Allied Land Command in 2020 in Izmir, Turkey. U.S. ARMY

From large-scale training exercises to small social events to key leader engagements with our NATO allies and partners, the mutually supportive relationships we are forming across organizations, commands and nations help generate tangible progress on interoperability that is critical to a ready and cohesive alliance. Interoperability for V Corps spans the human, procedural and technical domains, with the ultimate goal of providing combat-credible forces to deter adversary aggression in the region.



Lt. Gen. Kolasheski, left, walks with Lt. Gen. Johann Langenegger, commander of the German Field Army, during an exercise in Germany in 2021. U.S. ARMY

V Corps' presence in Europe is a continual reminder that we are *stronger together*. This is why interoperability is so important. Our allies are indispensable and our cooperation magnifies each of our unique strengths and advantages against potential adversaries. As we continue to train alongside allies and partners, we are looking at areas for further integration and greater interoperability to set conditions for the future. We know we won't fight alone. We will fight as part of a coalition, which is why strong relationships matter. Together we are better prepared to impose costs upon any adversary that might threaten peace and prosperity in Europe, which is a vital aspect of deterrence.

▶ ***What are V Corps' priorities for the short- to mid-term in establishing V Corps in the European theater?***

Lt. Gen. Kolasheski: I am focused on helping the commander of the U.S. European Command and NATO's supreme commander in Europe, and the commanding general of the U.S. Army Europe and Africa, to meet our national defense requirements here in Europe, show U.S. resolve and U.S. commitment to our allies and partners. With that, I have established three priorities for the Corps in the short term to ensure we maximize our efforts and produce positive effects.

- **My first priority** ensures the Corps maintains a "people first" mindset. We accomplish this through engaged leadership and predictability, which allows us to form a team built on competence, resilience,

discipline and trust. This in turn fosters our ability to collectively adapt and innovate, giving us an advantage as we promote regional security while enhancing our readiness and ability to support allies and partners.

- **My second priority** is to constantly consolidate gains, day to day, in all we do while enhancing our collective position. This means strengthening relationships and deepening our military capabilities that ultimately contribute to national and regional security. If done deliberately, when called upon, we will be able to generate windows of advantage that can be exploited (by ourselves and our partners) and achieve real effects on the battlefield.
- **My third priority** is remaining focused on our enduring mission, which is, to put it simply, to exercise responsibility for designated forces in Europe. Vital to accomplishing these priorities is our forward element in Poznań, Poland, which helps me ensure the readiness of our forces and is essential in establishing our presence in the European theater. What is known as V Corps Forward allows us to live in what I call "the contact layer" and provides me with an indispensable level of situational awareness.

▶ ***How will V Corps shape the operational environment with other allied and partner nations?***

Lt. Gen. Kolasheski: First, we have an enduring presence in Europe, thanks to our Corps Forward in Poland. This allows for rapid theater engagement and mission command

of forward deployed subordinate commands while monitoring current operations throughout the European Theater of Operations. Our Corps Forward will execute engagements and select responsibilities throughout the V Corps European area of operations and as an extension of the Main Command Post headquarters in Fort Knox, Kentucky. I will stress, though, that the Corps Forward does not do this alone. The Main Command Post is the integrating headquarters, constantly and continuously directing and supporting the Corps Forward with planning and resourcing.

I mentioned it earlier but want to reiterate it: We are never going to fight alone. Our relationships with allies and partners strengthen a foundation built upon resilience, innovation and shared vision. We must depend on each other in ways that emphasize and leverage our core strengths, ultimately honing our competitive advantage against adversaries. In conflict this allows us to simultaneously present multiple dilemmas to our adversaries. At the same time, during competition we are shaping the operational environment to deny positional advantages to the adversary and interrupting his decision-making cycle.

Allies and partners play a big part in allowing V Corps to compete daily in the contact layer. Interoperability is key to successful deterrence and that is part of the reason I stress it so much to my team. It increases allied flexibility and enhances existing capabilities. Interoperable combined forces can effectively act together to more easily achieve military objectives. This is interoperability, and it is a priority initiative for V Corps. We are incorporating it into our plans, daily operations, communications, information sharing and equipment. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Mark Milley, has made clear that the need for interoperability extends beyond the battlefield. V Corps is taking that need and making it a reality.

► ***Multi-Domain Operations (MDO) has been a big topic of late; how will it work in Europe, and what role will V Corps play?***

Lt. Gen. Kolasheski: Part of MDO is integrating and converging lethal and nonlethal effects against targets across the various domains, including the physical and information environments. We have learned from recent conflicts that this integration is critical to our battlefield success. V Corps now has the opportunity to continuously improve on this integration and leverage it within the European Theater. The benefits of convergence are real. We saw this during our exercises this past year, especially during our culminating Warfighter exercise in October 2021. This is what I see as essential, new and different with MDO. We will employ integrated effects across the competition continuum in Europe, not just in large-scale combat operations.

MDO is important, even critical, because our adversaries and competitors are contesting all domains, not just during conflict, but also right now. In recent years, our adversaries have exploited seams and gaps within the operational information environment by competing below

the level of armed conflict. This tactic has been successfully used around the globe. Smaller armies and groups are now capable of fighting on an expanded battlefield that is increasingly lethal and hyperactive. Nation states are having more difficulty imposing their will within a politically, culturally, technologically and strategically complex environment. Near-peer states are exploiting ambiguity below armed conflict, making deterrence more challenging.

Nations like Russia frequently use gray-zone activities, including unconventional and information warfare to propagate a narrative favorable to their strategic objectives. Mastering multidomain operations with allies and partners is crucial to winning any future fight, as well as competing below the level of armed conflict. Our planning and operations cycle is being adapted to enable us to focus efforts where we assess the competitive space, anticipate changes in the environments and influence outcomes.

► ***How do you view the challenges and opportunities that V Corps faces?***

Lt. Gen. Kolasheski: Our adversaries believe that the very rules of war have changed. There is a recognition that nonmilitary means of achieving strategic goals have grown in importance and, in many cases, exceed the power and speed of direct military force in their effectiveness. When looked at through this new prism, one can see how V Corps plays a critical role in helping the U.S. and NATO face the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Future warfare is now about the multidomain fight. Near-peer competitors are synthesizing emerging technologies to exploit perceived seams in the Alliance and complement their military operations and doctrine. Those technologies are capable of deploying and challenging the U.S. in all domains. The military problem we face is defeating multiple layers of stand-off capabilities across all domains while at the same time maintaining coherence of our operations.

By continually working with our allies and partners, we're creating an environment that reaffirms, modernizes and reinvests our Alliance as our greatest strategic asset. Together we contribute to a common front and a unified vision, working hand in hand to advance shared interests and values, giving us a unique advantage in modern competition. V Corps has had a fast-paced first year, starting with reactivation, operating in the COVID-19 environment and completing a rigorous series of exercises. We will not be resting on our laurels any time soon. I'm looking forward to contributing to strengthening the capabilities of U.S. EUCOM, the United States and the entirety of the NATO Alliance.

**STRONGER TOGETHER!
IT WILL BE DONE!
VICTORY! □**

Editor's note: This article was completed prior to Russia's illegal escalation of aggression against Ukraine in February 2022.

ONE FOR ALL AND ALL FOR ONE

AUTHOR: Olivier Schmitt

FOREWORD: Jean-Baptiste Jeangène Vilmer

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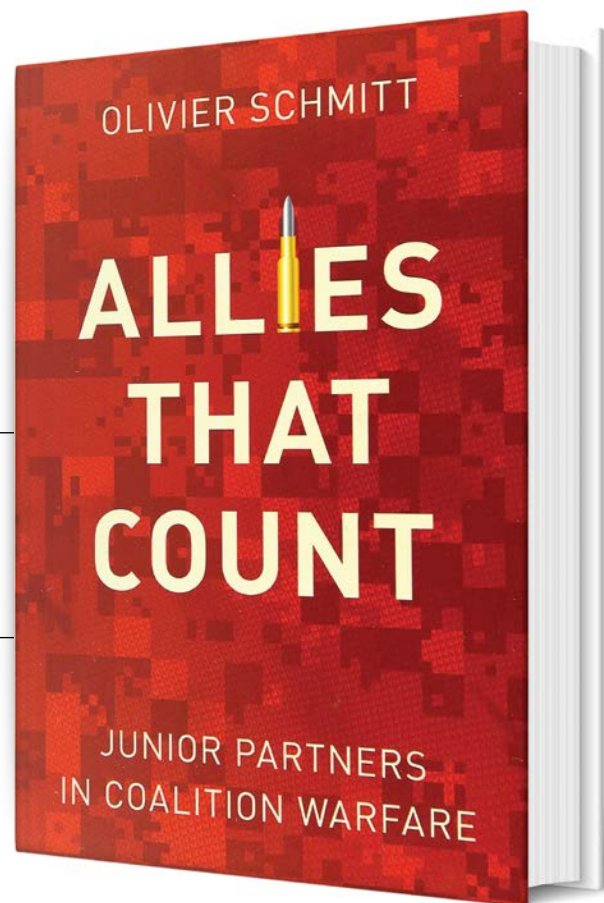
REVIEWED BY: Patrick Swan, per Concordiam contributor

God may favor the big battalions, per Napoleon’s apocryphal dictum. But big battalions are usually more useful to commanders when filled with willing and capable troops.

Ensuring that junior partners’ contributions to coalition warfare are well-placed in the overall scheme of maneuvers is key to ensuring their presence is useful, rather than a hindrance. How those troops are integrated can prove their worth, despite their small numbers. While they probably can’t sponsor a global operation on their own, their presence alone can be sufficient to fill a military and political purpose for a given endeavor.

Olivier Schmitt, a University of Southern Denmark professor and scientific director of the French Association for War and Strategic Studies, asserts in his book, “Allies That Count: Junior Partners in Coalition Warfare,” that some junior partners may employ homegrown efforts that are more useful than what the superpower is employing. To demonstrate, the author uses a rich empirical framework, having conducted more than 150 interviews, participated in practical observation and used primary and secondary sources from four languages.

Carefully defined terms form a scaffolding for his research. He defines a junior partner as any state whose contribution is not the most important militarily (number of troops) or politically (leadership). He



explores the reasons states form alliances and how junior partners affect alliance policies and strategies. Do they honor alliance commitments? Does their presence make war more or less likely?

But first, it is important to differentiate between coalitions and alliances. Alliances are long-term efforts that translate peacetime organizations to wartime, while coalitions are typically formed to counter a specific threat. It is also important to recognize that a contribution is based on more than manpower. It is false to assume that coalition leaders should simply aggregate individual members as if it were a unilateral operation. Gen. John Pershing, commander of American Expeditionary Forces in France in 1918, refused to allow American soldiers to be mere backfill for French or British militaries. He insisted they operate as autonomous, associated allies. All nations demand some evidence that their troops matter to the campaign’s objectives. Leaders must understand that coalitions are, as French strategist Adm. Raoul Castex

observes, “transitory assemblies of nations brought together by temporarily shared interests on some points, but still disagreeing on others.”

Reliability also affects strategy. Specific junior-partner shortfalls in operational and tactical proficiency may hamper a mission. Bringing on a coalition partner lacking a history of military cooperation may lead to friction. When a junior partner is not able to handle multinational operations, or when equipment varies widely or a language barrier exists, integrating a junior partner may seem more trouble than its worth.

So, why would a coalition consider a partner with limited military skills? Politics, of course. A junior partner’s presence may encourage other nations in its geographic vicinity to support, if not join, a coalition. And it may provide a legitimacy of its own to the undertaking. It depends, in Schmitt’s telling, on the strategic conditions of the engagement and the junior partner’s contributions. Indeed, a tautology revolves around coalition participation. Coalitions use the number of participating nations to lend legitimacy to an intervention: If it was illegitimate, why are so many countries supporting it? Hence, junior partners bring intangible benefits to a coalition operation and, in some cases, concrete political advantages.

To obtain a qualitative analysis, Schmitt examines 12 states in four cases of multilateral interventions. These cases display variations in standing, integration, responsiveness, skill, quality and utility. The four cases of coalition warfare in the post-Cold War era are the Gulf War (1991), Operation Allied Force in Kosovo (1999), Operation Iraqi Freedom (2003) and Operation Enduring Freedom with the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (after 2003). Schmitt separates four types of states involved in coalition warfare: big states with high utility, big states with low utility, small states with high utility, and small states with little utility. Depending on the mission, some small states may provide either high or little utility. Australia has stood with the United States for more than a century, but Schmitt finds its contribution at times to be of limited utility for certain operations.

Other nations may contribute little more than a political presence. Syria in the 1991 Gulf War showed limited military utility. But its political presence proved to be huge: It prevented Iraqi President Saddam Hussein from portraying himself as a victim of Western imperialism and helped to limit terrorist attacks on the coalition. It showed that recruiting non-NATO nations to a campaign can have a direct impact on NATO. “In addition to establishing a clear benchmark for non-NATO countries to join an effort,” Schmitt writes, “it may relieve some NATO nations from even participating” in an operation if the politics at home are dicey.

Nevertheless, Schmitt’s investigation concludes that the idea of “the more, the merrier” in coalition construction must be abandoned. Some additional partners may simply get in the way if their capabilities are of limited usefulness to the campaign being waged. The legitimacy of an operation should stand on the operation itself, not on the number of nations participating. And nations whose contributions simply impede the coalition’s aims should be politely directed to contribute in a nonkinetic manner. Japan did this in Iraq.

Larger nations in a coalition must learn to appreciate targeted participation from junior partners and to never talk ill of such contributions. Every nation thinks it can perform a given task better than any other nation. A willingness to let a junior partner lead in certain elements where it has expertise is essential.

So, yes, the big battalions may still enjoy the quantitative advantage — but it matters which units are in those battalions. For a junior partner to matter, it must bring either unique capabilities for which it is renowned (e.g., Hungarian riot police) or it must establish how its participation improves the success of coalition operations.

Fortunately, would-be junior partners have a handy guide in “Allies that Count” from which they can measure the utility of their participation in a coalition campaign, both for themselves and for the coalition. The case studies make clear that just showing up is not usually enough militarily unless the partner brings a unique capability. Determining what these are will determine the utility of bringing a junior partner into a coalition. It is about more than whether a junior partner’s participation is consequential or ephemeral. It is about how they might fit into the overall strategic objective.

Larger nations in a coalition must learn to appreciate targeted participation from junior partners and to never talk ill of such contributions. Every nation thinks it can perform a given task better than any other nation. A willingness to let a junior partner lead in certain elements where it has expertise is essential. Schmitt’s book provides a primer on how to do this intelligently and effectively. □

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An unarmed Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile launches from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California during a test in 2020. U.S. AIR FORCE

In the next issue of per Concordiam:

STRATEGIC DETERRENCE AND THE GROWING NUCLEAR THREAT

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