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Defence Committee

The future of NATO and European defence

Ninth Report of Session 2007–08

Report, together with formal minutes, oral and written evidence

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The Defence Committee

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Front cover of the official NATO emblem downloaded at www.nato.int
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Members of NATO and the European Union

Users should note that this map has been designed for briefing purposes only and it should not be used for determining the precise location of places or features. This map should not be considered an authority on the delimitation of international boundaries nor on spelling of place and feature names.
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Summary

NATO’s achievements over the past sixty years in ensuring the stability and prosperity of Europe are remarkable. But the NATO Summit at Bucharest in April 2008 takes place at a time when the Alliance’s reputation and credibility are being questioned in relation to Afghanistan. NATO’s command of the multinational International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) mission has become a key test of the Alliance’s capacity to adjust to the demands of today’s security environment. Bringing stability to Afghanistan, and creating the conditions in which reconstruction and development can occur, is, and must remain, at the top of NATO’s agenda. It requires a sustained long-term military and financial commitment by all members of the Alliance. While failure in Afghanistan would not herald the demise of NATO, it would deal a severe blow to allied unity and prompt the United States to question the Alliance’s continuing utility. NATO must succeed in Afghanistan, but it faces major challenges in generating sufficient numbers of forces without restrictions upon their use. Reaching new agreements on a more equitable sharing of the burden of operations, along with a clearer definition of success in Afghanistan, will be key tests of the Bucharest Summit.

Afghanistan, however, must not be allowed to dominate the Bucharest agenda. NATO faces far broader questions about its role and relevance in the 21st century, the answers to which will, ultimately, decide the future of the Alliance. If the public in Europe and North America do not understand what NATO is for, their support for the Alliance will inevitably decline. NATO should launch a far-reaching review of its Strategic Concept at Bucharest, defining its future role and purpose. This should be adopted at its 60th anniversary summit next year.

Given the global nature of the threats facing the Allies, there is no alternative to NATO playing a global role. Its willingness to act to counter threats to its members wherever they arise is fundamental to the Alliance’s continuing relevance. If NATO limits itself to a regional role, it risks becoming marginalised. NATO’s willingness to fulfil a global role is critical to the continued support of the United States. Without US support, NATO has no future. But US support depends on NATO becoming more capable, deployable and flexible, and on the European allies contributing more.

Achieving new commitments to deliver improvements in capabilities will be another key test of the success of the Bucharest Summit. NATO has shortfalls across a range of specific military capabilities. These compromise its ability to mount and sustain the expeditionary operations which underpin the Alliance’s new role. This issue must be tackled as a matter of the highest priority. On this, it is important that Bucharest delivers meaningful agreement.

The creation of the NATO Response Force (NRF) represents a significant achievement and promises to enhance the Alliance’s capabilities. But its funding mechanism is inadequate and acts as a disincentive for the deployment of the Force. The “costs lie where they fall” arrangement for funding the NRF should be abandoned and the Force should be financed out of NATO Common Funding. The contribution of Allied Command Transformation (ACT) to improving Alliance capabilities is unclear. Reports that ACT has been diverted
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from long-term capability planning by the operational demands of Afghanistan are a matter of concern.

The biggest shortfall in NATO’s capabilities, however, is a lack of political will. This is most manifest in the large and growing gap in defence spending between the United States and the European members of NATO. Europe does not spend anywhere near enough on defence. NATO’s informal defence expenditure target of 2% GDP by each member of the Alliance has proved a failure and there is no detectable appetite in Europe for increasing spending on defence. In addition to the 2% target the Alliance should establish detailed capability targets and timeframes. We are concerned that an Alliance containing such large disparities in defence spending will prove unsustainable in the long-term.

The Bucharest Summit is an opportunity to welcome new members to the Alliance. The Summit will be a key test of NATO’s commitment to maintain its open door policy on enlargement. NATO should continue to remain open to accepting new members to the Alliance. If a country meets NATO’s performance-based entry criteria, it should be permitted to join. However, new members should bring with them the capacity to add to NATO’s capabilities and a willingness to do so. They cannot only be consumers of security; they must also contribute to the common defence. Nor must NATO membership be treated as a means of gaining entry to the European Union.

The relationship between NATO and the EU is plagued by mistrust and characterised by unhealthy competition, and remains hostage to the damaging dispute between Cyprus and Turkey. Improving communication and coordination between NATO and the EU is essential. At Bucharest, NATO should make firm commitments to expand the strategic dialogue with the EU and identify a series of small-scale and pragmatic initiatives which can foster greater cooperation and trust. Above all, NATO and the EU must avoid duplication of efforts and resources. The Lisbon Treaty has the capacity to enhance the EU’s role in defence but it is vital it does nothing to undermine NATO’s role as the cornerstone of European defence.

We regard NATO as an indispensable Alliance. It has served us well for over half a century and still does. At the Bucharest Summit, the NATO allies have an opportunity to demonstrate powerfully the relevance of the Alliance in the 21st century; it is essential they do so. This effort must start with a renewed commitment to success in Afghanistan.
1 Introduction

The NATO Summit at Bucharest

1. In 2009, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) will celebrate its sixtieth anniversary. Its achievements over the past sixty years in ensuring the stability and prosperity of Europe are remarkable. Since the end of the Cold War the Alliance has undergone a dramatic transformation, from a largely reactive organisation concerned with contingency planning for the territorial defence of Western Europe to an operational Alliance, expanded to incorporate former Warsaw Pact Eastern European nations, which seeks to project stability on its periphery and beyond. The mission in Afghanistan is a manifestation of the new Alliance that NATO has become, but it also highlights the difficulties the new agenda has brought.

2. We began our inquiry into the future of NATO and European defence in December 2006 in the aftermath of the NATO Summit at Riga. Our intention in holding this inquiry is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the Atlantic Alliance. Although we publish it in advance of the NATO Summit at Bucharest, our report addresses issues of wider significance. The NATO Summit at Bucharest in April 2008, however, takes place against a backdrop of an increasingly acrimonious debate about Alliance burden-sharing in Afghanistan. On the one hand, the perceived unwillingness of some NATO nations to participate in that mission, or to send combat troops to the more unstable South of the country, is said both to undermine the coherence of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission and to risk splitting the Alliance. On the other hand, there is real unease in many parts of Europe about what is seen as the aggressive and militaristic approach of NATO to problems which will not be resolved without the support of the Afghan people.

3. With NATO having staked its reputation on stabilising Afghanistan, failure could have significant consequences not only for the people of Afghanistan but for the future of the Alliance itself. NATO’s mission in Afghanistan is likely, therefore, to dominate the agenda at the forthcoming Bucharest Summit. The Alliance, however, faces a range of additional challenges: how to improve force generation within the Alliance more broadly; how to improve the military capabilities of NATO, particularly amongst the Alliance’s European members; how to take forward the transformation agenda and embed the Alliance’s new expeditionary role; how to approach the further enlargement of NATO; and how to improve relations between NATO and the European Union. There is also the question of what to do about the Alliance’s Strategic Concept—last updated almost a decade ago in 1999—and now in need of revision. Underlying this are the larger questions about where the Alliance is heading, whether it remains relevant, whether the public understand what NATO is for, and whether an Alliance with such large disparities in defence expenditure between America and Europe can survive in the long term.

4. There can be little doubt that NATO is a highly successful military alliance. However, that does not mean it must naturally endure. The presumption that NATO remains relevant should not be taken for granted. At Bucharest, the members of NATO have an opportunity to demonstrate powerfully the Alliance’s continuing relevance. Commitments to greater burden-sharing in Afghanistan, improving the Alliance’s military capabilities,
and shouldering a more equitable burden of the common defence will reveal much about the commitment of NATO’s members to the future of the Alliance.

5. NATO’s evolution from an Alliance concerned with the territorial defence of Western Europe to one which projects stability beyond its borders has taken place alongside the evolution of the role of the European Union (EU) in defence matters. Over the past decade the EU has developed a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and, through this, a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). Like NATO, the EU is engaged in an effort to improve European military capabilities and is also involved in peace support operations beyond its borders—in Bosnia, Kosovo, Congo and Darfur, as well as, more recently, in Afghanistan. Further developments in the EU’s role are proposed in the Lisbon Treaty, which was signed by EU Heads of State and Government in December 2007.

6. The implications for NATO of the EU’s growing role in defence and security are hotly debated. Some contend that a growing role for the EU in defence matters will damage the Alliance, lead to inefficiencies through the duplication of capabilities, and dilute further the already meagre defence budgets of European states. Others suggest that it will strengthen the Alliance, enhance capabilities, and encourage greater defence expenditure by European nations. How the ESDP evolves will necessarily impact upon NATO, and vice versa. Although NATO alone cannot solve the myriad difficulties in the NATO-EU relationship at the Bucharest Summit, it can make a start; it is essential that it does so.

7. How effective the Bucharest Summit will be in addressing the many questions facing the Alliance is unclear. In light of the modest achievements of the previous NATO Summit at Riga in November 2006, expectations of Bucharest are perhaps more limited. The importance of the Bucharest Summit, however, should not be in doubt; the Alliance is at a critical juncture, particularly in its mission in Afghanistan, and the results of the Bucharest Summit will go a long way towards shaping not only the nature of the Alliance, but, crucially, its place in UK, European and US defence thinking for the years to come.

The results of the Riga Summit

8. Returning from the last NATO Summit, at Riga in November 2006, the Secretary of State for Defence, the Rt Hon Des Browne, told the House of Commons that Riga had been a success. The UK had identified three priorities for the Riga Summit: ensuring success in NATO’s operations in Afghanistan; improving NATO’s expeditionary capability; and improving NATO’s ability to work more closely with civilian partner organisations and other international organisations. The Secretary of State maintained that “despite the complexity of some of those issues, and some genuine and legitimate differences of approach between member countries, real progress was achieved in all three areas”.¹ The “primary focus” of the Summit had been the Alliance’s current operations, particularly Afghanistan. Mr Browne reported that, at Riga, there had been “a shared recognition that success in Afghanistan is crucial not just for the Afghan people and regional and global security, but for NATO itself...everyone at Riga agreed the mission in Afghanistan had to succeed”.² The Secretary of State argued that it was important not to underestimate the

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¹ HC Deb, 30 November 2006, Col 1239
² Ibid
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significance of all member countries coming together to express their support for the mission, their common determination to achieve success, and their commitment to deliver the Comprehensive Approach—bringing together security, governance, rule of law, and reconstruction and development in a coherent and effective manner.³

9. In addition to Afghanistan, the Secretary of State told the House there had also been progress at Riga in taking forward the agenda of NATO transformation—of improving NATO capabilities and streamlining its command structure to meet the challenges of a changing world. In this, the declaration that the NATO Response Force (NRF), a 25,000 strong rapid reaction force, had been declared fully operational had been “a key development”.⁴ Although recognising the fact that “NATO is not perfect” and that it needed to prepare itself for future challenges and adapt to today’s operational needs, Mr Browne stated:

Many commentators feared the summit in Riga would be a waste of time and at worst a failure. Those fears were unfounded. The summit reaffirmed the strength of purpose within the Alliance and its commitment to remain a force for good in the 21st Century.⁵

The Secretary of State regarded the agreement on the comprehensive approach in Afghanistan and on the Comprehensive Political Guidance as significant achievements of the Riga Summit.

10. In other respects, however, many commentators suggested that the Summit had been disappointing. Despite its significance as the first NATO summit held on the territory of a former Soviet bloc state, Riga was the first summit since the end of the Cold War to issue no new invitations to former communist countries to join the Alliance. Only modest progress had been achieved in improving capabilities. The NRF might have been declared fully operational at Riga, but difficulties in filling the force and capability requirements still remained. Moreover, the Summit made no progress, and indeed barely addressed, the difficult relationship between NATO and the EU; no new agreements were achieved at Riga for improving co-ordination or communication between the two organisations. Even on Afghanistan, the achievements were said to be modest. The Summit failed to produce significant commitments of additional forces by NATO nations to Afghanistan, nor did it succeed in removing many of the restrictions placed on the deployment of allied forces in theatre. In addition, the Allies failed to address adequately questions about the role and purpose of the Alliance in today’s changed strategic environment. The Comprehensive Political Guidance issued at Riga was regarded as no more than a stop gap for the eventual revision of NATO’s Strategic Concept. **We do not share the Secretary of State’s confidence that the last NATO Summit at Riga was a success. We recognise that some important progress was achieved, particularly in endorsing the comprehensive approach in Afghanistan and in agreeing the Comprehensive Political Guidance. Nevertheless, we believe that, overall, Riga was a disappointment and that the forthcoming Summit at Bucharest needs to set a clear path to achieving far more.**

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³ HC Deb, 30 November 2006, Col 1240
⁴ Ibid
⁵ Ibid, Col 1241
The UK’s priorities at Bucharest

11. We asked the Secretary of State for Defence what he expected to be achieved at the forthcoming NATO Summit at Bucharest and what would constitute a success for the UK. Mr Browne argued that:

Success for the UK will involve the Alliance at Bucharest re-endorsing its collective commitment to Afghanistan, building…on the success that the Alliance has already had to date and agreeing a plan for the future. Bucharest will be successful too if it maintains momentum and capabilities in force generation both for Afghanistan and more widely too if we recognise KFOR’s role in managing the transition in Kosovo and look to develop further the partnerships NATO has with others…Finally, we hope that at Bucharest the Heads of State will invite to join the Alliance those Membership Action Plan countries who meet NATO’s performance base and those that are able and willing to contribute to the Euro-Atlantic security.6

12. In a subsequent memorandum to our inquiry, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) told us that the Government’s priorities for the Summit are:

- to reaffirm Allied solidarity and purpose in current operations;
- to give NATO the tools to work more effectively as part of a Comprehensive Approach to security challenges and in operations;
- to agree to press forward in modernising NATO’s structures and procedures to manage complex expeditionary operations and orchestrate the development of Allies’ capabilities;
- to invite countries currently engaged in the Membership Action Plan (MAP) to join the Alliance, if they are judged to have met the required standards following the completion of the MAP cycle next month [March 2008]; and
- to achieve a commitment to deliver NATO’s most pressing military requirements for operations, notably trainers/mentors and helicopters.7

13. The Government’s stated priorities for the Bucharest Summit, and the criteria by which its success will be judged, are unambitious and disappointingly vague. They do not provide Parliament with a sufficiently detailed breakdown of the UK’s aspirations which limits our ability to measure the success of the summit.

14. We are also concerned that the Government fails to list seeking improvements in the relationship between NATO and the EU as one of its key priorities for the summit. We believe that improving that relationship is essential for the future effectiveness of both NATO and the EU.
15. We call upon the Government, in its response to this report, to provide us with a comprehensive, detailed and frank assessment of the successes and shortcomings of the Bucharest Summit.

Our inquiry

16. In this report, we seek to offer a comprehensive analysis of the Atlantic Alliance, its role, purpose and prospects. We consider what role NATO should play in the future of UK and European defence and whether the Alliance has a viable, long-term future. We examine the way in which NATO manages its operations and consider whether the Alliance is militarily configured and financially resourced to handle situations like Afghanistan, and the lessons of NATO’s operational deployments. We consider the impact of NATO’s performance in Afghanistan on the future of the Alliance and analyse the progress made to date in improving NATO’s military capabilities. We highlight the capability gaps which remain and consider how these can best be addressed. We consider the existing division of risk within the Alliance and the issue of national caveats and address the challenges of Alliance burden-sharing and defence spending. Also considered is the issue of NATO enlargement, the challenges that have confronted new members and the prospects for, and implications of, further enlargement. NATO’s relationship with the European Union is examined alongside the respective roles of NATO and the EU. We analyse the role of, and prospects for, the European Security and Defence Policy and will consider what implications a growing role for the European Union in defence and security might have for the long-term future of NATO. Finally, we examine the implications of the Lisbon Treaty for NATO and European defence.

17. Our report focuses primarily on NATO and examines the development of the ESDP largely in the context of discussing the NATO-EU relationship. Although we offer some observations about the impact of the Lisbon Treaty on the ESDP and NATO, our report should not be taken as a report on the Treaty itself. Other Select Committees of the House of Commons have conducted such inquiries. The Foreign Affairs Committee published a report on the Foreign Policy Aspects of the Lisbon Treaty on 20 January 2007 and the European Scrutiny Committee published a report on The European Union Intergovernmental Conference on 27 November 2007. The House of Lords European Union Committee is also conducting an in-depth analysis of the foreign policy and defence aspects of the Lisbon Treaty.

18. Our predecessor Committee held an inquiry into The Future of NATO in 2002. Its report examined the key developments in NATO in the build-up to the NATO Summit at Prague in November of that year which dealt in particular with the issues of NATO enlargement and partnerships. The report also considered the implications of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 for the future role of the Alliance and American attitudes towards NATO. Our report does not seek to duplicate this work. Significantly, our predecessor’s report, published in July 2002, predated NATO’s decision to take command of the ISAF mission in Afghanistan in August 2003. This decision has important implications for the future of the Alliance. Our current report devotes considerable attention to what NATO’s command of ISAF might mean for the future of the Alliance.
19. As part of our inquiry we visited NATO Headquarters and European Union institutions in Brussels, in March 2007, and held discussions with the NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, and International Staff, and senior NATO and EU military officers and diplomats. We also visited the United States and Canada, in May 2007, to hold discussions with our Congressional and parliamentary counterparts, senior government ministers and officials, and representatives of defence and foreign policy think tanks. In October 2007, we visited Georgia, a prospective member of the Alliance, and Turkey, a longstanding Alliance member but not a member of the EU, to hold discussions about their respective aspirations and concerns about NATO. In smaller groups, between February and May 2007, we also visited Berlin, Copenhagen, The Hague, Paris, Prague, Madrid, Rome, and Warsaw to meet ministers, other parliamentarians, military officers and officials, as well as defence and foreign policy opinion-formers, to elicit their opinions about the future of NATO and European defence. We believe our visits have greatly informed our inquiry. A complete list of the visits undertaken as part of this inquiry is set out at Annex B.

20. On 19 June 2007 we took oral evidence from Martin Wolf, Senior Columnist for the Financial Times; Sir Paul Lever, Chairman of the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) Council and former HM Ambassador to Germany; Charles Grant, Director of the Centre for European Reform; and Dr Rob Dover, Lecturer in Defence Studies at King’s College London. On 9 October 2007 we held an evidence session with Dr Dana Allin, Senior Fellow for Transatlantic Affairs at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS); Professor Michael Cox, Professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics (LSE); Dr Jonathan Eyal, Director of International Security Studies at RUSI; Dr Robin Niblett, Director of Chatham House; and Dr Mark Webber, Senior Lecturer in Politics at the University of Loughborough. On 20 November 2007 we took evidence from General Sir Jack Deverell (Rtd), former Commander-in-Chief, Allied Forces North (AFNORTH), NATO; Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry (Rtd), former Director of Operations at the MoD; Daniel Keohane, Research Fellow at the European Union Institute for Security Studies; and Colonel Christopher Langton, Senior Research Fellow at the IISS. Finally, on 8 January 2008, we took evidence from Rt Hon Des Browne MP, Secretary of State for Defence, Mr Andrew Mathewson, Director of Policy for International Organisations at the MoD, and Mr Hugh Powell, Head of Security Policy Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). We received a wide range of written submissions, details of which can be found on page 120. We are grateful to all those who participated in our inquiry.

9 Dr Webber is now Professor of International Politics at the University of Loughborough
2 NATO’s role and relevance in the 21st Century

The Bucharest Summit and the role of the Alliance

One of the disappointments of the 2006 NATO Summit at Riga was the collective failure of the Alliance to address and reconcile the divergent views on NATO’s overarching purpose in the dramatically changed strategic and political context of the 21st Century. Although the Riga Summit produced agreement on a new Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG) for the Alliance—“a framework and political direction for NATO’s continuing transformation, setting out, for the next 10 to 15 years, the priorities for all Alliance capability issues, planning disciplines and intelligence”—Riga left many of the essential questions about NATO’s role, purpose and strategic priorities unanswered: should NATO seek to project stability on a global basis or should it concentrate on the Euro-Atlantic area? Should Afghanistan serve as a model for further expeditionary operations or should it be an exception? What relationship should NATO have with the European Union? None of these crucial questions was addressed adequately at Riga. At the Bucharest Summit in April 2008, it will be essential for the Alliance to deal with these questions. NATO needs to define more clearly its political purpose and strategic priorities for the coming years. Only by doing so can NATO answer its critics and demonstrate its continuing relevance to today’s and tomorrow’s security challenges.

The evolution of NATO’s role and purpose

The North Atlantic Alliance was founded in 1949 to counter the threat posed by the Soviet Union in the early years of the Cold War. Between 1945 and 1949, in the years immediately following the end of the Second World War, the United States and the nations of Western Europe had viewed with growing alarm the expansionist ambitions of the Soviet Union. The signing of the North Atlantic Treaty on 4 April 1949 established a common security system based upon the principle of mutual defence between Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States. Greece and Turkey became members of the Alliance in 1952; the Federal Republic of Germany in 1955; and Spain in 1982.

The original role and purpose of the Alliance is enshrined in its founding document, the North Atlantic Treaty, which committed its signatories to “safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law” and to “unite their efforts for collective defence and for the preservation of peace and security”.10 Throughout the Cold War, the key provision of the Treaty was its mutual defence clause, set out in Article 5, which stated that an attack on one would constitute an attack on all.

From the outset, however, NATO has been a political as well as a military alliance—committed to the territorial defence of the North Atlantic area against external threats and,
at the same time, within that area, to preserving liberal democratic values and promoting transatlantic cooperation and stability between the members of the Alliance. Beyond the security guarantee enshrined in Article 5, the Treaty sought to promote “stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area”. This duality in NATO’s role has existed since the inception of the Alliance. As much as NATO was created to counter the Soviet threat, its parallel, if subsidiary, purpose was to unify the West and to make war between the countries of Western Europe unthinkable. Throughout the Cold War, therefore, NATO developed as both a military collective security organisation and, more broadly, a political organisation for defence and security cooperation.

25. During the Cold War, defining NATO’s overarching purpose was straightforward: to contain and counter the threat posed by the Soviet Union and its allies and deter Soviet aggression against Western Europe, and against Western interests more broadly defined. The Soviet threat gave NATO a clear and compelling purpose around which its members could coalesce. Overall, this common threat served as a glue, binding the Alliance together. To be sure, the Alliance was not without its difficulties and tensions during the Cold War; there were bitter disputes and divisions within NATO over the Suez crisis in 1956, Alliance nuclear-sharing and nuclear doctrine in the early 1960s, the French withdrawal from the NATO Integrated Command in 1966, the Vietnam War, West Germany’s policy of Ostpolitik under Chancellor Willy Brand in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and the placement of US cruise missiles in Europe in the 1980s. On almost every occasion, critics observed these tensions and predicted the imminent demise of NATO. Yet despite the sometimes bitter disputes between NATO allies over the appropriate strategy for confronting the Soviet threat, ultimately there was no disagreement on the fundamental issue of what NATO was for and what it was designed to achieve.

The end of the Cold War and its implications for NATO

26. The ending of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, between 1989 and 1991, left NATO without a single, unifying military threat to confront and without a compelling strategic agenda around which its members could rally. Without the Cold War, critics charged that the Alliance had lost its raison d’etre. In 1990, an article by academic John Mearsheimer, for example, questioned the continuing relevance of NATO and anticipated its early demise as a meaningful political and military alliance: “The Soviet Union is the only superpower that can seriously threaten to overrun Europe; it is the Soviet threat that provides the glue that holds NATO together. Take away that offensive threat and the United States is likely to abandon the Continent, whereupon the defensive alliance it has headed for forty years may disintegrate”. In voicing pessimism about the future of NATO, Mearsheimer was by no means alone. Other commentators, such as Owen Harries, argued in a similar vein: “it took the presence of a life-threatening, overtly hostile ‘East’ to bring [NATO] into existence and to maintain its unity. It is extremely doubtful whether it can now survive the disappearance of that enemy”.

11 Text of the North Atlantic Treaty, 4 April 1949, NATO website (www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/treaty.htm)
13 Owen Harries, “The Collapse of the West,” Foreign Affairs Vol. 72, No. 4, September/October 1993, p 41
27. A decade-and-a-half after the collapse of the Soviet Union, NATO has not only survived the end of the Cold War but has gone a significant way towards establishing its continuing relevance in the post-Cold War world. If the overarching purpose of its post-Cold War mission remains somewhat less clear, its success in surviving the loss of its principal protagonist and transcending the Cold War is beyond doubt; not a single member of the Alliance believes NATO is irrelevant to the post-Cold War world. That success owes much to the fact that, in addition to acting as a bulwark against Soviet expansionism, the Alliance has always had a discrete political dimension, preserving and extending liberal democratic values. As former NATO Secretary General Javier Solana suggested in 1999, “What unites us are shared interests, not shared threats…This is why the Alliance has remained so strong beyond the end of the Cold War”.14

28. After the end of the Cold War, NATO increasingly embraced its hitherto largely latent political function and placed it at the heart of the Alliance’s policy. The 1990s witnessed the development of new political tools for projecting stability across Europe and beyond, including the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the Partnership for Peace, the NATO-Russia Council and the NATO-Ukraine Commission. The Alliance also admitted new members from the former Soviet bloc; in 1999, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland joined NATO and were followed later, in 2004, by Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. As the then NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson, remarked at the Washington Summit in 1999, the Alliance had “evolved from a passive, reactive defence organisation into one which is actively building security right across Europe”.15

29. In the 1990s, the political mission of building security in Europe drew NATO into the bloody and brutal conflicts of the Balkans which followed the break-up of Yugoslavia, interventions which were deeply controversial within NATO. In Bosnia, in December 1995, NATO led a UN-sanctioned Implementation Force (IFOR) of some 60,000 troops to oversee the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement and the withdrawal and demobilisation of the warring parties. A year later, a NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR) of some 31,000 troops took over from IFOR to consolidate the peace and promote longer-term stability in Bosnia. Though the size of the military deployment was scaled back in succeeding years, the SFOR mission to Bosnia lasted until December 2004. In Kosovo, meanwhile, NATO intervened in March 1999 to stop the ethnic cleansing of Kosovan Albanians by Serbian Forces under the control of Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic. A two-and-a-half month air campaign—Operation Allied Force—against Milosevic’s Serb Forces ensued. Following Serbia’s agreement to comply with UN Resolutions, NATO led a 50,000-strong Kosovo Force (KFOR) in June 1999 to uphold the Resolutions. Although the size of the deployment has reduced to 16,000 troops, the NATO-led KFOR mission remains deployed in Kosovo to this day. In addition, a smaller 3,500-strong NATO-led force intervened in Macedonia in 2001 following tensions between ethnic Albanian and government forces.

30. Through its interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo, NATO was perceived to have demonstrated powerfully its continued relevance in the post-Cold War world, though the debate about whether NATO should intervene militarily beyond Europe was far from settled. Nevertheless, the interventions, in part, paved the way for the development of the expeditionary, operationally-focused Alliance we see engaged in Afghanistan today. In the late 1990s, however, intervening in Afghanistan, way beyond the Alliance’s traditional Euro-Atlantic territory, was inconceivable. Though intervening in the Balkans had meant intervention beyond NATO’s formal territory, promoting stability in Bosnia and Kosovo was seen as part of safeguarding European security as a whole. Ever since the interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo, a debate has raged within NATO about whether the Alliance should intervene militarily beyond Europe. Despite its current mission in Afghanistan, those debates about out-of-area operations are still ongoing.

**St Malo and the origins of ESDP**

31. The development of NATO in the post-Cold War world was also shaped by the emerging role of the European Union in defence matters. During the Cold War, debates about the development of an autonomous European defence identity alongside NATO arose periodically but did not lead to any substantive developments. While the Western European Union (WEU) certainly constituted a European forum for discussing security questions, its military significance and political role were marginal. Throughout the Cold War, NATO remained in charge of European defence. The debate over European security was still characterised by historically-based divergences between the major members of the then European Community. In the early years of the post-Cold War period, the situation remained broadly the same. Although the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 established a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), including, after bitter negotiation, the notion that this common policy “might in time lead to a common defence”, it was not until 1998 that some substance emerged.16

32. The trigger for new steps in European defence was the experience of the Balkan wars in which the European nations failed to produce a common strategy in the face of the unfolding humanitarian catastrophe in the former Yugoslavia. The Balkan tragedy affected all European countries, particularly France and the UK. For the French, the need for effective use of force led in the mid-1990s to a thawing of longstanding tensions between France and NATO. The UK, meanwhile, in its 1998 Strategic Defence Review, concluded that the operational powerlessness of Europe, despite the fact that European GDP was higher than that of the United States, was unacceptable and might imperil the NATO Alliance in the long-term. Commenting on the EU summit in Portschach, Austria, in October 1998, the UK Prime Minister, Tony Blair, stated that “there was a willingness which the UK obviously shares, for Europe to take a stronger foreign policy and security role...A Common Foreign and Security Policy for the European Union is necessary, it is overdue, it is needed and it is high time we got on with trying to engage with formulating it”. He also stated that “we need to make sure that [it] in no way undermines NATO but rather is complementary to it”.17 A Franco-British Summit in St Malo, in December 1998,

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16 Treaty on European Union (The Maastricht Treaty), Article 24.1, 1992
17 Speech by Prime Minister, Rt Hon Tony Blair, cited in Maartje Rutten (ed.), “From St Malo to Nice—European Defence: Core Documents,” Chaillot Papers Vol 3, 2001
led to agreement that while the main security responsibility for Europe should remain with NATO, European allies would strengthen institutional and practical arrangements for acting together militarily in activities such as peacekeeping in which the Alliance as a whole chose not to be involved. This led to new agreements at the EU summits at Cologne and Helsinki in 1999 to strengthen the EU’s role in defence.

33. The official reaction of the United States to these developments was cautiously welcoming, though at the time it was reported that, in private, senior members of the US administration were less happy. The then US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, endorsed the developments but warned that Europe should avoid the “3 Ds”: “no duplication, no discrimination and no decoupling”. It was essential that NATO was not diminished by these initiatives, that there was no discrimination against non-EU NATO members, and no duplication of efforts or capabilities.

**The impact of September 11 and the war in Iraq**

34. The development of an EU role in defence matters was still in its infancy at the time of the terrorist attacks against the United States on 11 September 2001. The atrocities in New York and Washington DC had a profound impact on the direction of US foreign policy and its attitude towards the Atlantic Alliance. Although in the aftermath of the attacks, NATO invoked its Article 5 provisions in solidarity with America, arguments within NATO about the proper scope of its operations, whether to intervene militarily beyond the Euro-Atlantic area, and whether to embrace a global role were ultimately reinvigorated. The terrorist attacks revealed powerfully the severity of the new threat posed by international terrorism and the danger of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) falling into the wrong hands. Equally apparent was the fact that the terrorist threat emanated largely from beyond Europe’s borders, in the Middle East and Central Asia.

35. The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 also revived questions about NATO’s continuing relevance in the face of this new threat. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks, and again following the tensions in transatlantic relations caused by the Iraq War in 2003, bleak predictions about NATO’s fate abounded. Just at the moment NATO invoked its Article 5 mutual defence clause for the first time in its history, the Alliance was characterised as “irrelevant: a bureaucracy whose time has passed” and as “a military pact that is hollowing out and of diminishing geopolitical relevance”. The notion was undoubtedly fuelled by the fact that early operations in Afghanistan to oust the Taliban and hunt down Osama bin Laden and other al-Qaeda leaders were undertaken by the United States without reference to NATO. The schism in transatlantic relations caused by Iraq, in particular, was perceived by some to be a decisive break that had split the Alliance irreparably. For the sceptics, NATO was a broken Alliance and there appeared insufficient political will on either side of the Atlantic to rebuild it.


36. In reality, however, the Alliance has proved remarkably durable, repeatedly confounding its critics. As the rift over the Iraq War heals, and with NATO having taken on command of the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, so perceptions about its relevance have shifted. Now, it is said, the Alliance’s continued relevance will be determined by its mission in Afghanistan. But there remains an undercurrent of uncertainty about NATO’s proper role in the context of today’s more diverse and challenging security environment.

**A global versus a regional role**

37. Compared with the situation during the Cold War, the NATO Allies now face a far more diverse range of security threats: international terrorism, rogue states, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, drug and people trafficking, international crime, climate change, and energy shortages. A further complicating factor is that many of these threats emanate from beyond NATO’s North Atlantic borders. As a result, in the post-Cold War and post-September 11 world NATO has sought increasingly to project stability on its periphery and beyond. The NATO handbook states that “the Allies agree that they must be ready to help to deter, defend, disrupt and protect themselves collectively against terrorist attacks…from abroad and that this may include action against terrorists and against those who harbour or protect them”.\(^{20}\) It also declares that the Allies “agree that the Alliance should not be constrained by predetermined geographical limits”, and that “it must have the capacity to act as and when required”.\(^{21}\) This may be true, but it gives the impression that the argument about NATO’s current and future role has been settled and that there is consensus in favour of the Alliance acting globally to guarantee security in the Euro-Atlantic area.

38. During our visits to NATO capitals we were aware of a clear divergence in opinion between those countries that favoured a global role for NATO and those that did not. In the United States, we heard that it was essential that the Alliance proved capable of dealing with threats wherever they arose. The Alliance had to be a global organisation; if it failed to prove capable of looking beyond the Euro-Atlantic area, the US was likely to place less emphasis on NATO and, instead, favour “coalitions of the willing”. This was a view echoed in Denmark and the Netherlands. In Copenhagen, we heard that the transatlantic dialogue should be expended further to address issues including developments in China and Iran and that membership of the Alliance should be offered to countries beyond the North Atlantic area such as Australia, New Zealand and Japan.

39. In Spain, Italy and France, however, there was a considerable degree of scepticism about NATO adopting a global role. In Paris, we heard that the future of NATO was promising, but that it should not simply follow the global vision set out by the United States; NATO should instead stick to its Treaty roots and concentrate on providing security in the Euro-Atlantic area. The views expressed to us in Prague and Warsaw were more complex. The Czech Republic and Poland had both strongly backed the Alliance’s mission in Afghanistan and supported what ISAF was trying to achieve, but we heard that their principal security concern was that of a resurgent Russia. Whilst not objecting to NATO

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20 NATO Handbook, 2006, p 9
21 Ibid, p 10
assuming a global role, both capitals believed that the Article 5 provisions of mutual
defence should remain paramount to the Alliance’s future role.

40. The possibility of a global NATO—with a global mission and global partnerships—
remains deeply contentious within the Alliance. Agreeing the scope and nature of
NATO’s mission should, arguably, be one of the highest priorities at the Bucharest
Summit, with that agreement defined clearly in a new Strategic Concept.

41. Given the global nature of the threats we face, we believe there is no alternative to
the Alliance fulfilling a global role. Its willingness and ability to act on a global basis to
tackle threats where they arise is fundamental to NATO’s continued relevance. If
NATO limits itself to a regional role in defence of the territory of the North Atlantic
area alone, its value will be diminished, particularly to the United States, and its future
will be in doubt.

Uncertainty about the current role and purpose of NATO

42. The profound changes that have taken place within the international system since the
end of the Cold War have led the NATO allies, individually and collectively, to reappraise
and question the role and continuing relevance of the Alliance in the 21st Century.
Together with the demise of the Soviet threat, the diversification of the security challenges
confronting the NATO allies means that NATO no longer has the commonly agreed,
unifying purpose it once had. Moreover, there is, at present, in Europe and in North
America, a lack of popular understanding about what NATO is for, what its purpose is,
and whether it remains relevant. As Dr Dana Allin, of the International Institute of
Strategic Studies, told us in evidence, NATO’s purpose has become “more fuzzy” in the
post-Cold War world. While a number of plausible and valid explanations of NATO’s role
could be offered, “they are not obviously as compelling in the fundamental way that
mutual defence against the Soviet threat was”. According to Professor Michael Cox, of the
London School of Economics, “something fundamental changed because of the end of the
Cold War” in that it “removed a single magnetic north in [NATO’s] strategic thinking”. In
the Cold War, NATO had been “a clearly focused European alliance…you knew exactly
where you were and what you were doing”. This was no longer the case and, consequently,
NATO’s role was now far harder to define.

43. In evidence to our inquiry, Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry (Rtd), former Director of
Operations at the MoD, argued that an alliance formed around the concept of collective
defence against an overwhelming external threat was “entirely different to an alliance, held
together by all sorts of other motives, which can no longer necessarily see something
homogenous in front of it”. The result, according to Dr Mark Webber, of Loughborough
University, was that “NATO itself is uncertain of its role and purpose”. Although NATO’s
own estimation of its role was “very widespread”, that was “a discourse which hides a
considerable degree of uncertainty as to what its current role and purpose is”. Dr Michael

22 Q 79
23 Q 96
24 Q 141
25 Q 78
Williams, of the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), summarised the current problems confronting NATO in defining that role more clearly:

At the core of the Alliance’s current difficulties is a lack of consensus about what NATO is supposed to do. The allies all agree that NATO is a political-military alliance made up of democratic states that share common values. Beyond this, however, disagreement is rife…The problem for NATO is deciding which [security] challenges to manage.26

44. Other witnesses to our inquiry, however, emphasised that it was important not to overstate the significance of NATO’s current difficulties in defining its role. According to Sir Paul Lever, Chairman of RUSI and a former UK Ambassador to Germany, the current debates within NATO about its proper role and purpose had to be seen in context. He argued that:

[NATO] always seems to be fearful that it is losing its role, and yet without a doubt it has been one of the most extraordinarily resilient and successful organisations, and some would say the most successful military alliance ever. It has retained public support within its members, and it still does.27

45. The Secretary of State for Defence told us in evidence that he believed NATO remained relevant; the role ascribed to the Alliance in the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty was still a compelling justification for the continued existence of NATO. Mr Browne told us:

The Treaty itself sets out the ambition of an alliance based on shared values and standards with the clear recognition that the security of its North American and European allies is indivisible, and the reaffirmation in the preamble of what it stands for stands the test of time…It is as relevant today as a purpose for NATO as it was before.28

The Secretary of State maintained that despite the changes inaugurated by the end of the Cold War and the demise of a single unifying threat, NATO had proven its resilience and its capacity to adapt to a changing strategic environment. In evidence to us, he argued that:

NATO has proved to be an organisation which, whilst still retaining its fundamentals, has been able to dynamically evolve in a way that is relevant to the threats that we face in the 21st Century.29

46. During our visits to European NATO capitals in 2007, we observed clear differences in attitudes towards, and support for, NATO amongst politicians and the public in each the countries we visited. In some countries, such as Denmark and the Netherlands we heard that NATO retained a significant amount of popular support. In Copenhagen, we were told that Denmark had a similar outlook on NATO to that of the UK. NATO was the foundation of its defence policy and the government was a strong supporter of NATO’s
military operations. In Prague, we heard that the Czech Republic was enthusiastic about NATO and wanted to be a high quality member of the Alliance. NATO was the cornerstone of Czech defence policy. But while it was committed to NATO operations, its principal concern was the protection it offered against a resurgent Russia.

47. In other countries, such as Italy and Spain, NATO was said to be less popular with a higher degree of scepticism about the Alliance’s continuing relevance. In Madrid, we were told that Spanish support for NATO was of the head rather than of the heart; there was little public enthusiasm for the Alliance—which, in general, preferred the idea of separate European defence structures—even though all major parties backed Spain’s continued commitment to NATO. At the Spanish Defence Ministry we heard that Spain needed to address what benefit it derived from continued NATO membership. In Rome, we heard that NATO was not popular with the Italian public, though this was to some extent related to antipathy felt towards the current US Administration. In Paris, we heard that NATO was not a subject often raised in public debate in France. Although the Alliance remained an important stakeholder in transatlantic relations, French politicians told us that they believed NATO should stick to its original purpose of providing collective defence in the Euro-Atlantic area and not seek to broaden its role. Particular scepticism was expressed about the idea of NATO assuming a global role and tackling threats outside its traditional area of responsibility.

48. In Washington DC, during our discussions with US Administration officials and politicians on Capitol Hill, we heard that, of all international organisations, NATO still enjoyed legitimacy in the eyes of the American public. However, NATO did not feature prominently in the public consciousness and there were signs that the public did not appreciate NATO’s continuing relevance in the changes circumstances of the post-Cold War world.

49. We also perceived a difference in approach to NATO between the original members of the Alliance, where we found a reducing interest in a concept that was seen to have done its job, and the newer or aspirant members, where NATO’s importance as a bulwark against Russia or, in other cases, as an entry ticket into the European Union remained high.

50. During the Cold War, defining the role and purpose of NATO was straightforward: to contain and counter the Soviet threat. In the post-Cold War world, NATO faces a far more diverse range of security challenges. As a result, NATO’s role and purpose is far harder to define. Consequently, there is a lack of understanding, amongst the public in Europe and North America and within the Alliance itself, about the purpose of NATO in the 21st Century. We call upon the governments of all NATO countries to do more to explain to their citizens the relevance of NATO in today’s uncertain world. If people do not understand what NATO is for or why it is important to them, their support for it will inevitably decline.

The need for a new Strategic Concept

51. The uncertainty and ambiguity about NATO’s role and purpose underscores the importance of the Alliance defining that role and outlining its political direction. In 1991, following the end of the Cold War, NATO agreed a Strategic Concept to define both the fundamental security tasks of the Alliance in the dramatically changed strategic landscape
of the post-Cold War world and the means of implementing Alliance policy as a whole. NATO’s Strategic Concept has become “the authoritative statement on the Alliance’s objectives” and the “highest level guidance on the political and military means to be used in achieving them”. The 1991 Strategic Concept, the first such document agreed by NATO, stated that safeguarding the security of its members remained the core purpose of the Alliance, but it also stressed the need for cooperation and partnership with former adversaries and emphasised the importance of working towards improving the security of Europe as a whole.

52. Profound political and security developments in Europe during the 1990s led to a revision of the Concept at the 1999 Washington Summit. The 1999 Strategic Concept, now almost a decade old, remains the authoritative statement on Alliance objectives. In essence, it committed the Allies not only to common defence, but also to promoting the peace and stability of the wider Euro-Atlantic area. It contained a strong commitment to maintaining the transatlantic link “by which the security of North America is permanently tied to the security of Europe”. It adopted a broad approach to security, encompassing political, economic, social and environmental factors, as well as the Alliance’s defence dimension. It emphasised the importance of maintaining Alliance capabilities to ensure the effectiveness of military operations and improving European military capabilities within the Alliance. It defined a new role for the Alliance in conflict prevention and crisis management. It underscored the importance of effective partnerships with non-NATO countries based on cooperation and dialogue. It stated that NATO should remain committed to further enlargement and maintain an open door policy towards potential new members. Finally, it committed the Alliance to the pursuit of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation agreements. The 1999 Strategic Concept stated that the “fundamental security tasks” of the Alliance were:

• to provide one of the indispensable foundations for a stable Euro-Atlantic security environment, based on the growth of democratic institutions and commitment to peaceful resolution of disputes, in which no country would be able to intimidate or coerce any other through the threat or use of force;

• to serve, as provided for in Article 4 of the Washington Treaty, as an essential transatlantic forum for Allied consultations on any issues that affect their vital interests, including possible developments posing risks for members’ security, and for appropriate coordination of their efforts in fields of common concern;

• to deter and defend against any threat of aggression against any NATO member state as provided for in Articles 5 and 6 of the Washington Treaty;

In order to enhance the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area, it identified the following priorities for the Alliance:

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30 NATO Handbook 2006, p 18
31 Ibid
32 Ibid
33 Ibid, p 19
• to stand ready, case-by-case and by consensus, in conformity with Article 7 of the Washington Treaty, to contribute to effective conflict prevention and to engage actively in crisis management, including crisis response operations; and

• to promote wide-ranging partnership, cooperation, and dialogue with other countries in the Euro-Atlantic area, with the aim of increasing transparency, mutual confidence and the capacity for joint action with the Alliance.\(^{34}\)

53. Although the 1999 Strategic Concept identified terrorism as a threat which the Alliance should address, the document was framed before the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. The attacks transformed the strategic environment, led to changes in US, UK and European defence priorities, and prompted the members of NATO to revise their understanding of global security and the Alliance’s place within it. Although NATO has recognised the significance of the terrorist threat and has put in place a number of measures to combat it—including improved methods of intelligence-sharing, enhancements in military capabilities, changes in force structures, and strengthening partnerships with countries outside NATO—the Alliance has not adapted or updated the 1999 Strategic Concept to take account of the nature or scale of the terrorist threat revealed in September 2001.

54. At the Istanbul Summit in 2004, in recognition of the fact that the operating environment of the Alliance had changed dramatically, NATO tasked the North Atlantic Council with drawing up a draft Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG) to support the existing Strategic Concept for agreement at the 2006 Summit at Riga. In part, this was an admission that rewriting the Strategic Concept, at a time when the Alliance was recovering from the bitter disputes over Iraq, was not feasible. As Julianne Smith et al suggest in their primer for the Riga Summit, *Transforming NATO (...again)*, the members of the Alliance “simply did not have the energy to launch a strategic debate over NATO’s purpose, the doctrine of preventative war, multilateralism, and nuclear policy”. The CPG was, therefore, a “compromise solution” which, ultimately, was “less ambitious than NATO’s original expectations”.\(^{35}\)

55. The CPG agreed at Riga in November 2006 stated that “the Alliance will continue to follow the broad approach to security of the 1999 Strategic Concept and perform the fundamental security tasks it set out, namely security, consultation, deterrence and defence, crisis management, and partnership”.\(^{36}\) It reaffirmed that collective defence would remain “the core purpose of the Alliance”, though it also noted that “the character of potential Article 5 challenges is continuing to evolve”. It found that “large scale conventional aggression against the Alliance will continue to be highly unlikely”, but it noted that “future attacks may originate from outside the Euro-Atlantic area and involve unconventional forms of armed assault”, including the use of “asymmetric means” such as weapons of mass destruction.\(^{37}\) It lists the principal threats facing the Alliance as

\(^{34}\) NATO Handbook 2006, pp 19-20

\(^{35}\) Julianna Smith (ed.), *Transforming NATO (...again): A primer for the NATO Summit in Riga 2006*, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, November 2006, p 17

\(^{36}\) Comprehensive Political Guidance, 2006, NATO website (www.nato.int)

\(^{37}\) Ibid
terrorism—“increasingly global in scope and lethal in results”—the spread of weapons of mass destruction, instability due to failed or failing states, regional crises and conflicts, the misuse of emerging technologies, and the disruption of vital resources. The CPG states that “against this background, NATO must retain the ability to conduct the full range of its missions, from high to low intensity”. \(^{38}\) Enumerating a lengthy list of capability requirements which NATO should seek to acquire, it stated that the Alliance should focus on:

- strengthening its ability to meet the challenges, from wherever they may come, to the security of its populations, territory and forces;
- enhancing its ability to anticipate and assess threats, risks, and challenges it faces, with special attention to the threats posed by terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;
- providing forces able to conduct the full range of military operations and missions;
- being able to respond quickly to unforeseen circumstances;
- ensuring that NATO’s own crisis management structures are effectively drawn together; and
- continuing to adapt planning processes to meet new demands. \(^{39}\)

56. The CPG is an important document and reflects the significant changes which have taken place in the international strategic environment since the adoption of the Strategic Concept in 1999. It also provides essential guidance to Allies about the kinds of capabilities they should seek to develop and it, rightly, underscores the importance of continuing the process of transformation, including “conceptual and organisational agility” and “the development of robust capabilities that are deployable, sustainable, interoperable and usable”. \(^{40}\)

57. The question remains, however, as to whether the CPG goes far enough. As Julianne Smith et al argue, the CPG:

- does little to settle the debate about NATO’s overarching purpose. Is…the current mission in Afghanistan a precedent or an exception? Should the Alliance focus on protecting interests in the Euro-Atlantic area or promoting values around the world? The CPG’s answers to these questions are left open to interpretation…While the CPG turns NATO’s attention to the future, it does little to help the Alliance prepare for the future. Too many questions about NATO’s purpose and planning priorities are left unaddressed, leaving the Alliance susceptible to stagnation and more internal political bickering. \(^{41}\)

\(^{38}\) Comprehensive Political Guidance, 2006, NATO website (www.nato.int)
\(^{39}\) Ibid
\(^{40}\) Julianna Smith (ed.), Transforming NATO (…again): A primer for the NATO Summit in Riga 2006, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, November 2006, pp 16-17
\(^{41}\) Ibid
58. We asked our witnesses whether the Alliance needed to adopt a new Strategic Concept. Sir Paul Lever expressed a degree of scepticism as to the value of agreeing a new Strategic Concept. Although he conceded that the existing document was “out of date”, he argued that “I am not quite sure whether a further draft of the strategic concept will yield penetrating new insights or innovative solutions”. Nevertheless, he believed that “the mega-documents and strategic concepts produced by NATO” do “serve a role” in that agreeing them engages all 26 members of the Alliance, particularly the smaller nations, “in the process of common thought, analysis and to some degree, at a very general level, policy-making”. Dr Rob Dover, however, argued against a new Strategic Concept, suggesting that it was “unnecessary and may be divisive”.

59. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) told us in evidence that a new Strategic Concept should, eventually, be defined. However, the Secretary of State expressed some scepticism about whether it would be possible to launch a review of the Concept at the Bucharest Summit. In evidence to us the MoD stated that:

NATO’s 1999 Strategic Concept describes the evolving security environment in terms that remain largely valid. The CPG builds on this to provide the framework for NATO’s continuing transformation and sets out, for the next 10 to 15 years, the priorities for all Alliance capability issues, planning disciplines and intelligence. Combined with NATO’s developing work on a Comprehensive Approach, this provides the strategic framework against which NATO can plan to operate, and a good vision for change. These elements should eventually be brought together in a new strategic concept.

The Secretary of State for Defence told us, “I believe we should refresh the Strategic Concept” and “now, in my view, is the right time for us to consider doing that”. However, he suggested that the timing of the US presidential elections might make agreement on a new Concept difficult to reach in this timeframe.

60. We believe that NATO needs to revise its Strategic Concept as a matter of the highest priority. The new Concept should define, far more clearly, the role, purpose and relevance of the Alliance in the context of today’s security challenges. The new Strategic Concept should also reflect the fact that, in terms of its operations, NATO is about more than the projection of military force alone; it is about implementing the Comprehensive Approach, and providing the stability in post-conflict situations to allow reconstruction and development to take place. NATO should launch a review of the Strategic Concept at the forthcoming Bucharest Summit for agreement at its 60th anniversary summit in 2009.
NATO and the United States

61. The future of NATO will be shaped, to a significant degree, by the attitude of the United States. Without continued US support, the Alliance will not have a future. Not only is the US by far the largest military and financial contributor to the Alliance, it is the US commitment to make its security indivisible from that of the European members of NATO which has been at the heart of the Alliance since its inception 59 years ago. Witnesses to our inquiry argued that the key to NATO’s future was keeping the United States engaged in the Alliance. As Professor Cox told us in evidence, “if NATO is irrelevant to the United States, it is not relevant at all”.48 To remain relevant to Washington, however, NATO had to be an effective alliance. It had to be a viable military organisation and it had to serve US national interests. Professor Cox argued that “the United States looks at NATO and says ‘Does it serve our national interest?’ and it is as simple as that”.49 He maintained that today’s radically changed strategic environment raised “a series of major questions about what an alliance of a stable and permanent character is for a power as strong as the United States”. In particular, US politicians asked “tough questions” about why they should continue to give consultation rights to those who do not contribute to international security.50 Dr Jonathan Eyal suggested that “they cannot understand why they must continually pay a political price for people who are not prepared to invest in their defence in an adequate manner”.51 This was not an attitude limited to the current US administration. Sir Paul Lever argued that:

We have to be realistic about the difference in power between America on the one hand and its European allies on the other…Even a more benign American administration which took the need for allies much more seriously would not want to be completely hemmed in by having to obtain the consensus of all its NATO Allies to a policy or military action….There are common interests and similar perceptions, but we have to be realistic about the scale of American power and the desire that any US president will have to retain over how that power should be deployed.52

62. Although the United States continued to attached importance to NATO, Dr Robin Niblett argued that the US attached less importance to the Alliance than it did during the Cold War. Ultimately, the US was “looking for a NATO that is effective”.53 In recent years, the United States had undergone a dramatic shift in how it perceived the Alliance. Dr Niblett suggested that Washington regarded NATO less as an alliance than a “pool of allies…who happen to be conveniently and well-integrated…around a military command structure, around a certain disciplined structure in which the United States can be heavily involved”.54

48  Q 80
49  Ibid
50  Ibid
51  Q 90
52  Q 39
53  Q 86
54  Q 93
63. Martin Wolf suggested that US thinking about NATO was in transition. The United States was “in the process...of working out a new foreign policy in response to a new world”.55 This had been going on ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union and had been greatly accelerated by the rise of China and the threat of international terrorism. Mr Wolf told us that the Bush Administration’s early repudiation of alliances as a “constraining force” on the freedom of action of the United States had been shown to be a failure and that even the current president was seeking to re-engage with America’s NATO Allies. Today, there was a growing recognition of the “need to have allies which are potent, credible and consistent”. But this did not mean that the United States had “gone all the way back to thinking that the entire security aims of the United States should be pursued within NATO, because they are also not at all clear what the other members of NATO give them”. According to Mr Wolf, US foreign policy was currently “up for grabs”.56 He argued that much would depend upon both the willingness of allies to make a real contribution to the military capabilities of the Alliance and the outcome of the 2008 presidential elections:

We are at a time of enormous flux in American thinking about what they should be doing, what their role in the world should be and how their allies fit into that. One can perfectly well imagine outcomes in which they decide that NATO is an important element in their foreign and security policy but not the only one, or possibly even the central element. It will depend on what the other members of the Alliance bring to the table that is of value to them and how co-operative they are from their point of view, that is, how widely they share similar perceptions, interests and values, how effective the institution is and how grievous the constraints imposed upon US action by the requirements of alliance cohesion are seen to be. All of that is to play for and will depend on who wins...the presidency...but also, more broadly, how the debate in Washington goes and how the allies behave.57

64. In our discussions with US policymakers in Washington and with American representatives at NATO, we were told that for fifty years, the Alliance had focused on the European continent but that the job in Europe was largely completed. There were no threats on the European continent. The challenge now was to mobilise the Alliance to do other things. NATO was the most effective tool for multilateral action by the United States but there was frustration and resentment in America about the unwillingness of European allies to shoulder their fair share of the common defence.

65. United States support for NATO is fundamental to the continued existence of the Alliance; without it NATO would become redundant. But the US will only support NATO if the Alliance serves the national interests of its members, and particularly the United States. To remain relevant to the United States, and to demonstrate that relevance to the American people, the Alliance must be capable of tackling today’s and tomorrow’s security challenges. To do so, NATO must become more capable, more deployable and more flexible, and the European Allies together need to demonstrate clearly what they contribute to NATO.

55  Q 12
56  Ibid
57  Ibid
NATO and the UK’s national interests

66. We asked the witnesses to our inquiry whether membership of NATO was still in the UK’s national interests. Our witnesses said this depended, in part, on how the national interest was defined, and there was some disagreement on what constituted the UK’s national interests. Overall, however, our witnesses identified three elements which they argued were fundamental to the UK’s national interests:

- to maintain a formal link with the United States and remain close to America, politically, diplomatically and strategically;
- to defend the global political, economic and military interests of the UK; and
- to protect the territory of Europe from attack or coercion by any foreign power.

In each of these, several witnesses to our inquiry argued that NATO had played, and continued to play, a crucial role. Professor Cox argued that the overriding interest of the UK in the past half century had been to remain close to the United States. The “best and most useful means of doing that…in an international institution which still has high legitimacy in the United States is NATO”. 58 The UK remained a “global player” and therefore had a direct interest in countering any threats to its interests around the world. The UK had to be capable of dealing with those threats. In this, NATO played a crucial role; it was “the only force projection organisation that exists and Britain plays a role in [it]”. 59 Dr Niblett agreed with Professor Cox’s analysis:

From the British national interest perspective, the UK has interests around the world. They are in the future of Pakistan, they are in Afghanistan, they are in parts of East Asia in terms of our economic interest, they are in Africa, they are in the Middle East and ultimately our ability to pursue those is going to be insufficient either by ourselves or with our European partners alone and they are much more likely to be pursued in collaboration with an institution that brings the United States into the mix as well. 60

67. In evidence to our inquiry, the Secretary of State argued in similar terms that membership of NATO remained in the UK’s national interests. Mr Browne stated that the threats facing the UK were global and that:

we cannot deal with them…as the United Kingdom alone, but we need to do that in an alliance and NATO has proved to be the best political and military alliance the world has known. 61

68. Not all of our witnesses, however, believed that NATO served the UK’s interests. Dr Webber argued that it was an “unquestioned assumption…that NATO does serve British national interests”. 62 He suggested that “commentary on NATO tends to be problem-
solving about how NATO can be repaired, how it can be made to better serve the functions one presumes it undertakes...[but] NATO is only one of a number of things that serve a presumed national interest”. Dr Webber argued that “the assumption that NATO is and must be at the centre of British defence thinking crowds out other creative alternatives...[it] should not be taken at face value, but it should be questioned”.63

69. We are committed to NATO and believe it continues to serve the UK’s national interests. The UK’s support for the Alliance should not be uncritical or unquestioning, and there are important areas, such as force generation, burden-sharing and capabilities, where NATO must improve. However, we believe NATO remains an indispensable alliance, the essential embodiment of the transatlantic relationship and the ultimate guarantor of our collective security. NATO must remain at the heart of the UK’s defence policy.
The future of NATO and European defence

Afghanistan and the future of NATO

Afghanistan and the Bucharest Summit

70. Over the past decade, NATO has evolved from an Alliance focused on contingency planning for a large-scale conventional war in Central Europe into a highly operational organisation focused on projecting stability beyond its borders. NATO now has a diverse set of missions, with troops deployed on Alliance-led operations in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Darfur, and Iraq. In Kosovo, the Alliance leads a force of some 16,000 troops as part of KFOR, the NATO force deployed in 1999 to guarantee security and stability in the territory as the diplomatic process, led by the United Nations to define its future status, moved forward. In Darfur, NATO supports the peacekeeping mission of the African Union (AU) by providing airlift support and training for AU personnel. In Iraq, the Alliance operates the NATO Training Mission (NTM-I) which, since 2004, has provided training to middle and senior level personnel from the Iraqi Security Forces in order to build the capability of the Government of Iraq in addressing the security needs of the Iraqi people. In the Mediterranean, NATO operates a counter-terrorist mission, Operation Active Endeavour, monitoring shipping and providing escorts to non-military vessels through the Straits of Gibraltar. This operation is designed to detect, deter and protect against terrorist activity. The Alliance’s most significant operational deployment by far, however, is Afghanistan, where NATO commands the 43,000-strong International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

71. NATO’s mission in Afghanistan is likely to be the headline issue on the agenda at the Bucharest Summit. The build-up to the Summit has been characterised by an increasingly fractious debate over Alliance burden-sharing in Afghanistan. The reluctance of certain NATO Allies to participate fully in that mission, to put their troops in harms way, and to shoulder their fair share of the burden of common defence—in terms of both troops and financial contributions—has reflected growing tensions within the Alliance. These tensions relate to the direction of NATO’s mission, the prospects of success, and wider the ability of the Alliance to conduct expeditionary operations. The US Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates, has been particularly outspoken in his criticism of Allies for refusing to commit sufficient numbers of troops and resources to the ISAF mission. Mr Gates has warned that there was a real danger that a two-tier Alliance might develop if NATO members do not commit more troops. Speaking after the meeting of Defence Ministers in Vilnius, the US Secretary of Defense said that “we must not—we cannot—become a two-tiered alliance of those who are willing to fight and those who are not...Such a development, with all its implications for collective security, would effectively destroy the Alliance”.

72. The perception that Afghanistan is vital for the survival of NATO is increasingly common. In evidence to us, Professor Michael Cox argued that, at present, “there is clearly a very uneven contribution, blood and treasure, through NATO Allies” in Afghanistan. He maintained that “the future credibility of NATO really rests on the outcomes in Afghanistan. This is the great test”. This sentiment was echoed by a number of witnesses...

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65 Q 115
to our inquiry. Dr Christoph Meyer, of King’s College London, argued that Afghanistan would be critical in shaping US attitudes towards the Alliance: “NATO is in crisis as an organisation and its fate may well be decided by how it handles Afghanistan—at least from the perspective of the US”.

In her recent book, *NATO’s New Mission*, Rebecca Moore warns that “failure in Afghanistan would have nothing short of catastrophic implications for NATO’s credibility”. Similarly, a recent report from the Atlantic Council of the United States warned that failure in Afghanistan could undermine the credibility of NATO and damage its relevance. It said that “surprisingly, many NATO nations engaged in Afghanistan lack a sense of urgency in comprehending the gravity of the situation and the need for effective action now”. It also warned that:

If the Afghanistan effort fails, NATO’s cohesion, effectiveness and credibility will be shaken and the rationale for NATO’s expeditionary, out of area, role would be undermined. Member states would become reluctant to embark on other out of area operations, and the United States would be less likely to turn to the Alliance in crisis. This could lead to a moribund Alliance, which could find itself reduced to geopolitical irrelevancy and marginalization, much like the long defunct Cold War pacts of CENTO and SEATO.

Following the previous NATO Summit at Riga in November 2006, the Secretary of State for Defence stated that the success of NATO’s operations in Afghanistan was crucial to the future credibility of the Alliance. Noting that the Allies had made a “common pledge to provide ISAF with the forces and flexibility to ensure the success of this vital mission,” Mr Browne told the House of Commons that at Riga there had been:

a shared recognition that success in Afghanistan is crucial not just for the Afghan people and for regional and global security, but for NATO itself…Now NATO has taken on this vital but challenging mission, its credibility is now at stake.

In evidence to our inquiry, the MoD reaffirmed the importance of the mission in Afghanistan to the future of the Alliance. It stated that “success on operations remains the primary measure of [NATO’s] value and credibility”.

The Bucharest Summit in April 2008 could well emerge as a watershed moment for the future of NATO’s mission in Afghanistan. The Summit will be a key test of the commitment of the Allies to stay the course in Afghanistan. It is also likely to reveal the viability of future Alliance expeditionary operations. Whether the Summit can achieve an agreement to send additional forces to Afghanistan, to remove the restrictions placed by Allies on the use of their troops in theatre, and achieve an overall improvement in Alliance force generation, is unclear. Ultimately, this will come down to the political will of individual allies. If NATO fails to deliver real and lasting improvements in Alliance

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66 Ev 119
69 Ibid
70 HC Deb, 30 November 2006, Col 1240
71 Ev 111
burden-sharing in Afghanistan, the implications for the future of NATO operations in Afghanistan, and for the unity of the Alliance, would be profound and far-reaching.

**The NATO mission in Afghanistan**

75. When NATO assumed command of the ISAF mission in Afghanistan in August 2003, it represented a watershed in Alliance history. The mission was the first operation the Alliance had conducted outside the Euro-Atlantic area and was perceived by many to mark the birth of a truly global NATO.

76. The ISAF mission itself had been launched 18 months earlier, following the December 2001 Bonn Conference at which prominent Afghans met under the auspices of the United Nations (UN) to determine the post-Taliban future for Afghanistan. The resulting Bonn Agreement led to the deployment of a 5,000-strong force, operating under the authority of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1386, to ensure stability in Kabul. On 11 August 2003 ISAF became a NATO-led operation and began progressively to expand its area of operation over Afghanistan. In June 2004, ISAF extended into the Northern and Western Provinces, as authorised by UNSCR 1510. In July 2006, ISAF extended into Afghanistan’s Southern provinces and 12,000 US troops previously deployed in Afghanistan as part of the separate US-led *Operation Enduring Freedom*, came under ISAF command. In October 2006, UNSCR 1707 extended ISAF’s authority to the Eastern Provinces so that the whole of Afghanistan came under its authority.

**ISAF troop numbers and structure**

77. As of February 2008, there were some 43,250 ISAF troops in Afghanistan drawn from 40 countries, including all 26 members of the NATO Alliance. By far the largest contribution is from the United States which, in addition to the almost 20,000 troops it has deployed in Afghanistan as part of *Operation Enduring Freedom*, has some 15,000 forces operating under ISAF command. The UK, which contributes around 7,800 troops, is the second highest ISAF troop-contributing nation. The ISAF operation is commanded by US General Dan McNeill based in the Command Centre in Kabul. There are four regional commands covering provinces in North, West, South, and East. The political direction and co-ordination of the mission is provided by NATO’s principal decision-making body, the North Atlantic Council (NAC). Based on the political guidance from the Council, strategic command and control is exercised by NATO’s top operational headquarters, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons, Belgium.
The future of NATO and European defence

Table 1: Number of NATO forces deployed as part of ISAF, February 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Troops</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ISAF

The purpose of the ISAF mission

78. ISAF describes its mission in Afghanistan as that of “assisting the Afghan Government in extending and exercising its authority and influence across the country, creating the conditions for stabilisation and reconstruction”. It defines its “key military tasks” as “conducting stability and security operations in co-ordination with the Afghan national security forces; mentoring and supporting the Afghan national army; and supporting Afghan government programmes to disarm illegally armed groups”. In essence, NATO’s aim is to deliver the Comprehensive Approach—creating the secure and stable conditions that enable reconstruction and development to be delivered by government officials and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and provide the space for political progress to be achieved.

79. In reality, ISAF’s tasks are wide-ranging, reflecting the Comprehensive Approach, including the training of the Afghan security forces, support of aid and reconstruction, and supporting counter-narcotics efforts to high intensity counter-insurgency combat. The efforts reflect the variegated security picture in Afghanistan: a relatively stable North and West of the country where the threat to ISAF troops is comparatively low, and an unstable, and often violent, South and East where NATO Forces, including UK Forces in Helmand Province, are involved in intense and fierce fighting against the Taliban.

80. Despite the coherent explanation of ISAF’s role in Afghanistan, one of the problems the Alliance confronts is a lack of consensus about what NATO is trying to achieve in

73 ISAF website (www.nato.int/isaf/index.html)
74 Ibid
Afghanistan. Dr Michael Williams, of RUSI, argued that “if you ask ten NATO Allies, you will most likely get ten different answers” about what ISAF is trying to achieve. According to Dr Williams, “since practically each ally has a different rationale for being in Afghanistan, they conceptualise the problems differently and prescribe different solutions” which has “resulted in a disjointed Western (and international) approach to the country”. This disjointedness has had a direct impact on the Alliance’s efforts to bring stability and reconstruction to Afghanistan. Dr Williams argues that it “has meant that the security situation has improved only marginally in some parts of the country and in secure areas it has meant inadequate levels of reconstruction and development”. He maintained that “the lack of a joined up approach, coupled with a lack of assistance from the rest of the international community, does not bode well for the future of the mission”.

81. During our visits to European NATO capitals in 2007, it was apparent that different countries placed a different emphasis on the various aspects of the ISAF mission. In certain countries, including Germany, Spain and Italy, we heard that NATO’s overriding concern should be on providing reconstruction and development for the Afghan people and that the Alliance should reconsider its high-intensity military campaign in the South. In Berlin, for example, we were told that German Forces were underpinning reconstruction efforts in the North of Afghanistan and thereby winning the hearts and minds of the Afghan people. We heard that a greater effort was needed to bring reconstruction and development to the rest of Afghanistan and that in the South too much emphasis had been placed on the military aspects of allies’ operations; it was not possible to extend the authority of the government in Kabul by military means alone. A better balance had to be found between ISAF’s military and civilian components. German politicians and policymakers also expressed the view that there was a need for greater clarity about the goals of the Alliance in Afghanistan and a greater sense of what would constitute success and failure. In Madrid, meanwhile, we heard that although Spain was fully committed to success in Afghanistan, it believed ISAF’s overriding purpose was humanitarian and reconstruction work, rather than war-fighting. This was a belief echoed in our discussions with policymakers during our visit to Rome; Italy was keen to promote the civilian dimension of NATO’s operations. We heard that public support in Italy for NATO’s mission in Afghanistan could only be sustained if the Alliance focused principally on delivering reconstruction and development for the Afghan people and in building the capacity of the Afghan government.

82. In others countries, such as Denmark and the Netherlands, we were told that, while reconstruction and development was seen as central to NATO’s mission, ISAF Forces had to achieve the secure and stable conditions in which civilian efforts could flourish. Where the Taliban posed a threat to security, NATO had to engage in military operations. In both Copenhagen and The Hague, we were told that war-fighting and reconstruction efforts had to go hand-in-hand; on their own, neither could have the desired effect. In Paris, meanwhile, we heard that there was in France a general feeling that NATO should stick to its military brief and not seek to extend its role into civilian affairs. During our visit to Brussels, the NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, emphasised the importance of the Comprehensive Approach. He maintained that the answer in Afghanistan was not only a military one; success required a combination of military and civilian efforts.
83. The purpose of the NATO-led ISAF mission is to achieve stability and security in Afghanistan, to deny al-Qaeda and the Taliban the environment in which to operate, and to implement the Comprehensive Approach by delivering the security necessary to enable reconstruction and development to occur. This requires a sustained, long-term military and financial commitment by all contributing nations.

84. There is currently some disagreement between the NATO allies about the objectives of the ISAF mission and the means of achieving them. All agree on the importance of the Comprehensive Approach, but there are differences in the interpretation of its meaning and implications. Achieving a common understanding of ISAF’s mission in Afghanistan should be a key priority for NATO at the Bucharest Summit. This is essential if there is to be greater strategic coherence to the Alliance’s operations.

**Force generation in Afghanistan**

85. The difficulties of force generation in Afghanistan have long been a source of concern to us. In our report on *UK operations in Afghanistan*, published in July 2007, we highlighted the difficulties NATO had encountered in generating sufficient forces for the ISAF mission. We said that we were deeply concerned at the reluctance of some NATO members to provide troops to ISAF and stated that that this was undermining the coherence of ISAF operations on the ground as well as the credibility of the NATO Alliance as a whole.\(^{77}\)

86. In early 2008, tensions over Alliance burden-sharing and force generation in Afghanistan have reached a new level. Not only has the US Secretary of Defense publicly berated Allies for failing to commit forces to Afghanistan, but some NATO nations with large and valuable troop deployments have begun to question the future of their commitments to ISAF in the absence of more equitable burden-sharing. The Canadians have been particularly critical of the reluctance of certain Allies to fight in Afghanistan. Speaking ahead of the NATO Defence Ministers meeting in Vilnius in February 2008, the Canadian Defence Minister, Peter Mackay, said “we want to see more of a one-for-all approach, including more burden-sharing in the South”.\(^{78}\) The previous month, an independent Canadian commission stated that unless other nations committed more troops and shouldered their fair share of the burden, Canada should consider withdrawing its forces from Afghanistan. It argued that “the most damaging and obvious deficiency in the ISAF mission in Afghanistan is the insufficiency of military forces deployed against the insurgents”. It warned that “the entire ISAF mission is threatened by the current inadequacy of deployed military resources”. Noting that “Afghanistan represents a challenge to NATO’s credibility”, it argued that “NATO partners will have to assign more forces to Afghanistan and execute a more effective counterinsurgency strategy”. It concluded that Canada should maintain its commitment to Afghanistan but only if additional troop contributions from other NATO nations were forthcoming: “Canadian resources, and Canadians’ patience,” it warned, “are not limitless”.\(^{79}\)

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77 Defence Committee, Thirteenth Report of Session 2006–07, *UK operations in Afghanistan*, HC 408

78 Canadian Defence Minister, Peter Mackay, cited in *The Guardian*, 7 February 2007

79 Independent Panel on Canada’s Future Role in Afghanistan, p 34
87. In evidence to us, Dr Jonathan Eyal warned of the dangers of the “cascading effect” of national decisions to withdraw, or to stop, contributions, emanating from the internal political dynamics of each contributing nation. He argued that “once the cascade begins, it will become unstoppable and it will prevent NATO from even withdrawing with a bit of honour”. Although he did not believe this would ultimately undermine NATO, shatter its credibility, or trigger its collapse, it would nevertheless deal a significant blow to the Alliance. The greater danger, argued Dr Dana Allin was not so much whether the Alliance would survive, since it had “an institutional staying power”. Nor did its future credibility depend on the outcome of operations in Afghanistan, since “its credibility in future crises will depend on the perceived stakes of various antagonists in those future crises”. Instead, Dr Allin argued that “the greatest existential threat to NATO is the United States, the relative disinterest it may or may not have in the future” and “obviously that would be increased by failure in Afghanistan so it would damage NATO”. Similarly, Michael Williams argued that the reluctance of NATO Allies to share the burden in Afghanistan could lead the United States to look for solutions outside NATO; “should the Alliance become increasingly unwilling to act, or willing to do so in rhetoric only, then the logical conclusion is that the United States would wish to establish coalitions of the willing to support US policy”. He suggested that “one must ask why exactly the US should work through NATO if the majority of the allies bring little to the table, but to complicate the decision making process immensely”. He maintained that “if will and capability are non-existent, the Alliance will not endure as a working organisation in the long term”. Although he suggested that it may continue to exist in an institutional form, “it would cease to be a working forum for debate and formulation of transatlantic defence policy”.

88. The Canadian commitment to Afghanistan, however, appears to have been secured by the recent announcement from the United States that an additional 3,000 US Marines will be sent to reinforce ISAF Forces, including Canadian troops, predominantly in Southern Afghanistan. Yet, the Canadian experience reveals the depth of tension caused by the current uneven distribution of burdens and risk within the Alliance. As Michael Williams told us, “the situation in Afghanistan is effectively a coalition of the willing within NATO”. Despite the fact that all 26 NATO nations are participants in the ISAF mission, the US, UK, Canada, Denmark and the Netherlands are the only five countries with significant numbers of troops in the conflict zone in the South of the country. Moreover, the force element deemed necessary by NATO’s Deputy Supreme Allied Commander in Europe (DSACEUR) to fulfil the operational plan in Afghanistan—the Combined Joint Statement of Requirements (CJSOR)—has never been met.

89. The need for greater burden-sharing in Afghanistan was highlighted by the Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Gordon Brown, in his statement on Afghanistan to the House of
Commons on 12 December 2007. The Prime Minister said that “greater burden sharing by all partners and allies” was important to ensure success in Afghanistan and he welcomed the announcements from Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Germany and Estonia that they would maintain or increase their troop numbers. But he said that “this progress must...now be matched by contributions from other countries in NATO, the EU and beyond”. In situations “where countries are unable to deploy their own troops or equipment,” he said the UK Government was “urging them to look at innovative ways to burden share and help fund those who can”. 87

90. In evidence to us, the Secretary of State acknowledged that “burden-sharing ought to be the proper expression of the collective defence agreement of NATO”. 88 He declared, “I have never made any bones...about my desire to see other countries stepping up their play, sharing their fair share of the burden, and deploying those forces that they can”. 89 However, he maintained that “there has to be a degree of realism about what can be achieved and...we have made significant progress”. 90 Mr Browne argued that Denmark, the Netherlands and Germany had all made important commitments to the NATO mission in Afghanistan by pledging additional troops or by extending the parliamentary mandates authorizing the maintenance of their existing troops in theatre. These decisions had been courageous, especially in the Netherlands where the political circumstances had been “quite challenging”. 91 The Dutch had come through the process with “a significant reinforced mandate”. There was also a possibility that the French might commit additional forces to Afghanistan in the near future. The Secretary of State argued that, whilst it was essential to achieve equitable burden-sharing, it was also important to “get the balance between burden-sharing and military effectiveness right”. A pragmatic approach was required. If certain nations did not have the capacity to contribute troops now, but were willing to make a contribution to allow others who did have the capacity to deploy forces, “then we should take advantage of that”. 92

91. In a subsequent memorandum to our inquiry, the MoD stated that there had been a “substantial increase in troop levels” since NATO started operating in Southern and Eastern Afghanistan in 2006, and provided details of recent force increases and other pledges of support to the ISAF mission from NATO member states:

- The Czech Republic had agreed to deploy two Weapon Locating Radars to Kandahar airfield in April 2009;
- Turkey had pledged to provide two additional Operating Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLT) to help train the Afghan National Army (ANA);

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87 HC Deb, 12 December 2007, Col 303  
88 Q 218  
89 Q 220  
90 Ibid  
91 Q 231  
92 Q 225
• Poland had announced a commitment to deploy a further eight helicopters, a mobile training team, and additional support to the Regional Command East Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT);

• Germany had agreed to provide additional training for the ANA;

• France had pledged an additional deployment of an OMLT in Southern Afghanistan and had increased its Close Air Support contribution;

• The United States had announced the deployment of an additional 3,000 Marines to Regional Command South.93

92. Succeeding in Afghanistan is, and must remain, at the top of NATO’s agenda. All 26 members of the Alliance contribute to the ISAF mission, and their efforts—together with those of the 14 non-NATO nations who participate in ISAF—are vital to the stabilisation and reconstruction of the country. It is essential the Alliance works together in delivering the Comprehensive Approach—creating the secure and stable conditions to enable reconstruction and development to take place and to allow space for political progress to be achieved.

93. This also underlines the importance of clarifying the ISAF mission in a way that is compatible with the Comprehensive Approach and which all NATO member states will support. A number of issues need to be urgently addressed: the appointment of a UN international coordinator, a divided military command chain, differing perspectives on the mission amongst ISAF troop contributing nations, confusion about dealing with narcotics, the effectiveness of the civil aid effort to win hearts and minds, and corruption within elements of the Afghan administration. Indeed, a clearer definition of success in Afghanistan at Bucharest would be extremely welcome.

94. Failure in Afghanistan would be deeply damaging for the people of that country. It would have serious implications for the Alliance’s cohesion and credibility. But NATO’s continued existence does not depend upon the outcome of its operations in Afghanistan. In any circumstance it would have a role because of its command structure, its mechanisms for harmonising equipment and promoting interoperability between its members, and its function as a political forum for essential discussions about defence and security. However, if the Alliance cannot demonstrate its ability to undertake expeditionary operations, the support of the United States for NATO over the long-term will be diminished.

95. NATO has encountered substantial difficulties in generating sufficient forces for Afghanistan and there are large disparities in troop contributions between different members of the Alliance. In some of the larger troop-contributing nations, there is a perception that the burden in Afghanistan is not equitably shared and that some countries are making sacrifices that others are not prepared to accept.

96. We recognise that not all members of NATO have the capabilities to deploy their forces on expeditionary operations and that some have found it hard to obtain the
popular or parliamentary support required to increase their deployments. We welcome, in particular, the pledges made recently by Denmark and the Netherlands to the ISAF mission which show how such barriers can be overcome.

97. More troops are needed in Afghanistan if the ISAF mission is to succeed. We look to our other allies to make additional contributions where they can, be it through increased force levels, pledges of military equipment, or by offsetting the costs of operations. We hope that further progress in force generation can be achieved at the Bucharest Summit. Such progress will be essential to the future of the ISAF mission.

National caveats

98. The issue of national caveats—the restrictions placed by nations on the use of their forces on multinational operations—has received particular attention and has prompted much criticism. National caveats impose limitations on the use of Allied forces which complicate the task of theatre commanders and necessitate the deployment of additional troops to cover for those which cannot be employed in certain kinds of operations. Professor Cox argued that national caveats, and the issue of burden-sharing as a whole, posed a real problem for NATO. It was “undermining and doing some really major damage not only in this country but in other countries who are members of the…Alliance who are contributing in blood while others are doing it less so, for all sorts of peculiar and specific national reasons”.94 In our Report on UK operations in Afghanistan, published in July 2007, we said that while there had been progress in reducing national caveats, we remained concerned that such caveats risked impairing the effectiveness of the ISAF mission. We called on the Government to press ISAF partners to reduce further the restrictions placed on the use of their Forces.95 In evidence to that inquiry, the former commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan, General David Richards, told us that it was the number of troops, rather than caveats, which had been his greatest concern.96 However, the ISAF Commander, General Dan McNeill, has said recently that national caveats are “frustrating in how they impinge on my ability to properly plan, resource and prosecute effective military operations”.97

99. The Secretary of State for Defence told us in evidence that important progress had been made in removing or limiting the scope of national caveats. He maintained that the Riga Summit had led to a marked reduction in the restrictions placed by Allies nations on the use of their forces in Afghanistan and insisted that further progress had been made since Riga.98

100. Witnesses to our inquiry also emphasised that it was important to understand the reasons why some countries chose to impose restrictions on the use of their forces, which, they argued, were in some cases justifiable. Sir Paul Lever told us that it was important to

94 Q 115
95 Defence Committee, Thirteenth Report of Session 2006-07, UK operations in Afghanistan, HC 408, para 45
96 Ibid, para 46 (Q 270)
98 Q 220
be realistic about the issue of national caveats. When the UK deploys its forces, “we take quite a close interest in how, where and under what rules of engagement they are to be used”. 99 It was only natural other governments would do likewise. He pointed out that the UK was “usually pretty relaxed” about deploying its forces as part of a NATO mission, “but in other contexts…we have been very insistent that ultimately we retain control over how they may be used and in particular the extent to which they should be put in harm’s way”. 100 Sir Paul accepted that it would be “highly desirable” if other nations “were less restrictive” in their use of caveats, but he maintained that:

the reasons some of them are restrictive are not just a matter of perversity; it is because they have either domestic constitutional arrangements or domestic political constraints which mean they are more comfortable with their armed forces being used in one particular theatre.

It would undoubtedly be highly desirable…if all allies gave what might be called carte blanche and said, ‘Here’s our contingent. Deploy it as you like’, but that is not how the real world is. 101

General Jack Deverell adopted a similarly phlegmatic perspective and suggested that “caveats are going to be like death and taxation, they are an inevitable part of our military life”. 102 Likewise, Charles Grant, of the Centre for European Reform, argued that “we have to accept that some countries will send troops on certain missions with caveats. It is a real pain” but “the only thing we can do is use the power of persuasion”. 103

101. Tackling the issue of national caveats, ultimately, comes down to an issue of political will. Although General Fry accepted that the imposition of caveats by some NATO members risked jeopardising the success of ISAF’s mission in Afghanistan, he noted that “military mechanisms to make force generation any better are completely exhausted”. 104 According to General Fry, removing caveats was, ultimately, an issue of political will for the countries which imposed them and for the Alliance as a whole. Like Charles Grant, he argued that the only means of lifting or limiting the scope of caveats was through negotiation: “this is really now a matter of convincing other nations of their political responsibilities to the health of the Alliance as a whole”. 105 General Fry argued that this approach held some promise since there had been “very considerable advances from where we were [at the start of the NATO mission] in 2003; those have got to continue”. 106

102. In evidence to us, the Secretary of State acknowledged the difficulties the restrictions created for the Alliance, in that “even countries which come to this environment with
caveats find themselves out-caveated by others and that dynamic is having an effect”. However, he maintained that it was important to be realistic on the issue:

we have to accept in operations, such as the operation in Afghanistan, where we are talking about the deployment of forces by sovereign nations, that the ultimate decision over how, when and where their forces will be deployed will lie with those sovereign nations.

103. The Secretary of State also said that it was important to recognise that different allies had different capabilities which had an inevitable impact on the kinds of tasks they were able to perform in theatre. According to Mr Browne, it was “unrealistic to expect every NATO member to be able to conduct every military task at the same tempo and certainly not with the tempo that we can generate in the United Kingdom”. Indeed, he argued that participation in the ISAF mission was having a “transformational effect” on the outlook and capabilities of Allied countries which was progressively having a positive impact through the removal, or the limitation in the scope of, caveats. Nevertheless, it was important to recognise that “countries are at different stages of their transformation than others” and this would be reflected on the ground. This perspective mirrors the argument put forward by James Pardew and Christopher Bennett, who argued, in the NATO Review, that “as NATO broadens its operational experience, nations are moving to eliminate or reduce the restrictions they place on the ways in which their contributions to operations may be used”. Increasingly, countries were “reducing national caveats as they become used to the complexities of operations”.

104. In evidence to us, the MoD states that “a number of countries have removed some or all of the caveats they began with”. Where restrictions remained, their effect was limited by the fact that the Commander of ISAF (COMISAF) “is fully aware of any remaining caveats and can plan around them”. The MoD also emphasised that there had been agreement from all nations to extend their operations in the case of a requirement to provide “in-extremis support”. Similarly, the Secretary of State maintained that “significant progress” had been made in removing caveats. He argued that the Riga Summit had improved the situation and maintained that “I believe we are progressively winning this argument and there are clear indications that we are”. He argued that there were “a number of countries which have significantly changed in what they do and what they are prepared to do”. He cited Canada and Denmark as two “outstanding” examples of the success NATO had had in removing caveats. Moreover, Mr Browne said it was instructive to compare the experience of troop contributions in Iraq and Afghanistan. In

107 Q 237
108 Q 218
109 Ibid
110 Q 224
111 James Pardew and Christopher Bennett, “NATO’s evolving operations”, NATO Review, Spring 2006
112 Ev 163
113 Ibid
114 Q 220
115 Q 228
116 Q 227
Iraq, a number of countries had withdrawn their troops as the politics within those countries had changed. In Afghanistan, however, no country had chosen to withdraw its forces, which reflected a commitment by all NATO countries to the principles of the Alliance. According to Mr Browne, this was “an important aspect of political will and…that is an important aspect of the Alliance”.117

105. The Secretary of State recognised, however, that further steps towards the elimination of national caveats were required. A key test of the Bucharest Summit would be the extent to which progress on burden-sharing in Afghanistan would be achieved. In terms of operations in Afghanistan, Mr Browne said that, from the UK’s perspective, success at the Summit would involve the Alliance:

re-endorsing its collective commitment to Afghanistan, building…on the success the Alliance has already achieved to date and agreeing a plan for the future. Bucharest will be successful too if it maintains momentum and capabilities in force-generation both for Afghanistan and more widely.118

106. During our visits to European NATO capitals we raised the issue of national caveats and asked about the extent to which their impact on the effectiveness of operations could be limited. In Berlin, we heard about the constitutional restrictions upon the deployment of German troops on overseas operations and about the lack of popular support for any military deployments, including to Afghanistan. We were told that Germany imposed no caveats on the use of its forces in Afghanistan but that those forces operated under a mandate, the terms of which had been agreed by NATO in Brussels, and this had to be approved by the German Parliament, the Bundestag. We also heard that German concerns over the deployment of forces were, to a significant extent, a product of German history. The fact that there was a German presence in Afghanistan at all was highly significant; even ten years ago such a deployment would have been unthinkable. Despite the limitations of the mandate, we were told that Germany had made a commitment to NATO that it would assist in Southern Afghanistan if a crisis arose.

107. In Madrid, we were told by politicians and academics that while Spanish public opinion supported troops working on reconstruction projects, it would not support a war-fighting role; if the Spanish government asked the Senate to alter the role of Spanish forces, it would be refused. A similar concern was revealed during our discussions at the Italian Ministry of Defence in Rome; the Italian public was supportive of peacekeeping and reconstruction efforts, but not war-fighting.

108. At the French Ministry of Defence in Paris, we heard that national caveats would not be a problem provided the objectives of the mission were clearly defined. It was also important to remember that operational deployments carried a political risk; they had to be backed by popular support.

109. In Copenhagen, during the course of our discussions at the Folketinget, the Danish Parliament, we were told that while Denmark remained firmly committed to the ISAF mission, and that all five major parties had supported that mission, Danish politicians
nevertheless faced a huge task in conveying to voters the importance of its deployment to Afghanistan. As in many other European countries parliamentary approval was required to sustain its troop commitments.

110. During our meetings in The Hague, we heard that the Dutch government could not deploy its forces without parliamentary support and that widespread support was necessary. In our discussions with our counterparts on the Dutch Defence and Foreign Affairs Committees, we heard that there was a strong sense in the Netherlands that the Dutch were doing more than their fair share in Afghanistan and that there was public frustration that other countries were not doing more. The situation in Southern Afghanistan, in particular, looked more like a coalition of the willing than an alliance. At the Dutch Ministry of Defence, we heard that the issue of national caveats should not be tackled by berating other NATO Allies for failing to do their share. Not all European countries had the ability to mount expeditionary operations. Instead, the best and most effective way of dealing with caveats was to ask what capabilities those countries had and how they could be made available.

111. The ultimate decision over whether to deploy forces on operations is, and must remain, a matter for each sovereign member state of the Alliance. UK Forces are deployed in Afghanistan without any caveats imposed upon their use, but the public and Parliament maintain a close interest in how those forces are used. The ability of any nation to commit its forces on operations is governed by the willingness of the public to sustain those commitments and by ability of any nation to sustain expeditionary operations. However inconvenient, caveats are an inevitable part of military life. The real challenge is to prevent them from impairing operational effectiveness. There is no doubt that caveats can have a detrimental effect on the coherence of NATO’s operations. Although some important progress has been made in removing these restrictions there remains a long way to go. Further progress is essential at Bucharest.

112. The debate on national caveats would benefit from greater clarity about which countries do and do not impose caveats on their force commitments to ISAF. We call upon the MoD, in its response to this report, to provide a full breakdown of the national caveats imposed by each member of the Alliance on the use of their forces in Afghanistan and to state which countries impose no restrictions.

Afghanistan and the future of Alliance military transformation

113. The MoD maintains that NATO’s experience in conducting operations in Afghanistan has become “a significant driver for change in the Alliance” and that this “underlines the importance of Allies acquiring flexible, rapidly deployable and sustainable expeditionary capabilities”. In evidence to us, the Secretary of State referred to “transformational effect of ISAF on certain countries”. He said that “that process is ongoing” and that it was a priority for NATO to ensure “that forces throughout the Alliance are transformed to be
able to be deployed with the capabilities that are necessary to face the challenges of the modern world”.  

114. The future of NATO’s expeditionary role is likely to be determined, to a significant degree, by the Alliance’s experience in Afghanistan, as Michael Codner, of RUSI, told us in evidence. Success in Afghanistan is likely to reinforce that role; anything less than success could well undermine it.

115. NATO’s leadership of ISAF has arguably led to important changes and, in some cases, improvements in the way the Alliance employs its command and force structures, and how it plans, conducts and supports expeditionary operations in remote and challenging theatres. The experience of deploying land, air and maritime forces for extended periods at considerable distance from their home bases has had an impact in enhancing Allied expeditionary capabilities, both operationally and logistically. It has also had some impact in improving the ability of the NATO Allies to sustain ISAF operations in Afghanistan. NATO’s experience in Afghanistan since 2003 has served to highlight areas in which the Alliance needs to improve. It has revealed the need to equip NATO better for expeditionary operations, to improve further defence planning and force generation processes, and to improve significantly its expeditionary military capabilities. To this extent, Afghanistan has helped to promote the military transformation of the Alliance, even if there remains a long way to go.
4 NATO capabilities

NATO capabilities and the Bucharest Summit

116. At successive summits since 1999, the Alliance has pledged to improve its military capabilities. Its achievements, however, have been mixed. While important progress has certainly been made—and this progress should not be underestimated—commitments on paper have not always been turned into reality. Enhancing the capabilities of the Alliance is a task that underpins the process of transformation in which NATO is currently engaged. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that the MoD has said that achieving improvements in NATO capabilities is a key priority for the UK at the forthcoming Bucharest Summit. Indeed, the Secretary of State told us in evidence that the future of NATO would depend not on developments in Afghanistan but on the ability of the Alliance to transform itself: “it is the transformation of NATO that will determine whether it continues as a successful Alliance…not particularly Afghanistan”. Since improvements in capabilities are fundamental to the transformation of NATO, this issue is likely to figure prominently on the Summit agenda; new commitments by the Allies in this area will be a key test of the Summit’s success. In the past, NATO members have made pledges to achieving improvements in capabilities which they have struggled to meet. New commitments to achieve real, tangible improvements in Alliance capabilities will be a key test of the success of the Bucharest Summit, but their worth will be measurable only in the light of their delivery over time.

117. Perhaps the greatest commitment the Allies can make at Bucharest will be to increase defence spending. Although the prospects for such an increase are not promising, it will be essential for European nations to spend more on defence if the Alliance is to fulfil its expeditionary role. On this issue, the Bucharest Summit represents a clear opportunity for the Alliance to demonstrate powerfully its commitment to the basic principles of collective defence as well as to success in Afghanistan.

The development of NATO capabilities

118. Over the past decade the Alliance has conducted several initiatives aimed at improving NATO’s capabilities. These have focused, primarily, on attempts to improve Alliance expeditionary capabilities, on the enhancement of its capacity to conduct and support multinational joint operations beyond its defined territory, and on the maintenance of such operations for extended periods. Significant progress has been made but there remains a long way to go. Given the huge gap in military capabilities that exists between the United States and Europe, extensive investment in capabilities is still required particularly by the European members of the Alliance.

119. At the Washington Summit in 1999, NATO launched the Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI). Intended to ensure that the Alliance enhanced its capabilities to meet the threats and security challenges identified in the 1999 Strategic Concept, the DCI sought to
deliver improvements in the mobility and deployability of forces, to enhance the sustainability of those forces once deployed, and to consolidate the ability of the Alliance to conduct the full range of military tasks from large-scale high-intensity operations to smaller, low-intensity engagements. It has also sought to develop the protection available to deployed forces, and to facilitate the interoperability of communications, particularly the command and control and information systems. The focus of the DCI was on improving Alliance capabilities in C4ISTAR (command, control, communications and computers, intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition, and reconnaissance), strategic lift, precision guided munitions, the suppression of enemy air defences, and protection against chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.\textsuperscript{124} Progress in implementing the DCI, however, was uneven and, in June 2001, NATO’s own internal assessment identified “critical and longstanding deficiencies” in many capability areas.\textsuperscript{125}

120. The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 highlighted the increased urgency of addressing these deficiencies and led to a further review of NATO capabilities. This, in turn, resulted in the Prague Capabilities Commitment (PCC), the successor to the DCI. The PCC was agreed at the Prague Summit in November 2002. Having concluded that the DCI was too broad a programme, NATO agreed that the PCC should have a narrower focus, with clear objectives and backed up by high-level ownership. It was based on national commitments with specific milestones and target dates. The intention was to provide the impetus for members to re-prioritise defence spending, reduce force numbers, upgrade equipment, pool resources, and promote role specialisation. In terms of the areas of concentration, however, the PCC reflected many of the same priorities as the DCI: chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defence; intelligence, surveillance and target acquisition; air-to-ground surveillance; deployable and secure command, control and communications; combat effectiveness, including precision-guided munitions and suppression of enemy air defences; strategic air- and sealift; air-to-air refuelling; and, deployable combat support and combat service support units.\textsuperscript{126}

121. Although the PCC expressed key targets for improving military capabilities by the NATO Allies, the Alliance placed increasing emphasis on deployability and usability of those military capabilities. The experience of Afghanistan was vital to this development. Moreover, in addition to the continuing emphasis on enhancing capabilities in the run-up to the Istanbul Summit in 2004, the Alliance established new goals for force generation, force planning and force readiness, with a target of 40\% of forces being capable of deployment at any one time. Following the Summit, NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, stated the rationale for these new targets:

I am pleased that the Istanbul Summit decided that we should re-examine our approach to force planning and force generation procedures. Because if NATO wants to continue to meet its commitments—in Afghanistan, Iraq or elsewhere—our military means must match our ambitions.\textsuperscript{127}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{124} NATO: The Istanbul Summit, Research Paper 04/60, House of Commons Library 26 July 2004, pp 26-28
\textsuperscript{125} NATO press release M-NAC-D-1 (2001) 89, 7 June 2001
\textsuperscript{126} NATO: The Istanbul Summit, Research Paper 04/60, House of Commons Library 26 July 2004, pp 26-28
\textsuperscript{127} Speech by NATO Secretary General, NATO website (www.nato.int/docu/speech/2004/s040712a.htm)\end{flushright}
122. In evidence to our inquiry, the MoD stated that prior to the Riga Summit in November 2006, NATO conducted a review of the PCC and concluded that it had been a “valuable initiative” which had “prompted progress in capability development across the Alliance”. However, it also found that there remained a number of areas in which “progress has been slow, due in the main to financial or technical difficulties”. Although, in its view, 72% of the PCC targets would be met by 2008, the remaining 28% included the most costly undertakings such as strategic lift.

123. At the Riga Summit the PCC was re-focused on the “high priority capability development areas” identified in the Comprehensive Political Guidance. The CPG, which remains the most up-to-date statement on NATO’s capability requirements, underscored the importance of the development by Allies, individually and collectively, of the capabilities required to conduct expeditionary operations:

Given the likely nature of the future security environment and the demands it will impose, the Alliance will require the agility and flexibility to respond to complex and unpredictable challenges, which may emanate far from member states’ borders and arise at short notice.

In order to undertake the full range of missions, the Alliance must have the capacity to launch and sustain concurrent major operations and smaller operations for collective defence and crisis response on and beyond Alliance territory, on its periphery, and at strategic distance; it is likely that NATO will need to carry out a greater number of smaller demanding and different operations, and the Alliance must retain the capability to conduct large-scale high-intensity operations.

The CPG listed a wide range of specific capability requirements that the Allies should seek to acquire or enhance over the coming decade. Among these, the CPG stated that “NATO’s top priorities” were:

- joint expeditionary forces and the capability to deploy and sustain them; high readiness forces; the ability to deal with asymmetric threats; information superiority;
- and the ability to draw together the various instruments of the Alliance.

It placed particular emphasis on the deployability, sustainability and interoperability of Allied forces, on the ability of the Alliance to deliver a rapid military effect, on the ability to protect critical national infrastructure against terrorist attack, and on the ability of the Alliance to coordinate its efforts with other international institutions and organisations.

124. In addition to agreement on the CPG, the Riga Summit witnessed the delivery of specific improvements in capabilities. The NATO Response Force (NRF), which had been
launched at the Prague Summit as a key driver in the development of deployable forces and the transformation of Alliance capabilities, was declared fully operational, and NATO increased its strategic lift capability by agreeing to purchase additional C-17 air transport aircraft out of Common Funding. Following the Riga Summit, the Secretary of State for Defence told the House of Commons that “real progress” had been achieved at Riga, where NATO had “agreed new initiatives to increase strategic airlift available to allies, to enhance cooperation between our special forces, to improve alliance logistics support and to streamline the NATO command structure”.

**NATO’s principal capability shortfalls**

125. We asked our witnesses what capabilities NATO required to fulfil its expeditionary role, what capability shortfalls currently existed and how those shortfalls could be addressed. General Fry maintained that “NATO’s expeditionary capability is no different from anyone else’s expeditionary capability…you need forces at the appropriate level of readiness, you need a capacity to project them, you need a capacity to sustain them and command them whilst they are there”.

126. In terms of specific capability shortfalls, Dr Bastian Giegrich, of IISS, argued that the requirements of current operations, particularly in Afghanistan, had “revealed several bottlenecks and capability shortfalls”. Dr Giegrich identified the following as the most notable shortfalls:

- Strategic and in-theatre lift, sea lift, reconnaissance and surveillance, the integration of close air support, the interoperability of communications systems, information systems…logistics…heavy lift helicopters and maintenance crews…[and] information operatives.

According to Dr Giegrich, not all of these capability shortfalls corresponded with the declared long-term military transformation goals of the Alliance.

127. Despite the additional purchases of C-17 air transport aircraft at the Riga Summit, General Deverell also identified strategic airlift as one of the most significant shortfalls in military capability facing the Alliance. According to General Fry, the reason for this shortfall was straightforward: “these are extremely expensive things to buy and maintain”. As we highlighted in our report on Strategic Lift, published in July 2007, strategic airlift is one area of capability the UK is currently committed to expanding through the purchase of additional C-17 aircraft.

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135 HC Deb, 30 November 2006, col 1240
136 Q 123
137 Ev 90
138 Ibid
139 Ibid
140 Q 132
141 Q 142
142 Defence Committee, Eleventh Report of Session 2006–07, Strategic Lift, HC 462
128. We asked the Secretary of State for Defence whether he expected any more progress to be made at the Bucharest Summit in improving Alliance capabilities. Mr Browne told us that “we will continue this process and we will continue to reinforce the arguments for why this is in the national interests of individual member but also in the interests of NATO for them to make a contribution to these initiatives”.

129. NATO currently faces shortfalls in military capabilities in a range of areas, most significantly in strategic airlift, reconnaissance, surveillance and intelligence assets, and interoperable communications. These capabilities are fundamental to current operations in Afghanistan and are also crucial if the Alliance is to fulfil its ambition of having the capacity to conduct future expeditionary operations.

Political will and Alliance capabilities

130. Witnesses to our inquiry emphasised that whilst specific military capabilities—such as strategic lift, Network Enabled Capability, and intelligence assets—were essential in underpinning the Alliance’s expeditionary operations, the biggest single shortfall in Alliance capabilities was, in fact, one of “political preparedness” or “political will”.

131. One key difference between a national expeditionary capability and an Alliance expeditionary capability was the need for the latter to be based on “unity of concept, of training and of doctrine”. According to General Fry, the more significant difference, however, was the need to sustain collective political will. Modern expeditionary operations, General Fry maintained, “by and large, are synonymous with discretionary operations”. For the most part, they are not wars of national survival. There is always a choice involved in determining the extent of a given nation’s participation in a military operation. As a result, Alliance expeditionary operations “must be written, and underpinned, sustained essentially, by a political will”. This was no easy task: “everybody who is a force contributor gets a vote in that equation, and keeping that political will solid and not allowing those who wobble to undermine the whole is actually quite a difficult thing.” Similarly, Colonel Christopher Langton, of IISS, argued that NATO was not principally a military alliance; “it is a political alliance trying to deliver a military capacity”. This created real complexities in that there were “26 countries, with 26 defence budgets, [and] 26 constitutions, which limit the preparedness to take part in expeditionary [activity]”. According to Colonel Langton, recent deployments of European armed forces revealed key differences by European nations in political will to commit to expeditionary operations:

If you look at Europe as a whole, including European NATO member states, there are 39 countries with troops deployed in the world and 19 of those have deployed less than 3% [of their armed forces]. If you compare that with the United Kingdom,
it is a fairly stark comparison and it is an indication of preparedness which limits the ability to engage in expeditionary warfare.\textsuperscript{148}

132. According to our witnesses, part of the explanation for the apparent lack of political will within the Alliance to mount and sustain expeditionary operations was a divergence in perception about the proper role of armed forces. For example, those countries that still rely on conscription can find it difficult to send to a dangerous overseas deployment conscript troops with little training. According to General Deverell, there existed “a great absence of a unifying purpose at the military level”. He argued that it would be “very difficult, very demanding to get political coherence underpinned by military coherence if there is not a similarity of view of what your armed forces are for”.\textsuperscript{149}

133. We asked our witnesses how it would be possible to generate and sustain the required political will to fulfil the expeditionary role of the Alliance. General Fry told us that “the greatest method of getting greater cohesion of thought across NATO members is to convince them of a shared danger and a shared requirement to respond”.\textsuperscript{150} Given the dangers posed by the “malevolent combination” of international terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, “the only response is to be direct, effective and unified”.\textsuperscript{151} General Fry told us:

There is a task here of political advocacy drawing on the military situation…to persuade people that they share a common threat, to which a common response is the only thing to do.\textsuperscript{152}

134. Overall, our witnesses maintained that political will currently represented a greater challenge to NATO than shortfalls in specific military capabilities. Dr Giegrich argued that NATO was becoming “more creative” in meeting its equipment needs and in dealing with operational requirements than it was in “maintaining unity of purpose and providing the political will to maintain the level of ambition necessary to achieve its objectives”.\textsuperscript{153} A similar point is made by Dr Williams, who argued that, in the end, “capability really boils down to political will”.\textsuperscript{154}

135. In terms of fulfilling its expeditionary role, one of the key capability shortfalls confronting the Alliance is that of political will. This, in turn, depends on a perception of a shared danger and a shared requirement to respond. Expeditionary operations are predominantly discretionary by nature; there is a choice to be made about participation in any given mission. Alliance expeditionary operations, such as the current Afghanistan deployment, must be underwritten and sustained by the political will of the countries involved, both individually and collectively. Its absence undermines the capability of the Alliance. As important as it is to deliver tangible military capabilities,
such as strategic airlift, the generation of the political will necessary to fulfil its expeditionary role is the greatest challenge currently facing NATO.

The NATO Response Force

136. The Alliance committed itself to creating a NATO Response Force (NRF) at its 2002 Prague Summit. NATO hoped that the NRF would act as an engine for Alliance transformation and as a catalyst for improving NATO’s expeditionary capabilities, particularly force generation, by pushing European nations to reform their militaries and make them more deployable, interoperable and capable. The NRF was seen as important in making the Alliance more agile and flexible and capable of responding to crises at short notice. It was also important in helping NATO to achieve and implement its PCC commitments. Composed of a force of some 25,000 troops, the NRF was designed to be deployable within five days and sustainable for up to 30 days (or more if re-supplied). It consists of land, air, and sea components from NATO member states, with the option of adding support from NATO partner countries on an ad hoc basis. National force commitments to, and leadership of, the NRF rotate every six months.\(^\text{155}\) While strategic command of the NRF is provided by the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), operational command rotates every 12 months between NATO’s Joint Forces Command (JFC) Brunssum, JFC Naples, and the Joint Headquarters in Lisbon.\(^\text{156}\)

137. The development of the NRF has been rapid. From its conceptual origins in 2002, it achieved initial operational capability of 17,000 troops in October 2004 and full operational capability in November 2006.\(^\text{157}\) To date, the NRF has been deployed twice. Its first official mission was in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in September 2005, when it mounted a small-scale operation to deliver assistance to victims on the US Gulf Coast. Its second, more sizable and significant, deployment was its operation in Pakistan following the devastating earthquake of October 2005. There, the NRF used tactical airlift, command and control and some ground elements to deliver vital assistance to the survivors and provide a basis for long-term support and reconstruction by other organisations.\(^\text{158}\)

138. In evidence to us the MoD says that the NRF has been “at the vanguard of the process of the Alliance developing flexible, rapidly deployable and sustainable forces called for in the CPG”.\(^\text{159}\) The Secretary of State explained that the NRF was “intended to be NATO’s first tool of response” and “an important catalyst for transformation”. Mr Hugh Powell, Head of Security Policy at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), argued that the NRF had led to significant improvements in NATO’s capabilities; “readiness and getting other countries to actually put troops on stand-by is a major capability gain”.\(^\text{160}\) He also maintained that the NRF arrangements had a practical “burden-sharing effect”. According to Mr Powell, in the case of the Pakistan earthquake, rather than having to turn to the UK as the only European country able to react, the NRF arrangements ensured that Spain was

\(^{155}\) NATO: The Istanbul Summit, Research Paper 04/60, House of Commons Library, 26 July 2004, p 29

\(^{156}\) Ev 90

\(^{157}\) NATO: The Istanbul Summit, Research Paper 04/60, House of Commons Library, 26 July 2004, p 29

\(^{158}\) NATO website (www.nato.int)

\(^{159}\) Ev 112

\(^{160}\) Q 317
able to send engineers out to Pakistan to help in the relief mission; without the NRF “we would never have been in a position to have done that”.161

139. Andrew Mathewson, Director of Policy for International Organisations at the MoD, acknowledged that whilst the NRF “was set up as an engine for transformation” it had “not been possible to commit the forces to the NRF that were originally intended”.162 However, Mr Mathewson insisted that this did not imply that the transformation agenda had been dropped. On the contrary, he argued that the reason it had not proved possible to commit forces to the NRF was because “NATO is actually doing real work and forces are heavily committed in Afghanistan”.163 He maintained that:

It is now Afghanistan that is driving transformation, driving the change in the capabilities that nations need to develop, becoming the test-bed for the relevance of the command structure, so the transformation agenda is comprehensive; it covers structures and capabilities and ways of working.164

140. General Deverell, whose headquarters at Allied Forces North (AFNORTH) had set up the first NRF, told us that the Force was “an aid to transformation because it does actually drive nations to ensure their force structure is at levels of real readiness which can be measured rather than stated readiness”. According to General Deverell, the value of having the NRF was that it exposed problems of compatibility and interoperability—both conceptual and physical—and, at the same time, provided a mechanism for dealing with, and resolving, those problems.165 Although General Deverell accepted that there were difficulties with the NRF, particularly in terms of generating the political will necessary to meet the stated force requirements, he maintained that he had “no doubt” that it had “a real capability”.166 Much would depend on how the NRF evolved in the coming years:

Whether [the NRF has] quite the capability that we first thought, whether it is as flexible as we first thought and whether it is as politically robust in that it cannot be unhinged dramatically by a nation at the last minute saying, ‘You cannot have that capability’, remains to be seen. That is where I have my doubts. We are back…to this main theme…political will.167

141. Despite his overall support for the concept, General Deverell highlighted one further problem with the NRF; that the burden for filling the force requirements falls mainly on the non-Afghanistan and non-Iraq players. In itself, greater burden-sharing is to be welcomed but General Deverell noted that one of the original intentions behind the establishment of the NRF was to create a capability for intervention in order to reinforce current operations, the idea being that “if you wished to conduct a surge operation, you could use the existing, trained, coherent NATO Response Force for a limited period of
time, put it into theatre and bring it out again”. General Deverell argued that this was a “perfectly reasonable thing to do” but noted that “some nations have found that, for all sorts of reasons, [this approach is] very difficult and there has been enormous reluctance”.169

142. Other witnesses highlighted additional difficulties with the NRF. Dr Bastian Giegrich told us in evidence that operations at the upper end of the operational spectrum are “judged to be problematic because certain capability shortfalls remain unresolved”.170 There was also disagreement within NATO about what the NRF was for. Some allies are concerned that the NRF, which was designed for high-intensity combat, risks becoming no more than an instrument for humanitarian assistance, with some Allies arguing that this is not a role NATO should seek to fulfil. However, there is a danger that if the NRF is ring-fenced for high-intensity operations, some NATO members might assume the chances of it being used are sufficiently low and, as a result, will not contribute the necessary forces to fill future rotations. There is also the risk that in those countries where deployment of troops is subject to constitutional requirements of democratic permission, the processes involved would take too long to allow for the rapidity of deployment that is the purpose of the NRF.

143. Another weakness of the NRF is its funding mechanism which is said to act as an “obstacle to the actual use of the NRF”.171 The so-called “costs-lie-where-they-fall” principle means that the costs of deploying and sustaining NRF operations are borne almost exclusively by the nations that provide the components of the force at the time of its deployment. Any rapid deployment of the NRF, therefore, imposes significant costs on the nations involved. Some nations have indicated that the unpredictable financial consequence of short-notice deployments acts as a disincentive to making force contributions to the NRF.

144. The creation of the NATO Response Force is a significant achievement by the Alliance and promises, in theory, to help improve Alliance capabilities in the long term. However, if the NRF is to be effective it will be important for the Allies to achieve consensus on when, where, and why to use it. It is also essential that the force requirements of the NRF are met in full.

145. We believe NATO should abandon the present “costs lie where they fall” arrangement for funding the NRF. We believe an appropriate alternative would be to finance the NRF through NATO Common Funding. Putting the NRF on a more stable financial footing is essential if it is to be an effective force. The current arrangements impose unpredictable financial burdens on troop contributing nations and act as a significant political disincentive for deploying the NRF.
The role of Allied Command Transformation

146. During the course of our inquiry witnesses raised concerns about the effectiveness of Allied Command Transformation (ACT) in developing and implementing NATO’s transformation agenda. ACT, which is based in Norfolk, Virginia, USA, is the organisation charged with transforming the military capabilities of the Alliance. According to its “vision statement,” ACT is “NATO’s forcing agent for change” in “upholding NATO’s global security interests”. Its “standing priorities” are to: transform NATO’s military capabilities; prepare, support and sustain Alliance operations; implement NATO Response Force and other deployable capabilities; achieve ACT full operational capability; and, assist transformation of partner capabilities. During our visits to European NATO capitals, we heard that ACT was not performing effectively and that its location on the East coast of the United States, in effect, isolated it from the European nations where the real need for transformation existed.

147. Colonel Christopher Langton told us in evidence it was true that ACT had encountered problems since its inception. This was particularly the case in terms of its relationship with Europe and particularly with the European Defence Agency (EDA) where there was a lack of adequate communication between ACT and the EDA. However, according to Colonel Langton, the initial problems with ACT had been overcome and the organisation was “now beginning to have an effect” and was “transforming or increasing interoperability in many areas”.

148. We asked the Secretary of State for his impressions about the effectiveness of ACT and its impact in facilitating the transformation of Alliance capabilities. Mr Browne told us that, despite the fact that ACT had not “figured in any discussions that I have been present at”, the organisation had nevertheless played an important role in training the NATO Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) prior to its deployment to Afghanistan in 2006 where it took command of the ISAF mission. According to the Secretary of State, ACT had made “a very positive contribution” to the training of the ARRC. While he recognised that there were criticisms about its location he maintained that by virtue of the fact that it was located next to the US Joint Forces Command, NATO stood to gain from American experiences. The United States was at “the forefront of transformation”. Basing ACT in Virginia meant that NATO could “effectively hinge” its own transformation on that of the United States.

149. In evidence to us, Mr Mathewson, Director of Policy for International Organisations at the MoD, argued that “Allied Command Transformation is an important part of the Alliance”. He told us that:

It is important because as well as having Allied Command Operations fighting the current battle and handling the issues of the day, it is important that there is another

172 Allied Command Transformation website (www.act.nato.int)
173 Q 135
174 Q 313
175 Ibid
176 Q 308
part of the Alliance which is thinking further ahead, and that is what the role of ACT is; it is to think about how the Alliance develops its concepts and its doctrines over the future, for example, to develop thinking on the comprehensive approach.\footnote{177}

150. Mr Mathewson, however, acknowledged that ACT had encountered some difficulties. To some extent, this was a reflection of the fact that ACT was “still bedding in”. The MoD still wanted to see “some further improvement in the operation of the ACT, particularly at its headquarters level”.\footnote{178} According to Mr Mathewson, its location in America was a “strength” in that it was “a visible expression of NATO in the United States” and, therefore, of the transatlantic partnership.\footnote{179}

151. \textbf{The contribution made to date by Allied Command Transformation to the improvement of the Alliance’s expeditionary capabilities is difficult to measure.} We are also concerned by reports that its focus on long-term capability development has been overshadowed by the operational demands of Afghanistan. ACT potentially has an important role to play in improving NATO capabilities in the long-term and in developing the Alliance’s concepts and doctrines for the future. As important as current operations in Afghanistan unquestionably are, ACT must not be diverted from this central purpose. ACT must also improve its relationship with Allied Command Operations and with the European Defence Agency.

\section*{Defence spending and the future of NATO}

152. The effort to improve NATO’s capabilities—whether through the ACT, the NRF, the PCC or through any of the Alliance’s various capability initiatives of the past decade—must be underpinned by adequate defence expenditure. NATO itself has no capacity for financing major procurement projects and its ability to generate improvements in capabilities rests on the preparedness of each member state to commit sufficient resources to defence. One of the most longstanding complaints of the United States has been the failure of European members of the Alliance to commit those resources.

153. Recent defence expenditure statistics reveal the extent to which European nations lag behind the United States. As tables 2 and 3 show, in 2006, whereas the United States spent some 3.8% of its GDP on defence, European nations spent an average of just 1.74%.\footnote{180} Moreover, there had been a steady decline in European defence spending as a percentage of GDP over the past decade.
The future of NATO and European defence

Table 2: Defence Spending in NATO, by country, in 2006 as a percentage of GDP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Defence Spending (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: House of Commons Library

Table 3: Average European NATO defence expenditures (excluding US) as percentage of GDP, 1997-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Defence Spending (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>2.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>2.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>2.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IISS Military Balance 2008

154. Similarly, the total US defence budget dwarfs those of the European members of NATO. In 2006, the US defence budget totalled $617 billion. The next highest NATO spenders were the UK on $53.1 billion and France on $44.25 billion. ¹⁸¹ Indeed, in 2006, the
US defence budget represented 75% of the combined defence budgets of all NATO member states. Table 2 reveals the gap in defence spending between the US and Europe.

155. In a speech on NATO and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), the Secretary of State for Defence stated that “the real problem that European defence faces is insufficient and inadequate military capability”\(^\text{182}\). He agreed with comments by President Sarkozy that “European security cannot rest on the shoulders of 3-4 countries”. The only solution was to spend more, but at present “most European nations spend too little on defence”. A further problem was that those countries “spend too little of those inadequate budgets on acquiring the modern capability that NATO and the EU need”. Efforts to improve capabilities were “futile if nations do not step up to the plate and commit the necessary resources”.\(^\text{183}\) Mr Browne declared that, in the final analysis:

> unless Europeans spend more on defence, and more of their defence budgets on capability, both NATO and the EU will be hamstrung. For Europe to have more capability its members must spend more—quite a lot more.\(^\text{184}\)

156. At the Riga Summit, in November 2006, the NATO Allies reaffirmed their commitment to investment in improving capabilities. The CPG issued at Riga declared that:

> The development of capabilities will not be possible without the commitment of sufficient resources...Increased investment in key capabilities will require nations to consider re-prioritisation, and the more effective use of resources, including through pooling and other forms of bilateral and multilateral cooperation.\(^\text{185}\)

157. The prospects for an increase in European defence spending, however, are not encouraging, particularly in the short-term. During our visits to European NATO capitals we heard repeatedly that the chances of increases in national defence budgets were extremely unlikely. Likewise, in evidence to us Charles Grant stated that “it is almost inconceivable that defence budgets will go up”.\(^\text{186}\) He recommended that the NATO Allies consider new mechanisms for pooling defence assets, since “pooling saves money”. Indeed, Mr Grant argued that “we could save a lot of money if we collaborated and built common organisations”.\(^\text{187}\) If European NATO nations do not increase their defence expenditure the ability of NATO to meet its declared capability ambitions will be in jeopardy.

158. The implications of the gap in defence spending between the United States and Europe are significant. In evidence to us, Dr Robin Niblett noted that for over a decade the United States had been spending “high amounts of money on very sophisticated technologies and the ability to fight in ways that are fundamentally different to the way the

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\(^\text{182}\) Speech by Rt Hon Des Browne, Secretary of State for Defence, “NATO and ESDP: forging new links”, 8 June 2007, MoD website (www.mod.uk)

\(^\text{183}\) Ibid

\(^\text{184}\) Ibid

\(^\text{185}\) Comprehensive Political Guidance, NATO website (www.nato.int)

\(^\text{186}\) Q 73

\(^\text{187}\) Ibid
EU nations can fight”. 188 Dr Niblett argued that, over time, this would have a direct impact on the interoperability of US and European forces and their ability to act alongside each other. He warned that the gap would ensure that the difficulties of interoperability, revealed during the 1991 Gulf War, would be “widened and exacerbated even further into the future”. 189 The danger that disparities in defence expenditure might lead to US and European forces becoming unable to operate together was also highlighted by Dr Johnathan Eyal:

If you look at European defence research expenditure, which of course is dwarfed by the Americans, within that research budget about 80 per cent is dominated by spending by Britain and France. The rest is almost no activity at all. The result of it is not simply that we have less equipment but very often that our equipment becomes incompatible with that of the Americans….they simply are incapable of digesting or deploying the kind of technology which the Americans have. It is not merely volume; it is also how it is spent”. 190

159. Although the debate about spending focuses predominantly on the chasm that exists between US and European defence expenditure, there is also a less heralded but equally significant spending gap between the European nations themselves. As Dr Niblett told us, “the disparity within the EU on defence spending is as dramatic as the disparity between some of the top spenders within the EU and the United States”. 191

160. However, it is not only a question of how much money is spent by nations on defence; it is also a question of how those nations choose to spend their money and in what they choose to invest. The MoD told us that “institutional investment must be reprioritised in line with current and emerging requirements rather than continuing to spend money maintaining out-of-date and less relevant capabilities”. 192

161. We asked the witnesses to our inquiry whether NATO’s informal defence expenditure target of 2% GDP for each member of the Alliance should be binding. Overwhelmingly, our witnesses argued that, desirable or not, binding targets would simply not prove feasible. Professor Cox stated, “I do not think there is any chance at all” of implementing binding targets on defence. There had been huge debates in the 1970s about Alliance burden-sharing, but “they did not go anywhere”. 193 General Deverell asked since “NATO [is] the sum of national wills…who is going to make it binding? It is rather like turkeys voting for Christmas”. 194 In reality:

Those who want the flexibility not to spend 2%...are going to find it very difficult to get themselves to vote for something they do not want to do, so I do not understand
how it can be made binding unless you have some form of majority voting which, of
course, under consensus one does not.  

162. Noting that NATO’s target for each nation of spending 2% of GDP on defence was an
informal one, Dr Webber argued that “there is no binding limit and attempts to use
guidelines within NATO have generally failed...they only generate resentment”.  
He maintained that:

With an alliance of 26 Member States with hugely divergent economies, histories and
military capabilities, you cannot impose matters of that sort and you must allow
allies within NATO, if they share membership with the EU, to contribute to defence
and security in more creative ways than assuming that what matters is [the] headline
spend in [the] defence budget.

163. Dr Mark Webber also argued that the gap in defence spending between the United
States and Europe was not all that it appeared. He maintained that the disparity had been
“exaggerated by the way the figures are calculated”. In terms of defence budgets, he
acknowledged that the differences in spending appeared vast. However, Dr Webber
maintained that “if you look at the overall spend on security issues”, whilst the US was still
“way out in front”, the EU member states spent money on things like humanitarian aid and
assistance which, though “technically not defence expenditure”, nevertheless “clearly feeds
into the issue of security”. In that case, the disparity became “less clear”.

164. Professor Cox argued that, ultimately, the debate over burden-sharing and defence
expenditure was not a new discussion. It had been going on for decades within NATO and
was likely to do so for the foreseeable future. According to Professor Cox, the future of
NATO was not at stake due to the disparities in defence expenditure between American
and Europe, however it was measured. The Alliance would endure despite those
disparities. However, he suggested that the gap in spending was linked to the issue of the
leadership of NATO and the influence of member states upon the direction of Alliance
policy. He posed the question, “if the United States is the one putting most money into this
Alliance and most lives on the line...does that not also give it legitimate leadership of this
Alliance?”

165. The ability of the NATO Alliance to deliver real and lasting improvements in
military capabilities depends on the willingness of Allies to commit sufficient
resources. There can be no greater demonstration of political will in NATO, or the lack
of it, than the amount of money each member of the Alliance is willing to spend on
defence. There exists a clear, persistent and growing gap in defence expenditure
between the European members of NATO and the United States and there seems little
prospect of this being reversed.

195 Q 209
196 Q 120
197 Ibid
198 Q 119
199 Q Ibid
200 Q 121
166. Despite a longstanding commitment by all members of the NATO Alliance to spend a minimum of 2% of their GDP on defence, only six out of the 24 European members of NATO actually achieve that target. But defence spending is not simply about quantity; it is about what the money is spent on. We believe that in addition to the 2% target the Alliance should establish detailed capability targets, and timeframes, against which the performance of Allies could be measured.

167. If the European members of the Alliance want to be taken seriously, if they want the United States to remain engaged in, and committed to, NATO, and if they want greater influence in the overall direction of Alliance policy, they must commit the necessary resources and improve their capabilities. We are concerned that an Alliance with such large, and growing, discrepancies in defence expenditure will not be sustainable in the long term.
5 NATO enlargement

Enlargement and the Bucharest Summit

168. NATO has long maintained an “open door” policy on enlargement of the Alliance. Under the terms of Article 10 of the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty, any European country in a position to uphold the principles of the Treaty and contribute to security in the Euro-Atlantic area is eligible to become a member of the Alliance when invited to do so unanimously by the existing member states. Since the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in 1949, there have been five separate rounds of NATO enlargement: Greece and Turkey in 1952; West Germany in 1955; Spain in 1982; the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland in 1999; and, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia in 2004.\(^{201}\) The 1999 and 2004 enlargements have witnessed numerous counties of the former Soviet bloc become full members of the NATO Alliance. The fifth round of NATO enlargement, in 2004, is unlikely to be the last. At present, three countries—Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia—are members of NATO’s Membership Action Plan (MAP), designed to assist aspiring partner countries meet NATO standards and prepare for possible future membership. Beyond those countries, Georgia is particularly eager to become part of the Alliance and has expressed the hope that it will be granted a MAP at the Bucharest Summit. Ukraine too has signalled its desire to be considered for a MAP in 2008. NATO also has an extensive range of partner countries throughout Europe and beyond, some of whom are keen to join the Alliance in the longer term. Further afield, NATO has a network of global partnerships with nations including Australia, New Zealand and Japan which have committed troops to the NATO-led ISAF mission in Afghanistan.

169. Within NATO, there is now a debate on which countries should join the Alliance and whether the Alliance is approaching the outer limits of membership. There is, in some quarters, a concern that NATO is putting itself at risk by becoming overextended or taking in countries whose governments do not necessarily share its liberal democratic values. There are suggestions that some existing NATO members are suffering from enlargement fatigue, displaying scepticism about matters such as the value of further enlargement, the contributions new members make to the common defence, and the pace of reforms in those countries after joining NATO.

170. At the Riga Summit in November 2006, for the first time since the end of the Cold War, NATO did not launch any new membership initiative. No new members were admitted to the Alliance and no Membership Action Plans were granted. The Bucharest Summit is likely to be different. The Alliance will decide whether to admit Albania, Croatia and Macedonia and will also consider Georgia’s application for a MAP. The MoD has stated in evidence that inviting new members to join the Alliance, on condition they meet certain performance-based criteria, will be one of the UK’s priorities at the Summit. Although enlargement is unlikely to be the most important issue at Bucharest, it is likely to feature prominently on the agenda. Whatever decisions are taken at the Summit on further enlargement of the Alliance, they are likely to indicate NATO’s enduring commitment to the open door policy.

201 NATO Handbook, 2006, p 183
171. Membership of the Alliance within the North Atlantic area should continue to be based on the ability of applicant countries to meet NATO's performance-based membership criteria rather than the imposition, by the Alliance, of arbitrary territorial boundaries. Welcoming new members at the Bucharest Summit, or granting Membership Action Plans to those who meet NATO's criteria, would be a powerful signal that the Alliance remains committed to its open door policy.

172. We call upon the Government to state clearly, in advance of the Bucharest Summit, which countries it intends to support in their applications for full membership of NATO and for Membership Action Plans.

Previous enlargements

173. We asked the witnesses to our inquiry about the impact of previous rounds of NATO enlargement and the contribution made by new members of the Alliance. Our witnesses agreed that previous enlargements had been a success. Sir Paul Lever, a former UK Ambassador to Germany, told us in evidence that the new Central and Eastern European members of NATO had “performed rather well” since joining the Alliance. He argued that “they have been good loyal members; they have shown a lot of solidarity and contributed militarily within their still modest but improving military capabilities”. Many of the newer members of the Alliance had demonstrated their willingness to contribute to Alliance operations and had committed troops to Afghanistan. Unlike some Western European nations, these countries have, by and large, deployed their forces without the imposition of national caveats and some of the restrictions upon their use were lifted at the Riga Summit. Similarly, Dr Webber argued that “most of the new entrants into NATO have shown a…willingness to go off on NATO missions”, even if they had bought less in terms of their economic contribution. Dr Eyal maintained that the newer members of NATO had been “scrupulous in their commitments” to the Alliance.

174. The argument that the countries which had joined the Alliance since the end of the Cold War had made an important contribution to NATO was endorsed by the Secretary of State for Defence, who told us that:

Many of these smaller countries who have come into membership of NATO from the disaggregated Soviet Union or Eastern European countries are becoming valued allies and are making a great contribution. Proportionately to their ability they are making an increasingly greater contribution and they are using that process for the transformation of their own military capabilities, and I think that is a very good thing.

175. Previous rounds of Alliance expansion had also had a transformational and defence diplomacy effect, promoting internal democratic reforms and reforms of the armed forces in new or applicant countries. Dr Webber maintained that “NATO’s strength historically
has been to pacify its membership…part and parcel of enlargement…is to continue with that process”. Dr Rob Dover maintained that enlargement had succeeded in promoting “security sector reform” throughout Eastern Europe since it “allowed Western European governments to influence governance structures of those countries, which can only be seen as a good thing”.

176. Previous enlargements of NATO have made an essential contribution to the development of stability and democracy in Europe. Many of NATO’s newer members have made significant contributions to Alliance operations and are improving their military capabilities. Equally importantly, enlargement to date has played an important role in extending and embedding democracy in Central and Eastern Europe.

The prospects for further enlargement

177. The further enlargement of NATO depends in large part on the ability of candidate countries to meet the criteria for membership laid down by the Alliance. A study on enlargement, carried out by NATO in 1995, considered the merits of admitting new members and the process for bringing them into the Alliance. It concluded that enlargement would contribute to enhanced stability and security for all countries in the Euro-Atlantic area by encouraging and supporting democratic reforms, including the establishment of civilian and democratic control over military forces; fostering patterns and habits of cooperation, consultation and consensus-building characteristic of relations among members of the Alliance; and promoting good-neighbourly relations. It also concluded that enlargement would increase transparency in defence planning and military budgets, thereby reinforcing confidence among states, and would reinforce the overall tendency toward closer integration and cooperation in Europe. In terms of the mechanics of entry into the Alliance, the study emphasised that countries seeking membership would have to demonstrate that they had fulfilled certain specific requirements. The Intensified Dialogue process aimed to provide these countries with concrete information regarding their rights and obligations as they proceeded towards full NATO membership. According to the study, any country wishing to join the Alliance would have to meet the following key requirements:

- a functioning democratic political system based on a market economy;
- treatment of minority populations in accordance with guidelines established by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE);
- commitment to peaceful resolution of disputes with neighbours;
- the ability and willingness to make a military contribution to the Alliance and to achieve interoperability with other members’ forces; and
- commitment to democratic civil-military relations and institutional structures.

206 Q 112
207 Q 59
208 NATO website (www.nato.int)
178. The Membership Action Plan, which follows the process of Intensified Dialogue, gives substance to NATO’s commitment to keep its door open to new countries. According to the MoD, it provides “a programme of advice, assistance and practical support designed to help countries within to join the Alliance in their preparations for potential membership and in their drive to meet NATO standards.” 209 The main features of the MAP are:

- the submission by aspiring members of individual annual national programmes on their preparations for possible future membership, covering political, economic, defence, resource, security and legal aspects;
- a focused and candid feedback mechanism on aspirant countries’ progress on their programmes that includes both political and technical advice;
- a clearing-house to help co-ordinate assistance by NATO and by member states to aspirant countries in the defence/military field; and
- a defence planning approach for aspirants which includes elaboration and review of agreed planning targets. 210

179. We asked the Secretary of State for Defence what the prospects were for a further enlargement of the Alliance. Mr Browne told us that “within the North Atlantic geographic area…European countries that meet the criteria for membership of NATO should be allowed membership of NATO because that is what NATO was set up to do”. 211 He argued that “the countries who meet NATO’s performance-based standards and are willing to contribute to Euro-Atlantic security, assuming they have gone through the process of Intensified Dialogue and then into the Membership Action Plan, should be allowed to join NATO”. 212

180. We asked our other witnesses whether they believed it was feasible for NATO to expand further, in effect whether NATO had reached the outer limits of membership. Our witnesses argued that, at present, further expansion of the Alliance was realistic, though there were some practical limits about how far, and into which areas, NATO should seek to expand. Dr Eyal maintained that “we have not reached the outer limits [of membership]”. He maintained that he was not convinced by the argument put forward by some commentators which suggested that NATO was suffering from “indigestion” from previous enlargements. According to Dr Eyal, it was the older members of NATO, “old Europe”, which were creating problems within the Alliance; new members had made a very positive contribution. 213 Dr Webber agreed, saying that in the long term it was feasible that Sweden and Finland could join the Alliance and that it was “inevitable” that Albania, Croatia and Macedonia would join. 214 Beyond this, however, some of our witnessed believed expansion of NATO could prove difficult and perhaps even undesirable. According to Dr Webber, Dr Dover and Mr Grant, it was questionable whether Georgia

209 Ev 162
210 Ibid
211 Q 253
212 Q 261
213 Q 111
214 Q 112
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and Ukraine should be considered for NATO membership. Mr Grant, in particular, argued that “I certainly do not believe we should encourage Georgia” and that admitting Ukraine could be interpreted by Russia as an aggressive move by NATO.215

**Albania, Croatia and Macedonia**

181. In a memorandum to our inquiry, the MoD states that Albania, Croatia and Macedonia are due decisions on their applications to join NATO at the Bucharest Summit. The MoD maintains that “Croatia is in a strong position, and remains on course to meet the requirements for NATO membership, with public opinion now around the 50% mark in favour of joining NATO”.216 It noted that support for NATO in Albania was high and that membership of the Alliance was a key priority for the country. However, its membership would be determined by its performance in making “sustained progress against organised crime and corruption”. As far as Macedonia was concerned, the MoD said that the NATO Allies would “want to see sustained progress…on reform up until the Summit”.217 Ultimately, if those countries met the performance-based criteria outlined by NATO in their Membership Action Plans, the Alliance should be prepared to accept them. The performance of Albania, Croatia and Macedonia in meeting the criteria for NATO membership will be assessed at the Bucharest Summit. Providing they meet those criteria there is no reason why they should not be admitted into the Alliance.

**Georgia**

182. One of the key decisions facing the Alliance at the Bucharest Summit will be whether to grant Georgia a Membership Action Plan, the first significant step on the path to eventual membership of NATO. Both the Georgian population and the Georgian government support the bid for NATO membership. When we visited Tbilisi in October 2007 we heard that 80% of the population were in favour of Georgia joining NATO. We were told that NATO membership was a key foreign policy priority and that Georgia believed that membership of the Alliance would help to secure its young democracy, stabilise its position in the region, and allow it to assume its proper place in the European family of nations. In our meetings with Georgian ministers and officials, we heard that Georgia was committed to undertaking the reforms necessary to secure membership of the Alliance, both strengthening its democratic institutions and reforming, and democratising control over, its armed forces. We were told that Georgia believed it was on-track to meet the criteria for a MAP laid down by the Alliance; it had successfully completed its Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) and had been part of the Intensified Dialogue since September 2006. We also heard that it expected its friends—the US, the UK and the Baltic states in particular—to support its request to be granted a MAP at the Summit. The United States has been a vocal supporter of Georgian membership of the Alliance. In July 2005, President Bush endorsed Georgia’s NATO aspirations and in January 2007, the US Congress adopted a bill expressing its support.

215 Q 62
216 Ev 162
217 Ibid
183. Recent political unrest in Georgia, however, has thrown that country’s aspirations into doubt. In November 2007, shortly after our visit to Tbilisi, the Georgian government violently dispersed a peaceful opposition rally, imposed a state of emergency, and closed down an independent television and radio broadcaster. The Georgian President, Mikhail Saakashvili, agreed under domestic and international pressure to hold snap elections, 18 months earlier than scheduled. The elections, held in early January 2008, were won by President Saakashvili who attained 53% of the vote. According to international observers, the elections were for the most part free and fair. The fact that the international community has endorsed the election results has given Georgia renewed hope for being granted a MAP at the Bucharest Summit. However, a number of Western European countries are believed to be opposed to early admission of Georgia to the path towards NATO membership.

184. Georgia’s NATO aspirations are also likely to depend upon its ability to make a contribution to Alliance capabilities. In October 2007, shortly before our own visit to Georgia, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer visited Tbilisi and warned that “more than ever, NATO is a performance-based organisation, which is making very serious demands of its members”. He noted that “any further progress in [Georgia-NATO] relations will depend on Georgia being able to demonstrate that it is capable [of meeting] these commitments”. Following the political turmoil in Georgia in November 2007, Mr de Hoop Scheffer warned that President Saakashvili’s actions were “not in line with Euro-Atlantic values”.

185. For NATO, there are potential advantages and disadvantages in granting Georgia a MAP at the Bucharest Summit. It could help to consolidate Tbilisi’s commitment to democracy and encourage further democratic reforms. If Georgia emerges in future as a successful democratic state, this would have a major, positive influence on other parts of the region. Georgia is a major energy transit country hosting the only oil pipeline to the West which bypasses Russia. Georgian membership of NATO could, therefore, contribute to the broader strategic objective of ensuring energy security in Europe. Moreover, Georgia had already proven its commitment to NATO’s expeditionary future, committing troops to Afghanistan, reforming and training its armed forces, boosting its defence budget, and increasing significantly its military capabilities. There is also the possibility that participation in a MAP would discourage Georgia from seeking a military solution to the unresolved conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. However, granting Georgia a MAP at a time when the strength of its commitment to democracy is open to question remains a concern for many NATO members. In its brief post-Soviet history, Georgia has never had a peaceful, democratic change of government. There is also the risk that NATO would, in effect, assume responsibility for resolving Georgia’s internal territorial disputes which, in turn, could destabilise NATO’s relationship with Russia. This is particularly problematic given Russia’s threat to recognise Abkhazian and South Ossetian independence in light of Western recognition of Kosovo.

186. The unresolved conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia significantly complicate Georgia’s bid for NATO membership. There seems little doubt that Georgia’s enthusiasm

218 Speech by Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, 4 October 2007, NATO website (www.nato.int)
219 Comments by Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, 8 November 2007, NATO website (www.nato.int)
for joining NATO is fuelled, at least in part, by its desire to protect its territorial integrity, particularly since Georgia alleges that Russia is actively backing the secessionist forces in both areas. Many Western European nations argue that the internal conflicts should be resolved and Georgian-Russian relations normalised before NATO grants Georgia a MAP. However, as we heard when we visited Georgia, Alliance insistence upon the resolution of the conflicts prior to the grant of a MAP would, in effect, hand Russia a veto on Georgian membership of NATO.

187. We asked Andrew Mathewson, Director of Policy for International Organisations at the MoD, whether the unresolved conflicts would prevent Georgia securing a MAP at the Bucharest Summit. Mr Mathewson told us that there was “no guarantee that Georgia will be given the MAP at Bucharest” and that, in any case, “the MAP process itself is open-ended; it will take as long as it takes”. He acknowledged that “the fact of the frozen conflicts is a factor. It is a factor that NATO has to take into account openly without going as far as handing Russia a veto on Georgian membership”.

188. On that basis, we asked the Secretary of State for Defence whether the UK intended to support Georgia’s application for a Membership Action Plan at the Bucharest Summit. Mr Browne told us that the Government had not yet conducted an assessment of Georgia’s performance against the criteria for being granted a MAP. Hugh Powell, Head of Security Policy at the FCO, stated that the process of assessing Georgia’s performance would be undertaken some time in February or March 2008. Only after that process had been concluded would the UK be in a position to state whether it intended to support Georgia’s application. Nevertheless, in evidence to us, the MoD states that “the UK continues to support Georgia’s long-term Euro-Atlantic aspirations”.

189. Georgia’s ambitions for joining NATO will depend upon its performance in meeting the Alliance’s criteria for participation in a Membership Action Plan. Although we are not in a position to judge for ourselves whether Georgia currently meets those criteria, we support, in principle, its long-term ambition to join the Alliance.

190. Before joining NATO, Georgia must demonstrate clearly and unambiguously the strength of its commitment to democracy and further democratic and political reform. It must also work to resolve the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, though much depends on the willingness of Russia to play a constructive role. For NATO, there are real and legitimate concerns about admitting a country with unresolved conflicts within its borders. But if NATO insists upon the resolution of the conflicts before Georgia is allowed to join NATO, this will effectively hand Russia a veto over Georgian membership of the Alliance.
Ukraine

191. Although Georgia’s bid for membership of NATO is inherently complex, the prospect of Ukrainian membership of the Alliance is an altogether more contentious and difficult issue both for the Alliance and for Ukraine itself. Following the Orange Revolution of 2004, Ukrainian President Victor Yushchenko signalled his desire for Ukraine to join NATO. Eager to embrace its apparent turn to the West, the Alliance granted Ukraine Intensified Dialogue with NATO, having earlier accepted Ukraine into the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme. In advance of the Bucharest Summit, the Ukrainian Government has written to the NATO Secretary General requesting “positive decisions” on a Membership Action Plan.

192. The prospects for Ukrainian membership of NATO, however, are deeply unclear. As we heard in evidence, the population of Ukraine remains firmly and overwhelmingly opposed to NATO membership. Charles Grant told us that unlike in Georgia, where there was widespread popular support for NATO, in Ukraine there was no appetite to join the Alliance. Polls suggested that a mere 10 to 20 percent of the population were in favour of Ukraine’s membership of NATO. The lack of popular support for NATO membership in Ukraine contrasts starkly with the overwhelming popular support demonstrated in countries which have joined the Alliance since the end of the Cold War. In evidence to us, Professor Michael Cox argued that NATO enlargement in the 1990s had occurred “not simply from external pressure, but by demand”. Expansion was “demand driven” and “came about by demand from democratic and newly elected governments”. In Ukraine, that demand is largely absent. In addition, Dr Webber maintained that Ukraine, in his opinion like Georgia, was “very far from the criteria” for membership. As a result, he believed it was “extremely unlikely that Ukraine and Georgia will join [NATO]”.

193. The prospects for Ukrainian membership is also complicated by the depth of the country’s relationship, and cultural bonds, with Russia. Mr Grant argued that attempts to bring Ukraine into NATO would, in all likelihood, cause real difficulties in the Alliance’s relationship with Russia. While Mr Grant noted that “I do not believe we should kowtow to the Russians or give in to them when they growl at us”, he argued that Ukraine was culturally and historically Russian and that talk of bringing Ukraine into the Alliance was premature and might prove counterproductive:

We must recognise, as any brief knowledge of Russian history will tell you, that Ukraine is the kernel of Russian civilisation. More practically, the Russian defence industry is partly based in Ukraine. Ukraine’s armed forces are pretty bound up in Russia’s own military structures. It is a fact that Russians do not regard Ukraine as a foreign country.
Mr Grant concluded that, “psychologically, given the paranoia that genuinely does pervade Russian ruling circles, it would be seen as a very aggressive move to take Ukraine into NATO”. 226

194. In evidence to us, the MoD states that the Ukraine was currently participating in an Intensified Dialogue on its aspirations for joining NATO. Asked whether the Government supported Ukrainian membership of the Alliance, the MoD stated “the UK continues to support Ukraine’s progression on the path towards eventual membership”. 227

195. Although Ukraine has indicated its desire to be considered for a Membership Action Plan, it seems highly unlikely that NATO will decide to make such an offer at the Bucharest Summit. The Ukrainian population is, at best, seriously divided on joining NATO and, at worst, opposed. For NATO to accept as a new member a country whose population did not support such membership would in our judgement exacerbate the problems considered earlier in this report. While in principle, if Ukraine demonstrates its commitment to the principles of the Alliance and fulfils the criteria for membership outlined by NATO, the Alliance should consider an application for membership, that application should in the longer term be determined only after great weight has been given to the wishes of the people of Ukraine.

The future of the Alliance’s open door policy

196. Witnesses to our inquiry argued that provided prospective members of NATO brought with them a capacity to contribute to the Alliance, they should be considered for full membership. Martin Wolf, senior columnist for the Financial Times, acknowledged that further enlargement would bring difficulties but noted that previous enlargement in Central and Eastern Europe had been successful and had added capabilities to the Alliance. Further expansion to the Ukraine would also bring capabilities, though “it would also raise huge difficulties”. In principle, Mr Wolf argued that there was no problem with further expansion of the Alliance, but he warned “I am a bit concerned about adding countries that increase obligations but not capabilities”. 228

197. Dr Williams expressed concern that expansion of NATO might undermine its ability to transform itself into the expeditionary and capable Alliance its members wanted. He argued that the problem of adding new countries like Macedonia, Croatia and Albania to NATO was that “these new countries make it more difficult to achieve consensus, which makes it harder to use NATO as an expeditionary force”. 229 Dr Williams maintained that “whilst the stabilising factor of expansion benefits British interests, it also limits any ambitions that the Alliance can be used in an expeditionary capacity”. 230 He further argued that “even when new members are willing to act abroad in an expeditionary campaign, they lack the resources to do so”. He argued that “even states such as Poland or the Czech

226 Q 62
227 Ev 163
228 Q 22
229 Ev 103
230 Ibid
Republic, which are trying to transform their forces, for the time being, offer little support to Alliance capability."\(^{231}\)

198. The Secretary of State for Defence, however, pointed to the longer-term benefits that maintaining the open door policy would bring, particularly in terms of encouraging democratic reform and promoting stability. Mr Browne told us:

> The question is whether the process of holding out [the offer of] membership of NATO, or indeed the European Union, encourages these countries along the path of development of good governance and the rest of the conditionality we would apply to it—the resolution of internal conflict, stability, security, the treatment of their own citizens, the rule of law—and whether all of these are in the best interests of Europe and indeed the United Kingdom, and in my view it has been.\(^{232}\)

199. **NATO should continue to be open to the acceptance of new members in the Euro-Atlantic area.** The promise of NATO membership provides the Alliance with a means of encouraging countries on its borders to embrace internal democratic reform and the reform of their armed forces; it is a powerful tool of defence diplomacy. However, it is important that as new members join the Alliance they bring with them additional capabilities or, at the least, a commitment that would add to NATO’s capabilities in future. New members cannot only be consumers of security; they must also contribute to the common defence.

200. **Membership of NATO should continue to be performance-based;** if a country meets the criteria for membership, it should be permitted to join. We believe it is essential that NATO’s open door policy is maintained on this basis. Ending the Alliance’s open door policy on membership is not in the interests of the Alliance itself or European stability as a whole. Signalling that the Alliance has reached its outer limits, or ruling out further expansion, would consign those countries left outside NATO’s borders to an uncertain future, potentially creating instability on the Alliance’s Eastern fringes. Perpetuating this instability is not in the interests of any member of the NATO Alliance.

**NATO Partnerships**

**Partnership for Peace**

201. The Partnership for Peace (PfP) process was set up in 1994 as a means of developing individual programmes of practical defence and security cooperation. Its aims are to promote transparency in defence planning and budgeting and democratic control of the military, and to develop the capacity for joint activity between NATO and the partner countries in peace-keeping and other operations. The Partnership Framework Document includes the commitment by the Allies to consult bilaterally with any partner country which fears a direct threat to its territory, its political independence or its security. The PfP
works on the basis of individual Partnership Programmes between NATO and partner countries tailored to each country’s needs and interests.

202. Participation in the Partnership for Peace is, for some countries, a precursor to the process of membership but it is said to be equally valuable in its own right in increasing stability and strengthening NATO’s relationships with countries which border, or are strategically important to, its territory. The current PfP members are listed in Annex C.

**Mediterranean Dialogue**

203. NATO’s Mediterranean Dialogue was established in 1994 as a means of engaging the countries of the southern Mediterranean and promoting good relations with, and between, them. Six countries initially joined: Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. Algeria followed in 2000. The seven countries participate in a range of activities, including courses at NATO colleges on issues such as peace-keeping, arms control and civil-military cooperation in military planning. The southern Mediterranean region faces instability from a number of sources, including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, fundamentalism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The region is also strategically important to the members of NATO and to global energy security because of its geographic location.

**The NATO-Russia Council**

204. NATO-Russia relations formally began in 1991, when Russia joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (renamed the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in 1997), a forum created to foster transparency and dialogue with the countries of the former Soviet Union after the end of the Cold War. Russia joined the Partnership for Peace in 1994, paving the way for more practical cooperation and, in 1996, Russia deployed a major contingent to the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

205. The 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security provided the formal basis for NATO-Russia relations and led to the development of a bilateral programme of consultation and cooperation under the Permanent Joint Council (PJC). However, lingering Cold War tensions prevented the PJC from achieving its potential. Differences over the Kosovo air campaign also impacted on relations. However, Russia played a notable diplomatic role in resolving the Kosovo crisis and deployed peacekeepers to support the Kosovo Force in June 1999. From 1999, NATO-Russia relations began to improve significantly.

206. In 2002, the relationship was given new impetus and substance with the establishment of the NATO-Russia Council. The decision to establish the NRC was taken in the wake of the September 2001 terrorist attacks, which reinforced the need for coordinated action to respond to common threats. It demonstrated the shared resolve of NATO member states and Russia to work more closely together towards the common goal of building a lasting and inclusive peace in the Euro-Atlantic Area—a goal which was first expressed in the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act.

207. Since 2002, the relationship between NATO and Russia is difficult and has been plagued by deep disagreements over a wide range of policy issues, including NATO
enlargement and Russia’s stalling democratic process. NATO-Russia relations on smaller, pragmatic issues such as counter-terrorism remain relatively strong, but it appears that political goals are drifting further apart. Given Russia’s continued possession of a large nuclear arsenal, its vast energy resources, and increasing assertiveness, the relationship between NATO and Russia is of huge significance to the Alliance. Cooperation with Russia is desirable, but, at present, the signs are not encouraging.

**Global partnerships**

208. All NATO countries recognise the enormous contributions that non-NATO allies have made to Alliance-led operations in recent years. The presence of Australian, New Zealand and Japanese forces in Afghanistan is one positive example of such cooperation. What NATO cannot seem to agree on, however, is the best way to reward and further strengthen its relationship with these and other like-minded countries. As with the enlargement issue, there are two distinct points of view: those who favour a strengthened global partnership programme with formal structures and clearly defined parameters, and others who fundamentally reject the idea because of the difficulty of managing such partnerships and the increased political role it would require the Alliance to adopt. Whether progress can be made at the Bucharest Summit in resolving these issues is unclear.

209. NATO operations in Afghanistan are the first the Alliance has conducted outside the Euro-Atlantic area. They represent a commitment by the NATO Allies to project stability on the periphery of the Alliance and beyond. In tackling the sources of insecurity at root, NATO has gone some way to recognising that its interests are global in nature. This underscores the importance of building and maintaining an intensive and cooperative network of global partnerships.

210. **NATO should continue to work closely with nations beyond its borders and should work to enhance further its relationships with Australia, New Zealand and Japan.** Formalising the relationship between NATO and these countries is desirable, but this need not involve full membership of the Alliance. Extending full NATO membership beyond the Euro-Atlantic area carries distinct risks; there is a danger it could dilute the coherence of the Alliance, create yet more questions about its role and purpose, or complicate decision-making. However, NATO should continue to embrace the concept of global partnerships and seek to intensify cooperation with like-minded allies.
6 NATO and the European Security and Defence Policy

The development of the European Security and Defence Policy

211. Since the establishment of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) following the Franco-British summit at St Malo in 1998, significant progress has been made in the development of the framework of European defence. At Feira in 1999, the EU launched the civilian arm of ESDP. At Nice in 2000, permanent structures were created within the Council of the European Union to deal with ESDP matters, including the Political and Security Committee (PSC), the EU Military Committee (EUMC), and the European Military Staff (EUMS). At Laeken in 2001, ESDP was declared operational and at Seville the following year ESDP missions were enlarged to include the fight against terrorism. The Copenhagen Summit in December 2002 led to the agreement of the Berlin Plus arrangements, permitting the EU to have access to NATO assets and capabilities should the need arise. Since 2003, the EU has been engaged in an effort to define its strategic priorities and improve further the military capabilities of its member states. In December 2007, EU Heads of State and Government signed the Treaty of Lisbon, enshrining the ESDP in a treaty for the first time and proposing a series of innovations in the policy.

212. This chapter considers the key developments in the ESDP since 2003 and its impact upon NATO. It analyses the European Security Strategy, EU operations, and the EU’s efforts to improve military capabilities, including the development of EU Battlegroups and the European Defence Agency. It analyses the state of the relationship between NATO and the EU and considers the implications of the Lisbon Treaty for the ESDP and NATO.

The European Security Strategy

213. In December 2003, the EU published the European Security Strategy (ESS), setting out its foreign policy priorities in the context of its analysis of the developments in the global security environment. The ESS identified the key threats facing the EU: terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, state failure, and organised crime. It argued that terrorism “poses a growing strategic threat to the whole of Europe” and noted that the threat of terrorism was “global in its scope”. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction was identified by the ESS as “potentially the greatest threat to our security”, particularly if terrorists acquired such weapons. Regional conflicts, such as those in Kashmir, the Great Lakes Region, the Korean Peninsula, and the Middle East were said to “impact on European interests directly and indirectly” since they risked fuelling regional instability, extremism and terrorism. State failure was “an alarming phenomenon, that undermines global governance, and adds to regional instability”. Organised crime, meanwhile, was a significant “internal threat” with an “important external dimension”, involving people and drug trafficking and terrorism.233

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To combat these threats, and to defend the security and promote the values of the EU, the ESS identified three “strategic objectives”:

- addressing the threats to European security by standing ready both to intervene before a crisis begins and to act on a global basis, since, “with the new threats, the first line of defence will often be abroad”;
- building security around the borders of Europe through the promotion of good governance in Europe’s immediate neighbourhood; and
- developing a stronger international society, well functioning international institutions and a rule-based international order.  

In this way, the ESS emphasised the global nature of the threats facing the EU and the global nature of its interests. But it noted that “if we are to make a contribution that matches our potential, we need to be more active, more coherent and more capable”. According to the ESS, the EU needed to be “more active in pursuing [its] strategic objectives” by developing “a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid, and when necessary robust intervention”. It needed to be “more capable” by transforming Europe’s militaries into flexible, mobile forces and by enhancing its civilian capabilities. It needed to be “more coherent” by bringing together capabilities in defence, development, diplomacy and trade. And it needed to work with partners and foster “an effective and balanced partnership with the United States”. In a revealing statement on the EU’s ambitions, the ESS concluded that:

This is a world of new dangers but also of new opportunities. The European Union has the potential to make a major contribution, both in dealing with the threats and in helping realise the opportunities. An active and capable European Union would make an impact on a global scale. In doing so, it would contribute to an effective multilateral system leading to a fairer, safer and more united world.

The recognition by the EU of the global nature of the threats facing its members and, consequently, the importance of defending its global interests, combined with its aspiration to assume a global role, mirror, to some extent, the global aims and ambitions of NATO.

**EU operations**

Alongside its attempts to define more clearly its foreign policy and security priorities, the European Union has conducted a growing range of operations under the auspices of the ESDP. The scope of the EU’s operations are defined in the Petersberg Tasks, originally formulated by the Western European Union in 1992 and incorporated into the Treaty on European Union (the Maastricht Treaty) at the EU summit at Amsterdam in 1997. The Petersberg Tasks include: humanitarian and rescue missions; peace-keeping; and crisis management, including peacemaking.
217. To date, there have been a total of 22 ESDP missions, of which seven have been completed and fifteen are current and ongoing. The majority of these missions have been in the sphere of civilian crisis management, areas which analysts suggest are less demanding in terms of force generation. Only four missions have been military missions, and only two have used the Berlin Plus arrangements in which the EU has called upon NATO assets. The other missions had been predominantly police, rule of law, and security sector reform missions. ESDP missions had varied greatly in size. For example, the EUFOR mission to Bosnia-Herzegovina, Operation ALTHEA, comprised 7,000 soldiers at the peak of its operations and currently has around 2,500 soldiers. The EU mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) comprised approximately 500 military personnel deployed to the capital city, Kinshasa, with a further force of 1,100 personnel deployed in Gabon ready to intervene in the DRC if necessary. By contrast, the ESDP mission to Georgia, the smallest of the EU’s operations, comprised just 10 personnel.

218. In carrying out its operations, the EU is able to call upon NATO assets under the Berlin plus arrangements. Agreed in 2003, these arrangements are based on the recognition that member countries of both NATO and the EU can only draw upon one set of forces and have limited resources. Under these circumstances, to avoid duplication of resources, it was agreed that operations led by the EU would be able to use NATO capabilities. In effect, this enables NATO to support EU-led operations in which the Alliance as a whole is not engaged. The main elements of the Berlin Plus arrangements include:

- assured EU access to NATO planning capabilities able to contribute to military planning for EU-led operations;
- the presumption of availability to the EU of pre-identified NATO capabilities and common assets for use in EU-led operations;
- identification of a range of European command options for EU-led missions;
- the further adaptation of NATO’s defence planning system to incorporate more comprehensively the availability of forces for EU-led operations;
- a NATO-EU agreement covering the exchange of classified information;
- procedures for the release, monitoring, return and recall of NATO assets and capabilities; and
- NATO-EU consultation arrangements in the context of an EU-led crisis management operation making use of NATO assets and capabilities.

219. To date, only two EU operations—Macedonia and Bosnia—have made use of the Berlin-Plus arrangements. In evidence to us, Daniel Keohane argued that on each occasion the arrangements had “worked very smoothly”. However, because so few missions had used them the arrangements had not really been tested. As a result “we cannot really assess just how effective they are”.238
**Capability development**

220. The European Union, like NATO, has also been engaged in an effort to improve the military capabilities of its member states. The Helsinki Headline Goal (HGG), established at the European Council in December 1999, established the development of the EU’s capabilities as a priority for ESDP. Among its major recommendations was the creation, by 2003, of a European Rapid Reaction Force (ERRF) of 60,000 troops capable of deployment within 60 days and sustainable for a period of up to one year. The ERRF was intended to be deployed across the range of Petersburg Tasks. In order to implement the Helsinki proposals, EU member states agreed to draw up a “capabilities catalogue” aimed at identifying the capabilities across the envisaged spectrum of operations. This initiative culminated in the EU Capabilities Commitment Conference (CCC) in November 2000. The CCC allowed member states to pledge military assets for use in any future deployment by the ERRF and identify areas of capability shortfall. In November 2001, having assessed the implementation of the objectives of the CCC, the EU established a European Capabilities Action Plan (ECAP) to draw member states together in 19 dedicated working groups to address specific capability shortfalls, including C4ISTAR and strategic lift. At the EU Capability Conference in May 2003, EU defence ministers declared operational capability across the full range of Petersburg Tasks, although it was acknowledged that this capability remained constrained by recognised shortfalls.\(^\text{239}\)

221. In June 2004 the European Council revised the Helsinki Headline Goal in light of the conclusions of the European Security Strategy. Headline Goal 2010 focused specifically on qualitative improvements in European capabilities, including interoperability, deployability and sustainability. To this end, the EU Battlegroups concept (discussed below) was established as a means of realising these new priorities. Headline Goal 2010 stated that:

> The ability of the EU to deploy force packages at high readiness as a response to a crisis either as a stand-alone force or as part of a larger operation enabling follow-on phases, is a key element of the 2010 Headline Goal. These minimum force packages must be militarily effective, credible and coherent and should be based broadly on the Battlegroups concept.\(^\text{240}\)

222. Headline Goal 2010 also identified specific capability shortfalls including strategic lift, the availability of an aircraft carrier and communications assets. The Goal now forms the basis of the EU’s work in meeting the remaining capability shortfalls, which is to be taken forward by the European Defence Agenda (discussed below).

223. During our visit to EU institutions in Brussels in March 2007 we heard that the new Headline Goal provided a more effective means of promoting capability development within the EU. We were told that the initial target of generating 60,000 troops was too large a target. The new target—of Battlegroups of 1,5000 troops each—was more realistic to achieve and was focused on rapidly generating deployable forces.

\(^\text{239}\) European Security and Defence Policy: Developments since 2003, Research Paper 06/32, House of Commons Library, 8 June 2006, pp 24-29

\(^\text{240}\) European Council, Headline Goal 2010, 17 June 2004
EU Battlegroups

224. The plan to develop EU Battlegroups is at the heart of the European Union’s strategy for improving European capabilities and force generation under Headline Goal 2010. Launched in 2004, Battlegroups—each comprised of 1,500 troops and deployable within 15 days—are “the minimum military effective, credible, rapidly deployable, coherent force package capable of stand-alone operations, or for the initial phase of longer operations”.

Battlegroups are intended to be quick response tools, rapidly deployable in situations of crisis to perform initial stabilisation operations. They are intended to perform the full range of Petersburg Tasks as well as stabilisation and reconstruction missions and to be sustainable for up to 30 days, extendable for up to 120 days if re-supplied. Most of the declared Battlegroups are multinational configurations, though some are purely national packages, and there is a six-monthly rotation system designed to ensure that two Battlegroups are on call at any one time. Although not intended to be war-winning tools, Battlegroups are designed to go far beyond the soft end of military missions. They are also meant to act as a catalyst for defence reform in countries with little or no experience of expeditionary operations.

225. In evidence to our inquiry the MoD stated that Battlegroups “play an important role as an example of a modern force able to quickly respond to crisis-management operations” and helped to “transform...some Member States’ armed forces from static to expeditionary”. The Secretary of State told us that they were an example of the improvements in European capabilities and readiness that had been achieved since the establishment of the Helsinki Headline Goal in 1999.

226. The Nordic Battlegroup, in which Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania contribute force elements, has been a particular success and has been “a very effective vehicle for the transformation of the Swedish military” which leads the force. This had been “very important and beneficial”. Andrew Mathewson, Director of Policy for International Organisations at the MoD, told us that the Nordic Battlegroup was an example of capacity being generated for the benefit of both the EU and NATO:

The example of the Swedish Battlegroup is very important. As of today there is a Nordic Battlegroup on stand-by with its enablers ready to go. Before that, the only countries in Europe able to provide rapid response forces were the UK and France. Now, today, there is a Nordic Battlegroup on stand-by. It has entered into arrangements to provide strategic lift...This is capability which did not exist before the Battlegroup existed. This is an example of a formerly neutral country with previously a focus on territorial defence generating capacity which is usable for the sort of expeditionary operations that both NATO and the EU want to undertake.

241 Military Capability Commitments Conference, Declaration on European Military Capabilities, 22 November 2004
242 Ev 147-148
243 Ev 109
244 Q 314
245 Q 317
Hugh Powell, Head of Security Policy at the FCO, told us that the success of the Battlegroup concept should not be underestimated. According to Mr Powell, “readiness and getting other countries to actually put troops on stand-by is a major capability gain”.

227. Some of our witnesses questioned the extent to which Battlegroups represented a significant increase in European capabilities. General Fry argued that “in any real military sense” Battlegroups are “below the level of credible military force…with very little to support it or sustain it”. The result was that “you can get it somewhere, but once it is there it represents a level of force and a radius of action that is all about demonstration rather than getting anything greater than that”. Although Battlegroups were intended to deploy in real crisis situations, this was “for rather more cosmetic purposes than war-fighting purposes”. Nevertheless, General Fry maintained that Battlegroups were significant because they had “an important function in signalling political will and intent”.

228. In a memorandum to our inquiry, Major General Graham Messervy-Whiting (Rtd), a Fellow of RUSI, told us it was too early to assess the impact of Battlegroups on improving European capabilities. Battlegroups were still in their infancy and their impact could be gauged more easily retrospectively. However, while they had a useful role to play in crisis-management and in transforming military capabilities in Europe, they should not be relied upon as the principal form of EU force generation. General Messervy-Whiting argued that “the EU needs to retain the capacity to generate the military…and non-military capability packages required, case by case”.

229. One of the issues raised in evidence to our inquiry was whether EU Battlegroups were compatible with the NATO Response Force and whether they duplicated the tasks and functions of the NRF. In a memorandum to us, Open Europe argued that Battlegroups were a prime example of duplication of NATO’s initiatives and projects. According to Open Europe, the Battlegroups concept “rivals the existing NATO Response Force initiative and duplicates efforts in several ways”. The two concepts were “very similar” and “overlapping”: “both are expected to deploy at very short notice; both will be targeted to a range of missions, including higher and lower intensity; both serve as conduits for force transformation and modernisation; and they will rely on a similar pool of personnel”.

230. Geoffrey Van Orden, UK Conservative Party defence spokesman in the European Parliament, told us in a memorandum to our inquiry that the ESDP, as a whole was “a diversion, weakening wholehearted commitment to the North Atlantic Alliance”. It was “duplicative and divisive”, produced “no new military capabilities” and “compete[d] with

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246 Q 317
247 Q 177
248 Q 178
249 Q 179
250 Ev 148
251 Ev 97
252 Ibid
253 Ev 113
NATO”.254 He argued that generating forces for EU Battlegroups was duplicative and wasteful and did not deliver any additional capability. The concept was “smoke and mirrors” in that it drew upon exactly the same forces that NATO needed to draw upon. As a result, it “merely places an additional burden on our existing armed forces and does not generate any additional capability”.255

231. Hugh Powell, however, argued that there was no incompatibility between EU Battlegroups and the NRF. In evidence he told us that there were in place arrangements between the EU and NATO to “de-conflict the two forces…to ensure that the same force is not on stand-by for both organisations”.256 He also argued that:

It was accepted by NATO, and indeed by the United States at the time that EU Battlegroups were being set up, that the Battlegroups were in support of the NRF, in the sense that they would encourage smaller Member States to develop in packages in a multilateral framework the larger force packages that then over time would also be available to the NRF.257

232. Andrew Mathewson told us he was not aware of any American nervousness about Battlegroups. He argued that the United States saw them as “additional capacity…a raising in the level of Europe’s ability to respond, whether through NATO or through the EU itself”.258

233. EU Battlegroups are a significant innovation and promise, in theory, to improve European capabilities, force generation and interoperability. Given the poor level of European capabilities and the difficulties encountered in generating sufficient forces for Afghanistan, such improvements can only be welcome and would represent a significant capability gain. A key test of whether Battlegroups represent a useable military capability will be the ability of these force packages to fight, but, as in Afghanistan, this requires a level of political will on the part of the troop-contributing nations that may not exist. We also doubt whether the creation of Battlegroups will lead to any increases in European defence budgets, which is the key to improving military capabilities.

234. The fact that EU Battlegroups are intended to perform some of the more robust elements of the Petersburg Tasks suggests some degree of overlap of role and responsibility with the NATO Response Force. Any duplication must be avoided. However, if Battlegroups help European nations to improve significantly their force generation processes, this is likely to help NATO meet the force requirements of the NRF.
The European Defence Agency

235. A key element of the EU’s plans for enhancing European capabilities was the creation of the European Defence Agency in 2004. The stated purpose of the EDA is to help EU Member States develop their defence capabilities for crisis-management operations under the ESDP. The main roles of the Agency are:

- to develop defence capabilities in the field of crisis management, by identifying the EU’s future defence capability requirements, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, harmonising military requirements, and assisting in the implantation of Headline Goal 2010;
- to promote and enhance European armaments cooperation, by promoting compatible procurement methods and proposing multilateral projects to meet ESDP capability requirements;
- to strengthen the European defence industrial and technological base and create a competitive European defence equipment market; and
- to enhance the effectiveness of European defence research and technology.259

236. The EDA works with Member States, encouraging them to spend their defence budgets on required capabilities and to pool their resources where appropriate. Its operational budget is small—around $22 million in 2006—and its powers limited. Twenty-four of the 27 EU Member States participate in the EDA, with the exception of Denmark, which has an opt-out from ESDP, Spain and Hungary.

237. Over the first three years of its existence, the EDA has launched three major programmes: the Long Term Vision; the Research and Technology Investment Programme; and the Defence Procurement Code of Conduct. The Long Term Vision investigated what military capabilities EU governments need to develop over the next 20 years. The Research and Technology Investment Programme indicated what capabilities European defence ministries should seek to develop in future. The Defence Procurement Code of Conduct aimed to create a competitive European defence market by increasing openness in the tendering of defence procurement contracts through posting contracts on an Electronic Bulletin Board.

238. In evidence to our inquiry, we heard conflicting reports about the performance of the EDA and the implications of its work for of NATO. Daniel Keohane argued that the three initiatives the EDA had undertaken over the past three years had been “extremely useful”. The Defence Procurement Code of Conduct, in particular, promised to achieve “huge efficiency gains”.260 Charles Grant suggested that, through the work of the EDA, “the EU is increasingly playing a useful and potentially valuable role in encouraging armaments cooperation”.261 The challenge for the EDA was to ensure that it did not become protectionist. Although the Code of Conduct was supposed to achieve greater openness in

259 European Defence Agency website (www.eda.europa.eu)
260 Q 171
261 Q 57
European defence markets, there were “people in the EU system who would like this sort of procedure to exclude American products from our market and encourage a Europe first choice”. This would be damaging. Mr Grant argued that, as far as promoting armaments coordination and interoperability was concerned, “it would be good if NATO could play that role”. According to Daniel Keohane, the other main problem confronting the Agency was that it “does not have the power to force governments to behave themselves”. This could dilute its effectiveness in delivering improvements in European capabilities.

239. One of the major concerns highlighted by some of those who gave evidence to our inquiry was the possibility of duplication between the work of the EDA and that of NATO’s Allied Command Transformation. In a memorandum to us, Open Europe argued that “serious problems with duplication have emerged”. It maintained that “by establishing its own structures and programmes the EU is…steadily decoupling itself from NATO and the US and discriminating against non-EU arms suppliers and partners”. Similarly, Dr Rob Dover argued that the EDA had “the potential to cause tensions between national arms programmes and national commitments to the NATO Alliance”. According to Dr Dover, “the European Commission can be seen as trying to construct a counter-weight to the global dominance of the American arms manufacturers”. He argued that “this sort of competition with America may well put strains on the NATO Alliance” and that, as a result, the EDA has the “potential…to destabilise the transatlantic Alliance”.

240. General Deverell told us that it was only natural that there should be two organisations. It was “quite reasonable” that bureaucracies should “create institutions which deal with particular situations they find themselves in”. However, General Deverell argued that there was, at present, insufficient cooperation and coordination between the EDA and ACT:

> There is every reason why these two bodies should perceive themselves to be brothers and sisters of a single family and seek ways of improving interoperability and compatibility which I do not detect they are doing at the moment as well as they should be…In a philosophical sense, why have two [organisations], but…in a practical sense, almost certainly there will be two bodies there. They need to mesh into each other very much more effectively.

241. We asked the Secretary of State for his assessment of the EDA’s performance since its creation in 2004. Mr Browne told us that the EDA had “produced some good work”, particularly the Defence Procurement Code of Conduct. However, he stated that the Agency “lacked structure and orientation”. In a subsequent memorandum to us, the MoD stated that this “lack of structure and orientation in the EDA is primarily the result of
a lack of a clear understanding of collective priorities”. The initial emphasis placed on pursuing activity in all four areas of its remit—armaments, industry and markets, capabilities, and research and technology—was “perhaps at the expense of a coherent process across the Agency”. The MoD assured us that these problems were being addressed through a number of strategies and initiatives within the Agency and that a Capability Development Plan had been devised to make the EU’s Long Term Vision “more practical and usable by Member States for long term capability planning and by the Agency to prioritise its future work programme”. The MoD stated that the UK believed the first priority of the EDA should be to address interoperability and that its second should be to enhance deployability, both tactical and strategic.

The EDA potentially has an important role to play in improving European capabilities, but the suggestion that the Agency lacks structure and orientation is worrying. The EDA should focus more narrowly on delivering real improvements in capabilities, interoperability and deployability. For the EDA to make a really useful contribution, it needs to be integrated with NATO’s effort in this area, so interoperability extends throughout the EU and NATO. Yet, in light of its limited resources, we are not convinced that it can make a great difference.

We believe it is essential that, in promoting the development of European capabilities, the EDA should not duplicate the work of NATO’s Allied Command Transformation. The Defence Procurement Code of Conduct must not become a vehicle for European protectionism by excluding American products.

Witnesses to our inquiry also argued that Turkey’s exclusion from membership of the EDA, despite its membership of NATO and the EDA’s predecessor body, OCCAR, was a major weakness of the Agency, with potentially profound consequences for Turkish engagement with the West. Daniel Keohane told us that Turkey was not a member of the EDA because it was not a member of the European Union and that attempts to offer Turkey some kind of associate membership had been blocked by Cyprus because of the intractable Turkey-Cyprus dispute. According to Mr Keohane, Turkey had made clear its willingness to participate in ESDP missions if and when it was asked to do so. Given the fact that Turkey was a major defence player in Europe, with the largest army, he argued that “the EDA should be…open to co-operation with non-EU members”.

General Fry stated that Turkey’s exclusion from the EDA was “profoundly reprehensible”. Moreover, it raised “the most profound strategic issue facing Europe at the present time: which way does Turkey face?”. He argued that if exclusion from the EDA was “just one of those small incremental steps preventing it from looking westward then it

269 Ev 164
270 Ibid
271 Ibid
272 Ibid
273 Q 173
274 Q 174
is a thoroughly bad thing”. Andrew Mathewson told us that it was the Government’s policy that “Turkey, like Norway, should have an association arrangement with the EDA” but highlighted that this “has been blocked by another Member State…Cyprus has withheld consensus”. Turkey’s exclusion from membership of the European Defence Agency is deeply regrettable. Turkey has an enormous amount it could contribute to Europe’s capabilities and its defence spending is among the highest of all NATO states. We believe Turkey should be admitted to the EDA as a matter of priority.

The relationship between NATO and the EU

247. NATO and the European Union are both engaged in a process of seeking to enhance capabilities and improve force generation for expeditionary operations. Both organisations have a global outlook and aspire to act in a wide variety of circumstances. Their threat assessments are very similar and they share a common security agenda. They are both currently seeking to define their role and purpose in the context of a changed strategic environment. Moreover, the two organisations have an overlapping membership with shared common interests; 19 countries are members of both NATO and the EU.

248. This need for closer NATO-EU cooperation is found expressed in countless speeches by officials, and in the strategies, documents and publications, of both organisations. The Comprehensive Political Guidance issued by the Alliance at the 2006 Riga Summit referred to agreement by NATO and the EU on “procedures to ensure coherent, transparent and mutually reinforcing development of the capability requirements common to both organisations”. The 1999 Strategic Concept also stressed the importance of cooperation between NATO and the EU.

249. The European Security Strategy, published in December 2003, also emphasised the common interests of the EU and NATO. It stated that:

One of the core elements of the international system is the transatlantic relationship. This is not only in our bilateral interest but strengthens the international community as a whole. NATO is an important expression of this relationship…The EU-NATO permanent arrangements, in particular, Berlin Plus, enhance operational capability of the EU and provide the framework for the strategic partnership between the two organisations in crisis management. This reflects our common determination to tackle the challenges of the new century.

250. A close relationship between NATO and the EU is essential. The lack of it is inexcusable given the importance of NATO to EU security. In practice, the relationship between NATO and the EU is fraught with difficulties. It is plagued by mistrust and unhealthy competition, and characterised by a lack of communication and cooperation. Little progress has been achieved in recent years in improving a relationship which
remained stalled and inefficient. In evidence to us Charles Grant stated that “it is extraordinary that there is a difficult relationship when the same governments are involved in the two organisation”. Witnesses to our inquiry characterised the relationship between NATO and the EU as “plagiarising”, “poor”, and “evolving”. Dr Dover stated that “it is a curious form of plagiarism where each of the two blocs starts to move and dance with each other which results in a classic double-hatting”. He believed the relationship currently led to inefficient duplication and confusion.

251. We asked the witnesses to our inquiry at what level in the NATO-EU relationship the problems occurred. Our witnesses agreed overwhelmingly that the problems were at the highest bureaucratic levels in Brussels, rather than at an operational level. At the operational level communication and coordination between NATO and EU forces was generally good. Dr Niblett suggested that, on the ground, in Kosovo or in Afghanistan, the relationship between NATO and ESDP forces had worked well. Likewise, Sir Paul Lever told us that “if one goes outside Brussels into the real world one will discover that cooperation takes place rather satisfactorily”. He noted that forces with an EU mandate and those undertaking a NATO mission “not only talk to each other but collaborate practically and effectively”. As a result, argued Dr Niblett, “when we talk about the ESDP and NATO not working together, we are talking about something bigger.”

252. Most of our witnesses accepted that the practical problem in NATO-EU relations was at the bureaucratic level. Charles Grant argued that, in part, competition between bureaucracies was inevitable; “bureaucracies protect their own interests and do not like bureaucracies made up of different people”. However, Mr Grant told us that “one has two bureaucracies in Brussels, NATO and the EU, which mistrust each other, do not like each other and do not talk to each other”. Jonathan Eyal agreed and suggested that “the crux of the problem” was that NATO and the EU were “bureaucratically incompatible”. A key part of this was the lack of a military culture within the European bureaucracy. He argued that:

The reality is that the organisations will only work when there are docking mechanisms between their bureaucracies at various levels, and institutionally the European Union is incapable of realising that at the moment. It just does not have the staff and it does not have the abilities. It has the desire to acquire powers, but it does not have them in practice and it does not know how to discharge them. That…is fundamentally the problem, quite apart from the usual political issues that we all know.
253. Our witnesses also identified the attitude and approach adopted by France as key factors in contributing to the current stalemate in NATO-EU relations. Charles Grant told us in evidence that “France has done quite a lot to prevent contacts” between the two organisations. Policymakers in Paris had a fear “that too much close contact between NATO and the EU will lead to the fragile flower of EU defence being contaminated by the big monstrous elephant that can stamp on it”.289

254. Most of our witnesses, however, saw cause for optimism in France’s attitude towards NATO-EU relations. They suggested that the election of President Sarkozy could prove a significant development which could prompt a closer dialogue. President Sarkozy had already indicated that France might be willing to rejoin the NATO integrated military command, which it had left, under President de Gaulle, in 1966. According to Michael Codner of RUSI, this could be “hugely significant if the idea is taken forward” as it would “enable the full integration of NATO and the EU’s force planning processes”.290

255. In evidence to us, Dana Allin argued that French resistance to greater contact between NATO and the EU had also been lessened by the growing recognition in France that it was “structurally impossible” to pursue European ambitions on anything “perceived as an anti-American or an anti-NATO basis”.291 Robin Niblett agreed, and argued there had been a “fundamental change” in French attitudes which augured well for an improvement in NATO-EU relations in the longer-term. According to Dr Niblett, there was “a realisation that a separate France that is anti the United States, not only can it not achieve its goals vis-à-vis the ESDP, but it is actually weaker within Europe and within the European Union”.292 Similarly, Jonathan Eyal argued that France “will make no progress on European defence with a large number of former communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe unless the project is seen as being another pillar strengthening, or parallel to, NATO rather than in opposition or as a substitute”.293

256. Professor Cox maintained that President Sarkozy’s election represented a “great moment”.294 The prospects for France rejoining the NATO command structure “has to be taken extremely seriously and more seriously...than the 1990s”. But Professor Cox expressed scepticism that Sarkozy would ultimately be able achieve this since there were “very deep and imbued views inside large sections of the political establishment” which remained hostile to NATO. Nevertheless, according to Professor Cox, even if President Sarkozy did not succeed in bringing France back into the NATO integrated command, there had been a huge shift in the prospects for the kind of European defence France had once sought. He argued that “the idea that you can have a European defence, a European Army, a European wing which in a sense is going to balance NATO in any fundamental way, challenge it or replace it, has simply gone out of the window”.295

289 Q 46
290 Ev 154
291 Q 98
292 Ibid
293 Q 100
294 Ibid
295 Q 102
257. Whether or not French attitudes towards NATO improve, a large obstacle to an improved NATO-EU relationship is the longstanding dispute between Turkey and Cyprus. The Secretary of State told us in evidence that the UK was working hard to improve the relationship between Turkey and Cyprus and to resolve the territorial disputes between them. But a lasting breakthrough would be possible only through a United Nations process.\textsuperscript{296}

258. Although there is a good degree of convergence in analysis of the causes of the tensions in the NATO-EU relationship, there is less agreement on how to achieve a better, more effective, and closer relationship. One solution which is often mooted is that there should be some kind of grand bargain between NATO and the EU, with NATO providing the hard power and the EU the soft power, or that NATO is confined to Euro-Atlantic territorial defence as the EU increasingly takes on global security as suggested by some.

259. We asked the MoD the extent to which there should be a division of labour between NATO and the EU. In evidence, the MoD maintained that there was no requirement for an explicit and formal division of labour between NATO and the EU. It maintained that each organisation had its strengths and that each had a role to play, but that they contributed in different ways, NATO specialising in more intensive military operations and the EU in situations which demanded greater civilian capability.\textsuperscript{297} The MoD stated:

NATO has a far greater military capability than ESDP. But the range of security instruments that the EU can deploy allows it to add value in different ways. There are thus some types of operations in which one or the other of the two has a clear advantage: NATO for more intensive military operations, the EU where the emphasis is on civilian capability. But there are equally a range of peace support operations which could be undertaken by either organisation, or where there is a role for both. In these cases the choice of whether NATO or the EU should lead should be made on a case by case basis, according to the intended objectives and the nations that intend to participate.\textsuperscript{298}

260. Dr Jonathan Eyal told us in evidence that in theory a clear division of responsibility between NATO and the EU should be achievable and that “one could see the outlines of a grand bargain…fairly easily”. There was much to commend the EU taking “one side of an operation while the higher end—that is, the military side—should be left to NATO”. The problem with such a bargain, however, was “a political question and one of aspirations” since “neither institution ultimately wishes to be consigned to one role in these conflicts.”\textsuperscript{299}

261. Dr Dana Allin agreed that while there was “a logical division of labour” between NATO and the EU it was “not one that is very easy to spell out in advance”.\textsuperscript{300} In practice it would have a lot to do with whether the United States wished to become involved in a particular crisis. It was possible to imagine a situation in which Europe undertook a

\textsuperscript{296} Qq 275-277
\textsuperscript{297} Ev 107
\textsuperscript{298} Ibid
\textsuperscript{299} Q 105
\textsuperscript{300} Ibid
mission of “punctuated intervention” to foster stability in a crisis in sub-Saharan Africa. In this scenario, “the ESDP may be more suited than the United States and NATO”, but it was not possible to have “hard and fast rules”.

262. Dr Robin Niblett, however, maintained that a division of labour between NATO and the EU was not desirable. There was a considerable degree of overlap between two organisations and to suggest a clear division of labour would imply an incompatibility between them that did not exist. He suggested that “to say they are incompatible is almost like saying your right hand is incompatible with your left hand”; for the most part, the same countries were involved in both organisations. Although Dr Niblett accepted that in certain circumstances, such as post-conflict situations, “the EU can bring different forces to the table” such as policing, gendarmerie and development support, he argued that “we cannot have a bargain between hard and soft power where NATO does the hard and the ESDP just does the soft”. This was the antithesis of the comprehensive approach that was so essential in situations like Afghanistan. Any division of labour along those lines would only serve to accentuate problems such as national caveats. Dr Allin, however, disagreed and suggested that the problem of caveats was not a function of the division of labour between NATO and the EU in situations like Afghanistan. The problems that had emerged in practice were “no problems that so far have been created by a European Union aspiration” and were instead “a factor of national sovereignty and different national cultures”. Dr Allin argued that “German inhibitions and national caveats are not caused by the European Union” and “would not go away if the European Union abandoned all ambitions in defence”.

263. Professor Cox argued that while “there is no fundamental incompatibility at the moment” between NATO and the ESDP, “there is a potential incompatibility” and this should not be ignored. According to Professor Cox, the origins of ESDP, although complex, “still arise out of a European desire to frankly let Europe do more and not have the United States define every single global agenda”. He maintained that the incompatibility would be managed “as long as the ESDP is not terribly serious”. However, “if the ESDP did get very serious, there may be an incompatibility” and it would be possible to imagine a situation in which “the left hand could start fighting with the right”.

264. There is a pressing need for a stronger, expanded and more cooperative relationship between NATO and the EU. This is essential for both organisations.

265. We do not believe a grand bargain between NATO and the EU in which NATO provides the hard power and the EU a soft alternative is either feasible or desirable. It would be the antithesis of the comprehensive approach which is so vital to current operations, such as Afghanistan. Nor do we believe that NATO should be confined merely to territorial defence of the Euro-Atlantic area.
266. We believe improving the NATO-EU relationship should be a key priority for NATO at the Bucharest Summit. Although the relationship is unlikely to improve radically in the short-term, the Summit represents an opportunity to set a new long-term course in NATO-EU relations. This should involve an expanded strategic dialogue between NATO and the EU, possibly by reinvigorating the contacts between the North Atlantic Council and the EU’s Political and Security Committee, and by identifying a series of small-scale and pragmatic initiatives to foster greater trust and cooperation between the two organisations.

The Lisbon Treaty and the future of NATO and European defence

267. The relationship between NATO and the EU has been subject to renewed scrutiny since the signing of the Lisbon Treaty by Heads of State and Government at the European Council on 13 December 2007. The Treaty contains a range of innovations in the area of the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy and, through that, the European Security and Defence Policy. The Treaty expands the scope of the ESDP, now called the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), and of its missions. It establishes a solidarity clause and a mutual defence commitment between the Member States of the EU and provides for the establishment of a process of “permanent structured cooperation” in defence matters. It creates a new “start up” fund for ESDP operations. It also establishes a single legal personality for the EU. In addition to these innovations, the Lisbon Treaty brings together the existing aspects of the ESDP, and all its developments since the 1999 European Summit at Cologne, within the framework of a single treaty.

268. In this part of our report, we examine the key ESDP provisions of the Treaty and assess what they mean for the future development of the ESDP and NATO. We do not seek to offer a comprehensive analysis of all the foreign and security aspects of the Lisbon Treaty. Our colleagues on the Foreign Affairs Committee published a report on The Foreign Policy Aspects of the Lisbon Treaty in January 2008. This examined, in some detail, the new foreign posts created by the Treaty, including the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European Council President, the CFSP decision-making process and the role of the European Court of Justice. We do not seek to duplicate this work. Nor do we seek to offer a clause by clause analysis of the Treaty; this is beyond the scope of this report. Our analysis of the Treaty focuses on two key provisions: permanent structured cooperation and the mutual defence clause.

The implications of permanent structured co-operation

269. The Lisbon Treaty sets out the arrangements whereby EU Member States can engage in permanent structured cooperation (PSC) in defence matters. The criteria for membership, which are set out in a protocol of the Treaty, states that participating states should have the capacity to supply by 2010 at the latest, either at a national level or as a component of a multinational force group, combat units and supporting elements capable of deployment within five to 30 days and sustainable for up to a period of 30 days. The protocol also sets out provisions on capability harmonisation, the pooling of defence assets, cooperating in training and logistics, regular assessments of national defence expenditure
and the development of flexibility, interoperability and deployability among forces.\textsuperscript{306} The Treaty establishes that the Council of Ministers will decide by qualified majority voting (QMV) to establish permanent structured cooperation and determine the list of participants. Once established only participating Member States would be able to take part in decisions relating to the development of structured cooperation, including the future participation of other Member States. If a Member State no longer fulfils the established criteria for participation in permanent structured cooperation, the Council, acting by QMV, may suspend the Member State concerned.\textsuperscript{307}

270. There is concern in some quarters that the Treaty’s provisions for the establishment of permanent structured cooperation, including provisions for qualified majority voting, could prove contrary to the UK’s interests. Opponents argue that countries left outside the PSC arrangements would have less incentive to enhance their defence capabilities. Some also suggest that PSC would lead to the creation of a separate European pillar of NATO which would undermine the Alliance. There is also concern that decisions on how PSC will work in practice are not clear. In the debate on the foreign and security aspects of the Lisbon Treaty, the Shadow Defence Secretary, Dr Liam Fox, told the House of Commons that PSC amounted to “integration in defence common policy by stealth” and that certain countries, France in particular, hoped “to create a six-nation hard-core of EU members who want to further EU defence integration”. According to Dr Fox, PSC would “establish an EU pillar in NATO” which was “absolutely unacceptable”.\textsuperscript{308}

271. In evidence to us, however, Daniel Keohane argued that the provisions for permanent structured cooperation “make…a lot of sense”. Since “military capabilities and ambitions vary widely among the member states”, PSC ensured that the EU could rely on a smaller group of the most willing and best-prepared countries to run its more demanding military missions”.\textsuperscript{309}

272. In its memorandum to our inquiry, the MoD maintained that permanent structured cooperation was in the interests of the UK. It would promote improvements in European defence capabilities and increases in European defence expenditure.\textsuperscript{310} The Department stated that:

> The provisions on permanent structured co-operation including in the Protocol on permanent structured cooperation do not affect foreign and defence policy but are solely limited to the purpose of developing military capabilities. This is in line with UK objectives for improving European capability development.\textsuperscript{311}

273. In the debate in the House of Commons on the foreign and security aspects of the Lisbon Treaty, the Foreign Secretary, the Rt Hon David Miliband, told the House that:

\textsuperscript{306} The Lisbon Treaty and external relations, Standard Note, SN/IA/4616, House of Commons Library, 11 February 2008, p 15
\textsuperscript{307} Ibid
\textsuperscript{308} HC Deb, 20 February 2008, Col 418
\textsuperscript{309} Ev 152
\textsuperscript{310} Ev 160
\textsuperscript{311} Ibid
One of the UK’s priorities on defence—in both the EU and NATO—is to get our partners to shoulder more of the international security burden and to get them to develop the right capabilities and provide the right sort of forces so that they can help to tackle the security challenges that we face. The Treaty includes a new provision—permanent structured cooperation—focused solely on developing EU member state capability in line with those aims. To become a member of permanent structured cooperation, EU member states will need to commit to a higher level of capability development. The prospect of membership will, we hope, encourage member states to develop the sort of deployable, flexible and sustainable forces for which we have been calling.\textsuperscript{312}

274. The provisions for permanent structured cooperation in the Lisbon Treaty promise to enhance European defence capabilities and expenditure. If the Treaty can deliver such long overdue improvements, which can be called on for EU and NATO missions, they can only be welcome. Improving military capabilities throughout Europe is in the interests not only of the EU but also of NATO. However, we remain to be convinced that PSC will deliver such improvements in practice. European nations have so far shown little appetite in investing sufficiently in defence.

275. It is essential that permanent structured cooperation does not lead to the development of a two—or three—tier Europe in defence matters. This would be counter to the interests of NATO.

276. How permanent structured cooperation will work in practice remains unclear. We call upon the MoD, in its response to this report, to state clearly how it expects PSC to work in practice.

\textit{The implications of the Lisbon Treaty for NATO}

277. Under Article 28A.7, the Treaty established provisions for the creation of a mutual assistance clause. The Article states that:

If a Member State is the victim of armed aggression of its territory, the Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. This shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States.

Commitments and cooperation in this area shall be consistent with commitments under the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, which, for those States which are members of it, remains the foundation of their collective defence and the forum for its implementation.\textsuperscript{313}

278. This is the first occasion on which any EU treaty has contained a mutual defence provision. On the surface, there would appear to be some duplication of NATO’s role as an organisation for collective defence. In evidence to us, the MoD stated that the Lisbon

\textsuperscript{312} HC Deb, 20 February 2008, Col 380

\textsuperscript{313} Treaty of Lisbon, December 2007, Article 28A.7
Treaty “does not duplicate NATO’s function as a mutual defence pact because not all members of the European Union are members of NATO”\textsuperscript{314} It went on to state that:

The mutual defence provision provides an obligation on Member States to come to the aid and assistance of another Member State which is the victim of armed aggression on its territory. For the first time EU Member States which are not also members of NATO are now committed to the defence of their fellow Member States (to the potential benefit of the UK).\textsuperscript{315}

This does not make clear in the case of armed aggression against a state that was a member of both NATO and the EU, which organisation would respond. In its memorandum to us, however, the MoD notes that:

The obligation to provide assistance [in the case of armed aggression] falls upon individual Member States, not the EU. The provision therefore does not provide a basis for the development of an EU collective defence organisation to rival NATO.\textsuperscript{316}

The MoD also notes that the Lisbon Treaty “makes clear that for members which are members of NATO, NATO remains the foundation of their collective defence and the forum for its implementation”.\textsuperscript{317}

279. We asked the Secretary of State for Defence what the Lisbon Treaty meant for NATO. He told us that:

I am in no doubt that NATO will remain the cornerstone of the United Kingdom defence policy and the only organisation for collective defence in Europe. The Reform Treaty does not change that. The Reform Treaty text makes clear that NATO is the foundation for collective defence of its members and the instrument for implementing that commitment; it is clear.\textsuperscript{318}

280. In its response to the report by the Foreign Affairs Committee on the \textit{Foreign Policy Aspects of the Lisbon Treaty}, the Government states that “even if there were to be a unanimous agreement to establish an EU common defence, it would need to be compatible with the common security and defence policy established within NATO”.\textsuperscript{319} Likewise, in the debate in the House of Commons on the foreign and security aspects of the Lisbon Treaty, the Foreign Secretary stated that “the development of European policy [under the Treaty] can complement NATO rather than rival it”.\textsuperscript{320}

281. The establishment of an EU mutual defence clause by the Lisbon Treaty overlaps, to some extent, with the provisions of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. This should be clarified at Bucharest. Although this ensures that non-NATO members of the

\textsuperscript{314} Ev 160  
\textsuperscript{315} Ibid  
\textsuperscript{316} Ibid  
\textsuperscript{317} Ibid  
\textsuperscript{318} Q 302  
\textsuperscript{319} \textit{Government Response to the Foreign Affairs Committee Report on “Foreign Policy Aspects of the Lisbon Treaty”}, Cm 7332, para 26  
\textsuperscript{320} HC Deb, 20 February 2008, Col 371
EU are now committed to each other’s defence, we believe it is essential that nothing in the Treaty undermines the primacy of NATO for its members. There must be no unnecessary duplication of commitments or roles which undermine the common defence.

282. We believe that the key test of the Lisbon Treaty will be the extent to which it makes a real difference in increasing European military capabilities, which so starkly lag behind those of the United States, and in improving the deployability of European forces. We are sceptical that the Treaty will itself achieve such improvements. This requires European countries to decide to spend more on defence—decisions they have so far been reluctant to take.
Conclusions and recommendations

The NATO Summit at Bucharest

1. We do not share the Secretary of State’s confidence that the last NATO Summit at Riga was a success. We recognise that some important progress was achieved, particularly in endorsing the comprehensive approach in Afghanistan and in agreeing the Comprehensive Political Guidance. Nevertheless, we believe that, overall, Riga was a disappointment and that the forthcoming Summit at Bucharest needs to set a clear path to achieving far more. (Paragraph 10)

2. The Government’s stated priorities for the Bucharest Summit, and the criteria by which its success will be judged, are unambitious and disappointingly vague. They do not provide Parliament with a sufficiently detailed breakdown of the UK’s aspirations which limits our ability to measure the success of the summit. (Paragraph 13)

3. We are also concerned that the Government fails to list seeking improvements in the relationship between NATO and the EU as one of its key priorities for the summit. We believe that improving that relationship is essential for the future effectiveness of both NATO and the EU. (Paragraph 14)

4. We call upon the Government, in its response to this report, to provide us with a comprehensive, detailed and frank assessment of the successes and shortcomings of the Bucharest Summit. (Paragraph 15)

The evolution of NATO’s role and purpose

5. The possibility of a global NATO—with a global mission and global partnerships—remains deeply contentious within the Alliance. Agreeing the scope and nature of NATO’s mission should, arguably, be one of the highest priorities at the Bucharest Summit, with that agreement defined clearly in a new Strategic Concept. (Paragraph 40)

6. Given the global nature of the threats we face, we believe there is no alternative to the Alliance fulfilling a global role. Its willingness and ability to act on a global basis to tackle threats where they arise is fundamental to NATO’s continued relevance. If NATO limits itself to a regional role in defence of the territory of the North Atlantic area alone, its value will be diminished, particularly to the United States, and its future will be in doubt. (Paragraph 41)

Uncertainty about the current role and purpose of NATO

7. During the Cold War, defining the role and purpose of NATO was straightforward: to contain and counter the Soviet threat. In the post-Cold War world, NATO faces a far more diverse range of security challenges. As a result, NATO’s role and purpose is far harder to define. Consequently, there is a lack of understanding, amongst the public in Europe and North America and within the Alliance itself, about the
The future of NATO and European defence

purpose of NATO in the 21st Century. We call upon the governments of all NATO countries to do more to explain to their citizens the relevance of NATO in today’s uncertain world. If people do not understand what NATO is for or why it is important to them, their support for it will inevitably decline. (Paragraph 50)

The need for a new Strategic Concept

8. We believe that NATO needs to revise its Strategic Concept as a matter of the highest priority. The new Concept should define, far more clearly, the role, purpose and relevance of the Alliance in the context of today’s security challenges. The new Strategic Concept should also reflect the fact that, in terms of its operations, NATO is about more than the projection of military force alone; it is about implementing the Comprehensive Approach, and providing the stability in post-conflict situations to allow reconstruction and development to take place. NATO should launch a review of the Strategic Concept at the forthcoming Bucharest Summit for agreement at its 60th anniversary summit in 2009. (Paragraph 60)

NATO and the United States

9. United States support for NATO is fundamental to the continued existence of the Alliance; without it NATO would become redundant. But the US will only support NATO if the Alliance serves the national interests of its members, and particularly the United States. To remain relevant to the United States, and to demonstrate that relevance to the American people, the Alliance must be capable of tackling today’s and tomorrow’s security challenges. To do so, NATO must become more capable, more deployable and more flexible, and the European Allies together need to demonstrate clearly what they contribute to NATO. (Paragraph 65)

NATO and the UK’s national interests

10. We are committed to NATO and believe it continues to serve the UK’s national interests. The UK’s support for the Alliance should not be uncritical or unquestioning, and there are important areas, such as force generation, burden-sharing and capabilities, where NATO must improve. However, we believe NATO remains an indispensable alliance, the essential embodiment of the transatlantic relationship and the ultimate guarantor of our collective security. NATO must remain at the heart of the UK’s defence policy. (Paragraph 69)

The NATO mission in Afghanistan

11. The purpose of the NATO-led ISAF mission is to achieve stability and security in Afghanistan, to deny al-Qaeda and the Taliban the environment in which to operate, and to implement the Comprehensive Approach by delivering the security necessary to enable reconstruction and development to occur. This requires a sustained, long-term military and financial commitment by all contributing nations. (Paragraph 83)

12. There is currently some disagreement between the NATO allies about the objectives of the ISAF mission and the means of achieving them. All agree on the importance of
the Comprehensive Approach, but there are differences in the interpretation of its meaning and implications. Achieving a common understanding of ISAF’s mission in Afghanistan should be a key priority for NATO at the Bucharest Summit. This is essential if there is to be greater strategic coherence to the Alliance’s operations. (Paragraph 84)

**Force generation in Afghanistan**

13. Succeeding in Afghanistan is, and must remain, at the top of NATO’s agenda. All 26 members of the Alliance contribute to the ISAF mission, and their efforts—together with those of the 14 non-NATO nations who participate in ISAF—are vital to the stabilisation and reconstruction of the country. It is essential the Alliance works together in delivering the Comprehensive Approach—creating the secure and stable conditions to enable reconstruction and development to take place and to allow space for political progress to be achieved. (Paragraph 92)

14. This also underlines the importance of clarifying the ISAF mission in a way that is compatible with the Comprehensive Approach and which all NATO member states will support. A number of issues need to be urgently addressed: the appointment of a UN international coordinator, a divided military command chain, differing perspectives on the mission amongst ISAF troop contributing nations, confusion about dealing with narcotics, the effectiveness of the civil aid effort to win hearts and minds, and corruption within elements of the Afghan administration. Indeed, a clearer definition of success in Afghanistan at Bucharest would be extremely welcome. (Paragraph 93)

15. Failure in Afghanistan would be deeply damaging for the people of that country. It would have serious implications for the Alliance’s cohesion and credibility. But NATO’s continued existence does not depend upon the outcome of its operations in Afghanistan. In any circumstance it would have a role because of its command structure, its mechanisms for harmonising equipment and promoting interoperability between its members, and its function as a political forum for essential discussions about defence and security. However, if the Alliance cannot demonstrate its ability to undertake expeditionary operations, the support of the United States for NATO over the long-term will be diminished. (Paragraph 94)

16. NATO has encountered substantial difficulties in generating sufficient forces for Afghanistan and there are large disparities in troop contributions between different members of the Alliance. In some of the larger troop-contributing nations, there is a perception that the burden in Afghanistan is not equitably shared and that some countries are making sacrifices that others are not prepared to accept. (Paragraph 95)

17. We recognise that not all members of NATO have the capabilities to deploy their forces on expeditionary operations and that some have found it hard to obtain the popular or parliamentary support required to increase their deployments. We welcome, in particular, the pledges made recently by Denmark and the Netherlands to the ISAF mission which show how such barriers can be overcome. (Paragraph 96)
18. More troops are needed in Afghanistan if the ISAF mission is to succeed. We look to our other allies to make additional contributions where they can, be it through increased force levels, pledges of military equipment, or by offsetting the costs of operations. We hope that further progress in force generation can be achieved at the Bucharest Summit. Such progress will be essential to the future of the ISAF mission. (Paragraph 97)

**National caveats**

19. The ultimate decision over whether to deploy forces on operations is, and must remain, a matter for each sovereign member state of the Alliance. UK Forces are deployed in Afghanistan without any caveats imposed upon their use, but the public and Parliament maintain a close interest in how those forces are used. The ability of any nation to commit its forces on operations is governed by the willingness of the public to sustain those commitments and by ability of any nation to sustain expeditionary operations. However inconvenient, caveats are an inevitable part of military life. The real challenge is to prevent them from impairing operational effectiveness. There is no doubt that caveats can have a detrimental effect on the coherence of NATO’s operations. Although some important progress has been made in removing these restrictions there remains a long way to go. Further progress is essential at Bucharest. (Paragraph 111)

20. The debate on national caveats would benefit from greater clarity about which countries do and do not impose caveats on their force commitments to ISAF. We call upon the MoD, in its response to this report, to provide a full breakdown of the national caveats imposed by each member of the Alliance on the use of their forces in Afghanistan and to state which countries impose no restrictions. (Paragraph 112)

**Afghanistan and the future of Alliance military transformation**

21. NATO’s experience in Afghanistan since 2003 has served to highlight areas in which the Alliance needs to improve. It has revealed the need to equip NATO better for expeditionary operations, to improve further defence planning and force generation processes, and to improve significantly its expeditionary military capabilities. To this extent, Afghanistan has helped to promote the military transformation of the Alliance, even if there remains a long way to go. (Paragraph 115)

**NATO capabilities and the Bucharest Summit**

22. New commitments to achieve real, tangible improvements in Alliance capabilities will be a key test of the success of the Bucharest Summit, but their worth will be measurable only in the light of their delivery over time. (Paragraph 116)

**NATO’s principal capability shortfalls**

23. NATO currently faces shortfalls in military capabilities in a range of areas, most significantly in strategic airlift, reconnaissance, surveillance and intelligence assets, and interoperable communications. These capabilities are fundamental to current
operations in Afghanistan and are also crucial if the Alliance is to fulfil its ambition of having the capacity to conduct future expeditionary operations. (Paragraph 129)

**Political will and Alliance capabilities**

24. In terms of fulfilling its expeditionary role, one of the key capability shortfalls confronting the Alliance is that of political will. This, in turn, depends on a perception of a shared danger and a shared requirement to respond. Expeditionary operations are predominantly discretionary by nature; there is a choice to be made about participation in any given mission. Alliance expeditionary operations, such as the current Afghanistan deployment, must be underwritten and sustained by the political will of the countries involved, both individually and collectively. Its absence undermines the capability of the Alliance. As important as it is to deliver tangible military capabilities, such as strategic airlift, the generation of the political will necessary to fulfil its expeditionary role is the greatest challenge currently facing NATO. (Paragraph 135)

**The NATO Response Force**

25. The creation of the NATO Response Force (NRF) is a significant achievement by the Alliance and promises, in theory, to help improve Alliance capabilities in the long term. However, if the NRF is to be effective it will be important for the Allies to achieve consensus on when, where, and why to use it. It is also essential that the force requirements of the NRF are met in full. (Paragraph 144)

26. We believe NATO should abandon the present “costs lie where they fall” arrangement for funding the NRF. We believe an appropriate alternative would be to finance the NRF through NATO Common Funding. Putting the NRF on a more stable financial footing is essential if it is to be an effective force. The current arrangements impose unpredictable financial burdens on troop contributing nations and act as a significant political disincentive for deploying the NRF. (Paragraph 145)

**The role of Allied Command Transformation**

27. The contribution made to date by Allied Command Transformation to the improvement of the Alliance’s expeditionary capabilities is difficult to measure. We are also concerned by reports that its focus on long-term capability development has been overshadowed by the operational demands of Afghanistan. ACT potentially has an important role to play in improving NATO capabilities in the long-term and in developing the Alliance’s concepts and doctrines for the future. As important as current operations in Afghanistan unquestionably are, ACT must not be diverted from this central purpose. ACT must also improve its relationship with Allied Command Operations and with the European Defence Agency. (Paragraph 151)

**Defence spending and the future of NATO**

28. The ability of the NATO Alliance to deliver real and lasting improvements in military capabilities depends on the willingness of Allies to commit sufficient
resources. There can be no greater demonstration of political will in NATO, or the lack of it, than the amount of money each member of the Alliance is willing to spend on defence. There exists a clear, persistent and growing gap in defence expenditure between the European members of NATO and the United States and there seems little prospect of this being reversed. (Paragraph 165)

29. Despite a longstanding commitment by all members of the NATO Alliance to spend a minimum of 2% of their GDP on defence, only six out of the 24 European members of NATO actually achieve that target. But defence spending is not simply about quantity; it is about what the money is spent on. We believe that in addition to the 2% target the Alliance should establish detailed capability targets, and timeframes, against which the performance of Allies could be measured. (Paragraph 166)

30. If the European members of the Alliance want to be taken seriously, if they want the United States to remain engaged in, and committed to, NATO, and if they want greater influence in the overall direction of Alliance policy, they must commit the necessary resources and improve their capabilities. We are concerned that an Alliance with such large, and growing, discrepancies in defence expenditure will not be sustainable in the long term. (Paragraph 167)

Enlargement and the Bucharest Summit

31. Membership of the Alliance within the North Atlantic area should continue to be based on the ability of applicant countries to meet NATO’s performance-based membership criteria rather than the imposition, by the Alliance, of arbitrary territorial boundaries. Welcoming new members at the Bucharest Summit, or granting Membership Action Plans to those who meet NATO’s criteria, would be a powerful signal that the Alliance remains committed to its open door policy. (Paragraph 171)

32. We call upon the Government to state clearly, in advance of the Bucharest Summit, which countries it intends to support in their applications for full membership of NATO and for Membership Action Plans. (Paragraph 172)

Previous enlargements

33. Previous enlargements of NATO have made an essential contribution to the development of stability and democracy in Europe. Many of NATO’s newer members have made significant contributions to Alliance operations and are improving their military capabilities. Equally importantly, enlargement to date has played an important role in extending and embedding democracy in Central and Eastern Europe. (Paragraph 176)

The prospects for further enlargements

34. The performance of Albania, Croatia and Macedonia in meeting the criteria for NATO membership will be assessed at the Bucharest Summit. Providing they meet
those criteria there is no reason why they should not be admitted into the Alliance. (Paragraph 181)

35. Georgia’s ambitions for joining NATO will depend upon its performance in meeting the Alliance’s criteria for participation in a Membership Action Plan. Although we are not in a position to judge for ourselves whether Georgia currently meets those criteria, we support, in principle, its long-term ambition to join the Alliance. (Paragraph 189)

36. Before joining NATO, Georgia must demonstrate clearly and unambiguously the strength of its commitment to democracy and further democratic and political reform. It must also work to resolve the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, though much depends on the willingness of Russia to play a constructive role. For NATO, there are real and legitimate concerns about admitting a country with unresolved conflicts within its borders. But if NATO insists upon the resolution of the conflicts before Georgia is allowed to join NATO, this will effectively hand Russia a veto over Georgian membership of the Alliance. (Paragraph 190)

37. Although Ukraine has indicated its desire to be considered for a Membership Action Plan, it seems highly unlikely that NATO will decide to make such an offer at the Bucharest Summit. The Ukrainian population is, at best, seriously divided on joining NATO and, at worst, opposed. For NATO to accept as a new member a country whose population did not support such membership would in our judgement exacerbate the problems considered earlier in this report. While in principle, if Ukraine demonstrates its commitment to the principles of the Alliance and fulfils the criteria for membership outlined by NATO, the Alliance should consider an application for membership, that application should in the longer term be determined only after great weight has been given to the wishes of the people of Ukraine. (Paragraph 195)

The future of the Alliance’s open door policy

38. NATO should continue to be open to the acceptance of new members in the Euro-Atlantic area. The promise of NATO membership provides the Alliance with a means of encouraging countries on its borders to embrace internal democratic reform and the reform of their armed forces; it is a powerful tool of defence diplomacy. However, it is important that as new members join the Alliance they bring with them additional capabilities or, at the least, a commitment that would add to NATO’s capabilities in future. New members cannot only be consumers of security; they must also contribute to the common defence. (Paragraph 199)

39. Membership of NATO should continue to be performance-based; if a country meets the criteria for membership, it should be permitted to join. We believe it is essential that NATO’s open door policy is maintained on this basis. Ending the Alliance’s open door policy on membership is not in the interests of the Alliance itself or European stability as a whole. Signalling that the Alliance has reached its outer limits, or ruling out further expansion, would consign those countries left outside NATO’s borders to an uncertain future, potentially creating instability on the Alliance’s
Eastern fringes. Perpetuating this instability is not in the interests of any member of the NATO Alliance. (Paragraph 200)

NATO Partnerships

40. NATO should continue to work closely with nations beyond its borders and should work to enhance further its relationships with Australia, New Zealand and Japan. Formalising the relationship between NATO and these countries is desirable, but this need not involve full membership of the Alliance. Extending full NATO membership beyond the Euro-Atlantic area carries distinct risks; there is a danger it could dilute the coherence of the Alliance, create yet more questions about its role and purpose, or complicate decision-making. However, NATO should continue to embrace the concept of global partnerships and seek to intensify cooperation with like-minded allies. (Paragraph 210)

The development of the European Security and Defence Policy

41. EU Battlegroups are a significant innovation and promise, in theory, to improve European capabilities, force generation and interoperability. Given the poor level of European capabilities and the difficulties encountered in generating sufficient forces for Afghanistan, such improvements can only be welcome and would represent a significant capability gain. A key test of whether Battlegroups represent a useable military capability will be the ability of these force packages to fight, but, as in Afghanistan, this requires a level of political will on the part of the troop-contributing nations that may not exist. We also doubt whether the creation of Battlegroups will lead to any increases in European defence budgets, which is the key to improving military capabilities. (Paragraph 233)

42. The fact that EU Battlegroups are intended to perform some of the more robust elements of the Petersburg Tasks suggests some degree of overlap of role and responsibility with the NATO Response Force. Any duplication must be avoided. However, if Battlegroups help European nations to improve significantly their force generation processes, this is likely to help NATO meet the force requirements of the NRF. (Paragraph 234)

43. The EDA potentially has an important role to play in improving European capabilities, but the suggestion that the Agency lacks structure and orientation is worrying. The EDA should focus more narrowly on delivering real improvements in capabilities, interoperability and deployability. For the EDA to make a really useful contribution, it needs to be integrated with NATO’s effort in this area, so interoperability extends throughout the EU and NATO. Yet, in light of its limited resources, we are not convinced that it can make a great difference. (Paragraph 243)

44. We believe it is essential that, in promoting the development of European capabilities, the EDA should not duplicate the work of NATO’s Allied Command Transformation. The Defence Procurement Code of Conduct must not become a vehicle for European protectionism by excluding American products. (Paragraph 244)
45. Turkey’s exclusion from membership of the European Defence Agency is deeply regrettable. Turkey has an enormous amount it could contribute to Europe’s capabilities and its defence spending is among the highest of all NATO states. We believe Turkey should be admitted to the EDA as a matter of priority. (Paragraph 246)

The relationship between NATO and the EU

46. A close relationship between NATO and the EU is essential. The lack of it is inexcusable given the importance of NATO to EU security. In practice, the relationship between NATO and the EU is fraught with difficulties. It is plagued by mistrust and unhealthy competition, and characterised by a lack of communication and cooperation. Little progress has been achieved in recent years in improving a relationship which remained stalled and inefficient. (Paragraph 250)

47. There is a pressing need for a stronger, expanded and more cooperative relationship between NATO and the EU. This is essential for both organisations. (Paragraph 264)

48. We do not believe a grand bargain between NATO and the EU in which NATO provides the hard power and the EU a soft alternative is either feasible or desirable. It would be the antithesis of the comprehensive approach which is so vital to current operations, such as Afghanistan. Nor do we believe that NATO should be confined merely to territorial defence of the Euro-Atlantic area. (Paragraph 265)

49. We believe improving the NATO-EU relationship should be a key priority for NATO at the Bucharest Summit. Although the relationship is unlikely to improve radically in the short-term, the Summit represents an opportunity to set a new long-term course in NATO-EU relations. This should involve an expanded strategic dialogue between NATO and the EU, possibly by reinvigorating the contacts between the North Atlantic Council and the EU’s Political and Security Committee, and by identifying a series of small-scale and pragmatic initiatives to foster greater trust and cooperation between the two organisations. (Paragraph 266)

The Lisbon Treaty and the future of NATO and European defence

50. The provisions for permanent structured cooperation in the Lisbon Treaty promise to enhance European defence capabilities and expenditure. If the Treaty can deliver such long overdue improvements, which can be called on for EU and NATO missions, they can only be welcome. Improving military capabilities throughout Europe is in the interests not only of the EU but also of NATO. However, we remain to be convinced that PSC will deliver such improvements in practice. European nations have so far shown little appetite in investing sufficiently in defence. (Paragraph 274)

51. It is essential that permanent structured cooperation does not lead to the development of a two—or three—tier Europe in defence matters. This would be counter to the interests of NATO. (Paragraph 275)
52. How permanent structured cooperation will work in practice remains unclear. We call upon the MoD, in its response to this report, to state clearly how it expects PSC to work in practice. (Paragraph 276)

53. The establishment of an EU mutual defence clause by the Lisbon Treaty overlaps, to some extent, with the provisions of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. This should be clarified at Bucharest. Although this ensures that non-NATO members of the EU are now committed to each other’s defence, we believe it is essential that nothing in the Treaty undermines the primacy of NATO for its members. There must be no unnecessary duplication of commitments or roles which undermine the common defence. (Paragraph 281)

54. We believe that the key test of the Lisbon Treaty will be the extent to which it makes a real difference in increasing European military capabilities, which so starkly lag behind those of the United States, and in improving the deployability of European forces. We are sceptical that the Treaty will itself achieve such improvements. This requires European countries to decide to spend more on defence—decisions they have so far been reluctant to take. (Paragraph 282)
### Annex A: List of abbreviations

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACO</td>
<td>Allied Command Operations, Mons, Belgium</td>
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<td>ACT</td>
<td>Allied Command Transformation</td>
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<td>AFNORTH</td>
<td>Allied Forces North</td>
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<td>ANA</td>
<td>Afghan National Army</td>
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<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>BG</td>
<td>Battle Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>C4ISTAR</td>
<td>Command Control Communication and Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBRN</td>
<td>Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear</td>
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<td>CCC</td>
<td>Capabilities Commitment Conference</td>
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<td>CDP</td>
<td>Capability Development Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>CENTO</td>
<td>Central Treaty Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CER</td>
<td>Centre for European Reform</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFSP</td>
<td>Common Foreign and Security Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>CJSOR</td>
<td>Combined Joint Statement of Responsibilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMISAF</td>
<td>Commander, International Security Assistance Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPG</td>
<td>Comprehensive Political Guidance</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSDP</td>
<td>Common Security and Defence Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCI</td>
<td>Defence Capabilities Initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>DfID</td>
<td>Department for International Development (UK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DSACEUR</td>
<td>Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe</td>
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<td>ECAP</td>
<td>European Capabilities Action Plan</td>
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<td>EDA</td>
<td>European Defence Agency</td>
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<td>ERRF</td>
<td>European Rapid Reaction Force</td>
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<td>ESDI</td>
<td>European Security and Defence Identity</td>
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<td>ESDP</td>
<td>European Security and Defence Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESS</td>
<td>European Security Strategy</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>EUMC</td>
<td>European Union Military Committee</td>
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<td>EUMS</td>
<td>European Union Military Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>FCO</td>
<td>Foreign and Commonwealth Office (UK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<tr>
<td>HG 2010</td>
<td>Headline Goal 2010</td>
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<td>HHG</td>
<td>Helsinki Headline Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>IFOR</td>
<td>Implementation Force (NATO Force in Bosnia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>IISS</td>
<td>International Institute for Strategic Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISAF</td>
<td>International Security Assistance Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>KFOR</td>
<td>Kosovo Force</td>
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<td>MAP</td>
<td>Membership Action Plan</td>
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<td>MoD</td>
<td>Ministry of Defence (UK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAC</td>
<td>North Atlantic Council</td>
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<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEC</td>
<td>Network Enabled Capability</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>NRF</td>
<td>NATO Response Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTM-I</td>
<td>NATO Training Mission—Iraq</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCCAR</td>
<td>Organisation Conjointe de Coopération en matière d’Armement</td>
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<tr>
<td>OEF</td>
<td>Operation Enduring Freedom (US-led mission in Afghanistan)</td>
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<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCC</td>
<td>Prague Capabilities Commitment</td>
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<tr>
<td>PfP</td>
<td>Partnership for Peace</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRT</td>
<td>Provincial Reconstruction Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>Permanent Structured Cooperation</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>QMV</td>
<td>Qualified Majority Voting</td>
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<td>RUSI</td>
<td>Royal United Services Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>SACEUR</td>
<td>Supreme Allied Commander Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEATO</td>
<td>South East Asia Treaty Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>SFOR</td>
<td>Stabilisation Force (NATO Force in Bosnia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHAPE</td>
<td>Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNSC</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNSCR</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council Resolution</td>
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<tr>
<td>WEU</td>
<td>Western European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>WMD</td>
<td>Weapons of Mass Destruction</td>
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As part of our inquiry into the future of NATO and European defence, we undertook the following programme of visits:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Members participating</th>
<th>Meetings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 20-21 February 2007 | Paris, France   | Robert Key            | • Briefing by Deputy Head of Mission and UK Embassy staff  
• Meeting with the National Armaments Director, Director of Industrial Affairs Department, and Deputy Director for Cooperation and European Development, Délegation Générale pour l'Armement  
• Meeting with the Deputy Director for European and Atlantic Alliance Affairs, Department of Strategic Affairs, and Head of Bilateral Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
• Meeting with the Defence Committee, French National Assembly  
• Meeting with representatives of think tanks  
• Meeting with the Technical Counsellor to the President of the Republic and the Air Adjutant, Elysée Palace |
| 21-22 February 2007 | Madrid, Spain   | Mr Jenkin, Mr Jenkins | • Briefing by HM Ambassador and Embassy staff  
• Meeting with the Secretary General and the Director General of Defence Policy, Ministry of Defence  
• Meeting with the Minister of Defence  
• Meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs  
• Meeting with the Congress Defence Committee  
• Briefing from think tanks at the Real Instituto Elcano |
| 27-28 February 2007 | Berlin, Germany | Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Crausby | • Briefing by HM Ambassador  
• Briefing by the Defence Section, UK Embassy  
• Meeting with the German Defence Committee  
• Meeting with the German Budget Committee  
• Meeting with the Special Representative for Security Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
• Meeting with the Parliamentary State Secretary, Ministry of Defence  
• Meeting with the Assistant to the Chancellor, Chancellery  
• Meeting with representatives of think tanks |
| 27 February 2007   | Rome, Italy     | Mr Borrow, Mr Holloway | • Briefing by the First Secretary and UK Embassy staff  
• Meeting with the Diplomatic Counsellor to the Defence Minister, the Political/Military Adviser to the Defence Minister, and the Deputy Head, Political and Military Planning Division, Ministry of Defence  
• Meeting with the Deputy Defence Secretary General and Deputy Armaments Director, and the Director General for Political Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Members participating</th>
<th>Meetings</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 12 March 2007    | Prague, Czech Republic | Mr Hamilton, Mr Hancock, Mr Jenkins, Willie Rennie | • Meeting with the Defence Committee, Chamber of Deputies  
• Briefing by HM Ambassador and UK Embassy staff  
• Meeting with the Deputy Chairman of the House of Deputies Defence and Security Committee  
• Meeting with the First Deputy Minister of Defence  
• Meeting with the Political Director, and the Director and Deputy Director of the Security Policy Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
• Meeting with the Director, Defence Policy and Strategy Division, Ministry of Defence |
| 21 March 2007    | Copenhagen, Denmark    | Linda Gilroy, Robert Key, John Smith             | • Briefing by HM Ambassador and UK Embassy staff  
• Meeting with State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
• Meeting with the Defence Secretary, the Head of the Ministerial Secretariat, and the Desk Officer, Department for NATO and EU Policy, Ministry of Defence  
• Meeting with the Defence and Foreign Affairs Committees, Danish Parliament  
• Meeting with representatives of think tanks |
| 21 March 2007    | The Hague, The Netherlands | Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Borrow, Mr Havard | • Briefing by HM Ambassador and UK Embassy staff  
• Meeting with the Defence and Foreign Affairs Committees of the Dutch Parliament  
• Meeting with the Policy Director and Policy Adviser, Ministry of Defence and the Head of Security and Defence Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
• Meeting with representatives of think tanks |
| 28-29 March 2007 | Brussels, Belgium      | Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Borrow, Mr Havard, Mr Jenkins, Mr Jones, Robert Key | • Briefing at the UK Representation to the EU with HM Ambassador and UKRep staff  
• Meeting with Robert Cooper, Director-General External Economic Relations, Politico-Military Affairs, EU Council Secretariat, and Claude-France Arnauld, DGE8 Defence Issues, EU Council Secretariat  
• Meeting with Nick Witney, Chief Executive, European Defence Agency  
• Meeting with Lieutenant General David Leakey, Director General, EU Military Staff  
• Briefing at the UK Delegation to NATO, with the UK Permanent Representative to NATO and UKDel staff  
• Meeting with Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, NATO Secretary General  
• Meeting with the French and German Permanent Representatives to NATO  
• Roundtable discussion with senior NATO International Staff: Assistant Secretary General Defence Policy and Planning, Deputy Assistant Secretary General Defence Investment, Head of Resource Policy Coordination, Deputy Assistant Secretary General Operations  
• Meeting with the US Deputy Permanent Representative to NATO |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Members participating</th>
<th>Meetings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 21 May 2007   | Warsaw, Poland                  | Mr Hancock, Mr Holloway, Mr Jenkin                                                     | • Briefing from HM Ambassador and Embassy staff  
• Briefing by Senior British Military Adviser to the Polish Ministry of Defence, UK Embassy  
• Meeting with the Under Secretary of State and Director of International Security Policy, Ministry of Defence  
• Meeting with the Deputy Director of Security Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
• Meeting with the Head of the National Security Council  
• Roundtable discussion with think tanks: Director and Security Issues Specialist, Demos Europa |
| 3-7 June 2007 | Washington DC, USA and Ottawa, Canada | Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Borrow, Mr Crausby, Linda Gilroy, Mr Hamilton, Mr Hancock, Mr Havard, Mr Holloway, Mr Jenkins, Mr Jenkins, Willie Rennie, John Smith | Washington DC, USA  
• Briefing from Deputy Head of Mission and Embassy staff  
• Meeting with AT&L Director for International Cooperation, Department of Defense  
• Meeting with Assistant Secretary, International Security Affairs, Department of Defense  
• Meeting with Principal Director for NATO and European Policy, Department of Defense  
• Meeting with Deputy Coordinator Iraq and Deputy Assistant Secretary Regional Security, Department of State  
• Meeting with Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, European and Eurasian Affairs  
• Meeting with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee  
• Meeting with the House Foreign Affairs Committee  
• Meeting with the House Armed Services Committee  
• Meeting with the Senate Armed Services Committee  
• Meeting with Madeleine Albright, former US Secretary of State  
• Meeting with William Kristol, Editor, Newsweek  
• Roundtable discussion with think tanks and commentators, Atlantic Council  
Ottawa, Canada  
• Briefing by the High Commission Staff  
• Meeting with the Minister for National Defence  
• Meeting with the Opposition Spokesperson for defence  
• Meeting with the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence  
• Meeting with Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs  
• Meeting with Roland Paris, Associate Professor, University of Ottawa |
| 14-18 October 2007 | Tbilisi, Georgia and Ankara, Turkey | Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Borrow, Mr Crausby, Linda Gilroy, Mr Havard, Mr Holloway, Mr Jenkins | Tbilisi  
• Briefing by HM Ambassador and Embassy staff  
• Meeting with the Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration  
• Meeting with the Minister of Defence and the Deputy Minister of Defence  
• Meeting with the Speaker of the Georgian Parliament |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Members participating</th>
<th>Meetings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|      |          | Mr Jenkins, Robert Key, Willie Rennie, John Smith | Parliament and Members of the Georgian Foreign Affairs and Defence and Security Committees  
- Meeting with representatives of the OSCE  
- Meeting with opposition MPs  
Ankara  
- Briefing from HM Ambassador and Embassy staff  
- Meeting with the Deputy Chief of the Turkish General Staff  
- Meeting with the Minister of National Defence  
- Meeting with the Chairman of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly Turkish Group  
- Meeting with the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Turkish Grand National Assembly  
- Briefing at the NATO Centre of Excellence—Defence Against Terrorism  
- Visit to the 28th Peacekeeping Brigade of the Turkish Armed Forces  
- Meeting with a former Turkish Ambassador to NATO  
- Meeting with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
Annex C: NATO members and partner countries

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### NATO Partners

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### NATO Mediterranean Dialogue Partners

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*Source: NATO Handbook, p 17*
### Annex D: Defence spending by NATO and EU member states

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</tbody>
</table>

Figures are defence spending by country as a percentage of GDP

*Iceland has no armed forces

Source: House of Commons Library
Annex E: Text of the North Atlantic Treaty, 4 April 1949

The Parties to this Treaty reaffirm their faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments.

They are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. They seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area.

They are resolved to unite their efforts for collective defence and for the preservation of peace and security. They therefore agree to this North Atlantic Treaty:

**Article 1**

The Parties undertake, as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, to settle any international dispute in which they may be involved by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered, and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

**Article 2**

The Parties will contribute toward the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions are founded, and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being. They will seek to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and will encourage economic collaboration between any or all of them.

**Article 3**

In order more effectively to achieve the objectives of this Treaty, the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack.

**Article 4**

The Parties will consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened.

**Article 5**

The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will
assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.

Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security.

Article 6

For the purpose of Article 5, an armed attack on one or more of the Parties is deemed to include an armed attack:

on the territory of any of the Parties in Europe or North America, on the Algerian Departments of France, on the territory of or on the islands under the jurisdiction of any of the Parties in the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer;

on the forces, vessels, or aircraft of any of the Parties, when in or over these territories or any other area in Europe in which occupation forces of any of the Parties were stationed on the date when the Treaty entered into force or the Mediterranean Sea or the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer.

Article 7

This Treaty does not affect, and shall not be interpreted as affecting in any way the rights and obligations under the Charter of the Parties which are members of the United Nations, or the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Article 8

Each Party declares that none of the international engagements now in force between it and any other of the Parties or any third State is in conflict with the provisions of this Treaty, and undertakes not to enter into any international engagement in conflict with this Treaty.

Article 9

The Parties hereby establish a Council, on which each of them shall be represented, to consider matters concerning the implementation of this Treaty. The Council shall be so organised as to be able to meet promptly at any time. The Council shall set up such subsidiary bodies as may be necessary; in particular it shall establish immediately a defence committee which shall recommend measures for the implementation of Articles 3 and 5.

321 The definition of the territories to which Article 5 applies was revised by Article 2 of the Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty on the accession of Greece and Turkey signed on 22 October 1951.

322 On January 16, 1963, the North Atlantic Council noted that insofar as the former Algerian Departments of France were concerned, the relevant clauses of this Treaty had become inapplicable as from July 3, 1962.
Article 10

The Parties may, by unanimous agreement, invite any other European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area to accede to this Treaty. Any State so invited may become a Party to the Treaty by depositing its instrument of accession with the Government of the United States of America. The Government of the United States of America will inform each of the Parties of the deposit of each such instrument of accession.

Article 11

This Treaty shall be ratified and its provisions carried out by the Parties in accordance with their respective constitutional processes. The instruments of ratification shall be deposited as soon as possible with the Government of the United States of America, which will notify all the other signatories of each deposit. The Treaty shall enter into force between the States which have ratified it as soon as the ratifications of the majority of the signatories, including the ratifications of Belgium, Canada, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States, have been deposited and shall come into effect with respect to other States on the date of the deposit of their ratifications.323

Article 12

After the Treaty has been in force for ten years, or at any time thereafter, the Parties shall, if any of them so requests, consult together for the purpose of reviewing the Treaty, having regard for the factors then affecting peace and security in the North Atlantic area, including the development of universal as well as regional arrangements under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Article 13

After the Treaty has been in force for twenty years, any Party may cease to be a Party one year after its notice of denunciation has been given to the Government of the United States of America, which will inform the Governments of the other Parties of the deposit of each notice of denunciation.

Article 14

This Treaty, of which the English and French texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited in the archives of the Government of the United States of America. Duly certified copies will be transmitted by that Government to the Governments of other signatories.

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323 The Treaty came into force on 24 August 1949, after the deposition of the ratifications of all signatory states.
Formal minutes

Tuesday 4 March 2008

Members present:

Mr James Arbuthnot, in the Chair

Mr David S Borrow
Mr David Crausby
Linda Gilroy
Mr David Hamilton
Mr Mike Hancock

Mr Adam Holloway
Robert Key
Mr Bernard Jenkin
Mr Brian Jenkins
John Smith

Draft Report (The future of NATO and European defence), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 5 read and agreed to.

Paragraph 6 read.

Amendment proposed, in line 14, after “Alliance” to insert “becoming more important than NATO in the minds of many EU members of NATO”.—(Mr Bernard Jenkin.)

Question put, That the Amendment be made.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 3
Mr Mike Hancock
Mr Adam Holloway
Mr Bernard Jenkin

Noes, 6
Mr David S Borrow
Mr David Crausby
Linda Gilroy
Mr David Hamilton
Mr Brian Jenkins
John Smith

Paragraph agreed to.

Paragraphs 7 to 35 read and agreed to.

Paragraph 36 read.
Amendment proposed, in line 6, at the end, to add “and the rising importance of EU defence”.—(Mr Bernard Jenkin.)

Question put, That the Amendment be made.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 3  Noes, 6
Mr Mike Hancock  Mr David S Borrow
Mr Adam Holloway  Mr David Crausby
Mr Bernard Jenkin  Linda Gilroy
                           Mr David Hamilton
                           Mr Brian Jenkins
                           John Smith

Paragraph agreed to.

Paragraphs 37 to 166 read and agreed to.

Paragraph 167 read.

Amendment proposed, in line 6, after “capabilities.” to insert “We are concerned that some European nations regard pooling of resources as a way to avoid spending more money on defence.”.—(Mr Bernard Jenkin.)

Question put, That the Amendment be made.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 4  Noes, 6
Mr Mike Hancock  Mr David S Borrow
Mr Adam Holloway  Mr David Crausby
Mr Bernard Jenkin  Linda Gilroy
Robert Key  Mr David Hamilton
                           Mr Brian Jenkins
                           John Smith

Paragraph agreed to.

Paragraphs 168 to 239 read and agreed to.
A paragraph—(Mr Bernard Jenkin)—brought up and read, as follows:

Under the Lisbon Treaty the European Defence Agency (EDA) is given treaty status and is granted wide powers. Under Article 28A (3) the EDA “shall identify operational requirements” and “shall participate in defining a European capabilities and armaments policy”. Under Article 28D (1b &c) the EDA is tasked to “promote harmonisation of operational needs and adoption of effective, compatible procurement methods” and “to propose multilateral projects”. The UK has no veto either over the decisions defining the Agency’s statute (Article 28D (2)), or over membership of the EDA, or over decisions of the steering board (Article 9 (2) of the EDA Statute CJA 2004/551/CFSP), all of which are to be taken by QMV. Article 28D (2) also obligates the Agency to “carry out its tasks in liaison with the Commission where necessary”. This, together with “leading role in the Agency’s structure” granted to the High Representative who is also a member of the Commission under the EDA Statute [CJA 2004/551/CFSP, preamble (9)], gives the Commission influence over the work of the EDA.

Ordered, That the paragraph be read a second time.

Question put, That the paragraph be added to the Report.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 3
Mr Mike Hancock
Mr Adam Holloway
Mr Bernard Jenkin

Noes, 7
Mr David S Borrow
Mr David Crausby
Linda Gilroy
Mr David Hamilton
Mr Brian Jenkins
Robert Key
John Smith

Paragraph disagreed to.

Paragraphs 240 to 243 read and agreed to.

Paragraph 244 read.

Amendment proposed, in lines 22 to 23, to leave out from “The Defence” to “products” and insert “Recognising that the EDA has a very limited budget at present, we would be concerned if the lack of a national veto in EDA led to pressure for “developing defence capabilities” and “European armaments cooperation” which excluded interoperability with the United States, so that, for example, the Defence Procurement Code became a vehicle for European protectionism by excluding American products.”.—(Mr Bernard Jenkin.)
Question put, That the Amendment be made.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 3  Noes, 7
Mr Mike Hancock  Mr David S Borrow
Mr Adam Holloway  Mr David Crausby
Mr Bernard Jenkin  Linda Gilroy
               Mr David Hamilton
               Mr Brian Jenkins
               Robert Key
               John Smith

Paragraph agreed to.

Paragraphs 245 to 265 read and agreed to.

Paragraph 266 read.

Amendment proposed, in line 9, after “relations” to insert “by affirming that key decisions about future EU operations will be taken and implemented through the Berlin Plus arrangements rather than unilaterally by the EU”.—(Mr Bernard Jenkin.)

Question put, That the Amendment be made.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 4  Noes, 6
Mr Mike Hancock  Mr David S Borrow
Mr Adam Holloway  Mr David Crausby
Mr Bernard Jenkin  Linda Gilroy
Robert Key  Mr David Hamilton
               Mr Brian Jenkins
               John Smith

Paragraph agreed to.

Paragraphs 267 to 273 read and agreed to.
Paragraphs—(Mr Bernard Jenkin)—brought up and read, as follows:

For the foreign secretary to claim that Permanent Structured Cooperation is “focused solely on developing EU Member State [military] capability”, he must be satisfied that the PSC does not constitute any kind of obligation on the UK. The Protocol states:

“member states participating in permanent structured cooperation shall undertake to.... (b) bring their defence apparatus into line with each other as far as possible, particularly by harmonising the identification of their military needs... [and] (c) take concrete measures to enhance the availability, interoperability, flexibility and deployability of their forces, in particular by identifying common objectives regarding the commitment of forces, including possibly reviewing their national decision-making procedures.”

While decisions within PSC are explicitly by unanimity only, a Member State which “no longer fulfils the criteria or is no longer able to meet the commitments” laid out in the Protocol, members of the PSC may decide by QMV to suspend it [Article 28E (4)]. This may place great pressure on Member States participating in QMV to acquiesce to a majority view rather than risk suspension or expulsion.

The foreign secretary also accepted that “forces could be deployed under PSC” [Hansard, 20 February 2008 col 381]. If military deployments were agreed within PSC from which a member state had been excluded, this would amount to their loss of the veto over key aspects of EU military policy. Moreover, even if expelled, non-members of PSC remain under obligation to “support the Union’s external and security policy actively and unreservedly in a spirit of loyalty and mutual solidarity and shall comply with the Union’s action in this area..... They shall refrain from any action which is contrary to the interests of the Union or likely to impair its effectiveness as a cohesive force in international relations.” [Article 11 (3) and (4)] Again, this would place great pressure on Member States participating in PSC to acquiesce to a majority view rather than risk being placed in such a situation.

Along with the incorporation of the European Defence Agency into the EU structure, governed by QMV and with its formal relationship with the EU Commission, the powers given to the establishment of PSC in the Lisbon Treaty provide for flexibility and dynamism for decision making in EU defence policy which is wholly lacking in NATO. We would be concerned if this led to further duplication of NATO functions or threatened the primacy of NATO in UK defence policy. However, we welcome the Government’s assertion that neither the EDA nor the PSC will undermine NATO.

Ordered, That the paragraphs be read a second time.

Question put, That the paragraphs be added to the Report.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 3

Noes, 7

Mr Mike Hancock

Mr David S Borrow

Mr Adam Holloway

Mr David Crausby
Amendment proposed, in line 23, after “matters” to insert “which are concerns the government expressed in its 2003 submission to the Constitutional Convention opposing the principle of PSC” [“The UK has made clear that it cannot accept the proposed ESDP reinforced cooperation provisions. While we support Member States making higher capability commitments and co-operating with partners to this end, the approach described here – a self-selecting inner group – undermine the inclusive, flexible, model of ESDP that the EU has agreed.” Submission to Constitutional Convention].”—(Mr Bernard Jenkin.)

Question put, That the Amendment be made.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 4
Mr Mike Hancock
Mr Adam Holloway
Mr Bernard Jenkin
Robert Key

Noes, 6
Mr David S Borrow
Mr David Crausby
Linda Gilroy
Mr David Hamilton
Mr Brian Jenkins
John Smith

Paragraph agreed to.

Paragraphs 276 to 282 read and agreed to.

Annexes (List of abbreviations; Committee visits; NATO members and partner countries; Defence spending by NATO and EU member states; and Text of the North Atlantic Treaty, 4 April 1949) and Summary agreed to.
Resolved, That the Report be the Ninth Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

Written evidence was ordered to be reported to the House for printing with the Report, together with written evidence reported and ordered to be published on 19 June, 11 December and 15 January.

[Adjourned till Tuesday 11 March at 10.00 am.]
Witnesses

Tuesday 19 June 2007

Mr Martin Wolf CBE, Senior Columnist, Financial Times Ev 1

Sir Paul Lever KCMG, Chairman, Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) Council, Mr Charles Grant, Director, Centre for European Reform, and Dr Robert Dover, Lecturer in Defence Studies, King’s College London Ev 5

Tuesday 9 October 2007

Dr Dana Allin, Senior Fellow for Transatlantic Affairs, International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), Professor Michael Cox, Professor of International Relations, London School of Economics, Dr Jonathan Eyal, Director of International Security Studies, Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), Dr Robin Niblett, Director, Chatham House, and Dr Mark Webber, Senior Lecturer in Politics, University of Loughborough Ev 17

20 November 2007

General Sir Jack Deverell (Rtd), Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry (Rtd), Mr Daniel Keohane, Research Fellow, European Union Institute for Security Studies, and Colonel Christopher Langton (Rtd), Senior Fellow for Conflict and Defence Diplomacy, International Institute for Security Studies (IISS) Ev 34

8 January 2008

Rt Hon Des Browne MP, Secretary of State for Defence, and Mr Andrew Mathewson, Director of Policy for International Organisations, Ministry of Defence, and Mr Hugh Powell, Head of Security Policy Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ev 51

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1 Medact Ev 69
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3 Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy Ev 72
4 Maria-Pierre Nisus Ev 80
5 Dr Robert Dover Ev 86
6 Dr Bastian Giegerich Ev 89
7 Open Europe Ev 92
8 Dr Michael Williams Ev 102
9 Ministry of Defence Ev 106, 157, 161
10 Geoffrey Van Orden MEP Ev 113
11 Dr Christoph Meyer Ev 118
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Oral evidence

Taken before the Defence Committee

on Tuesday 19 June 2007

Members present:

Mr James Arbuthnot, in the Chair

Linda Gilroy
Mr David Hamilton
Mr Mike Hancock
Mr Adam Holloway
Mr Bernard Jenkin

Mr Brian Jenkins
Robert Key
Willie Rennie
John Smith

Witness: Mr Martin Wolf CBE, Senior Columnist, Financial Times, gave evidence.

Q1 Chairman: This is, interestingly enough, the first of our evidence sessions on NATO. It seems as though we have been discussing this issue for a very long time. Nevertheless, I welcome Martin Wolf to give evidence on this very important subject. Mr Wolf, thank you for coming to give evidence. Perhaps you would begin by saying what you see as the current role and purpose of NATO, whether you consider that the Alliance is still relevant and whether you believe it has a long-term future.

Mr Wolf: I begin by saying that I am a little surprised to be here because it is somewhat outside my normal area of expertise, which perhaps gives me the benefit of ignorance. I do not know fully why I was invited and I just give that qualification, but it allows me to be brief. As to what NATO is for, it is the military arm of the West; it exists in present circumstances to provide security to its members and to extend military action to other parts of the world if there is a consensus among its members that such action is needed. It is relevant to the extent that the West with NATO at its core itself remains a relevant alliance in the world today. My view is that it ought to remain a relevant alliance in the sense that there are still large common interests and substantial common values binding together the two sides of the Atlantic. Those are values we share with one another and with no other great powers to the same degree. Whether it remains relevant depends on the future of the West itself.

Q2 Chairman: When I ask whether the Alliance is still relevant the answer is that it ought to be but you are unconvinced that it does?

Mr Wolf: It ought to be. I do not say “unconvinced”; that is not the way I would put it. Whether it turns out to be depends on the choices made by NATO members, particularly its leading ones, above all the United States, in terms of how they perceive their interests and the achievement of their security objectives in the world under today’s circumstances. I believe they ought to see the maintenance of the West as an integrated alliance, including a military component. This is an essential part of that interest. It is pretty clear that in recent times that has not been a dominant idea in America. Whether or not it will be a dominant idea is in play and is to be decided in succeeding years. I know what they ought to decide in our own interests and what we ought to decide for ourselves, but it is to play for; it is not obvious that it will evolve. I can perfectly well imagine a world in which essentially the two sides of the Atlantic go their separate ways.

Chairman: We will come on to the American perceptions in just a moment.

Q3 Willie Rennie: What do you believe are the principal challenges facing NATO, and do you think it is capable of meeting those challenges?

Mr Wolf: I define it in terms of maintaining the security of its members in the first place and out-of-area operations. To deal with those separately, despite what has happened recently in relation to Russia, which is clearly our most important and potential threatening great power neighbour, I do not envisage a return to the cold war circumstances, but we have made commitments vis-à-vis members in central and Eastern Europe and they are vulnerable states. I believe that our ability to meet those commitments under all circumstances is in question. The meeting of those commitments under certain circumstances could be very difficult, so that is part of the answer as to what we are there to do and whether we can do it. Clearly, there are also security concerns in all NATO members, particularly European ones. In relation to terrorism on the European mainland and North America I think NATO is fairly irrelevant. I do not see that as essentially a NATO issue though it is a very big security concern. There may be circumstances which are not too difficult to envisage in which other powers pose quite a significant military threat to Europe, for example a nuclear-armed Iran. In those circumstances to meet that threat would obviously fall within the purview of NATO, and it would be quite difficult to do so. Presumably, one would go back to some form of nuclear doctrine. In terms of out-of-area missions, particularly in the crucial case of Afghanistan, these are above all new areas of activity for NATO and were not the sorts of things that it did for most of its history. I believe that as part of being an effective alliance it should be able to do...
these things. It is not obvious to me—I am by no means an expert—that it does have the capacity, resources and will as an alliance to carry out those out-of-area missions. It seems to depend heavily on a limited number of members who are very overstretched.

Q4 Willie Rennie: That is quite a traditional view of NATO as being very military-focused. Do you not think there is room for rethinking its role and looking at other issues?

Mr Wolf: The way I see it is that NATO exists to perform a military security function. There are institutions to provide other aspects of policy and security, particularly the European Union in the economic sphere. If you mean whether, starting off obviously with the West, we should be thinking of a broader transatlantic community which goes far beyond security questions, that is a very interesting question. I am not at all convinced that the right way to deal with it is to extend NATO itself into those areas. I have a general rule developed from 35 years of observation which is that institutions exist to do the things they were created to do, and that is what they are good at. If they are no longer relevant they should be scrapped. If you want them to do something altogether different create a new institution.

Q5 Linda Gilroy: You said that there would be issues arising from obligations to newer member states, but Turkey has been a member for some time and is in an interesting position, particularly in view of whatever happens in Iraq. What do you think about the attitude to that in the American administration and on the Hill?

Mr Wolf: Clearly, the issue is not the need for other NATO powers to defend the security of Turkey as Turkey perceives it; rather, the issue is one of dissuading Turkey from taking certain actions which the Turkish military may believe is in its interests from a security point of view but we do not. That is the basis of this particular conflict. I will not talk about the wider conflict over Iraq which is a separate thing. We have a fairly powerful interest in dissuading the Turkish military from invading Kurdistan which I think would create lots of problems. It is not a traditional security obligation of NATO in the sense it is Turkey that is under military attack or threat; it perceives the security danger because it perceives a risk to its own integrity, but there is nothing NATO can do about that. The grave risk is that Turkey will take actions which enormously worsen the position in both northern Iraq and Kurdish Turkey—not that they would ever be likely use that term—or regions of Turkey in which Kurds live. NATO has very little leverage in this situation. There are two institutions that have some leverage. The relationship between the United States and Turkey has become very difficult since the Iraq invasion for obvious reasons and, in a completely different way, with the European Union because of Turkish membership that goes well beyond narrow security issues. Because of the fast declining credibility of EU membership the leverage of the EU over Turkish politics is declining very rapidly. Turkish politics are moving into an extremely unstable phase over which I think we have next to no leverage. I have followed Turkey very closely for about 25 years.

Q6 Linda Gilroy: Do you believe that the United States needs to take more interest than it appears to be taking at the moment? On our recent visit we understood they felt it was very much an EU issue. For the reasons you have just outlined, do you see any sign of that happening?

Mr Wolf: Membership is an EU issue, but it must be said that very consistently the United States has under all administrations of which I am aware pushed Turkish membership of the EU. I have always regarded that as somewhat cheeky. My response has been that perhaps they should take Mexico into the American union. The point is that they have always been very interested in Turkish membership for these reasons, but surely they are interested in what happens in Iraq, not least because they have a very large army there, and I am reasonably sure that they would find a significant Turkish invasion of Kurdistan immensely worrying. I would be terribly surprised if they were not discussing that with the Turkish army directly. My impression is that the Americans are the only political entity to which the Turkish army ever listens.

Q7 Chairman: You said that we had next to no leverage now. Were you referring to Europe as opposed to the West?

Mr Wolf: The United States continues to have substantial leverage as long as it remains a major Middle Eastern power particularly in Iraq, because the outcome in Iraq, about which the Turks care a great deal particularly with the possibility of the fragmentation of Iraq so that Kurdistan emerges as a state, is of enormous concern to them, rightly or wrongly. Clearly, the Americans will continue to play a very large role in it. I do not say that the EU has no leverage but its leverage is substantially diminished, because no intelligent person believes any more that the EU will let in Turkey.

Q8 Linda Gilroy: I was interested in your comment that NATO’s future depends on choices as to how it perceives its interests and security objectives. Do you think that NATO has a role to play in energy security? If so, would you care to discuss any differences there may be in terms of the perspectives on either side of the Atlantic?

Mr Wolf: I would have thought that NATO as an organisation, as opposed to its members, had at least rather limited functions in energy security. I have not thought about it much. I have written about energy security. The only area where I think it would be relevant would be the potential for large-scale military attacks on energy installations. I do not know where that would be and from whom. I leave aside terrorism in which obviously armies would be involved to some degree. The only other respect in which military force might be relevant to energy
security would be the Middle East itself. One can just about imagine circumstances in which a very large military force might be needed to deal with threats to energy security emanating from the Middle East. I would have thought it very unlikely that they would be NATO missions. The last and most obvious example of a major military engagement related directly to energy security was Gulf War One. For very obvious reasons, that did seem to me to have very clear energy aspects since it was not in our interests that Saddam should control Kuwait, let alone Saudi Arabia, but in the end it did not involve a NATO mission. I can imagine circumstances in which NATO would be involved in energy security, but it does not seem to me to be central either to the issue or the organisation.

Q9 Linda Gilroy: There are various predictions about how long oil supplies will last and what we shall be able to do in response to that. One way in which energy security is beginning to appear on the horizon is in relation to climate change and the movement of people that that could entail if predictions over the next 30 to 40 years come to pass. I guess that is what NATO needs to begin to prepare itself for.

Mr Wolf: We are talking about very long-term risks to do with climate change. I have looked fairly closely at the forecasts on climate change. Not many of them suggest the need for enormous movements of people within any of our lifetimes. Most of the significant changes occur well into this century or even the next. I would assume—but I am a cynic—that every effort will be made to prevent these movements. Whether NATO will end up as the police force in this case so far in the future I honestly do not know; it will in part depend where they come from and the precise nature of the climatic changes and their impact, but I suppose that the most obvious continent to be affected is Africa.

Q10 Linda Gilroy: And the Mediterranean?

Mr Wolf: Yes. One can imagine a situation in which one would be spending a lot of time shooting desperate refugees, if that is what you are thinking of.

Q11 Linda Gilroy: I hope not!

Mr Wolf: That is the implication of using military force to deal with this. It does not seem to be a very satisfactory solution. There are quite a few other and more desirable solutions than that one. As to energy, except in an extreme situation of somebody getting monopoly control of the world’s principal oil reserves in the Middle East—they account for two thirds—I cannot see any role for military force as a central element in energy security beyond the obvious things like pipeline facilities, oil terminals, refineries and so forth which need to be protected.

Q12 Mr Hancock: How important do you think NATO now is to the United States, and to what extent is Washington re-engaging with the Alliance?

Do you think that the cost of NATO is a burden that the American taxpayer will be prepared to go on shouldering?

Mr Wolf: I followed this debate quite closely in the early part of this decade and less so in the past couple of years. My honest answer is that I do not know because I think the Americans do not know. My perception—it was an important part of the columns I wrote on this subject, which I suspect is why I am invited here—is that the United States is in the process, rather unsatisfactorily, of working out a new foreign policy in response to a new world. This has been going on since the fall of the Soviet Union and has been greatly accelerated by two further developments: the rise of China and Islamic terrorism and fundamentalism. US foreign policy as designed after 9/11 is widely regarded in the United States as having been a failure and is about to be rejected by both parties. Clearly, that foreign policy was essentially a rejection of the Alliance structure as a constraining force. It was seen as a constraint on American power and therefore a nuisance. The split in Europe at the time of the Iraq war really confirmed that view. Today, the view is very different for two reasons. First, the policy pursued outside the Alliance structure has been seen very widely to be a failure. I am not talking just about the obvious opponents; it has been regarded widely as a failure. Second, there is a need to have allies that are potent, credible and consistent and therefore, obviously, within some sort of structure they are also perceived as of much greater value than before. But I do not think that means they have gone all the way back to thinking that the entire security aims of the United States should be pursued within NATO, because they are also not at all clear what the other members of NATO give them. The way I perceive it is that the foreign policy, a fortiori the security policy, of the United States is “up for grabs” at the moment. We are in a time of enormous flux in American thinking about what they should be doing, what their role in the world should be and how their allies fit into that. One can perfectly well imagine outcomes in which they decide that NATO is an important element in their foreign and security policy but not the only one, or possibly even the central element. It will depend on what the other members of the Alliance bring to the table that is of value to them and how co-operative they are from their point of view, that is, how widely they share similar perceptions, interests and values, how effective the institution is and how grievous the constraints imposed upon US action by the requirements of alliance cohesion are seen to be. All of that is to play for and will depend on who wins the Washington debates and the presidency, which is very important, but also, more broadly, how the debate in Washington goes and how the allies behave. In that regard Afghanistan will be a crucial test.

Q13 Mr Hancock: How does the United States now see ESDP? Does it view it as a threat to its view of what NATO ought to be and what it could be, or does it regard it as something that complements NATO and maybe takes on some of the burden?
Mr Wolf: To show my ignorance, can you spell out ESDP?

Q14 Chairman: It is the European Security and Defence Policy.

Mr Wolf: I have forgotten these abbreviations; there are so many in the field of economics. I do not believe that the US regards it as relevant or as a threat.

Q15 Mr Jenkin: Assuming that we have no ambivalence in the United Kingdom about the indispensability of NATO to our national interests, how should the UK Government conduct a policy in order most effectively to engage the United States? Is not the mixed signal of creating a European Union defence identity creating more difficulty than it is worth? Is not the engagement of the United States a more important policy priority for the United Kingdom?

Mr Wolf: I do not know how much it will put them off. I think the Americans have concluded that it does not amount to anything. Their point of view is that if the Europeans, either as individual state members of NATO or through the ESDP, turn out to be effective militarily and as allies they are not particularly worried which institutional form it takes. At the moment the American view would tend to be that on the whole they are effective neither militarily nor as allies, but I am not convinced that the particular institutional form that the Europeans seek will be determinative of how the Americans view it.

Q16 Mr Jenkin: If it duplicated NATO assets wastefully, discriminated against non-EU members of NATO or decoupled security policy between Europe and the United States those would be concerns?

Mr Wolf: If all those things were true they would not be very happy.

Q17 Mr Holloway: If there was a very large terrorist attack against a NATO country what sort of political effects might emerge from it?

Mr Wolf: What do you mean by “a very large terrorist attack”—for example somebody letting off a nuclear bomb?

Q18 Mr Holloway: Let us say that someone loses a city. At a macro level of warfare, does that throw the West into confusion?

Mr Wolf: I have discussed this in many of my presentations. If somebody succeeds in letting off a major device in a significant city anywhere in the world and kills 100,000 or several hundred thousand people the world in which we live will be entirely altered in unimaginable ways. I would then have to talk for half an hour about the implications. We would be living in a totally different world in which the assumptions with which we have lived about sovereign autonomy around the world, nuclear proliferation and all the rest of it would come into question in a massive way. Among other small things, the global economy would collapse. It is such a huge question and an enormously interesting one. I hope it does not happen.

Q19 Mr Holloway: How do you describe the relationship between NATO and the EU? Is a rivalry now developing?

Mr Wolf: It is related to the earlier questions. The answer is yes potentially, but that rests on the future of the EU and its effectiveness as an integrated security and foreign policy structure. Outside a complete collapse of NATO and withdrawal of the US from interest in Europe, I do not believe that the EU is likely to emerge as such a structure. It seems to me that the past five or six years have demonstrated that, so I do not believe it is a serious worry.

Q20 Mr Holloway: But is greater co-operation possible, or do the two things contradict each other?

Mr Wolf: I think it is perfectly possible. I am neutral on this matter. I can well envisage a more effective European security identity that is supportive of the Atlantic Alliance because it leads to greater commitments by all member countries to participate seriously in security activities. I can also perfectly well imagine a greater European security and foreign policy presence that is divisive of the Alliance, and at this stage I do not know which of the two it would be.

Q21 John Smith: Do you think we can expect to see greater transatlantic co-operation in the military defence industry between the Americans and key NATO allies? Might that be an indication of their thinking in terms of foreign policy and re-engagement?

Mr Wolf: There has obviously been a very big effort, whose details I do not know, to make our defence industry integrate with the American’s. That seems to have been a deliberate decision by BAE, and it seems to have been moderately successful. But I suspect that, first, the Americans do not take the defence industries of Europe seriously and so their interest in co-operation is rather modest; they think they are decades behind. Second, they do not trust them. In this case at least there is a choice. We have to make a choice as a country—I suspect because it is so politicised—whether we want our defence industry to be part of the American system or a nascent European one. Since I am a completely pragmatic human being, I go with the Americans for the obvious reason that they know what they are doing in this field.

Q22 Chairman: Do you think there is any prospect of further enlargement of NATO?

Mr Wolf: There must be given the history. Certainly, there are countries that would not mind being members. I have no problem with it in principle, but I am a bit concerned about adding countries that increase obligations but not capacities. I do not object to enlargement in central and Eastern Europe. In principle, we had to make clear that the cold war had ended in the way it did, but there is no
doubt it has created problems with Russia, however much one objects to it. Further extension—fairly obviously, Ukraine or something like it—would bring capacity and so would not be unimportant, but it would also raise huge difficulties. It could well happen, but we have to be very careful about it. I do not envisage an extension of NATO into the Middle East, although Israel would bring capacity.

Q23 Chairman: To paraphrase your evidence, probably incorrectly, you said that if organisations were formed to do something and that activity became irrelevant they should be scrapped, and if an altogether different function needed to be done a new institution should be created. NATO’s main activity at the moment is in Afghanistan, which is a long way from the North Atlantic. Do you suggest that that principle should be applied to NATO and a new organisation should be formed to carry out that activity?

Mr Wolf: On this one I have an open mind. It depends on the effectiveness of NATO as an organisation in this sort of context. It seemed to me that the extension of NATO as a security organisation to deal with security concerns in areas outside Europe after the end of the cold war was not an unreasonable extension of its original mission since it still relied on its essential military capacity. Whether or not it is effective in that regard is precisely what Afghanistan will show. The conclusion may well be that many of the members of NATO are so irrelevant to such activities that their presence is merely a nuisance and it is more sensible to have some other structure. But the question to which I was responding, if I understood it correct, was whether or not NATO should in addition become an institution for security and political integration at a high political level between Europe and the United States. That seems to me to go well beyond its original defensive functions. A modest extension of out-of-area missions is perfectly reasonable if it can be made to work, but I believe that is open to question at the moment. If Afghanistan is seen as a failure I think this is over. If there is an extension to a bigger political stage that seems to me to require a decision essentially to create a transatlantic political community. That is not an insane idea but it will involve much more than NATO.

Chairman: You may not have been entirely clear as to why you were invited this morning, but, having listened to you for the past half-hour, we are. We are most grateful to you for coming to give such clear, incisive answers to our questions.

Witnesses: Sir Paul Lever KCMG, Chairman, RUSI Council, Mr Charles Grant, Director, Centre for European Reform, and Dr Robert Dover, King’s College London, gave evidence.

Q24 Chairman: Gentlemen, thank you very much for coming to talk about the role of NATO. I ask you to introduce yourselves and say a little about your organisations.

Sir Paul Lever: I am chairman of the Royal United Services Institute. We are a defence and security think-tank founded in 1831 by the Duke of Wellington in order to give his young officers gainful employment in the study of military science and stop them wasting their days in drinking and dancing. We study defence and security in its broad context. We are a British institute but we operate with an international perspective. Before I retired from public service in 2003 I was for 37 years a member of the British Diplomatic Service and virtually all of that time I spent on European and politico-military issues.

Mr Grant: I am Charles Grant, director of the Centre for European Reform, a small think-tank that thinks about the future of the EU. I have done that for the past 10 years. One of the things we think about is European defence. Before setting up the think-tank in the early 1990s I had a spell as defence editor of the Economist.

Dr Dover: I am a lecturer in defence studies at King’s College London. I am based at the Joint Services Command and Staff College at the Defence Academy and for my considerable sins I run the MA in defence studies which has on it 272 middle-ranking military officers.

Q25 Chairman: You have been listening to much of what we have been discussing this morning. We will start with very similar questions. What do you see as the current role and purpose of NATO? Is the Alliance still relevant? Does it have a viable long-term future?

Sir Paul Lever: In my view, the essential purpose of NATO remains what it always has been, that is, to provide for the collective defence of its members and to offer a forum in which they can discuss and, where appropriate, take action on issues relevant to their common security. I add one matter of a more general kind. I first became involved in NATO in 1971 when I was appointed a very junior member of the British delegation there. Even at that time NATO was agonising about its future and purpose. Was it still relevant? It seems to me that throughout its existence NATO has done so under varying slogans, such as “adapt or die” and “out of area, out of business”. It always seems to be fearful that it is losing its role, and yet without a doubt it has been one of the most extraordinarily resilient and successful organisations, and some would say it is the most successful military alliance ever. It has retained public support within its members, and it still does. It has been attractive to future members. People still wish to join it. I just note the rather odd combination of apparent continuing nervousness about being relevant and having a proper role to play, coupled with extraordinarily durable success.

Mr Grant: I agree. It is a manifestation of the transatlantic relationship, and one important political function that it serves is to create a forum where Europeans and Americans can talk together. It creates some political glue between them, but what it does not do, and is unlikely to do, is to be a body
where there are true strategic discussions on common transatlantic problems. That is what Mr de Hoop Scheffer and some figures in the Bush Administration have been saying it should do, but I do not believe that it is well designed to be a true forum where people talk freely and frankly about key issues, maybe because there are too many members. If there are 26 people around the table it is quite hard to have serious discussions. I do not think that it will play that role, though some people think it should. The defence diplomacy role that it plays is quite important in reaching out to the central Asians and people who will never join NATO but co-operate with it in certain ways. I include Russia in that. The NATO-Russia Council was not a great success, but it was not a great failure either. It creates a structure in which if the situation in Russia improves useful co-operation between that country and the West can be promoted.

**Dr Dover:** It probably should play the role to which Mr Grant referred. I think that it ought to play its historical role as it stands, but it should be bolder; it ought to try to shape itself to become the pre-eminent institution of choice for military operations that involve coalitions. It should see itself as having a defence diplomacy role with those countries on its periphery and around the world in trying to prevent regional conflict, but it should also be a forum in which coalitions of the willing are able to form and do the sorts of activities that we might have seen in certain parts of Africa. I believe that it should in essence perform its historical role but try to be bolder.

**Q26 Chairman:** None of you has mentioned the issue of the command structure or force for unifying standards, procurement and weapons. Is that because it is too low down the food chain for the grand question that I have asked?

**Dr Dover:** I would come to procurement as a second order question. I certainly believe that the question of procurement is a piece of work that the Alliance and the European Union and its Member States need to do as a matter of priority. As I put in my written evidence, if we continue to procure very high technology pieces of equipment the Pugh curve, which indicates that defence inflation will see a degradation of capability over time, means that we will have to think differently about how we do procurement.

**Q27 Chairman:** We thank you for your written evidence which is very helpful.

**Dr Dover:** Whilst the EU has the European Defence Agency which is meant to plug the gaps in European capabilities NATO does not have exactly the same thing. Given the presence of the latent defence industrial capability of the United States, that seems to me to be an obvious missed opportunity.

**Mr Grant:** There is some strategic divergence between Europeans and Americans on how to approach security challenges. Many Europeans, the British less than some, always tend to prefer diplomatic solutions to security problems, whilst Americans are naturally more willing to think about the use of force. In a sense, one thing the Alliance does is try to get a composition. For now at least we have a common position on Iran and Afghanistan, so we work quite well together on those two problems, but we have fundamentally different starting points. The British are half-way between some Europeans and the Americans on that.

**Q29 Willie Rennie:** But that is more about what you do with the threats and challenges rather than what they are. My question is about whether there is a difference of opinion or a common understanding about the threats and challenges rather than what is to be done about them.

**Mr Grant:** I think there is a pretty good convergence of analysis. My point is that we may disagree about what we do about them. The Germans always want to negotiate that bit longer than the rest of us, but, analysing the threats, at the moment I do not see a significant difference between Europeans and Americans on the key security threats.

**Q30 Willie Rennie:** Therefore, the lack of a forum for discussion does not hinder that common understanding?

**Mr Grant:** Not too much. There was a forum for discussion, of which Sir Paul was probably a part. I refer to the so-called Quad meetings involving Americans, Germans, Brits and French. Those were informal meetings before the formal NATO body met. That was quite a useful steering group for the big boys. That fell into disarray in recent years, perhaps because of French-American tensions, and it may be that something like that needs to be revived. I agree with Dr Dover, Mr de Hoop Scheffer and others who say that it would be greater if there were strategic discussions in NATO. I am not opposed to them; I just question whether it is practical to have useful high-level discussions when there are 26 people around the table.

**Q31 Willie Rennie:** Can you also say what you believe to be the threats and challenges?

**Sir Paul Lever:** In the days when the principal strategic issue facing the North Atlantic Alliance was the Soviet Union and how to deal with it, sustain a credible defence against it and engage with it NATO was the principal forum for strategic dialogue because the dialogue was about things that might happen on the territory of its members. What has changed since then is the nature of the strategic threat, or the strategic environment. The concerns of most governments now relate to terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and, going beyond that, issues such as failed states, instability, energy security and so on. These matters lend themselves less well to a single point of
consultation. There is probably more diversity of views on them. The sheer difference in scale, size and power between America on the one hand and its allies on the other has made consultation in the traditional sense, ie a commitment to finding a single point of view and acting on it, much more difficult.

Q32 Mr Jenkin: The strategic concept of NATO predates 9/11; it was agreed at the Washington summit in 1999. Is it time to update that concept? Would that be a meaningful process, and would NATO be capable of agreeing a new strategic concept?

Sir Paul Lever: Logically, for the reasons you give, yes. At this time a document drafted in 1999, albeit complemented by political guidance issued last November or December, is, given 9/11, out of date. I would start with the question: are the mega-documents and strategic concepts produced by NATO quite regularly over the years seminal tools in enhancing our security or, like many communiques flowing from international organisations, are they things that are arrived at and adopted and then disappear into the archives? My experience is that it is easy to laugh at them but they serve a role, which is to engage all the members of the organisation, in this case all 26, in the process of common thought, analysis and to some degree, at a very general level, policy-making. That has a virtue of its own particularly for the smaller countries because, without intending to sound patronising, it helps to bind them in, but I am not quite sure whether a further draft of the strategic concept will yield penetrating new insights or innovative solutions. It is right that 9/11 was a seminal moment. It has focused attention on the issue of terrorism, but terrorism is a very broad subject in relation to which the possible application of military force, which is NATO’s speciality, can at best play only a modest role.

Q33 Mr Jenkin: Is there any dissenting opinion?

Dr Dover: The changing of documentation is a chicken-and-egg question. Does one need agreement first or does it lead to agreement? If it does not result in a change of doctrine then the dangers in division possibly outweigh the benefits of having a nice shiny brochure that we can hawk round all 26 countries. Therefore, I dissent inasmuch as it probably is unnecessary and may be divisive.

Mr Grant: I do not want to add anything to that question, but I should like to respond, perhaps not now, to an earlier point raised by the Chairman on the defence industry.

Q34 Mr Jenkin: I think we will come to that later. Perhaps I may posit the suggestion that, looking at the success of NATO from the 1960s onwards, the Harmel report which was generated by strategic and military thinkers became the strategic concept. Rather than politicians trying to agree a top-down process, it was a bottom-up process. Would not NATO be better advised to pursue a process of that nature with regard to terrorist threats and other threats?

Sir Paul Lever: You are right that that was a key document because it established as collective policy the twin approaches of defence on the one hand and détente—an expression which I believe first emerged from the Harmel report—on the other. It is possible that in relation to terrorism some new concept could emerge that caught the public imagination and would be something around which everyone rallied. I am slightly sceptical because I think that dealing with terrorism requires such a range of policy instruments, because the nature of the terrorist threat which members of the Alliance face is not the same. For the United States terrorism is a problem to be dealt with out there before it gets to America; for us, sadly, terrorism is increasingly a problem from within our own society. For some other members of the Alliance it is a problem which really affects other people but is not perceived as necessarily affecting them.

Dr Dover: I believe that is right. I think that changes should come from the hard-thinking half-colonel rather than from the top down.

Q35 Mr Holloway: Sir Paul, could a gap open up within NATO between those who face terrorism internally and those who do not?

Sir Paul Lever: A gap in what sense?

Q36 Mr Holloway: I refer to a political gap. If there was a major terrorist attack and things changed clearly the interests of countries that faced terrorism internally would be different from those that did not.

Sir Paul Lever: You could say that is the case at the moment. There are some countries in Europe for whom fortunately terrorism has not been a problem on their own territory, but it has not affected their general solidarity with the international effort to combat terrorism.

Q37 Mr Holloway: But their minds may not have been concentrated yet.
Mr Grant: There are one or two examples of slight tensions amongst Europeans in this area. When the EU was introducing a directive on data retention on telephone calls, which is a very useful tool in the fight against terrorism, the Swedes, who do not face much of a terrorist threat and care about civil liberties, were at one end of the extreme in opposing the compulsory retention of such information. There are tensions amongst Europeans which one sees. One matter that NATO and the EU can perhaps do in counter-terrorism is simply to exchange best practice. Europe has weak links in its efforts to fight terrorism because the smaller EU countries do not have very sophisticated intelligence services and are not very well equipped to deal with al-Qaeda or somebody else. If I was al-Qaeda I would set up in some of the smaller Member States where the intelligence and counter-terrorism operations are not very sophisticated. NATO can do quite a lot to facilitate the exchange of best practice in how to deal with terrorism.

Q38 Linda Gilroy: Has there been any lasting damage to the Alliance caused by the disputes over the Iraq war?

Dr Dover: There probably has, but I counter that with the suggestion, which is almost counter-intuitive, that that is why I think the Alliance should now act to regain some confidence that maybe it has lost. Therefore, it should mortgage its confidence to try to come together to be that pre-eminent institution for coalitions of the willing. I believe that Afghanistan and Iraq were in a particular time and space politically and from the perspective of international security. The sorts of conflicts in which the West will become involved in future are essentially counter-insurgencies or interventions in failing or failed states. Therefore, to have NATO as a strong part of the international system is very important to deal with those matters. My answer is that it has affected NATO but the follow-on point is that the Alliance has to get over that schism to find its feet.

Mr Grant: I believe that it has inflicted long-term damage, particularly the impact on public opinion. One of the problems that the Alliance now faces is that anti-Americanism has progressed and become a more powerful force in several European countries. Obviously, it is hard to distinguish between anti-Bushism and anti-Americanism. They are different phenomena but related. I think that at the level of leadership there is a strong effort to put Iraq behind us, and I believe that Merkel and Sarkozy are the two best leaders that we can hope for in Germany and France to try to repair the damage, some of the blame for which, though obviously not all, was due to Chirac and Schroder. They are well placed to try to repair that damage, but they are constrained in what they can do and say by their public opinions. In particular, in Germany, which Sir Paul knows much better than I, public opinion is very strongly anti-American. We saw this recently when Putin very cleverly earlier this year re-ignited the divisions of the Iraq war with his opposition to America’s plan to install missile defence systems in the Czech Republic and Poland. Extraordinarily, he complained about it and his top general threatened to point nuclear weapons at those two countries, and then the German foreign minister said it was all America’s fault and not Russia’s. Since then Putin has gone over the top and created quite a lot of solidarity among Europeans. In the past month he went completely over the top. But these divisions are there and can be revived by clever tactics such as those deployed by Putin earlier this year.

Sir Paul Lever: Things come and go. Of course, when on a big international issue like Iraq there is a clear divergence of opinion within the North Atlantic Alliance it is not good for its solidarity and cohesion, but there have been differences of view in the past, for example in relation to Vietnam and certainly Suez. It is true that the general mood in Europe is less friendly towards the United States than it traditionally has been. That does not apply just to Germany but in our country too according to the opinion polls, but moods change quickly. Immediately after 9/11 the biggest demonstration of public support for the United States in the world took place outside the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin. There was massive sympathy in Europe everywhere for the Americans after what had happened. In my view, it remains to be seen how things go in the United States. If you look at the public mood there, we may have a successor to George Bush who will take a rather different view on Iraq. There may even be people in the United States, though I am sure they will never say it publicly, who think that, sadly, the French and Germans were right about Iraq. Much will depend on how policy develops in America and what attitude the United States has both to Iraq and its need for allies.

Q39 Mr Hamilton: Following up your comments about whether America and Europe share a common purpose on the threats that they face, is there enough there so we can have a joint purpose between America and Europe?

Sir Paul Lever: I see no reason why we cannot, but we have to be realistic about the difference in power between America on the one hand and its European allies on the other. I go back to the days of the cold war. When we were dealing with a direct common threat of that kind common policy-making, including policy-making which had to be based on consensus, was possible despite America’s predominance. It is much less easy to do it today. Even a more benign American administration which took the need for allies much more seriously would not want to be completely hemmed in by having to obtain the consensus of all its NATO allies to a policy or military action. It is not realistic to imagine that we can go back to those days. There are common interests and similar perceptions, but we have to be realistic about the scale of American power and the desire that any US president will have to retain flexibility over how that power should be deployed.
Q40 Mr Hamilton: We were in Washington a few weeks ago and met congressional members, senators and staff. There seemed to be a re-engagement, if you like, of the need for America to get involved in NATO to a far greater extent. Do you agree with that comment?

Sir Paul Lever: That is also my impression. Even the present administration is already re-engaging.

Dr Dover: I broadly agree. I believe that for common cause to break out spontaneously across NATO the US will have to stop, or stop being perceived to be, pursuing some kind of hegemonic power enterprise. That may well come as a product of having their fingers burnt in Iraq. They may well become more isolationist necessarily in their PR as their foreign policy and their approach to the world changes. One wonders whether there is almost a need to go back to the mid-1990s and the doctrine of benign humanitarian intervention, doing what was known at that time as Chapter 6 and 7 operations for peace support and peace-keeping to re-connect the two blocs across the Atlantic into a common cause. I think there is a desire to do that across the pond and also on this side of the Atlantic as a way of getting away from high-end controversial power projection and into the sort of operations on which there is common agreement.

Q41 Mr Hamilton: Is it the case that more and more often, depending on what the issue is, there will be the involvement of certain core countries, such as the UK and maybe America, and others will join or not join? Afghanistan is an example.

Dr Dover: Yes. When I say that I think NATO ought to become involved I mean, though it sounds slightly paradoxical, that it also has to become more voluntaristic. One can just form ad hoc coalitions of the willing and then second order questions as to how to share the burden of funding arise, because if one just relies on a core of four or five countries which must bear the cost of those operations when they are supported by the majority of the 26 NATO states one sees coalitions of the willing break down because people will become more selective about where they intervene.

Q42 Chairman: I should like to turn to the relationship between NATO and the European Union and how you characterise it. Perhaps I may start this series of questions by asking each of you to say one word that in your view best characterises the relationship between NATO and the European Union. See what you can do. This is a very unfair question, but it may give us insight.

Dr Dover: “Plagiarising”.

Mr Grant: “Poor”, for stupid reasons.

Sir Paul Lever: “Evolving”.

Q43 Chairman: Please expand on those words.

Dr Dover: ESDP was ESDI with a different hat on. Therefore, ESDI was impossible for NATO to carry forward because of the French, putting it crudely, and so ESDP came about as a new version of ESDI. As one moves into this century, NATO is constantly seeking to reinvent itself and adapt to the changing international environment. One then sees NATO increasingly doing the sort of Petersburg-type task that ESDP was designed to do. It is a curious form of plagiarism where each of the two blocs starts to move and dance with each other which results in a classic double-hatting. It is a relationship that is fraught with problems because if the relationship was resolved one would not have this duplication and confusion with multiple hats.

Q44 Chairman: At what level do you say the problems lie?

Dr Dover: They lie at the very highest level largely because of the choice of whether or not to include the US in any given particular discussion or operation. That is when you see the switch between the hats.

Q45 Chairman: Is it president to prime minister?

Dr Dover: It is probably a little lower than that; it is department to department. It is difficult to pinpoint a particular level. It is at a high level but it certainly does not arise at the operational level.

Mr Grant: Most members of the EU are in NATO, and vice versa, so it is extraordinary that there is a difficult relationship when the same governments are involved in the two organisations. In part, the problem is a natural law of human society which is that bureaucracies protect their own interests and do not like different bureaucracies made up of different people. One has two bureaucracies in Brussels, NATO and the EU, which mistrust each other, do not like each other and do not talk to each other. That is very silly. There are particular reasons which prevent them co-operating and talking together. One is the awfully boring dispute between Cyprus and Turkey.

Q46 Chairman: I should like to turn to that in a few minutes.

Mr Grant: Cyprus and Malta have not signed the NATO security agreement which gives Turkey an excuse to prevent the two organisations discussing certain things. But it is not just that; it is also France. France has a fear, which I do not understand, that too much close contact between NATO and the EU will lead to the fragile flower of EU defence being contaminated by the big monstrous elephant that can stamp on it. France has done quite a lot to prevent contacts. Others will be more aware of the details. Certainly, when I looked at it last year NATO and EU were not allowed formally to talk about counter-terrorism, Afghanistan or many issues in the wider world because in part France believes that NATO should not be global. They can talk about the Balkans where they worked together very closely. This is pathetic. I hope that the new leadership in France in particular and Germany will allow us to overcome it. Thanks to EU enlargement, most Member States are now atlanticists. I think the time has come to try to overcome French resistance to contact between NATO and the EU. I expect Mr Sarkozy to be quite helpful in that respect.

Sir Paul Lever: I endorse everything my colleague has said. If one goes outside Brussels into the real world one will discover that co-operation takes place
rather satisfactorily and that the people with an EU mandate and those undertaking a NATO mission not only talk to each other but collaborate practically and effectively. The reason I use the word “evolving” is that I believe over time it will become apparent that the sorts of missions which the European Union chooses to undertake through ESDP will naturally be ones where the United States is happy for the Europeans to take it on. The United States was happy for the EU to do Macedonia and take over Bosnia when the time was right. I think it is quite happy for the EU to do things like the Congo. In those areas where the EU has a niche advantage because of its ability to mobilise the non-military components of an intervention—to bring in policemen, judges and elements of civil society—and it becomes apparent that those are the areas where the EU will focus, with less fear of potential duplication with both EU and NATO somehow competing with each other to take on a mission, I hope that even in Brussels the relationship can become better.

Q47 Mr Jenkin: As far as concerns Macedonia, I put it to you that when operation Amber Fox was first threatened with a veto in the NAC in early 2003 the Americans were not at all happy about it, and it rather gave the lie to the assurance given by the Prime Minister that it was only when NATO decided as a whole that it did not wish to become engaged that the EU would take over an operation. The way it works is that France can veto a NATO operation and it falls into the lap of the EU. Concern was expressed to us in the United States by a former military officer who had worked for SACEUR that this was very debilitating in the NATO military structure. One never knew with which operation one might be left in the fullness of time. Do you agree that that is a bit of a disadvantage as a result of creating the ESDP?

Sir Paul Lever: My memory of the ins and outs of the decision-making process in relation to Macedonia has become opaque with the years. I think it was an issue where mutual vetoes were being threatened and it was not handled well. I still think that with hindsight when the Americans look at what the EU is doing, or aspiring to do one day, as opposed to what it purported to do sometimes in its declarations of public policy, they are now more reassured than they were perhaps in the initial debates over Macedonia.

Q48 Mr Jenkin: Mr Grant, you were the one who with the Prime Minister came up with the idea of developing ESDP in the run-up to the St Malo agreement. You now say that the relationship between the two institutions is not working for stupid reasons. Should we not have anticipated these stupid reasons? Did not Madeleine Albright warn about these stupid reasons and that the exclusion of non-EU members of NATO would create exactly this kind of paralysis?

Mr Grant: That requires some answer.

Q49 Mr Jenkin: It sure does!

Mr Grant: I believe that you are confusing NATO-EU relations which are not working as well as they should in Brussels, although as Sir Paul rightly said they tend to work all right in the field. I accept that there are problems there. On the specific point you make that Americans want NATO to be the organisation of first choice and it should decide whether it wants to tackle a mission and, if not, it goes down the line and the EU is allowed to pick up the tab, the Europeans, including I believe the British Government, never really accepted that. There has always been some ambiguity there. The Americans have their view and the Europeans theirs and sometimes it leads to disagreements. I am not aware of the problem over Macedonia. I understand that more recently in relation to Sudan there was a problem about who should do the airlift of aid to Darfur and so on. We now have a NATO mission and EU mission to do that; and there are missions to support the African Union peace-keepers. This is a bit silly, but I do not think it is fundamental. Usually, things work out: either the EU does the stuff or NATO does it. The bigger point on which perhaps you and I disagree is that overall I believe ESDP has been fantastically successful. There have been 18 missions in various parts of the world. If one talks to some of the people who have worked in the Congo they say that those two small but significant missions that the EU sent to stabilise Buhia and Kinshasa were useful. I think that today in Bosnia EU peace-keepers are doing a tremendous job. In Ache they have done a tremendous job monitoring the ceasefire. I believe that some of the EU’s ESDP missions, most of which are not military, have been really useful and that alone justifies the creation of the ESDP.

Q50 Mr Jenkin: Looking at the United Kingdom’s national interest, which institution should have primacy over defence and security policy in Europe? Is it NATO or the EU?

Mr Grant: For hard security questions and significant threats to our security it is NATO, and for some of the softer issues—the less urgent issues—the EU is very important. You should not have to choose one or the other. I have always said that NATO and the ESDP will sink or swim together. If one is successful the other will succeed; if one fails the other will fail.

Dr Dover: I agree that for hard security issues right down to peace support it is NATO; for counter-terrorism it is the EU but not necessarily through the ESDP.

Q51 Chairman: What can be done to encourage greater co-operation between NATO and the EU? For example, how can we address the issue of Cyprus?

Mr Grant: I believe that this can be addressed only in terms of the broader problem of Cyprus. You cannot solve the NATO-EU aspect of the Cyprus-Turkey problem without solving the issue of Turkey’s broader relationship with Cyprus, and indeed Turkey’s relationship with the EU. We are
not here to talk about the Turkish accession talks, but I believe that they cannot succeed, and certainly will not do so in the long run, unless some way can be found to do a deal on Cyprus, perhaps some son of the Kofi Annan plan. If one reaches a broad political settlement which means that both Turkey and the Cypriot Governments are happy with the resolution of the problem of Cyprus the NATO-EU problem will automatically be solved. I do not think one can solve the NATO-EU-Turkey-Cyprus problem without solving the broader political issue, but I am not an expert on the problem of Cyprus.

*Dr Dover:* I am not sure that I am sufficiently expert on Cyprus to hazard a guess.

**Q52 Chairman:** Do you agree with Martin Wolf's assessment that no intelligent person thinks that Turkey has a hope of joining the European Union?

**Mr Grant:** I do disagree with that. I agree that at the moment it looks unlikely, but the world can change in 10 years. Turkish accession is not on the cards for at least 10 years. If, for example, France becomes a prosperous, successful and confident nation that feels good about itself and globalisation I do not believe that the French will necessarily oppose Turkish membership, especially if by then Turkey has become as rich as Greece is today, which is quite possible. It all depends on how Turkey evolves in the next decade and how some countries in Europe like France, Austria and others evolve over the period. It is not impossible.

**Q53 Chairman:** Therefore, do you say that on all sorts of fronts the key to improving relations between the EU and NATO is Sarkozy?

**Mr Grant:** For a number of reasons we have discussed this morning, yes, he is rather crucial.

**Q54 Chairman:** Does either of the other two witnesses disagree with that?

*Dr Dover:* No.

*Sir Paul Lever:* No.

**Q55 Willie Rennie:** Do you think the ESDP has been successful at getting countries that traditionally under the cold war arrangements have just had their own territorial armed forces to perform activities outside their own boundaries? Has that been a crucial part of it?

**Mr Grant:** Yes, it has. We have seen France, Italy and Spain adopt fully professional armed forces which have enabled them to supply more troops for peace-keeping operations. We have seen Germany not abolish conscription but greatly reduce its role and increase the number of soldiers able to deploy overseas. We have also seen countries like Germany and Italy deploy at times up to 10,000 people on various peace-keeping missions in different parts of the world. That is progress. It is not enough; one wishes that countries would do more. As to Europe's capacity to deploy peace-keepers in various parts of the world, I believe three or four years ago a paper written and published by William Wallace said that about 75,000 people were deployed at that time. That is pushing the limit and one could probably not go much beyond 100,000.

**Q56 Willie Rennie:** Do you think that NATO would have been able to persuade those countries to go outside their own boundaries and achieve that?

*Dr Dover:* Potentially, it would. Mr Grant is right that one of the great successes of ESDP is that more countries are involved and there are regional specialisations. The Nordic countries have their own particular impact on operations around the world, for example. What it has not done is stop member states free-riding in terms of capabilities and increasing the amount of money put into capabilities and expertise. That is an area in which the ESDP and European Union, particularly with the Lisbon agenda and the tying of defence procurement and technologies to a wider trade agenda, have profoundly failed. As to whether in the absence of ESDP NATO would have been able to do all these tasks, the answer may be yes, but it depends on the historical question of whether there would have been the same political motivations to do so, and that is unanswerable.

**Q57 Chairman:** That answer brings me to your memorandum in which you say that equipment choices being made by the UK and now at a European level are ill-suited to the sorts of conflicts in which the UK and European states are involved. Mr Grant wants to say something about industrial issues.

**Mr Grant:** I go back to the points raised at the beginning about NATO's role in the arms industry generally. I have always thought that it would be a very good idea if NATO played a role in fostering a transatlantic armaments market, setting the ground rules and ensuring fair competition and so on. This has never happened, one reason being that the French have not wanted NATO to broaden its ambit in that way. But the EU is increasingly playing a useful and potentially valuable role in encouraging armaments co-operation. We have seen in the past year the so-called code of conduct pushed by the European Defence Agency so that all contracts over one million euros must be posted. This encourages the opening up of procurement, but the danger is that the EU could be protectionist. There are people in the EU system who would like this sort of procedure to exclude American products from our market and encourage a Europe first choice, which I would be against. Therefore, it would be good if NATO could play that role. If one is exchanging defence technology and shifting it from one part of the world to another one needs to trust other people. The Americans at the moment do not sufficiently trust the British to make it easy for us to get weapons and equipment transferred here. Nevertheless, if one trusts anybody one will trust one's close allies. Therefore, since NATO is a collection of countries that more or less trust each other it seems to me it is quite an appropriate forum in which to encourage free flows of technology. If there was to be a body
that encouraged transatlantic defence industry consolidation and technology transfer it should be NATO, but sadly I see no signs of that happening.

Q58 Chairman: Do you blame the French?
Mr Grant: In part, but the Americans in their own way are as protectionist as the French on some issues.

Q59 Linda Gilroy: Sir Paul, is membership of NATO fulfilling the expectations of the new members of the Alliance? What challenges have they encountered?
Sir Paul Lever: My impression is that the new members joined NATO essentially for two reasons. First, it was part of the emergence from their old world of communism and the Warsaw Pact and part of the process of becoming true free sovereign states. NATO like the EU was a natural institution to which to belong. The second reason, though not second in scale of importance, is that they joined because of Article 5, that is, because the North Atlantic Alliance offers a collective security guarantee which for them—they chose not to play it up too much in public—was still something relevant given their geographical situations. Having joined, how have they performed? I would say that on the whole they have performed rather well. They have been good, loyal members; they have shown a lot of solidarity and contributed militarily to NATO missions within their still modest but improving military capabilities. One may say that these are fairly symbolic contributions and they are doing it just to show that they are good allies. That may be so but they are doing it. I would say that overall NATO enlargement has been a success. For those who worried about taking in countries actually or nearly bordering on Russia, up to now that problem has been reasonably well managed. I guess that what is happening in Russia would convince people that we were right to take them in and it would have been very dangerous to leave them in the cold.

Dr Dover: I broadly agree with that. I think the post-cold war situation in which those countries were brought in from the cold was part of a wider package of “improvements”, including security sector reform which was much needed after the end of the cold war. It also allowed Western European governments to influence the governance structures of those countries, which can be seen only as a good thing from a Western European perspective. Anecdotally, these countries tend to be very enthusiastic members of Western Europe as they see it. Less good is that they have provided us with an opportunity to sell equipment when other stuff may be more suitable. But the major impact has been on a newly-resurgent Russia which is currently almost trying to roll back the frontiers of this westernisation.

Q60 Linda Gilroy: As to prospects for further enlargement of NATO, have we reached the limits of the formal expansion of the Alliance?

Dr Dover: In Eastern Europe, yes. If one goes further the two obvious ones are Georgia and Ukraine. I think there are some serious question marks about whether NATO should want those countries in membership anyway.

Q61 Linda Gilroy: What questions does that raise?
Dr Dover: I refer to the geopolitical questions on whether Russia then becomes so intransigent and/or aggressive that it is counter-productive to do so.

Q62 Linda Gilroy: Should they have a veto on membership?
Dr Dover: No, but in effect they will have just through conduct. I do not know enough about the Ukraine to comment on the desirability of membership, but I think there are question marks on the internal governance of Georgia.

Sir Paul Lever: In other contexts we have seen the risks of taking into an organisation a new member that does not have control over its own territory, or what it claims as its own territory. There are some countries that would like to be members of NATO in that situation. It is a difficult conundrum. Do we give Russia a veto? I am sure that we would all answer no, but that is not the same as saying that if any country applies to join and that is its sovereign choice we take it in. The North Atlantic Alliance has an interest in its own security, and there is a certain balance of obligations and entitlements and any enlargement must be examined from that perspective. My feeling is that, as with Turkey and the European Union, it is not never but it is not on the immediate agenda. NATO probably will not in practice enlarge any further in the short term and thereafter, depending on what happens in the Balkans, there may be scope there. One always must note in this context that if hypothetically Sweden or Finland changed their long-standing defence policy, which I do not think is remotely on the cards, that would be a different matter.

Mr Grant: As to the Balkans, as with the EU countries they will join in the long run if they do the things we want them to do. I do not believe that existing members would have strong objections to taking in Balkan countries if and when they were ready. We do not want to leave the western Balkans as a kind of black hole on the map of Europe which breeds nasty things that come out and bite us. I share the view of Dr Dover on Ukraine and Georgia. I do not believe that we should kowtow to the Russians or give in to them when they growl at us, but we must recognise, as any brief knowledge of Russian history will tell you, that Ukraine is rather different from, say, Slovakia joining NATO. Ukraine is the kernel of Russian civilisation. More practically, the Russian defence industry is partly based in Ukraine. Ukraine’s armed forces are pretty tightly bound up in Russian’s own military structures. It is a fact that Russians do not regard Ukraine as a foreign country; they regard it perhaps a bit like the English regard Ireland. Psychologically, given the paranoia that genuinely does pervade Russian ruling circles, it would be seen as a very aggressive move to take Ukraine into NATO. I would not encourage it. As
it is, public opinion in Ukraine, depending on which opinion polls you read, shows that between 10 and 20 per cent of people want to join NATO. Although Yushchenko wants to join NATO in my view he does not have much of a political future. As for Georgia, one should not let in countries that have territorial disputes with neighbours. I do not say never but I certainly do not believe we should encourage Georgia. Although public opinion there suggests that it wants to join I do not think we should encourage Georgia to join NATO soon. The EU may be able to offer some feeling of safety and security by coming up with new systems and schemes, for example including Georgia or Ukraine in aspects of the EU’s common foreign and security policy. That would be less threatening to the Russians and create fewer problems.

Q63 Mr Holloway: In that case, why are we provoking them with the talk of Ukraine joining NATO?

Mr Grant: I think that some people in Washington are talking about Ukraine joining NATO. I am not aware of any European government other than the Poles or Brits that is keen to bring Ukraine into NATO. The president of Ukraine wants to join NATO and he has raised the issue, but I do not believe that the British Government and other Western European governments or EU or NATO institutions are making a big fuss about it.

Q64 Linda Gilroy: To move to the international partnerships and the people who are joining us in Afghanistan and who are not members of NATO, should those relationships be formalised?

Mr Grant: Is this a question about a global NATO?

Q65 Linda Gilroy: Yes. Australia and other countries have come in to help.

Mr Grant: This follows on quite nicely from the earlier questions. I guess that one impact the East Europeans have had in joining NATO is that although they are generally very atlanticist they take NATO away from the direction in which many Americans would like it to develop in terms of it becoming a global security alliance. East Europeans are very concerned that NATO should be about Article 5, so there is a strange alliance within NATO between the French who hate the idea of a global NATO and the East Europeans who also hate it for different reasons. Other people are better informed than me, but I am not aware of very many European governments in NATO that are terribly keen on the idea pushed by some in Washington to include the countries that are terribly keen on the idea of a global NATO and the East Europeans who also hate it for different reasons.

Q66 Linda Gilroy: You do not believe strongly that there is a need to formalise that arrangement?

Mr Grant: China is a bit of a danger here. Some people have made the case to me that if we did make, say, Australia a formal partner of NATO and give it some status within the organisation China would begin to perceive NATO as an anti-China organisation, which it does not at the moment. Maybe it is not the end of the world if it does so, but I do not believe that we should particularly encourage China to feel that the Americans are trying to encircle it. That would not be very helpful.

Dr Dover: I am similarly relaxed about ad hoc associations. I am not sure about full membership. I can see the utility of having Japan within the broad NATO ambit in terms of counter-terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, rogue states and that sort of thing; similarly with Australia particularly in relation to counter-terrorism, but I believe that full membership changes what NATO does so significantly and I am not sure it is a good idea.

Mr Jenkins: I have been sitting here thinking of NATO, Europe and Russia. Maybe we have lost the plot. I believe that Russia is playing the old game. It is very much involved in Iran and it has been sidetracked a great deal in Europe. Russia went through a dramatic change when the country fell apart and was on its knees. We could have helped it but did not and the West, particularly America, wanted to humiliate it. Now it has some power and is being sent extra money by the trainful from Europe it will get off its knees. This was a country whose people proudly strolled the world stage; it was one of the two superpowers. It was humiliated and now it has a leader who promises to take it back to the world stage. Therefore, for purely domestic reasons I can understand what Putin is doing, but for purely strategic reasons I cannot understand what Europe is doing.

Chairman: What is the question?

Q67 Mr Jenkins: No. We are putting questions in a vacuum, so let us set the framework. My concern is that NATO is so dominated by the US that it is not looking after Europe’s interests but America’s. Europe needs Russia. Will NATO be a stumbling block to our European future? I wish to see the day when a quarter of a million Poles do not turn west to work in Western Europe and Britain but turn east to work in Russia with its falling population, which is the main concern of that country, to help that country’s development. All one hears is the bright future for Europe, but what I get from the witnesses is that we should not allow Russia to block the progress we have made in pushing NATO up to its doors, threatening to site missiles on its border and kicking in its back door to occupy the kitchen.

Mr Grant: I spend a fair amount of time in Russia. There is real paranoia about NATO in Russia which is linked to the belief that the colour revolutions in Serbia, Ukraine, Georgia and Kurdistan would not
have happened without the CIA and Freedom House engineering them. As they do not like to see American military bases in central Asia—there is I believe only one left in Kurdistan—they have genuine worries about the missile installations that have been in the news recently. Certainly, I have been told by American diplomats that America gave verbal promises to the Russians 10 years ago that the enlargement of NATO would not lead to any US military facilities being stationed in the new members. American diplomats have told me recently that basically the US has reneged on the verbal promises that it gave Russia. The Russian fear of encirclement is genuine and not just an act. Having said that, if Russia does launch an economic blockade against Georgia as it has recently threatened, cut rail links to Estonia and cut off oil supplies to Latvia and Lithuania—Putin himself has said he will have to target European sites with his missiles to punish us for taking missile defence systems—that does not create the kind of ambience which allows us to have a very constructive relationship with Russia. Frankly, the way things are going in the Russian leadership at the moment it is very hard to have a constructive relationship. Sir Paul Lever: I do not think I can add to that.

Dr Dover: Perhaps I have gone soft on Russia. I think it is important to frame Russia's current behaviour in terms of thinking of its offensiveness as defensive. In the 1990s it felt humiliated by policies initiated and/or forced upon it by the West. Now it is finding its feet because it has a resurgent wealth through natural resources in one sense it is trying to solidify what has happened to it on its borders and that is why it does not want NATO to expand, but it is also trying to roll back some of the humiliations that it felt in the 1990s. That is quite clearly seen through energy policy. Even though most of us think of Gazprom as being a state-owned enterprise, it is a private company and so we can apply more rational company logic to the way it acts. I am more dovish than Mr Grant on this matter because I think that Russia must be seen in the context of almost a caged tiger; it is responding to a feeling of oppression rather than offensively trying to push its borders, be they political or geographical.

Mr Grant: I agree.

Q68 Willie Rennie: Referring to Afghanistan, what lessons do you think can be learnt about the failure to fulfil the requirements of the deployment from fellow NATO members? What are the implications for being able to conduct future deployments like this?

Dr Dover: Afghanistan will be informative for all sorts of reasons, one of which may be the experience of a strategic failure, not a military loss. That failure will fall on all of NATO member countries because they are collectively responsible for that. Technically speaking, the work that was done as part of ESDP on the capabilities catalogue, which I think is still unfulfilled, shows where the blame lies in this regard. It lies with free-riding European member governments that are not willing to sort out their capability shortages. Clearly, that bears heavily on the ability of the Alliance to do similar activities in the future.

Sir Paul Lever: One of the complaints made in relation to NATO's performance in Afghanistan is not just the unwillingness of some NATO members to provide forces and equipment but their insistence when they do provide it on applying so-called caveats to their use. In the latter context my view is that we need to be realistic. When a British government deploys our Armed Forces abroad we take quite a close interest in how, where and under what rules of engagement they are to be used. We are usually pretty relaxed in a NATO deployment, but in other contexts—I think of UNPROFOR—we have been very insistent that ultimately we retain control over how they may be used and in particular the extent to which they should be put in harm's way. It would undoubtedly be highly desirable from the point of view of the conduct of the NATO operation in Afghanistan if all allies gave what might be called carte blanche and said, “Here's our contingent. Deploy it as you like”, but that is not how the real world is. In some countries the constitutional arrangements bind the government quite tightly as to how to deploy their armed forces; in others there are domestic political realities. One has to accept that there is public opinion and governments must be able to choose the terms under which they contribute, given that this is an exercise whose relationship to their national security is indirect. It is not about territorial defence but the projection of force for wider purposes of security. Therefore, it may be a bit counter-productive to be too critical about those countries which say they will deploy here but not there.

Q69 Willie Rennie: How should other members respond to these events?

Sir Paul Lever: It would be highly desirable if they were less restrictive, but the reasons some of them are restrictive are not just a matter of perversity; it is because they have either domestic constitutional arrangements or domestic political constraints which mean they are more comfortable with their armed forces being used in one particular theatre.

Q70 Willie Rennie: My question is: what do we do about it? Do we just accept it? What are the implications of failure?

Mr Grant: The only thing one can do is use the power of persuasion. NATO is not a supra-national organisation. The secretary-general cannot override national caveats set by national parliaments. NATO is a collection of democracies. As Sir Paul says, we have to accept that some countries will send troops on certain missions with caveats. It is a real pain. Others will correct me, but I believe that some of the caveats have been listed in the past few years, particularly following the awful events in Kosovo about three years ago when there was a riot of Kosovars against Serbs. Some Serbs were killed and peace-keepers from some European countries stood
by and watched it happen because the caveats did not allow them to use force. I believe that it involved the Germans.

Q71 Mr Jenkin: It was not the Germans.
Mr Grant: I forget who it was. Following that awful event in a NATO peace-keeping mission moral pressure was applied. That is all one can do. In the broad sweep of history, let us think where the Germans have come from 15 years ago. At the time of the first gulf war when it was inconceivable that Germany would deploy force the Schroder Government with Joschka Fischler as foreign minister—I am a big critic of that government—started little by little to play a more active role in justice and security missions, sending troops all over the world. Although the Germans have been criticised for not sending troops to the south of Afghanistan, I believe that they have suffered 20 deaths through the use of special forces and their deployment in other parts of the country. As for the French, they have been rightly criticised for not sending more troops to the south, but their special forces have played a useful role. They provided troops for Lebanon last summer when Britain did not have any troops available. The answer to the question is that all we can do is use moral suasion which sometimes produces results.

Dr Dover: To follow up one point, on a broad sweep with Afghanistan—I know that the Committee is doing work on Afghanistan separately from this inquiry—one of the key factors for the Alliance is that it has learnt lessons more quickly as people rotate out of theatre. That has been very important. Counter-insurgency thinking is getting far better. From my experience at the Defence Academy, even in the past two years it is becoming far more nuanced, sophisticated and strong. We are still doing COIN in the wrong way; we are using air power as artillery and dropping 2,000-pound bombs on adversaries. That is not connecting hearts and minds, even if it physically disconnects people’s heads from their bodies. COIN can be done only in terms of managing a political concept, so learning lessons more quickly and in a better way out of theatre is the key factor that comes out of this rather than some of the more strategic aspects.

Q72 Mr Holloway: We visited Canada the other day and met members of the opposition. I was surprised to be told that unless others came up to the mark the Canadians would leave Kandahar. That does not seem so unreasonable. Do you believe that a bit more hard ball has to be played in order to get people to remove the Brits, Canadians and Dutch from the dangerous places?
Dr Dover: It is very difficult to find countries, governments and militaries that are capable of doing the sorts of operations we are talking about. The number of militaries that are capable of doing the operations that the British Armed Forces do is quite small, and certainly the political motivation to do them is even smaller. In terms of Afghanistan burden-sharing becomes a large issue, which feeds into what I said earlier about whether we could envisage a system within NATO where there was burden-sharing of payments. Therefore, one country will do the operations whilst the others help to subsidise that particular set of operations. I do not know the answer to that, but I suggest that it is an attractive option for those who are more capable and willing.

Sir Paul Lever: I think that one area in which NATO has perhaps been rather unsuccessful is explaining publicly the nature of the military mission in the south of Afghanistan. In the north there was a mission to support provincial reconstruction teams and apply military force to support reconstruction and civil rebuilding. That was a mission that I think everybody could understand and it had good public resonance in countries like Germany, but NATO seems rather to have drifted into the south without very much of a public debate or understanding of why exactly these small pockets of NATO forces are holding small villages and defending them against the Taliban and engaging in this type of warfare. It is possible to understand the rationale for it in the north and the use of special forces deployed by the Americans. There are question marks about whether they are too heavy in the use of air power, but you can see the rationale for going after al-Qaeda in that way. What is not quite so clear is the purpose of the counter-insurgency action that NATO is undertaking in the south. That does not mean I criticise it; I just note that I do not think it has been adequately explained in public.

John Smith: I thought that it was to extend the writ of Kabul.
Chairman: We are moving on from Afghanistan.

Q73 John Smith: We are indeed, but I think it is worth replying to that comment. Turning to capabilities, what improvement have we seen in actual NATO capabilities in, say, the past five years? Has the development of ESDP been a help or hindrance in the development of those capabilities in relation to EU battle groups? What more needs to be done?
Dr Dover: Improvements in capabilities across the Alliance have arisen mostly in the American sphere. Their capabilities with their limitless bank balance continue to improve exponentially. The challenge for the European end of the Alliance is the network-centric capability and whether or not we wish to engage in that fully. Most recently, Lockheed Martin has tried to promote within the UK the idea of having standard platforms into which small businesses can plug their particular bits of kit. That is an interesting development and one that will hopefully generate some cost savings in putting new kit into theatre. Across the European Union capabilities come under the same defence inflationary crush. People try to do more with less; they put high technology capabilities into situations where low technology capabilities would be more suitable. The rationale is that you can do low intensity operations with high technology kit more...
effectively than to do high intensity activity with low technology capabilities. The reality in places like Afghanistan and Iraq is the converse is true, so my broad picture is quite pessimistic.

**Mr Grant:** It is almost inconceivable that defence budgets will go up. The cost of defence equipment is rising higher than inflation, so there is a real problem in improving capabilities. I still believe that one way forward is to pool defence assets. That could save significant amounts of money in non-sensitive areas of defence equipment and organisation. After all, NATO has its own fleet of AWACS and airborne ground surveillance aircraft. Pooling saves money. As for the EU, because a lot of countries are now buying the Eurofighter why not have a single support organisation for the A400M transport plane against single support operation? One could apply the same logic to catering, engineering and the non-sensitive logistic bits of defence. We could save a lot of money if we collaborated and built common organisations.

**Q74 John Smith:** Is there a case for developing non-military capability within NATO?

**Sir Paul Lever:** It is not what NATO is good at and has done up to now on any significant scale. There are two questions. First, when NATO conducts certain military operations does it need to have in mind the non-military aspects? The answer is emphatically yes. Second, should NATO itself provide them through a single organisation? The answer is not necessarily. There are other international bodies—one is the EU, another is the UN and another is possibly OSCE—with which NATO can interact. I would be slightly wary of trying to turn NATO from an organisation whose essential purpose is military into one which provides development aid, engages directly in civil reconstruction and offers police training and so on. Those are things that need to be done and NATO needs to be confident that they will be done, but I do not think that means NATO itself needs to do them.

**Q75 Mr Jenkin:** When we were at NATO we encountered some real frustration that the EDA was undertaking weapons standardisation which is one of NATO’s key tasks; it has been doing it for years. Would it not be preferable to have one authority in Europe attempting to standardise weapons rather than two?

**Dr Dover:** Instrumentally, yes.

**Mr Grant:** Yes.

**Q76 Chairman:** There is a huge disparity between the spending of the United States and the spending of Europe on defence. Mr Grant says there is no chance of budgets being increased. Given that huge disparity, do you think that an alliance based on that disparity has a long-term future?

**Mr Grant:** As we said earlier, the current US administration is very pro-NATO at the political level. The State Department is full of NATO-lovers like Nick Burns and Condi Rice, but in terms of your question at the level of the US military and the Pentagon there is much less interest in NATO than there was. I believe that fewer American top generals have served in NATO and fewer people in the American military think that NATO is important. Because of that disparity in brute force, if you like, there is a real problem in getting the US military to think that NATO and the Europeans matter and should be taken seriously.

**Dr Dover:** If we are more pragmatic about the roles and their disaggregation and which ones certain collections of states play then the Alliance is sustainable; if not and we insist on having the US involved at all or most points then it is probably unsustainable.

**Chairman:** Thank you very much. It has been an interesting morning and this first evidence session in our inquiry into NATO has really helped us.
Tuesday 9 October 2007

Members present

Mr James Arbuthnot, in the Chair

Mr David S Borrow Linda Gilroy Mr David Hamilton Mr Mike Hancock Mr Adam Holloway

Mr Bernard Jenkin Mr Brian Jenkins Mr Kevan Jones Robert Key Willie Rennie

Witnesses: Dr Dana Allin, International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS), Professor Michael Cox, London School of Economics, Dr Jonathan Eyal, Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), Dr Robin Niblett, Director, Chatham House, and Dr Mark Webber, University of Loughborough, gave evidence.

Q77 Chairman: This is the second evidence session in our inquiry into the future of NATO and European defence. Welcome to our witnesses this morning. The purpose of our inquiry is to look very broadly at the role of NATO, at the sorts of challenges that NATO faces and how it relates to the European Security and Defence Policy and we expect to have further evidence sessions during the course of the next few months, including with the Secretary of State, and we hope to publish our report in the New Year ahead of the NATO Summit in Bucharest in April. This morning we have got a panel of very distinguished academic people, and I wonder if you could possibly begin by introducing yourselves, saying where you work and what you do.

Dr Allin: I am Dana Allin and I am a Senior Fellow for Transatlantic Affairs and editor of our journal Survival at the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Professor Cox: I am Professor Michael Cox, Professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics.

Dr Eyal: I am Jonathan Eyal, Director of International Security Studies at the Royal United Services Institute.

Dr Niblett: I am Robin Niblett, Director of Chatham House.

Dr Webber: I am Mark Webber, Senior Lecturer in Politics at Loughborough University.

Q78 Chairman: We have a number of questions to ask you and, first, I wonder if we could ask what the role and purpose of NATO actually is. I know that is a huge question, but I wonder if you could try to condense your answers into a few sentences.

Dr Webber: It is a difficult question to answer and no doubt the hearings here are partly spurred by the fact that NATO itself is uncertain of its role and purpose. Its role and purpose today is clearly different from that of its formation during the Cold War, NATO’s own self-estimation of its role is very widespread, partnership, counter-terrorism, enlargement and so on, but I think that is a discourse which hides a considerable degree of uncertainty as to what its current role and purpose is. In essence, I think one of its most important roles at the moment is simply to ensure its own relevance and that has been a spur to its activities in the last ten years or so and sometimes, I think, mistakenly.

Q79 Chairman: So its role is to exist?

Dr Webber: Yes. In some senses, its role is simply to ensure its survival and to accrue certain functions in order to justify its continued existence.

Dr Eyal: I must admit, I disagree. I do not think that NATO is an amoeba which has to grow because it has to grow because it has to grow. I would say, without descending into the clichés of the 1940s about why it was created, that the main purpose is to prevent the renationalisation of its Member States' defence policies, to maintain a formal, explicit, enshrined-in-treaties link with the United States of the kind that Europe is very unlikely to get even on paper or in theory in Congress today, and increasingly also to prevent a knee-jerk reaction in the European security arrangements if NATO were to disintegrate tomorrow. There is an additional element which we tend to forget and we tend to dismiss which is that the new Member States from Central and Eastern Europe are still looking upon this organisation as the ultimate umbrella organisation for defence purposes and they still feel quite vulnerable. There is no other institution in the Euro-Atlantic area that could provide, at least on paper, the security guarantees and the security framework, the habit of negotiation and dialogue of the kind that NATO can.

Professor Cox: I think there is a simple answer to your question as to what is its current purpose and that is to win in Afghanistan and if it does not, then NATO may be dead, and I think that is where you have to begin, ie, where it is currently deploying 35,000-odd troops in the most important part of the world now facing global security. That is the simple answer to your question. I think the second answer I would give is that it has got to provide some role for the United States because the United States for all sorts of other reasons is still the only hegemon left in the world and nobody is going to replace it for a very long time, despite China’s rise and all the rest, and thus if NATO is irrelevant to the United States, it is not relevant at all. Therefore, what the United States is seeing NATO as being is essentially as a global player. It has to provide global security and a global role and the United States thinks post-9/11 that it has got to be global, so regionally its first task is Afghanistan, but that has global implications, and, secondly, it has to look relevant to what the
United States wants, and what it wants from NATO effectively is a global perspective and indeed a global role.

**Dr Niblett:** I think I would agree with some of the points raised by Jonathan Eyal, so I will not repeat those. For me, NATO has a fundamental purpose and I would just pick one, which is to maintain the transatlantic link on security issues between the United States and the nations of Europe. I think that remains a highly valid and important purpose in a world that is dangerous in different ways from the ways that it was when the Alliance was formed, but where I think both the United States, Canada obviously and the nations of Europe are far more secure by being organised around a treaty-legally-constructed organisation in which they work together on security questions in today’s world and I would put that at the centre and I think the rest in a way moves around it.

**Dr Allin:** Well, its purpose is clearly more fuzzy than it was in the Cold War and I think that the diversity of answers you have had from my colleagues suggests that. I think all of the answers my colleagues have given are plausible, but they are not obviously compelling in the fundamental way that mutual defence against a Soviet threat was. For example, security guaranteed for East and Central Europe is very important for East and Central Europe, but it is not going to be the animating purpose for much of the rest of the Alliance. The transatlantic link, formalising the transatlantic link, that is obviously important and I think it is very important as we have seen in the repair or the recovery of transatlantic relations and the sort of transatlantic spring and it is important to elites in Europe, but it is not, judging by the polls, an entirely compelling purpose as far as the European public are concerned. I do not think it is threatened not just because of institutional inertia, but because it does have many purposes that are valuable, but it is problematic that the purposes are so difficult to describe. The role, which is a slightly different word, is obviously currently that it has a major project in Afghanistan and more broadly I have heard it described, I think, very well as a kind of military services organisation that brings together militaries very good for force-generation purposes, the best organisation in the world for force-generation purposes, to serve the purposes of the various Western allies when they are common and they can agree, but the agreement is not pre-programmed, which is the point, and it is always going to be more difficult, more ad hoc, case by case.

**Q80 Mr Jenkin:** Is the survival of NATO still one of our most fundamental national interests and can you express what our national interest is in relation to NATO and perhaps Dana Allin would like to express that view from the point of view of the United States’ national interest?

**Dr Eyal:** I will try to answer Mr Jenkin’s point. It depends of course to whom you talk in terms of the definition of the British national interest. My suggestion is that there is no European structure in purely European defence that could match NATO’s habit of co-operation and NATO procedures. Of course it could be invented and one of the oddities of the academic intellectual debate is that whenever you mention European defence, people nod very sagely and say, “This is an urgent project”, but the moment you mention NATO, they say, “What do we need the organisation for?”, so presumably we do need a collective security organisation. I think the onus is on those who suggest that this current security organisation no longer serves a function. The onus is on them to prove why it does not. If you ask me the way I interpret British security interests, they are to maintain a formal link with the United States because any other link with the United States is unlikely to befall. The poodles are likely to be discovered much more quickly if there is not a NATO than if there is a NATO. Number two, it is to maintain NATO as a military structure and not as a fuzzy, political organisation. We have got plenty of these structures around and they all issue communiqués. Number three is to try to maintain or improve the ability of the Alliance for force-generation and that has been the bane of NATO’s problems for decades and it has been exposed much more since the end of the Cold War. These, I would say, are British national security interests, as I see them.

**Professor Cox:** I kind of give a three-point response to the question of national interest and it is very unfashionable now in international relations to talk of such things. If you take the British national interest, to be very precise about it, since 1956 the first British interest has been to remain close to the United States and the best and most useful means of doing that and in an organisation or an international institution which still has high legitimacy in the United States is NATO, so if part of the national interest of Britain is defined not simply in terms of what it does, but also in terms of the relationship it has with the major players still in the international system to the United States, then NATO serves that purpose. There is no other body that the United States wants to look towards in terms of its security and in terms of definitions of global security other than NATO. It does not want the ESDP, it does not want to look to European institutions. They may be an addition, but they are not fundamental. Secondly, Britain is a global player. It has global foreign direct investments around the world, it is a global trader and it always has been and it will remain so and even if you do not believe in the linguistic nonsense which comes up with the globalisation theory, you can still accept that Britain is a global player and most of the threats in the world today are not going to come from armies steam ing across the frontiers, but they are going to come from sources around the world which we do not even know are going to happen in the next few years. Who would ever have believed that Afghanistan would become a serious global threat, so in that sense NATO, it seems to me, again is the only force projection organisation that exists and Britain plays a role in that. Let me also conclude with one other thing, being an old Cold Warrior intellectually at least, I studied it for many years and still do, and that
is do not forget Russia. NATO went away because the Soviet threat has gone away. Well, lots of people are now talking Russia up as a new problem and of course for many people essentially in Eastern Europe the existence of NATO is reassurance. If it is reassurance for them, then presumably it does serve the British national interest.

Dr Allin: Well, I was asked from the American point of view and I would say from the US perspective that a warm, strong, amicable and good working relationship and a good working link with European allies is an extremely important and probably a vital American interest. I think the evidence for that is that Europe is kind of the canary in the mineshaft in terms of American isolation. If America cannot maintain this relationship and convince Europeans of common purposes in the world, then I think it is highly implausible that it is going to be anything but isolated.

Chairman: We will come on to the American view of NATO actually in just a few minutes.

Q81 Mr Hancock: When Jonathan Eyal said there are those people who say, “Why NATO?”. I am always curious to know who these people are who say, “Why NATO?”

Dr Eyal: I think that this is a fairly widespread view.

Q82 Mr Hancock: But of whom?

Dr Eyal: In the academic community. I did refer to the academic community. It may not count, but it does. At the end of the day—

Q83 Mr Hancock: I did not say that it did not count, but I was curious to know where it was.

Dr Eyal: It is an intellectual fashion and I was just pointing to the contradiction which is very widespread and it is widespread in the media as well that the moment you mention European defence and the imperative of creating a European defence structure, everyone nods very sagely and says, “Let’s do it by yesterday”; and the moment you mention NATO and say, “Let’s improve NATO”, people say, “Well, what’s the organisation for?” and I would submit that the same “What’s it for?” could apply to the European Union security structure, but I was merely referring to this curious contradiction that very often an existing, functioning security organisation to which most of us are bound with very strict, legal obligations is questioned almost as an intellectual fashion.

Dr Webber: I wanted to return to the question just asked, the degree to which NATO serves the UK national interest. It is an unquestioned assumption, it seems to me, in hearings of this sort and in the commentaries that NATO does serve British national interests. In hearings of this sort, nobody questions, the fundamental link which UK defence policy enjoys through NATO to the United States, for instance, so in that sense hearings like this and commentary on NATO tends to be problem-solving about how NATO can be repaired, how it can be made to better serve the functions one presumes it undertakes. In a wider setting, however, insofar as it is possible to define a national interest which is a difficult job in itself, NATO is only one of a number of things which serve a presumed national interest. I think sometimes the trouble with NATO is that it crowds out alternatives and the very nature of NATO transformation over the last ten years has been to take on more and more roles for itself and to some degree encroach upon the roles of others. I have no doubt we will go into Afghanistan in great detail in a moment, but the fact that NATO is now engaged to some degree in reconstruction and humanitarian missions is a crowding out of other agencies which could perhaps perform the job to some degree better, and I think a similar process occurs intellectually. The assumption that NATO is, was and must be at the centre of British defence thinking crowds out other creative alternatives, one of which clearly is the relationship with the European Union and the development of the ESDP, for instance, and empowering global organisations to a greater degree. Insofar as NATO wants to be a global actor, one should not forget that there is already another one out there which is the United Nations, so I think the presumption that NATO is at the heart of our British national interest should not necessarily be taken at face value, but it should be questioned.

Q84 Mr Jenkins: One of the difficulties I have got is when I walk the streets and talk to people and say, “Now, I want you to make a choice between NATO and the European defence. Let Europe defend us”, and people say, “Europe? Do you mean that bunch of bureaucrats who can’t get anything right or NATO, a rather clean-cut military group who have actually improved their expertise over 50 years in our defence?” How do I get the concept of what the public across Europe feel when I think our country is pro-NATO, but across Europe how do I get the concept of how the European people feel with regard to what they see as being the future of NATO? Do they still value NATO and still think it is the way forward or do they think they want to go for a European defence force?

Dr Niblett: I agree again with a lot of the points raised by both Dr Allin and Mick Cox in particular. If you need to answer that question, “What is its value?”, I am afraid I would agree with you, that I think it is a fair question to ask. In other words, when Member States of the European Union try to come together to look at foreign policy and security questions, there is a fragmentation which seems to naturally take effect. As countries look out, there are different aspects of priority around their periphery. In some countries of Europe, it is Russia, if you are in the south of Europe, it is North Africa and in certain parts it is Libya or the Middle East, and if you are here in the UK, maybe it is global interests which stretch way beyond Europe’s periphery, so it is very difficult, I think, to make it an either/or question, “Is it NATO or the EU?”. In my opinion, from the British national interest perspective, the UK has interests around the world. They are in the future of Pakistan, they are in Afghanistan, they are in parts of East Asia in terms of our economic interest, they are in Africa, they are in the Middle
East and ultimately our ability to pursue those is going to be insufficient either by ourselves or with our European partners alone and they are much more likely to be pursued in collaboration with an institution that brings the United States into that mix as well. I would note, however, that the members of NATO and the EU are mostly the same, so when we create this dichotomy between it being either NATO or the EU, in fact we are talking about the same people wearing different hats, sometimes arguing against each other in different ways. From a military perspective, members of all the European armed forces that I am aware of, including the French, one might add, are highly committed towards operations within NATO because they see them as being very valuable to achieving their military goals, so it is not a case of their wishing that Europe was doing more or that NATO was doing more, but it is a matter of which institutions are best at doing which things and how can we get them to work better together, and I know we are getting on to that later on.

**Chairman:** Could you comment also on Brian Jenkins’ question about the public support for NATO as opposed to the public support for the EU?

**Dr Niblett:** Yes, I understood his comment to mean that it is very hard to build up public support for European defence and it is easier to find support for NATO because there is a residual support for NATO, so in that sense I suppose I am agreeing with him. If one wants to explain to the British public why NATO remains valuable, I think you can point to Afghanistan as a first point. If Afghanistan and its future are vital to the British national interest, which I happen to believe they are, the ability of UK forces to be protected and operate well there more often than not depend on US close-air support than they do on support from any of their other European partners who are perhaps not as committed to that operation. Therefore, having the United States as a close ally within the NATO context is an important part of that mix. On the European front in terms of public support, I think a much stronger case can be made, and should be made, for the role that the European Union and the EU institutions can play in promoting British security, but it is a much broader realm than in the military realm per se and I think that case can be made in terms of foreign assistance, in terms of post-conflict reconstruction and in terms of the role of police forces to be able to win the peace after you have won the war.

**Dr Eyal:** To answer Brian Jenkins’ point, it is fair to say that NATO does suffer from an image as being a US-dominated institution and that clouds the kind of responses that one gets in terms of public opinion in certain European countries, so when you put a bland question like the one you have suggested which is, “Which one would you prefer?”, my guess, and I suspect it would be proven by opinion polls, is that the majority of the French and probably, as a numerical symbol, a majority of Germans would say, “We prefer a European structure” for precisely the reasons of starting on your own, looking after yourself and not listening to the Americans, the sort of broad slogans. However, I think it is the wrong question. I think the real question which should be put is, “Are you prepared to pay for this European construction?” and the answer there, well, the members of the Committee know fully well from the record of most, not all, but most European countries. I would like to address one point which I think needs to be addressed of Dr Webber’s which is about NATO crowding out other institutions. There is an element of that, although I would submit that the European Union tends to crowd out almost any institution, but there is also a point which ought to be remembered which is that NATO has over the last 50 years worked as an agency, in effect the sub-contractor of the United Nations. It has done so in the Balkans, both in Bosnia and in Kosovo and it has done so in strictly legal terms in Afghanistan as well, so far from being outside the international legal system, they could make a very good case that it is a very important pillar of the international legal system in the absence of standing United Nations’ peacekeeping forces.

**Dr Allin:** I do not personally see an irrevocable choice to be made between NATO and European defence policy. There are obviously going to be frictions and tensions, and we are largely talking about the same forces, but it all has to depend on a prior question which Europeans have to ask themselves, and are asking themselves, which is, “Are there places where European power as Europe should be projected?”. I am speaking to a group of British politicians where this question is fraught, but looking from the outside, not only do I think the answer is yes, but I see a couple of examples where it has been very successful, such as in Congo, so I really do not see an irrevocable choice and I do not necessarily think that the European public need to have it presented that way.

**Chairman:** We will come back to this issue of the EU and NATO in a few minutes, but now I think we ought to get back to the issue of the United States’ attitude towards NATO.

**Mr Hancock:** Dr Allin has already answered part of the question from the American perspective, but I would be interested to know what the rest of the panel feel about what importance the United Nations attaches to NATO. How has the Alliance’s place in American foreign policy changed over recent years and what kind of alliance are the United States seeking from NATO in the next decade or so?

**Dr Niblett:** I think the United States still attaches importance to NATO. I have not put a qualifying adjective in front of it because I think probably, in the sum of it, it attaches a more important importance to NATO than it did for obvious reasons during the Cold War, but NATO remains important. It remains important for some of the reasons that Dana Allin mentioned earlier on which is that ultimately when the United States needs to operate in theatres abroad, having allies to be able to go in with it can be useful both in terms of political support and also in terms of manpower, material and so on. Ultimately, they are looking for a NATO that is effective; and this is one of the deep concerns. I think it is less a NATO that...
is a forum within which the United States is able to convince and marshal European allies around a common, strategic vision of what needs to be done in the world and it is more a place where, once decisions have been taken quite often by perhaps a small group of European countries and the United States or within the United States and they have then been able to convince others in Europe that military forces are part of the answer to a particular problem, then NATO is a vehicle to be able to pursue that particular goal. This has been paraphrased into the toolbox metaphor meaning NATO provides a good forum within which the integrated military command retains a usefulness, along with training, common standards, doctrine, logistics, et cetera, and I think there is some truth to that description within US perceptions. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but I think as the United States looks at security threats around the world, whether they be in China or in the Far East, whether they be in terms of the kind of relationships they are trying to build up with India, NATO does not feature as yet as much in that particular answer. There is a clear effort going on which cuts across, and I think this is very important, the political divide between Democrats and Republicans in favour of a more global NATO, a NATO that can operate internationally, and I am sure you have seen the commentary made by various presidential candidates about enlarging to India, et cetera, et cetera, and we can talk more about that, but I think what this reflects is a perception that the threats are far more global, they are far more dispersed and being able to have allies that can participate in that would be the ultimate goal. I do not think there is a huge amount of confidence yet in the United States that this particular global NATO will necessarily emerge.

Professor Cox: For me, it goes back to the question about the British national interest. I think the United States looks at NATO and says, “Does it serve our national interest?” and it is as simple as that. In the Cold War, it was a very simple answer to that question. After the end of the Cold War, without getting too historical, clearly there was not an easy answer to the question of what NATO was actually for and that was not a question, by the way, that was an American question and indeed a question for everybody in Europe, “What’s it for when there is no longer an enemy to fight?”, and that was one problem for NATO and from the American perspective on it. Secondly, there is no longer any threat in Europe and it had always been a European-based organisation, so “What’s it for?” is another question. There is then that huge question of the capabilities gap and “What are the Europeans for?” and, “To contribute to a military organisation, what are they for?”. Okay, the Brits do a bit and the French in their own unambiguous way do their bit, but what are the rest for? As you saw, the military spending gap grew and grew and grew through the 1990s, so most Americans would ask from a national interest point of view, “There are several nice theme parks in Europe, but what’s it for militarily?”, and then of course we had the whole thing over Kosovo where clearly the Americans came out of it and Dana has written about this with great skill and he knows more about it than I do, but they came out of Kosovo saying, “Fighting war by committee is a problem. Why should I kind of consult with guys who don’t want to do what I want to do militarily when I want to do what I want to do militarily?”. I think that when you get into the post-9/11 situation, it is actually noticeable that NATO actually does not look terribly relevant immediately after 9/11. Article 5 is declared and I think the response in Washington, at least within some circles of the Bush Administration, is, “So what?” and then immediately in the first days, weeks and months of Afghanistan, the United States clearly did not go through NATO. It seems to me that they have had to come back to NATO for a variety of reasons partly which I think are to do with the disaster which is currently Iraq, partly because Afghanistan is still an ongoing problem and partly because I think in the end they do see that NATO is in the national interest. However, I do think that the world we are now living in, a world where the threats are different, where pre-emption has become the military doctrine of the United States and where the definition of alliances has moved over to things called ‘coalitions of the willing’, I think that does raise a series of major questions about what an alliance of a stable and permanent character is for a power as strong as the United States. Why should they give consultation rights to those who do not contribute militarily to international security and who do not pay the same amount on defence and security as they do, and those are very legitimate, but tough questions that Americans ask in America and we have got to know that they do ask those questions because they may be very polite when they come to Europe, but they ask these questions very seriously on the Hill.
Q88 Mr Hancock: Do they understand the Europeans’ changing view of NATO because, if they do, why are they surprised when they make bilateral arrangements on missile defence with Poland and the Czech Republic and the rest of NATO find that a rather strange occurrence?

Professor Cox: Well, the powerful do what the powerful do.

Q89 Mr Hancock: But that means they do not understand then?

Professor Cox: I think they simply act like a very, very, very powerful nation which sees NATO as one part of an overview it has of the whole world and it will deal bilaterally and in its own interests on certain things it would do and it will not get a pink permission slip from anybody to do it. In certain other areas, such as NATO, where it has to seek collective consultation, it will go in that direction. I think there is a contradiction there.

Q90 Mr Hancock: Yes, a big one.

Dr Eyal: First, on the point of a missile defence, looking at it from the American perspective, they would argue that missile defence has been discussed in the NATO context for quite some time. The European answer has been, “We can’t provide you an answer. It’s all too difficult with the German coalition and France’s elections”, et cetera, et cetera, and the feeling was at the end that the only way that there would be an impulse or a push is by the Americans going in with the Poles and with the Czechs. I think they do understand the concerns of Europe, but, as Professor Cox says, at the end of the day they cannot understand why they must continually pay a political price for people who are not prepared to invest in their defence in an adequate manner, and they know that it would not be the same kind of investment, but not even in an adequate manner. I would like to pick up the point you mentioned about why the NATO global outreach has failed, just to strengthen the points of Dr Niblett. There are a few proposals, there is a dialogue going on with Japan, there is one going on with Australia and there is even a dialogue going on sotto voce, very quietly, with China. There is of course the Mediterranean dialogue which NATO has launched and a special one with the Gulf States. The reason it has not worked is that this is where Mark Webber’s point about crowding out does make sense. The reason it did not work is that the European Union is pledged in economic terms to maintaining a unified position and the two simply could not be made to match. It is very difficult to see what NATO could offer to Japan and the Japanese were very interested to find out, but they have never got an answer, and it is very difficult to see what NATO could offer Australia. It is very easy to see what NATO could do in the Mediterranean, but then we have got the Barcelona Process and another process about to be launched by the French now, so I do not think that there is much scope for NATO enlarging its activities, despite the innumerable plans that are put on the table.

Dr Allin: First of all, Professor Cox is absolutely right about the lessons that many Americans drew from the Kosovo war. I would only want to add that that lesson is entirely perverse because there would have been no Kosovo war unless it was fought through NATO, but it only made sense in that way and its legitimacy, as opposed to its legality, was only established as a NATO operation. We cannot talk, or it would be idle to speculate, about when this might happen again and military strikes against Iran, well, it seems implausible, but one cannot imagine a place where it would be more plausible than within the UN Security Council and it could make a difference. On the global NATO issue, I think I may disagree with my colleagues a little bit. First of all, Afghanistan is not in Europe, as far as I know, so the sort of out-of-area issue is not really an issue anymore, that has been solved, but if you are talking about a global NATO where everyone is together as an alliance with the scope and the ambitions and the responsibilities sort of paralleling the United States, I think that obviously is not plausible and it is not going to work. Where is the United States likely to be, or not likely to be, in the Middle East? Where is the United States possibly going to be involved in military action? There is a possibility of a war with China over Taiwan and that is a real possibility. I do not think it is plausible or necessarily even a good idea to ask NATO to sign on to something like that.

Dr Webber: I would not disagree with most of what has been said, but there are just a few points which in a sense back up some of the observations. It seems to me that NATO has been, in the post-Cold War period, an organisation which the United States has tried to fashion in a way which serves its foreign policy interests, and part of the difficulty with NATO at the moment is that the utility of that strategy is no longer working perhaps in the way Washington and particularly the Pentagon would like. In the 1990s, there was a lot of success for American foreign policy in this respect. Enlargement was largely American and to some degree German policy, the strategy of NATO-Russian relations was largely led by Clinton and his very dynamic Deputy-Secretary of State, Strobe Talbott, the intervention in Kosovo, although Tony Blair played a fairly significant role in galvanising the Alliance, was certainly executed, by and large, by the United States and the current agenda of military transformation is largely led by developments in the American military in order to make NATO more interoperable still with American Armed Forces. Now, it seems to me that those successes served the United States rather well. It preserved its influence in Europe and extended its influence in Eastern Europe. Talk of a global NATO is a way of consolidating American influence in Central Asia and to some degree also in the South Caucasus, so in that sense NATO remains of some use, but the notion of a global NATO, it seems to me, is where the strategy hits the buffers because NATO is not, I think, well geared to play that role. There is clear dissent within the Alliance on whether it should play that role and over the last year there has been some back-pedalling on this sort of rhetoric in any case. I
think if that division becomes more obvious, and it was fairly hidden in the Riga Summit Declaration, the last Defence Ministerial hardly mentioned global partnerships, and it will be interesting to see whether the upcoming Defence Ministerial does either, so I think it may be an idea that is running into the sands, even though it is still one favoured in Washington.

Dr Niblett: Do you mean a series of global treaties between NATO and those countries or the United States?

Q92 Willie Rennie: The United States.

Dr Niblett: My only point is that I think the United States has most of those treaties already lined up with Australia and New Zealand and with Japan in particular.

Q93 Willie Rennie: And what about the impact on NATO from those treaties?

Dr Niblett: Maybe my colleagues know better than I in terms of how deeply integrated they are, but I know in the Japanese case that there are US troops deployed out there already and with Korea, they have troops deployed out there. These are quite integrated and quite elaborate arrangements that they have already, so to a certain extent you could argue that the United States already has that global network of alliances established and set up in many cases in treaty format and the North Atlantic Treaty happens to be the bit for that area, but what perhaps is different in terms of coming back to this discussion of a global NATO, a lot of this is designed also for lower end of the spectrum, mopping up after the high-intensity operations which the Americans may happen to be the case at all, that there is a definite change in policy?

Professor Cox: The word ‘Rumsfeld’ immediately precipitates a kind of wry snigger around most tables these days, but Rumsfeld used a term which actually Robin also used, but in a different form. When Rumsfeld said, “Basically we’re looking for a coalition of the willing”, all the hands went up around Europe and in the UK with people saying, “My goodness me! What does this mean? It’s a highly opportunistic approach to the definition of what was a formally structured alliance”, but Robin, who is not Donald Rumsfeld of course, talked of, “We’ve moved from an alliance to a pool of people we can deploy”. Well, by any other name, that strikes me as a coalition of the willing, so Rumsfeld may have departed the political stage and everybody
rubs their hands and says, “Well, thank goodness the Bush doctrine is now dead and buried”, which I do not believe for one minute, by the way, but Rumsfeldian kind of thinking about what is the purpose of alliances in the age of the War on Terror and in an age of American military predominance and in a way where we do not have fixed threats as we did in the past, I think that kind of thinking has not disappeared at all.

Q95 Mr Holloway: But, Professor, was it always thus?
Professor Cox: How far are we going back now?

Q96 Mr Holloway: Is it not always going to be the case that states, whatever alliances they are involved in, are going to commit big or commit symbolically based upon how it impacts them?
Professor Cox: Well, in some deep sense international relations has not changed for 2,000 years, so in that sense it has been ever thus, that there are some fundamentals of international politics and power and relations with states and other states and coalitions and the causes of wars, and I do accept that point, but I do think that something fundamental changed because of the end of the Cold War, to make the obvious point, when you removed a single magnetic north in your strategic thinking called the Soviet Union around which you then constructed a clearly focused European alliance. You knew exactly where you were and what you were doing and I think that has changed post the Cold War.

Chairman: I do want now to throw France into the mix.

Q97 Robert Key: Please can we focus on France. In the dying days of the Chirac presidency, as part of this inquiry, I went to the Elysée for a briefing with the President’s military advisers on the French perception of NATO and I was quite surprised to discover that even the Chirac regime recognised the significance of NATO as the ultimate guarantor of France’s nationhood. I also was fascinated to talk to academics who seemed to agree that when it came to France’s relationship with Europe and the European defence policy, France would always talk the talk, but never walk the walk. What difference has it made with President Sarkozy in post and what perception does Sarkozy have of NATO and what perception of France does America have of France’s role in NATO?
Dr Allin: Sarkozy is important because I think he clearly has personally fewer dogmatic inhibitions about these issues, maybe not quite to say that he is congenitally pro-American, but he clearly has greater affinities and understanding or less worry about maintaining a particular French line, so in those circumstances, although these conditions are very important and could, as in the 1990s, torpedo the whole thing, perhaps he will be more flexible and I think that is at least probable. Of course the French military circles—

Q98 Chairman: And would the Americans be more flexible as well?
Dr Allin: That, I do not know. Whilst I think it is true, as I think Dr Niblett said, that Americans have kind of given up being so worried about ESDP, I think we could revert to the problem that the United States, because of its power, can basically feel that it can deliver more ultimatums. I just do not know the answer to that and I do not know how the political constellation is going to go. I would think that the difference between one Presidential candidate and another on this score could actually be very important. French military circles have always wanted to be closer to NATO and, as I have suggested, in many ways they are. It has been more of a diplomatic idea to insist on French separation, but I think one thing I have noticed in France which is dawning and is sinking in, and not too soon as far as I am concerned, is the understanding that it is structurally impossible to pursue European ambitions, to build European structures, European unity on what is even perceived as an anti-American or an anti-NATO basis; it just does not work. It did...
not work with the old European Union and it certainly does not work with the new European Union and I think the French understand this. When I talk about an anti-American basis, I do not even necessarily think that is the right word, but they have come to recognise or they are coming to recognise that if it is perceived as an anti-American project, that is already a problem.

**Dr Niblett:** I completely agree with Dr Allin’s last point there and perhaps I could enlarg[e] on that and make two other points. Number one, I think that there is a realisation that a separate France that is anti the United States, not only can it not achieve its goals vis-à-vis ESDP, but it is actually weaker within Europe and within the European Union, so I think we do have a fundamental change here and I would go more for this being actually quite an important moment. Whether it is successful because of tactical, political issues, we can worry about, but I think that the further enlargement of the EU has fundamentally changed the balance within the EU. France cannot rely on a partnership with Germany to be able to pursue its own goals anymore. Germany is pulled more in the centre of Europe, it is pulled in more directions, so France has to strike out more on its own and it cannot rely on a Franco-German solution in the way it did for being able to further its own cause within the European Union. In essence, therefore, looking out and looking for new options and breaking the mould and the consensus is an important part of what Sarkozy and his team, I think, have realised they need to do and there is no more totemic thing to take on than this. I think it is also part of Sarkozy trying to shake up the French bureaucracy and, as we know, Quai d’Orsay, the foreign ministry, has traditionally been more anti this and the French military, as I have mentioned, has been more pro and I do think it is well-known that President Sarkozy’s view of the Quai d’Orsay is not particularly positive and I think he is taking them on.

**Q99 Robert Key:** Has the Pentagon woken up to this change?

**Dr Niblett:** I think the Pentagon more possibly than other parts of the American system. But the other audience you often need to look for in Washington is the Congress, and this is where, I think, President Sarkozy has been especially clever and I think he is clever partly because he has been very well advised by Jean-David Levitte who, as you know, was the Ambassador there who was recalled to service as Sarkozy’s adviser and he knows Washington very well, they are saying things to gain the confidence of Washington. The combination of a tough language, it has an effect and it permeates through. It counters a little bit the freedom frites perspective of France, and I will not use all the other descriptions for the sake of the record, but I think that they have realised that they need at least to talk the talk at the beginning if it is going to be possible for the Americans to let them walk the walk, and this is where I think it does become important because I think the United States, which is my third point, has a different view. We had a visit by a senior US official to Chatham House just last week where this issue was heavily debated. You cannot take one official’s viewpoint on this to represent the whole Administration, but their view was, “Come on, let’s talk about it”. The view of ESDP today is not the view of ESDP or the ESDI in 1996—not for necessarily good reasons for NATO. I think the US is much less altruistic and it is much more self-interested, so it does not care as much, but that does open up an opportunity. It is a more flexible organisation. France will not join the NATO of 1996 if it rejoins in 2007, if you see what I mean, some form of integrated military command structure and I think this is an important moment.

**Q100 Robert Key:** Can I just ask about the global role that America perceives for NATO and is Sarkozy moving in that direction?

**Dr Niblett:** I would think not; in the sense that that is something the French retain a nervousness about, but they also know that the United States is going to be very choosy about when it goes with NATO abroad as well. I think they see the politics on the US side on that as well.

**Dr Eyal:** I am absolutely convinced that the French are serious in their overture now on the integrated military command structure. I think the key, as Robin Niblett pointed out, is the fact that they will make no progress on European defence with a large number of former communist countries from Central and Eastern Europe unless the project is seen as being another pillar strengthening, or parallel to, NATO rather than in opposition or as a substitute. However, this is where it will stop. I do not believe for a moment that the French will accept NATO taking a larger role in, let us say, the Pacific area. I think that this is one where they would look very much upon the European Union, and especially if the European Treaty is adopted, and a unified foreign policy of the European Union as leading.

**Professor Cox:** I have two very quick points. It is a great moment and I do not think we should underestimate that. France has gone through a crisis between 2003 and 2007. It had its Iraq moment and that collapsed around it and we also know there is a whole debate going on inside France about the economic model and all the rest of it, so Sarkozy is coming out at the moment of a sense of decline and crisis and the old formulas have failed both externally and internally and I think it has to be taken extremely seriously and more seriously, I think, than in the 1990s. In that sense, the 1990s does not give us a guide to the possibilities that have opened up today. I would simply, however, make two points, going back to the scepticism which was, I think, expressed by Mark Webber at the very beginning. One, can he overcome the French political establishment? I am seriously doubtful. I think there are still very deep and imbued views inside large sections of the political establishment and the intellectual establishment. He is not an énarque-iste, Sarkozy. He comes from outside, he is an outsider, and I think there are still powerful forces of resistance intellectually and philosophically which are very deeply embedded.
into what I call almost ‘French identity’. It, secondly, comes to another point which is connected: can he overcome Gaullism? Gaullism is a coherent philosophical doctrine which has defined and shaped French foreign policy since 1956 again or 1958 when the President became President of this republic. How deep is that Gaullism and can that be overcome? If it cannot be and if it is so embedded into the identity, society and politics, then there are two philosophical opposition positions here on global security in Europe.

Q101 Mr Jenkin: It is a brilliant evidence session, but Robin Niblett has stolen the words from my lips, that the reason why the United States cares less about the ESDP is because it cares less about NATO and its disappointment with NATO is tangible. Should we not be very careful about what President Sarkozy is doing? Should the Americans not remember that we only resolved the NATO crisis in 2003 before the invasion of Iraq because France was not sitting in the military committee and where does the British national interest lie in this? Is President Sarkozy not seeking to supplant what has been a traditional Anglo-American partnership with a Franco-American partnership? As our new Prime Minister appears visibly cooler towards President Bush and his predecessor, is President Sarkozy not jumping into the breach and what should the British Government do about it?

Dr Eyal: First, on the episode of 2003, you are absolutely right, that one of the reasons why the French are now accepting their perhaps re-entry into the integrated military command structure makes sense is that they have discovered that their ability to veto issues around the Permanent Representatives’ table was limited with Lord Robinson reinventing the wheel and deciding that this was a purely military issue which should be left to the Chiefs of Staff. There is an element there and it is not a secret that the Ministry of Defence in London is a bit doubtful about the impact of France’s re-entry into the military structure and what it would mean. Nevertheless, I would submit that it is a risk worth taking. I believe that it is not in France’s interest to paralyse the military structure which would be the ultimate outcome of a bad scenario mainly because I am not sure that anyone in Paris believes that they could now push what was the traditional French agenda on the European Union. As Robin Niblett reminded all of us, the Union today is not the Union that Chirac wanted, dreamed of and ultimately obtained, so in that respect it will not be one that will be manoeuvred by the old traditional French ways. As to whether Sarkozy can supplant any other European country in a special relationship with the United States, I doubt it. I think that what Michael Cox has suggested is extremely important. Please look at the French media, please look at the whole French intellectual elite. Any president who tries to supplant Britain in the special relationship with the United States, to use the completely opposite example, would have a very, very tough fight and the potential internal domestic benefits in France would simply be too small. That does not mean to say that

Britain does not need to watch the situation very carefully, but it does mean to say that Mr Sarkozy has a very long journey to cover.

Q102 Mr Borrow: We ought to move on to the relationship between NATO and the ESDP and the practical difficulties in that relationship. To what extent are there difficulties and what are the main obstacles to effective co-operation and I would like you to touch specifically on the issue around Turkey and Cyprus?

Dr Eyal: I think the Turkish-Cypriot question is a difficult one, there is no doubt about it. It is one on which everyone is tiptoeing both in NATO and in the European Union, but I do not think that that is the crux of the problem. The crux of the problem goes much, much deeper and at the end of the day, having looked at it for years, and one could go into all the details of who meets where, what the formats of the decisions are, but my guess is that the institutions are not compatible because they are bureaucratically incompatible. Despite the celebration of a planning cell within the European Union, there is no military culture in the European bureaucracy; they do not know how to deal with NATO. What you have and what everyone tells you of is this constant sort of periodic luncheons or breakfasts between the President of the Commission and the Secretary General of NATO, but this is at the formal, superficial level. The reality is that the organisations will work only when there are docking mechanisms between their bureaucrats at various levels, and institutionally the European Union is incapable of realising that at the moment. It just does not have the staff and it does not have the abilities. It has the desire to acquire powers, but it does not have them in practice and it does not know how to discharge them. That is, I think, fundamentally the problem, quite apart from the usual political issues that we all know.

Dr Webber: I would largely agree with that. I think the Turkish problem is important, but I do agree in the sense that a focus on the Turkish-Cypriot problem often means that we overlook some of the others and there is a real institutional issue. A lot of the crafting between NATO and the EU over the last six or seven years has circled around institutional design and through the Berlin-plus mechanism and so on which has been successful to some degree. But what looms large now, it seems to me, is that NATO and the EU work increasingly together, as they have done in the Balkans to some degree, and they are, and will, in Afghanistan as well. It is a working relationship between NATO and the European Commission which whether Sarkozy, as far as I understand at the moment, is completely absent. The Commission does not play a leading role in the ESDP, but the Commission does play a leading role in the release of funds for the ESDP and it has an oversight role over the manner in which ESDP funds are used and how the ESDP in its civilian dimension is exercised. Let us not forget the upcoming EU role in Afghanistan where there will be an important policing role, so the crafting of that relationship, it seems to me, will be a real challenge. Some of the proposals, and I think
there was one at the WEU Assembly recently, is the notion that some sort of working relationship be established between the office of the Secretary General at NATO and the office of the President of the European Commission. I do not know if this is being actively thought on, but it is that sort of creative thinking that needs to be looked at, I think.

Dr Allin: I think all of this is correct. The lack of a kind of military culture in the EU is a problem. Of course that is precisely what members who want planning cells and so forth are trying to overcome, but it is a long way from that and it seems to me that the basic question is if you go back to St Malo and consider what was that all about, now it seems to me what that was all about was an agreement, and this is crucial, between a British Prime Minister and a French President that in the context of what was happening in the Balkans and what was brewing in Kosovo and what was happening in Washington in terms of indecision and inter-agency fighting about whether intervention was a good idea, there was a view that the British Prime Minister shared the view that an important matter of European security could not await the outcome of an inter-agency debate in Washington. Now, if that is considered a problem and if that is still considered a problem, then it seems to me that there are ways to overcome these bureaucratic and cultural issues. If it is not considered a problem, then it is not a problem, but it was then and it seemed that there was a certain logic to it.

Professor Cox: I think the thing I would say about the ESDP is that it can do some useful stuff, but it cannot do the serious stuff and I think that is the way we should approach it. It can do some very useful things usually after NATO has done the serious stuff. That has been the history so far for the Balkans and we can see the role of the ESDP in Afghanistan today, almost zero, so it does useful stuff and I do not think anybody should get too upset about it or too worried about it. There was kind of a lot of nonsense being talked on the other side of the Atlantic and around this city about it being NATO-threatening and NATO busting and all that stuff and I do not think that should be taken seriously. I think it just can be used for specific purposes and I do not think anybody in Europe really takes it beyond that any longer. Going back to the French thing quickly, I think Sarkozy has drawn that conclusion as well. The idea that you can have a European defence, a European Army, a European wing which in a sense is going to balance NATO in any fundamental way, challenge it or replace it, has simply gone out of the window. It would be useful? Serious in terms of deep, hard security? I think probably not. We are going to live with that for a very long time to come and I do not think we should be worried about it either.

Q103 Mr Jones: I agree with the analysis but we have the unfortunate task sometimes of having to attend meetings of European counterparts in the European Parliament. I agree with your approach but there is clearly still a clamour, if not a creeping, approach from the European Parliament. They want one more control over foreign affairs defence policy. I do not think they see the ESDP in the way that you do. I agree with your position on it. They do think it should be a rival to NATO and that is not just the French; that is also some of the British who have gone native.

Professor Cox: I know. I lecture frequently now in Brussels and you do meet that viewpoint. My only response is: where is the beef? How much are you guys spending per year of GDP on military and security? How much real coordination, how much integrated military structure is there actually going on here? Secondly, the Europeans themselves fundamentally disagree on certain fundamental security issues as well, as we have seen. The enlargement process brought in a number of countries from the former Communist countries with rather different views on the United States than some of what we might call old Europe, if I dare use that phrase. Yes, you do meet that attitude, but I would not get too worried about it.

Dr Niblett: First of all at the operational level, the ESDP type forces, Eurocorps and others have been able to work reasonably well under NATO command in recent years, whether in Kosovo or in Afghanistan, at a military level, despite some of the intelligence cooperation limits that are important and do limit therefore the total potential. Despite that, it is possible for the ESDP—let us call them European defined forces—to be able to work with NATO forces on common goals. When we talk about the ESDP and NATO not working together, we are talking about something bigger. We are talking about what is force for and, in a way, it is a strange thing. When European forces inside NATO talk about the ESDP, they seem to be talking about different things. NATO seems to represent a view in which military force is an important part of a solution. The ESDP is reflecting a different purpose of force which is to pop in, separate the competing forces, oversee the election, deal with the immediate crisis, help with the peace keeping and get out ideally; and, ultimately, military force ends up making the situation worse rather than better. I am drawing a little bit of a straw man here between the two organisations but I think it is important to get to what is the problem. ESDP forces have been defined slightly as an EU conception of what force is about in general terms. NATO still comes out of an environment, a period, in which force was used for very different purposes. Therefore, we see a mismatch in the way of strategic concept and we have a mismatch of forces. The battle groups are great concepts in a way but they are designed to come in and get out. As a senior official in the European Defence Agency commented recently, the need in the future is probably only going to be for sustainable forces rather than for rapid forces. My concern is that the ESDP is designed around rapid action and NATO is trying to struggle with what is sustainable. Therefore, the problems are much deeper in terms of Turkey.

Q104 Mr Hamilton: Following what Robin has said, that sounds very much like the role of the United Nations, not Europe. You have talked about the
police coming in and washing up. If I was a member of the public out there and I thought about what the United Nations do, that is what they do. All we are talking about here is duplication of work which is ludicrous. **Dr Niblett:** This is where subcontracting comes in. Who will the United Nations subcontract that operation to? Many in the European Union would like them to subcontract it to the EU. Then it has the legal mandate. It is not either/or.

**Q105 Mr Jenkin:** This all begs the question: should there not be a clear division of responsibility between the EU and NATO? Should that not be achievable?

**Dr Eyal:** In theory, yes. One could see the outlines of a grand bargain, as it were, fairly easily. The European Union does have the staying power in financial terms and in organisational terms. Please look at the administration of places like Bosnia, for instance, to see that they can take countries which need nurturing and build them up. Once they get going on the peace reconstruction process, they are far better equipped for that than NATO, both bureaucratically and in financial terms. They do have one great asset that NATO does not have, which is central funding. We tend to forget that. That is one of the big banes of NATO, that it does not have central funding, with a few minor exceptions. Therefore, there is a staying power which would suggest that the EU should take one side of an operation while the higher end—that is, the military side—should be left to NATO. We are back again to ultimately a political question and one of aspirations. Neither institution ultimately wishes to be consigned to one role in these conflicts, partly because we do not know what kind of conflicts there are likely to be in the future, partly because both institutions in this context are fighting for their survival as they see it.

**Dr Allin:** I think there is a logical division of labour but it is not one that is very easy to spell out in advance. It has a lot to do first of all in a particular crisis with whether the United States is going to be involved. It is going to want to be involved. You can imagine the European Union being more likely to be deployed in sub-Saharan Africa. I mentioned the Democratic Republic of the Congo example. I forget which one of my colleagues was complaining about the idea of in and out and not preparing for sustainability but this might be something that battle groups can do fairly well because they are more ready to go in at the service of the United Nations to try to stabilise a situation but not having the political support throughout Europe to imagine a prolonged deployment. I think it is called punctuated intervention. It is an idea that I think makes sense and to which the ESDP may be more suited than the United States and NATO. Again, we can draw these notional ideas about sub-Saharan Africa and specific cases, Europe to a large extent, the Balkans and so forth but I do not really think you can necessarily have hard and fast rules.

**Dr Webber:** I think there should be a division of labour but I do not think there will be because the tasks which both the European Union and NATO have increasingly taken on are too complex and there is too much duplication. Any grand bargain that should occur between NATO and the European Union should not be a bargain simply between those two organisations. The parts of the world they are now involved in involve other actors to a very considerable degree, one of which has been mentioned, which is the United Nations. Others perhaps we will come on to. I do not think you can talk about grand bargains in the so-called arc of crisis, through the Caucasus, central Asia, Russia and China. A couple of organisations which are very obscure and consequently always overlooked, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Shanghai Corporation Organisation, are of increasing importance in that part of the world.

**Q106 Mr Jenkin:** Are you not all confirming that this relationship between the EU and NATO is fundamentally unstable? They are in fact very different organisations in that the European Union has a much more legally superior structure and, with the addition of the European Reform Treaty, which we hear this morning is the same as the Constitution substantially according to the European Scrutiny Committee on the advice of Speaker’s Counsel, how are we going to prevent the very duplication and replication of NATO assets which we have always wanted to prevent?

**Dr Niblett:** I find it hard to see that they can a priori be incompatible because the same countries are choosing to do things through different tracks. To say they are incompatible is almost like saying your right hand is incompatible with your left hand. To me, they are part of the same countries in many cases.

**Q107 Mr Jenkin:** Your right hand and your left hand do not try and do the same thing at the same time.

**Dr Niblett:** No. This is what we are talking about. Can you get them to work in coordination and not try to do the same thing at the same time? Just to state the obvious, we cannot have a bargain between hard and soft power where NATO does hard and the ESDP just does soft. Some of the thinking in Afghanistan throws a strong light on why this would be a bad idea.

**Q108 Chairman:** Why is that obvious?

**Dr Niblett:** I think it is obvious because what potentially happens is that a particular chain of command in which the US is likely to be dominant, because of the size of the forces and the strength and sophistication of the forces it has, is the hard power part and the European side, which has much less of those forces on a sustainable basis, will be involved inevitably on the soft side. Those two strategies will not necessarily match because, as we have seen from national caveats which seem to permeate all aspects not only of NATO operations but definitely ESDP operations where you do not even have an integrated
military command, you end up with people doing different things for different objectives. In Afghanistan we have in many cases the US forces going round trying to kill people at the same time as—

**Q109 Mr Jenkin:** It is the antithesis of the comprehensive approach.

**Dr Niblett:** Exactly. That is my concern.

**Professor Cox:** There is no fundamental incompatibility at the moment but there is a potential incompatibility and I do not think one can ignore that. The origins of the ESDP, complex though they are, still arise out of a European desire to frankly let Europe do more and not have the United States define every single global agenda. The incompatibility will be managed, it seems to me, as long as the ESDP is not terribly serious. If the ESDP did get very serious, there may be an incompatibility. Indeed, if the European Union—whether through a Constitution or a Treaty—were to become far more significant as a foreign policy actor, which seems to be implied in what has been going on, again there could be an incompatibility. There is an ambiguity at the moment which could become a tension other things being equal and if things were to change, but it is there. Maybe Robin and I do not agree on this completely. I am not sure it is whether the left hand is compatible with the right hand. I think there could be a point where the left hand could start fighting with the right.

**Q110 Mr Holloway:** Is there not a danger, when you have two organisations in the same place but slightly at cross purposes, that you undermine the whole thing, the British and American principles of counter-insurgency warfare? If you do not have unity of command and unity of purpose, you are starting from a very bad place.

**Dr Niblett:** I would argue that that argues therefore for having greater unity of command and the biggest case—for example, in Afghanistan—is that we do need somebody who is able to coordinate precisely those two parts. You are right. Without that greater concentration of empowering a person or a group overseen by a person to dominate that, yes, you could end up precisely with that kind of tension, as we have seen right now. On the other hand, this idea that the EU can bring different forces to the table in a post-conflict environment is an important one. The police force, the gendarmerie, the development support are more likely to be brought into a post-conflict environment through an ESDP that is tied into an EU mechanism than through a NATO one, unless we are going to end up with a duplicating operation on both sides.

**Dr Allin:** The problems that we see in practice are not problems that so far have been created by a European Union aspiration. They are a factor of national sovereignty and different national cultures. I speak here in terms of Afghanistan or a country like Germany. German inhibitions and national caveats are not caused by the European Union. They would not go away if the European Union abandoned all ambitions in defence policy.

**Q111 Mr Jones:** Have we reached the outer limits of NATO? If we have not, what are the future prospects? What are the consequences for the countries that are left out if we say that NATO is now closed to new partners?

**Dr Eyal:** We have not reached the outer limits. I am not persuaded by the argument that is very frequently made that NATO had indigestion from the large waves that came in. If one looks at the decision-making processes in Brussels, one would see that the same countries which created difficulties in the past are creating them now and they happen to be on what is called the old Europe rather than the new Europe. The large influx of new members has not created any problems. In fact, they have been rather scrupulous in their commitments, probably more than most people expected. One should not put the shutters down. At the same time, it is clear that we are talking about very difficult countries, some of them fairly dubious countries, that are putting themselves forward, with a much bigger geographic dispersion. Talking about the Caucasus as being part of it is understandable but it is not something that immediately comes to people’s minds in most of Europe as being part of the continent. There is a problem in keeping countries out. The problem is that, unlike the first or the second post-Cold War waves of enlargements, where the European Union was able to walk step in step with NATO, in the case of some of the countries left out, the European Union has no better options than NATO, with the possible exception of Croatia.

**Q112 Mr Jones:** When I visited Poland and other countries before they came into NATO or the EU, some of the former eastern European countries saw it as a badge that you had to have on your lapel to see that you have advanced. To what extent are we looking at it in terms of what they can bring to the table rather than just being a badge that they have to get to say that somehow they have progressed from the old, former Soviet Union days?

**Dr Webber:** This goes to a well worn phrase: are new members consumers or producers of security? Most of the new entrants into NATO have shown a great deal of will in their willingness to go off on NATO missions and so on but have brought very little economically. I personally do not see that as a problem because I think NATO’s strength historically has been to pacify its membership as well as to project itself externally. Part and parcel of enlargement, it seems to me, is to continue with that process. Going back to the question, I think NATO enlargement will continue. I do not think it has reached its limits. The two most credible candidates, by the way, are Finland and Sweden but they will not join in the sense that they are not formal candidates, but they could easily be absorbed. I think one should watch that in the very long term. There is some possibility in the north. If you go to the south and the east, it seems almost inevitable that Macedonia,
Croatia and Albania will join NATO. They will probably get an invite in 2008 and join in 2010. That is the way the pattern has worked in the nineties and in the early part of this century. A country joins the Membership Action Plan or its forerunner, it then inevitably gets an invite to NATO and then inevitably joins. The real crunch, it seems to me, will come after these three states. You can envisage Bosnia perhaps at some very large, distant future joining and even Kosovo and Serbia as independents for the sake of completing the jigsaw in that part of the world, but I think it is extremely unlikely that Ukraine and Georgia will join, despite the fact that I know Georgia is very much on the radar of American foreign policy. They are very far from the criteria. It would cause no end of trouble with Russia, which Russia is already exploiting. It seems to me that the United States gets sufficient strategic advantage with countries like Georgia bilaterally in any case without having to go the route of having them in NATO.

Q113 Chairman: Yes or no? Do you agree with Dr Webber’s analysis of Ukraine and Georgia?

Professor Cox: Not exactly.

Dr Allin: Yes.

Professor Cox: Enlargement occurred in the 1990s, not simply from external pressure but by demand. It was demand driven. Namely, Poland wanted NATO membership. The only qualification I would put to what Mark has argued is that what happens if the Ukrainian Government duly elected comes to NATO and says, “We want to join”? That was the dilemma with Poland back in 1992, 1993 and 1994. There was no immediate push to enlarge NATO in 1990 and 1991. I used to take my students off to Brussels and give them 25 reasons why enlargement was a very bad idea, not a good idea. It came about by demand from democratic and newly elected governments. I agree with what Mark has said but what happens if you do get democratically elected governments in Ukraine or Tbilisi who say, “We want to join. We do not want a half-way house where you want to call it something else, PFP”? That could be the moment which formulates views about should we be in favour or not of enlargement challenged by political pressures on the ground, as it was in the early 1990s.

Q114 Mr Jenkins: That is the difficulty we have at the present time. We have a NATO Russia committee operating and trying to bring Russia into the centre of activities. I feel that Russia has been isolated and put in the outer ranges and the advancement of NATO across Europe for the security of the American cloak rather than anything to do with Europe to save the countries going back into the former Soviet Union or being overrun by Russia gives us a major problem. Russia is now developing and gaining lots and lots of money being sent there by Europe by the truck load, to pay for the oil and gas. They are spending more on the military hardware provision, like a 700 per cent increase, and they are going to walk the world stage again as a super power. Nobody will be able to get in their way while they are doing it because now they have a white knight in charge of their country who says, “You have been humiliated and I am going to put you back where you really and truly belong as a super power, walking the world stage.” How is NATO going to be able to cope with this, because it was arranged, developed and built to stop the Soviet armies walking across Europe. If we perceive a slight instance that it might happen again, will that not refocus the countries in Europe to reconsider an old NATO?

Dr Eyal: I disagree fundamentally with the Russian suggestion that it was NATO which was responsible for the humiliation of Russia. The people who were responsible for the humiliation of Russia were the Soviet leaders themselves and the Russian leaders thereafter. A good argument would have been that the end of the Soviet empire was a liberating experience for the Russians themselves. This is what other countries, including Britain and France, have ultimately made. It is not the argument that Russian leaders, including Mr Putin, have made. To return to the NATO issue, there have been enormous efforts to engage in a dialogue with the Russians. There was a great deal of effort after the Istanbul summit in 1999 to expand the dialogue. If the Russians wanted, they could have had an enormous amount of cooperation with NATO. Every single time, it was either rejected or simply neutered. I know because I took part in a lot of this effort. There were genuine efforts undertaken by NATO. What has happened—which NATO could do nothing about—is that the Russians resent the territorial status quo as established at the end of the Cold War. They are in all their moves over the last 18 months trying to reverse that particular status quo, the repudiation or the withdrawal from the CFE being one classic example of a lot of very spurious arguments that could have easily been addressed with the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe. There are many things we could have done better but I would not accept that it was NATO that humiliated them. Although I know that this is the argument the Russians make very often, I would not accept that NATO was not aware of the sensitivities in Moscow.

Dr Allin: I disagree. It was an argument that the Russians made and believed. The entire premise of NATO enlargement was to ignore that, it seems to me. It is fine if you think it is important enough but you cannot have it both ways. I am not in any way defending anything that has happened in Russia since the end of the Cold War and I am certainly not defending the policies of the Putin government but it seems to me that it is elementary that there was an understanding of a peaceful end to the Cold War that had to preclude the expansion of an alliance that was remaining for the new members basically, an anti-Russian alliance. This was said at the very beginning of our session here. From their point of view, that is the most important that NATO was about. They required the security from NATO to be defended from Russia? I do not think so. I do not think Russia is threatening them but in any event we can ignore but I do not think we can deny the Russian perspective in all of this, which is that the
West has taken advantage of their weakness. I think that has caused us problems in our relationship with Russia. I am not blaming NATO for everything that has gone wrong in Russia. Obviously that has deeper roots but I think NATO enlargement has been undertaken with a kind of strategic carelessness in these terms.

**Dr Niblett:** I think Dana Allin and Jonathan both make very good points. Even though they contradict each other, I thought the most important point was Dana Allin’s point. You have to make a choice. We are trying to have it both ways. We want Russia to like us. At the same time we want to enlarge NATO and everyone to feel happy. You cannot have both. A choice was made and I think it was the right choice, as long as we knew why we were making it and what some of the potential implications were going to be. A resurgent, strong Russia, as we have today, alongside the countries who are currently in NATO not in NATO would worry me more than the current situation we have now with a resurgent Russia being annoyed that these countries are in NATO and we are even talking about potentially expanding it a little further. I would go along with the argument that there was a geopolitical vacuum in Central and Eastern Europe in 1990 and vacuums are better filled than not filled. Ultimately, the choices taken were the right ones. What it means in terms of our relationship with Russia going forward—I do think we need to be sensitive to their sense of humiliation but my premise point on Russia is that at the moment this is a country that sees the world through a very different prism to the way we see it in the European Union. Russia sees the world in zero sum terms that we are the most ill-equipped to deal with. An element of toughness will be respected and will serve us better than the reverse.

**Dr Webber:** In an attempt to adopt a middle position between those who have just spoken, it is very easy to give Russia a bad press, particularly in light of some of the developments of the last few months, the redeployment of long range fighter flights across various parts of the world, tub thumping over issues of energy security, the so-called suspension from the CFE Treaty. However, I think Russia often does have a case but it puts it very badly. Russian diplomacy, particularly defence diplomacy, is often very incompetent. On two very technical issues I think it has had a case and it has been rejected by the countries of NATO. One is the CFE Treaty. It is a very technical issue which we do not have the time or maybe the mental energy to go into, but I do not think the Russian case of a revision of the CFE Treaty is entirely wrong. It has been not entirely correct of the NATO side not to ratify the amended Treaty and not to push the Baltic states to join it. The second—and it is equally technical—is the reluctance of NATO to formally establish relations with the Collective Security Treaty Organisation which is a Russian led military organisation which Russia takes as a snub. It takes it as putting a firewall between itself and NATO, particularly in areas of cooperation such as Afghanistan.

**Q115 Mr Jones:** Afghanistan has been seen by many commentators as a great test for NATO. What lessons do you think can be drawn from what happened in Afghanistan and is it fair to say that we are seeing a development within NATO in terms of force generation, willingness to fight or provide assets, a two tier system where some members are prepared to do more than others?

**Professor Cox:** I want to go back on Russia but I will not. The history does not matter. We are confronted with a real problem there and we do not have an answer to it. Anyway, on Afghanistan, the only thing one can keep coming up with is a series of obvious statements about it. It is the largest deployment we now have and have ever had. Who would have ever thought we would be in this situation today? Nobody a few years ago. NATO was sidelined in the first part of the war in Afghanistan against the Taliban. They have now become central. There is clearly a very uneven contribution, blood and treasure, through NATO allies. The war is not going very well, in spite of what many people would say, it seems to me. The future credibility of NATO really rests on the outcomes in Afghanistan. This is the great test. NATO has never fought wars before. What are the marks out of ten? On certain things you can tick certain boxes and say, “Not bad, quite good, doing well”, but who? The Brits, the Canadians, the Dutch, the Norwegians? You go down the list. I know that there are national cultures and peculiarities and all the rest of it but at the end of the day it is a fighting military alliance and has a meaningful contribution. That is undermining and doing some really major damage not only in this country but in other countries who are members of the NATO Alliance who are contributing in blood while others are doing it less so, for all sorts of peculiar and specific national reasons. Second, from the United States, the United States is part of NATO in some points but it is also acting in its own way relatively independently. It is NATO but it is the United States which is still taking up the bulk of the fighting in some of the most serious, dangerous areas in Afghanistan. That also raises this question: is it really only NATO? The United States would be there for its own reasons anyway to do with it. Frankly, this is not an academic point of view; it is a personal point of view just listening to what people have told me: one has to think that there is a real crisis that is going to hit us in about a year or a year and a half’s time on this issue, it seems to me. We are not there yet but we are heading towards it and we have seriously underestimated a whole series of issues here. That will be the brick wall we are going to hit.

**Q116 Chairman:** What sort of crisis are you talking about?

**Professor Cox:** Obviously the resurgence of the Taliban, the ability of the Taliban to adapt their military strategy to car bombing, differences between the British and the Americans over what to do about the poppies, over the heroin. It knocks on into Pakistan which is as important in this whole debate as is Afghanistan itself. It hits on that relationship. In a way, it is the worst kind of domino theory working against the West. Iraq has clearly knocked into Afghanistan or Afghanistan has...
knocked into Iraq and both are now knocking into Pakistan which is knocking back. You cannot simply look at Afghanistan as a single element or a single point in this arc of crisis. Each one contributed to the other and unfortunately at the moment the crisis in Iraq contributes to the deepening of the crisis in Afghanistan which contributes to the deepening of the crisis in Pakistan. As you may have gathered from my comments, I am rather gloomy about the future.

Dr Eyal: Nothing that I say would be in contradiction to Professor Cox on this point. I am afraid. I am pessimistic as well. I am not so pessimistic about the links between Pakistan, Afghanistan and what we may do in Iraq although there is clearly a connection there. The biggest danger at the moment is the cascading effect of national decisions to withdraw or to stop contributions based on the dynamics in each individual contributing nation. The figures are astounding. Something like 70 per cent of Germans are opposed to the continued contribution there. There is a possibility of a vote of no confidence in the Canadian House of Commons, bringing down the government there. The latest figures published yesterday, done by the Dutch, of their public opinion indicate really some amazing figures like five per cent of those under 25 supporting the operation and at no point more than 50 per cent of the nation, since the operation began, supporting this project. Once the cascade begins, it will become unstoppable and it will prevent NATO from even withdrawing with a bit of honour, which must be a fallback position. It does not need to end up in that grave situation but it could.

Chairman: What a profoundly depressing thing to say.

Q117 Mr Holloway: How do you think that will play out in terms of a possible disintegration of the NATO allies in Afghanistan?

Dr Eyal: Of course we are guessing here. My guess is that probably not as much as opinion leaders in newspapers will write. People have written obituaries before of NATO. What will happen is that people will try to suggest that the decision to stake all of NATO’s credibility on Afghanistan was taken rashly, that it was taken within a particular historic context, with countries trying to get away from the dispute with the US over Iraq and therefore we went into it too rashly; that we must pick up the pieces and there must be serious discussion, but that ultimately this will not be the end of the credibility. As always with credibility, you do not know. It depends what the—

Q118 Mr Holloway: How will it play out, if Canada goes for example, in terms of who fills in? What happens?

Dr Eyal: In practical terms, I do not believe that there is any chance of anyone stepping into the breach now. We are lucky to keep the Germans in the position that they are in with the caveats that there are. I do not think Dr Merkel can deliver on anything more within her government but the status quo in terms of deployment. We may be lucky and get more active French involvement and perhaps France fanning out of Kabul if Mr Sarkozy is true to what he has hinted, but I do not think we are talking large numbers. Any one of these pieces of the jigsaw, if it drops out suddenly, I am afraid the entire picture starts disintegrating.

Dr Allin: On the larger question of the impact on NATO of failure, I agree with Jonathan Eyal very much. NATO has an institutional staying power. Its credibility in future crises will depend on the perceived stakes of the various antagonists in those future crises, not what it did in Afghanistan. The threat is in a sense because the greatest existential threat to NATO is the United States, the relative disinterest it may or may not have in the future. Obviously that would be increased by failure in Afghanistan so it would damage NATO. If I listen to what Jonathan Eyal has said about the polling results, I think he is absolutely right about countries like Germany and the Netherlands. If I consider what little I know about the difficulties of the mission, even not being entirely clear how the mission is defined, what do you do about a sanctuary in Pakistan? Some historical theories of counter-insurgency would say that you cannot defeat an insurgency that has this sanctuary; and yet some people are defining NATO’s very future viability on the basis of what can almost be defined as an impossibility. Not knowing enough about the situation, I would nonetheless say that there does need to be greater NATO-wide consultation and discussion of what the really achievable, strategic goals are in Afghanistan. They may not be the maximal ones.

Q119 Willie Rennie: Can NATO survive in the longer term when there is such a disparity in percentage of GDP funding levels from the variety of people in the partnership?

Dr Niblett: The kind of NATO we have been talking about today can survive. It is not the NATO as we knew it but it is the NATO, at least as I have been talking about it, that is more flexible to take a positive adjective and maybe a little less united, one that picks and chooses the way it constructs its operations, particularly abroad. I think that type of NATO can survive with the disparity. The disparity within the EU on defence spending is as dramatic as the disparity between some of the top spenders within the EU and the United States. It is clearly a problem. I am as much concerned by the problem at a practical level that the US military is spending—and has been now for over a decade—high amounts of money on very sophisticated technologies and the ability to operate and fight in ways that are fundamentally different to the way that EU nations can fight. It is not just the amount of money; it is how the money is being spent, what it is being spent on, the way that doctrines and methods of fighting are evolving that are different, that will make the separation of action that we saw in the 1991 Gulf War constantly be widened and exacerbated even further into the future.
**Dr Webber:** I am not a defence economist but the issue of disparity of defence expenditure may be perhaps exaggerated by the way the figures are calculated. NATO is now not just about defence; it is about security. The disparity is quite obvious if you look at defence budgets but if you look at overall spend on security issues, the United States is still way, way out in front but, if you look at what the EU NATO members spend on things like humanitarian aid, that is technically not defence expenditure but it clearly feeds into issues of security in some sense. That disparity, if you like, is less clear. Here I have a link back to Afghanistan. It depends on what you choose to spend your money on. In the case of Afghanistan, the US Department of Defence spent $US116 billion on Afghanistan between 2001 and 2007. Money on diplomacy and aid during that same period was $7.7 billion, so there is a huge disparity in terms of the manner in which money is spent for the same end which, in some senses, is security. It is an age old question about the disparity of defence expenditure within NATO but I think in some ways it misses the point, the point being that there are different ways to spend money other than simply headlining them under defence.

**Q120 Willie Rennie:** I take it you would not agree on binding defence expenditure?

**Dr Webber:** There are no formal targets. The two per cent GDP limit is an informal one. There is no binding limit and attempts to use guidelines within NATO generally have failed throughout the Cold War and the post-Cold War period and they only generate resentment. With an alliance of 26 Member States with hugely divergent economies, histories and military capabilities, you cannot impose matters of that sort and you must allow allies within NATO, if they share membership with the EU, to contribute to defence and security in more creative ways than assuming that what matters is that headline spend in a defence budget as narrowly understood.

**Dr Eyal:** Just a codicil on this, if I may. Of course one can bandy a great amount of the spending and claim that it is part of security, but I am mainly talking here about the hardware which does have an impact on NATO. NATO as it currently is can continue functioning as Robin has suggested, but it is increasingly going to be hampered by these distinctions. I can supply the Committee with a very simple graph which I do not have with me now about not merely the disparities in current spending but the disparities in defence research to which Robin referred. It is a riddle within a riddle. If you look at European defence research expenditure, which of course is dwarfed by the Americans, within that research budget about 80 per cent is dominated by spending by Britain and France. The rest is almost no activity at all. The result of it is not simply that we have less equipment but very often that our equipment becomes incompatible and not interoperable with that of the Americans. Even if we talk about coalitions of the willing, it becomes very difficult with a few exceptions to talk about countries which could be strapped on to even an American led operation, because very often they simply are incapable of digesting or deploying the kind of technology which the Americans have. It is not merely volume; it is also how it is spent.

**Dr Allin:** In one sense the disparities are so great that one wonders what European countries can practically get with marginal increases in defence spending. It is not going to impress the Americans enough to solve this resentment but on the other hand — this is a point that goes outside of NATO — but it is not as though the European contribution to various joint endeavours or purposes is a token one. A few years ago, before we got sucked into Iraq, one could talk about the United States being able to do almost anything it wanted to on its own and European contributions were sort of symbolic. That is clearly not the case. What would the United States have done if the European forces were not able and ready to go into Lebanon the summer before last? That was a very serious crisis. The United States was not in a position to do that. What would we do? As much as there are valid, legitimate complaints about Europe’s performance and caveats in certain European countries in Afghanistan, what would the United States do without them? The idea that the United States can get disgusted and walk away from this is not exactly the case.

**Q121 Willie Rennie:** What do you think the chances are of binding targets?

**Professor Cox:** I think that question has already been answered. I do not think there is any chance at all.

**Dr Eyal:** Just as high as the stability pact in the euro. If countries committed themselves to the stability pact in the euro, it is about as high as that, probably less.

**Professor Cox:** For those of us who go back long enough, there were huge debates in the 1970s about burden sharing. As far as I can remember, they did not go anywhere. This is not a new discussion and NATO still managed to survive the end of the Cold War. It still managed to survive and endure the 1990s. To go back to your original question, I still think it will endure this. Without sounding conspiratorial, I just wonder if there is not a little bit of a verbal game being played here on this issue because ultimately, if the United States is the one putting most money into this Alliance and most lives on the line into this Alliance when it comes to it, does that not also give it legitimate leadership of this Alliance? I just wonder if there is not also a little bit of verbal posturing on this issue.

**Chairman:** I think we have covered a huge amount of ground. To our witnesses, I will say thank you very much indeed. It was absolutely fascinating. I know you had a great deal more that you would have said but one consolation is that we had a great many more questions we could have asked as well, so thank you very much indeed.
Tuesday 20 November 2007

Members present

Mr James Arbuthnot, in the Chair

Mr David Crausby
Linda Gilroy
Mr David Hamilton
Mr Dai Havard
Mr Adam Holloway
Mr Bernard Jenkin

Mr Brian Jenkins
Mr Kevan Jones
Robert Key
Willie Rennie
John Smith

Witnesses: General Sir Jack Deverell (Rtd), Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry (Rtd), Mr Daniel Keohane, Research Fellow, European Union Institute for Security Studies, and Colonel Christopher Langton (Rtd), Senior Fellow for Conflict and Defence Diplomacy, IISS, gave evidence.

Q122 Chairman: Welcome to this evidence session. This is our third evidence session in our inquiry into the future of NATO and European defence. Our intention is to look pretty broadly at the role and purposes of NATO, to look at the challenges that we face in NATO, how all this relates to European defence and security policy, and today it is mostly military capabilities, operations and readiness. There is going to be, we currently intend, one further evidence session in December with the Secretary of State. We hope to publish our report in the New Year, and anyway ahead of the NATO summit in Bucharest in April. We have an excellent panel in front of us today. I wonder if you could possibly, gentlemen, introduce yourselves?

Colonel Langton: I am Christopher Langton. I am the Senior Fellow for Conflict and Defence Diplomacy at IISS and I was formerly Head of Defence Analysis at the Institute.

Mr Keohane: My name is Daniel Keohane. I am a Research Fellow with the European Union Institute for Security Studies which is based in Paris, and there I look after the European Security and Defence Policy Research Programme.

Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry: My name is Robert Fry and I am Vice President of the EDS Corporation, previously the Director of Operations in the Ministry of Defence.

General Sir Jack Deverell: Jack Deverell. My last military job was Commander in Chief, Allied Forces North, with a particular responsibility to the integration of new NATO nations, and we redeployed the first ISAF headquarters and force to Afghanistan and I spend the rest of my time now talking about it as much I can!

Q123 Chairman: Can we begin by talking about the expeditionary capability of NATO? What are the principal capabilities that NATO requires to carry out its expeditionary role? General Deverell.

General Sir Jack Deverell: The first thing is you have got to be able to deliver, in the area of operations, the required level of combat force, and that is a balance between force protection and force projection, and that will depend upon the nature of the threat and the nature of what you want to achieve. So, it is having the right number of soldiers at the right readiness, with the right balance of equipment, all those sorts of things, and a coherent concept so that between nations there is an understanding of what you are trying to achieve and how you can do it and all those other things which come into interoperability, compatibility and the rest. However, that implies that you have the capacity to get them there and to sustain them there, and that is both a political, a moral, a physical and a conceptual capacity. In one sense it is strategic lift, on the other side it is the capacity to command and control it, have a network enabled capability, and, in particular, to sustain it logistically and to be able to rotate it, and we have this classic military conundrum. The old-fashioned phrase was: one on, one in the wash and one in your pack. In fact, the rule of three is now the rule of five, because you have to be able to sustain that force by committing it, allowing it then to reconstitute itself, conducting further training (general training as well as all the other things you have to do) before committing it then again to mission rehearsal training before it goes back into theatre. So, there is now deemed to be a rule of five really. If more than 20% of your force is committed, then you are probably suffering from serious overstretched. Those are some of the issues which an expeditionary force needs to be successful.

Q124 Chairman: This is your past role I am asking you to answer for. Does the British MoD accept that rule of five?

General Sir Jack Deverell: Yes. That is where it has largely come from. I am not sure it is written down anywhere like that, but I guess if you talk to most people in the MoD, they would nod and say, yes, a rule of five is about right, in that a rule of three, one third having just left and one third ready to go, is unsustainable apart from a very, very short period of time— I mean months rather than years.

Q125 Chairman: General Fry.

Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry: I think I would say that NATO’s expeditionary capability is no different from anybody else’s expeditionary capability. I think most of the things Jack has enumerated already: you need forces at the appropriate degree of readiness, you need a capacity to project them, you need a capacity to sustain and command them whilst they are there. There are two differences, however,
between an alliance expeditionary capability and a national expeditionary capability. These are really the fundamental issues. The first one is that bringing disparate force elements together requires some sort of unity of concept, of training and of doctrine, and you need to make sure that those things are right, because if you are actually going to put people in harm’s way, then you need to make sure that you share as many of the central assumptions that combat will bring as you possibly can. The second thing is that expeditionary operations, by and large, are synonymous with discretionary operations. They are not necessarily involved in wars of national survival; therefore there is always a choice to be involved in these things or not and, therefore, they must be written and underpinned, sustained essentially, by a political will, and everybody who is a force contributor gets a vote in that equation, and keeping that collective political will solid and not allowing those who wobble to undermine the whole is actually quite a difficult thing. As Jack has already said, there are physical elements to this, and those can be easily defined because we would recognise them as a part of military science. There are things, however, that underwrite them which are conceptual or moral which are a bit more difficult to define and much more difficult to hold together.

**Q126 Chairman:** Would either of you like to add anything? By the way, we have got lots of questions, so you do not need to feel that everybody that needs to add something to every question, but do feel free if you would like to on that one.

**Colonel Langton:** If I might add, obviously these comments are absolutely correct, particularly, I think, the one where we look at a nation’s preparedness as opposed to an alliance’s preparedness. My comment here is that NATO is actually a political alliance in the first place and not a military alliance. It is a political alliance trying to deliver a military capability, and that is very complex and it speaks to a lot of these issues, and we have 26 countries, with 26 defence budgets, 26 constitutions, which limit the preparedness to take part in expeditionary warfare, or expeditionary operations, should I say, and we have only got to look at the world today. If you look at Europe as a whole, including NATO European Member States, there are 39 countries with troops deployed in the world and 19 of those have deployed less than 3%. If you compare that with the United Kingdom, it is a fairly stark comparison and it is an indication of preparedness which limits the ability to engage in expeditionary warfare.

**Q127 Chairman:** It is preparedness or political?

**Colonel Langton:** Political preparedness, if you like. The militaries of, say, Germany and France are incredibly capable.

**Q128 Chairman:** So the military are prepared in these countries but the political constraints are not?

**Colonel Langton:** Yes. If you take the example, and I am sure colleagues would want to comment on this, of the German forces in Afghanistan, which have been all over the press this week, you can see exactly what I am talking about, and if you visit those forces, as I have done this year, there is frustration. They cannot do what they know they are able to do because of restrictions placed upon them from their national capital. It is not the only country.

**Q129 Chairman:** Mr Keohane?

**Mr Keohane:** I have nothing to add.

**Q130 Mr Jenkin:** Would it not be more realistic to regard NATO less idealistically as a single set of capabilities that will be deployed collectively but more as a pool which trains together, co-ordinates procurement but actually from which we draw a coalition of the willing that can operate together when Member States want to. It is not really the military alliance that it was under the Cold War that would go to war as an alliance in defence of mainland Europe.

**General Sir Jack Deverell:** The problem with that is that its structures still are, and you have this debate between common funding and where the costs lie.

**Chairman:** We will come on to that later.

**Q131 Mr Jenkins:** It is a very interesting opening statement you made, because most people ran away from it, but I believe you are right: the one big gap that NATO has got is the political will across nations. Admittedly some of the Governments in Europe would put their soldiers in harm’s way because they have not co-ordinated and practised with other armed forces before they get pulled into a conflict situation. How would you recommend we raise the pressure on these other politicians across Europe to recognise that there is no free ride any more, that we are linked in common and we all need to make the same commitments?

**Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry:** I am sure you are far better placed to comment on that than any of us are. I do not feel the sense of outrage that you do. I can see that politicians in each of these countries have elections to win, electorates to satisfy and it is not an easy equation to pick your way through the commitment of your force to live operations whilst retaining a political will. I think some of the political decisions in places like the Netherlands and Denmark are actually quite politically courageous given the political backdrop against which they are made. I think maybe the greatest method of getting greater cohesion of thought across NATO members is to convince them of a shared danger and a shared requirement to respond. I made the comment earlier on that we are not in a condition of facing a war of national survival, but maybe we are, and I think that one could present it as such but if there was ever a malevolent combination of terrorism and weapons of mass effect, then you are really in a very bad place, to which the only response is to be direct, effective and unified. It seems to me that there is a task here of political advocacy drawing on the military...
situation, as we see it and could define it, to persuade people that they share a common threat, to which a common response is the only thing to do.

Q132 Chairman: I think we may be getting a bit ahead of ourselves here. Is there a serious gap in NATO’s capability and, if so, is it true that it is this political will or is there also another gap relating to the size of military forces in Europe and their equipment? What would you say were the key gaps, if there are any, in NATO and how can they be addressed? Who would like to begin with that?

General Sir Jack Deverell: I will start off and other people can come in and fill in the gaps, so to speak. There are some previously identified gaps in capability—strategic airlift.

Q133 Chairman: We will come on to that in just a second and concentrate on strategic airlift specifically.

General Sir Jack Deverell: All I am trying to do is identify where these gaps are. I think it is not exactly a gap in the accepted sense, although you could call it a gap. There is a great absence of a unifying purpose at a military level. If you go round many of the countries and ask: “What is the Army for?”—and the Navy, where they have got an airforce, if you will excuse the shorthand—you will get some very different answers, and it is very difficult, very demanding to get political coherence underpinned by military coherence if there is not a similarity of view of what your armed forces are for. There is a penalty we pay with some countries still focusing on conscript armies, because in many countries the law states that no conscript shall be posted abroad unless he or she volunteers, and this changes the nature of units and, therefore, the cohesion of units and, therefore, governments will be more sensitive about endangering people who are, in a sense, not volunteers to be in the force although they may be volunteers to deploy. We can talk about physical weaknesses, capabilities. Let me just finish by pointing out the whole concept of precision engagement: the whole idea that you only hit the target that you are aiming at, you are only hitting the target that is a threat to you. Too many of our weapons, I would suggest (and you have only got to look at some of the amazing pictures on You Tube), are still weapons which have an area effect which are at times not suitable for the precision engagement that we seek in somewhere like Afghanistan to reduce the collateral damage. Too often in the past we have had to resort too quickly from a precision weapon, a small arms round, to a thousand pound bomb, which might be a precision guided munition in that you can guide it through the top right hand window of a house, but then it blows that house up and another three round it and, it may be, those other three houses contain people who are innocent of any involvement in what is going on. So those are some of the areas where there is a genuine lack of capability, and in many cases, of the force goals that were put out at Prague, something like 72% of them will have been met but 27% will not have been met by 2008, and one of those that will not be met is the strategic airlift.

Q134 Mr Hamilton: Chairman, can I indicate that I understand Brian’s point but I disagree with it in the sense that NATO, surely, is a cornerstone of the world. Really what the problem is, taking your point, Mr Fry, is that at the end of the day there are a number of countries who are willing to participate in say Iraq but there are also a number of countries who are willing to participate in Afghanistan. Surely what we should be doing is adapting the NATO alliance to every single conflict we are involved in—that would make it much simpler. We criticise other countries, but in actual fact other countries have a right to do what they are doing. Some people agree with that, some people do not. Most agree with Afghanistan. The point I am making is that it has to be a coalition. There is no point in criticising other countries for what they are doing or what they are not doing.

Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry: I think this goes back to Mr Jenkins’ point, which is that an alliance is there and an alliance literally and semantically, we assume, does things together. That is palpably not the truth. One actually exists as there are a number of willing partners within this who, for various reasons based on history, provenance and domestic politics, decide to get involved in this and tend to lead the way.

Q135 Chairman: General Deverell, your comment about people not knowing what their armies are necessarily for implies that the allied command’s transformation is a process which has not gained traction in the nations of NATO and that it is not working in transforming NATO into a new, modern alliance that is relevant to the people it is meant to protect. Colonel Langton, would you like to comment on that?

Colonel Langton: The ACT, I think, has had problems since its inception, particularly with its relationship with Europe and particularly with its relationship with the EDA, which you are coming on to later. My understanding, though, is it is now beginning to have an effect as a transforming body but what it is doing is transforming or increasing interoperability in many areas, but it comes back to this question which has just been raised. We can be as interoperable as we like but it is to do with: will the country be prepared to deploy? There is, I think, Chairman, in your question another implied question, which is: are NATO and ACT communicating properly to the nations and the populations of the nations that are its Member States? I think that is another question.

Q136 Chairman: Your answer would be?

Colonel Langton: My answer would be that they are making strides. They now have this public diplomacy division. I think it is called, which goes around Europe passing messages, but I think the question is: are those messages being aimed at the
right place? My answer to that would be probably not. For example, there was a seminar here in the House of Commons on Afghanistan under their aegis only two weeks ago and, when I looked around the room, there was not actually a member of the British political establishment in the room, even though it was in the House of Commons. The people who were in the room largely came from the student population of London and the academic community, which is a good thing, but if you are trying to pass a message into the population, then I suppose, arguably, being a democrat, I think it is probably best to pass it through the members of Parliament.

Q137 Chairman: You quaint, old-fashioned thing. Colonel Langton: I know; I am sorry about that.

Q138 Chairman: Shall we move on? General Fry. Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry: May I make a couple of points on the transformation? First of all, I do not think that the transformation of a military alliance is necessarily the subject which attracts most attention in my local pub. In terms of penetration of popular debate, I do not think so. It is quite an arcane and distant business. The second thing is, even within single military entities the process of transformation is a profoundly difficult thing to pull off. We have witnessed what the Americans are going through at the present time and, in a sense, the whole of the Rumsfeld doctrine to the conflicts that we have been engaged in over the last few years have been to use those conflicts almost as a battle-field experiment to the transformation process. So it is not an easy thing and, given the resources that the Americans have devoted to this in comparison to that which is available to NATO, with 26 people trying to do it in different ways unified only by a loose framework, I think you are talking about a really significant challenge.

Chairman: Mr Keohane, you are being admirably restrained. You will have your time, I promise you. We will move briefly on to strategic airlift now, because it is something that you and we have identified.

Q139 Mr Jenkin: Before we leave, are we missing the wood for the trees here? Let me explain what I mean. There is a huge capability gap because governments will not spend enough money. True or false? Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry: I do not think that is entirely true. I think that when Jack describes some of the gaps that exist in capability, going from the back to the front, an industrial capacity to surge the appropriate level of logistics support at the right time does not exist in every nation, or at least the mechanisms to capture it and push it forward. The means to project by sea and by air do not necessarily exist in the scale required. The numbers of high level, high readiness formations probably do not exist and neither does deployed command and control; so there are a whole series of gaps right the way through this whole process. If, however, it was possible to mobilise all of the things which ostensibly are committed to NATO simultaneously, those gaps would be far less than they appear now; and I think that there are real physical gaps but they can be addressed by expenditure or better co-ordination of the process of allocating force goals and getting people to stump up to them. We come back to the underlying issue here, which is a lack of will to commit those forces. They are not necessarily absent, it is the will to deploy them which is absent. General Sir Jack Deverell: And a lack of understanding as to what effect you are trying to achieve. In some ways NATO has not been good, and I have a criticism of NATO when I was there with the accession and integration of the new nations, because they took, in my view, and people disagreed with me about this—this is a personal judgment—a rather lofty view that each nation was a sovereign nation, which of course it is, and that they should come to their own decisions about the nature of their military capabilities. A great number of the nations, particularly the small ones, actually were thrashing around unable to make those decisions because they did not have the experience of the decision-making process to come to terms with some of the very, very difficult problems of either drawing down or increasing—drawing down in some areas and increasing in other—and NATO rather stood back. I fear, and they lacked a guiding hand. So, we now have a situation where some of those decisions which should have been taken five or six years ago are still not taken. The whole thing about conscripts and the practicalities and efficacy of a conscript army is still an issue which is being addressed when, in fact, really there should have been a much clearer guide from NATO. I think, about that; but you will find different opinions about that, needless to say.

Q140 Mr Jones: What we have been talking about is the difficulty about different nations agreeing this, but to what extent do you think internal politics within nations between, say, the Army, Airforce and Navy, has an effect, not just in this country but also in America, where they are throwing a lot of money into it but the internal disagreements between different areas of the Armed Forces also affects being able to get this transformation? Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry: I would not say it is that great. The campaigns we are involved in at the present time are fundamentally land-focused. There is an air adjunct to this, there are several air adjuncts. There is an air adjunct in sustainment and in internal transportation and in the sharp end of tactical support, so there is a constant air theme running through it. Maritime force is almost entirely absent at the present time. That does not, however, seem to have provoked in this country some of the nasty inter Nicene tribal fights that have taken place in other times. I think that the chiefs of staff are bound together by the commonsense that we have got to get through this and, therefore, no matter who is bearing the burden, we must all morally accept that this is a shared responsibility.
Q141 Willie Rennie: There seems to be a view developing, and it has been there for some time, that members of NATO should commit to whatever NATO does no matter what it does. Surely it is the case that they will pick and choose what those deployments are, depending on what their populations believe are the right deployments to make, and is this black and white issue that if NATO does it everybody should be on board if they are members of NATO not unrealistic?

Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry: I do not think any of us has claimed that. I think an alliance formed around the concept of collective self-defence against an overwhelming external threat is entirely different to an alliance, held together by all sorts of other motives, which can no longer necessarily see something homogeneous in front of it.

General Sir Jack Deverell: There is not a unifying threat any more, but, as I said five or six minutes ago, the trouble is the structures and almost the philosophy, the culture of the place, is that it is still being worked; the processes, the procedures and the hierarchies are still there to deal with a unifying threat where there has to be consensus, there has to be unanimity. In fact, at the moment what you are implying—and I think most of the people here would agree instinctively that how it is done is different, is a more difficult issue—is that it is a pool from which you take coalitions of the willing for different things at different times perhaps. How you go from where you are now to where you might want to be is a much more difficult problem.

Chairman: Strategic airlift. John Smith.

Q142 John Smith: Thank you, Chairman. Leaving political wills to one side, you have already referred to the capability gap in strategic airlift. What is your assessment of that gap and what constraints do you think it currently puts on the ability to conduct military operations and sustain them? What is the nature of that capability gap?

Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry: I think that the air transport inventory in most advanced nations, but not in all, is probably just about adequate, and certainly very little more than that, when taken in purely national terms. When you have a combination of both national requirement and alliance requirements, I suspect to some extent you are in double jeopardy as far as your resources are concerned. I think the reasons behind this are pretty simple. These are extremely expensive things to buy and maintain, and I think that most nations buy them against national requirements rather than building in a premium which then allows them to support alliance operations at the same time. I will give you one example, which is operations in Afghanistan at the present time, to show you the impact on these things. At a battlefield level the impact should not be huge so long as you are able to guarantee the security of your lines of communication. You can get to Afghanistan by one of two means. One is to put aeroplanes flying directly into Kabul or maybe Kandahar which then offload their logistic stocks directly almost into the base areas of the troops who are fighting in the country. The alternative is to conduct surface transport to somewhere like Karachi, offload it and then have an extended line of communication which goes through one of the passes into Afghanistan, and it is a mystery to me why those lines of communication have not been disrupted before now, because they are immensely vulnerable and entirely obvious in the way in which they are being conducted at the present time. If you had more airlift you could avoid that risk altogether and simply fly the stuff directly into theatre. Air transport will never give you the volume that sea transport will give you, but air sustainment of a place like Afghanistan, given its geographical characteristics, has some obvious advantages.

General Sir Jack Deverell: I absolutely concur with that. There are some quite interesting figures that I picked up. When NATO did the support for the Pakistan earthquake, the humanitarian operation, it was forced to use C-130s and it used something like 123 missions of C-130s, at a cost of 10 million euros, to lift 1,000 tonnes of equipment. With C-17s that would have been 40 missions at four million euros. So, there is a financial element that comes into this. Of course, you then have to say, well, the C-17 is more expensive than the C-130 and maintenance costs and all the rest of it—it is a much more complex issue—but there are financial issues here which, of course, when you are dealing with things like common funding or costs for where they lie, actually have an important effect upon the political willingness to commit their forces to that sort of operation.

Q143 John Smith: Do you think that the decision in June to acquire three or four C-17s will be enough to meet certainly the pressure on the strategic airlift?

Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry: I do not know what the rationale behind the procurement was, but I suspect it was to make sure that we do not find ourselves in the embarrassing position that I have just outlined to you and, therefore, that you could actually run a discrete airline of communication if all else failed.

Q144 John Smith: What about the delays in the A400M programme of up to about 15 months at least at the moment? Do you anticipate any problems arising from that: either a gap in terms of the transfer from existing aircraft to news ones?

Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry: You can always go out into the market. Taking aircraft from trade is something that we have done whenever we have needed to, and it tends to fill either real capability gaps or temporary gaps of the type that you describe. I think that a solution is available, but it comes at a certain cost.

Q145 John Smith: What about the through-life maintenance and support of this new generation of lift aircraft, the A400M? Do you have any views on whether these aircraft, which are going to be bought
right across Europe, are going to be sustained and maintained through life nationally, on a European-wide basis, or any other view?

**Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry:** I guess this is beyond the competence of all of the panelists. I would say a couple of things. First of all, there should be some economies of scale here, both in terms of the price you pay for them and the standardisation of maintenance support. That simply ought to be a truism. I also think that some of the production techniques now should make it far easier to maintain complex machines, simply because you take a board out and you put a board in rather than having to go through the entire process of diagnostic maintenance.

**Q146 John Smith:** But you have not yet developed a view on whether this new generation of A400Ms should be maintained through life at RAF Sealand?

**Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry:** I do not think I have the strength of confidence to offer that view.

**Q147 John Smith:** What about other air assets: tankers. Is there a capability limitation elsewhere?

**Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry:** You are normally okay, because one of the things we do tend to do is share tanking assets. It is one of the things that alliances tend to do well. We certainly tank an awful lot of American aircraft, and tankers tend to be something of a collective asset.

**Q148 Mr Jones:** General, you mentioned the situation of taking assets from a civilian fleet. What role in terms of strategic lift within Europe should the civilian sector play? Do we need the capacity all the time or should we aim to have a baseline and then, when we have surges, bring it in from the civilian sector?

**Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry:** I think that so long as we feel we face a threat of large-scale conflict, then being able to link into the sinews of the real economy rather than simply military capability is something you should never ever loose. I think that the British amphibious capability historically, over the last 30 years, has been sustained for a large part of that time by shipping taken up from trade—latterly we have got better amphibious platforms—and the same is true, I think, for most other nations. All of us would be dependent to a greater or lesser extent on what we can access from the civilian market. This is a matter of legislation. You need to have legislation there by which, under certain circumstances, you can go into a process sequestering this stuff. Otherwise there is a well understood market mechanism that makes this available.

**General Sir Jack Deverell:** The only comment I would make is that there is an element here of risk of the civilian element of it being unwilling or, indeed, perhaps finding, for all sorts of insurance rationales, that the potential risk to their crews was such that they would be unwilling to actually deploy those crews into theatre in the way we would want. It is something that cannot just be swept under the carpet, I guess.

**Chairman:** NATO response force. David Crausby.

**Q149 Mr Crausby:** Thank you, Chairman. The NATO Response Force was declared fully operational last November at the Riga Summit. It is highly ready, it can start to deploy within five days, it can muster 25,000 troops, but, in the light of all that we have said about political consensus and 26 nations, could you say something about its sustainability and viability?

**General Sir Jack Deverell:** I suppose that question points at me because my headquarters set up the first NATO response force. It was seen to be both an aid to, and a test of, NATO transformation. It is an aid to NATO transformation because its does actually drive nations to ensure that their force structure is at levels of real readiness which can be measured rather than stated readiness, where we take it on trust because there is a level of training that is conducted to prepare NATO response forces for their stand-on period, so to speak. The main problems with the NATO Response Force are, entirely as we have discussed before, one of compatibility and interoperability, both conceptual and physical, and that is one of the values of having that force, because, first of all, it exposes these issues and, secondly, gives you a mechanism by which you can actually deal with them, and there is evaluation (some awful NATO acronym) which actually, in simple terms, means there is a lessons-learned capability to feed back into the future. My own view of the NATO Response Force is that it is limited again (and I am afraid to go back to it) by the political will. There are questions over common funding and how much common funding provides the enablers for the NATO Response Force and how much do nations pay, because it is not surprising that nations find themselves less willing to commit their forces to the NATO Response Force if they find they get a big bill for it and, secondly, if they find that they cannot use those forces for other things, whatever those other things might be; so there is a certain amount of giving up of sovereignty. There is the whole question of transfer of authority and the confidence that NATO headquarters has that when “country A” commits a special forces company to it, of which you have no idea what the NATO Response Force is going to be used for, when the operation is actually identified will that country say, “I am very sorry, we are not prepared to play. We are not prepared to commit our forces”? It goes back to the points we have been talking about. The other area, I guess, in terms of the NATO Response Force is the sustainability of it, not least because the United States and the United Kingdom find it very difficult at the moment, I understand, to find certain forces to go on it because we have 20% plus of our force structure which is committed to operations already. This throws the burden onto the other European nations, the other NATO nations, to fill that role and there is a sense (and it was a sense three years ago) that we are not playing our part in the development of the NRF; it is the non Afghanistan and Iraq players who are carrying the burden. The
other problem with the NATO Response Force is that the raison d'être for it was to give NATO a form of response force which could be used, in part or in whole, not just to deal with new operations, but actually to reinforce existing operations. So, if you wished to conduct a surge operation, you could use the existing, trained coherent NATO Response Force for a limited period of time, put it into theatre and bring it out again. This was deemed a perfectly reasonable thing to do. Some nations have found that, for all sorts of reasons, very difficult and there has been enormous reluctance.

Q150 Mr Crausby: The Germans would have to take that back to their own Parliament, would they not?

General Sir Jack Deverell: And, of course, there are constitutional reasons why this is so, yes, and the French have found it difficult because they see the NATO Response Force for a totally different purpose in any case.

Q151 Mr Crausby: It is only really effective for disaster relief, is it?

General Sir Jack Deverell: No. To be honest, I think if there was a situation which occurred which required that commitment, you have a force which exists which has a combat capability, a power projection capability, the bits are in place. It might not be all the bits you want, because nations might not have filled, for that NRF six months, all the capabilities you want, but it does have a real capability. I have no doubt about that. Whether it is the quite the capability that we first thought, whether it is as flexible as we first thought and whether it is as politically robust in that it cannot be unhinged dramatically by a nation at the last minute saying, "You cannot have that capability", remains to be seen. That is where I have my doubts. We are back, I am afraid, to this main theme we keep going back to, political will.

Q152 Mr Crausby: The Heads of Government Declaration said that it also served as a catalyst for transformation and interoperability. How effective has it been on that and to what extent has it delivered new capabilities for the alliance in that way?

General Sir Jack Deverell: I really cannot answer the question because I have been out of it too long, I am afraid. I think it has been effective. I guess it has not been as effective as we would have liked it to have been or have hoped it would be, but I can say I know it has been effective in many areas where there was a lack of interoperability, if not to actually produce it, certainly to identify in more detail and more clearly the requirement for it. I think it has been successful to a degree though.

Q153 Mr Crausby: What about the United States and their involvement? They have been reluctant to commit themselves, have they not? What do you think the United States think about it?

Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry: I think the United States think they have probably got enough on their plates and I think that what they want is to be part of an alliance which is properly burden-sharing. They feel that they are bearing a very considerable amount of that burden at the present time and they would like to see other people stomp up their contribution as well.

Q154 Mr Crausby: So you think that they are leaving it to the Europeans to say, “Let them get on with it”, as opposed to the United States thinking that it will not work. You believe it is just a question of putting the Europeans under pressure to do something.

Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry: Yes, I do, but I think the first might lead to the second, because unless you have got the force and the focus of American military involvement in this thing, then perhaps it will not have the transformational effect that it might otherwise have. I think the American position here is pretty legitimate. They know what they are doing, either unilaterally, in bilateral form or in coalitions that are willing, and in alliance terms, and I think their position would be, “Our contribution to military operations on a global basis is completely defensible at the present time. We do not need any more.”

Chairman: Moving on to the European Security and Defence Policy. Robert Key.

Q155 Robert Key: Could I invite Daniel Keohane to talk us through his analysis of the consequences of the Lisbon Treaty for ESDP and NATO?

Mr Keohane: I think it is best that I begin my remarks by explaining the contrast with the earlier debate about NATO. I think the first thing we should all remember about the EU Defence Policy is it is not really a defence policy in the traditional sense. It is not about territorial defence; it is not a military alliance. Of course there is political solidarity, but that is another issue. It is as much about a security policy and, when it comes to military operations or civil military operations, we are talking about crisis management at a very small scale so far. It is also worth bearing in mind, of course, that ESDP is just over eight years old, so it is still a very new policy in EU terms. Specifically with the Lisbon Treaty, the interesting part of the Lisbon Treaty is the so-called permanent structured co-operation which, in essence, is supposed to be about improving our military capabilities. There is a similar debate, it is not exactly the same, within the EU about our lack of capability on things like strategic airlift and so on, and the idea behind structured co-operation is to encourage those counties who want to co-operate more closely on developing capabilities to allow them to do that, because up until now it has not been allowed to have closer co-operation between a smaller group of countries, as you have had in the euro, say, or in Shengen in the area of defence policy. So it is essentially to allow that. Of course, when this first came up in the Convention, the body that drew up the original Constitutional Treaty, it was presented as a kind of defence euro zone, but that has been watered down to some degree because governments, particularly I think in France but also maybe in the
UK as well, do not want to present this as an entirely exclusive process and do not want this to be seen as divisive between the Member States. They recognise, of course, that not all Member States have the capabilities that France and the UK have. Also, because of the way certainly EU officials think about ESDP—it goes back to what I said about defence policy, you have to think of it in very holistic terms. When you look at a security problem there are not just military solutions. They are trying to bring together development policy, they are trying to bring together diplomacy, they are trying to bring together defence policy. So, the military tool, if you like, is just one aspect, and they are trying very hard to develop this broad holistic approach. The real crux in terms of military resources will be what the criteria will be to join this permanent structured cooperation. That is not entirely clear yet. There is still some debate as to how it should be interpreted. For example, I doubt we will have strict spending goals, as you have in NATO—for example, the aim to spend 2% of GDP on defence. I would like to see more stringent investment goals where you should be spending say 20% of your defence budget on equipment, but again, I am not sure that is going to happen because the idea is to try and encourage as many people to be involved as possible. I personally would prefer to see fairly stringent goals. I am not against the idea, in practical terms, of having a two-tier defence policy on capabilities, but maybe I should stop there.

Q156 Robert Key: Should NATO be alarmed as a result of the Lisbon Treaty?

Mr Keohane: No, basically because if the reforms in the Lisbon Treaty helped to improve military capability, then that is good for NATO as well.

Q157 Robert Key: I wonder if our military witnesses could comment on the effectiveness of the Headline Goal 2010. How has that helped to improve the generation of military capabilities?

Mr Keohane: Can I make a comment on it first?

Q158 Robert Key: Of course.

Mr Keohane: It is important to remember what the Headline Goal 2010—. If you look at the EU documents which the military staff produce, and they are available somewhere on the website, but it is not an easy website to use, it is very hard to find concrete examples of new hardware, to put it bluntly, but perhaps that is not the point in a way, because if you look at any headline goal process in any EU policy area, if you take, for example, the Lisbon Economic Reform Process, everyone knows the EU is not going to become the most competitive economy in the world by 2010 and, likewise, they know that the EU Governments are not going to meet all the headline goal by 2010, but what is more important is that they have agreed to this set of reforms, that you effectively have a common agreed set of military reforms, and given the way politics is and national politics is, of course it is going to take some longer than others, but what I would argue is look at the investments. If you look at the equipment that EU governments should have available by 2015, it is actually not bad. We should have A400Ms, we should have new aircraft carriers, we should obviously have new fighter jets, we should have new satellites, we should have new refuelling planes. So on a strategic level, it should be a lot better, and the headline goal is part of that.

General Sir Jack Deverell: I am very glad that Daniel has brought in this whole business that the military is not the solution to conflict resolution pure and simple. We talk about the comprehensive approach; we just do not implement the comprehensive approach very well. The thing that worries me about NATO is that it is a political alliance but one that manifests itself in military capability and, it is not good, there is no part of its structure that readily enables itself to deal with all those other bits of the comprehensive approach—the political, the legal, the economic, the social, the cultural and all the rest of it. The people who do that extremely well are Europe. America does it well unilaterally, but if you look at Europe, the capacity of Europe to draw these things together, it has the capacity, it is very, very effective, and it strikes me that the synergy between the European capacity to provide the capabilities to implement the civil side of the comprehensive approach has been understated. It may not have been understated; it has been under-implemented. I just get concerned when I hear Europe continuing to go down the line of developing military capabilities, because I fear it is a distraction. I go to various things at the European Defence Agency and I hear all these major projects being talked about—the carriers, the aircraft, strategic lift—all of which are important, but the reality in Europe is that we have armies which are not suitable for purpose because they have not transformed intellectually in many cases, and I do not hear much about that. To me it is about institution building, it is about the creation of hierarchies, it is about a mirroring of bureaucracy and does not get down to the essential issue that there is a tremendous capacity for the European Union and all that it represents to support the NATO kinetic capability, and I do not think that is being worked hard enough or effectively enough.

Chairman: Could I break in for a moment, Bernard Jenkin.

Q159 Mr Jenkin: I agree with every word that Jack Deverell has just said, but positively about ESDP having the civil capabilities that we need to deploy in these situations. Can I just turn back to Daniel for a moment about permanent structural co-operation. The Lisbon Treaty specifies qualified majority voting for the permanent structural co-operation, does it not?

Mr Keohane: Yes.

Q160 Mr Jenkin: We will have a choice when permanent structural co-operation is launched, the United Kingdom will have to either opt in and be
subject to qualified majority voting or opt out and have no say over it at all. Is that not rather a disadvantageous place to put the United Kingdom?

Mr Keohane: I would take that as a rather legal interpretation, if you look at the policies.

Q161 Mr Jenkin: A rather what interpretation?

Mr Keohane: Legal interpretation. What I mean by that is everyone knows that the UK and France are the leading players in European defence; nothing is going to happen in permanent structured co-operation or anything else on ESDP unless the United Kingdom agrees.

Q162 Mr Jenkin: But that is not what it says, is it?

Mr Keohane: No, no, hold on. To turn it around, over the last few years France and Germany have threatened—for example in 2003—to set up something which sort of looked a bit like permanent structured co-operation, to divide Europe and to go ahead with European defence. Why did they not do so? Because they realised they cannot go ahead on European defence without the United Kingdom, so it is very important to bear in mind the politics. Legally you are correct, but the UK actually pushed for this and is one of the biggest supporters of permanent structural co-operation, precisely because the criteria for joining it are based on capabilities and that is why they think it should also help NATO. That is my understanding.

Mr Jenkin: But legally I am correct. Thank you.

Q163 Chairman: Before we move on from that, if Bernard Jenkin legally is correct, should not the political position reflect the legality; should not the law be such that it actually reflects the reality on the ground?

Mr Keohane: The reason why you want to have QMV in this area is because it is very difficult to get anything done. QMV relates strictly to the criteria for joining the group, who can join the group, it does not in terms of launching an operation; that is something that must be made very clear, that still needs unanimity. It is purely for who joins the group, what the criteria are, because otherwise it is very difficult to get anything done. As you know, in any organisation with 27 members it is very difficult to get agreement and certainly you want to avoid lowest common denominators; if European defence is to develop meaningful capabilities then it is better to have qualified majority voting. In effect, if you look, generally speaking, at EU policies—and not just at defence policy because obviously we have not had QMV in defence policy—QMV is not actually used very much because the idea is to threaten QMV politically to try and get people to do what you want them to do. You want it to be more effective because you want people to develop their capabilities, you want them to spend their money better, you want them to invest more in equipment and you want them to consider to be willing to deploy. The only way to do that is to try and encourage people to consider the consequences of being left out.

Q164 Mr Jenkin: But, Mr Keohane, it all depends upon who “you” is in that description. If I could just point out, in Article 11(2) of the existing Treaty which is translated to the new Treaty, it says: “Member States shall support the Union’s external and security policy actively and unreservedly in a spirit of loyalty and mutual solidarity.” That is a very strong, legal invocation upon a non-participating Member State in the permanent structural co-operation to support whatever they decide to do actively and unreservedly. Supposing France and a few other countries decide to form a permanent structural co-operation for a particular purpose that we do not want to be involved in because we are against it, and they go off and do something we do not want, how do we stop them doing that?

Mr Keohane: What you are referring to there is the CFSP article actually; supporting the Union’s common foreign security policy is actually a foreign policy article and there is not QMV in foreign policy and anyway it only refers to where you have a common policy.

Q165 Mr Jenkin: It is all under Title V, is it not?

Mr Keohane: Yes, that is because the ESDP—

Q166 Mr Jenkin: Just one last point, it is a common foreign and security policy and the ESDP is the security element of the CFSP, so this article applies to ESDP, does it not?

Mr Keohane: No, you do not have QMV on CFSP.

Q167 Mr Jenkin: No, but you do in ESDP.

Mr Keohane: There is a difference procedurally.

Mr Jenkin: That is not my question. My question is does this article apply to ESDP and the answer is it does because it is a common foreign and security policy.

Mr Hamilton: You are actually answering your own question now.

Q168 Chairman: Your answer is that it does; Mr Keohane, your answer is that it does not?

Mr Keohane: No, my answer is that they are not the same thing in that QMV in ESDP only applies to the criteria for joining the group on capabilities, when you are deciding the list of criteria. When you are deciding the common policy—remember, ESDP is about implementing the foreign and security policy—it is not QMV, it is unanimous.

Chairman: I have decided that this has gone far enough and so we will now move on to the European Defence Agency. Kevan Jones.

Q169 Mr Jones: The EDA was set up to support Member States and improve the defence capability; has it made any useful contribution to date?

General Deverell: I genuinely do not know and I doubt whether any of the panellists can give you a hard and fast example. What it should do, at the very least, is encourage discussion about the modalities of international co-operation, perhaps in terms of research as well as production. Whether that has
borne any material fruit I really do not think, but Lord Drayson, before he went racing, gave evidence to the Committee some time ago, and he is far better placed than any of us, I think.

Q170 Chairman: Do you think he will come back? General Deverell: It depends whether he wins or not. As I say, I have had a little bit to do with the European Defence Agency, and my fear is — this is not anecdotial, it was reported in a conference I attended from the NC3A, the NATO command and control agency et cetera — that they were worried that there was very little connection between the European Defence Agency and themselves at that level in terms of trying to achieve commonality—I use the word commonality in its widest sense; they were concerned about it. Now NC3A are not themselves without sin in this matter and it depends who you talk to, but there does strike me as being something of a reluctance for those two organisations to get alongside each other in the way they really ought to. There is only one set of forces, there is only one lot of money, we all know that, yet I detect a continuation along parallel lines, if not a slight drift away.

Q171 Mr Jones: Mr Keohane, the British last week blocked the three-year budget for the Defence Agency. Can we read into that that Britain is not committed really to this project or what are the internal politics of that? Mr Keohane: Of course everyone knows the UK was one of the leading forces behind setting up the agency — it is worth bearing that in mind — along with France in particular. Just to make a general comment about the EDA first, before I get into the specifics of that, the EDA is an inter-governmental agency, it does not have much power of its own, it cannot force governments to do things, all it can do is try and come up with proposals and it is up to the governments then to decide whether or not they want to go ahead with them, but it is worth bearing in mind that there are at least three things the EDA has done in the last three years which are potentially extremely useful, if the governments deem to use them. One is the long term vision project, which has tried to come up with ideas on what capability we will need in 20 years time; related to that are projects on research and technology which have been difficult for the UK. They do not disagree in principle with spending more on R and T but they are not completely sure about common budgets, common funding, but the third and perhaps most important, as much for its principle as its practice, is the defence procurement code of conduct because this is supposed to help open up Europe’s defence market and that of course could lead to huge efficiency gains if it were implemented properly. The problem, as I said earlier, is the EDA does not have the power to force governments to behave themselves.

Q172 Mr Jones: What do you make of the British blocking the budget?

Mr Keohane: Since I am based in Paris it is more difficult for me to judge, but my sense is that this is related to a much broader debate on Europe and the UK at the moment. It is certainly true that in the past the UK has been extremely supportive, both of the ESDP and the EDA in particular because it wanted to ensure that ESDP was about helping improve European military capabilities, but my sense at the moment is that it is more related with the broader debate.

Q173 John Smith: Turkey is a key NATO power; do you think it makes any sense to develop the EDA without Turkey playing a bigger role or any role in its process? We were out there recently and they were very exercised at the fact that they felt they were getting nowhere. Mr Keohane: Obviously since Turkey has actually the largest army in Europe, if I remember correctly, Turkey is a major defence player in Europe. Of course, as you well know Turkey’s relationship with the EU has been difficult at times, particularly on defence policy, given the impasse between the EU and NATO and the Cypriot-Turkish issue, so that unfortunately has hampered the co-operation. On the other hand, Turkey has made it clear that it is happy to participate in the ESDP missions if and when it is asked to do so and required to do so, but in general yes, the EDA should be and as far as I know is open to co-operation with non-EU members.

Q174 Chairman: John Smith asked an extremely important question, as he always does, because Turkey was a member of the predecessor body to the EDA and it has been blocked from becoming a member of the EDA, even though every other country that was a member of the predecessor body has now, through one method or another, become a member of the EDA. Do you find that strange? Mr Keohane: Given the politics at the moment in the EU, no, and specifically given the politics between Cyprus and Turkey as you know are very difficult, and this of course as I said earlier is woven into the EU/NATO debate as well, so I do not find it so strange that the EDA is made up of EU members. Lieutenant General Fry: I do not find it remotely strange but it is profoundly reprehensible. It seems to me that both your question and, Chairman, your observation really beg probably the most profound grand strategic issue facing Europe at the present time, which is: why does Turkey face? If this is just one of those small incremental steps that is preventing it from looking westward then it is a thoroughly bad thing. Chairman: It certainly is. Bernard Jenkin. Mr Jenkin: The Turkey point is very serious but just to revert to the relationship between ACT and EDA, is this not the kind of duplication that we were promised would not take place? You have two organisations in Europe trying to standardise weapons systems and weapons procurement; should there not just be one?
Q175 Chairman: Do you see that link, General Deverell?

General Deverell: I will answer it directly. I guess if you have two organisations—NATO is one, the European Union is the other—it is quite reasonable and indeed one should expect bureaucracies to create institutions which deal with particular situations they find themselves in. I do not have a problem with that. I am not sure how nations which are not in NATO can deal with a NATO body in terms of procurement of weapons systems or whatever that they wish to be involved in; there may be ways of doing that but I personally cannot see it.

Q176 Mr Jenkins: Perhaps it should be a joint body. General Deverell: Of course, you may have all sorts of reasons why it cannot be a joint body. All I would say is that there is every reason why those two bodies should perceive themselves to be brothers or sisters of a single family and seek ways of improving interoperability and compatibility which I do not detect they are doing at the moment as well as they should be. The answer to your question is, in a philosophical sense, why have two, but I think in a practical sense, a realistic political sense, a technical sense, almost certainly there will be two bodies there. They need to mesh into each other very much more effectively.

Chairman: Moving on to Battlegroups, now it is Brian Jenkins.

Q177 Mr Jenkins: Can I ask a series of questions to which you can give short answers because it will help me, hopefully, to understand what Battlegroups are for and also for the record what you think Battlegroups are for. In fact, what are they for? What are the criteria as regards to how they are brought together?

General Deverell: Can you answer that question because I do not think I can.

Lieutenant General Fry: In bits; I cannot give you a necessarily a comprehensive answer. In various ways, it depends on the national solution. I think that we in this country have them as formal bodies, other countries seem to mix and match and, when that happens, it creates a very significant force generation issue because if you have not had people who have habitually operated together, asking them to come together and do something substantial is quite a difficult thing to do. The key is almost in the title: Battlegroups. Battlegroups in any real military sense are below the level of credible military force because a battalion is likely to be an assembly of bayonets, with very little to either support it or sustain it. So you can get it somewhere, but once it is there it represents a level of force and a radius of action that is all about demonstration rather than anything greater than that.

Q178 Mr Jenkins: Are they intended to be deployed? Lieutenant General Fry: They are intended to be deployed but for rather more cosmetic purposes than war-fighting purposes, because I do not think in terms of the military capacity that they represent that they have the capacity for sustained war-fighting.

Q179 Mr Jenkins: Do you think that through Battlegroups we might be able to transform the military capabilities across Europe?

Lieutenant General Fry: I think you are starting at too low a level to have that ambition. I sound as though I am being rather dismissive and I do not intend that because I do think they have an important function in signalling political will and intent but they are unlikely to be a military solution entirely by themselves.

Q180 Mr Jenkins: Is there a set-down criteria for bringing these groups together or is it once again a partnership of the willing as they come together, and can they pull out if they think no, we do not want to go there, it is too hot and dusty?

Lieutenant General Fry: My understanding is what you have just said.

Q181 Mr Jenkins: They can pull out at any time. What is the point of going through a training exercise—you have all this training, my colleagues across here are guarding my right flank, we are going to go into conflict and they are going to decide they do not want to be there and the whole thing falls apart. I cannot quite get my head around that: why have they got the right to pull out when they have made a commitment to the Battlegroup?

General Deverell: I think your point was pre-figured in the earlier discussion.

Colonel Langton: It is a very important question, but my sense is that the Battlegroups which mostly are sub-regional groupings of nations that might even speak the same language—there is the Nordic Battlegroup, the Balkan Battlegroup and so on—were an easier way (shall I put it like that) to bring together a smaller group of nations who are used to operating and talking together—and I will concentrate on the Nordics for the moment because it comes to the second part of your question—and did so in fact previously, partly to train more easily and locally and less expensively, partly therefore to transform and therefore to contribute to the overall Alliance, if it was necessary, but the interesting thing here—and currently Sweden has just pulled out of the possible deployment of the Nordic Battlegroup to Darfur which was a proposal, and of course there are reasons for that which are purely national. One of them is that Sweden is already committed, as a neutral country, to be under the command of NATO inside Afghanistan with a provincial reconstruction team, and the Swedes have felt that was just enough as far as operating out of area should go, even though they are of course in the EU. Those are the criteria and, yes, people do feel that they can opt out and they have done.
Q182 Mr Jenkins: General Fry, in the last question I referred to NATO and I want to see if the European mindset is exactly the same, and apparently it is as far as being willing and you can walk away having been trained, so there is no difference there. Who pays for this Battlegroup? Is it the same thing, the costs lie where they fall for different countries and is there any perception that maybe we should have common funding so that costs are met by a tax adjustment?

Lieutenant General Fry: For deployment possibly, for force generation, no, I would say, force generation is entirely a national business. We would do it under any circumstances. The only issue which arises is that if you do conduct a deployment, where does the responsibility lie then and I think that there is a powerful case for common funding under those circumstances.

Q183 Mr Jenkins: Do you think that Battlegroups should be the main force as far as European force generation is concerned in the future?

Lieutenant General Fry: Let me give a slightly longer answer. Jack Deverell has already made the point that in a sense the real core capabilities that NATO and European forces have are complementary at their best. There is a capacity within NATO for large scale military operations and force projection, and I would say that is no more than nascent in European structures at the present time. However, in all sorts of cross-disciplinary affairs—police, legal and judicial functions—European capabilities seem to me to be very, very strong. If you want to be in a process, therefore, of trying to transform a nation like Afghanistan, for example, it seems to me that there are complementary functions to be performed here. Therefore, necessarily, if you accept that judgment, perhaps Europe is best in establishing its military horizons at a rather lower level than NATO, in which case Battlegroups, notwithstanding the reservations that I expressed earlier on, are an appropriate level at which to pitch that, but recognising that their capacity for sustained and difficult war-fighting is likely to be limited.

Q184 Mr Jenkins: So you think that Battlegroups compare—I cannot say unfavourably—with NATO’s Response Force because what you are saying is that Battlegroups have a different perspective to NATO’s Response Force.

Lieutenant General Fry: That is true, but also the NATO Response Force should have within it the entire structure to project, sustain and support it. A Battlegroup, to go back to my original point, is essentially a minor tactical instrument. Until you get to formation level, brigade and beyond, you do not have the internal capacity for let us say artillery support or sustainment in the field. A loose assembly of battlegroups does not naturally aggregate itself up unless it has those supporting capabilities, and that is probably one of the weaknesses of the overall concept.

Chairman: Operations. Adam Holloway.

Q185 Mr Holloway: What do the Generals think we can do to improve force generation and deal with this question of national caveats that seems to be causing something of a hindrance?

General Deverell: National caveats come and go. Sometimes, I am afraid, they are constitutional issues; sometimes it is a matter of constitutional or Parliamentary diktat that a nation can or cannot do something. I was confronted in Bosnia with a French lawyer—and I am not against the French from this point of view—who was hidden behind a pile of books which he was about to metaphorically throw at me to demonstrate that the French could not do what I had asked them to do. That is fine, that is what the law says. The more pernicious caveat is where a government takes a decision for political reasons which restricts the flexibility of the force, which can lead to increased threat, it can lead to increased costs because you need more soldiers to do what less soldiers could do if you could move your soldiers from place to place et cetera, et cetera. Of course, the one caveat that is often not mentioned but very often is present and actually quite damaging—and this is something NATO could do—is the self-imposed one where the commander reads his political directive and adds 10% or 15% of de-risking to it and says “I cannot do that; this is the way I read this political directive and this is the implication.” Those caveats are going to be like death and taxation, they are an inevitable part of our military life. What can we do to ameliorate them? I am afraid we go right back to this whole thing of political will and we go back to this understanding of what your military is for, what constitutes the proper ability to generate combat power in support of your military objectives, and if nations have different views of that then you will get caveats.

Q186 Mr Holloway: Immediately there is a whole practical question emerging with the Dutch in Oruzgan and the Canadians in Kandahar with the possibility that neither of them will sign up again. Does this sort of thing not seriously jeopardise operations and specifically what is happening in Afghanistan?

Lieutenant General Fry: Absolutely it jeopardises it, but military mechanisms to make force generation any better are completely exhausted. John Reid worked himself to a shadow doing this and we went round every possible buoy; it is interesting on one sense that the reformed Alliance places some limitations upon you. For example, there are Mongolians and Koreans deployed in Iraq in a coalition of the willing; you are not confined necessarily by what is in the Alliance, you can go outside; in NATO there is no such recourse. Looking to find some smart button to press within the NATO process; no such recourse is available to you and this really is now a matter of convincing other nations of their political responsibilities to the health of the Alliance as a whole.
Q187 Mr Holloway: If I can move that on slightly, would you extend that to lack of unity of purpose, lack of unity of command, specific to Afghanistan, and how seriously would you say this was jeopardising the possibility of succeeding there?

Lieutenant General Fry: I would say it is jeopardising things but it is a solution that has been derived because of the essential limitations within the situation. We did not go there thinking let us have the Americans doing something over there, the caveatted nations only operating in the north and here is a wonderful opportunity, we will take the south. It was finding people’s limitations and appetites and trying then to shape a scheme of manoeuvre according to that.

Q188 Mr Holloway: Finally, if I may, do you guys have any observations of how things would work differently if you just hinted at in Iraq, where you have essentially got a coalition whereas in Afghanistan you have an alliance—how has Iraq in a sense been more successful than Afghanistan in that particular respect?

Lieutenant General Fry: Because people who join a coalition of the willing do so with less constraint than when they pay their dues to an alliance. A nation committing to deployment in Iraq has made a rational choice, which is not about its alliance responsibilities, it is there for whatever political reasons it has. It is therefore less likely to place constraint upon its operating forces.

General Deverell: I think it is worth saying that if you look back at Afghanistan in 2003 you see a very different construct and a very much more positive construct. There is greater unity of purpose and unity of command because NATO has steadily expanded its influence. If you look back at 2003 before NATO took over, ISAF was limited to Kabul and Operation Enduring Freedom which, dare I say, was more about the security of the United States and Western Europe than it was about the reconstruction of Afghanistan—that is my personal view. There has been through the melding of the command structures and a change in responsibilities a much greater sense of cohesion, though there are still major problems in it. One does get progress, therefore, and the danger is that we take a snapshot through time and say “My God, this is unacceptable.” Whether that progress continues, NATO has this extraordinary capacity to muddle through; the problem is previously it has muddled through against a virtual enemy, somebody who is sat the other side of a border, another bureaucracy: I am not sure we are now in a situation where we can afford to muddle through when we are being called to account. It is one thing to go onto the practice ground and play football against a series of shady figures, it is another thing to actually be in the stadium and play with half the management team saying “I am not quite sure whether I want to put number 10 on quite yet” or “He is only allowed to kick the ball with his left foot”—if I can use a sporting analogy. There have been very considerable advances from where we were in 2003; those have got to continue.

Chairman: I just want to break in for a moment to compliment our advisers on something because I personally am finding this session extremely valuable, so the choice of our witnesses has been well done. Thank you Robert Key.

Q189 Robert Key: Most people are anticipating some difficulty in the next few weeks in Kosovo. Presumably the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in this country and diplomats across Europe are anticipating what might happen. Can we assume that NATO is also planning what might happen for them in the worst case scenario and can we assume that there are ESDP planners contemplating what might happen in a worst case scenario? If they are both doing that, will they both be talking to each other?

Lieutenant General Fry: Certainly there will be NATO planners thinking about this because of the contingent responsibility to respond to it. Whether ESDP planners will be doing it with the same alacrity I am not really sure, and I would have thought the chances of a unified military response are very small. However, the chance of a NATO military response being co-ordinated with elements of a European civil response is quite high. The one thing that did seem to me to work in Kosovo was a very good combination of European agencies, some international agencies, NATO and OSCE actually mucking in together and, probably better than anywhere else I have seen, bringing about some pretty beneficial responses. The only response that NATO is thinking about is a civil order one within the confines of Kosovo itself. The wider implications of, let us call it Albanian irredentism, seem to me to be far, far larger than that, and whether anybody is contemplating that on a larger scale, I do not know.

Q190 Robert Key: We have now had ESDP missions in Bosnia, Kosovo, Congo, Afghanistan; you would have thought a lot of lessons would have been learnt here and I am not very reassured by what you have said. Has anyone else got a perspective on this?

Colonel Langton: The only thing I could add to this, having spoken with Roy Reeve last week as the Special Representative for the EU, is that he has spent a considerable amount of time talking with NATO before he deploys, which is actually this coming Saturday in advance of an 1800 strong EU police mission, but he has talked about quite a lot of contingency planning and activity with and alongside NATO. That is the only thing I could add to that.

General Deverell: You will always find soldiers and policemen and lots of other organisations who will talk at the tactical level in order to de-conflict, to collaborate, to co-operate. What is often lacking, and it was lacking in Afghanistan prior to 2003, is drawing together those threads at a political/strategic/military operational level. It was very interesting, if you look at Afghanistan, that prior to
NATO taking over the Kabul issue, the ISAF issue, was run from whichever national capital was running it and the United States effectively ran Operation Enduring Freedom, and if you asked anybody in the US who was running Afghanistan they said “We are”. You would say, “Hang on, how are you co-ordinating?” “Well, it is done in theatre.” That is not a strategic tying together, there is nobody allocating priorities, and I guess there will be a lot of work going on about Kosovo at the tactical level; whether this is being drawn together at a higher level where strategic decisions are being made to effect whatever we have to effect would I be more dubious, frankly.

Q191 Robert Key: In spite of all the experience of these ESDP deployments and all NATO's experience we are just going to muddle through, are we?

Lieutenant General Fry: I do not think “muddle through” is a recognised military doctrine, but it is a common practice.

Q192 Robert Key: It seems to be the practice on this occasion—a practice not a doctrine.

Lieutenant General Fry: Sometimes it works.

Q193 Chairman: Colonel Langton, what would you like to add, if anything, to what has been said already about Afghanistan and the lessons that we need to learn?

Colonel Langton: Just going back to this question about Iraq and Afghanistan, of course one of the obvious differences is you have a nation running operations in Iraq as the sort of supreme military player, whereas in Afghanistan that supremacy which General Deverell has just alluded to has diminished to a state where now we have 37 countries operating there, some in larger capacity than others. It is important, perhaps, when we talk about NATO's operation in Afghanistan, to ask ourselves is it not actually the International Security Assistance Force’s operation, which has a slightly separate mandate—or has its own mandate but it is being led by NATO and was led by other groups of countries in the past. My sense is that the military effect which is achieved is quite obviously diluted by having more and more nations and less and less American influence on top of it.

Chairman: Moving on to NATO/EU relations, Bernard Jenkin.

Q194 Mr Jenkin: Chairman, we have covered one or two of these areas already. Do ESDP’s attempts to increase military capabilities interfere with or enhance NATO’s attempts to create military capabilities? We would like it to work better, but.

General Deverell: I have said everything I possibly can say about it.

Q195 Mr Jenkin: We have done the non-military capabilities of ESDP but when we visited NATO headquarters earlier this year we did hear that some EU people still want a military headquarters and I wonder whether there is a case for this or does it risk creating further unnecessary duplication?

Lieutenant General Fry: I think there is a case for it. I visited some time ago and it seemed to me that there were a couple of black phones in the corner and a layer of dust about the place; if you are going to do it then you need to do it in a serious manner and if you are going to contemplate the deployment of military force then maybe it is sensible for you to have something on the top of the whole thing. As long as there are separable military ambitions that the Europeans have, then it is entirely legitimate to try and command them in an appropriate fashion.

Q196 Mr Jenkin: With all these double-hatted forces, on call both to ESDP and NATO, when there is a crisis what is the command chain for deciding who does what?

General Deverell: There is a command chain and of course some time ago I had this debate about the command chain. I have to say my view of the resilience and robustness of that command chain was not particularly good, but that is a matter of military judgment and it does not mean to say that they are wrong. Where I have some difficulty is with the vision of the strategic commander of EU operations being the same as DSACEUR, and all this begins to unravel when things go wrong, when something unexpected happens—events, dear boy, events, suddenly crop up. There is this rather comic vision that DSACEUR or the strategic commander goes into his own office and stands on one side of his desk and issues a rocket, and then rushes around the other side of his desk, changes his hat and receives his own rocket, and what does he do about it? He has a very difficult problem if things go wrong.

Q197 Mr Jenkin: I was thinking more in terms of force generation. When there is a crisis, who is in charge of force generation for an operation involving European forces, is it DSACEUR or is it the ESDP?

General Deverell: The answer to your question is I am not quite sure. There is an EU military staff and I suppose the strategic commander ultimately is responsible for the force being generated; having been generated he will not be doing the actual work—or maybe he will. Rob might know better than I. There is one glaringly obvious point which I almost apologise for making, it is so obvious, but if there is a very large European commitment to a European operation which is on-going, those are soldiers which are not available to NATO operations and it may be that a large and on-going European operation starts to undermine the viability of NATO response forces and other NATO operations, because there is only one set of forces.

Q198 Mr Jenkin: But that is true of any national operation which might occur. We are involved in Iraq and our forces in Iraq are not available for NATO operations.
**General Deverell:** Absolutely, but we luckily, though it costs a lot, have an extremely flexible and effective military force. A lot of nations—and it goes back to one of the significant problems—do not have that capacity to generate deployable forces with relevance and utility from within the very often quite large forces they have.

**Q199 Mr Jenkin:** What do you feel about France talking about an ESDP operation to Darfur when NATO has not even fulfilled its commitments in Afghanistan? Is this the kind of conflict—

**General Deverell:** I was looking at my friends to start talking because I am boring myself now.

**Q200 Chairman:** Before we get into that I want to pinpoint what strikes me as a possible disagreement between you because when General Fry was saying that he thought that there was a case for a separate headquarters, for the first time during the course of the morning a pained look came over your face, General Deverell, so it seems to me that General Fry thinks there is a case and you think there is not a case. Is that correct? General Fry.

**Lieutenant General Fry:** Let me clarify the point. There is a three star officer, currently David Leakey, who operates in Brussels and he is Commander EU Forces. His predecessor was a Frenchman and we are doing it this time round. He has a function in force generation and almost an inspectorate function of looking at the force’s readiness overall; he is unlikely, except in extremely specific circumstances, to command a military operation, that is much more likely to be done by DSACEUR. My point was that if there was a requirement for that headquarters to command an operation it ought to be able to do so. I think that the circumstances would be highly localised, but it is not an unreasonable investment against that contingency.

**General Deverell:** I entirely concur; we do not really disagree. My pained expression was that I have an innate suspicion of large bureaucracies because once you start creating these structures you start creating structures that support other structures and you find that you then have a very substantial structure. You can criticise the NATO command structure for being far too constipated and bureaucratic and just too big, and I would say that, yes, you are quite right. It is another issue how you get over it and there are certain training and environmental costs—I mean environmental in terms of getting people out of national thinking and into NATO thinking, there are certain costs you have to pay for that—but I am just nervous about setting up an alternative structure here. We concur.

**Q201 Mr Holloway:** Talking to the military people here, you have spent your careers in the British Army and the Royal Marines and now we are in an environment where we speak about the EU. Does anything rankle in your minds about the expression EU Commander or the British General who is reported to have said in Bosnia, “I am not a British General, I am a European General”. Almost at the emotional level does this rankle at all?

**Lieutenant General Fry:** For me absolutely not. One of the aspects of the strategic genius of this country is getting other people to fight our wars for us. Since approximately 1800 until today we have been better at creating alliances, we have been better at industrial production, better at intelligence and we have been better at inviting the Americans and the Russians to do the really difficult things on our behalf. Therefore, if I look back at any period of British history, with the one exception of 1 July 1916 to 11 November 1918, on most of those occasions we have been part of an alliance and we frequently have not been the major shifters within that alliance.

**Q202 Mr Holloway:** I did not mean so much in the sense of an alliance. I meant I suppose in the sense that the European Union or some members increasingly see it as a country; how does that feel to you guys as military people?

**Lieutenant General Fry:** I think you might be asking me a question as a British nationalist — but I do not think you will get the answer you want.

**Q203 Mr Holloway:** You have to ask the question. **General Deverell:** Funnily enough I think we are rather better at it than other nations. I must give you an anecdote now because I cannot explain it any other way, but every day my German deputy in NATO was telephoned by or telephoned Berlin, and he would come to me and say “What is the British view?” I said to him, quite seriously and realistically, “I have not got a British view; if you want a British view you must go to the senior British officer, not me. I am a NATO officer, I will give you my view, I am not giving you a British view.” We are actually quite good at it and I had no problem at all about being a NATO officer.

**Q204 Mr Holloway:** Does the Household Division have a different view?

**Colonel Langton:** You could probably answer that. I too have headed up a small UN mission and I would totally concur that I had no doubts at all that I did not ring up Whitehall if I had a difficulty, I rang up New York. I think you could find the same with senior British officers in Afghanistan, in Kabul and their headquarters. I am not sure if I fully understand the question, but if it is do I mind or would I have minded commanding a multinational force under another flag, providing my government had sent me there the answer would be no.

**Q205 Mr Jenkin:** An interesting proviso, providing “my” government had sent me there.

**Colonel Langton:** But that is true.

**Q206 Mr Jenkin:** Going back to force generation, was not Berlin Plus meant to resolve all this question and is Berlin Plus working or was the can of worms too quickly reopened as soon as we thought we had closed the lid on the can of worms?
Lieutenant General Fry: Berlin Plus was intended to be a solution, not necessarily the solution and a template to which people would have recourse on every occasion and there are examples where it has been successful, so I do not think we should dismiss it out of hand but it may not, on the other hand, be a solution to every requirement we have.

Mr Keohane: The two operations, Macedonia and Bosnia, where Berlin Plus has been used, they have been fine, it has worked very smoothly, but that also may be the point in a way, it has not really been tested. That is true generally for ESDP operations and very small operations and a lot of ESDP processes have not been tested yet so we cannot really assess just how effective they are.

Chairman: Moving on to a key issue—and this will be the final set of questions—funding. Willie Rennie.

Mr Jenkin: I thought we were going to do something about Bosnia and Kosovo.

Chairman: We have passed that, we have to get on to Willie Rennie and the funding.

Q207 Willie Rennie: I concur with all the points that were made earlier on about the political will in different countries and I want to focus on the actual tools that we could use to lever more funding from different countries. First of all the targets, there is the 2% of GDP; should NATO defence targets be binding, do you think that is a possibility, and second of all do you think that we should establish separate funds within the national defence budgets for designated Alliance tasks and, third, do you think there should be more common funding of operations?

Lieutenant General Fry: I will have a crack first of all. The middle question you asked is should we have dedicated funding for Alliance operations? No, I am absolutely convinced we should not do that. What we have done in terms of our force attribution is always say we have got one pot of forces and that we will allocate them to whatever we need to do—national, bilateral, coalition or alliance operations. To artificially separate those things out is never going to be possible with Armed Forces of the size and shape that we have because the only course of action we have is to multi-hat people, we could not possibly have discrete Forces for discrete relationships and therefore I do not think it follows that we should have discrete funding.

Q208 Willie Rennie: The Turks have done exactly that, they have a separate peacekeeping division for overseas activities.

Lieutenant General Fry: They have, and other nations go to a certain amount of role specialisation, but the Turks are in a very particular position and we touched on that earlier on—maybe that is a discussion by itself, but if you are a member of NATO but not a member of the EU it does present certain challenges for you in the way in which you deploy your forces, and maybe it is a response to that rather than a response to a situation which is analogous to our own.

Q209 Willie Rennie: And the other two points about binding targets and also the common funding.

General Deverell: Whenever I said anything about NATO ought to, NATO must, I was always told by my German and other national colleagues that NATO was the sum of national wills, so who is going to make it binding? It is rather like turkeys voting for Christmas really, is it not? Those who want the flexibility not to spend 2%—it does not mean to say they will never spend 2%—are going to find it very difficult to get themselves to vote for something that they do not want to do, so I do not understand how it can be made binding unless you have some form of majority voting which, of course, under consensus one does not. The whole element of common funding of course has come out of the days when you had a small NATO, you had a permanent infrastructure—we looked more like a 17th century army with garrisons and dumps just behind our lines from which we operated than we look at the moment because you had these two largely fixed positions in Western Europe and one could more easily identify what was NATO common funded and what was not. People fought in national corps and there was very little integration, apart from in the air and on the sea where there was much greater integration, and really it is the common funding on the land environment which is, in my view, causing the major problems. I was made aware that there were certain nations who were the bigger payers who were very nervous that they were going to fund the sort of infrastructure projects of the smaller players and allow the smaller players to escape from their funding responsibilities. The things that came up in Afghanistan were the need to have a mobile air traffic control system which nobody had—with fixed air bases you did not have that expeditionary capability; the only people who really had it were the Germans, who happened to get there first and then there was a hell of a row, it was very difficult to get the Germans out of it, to find ways that the Germans could get out of that commitment, which was a very demanding commitment. Should that be common funding? It has become a far more complex issue; I can simplify it, but when you then start trying to dot the I’s and cross the T’s I am not sure the simplification works. I would suggest that anything that is required to enable, for example, the NATO Response Force should be funded commonly; the costs of being part of it probably should not be, but there are structures which enable the NATO Response Force which are, at the moment, as far as I am concerned not commonly funded which I think could be. There are identifiable tranches which you could argue about and that is work that possibly needs to be done—I do not know whether you would agree with that.

Lieutenant General Fry: Yes.

Q210 Chairman: Would there be anything to be said for the precise reverse of a costs lying where they fall process so that those countries that were prepared to commit troops would do so and those countries that were not would commit money?
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**General Deverell:** Famously enough I have that written down. I was coming up in the train and I suddenly was struck by this, I thought, rather elegant idea. That starts to repaint NATO as a very different organisation where actually you can pay; you can pay to avoid having your soldiers in combat. It is a form of military carbon trading and I do think it is a very interesting concept, but I cannot go any deeper than nodding and saying that is an interesting point of view.

**Lieutenant General Fry:** It did seem to me that when the Prime Minister spoke in New York when he co-sponsored a resolution with France about intervention in Darfur, that is precisely what we were doing. We were making no undertakings about the deployment of our own Forces but we were willing to contemplate the material support of others to do so and I think that is a course of action that we have taken nationally on a number of occasions, and I do not see why that should not become a wider principle.

**Q211 Mr Havard:** Sorry I was not here earlier. As I understand it, this is a doctrine that is developing in NATO called constructive abstentionism—the things they do to the English language beggar belief, but I understand that is a doctrine which is actually being developed quite actively. Is this not really about, as you have just said, France does not want to participate at certain times; are these not just squaring political circles? Is not the whole debate about ESDP and NATO about what is Europe going to do sans the USA, so when the right question comes out of the wrong mouth, like it did with Rumsfeld, of saying “What are you Europeans going to do on your own without the Americans?” is that not really what they are talking about?

**Lieutenant General Fry:** The military officers here are probably not very good at being abstemious, but we will leave that to one side. The earlier part of this conversation was all about political will, absolutely all about political will, and if there is a theme which has recurred throughout the evidence that we have given here it is the centrality of that to just about everything that we have talked about; also the glue that NATO provides which binds the United States to Europe is another fundamental underpinning which we have not touched upon on this occasion, but I think was given in previous testimony.

**Q212 Mr Havard:** Is this the whole point, this is about how much you are prepared to pay and is this not really about are the Europeans prepared to pay?

**Lieutenant General Fry:** You can pay in either blood or treasure and there is a considerable difference between those two things.

**Q213 Mr Hamilton:** Taking the last point on blood or treasure, that would be a conscience payment that many countries would see fit to do. You made a comment earlier on to an earlier question which I thought was really quite telling, and that was the difference between Afghanistan and Iraq where there is an obligation on the countries that are in Afghanistan but there is a declaration open the countries that are in Iraq. Surely that just makes that obligation even more diluted and it would be the wrong way to go. It is conscience money.

**General Deverell:** We have come back full circle to the essential issue and that is the issue of political will. Wars of discretion, wars of choice, carry political risk. People who join alliances of the willing—and there will always be a major alliance nation, either politically or militarily, there will be a major alliance figure, the big boy on the block, probably going to be the United States, and governments sign up to that political risk. When they sign alongside another alliance member they sign up to that political risk and this makes their life extremely difficult, and it can actually determine the way they control their forces, their capabilities that they commit to it and the rest. I guess that any of these options that we have talked about all come with a cost, it is just a different cost and people have to make that decision.

**Chairman:** A quick final question from Bernard Jenkin.

**Q214 Mr Jenkin:** It is about Bosnia and Kosovo and force generation. It is quite possible that Berlin Plus is going to be tested because of the possibility of instability in the Balkans. Do you have confidence that there is access to and readiness of the EU/ NATO operational reserve in order to bolster military forces in the Balkans if needed?

**Lieutenant General Fry:** Yes, I do, because Bosnia is the example that will prove the efficacy of the European structures. It was entered into and the transfer of command from NATO to the EU was permitted with the full knowledge that this might happen at some stage. It is an example which Europe cannot afford to permit to fail.

**Chairman:** We must finish there, which is a shame in a way because it has been a fascinating session this morning, really helpful. Thank you very much indeed to all of our witnesses, most excellent stuff.
Tuesday 8 January 2008

Members present

Mr James Arbuthnot, in the Chair

Mr David S Borrow
Mr David Crausby
Linda Gilroy
Mr Mike Hancock
Mr Dai Havard

Mr Adam Holloway
Mr Bernard Jenkin
Mr Kevan Jones
Robert Key
Willie Rennie

Witnesses: Rt Hon Des Browne MP, Secretary of State for Defence, and Mr Andrew Mathewson, Director of Policy for International Organisations, Ministry of Defence, and Mr Hugh Powell, Head of Security Policy Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, gave evidence.

Q215 Chairman: Secretary of State, welcome and a happy new year.
Des Browne: Thank you and a happy new year to you, Chairman, and to members of the Committee.

Q216 Chairman: Now, this is our final session in our inquiry into the future of NATO and European defence and the purpose of the inquiry has been to consider the role of NATO, to ask whether NATO has a long-term future, what its relationship with the European Security and Defence Policy should be and the relationship between NATO and the EU. We expect to produce our report at the beginning of March, so it will be in time for the Summit in Bucharest in April. We have lots of questions to ask you, so, to members of the Committee, I would ask you to ask brief, snappy questions and, Secretary of State, I would ask you to give brief, snappy answers please. Perhaps I could ask you then to introduce your team first.
Des Browne: Well, thank you very much indeed, Chairman. If I may introduce those who are present with me at the table here, Andrew Mathewson is on my right, who is the Director of Policy for International Organisations in the MoD, and I am also supported by Hugh Powell, who is the Head of the Security Policy Department in the FCO, who is to my left.

Q217 Chairman: The Bucharest Summit in April, what do you expect to come out of that and how will we be able to tell whether it has been a success?
Des Browne: As far as we are concerned, success for the UK will involve the Alliance at Bucharest re-endorse its collective commitment to Afghanistan, building. I believe, on the success that the Alliance has already achieved to date and agreeing a plan for the future. Bucharest will be successful too if it maintains momentum and capabilities in force-generation both for Afghanistan and more widely too if we recognise KFOR’s role in managing the transition in Kosovo and look to develop further the partnerships NATO has with others, and we may come on to discuss some of those in detail. Finally, we hope that at Bucharest the Heads of State will invite to join the Alliance those Membership Action Plan countries who meet NATO’s performance base and those that are able and willing to contribute to the Euro-Atlantic security.\(^1\)

Q218 Chairman: You started there with the commitment to Afghanistan. Last month in his statement, the Prime Minister said that he wanted to see an improvement in burden-sharing and that it would be on the agenda at the Summit. What decisions do you expect to see made about an improvement in burden-sharing at the Summit?
Des Browne: Well, I think that burden-sharing ought to be the proper expression of the collective defence agreement of NATO. I think we have to accept in operations, such as the operation in Afghanistan, where we are talking about the deployment of forces by sovereign nations, that the ultimate decision over how, when and where their forces will be deployed will lie with those sovereign nations, and I think Afghanistan has shown that that is the case, and certainly I have learnt to recognise that politics exists in other countries as well as in the United Kingdom. Clearly what we are seeking to do is to continue along the route of encouraging a more equitable sharing of those burdens and the risks, which is a point that I stress at every meeting of NATO and every EU Defence Ministers meeting, but I think it is important not to discount the contributions and what has been achieved in that regard, the contributions made by other nations simply because they are not deployed alongside UK forces. I think there is a tendency for us to discount the contributions of other nations, and we have discussed this in the past in the context of Afghanistan, just because they are not deployed alongside other UK forces. I think it is unrealistic to expect every NATO member to be able to conduct every military task at the same tempo and certainly not with the tempo that we can generate in the United Kingdom. I am conscious that I am not precisely answering the question that you have asked and I would like to precisely answer it, but I think that, if we continue to make progress with regard to our burden-sharing, the Bucharest Summit will be a success, but I am not in a position, I think, to give you specific measures.\(^2\)

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1 See Ev 161
2 See Ev 161
Q219 Chairman: Did you regard Riga as a success?

Des Browne: Yes, I thought Riga was a success. I thought in a number of regards that Riga was a success. I think sometimes that, given the nature of this Alliance, the complexity of it and the fact that it moves by consensus, which effectively means unanimity, its achievements are sometimes diminished. I think we have, first of all, to bear in mind that ten years ago it would have been unthinkable for NATO to have collectively made the contribution that it has to Afghanistan and I thought that Riga was a success, in particular, in the commitment to the Comprehensive Report and I thought also the way in which the Alliance, in recognition of the global environment that we all operate in, the way in which countries recognise the importance of these relationships beyond the geographical area of NATO.1

Q220 Chairman: Secretary of State, I will just make a comment which is basically this: that, if the UK’s ambition is simply to make progress, however painfully slow it may be, then it might be seen as too bland an approach to something which needs a very hard-edged approach, so perhaps you would please bear in mind, in the answers to some of the questions that you will be asked about burden-sharing during the course of this evidence session, that other countries will be listening to what you say as we would hate it if they felt that we thought that everything was all right and that there was nothing further they needed to do because of a bland approach; I think that would be in the interests of the country. That is just a comment.

Des Browne: I recognise that and I understand and have given evidence on a number of occasions, particularly about Afghanistan, before this Committee and I do not think I have ever made any bones about my position either here or in the House of Commons about my desire to see other countries stepping up their play, sharing their fair share of the burden and deploying those forces that they can, but at the end of the day there has to be a degree of realism about what can be achieved and I think we have made significant progress. For example, I pray in aid the transformation that there has been of the forces of both Denmark and the Netherlands and the change from effectively a peace-keeping force to now a war-fighting force of Canada which is a very valued NATO ally. There have been significant achievements and we are at the moment, I think, seeing progress under the new leadership in France and a level of commitment, including the potential deployment of forces to the south and a quite important military commitment to the south of Afghanistan, so progress is being made and one should not underestimate that. I merely make the point that it is important to secure, and build on, the success that we have already achieved, and maintain it, in the north and west of Afghanistan and forces will be needed to be able to do that, and forces have suffered casualties in the north-west and in Kabul.

There is a practice on the part of the Taliban, as we know, in that, where they are over-matched, they seek what they think are softer targets.

Q221 Mr Crausby: In our last evidence session, we were told that, although there are certain capability shortfalls, the real issue that faces NATO is one of political will in the sense that current NATO operations are almost discretionary for some nations, that they are not wars of national survival and it is a pick-and-mix issue for some people. Now, is there anything that the UK can do to address what I see as a pretty important issue as far as the future of NATO is concerned?

Des Browne: I think the political will of our allies is expressed in a number of different ways. For a start, the nature and scale of the defence budget of our allies is an expression of their political will and commitment. There is constant debate and encouragement on our part with allies to increase their investment, particularly in expeditionary capability. The political will also of our allies is expressed in whether they are prepared, once they have those capabilities, to deploy them, and we have seen that and we have to recognise, as we have before, that our allies live in different political environments from us. Then there is of course the issue of caveats once they are deployed, which is another expression of political will. In every single one of these areas, with those allies who make the level of investment, who create and deploy the capability where there are difficulties and who do it without caveats, we seek to encourage those other allies to do the same, and indeed the Committee will be aware that those who are committed to Regional Command South meet regularly together now to share lessons and to reflect of course the command structure there at a political level across the nations that are involved and to speak with one voice in the Alliance when it meets in order to encourage others. I think that it has substantially been because of that that we have seen the increased support that the Netherlands has been able to get for us and indeed increasing numbers of countries, albeit that some of them have put small components into Helmand Province and otherwise in RC South, and now we are seeing some significant change, I think, in particular, in relation to the French who have quite a significant capability that would be effective were it deployed. Of course, these countries deploy some of their capabilities in other places which are difficult and dangerous, for example, the Lebanon and parts of Africa.

Q222 Mr Crausby: Whilst caveats are really important, it is quite an emotional issue, it seems to me, the question of caveats. The real issue has got to be the willingness of a nation to commit itself to investing in defence. Is it not the case that the reluctance of some of these member nations to share the burden as a result of their lack of investment is in fact eventually leading to a completely different NATO that some European members see as almost pointless? The French seem, to me, at every opportunity to express the view that NATO is to

1 See Ev 161
some extent irrelevant these days and, whilst we should have the capability, they go down a different route than the NATO one.

**Des Browne:** Did you say the French?

**Q223 Mr Crausby:** Yes. Well, the Chairman and I recently attended a meeting in Italy where the French seemed, to me, to be saying that we should produce a European system of defence rather than the NATO one. The point I am really trying to make is that have we now got a complete set of tiers in NATO, those who are prepared to invest and commit themselves and those who are really just sat on the sidelines of it all?

**Des Browne:** I think what we are seeing is an organisation which is the best political military alliance the world has known transforming. The fact that it is doing it slower than some of us would wish is the reality, but it is transforming itself and changes are taking place. At the moment, the French are going through a very comprehensive policy review in relation to defence and we will need to wait and see what a manifest change in policy, and there will be a manifest change, I think, in policy from the present Government to the past Government, will mean in practice towards NATO, but certainly the leadership of that Government has made it perfectly clear that he wants to see two things. One of them, I accept, is that he wants to see more effective European defence, and we all want to see European countries having more effective capabilities in terms of defence, and he said in terms that he wants France to play its full part in NATO, but he said that there should be co-operation, not competition, between those two organisations. I cannot speak for all the French people whom you may have spoken to, but we will have to wait and see what that means as time goes on, but, since they are presently undertaking a significant review of the defence policy in France, we ought to see how that is reflected when it comes out. My view is that we are not increasingly seeing a two-tier NATO, although we were in danger, if we had not seen progress, of that being the eventual outcome, but increasingly we are seeing countries emerging transformed in the way in which they approach it, and I have given some examples already and I could give more. There are many countries which are making quite a significant contribution, and the Czech Republic, for example, in Helmand Province made a very important and significant contribution to our operations over last summer. It was a small number of very highly skilled forces, but they were exactly the right sort of forces for that environment, and there is an initiative which we are contributing to which will allow the Czechs to deploy helicopters into Helmand Province and to support us there. I think there may have been a danger at one stage, and I share the comments that it would be better if this change were taking place more quickly, but I think we need to recognise that the change is happening.

**Q224 Mr Crausby:** It is argued by some that, with so many different national capabilities, different countries will inevitably be able to contribute different things, and some would argue that those who do not have troops in place should at least share the financial burden. Where do you stand on that?

**Des Browne:** I think we have to get the balance and we have to do a number of things in relation to burden-sharing. We have to, one, ensure that we share the burden equitably and that is fundamental, but we also have to get the balance between burden-sharing and military effectiveness right and we have to recognise that countries are at different stages of their transformation than others. I have already given some examples of quite dramatic changes that have taken place as a consequence of the transformational effect of ISAF on certain countries and that process is ongoing, but we have to get that right, and then we have to get the balance between addressing the issues that we face in the operations at the moment and pragmatic solutions to them. Some of those pragmatic solutions might involve countries which at the moment do not have capabilities that would add, or contribute, significantly to what we need on the ground, for example, in more dangerous parts of Afghanistan making some additional financial contribution, but we ought not to get them to do that if that means that that is done at the cost of the transformation of their capabilities so that in the longer term we have deployable capability from them, so it is quite a difficult balance. When the Prime Minister talks about countries making a contribution in support of others who would have deployable capability, then I agree with that, and the Czech helicopters is a good example of that. We will ourselves contemplate making some contribution towards the strategic airlift of those helicopters that they will be deployed in Helmand and others, we hope, will make a contribution to making them deployable, but we need to still concentrate on ensuring that forces throughout the Alliance are transformed to be able to be deployed with the capabilities that are necessary to face the challenges of the modern world.

**Q225 Mr Crausby:** But do you not accept that, once you allow certain rich countries in NATO to contribute financially as an alternative to putting troops in harm’s way, that completely changes the whole nature of the Alliance?

**Des Browne:** I think the difference between us is that I am not accepting that we should do this, that is, that we allow countries to make a contribution in a financial sense as an alternative. I am suggesting that we should still encourage and, in the context of the Alliance and its transformation, have those countries move along the process of increasingly having deployable forces, but, if they have not got them at the moment and they are willing to make a contribution to allow others who have potentially deployable forces or potentially deployable capabilities to get them capable of being deployed, then we should take advantage of that. We should take a pragmatic approach because Afghanistan is in fact going on at the moment.
Q226 Mr Crausby: But it is not about deployable forces sometimes, it is about political will, is it not? I accept that, if the deployable forces are not there, then maybe the finance should be, but, when it is about political will and a country is capable, but does not want to put its troops in harm’s way, I think it completely changes our relationship.

Des Browne: If you looked at this whole challenge as being frozen in time and having a point of decision, then that would be right, but in fact this is a dynamic process and we are part of a sovereign alliance that is transforming. It is doing it slowly, but it is transforming and different countries are at different stages and, as long as progress is being made and the Alliance is being improved by that process, then we should encourage that process, but, equally well, we cannot change the political circumstances that generate the decision-making process in other countries. There are countries who have constitutions that are a hindrance to their deployment in certain circumstances and, in at least one of those, we helped to write the constitution.4

Q227 Mr Jones: I would just like to come back to the point that David Crausby just asked. There is a big difference between not having the capability, therefore, not being able to deploy, and actually taking the decision. I accept that we are talking about various different constitutions, but it is actually having a political position that, “We will not do certain things in, for example, Afghanistan”. If that is the case, how can NATO really survive, if it is like David Crausby has referred to as a pick-and-mix operation where you pick and choose what you actually want to do?

Des Browne: I am agreeing if that was the static position and we were not making changes in the sense that people were modifying or removing caveats, as they have been, and that position was frozen in time, but it is not. There are a number of examples of countries which have significantly changed in what they do and what they are prepared to do, and Canada is an outstanding example of this and Denmark is.

Q228 Mr Hancock: But there was a point in time, and you said there was not a point in time, when everyone was together, but there was a point in time and it was when all of the NATO countries signed up to take the responsibility of taking on the challenge of Afghanistan and it was a unanimous decision. Now, if this is the first time that NATO has been deployed in a war capability, then the second time when this situation arises, that point in time is going to be a much more difficult thing to achieve with the experience of what happened the last time, ie Afghanistan, so what is NATO going to do to ensure that there will be a future NATO engagement? In countries like Canada, as you must know as we know, the Canadian public are horrified at the consequences of their troop losses nearly equal to the UK’s and certainly bigger than the UK’s in size of deployment and the Canadian people are horrified that other countries have sat on the sidelines and simply paid literally blood money to avoid the consequences of seeing their troops in harm’s way. What future is there for NATO if politically they all sign up for something where, after the event, they then implement a series of caveats and restrictions irrespective of their constitutions?

Des Browne: Well, if I thought that that was a position that we could not affect and there was no evidence that we were affecting it, then I would agree with you, but there is evidence that we are affecting it. I am not coming here and tub-thumping about it, shouting about frustration and all the other words that people put to me about this, but that is because I believe that progressively we are winning this argument and there are clear indications that we are. The view expressed by the President of France about the willingness of his country to deploy forces into the southern part of Afghanistan is a clear signal, I think, of that change, but there are many others. Indeed, the Canadians find themselves in this current situation, but were substantially a peace-keeping force a comparatively short period of time ago.

Q229 Mr Hancock: Most of the NATO countries, with the exception of four or five of them, have actually reduced defence expenditure. How are they ever going to have the capability to put the troops that are needed into a fighting capacity? You name the ones where they have increased expenditure specifically targeting that capability; they do not exist.

Des Browne: But I think there are a significant number of countries who have troops and who have other capabilities in southern Afghanistan. We sometimes think it is just us and the US, but it is not, and some of them are small numbers, but, proportionate to the size of their armed forces, these are significant contributions.

Q230 Willie Rennie: Do the general public in these countries understand our frustration about this? You must have people that look at the politics in the countries that we are talking about. Do they understand how frustrated we are and how much their inaction could affect the success of the deployment in Afghanistan?

Des Browne: I shudder to put myself into the position of speaking for the general public of other nations; I would not even speak for the general public of the United Kingdom. The answer to that almost certainly is that some of them do, yes, but then I am not in a position to be able to quantify that.

Q231 Willie Rennie: The approach that you take and other countries take who already contribute to Afghanistan could have an effect on that. Perhaps in these countries the general public should know about our frustration and, therefore, having a more tub-thumping approach actually might achieve that. I am just posing the question.

4 See Ev 161
Des Browne: People have to approach these issues in the way in which they think is most effective and, if there is an example of a more overt and challenging way of doing it and producing results, then I will be happy to follow that, but there is no other example. Can I just say to the Committee in short that I think the success of the Netherlands going through the political process that they went through, with the public having a commission look at their commitment to Afghanistan and attracting support from additional other countries who were not deployed to the south, is an indication of this dynamic and it is important. I believe passionately in the NATO Alliance, and I am not seeking by confrontation to break the NATO Alliance up, but I am seeking to build it up and to use the opportunities that are there, including the deployment of forces into Afghanistan and to transform that Alliance so that it is capable of meeting right across the board a moment of having a commission look at their. Des Browne:

Well, Canada is in the process at the mark. The situation you have described up to a point, that there have been real achievements and we would not want you to be under the impression that we thought differently.

Q232 Linda Gilroy: I think I understand the situation you have described up to a point, that there are more countries transforming, that there are some who have transformed already and there are those that have set out on that path, but are you saying to the Committee that you feel that every partner in NATO who has signed up to ISAF, to being in Afghanistan, has actually started out on the path of improving. On my last visit to Afghanistan, I quite

manifest progress in the city of Kabul and you can see it with your own eyes that this is a place which is improving. On my last visit to Afghanistan, I quite deliberately went beyond the three places that I deliberated went beyond the three places that I

Helmand Province and Kabul, and I went to Herat where the Italians, the Spaniards and others have been responsible for sustaining, and building on, what security has been achieved there. I think you

Q233 Linda Gilroy: How long is “eventually”? The problem is, as we saw when we were out in Canada, that those that take certain steps forward in this direction, their public and the politics of it mean that they do not continue to get the political support to go on if others are not also stepping up appropriately to the mark.

Des Browne: Well, Canada is in the process at the moment of having a commission look at their commitment to Afghanistan and to report, and shortly they will have a debate in Parliament and then a decision as to whether they will continue to commit to making a contribution in Afghanistan will be made. I hope that we will persuade Canada to continue to make a contribution and to continue to make that contribution where they presently do that, but that will be, at the end of the day, a decision for them, but I believe that they will come to the same conclusion that the Netherlands came to. I would just make this other point, that we have troops deployed in operational theatres, in one case, in the context of a NATO-led Alliance and, in the other, in Iraq in what has become known as the “coalition of the willing”. I think it is instructive and important to recognise that increasingly, as politics changes the governments of countries, countries fail to continue to have that commitment to the coalition of the willing, but none of them, none of them has taken its troops out of Afghanistan, and I think that is an important aspect of political will and I think that is the importance of the Alliance. Italy is an outstandingly good example of that, but even Australia, which is traditionally 21st Century to its NATO Alliance, and in a partnership, has recently intimated a decision intending to withdraw its troops from Iraq, but reiterated its commitment to Afghanistan.

Q234 Mr Jones: A number of the expert witnesses that we have had before us in this inquiry have said that Afghanistan is a make-or-break situation for NATO. Would you agree with that?

Des Browne: I do not think that Afghanistan is make or break for NATO, but I think the ability of NATO to transform will depend on its continued relevance as an Alliance to its members, and I think the NATO and ISAF commitment to Afghanistan is a driver of that transformation.

Q235 Mr Jones: One of the expert witnesses we had made it quite clear, and I think we have touched on it already, that the unwillingness of certain people to do certain things in Afghanistan will lead to tension. If they do not deliver in Afghanistan, it could obviously be seen as a major failure on behalf of NATO. How difficult are those tensions you have referred to about burden-sharing and others? You say you have made progress in terms of caveats and other things, but how confident are you that operationally on the ground not just the UK, but joint NATO forces can deliver what is actually needed?

Des Browne: I think we need to see what has been achieved, and what has been achieved in the north and in the west and Kabul is very obvious to anyone who has visited Afghanistan over the last three or four years or thereabouts longer. I myself, in 18 months and regular visits to Afghanistan, have seen manifest progress in the city of Kabul and you can see it with your own eyes that this is a place which is improving. On my last visit to Afghanistan, I quite deliberately went beyond the three places that I regularly, normally visit, which are Kandahar, Helmand Province and Kabul, and I went to Herat where the Italians, the Spaniards and others have been responsible for sustaining, and building on, what security has been achieved there. I think you
can see there that Herat is a vibrant city which takes significant advantage of its geolocation on the borders of Turkmenistan, Iran and indeed, although it could not be further away from the Pakistan border, most of the traffic goes over to Pakistan and sits on the Pakistan border as well in a sort of way, but it was very obvious to me, and I was able to move around in the centre of that city and its markets, which were very vibrant, quite freely. I could see that this was a place which was successful. However, I have to say that the Italians, who have responsibility for command, have the Spaniards deployed under their command who operate with a different set of caveats.

Q236 Mr Jones: It sounds like a recipe for disaster. Des Browne: But it has not turned out to be a recipe for disaster, though you ought not to dismiss the potential risk and security problems that there are there.

Q237 Mr Jones: And the temperaments of the two countries! Des Browne: The Italians have a way of doing these things and the Italian commander certainly seemed to me to be coping with it, but he described them to me and they seem to be restrictive, to say the least. I gave that example because that dynamic is increasingly evident there and even countries which come to this environment with caveats find themselves out-caveated by others and that dynamic is having an effect. The Alliance is very important and what it has achieved in Afghanistan is very important. We need to do what we can, in my view, to make it better, but it is the transformation of NATO that will determine whether it continues as a successful alliance, as it has been in the past, not particularly Afghanistan.

Q238 Mr Jones: Well, I have been there three times in the last four years and I agree with you that progress has been made certainly in terms of Kabul. Is it the case, therefore, that NATO needs to do a bit more of a selling job of its actual good news stories that are coming out of Afghanistan and explaining what is actually being done rather than just relying on the snapshots we get from the media?
Des Browne: I think the other point is that of course, as far as the international community and its commitment to Afghanistan is concerned, NATO is part of it. There is the United Nations, there are international financial institutions which have an interest in a presence there and there is increasingly an EU presence which is very welcome and complementary because it brings capabilities which NATO does not have and nor should it develop, but which relate to the development of the rule of law, of policing and of governance and other development issues, and there are NGOs there. I think there is a lack of understanding across the world of what the world is committed to doing in Afghanistan and what has been achieved. Part of the transformation of NATO is to improve its ability to be able to tell its story across the world, and you have already heard evidence, as I know from having read some of the transcripts of evidence of those charged with that responsibility coming to this institution and managing, I think that you were told, to have a meeting at which no MPs were present.

Q239 Mr Holloway: I would like to echo the Chairman’s comments about the performance of British and NATO troops, but, Secretary of State, do you think that we are winning in southern Afghanistan and, if we are or if we are not, how long do you think we will have to be there? Whilst we have good news possibly from the French, there is no doubt that the Dutch and the Canadians are wobbling, so how long, if we are measuring this in five years or ten years or decades, do you think the governments and the public of NATO countries will continue to bear this enormous cost in terms of life and also money, and are we being over-ambitious?

Des Browne: I do not accept that the Dutch and the Canadians are wobbling. I think the Dutch went through a process which I think was entirely understandable. They have come out of it with quite a significant reinforced mandate, I think, across the politics of the Netherlands and I think that they have a commitment now and a level of support that could not be described as wobbly. The Canadians, who are there in very impressive numbers and effect, are going through a process which I think is perfectly understandable given the level of casualty that they have suffered and given the stage that they are at in terms of their transformation, and I am sure that they may well need to find support from other allies and others, but I am confident that they will come out of that process with a renewed commitment to southern Afghanistan. The principal question you asked is: are we winning? I think yes, we are, and clearly you know this, that at the tactical level we have been winning consistently, not just us, but others, over-matching the Taliban. This is not a question of body count, but inflicting quite significant attrition on them and also having, as we have had over the last 12 months, I think, some quite significant effect in degrading their command and control structure which is very important, but that of course is only part of a comprehensive approach that is necessary, and sustaining that tactically in districts or in provinces will be dependent upon us being able to build up governance and build up the other aspects of what a stable, secure state needs, and also it will be a function of how effective central government is. I believe that the international community and we, the United Kingdom, as I have said before, will have to make a long-term commitment. People always try to drag out of you numbers of years, but it will be a long-term commitment, although I do not think we will need to be war-fighting for all of that time.

Q240 Mr Holloway: I am not trying to drag out the number of years really, although that is oft-quoted, but I am really trying to get at whether or not you think that the governments and the public of NATO countries will be prepared to tolerate this
extraordinary cost over a long period of time and whether or not actually we are being rather over-ambitious by having 40,000-odd troops and billions and billions of dollars spent every year. Will people still be swallowing this in five years’ time because, if not, have we set ourselves on a sensible course? **Des Browne**: In the first instance, the basic answer to that is that, in my view, there is no alternative. You have to remember why the international community chose, first of all, in a coalition which was a coalition of the willing, but subsequently through the United Nations and NATO and ISAF, to take on this task and that is that we cannot contemplate the possibility that Afghanistan will become a failed state again and a training ground for terrorists and an anarchic state to the extent that it was, so we do not really, in my view, have any alternative but to seek to deal with Afghanistan and to seek to move it from where it presently is nearer to the 21st Century in terms of stability and security. Whether the public will allow the political leadership to continue to make the commitment that they unwaveringly have made over an extended period of time now will depend on whether progress is being made, and progress is being made and we are winning at the moment, but it is fragile and it depends on building up these other complementary parts.

**Q241 Mr Borrow**: We can perhaps move on to the role and purpose of NATO in the future. When NATO was established, there was a clear and unifying threat to the Member States of NATO which is no longer the case now. To what extent should NATO move away from that consensus alliance to one in which there is a pool of supportive nations, like the coalition of the willing, for particular operations that certain NATO members may wish to get involved in rather than seeking every Member State to be united and in agreement?

**Des Browne**: I know there is a view that we should seek to try to develop NATO as an organisation which presents a pool of capability from which those who are willing to do certain jobs may draw. I do not believe that that is an appropriate future for NATO because I think the NATO strength lies in its foundations. In preparation for this, I went back to the NATO Treaty and read the preamble and some of its clauses, and I do not intend to repeat them because people can do that for themselves, but it is instructive to do it because the Treaty itself sets out the ambition of an Alliance based on shared values and standards with the clear recognition that the security of its North American and European allies is indivisible, and the reaffirmation in the preamble of what it stands for stands the test of time and I think it is as relevant today as a purpose for NATO as it was before. NATO is an organisation which is extremely attractive to other countries and people are queueing up to join NATO because they get with it that security, that Article 5 guarantee and I do not think there is any question about that, but those countries, the newest countries which have joined, have been prepared to live up to the commitment of generating to the degree that they can, and sometimes in very difficult circumstances, deployable forces and deploying them. I think that, in spite of the fact that we have moved away from this unified enemy, as it were, this unified threat, to a more complex environment, NATO is still of relevance. If you look at the documents which instruct the basis of NATO, the Treaty, and if you look at the Strategic Concept and if you look at the Comprehensive Political Guidance, which was another success of Riga that I forget to mention, then you can see that NATO has proved to be an organisation which, whilst still retaining its fundamentals, has been able to dynamically evolve in a way that is relevant to the threats that we face in the 21st Century.

**Q242 Mr Borrow**: So in terms of a new concept for NATO which moved on from the original concept, which you seem to reject, is there a debate within NATO around that idea or are all NATO Member States in agreement with the UK position which is that we should stick to the old 1949 concept of what NATO is for, albeit in a changed climate where you may do operations, as we are, in Afghanistan?

**Des Browne**: I think there a number of ways of trying to determine the relevance of NATO to the 21st Century. I have said some of them and I do not propose to repeat them, but another one is surely the fact that NATO is busier than it ever has been as an alliance. Presently, NATO countries have 51,000 personnel deployed in five NATO missions across three continents. If that is not relevance to the 21st Century, if that means that the current concept of NATO, modernised and transforming, does not continue to be relevant, then I do not know what evidence you need for that. I understand that the threat that generated that apparent unity is no longer there and we are not of the view that any component element of the Soviet Union generates a strategic threat to us or any of our allies and that is our current position, and the comprehensive documentation of NATO sets out the strategic threats that we believe that we face collectively, but NATO has been able to modify and adapt itself to that without undermining the fundamentals of it which is the one-for-all principle.

**Q243 Mr Borrow**: Just for the record, it might be useful for you to say to the Committee why you believe it is in the UK interest to be involved in NATO. Sixty years ago, that would not have been questioned by the UK electorate, but actually I think it might be useful at this stage just for you to say, “This is the UK Government’s position as to why we believe it is in our national interest to be a member of NATO”.

**Des Browne**: I think we get from our membership of NATO an alliance with a significant number of countries, including the United States of America who are very important and our principal ally, a relationship that expresses our shared values and our willingness collectively to defend each other and to defend those values, and I think that is
fundamental. Frankly, that is a shorthand way, I think, of setting out the preamble to the Treaty itself that is still relevant today. It also has become a dynamic organisation that has shown an ability to be able to transform itself and able to deal with a changing strategic environment and strategic challenges involving international terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, failed and failing states and what may come out of them. Those are the threats that we face. We cannot deal with them, I think, as the United Kingdom alone, but we need to do that in an alliance and NATO has proved to be the best political and military alliance the world has known and we are proud to be members of it, and it continues to be in our interests to stay in that alliance and what we are doing in Afghanistan collectively and together is in the best interests of the security of the United Kingdom.

Q244 Mr Borrow: If I can touch on two areas of change, you have mentioned the Strategic Concept which was agreed at the Washington Summit in 1999. Should that be renewed, reviewed, looked at again and, if so, when? Secondly, in your memorandum to the Committee, you mentioned that NATO should become leaner, more responsive and accountable, which is obviously structural rather than strategic. What exactly do you mean by that and what changes in structure, etc, are actually involved in carrying out that change?

Des Browne: The purpose of the Strategic Concept, as I understand it, is to take the principles of the Treaty and to define the objectives that flow from those principles within the relevant security context. That security context has changed and the Comprehensive Political Guidance, in my view, reflects that change, so the security context has evolved and I believe that we should refresh the Strategic Concept which, as you point out, was published in 1999. As for when is the right time to do that, well, now, in my view, is the right time for us to consider doing that, drawing, I think, on the Comprehensive Political Guidance and other developments that have taken place since 1999, not least, I think, to reinforce the centrality of the comprehensive approach which has become increasingly relevant.

Q245 Mr Borrow: That shall be on the agenda for Bucharest?

Des Browne: I think we will be at a particular point of the cycle of the United States and it may not be the most appropriate time to generate a work stream that is designed to produce a new Strategic Concept, but I think we should start to till the field, as it were, and we should start to look at some of the preparatory work for doing that in the context of Bucharest, yes. There was a second half to this question which was about structures.

Q246 Chairman: Mr Mathewson, do you want to comment?

Mr Mathewson: Yes, the second part, I think, really spoke about the internal structure of the Alliance and I think the Secretary of State has sort of set out the political journey of evolution that the Alliance as a whole has gone through. I think, to accompany that, we would like to see a sort of internal reform process that makes the money go to the places where it is really needed. I think we could probably see a thinning down of the command structure, making the command structure more relevant to current operations. We could probably see internal reorganisation of the way the headquarters works itself to produce more coherence and swifter decisions. In many ways, the internal workings of the Alliance are somewhat lagging behind the political evolution that the Alliance has gone through, so we have as an aspiration a sort of reform agenda for just trying to sharpen up the way the headquarters works, the way the Alliance works, where the money goes, making sure that the money we put in is going to the relevant parts of the structure rather than, as it were, the rather outdated parts of the structure, so it is a fairly longstanding and continuing reform agenda just to try to modernise it as an institution to keep pace with the political evolution.5

Q247 Chairman: So, Secretary of State, if I can summarise something that I think you just said, I think that David Borrow asked, “Do we need a new Strategic Concept now?” and I think you said, “Yes, we do now need a new Strategic Concept, but it is a waste of time going for it just at the moment because the American elections are going on”. Is that what you said?

Des Browne: I do not think that was what I said, but it certainly was not what I intended to say. I think we do need it and that process of work will take some time and I think we should begin to consider what changes need to be made to the Strategic Concept and the like in the changed strategic context that we are in and in the light of the quite significant changes in that strategic context which are recognised in the Comprehensive Political Guidance. Whether that can be done at Bucharest from here in the current political situation, I do not believe that we can, but we can start to make some progress towards it.

Chairman: I do not think you should shy away from my summary of it simply because it sounded stark. I thought it was an interesting reply that you gave and I am grateful for that.

Q248 Mr Hancock: Can I take you back then, and you have mentioned the point about the political cycle in the United States which should be relevant to Bucharest, but I think one of the issues that there is going to be from the outgoing Administration and the new, incoming Administration is that NATO will only succeed from the American point of view if they are prepared to produce the capabilities that they are short of now, and that can only be produced if countries are prepared to spend more on defence. Now, the unwillingness on the part of some countries is because they do not see the strategic threat, they no longer believe that they are at risk as

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a nation, they have no external threats and yet NATO offers them the comfort and they reduce their defence expenditure, knowing that the biggest component in NATO, the Americans, are demanding, as they have done for the last 60 years or so, that Europe put more of a commitment to defence. How can NATO have a future if the countries do not accept that the only way you can increase capability is, one, by the use of resource, but in most instances by an increase in the resource in the first place?

Des Browne: There is no question that lack of investment is a problem. I understand that and the Americans regularly exhort, and encourage, their NATO allies to increase expenditure in defence, and it is manifestly the case that, unless countries increase their defence spending instead of reducing it, as they are in some cases, then NATO is unlikely to develop all the capabilities required to meet the current level of ambition, and I do not think there is any question about that. It is equally important that they spend the money that they do spend in the correct way.

Q249 Mr Hancock: Does that not take us full circle back to where David Crausby came in to say that unless there is an equal sharing where people have to step up to the plate fairly, then NATO is becoming a two-tier or three-tier organisation?

Des Browne: NATO is an organisation of individual nations, but my argument is that, increasingly, nations are beginning to accept their responsibilities. One of the advantages, in a sense, of the Afghanistan operation is that it has become the most successful driver of the transformation.

Q250 Chairman: Do you think the United States shares your argument? Do you think the United States continues to be very interested in NATO?

Des Browne: I think the United States by its actions shows a commitment to NATO which is impressive.

Q251 Chairman: That is because it is carrying the whole of the burden, is it not, or the vast majority of it?

Des Browne: The United States, like any other country that works in an environment of consensus, is making a national decision to do that, and that is because, in my view, the United States of America values the NATO Alliance. As I have already said, NATO has never had more troops committed to operations than it presently does, and of course the Americans make the lion’s share of that contribution. What other evidence do people want of the United States’ commitment to NATO?

Q252 Chairman: That is one way of putting it.

Des Browne: I am told that of the 51,000, 18,000 are from the United States, that is the proportion of it.

Q253 Mr Hancock: Can I take you to something you touched on earlier which is about those countries clamouring to join NATO and the reasons behind that and whether or not NATO has got a finite number of component parts. It is difficult now to get them to share the burden, as we know, and new countries are clamouring to join. Where do you believe, Secretary of State, the political parameters and the geographical parameters are? They might be different of course because for political reasons you might want to go further than you would in defensive terms. Where do you stand on further NATO enlargement and what countries do you see as the new group of applicant countries?

Des Browne: NATO is a North Atlantic alliance. It has proved itself over time to be capable of developing relationships beyond that geographical definition with other countries. I do not get the sense, whatever other people may say about whether it would be better if it was an all-world alliance, that any of those other countries are expressing any interest in joining NATO. The countries who are seeking to join NATO generally, in my view and in my experience, are those countries who fit within the North Atlantic geographic area. I think that European countries that meet the criteria for membership of NATO should be allowed membership of NATO because that is what NATO was set up to do.

Q254 Mr Hancock: We know the Georgians have just had an election for a President and at the same time they had a vote on joining NATO. Would you say that Georgia was a country that would be a welcome addition to NATO, bringing with it, as it does, all of its problems and all of its suspicions at its Russian neighbour and also the intoxication that Russia has now that Georgia is about to “do for them” in some way or another?

Des Browne: We are in the process of what is known as Intensive Dialogue with Georgia and have been for some time, which is a sort of precursor to MAP, which is the stage before membership. My view about Georgia, or indeed any other country, is that countries who meet NATO’s performance-based standards and are willing to contribute to Euro-Atlantic security ought to be able to aspire to membership, but of course—

Q255 Mr Hancock: We let countries in who did not meet those standards, did we not?

Des Browne: You will need to give me evidence of that.

Q256 Mr Hancock: Estonia did not; Bulgaria did not.

Des Browne: What parts of that did they not meet?

Q257 Mr Hancock: They did not actually have in place the structures that NATO insisted they should. We used whatever discretion the NATO Alliance had to say we could not have two of the Baltic states without the other one, so it was three in, and we could not have Romania in without Bulgaria, so Bulgaria came in. I am not against that but when you talk about a country like Georgia, who sees NATO as their best Article V reason for being in NATO to defend them from whatever provocation they will offer to the Russians over the next five years if the Russians come back at them, is it in Britain’s
interests to see enlargement taking in countries like Georgia who are already in a virtual hostile situation?

Des Browne: It would not be, in my view, in their interests to take them in now but that is why we have this process of engaging with countries in order to move them along so that they are in a position for membership.

Q258 Mr Hancock: So your view is then, Secretary of State, for the record of our report, that any country that fulfilled the obligations they might have is a suitable candidate to join NATO?

Des Browne: No, that is not what I said.

Q259 Mr Hancock: I thought that is what you did say.

Des Browne: That is not what I said.

Q260 Mr Hancock: What did you say then, Secretary of State?

Des Browne: I said—and I will read it to you because I have got it written down—

Q261 Mr Hancock: That is very good of you.

Des Browne: The countries who meet NATO’s performance-based standards and are willing to contribute to Euro-Atlantic security, assuming they have gone through the process of Intensive Dialogue and then into the Membership Action Plan, should be allowed to join NATO.

Q262 Mr Hancock: That is what I thought I said. So the geographical—

Des Browne: If you repeat the exact words that I have used then that is what I said. If you use other words then it is not what I said.

Q263 Mr Hancock: I was as near as damn it without having it written down.

Des Browne: That is your view.

Mr Hancock: Okay.

Chairman: Before we move on off that, Kevan Jones?

Q264 Mr Jones: I hear what you say, Secretary of State, but is it not the case that certainly some of the former parts of the Soviet Union and parts of Eastern Europe see joining both NATO and also the EU as a badge that they have got to get in order to be seen to be progressing in the world community? Is there not therefore a political dynamic to this, which is really what I think Mike is driving at, where the political consequences of joining NATO or the reasons for encouraging people to do so outweigh what some of these countries can bring to the table in terms of military contribution towards NATO?

Des Browne: They may at the beginning—and I am not thinking of any particular country at the moment—be in that situation, but the question is whether the process of holding out membership of NATO, or indeed the European Union, encourages these countries along the path of development of good governance and the rest of the conditionality that we would apply to it—the resolution of internal conflict, stability, security, the treatment of their own citizens, the rule of law—and whether all of these are in the best interests of Europe and indeed of the United Kingdom, and in my view it has been. As a matter of fact, many of these smaller countries who have come into membership of NATO from the disaggregated Soviet Union or Eastern European countries are becoming valued allies and are making a great contribution. Proportionately to their ability they are making an increasingly greater contribution and they are using that process for the transformation of their own military capabilities, and I think that is a very good thing.

Q265 Mr Jones: I do not disagree with anything you have said but is that not a major change in terms of NATO going away from talking about the military aspects of it to now a political method and a leader, as you say, to try and get development in those countries? That is a big change from where we were, say, 60 years ago when it was about collective security.

Des Browne: I suppose the answer to that, Mr Jones, is that the world has changed quite significantly from 60 years ago. We have just spent about 15 minutes talking about the change in the strategic context that we all live in. That is part of that change in the strategic context and the value of NATO as an alliance is that as a political alliance that delivers military capability or a political and military alliance it has been outstandingly successful and it has been able to adapt and adjust within the basic framework to this changing context and environment.

Q266 Mr Hancock: The newly elected Georgian President has said that he will go to Bucharest and he would expect from Bucharest that NATO would give them a MAP for their entry into NATO. Is the UK Government going to support that view and give them a MAP?

Des Browne: Since there has been no assessment as to whether or not they have fulfilled the criteria and no decision-making process for us to consequently be engaged in, then I am not in a position to go into the detail that you expect of me in relation to that. Once that process has been gone through then I will give you an answer.

Mr Hancock: As Secretary of State for Defence and the nation’s spokesman for NATO, have you looked at the consequences of Georgia not being given a MAP and the obvious political consequences and fall-out of that? My second question really relates to Russia’s new-found impetus—

Chairman: Before we get on to that, let us have an answer.

Q267 Mr Hancock: But I think they are linked, Chairman.

Des Browne: I am being told by those who know the details of previous applications that it can take a decade for us to go through, so timescales are—
Mr Hancock: That is not what our American allies are saying about Georgia. They are saying they want speedy accession for Georgia into NATO.

Q268 Chairman: Secretary of State, you will be at this summit?
Des Browne: I will be, yes.

Q269 Chairman: Georgia will come to you and say, “We want a MAP,” and what will you say?
Des Browne: If we have been through the process of assessment as to whether or not they are entitled to that status then I will given them an answer, but we have not been through that process.

Q270 Chairman: And when will you go through that process?
Des Browne: I will need to defer to somebody else as to when it is proposed that that assessment process will take place.

Q271 Chairman: Mr Mathewson, Mr Powell, when will the process be gone through?
Mr Powell: Some time during February or March. I have not got the exact date to hand.
Mr Hancock: It has to be, does it not?

Q272 Linda Gilroy: Is there not a real Catch-22 situation as far as Georgia is concerned and something that makes it a bit different from other previous applicants, and that is that it still has frozen conflicts on the border of Russia, and Russia will try and get in the way of its applicant status? How do you actually see that being broken because it will always be in the interests of Russia to try and maintain those so-called frozen conflicts, although they are actually far from frozen?
Mr Mathewson: I think these are the very considerations that will be taken into account first in the consideration as to whether Georgia is allowed the MAP in the first place and then in the consideration of how it proceeds through the Membership Action Plan process. Firstly, there is certainly no guarantee that Georgia will be given the MAP at Bucharest and, secondly, the MAP process itself is open-ended; it will take as long as it takes. The fact of the frozen conflicts is a factor. It is a factor that NATO has to take into account openly without going as far as handing Russia the veto on Georgian membership.

Q273 Linda Gilroy: Is it not just a veto to Russia, is it actually not doing Georgia any favours by creating a situation in which it is going to be almost impossible for Georgia ever to get out of? Therefore in terms of the fundamental principle you were outlining of NATO being about not just shared values but sharing Euro/Atlantic security, is there not a way in which extending NATO in that direction is going to be really difficult for all of us as well as for Georgia?
Mr Mathewson: I think there are risks which NATO has to think through and I think this is a decision which NATO has to consider carefully and get right. These are all factors which have to be taken into account in that consideration. There is no presumption that Georgia will get into MAP this time round.

Chairman: I think that is as far as we are going to be able to take Georgia. Mike Hancock?

Q274 Mr Hancock: I was just going to ask a final question about whether Russia’s new-found assertiveness mean that NATO should look again and refocus on the traditional role of providing collective security? This slightly goes against the position that David Borrow was suggesting that they needed a new strategic view. Maybe they need to have two. What is your view?
Des Browne: I do not think NATO has moved away from the role of providing collective security, but our current assessment is—and this is an assessment shared by NATO—that Russia does not pose a strategic threat to NATO or to any of its members, so it does not therefore in my view require any changed response to changed strategic circumstances.

Chairman: Moving on to the European Union in relation to NATO, Robert Key?

Q275 Robert Key: Almost every EU or NATO summit is of course an “outstanding success”, better than the previous one, and sometimes they are—and perhaps Berlin Plus was a good idea, but some of us think that St Malo did more to weaken NATO’s relationship with America than anything else. You said that Riga was a triumph but I do not believe it was. Twenty-one countries share membership of the EU and NATO and yet that relationship is plagued by mistrust. Riga paid lip service to that and said it would “strive for improvements in the NATO-EU strategic partnership as agreed by our two organisations.” Nothing at all has happened to improve that relationship between NATO and the ESDP, has it? They continue to duplicate their roles and capabilities. Are you not a bit frustrated about that?
Des Browne: I do not now what the evidence is that they continue to duplicate their roles and capabilities. What there is evidence of is encouragement by both organisations for the development of capabilities, which we encourage in fact because we are conscious that those capabilities, if they are generated by members who are members of both organisations, will be available to NATO, but there is no duplication of that. There are tensions between the two organisations. The stand-off between Cyprus, Greece and Turkey continues despite political efforts at the highest level to try and resolve that, but the bottom line in this is that cooperation on the ground is good.

Q276 Robert Key: There are always differences between the political relationship and the military relationship. Are there ways in which the military capabilities of NATO and the ESDP can be better co-ordinated?
Des Browne: I think there are ways. The advances that we have made with strategic airlift are an example of us doing just that. However, I think there
are lessons to be learned at the strategic level by the way in which forces and those on the ground in Kosovo and Afghanistan (and in the past the Balkans) are able to work together, and at the end of the day I think that is what matters. The issues that cause the tensions at the strategic and political level are political issues and will be resolved only by politics, so we have to redouble our efforts to try to resolve those issues, but they are not easy to resolve for very good historic reasons.

Q277 Robert Key: When we visited NATO headquarters in Brussels earlier in the year, it was pretty clear that France wanted to establish a separate EU military headquarters. Is France right?

Des Browne: I think we are on record as saying that a permanent EU operational headquarters would duplicate what is already available to the EU at the Berlin Plus level from SHAPE or otherwise from the five national operational headquarters which are offered to the Headline Goal, and I agree with the development on that.

Q278 Robert Key: So how can we reconcile this divergence of opinion between France and the rest?

Des Browne: Presently we have no operational headquarters and that is how it has been reconciled thus far!

Q279 Robert Key: I cannot argue with that.

Des Browne: There is no operational headquarters and so long as we continue to sustain the argument then that is how it will be resolved.

Chairman: Secretary of State, if such a headquarters were the price for increased French commitment to NATO or for increased French commitment to Afghanistan, would it be a price worth paying?

Q280 Robert Key: Just say no!

Des Browne: I do not believe so, but with all due respect, Chairman, it is the most hypothetical of hypothetical questions and it may have been better if I had just said that to you.

Q281 Robert Key: Secretary of State, you referred a few moments ago to the Turkey-Greece-Cyprus problem. At the moment that seems to be creating a tremendous impasse and poisoning of relations, preventing closer co-operation between NATO and the EU, which is very important considering the strategic significance of Turkey to NATO. Does the British Government see a way through this?

Des Browne: I believe that we do. Finding a way through that impasse probably lies in a United Nations initiative of some description. We continue to encourage and work at diplomatic levels and at other levels and bilaterally to try to find some way through it, but it is not easy. The most important thing is that we find in the meantime a way of ensuring that the diplomatic difficulties, which are very real, do not get in the way of delivery on the ground, and thus far we have been able to do that.

Q282 Robert Key: How do you view the relationship of Malta with NATO and the EU? That is also part of the equation. If you talk to people not in the Westminster village but in Turkey, and if you talk to people in Malta, they certainly find this a difficult relationship. Do you not have a view on Malta’s position?

Des Browne: I wish I had thought about it before I came in! I may have somebody with me who has got a strong view on Malta’s position who might be able to share it with you, Mr Key.

Q283 Chairman: Mr Powell, do you have a strong view?

Mr Powell: No. Clearly Malta is trapped in the technical position of not having the sort of security agreement with NATO that would allow Malta to participate in the Berlin Plus arrangements, and it would be difficult for Malta to get such a security arrangement without also addressing Cyprus having such a security arrangement, and that gets you into the Turkey-Cyprus problem. So Malta is in that sense a bit of a victim of the Turkey-Cyprus problem. Are we devoting major attention to solving Malta’s problem? Not exactly.

Mr Mathewson: It is worth a comment that at one time Malta was a member of Partnership for Peace, it has had a different relationship with NATO, and there is no inherent reason why it could not re-establish that different relationship with NATO.

Q284 Robert Key: Does the British Government support the application from Malta to rejoin Partnership for Peace?

Mr Powell: I am not aware that it has done so.

Q285 Chairman: From a defence point of view and from the point of view of the difficulties that Cyprus causes to the relationship between the European Union and NATO, was it not a mistake for Cyprus to have become a member of the European Union?

Des Browne: I think the answer to that is that has been a consequence of Cyprus becoming a member of the European Union.

Q286 Chairman: A foreseeable consequence.

Des Browne: It was a consequence. I do not believe that you should describe Cyprus’s membership of the European Union as a mistake. The fact of the matter is these issues would have to be resolved in any event.

Q287 Chairman: The membership of Cyprus of the European Union makes it less likely, I would suggest, that these issues will be resolved.

Des Browne: I would have to give that some thought and so long as we continue to sustain the argument then that is how it will be resolved.

Chairman: Okay, then moving on to the Reform Treaty, Bernard Jenkin?

Q288 Mr Jenkin: That also would have meant that it was a mistake giving the EU a defence role in the first place because these issues would never have
arisen had that not have happened at St Malo. Can I ask about the implications of the Reform Treaty for NATO. We have got legal personality for the European Union granted by the Lisbon Treaty which will allow it to sign military treaties; is that correct?

Des Browne: No.

Q289 Mr Jenkin: No? Because not even NATO can sign a military treaty.

Des Browne: As far as the defence aspects of the European Union are concerned, the Reform Treaty makes no difference to its capacity. The European Union only has the capacity in defence issues that its individual Member States give it, so any decisions would have to be taken by unanimity.

Q290 Mr Jenkin: The question of how decisions are made is a separate issue. At the moment the European Union does not have legal personality and therefore it cannot sign an international treaty, unlike the European Community can in respect of trade.

Des Browne: I am saying that in the context of defence, which is what you asked me, the fact that the European Union has a legal personality is irrelevant to any issues that are raised in relation to defence.

Q291 Mr Jenkin: Does the fact that the Lisbon Treaty inserts a new mutual security guarantee into the European Union Treaty not result in a duplication of exactly what NATO does? Does NATO not provide a mutual security guarantee?

Des Browne: Interestingly enough, exactly like the mutual security guarantee that is in the NATO Treaty, the mutual security defence clause in the Reform Treaty relies on UN Charter 51, so this is just an expression of a legal basis which exists in any event in the context of UN Charter 51.

Q292 Mr Jenkin: There are enjoiners to support unreservedly the position of the European Union and that does not exist under the UN Charter or even NATO.

Des Browne: The Treaty makes it clear in that very context that for its members NATO remains the foundation of their collective defence.

Q293 Mr Jenkin: In a declaration.

Des Browne: That is part of the Treaty though. Mr Jenkin, if we are going to have a very detailed legal dissection of clauses of the Treaty then we should do it clause-by-clause. You should tell me precisely what clauses you are talking about and what parts of them and then we can read them in the context of the whole of the Treaty.

Q294 Mr Jenkin: May I ask a very general question.

Des Browne: Of course you may but I just make the point to you though that if you choose to quote one part of the Treaty to me and I quote another part to you, which is part of the same Treaty, it is not an answer to say that it is a part of the Treaty.

Q295 Mr Jenkin: I think you have underlined exactly the difficulty about discussing this. There are going to be different views. The Commission is going to take different views and the European Court of Justice is going to take different views and different Member States are going to take different views, but in the end the Government’s key assurance is that Common Foreign and Security Policy and defence remain fundamentally intergovernmental, governed by unanimity, and the European Court of Justice is not involved. If it emerges over time that the European Court of Justice has developed a creeping competence into some areas and that decisions are being taken or being asked to be taken by qualified majority vote when we would have expected them to have been taken by unanimity—for example, when does a decision to implement a mandate in Bosnia under qualified majority voting actually become a new mandate—that is rather a grey area, would you not agree?

Des Browne: I do not recognise that as a possibility under the Reform Treaty.

Q296 Mr Jenkin: You do not but this is the point, there is a disagreement. The fundamental question I want to ask is—

Des Browne: With respect Mr Jenkin, I do not accept that there is a disagreement. You have a view on this and I have read your view and the context of the document that you published recently.

Q297 Mr Jenkin: I am very flattered.

Des Browne: But I do not know anybody else who agrees with it.

Q298 Mr Jenkin: That is very interesting!

Des Browne: If you know of other people in other countries who agree with it, if you share that with us then there may well be a competition of view.

Q299 Mr Jenkin: We all agree that Sarkozy wants to make European defence a great priority of his new Presidency. Angela Merkel talks periodically about the need for a European Army. There is a dynamic to this. You may be right or I may be right, but if it emerges that QMV and creeping competence of the European Court of Justice is creeping into this, then it would require a re-negotiation of the Treaties, would it not? If it turned out that I was right and you were wrong it would mean a renegotiation of the Treaties.

Des Browne: It will not turn out that you are right and I am wrong.

Q300 Mr Jenkin: That is a yes.

Des Browne: Fundamentally I do not accept the premise that underpins your question. I am not prepared to answer a question the underlying premise of which I do not accept.

Q301 Mr Jenkin: I will take that as a yes because if it turns out to be true then you would agree that it would have to be renegotiated.
Des Browne: I am quite content to come and give evidence to this Committee at which you both ask the questions and answer them, but—

Q302 Mr Jenkin: Can you give me an assurance? Des Browne: I am in no doubt that NATO will remain the cornerstone of the United Kingdom security policy and the only organisation for collective defence in Europe. The Reform Treaty does not change that. The Reform Treaty text makes clear that NATO is the foundation for collective defence of its members and the instrument for implementing that commitment; it is clear. It remains of course intergovernmental and decisions of effect in defence will need to be made by unanimity.

Chairman: Moving on to capabilities, Linda Gilroy?

Q303 Linda Gilroy: What are NATO’s main capability gaps? What capabilities does the Alliance need to acquire to fulfill its expeditionary role? What is the UK doing about addressing them? Des Browne: The key to its expeditionary role as far as NATO is concerned is that it needs a range of deployable and sustainable capabilities. I have read the evidence that those other witnesses who have given evidence before this Committee in this area have given, and I thought that in particular General Fry and others who addressed these questions answered them quite comprehensively, so I do not propose to repeat that. The key deployment capabilities are strategic lift, ISTAR and expeditionary logistics and communications. There was a vision set for the development of these capabilities in Prague in 2002 and there are gaps still to be filled in that vision, but progress has been made in terms of specifics in strategic lift to which we have already referred and there is on-going work to improve the supply of helicopters. In wider doctrinal issues, however, such as adopting context of approach, having flexible expeditionary forces and moving away from traditional, static territorial defence, we have made progress, and we are, as a nation, making investment in all of these areas, in strategic lift and in ISTAR, in expeditionary logistics and communications, and we are working with our Alliance partners in the context of the transformation to improve the Alliance’s capabilities in this regard. However, there is still a lot to be done. The list is there from Prague.

Q304 Linda Gilroy: You say in your memorandum that implementation remains patchy and there are concerns over funding, technical feasibility and a lack of multi-national co-operation. In a way does that not take you back to some of the earlier questions on burden-sharing and making sure that other countries are stepping up to the mark as far as expenditure on defence is concerned? Des Browne: Of course it does.

Q305 Linda Gilroy: While you have said that 72% of the Prague capabilities commitment have been implemented, it is actually the more expensive ones, and indeed you could say the more necessary ones, including strategic lift, that remain to be addressed? Des Browne: That is right but then we have the Strategic Airlift Interim Solution and the Strategic Airlift Capability initiatives which are being instigated which are making progress in this regard. I think we have seen in a comparatively short period of time more progress over the last couple of years than we have seen since Prague.

Q306 Linda Gilroy: So will we see more progress at Bucharest? Des Browne: I think we will continue this process and continue to reinforce the arguments for why this is in the national interests of individual members but also in the interests of NATO for them to make a contribution to these initiatives.

Q307 Linda Gilroy: Moving on to NATO’s transformation agenda, we have discussed a bit of that earlier, but in terms of meeting these capabilities is it as much about that transformation and readiness? Have the operational demands of Afghanistan facilitated or impeded the transformation agenda? Des Browne: I think to some degree I have already answered that question. My view is that the operational demands of Afghanistan have facilitated that transformation. We have seen that and I have given examples of the sort of transformation, but one of my colleagues may wish to expand on this.

Mr Mathewson: In a sense the operational demands of Afghanistan have become, as it were, the transformation agenda. They have now become the testing ground and the comparator for what NATO has to do. As an example, the NATO Response Force was set up as an engine for transformation. In fact, it has not been possible to commit the forces to the NRF that were originally intended, but the reason for that is that NATO is actually doing real work and forces are now heavily committed in Afghanistan, and it is now Afghanistan that is driving transformation, driving the change in the capabilities that nations need to develop, becoming the test-bed for how we need to change the headquarters, becoming the test-bed for the relevance of the command structure, so the transformation agenda is comprehensive; it covers structures and capabilities and ways of working.

Q308 Linda Gilroy: So if Afghanistan is driving what role is the Allied Command Transformation playing? You will probably have seen from our earlier evidence that many people think it is not performing as well as it is expected to. What is your view on that, Secretary of State? Mr Mathewson: I think the Allied Command Transformation is an important part of the Alliance. It is very important that as well as having Allied Command Operations—
Q309 Linda Gilroy: Why is it important because most people we hear from tend to say that it proves very frustrating, even for those that are involved in it, and it is particularly frustrating that it is sited where it is, which tends to take it very far away from where things are happening at the front-line and certainly gives it the appearance of not contributing very much.

Mr Mathewson: I think it is important because as well as having Allied Command Operations fighting the current battle and handling the issues of the day, it is important that there is part of the Alliance which is thinking further ahead, and that is what the role of ACT is; it is to think about how the Alliance develops its concepts and its doctrines over the future, for example, to develop thinking on the comprehensive approach. I recognise the concern about being where it is. On the other hand, that is a strength, and it is a question of balance.

Q310 Linda Gilroy: In what way is it a strength?

Mr Mathewson: It is a strength in that it is a visible expression of NATO in the United States, so it is part of the transatlantic partnership. It is strength in that is located alongside the United States Joint Forces Command and shares a commander with the US Joint Forces Command and there is therefore the potential (not yet fully realised) for the Alliance to pull through from the US experience thinking about how Armed Forces need to develop in the future. I think it is bedding in; it is setting itself up; there are a couple of parts of it which I would say are succeeding more quickly. There is a Joint Lessons Learned Centre at Monsanto in Lisbon which is taking the lessons out of current operations and feeding them back into the system. There is a Joint Warfare Training Centre at Stavanger in Norway which is providing some very effective training to NATO formations including headquarters teams going into ISAF. It is important conceptually to have a part of the Alliance thinking further ahead. It is bedding itself in. I think parts of it are moving forward.

Q311 Linda Gilroy: If those are the bits that are working, what are the bits that are not working that need to be improved upon?

Mr Mathewson: I think in terms of the headquarters arrangement in Norfolk, it is still bedding in. We would like to see a clearer understanding of the relationship between ACT and Norfolk and NATO headquarters in Brussels and ACO and SHAPE and thinking through some of the headquarters level processes. I think that as part of the transformation of the headquarters reform agenda we still want to see some further improvement in the operation of the ACT, particularly at its headquarters level.

Q312 Mr Holloway: You call it transformation but it is much more an evolution, is it not, or even a muddling through?

Mr Mathewson: I think it is more structured than that.

Q313 Linda Gilroy: Does it register on the Secretary of State’s agenda? Will it materialise in discussions at Bucharest or anywhere else?

Des Browne: I am not actually sure that the NATO Allied Command Transformation Centre has figured in any discussions that I have been present at, to be absolutely candid with you, although I am aware that, among other things, it made a contribution to the training of the ARRC before it went to Afghanistan, and a very positive contribution to the training of the NRF before it went to Afghanistan. I take the point you make about the location of it but I understand that the argument for locating it there was that the United States were at the forefront of transformation and to effectively hinge this to United States transformation would allow those lessons to feed through. However, I have not yet had an opportunity to go and examine that concept for myself.

Q314 Willie Rennie: Since 1999 the Helsinki Headline Goal has led to increased synergies between the capabilities of the European allies, but has it created any new military capability for the Europeans that did not already exist?

Des Browne: I think the very obvious one is EU Battlegroups, which is a military capability that did not previously exist. The Nordic Battlegroup, for example, led by Sweden, has become a very effective vehicle for the transformation of the Swedish military. That is very important and beneficial.

Q315 Willie Rennie: And what is the purpose of the NATO Response Force? Is it to generate deployable forces or to promote the transformation of Alliance capabilities? Does the Alliance have a common understanding of what the NATO Response Force is about?

Des Browne: I think the answer to that is that it is both. It is intended to be NATO’s tool of first response but it is also intended to be an important catalyst for transformation.

Q316 Willie Rennie: And is there any significance or any effect of the United States’ lack of involvement in the NRF? It is not particularly deeply involved in it. Does that undermine the utility of the force? Do you think the Americans see it as a kind of “litmus test” of European commitment?

Des Browne: The answer as I see it from the point of view of the United States is that it must be a function of the level to which they have their military capabilities committed in any event to operational theatres. They have a significant degree of overstretch.

Q317 Willie Rennie: In your memorandum you have said that the NRF and the EU Battlegroups are “key drivers for improving capabilities” in Europe. Could you give us some specific examples of that?

Mr Mathewson: I think the example of the Swedish Battlegroup is very important. As of today there is a Nordic Battlegroup on stand-by with its enablers ready to go. Before that, the only countries in
Europe able to provide rapid response forces were the UK and France. Now, today, there is a Nordic Battlegroup on stand-by. It has entered into arrangements to provide strategic lift. Sweden took part in the Strategic Airlift Initiative to lease a number of C-17 aircraft. This is capability which did not exist before the battlegroup existed. This is an example of a formerly neutral country with parishouse, the fact is that a defence generating capacity which is usable for the sort of expeditionary operations that both NATO and the EU want to undertake. It has gone into this airlift consortium with a number of NATO countries, so there is an example of capacity being generated for the benefit of both institutions.

Des Browne: Hugh Powell thinks he has another example.

Mr Powell: I wanted to make the point that readiness and getting other countries to actually put troops on stand-by is a major capability gain. You mention the NRF: if you look at the Pakistan earthquake, the fact is that we managed to get Spanish engineers out to Pakistan. If there was not a mechanism to get Spain to have these sorts of troops on stand-by we would never have been in a position to have done that. As Andrew Mathewson said, we would be back in a world where the only European country to whom people could look to react would be the UK. So these arrangements have a burden-sharing effect.

Q318 Willie Rennie: Do the Americans have the same view? Do they view it in the same positive light?

Mr Mathewson: I am not aware of any American nervousness about the battlegroups. They see this as additional capacity, as I think does the United Nations. The United Nations is rather interested in the potential of battlegroups to help support its operations. I think they are generally perceived as a raising in the level of Europe’s ability to respond, whether through NATO or through the EU itself.

Q320 Mr Hancock: We should be quite clear of what we are saying here. The name is a misnomer, is it not, it is a battlegroup which can only be used in peacekeeping but not war fighting?

Mr Mathewson: That is the nature of battlegroup missions.

Q321 Mr Hancock: They cannot stop a war though, can they?

Mr Mathewson: You would not deploy a force of 1,500 people to try to stop a war.

Q322 Mr Hancock: All right, stop a civil war.

Mr Mathewson: They can do the full range of peacekeeping operations from peacekeeping to the robust end, including separation of parties by force, but if you are thinking of an operation which is at that robust end of peacekeeping you would want to be planning what came after the battlegroup.

Q323 Mr Hancock: From the Committee’s report point of view, if you could write us a note on what caveats the Nordic Battlegroup has that would be helpful.

Mr Mathewson: I am not aware of any caveats.

Q324 Mr Hancock: That is fine.

Mr Mathewson: They are capable of mounting the full range of missions implied by the Petersberg Tasks.

Q325 Mr Hancock: Can I just go back, Secretary of State, when you answered Mr Jenkin’s question about the EU Treaty and he asked whether or not it was possible for them to sign a defence treaty, you immediately said no but at that time Mr Mathewson and Mr Powell looked rather differently to that. I would be interested to know if they share your absolute conviction that the EU Treaty prevents the reformed EU from signing a defence treaty. Both of them looked rather taken aback by the speed of your “no”. I hope I am wrong.

Mr Powell: As I understand it, the position is and remains that under the existing Treaty it is already possible, with the unanimous agreement of the Council, for the EU to enter into Treaty arrangements, including in the defence sphere. That has not changed with this new Treaty. With the unanimous agreement of the Council, ie all the Member States, as the Secretary of State said, we can still do that. The Treaty does not change that.

Q326 Mr Hancock: But the Treaty says specifically—

Des Browne: The question I was asked was was this a function—

Q327 Mr Jenkin: I did not use the word “function”; I said “could”.

Des Browne: We will go back and read the question. The question as I understood it was as a consequence of the European Union assuming this legal identity—

Q328 Mr Hancock: But under Article 11.3—you asked us to be specific—it says that there is a negative obligation which means that a Member State who might not have signed up to something cannot get in the way of the overall collective good of the EU. I am interested in this concept of if there is one vote against, meaning they cannot go ahead, but if all the Member States believe it is in their collective interests under Article 11.3 there is an obligation on that renegade state not to be negative and try to prevent it if it was seen to be in the collective interests of the Union.

Des Browne: Excuse me Mr Hancock, we will defer to the lawyer who we have brought with us who understands this Treaty in some complex detail.
Mr Powell: The key point I can report is that that requirement is in the existing Treaty; it is not introduced by the new Treaty.

Q329 Mr Jenkin: But legal personality is a new feature.

Des Browne: That is very important. That is why the premise that underpinned your question was what I answered.

Q330 Chairman: I would like to move on.

Des Browne: Can I just say, Chairman, that it is clear to me from what I have seen of question-and-answer sessions before that there are members of this Committee who are exercised by some of the legal detail of the interpretation of provisions of the Reform Treaty and its interaction with others. I am quite prepared to get definitive answers to these questions but it would be better if we were given some notice of these questions in complex detail. If they could be provided to us in writing, I will do what I have done in the past and I will give specific legal answers to legal questions.

Mr Jenkin: We cannot ask for more than that.

Chairman: That is very helpful. We will now move on.

Q331 Mr Hancock: I am sorry for that distraction. I was just nervous about your two colleagues either side and I wanted to give them a chance to answer. I am interested to know what you believe the EU Battlegroups are actually for. Are they intended to generate deployable European forces? With the exception of the Nordic Battlegroup, do they not by their very creation mean that the same troops that NATO would want to deploy at the front-line from many Member States are the same troops? Consequently there could be a conflict, could there not?

Mr Mathewson: It is clearly the case that each country has only one set of forces and it is for each country when it is managing its own battlegroup and NATO commitments to make sure that it is not double committing its forces. What are EU Battlegroups for? They are to allow the EU to respond very rapidly with forces which are on stand-by and pre-formed to a range of contingencies. They are there to conduct a rapid response to the sort of Petersberg-type Tasks which are set out in the old Treaty and the new Treaty. They are there to respond quickly to improve the EU's ability to respond to that sort of operation from humanitarian through to the full range of peacekeeping operations.

Q332 Mr Hancock: One of the witnesses who gave evidence at a previous meeting said on European battlegroups: "They have an important function in signalling political will but they are unlikely to be a military solution by themselves." How would you respond to that?

Mr Mathewson: The battlegroup is a small group. It is up to around 1,500 people. There are contingencies where you could foresee—

Q333 Mr Hancock: So where would the support for them come from—NATO?

Mr Mathewson: There are contingencies where the battlegroup itself could make a decisive difference if deployed quickly and at the right time. We have seen that in The Congo. There are clearly contingencies which would be beyond the scope of the battlegroup to resolve and in those circumstances the battlegroup could be, as it were, the first foot on the ground but the EU would then need to generate the forces which filled it out and, as it were, came behind.

Mr Powell: I can give a concrete example which was a precursor to the creation of the battlegroup concept, and that is the EU operation in The Congo in 2003, known as Operation Artemis. That sent in what was in effect a battlegroup led by the French to help the UN operation that was getting into trouble in Eastern Congo. For a relatively short period of time that had to take on a serious local threat, and take on a combat function. It succeeded in stabilising that particular region of The Congo to the benefit of the wider UN mission. On your question about compatibility between battlegroups and NRF, I think I would say three things. First of all, as Andrew Mathewson said, you already have in place EU-NATO arrangements to de-conflict the two forces, in other words to ensure that the same force is not on stand-by for both organisations. That is another way of saying that in practice we have ensured that there are more capabilities/resources on stand-by than there otherwise would have been in Europe.

Q334 Mr Hancock: But that is not the case, is it, because the EU set up a mission to Chad, they get the 4,000 troops, but they need 23 helicopters and they get two and so they cannot go. How can there be a proper mix of capabilities?

Mr Powell: Both NRF and battlegroups are set up for rapid reaction and the Chad mission was not a rapid reaction so it had been force generated separately from any of the stand-by forces. The third point, just to complete what I was going to say, it was accepted by NATO and indeed by the United States at the time the EU Battlegroups were being set up that the battlegroups were in support of the NRF, in the sense that they would encourage smaller Member States to develop in packages in a multi-lateral framework the larger force packages that then over time would also be available to the NRF.

Chairman: The final set of questions I want to be asked is about the European Defence Agency. Robert Key?

Q335 Robert Key: Secretary of State, in your memorandum to the Committee there was hardly a ringing endorsement of the European Defence Agency. It was more of a footnote really and it said that the Headline Goal 2010 process will identify any shortfalls but then you say that the EDA will not actually be able to correct the shortfalls. Has the EDA developed in the way the British Government would have envisaged or wished?
Des Browne: It has produced some good work, for example the Code of Conduct in Defence Procurement, but we think it has lacked structure and orientation. We are working with Member States to refocus the efforts and the key priorities and to mitigate these shortfalls.6

Q336 Robert Key: Is that why the British Government recently blocked the EDA’s three-year budget?

Des Browne: We were part of a small group of Member States who asked for the justification of the planned year-on-year increases in the budget and the level of growth that was anticipated. We were unable to reach agreement on an acceptable level of growth so therefore we were not in a position to agree the budget.

Q337 Robert Key: Do you think there is very little contact between the EDA and NATO itself? Is that part of the problem?

Des Browne: I might need to defer to one of my colleagues to talk about the level of contact that there is between the EDA and NATO.

Mr Mathewson: I think there is increasing contact. They are starting to go to each other’s meetings. Meetings of the National Armaments Directorate in NATO will see an EDA representative. I do not think that is the real problem. The EDA exists to bring countries together and to identify the opportunities for them to work together. It still requires countries to want to invest and develop the capabilities.

Q338 Robert Key: If the EDA is designed to bring countries together, why is Turkey excluded from the EDA?

Mr Mathewson: Turkey is not eligible for membership of the EDA since it is not a member of the European Union. It is permitted to have an association arrangement with the EDA. Norway has one and Turkey is entitled to have one.

Q339 Robert Key: But Turkey was a member of the predecessor body of the EDA, was it not?

Mr Mathewson: It is our policy that Turkey, like Norway, should have an association arrangement with the EDA. That has been blocked by another Member State.

Q340 Robert Key: Which state?

Mr Mathewson: Cyprus has withheld consensus on that.

Robert Key: I just wanted you to say it! I am grateful, Chairman, thank you.

Q341 Chairman: Secretary of State, thank you very much indeed to you and your team for a long session. We did finish it within two hours which I was not sure we were going to be able to do. I am grateful to you. It is the final session, as I say, for our NATO inquiry and we will now proceed to try and produce a report, which will not be easy!

Des Browne: I look forward to it.

Q342 Chairman: And if we decide, as we may well, to take you up on your offer on detailed legal questions, we will let you know as soon as we can.

Des Browne: Thank you very much. With respect, Chairman, it might be a better way to deal with these very detailed legal points than trying to rely upon what people believe they said and other people answered subsequently.

Chairman: Yes, well, I do not even understand the questions let alone the answers!

6 See Ev 161
Written evidence

Memorandum from Medact

MEDACT is a UK charity of health professionals concerned with the health effects of nuclear and other weapons, conflict, poverty and the environment. It is the UK affiliate of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW: Nobel Peace Prize 1985)

1. Medact welcomes the opportunity to submit evidence to the House of Commons Defence Committee on the future of NATO and European defence. As health professionals, we advocate policies which prevent injury, illness and death, and in the present context would emphasise that NATO came into being during the Cold War as a potential war-fighting organisation, equipped to oppose the perceived risk of Warsaw Pact forces invading western Europe. We suggest that the debate on the future of NATO and European defence should be part of the wider debate on whether UK defence forces in the future should continue to be equipped for war-fighting or whether their out-of-Europe role should be restricted to UN-Security Council-approved peacekeeping activities. The Prime Minister, for instance in his Devonport speech of 12 January 2007, favours a continued war-fighting capability, although he will soon be unable to take a lead on future possibilities. On the other hand, some military experts, including leading soldiers such as Gen Sir Rupert Smith, believe that the era of formal war-fighting is past. He does not of course mean an end to conflict, but that this has been replaced by what he calls “war among the peoples”. We suggest that NATO was not designed for such a process, and the attempts of Western powers, particularly the US, and NATO to substitute what Professor Paul Rogers has called “asymmetric warfare” has been less than successful (see below).

2. The attitude of other W European countries, both in and out of NATO, varies greatly in these respects, and the size and equipment of their military and their defence budgets vary accordingly. The UK defence budget is about 3% of GDP, some other European countries less than 2% of GDP. The Trident replacement system which the House is about to vote on will cost some £25 billion for procurement and another £50 billion in running costs, and the two giant aircraft carriers proposed as part of any continued war-fighting capability will together cost billions more. Yet even Mr Blair admits that such systems are irrelevant to the problems of countering terrorism.

3. Three recent major war-fighting operations illustrate the failure of war-fighting operations to produce stable solutions to putative military threats.

(i) In Kosovo, OSCE monitors had to be withdrawn for their own safely when the decision for NATO to bomb former Yugoslavia was taken. Most of the ethnic cleansing of ethnic Albanians by Slavs took place after the onset of bombing, and there were many Slav refugees after the end of active hostilities. Several years later, there is little prospect of a stable settlement, and indeed fear of renewed violence.

(ii) The 2003 attack on Iraq was not a NATO action nor authorized by the Security Council; four years later the country is virtually in a state of civil war. The occupying forces could well be withdrawn in the not too distant future.

(iii) The 2001 attack on Afghanistan, following 9/11, was a NATO action authorised by the UN. Over five years later, violence is increasing and the country is producing more opium for the drugs trade than ever. Civilian deaths due to the actions of NATO forces are increasing resentment. Apart from the US and the UK, other NATO members are refusing to allow their forces to be used for war-fighting activities. This operation too may end in failure.

(iv) We can never know what the outcome would have been if much more serious and prolonged efforts at a diplomatic settlement of these three disputes, had been made. At the very least, however, they raise serious questions about the usefulness of NATO-style operations and, with the end of the Cold War, whether NATO has any useful role in the future.

4. At the time of writing, the possibility of armed attack on Iran is causing concern. Such an attack could be carried out by the US (independently of NATO) or Israel (not a member of NATO); Mr Blair’s denials of the possibility of UK involvement do not sound entirely convincing. Germany, a NATO member, is joining with France and the UK to work for a negotiated settlement; given its attitude to the conflict in Afghanistan it seems inconceivable that it would consent to NATO involvement, and hard to think of other NATO members that would participate. NATO is surely becoming insignificant if individual members make war unilaterally, as the US seems to think it has a right to do. A US attack on Iran would not be authorised by the UN and, as such, illegal, and a major human, environmental and regional disaster. From the point of view of restraining Iran from nuclear weapons capability it might indeed be counter-productive.

5. NATO has nuclear-weapons capability, and has never renounced “no-first-use” of its nuclear weapons. The US still keeps some 400 free-fall nuclear bombs in six NATO countries; it is hard to imagine any situation where they might be used, or what they now “deter”.

6. We believe that a more closely integrated European defence programme provides an alternative. Whatever else the EU may or may not have achieved, it has made war between its member states less likely than at any time for the last 2000 years, yet each of the 27 EU member states still has its own standing army with a roll-call of over two million men (and some women) and a combined budget of around 200 billion Euros. Whatever the outcome of the current debate on a possible European constitution it should surely be possible to greatly reduce both manpower and cost. The resulting organisation would have responsibility for basic home defence (excluding counter-terrorism which is a matter for policing), provide logistic support for the OSCE, and be available for UN Security Council-backed peacekeeping. Such an organisation would be non-nuclear-weapon-capable and would not require high-tech battle-tanks and war planes. Substantial financial and human resources would be freed for more constructive purposes.

7. The use of fewer tanks and warplanes in training, let alone in war-fighting, would also make a real contribution towards the EU’s welcome new targets for reducing carbon dioxide emissions. Such a contribution to reducing the severity of climate change would in itself be a positive step towards improved global security.

8. The Responsibility to Protect must be an essential responsibility of leading Western states. This can be exercised largely by promoting economic and environmental progress, by preventive diplomacy in zones of potential conflict, by peacekeeping, but only occasionally and as a last resort by pre-emptive armed intervention, and then only when authorized by the UNSC under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. We propose that European defence should be restructured along these lines, but within the EU rather than through NATO.

7 March 2007

Memorandum from Mark Phillips

1. SOME CONCLUSIONS FROM DEPLOYED/ONGOING OPERATIONS

1.1 NATO’s role in Afghanistan is significant. Failure risks the reputation of both the US and Europe given the commitments made, and will therefore not only damage the idea of NATO as a strategic stabiliser but also that of the EU.

1.2 Force generation and operational effectiveness

NATO’s experience in Afghanistan illustrates the likely future challenges any coalition or alliance will face in accepting new operational commitments:

1.2.1 The effectiveness of alliance/coalition force generation and military operations depend upon a high level of political cohesion among nations which assumes:

(i) a shared view of desired campaign objectives;

(ii) a common acceptance of risk;

(iii) shared rules of engagement.

1.2.2 The increasingly non-linear operational theatre will require military actions that frequently lie outside existing treaties and their associated and agreed obligations. Operations will thus tend to be characterised by a lack of clarity and unanimity in defining strategic goals, making it difficult to establish shared interests between members of any coalition or alliance.  By way of initial conclusion, NATO’s experience in Afghanistan clearly demonstrates the dangers for any coalition or alliance of accepting new operational commitments without these preconditions properly in place and the likely impact on lead nations.

1.2.3 An immediate concern for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is that systems need to be developed and put in place for determining rules of engagement that are sufficiently flexible and

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responsive, given that expeditionary operations will often require new, uncertain and rapidly changing rules of engagement. More generally, if both NATO and the EU (assuming the EU develops a greater independent security role/capacity—see point [4] below) are unable to foster political cohesion as a prerequisite for this, the potential for future ineffectual coalition deployments under their auspices is significant.

1.2.4 What seems increasingly likely is that future coalitions will always be ad hoc “coalitions of the willing”. An implication of this is that the character of any coalition will change from operation to operation. Moreover, it is also highly likely that the character of any coalition will also change within a given operation over time. The risk of this approach is two-fold: that working practices will be developed during the crisis (an approach not fully adequate to achieving successful outcomes—standard operating procedures should ideally be established in advance of a crisis); and that those contributing nations who are not members of organisations such as NATO and the EU will pose challenges of interoperability in and for multinational operations, even if their military strategic concepts and political visions are similar to those of other (lead) nations.

1.2.5 A future role that NATO and the EU will have in these circumstances will be to use their institutional structures to address (a) interoperability and (b) capability requirements amongst a larger number of states to develop a large pool of potential coalition partners for all phases of an operation. This necessitates an examination of the expansion and transformation processes of NATO and the EU. The latter is addressed briefly immediately below.

1.3 Transformation

1.3.1 Ongoing participation in operations can be actively detrimental to nations’ chances of meeting transformation targets.

1.3.2 Adjustments in both NATO Allied Command Transformation and the transformation concept are underway to reflect lessons learned in Afghanistan and Iraq, but need to be hastened.

1.3.3 At present, NATO transformation and ESDP are working in opposite ends and opposing each other. They need to be complementary: it is recognised that it is not practicable for NATO to be the “sole engine of interoperability” or, indeed, to be the sole driver of transformation. This is particularly so because NATO transformation to date has focused specifically (like national US counterpart programmes) on developing rapidly deployable forces and networked, high technology weapons and command and control systems. Experience in Iraq and Afghanistan, however, has driven home the fact that “transformation at the sharp end”, although necessary, is not sufficient to address current challenges to international security: transformational thinking in future peace support, reconstruction and counter-insurgency capabilities will be as valued.

1.3.4 Herein lies a probable role for the EU. This not least because technological advances have provided opportunities for the development of strategic and operational concepts that are not available to many partners of the US, but in any event also seem unwelcome to them: in all likelihood, it seems that the majority of EU member states would prefer to become the focus of less technologically dependent strategic partnerships of the US, but in any event also seem unwelcome to them: in all likelihood, it seems that the majority of EU member states would prefer to become the focus of less technologically dependent strategic partnerships of the US, but in any event also seem unwelcome to them: in all likelihood, it seems that the majority of EU member states would prefer to become the focus of less technologically dependent strategic partnerships of the US, but in any event also seem unwelcome to them: in all likelihood, it seems that the majority of EU member states would prefer to become the focus of less technologically dependent strategic partnerships of the US, but in any event also seem unwelcome to them: in all likelihood, it seems that the majority of EU member states would prefer to become the focus of less technologically dependent strategic partnerships of the US, but in any event also seem unwelcome to them: in all likelihood, it seems that the majority of EU member states would prefer to become the focus of less technologically dependent strategic partnerships of the US, but in any event also seem unwelcome to them: in all likelihood, it seems that the majority of EU member states would prefer to become the focus of less technologically dependent strategic partnerships of the US, but in any event also seem unwelcome to them: in all likelihood, it seems that the majority of EU member states would prefer to become the focus of less technologically dependent strategic partnerships of the US, but in any event also seem unwelcome to them. It would nevertheless be wise, however, for NATO to be the repository for all standards to ensure a coherent approach from trans-Atlantic countries in all phases of expeditionary operations, and to avoid duplication in “role specialisation”. This will require further thought on cross-institutional working arrangements. This has the potential to create a “pick and choose” system or pool of nations for future expeditionary operations.


13 See, for example, Michael Codner, Hanging Together: Military Interoperability in an Era of Technological Innovation, RUSI Whitelhall Paper 56 (2003), pp 79–80.


2. **COMPREHENSIVE POLITICAL GUIDANCE**

   2.1 NATO’s Strategic Concept is being progressively replaced by the national caveat. This is driven by a range of factors including the risks a state is willing to take with its armed forces, the robustness of political leadership and public opinion, and the level of capability and capacity of the deployed force.

3. **US INVOLVEMENT IN NATO AND WITH THE EU**

   3.1 The US is currently quite disengaged from the day-to-day life of NATO. In the near future it is likely to look to the UK, however, to help restore its role within the alliance.

   3.2 The US will likely assume that the EU should take the lead in addressing its near-abroad and Africa. Britain should therefore make ongoing efforts, alongside the French and inter alia through the EU and NATO, to rehabilitate the armed forces of other Europeans for the purposes of stabilisation missions.

4. **EUROPEAN DEFENCE**

   4.1 There is a gap (1 of the declared size or less) between declared ESDP capabilities and what is available given a lack of understanding of readiness profiles. This will likely also be an issue of concern for NATO given shared membership.

   4.2 The second version (2006) of the Strategic Trends project of the MoD’s Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre (DCDC) notes that “depending on the success of ESDP, the extent of US unilateralsm and the nature of future threats, the EU could develop collective defence and intervention capabilities by 2030”.

   4.3 The division of labour and forms of cooperation between NATO and the EU are still being decided upon on an ad hoc basis. Moreover, there is a mismatch between NATO and EU decision making procedures.

   4.4 There is a risk that NATO and the EU will both have similar political and security competencies in light of the EU’s increasing common foreign, security and defence policies. ESDP should be complementary to NATO, and therefore particularly focus on the development of civil-military operational capabilities that do not yet fall within NATO’s remit. This will go some way towards delineating the roles of the two organisations by utilising proven NATO-EU arrangements, and help to prevent tension and competition for resources between them in the future.

   4.5 The ability for autonomous EU planning in military missions where NATO involvement is unlikely is to be welcomed, but much greater attention needs to be given to issues of force generation/sharing in this area.

12 March 2007

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**Memorandum from the Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. As it draws towards its 60th Anniversary in 2009, NATO has changed beyond recognition from the Cold War Alliance, and the Security Challenges it faces have also changed dramatically in a few short years. The Alliance must now redefine itself in a profound debate on its mission and purpose.

2. Defining a new role for NATO encompasses an extremely difficult series of questions as to its purpose and mission, and the means that it uses to carry out that mission. Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer and others have called for adoption of a new strategic concept, based in the security lessons of the 21st century, lessons that have been learned on the battlefields of Kosovo and Afghanistan, as well as in the 9/11 attacks and the spread of weapons of mass destruction across the globe.

3. Any drafting of a new Strategic Concept will entail consideration of the role of nuclear weapons in Alliance defence strategy, and whether NATO should continue to rely on nuclear weapons in its defence posture. It must also mean a consideration of the ways in which arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament can contribute to Alliance security through nuclear, chemical and biological weapons threat reduction and elimination.

4. Current NATO nuclear weapons policy and practice raise a number of concerns. NATO must address these concerns, and resolve the problems that they pose for the Alliance.

5. NATO has been drawn into adopting US counterproliferation policy, at the expense of the more balanced non-proliferation approach to WMD threats. This is deeply controversial within the Alliance, and has undermined NATO solidarity. Many European nations are concerned that a pre-emptive or preventive military approach to proliferation, as used in Iraq, is inappropriate and reduces Alliance security rather than enhancing it.
6. The policy of counterproliferation has increased risks, or helped stimulate new threats to NATO members at the periphery of Europe, as some countries have sought WMD capabilities to deter NATO or NATO members. This has undermined the global non-proliferation regime. Tactical nuclear weapons, including the US nuclear free fall bombs deployed in conjunction with NATO, are by their nature portable and relatively accessible, which increases their attractiveness for terrorists, while their operational flexibility makes them especially destabilising.

7. NATO policy further undermines the global non-proliferation regime through the practice of nuclear sharing. This programme allows nominally non-nuclear states to be equipped for nuclear missions, and to train in the deployment and use of nuclear weapons. During the Cold War, and especially before the NPT came into force, this policy could be portrayed as restricting proliferation by extending deterrence. In the very different geostrategic context of today, the policy is perceived as undermining the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and providing an excuse to others to proliferate nuclear weapons in a similar fashion.

8. NATO is still primarily configured for territorial defence of Europe, and is proving to be poorly adapted to the missions which it is already undertaking, and is likely to undertake in the future. The nuclear defence policies of NATO are a relic of the cold war configuration, and complicate NATO efforts to genuinely transform itself into a security provider as part of the network of global institutions.

9. The Acronym Institute therefore recommends that the time has come for the first fundamental revision of NATO’s Strategic Concept since the end of the Cold War. Of particular relevance to the Defence Committee’s inquiry:

- The Committee should endorse the view of Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer and recommend that NATO draft a new Strategic Concept to be adopted at the 2009 NATO 60th Anniversary Summit. The Committee should recommend that a fundamental re-examination of the role of nuclear weapons in defence strategy, and of the suitability of NATO nuclear deterrence policies in the new security environment should be a major part of the redrafting of the Strategic Concept.

- The Committee should recommend that the use of nuclear weapons in counterproliferation missions should be explicitly rejected by NATO. Such missions would be incompatible with the NPT, international law and Alliance security as a whole.

- The Committee should recommend that HMG should lead NATO in an immediate reinvigoration of its policies on arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament as part of a comprehensive strategy for nuclear, biological and chemical threat reduction. The withdrawal of US nuclear weapons from Europe, and an end to the role of US and UK Trident forces in NATO defence policy should be part of this arms control process.

- The Committee should recommend the immediate termination of NATO nuclear sharing arrangements and support international calls for the withdrawal and elimination of all tactical nuclear weapons.

- The Committee should recommend that Her Majesty’s Government, as part of its commitment to non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament, should initiate negotiation of a new Strategic Concept for NATO, including the termination of all nuclear elements in joint strategy and doctrine; and should join with other key NATO members to emphasise that arms control and non-proliferation are the only long-term, sustainable mechanisms for reducing and eliminating WMD threats.

**The Future of NATO and Nuclear Weapons**

10. In November 2006, NATO Heads of State and Government met at the Riga Summit, ostensibly to plot out a course for the Alliance for the coming years. In fact, Riga turned out to be an exercise in papering over cracks, and so failed to provide the much-needed debate for deciding on the future membership and core purposes of the Alliance at the beginning of the 21st century. Now, only months later, NATO members find themselves obliged to begin rethinking the future of the Alliance all over again. Defining a new role for NATO encompasses an extremely difficult series of questions, and the Alliance is currently very deeply engaged in day-to-day management of the security situation in Afghanistan, which has proved distracting. The Alliance must now manage to continue day-to-day operations and simultaneously redefine itself in a profound debate on its mission and purpose.

**Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG)**

11. The Alliance did look to the future in a half-hearted fashion in Riga. NATO Heads of State and Government approved and published the Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG), previously agreed by Foreign Ministers in June 2006. This document is short, bland and somewhat self-contradictory. The CPG came about as, in the years following the previous Summit in Istanbul, it was clear that there was insufficient common ground between member states to allow negotiation of a new strategic concept. The CPG reconfirms the 1999 Strategic Concept which “described the evolving security environment in terms that remain valid”, but the two greatest threats to NATO identified in the CPG are terrorism and the spread of WMD. The latter received mention in the 1999 document, but the threat of terrorism was almost completely
absent. While the CPG claims to provide guidance for the next ten to fifteen years, many commentators (and indeed NATO officials) have said that it is little more than a stop-gap until a new Strategic Concept can be developed.

**Drafting a new Strategic Concept**

12. At the Munich Security Conference in February 2007, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer voiced his opinion that NATO’s leaders “should endorse a new strategic concept” based in “lessons of 21st century security” learned in Kosovo and Afghanistan. These lessons, de Hoop Scheffer told his audience, “need to be enshrined in our guiding documents” so they can be fully implemented in future operations. Spokespeople for de Hoop Scheffer have indicated that a new Strategic Concept should be agreed at the Summit to be held in 2009, on the occasion of the Alliance’s 60th Anniversary.

13. As the new Strategic Concept debate begins, the first area of rethinking is at the conceptual level, trying to provide an intellectual basis for future alliance roles and missions. Some NATO officials are questioning the centrality of the Article V territorial mutual mission to NATO’s identity, questioning whether Article V is still important to the Alliance, and offering completely new interpretations of what it is about. NATO officials posit a world where the threat of massive conventional and nuclear attack has gone, and there is no sign that any enemy could emerge that would come close to matching the former Soviet threat. In this model, if NATO has an Article V mission it is against far more diffuse threats—counter-terrorism (including defending against the threat of terrorists armed with nuclear, biological, chemical or radiological weapons), missile defence, managing the destabilizing effects of migration, and even guaranteeing energy security and filling a role in counter-narcotics operations. This approach will require a rethinking of the role of nuclear weapons within the Alliance’s defence posture. In the absence of threats which are susceptible to traditional notions of nuclear deterrence, Alliance leaders must reconsider the role of nuclear weapons in both policy and strategy and determine whether they have any useful role today at all. As the Secretary General has said, this will necessitate a fundamental reconsideration of the mission and purpose of NATO.

14. Previous rewrites of the Strategic Concept in the post-Cold War period have represented incremental change, rather than wholesale adaptation to a post-Cold War environment. The end of the Warsaw Pact and then the fall of the Soviet Union brought about the reduction and then disappearance of the major military threat to NATO. Strategic Concept rewrites did go some way to recognizing this fact. However, even in the 1999 Strategic Concept, territorial defence of NATO member states against a major conventional threat—the Article V mission—remained central to NATO’s existence. As the 1999 Strategic Concept says “NATO’s essential and enduring purpose, set out in the Washington Treaty, is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means.”

15. Some efforts were made to redefine the concept of “territorial defence”, particularly since in 1999, when the Washington DC Summit approved its latest Strategic Concept, NATO was actually engaged in a war with Serbia over Kosovo and a long-standing peacekeeping operation in Bosnia Herzegovina. So the Alliance added that “[t]he achievement of this aim can be put at risk by crisis and conflict affecting the security of the Euro-Atlantic area. The Alliance therefore not only ensures the defence of its members but contributes to peace and stability in this region.”

16. Some believe that NATO’s main role in future will be as an organizer of voluntary missions beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. As President Bush told an audience in Riga last November, “Today, the Soviet threat is gone. And under the able leadership of the Secretary General, NATO is transforming from a static alliance focused on the defense of Europe, into an expeditionary alliance ready to deploy outside of Europe in the defense of freedom. This is a vital mission.” NATO in Afghanistan (and in a smaller way in Darfur) is engaged in such missions. NATO officials defend these engagements as important to global security and emphasize their contribution to the security of the Euro-Atlantic region through their undermining of support for Al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations who seek to attack Alliance members. The fact that there is still a need to defend such missions in an Article V context shows the reluctance with which some NATO nations allowed ISAF to go forward, and also their doubts about involving NATO in such missions in future. There is a consensus for ISAF, but only in the sense that no nation was willing to block the mission against overwhelming pressure for it from the United States. There is no consensus as to the form the mission should take, or as to whether it is a good thing for NATO to undertake. There is absolutely no consensus within the Alliance on President Bush’s view that such missions represent the main purpose of NATO in the post-9/11 environment.

16 NATO Strategic Concept, 1999, paragraph 6.

17 President Bush, Speech on Future of NATO, Latvia University, Riga, Latvia, 28 November 2006.
Expiring Security and Democracy?

17. Senior officials have talked about NATO becoming part of a web of international organizations, where the EU, the World Bank, the UN and others all have important roles to play in stabilizing critical security situations, such as Afghanistan. NATO would provide the military component of an overall task force, but could not operate alone. As the Secretary General said in Munich, “Our security is not just military. NATO must be fully integrated into the emerging network of international institutions and I was very happy with the speech made by Chancellor Merkel this morning because this was one of her key themes.” NATO staffs point to Bosnia and Afghanistan as examples of such missions, and say clearly that things can be done better in the future. NATO will, in this view, work with global partners on a wide spread of missions. De Hoop Scheffer puts it thus “Partnership, ladies and gentlemen, is a force multiplier. We must and will be working with nations from across the world to share our security burdens.”

Maintaining Article V

18. This is still a controversial agenda. Countries such as France would like to see NATO confined to its old role, while the EU takes on more of the new missions. The US Ambassador to NATO, Victoria Nuland, was forced to defend the American position in mid-February 2007 on the BBC. “HARDtalk: What the Europeans fear is that the United States wants to turn NATO into an instrument of US foreign policy, and that their traditional view of NATO is that it should be for the defense of Western Europe, is now threatened . . . Ambassador Nuland: . . . What we are saying about today’s NATO and today’s security environment is if we want to be safe at home, if we want our values and the freedoms that we enjoy to be protected, we’ve got to go out there where the challenges are. HARDtalk: The French Defense Secretary Michele Alliot-Marie says the new global role that America seems to envisage will dilute the natural solidarity between Europeans and North Americans. Ambassador Nuland: . . . I do think that the consensus within the alliance that our values are under threat and our security is under threat, less at home and more out there, is growing. Therefore, we need to be where the challenges are or they will come to us.”

19. It is not only, the states of “old Europe” who are questioning the US agenda. While the UK government told Parliament in December 2006 that there are no conventional threats to the UK or NATO and they foresee none arising, this is not the view amongst new NATO members. Welcoming NATO to Riga, Latvian President Vike-Freiberga, said last November that “[w]e truly are pleased to be now part of that family of secure nations who have entered into an agreement of solidarity, of mutual support, to ensure their security and their sovereignty and their territorial integrity.” This is a typical view amongst the new members, still inclined to look very nervously at Russia, where militarism appears to be reviving (in part in reaction to perceived threats from certain US and NATO military developments). Even Germany, under a conservative government, is hesitant about full involvement in far-flung missions, hence their decision to approve troops for Afghanistan only in a peace-keeping role and their refusal to participate in combat in southern Afghanistan.

20. Resolving the practical questions that the Alliance faces in Afghanistan and elsewhere could help point the way to future adaptations of the Strategic Concept, and thus to the future direction of NATO. For example, France wishes the NATO Response Force to operate only in extremis, when NATO must force entry to a country to carry out a mission for example, and also to operate only as a 25,000 strong unit. Others would like to see the NRF available in smaller battle groups, and on an ad hoc basis for all missions. This would allow the force to be used to reinforce British and Canadian forces in Helmand province, and would remove some element of national control from troops. This model of NATO command was uncontroversial in the face of the Soviet threat during the Cold War, but is intensely controversial for voluntary missions. The delinking of nuclear weapons from conventional forces under NATO command would do much to make such changes in Alliance practice less controversial.

21. The Committee should endorse the view of Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer and recommend that NATO draft a new Strategic Concept to be adopted at the 2009 NATO 60th Anniversary Summit. The Committee should recommend that a fundamental re-examination of the role of nuclear weapons in defence strategy, and of the suitability of NATO nuclear deterrence policies in the new security environment should be a major part of the redrafting of the Strategic Concept.

A Role for nuclear Weapons in the New NATO?

22. If NATO is to transform itself, it must address the role of nuclear weapons in Alliance defence strategy. The continuing reliance on nuclear defence creates a number of problems for the Alliance, even making pursuit of its own policies goals more difficult in some cases. These problems include:

— Nations in the NATO periphery and far beyond are unlikely to be able to accept NATO as an impartial arbiter of international security while it maintains an arsenal of nuclear weapons that are deployed in Europe and available for use even against non-nuclear nations across the globe.
This is more the case as NATO has adopted US counterproliferation policy. The use of nuclear weapons in counterproliferation is deeply controversial in Europe, and undermines Alliance solidarity in the struggle against proliferation.

— NATO’s retention of its nuclear arsenal, and failure to address nuclear arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament, is also a serious impediment to its own stated goal of addressing the threat to NATO of the proliferation of WMD.

— NATO nuclear sharing policy undermines the NPT, providing nuclear weapons and training in their use to nominally non-nuclear countries. Other European countries, such as Sweden and Ireland, the New Agenda Coalition of cross-regional states, and the 111-member group of Non-Aligned states parties to the NPT have objected to this policy.

23. There has been no serious debate on the role of nuclear weapons in NATO since the withdrawal of thousands of US nuclear weapons at the end of the Cold War. Hundreds of free fall bombs still remain assigned for NATO missions and even the use of NATO nations in wartime, and the US and UK allocate Trident forces for NATO missions. The Alliance states a need to defend “NATO deployed forces” against WMD with missile defences, and to be able to “conduct operations taking account of the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction”, nuclear, biological or chemical. The Alliance has gradually removed support for arms control and traditional non-proliferation measures from its communique.

24. There are cracks showing in the Alliance show of solidarity on this issue. German and Norwegian government ideas on nuclear arms control and reductions, set out in their joint article on 11 November 2006, in the Frankfurter Rundschau will probably be pressed to a greater degree than was the case in 1998 and 1999, when such concerns were last raised. Sources from both countries indicate that they are looking for ways to advance concrete proposals based on the article published by Henry Kissinger, George Schultz and others in the Wall Street Journal in early 2007. This argued that US national security now requires that US nuclear weapons should be withdrawn from Europe as part of a reinvigoration of security based on nuclear arms control, leading to nuclear disarmament. The alternative, they noted, is that worsening nuclear proliferation will see the US (and indeed NATO) increasingly unable to act in an ever more dangerous world.

**Nuclear Deployments in Europe**

25. The United States maintains around 480 nuclear weapons in Europe, some under joint control with the host country, and some under sole US disposition (although physically the weapons remain under sole US custody until war breaks out). These weapons are made available to NATO Commanders, but are also allocated to the US European Command, a separate national command structure. They are deployed at airbases in a number of NATO member states. In addition, some US and UK Trident forces are also made available for NATO nuclear planning.

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**NATO. Nuclear Weapons and Counterproliferation**

26. NATO nuclear policy and use doctrine has been changing since the end of the Cold War, heavily influenced by doctrinal changes in the United States. NATO has adopted counterproliferation as a policy, although in a somewhat ambivalent manner. This ambivalence has only grown in the wake of the Iraq War. Many European nations are concerned that a pre-emptive or preventive military policy of counterproliferation does nothing to reduce threats to European security. The Committee expressed concern about the role of counterproliferation in UK nuclear use doctrine, and NATO doctrine in the same area needs also to be examined extremely carefully.

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27. The Alliance has always adapted its nuclear use doctrines and practices to accommodate prior changes in US strategy. From the US point of view, it can act alone but would find support from NATO nations highly desirable (if not essential), particularly in a crisis. While a nuclear or conventional counterproliferation strike could be launched from US territory, many of the possible targets are on the periphery of NATO. It would, at the least, be advantageous to have NATO support for the use of nuclear weapons, even if only for political cover.

28. NATO agreed to begin consideration of the adoption of counterproliferation as an alliance mission at its Brussels Summit in January 1994. This decision came despite serious Allied reservations about the concept of counterproliferation, and to this day NATO does not officially refer to its counterproliferation activities under that name. The 1994 Summit launched a project by the Senior Defence Group on Proliferation (DGP) to establish NATO policies in the area of counterproliferation. That process led to the approval of force goals for NATO nations by defense ministers at their meeting in December 1996. By 1999, counterproliferation formed part of the NATO strategic concept.

29. Asserting that proliferation is a threat to NATO nations, and that the threat is manifest in NATO's periphery of North Africa, the Middle East and the former Soviet Union, the Strategic Concept states that “The principal non-proliferation goal of the Alliance and its members is to prevent proliferation from occurring or, should it occur, to reverse it through diplomatic means.” However, the Strategic Concept continues, stating “that the Alliance’s defence posture must have the capability to address appropriately and effectively the risks associated with the proliferation of NBC weapons and their means of delivery, which also pose a potential threat to the Allies’ populations, territory, and forces. A balanced mix of forces, response capabilities and strengthened defences is needed.” This change in policy was amplified at the 2002 Prague Summit.

30. NATO has now fully integrated counterproliferation into its force planning, training, and its strategic concept and related papers. The two differences between NATO and US national policy are that NATO has not openly assigned its forces a preventive or pre-emptive role in counterproliferation, nor has it explicitly given a role to nuclear weapons in counterproliferation. Despite this, the process of adopting this new doctrine into the Alliance strategic concept has led to the adaptation of NATO nuclear policy and operational practice.

Changes in NATO nuclear policies and operational practice

31. NATO doctrine has been adapted, as has operational practice, to accommodate the expansion of the range of possible targets and the range of possible enemies identified by the United States as potentially requiring to be deterred by nuclear weapons. US policy on the use of nuclear weapons in regional wars has also had its influence on co-operation with allies. These doctrinal changes affecting nuclear cooperation within NATO, and particularly the nuclear sharing programs, are controversial and barely acknowledged in public.

32. NATO policy began to shift early in the 1990s, led by the changes in US policy. From the adoption of the revision to NATO strategy, laid out in the document MC400/1 in 1996, NATO no longer maintains detailed plans for the use of nuclear weapons in specific scenarios. Instead, like the US, it has developed a so-called “adaptive targeting capability”. This capability is designed to allow major NATO commanders to develop target plans and nuclear weapons employment plans on short notice, during a contingency or crisis, from pre-developed databases containing possible targets. This enables the political declaration that no nation is currently targeted by NATO. This represents a dramatic shift from previous policy, where nuclear weapons were said to counter the conventional imbalance between NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

33. Concerns have been raised that NATO is adopting US policies on using nuclear weapons against proliferant states which possess, or potentially possess, NBC weapons. This is much more controversial in Europe than in the United States, not least because of the proximity of such states to Europe and the likely environmental and human health effects on European populations if such weapons were to be used against neighbours. This has meant that statements of NATO policy are far more reserved and opaque than related American statements. For example, paragraph 41 of the Alliance’s Strategic Concept states that “By deterring the use of NBC weapons, they [Alliance forces] contribute to Alliance efforts aimed at preventing the proliferation of these weapons and their delivery means.”

34. American sources have said that this formula leaves the door open to the use of nuclear weapons against those possessing, or even thought to possess, nuclear or other NBC weapons and their means of delivery, a doctrine the United States has already adopted in US national nuclear strategy. US spokespeople refuse to rule out the use of nuclear weapons against potential adversaries who use, or threaten to use,
nuclear weapons or other NBC weapons, even non-state actors. The United States aims to have its national doctrine incorporated into NATO policy. Even if this is not in the interests of other NATO states, historical precedent makes this a likely development.

35. Ministers adopted the next revision of the NATO strategy implementation paper, MC400/2 in May 2000. According to one report, the document states that “an appropriate mix of forces”—ie conventional and nuclear forces—should be available to the Alliance when facing a threat by any NBC weapons. This ambiguity would allow the United States to interpret NATO strategy as being in line with US national doctrine. Following the Nuclear Posture Review of 2002, this has been explicitly altered to allow for the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear targets in counterproliferation missions. NATO policy is ambiguous enough to allow others to claim that this is not the case, but non-nuclear countries in the NPT have nonetheless raised concerns.

36. There is no public evidence that the MC400 series of papers has as yet been clearly revised to allow for pre-emptive nuclear strikes against NBC weapon states, or non-state actors, as is the case with US military doctrine. It also seems that NATO has yet to completely revise operational procedure in line with US doctrine, a step that is controversial for European NATO nations, and for Canada. One senior European diplomat told the author that “If you think we are going to let the Americans throw nuclear weapons around on Europe’s periphery, then you must be crazy.” Canadian diplomats at the 2003 PrepCom for the 2005 NPT Review Conference reacted badly to suggestions that NATO had adopted the US practice of targeting all NBC weapons with nuclear weapons. In a statement to the conference Canada stated that:

As a non-nuclear weapon State member of NATO, Canada takes this opportunity to affirm that the 1999 Strategic Concept has not been re-opened and remains the base for NATO’s nuclear policy. Nor is it NATO policy that nuclear weapons may be used against non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT, except as provided in the language of the Negative Security Assurances affirmed in 1995.

37. Despite this European and Canadian reluctance, the United States has already attempted to integrate pre-emptive conventional and possibly nuclear strikes into a NATO exercise scenario, but were met with strong resistance from other NATO nations. The exercise, Crisis Management Exercise or CMX 2002, was the first designed to test allied reaction to a potential NBC weapons strike against a member state (in this case Turkey) from “Amberland” (based on Iraq). The scenario began 100 days into the crisis with an attack looming. A report of the exercise notes:

[Serious disagreements arise between Allies over the appropriate response to the situation. The Military Committee is tasked with providing a list of recommendations for military options, but eventually is unable to do so. Capitals cannot agree on what the priorities should be and demand that political considerations be taken into account. The range of alternatives available are narrowed down to two main options: either carry out a pre-emptive strike with conventional weapons, or embark on an active information policy which delivers a threat of heavy and swift response if Amberland attacks Turkey. The United States and Turkey reportedly take a more hard line stance in support of pre-emptive strikes, while Germany, France and Spain prefer to defuse the crisis through more political means. Many NATO members see the practical benefits of a pre-emptive strike, but warn that such an action could trigger an escalation of the crisis. By the end of the seven-day exercise, the United States and Turkey declare themselves ready for pre-emptive air strikes. The exercise ends before any attack is carried out or Article V is officially declared.]

38. In fact, then NATO Secretary-General Lord Robertson was forced to step in and shut down the exercise early in order to prevent open conflict emerging between allies. (This mirrored similar events in 1989, when Germany refused to allow an exercise including nuclear use in Germany to reach its final day). Other sources indicated that the US delegation at the exercise wanted nuclear options to be considered as part of this exercise, but did not press the point when even conventional pre-emptive strikes proved so controversial. They insisted on leaving the option open.

39. The difficulties in Alliance collective action exposed by CMX 2002 have been reinforced in European reaction to the publication of the National Security Strategy and the National Strategy to Combat WMD. If this kind of mission were to arise in real life, there is reportedly “some agreement among NATO insiders that that ‘the Alliance will not be the primary vehicle to carry out such an initiative’. One official points out that ‘even if there was evidence that a rogue state was imminently launching an attack with NBC weapons, the Allies would not be able to do anything and the US would have to go it alone. At best, NATO could give political support or another invocation of Article V’”.

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27 Monaco, Annalisa and Riggle, Sharon, NATO Squares Off with Middle East Foe: Threat of WMD challenges Alliance, in NATO Notes, Vol 4, No 2, 1 March 2002.
40. US efforts to fully integrate American doctrine into NATO run counter to the traditional NATO approach that nuclear weapons have a political function. In this perspective, the tensions between US and European views on how best to resolve risks and threats from proliferators will be hard to reconcile. The US view that counterproliferation must be “integrated into the doctrine, training, and equipping of our force and those of our allies to ensure that we can prevail in any conflict with WMD-armed adversaries” will be controversial as no European nation can openly admit to preparations to fight and win nuclear war, or a war involving other NBC weapons. European NATO nations in particular cannot openly support the idea that nuclear weapons should be used against biological or chemical weapons-armed adversaries who lack nuclear weapons.

41. The threat of conventional or nuclear strikes by NATO or by the US alone is likely to strengthen the pressures on countries in the NATO periphery to proliferate, unless they receive solid, binding security guarantees that they will not be subject to attack. Further, as NATO seeks to transform, nations outside Europe which face the potential threat of NATO nuclear use are less likely to accept NATO as an organizer of expeditionary missions meant to build global security in a disinterested fashion. These problems may already be dissipating unified approaches with regard to Iran and other areas of concern. In such a way, the current Alliance nuclear posture is actually increasing threats to the Alliance at its periphery.

42. The Committee should recommend that the use of nuclear weapons in counterproliferation missions should be explicitly rejected by NATO.

**NATO, Arms Control and Non-Proliferation**

43. The retention by NATO of nuclear weapons is a stumbling block to pursuing threat reduction through arms control and non-proliferation—an approach which most NATO members have endorsed through the European Union’s non-proliferation strategy. The development of new generations of nuclear weapons by the US, UK and France only add to the impression beyond Europe that NATO’s stance on preventing the spread of nuclear weapons while planning to retain their own far into the 21st Century is at best hypocritical, and at worst self-defeating, actually decreasing security for Alliance members and encouraging the creation of new threats.

44. The gradual drift away from the open endorsement by NATO of key arms control Treaties, such as the CTBT, has further undermined the Alliance role in preventing and rolling back proliferation through diplomacy. Senior NATO sources have affirmed that, while ideas such as those put forward publicly by Germany and Norway were not discussed at the Riga Summit, they will have to be addressed in the future. It is also clear to Alliance insiders that if NATO wishes to be a serious security player in the future, it needs to return to past practice and incorporate non-proliferation and arms control into its missions, starting with the inclusion of such issues for addressing in formal NATO settings.

45. This is an urgent matter. We currently face a relatively benign threat environment, but there may be only a narrow window of opportunity to further improve this situation, and to build longer term, sustainable security through nuclear threat reduction. The Ministry of Defence assessment, as laid out in the Trident white paper and in Written Answers, is that there is no current conventional or nuclear threat to NATO. The current situation, in which NATO is failing to endorse further nuclear arms control, means that NATO nations are forgoing a golden opportunity to enhance their security in the long term through the definitive removal of WMD threats from Russia and other nations in the NATO periphery.

46. The actions of some NATO member states are putting the possibility of engaging Russia and others in nuclear arms control at risk. The United States, Poland and the Czech Republic are currently examining the possibility of stationing elements of the US Ballistic Missile Defense system, including missile interceptors, in Europe. The UK has also shown interest in such deployments. Russia has said it would reinstate targeting for any missile defence bases in Europe, and has also threatened to withdraw from the 1987 Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. If they do so, and follow this with a redeployment of nuclear missiles like the SS-20s of the 1980s, aimed at NATO nations, then non-strategic nuclear arms control will be very much harder. Moreover, NATO will face a nuclear threat we all believed had been negotiated away once and for all. Such a stand-off is in no-one’s interest, and would substantially decrease our security.

47. The Committee should recommend that HMG should lead NATO in an immediate reinvigoration of its policies on arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament as part of a comprehensive strategy for nuclear, biological and chemical threat reduction. The withdrawal of US nuclear weapons from Europe, and an end to the role of US and UK Trident forces in NATO defence policy should be part of this arms control process.

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30 For the appropriate written answer to John Bercow MP, see Hansard, 12 December 2006: Column 932W.
NATO Nuclear Sharing

48. NATO maintains a Cold War-era programme of nuclear sharing under which nominally non-nuclear states have military units which are trained in the use of nuclear weapons, and the United States maintains stocks of nuclear weapons on their territory for host nation use in time of war. Belgium, The Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Greece and Turkey participate in this programme, though it is understood that Greece no longer permits US nuclear weapons to be based on their soil. Currently each of the nuclear sharing nations has air force units which are trained and certified in the carriage, deployment and use of nuclear weapons.

49. The pilots for these aircraft are provided with training specific to the use of US nuclear weapons. The air force units to which these pilots and aircraft belong have the capability to play a part in NATO nuclear planning, including assigning a target, selection of the yield of the warhead appropriate for the target, and planning a specific mission for the use of the bombs. In times of war, the US would hand direct control of these nuclear weapons over to the non-nuclear weapon states’ pilots for use with aircraft from non-nuclear weapon states. Once the bomb is loaded aboard, the correct Permissive Action Link code would have been entered by the US soldiers guarding the weapons. Therefore, once the aircraft begins its mission, control over the respective weapon(s) has been transferred to pilots from the host nation, notwithstanding that five of these are non-nuclear weapon states parties to the NPT.

50. There are concerns that this arrangement undermines, and possibly contravenes, Articles I and II of the NPT. According to US lawyers, the transfer of control is legal because, on the outbreak of “general war”, the NPT has failed in its purpose and can be regarded as no longer in controlling force. This arrangement was conceived in the early to mid-1960s to contain proliferation. It is arguable that several European nations including Germany were persuaded not to become nuclear states themselves because of the NATO nuclear umbrella. However, a nuclear sharing arrangement that may have had some logic in the pre-NPT and cold war world is now a source of weakening for the NPT, as it offers a rationale to other states to pursue a similar programme. NATO’s nuclear sharing programme could now be used as an excuse by China, Pakistan or any other nuclear-armed nation to establish a similar arrangement. Imagine if China were to offer such an arrangement to persuade North Korea to give up its nuclear ambitions. Or if Pakistan were to undertake nuclear sharing with Saudi Arabia or Iran. Such developments would be perceived as a threat to security in North Asia or the Middle East, and even as a direct threat to NATO. Yet, while the NATO arrangements remain in place, NATO members would have few valid grounds for complaint.

51. The Committee should recommend the immediate termination of NATO nuclear sharing arrangements.

CONCLUSION

52. NATO is facing some serious and difficult debates over the next three years. Alliance solidarity has been slowly eroding since the disappearance of the Soviet Union, and the task for NATO leaders is to rebuild that solidarity and reshape the Alliance to face new missions dictated by the transformed post cold war, post 9/11 strategic and security environment. NATO must find a way to succeed in bringing stability to Afghanistan, and successfully extracting itself from a more stable Kosovo, while using these experiences to craft a new Strategic Concept based on the security needs of the 21st century on which all members can agree. This task is difficult, but not impossible.

53. The Committee should recommend that Her Majesty’s Government, as part of its commitment to non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament, should initiate negotiation of a new Strategic Concept for NATO, including the termination of all nuclear elements in joint strategy and doctrine, and emphasizing arms control and non-proliferation as the only long-term mechanisms for reducing and eliminating WMD threats.

19 March 2007

Memorandum from Maria-Pierre Nisus

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN POINTS

NATO: The New Way of Force

This paper examines the nature of war in our modern society. Precisely, war amongst the people and the role of NATO. It underlines the new way to combat emerging threats, which requires from leaders both new thinking and new capabilities. War amongst the people necessitates more than ever the use of intelligence and information to fight terrorism effectively. The analysis brings us to understand that the role of military forces are limited, even if they face timeless conflicts. In this war amongst the people, the role of the military is debatable. To meet emerging threats, NATO is evolving; this paper will give an insight into this process. To respond efficiently, the 2002 Prague Summit and the 2006 Riga Summit added the new objectives of the stabilisation of conflicts not only in Europe (for example, Bosnia-Herzegovina), but also out of its European
forces are well-planned. The example of war between France and Russia in 1812 illustrates the massive operations and so to reach the political objectives. To win a war important factors are involved: operational therefore, it is the political objectives which shape the military objectives, and in consequence military

A Brief Introduction About You

Marie-Pierre Nisus holds a Master of Arts Degree, with Merit, in Diplomatic Studies from the Diplomatic Academy of London (University of Westminster), and a Bachelor of Arts, with Honours, in International Relations. She has an interest in International Security, the development of NATO, and Civil-military relations. She has attended meetings at the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies and the Royal Institute of International Affairs, both in London.

NATO THE NEW WAY OF FORCE

Introduction

War no longer exists, as General Sir Rupert Smith affirms in his book: The Utility of Force, the Art of War in the Modern World. He asserts that we face different type of conflicts, but not war. Yet, the concept of war remains the same with a significant mobilization of force from the opponent country with an intentional armed conflict. This was most evident during the First and Second World Wars and even the most recent War in Iraq. The real cause of war may remain unclear, but it is always an issue about governance between two political communities. From this perspective, the philosopher of war, Carl Von Clausewitz, asserted that war is “the continuation of policy by other means.” This affirmation is certainly true to some extent by using violence to resolve policy; that is, Clausewitz stated again that “an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfill our will”. In other words, war per se, is a means to create new policy, by using force to come to a peaceful agreement between two parties at war. The Cold War had been an exception. A war between two different ideologies that did not bring any direct confrontations, but rather allowed two nations to develop sophisticated and destructive weapons. Although considering war was unthinkable, because of the consequence of a nuclear war, their nuclear arsenals played a significant role via deterrence. Therefore, war had been managed and led to the development of an art of strategy.

War remains a brutal enterprise, which has an impact on human history and social change. War has changed too, and particularly, its environment from battlefield to war amongst people. Defensive postures from governments have changed—focusing on collective security to the protection of common interests. However, war still remains the driving force in our international society. Recent events in different parts of the world attest this affirmation: the terrorist attack of 9/11, the war in Afghanistan and in Iraq, the Darfur crisis in Sudan, and the on-going consequences of the “war on terror”. The evolution of war, or precisely regional or international conflicts call for a new approach to deal with the new emerging form of threats. Thinking about these conflicts should bring political leaders to employ new ways to respond to the conflicts of our modern society. Principally, terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and disarmament, require the use of military force with appropriate deployment and measures to be not only effective, but also to face any challenges. The Iraq case illustrates this aspect of the military in conflicts, but also, underlines the limit of military force. Seeking positive results should not take into account only the political objectives, but the military objectives too. Other factors should be included to sustain peace in an area of conflict, as the different institutions: UN-NATO, EU-NATO and without forgetting the civil-military relations: NGOs, which should be taken into consideration for nation-building operations.

The involvement of NATO in different conflicts (Bosnia and Kosovo) have changed NATO’s objectives from the Cold War. The continuing improvement of these objectives have taken place in many summits, and notably the “war on terror” has made NATO re-think its role in Afghanistan and future commitments.

Thus, it is in no way the end of NATO, but the opposite, its enlargement towards other democratic nations, out of its European borders, to help NATO to face efficiently any threats.

The 21st century has already been stained with warfare, but how has the changing nature of conflict changed the military’s role, and when conflicts end, how should post-war conflict stabilisation and reconstruction proceed?

1. Political and Military Objectives

The decision to wage war is made by government. As Clausewitz mentioned that war is a tool of policy; therefore, it is the political objectives which shape the military objectives, and in consequence military operations. War and the use of military forces are fundamental elements to bring success to military operations and so to reach the political objectives. To win a war important factors are involved: operational and tactical strategies. Military objectives can be a triumph if the deployment and employment of military forces are well-planned. The example of war between France and Russia in 1812 illustrates the massive
deployment of forces from Napoleon to take over Moscow. Similarly, during the Second World War, Hitler used a massive deployment of airpower to attempt to overthrow the British government by trying to destroy its military power, but he did not succeed. These two wars exemplify the massive deployment of military forces in interstate war.

The deployment and employment of military forces are still essential to achieve military objectives. Yet, in our modern society, deployments should be appropriate, and in the same way, political leaders should change their concept about waging war. The thinking used for interstate war is no longer applicable for the new way of war. The war amongst people requires other methods: military forces would have a limited role for a limited period. For example, in 1994, the deployment of military forces in Haiti were not used to overthrow the military junta. It was through diplomacy that the US achieved its political objectives. Another example is the war on terrorism: this does not necessarily require the large-scale or protracted use of military force. The deployment and employment of military forces should be appropriate and specific regarding those tasks. Certainly, as affirmed by many analysts on this subject, a new form of terrorist has emerged, which exploits the “tactics of the weak, or “a war method that undermines an enemy’s power, exploitation of his weaknesses, and asymmetrical operations to achieve victory.” In this situation, leaders should always think about the unthinkable, and thus, methods and equipment have to be adequate to ensure the attainment of set military and political objectives.

**The limited role of military forces in modern conflicts**

In our modern world, military forces have a limited role in conflicts. Indeed, in a conflict the use of military force is restrained: contemporary conflicts are limited. Bosnia and Kosovo, where limited military forces had been used to take the control over the enemy from local towns, villages and roads, are pertinent examples. This was also the case regarding the protection of the No-Fly zones in Iraq and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Consequently, in the Iraq conflict, US military forces should have stopped after the downfall of Saddam Hussein, leaving the place for other institutions. The conflict which emerged led to US forces having to fight against the terror of insurgents; a task for which the US military was not prepared. Indeed, terrorists act differently to the military, while the military has a strategic objective, terrorists have none. In addition, the conventional way of fighting is not the same. The use of new and advanced technology, and increasingly destructive weapons have alerted the world to how big terrorism is through the use of intelligence and information. This allows one to know the enemy. Sun Tzu states:

“*That one who knows both his enemy and himself will not be in danger in a hundred battles. That one who does not know his enemy and knows himself will sometimes gain victory. That one who knows neither his enemy nor himself will be immutably defeated in any battle.*”

The need for intelligence is essential, because as attested to by General Sir Rupert Smith, terrorists are amongst the people, and this had been demonstrated after the events of 11 September 2001. Thus, the collection of information should be verified and challenged by the assumptions before any decision regarding the use of military force. The example of the US-UK intelligence reports on Saddam Hussein regarding the possession of weapons of mass destruction discredited the intelligence services because no weapons of mass destruction have been found. Another challenging task is about the deployment and employment of military forces. Have they been trained or are they capable to fulfill their duties? It is an important question because leaders use old methods on new threats. This has to change; a US military specialist confessed that the defence system was ineffective to stop such terrorist attacks. It is thus essential that political leaders change the way they see conflicts in response to new challenges to the achievement of their political objectives.

With this analysis, the role of military forces seems to be reduced from the battlefield to limited and specific combat, but one significant question is what are their purposes in the conflicts of our modern society and principally, institutions like NATO? Are they capable of facing new challenges?

**NATO, changing objectives: a global role?**

At the end of the Cold War, new threats have emerged, but it was only from 11 September 2001 that NATO leaders became fully aware of the danger of those threats, and consequently a different approach has been adopted, in particular to the use of military power. These threats that Europe faces have pushed NATO to move beyond its European boarders. Indeed, the main threats today are the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and failed states and the interconnection between them which can endanger the security of other nation-states. These issues had been debated at the 2002 Prague Summit, acknowledging by leaders that NATO needed new capabilities to deploy and employ forces to confront any...
conflict, and to support operations in distant places, including dealing with biological, chemical and nuclear weapons. Thus, the Prague Summit made a good starting point by making NATO relevant by responding to the challenges of our modern society.

The process of NATO transformation has facilitated the Alliance to tackle these more diverse and distant threats. The example of NATO’s involvement in Afghanistan has permitted this organization to play a significant role in post-conflict stability operations. It has implemented the Prague Capabilities Commitment in a number of diverse areas: the NATO Response Force (NRF); civil-emergency-planning action plan; a partnership action plan against terrorism; nuclear, biological and chemical weapons have been considered in the defence initiatives; in the same way, a missile defence feasibility study and redesigning NATO’s science program to be more effective and responsive. These counter-terror capabilities have shown how NATO has changed to meet those threats, and enhancing the Alliance’s defence.

In August 2003 NATO took command of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) which has the task of stabilisation and the provision of security to post-Taliban Afghanistan, under the mandate of the United Nations (UN). Initially, ISAF was intended to operate inside the capital and its surroundings, but has now taken responsibility for security across Afghanistan. Thus, the NATO-led ISAF has got around 32,000 soldiers. The work of NATO and the US in Afghanistan made the military deployment effective and necessary as they do not have the same missions. While the US-led operation ‘Enduring Freedom’ was focused on counter-terrorism, ISAF concentrated on stabilisation and security. The employment of forces in this case are and should be appropriate to combat the terrorist scourage. It is for that purpose that an increase in the number of NATO soldiers has been made. From 5,000 troops firstly to 10,000 troops today, and intends to call for more troops by the end of the 2006, and particularly in the southern part of the country where the situation is most dangerous. Such an initiative should strengthen cooperation between European and US military forces.

The shift of NATO out of its geographical boundary has a sound of global engagement. Yet, the Secretary General, Jaap De Hoop Scheffer, contested the possible global mission attributed to NATO, as he made clear at the Riga Summit. NATO transformation is not about “globalising” NATO, but a way to provide new capabilities to defend the common interests and values of the Alliance member against new threats. In that sense, NATO is not a “global policeman” as stated by Mr Jaap Hoop De Scheffer.

From providing territorial defence to Europe, shifting to a more international security orientation, NATO with its new capabilities is therefore able to face challenges and meet the demands that are required to ensure stabilization and security, and provide immediate assistance.

2. A NEW PARADIGM: NATIONAL SECURITY

War in our modern society or amongst people has changed the military and political objectives. It is no longer about the national defence, but rather, about national security. Defending the people against their enemies, which are amongst them, or more precisely, ensuring the security of the people in the society is the new paradigm. The situation of today’s war could be summarized according to Admiral Jean Dufourcq’s statement:

“Ce n’est plus la défense des Etats qui est la question centrale mais la sécurité des sociétés, et les instruments militaires assemblés à grands frais pour préserver les Etats peuvent sembler inopérants pour protéger les citoyens fragilisés, précarisés.”

(“It is no longer national defence but the security of societies that is the central issue, and the military instruments assembled at great expenses to safeguard a state may now seem inadequate for the protection of a fragile, unstable population.”)

From this statement, it is obvious that the intervention of military forces have changed considerably in the post-Cold War. The deployment and employment of forces do not have the purpose of defence, but in the opposite, a goal of security or more broadly ‘human security’. Military actions embrace now a wide range of missions, such as crisis intervention, limited combat operations, peacekeeping and peace-enforcement. These missions are the new approaches by political leaders to restore peace and also to sustain fragile peace until a resolution has been found to end these conflicts. The example of NATO in the Balkans leading two major operations known as the Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) in the Serbian province of Kosovo, illustrate these facts. For instance, in Kosovo, the NATO air campaign had the objective to back diplomatic efforts to force Milosevic to return to the negotiating

table. The tandem works of NATO and UNPROFOR to enforce the UN sanctions and ensure the UN No-Fly zone over Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the UNPREDEP deployment in Macedonia, from 1992 until its withdrawal in 1999 illustrate the change in the use of military power. The goal of both deployments was to ensure stability in the region, while deterring any existing hostility from Yugoslavia.

It is thus clear that NATO has gone beyond its initial objective, but has also taken on new duties. For example, NATO’s involvement in the training of 1,500 Iraqi military and security forces, and the delivery of military equipment to Iraq. Regarding the African Union (AU), NATO has offered logistical support to 5,000 African Union troops in Darfur. It also provided training to the military officers and technical assistance in the African missions at their headquarters in Ethiopia. Another illustration is NATO’s assistance to the earthquake victims in the region of Kashmir, the tsunami in Indonesia and similarly to the victims of Hurricane Katrina in the United States. Thus, NATO has broadened its security spectrum by including human security from violent to non-violent threats.

Civil-Military relations

In a military intervention, civilian authorities, humanitarian organisations and NGOs are required and have to be considered in the planning of operations. They should work side-by-side to bring assistance and protection to vulnerable populations. It is a common image in the news to see NGOs remaining in a conflict area to provide assistance to the affected local populations. Moreover, conflict in our modern society demands such cooperation between civil and military authorities. The Former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq have demonstrated the importance of humanitarian organisation and NGOs in the field. With this, the domain of the Defence Ministries tend to be wide in taking the responsibility for a multitude of agencies, organisations and NGOs. It is thus obvious that the role of the peacekeeping is becoming more complex in providing security and stability for the assistance and protection of populations. In this view, NATO should develop and deepen the civil-military concepts in its operational planning. Its experience in Afghanistan on the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) is a good starting point. Similarly, it should cooperate with international organisations and NGOs in its planning operations and the sharing of information. In addition, as a regional security organisation, NATO should set up closer relationships with the United Nations organisations and UN bodies; particularly the UNHCR, UNDP, UNICEF, World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). As with the United Nations, NATO should have civilian representatives to work in liaison between NATO and humanitarian actors in the field. In this way, it is certain that NATO can be more efficient regarding human security, and also working in cooperation with the EU on specific operations.

Laure Borgomano-Loup37 went further by changing the role of peacekeeping: embracing coercion/peacemaking missions firstly, and then peacekeeping missions, which include reconciliation for a lasting peace. The case of Rwanda is an example; reconciliation amongst people within a society is the key to stop and possibly to eradicate the cause of conflicts. This approach should be applied, when stability and security have been restored, then peacekeeping missions could be set up, using military police and/ or French Gendarmerie-style detachments—as it was in Kosovo and Macedonia—to establish law and order and starting the reconciliation process within the society. This process should include not only NATO, other actors in the field, but also, government and local authorities.

3. NATO: STRENGTHENING THE ALLIANCES

NATO’s support in nation building has only contributed to restore stability and security. NATO cannot provide “soft security” instruments such as civilian assets; it has to rely on other institutions or ad-hoc coalitions of countries to perform reconstruction operations. The NATO-EU cooperation on crisis management (or Berlin-Plus arrangements) is an example of such a commitment. The Berlin Plus agreement for the EU ESDP (European Security and Defence Policy) provides EU access to NATO operational planning capabilities and the availability of NATO capabilities and common assets for EU-led operations, for example, Operation Althea in Bosnia-Herzegovina, run by SHAPE and DSACEUR,38 Operation Concordia in the Former Republic of Macedonia, and Artemis in the Democratic Republic of Congo. NATO-EU works in partnership and as a complementary of nation-building missions, by sharing common strategic interests and values. Member countries in the EU are also, for the most part, members of NATO, which is a key for strengthening the alliances and achieving successful missions, as it is the case regarding Operation Artemis. Moreover, such success depends on the consensus of decision-making and also on the political will of the two organisations. Thus, NATO-EU collaboration, working on mutual coordination of

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38 Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, and Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe respectively.
each organisation’s role and responsibility, with NATO providing “hard” security and stabilisation and the EU providing “soft” security instruments for civilian objectives, could relieve crises in different areas in the world.

In addition, such a concept could be applied in the context of NATO-Russia relations, for example, as a joint peace support operation. Debate on this concept has revealed the existing convergences between NATO members and Russia. The recognition of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) as a security provider by NATO is one option for establishing the grounds for operations in a coalition framework. However, NATO-Russia joint-operations in the Newly Independent States (NIS) would not be acceptable to the Russian public. They would prefer an UN mandate with the EU as a partner or a coalition of countries. However, such a concept should not be abandoned, but rather efforts to raise the Russian awareness on the possibility of a successful cooperation between NATO-Russia are required.

Another factor which has strengthened the Alliances is the growing engagement with non-NATO members. They have contributed toward the effort made by NATO in Bosnia and Afghanistan. For instance, Australia, Japan and South Korea have sent troops to ensure stability and security in Iraq. The Riga Summit in November 2006 emphasised the need to maintain and strengthen partnership and cooperation, which are essential for the Alliance’s operations and missions. In this sense, deepening relations with countries beyond the Atlantic, as in the Asia-Pacific region could only benefit the Alliance. The expansion of dialogue with its non-European partners would be a benefit for the Alliance, as these countries have in common democratic interests and values. Therefore, deepening its relations with the Asia-Pacific region, such as Australia, Japan and South Korea could benefit the Alliance by setting up a democratic belt around China.

**Strategic Concept**

The international security environment has changed since 11 September 2001. The Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts have set new tasks for the Alliance: NATO has acquired new capabilities to respond to these new threats and challenges and new agreements have been made on EU-NATO cooperation. This has led NATO to be involved in crises in Asia and Africa. From this point, debate on a new or revised Strategic Concept is required, calling for NATO adaptability to the 21st century threats. By reviewing NATO’s Strategic Concept, the redefinition of the Alliance’s relationship with the United Nations and the European Union, and also taking into account the concept of transformation could be discussed. Apparatus for NATO’s military transformation has been set-up, but a political transformation should also be put in place. The latter would consider a dialogue/forum for members and partnerships for issues on the security agenda, more flexible decision-making for a rapid response to humanitarian emergencies and conflicts/crises, and finally, for further enlargement for European States and possibly out of the European region, as NATO now has to respond to global needs. Therefore, NATO needs more coherent structures and strategies politically and militarily regarding consensual decision-making, which includes political legitimacy, and strives for efficiency in their activities. This will give a clear strategic concept for NATO and strengthen the Alliance.

**CONCLUSION: NATO’S FUTURE**

War has changed the nature of the battlefield; conflict now tends to be urban-centred, and conflicts and confrontations have supplanted war in its traditional sense. In consequence, the military’s role has changed with the specific deployment and employment of forces. They no longer fight protracted war, but rather limited combats to defeat militias or insurgencies. They are, thus, used in a peacekeeping role to set-up security and stability for the negotiation of political agreements.

Institutions like NATO assured such a role in the Balkans. However, since 11 September, 2001, the international security environment has changed with new threats including terrorism, failed states, and the use of weapons of mass destruction by rogue actors (non-state and state). In addition, NATO has been transformed and gone beyond its initial concept. NATO has got a global reach thanks to its involvement in Asia and Africa, but also, it has widened its operations to include peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance. This transformation has permitted NATO to go along with its partners and institutions such as the EU, UN and other members to tackle global threats and provide civilian implementations in the post-war conflicts. The appreciation of a reconciliation programme including civil assets would be beneficial for the population to avoid going back to crisis. This would be done by the EU or UN; but NATO should adopt a civil-military cell in its operations and be closer to the UN agencies. With these new capabilities, military and civilian, NATO would be strengthened and adapt to the challenges of the 21st century. Additionally, the political transformation has to be pursued, along with a clear Strategic Concept to advance the common interests of the transatlantic community, and those of the global democratic community for a more stable world.
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8 March 2007

Memorandum from Dr Robert Dover

1. This memorandum takes a capabilities approach to the question of NATO and European Defence and argues that capabilities—in British and European contexts—pose some serious challenges to the concept of European defence today.

2. The reason for a capabilities approach to the question of European defence is straightforward—without a root and branch review of defence capabilities and assets in the EU, and in our localised case, the UK then all the follow-on questions of what the UK, EU and NATO can do with these capabilities become redundant. Without simultaneous reviews of the capabilities enjoyed by the Armed Forces, and the commitments endured by them there is a strong chance that the UK will suffer a strategic defeat in the medium to long term. This memorandum tries, through a discussion about capabilities, to suggest ways in which a new strategic culture can be adopted by the military and defence elites, to avoid being strategically defeated in the main military activities of the day—counterinsurgency.
A Downward Economic Spiral

3. Philip Pugh and Norman Augustine are the fathers of the concept of Defence Cost Inflation (DCI). In both their studies they concluded that all military equipment is subject to year on year compound inflation in the region of 2–3%. The impact of their statistical analysis (which was done in relation to the British Navy) meant that (on the assumption of compound UK defence budget increases of 2–3% per year) the navy would shrink by a compound interest figure of 2–3% a year. If one projects these figures out over 50 years, the navy becomes so diminished that it ceases to have any meaningful utility. The real-life inflationary costs of notable defence procurement projects—like the proposed aircraft carriers, and Eurofighter Typhoon—have come in at higher figures than presented by Pugh and Augustine. If we couple the inflation of these headline projects to the replacement of the nuclear deterrent and to other core costs such as the recruitment and retention of services personnel, fuel, ammunition and the like, then the pressure on the defence budget begins to look daunting. The same is the case across the whole of the European Union; for the disappointing reason that the majority of EU member governments used the Cold War to offset their defence costs against the American security guarantee. The off balance-sheet cost of this upward economic cycle and downward capabilities cycle is to limit the range and scope of activities that EU can prosecute in its own name and its member states can do in support of NATO. The political effects of these trends are therefore large.

4. The question of how to break out of inexorable cycle of capability decline is a difficult one. Pugh concluded that the only way to break the cycle was to fundamentally re-conceptualise the tasks to be undertaken by the armed forces and the capabilities they have to do them with. This memorandum modifies this view slightly—it is essential to think beyond high-technology solutions for every military problem. The majority of tasks that are performed by European armed forces, including our own, do not lend themselves to high-technology solutions, indeed the opposite is true.

The Problem of Small Wars and Insurgencies

5. The companies who supply the British Armed Forces, the politicians who make the decisions about procurement projects, and the Armed Forces themselves are fixated on high-technology projects and finding operational justifications for them.

6. For the companies this makes sense: in a post-industrial society the best way to improve profit yields is to build few, very expensive pieces of equipment with high research and development costs. Politicians seem easily seduced by “high-ticket-price” items like Eurofighter Typhoon and FRES, whilst simple and cheap equipment options (like infantry body armour) get lost in a myriad of committees; whilst the armed forces are instrumentally keen on any piece of equipment that can demonstrate an improvement to their ability to conduct operations.

7. My argument is very simple. If the premise that the British military will be fighting in a series of small wars and counterinsurgency campaigns (like Iraq and Afghanistan) is accepted, then the requirement for the most technologically advanced equipment is negated by the operational realities on ground. What the armed forces need is “second best, now”, not an Apache helicopter parked in a warehouse. Counterinsurgency doctrine also puts a very high premium on the political content of any campaign. These campaigns demand sympathetic contact between the armed forces and the non-combatant communities they operate within. Necessary moves into highly armoured vehicles are counterproductive for these campaigns, and so planners should think instrumentally about how to combat the improvised explosive devices and get the infantry out of armoured vehicles and back onto foot and into “snatch landrovers”; which are far more effective at reaching out to indigenous communities. What is required above all, at the moment, is a technology that can bridge the divide between high-altitude airspace and the commander on the ground; to help reconnect all the elements of the battlespace.

8. The European way of war-fighting has become wedged at the end of the higher intensity operation and this is where we have pitched our capabilities and procurement requirements. Equipment used for high-intensity war fighting is often poorly suited to the requirements of so-called small wars and insurgencies which require a larger focus on “influence operations”. British political and military history has become averse to risk. The average counterinsurgency campaign lasts 15 years—the British and American led coalitions in Iraq and Afghanistan are trying to neutralise the adversaries and the win the peace in these theatres in two years, and to do so using high-end war-fighting techniques. This demonstrates a failure to understand asymmetry in all of its guises and makes it likely that we will face strategic defeats in both the main theatres of operation in Afghanistan and Iraq. Addressing these failures is not only about a cultural turn in understanding the adversary, it is also about a strategic culture of flexibility within the military and the Ministry of Defence. The dynamism seen in the German military prior to World War II was due to the strategic defeat they had suffered in World War I and the rapid promotion of the middle ranks open to new suggestions, including those of Liddell-Hart on tank warfare. It should be our ambition to try and affect...
a strategic cultural change without suffering a strategic defeat first. One of the ways of doing this is to improve the immediacy of the lessons learned by individuals returning from Afghanistan and Iraq and also to seek their input into the equipment and innovations they need in the field. This should include modifications to existing equipment—which used to be the sort of task that was performed by DERA. Current procurement programmes rely heavily on computerised scenario planning, rather than the experiences of those rotating out of theatre. A return to the innovation and flexibility that used to be a key element and success of the British military would reduce the lead-in time to innovative solutions in the field and also be one way to echo Pugh’s desire to adapt existing equipment rather than procuring bespoke solutions.

A European Challenge to European Defence

9. The European dimension of arms procurement is particularly interesting. The European Commission and arms manufacturers are at the forefront of an increasingly Europeanized arms trade. The EU’s national governments remain concerned with the protection of national economic interests that are now anything but national because of the internationalization of defence industries through mergers, acquisitions and joint projects. Furthermore, the Commission and manufacturers have used the ‘homeland security’ agenda to force a Europeanization agenda, which has arguably distorted the preferences of national governments away from the stated security goals of the ESDP. The juxtaposition of the deeply insular national trade against an emerging and vibrant pan-European trade is an interesting one to observe.

10. On the European stage the European Defence Agency (EDA) provides the EU with an ability to influence the development of technology (through research and development funds) and, by inference, the procurement and sale of these materials. By extension, defence industries should now be considered as a tool of diplomacy at the disposal of the EU. However, the EU’s new diplomatic tool has the potential to cause tensions between national arms programmes and national commitments to the NATO alliance. The European Commission can be seen as trying to construct a counter-weight to the global dominance of the American arms manufacturers—this will clearly have an impact on how Britain shapes its defence industries and armed forces in the future. The EDA’s and Commission’s desire to increase arms sales might also be part of a post-Cold War version of an arms race, the dash for market share, as firms from America, Russia and Europe vie for contracts around the world. The competition for market share is partly a raw economic equation of boosting balances of trade, but it also serves a foreign policy purpose of buying, or more precisely selling, influence into those client countries—particularly as the contracts often contain maintenance clauses that extend the commercial relationship into the medium term. This sort of direct competition with America may well put strains on the NATO alliance. Furthermore, if the EU becomes a “soft-security” actor, and one engaged more fully in homeland security then it will start to put pressure on the MoD and Home Office budgets to invest in expensive technology led solutions to counter-terrorism; potentially dragging funding away from traditional military lines and the sorts of roles NATO expects Britain and its European partners to play.

11. However, at the moment, the EDA’s primary desire is for technological parity with the US. This is partly driven by economics, but also driven by the consideration of power politics, both nationally and supranationally. The EDA’s Programme of Action for 2005-6 demonstrated this point neatly: the priorities were stated as strategic lift, air-to-air refuelling and CAISTAR. These are all projects that the United States military has been at the forefront of developing. For example, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) are technologies that the American and Israeli military forces have used in preparing reconnaissance for tactical bombing or infantry movements—a recent example being the 2006 Israeli action against the Lebanon. The EDA’s stated desire is that European built versions of this technology should remain ‘interoperable’ with American built technology, reinforcing the thesis that the European Commission’s vision of defence technology is one that supersedes US-led military actions—a direct echo of the British government’s position. But if one accepts the premise from the Saint Malo Accords in 1998 that the French Government seeks a way of eventually decoupling the EU from NATO, then the move to build up similar types of capabilities to the United States, but on a smaller scale, begins to look rather different.

Depoliticising Capabilities

12. One often hears about “political interference” in procurement. From the stories about Westland Helicopters, through to how the Joint Strike Fighter came to have VSTOL installed on it, onto the more recent episodes about the Serious Fraud Office, BAE and Saudi Arabia, political involvement in defence procurement and capabilities seems to carry a large quantity of negative baggage. Whether one wants to explore the old military industrial complex explanations or not, it seems quite clear that the UK government has failed to procure the right sorts of military equipment for its personnel on a notable number of occasions. And the elision of government and industry interests appears to be playing a part in this.

13. Where this sort of dynamic may begin to affect European capabilities, rather than just our own, is with the development of the EDA. The EDA’s role of advancing collaboration between companies and countries on the development of defence equipment appears to have expanded into generating manufacturing contracts. This is not necessarily surprising as defence companies had a large role in the working groups that designed the EDA: high ranking European Commission officials sat with
representatives of BAE systems and EADS as well as the President of the European Defence Industries Group to advise on how the new institution should operate, providing a key voice opportunity to manufacturers and providing greater evidence of a fundamental elision of public and private interests.

14. The attempt to balance a quasi think-tank role of identifying and plugging gaps in European military capabilities, whilst also acting as an institutional guarantor of EU defence manufacturing interests, has pushed the EU into a potentially contradictory position. Evidence of this tension was seen within days of the agency being established with the largest European defence equipment manufacturers taking out a full page advert in some British newspapers to emphasize their vision for the EDA. The danger for the EDA is that it will lose its strategic overview of how to plug the capabilities gaps that exist within the European military portfolio—based on the sort of operations the EU and its member governments’ wish to conduct—as a result of becoming a conduit for the lobbying attentions of the major arms manufacturers. Moreover, its strong links with a European Commission which is determined to promote a high-technology, research-led industrial base, an enhanced internal market and an increasingly neo-liberal industrial policy pushes the EDA down certain avenues of activity, none of which look likely to suggest the sort of defence equipment developments that are necessary for the British military’s primary spheres of activities.

SUMMARY

15. This memorandum has explored, briefly, a capabilities led challenge to the concept of European defence. It has argued that the equipment choices being made by the UK, and now at a European level, are ill-suited to the sorts of conflict the UK and European states are involved with. The reasons given for this range from policy makers ignoring the experiences and recommendations of those coming out of conflict theatres, a fixation amongst the political classes for high-technology solutions, a similar profit driven motivation amongst manufacturers and the European Defence Agency trying to tie its activities to the Lisbon Agenda. The memorandum also explored the possibility that the British government is facing a strategic defeat that would severely undermine the general concept of European defence and the NATO alliance. Lastly, it plotted the development of the European Defence Agency and the potential this institution has to destabilise the trans-Atlantic alliance. The core argument of this piece is, therefore, that whilst procurement is seen as an esoteric part of European defence analysis, it has the potential to fundamentally challenge existing security structures, both through the failure to deal with equipment that is becoming obsolescent and the reduction in equipment stores and the development of expensive and ill-suited bespoke technology.

Lecturer in Defence Studies,
King’s College London

11 May 2007

Memorandum from Dr Bastian Giegerich

1. This memorandum responds to an invitation to contribute evidence for the Committee to consider in its inquiry into the future of NATO and European defence. It has been written by Dr Bastian Giegerich, Research Associate at The International Institute for Strategic Studies, and is submitted on an individual basis.

ASSESSING CAPABILITIES: OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS v TRANSFORMATION

2. The Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG) endorsed by NATO Heads of State and Government at the alliance’s Riga summit in November 2006, reiterated that NATO is likely to carry out a growing number of relatively small but demanding operations far beyond alliance borders and at short notice. The operational environment that NATO is confronted with is characterised by unpredictability regarding the character, timeline, and location of such operations. Hence, NATO’s desired capability profile currently puts a premium on joint expeditionary forces, deployability and sustainability, high readiness forces, information superiority, the ability to draw together different instruments and coordinate with other actors, as well as the general principles of interoperability, adaptability and flexibility. Aside from the likely smaller operations, NATO still needs to retain the ability to conduct large-scale high intensity operations.

3. Against this complex background, the assessment of capabilities becomes increasingly difficult. Given the wide variety of operations that NATO forces are being asked to take on, the measurement of capabilities can no longer be purely quantitative, although quantitative data remains a central indicator. In the most basic sense a military capability is the ability to achieve a certain objective. These objectives have become much more fluid in the current operational environment if compared to the traditional understanding of territorial defence.

4. Furthermore, the allies judge the importance of these objectives in light of the domestic determinants of their security and defence policy because, by and large, contemporary crisis do not threaten the national
sovereignty or survival of alliance members. Therefore, the operations NATO is engaged in are of a discretionary nature in the political sense. From this observation, in turn, follows that the effort NATO governments are willing to undertake will vary from operation to operation and is likely to be limited.

5. The ability to achieve objectives, the capability in other words, is a function of equipment, training, ethos, doctrine, and political will. The discretionary nature of contemporary operations makes it difficult for NATO members to generate the necessary political will to achieve their objectives. The fluid nature of operations and objectives makes it difficult to precisely foresee equipment, training, and doctrinal needs.

6. Recent operational experience underlines the value of rapid acquisition. Rapid exploitation of technology into fielded equipment is necessary. New major equipment programmes will become less and less frequent, with the capability edge generated by technology insertion into older platforms. The aim across European nations, as acknowledged in the European Defence Agency's Initial Long Term Vision document from October 2006, is to shorten timeframes from innovation to practical implementation.

7. The requirements of current operations, first and foremost ISAF in Afghanistan, have revealed several bottlenecks and capabilities shortfalls. In some cases these are being addressed through Urgent Operational Requirements provisions aiming to rapidly field new equipment and technologies. These requirements and the associated costs do not in all cases correspond to long term military transformation goals of NATO member states. In the context of stagnating resource envelopes, this situation increases the pressure on defence budgets. In general, the situation across Europe can be characterised as follows: countries are trying to do more with less. For some allies this suggests an inherent danger of being caught out with inadequate resources between short-term and long-term needs.

8. Operational bottlenecks and/or deficiencies have been reported in various fields. They include: strategic and in-theatre lift, sealift, reconnaissance and surveillance, the integration of close-air support, the interoperability of communications systems, information operations, and logistics. These are both equipment and manpower issues. For example, there is a shortfall in both heavy-lift helicopters and maintenance crews. There is also a lack of information operation operatives as well as persisting communication problems even among allies who use the same equipment (radios) due to different software deployed.

NATO RESPONSE FORCE

9. The NATO Response Force (NRF) remains the major vehicle for transformation of allied forces within the framework of NATO. The NRF provides NATO with a high-readiness force package of up to 25,000 troops which can start to deploy after five days notice and can sustain itself for up to 30 days (or longer if re-supplied) anywhere in the world. NATO members amended their NRF pledges during a force generation conference from 21 to 23 November 2006. As a result, the NRF was declared to have reached full operational capability on 29 November during NATO’s Riga summit. Additional pledges from Bulgaria, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Romania, Spain, Turkey, the UK, and the US have helped to fill gaps. Specifically, additional troops, helicopters, transport aircraft, combat support and combat service support have been provided. While strategic command of the NRF is provided by SHAPE, operational command rotates among NATO's Joint Forces Command (JFC) Brunssum, JFC Naples and the Joint Headquarters in Lisbon every twelve months.

10. Despite the fact that the NRF has been declared fully operational, several problems persist. Initial-entry operations, at the upper end of the operational spectrum, are still judged to be problematic because certain capabilities shortfalls remain unsolved. The annual joint strategic command study seminar, Exercise “Allied Reach 2007” conducted at Allied Air Component Command Ramstein 2–4 May 2007, pointed again to the challenge that arises when trying to achieve interoperability in the field of communication and information systems (CIS) between NATO allies. Currently, the NATO Communication and Information Systems Service Agency (NCSA) provides the NRF with a solution that is designed around off-the-shelf commercial equipment. This equipment has been used in NRF disaster relief operations in Pakistan as well as during exercise Steadfast Jaguar 2006.

11. Furthermore, the funding of NATO operations at this point remains an obstacle to the actual use of the NRF. The “costs lie where they fall” principle means that those countries who happen to be contributors to the NRF when the need for an operation arises have to carry the financial burden almost exclusively. This is a clear political disincentive for the deployment of the NRF. Maintaining a high-readiness force like the NRF is expensive in itself. Not last for this reason, several voices within the alliance have encouraged a “use it or loose it” attitude towards the NRF. This position, sound as it is, overlooks that the idea of the NRF
as a tool for frequent intervention runs into political difficulties in a number of NATO member countries. It would therefore be sensible to expect controversial debates if NRF deployments at the upper end of its mission spectrum arise. The intensity of these debates will depend on which allies are “on call” at a particular moment in time.

**UNITY OF PURPOSE: SHARING RESPONSIBILITY AND RISKS**

12. In the past, the obligation for many allies was understood to be the sharing of responsibility, for example, for peace on the Balkans. While this is neither a small nor risk free task, the acceptance of risk was underpinned by the acceptance of responsibility for stability in Europe. This sense of responsibility is much weaker when it comes to Afghanistan. Consequently, a problem that would strike at the heart of any military alliance emerged: some allies seem to be unwilling to share the risks whereas others shoulder a substantial load. This has nothing to do with the difference between smaller NATO member states and larger ones, but is a function of domestic constraints.

13. NATO commanders in Afghanistan have been plagued by two fundamental problems: a lack of troops and suitable equipment on the one hand and the restrictions (caveats) that are imposed by NATO governments on national contingents deployed to Afghanistan. Both issues, lack of troops/equipment and caveats are serious problems because they restrict the choices commanders have available. When confronted with the task of achieving a certain military objective such as the elimination of a threat posed by a small group of insurgents, a commander has several options including capturing the enemy operatives and aerial bombing of the compound they might be hiding in. On average, low troop levels and caveated contingents will push the commander towards the air strike option. This will lead to more damage, in turn making it more difficult to win the hearts and minds of the local population.

14. At the same time it needs to be understood that not even more troops and contingents that come without any restrictions would entirely solve the operational challenges NATO is facing, even with regards to the example just mentioned. While the situation would surely be better, the fact remains that only airpower provides NATO with the ability to strike throughout the area of operations, all of Afghanistan, without significant delay.

15. Domestic vulnerabilities and intra-Alliance division are on public display and in Afghanistan NATO is facing an opponent who understands these issues and seeks to exploit them. In addition, ISAF Regional Commanders have pointed out that the Taliban are very skilled at getting information out and reaching a lot of people in Afghanistan. Thereby they achieve a psychological presence that NATO cannot ignore in this setting of complex irregular warfare. The often mentioned problem of winning hearts and minds of the local population in Afghanistan is a psychological element of this warfare that is as important as the physical presence of NATO forces.

16. A combination of domestic vulnerabilities and the absence of political leadership lead to dishonest political debates in some NATO member countries. The purpose of military operations, in the case of Afghanistan, is not conveyed adequately and the difficulties and risks involved are not properly explained to the public at home. Given that operations in Afghanistan are extremely complex, difficult, and involve considerable risks, this state of affairs undermines public support for ISAF. NATO forces will encounter problems—they will take casualties and will inflict damage, including collateral damage. If electorates at home have been given the impression that these events are rare exceptions, the mission as such and participation in it will be questioned.

17. At the moment there is no true unity of purpose in the sense of a shared understanding of what NATO is doing in Afghanistan and what its major goals are. Member states characterise ISAF as either being about counter-insurgency, counter-terrorism, stabilization or reconstruction assistance. The reality is that ISAF is doing all of the above. With all NATO member states, and other partners, involved in ISAF, maintaining unity of purpose is difficult to begin with. However, alliance leaders should work harder to convey a definition of what success in Afghanistan would be and establish a clear means-end relationship.

18. NATO capability development needs to be understood in the complex terms outlined above. In the current operational environment, the assessment has become more complex, the provision of capabilities more difficult and more fluid. At the moment it seems that NATO is becoming more creative at meeting equipment needs and dealing with operational challenges (the recent initiatives in the field of strategic airlift, Strategic Airlift Interim Solution, SALIS, and Strategic Airlift Capability, SAC, may serve as examples) than it is at maintaining unity of purpose and providing the political will to maintain the level of ambition necessary to achieve its objectives.

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*31 March 2007*
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Developments in European foreign and defence policy are moving rapidly. It is widely acknowledged in Europe that the rejection of the EU Constitution by French and Dutch voters in 2005 did nothing to slow down progress in this area.

This is of concern because over the last few years the UK has moved away from its traditional partnership with the US in defence procurement, preferring instead to develop and procure technology in partnership with its EU allies. The EU is now looking to cement this tendency into binding commitments, through the development of European Defence Agency initiatives—such as commitments to pool resources and research initiatives and to open up national tendering processes to cross-border competition—as well as new ESDP-related initiatives such as the new EU space policy. The EU is also setting up parallel headquarters, including a planning HQ and has already set up a military staff.

While less than 15 years ago there was no EU foreign policy budget to speak of, by 2000, the EU was spending nearly €5 billion of its budget on foreign policy. This year the figure is €6.8 billion and by 2013 it will be more than €8 billion. There are now as many staff working on CFSP and ESDP in all the different EU bodies in Brussels and beyond as in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

We believe there are three questions which should be asked about European Defence:

(i) Is European defence developing in the way that the UK Government suggested it would?

(ii) Is European Defence helping or hindering? Is it, as the Government has stated, leading to higher defence spending, or is it, as critics have warned, leading to Duplication, Decoupling, and Discrimination vis-à-vis NATO and other UK allies?

(iii) Do the UK Government’s strategic objectives for European Defence match those of its partners?

Is European defence developing in the way that the UK Government suggested it would?

In this paper we argue that over the last 10 years the Government has broken promise after promise about the conditions in which an EU defence policy would operate. In several areas EU defence has developed in ways which the Government said it would not.

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<td><strong>Peacekeeping missions only</strong></td>
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<td>Tony Blair said the Rapid Reaction force would operate only “in respect of peacekeeping and humanitarian missions” (<em>Telegraph</em>, 22 November 2000)</td>
<td>The RRF project turned into the EU “Battlegroups” When asked to respond to a claim by Javier Solana that the EU’s battlegroups would never go to war, NATO’s General Secretary Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, said, “I don’t believe that to be true. Why do you think the EU is creating battlegroups? It’s not just so that they can reconstruct a country. The battlegroups are not going to rebuild schools” (<em>El País</em>, 10 March 2005)</td>
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<td><strong>Independent EU planning HQ</strong></td>
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<td>“Operational planning is a matter that will be the responsibility of NATO” (Geoff Hoon, <em>The Sun</em>, 29 March 2001)</td>
<td>The EU has its own operational planning cell, explicitly independent of NATO. Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt said, “I compare this cell for the planning and conduct of common military operations to the European Central Bank. Twenty years ago, we started off with a Monetary Institute, with a degree of ambition which was lower even than that of the military cell. It has grown into the ECB we all know” (<em>Agence Europe</em>, 17 December 2003)</td>
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<td>What the UK Government said</td>
<td>What actually happened</td>
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<td><strong>EU merger with the WEU</strong></td>
<td>The WEU has been fully merged into the EU.</td>
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<td>“Getting Europe's voice heard more clearly in the world will not be achieved through merging the European Union and the Western European Union or developing an unrealistic common defence policy” (Tony Blair, <em>Hansard</em>, 18 June 1997)</td>
<td>The Satellite Centre in Spain and the Institute for Security Studies have been transferred to EU control.</td>
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<td>“We stopped the merger of the Western European Union with the European Union and prevented the European Union from becoming a defence organisation” (Robin Cook, <em>Hansard</em>, 4 December 1997)</td>
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<td><strong>NATO right of first refusal</strong></td>
<td>“There is no question of a right of first refusal. If the EU works properly, it will start working on crises at a very early stage, well before the situation escalates. NATO has nothing to do with this” (General Jean-Pierre Kelche, France’s Chief of Defence Staff, <em>Telegraph</em>, 28 March 2001)</td>
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<td>“It is only [for] when NATO decides as a whole that it does not wish to be engaged” (Tony Blair, <em>Telegraph</em>, 22 November 2000)</td>
<td>In 2003 an unnamed UK Government official admitted, “The French won’t concede that NATO has the right of first refusal” (<em>Times</em>, 3 December 2003)</td>
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<td><strong>EU symbols</strong></td>
<td>“The EU’s blue flag and 12 golden stars will for the first time decorate the lapels of the troops” (<em>FT</em> report, 31 March 2003)</td>
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<td>“No European cap badges, no European flags” (Geoff Hoon, 22 November 2000)</td>
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<td><strong>Steps to a common defence</strong></td>
<td>“If you don’t want to call it a European army, fine. You can call it Margaret, you can call it Mary-Ann” (Romano Prodi, <em>Independent</em>, 3 February 2000)</td>
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<td>“[There is] no such concept called a European army” (Tony Blair, <em>Times</em>, 13 October 2003)</td>
<td>“The EU should have its own army from countries which accept a common defence” (Romano Prodi, Speech, 9 May 1999)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“There is a specific undertaking not to create a European army” (Geoff Hoon, PA, December 19 1999)</td>
<td>“A European army legitimised and financed through the European Parliament is the visionary goal . . . The European army should have joint structures that go beyond the ones already in place. Therefore there is a need for a joint defence system, common legislation and standardisation” (German Defence Ministry planning document, NATO website, 30 April 2003)</td>
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<td>“We need to begin with the European defence policy—which has to finally lead, in reality, to a common defence. That will take place through the plans specified in the European Constitution: The developing European arms agency, the solidarity and mutual defense clauses, the armed force for the protection of Europe, and the European general staff” (French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier, <em>Welt am Sontag</em>, 13 March 2005)</td>
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**Have fears about Duplication, Decoupling, and Discrimination been realised?**

Serious problems with duplication have emerged, in terms of NATO’s military planning structures, arms procurement programmes and strategic initiatives. By establishing its own structures and programmes the EU is also steadily decoupling itself from NATO and the US and discriminating against non-EU arms suppliers and partners.
Examples of duplication of planning and command structures include the creation of the EU “Situation Centre”, the “Civil/Military Cell”, the EU Military Staff and the EU Operations Centre. Duplication of military hardware and procurement programmes includes the A400M (needed for independence from NATO), the Galileo project and the EDA’s efforts to coordinate research and spending on future assets such as unmanned air vehicles. The duplication of initiatives includes the EU battlegroups, which the UK has committed to providing troops for, despite its commitments in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Decoupling is also an issue. There are clearly important tensions between NATO and the EU. NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer said in January this year that “There are some who deliberately wish to keep NATO and the Union separate from one another. For the proponents of this attitude, a strengthening of relations between the two would give excessive influence to the United States.”

Discrimination against non-EU members. Through European Defence Agency initiatives the EU is steadily increasing its powers over national procurement and defence research and technology, which threatens to lead to protectionism and discrimination against non-EU suppliers and sources of key defence technologies.

Is European Defence leading to higher spending?

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office’s Guide to the EU argued the development of European defence “should help encourage other European countries to spend more on defence.” However, so far there is little evidence to suggest that efforts to build a more integrated European defence policy are actually fulfilling objectives to increase Europe’s military capabilities and defence spending.

NATO figures show that defence spending$^{43}$ fell by €5.4 billion or 4.6% between 2002 and 2006 in the nine NATO-eurozone countries. Compared with 2002, the UK’s defence budget was 7.4% higher in 2006. Italy’s was 24% lower, Germany’s 5.6% lower and Belgium’s was 3.3% lower. As a percentage of GDP (constant prices), Portugal is the only European member of NATO to have increased its defence spending—from 1.5% in 2002, to 1.6% in 2006. The UK’s dropped from 2.4% in 2002 to 2.3% to 2006, France’s dropped from 2.5% to 2.4%, Germany’s from 1.5% to 1.3%, while Italy’s dropped from 2% in 2002 to 1.5% in 2006.$^{44}$ It appears that several member states see pooling of resources as a way to spend even less.

Do the UK Government’s strategic objectives for European Defence match those of its partners?

On some occasions the Prime Minister has appeared to acknowledge that other member states do want to use European Defence as a way to disengage from NATO. However he argued that, “Well, if we don’t get involved in European defence, it will happen without Britain. Then those people who really have an agenda to destroy NATO will have control of it.”$^{45}$

However in general the Government has attempted to stress that EU defence will be compatible with NATO, and has played down the threat that other member states might attempt to pursue much deeper defence integration in isolation from NATO. Mr Blair has stated that there is “no such concept called a European army” and argued that “You already have a European planning capacity. The issue is whether you set up a competitor capability in operations. But I don’t think that people in Europe want to do that.”$^{46}$ However, Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi has said that the EU should have “a common army from countries which accept a common army”. Although he stressed that “you arrive to a common army only very late” in the development of European defence, he has said that he believes that it is “inevitable”. He also argued that “If you don’t want to call it a European army, fine. You can call it Margaret, you can call it Mary-Ann.”$^{47}$

French President Nicolas Sarkozy has said that “the strengthening of European defence must remain a priority. While Europe and its security are no longer necessarily at the centre of American strategic preoccupations, Europeans must now be more autonomous in the protection of their territories and their populations, the same as in the defence of their fundamental interests on the international scene. I therefore want European countries to be able to deepen their cooperation in this field, as long as they have the capacity and the willingness, without being prevented to do so by others.”

He said this meant “an independent European defence.”$^{48}$

A planning document from the German Defence Ministry featured on the NATO website suggested that “A European army legitimised and financed through the European Parliament is the visionary goal . . . The European army should have joint structures that go beyond the ones already in place. Therefore there is a need for a joint defence system, common legislation and standardization.”$^{49}$

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43 Measured in local currencies using constant, 2000 prices. 2006 figures are based on (NATO) estimates.
44 [http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2006/p06-159.pdf](http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2006/p06-159.pdf)
47 *BBC One the Record* 9 May 1999 and *Telegraph* 4 February 2000.
48 Sarkozy’s blog, 4 March 2007.
49 30 April 2003.
Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero has stated that “Europe must believe that it can be in 20 years the most important world power . . . Naturally it [US military help] will still last some time, until we develop a single defence policy. That can happen only after the agreement on a common foreign policy. The constitutional treaty is an important step into this direction. In 15 to 20 years we will surely have a foreign service for the European Union.”

**Conclusion:** The UK is overstretched and cannot afford unnecessary duplication and diversion of effort from the wars it is fighting

At a time when NATO and UK forces are stretched to breaking point in arenas as challenging as Afghanistan and Iraq the UK Government must think carefully about the current direction of EU defence policy and the impact on its commitments within NATO.

The UK is timetabled to provide 1,500 troops to be on standby for an EU battlegroup from next year, despite its commitments in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Several EU member states, particularly France, clearly envisage the end-point of current initiatives as a European army under European control, using Europe-made assets and operating completely distinctly from NATO.

For this reason, the same member states are reluctant to cooperate with NATO to develop its own civilian capabilities to complement its traditional operations in ever more complex security environments. The recent agreement of an “integrated approach” in Afghanistan comes after clear problems coordinating the use of EU civilian assets with NATO operations there.

The danger is that European Defence becomes an excuse to stifle the sorts of new projects which will hold NATO together; that the two organisations will trip over each others’ feet in conflicts; and that expensive and time-consuming duplication will continue. It is not clear that the development of European Defence since St Malo has produced any positive benefits for the UK.

**Evidence**

1. **Background**

As the EU seeks to extend its reach further over national policies, with proposals for an EU Defence Procurement Directive, an EU space policy for the benefit of military users, a commitment to move towards a common EU defence, an EU Foreign Minister and an EU diplomatic service, we should take note of the fact that over the last 10 years the Government has broken promise after promise about the conditions in which an EU defence policy would operate.

It was only 10 years ago, for instance, that the Government was insisting that the idea to merge the WEU into the EU was not on the Government’s cards. Tony Blair said in 1997, “Getting Europe’s voice heard more clearly in the world will not be achieved through merging the European Union and the Western European Union or developing an unrealistic common defence policy.” At one point Robin Cook celebrated the fact that, “We stopped the merger of the Western European Union with the European Union or developing an unrealistic common defence policy.” Shortly afterwards it was fully subsumed.

Less than 15 years ago there was no EU foreign policy budget to speak of. By 2000, the EU was spending nearly €5 billion of its budget on foreign policy. This year the figure is €6.8 billion and by 2013 it will be more than €8 billion. EU spending on defence falls into this category and it is very difficult to separate out what is spent specifically on defence.

There are now as many staff working on CFSP and ESDP in all the different EU bodies in Brussels and beyond as in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

The EU Constitution would have explicitly committed member states to move towards a common defence for the first time. Negotiations for a replacement for the Constitution are still underway, and although it is not yet clear whether the Constitution’s defence provisions will be included in a new treaty, EU leaders are committed to moving forward in this area, treaty or no treaty. This is clear from the continuous attempt to further integrate national defence policies over the last few years, resulting in a large number of new initiatives, including the establishment of an EU planning cell, an EU military staff, and a European Defence Agency which aims to control European defence procurement.

The Government has long maintained that any EU defence capacity must not duplicate or undermine existing arrangements at NATO, but the evidence suggests this is not the case. In January 2000 Defence Minister Geoff Hoon said, “I have made it clear on several occasions on which the issues have been discussed in the House that there will not be any sort of duplication, nor any sort of conflict between proposals made

50 Spiegel, 8 November 2004.
51 Hansard, 18 June 1997.
52 Hansard, 4 December 1997.
53 Total commitments under The EU as a global player title http://ec.europa.eu/budget/budget_detail/current_year_en.htm
within the European Union context and our obligations under NATO. For many years, NATO Ministers have endorsed that approach because they recognise that, by strengthening the European pillar of NATO, we strengthen NATO as a whole.”

Back in 1998, the US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said the US could only support EU defence policies if there was: no duplication of NATO’s resources; no decoupling from the US and NATO; and no discrimination against NATO’s non-EU allies. But the EU is increasingly doing all three—to the detriment of the UK’s relationship with the US and other non-EU partners.

2. Examples of duplication

Duplication of military hardware and procurement programmes. The UK Government has so far invested more than a quarter of a billion euros in the EU’s faltering satellite navigation programme, Galileo. Despite insistence from the UK Government that the project continues to be planned as a civilian system, the Commission has recently admitted that it will have military users. Industry and analysts are concerned about the added-value of the system—the consortium initially set up to build the system has refused to shoulder the financial risk, resulting in costs of €10 billion to be met by taxpayers through the EU budget and/or member state governments. The UK military currently uses the free GPS system, and the improved accuracy promised by Galileo is likely to be matched by a third generation GPS before Galileo is even off the ground. The UK’s continued investment and involvement in the project is unjustified—especially given reports that the 140,000 jobs it was supposed to create in Europe may in fact be lost to partnering countries like China.

Several EU countries have orders for the A400m military airlifter, which is seen as essential if the EU is to realise its military objectives. The first are due to be operational in 2010 but there are concerns about delays and cost overruns. The UK has ordered 25 at a cost of £2.4 billion. There are serious concerns about its added value compared with US equivalents such as the Boeing C17 and Lockheed Martin’s C130. (Note that despite European lobbying for the A400M, Canada decided to buy C-17 earlier this year). Compared with the C-17 it will require a lower minimum runway length for both takeoff and landing, but there are payload and range issues with it, plus the C-17s have up to twice the capacity, bigger cargo doors, bigger cargo hold length etc.

The European Defence Agency has a €500,000 budget for an initial study into joint development of security oriented and commercial Unmanned Air Vehicles (UAVs), which was launched on 14 May 2007. There are also plans to pool efforts and resources to coordinate member states’ Armoured Fighting Vehicles within the EDA framework.

Duplication of facilities and planning structures. The EU now has its own military structures, including its own group of command bodies. It already has the facility to operate autonomous military operations—indeed NATO—in the EU’s faltering satellite navigation programme, Galileo. Despite insistence from the UK Government that the project continues to be planned as a civilian system, the Commission has recently admitted that it will have military users. Industry and analysts are concerned about the added value of the system—the consortium initially set up to build the system has refused to shoulder the financial risk, resulting in costs of €10 billion to be met by taxpayers through the EU budget and/or member state governments. The UK military currently uses the free GPS system, and the improved accuracy promised by Galileo is likely to be matched by a third generation GPS before Galileo is even off the ground. The UK’s continued investment and involvement in the project is unjustified—especially given reports that the 140,000 jobs it was supposed to create in Europe may in fact be lost to partnering countries like China.

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In 2005, more UK troops were deployed on EU operations than NATO ones. The EU is now looking to increase the size of the Military Staff—currently at 200—or its technical capabilities. Foreign Policy Chief Javier Solana is expected to come back to ministers with recommendations this November.

All this despite the UK insisting it would never happen. In 2001 Geoff Hoon said, “Operational planning is a matter that will be the responsibility of NATO.” Keith Vaz praised, “The EU military staff will not do operational level planning, nor will it provide command and control structures.” Robin Cook insisted, “There is no central integrated command.” By 2003 Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt was gushing,

54 http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199900/cmhansrd/vo000124/debtext/00124-02.htm
55 Written answer http://www.theyworkforyou.com/wrans/?id = 2007-05-18a.136602.h&d = EU + section%3Awrans&lg=136602 .q0
57 http://www.galileo-info.com/press.html
59 http://www.europe.eu.int/justice/galileo/press Releases/index. htm
60 http://www.theyworkforyou.com/lords/?id = 2006-12-11a.1361.4
64 Telegraph 22 November 2000.
“I compare this cell for the planning and conduct of common military operations to the European Central Bank. Twenty years ago, we started off with a Monetary Institute, with a degree of ambition which was lower even than that of the military cell. It has grown into the ECB we all know.”

The Government has always insisted there is “no such concept called a European army.” But the debate on the EU Constitution revealed that many European leaders are intent on pursuing one. Last year Kurt Beck, leader of the German Social Democrats called for a European army with a single command. Angela Merkel also said recently: “In the European Union we have to come closer to the creation of a European army.” Former French foreign minister Michel Barnier has said, “We need to begin with the European defence policy—which has to finally lead, in reality, to a common defence. That will take place through the plans specified in the European Constitution: The developing European arms agency, the solidarity and mutual defence clauses, the armed force for the protection of Europe, and the European general staff.”

European troops operating under European control now have all the symbols of an EU force. In 2000, Geoff Hoon insisted there should be “No European cap badges, no European flags.” By the time of the EU’s first independent military operation in 2003 the FT was reporting, “The EU’s blue flag and 12 golden stars will for the first time decorate the lapels of the troops.”

The Dutch have recently signed an agreement with Germany, France and Belgium to create a “European Air Transport Command” as a coordination pool for their own military transports, which, notes Defense Industry Daily, “furthers the objective of creating a parallel EU military structure outside of NATO.”

Duplication of initiatives and projects. The EU Battlegroups concept, which reached “Full Operational Capability” on 1 January 2007, rivals the existing NATO Response Force Initiative and duplicates efforts in several ways. As outlined in a recent paper by the Institute for Security Studies, while the groups may differ in size, composition and training processes, they are very similar, and therefore overlapping, in many ways: both are expected to deploy at very short notice; both will be targeted to a range of missions, including higher and lower intensity; both serve as conduits for force transformation and modernisation; and they will both rely on a similar pool of personnel. There are also several challenges facing NATO Response Force-Battlegroup relations—notably the potential problem of “double-hatting”, and questions over how the NRF and BG missions would relieve each other. (Another big challenge will be the lack of strategic airlift for the battlegroups—they hope to rely on A400Ms but it will be 2012 before these are being churned out at a rate of 30 per year. In the meantime Europe only has 4 C-17s to draw on.)

The Battlegroups idea was originally mooted as a “European Rapid Reaction Force”, which Tony Blair said would operate only “in respect of peacekeeping and humanitarian missions.” Five years later, when asked to respond to a claim by Javier Solana that the EU’s battlegroups would never go to war, NATO’s General Secretary Jaap de Hoop Scheffer said, “I don’t believe that to be true. Why do you think the EU is creating battlegroups? It’s not just so that they can reconstruct a country. The battlegroups are not going to rebuild schools.”

EU governments are spending millions creating the infrastructure in Brussels, funding, for example, the salaries of 180 officers based there, but despite now having reached “Full Operational Capability”—ie two battlegroups are on standby and capable of carrying out simultaneous missions—it is doubtful what they can actually do: the head of the EU Military Staff, Gen Henri Bentegeat admitted very recently that the EU battlegroups would struggle to intervene anywhere militarily in the near future. Back in 2004, Tony Blair promised that rapid reaction battlegroups could be used in Africa, but so far there has been no deployment there and Blair has recently called on the EU to provide £25 million to fund an African rapid reaction force to do the job itself.

The UK is timetabled to provide 1,500 troops to be on standby for an EU battlegroup from next year, despite its commitments in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The EU is also considering a “rapid response air initiative”. This initiative aims at enhancing the generation of air rapid response elements and proposes a draft concept for a European deployable air station.

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67 HIT, 6 November 2006.
68 Der Spiegel, 23 March 2007.
69 Welt am Sontag, 13 March 2005.
70 22 November 2000.
71 31 March 2003.
75 http://www.iss-eu.org/chaillot/cha97.pdf
76 Telegraph, 22 November 2000.
77 El Pais, 10 March 2005.
78 Sunday Telegraph, 3 June 2007.
79 Sunday Telegraph, 3 June 2007.
NATO and the EU are also carrying out competing missions. As Judy Dempsey writing in the IHT has pointed out: “Each helped separately to empty an arms dump in Georgia last year; they raced against each other to provide separate airlifts to the Africa Union in Sudan, and even in Afghanistan, where the EU has spent billions of euros on development aid, there is little coordination.”

She also points out that NATO and the EU are also competing for the same funds—"the EU has no military budget per se, but rather relies on its 25 member states for funding. When it fields a mission, participating countries carry the costs. A similar situation prevails in NATO, which has 26 members. Costs lie where they fall. If Belgium supports a NATO mission in Afghanistan, for example, or an EU mission in Bosnia, it must pay for the soldiers and the helicopters. What this means is that the amount European countries collectively spend on defense has to be divvied up between the EU and NATO.”

Duplication is likely to get worse with the creation of the European Defence Agency in 2005, which was set up in spite of the no votes. Its attempts to create more EU coordination outside NATO are likely to lead to more expensive duplication (see below). The EDA has set up a €50 million defence research and technology budget, to allow common European defence projects to go ahead.

Dr Sarah Beaver, Director General of international Security policy at the Ministry of Defence admitted to the Lords EU Committee, “It would be wrong to say that there is no duplication between the agency and work that is done in NATO, but it will have a different focus.”

The EDA has a budget of around €22 million a year. However Francois Lureau, head of France’s procurement agency, has said he “would like to see the EDA get 200 million euros [annually] by at least 2010.” The UK pays 17.57% of the European Defence Agency’s budget.

The French recently attacked Britain for a “lack of commitment” to the EDA, because of its decision not to participate in a €54 million research project to develop force protection technologies, which, according to Des Browne “represents a very high degree of duplication with our national programme”. They were also unhappy with the failure to agree a three-year budget for the EDA at the end of last year, over disagreements about how big it should be.

3. Examples of Decoupling

Through duplication of military structures with its own group of command bodies, the EU has also decoupled itself from the US and NATO, as well as decoupling from US technology. French enthusiasm for a clear separation between NATO and the EU is evident: as then-Defence Minister Michèle Alliot-Marie said in 2005, “We need to go up a gear and show that Europe can be a first-rate military actor . . . acting autonomously.”

In practical terms we are now starting to see exactly the sorts of NATO-EU rivalry problems which sceptics warned about several years ago. For example, at the NATO ministerial at the end of April 2006, the NATO/US speakers wanted Germany to commit resources to training African Union peacekeepers in Darfur, but Germany said it was unable to because it was taking a lead role in the EU mission to the Congo. While at the moment tensions are still manageable, having two separate structures is likely to mean that over the longer term there will be more and more occasions on which NATO and the EU pull countries in different directions, leading to rivalry and confusion.

NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer said in January this year that “There are some who deliberately wish to keep NATO and the Union separate from one another. For the proponents of this attitude, a strengthening of relations between the two would give excessive influence to the United States.”

During his presidency campaign Nicolas Sarkozy talked about maintaining NATO’s “clear geopolitical anchorage in Europe and its strictly military vocation” during a speech on defence.

In a recent article in Le Monde Leo Michel from the Institute for National Strategic Studies in Washington noted that only 1% of military personnel at NATO are French, suggesting this was indicative of the country’s attitude towards the alliance.

The Government has always maintained that EU intervention in traditionally NATO spheres will always be based on NATO’s right of first refusal. In 2000 Tony Blair insisted “It is only [for] when NATO decides as a whole that it does not wish to be engaged.” The French, however, do not seem to recognise this: General Jean-Pierre Kelche, then France’s Chief of Defence Staff, said in 2001, “There is no question of a

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81 IHT, 4 October 2006.
82 Evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on European Union, 10 June 2004.
84 Le Figaro, 13 October 2005.
85 http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?CAT2=1159&CAT1=16&CAT0=2&COM=1168&MOD=0&SMD=0&SSMD=0&STA=&ID=0&PAR=0&LANG=1
86 7 March 2007.
87 6 June 2007.
88 Telegraph, 22 November 2000.
right of first refusal. If the EU works properly, it will start working on crises at a very early stage, well before the situation escalates. NATO has nothing to do with this." In 2003 an unnamed UK Government official added, “The French won’t concede that NATO has the right of first refusal.”

French-led EU opposition has blocked NATO from doing work on terrorism which rivals the EU’s own anti-terrorism policies. Last year *Le Figaro* reported that NATO’s Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer had recommended an informal discussion on terrorism as part of a meeting on Bosnia. But the French delegation opposed it, arguing that terrorism was not on the list of official discussion themes between NATO and the EU. An unnamed French diplomat was quoted saying, “We don’t want NATO taking care of everything and imposing its agenda on the EU.” In fact this represents an attempt to duplicate NATO work and then try to rule certain subjects “out of bounds” for NATO. This is particularly exasperating given that the EU’s anti terrorism “strategy” involves such things as drawing up “a non-emotive lexicon for discussing the issues.”

Analysts report that NATO wants to develop civilian capabilities to enhance its traditional military role. It considered whether the EU could provide it with police and other civilian personnel in a “reversed Berlin Plus” arrangement, but the EU said this was unacceptable.

The French opposed NATO efforts to increase its civilian role in Afghanistan in December 2005, as well as the idea to merge NATO’s Isaf force with the anti-terrorist operation Enduring Freedom, because it did not want to see confusion between war missions and stabilisation. This was vetoed by France, Germany and Spain.

There is arguably a need for NATO to develop its civilian capabilities—especially given that in Afghanistan, NATO has repeatedly asked the EU for more civilian and humanitarian assistance, but the Commission has refused, largely because of opposition from some member states, including Belgium, France, Greece and Spain.

When Germany agreed to command the EU’s mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angela Merkel wanted to use NATO’s planning headquarters, SHAPE, based in Mons, Belgium, but Jacques Chirac insisted that the EU command the mission—alone, and from Potsdam, just south of Berlin, where the EU has a military operations headquarters.

In terms of procurement, there is much evidence of the UK decoupling from US technology—at increased cost to the taxpayer. In a speech to parliament recently Ann Winterton MP gave several examples of where the MoD has wasted money buying European instead of US technology, arguing the waste amounted to £8.8 billion “for no gain whatsoever.”

4. Examples of Discrimination

The idea of discrimination first set out by Albright was particularly focussed on discrimination in decision making against non-EU NATO members like Turkey. But as things have turned out, some of the most important problems with discrimination that have emerged relate to discrimination against non-EU armaments suppliers.

When the EDA was first suggested in 2002, the UK Government tried to head off the idea, producing a counter-proposal for a “capability agency” which would have focussed purely on encouraging member states to increase their capabilities and providing value for money audits of member states’ spending.

In December 2002 under the headline “UK set to spurn plan for EU defence procurement”, the FT reported that the UK would block EU powers over procurement, because it was worried that it would lead to protectionism and make it harder to work with the US. A senior British defence official was quoted saying, “We need to focus on outputs, not inputs . . . Yes, we want to maximise the amount of euros spent, but also to see every euro spent wisely.” The official added: “The capability agency wouldn’t compromise British procurement policy. We want the defence industry strengthened and more competitive, but not at the price of cutting off from the US.”

Last year the EDA launched a European Code of Conduct on defence procurement, which stops participating member states from exempting defence procurement contracts (which fall under Article 296 TEC) from cross-border competition, with the exception of defence research, chemical, bacteriological and radiological goods and services, nuclear weapons and nuclear propulsion systems and cryptographic equipment. Member states may also choose not to apply the Code in cases of pressing operational urgency.

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100 *Times*, 3 December 2003.
101 26 January 2006.
104 *IHT*, 4 October 2006.
105 *IHT*, 4 October 2006.
106 [http://www.theyworkforyou.com/whall/?id=2007-05 01a.425.0&s=speaker%3A106464eg425.1](http://www.theyworkforyou.com/whall/?id=2007-05 01a.425.0&s=speaker%3A106464eg425.1)
for follow-on work or supplementary goods and services and for extraordinary and compelling reasons of national security. However member states must provide explanations and data on these contracts to the EDA.\(^{98}\)

The idea is to encourage the creation of an internationally competitive European Defence Equipment Market (EDEM).\(^{99}\) Under the terms of the arrangement, the participating nations agreed to post details of proposed acquisitions for projects in excess of €1 million (excluding VAT) onto an electronic bulletin board (EBB), thus opening them up to pan-European bidding, with the hope that it would lead to more transparency, cross-border bidding, and opportunities for SMEs to win contracts. The hope is that eventually the majority of Europe’s €30+ billion procurement programmes will be posted on the web site.\(^{100}\)

However, so far, the Code of Conduct and the EBB haven’t had much success. The EBB was launched on 1 July 2006, and in March 2007 the EDA published a progress report, which found that by 14 March, 14 of the 22 participating member states had published more than 130 contract opportunities (five from the UK) with a total volume “cautiously estimated” at over €6.5 billion. However, it noted that “The impact of the CoC on increased cross-border award of contracts cannot yet be properly assessed since the Agency has so far been notified through the EBB of only four competitive contracts awarded (3% of the total advertised).”\(^{101}\)

As of 24 May, that figure had risen to 10% of the total advertised: out of a total of 178 contract opportunities published, 18 contracts were awarded. However, only two of these went to foreign companies, including one UK contract (for supply of small arms ammunition), which went to a Brazilian and a Swiss company, neither of which were SMEs.\(^{102}\) 13 contracts were awarded to Polish companies by the Polish government, two were awarded to Finnish companies by the Finnish government, and one was awarded to a Lithuanian company, by the Lithuanian government.\(^{102}\)

Despite this ambiguous record of success, the European Commission is now looking to further extend EU control over defence procurement with a Directive on Defence Procurement, for the harmonisation of national defence procurement rules (covering the procurement of defence equipment which does not fall under the derogation of Article 296, and therefore be complementary to the Code of Conduct),\(^{103}\) as well as a draft Regulation on intra-Community transfers. These are expected to be ready in autumn.\(^{104}\)

The logic behind the proposal for a directive is that unlike in other areas of the single market, such as transport, there is no specific directive coordinating national procurement rules in the defence sector. Defence procurement is covered by the EC Public Procurement Regulations (specifically Procurement Directive 2004/EC) unless exempted by Article 296 TEC.\(^{105}\)

However in 2005 the Minister for the Armed Forces Adam Ingram said “we do not believe that the benefits that might result from introducing a specific defence procurement directive are sufficient to offset the drawbacks. In particular, an additional regulatory burden on top of those already in place is unlikely to support our aim of making defence markets more effective and efficient. We do not, therefore, support the development of a new directive at this time.”\(^{106}\)

In a response to a Commission Green Paper on defence procurement in early 2005, the UK Government wrote that “we have less appetite for a new directive covering defence procurement, even one that does not cover those items exempted by Article 296 TEC . . . While we understand the potential benefits of new regulation outside of Article 296 TEC, not least that it might develop specific and perhaps more flexible rules, we perceive that the drawbacks would more than offset this. In particular, the creation of a new directive might mean that Member States’ defence procurement organisations would have to have a detailed knowledge of at least three separate procurement processes and make assessments, on each occasion, as to which processes to apply. We do not believe that this supports our aim to make defence markets more efficient and effective. Additionally, a new directive would inevitably require the negotiation of an agreement to an additional boundary between those goods falling under the scope of the more general public procurement rules and the new directive. This, and the attendant need to develop the scope of the directive between the member states, is unlikely to be achieved quickly. Accordingly, the UK does not favour the development of a new directive at this stage.”\(^{107}\)


\(^{100}\) [The Military Balance 2007, IISS](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/shared/shared—procurement/publications/)


\(^{103}\) [http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/shared/shared—procurement/publications/](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/shared/shared—procurement/publications/)


\(^{106}\) [the Military Balance 2007, IISS](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/shared/shared—procurement/publications/)

The House of Commons European Scrutiny Committee has recently questioned the UK Government’s failure to press the European Commission on the need for this directive, and also noted a shift in the Government’s position from two years ago, “from being not supporting the development of a new Directive, to seeking to identify what benefits to defence procurement might be derived from one.” They noted that this could be interpreted that, “with the Commission intent on pursuing this matter, he had concluded that damage limitation was the right approach; and that though he said that UK involvement was without commitment to supporting the adoption of a Directive, it seemed to us unlikely that, once produced, it would not in due course become law.” The Committee also asked the Minister for its assessment of the success so far of the Code of Conduct, but he said it was too early to tell.

EU Defence Ministers also recently committed to pool defence resources by adopting a strategy document with the aim of developing a “European defence technological and industrial base”, which, they said, “cannot be just the sum of the national parts, but an increasingly integrated, specialised and interdependent entity”. Agreeing on the need to break down national barriers in the EU arms market, open up cross-border investment and reduce Europe’s reliance on US military imports, a strategy paper said, “We cannot continue routinely to determine our equipment requirements on separate national bases, develop them through separate research and development efforts, and realize them through separate national procurements. This approach is no longer economically sustainable.” The document called for “less European dependence on non-European sources for key defence technologies.”

While the idea of strengthening Europe’s technological and industrial base to keep Europe competitive seems a laudable one, these moves threaten to make procurement cooperation with other NATO allies more difficult, and could lead to greater protectionism in the defence sector, further polarising EU-US relations in particular. Efforts to open up the EU’s defence procurement market are intended to create pressure to “buy European”. Coordinating spending on research and technology—supposedly so we can get “more bang for our buck”—may be a good idea, but why not do it within NATO, to create a bigger market which includes all our allies? Or, alternatively, the UK could pursue bilateral procurement projects, without going through the increasingly integrated EDA, where QMV is the rule.

According to Space News the French have raised the possibility of sanctioning governments that do not buy “European” in the space sector. This comes as the EU has launched an EU Space Policy which aims to explicitly link space initiatives like Galileo and the GMES to the European Security Defence Policy for the first time.

Last year Poland came under pressure from the French to “buy European” in a decision on issuing contracts for military helicopters. Le Monde noted that Poland faced “fierce criticism” from France just before its accession to the EU in 2004 when it signed a contract with Lockheed Martin for 48 F-16 combat aircraft. Non-EU countries may sign agreements with the EDA with a view to joining initiatives, (as Norway has), but this can only happen with the unanimous agreement of the Council. That’s discriminatory, because on most other issues, decision-making is by QMV, as its former head Nick Witney explained: “so it will not be possible for one member state to say, ‘We are not happy with this . . . it does not seem to be optimised to suit our national interests, so we are going to block it.’”

Discrimination and weakened transatlantic ties will damage the UK even more than other member states. However Britain has suffered a loss of access to key US technologies because of its EU-first approach to defence. Last year the US turned down the UK Government request to grant it a waiver from US International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR), citing fears that technology and secrets will be “leaked” from the UK to other European countries, and then on to third parties.

5. Is ESDP working?

Back in 2004 at the Military Capabilities Commitment Conference EU member states committed themselves to real increases in defence capability. One of the EU leaders’ key objectives is to improve military capabilities—“spend more, spend better and spend more together on Defence R&T” Indeed the Government has always maintained that part of the reason for pursuing an autonomous EU defence policy was that this would boost European defence capabilities. In 2002 Geoff Hoon said, “This is about ensuring that Europe makes better and more effective use of its resources. It is about co-operating to deliver increased defence capabilities. It is not about Europe competing with the United States. That is why we have been so insistent about avoiding the duplication of capabilities, through ensuring that the European Union has access to military assets/such as operational planning and command and control that NATO can already offer.”
For the EU battlegroups, the Headline Goal 2010 drawn up in 2004 said the aim was to be able to identify strategic lift, sustainability and debarkation assets by 2007. But Europe is still lacking capabilities.

As well as identifying objectives for member states and promoting more harmonisation and more joint projects within the EU, the EDA is also explicitly intended to encourage member states to spend more on defence. The Foreign Office Guide to the EU argues that “This should help encourage other European countries to spend more on defence.” Dr Sarah Beaver, Director General of international Security policy at the Ministry of Defence has said, “The head of the agency has to be in a position where he could cajole or bully, if you like, member states to improve their contribution.”

But recent patterns suggest most EU member states have no intention of increasing their defence spending, despite signing declarations about the need to increase EU capabilities. In a speech on 13 November 2006 Nick Witney admitted that over the last year the “Hampton Court-inspired efforts to progress Air-to-Air Refuelling and Strategic Lift made no real progress, in the absence of any sign of Member States’ preparedness to find ways to fund the significant investments that these capabilities will require.”

NATO figures show that defence spending fell by €5.4 billion or 4.6% between 2002 and 2006 in the nine NATO-eurozone countries. Compared with 2002, the UK’s defence budget was 7.4% higher in 2006. Italy’s was 24% lower, Germany’s 5.6% lower and Belgium’s was 3.3% lower. As a percentage of GDP (constant prices), Portugal is the only European member of NATO to have increased its defence spending—from 1.5% in 2002, to 1.6% in 2006. The UK’s dropped from 2.4% in 2002 to 2.3% to 2006, France’s dropped from 2.5% to 2.4%, Germany’s from 1.5% to 1.3%, while Italy’s dropped from 2% in 2002 to 1.5% in 2006.

9 June 2007

Memorandum from Dr Michael Williams

INTRODUCTION

1. Since 1989 the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has attempted to transform itself from a reactive, defensive organization centred on the protection of Western Europe to a pro-active risk manager that addresses security concerns that affect Europe and North America, but emanate far from the transatlantic region. But Allies have been slow to adapt to the post-Cold War security environment. While NATO’s role as a collective security guarantee for countries threatened by other states remains widely accepted, there is no clear agreement on the nature and lethality of non-state threats or how to tackle them. Security chiefs would all acknowledge that organised criminals, terrorists, drug lords and extreme ideologues catalyse insecurity, but there is no consensus on the role of expeditionary military forces in tackling them. The Alliance is torn between continued expansion, (principally to lock developing, post-conflict and former Soviet Union countries into liberal democratic models and managing pol-mil relations on Europe’s fringes) or transforming into an expeditionary force that address problems that emanate from abroad. Kosovo was the last campaign in which traditionally equipped forces opposed NATO using traditional tactics. And despite a subdued population, minimal insurgency and a massive military overmatch, it has taken nearly a decade (and the sustained deployment of some 20,000 troops) to deliver a secure environment in a territory the size of Yorkshire.

2. In Afghanistan, several times the size and a massive logistical, linguistic and political challenge, there continues to be a lack of consensus within the Alliance, not only over how to use military forces to manage security issues, but which ones are important enough for European publics to accept casualties for. This is particularly true since the Taliban were removed from government and the so-called reconstruction phase began. The result is an inefficient campaign conducted by caveated contingents, starved of resources and driven by divisions over intent. Europe stands with America in seeking collective security. But there is no unifying narrative strong enough to convince European capitals to share the collective risk. Once engaged in a mission, this uncertainty is expressed through varying political commitment and widely divergent investment in capability. This further marginalises Europe as a partner in American foreign and defence policy and may finally result in a severe decoupling between allies. The future of NATO is far from certain and much depends on the outcome of the mission in Afghanistan—a mission which illustrates all of these issues in starker detail. The question of how best suits UK interests—if NATO is to be used to further stabilise Europe, can the Alliance concurrently facilitate British interests through expeditionary missions.

117 measured in local currencies using constant, 2000 prices. 2006 figures are based on (NATO) estimates.
118 http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2006/p06-159.pdf
WHAT IS NATO?

3. At the core of the Alliance’s current difficulties is a lack of consensus about what NATO is supposed to do. The allies all agree that NATO is political-military alliance made up of democratic states that share common values. Beyond this, however, disagreement if rife. During the Cold War the rationale of the Alliance was simple—to deter a Soviet invasion of Western Europe and if invaded, to repel the Soviets. The threat was easily identified. The Soviets believed in a hostile and competitive ideology that advocated a global workers’ revolution and the Kremlin possessed the wherewithal to attack Europe and North America using both conventional and unconventional means. Although the Allies agreed that the USSR was a threat, there was still disagreement about how to handle the threat. Hence American furore at West German Chancellor Willy Brandt’s Ostpolitik or German outrage over American plans to put more missiles into Germany. Today the Alliance would very much like to squabble over such details—at least no one was really asking if NATO was relevant and the threat was easy to identify even if how to defeat it was a matter of debate.

4. Instead of the Soviet monolith the Allies now face a diverse number of security risks. Weapons proliferation, rogue states, failing states, global pandemics, international terrorist networks, people trafficking, crime syndicates, climate change and energy shortages are now pressing security issues. It is very true that many of these issues existed before the present day, but they were subsumed within the global Cold War. Furthermore, Western society has evolved over the past two decades to be come increasingly obsessed with the idea of risk. The situation is particularly acute in America, but it is not a uniquely American preoccupation. Therefore, even though people in the West are now safer than they ever have been in the last 100 years, they feel more at risk. This is why although statistics tell us that we have a better chance of dying from a falling off a ladder than we do in a terrorist attack, the US and its allies are currently engaged in a Global War on Terror, rather than a Global War on Ladders. The problem for NATO is deciding which challenges to manage. That many of them emanate from beyond NATO’s borders complicates the matter even further. It is because of this changing rationality that conceptualizes security in terms managing risks, rather than a means-ends approach to deterring threats that NATO has sought to become a more proactive organization. At the moment, however, the metamorphosis is incomplete, in part because of the continued expansion of the Alliance.

5. The demise of the Soviet Union not only enabled the West to address a variety of new security risks, it also left a vacuum in East-Central Europe. NATO filled this vacuum, expanding to include countries such as Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. In doing so NATO insured that these countries would have a firm supporting structure to guide their transition from closed dictatorships to open democracies and that their militaries would be subordinate to civilian rule. In many ways, this was a core function of NATO during the Cold War when the Alliance helped ensure peaceful transitions to democratic governments in countries such as Portugal, Spain and Greece. Just as NATO was a stabilizing factor in Southern Europe, the strategy of eastward expansion has also worked. Expansion continues now to the point that new NATO members include Macedonia and Bulgaria, with the possibility of membership being extended to countries such as Albania and Croatia. The problem that this presents is that these new countries make it more difficult to achieve consensus, which makes it harder to use NATO as an expeditionary force. Therefore, whilst the stabilizing factor of expansion benefits British interests, it also limits any ambitions that the Alliance can be used in an expeditionary capacity. Furthermore, even when new members are willing to act abroad in an expeditionary campaign, they lack the resources to do so. Even states such as Poland or the Czech Republic, which are trying to transform their forces, for the time being, offer little support to Alliance capability.

WHO IS NATO?

6. Once the Allies answer the question of what NATO’s purpose is, they can then more easily address the issues of NATO’s area of responsibility. Here there are essentially two possibilities. If the Alliance is deemed to be a collective defence organization, oriented on managing security relations among European states and defending the territory of Europe in a reactive way, then NATO will remain a European centred organization. If the Alliance agrees that managing security risks should start where the risks emanate from, then there is no choice but for the Alliance to be global in nature. The latter is the most logical choice for Britain. The United States has made it clear that US policy vis-à-vis Europe is not about Europe per se, but about how Europe and America can work together. The extension of this logic is that Washington wants NATO to be a global organization that provides for transatlantic security and defence by engaging problems around the world. The US drive to secure closer relations with Japan, Australia and New Zealand supports this goal. The involvement of all three countries in current US and European operations in Iraq and Afghanistan illustrates the possibility of increased transatlantic cooperation with key players in the Asia Pacific region.

119 According to the US Centers for Disease Control the average American has a one in 88,000 chance of dying in a terrorist attack, compared to a one in 10,010 chance of dying from a fall. See: Benjamin Friedman, Think Again: Homeland Security, Foreign Policy (July/August 2005) http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id = 3079&src = PJ/A05.
120 Global in nature does not necessarily mean new allies from outside Europe, but that the Alliance acts outside Europe as is the current trend. The possibility that global NATO means members from outside Europe, such as Australia or Japan, is another issue the alliance will have to confront in the medium term as it continues to work more and more closely with these states.
7. Some European states have, up until now at least, been worried about making NATO a global organization. Of particular concern is that the involvement of states such as Japan and Australia would tilt the balance of power within the Alliance towards Washington. While this concern is understandable, no one is advocating that Asian pacific counties join NATO—they would instead be special partners (such as Sweden currently is). Furthermore, while many of these countries are very pro-US, they have still sought to be clear when divisions exist between their policy positions and Washington. Canberra, for example, has clearly stated that it will not be goaded into supporting hostile rhetoric from Washington aimed at China as China is Australia’s second largest trading partner. The reality is that it would be better for the Alliance to integrate certain Asia-pacific countries into NATO partnership structures than to exclude them, thus forcing the US to perhaps go more in the direction of ad hoc coalitions to get the necessary support to effect policy. By partnering with these countries, NATO’s capability deficit is also somewhat reduced.

8. NATO today is de facto a four tier alliance.

(a) Tier I: This group includes countries such as the UK, US, Canada, the Netherlands and Denmark that acknowledge the role that expeditionary missions need to play in transatlantic security policy. These countries have prepared themselves for such missions and willingly deploy in hazardous areas. Interestingly enough, this group includes non-NATO allies, such as Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Sweden.

(b) Tier II: Members of tier II are the major countries of “Old Europe” such as Germany, France, Spain, Italy among others. There countries Stratégic Defence Reviews continually emphasis less and less defence spending. They are reluctant to deploy abroad, and when they do deploy they tend to do so in a highly risk averse manner that makes their contribution more cosmetic more than anything else. The one possible exception if France. Paris has invested quite heavily in defence (compared to other European countries) and the French maintain an open mind with regard to expeditionary missions. The major dilemma has traditionally been opposition to US-led initiatives. Perhaps, the new Sarkozy government will adjust course to be more engaged in an Alliance expeditionary capacity.

(c) Tier III: This group consists of new member countries such as Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary that understand the need for expeditionary missions and want to support them. They have willingly engaged in such missions and have started military transformation so that they can participate in expeditionary campaigns. At the moment, however, they militaries are not able to provide all of the required capabilities to engage in such missions and require heavy subsidies (financial and equipment) from the West (ie Washington) to deploy abroad.

(d) Tier IV: Members of this group include states such as Macedonia and Bulgaria. They are not able to deploy substantial contributions abroad and bring very little to the table in terms of capabilities when they are deployed abroad. They lack the funds or ability to sufficiently support expeditionary activities within the alliance framework. The militaries are small and have difficulty operating alongside Western European forces on a number of levels, not the least important of which is a lack of English speaking troops.

(e) The Next Round of Expansion—This round will include countries such as Albania and Croatia. The Alliance seriously needs to address what these countries will bring to NATO and what effect they will have on Alliance ambitions to be a global actor. All indications seem to point to these states as consumers of Alliance security, but not providers of it.

WHAT CAN A MULTISPEED ALLIANCE DELIVER?

9. The question of “who is NATO” has already been partially addressed. A more global NATO does not necessary mean new allies, but just new partners. The more substantive bit of this question is “who does what within NATO?” The situation in Afghanistan is effectively a coalition of the willing within NATO. Certain states believe that kinetic military operations are necessary to bring security to Southern Afghanistan. As such Britain, the United States, the Netherlands, and Canada (Denmark will be coming on board soon) find themselves doing all the fighting while the rest of the allies participate in “reconstruction” activities that many NGOs repeatedly emphasize they could undertake.

10. The issue of capabilities is not new. Throughout the Cold War Washington droned on about the necessity of Europe having a better ability to defend itself. Today the complaint is the same—Europe needs more airlift, more armour, more money into research and development—but there is now an added element. Capability really boils down to political will. If the Soviets marched over the Fulda Gap there is little doubt Bonn would have responded. Today, despite the former German defence minister proclaiming the defence of Germany starts in the Hindu Kush, Berlin is not willing to push the case that Germany must be involved in Southern Afghanistan.

11. This problem thus makes it important for the United Kingdom and other like-minded allies, that the Alliance incorporates new partners (or in the extreme, allies) with serious capability and will to act. Should the Alliance become increasingly unwilling to act, or willing to act in rhetoric only, then the logical conclusion is that the United States would seek to establish coalitions of the willing to support US policy. One must ask why exactly the US should work through NATO if the majority of the allies bring little to
the table, but complicate the decision making process immensely. This question must also be considered by Britain—do the benefits of NATO (legitimacy?) outweigh the drawbacks? A disastrous experience in Iraq does not discredited the idea of coalitions of the willing—indeed coalitions of the willing have more often than not been successful. The Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) stretching from the Mediterranean Sea to the Pacific Ocean (and beyond in theory) is one such working example as is the Peace Support Operations Training Centre in Bosnia. If will and capability are not existent, the Alliance will not endure as a working organization in the long-term. It may remain as a political husk, since its complete demise would be too disturbing to the idea of the West, but it would cease to be a working forum for debate and formulation of transatlantic defence policy.

THE AFGHAN DILEMMA

12. All of these issues are easily identified in NATO’s current mission in Afghanistan. What exactly is NATO doing in Afghanistan? There is the official rhetoric about assisting the Government of Afghanistan (GoA) in providing peace and security and extending the reach of the GoA. But if you ask ten NATO allies, you will most likely get ten different answers. Since practically each ally has a different rationale for being in Afghanistan, they conceptualize the problems differently and prescribe different solutions. This has resulted in a disjointed Western (and international) approach to the country. This disjointedness has meant that the security situation has only improved marginally in some parts of the country and in secure areas it has meant inadequate levels of reconstruction and development.

13. It may be because the allies have different rationales for being in Afghanistan that they assign caveats (or not) to their presence in the country. The German emphasis on reconstruction and development means that there should be no need for the Bundeswehr to fight in Helmand. On the other hand, while Washington and London might agree that reconstruction is a key aspect of success, they argue that security is a prerequisite for reconstruction and development, and as such, advocate kinetic military operations. At the heart of the capability and will issue is once again the question of “why is NATO in Afghanistan” which then leads ultimately to “what is NATO for?” The capacity and will issue cannot be resolved without answering this question.

14. The biggest challenge facing the Alliance at the moment, however, is not conceptual, but practical. NATO’s role in Afghanistan has always been a tough one and the Alliance has been on the verge of failure a couple times. NATO has attempted to do Afghanistan on the cheap and as such it has suffered. The fact that General Richards believes that if the Taliban had chosen to use manoeuvre warfare in summer 2006 instead of digging in against NATO forces, he could have lost the battle, is very revealing.12 The Alliance has overcome some difficulties, finally bolstering forces in the south of the country (which now include a theatre reserve requested by General Richards in 2006), but the lack of a joined up approach, coupled with a lack of assistance from the rest of the international community does not bode well for the future of the mission.

15. In the immediate term NATO must defined what success in Afghanistan looks like. To do this, the Alliance must work out why it is Afghanistan and what the ultimate mission is. From this point NATO can then establish what “success” (or at the very least failure) looks like. The Alliance should be careful to not ascribe too much to success—it should be a realistic and achievable standard. Although NATO troops will be in Afghanistan for a long time to come, with success defined, the Alliance could then draw up a plan that would allow it play an increasingly smaller role over the next decade, handing over responsibility to the Afghan government and other international organizations and non-governmental organizations that are better placed to help the country develop in the long-term.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS AND OPTIONS

16. In the face of the aforementioned factors NATO has two potential courses of action.

(a) Internal Assimilation—the Alliance focuses on being an engine of “peaceful expectation of change” in Europe. NATO will help to integrate new members into the community of democracies and it will help to train and update the militaries of former Warsaw Pact countries. If the Alliance continues to expand, however, the most likely outcome is that expeditionary missions either fall by the wayside or are assumed by a “coalition of the willing”.

(b) Expediency Capacity—In this scenario the Alliance tackles the demons of operating abroad. There needs to be serious discussion about what members contribute to NATO and how the Alliance engages in expeditionary missions such as those in Afghanistan. Under this model the Alliance cannot expand indefinitely and future expansion must be contingent upon shared values and capability. Adding Australia or Japan to the Alliance would make much more sense than adding Croatia from this point of view.

(c) It is possible that expansion and expeditionary missions are not diametrically opposed. Over the long term, adding members such as Poland and Hungary that are willing to act and just need to develop a capability will hopefully mean more boots on the ground (which pay for themselves). In

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the short to medium term, however, expansion to include allies that mainly consume resources, rather than provides them, means that the Alliance will have difficult time. Each ally has a vote in what the Alliance should or should not do, regardless of what they contribute to Alliance capabilities.

17. NATO faces a number of daunting challenges and its future is far from certain. It may be tempting to see the Alliance as a dated organization, but to do so is to overlook that very real fact that NATO is the physical manifestation of the West. The shared values of NATO member states are very real and they are the bedrock of the Alliance. It is because of these values that NATO will most likely succeed in Afghanistan. The Alliance may come through bloodied, bruised and perhaps not as effective as it could have been, but it should come through. Unlike the coalition of the willing in Iraq, which has steadily lost members over the years, NATO remains committed to Afghanistan. To fail in Afghanistan would call into question the idea of the West and the commonality of Western values. Although there is much speculation that America and Europe no longer share common values, this is nonsense. Both sides of the Atlantic believe in free-market economics, democracy and human rights. Europe and America do disagree on how to best promote these values and how to normalize them into international frameworks, but these differences are not what make the Alliance weak, they are what makes it strong. A callous and over zealous American administration has made the situation worse, but balance is slowly being restored to Washington politics. If policy-makers in Europe and Washington are smart, they will recognize that disagreeing over how to promote democracy and human rights at least means that you are starting from the same page—that democracy and human rights are good things. The same can not be said of Europe or America’s relationships with many other countries.

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Head, Transatlantic Programme, RUSI
11 June 2007

Memorandum from the Ministry of Defence

INTRODUCTION

1. This memorandum is provided by the Ministry of Defence as written evidence for the House of Commons Defence Committee Inquiry: The Future of NATO and European Defence. It outlines the Government’s policy towards NATO and European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), both in general terms and under the headings of activity, capabilities, partnerships, institutional reform and resources, and also seeks to answer questions asked by the Committee in its letter of 14 May (in italics in the text).

OVERALL POLICY TOWARDS NATO AND THE EU

2. The Government’s vision is of international organisations individually and in partnership being configured, resourced and having the resolve to provide an effective response to current and future security challenges.

(What are the key challenges affecting NATO and how can/should the Alliance change to reflect the new political and strategic realities?)

3. We see NATO as the ultimate guarantor of Europe’s security and the means for achieving its collective defence. As such, it should be able to respond both politically and militarily to the global risks that Allies face, taking a more expeditionary role to respond to the challenges of the twenty first century.

4. The key strategic challenges which NATO must deal with are international terrorism, the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery, and the instability caused by failed or failing states. Such complex and inter-related threats put a premium on close co-operation and co-ordination between international organisations, and underpin the importance of the transformation of NATO’s capabilities and relationships.

5. NATO’s Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG), published at the Riga summit in November 2006 (http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxml/061129e.htm), provides political direction and a 10–15 year framework for NATO’s continuing transformation. It recognises that the nature of potential Article 5 operations is continuing to evolve: a large-scale, conventional military threat to the Euro-Atlantic area is unlikely in the foreseeable future; whereas threats to Allies that originate further afield, possibly using asymmetric means, are rising. Against this background, NATO must retain the ability to carry out the full range of missions, from high to low intensity; placing special focus on the most likely operations, but maintaining the ability to conduct the most demanding. In order to do so, NATO needs the capability to launch and sustain...
concurrent major joint operations and a range of smaller operations for collective defence and crisis response on Alliance territory, at its periphery and at strategic distance. This places an imperative on Allies' ability to develop and acquire flexible, rapidly deployable, expeditionary capabilities.

6. Our aim is for the EU to be an effective strategic player in its own right, able to complement NATO's efforts but also able to conduct crisis management operations when NATO is not involved. The EU is unique among regional organisations in being able to apply a full suite of security instruments: military, police, judicial, developmental, economic, political and diplomatic. It should be able to employ military forces that are interoperable with NATO, drawing as necessary on the "Berlin Plus" arrangements that allow it to make use of NATO assets and capabilities. It has proved itself in a number of operations.

ACTIVITY

7. We expect NATO and the EU to conduct well-planned, well-resourced operations, appropriate to their roles and capabilities and on the basis of equitable contributions from Allies and member states that make a positive impact on international security.

(To what extent should there be a division of labour between NATO and ESDP?)

8. NATO has a far greater military capability than ESDP. But the range of security instruments that the EU can deploy allows it to add value in different ways. There are thus some types of operation in which one or other of the two has a clear advantage: NATO for more intensive military operations, the EU where the emphasis is on civilian capability. But there are equally a range of peace support operations which could be undertaken by either organisation, or where there is a role for both. In these cases the choice of whether NATO or the EU should lead should be made on a case by case basis, according to the intended objectives and the nations that intend to participate.

(What are the key lessons of NATO's operational deployments for the future of the Alliance?)

9. NATO's experience of conducting operations at distance, particularly in Afghanistan, has become a significant driver for change in the Alliance, and underlines the importance of Allies acquiring flexible, rapidly deployable and sustainable expeditionary capabilities. But NATO's experience in Afghanistan and the Balkans has also shown that success cannot be achieved by military means alone: the international community needs to work in a concerted way across many fields—security, reconstruction and development, law and order, and good governance. Whilst NATO does not need to develop civilian capabilities in its own right, it does need a capability to deal with complex political and other interactions inherent in today's crisis management operations management, and to improve its ability to work with other institutions like the UN, the EU, the OSCE, the World Bank and other international and non-government organisations. It should apply this Comprehensive Approach at all stages of an operation, from initial planning to execution. Indeed, it is clear that international institutions collectively need to improve their capacity to work together to deliver comprehensive responses to modern security problems.

CAPABILITY

10. European nations in particular must develop the capabilities they need to make qualitative and quantitative contributions to NATO and the EU. Military capability should preferably be usable by NATO, the EU or ad hoc coalitions, so that European nations can take on an appropriate share of the global security burden. The key priority remains the development of the capability needed to mount, sustain, conduct and recover expeditionary operations. The NATO Response Force (NRF) and EU Battlegroups have been key drivers for improving capabilities. Equally, NATO armaments bodies and the European Defence Agency (EDA) offer Member states and Allies the means to harmonise their requirements and research and technology priorities, to facilitate industrial cooperation and to open up the European equipment market, thereby helping generate valuable efficiencies and ultimately capability improvements for the UK and our partners.

(What more needs to be done by nations to ensure that the Alliance can achieve its aim of being capable of deploying joint forces which are interoperable, sustainable, and deployable to distant theatres?)

(How can the Force Planning Process be streamlined?)

11. NATO's CPG provides a framework for continuing transformation and sets out, the priorities for all Alliance capability development and planning to meet the security challenges we face over the next 10 to 15 years. It makes clear that NATO's priority should be on the development of expeditionary capabilities for both Article 5 and non-Article 5 missions, obviating the need for separate or competing investment in static territorial defence infrastructure. If fully implemented across the Alliance it should improve the overall deployability of NATO forces and their ability to be used for a full range of missions.
12. The experience of conducting operations at distance, notably in Afghanistan, is a further and equally significant driver for change in the Alliance, including in highlighting key capability requirements. Transformation comes at a cost, and resources need to be rigorously focussed on the priorities set out in the CPG. Nations also need to be clear how NATO’s priorities translate into their own defence programmes.

13. NATO’s military capability and preparedness comes from the sum of each Ally’s capability and preparedness, but NATO can support Allies in improving the capability and preparedness of their forces by streamlining the NATO Force Planning Process and encompassing all NATO planning activities

14. NATO’s current force planning process identifies over a four year cycle the capabilities that would be required for NATO to meet the range of operations and missions that Ministers have agreed it should be capable of. On the basis of information supplied by nations through the Defence Planning Questionnaire, Force Goals are addressed to nations suggesting what capabilities they should develop. But the process is lengthy, complex, time consuming and in some areas unable to keep pace with changes in requirement. It does not encompass all the necessary planning activities in NATO, and is not geared to the vision and planning horizons of the CPG. Reform of the process will inevitably be complex. We consider that a key requirement is to address defence planning across the board, not just force planning, which is but one of several NATO planning disciplines (others include resource planning, logistics, communications and armaments.) These disciplines should be streamlined to avoid duplication, improve coherence and support prioritisation of capability development across the Alliance. The roles and responsibilities of the various NATO bodies, such as the two Strategic Commands, the International Staff and International Military Staff, and the committees responsible for the various planning disciplines should be better defined and streamlined.

15. A reform of Alliance defence planning should also consider the following elements:

— Differentiation in planning horizons.
  There would be merit in tailoring the defence planning process to deliver improved force generation. Focus in the early years could be on current operations, force generation for the NRF and follow-on forces. The Force Goals addressed to nations could be focused out to two years for operations and four to six years for the NRF. Beyond these timescales the focus should be on longer term capability and technological development. The planning process must be able to respond to changing priorities within the four year cycle.

— Coherence of NATO planning processes with national planning processes.
  NATO should consider whether it really needs a “one size fits all” planning process or whether there is scope to make the process more flexible, for example allowing NATO the opportunity to offer advice when there are opportunities to shape national thinking, like at the time of defence reviews.

— Coherence with EU planning processes.
  19 nations formally declare forces both to NATO and the EU. Although the scope of operations may be different, both organisations use planning processes and both are moving towards capability planning. Nations need to be able to offer capabilities to both organisations in a similar format, and one which would allow each organisation to make use of this information for its own purposes.

16. The NATO Response Force (NRF), which was declared fully operational at Riga, has been at the vanguard of the process of the Alliance developing flexible, rapidly deployable and sustainable forces called for in the CPG. But even its development has not been without its problems, with Allies struggling with the demands to provide the required capabilities. We are working with NATO in reviewing the current basis for forming the NRF, with the aim of making it more sustainable and useable.

(To what extent has the Prague Capabilities Commitment (PCC) been fulfilled and what measures are in place to address the remaining capability gaps?)

17. Before the Riga Summit in November 2006 NATO reassessed the PCC initiative. It concluded that it was a valuable initiative which had promoted progress in capability development across the Alliance. There remained, however, a number of areas in which progress had been slow, due in the main to financial or technical difficulties, but which remained important. It was agreed that the future focus of the PCC initiative should be on high priority capability development areas as determined by the Comprehensive Political Guidance; and that nations with outstanding commitments should continue to report on these. Those areas considered to require continued high-level monitoring were CBRN Defence, Information Superiority, Combat Effectiveness, and Deployability and Sustainability, containing a total of 76 individual commitments (from an original total of 465).

18. The Spring 2007 Assessment of National Commitments Requiring Further High-Level Attention shows that implementation remains patchy. Most commitments are on track to be implemented as planned, although concerns remain over funding, technical feasibility and a lack of multinational co-operation. At present, two of the remaining commitments are due to be implemented this year, a further eight in 2008, and the remaining 66 beyond 2009.
19. In general, the main capabilities sought through the PCC initiative are also being pursued through specific initiatives in the Alliance, such as in the area of strategic airlift, or through the force planning process. High-level attention to these capability needs also continues independently of individual national PCC commitments. Given this, NATO is likely to reconsider before the 2008 Summit the continued high-level monitoring of the PCC initiative

(How can the capabilities of ESDP be improved and what role do EU Battlegroups play in enhancing EU capabilities?)

20. The capabilities available to ESDP are to a large extent the same capabilities that are being developed for NATO. The Headline Goal 2010 process provides specific guidance on the types of capability that should be available under ESDP. That process highlights the importance of EU Member States focussing their investment not on replacing legacy fixed infrastructure and assets but instead procuring modern deployable assets.

21. EU Battlegroups play an important role as an example of a modern force able to quickly respond to crisis-management operations. They have also acted as a catalyst for transforming some Member States’ armed forces from static to expeditionary. In preparing to assume a place in the Battlegroup roster a Member State, or more commonly a group of Member States, have to address a number of enabling capability issues. Each Battlegroup has to be interoperable, deployable and sustainable; this is tested through pre-deployment training to ensure that all of the contributing forces can work together, communicate amongst themselves and to headquarters and are able to deploy into theatre at short notice. For smaller Member States participating in a multinational Battlegroup, operating alongside other nations builds confidence in operating in a multinational force.

(Is the European Defence Agency delivering the comprehensive and systematic support and guidance needed to help EU Member States improve European defence capabilities, meet the capability needs of the ESDP, and achieve the targets of the Headline Goal 2010 initiative?)

22. The EDA is providing support and guidance to Member States in improving their defence capabilities. The Headline Goal 2010 process will identify any shortfalls in the EU’s ability to meet its operational levels of ambition, but the EDA will have little scope to assist member states in correcting these shortfalls, since most states’ plans are relatively fixed in the short term.

23. The EDA is therefore now looking to the longer term (2025–30) where there are more opportunities to influence and guide Member States’ plans and programmes. This initiative, called the Capability Development Plan (CDP) builds on the work done by the EDA last year in producing a Long Term Vision for future ESDP military capability needs. The CDP aims to use the work produced by the Headline Goal 2010 as a baseline that can be projected into the future, using the trends identified in the Long Term Vision, to assess which capability shortfalls or capability shortfall trends will still be relevant or be of increasing relevance to ESDP operations in 2030. By combining this information with lessons learnt from operations and with Member States’ national plans and programmes for future capabilities the EDA will be able to make an informed judgement of the most important capability gaps. The Agency will be then be able to focus their efforts in assisting Member States in addressing these shortfalls in their long term planning, and assist them in aligning requirements to potentially produce joint projects.

(To what extent should European procurement co-operation be enhanced?)

24. European states cannot afford to determine our equipment requirements solely on separate national bases, develop them through separate national R&D efforts, and realise them through separate national procurements. This approach is not economically sustainable for any nation outside of USA—and in a world of multinational operations it is operationally unacceptable, too. The United Kingdom sees benefit therefore in achieving consolidation on both sides of the market in Europe: aligning and combining our various needs in shared equipment requirements; and meeting them from an increasingly integrated European Defence Technological and Industrial Base.

25. The history of European equipment collaborations is mixed—some have been successful but many have not been, often because they have been less focussed on producing cost-effective equipment and more focussed towards national defence industrial ends. Such a course is ultimately self-defeating; European defence industries will survive only if they can provide top quality goods at competitive prices. When new capabilities are required, it must be consistently borne in mind that the best collaborations start “upstream”—the shared requirements must be achieved at the point where thought is being given to what the new capability will be for, and how it will be used. Attempts to harmonise the technical requirements of independently-conceived platforms are rarely successful.

26. Improving the possibility of collaborative programmes being formed and their subsequent success in delivering solutions cost-effectively is the subject of several work-strands. The EDA is using its Capability Development Plan to provide a new springboard for this effort in order to maximise cooperation from the
very outset. EDA also has work-strands looking specifically at best practice for cooperative programmes; improving cooperation on defence standards; and at cooperation on specific capability areas. OCCAR (Organisation for Joint Armaments Co-operation) was created with the aim of improving the efficiency and lowering the cost of managing co-operative defence equipment programmes involving European nations. This is making good progress—OCCAR is in the process of establishing a working relationship with the EDA given the expectation that it will be given the role of managing many of the programmes that evolve from the EDA’s capability development work.

(What capabilities, other than purely military capabilities, should the EU develop?)

27. The Civilian Headline Goal 2008 was established to address the challenges of civilian crisis management and sets out the EU’s ambitions for civilian ESDP. It is a similar process to the military Headline Goal 2010 process. The EU has made significant progress in identifying capability shortfalls in all the priority areas: police, rule of law, civilian administration, civil protection, monitoring and support to the EU Special Representatives. A Civilian Capabilities Improvements Plan was adopted in December 2005 which sets out a roadmap for taking the process forward. During 2006 the EU focussed on mission support and establishing rapidly deployable Civilian Response Teams (CRT). CRTs are now deployable with approximately 100 experts having received training. Their expertise covers: civilian police, rule of law, civilian administration, civil protection, monitoring, political affairs and mission support. Some key shortfalls have also been identified, notably of judges and prosecutors, prison personnel, police officers and border police officers. The forthcoming ESDP police and rule of law missions to Kosovo and Afghanistan will need such capabilities. There will be a revised Headline Goal process taken forward under the forthcoming Portuguese presidency. Improvements to the planning and control of civilian missions are also being put in place through the establishment of a Civilian Planning and Conduct Capacity. Although a civilian capacity, it will also draw on the expertise of the EU Military Staff.

Partnerships

28. The reality of the current international security situation is that solutions will come through institutions working together and with other nations. NATO and the EU need therefore to improve their ability to work cooperatively together and their ability individually or collectively to work with other nations or institutions like the UN, the African Union and non-governmental organisations that may be engaged in a crisis area. This will require that these institutions each develop the internal structures and processes and external interfaces that will allow them to work cooperatively with others. This is the only way either organisation can deliver a truly Comprehensive Approach on the ground and will also enhance their ability to draw on wider international support.

29. The concept of partnership also includes NATO and the EU engaging effectively with other countries where appropriate. We strongly support NATO’s open door policy on enlargement. Enlargement is a catalyst for reform and stability in aspirant members and brings benefits to the Alliance: decisions to further enlarge NATO need to be based on aspirants’ reform performance, their ability to contribute to Alliance security, and an understanding that they do not result in importing unresolved conflicts to the Alliance.

30. It is also vital to engage with nations that do not aspire to join NATO or the EU but which contribute troops and/or civilian capabilities that deploy alongside or as part of EU or NATO operations, and share our aims of promoting security. NATO will continue to develop its networks of partnerships to this end, including with these “contact countries” such as Australia. The decisions taken at Riga will enable both NATO and its partners to get more out of their relationship; with more flexible formats; improved arrangements for dialogue with troop contributing nations; and the opening-up of NATO’s current partnership tools to all partners.

(How can NATO and the EU work better together?)

31. It is essential to foster strong and effective links between NATO and the EU, respecting the different political identity of each organisation while avoiding unnecessary duplication of capabilities between the two and thereby also minimising the chance that doctrine and procedures will diverge.

32. There are standing arrangements agreed for consultation and co-operation between the EU and NATO including the “Berlin Plus” arrangements whereby the EU has guaranteed access to NATO planning capabilities (aimed at avoiding unnecessary duplication) and can use NATO’s command and control arrangements for running operations. EU military operations thus fall into two categories, “Berlin Plus” operations using NATO command and control arrangements, like EUFOR ALTHEA in Bosnia, and “autonomous” operations using command and control provided by one or more Member States, like EUFOR DR Congo, or in future through the newly-established EU Operations Centre. And military liaison teams have been established to facilitate coordination between the two organisations.
33. But tensions remain in the relationship between the two organisations. While they often co-operate together quite effectively in-theatre (as in Bosnia and in support of the African Union in Sudan/Darfur) the political difficulties can make the institutional process in Brussels more difficult, particularly in respect of information exchange and dialogue outside specific operational areas. Planning is under way for EU policing and rule missions in Kosovo and Afghanistan, to run in parallel with NATO missions in both countries. These are likely to require specific arrangements between NATO and the EU. We have aimed to encourage greater flexibility on information exchange at the political level and greater interaction between staffs.

34. But there are a number of ways in which NATO and the EU can work better together. Greater use of the new EU/NATO liaison cells would improve levels of cooperation and information exchange. We have seen with Darfur that staff-to-staff contacts can deliver effective cooperation, and expect the liaison cells will help achieve this. We expect compelling requirements to emerge for greater levels of information exchange over missions in Kosovo and Afghanistan. This should create precedents for EU/NATO cooperation and information exchange for future missions. Additionally, there have been informal meetings involving representatives of all NATO and EU member states. We hope to build on these informal meetings, to further improve the way in which the EU and NATO work together.

35. Greater information exchange, cooperation and transparency are also important for capability development. Since the military capability requirements of NATO and the EU are largely the same, this common approach is vital. Improving military capabilities in Europe is beneficial to both NATO and the EU, and work conducted in NATO and the EU (including the European Defence Agency) should seek to achieve common goals as far as possible. We continue to engage actively to encourage progress, including through a NATO-EU capabilities group that brings together nations and staff from both organisations.

REFORM

36. NATO and the EU need constantly to modernise their structures and processes to ensure that they are able to respond to the increasingly complex and interconnected security challenges of the modern world. In NATO we want to see better management of common resources, more effective working within NATO headquarters, including greater integration between military and civilian staffs and a command structure that is more affordable and better meets the current demands on the alliance. In the EU we want more effective internal working across and within the pillars to ensure a more coherent effect from the EU’s external actions.

(How is NATO’s transformation agenda progressing?)

37. NATO’s true strength is, and will remain, in expressing and delivering transatlantic consensus for action, and in providing a crucial framework for interoperability amongst Allies. Success on operations remains the primary measure of its value and credibility. NATO has achieved a significant amount in Afghanistan and Kosovo, but both theatres have posed significant challenges. In parallel to its military transformation and the political process of adopting more comprehensive and effective methods of working with others, NATO needs to accelerate internal reform. The Alliance’s structure and decision-making machinery needs to focus more sharply on its key operational, capability development and partnership objectives. It needs to be leaner, more responsive and accountable. This is a complex challenge for a consensus-based organisation.

(Does NATO need a new strategic concept?)

38. NATO’s 1999 Strategic Concept describes the evolving security environment in terms that remain largely valid. The CPG builds on this to provide a framework for NATO’s continuing transformation and sets out, for the next 10 to 15 years, the priorities for all Alliance capability issues, planning disciplines and intelligence. Combined with NATO’s developing work on a Comprehensive Approach, this provides the strategic framework against which NATO can plan to operate, and a good vision for change. These elements should eventually be brought together in a new strategic concept.

RESOURCES

39. NATO and the EU need to have the necessary resources at the right time and managed to the highest standards to make the most of finite budgets. Institutional investment must be reprioritised in line with current and emerging requirements, rather than continuing to spend money maintaining out-of-date and less relevant capabilities. Nations need to shoulder their fair share of the burden. Arrangements for the common funding of military operations in NATO and the EU should be developed carefully both to maintain an incentive on nations to develop the necessary national capabilities and to avoid favouring one organisation over another. {The UK will continue to lobby Allies, bilaterally and within the EU and NATO, to invest appropriately in their national defence.
(How can NATO nations address funding shortfalls and disparities?)

(How can the Alliance find the resources to match its global interests?)

40. While US defence spending has increased massively over the last five years, European defence budgets remain low in historic terms. The 25 NATO members who participate in the NATO force planning system (ie excluding France) have agreed two key benchmarks: that nations should aim to spend 2% of GDP on defence and invest 20% of their defence budget in equipment. In 2006 only six of those 25 allies met the first of these benchmarks, and only seven met the second. European defence spending in 2006 stands on average at about 2.0% of GDP, compared with US spending of about 3.8%. Turkey (3%) and Greece (3%) are the only two other NATO countries at the 3% level, while France and the UK are the highest defence spenders in real terms in the EU. The shortfalls in capabilities and disparities in funding levels between nations would be reduced if all NATO nations met the existing NATO benchmarks. The EDA is developing indicators and benchmarks to underpin discussion of defence investment among European countries.

41. NATO has created a new command, Allied Command Transformation, to encourage military innovation among NATO members that should lead to a broad reconfiguration of forces. NATO is using the four-year old military transformation agenda to advise member governments on future procurement needs. But its budget is modest—only some only $20 million from NATO common funding compared with some $150 million a year that the US spends on defence transformation.

42. Alliance members will have to generate new efficiencies to underwrite transformation costs. Common funding, shared purchasing, mission specialization, more open and transparent defence markets, and planning procurement coordination are some of the ways in which NATO members might be able to take on these costs without inflating national budgets.

(How can the arrangements for the funding of the NATO Response Force be improved and made more equitable?)

43. The NATO Response Force (NRF) is a “rotating” force provided by a sub-set of NATO nations at any one time. Costs fall to the nations that provide the force elements until such time as the NRF deploys. When NRF HQ elements are deployed as the senior NATO HQ in a theatre the usual range of eligibility for common funding of HQ Command and Control functions and theatre-wide enablers is applicable. Costs of deploying and sustaining the force elements below the HQ level continue to fall to the nations involved.

44. Any rapid deployment at short notice of the NRF incurs for the nations involved substantial costs. Some nations have indicated that the unpredictable financial consequence of short notice deployments acts as a disincentive to making force contributions to the NRF. As a consequence it has been argued that the problem would be alleviated if NATO agreed at least some common-funded reimbursement of strategic lift costs. We are not persuaded by this argument. It is not clear that common funding is the answer to improving the generation of forces for NATO operations or forces. For example, SHAPE was unable to detect any early signs of improved force generation as a result of the decision in 2005 to increase the range of eligibility for common costs in support of Non-Article five operations (such as Afghanistan and Kosovo).

45. Nevertheless, we have agreed to a NATO proposal to partial reimbursement of strategic lift costs for an interim period whilst nations improve their lift capabilities or gain assured access to lift capabilities. Any financial support for deployment costs of national force elements will be strictly limited to short-notice deployments of the NRF. As a rule not all elements of an NRF would require costly movement by air. The mode of movement would depend on the character and location of the crisis and would need to be subject to military advice at the time. Financial support would be provided only to meet minimum military requirements and for the most cost-effective means of deployment (usually about 15% deployed by air and 85% by sea).

46. The intended financial support would be available for a two-year period and expected to start from the North Atlantic Council’s agreement in the coming months. The interim arrangement would be subject to evaluation to assess the effects of the financial support arrangements on force generation and capacity building.

47. All participating nations would be eligible for reimbursement; based on a rate below the actual costs; with support available to those nations that have identified their airlift needs and have put in motion credible ways to meet them, such as ownership, or shared ownership, of appropriate aircraft, or assured access when required. The likely cost to the UK has yet to be established but we do not anticipate having to pay our 12.1% share of common reimbursement costs (even when UK forces are not participating) before early 2008.

13 June 2007
Memorandum from Geoffrey Van Orden MEP

As Conservative Defence Spokesman in the European Parliament since 1999, as a Member of the Defence Sub-Committee of the European Parliament, as a Member of the Parliament’s Delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, and as a former Executive Secretary of the International Military Staff at NATO Headquarters, Brussels, while serving in the British Army, I have closely followed the development of European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) as well as the fortunes of NATO.

I am concerned that ESDP has an essentially political purpose – namely to promote European integration and enhance the role of the EU as a global actor in the sphere of foreign and defence policy – and that it adds nothing to military capabilities. On the contrary it is a diversion, weakening wholehearted commitment to the North Atlantic Alliance.

I respectfully make the following submission to the inquiry of the House of Commons Defence Committee, and would welcome the opportunity to give oral evidence.

INTRODUCTION

Attitudes to EU involvement in defence matters are undoubtedly determined by the more general approach to the EU. Those who favour ever closer European political integration, and the development of an EU able to act independently on the world stage, will welcome a strong ESDP and seek to find practical justification for it. Those more cautious of transferring further sovereign competencies from member states, particularly in the areas of defence and security, will take a more critical approach. They will argue that the transatlantic relationship underpins our national security, and that international military operations are best conducted through the well-established intergovernmental alliance that is NATO, binding the US to the security of Europe. I am firmly of this latter persuasion.

My view is that pressure for the EU to adopt a defence-related role has come from those seeking to add state-like attributes to the Union, rather than military value to common objectives. They wish the EU to pursue its own distinct foreign policy objectives, requiring the full range of foreign policy instruments, and including the use of military force. It is not clear where the political drive for these ambitions is located. Whereas it is easy to suspect the hand of Germany, France, or its stalking horse Belgium, nevertheless both the British Government and the US Administration must bear a heavy responsibility — either through confusion of political objectives or naivety. For its part, the US has failed to take proper account of the advice and concerns of key allies in handling crises, it has invested insufficient political capital in NATO, its most important multilateral alliance, and it has been indifferent to the impact of the emergence of ESDP.

At St. Malo in 1998 the British and French governments agreed that the EU should have “the capacity for autonomous actions, backed up by credible military forces” (122). This was a reversal of the position of previous British Governments, regardless of their political persuasion. Although the earlier Maastricht Treaty includes reference to an eventual EU defence policy (123), it could be assumed that any move in this direction would always be blocked by the British Government. Since 1998, ESDP has become a flagship policy of the EU. It is my contention that it is duplicative and divisive. It competes with NATO, complicates decision-making there, and introduces a need for co-ordination mechanisms, surely superfluous given the overlapping memberships of the two organisations. ESDP produces no new military capabilities, it encourages reductions in defence efforts, and detracts from civil operations which could be a useful EU contribution and a helpful division of labour.

DUPICATION OF ACTIVITY

The most immediate effect of ESDP has been a proliferation of unnecessary EU bodies. The effect of this duplication is, firstly, that valuable resources and the time and effort of key commanders and senior staff are wasted. Secondly, differences are generated between those involved in one institutional arrangement but not the other. Different political signals are transmitted to potential adversaries, offering scope for exploitation of divergences. This was certainly the case in the lead up to the Iraq war, when Turkey applied for Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty to be put into effect and was blocked by France, Germany, and Belgium. Saddam took heart and Turkey was offended.

Proponents of ESDP deftly claim that NATO remains the cornerstone of collective defence while the EU merely takes on limited crisis management operations. This in fact consigns NATO to the bottom drawer — there in case it is needed — while the EU fulfils day to day military operations that are so much in demand. The Treaty of Lisbon signed in October 2005 contains the provision that “The common security and defence policy shall include the progressive framing of a common Union defence policy. This will lead to a common defence, when the European Council, acting unanimously, so decides.” (124) This would be a clear replication of NATO’s most fundamental guarantee.

122 Joint declaration on European defence, St. Malo, 4 December 1998, Paragraph 2
123 Treaty on European Union, Maastricht, 29 July 1992, Preamble, Article B, Article J.4
124 The Lisbon Treaty, October 2007, Article 27.7
COMPETING DEFENCE STRUCTURES

We now have a situation where both NATO and the EU act “out of area”—NATO is going global, but so is the EU, which does not wish to be restrained to a regional role; where both are engaged in military, humanitarian and reconstruction operations; where both are involved in crisis management, and both insist on a collective defence obligation. There is nothing going on in the EU, including the work of the European Defence Agency, which is not already happening in some form in NATO. ESDP is the proverbial elephant in the NATO corridors that no one likes to mention.

At first, the EU maintained it would limit its military activities to the Petersberg Tasks, humanitarian and rescue missions and peace-keeping—although “peace-making” was also included. Since then it has evinced a clear intention to assume a global role. In the European Security Strategy of 2003, Javier Solana claims that “the EU is inevitably a global player” and should “be ready to share in the responsibility for global security and in building a better world.”

The consequence of the EU’s refusal to accept a narrower role is demonstrated, unfortunately, in Darfur. In April 2005, NATO responded to a request for logistical support for the African Union’s military operation in Darfur, but the EU also decided to get involved militarily. There was some discussion as to whether EU and NATO efforts could be managed jointly but there was no agreement. As a consequence, the NATO airlift support was planned at Mons while the EU effort was directed up the road in Eindhoven. Given this duplication and confusion it is not surprising that the overall international intervention in the Darfur tragedy has been so unsuccessful.

Commitment to NATO is weakened because an alternative structure for international military expeditions is available. EU nations point to their military contributions in Bosnia, Congo and even Lebanon, which reduce their ability to reinforce Afghanistan. Such competitive deployment into the same theatre of operations is wasteful and dangerous.

At this time of threat to the democracies, when solidarity is needed, it is disastrous for Europeans and Americans to have competing strategic visions or, indeed, two defence organisations, with overlapping membership and competing claims on the same limited defence resources. Before ESDP, Western democracies had one forum for joint discussion and decision-making in relation to crises, but the same nations (more or less) now assemble at two separate locations.

Of course there will be times when Europeans may wish to act alone or bear the heaviest responsibility for a particular military action, especially in their own vicinity. But this sort of decision should be taken around the NATO table with the Americans and other allies and with their full support. Not only is there no need for meetings to take place in separate buildings or for separate military staff structures to pore over such matters, but such separate activities will only undermine confidence between the US and its EU allies and give comfort to our common enemies.

DEADLOCKED EU-NATO RELATIONS

Having created an artificial divide in defence, much time, resources and diplomatic capital is now being expended on trying to find ways to coordinate the efforts of two organisations whose membership largely overlaps. In the hands of the EU, this is a cumbersome bureaucratic and administrative matter, meaning that no fresh synergy or new capabilities are being created.

The situation in Afghanistan epitomises the dire state of EU-NATO relations. NATO’s ability to generate the forces it requires to sustain its operations is constrained by competing demands and politically-imposed caveats that limit the operational flexibility of many of those troops actually made available. While the US, UK, Canada and the Netherlands bear the brunt of combat operations, only Poland responded positively in late 2006 to an urgent request for more combat troops. Both Germany and France have significant numbers of troops deployed in Afghanistan, yet these troops are located in the relatively quiet north, are deliberately constrained from offensive operations, and are therefore not involved in the often fierce fighting underway in the south and east. NATO’s drive to increase troop contributions to Afghanistan is made even more difficult when the EU suddenly decides to issue a competing call for troops, for instance the military mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo in Summer 2006.

The vital need to consolidate military successes with immediate reconstruction and development assistance is frustrated by separate decision-making chains. For many years, the EU has sponsored humanitarian and development assistance in Afghanistan mainly through NGOs. The EU has its own Special Representative in Afghanistan answerable to the EU Foreign Policy chief, Xavier Solana. The lack of coordination and cooperation between this “civil” effort and the military campaign has created a situation...
which the former NATO commander described as “close to anarchy”. He wanted to synchronise the civil and military effort and provide a “security cloak” to enable reconstruction programmes to push ahead in areas of instability. This presupposed a common strategic approach and shared political objectives. The lack of commitment to NATO operations threatens the very future of the Alliance.

EDSP Generates no Additional Military Capabilities

With minor exceptions (eg AWACS), NATO owns no military forces, nor does the EU. There is only one set of military forces in each nation for the full range of military tasks. If troops are made available for an EU operation then clearly they are not available for NATO or other tasks. EU talk of a 60,000 strong rapid reaction force or indeed its less ambitious ‘battle group’ concept is smoke and mirrors in that these draw on precisely the same forces that a country might also make available for NATO, UN or indeed national military tasks. ESDP merely places an additional burden on our existing armed forces and does not generate any additional capacity.

Unnecessary EU Operations

The vast majority of the 19 ongoing or completed “EU operations” are on a small-scale, and only a handful have been purely military in nature. They are often the result of the EU scouring the globe for places where it can plant its flag and claim to be doing effective work. The Aceh Monitoring Mission comprised only 53 EU civilian monitors and the police mission to the Palestinian Territories was made up of 33 unarmed personnel. The UK contribution to the recent EU military operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo consisted of one staff officer in Potsdam and one officer in Kinshasa. Conversely, Operation Althea was, until recently, composed of approximately 7000 troops. Here, however, the EU took over the main military responsibilities from NATO, but this was only once the difficult military mission was effectively completed. The troop contingents in Bosnia over the last 13 years, whether under UN or NATO control, have always been overwhelmingly European. The addition of the EU flag introduced no additional or different military forces, serving only to complicate the chain of command and inflate EU military pretensions.

We hear four main themes in the arguments for an extended military role for ESDP. Each of them can be rebutted.

1) A common foreign policy is a more credible foreign policy

It is argued that European nations would have more influence on the world stage if they combined their military and diplomatic resources to speak and act with a single voice. Member-states of the EU have a combined population 50% larger than that of the US, a (fractionally) bigger GDP, and a higher rate of GDP growth. Even the UK, which has the highest defence budget of any EU member state, spends barely 13% of the US total, whereas the EU as a whole spends over 54%. A more credible partner, it is suggested, would be a more equal partner with the US. In the same vein, it is averred that a united front would enable more effective action in Middle Eastern or African countries where real or alleged divisions between Western allies are currently being exploited.

This is a noble theory, but it assumes that there is a distinct and agreed “European” strategic interest or foreign policy and that our armed forces would increasingly be willing to show allegiance to the EU. Furthermore, the practical reality is that ESDP expeditions have done more to damage than build up the collective credibility of the EU member states. In Chad, where more than 60% of the proposed EU force will come from France, there is every appearance of the French government exploiting the EU label to obtain their own military objectives in a country where their historical record makes unilateral action difficult. In Afghanistan, despite being operative since June 2007, an EU police mission has received only half of the promised 160 instructors, and safety fears have confined these 80 personnel to base, to the inevitable detriment of EU standing in the region. The bureaucratic and technical problems that underlay the resignation of General Eichele, have been equally well publicised and both locally and internationally have had similarly negative consequences for EU prestige.

There is also evidence to suggest that a transfer of responsibility from member states to EU institutions simply alters the forum in which divisions emerge. The most notable rift in recent months has been over the participation of Zimbabwe in the EU-Africa Summit, and this has come about as a direct result of EU institutions, not in defiance of them.

2) Common action is more efficient

It is suggested that ever closer co-operation in security and defence matters inevitably leads to efficiency savings, in procurement, in communication systems, and in a reduced number of operational headquarters.

EU involvement produces the opposite effect. As at NATO, there is now an EU Military Committee, composed of national Chiefs of Defence represented on a day to day basis by their Military Representatives. Just as there is an International Military Staff at NATO, there is now an EU Military Staff, and, just as at
SHAPE, there is now an EU Operations Centre, designed to enable the EU to run military operations without recourse to the operations centres of EU Member States or NATO. The EU is now in the initial stages of setting up a WMD Monitoring Centre, which will, of course, echo the work of the NATO WMD Centre established in 2000.

Of course, there is often political and industrial merit in collaborative equipment schemes, but these certainly do not require the involvement of the institutions of the EU.

3) **ESDP can go where the US cannot**

In some areas, notably the Middle East, the reputation of the US has been tarnished, resulting in some regional resistance to US involvement there. The EU has sought to capitalise on this problem. The resumption of conflict in Lebanon in 2006 was an instance where the US considered it prudent not to assume a high-profile role in the subsequent UN peacekeeping operation. European nations, not the EU, took the lead in providing additional troops to and commanding the enlarged UNIFIL mission in Lebanon. Those who advocate a stronger EU role in defence cite this example to prove that the EU can act where a strong US presence would not be beneficial.

But the EU flag is seen by some as acceptable, because it is relatively unknown and free from US association. This would necessarily change were ESDP to begin large-scale military projects. It also encourages the EU to distance itself from the US. In any case, there is also a plethora of other organisations able to go where the US cannot, including the UN, AU, ECOWAS in Africa, ASEAN and MERCOSUR.

It is true that there are and will be occasions where nations other than the US must take the lead, but this does not automatically lead to a role for the EU. As in Lebanon individual European nations can take the responsibility to lead UN operations without any reference to the EU at all. EU members of NATO can also opt to use NATO structures and assets when the US decides not to get involved. This was first proposed through the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) in 1996. At the 1996 NATO Summit in Berlin it was agreed that ESDI would be carried out by the Western European Union (WEU) but structured within NATO, using NATO headquarters and assets, preventing a weakening of the transatlantic alliance and wasteful duplication. Thus ESDI became a “separable but not separate” part of NATO.

Although ESDI was superseded with the creation of ESDP in 1999, the principle of working within NATO was retained, through the Berlin Plus arrangements. But even these were a palliative—useful in calming the nerves of those fearful about the growth of EU ambitions, and concerned about the future of NATO. But the real objective of dispensing with NATO did not disappear. This is dangerous and divisive, at a time when Western solidarity should be a foremost strategic requirement.

4) **ESDP can use a range of instruments that NATO lacks**

It is suggested that the EU can support ESDP missions with civilian, diplomatic and economic policy tools unavailable to NATO structures. With a budget of €7 billion pa, the Commission is the world’s largest donor and provider of humanitarian aid.

However, it is important to emphasise that such soft power is not an intrinsic feature of the Union, but is made available entirely through the goodwill of individual states. The EU can, for example, buy support through programmes such as the European Neighbourhood Policy, covering Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and North Africa, which has a foreseen budget of €12 billion for 2007–13. Meanwhile, urgent forward reconstruction operations in Afghanistan have been neglected. The EU can offer trade incentives, humanitarian aid and development programmes as part of its solution. It is here that the EU should concentrate its effort, leaving military operations to NATO.

5) **ESDP enhances European nations’ military capabilities**

This is the contention of the European Defence Agency (EDA), and a stated aim in the Lisbon Treaty published in October 2007. But the capabilities of European militaries will only be enhanced if national government have the political will to increase their defence budgets to an acceptable level, however unpopular this decision might be. Within NATO, there is an unspoken agreement to a base level of 2% of GDP spent on defence but only six NATO members currently meet this minimum requirement. In the EU spending on defence is as low as 0.7% of GDP in Austria and the Republic of Ireland.

The EDA’s mandate is “to support the Council and the Member States in their effort to develop defence capabilities for crisis management operations, to sustain the European Security and Defence Policy as it stands now, and will develop in the future” and it is to achieve this by promoting European armaments cooperation, strengthening the European defence technological and industrial base and creating a competitive European defence market. The favourite mantra of the EDA is that it is not the size of defence budgets that matters but how they are spent.

126 Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy: New proposals from the EC, 4 December 2006
127 Council Joint Action 2004/551/CFSP of 12 July 2004 on the establishment of the European Defence Agency
This is a misleading and cavalier statement. By claiming that European nations can improve their military capabilities by making different procurement decisions alone, instead of by raising their defence spending, the EDA contributes to the prevalent European trend of declining defence budgets. The solution to this problem is simple and it is not the one advocated by the EDA: it is to spend more money on defence.

The EDA also suffers from delusions of grandeur. Seen by most Member States as a middleman to facilitate collaborative intra-European defence projects, the EDA's Chief Executive, Nick Witney maintains that "it is at the strategic level that we can ultimately add most value—which is why arguably our most important output to date is a document called the Long Term Vision, published last October, which attempts to look forward over the next two decades and draw some conclusions about the environment in which ESDP operations will take place." This is mission creep of the worst kind, with the unelected members of an EU off-shoot agency taking it upon themselves to assess the strategic threats that European nations might face in the coming years. My confidence rests with the strategic planners in the UK and NATO, rather than with the bureaucrats in the EDA.

6) **NATO and the US support ESDP**

It is certainly true that NATO and the US offer ESDP qualified support, at least provided it does not conflict with NATO or try to replicate NATO functions. The lack of stronger public opposition to ESDP reflects NATO's lack of robust champions. Its senior representatives are government nominees, most are European, and governments of EU Member States have decided to support ESDP. There is, therefore, a vicious circle of self-debilitating compliance. While US representatives voice their concerns about ESDP in private, Mr Blair's support for the US in Iraq meant that the White House would not publicly state anything that undermines the Blair position. Hence, when Mr Blair told Washington that ESDP was acceptable, Washington accepted it.

**Looking Ahead**

The military role of ESDP is established but not yet entrenched, and military capabilities can still be brought back to NATO. For this to be widely acceptable, and for its own sake, it is clear that NATO must also change. Fresh strategic thinking is required on the future role, structure, geographical reach and capabilities of the Alliance. NATO needs to be reinvigorated to concentrate on what it does best—the application by the democracies of military force across the full spectrum, from peace support operations to war fighting.

Firstly then, the NATO allies need a fresh political compact which defines the nature of the Alliance and what it is for. Through what means, for example, are the problems of terrorism, WMD proliferation, energy security, cyber security, protection of critical infrastructure, and civil protection best addressed? The command structure may need revisiting. If the Europeans committed more then it could become more European. Of course, if France were to rejoin the integrated military structure of NATO, and if the US would accept that its forces may operate under foreign command, then many of the problems of recent years would be resolved at a stroke.

The capabilities and skills of the US and its European allies are complementary in terms of regional and global power projection. The US provides the ultimate backstop and has the capability to impact on any area of potential conflict. As a specific example, at a time when energy security is of increasing importance, the US is the only country with sufficient naval assets to defend all the maritime “chokepoints” where the flow of oil might be interrupted, and with the capability to provide the necessary surveillance of potential chokepoints in the land pipelines. The UK and France have a more limited ability to project power globally. Turkey is a major player in the Black Sea/Caspian area and the Middle East. At the same time, its actions have influence in the wider Islamic world.

Secondly, there is an urgent need for the democracies to generate more defence capabilities, but the European response has been to create more institutions. European nations already spend very little on defence. Even the UK—among the most active military powers—is spending less now as a proportion of national wealth than at any time since the 1930s. But the UK’s 2.2%\(^{129}\) of GDP puts it in a super league compared with Germany’s 1.4% or Spain’s 1.3%. Turkey meanwhile is spending 3.2%.

The US might reasonably complain that it bears a disproportionate share of the common defence. More equitable burden-sharing is not a new problem. The Europeans' share of the defence burden certainly needs to increase, but that does not require the involvement of the EU institutions whose meddling in military matters has proved divisive and a distraction from real security needs. Given the motives that drive it and the track record of declining defence expenditure among so many European nations, ESDP will not provide the solution.

\(^{128}\) *Europe Is Not in a Zero-Sum Game with NATO*, Washington DC, 14 February 2007

\(^{129}\) UK Ministry of Defence, 2005/2006 Budget
Budget reform has been on the NATO table for many months. There is an agreed cost share for each country calculated on gross domestic product. The question is whether more elements could be covered by the common funded budget. NATO Common Funding currently totals about $2 billion and comprises three elements: the Military Budget, the Civilian Budget and the Security Investment Programme. The main contributors are the US, Germany and the UK. There is a case for rebalancing this budget—for a start, France needs to make a fairer contribution for her seat at the top table. There is also a case for more common NATO assets, such as a strategic airlift component.

Thirdly, more attention needs to be given to so-called “soft power” non-military capabilities. The EU can play a valuable role in “soft” security—conflict prevention, humanitarian aid, development assistance, post-conflict reconstruction—leaving military matters to NATO. Such an institutional division of labour would be enormously helpful. Indeed, there is a need for forward civil reconstruction capabilities to consolidate and complement NATO military operations.

Finally, fresh attention should be given to regional alliances to which NATO could provide support. This would take account of the growing importance of regional powers such as India, the role of Australia and perhaps South Africa, and the need to support moderate Islamic countries in North Africa and the Gulf.

CONCLUSION

A plausible ESDP narrative has now been carefully constructed. It would be too easy to sit back and accept this as a reality, and just try to make ESDP work better. I believe the consequence of this would be the erosion of our independent foreign policy, the decline of NATO, and a weakening of the transatlantic relationship.

When the next strategic crisis implodes on the democracies we should not then be surprised if our defence forces prove inadequate and the US was absent at the critical moment.

No spokesman for ESDP has been able to provide a credible military justification for it. A British government should begin to undo what is to all intents an unnecessary and counter-productive political device that does not serve our national interest.

30 October 2007

Memorandum from Dr Christoph O Meyer

INTRODUCTION

0. This submission discusses briefly discussed the relationship between the EU and NATO and associated problems. My approach to the relationship relies rests on three main arguments that can only be stated briefly here.

1. It does not make sense to discuss the relationship between NATO and the European Security and Defence policy, but what is at stake is the relationship between the European Union and NATO, ie both organisations per-se. ESDP cannot be understood in isolation from the organisation it emanates from, the broader common foreign and security policy it is a part of (CFSP) and the EU’s other external policies such as trade, aid, development, asylum, migration and policing, accession and membership policies.

2. The debate about the relationship between NATO and the EU regarding security issues cannot be understood from nor should it be evaluated primarily by considerations of efficiency. The trajectory of national defence and security policies is influenced first and foremost by political factors and dynamics and is constrained as well as facilitated by deep-seated but not immutable norms about the ends and means concerning the use of force and role of a nation in international affairs. If electorates decide that the two organisations pursue different aims by different means, then “duplication” of, for instance planning and command facilities, is perfectly justifiable if more costly.

3. The primary source of friction between the EU and NATO are not the organisations per se, but members of both organisations who for their own geopolitical or historical reasons have divergent attitudes vis-a-vis how to co-operate with the US and in particular, to what extent the EU is entitled to different and even conflicting views and approach to security challenges than the US. The second source of friction originates from members who are part of one organisation and not the other (non-EU NATO members) and who fear that the evolution of the EU as a security actor will diminish their influence on key security issues and the value of the alliance they are part of.
THE STATUS-QUO AND ITS PROBLEMS

4. NATO and the EU are very different organisations, with different purposes and different memberships. They are overlapping with regard to missions that could be broadly defined as crisis management with clear authorisation of the UN. These are now the most frequent and likely missions that European states are engaging in and both organisations seek to play role in these areas. These missions also tend to be “missions of choice” and raise complex issues about the ends and means of each mission, including questions of costs and legitimacy concerning the use of force.

5. NATO has substantially expanded its membership, established the NRF and “gone global”. NATO has only launched one mission since the Prague Summit—Afghanistan—which is still ongoing and in serious difficulties. NATO is no longer just the collective defence organisation that it once was after the demise of the Soviet Union, but neither is it clear what it is now. US wants to turn it into an instrument in its global foreign and security strategies, but prefers after the Kosovo experience to resort to coalitions of the willing when it comes to high-intensity war-fighting. There are divergent views among EU members of NATO about the purpose and direction of the organisation. NATO’s internal decision-making structures are not designed for generating the political will that is necessary to underpin crisis management situations and new wars of choice. Moreover, NATO lacks the multi-faceted civil tools that contemporary peace and nation-building requires. It is unlikely to ever develop them and will depend on the EU and individual states, most notably the US, to provide them. Nor is it well equipped to deal with new sources of insecurity arising from economic, environmental and demographic factors.

6. The EU has expanded from 15–27, established the ERRF and formulated its first ever security strategy with global reach but regional emphasis. The EU has launched 16 ESDP missions since its inception, the overwhelming majority of them policing and monitoring missions, but also one, which involved small-scale but robust combat (ARTEMIS). The EU is a regional political organisation with a wide policy-scope, both in internal economic policy, but also increasingly in the domain of foreign policy. The EU has many of the characteristics, some of the institutions and procedures and virtually all of the instruments of a globally influential foreign policy actor. The EU is big enough not to take the work as given, whereas its individual member states are not. ESDP is the manifestation of the political will to underpin this policy also in the domain of hard security even if the main emphasis of its security policies is on conflict prevention. The EU currently lacks the military and political capapity for high-intensive and large-scale combat missions. The EU (or rather its member states) will depend on the US support for such missions for the foreseeable future, within or outside the NATO framework.

7. Problems of overlap and friction between both organisations have emerged as the EU moves into the hard-security crisis management realm and establishes institutions, committees, procedures and forces underpinning this autonomous security and defence policy. Attempts to ensure institutional synergies and close co-operation between organisations have been much less successful than those relating to co-operation among militaries and in the area of defence procurement.

8. The underlying conflict is, however, essentially political and concerns the rebalancing of the relationship between the United States and Europe after the end of bi-polarity and their respective roles in a gradual emerging multi-polar world order. NATO was originally designed to ensure the US engagement in Europe and it worked because of a shared threat and a set of shared ideas about NATO’s contribution to “the West’s vision of the world”. However, the common threat has gone and the ideational glue is evaporating gradually ever since. The Bush administration’s approach to international affairs in general and its European partners in particular, has only brought to the fore the insight that a common political and economic system, a shared history and a high degree of economic interdependence are not in themselves sufficient to ensure a convergence of foreign policy objectives. On the contrary, it is fair to say that in recent years a number of factors—economic, demographic, and cultural—point to a divergence of norms and values underpinning American and European views of international issues. “The West” has become a contested concept. Given these seismic changes, NATO is badly equipped to act as a political forum for exchanges between the US and EU states about these different views and re-establishing a shared meaning and purpose of “the West”.

THE WAY FORWARD

9. NATO is in crisis as an organisation and its fate may well be decided in how it handles Afghanistan—at least from the perspective of the US. The EU has settled some of the institutional uncertainties with the Lisbon Treaty and equipped itself with institutions and procedures that are—for good or for worse—unlikely to change for the next ten years or so. While CFSP common actions and ESDP missions are still subject unanimity, the trajectory of the EU as a whole is relatively clear and the momentum for a more capable, coherent and effective foreign policy, including on security issues, is strong. It would be in my view futile to think that the EU’s aspirations to become comprehensive security actor can be somehow reigned in again, made subject to US/NATO prior approval or limited in their scope to only civilian missions. The genuinely open questions are in in view the following:

10. The division of labour between the two organisations with regard to missions that require high-intensity combat. My view is that the EU should be realistic in the types of combat missions it can engage in for the foreseeable future and will have to rely NATO and/or the US for Serbia/Kosovo-type operations.
The battlegroups are likely to be effective only vis-a-vis adversaries in Africa. Yet, high-intensity and large-scale operations against non-African adversaries are likely to be quite rare if not impossible and NATO is well equipped to deal with them. The EU in contrast is quite capable of successfully supplying the military component for smaller-scale UN-sanctioned operations and smaller European crises—especially once it fully exploits its different means of addressing the problems of inefficient national defence and procurement policies. The wider and more detailed implications for military planning and procurement are better addressed by other witnesses.

11. The co-operation between NATO and EU on missions that require a mix of military and civilian elements. The Afghanistan mission has been already compromised by an overreliance on military means and an insufficient emphasis on “winning hearts and minds” through a careful mixture of military, police, economic, educational and developmental instruments. Instead of seeking to equip NATO with civilian instruments that it is ill-equipped to wield (Berlin-Plus in reverse), drastic changes need to be made to the political context of mission planning between EU and US so that military and civilian aspects are considered in an integrated fashion. This would also require spending equal attention to civilian as well military headline goals. What would be needed first is a new consensus between EU and the US on these missions, the adjustment of procedures/chains of command between NATO and EU could follow from that, including for instance, putting a Civilian into overall command of such missions. The working group on Human Security has made some important recommendations in this area.

12. Finally, the political framework for dialogue and co-operation between the EU and the US on security and defence issues needs a root-and-branch reform. It is true that NATO has been increasingly bypassed and hollowed-out as the forum for such a dialogue, even on security and defence matters. Instead, a new political structure needs to be found to ensure a more institutionalised and comprehensive dialogue between the EU, the US and other interested third-countries across a range of issues, including but not exclusively on security matters. Once such a structure has been established, NATO can be re-focused to provide any newly emerging consensus with the means to put it into practice.

I am happy to elaborate on any of these points if the committee feels the need to do so.

King’s College, London
3 December 2007

Memorandum from Joanna Kaminska

The new Eastern European Members’ of NATO and the EU approach towards the future of NATO and the ESDP and to NATO-EU relations.

The analysis investigates the Central and Eastern European states (CEEs) approach to the major debates concerning the NATO’s development, as well as the new members views on the future of the ESDP.

1. Debate concerning the NATO’s role in the world

The new Eastern European members perceive the NATO as a major traditional security guarantee. The Central and Eastern European countries (CEEs), support the strengthening the NATO’s primacy and their participation in the NATO missions reflects this idea. The CEEs believe that the obligations based on the NATO’s article 5 are the major priority for the Alliance and therefore should not be reformed.

In spite of a global involvement of the new NATO members in “out of area” operations, they still are very skeptical to the idea of “global NATO”, therefore the American concept of alliances between NATO and different continents (NATO-New Zealand. NATO-Japan or NATO-Australia). The Euro-Atlantic sphere is a major place of activity for the NATO according to the new members, and cooperation with countries of different (not traditionally NATO) regions should not affect the main Alliance’s aims. This “new cooperation” concept should not be formal and institutionalized but can be a part of a less formal cooperation between NATO and other regions.

2. Debate concerning the future of the NATO’s “out of area” operations

According to the Central and Eastern European countries North Atlantic Treaty Organization should rethink its involvement in new regions concerning the type of missions sent to react to the international crisis situations. Not always the situation requires the deployment of military resources, but in many cases the civilian or technical support might be sufficient. Some of the new EU countries experts argue that NATO’s military operations outside the Euro-Atlantic sphere can weaken the security of this region, as NATO would have a problem with parallel presence outside Europe and in Europe or at its borders in case of the conflict, therefore the question of available resources should be debated. The lack of resources questions also touches the issue of the financial contribution during the deployment. According to Poland the list of activities funded by the common budget should be made, as in the moment only those contributing to the missions have to cover the costs, which in case of the poorer countries is often a problem.
3. Debate concerning the NATO and the EU relationship development

The development of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) of the EU has affected the NATO’s ability to work with the EU partners, as the majority of the CEE countries perceive NATO as a first guarantee of their security, which not necessarily is the case for the old, Western members. The CEEs do not want to choose between NATO and the EU highlighting the complementarities of those two organizations. This is reflected in the preference for as little duplication as possible causing the animosity amongst the EU members over the EU military Headquarters, which the CEEs oppose. The duplication question is also connected with the issue of the military deployment as the new EU members contribute to the EU ESDP missions and NATO operations in the same time. According to the CEEs there should be more complementarities between two organizations concerning the operational deployment. Polish and Czech Republic’s experts believe that NATO and the EU should work out new agreement based on the example of Berlin Plus, where NATO would be supported by the civil resources and capabilities of the EU and the EU could use NATO’s military capabilities.

4. Debate concerning the NATO’s future enlargements

The majority of the CEEs support further Eastern enlargement understanding its importance for the democracy building and reform transposition. Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Bulgaria and Slovakia support the NATO’s enlargement eastwards and on the Balkan States, highlighting the need of proving the real identification with the Euro-Atlantic values and security interests, together with ability to fulfill the elementary military standards.

5. Debate concerning the European Security and Defense Policy of the EU and the European security

The transatlantic relationship is of a major importance for the CEEs and the NATO is still regarded as a main security guarantee, due to both geopolitics and history of the Central and Eastern European states. The CEEs were first very skeptical to the development of the EU security and defense capabilities, but the growing importance of new security challenges is recognized and the CEEs started to appreciate more the ESDP potential, believing that ESDP has good instruments to tackle them. The new EU and NATO members, especially highlight the importance of the civilian component of the ESDP missions contributing to the ESDP mission not only the military but also technical and expert resources (Lithuanians being an important contributor to the EU rule-of-law mission in Georgia). The change of approach in the new EU members has also its roots in the public opinion views as the governments of the CEEs have to take to consideration that the public opinion in those countries is very much in favour of the ESDP, largely as a result of the general satisfaction with the EU membership. According to the Eurobarometer polls 88% of Czechs, 86% of Latvians, Slovaks and Slovenians, 85% of Lithuanians 84% of Poles and 81% of Hungarians are in favour of the ESDP, with the 75% average within other EU members.

3 December 2007

Memorandum from Dr David Galbreath

“DUAL ENLARGEMENT AND THE FUTURE OF NATO AND THE ESDP”

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Since the end of the Cold War, there has been a continual question of who should be the keeper of peace and defender of states in Europe. In 1990, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was the most prominent security and defence alliance. Other initiatives had failed (European Defence Community), remained marginal (Western European Union), or were simply not in a position to replace NATO (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, now OSCE). Yet, in 1998, even the UK government began to put more emphasis on the EU vis-à-vis NATO in terms of security and defence. Similarly, European defence ministers at the 1999 Cologne European Council initiated the incorporation of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) into the office of the High Commissioner of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). However, following the 2004 and 2007 EU enlargements, NATO still remains the dominant insurer of regional peace and stability. In other words, despite considerable changes in European security, NATO remains the dominant security organization for the United Kingdom (UK) and Europe.

2. This paper examines how EU and NATO enlargements have shaped the relationship between NATO and the ESDP. The discussion engages several questions. First, what role did security and defence play in the accession process? How did the relationship between the EU and NATO change in this time? Second, what is the contemporary relationship between NATO and the countries of “New Europe”? Attention will be focused on those countries in Central and Eastern Europe, as opposed to Malta or Cyprus since the latter
states are not members of NATO. Finally, is there a solution to accommodating both NATO and the EU? Can there be a system of burden-sharing that makes for effective and efficient peace-making, peace-keeping and peacebuilding? Throughout, the discussion involves the impact on and implications for the UK.

B. SECURITY AND DEFENCE IN EU AND NATO ACCESSION

3. The argument for EU and NATO enlargement was constantly tied to regional security, stability and peace. From both organizations’ perspectives, enlargement could lock-in democratizing regimes in Central and Eastern Europe, ending the legacy of the post-war settlement in Europe. The basic assumption is that of the “Democratic Peace”: democracies do not fight one another. At the same time, member-state governments who resisted the enlargements of the EU and NATO thought that bringing in potentially unstable states would bring instability to the union and alliance. In 1995, NATO produced the “NATO enlargement study”. The study had four conclusions. Firstly, enlargement was an end within itself. In other words, the alliance had a political and moral responsibility to include these states. Secondly, enlargement was seen as part of a wider process of restructuring within NATO. The alliance had been predicated on defending against a Soviet land invasion. With the Soviets and the threat of a land invasion gone, NATO required restructuring to cope with the post-Cold War challenges of security in the Euro-Atlantic region. Thirdly, enlargement would reinforce common security amongst “us”, by connecting states to the institutional structures of defence and security provided by NATO. Finally, the study determined that the Russian Federation’s views would be taken into consideration over enlargement. In the end, Russia’s views seemed to be ignored, especially in the case of extending membership to the three former Soviet states, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania at the Prague North Atlantic Council in 2002.

4. EU enlargement in 2004 and 2007 and NATO enlargement in 1999 and 2004, overlapped significantly. The EU enlarged to Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Malta and Cyprus in 2004 and Romania and Bulgaria in 2007. Similarly, NATO enlarged to Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in 1999 and Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria in 2004. Thus, this overlap lies within Central and Eastern Europe. In part, gaining access to one organization, helped gain access to another. Similarly, the member-states of both organizations that were most reluctant to accept enlargement also overlap. The UK, Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands, were keen to see enlargement in both the union and the alliance. Likewise, France, Portugal, Spain and Italy were reluctant to see dual enlargement to these countries. There were also some special cases such as Sweden and Finland providing military assistance to the Baltic States despite not being members of NATO. Rather, Sweden and Finland work within the framework of the “Partnership for Peace” programme (1994).

5. With the strong overlap between enlargements, it is unsurprising that EU and NATO cooperation became more formalised in the accession phase. At the Berlin Ministerial Council in 1996, the member-states of NATO and the Western European Union (later to be incorporated into the second EU pillar (CFSP)) agreed to the establishment of the European Security and Defence Initiative (ESDI) within NATO. The purpose of the ESDI was to establish a European peace-keeping force bound to the “Petersburg Tasks”. These are humanitarian and rescue tasks as well as peacekeeping and combat-force in crisis management, including peacemaking. As discussed earlier, the ESDI was eventually brought under the wing of the High Commissioner of the CFSP. Closer partnership between NATO and the EU has allowed for an easier position for Central and East European states, as it has for the UK.

C. NATO AND “NEW EUROPE”

6. Central and East European member-states have been strong supporters of NATO as the primary security organization in Europe. Much of the support for NATO comes from two sources: a historical fear of Russia, the successor state to the Soviet Union, and a Cold War vision of the US as a saviour. Both of these perceptions have elements of truth and fiction. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have the most difficult historical relationship with Russia. The Baltic States were occupied from 1941, first by Soviets, then by Germans, then by Soviets again. As Soviet Republics, they were heavily repressed through political and class murders, forced mass migration were few survived, and agricultural collectivization which starved to death many. Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, and Slovakia have their own difficult history with Russia, while not within the Soviet Union themselves, experienced the oppression that came with being in the Soviet sphere of influence. For these states and others, the post-war settlement did not come until after 1990.

7. The relationship between these states and the US became strong after the end of the Cold War. Partly through strategic partnership, partly through globalization and Americanization, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe came to look upon the US as the key ally, in much the same way the UK has done since the Second World War. Evident when speaking to political officials at the EU in Brussels or the OSCE in Vienna, the author has heard a great deal of distrust from the Central and East European States towards many West European states. If one looks across the security strategies of the Central and East European states, one will find that Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria have all said in post-enlargement security strategies that NATO is the core of the European security infrastructure and wish to maintain NATO’s position in the region. The Baltic States have argued against any development of the ESDP that would be “detrimental to NATO”. Hungary has argued for a long-term preservation of NATO’s “central role” in the region. Poland has argued that the relationship with
the US and NATO is the “most important guarantee” of security. The Czech strategy sets out NATO as the “pillar of collective defence”. Slovakia has consistently argued a “NATO first” policy. Romania argues that NATO holds the “essential role” in European security. Bulgaria insists that the ESDP is “not an alternative NATO”. Overall, there is overwhelming support among these ten EU and NATO member-states for the continuation of NATO as the key collective security and defence organization in Europe.

D. ESDP AND NATO

8. The EU and NATO relationship has become increasingly close as memberships have overlapped, the lack of support for duplication between the two organizations persists, and events in Afghanistan have developed. As the previous section illustrates, existing reluctance to see the US withdraw from Europe and greater EU involvement in security and defence made the traditional position of the UK, one also of “NATO first”, more tenable. NATO has remained much more a regional security organization than has the EU. The alliance has limited its involvement to the former Yugoslavia and Afghanistan. On the other hand, the EU currently has a global presence including ESDP missions in the Palestinian Territories, Iraq, the Congo, Sudan and Georgia in addition to the former Yugoslavia and Afghanistan.

9. There has been a much greater emphasis put on complementarity between the EU and NATO. While all of the Central and East European member-states have pressed for the continual strength of NATO, all have also supported the EU’s development of complimentary security and defence policies. Complementarity should be what is expected from two organizations that overlap strongly in terms of membership. EU and NATO enlargement has brought both organizations to the step of post-Cold War conflicts. We see that in terms of EU and NATO operations in the former Yugoslavia, particularly in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and Macedonia, both organizations have a role to play in peace-making, peace-keeping and peace-building. The UK plays a bridging part in this collaboration between the EU and NATO. As a prominent actor in NATO, the UK can maintain a successful ground and air campaign, in combination with likely counterparts like the US, Dutch, Danish and Norwegians. In other words, NATO is an effective peace-maker as can be seen with SFOR and KFOR operations. Tied to the Petersburg Tasks, the EU can play a greater role in follow-up operations that support peace-keep and peace-building. Together with other organizations like the United Nations and the OSCE, extensive burden-sharing makes for a strong European security infrastructure.

E. CONCLUSION

10. Dual enlargement has brought greater support in Europe for the continued presence of NATO as the primary security organization as well as the Trans-Atlantic relationship. Eight of the ten new Central and East European member-states have taken active part in the coalition in Iraq (Slovenia and Hungary participated in NATO training missions with Iceland and Turkey), while all ten have taken part in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. Both Iraq and Afghanistan highlight that many of the threats to Europe’s security will come from outside the region. The focus on “out of area” operations was reaffirmed at the Prague North Atlantic Council in 2002. Through NATO’s niche capabilities framework, Central and East European states have much to offer NATO operations, as can be seen in Afghanistan and the former Yugoslavia. Furthermore, these states have much to offer EU operations as can be seen in their active participation in eleven current operations around the world. Europe’s ability to preserve regional peace and stability as well as Europe’s obligations to maintain security in other parts of the world require that complementary security and defence organizations remain a characteristic of the European security infrastructure.

Lecturer, Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Aberdeen
29 November 2007

Memorandum from British American Security Information Council (BASIC)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Few periods in the life of an institution are as critical as the one the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is facing now. The 26-member alliance is simultaneously engaged in the most difficult military mission it has ever undertaken (in Afghanistan) while also undergoing pressure to transform itself in an uncertain world. It is clear that the 21st century security environment requires the Alliance to transform, but the organisational discussions at Riga were too narrowly focused on force modernisation, interoperability and membership.

This submission argues that changes to the strategy in Afghanistan and a new Strategic Concept are both urgently needed if NATO is retain its credibility and legitimacy, within the eyes of the wider world and citizens in member states.
AFGHANISTAN

The situation on the ground in Afghanistan appears to have worsened since the Riga Summit. The most violent parts of Afghanistan have been in the east and south, where Taliban and Al-Qaeda forces continue to hold sway. NATO’s aggressive counter-insurgency operations have led to an increase in civilian casualties and the failure to collect or make information on the issue public suggests a refusal to acknowledge the negative impacts this war is having on Afghanistan. National caveats on troop deployments, the rise in drug production and failures in effective police training remain problematic, and there are question marks over whether the PRTs are achieving the right combination of security and reconstruction. Development of a NATO reconstruction corps may be a partial solution re the latter. A monumental effort is necessary on the part of the international community to better coordinate military and civilian instruments (especially crisis management, reconstruction and development), reduce civilian casualties and demonstrate the political will to sustain a long-term commitment to the country.

THE COMPREHENSIVE POLITICAL GUIDANCE (CPG): A STOPGAP FOR A NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT IN 2009

The CPG endorsed by Heads of State in Riga is a brief document that “provides a framework and political direction for NATO’s continuing transformation, setting out, for the next 10–15 years, the priorities for all Alliance capability issues, planning disciplines and intelligence.” It reconfirms the 1999 Strategic Concept, which “described the evolving security environment in terms that remain valid”, but then goes on to say that “this environment continues to change”. And the two “principal threats” to NATO identified in the CPG are terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. The CPG has nothing to say about how the Alliance might enhance arms control, non-proliferation or disarmament measures to significantly reduce such threats. The CPG is little more than a stopgap for a new Strategic Concept to be debated and agreed by 2009.

MISSILE DEFENCES: AN EXPENSIVE DISTRACTION FROM REAL SECURITY NEEDS

Also at Riga, NATO leaders agreed to establish a theatre missile defence system that is intended to provide NATO forces with protection from ballistic missiles with “an initial operational capability by 2010”. NATO has agreed to assess by February 2008 the political and military implications of the planned missile defence systems in Europe, including the possibility of “bolting” NATO and US missile defence systems together. We lament the lack of any public debate in Britain (or any other Member State) about the desirability, or workability of missile defence, let alone about the strategic assumptions that underpin it. The British Parliament has a duty to question whether such assumptions are compatible with British national interests and our collective interests within NATO. Going ahead with the BMD proposal in Central Europe regardless of Russian opinion would be a huge mistake. More substantive US, Russian and NATO dialogue, within the NATO-Russia Council on BMD and other mutual security concerns is necessary to avoid further divisions in Europe. BASIC recommends that:

(a) any proposed bilateral or multilateral missile defence agreements involving the UK should be made available for prior parliamentary scrutiny (ie before being signed); and

(b) the numerous UK and NATO ballistic missile threat assessments and industrial studies should be declassified and placed in the public domain.

AFTER RIGA: FOCUSING ON THREE NEW GOALS

The problems in Afghanistan, the insufficiency of the CPG, and the Alliance’s rush to participate in an expanded missile defence program that is under-tested and overly-expensive, reveals that much still needs to be done in terms of the often cited “NATO transformation”. In addition to carrying out a much-needed debate on how to stabilise Afghanistan, given the enormous changes that have taken place since the 1999 Strategic Concept was agreed, NATO should initiate a review process with the aim of agreeing a new Strategic Concept in 2009. Three goals should be fundamental to such a review:

1. affirming collective defence, disaster relief, conflict prevention, counter-and non-proliferation and peacekeeping missions as the primary purpose of NATO;

2. eliminating battlefield nuclear weapons from Europe and the adoption of a non-nuclear weapons security doctrine for the Alliance (including, as interim goals, withdrawal of the 480 US tactical nuclear weapons stationed in Europe and the withdrawal of Russian tactical weapons from operational deployment to secure storage); and

3. improving transparency, accountability and value for money within NATO, especially with regard to defence planning and procurement.

Goal 1: BASIC recommends that NATO should focus on:

(a) collective defence of the transatlantic area with selective humanitarian/ disaster relief, conflict prevention, counter- and non-proliferation and peacekeeping missions “out of area” where appropriately mandated and in accordance with international law. For the present, NATO does
not need to become a global membership organisation, but as in Afghanistan (where 15% of the troops are provided by non-NATO countries), the Alliance could facilitate and oversee “coalitions of the willing” in support of these missions;

(b) reshaping the NRF for peacekeeping and disaster response capabilities, and developing limited counter-insurgency and counter-intelligence capabilities, with clear rules of deployment; and

(c) Strengthening its cooperative threat reduction, weapons collection and destruction, and counter-proliferation capabilities, with a special emphasis on maritime interdiction under the Proliferation Security Initiative.

Goal 2: In the fullest recent statement of Government policy on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, the then Foreign Secretary, Margaret Becket, made it clear that the UK endorsed the appeal from Shultz/Kissinger/Perry /Nunn et al for a new initiative towards the global elimination of nuclear weapons. In particular, it believed that in combination with non-proliferation, the nuclear weapons states must take their nuclear disarmament responsibilities seriously, in order both to strengthen the arms control regime and to directly reduce risks. As part of this policy the Government is sponsoring a research project on the practicality of ultimately attaining a nuclear weapons free world. In pursuit of such policies the Government should consider the following proposals:

(a) in the process of negotiating a new strategic concept, NATO should reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in strategic planning, with a view to moving progressively towards the adoption of a non-nuclear weapon security doctrine;

(b) NATO open negotiations with Russia to create an international treaty to eliminate tactical nuclear weapons; and

(c) two interim goals should be: withdrawal of the 480 US tactical nuclear weapons stationed in Europe and the withdrawal of Russian tactical weapons from operational deployment to secure storage.

Goal 3: The lack of attention paid to the costs and the technical merit of the missile defence program is symbolic of a democratic deficit at the heart of the Alliance. Another example of failed transparency and accountability is the eight-year delay in NATO telling the Serbian government where thousands of cluster bombs were dropped during the 1999 Kosovo campaign. Throughout NATO’s history, MPs in their national parliaments when asking questions about NATO decisions have invariably been told that such decisions are confidential. When the same questions were put to the Secretary General, he invariably replied that NATO was but an alliance of sovereign states. This Catch 22 situation may have served a purpose during the Cold War, but is no longer appropriate today. Adequate mechanisms for parliamentary accountability within NATO are urgently required. BASIC recommends that NATO’s secrecy rules should be reviewed as part of the larger review of the Alliance’s Strategic Concept.

THE BRITISH AMERICAN SECURITY INFORMATION COUNCIL (BASIC)

BASIC is an independent research and advocacy organisation that analyses government policies and promotes public awareness of defence, disarmament, military strategy and nuclear policies in order to foster informed debate. BASIC has offices in London and in Washington and its governing Council includes former US ambassadors, academics and politicians. Further information is available on our website: http://www.basicint.org

INTRODUCTION—THE ROAD TO RIGA

1.1 Few periods in the life of an institution are as critical as the one the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is facing now. The 26-member alliance is simultaneously engaged in the most difficult military mission it has ever undertaken (in Afghanistan) while also undergoing pressure to transform itself in an uncertain world. Will NATO become a full-time crisis management force with a new reconstruction role, a rapid reaction anti-terrorism force, return to its traditional role as a defensive alliance serving as a deterrent against external attacks, or a combination of all of these roles?

1.2 The November 2006 NATO Summit in Riga, Latvia, the first to be held on the territory of the former Soviet Union, was meant to provide some answers. But while the two-day meeting of the 26 Heads of State was earmarked to discuss the transformation of the Alliance, the crisis in Afghanistan and how to enhance alliance capabilities and partnerships for future global missions, the outcomes were modest at best.

1.3 A Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG) document, previously agreed by Defence Ministers in June 2006, was approved and published, together with a Summit Declaration which unsurprisingly reaffirmed Afghanistan as NATO’s “top priority”. A contract for a theatre missile defence system for NATO was also signed at the Riga Summit: an international consortium has been selected to build the “Integration Test Bed” which puts NATO on track to have “an initial operational capability by 2010”.

1.4 How times have changed. “Safeguarding the freedom and security of all” NATO’s members was the primary purpose of NATO during the Cold War, as set out in the 1949 Washington Treaty. This primary role was later reaffirmed in the 1999 Strategic Concept, although since the end of the Cold War, NATO's
raison-d’

1.5 After its birth in 1949 with 12 countries (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States), NATO admitted Greece and Turkey in 1952, the Federal Republic of Germany in 1955, and Spain in 1982. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, NATO’s very existence came into question, despite agreeing a new Strategic Concept that same year. NATO was no longer needed to defend Western Europe from an unlikely invasion by an economically weak and politically wounded Russia. Amid debates over NATO’s purpose, institutional survival also took hold. Member states had invested too much time and money and were accustomed to the operating procedures of the alliance. Since the latter part of the 1990s, however, NATO leaders have genuinely sought to make the alliance more relevant to the post-Cold War security environment through four key interlocking processes:

— Crisis management missions in the Balkans.
— Building security through partnerships, eg Partnership for Peace (PfP), the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) and the NATO-Russian Council.
— NATO enlargement.

1.6 As part of the latter process, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland were admitted into NATO in 1999, followed by seven more nations in 2004: Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

1.7 The Alliance’s eastward enlargement slowed down in Riga. With potentially more enticing members available globally (as discussed below), the accession process of four more aspiring members—Croatia, Macedonia, Albania and Georgia—was put on the back-burner. All were hoping to get a clear structure and possible timetable for their membership, although only Croatia is now likely to gain membership by 2008. However, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro were invited to join NATO’s Partnership for Peace program—the first step in preparing a country for eventual NATO membership. The offer to Serbia was a particular surprise given that Belgrade had not yet handed over two indicted war criminals (Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic) whose arrests had long been demanded by NATO member states.

1.8 NATO is also beginning to court bigger fish. Despite one member state, the United States, being responsible for about half of global military expenditure in 2007 and NATO collectively accounting for around two-thirds of the global total, concerns are being expressed that the Alliance faces “perilous overstretch”. This is partly as a result of existing missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, but also because the alliance is increasingly being asked to play a role in conflicts in parts of Africa and other potential trouble spots around the world. Some observers (see, for example, Ivo Daalder and James Goldgeier, “Global NATO”, Foreign Affairs, September/October 2006) are therefore arguing that since the challenges NATO faces are global, its membership should be expanded from its currently exclusive transatlantic character to include any democratic state that is willing and able to contribute to the fulfilment of the alliance’s new responsibilities. Those being touted as sharing NATO’s values and many common interests include Australia, Brazil, Japan, India, New Zealand, South Africa and South Korea.

1.9 The argument that NATO should now be open to any state that qualifies for membership, and should not be restricted to only North American and European countries, deserves further discussion. However, the globalisation of NATO should play second fiddle to securing European-US agreement on future priorities. It is clear that the new, 21st century security environment requires the Alliance to transform, but the organisational discussions at Riga were too narrowly focused on force modernisation, interoperability and membership.

1.10 This submission argues that changes to the strategy in Afghanistan and a new Strategic Concept are both urgently needed if NATO is retain its credibility and legitimacy, within the eyes of the wider world and citizens in member states. It begins by reviewing the three key outcomes at Riga: renewed resolve in Afghanistan, a new Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG) document and a theatre missile defence system for NATO Europe. It then argues that NATO should initiate a review process with the aim of agreeing a new Strategic Concept in 2008 or 2009. Three goals should be fundamental to such a review:

1) affirming collective defence, disaster relief and reconstruction, conflict prevention, counter-and non-proliferation and peacekeeping missions as the primary purpose of NATO;
2) eliminating battlefield nuclear weapons from Europe and the adoption of a non-nuclear weapon security doctrine for the Alliance (including, as interim goals, withdrawal of the 480 US tactical nuclear weapons stationed in Europe and the withdrawal of Russian tactical weapons from operational deployment to secure storage); and
3) improving transparency, accountability and value for money within NATO, especially with regard to defence planning and procurement.
AFGHANISTAN

2.1 Afghanistan dominated the agenda at Riga. NATO’s International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan has been held up as the ultimate test of the Alliance in its post-Cold War incarnation. But while there were displays of public unity on the issue in Riga, little is expected to change on the ground, where the difficulties cannot be so easily papered over. Indeed, the situation on the ground appears to have worsened since Riga.

2.2 In early October 2006, NATO extended its ISAF operations to include the east of Afghanistan with about 40,000 troops now under its command. This total included 10,000 US troops that were previously part of Operation Enduring Freedom-Afghanistan (OEF-A), leaving about 8,000 US troops to continue fighting under OEF-A. The most violent parts of Afghanistan have been in the east and south, where Taliban and Al-Qaeda forces continue to hold sway. British, Canadian, Dutch and US forces in the south have been exposed to some of the most intense fighting—since Korea, according to Lt Gen. Richards, the British commander of ISAF (The Independent, September 2006).

2.3 NATO continues to run Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), which are supposed to support the Afghan government by providing security and sometimes training and humanitarian assistance. The 25th and latest PRT was inaugurated in the eastern province of Nuristan in November last year. Overall, however, question marks remain over whether the PRTs are achieving the right combination of security and reconstruction. Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer summed up his understanding of the challenge in Afghanistan in an article in advance of the Riga Summit: “There is no military solution; the answer is development, nation-building, building of roads, schools” (International Herald Tribune, November 2006). This suggests that a NATO reconstruction corps may be a partial solution, as discussed further in section 5 below.

2.4 In the lead up to the Riga Summit, NATO’s Parliamentary Assembly meeting in Quebec, released a Press Communiqué, declaring “NATO’s Afghanistan Mission is in Trouble.” The title was intended to add a sense of urgency before Riga. Also at the summit, the Parliamentary Assembly (PA) called for a “Political Initiative on Afghanistan” that would balance security, military, and reconstruction efforts, strictly apply international humanitarian law and the Geneva Conventions, improve coordination on international institutions, devise common policies toward leadership in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and increase effectiveness of NATO’s joint operations, including meeting troop requirements. And yet, by September 2007, a NATO PA delegation from the Defence and Security Committee returned from Afghanistan and reported that contributing ISAF countries lacked a well-defined strategic mission in the country.

2.5 NATO’s aggressive counter-insurgency operations in the south of the country, and especially the use of air-power, have led to an increase in non-combatant (ie civilian) casualties. As of the end of September 2007, more than 650 civilians have died as a result of insurgent violence or US or NATO attacks, according to an Associated Press tally. (3 October 2007) In August, US officials reported that insurgent attacks were at their highest level since the 2001 invasion (Associated Press 28 August 2007). Almost 200 international troops and more than 3,500 “militants” have been killed since the beginning of 2007, which is higher than the rate at the same time last year (Associated Press 3 October 2007).

2.6 Reliable information on civilian casualties in Afghanistan is extremely difficult. Neither the UK, Afghan, Iraqi or US governments track and report regularly and reliably on civilian casualties. The UN, non-governmental organizations and some media outlets have provided data, though none are comprehensive in their reports and some point to the fact that the information available is likely an undercount and subject to numerous flaws and inconsistencies. A July 2007 report by the Center for Defence Information in Washington, In-attention to Detail: Civilian Casualties in Afghanistan, confirms that ISAF is also tracking civilian deaths, apparently through its medical facilities, but does not release estimates to the public. We agree with the report’s conclusion that “the failure of those supporting the Karzai government—particularly the US government and NATO—to collect or make information on the issue public suggests a refusal to acknowledge the negative impacts this war is having on Afghanistan, and perhaps, the grave direction it’s headed”. Allegations by Amnesty International that people detained in Afghanistan continue to face torture and other ill-treatment also need to investigated (Detainees transferred to torture: ISAF complicity? Amnesty International, 13 November 2007).

2.7 Restrictions on troop deployments is another problem. Limited improvements were agreed at the Riga Summit: Poland and Romania lifted their “national caveats” on the location of their troop deployments; France agreed for its troops to operate outside of Kabul; a small US-Polish theatre reserve was established; and Germany and Italy said that their troops could be moved from northern Afghanistan “in extremis”. But almost a year later, the extra troops and helicopters requested were not as forthcoming as anticipated and American, British and Canadian troops continue to carry the brunt of the combat operations in the southern provinces. The Alliance had specifically requested German trainers for the south. In September 2007, however, Germany reiterated that it has no plans to release its 3,500-man force in Afghanistan from a “caveat” that limits German troops to the northern part of the country (Daily Telegraph, 8 October 2007). Other NATO countries, such as France, Italy and Spain, also maintain caveats on the deployment of their forces to the south.
2.8 Nor were failings in US police training (with only half the official total of 70,000 police officers “trained and equipped to carry out their police functions” according to a joint report by the Pentagon and the State Department in December 2006) and drug interdiction missions addressed. The European Union has taken over leadership of the police training mission, but with frustration over the lack of coordination between the EU and NATO (International Herald Tribune 23 August 2007). US officials have said that 3,200 more police trainers are needed.

2.9 The rise in drug production, now accounting for around $3 billion or half the Afghan economy, is fast becoming the greatest problem for NATO, especially since it funds the Taliban and other regional warlords. The United Nations reported in September 2007 that the country had just experienced a record season of opium production. But NATO continues to take a secondary support role in drug eradication or interdiction, with the ill-equipped Afghan government remaining in the lead role.

2.10 Domestic support in ISAF-contributing countries has been dwindling. Canada, which has been one of the major players in a combat role in Afghanistan with over 2,000 troops, is considering downgrading its combat role to a training-type mission. The Dutch are also due to consider whether to discontinue their combat mission. If ISAF loses the participation of those two countries in a combat role, only the United Kingdom and the United States will have forces deployed in Afghanistan without any major restrictions on combat.

2.11 The problems in Afghanistan appear to be beyond what NATO can resolve alone—at least as currently mandated. NATO is not a development organisation (although the potential to give it a partial or limited reconstruction capability is discussed in section 5 below), so responsibility currently lies elsewhere for progress on creating more jobs, roads, schools and teachers as part of the so-called “comprehensive approach”. A monumental effort is necessary on the part of the international community to better coordinate military and civilian instruments (especially crisis management, reconstruction and development), reduce civilian casualties and demonstrate the political will to sustain a long-term commitment to the country. Without these changes, at best, it is likely that Afghanistan will not move beyond a condition of perpetual conflict and desolation that has characterized the country for over two decades, and at worst, NATO and the international community of states engaged in the country face the prospect of defeat.

2.12 NATO’s Afghanistan mission raises a host of issues that should make alliance leaders think beyond this specific conflict. They need to consider the types of missions the Alliance is likely to undertake in the future. As discussed below, the lessons drawn from Afghanistan along with what has been learned from other recent missions suggest that NATO should affirm and focus on collective defence, disaster relief and reconstruction, conflict prevention, counter-and non-proliferation and peacekeeping missions as the primary purposes of the Alliance.

THE COMPREHENSIVE POLITICAL GUIDANCE (CPG): A STOPGAP FOR A NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT IN 2009

3.1 The CPG endorsed by Heads of State in Riga is a brief document that “provides a framework and political direction for NATO’s continuing transformation, setting out, for the next 10–15 years, the priorities for all Alliance capability issues, planning disciplines and intelligence.” It broadly assesses the future international security environment and lays out a range of missions that NATO should be expected to fulfil in the coming decades. In so doing, it reconfirms the 1999 Strategic Concept, which “described the evolving security environment in terms that remain valid”, but then goes on to say that “this environment continues to change”. And the two “principal threats” to NATO identified in the CPG are terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. The latter was briefly mentioned in the 1999 Strategic Concept, and the former was buried within a long list of potential threats that lay beyond a traditional military invasion of the North Atlantic Treaty area.

3.2 In terms of the implications of the new strategic environment for the Alliance, the CPG says that the Alliance will “continue to follow the broad approach to security of the 1999 Strategic Concept and perform the fundamental security tasks it set out, namely security, consultation, deterrence and defence, crisis management, and partnership.” And that it will “require the agility and flexibility to respond to complex and unpredictable challenges”.

3.3 The CPG cites the spread of weapons of mass destruction as a major threat to NATO but has nothing to say about how the Alliance might enhance arms control, non-proliferation or disarmament measures to significantly reduce such threats. Instead, the guidance mirrors thinking in several recent US national security strategy documents in setting out a need to defend NATO deployed forces against WMD with missile defences, and to be able to “conduct operations taking account of the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction”.

3.4 On the role of US tactical nuclear weapons in Europe, the CPG simply says that “there will continue to be a requirement for a mix of conventional and nuclear forces in accordance with extant guidance”. As discussed further below, the failure to discuss NATO’s nuclear weapons and nuclear policies is a huge dereliction of duty and something that is unsustainable in the longer term. In the discussion of a new Strategic Concept, NATO has the opportunity to set an agenda of leadership on non-proliferation and arms control efforts that would greatly enhance global security.
3.5 Thus, while the CPG claims to provide guidance for the next 10–15 years, in reality it is little more than a stopgap. Even the NATO Secretary General has said that he expects a new Strategic Concept to be debated and agreed by 2009. In particular, NATO’s nuclear policy should be revised and this will be discussed at greater length below.

**MISSILE DEFENCES: AN EXPENSIVE DISTRACTION FROM REAL SECURITY NEEDS**

4.1 At the Riga Summit, NATO leaders agreed to establish a theatre missile defence system that is intended to provide NATO forces with protection from ballistic missiles with “an initial operational capability by 2010”. NATO has agreed to assess by February 2008 the political and military implications of the planned missile defence systems in Europe. The assessment will include an update on missile threat developments, taking into account the discussions about a US “third site” in Europe. “The NATO roadmap on missile defence is now clear,” said NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, “It is clear, practical and agreed by all.”

4.2 Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer’s 14 June statement also said that the alliance will study the possibility of “bolting” NATO and US missile defence systems together to ensure that all 26 allies are protected effectively from future threats. “In essence, the alliance will pursue a three-track approach,” de Hoop Scheffer said in the statement. The three tracks include:

- continuing the ongoing NATO project to develop by 2010 a theatre missile defence for protecting deployed troops—the so called Active Layered Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence (ALTMDB) Program;
- assessing the full implications of the US system; and
- continuing existing cooperation with Russia on theatre missile defence, as well as consultation on related issues.

4.3 The Secretary-General’s sense of consensus is not shared by BASIC. There has been no public debate in Britain (or any other Member State) about the desirability, or workability of missile defence, let alone about the strategic assumptions that underpin it. The British Parliament has a duty to question whether such assumptions are compatible with British national interests and our collective interests within NATO. Menzeis Campbell (and more recently the Foreign Affairs Committee) made a similar point in relation to the latest UK bilateral agreement with the United States on this issue (which will allow the US administration to install additional equipment at Menwith Hill, in Yorkshire see Yorkshire Post, 20 September 2007), but the transfer of British sovereignty behind closed doors applies equally to NATO’s missile defence plans, and NATO decision-making in general (as discussed in section 5 below).

4.4 Russia has reacted angrily to the US European BMD plans and has hit back in three specific areas: the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty; the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty; and missile targeting and development. But we share the conclusion of the Foreign Affairs Committee (Second Report, November 2007) that Russian opposition “largely reflects Moscow’s sensitivity about the presence of NATO infrastructure in its former satellite states”. Going ahead with the BMD proposal in Central Europe regardless of Russian opinion would be a huge mistake. More substantive US, Russian and NATO dialogue, within the NATO-Russia Council on BMD and other mutual security concerns is necessary to avoid further divisions in Europe.

4.5 The US Government Accountability Office (GAO) said in March 2007 that Ground-based Missile Defence, the system proposed for Europe, had not completed sufficient flight testing to provide a high level of confidence that it can reliably intercept Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs). The US Defense Department’s director of operational test and evaluation has even said, “to be confident in my assessment of the effectiveness [of the ballistic missile defence system] I need validated models and simulations . . . They don’t exist today because [the Missile Defense Agency (MDA)] doesn’t have enough flight test data to anchor them” (Charles McQuery, Statement at the Hearing on Ballistic Missile Programs, Strategic Forces Subcommittee, US House Armed Services Committee, 27 March 2007).

4.6 Moreover, initial concerns by other European governments have been glossed over by the United States. For instance, the aggressive promotion of the US missile defence proposal in Poland and the Czech Republic was described by a former Polish defence minister Radek Sikorski as “crass”. (Washington Post, 21 March 2007). And according to two US scientists (George Lewis and Theodore Postol) who are experts on missile defences:

The Russians are deeply upset and suspicious of what appears to be a lack of candour, understanding and realism with regard to US plans for missile defences. US political leaders relentlessly deny basic technical facts that show the current US missile defence might well affect Russia. The result of this standoff is clear and predictable: a world with expanded nuclear forces on high alert aimed at compensating for defences, and defences that will be so fragile to simple or inadvertent countermeasures that they will, at very best, have little or no chance of working in combat. (European Missile Defence: The Technological Basis of Russian Concerns, Arms Control Today, October 2007).
4.7 While supplying sufficient helicopters and body armour to troops on the ground in Afghanistan has been beyond NATO leaders, they did find time at Riga to wrap up the contract for ALTBMD. Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) was the successful bidder for the contract worth 75 million Euros over a period of six years. Based in McLean, Virginia, in the United States, SAIC is comprised of the following companies: Raytheon (US), EADS Astrium (Europe), Thales (FR) Thales Raytheon System Company (FR/US); IABG (GE), TNO (NL), Qinetiq (UK), DATAMAT (IT); Diehl (GE).

4.8 At a press conference at NATO HQ in Brussels in May 2006, Marshall Billingslea, NATO assistant secretary general for defence investment, presented the results of a four-year study of the missile threat to Europe and how to defend against it. Although the report is classified, Mr. Billingslea said it found missile defence for Europe technically and financially feasible. Now, he said, it is up to NATO nations to decide what to do.

4.9 And how was that decision made? Behind closed doors in Riga with no prior independent scrutiny of the feasibility study or debate in the elected chambers of the 26 Member States. And who wrote this 10,000-page feasibility study funded by NATO (ie by European and US taxpayers)? SAIC—the same international consortium of industries that defined the threat and identified the most appropriate response, also “won” the contract to build the system.

4.10 The proposed ALTBMD system is meant to integrate with the US Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system, which has so far cost $107 billion dollars since the mid-1980s (US GAO estimate) with very little working infrastructure to show for it. Common sense would, of course, suggest that if the US interceptor system could not reliably and consistently hit incoming warheads, it would not be deployed. Yet, as history has shown, big military programs are rarely cancelled once governments and the contractors are on board. Deployment of the GMD European capability is scheduled to be completed by 2013 at a cost of $4.04 billion (for the period from 2007 through 2013 and including operating and support costs).

4.11 Rather than indicating a transformation in thinking, it borders on the irresponsible for NATO to be squandering such large sums of money on this expensive “Maginot line in the sky” when there are higher priority defence and domestic programs that remain under-funded. Ballistic missile defences have a low relevance to contemporary security risks but conversely may well provoke long-term missile escalation with Russia and China, among others. BASIC recommends that:

(a) any proposed bilateral or multilateral missile defence agreements involving the UK should be made available for prior parliamentary scrutiny (ie before being signed); and

(b) the numerous UK and NATO ballistic missile threat assessments and industrial studies should be declassified and placed in the public domain.

AFTER RIGA: FOCUSING ON THREE NEW GOALS

5.1 The problems in Afghanistan, the insufficiency of the CPG, and the Alliance’s rush to participate in an expanded missile defence program that is under-tested and overly-expensive, reveals that much still needs to be done in terms of the often cited “NATO transformation”. In addition to carrying out a much-needed debate on how to stabilise Afghanistan, given the enormous changes that have taken place since the 1999 Strategic Concept was agreed, NATO should initiate a review process with the aim of agreeing a new Strategic Concept in 2009. Three goals should be fundamental to such a review:

1. Affirming collective defence, disaster relief, conflict prevention, counter-and non-proliferation and peacekeeping missions as the primary purpose of NATO.

2. Eliminating battlefield nuclear weapons from Europe and the adoption of a non-nuclear weapon security doctrine for the Alliance (including, as interim goals, withdrawal of the 480 US tactical nuclear weapons stationed in Europe and the withdrawal of Russian tactical weapons from operational deployment to secure storage).

3. Improving transparency, accountability and value for money within NATO, especially with regard to defence planning and procurement.

5.2 BASIC will be expanding on some of these themes as part of a review of NATO’s Strategic Concept that we plan to undertake in 2008. What follows here is an initial analysis by the authors based on our experience of following NATO policy over a decade or more.

Goal 1: Affirming collective defence, disaster relief and reconstruction, conflict prevention, counter-and non-proliferation and peacekeeping missions as the primary purpose of NATO

5.3 In June this year, NATO carried out its first war games in Africa. Over a two-week period, more than 7,000 troops from Europe and North America backed by significant air, land and sea hardware pounded pretend terrorist bases, grappled with rioters and separated factions in a mock war over oil on the West African archipelago and former Portuguese colony of Cape Verde. Exercise “Steadfast Jaguar” was a crucial test for the new NATO Response Force (NRF), a 25,000-strong force able to be deployed within five to 30 days for missions ranging from “low intensity” humanitarian relief to frontline combat missions.
5.4 The exercise on Cape Verde confirmed the enthusiasm among some, but not all, member states for a NATO role in Africa and beyond. France, for example, was reluctant to support NATO’s assistance to African peacekeepers in Sudan’s Darfur region, preferring a role for the European Union. In a compromise, both organisations ran operations to airlift, train and provide logistics support to the peacekeepers, with France channelling its assistance through the EU.

5.5 But is NATO’s increasingly global military reach really necessary? And if it is, in what circumstances should it be deployed? How might the US policy of pre-emptive intervention influence decisions to use the NRF? These questions must be openly debated within the Alliance if NATO is to develop a coherent strategic purpose with capabilities and goals that are sound, achievable and supported by domestic populations in the 26 Member States.

**Collective defence**

5.6 Rather than committing itself even further afield—in both geography and mission—NATO should return to its core strength of collective defence of NATO populations under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. This will mean foregoing, at least in the short to medium term, developing the idea of a “global NATO”. Existing and new partnerships can still be developed outside of the core transatlantic membership track, but collective defence of the Alliance should remain its key focus. While the shape and nature of that collective defence will need to reflect the new security environment, it needs to be predicated on a fundamental redefinition of what constitutes security. Security should involve protection against all threats to human life, whether they emanate from terrorism, “rogue states”, the spread of nuclear weapons, environmental degradation, energy or infrastructure insecurity, outbreaks of disease or instability arising from deep-rooted poverty and hunger.

5.7 This means that many of the most dangerous threats that the Alliance faces are not amenable to collective defence—or even extended notions of collective defence that have seen greater use in recent years with expeditionary forces in support of “peace enforcement” missions. Given their cross-border nature, many of these challenges must be addressed through inclusive global economic and political partnerships, rather than military coalitions.

5.8 Military force should also be the last of the tools used in the fight against terrorism. The tools of choice are better intelligence-gathering, efforts to limit the flow of funds and materials to terrorist groups and determined law-enforcement efforts aimed at improving on an already significant record of trying and convicting terrorist suspects in regular courts. The possible use of NATO air power or special forces to target specific terrorist training camps remains an option that should be used sparingly and in accordance with international law. The development of specialised NATO counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism forces, with clearly defined doctrines and rules of deployment and engagement, should be a priority. The comprehensive Action Plan on Terrorism agreed between Russia and NATO is a useful starting point, but a better transatlantic dialogue on these matters is essential. In Afghanistan, for example, some member states appear to looking at the problems through a counter-insurgency lens, while others see it as a capacity or nation-building issue.

5.9 Another key consideration, therefore, in a new strategic review of NATO’s collective defence requirements is to fix the mismatch in resources that devotes far too much funding to traditional military missions at the expense of the more diverse set of tools needed to address current and future threats to security—as discussed in more detail below.

**Disaster relief and reconstruction**

5.10 Clearly, NATO’s humanitarian support or disaster relief role is non-controversial: NATO helicopters have been used to deliver supplies to disaster zones and evacuate the injured; NATO command, control, and reconnaissance capabilities have been used to sustain humanitarian missions. While civilian agencies should ultimately take the lead in coordination of these activities, NATO can offer capabilities that other organizations simply are unable to offer. Moreover, these are critical security tasks that NATO has shown it can undertake with great professionalism and success. For example, the NRF was successfully mobilised in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina’s devastation of the US Gulf Coast and the massive earthquake in Pakistan in 2005.

5.11 However, questions remain as to how quickly the NRF can be mobilised in response to disasters in non-NATO (or Partner) countries and the extent to which it can be converted to an organisation with a larger civilian reserve component, with appropriate skills. If these problems can be resolved, NATO should consider turning the NRF into a premier disaster response force. The NRF would have a mission more focused on dealing with emergencies of either human or natural origin (or more likely a combination of both). Many more of these disasters are expected in the coming years as a consequence of environmental degradation and climate change, so the mission would strengthen NATO’s purpose. NATO already has a Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre and a Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Unit (EADRU). These should be expanded and more adequately resourced, with the NRF adapted to become the emergency response tool for the EADRU. Assigning the NRF this mission would have the added benefit of avoiding more controversial pre-emptive and offensive military missions.
5.12 Should this proposed new role in reconstruction be expanded even further, with NATO coordinating broader development assistance? For example, could NATO look to mirror the OSCE’s comprehensive approach, which encompasses the politico-military, environmental and economic, as well as human, aspects of security? This idea deserves further consideration although it risks a further institutional and operational blurring of roles with both the EU and OSCE, especially since the latter agreed at its recent Madrid Summit to increase support to Afghanistan, and with the major civilian development agencies (governmental and non-governmental).

Conflict prevention

5.13 NATO could also take on a more decisive role in enhancing the effectiveness of international efforts to stabilise countries facing, and emerging from, violent conflict. Currently, there is no common vocabulary on conflict prevention and peacebuilding within the Alliance and different Member States’ concepts and preoccupations create a divided institutional culture. Conflict prevention is commonly viewed as what happens before conflict turns violent (ie upstream) and peacebuilding is conceived as on the “far side” of violent conflict. But it is often unclear whether a violent conflict is genuinely over or whether it may re-erupt, as happens within five years in approximately 40% of cases. This overlap between post-war and inter-war periods means that peacebuilding is itself conflict prevention.

5.14 Seriously addressing conflict prevention and peacebuilding within NATO demands new and fresh thinking. The question is how to identify the conditions required to create stability and to identify what can be supported. What can NATO do to help create this stability? Stability entails more than dominating the security space. Experience in Afghanistan has led to an acknowledgement that the military is less part of the solution than was envisaged. In which case, how can NATO contribute to good governance, beyond security sector reform measures? For example, how might NATO be involved in longer term training work or in developing security “centres of excellence” in countries emerging from conflict?

5.15 Democratic, responsive and resilient states do not get built primarily by strengthening the capacity of government departments but in the relationship between state institutions and a strong civil society. NATO cannot make peace—as witnessed in Afghanistan and Kosovo—the people involved make peace between themselves. So what can be done from the outside to enable peace? Such a discussion is beyond the scope of this submission, but should be at the heart of an internal review of NATO’s conflict prevention role.

5.16 NATO needs to avoid creating new mechanisms and committees—focusing instead on pushing for better implementation. Developing more effective impact assessment and evaluation of peacebuilding and conflict prevention initiatives is crucial. This will be a gradual process but will mean a step change and realignment of resources. It envisages a shift towards early warning, early intervention and long range forecasting of potential problems. A more comprehensive strategic concept, should place conflict prevention (and new security challenges like climate change) at the front and centre.

Counter-proliferation and non-proliferation

5.17 Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) weapons, as well as the widespread proliferation of conventional weapons, will remain a real threat to the transatlantic area and beyond. NATO has conducted exercises to deal with the CBRN threat and has overseen the destruction of thousands of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons in the Balkans. Given NATO’s skills and concrete results, and the ongoing threats that these weapons are likely to pose, the Alliance should continually seek more opportunities for weapons collection, destruction and other coordination activities.

5.18 But the primary counter-proliferation and non-proliferation goal of Alliance policy in the current era should be preventing the acquisition and use of nuclear weapons by terrorist groups. The most urgent short-term goal of NATO policy should be to secure or eliminate nuclear bombs and bomb-making materials in Russia—where there are materials sufficient to build tens of thousands of nuclear weapons—and worldwide, where smaller quantities of bombs and bomb-making material might be seized by a terrorist group. To this end, NATO should revive its political role in negotiating drawdown in its own and Russia’s nuclear stockpiles—see the further discussion about nuclear arms control below.

5.19 NATO’s role in the Proliferation Security Initiative should also be reviewed to see whether a more focused and concerted response to maritime interdiction is possible. For example, how might NATO contribute to local, sub-regional and regional PSI operations in the Mediterranean, Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Arabian Sea and Gulf of Oman? And could NATO play a leading role in adapting the PSI to become the key policing mechanism for a new initiative towards the global elimination of nuclear weapons? This latter vision has been given greater weight by the January Wall Street Journal articles of, collectively, Shultz, Kissinger, Perry and Nunn, and then Mikhail Gorbachev. A NATO-led PSI might be able to provide effective policing of the zero option, both in terms of the crucial drawdown to minimum deterrent postures within the nuclear weapon states and in preventing breakout in a nuclear weapon-free world.
Peacekeeping

5.20 While the EU is looking to increase its peace operations capabilities, there will be plenty of work to go around. NATO still has the political clout to draw countries like the United States into peacekeeping and conflict prevention roles. Although riddled with problems and continuing challenges, NATO has held fast to its peacekeeping roles in Afghanistan (discussed above) and Kosovo. 16,000 troops remain in Kosovo and with negotiations over a settlement with Serbia further prolonged, they are likely to remain there for some time. In Darfur, NATO has retained a limited role by assisting with airlifts.

5.21 On the issue of future humanitarian intervention, NATO should develop objective standards based on the severity of the situation—an approach that would have dictated NATO involvement to stop the genocide in Rwanda, for example. These standards should set out the criteria under which NATO should be ready to apply non-consensual military intervention: the “Responsibility to Protect” pledge, endorsed at the 2005 World Summit and in April 2006 by the UN Security Council’s unanimous adoption of resolution 1674 on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, demands nothing less.

5.22 In summary, BASIC recommends that NATO should focus on:

(a) collective defence of the transatlantic area with selective humanitarian/ disaster relief, conflict prevention, counter- and non-proliferation and peacekeeping missions “out of area” where appropriately mandated and in accordance with international law. For the present, NATO does not need to become a global membership organisation, but as in Afghanistan (where 15 per cent of the troops are provided by non-NATO countries), the Alliance could facilitate and oversee “coalitions of the willing” in support of these missions;
(b) Reshaping the NRF for peacekeeping and disaster response capabilities, and developing limited counter-insurgency and counter-intelligence capabilities, with clear rules of deployment; and
(c) Strengthening its cooperative threat reduction, weapons collection and destruction, and counter-proliferation capabilities, with a special emphasis on maritime interdiction under the Proliferation Security Initiative.

Goal 2: Eliminating battlefield nuclear weapons from NATO and the adoption of a non-nuclear weapon security doctrine for the Alliance

5.23 In June 2007, a meeting of the NATO Defence Planning Committee and the Nuclear Planning Group released a communiqué confirming:

that the fundamental purpose of the nuclear forces of the Allies is political: to preserve peace and prevent coercion and any kind of war. We recalled that NATO’s nuclear forces are maintained at the minimum level sufficient to preserve peace and stability. In keeping with this goal, we continue to place great value on the nuclear forces based in Europe and committed to NATO, which provide an essential political and military link between the European and North American members of the Alliance. We noted with appreciation the continuing contribution made by the United Kingdom’s independent nuclear forces to deterrence and the overall security of the Allies, reaffirmed the value of this capability and welcomed the recent UK White Paper in which the UK restated its commitment to provide this contribution.

5.24 NATO nuclear forces include strategic weapons provided by the United States, France, and the United Kingdom, along with US “sub-strategic” or “tactical” nuclear weapons deployed in Europe. Within NATO these sub-strategic weapons are seen as symbolic of the transatlantic link between the United States and its European allies. Some may also regard them as a hedge against future uncertainties, although NATO retains overwhelming conventional supremacy. Expenditures by actual or potential adversaries like Al Qaeda, the Iraq insurgency, Iran or North Korea barely register compared with the combined NATO military budget. Iran, for example, spends less than 1% of what NATO spends for military purposes.

5.25 The NATO nuclear arsenal is thought to consist of between 350 and 480 US tactical nuclear weapons on the territory of six Member States: Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Turkey and the United Kingdom. The lower number was suggested by expert Hans Kristensen of the Federation of American Scientists in July 2007 and is based on circumstantial evidence that some nuclear weapons stored in Germany may have been removed. NATO does not publish details on the number of nuclear weapons remaining in Europe, despite the Member States’ commitment to transparency in the 2000 NPT Final Document.

5.26 This combined NATO nuclear tactical arsenal is larger than China’s nuclear stockpile. Up to 180 of the 480 US tactical nuclear weapons are flagged for delivery by European pilots in wartime (although they remain under US control in peacetime). This raises questions as to whether basing these weapons in “non-nuclear” countries violates the NPT, which commits those countries “ . . . not to receive the transfer . . . of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or of control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly . . .”. Of course, preparation for their use (flight training etc) occurs during peacetime, so the argument that these weapons are only transferred in the event of war, when the NPT is technically no longer in effect, is disingenuous at best.
5.27 Tactical nuclear weapons are generally smaller and more easily transported than strategic nuclear weapons, making them a prime target for theft or diversion by terrorists. While this is unlikely to happen within NATO, the risk is of a much larger order of magnitude in Russia. But the continued presence of US nuclear weapons has, in part, also resulted in Russia declining to discuss its much larger tactical nuclear weapon holdings (thought to number several thousand, but there are no baseline figures for estimates) and dismantlement. Indeed, Russian Lieutenant-Colonel Leonid Ivashov recently argued that if tactical nuclear weapons were to be deployed in Belarus (in retaliation for US deployment of missile defences in Central Europe), it would not make that country a nuclear weapon state—"just as US weapons never made West Germany" (now Germany) a nuclear power (Fremya Novostei, 7 September 2007). Russian leaders have also expressed their concern that NATO tactical nuclear weapons are a strategic threat because the weapons could be used against Russian command and strategic nuclear centres.

5.28 The absence of any arms reduction treaties covering tactical nuclear warheads in the arsenals of both Russia and the United States is a bewildering dereliction of duty on the part of the political leadership of both countries and of NATO. The United States and NATO should seek to negotiate a treaty with Russia on the verifiable elimination of sub-strategic nuclear weapons and on warhead accounting.

5.29 Former US Senator Sam Nunn, one of the leaders behind the US Cooperative Threat Reduction Act that has helped to remove nuclear and other weapons materials from the former Soviet Union, told the Washington Post in August 2007 that joint action is needed between Russia and the United States to deal with tactical or short-range nuclear weapons left over from the Cold War. Even former NATO General James Jones told associates privately that he would prefer to have all US tactical nuclear weapons removed from Europe (New York Times, 9 February 2005). In 2003, NATO reduced the operational readiness level of its nuclear aircraft to several months. This suggests that the weapons could be stored in the United States and transported back to European bases in the event of a crisis.

5.30 The continued adherence to outmoded justifications for NATO nuclear doctrine prevents serious debate about how to address the proliferation threat that tactical nuclear weapons pose. A new NATO Strategic Concept should have as its primary goal a tactical nuclear weapons-free zone (NWFZ) in Europe, as a prelude to a full European NWFZ and an international treaty to eliminate tactical nuclear weapons. By including the specific goal of nuclear disarmament in Alliance strategic planning, would show the rest of the world that NATO is serious about the NPT and reduce the political capital associated with nuclear weapons. After all, if NATO, with its collective command of over 60% of global conventional military capacity, feels unacceptably vulnerable without a nuclear backup, what are countries like Iran, India and Pakistan likely to conclude?

5.31 In the fullest recent statement of Government policy on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, the then Foreign Secretary, Margaret Beckett, speaking in Washington, made it clear that the UK endorsed the appeal from Shultz/Kissinger/Perry/Nunn [see 5.19]. In particular, it believed that in combination with non-proliferation, the nuclear weapons states must take their nuclear disarmament responsibilities seriously, in order both to strengthen the arms control regime and to directly reduce risks. As part of this policy the Government is sponsoring an International Institute of Strategic Studies research project on the practicality of ultimately attaining a nuclear weapons free world. In pursuit of such policies the Government should consider the following proposals:

(a) in the process of negotiating a new strategic concept, NATO should reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in strategic planning, with a view to moving progressively towards the adoption of a non-nuclear weapon security doctrine;

(b) NATO open negotiations with Russia to create an international treaty to eliminate tactical nuclear weapons; and

(c) Two interim goals should be: withdrawal of the 480 US tactical nuclear weapons stationed in Europe and the withdrawal of Russian tactical weapons from operational deployment to secure storage.

Goal 3: Improving transparency, accountability and value for money within NATO, especially with regard to defence planning and procurement

5.32 The lack of attention paid to the costs and the technical merit of the missile defence programme discussed in section 4 is symbolic of a democratic deficit at the heart of the Alliance. Another example of failed transparency and accountability is the eight-year delay in NATO telling the Serbian government where thousands of cluster bombs were dropped during the 1999 Kosovo campaign. Only after pressure from foreign governments and human rights groups did NATO agree to hand over full coordinates for the hundreds of bombing sorties. With a failure rate of at least 5%, up to 20,000 unexploded sub-munitions may be strewn across Serbia and Kosovo, and at least six Serbs—including three children—have been killed by exploding cluster munitions since 1999, and twice this number wounded. Baroness Royall of Blaisdon described this delay as "rather shameful".

5.33 Throughout NATO's history, MPs in their national parliaments when asking questions about NATO decisions have invariably been told that such decisions are confidential. When the same questions were put to the Secretary General, he invariably replied that NATO was but an alliance of governments of
12 (1949)—26 (2007) sovereign states, each of which are responsible to their own parliaments. This Catch 22 situation may have served a purpose during the Cold War, but is no longer appropriate today. Adequate mechanisms for parliamentary accountability within NATO are urgently required.

5.34 NATO’s system of collective decision-making might be properly accountable if members of parliament were kept fully informed of NATO decisions, and if they had financial control. Neither is currently the case. Similarly, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly has no formal influence or oversight over the decision-making in the Alliance. Defence decisions should certainly not be the exclusive preserve of the executive branch of government or powerful inter-governmental bureaucracies, such as the Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD), the senior NATO body responsible for collaboration between Member States on equipment and research projects.

5.35 Refusal to disclose information (usually under the catch-all of “national security interests”) has been exploited on numerous occasions in NATO Member States to hide inefficiencies, disguise mistakes, and to advance military procurement projects to a stage where they are beyond the point of cancellation, before parliamentary debate can take. Restricted decision-making also prevents consideration of alternatives and encourages “business as usual”.

5.36 Neither the current Strategic Concept nor the CPG include sufficient references to the importance of transparency or accountability in decision-making. Yet paragraph 15 of the CPG stipulates that “increased investment in key capabilities will require nations to consider reprioritisation, and the more effective use of resources, including through pooling and other forms of bilateral or multilateral cooperation. NATO’s defence planning should support these activities”. As part of a new Strategic Concept, NATO should include a stronger commitment to transparency and accountability; to better inform the people it is supposed to protect and to arm their elected representatives with the knowledge they need to make effective decisions about “prioritisation” of defence resources at both the national and NATO levels.

5.37 Around 1998, NATO began a major overhaul on is policy on the handling of shared information, but it wasn’t until 2002 that the Alliance first disclosed its clearance rules and only in 2005 that BASIC was able to obtain a copy of NATO’s public disclosure guidelines drawn up in 1995. These may have changed over the ensuing years, but it is difficult to say, since we have no right to see the document that contains the current clearance standards.

5.38 Citizens (and parliamentarians) in NATO Member States are bound by secrecy rules that were drafted in a very different era—when the public had different expectations about participation in defence and foreign policy, when few of its Member States had adopted a national right-to-information law, and when the threat posed to the Western alliance was more profound and immediate. All of these circumstances have changed, but the regime that governs the handling of shared information remains unchanged in important respects. Legislators and citizens are effectively being denied the right to participate in the formulation of policies that have a profound effect on their liberties and security. BASIC recommends that NATO’s secrecy rules should be reviewed as part of the larger review of the Alliance’s Strategic Concept.

5.39 Another principle that NATO should follow is “value for money”. This may be self-evident, but an Alliance that has interests everywhere and tries to do everything will find itself going in the opposite direction of economies of scale; trying to do more and more with an ever dwindling pool of resources. A major thrust of a new Strategic Concept must therefore address the stark misallocation of resources, which is closely tied to the persistence of cold war strategies and weapons systems that have little relevance to today’s security environment.

5.40 Realizing value for money may become easier once the above recommendations of transparency and accountability are pursued, along with a sharper focus on military priorities. Value for money will also mean more sharing, especially with partners outside the Alliance. As in the case of missile defence, the United States, with the help of the NATO-Russia Council, should more seriously consider offers for sharing radar information and pool resources in instances where there are mutual security concerns.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Anti-communism was the foundation of the Cold War and the rationale for NATO and Britain’s commitment to the Alliance. In the post-Cold War environment NATO has expanded its ambit and developed a body of standards, structures, knowledge and protocols for complex multinational military coalitions that is unrivalled in history. But the Alliance continues to operate within a strategic concept that is stuck in the last century, and has so far failed to articulate a truly convincing rationale and coherent strategy for this century.

6.2 Close cooperation with the United States and one of the consistently largest defence budgets in Europe has reinforced the feeling (in Whitehall at least) that Britain is number two in the Alliance. Britain should use this status to set out a new blueprint for NATO. Support for major shifts in NATO policy, along the lines set out in this submission, could be expected from other Member States, including Belgium, Holland, Germany, Greece and the Central European and Scandinavian countries. The German Chancellor, Dr. Angela Merkel, for example, is one of a growing number of political leaders that is calling for a review of NATO’s Strategic Concept in 2008 or 2009 (ten years after it was elaborated at the
Washington Summit in 1999). Even in the United States, public opinion has already been affected by the failures in Iraq, and there is growing momentum for greater use of “soft power” (see, for example, recent speeches by Defense Secretary Robert Gates and presidential candidate Barack Obama).

6.3 BASIC has been working on a range of NATO-related transformation issues in recent years, including: the NATO Response Force; operations in Afghanistan; Ballistic Missile Defense; nuclear policy; the Prague Capabilities Commitments and capability improvement; the Alliance’s political development, and especially transparency and accountability issues; and the Global Partnership and future priorities. Based on this experience we have identified the following priorities for NATO’s reform agenda in the years ahead.

6.4 In Afghanistan a monumental effort is necessary on the part of the international community to better coordinate military and civilian instruments (especially crisis management, reconstruction and development), reduce civilian casualties and demonstrate the political will to sustain a long-term commitment to the country [Para 2.11].

6.5 The Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG) agreed at the Riga Summit is little more than a stopgap for a new Strategic Concept that should be debated and agreed by 2009 [Para 3.5].

6.6 Given the enormous changes that have taken place since the 1999 Strategic Concept was agreed, NATO should initiate a review process with the aim of agreeing a new Strategic Concept in 2009. Three goals should be fundamental to such a review:

1. affirming collective defence, disaster relief, conflict prevention, counter-and non-proliferation and peacekeeping missions as the primary purpose of NATO;
2. eliminating battlefield nuclear weapons from Europe and the adoption of a non-nuclear weapon security doctrine for the Alliance (including, as interim goals, withdrawal of the 480 US tactical nuclear weapons stationed in Europe and the withdrawal of Russian tactical weapons from operational deployment to secure storage); and
3. improving transparency, accountability and value for money within NATO, especially with regard to defence planning and procurement. [Para 5.1]

6.7 (Goal 1) in summary, BASIC recommends that NATO should focus on:

(a) collective defence of the transatlantic area with selective humanitarian/ disaster relief, conflict prevention, counter- and non-proliferation and peacekeeping missions “out of area” where appropriately mandated and in accordance with international law. For the present, NATO does not need to become a global membership organisation, but as in Afghanistan (where 15% of the troops are provided by non-NATO countries), the Alliance could facilitate and oversee “coalitions of the willing” in support of these missions;
(b) reshaping the NRF for peacekeeping and disaster response capabilities, and developing limited counter-insurgency and counter-intelligence capabilities, with clear rules of deployment; and
(c) strengthening its cooperative threat reduction, weapons collection and destruction, and counter-proliferation capabilities, with a special emphasis on maritime interdiction under the Proliferation Security Initiative. [Para 5.22]

6.8 (Goal 2) in pursuit of a new initiative towards the global elimination of nuclear weapons the Government should consider the following proposals:

(a) in the process of negotiating a new strategic concept, NATO should reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in strategic planning, with a view to moving progressively towards the adoption of a non-nuclear weapon security doctrine;
(b) NATO open negotiations with Russia to create an international treaty to eliminate tactical nuclear weapons; and
(c) two interim goals should be: withdrawal of the 480 US tactical nuclear weapons stationed in Europe and the withdrawal of Russian tactical weapons from operational deployment to secure storage. [Para 5.31]

6.9 (Goal 3): BASIC recommends that NATO’s secrecy rules should be reviewed as part of the larger review of the Alliance’s Strategic Concept. [Para 5.38]

6.10 Finally, going ahead with the US BMD proposal in Central Europe regardless of Russian opinion would be a huge mistake. More substantive US, Russian and NATO dialogue, within the NATO-Russia Council on BMD and other mutual security concerns is necessary to avoid further divisions in Europe. BASIC recommends that:

(a) any proposed bilateral or multilateral missile defence agreements involving the UK should be made available for prior parliamentary scrutiny (ie before being signed); and
(b) the numerous UK and NATO ballistic missile threat assessments and industrial studies should be declassified and placed in the public domain. [Para 4.11]

3 December 2007
Memorandum from the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND)

SUMMARY

1. This submission considers the security implications, both for the UK and the wider world, of NATO’s role as a nuclear-armed military alliance. It discusses the siting of nuclear weapons in Europe in contravention of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the failure of nuclear weapon states within NATO to comply with their obligations, under the NPT, to disarm, and the likelihood that this will promote nuclear proliferation. The submission also notes that NATO membership prevents the UK determining its own policy on nuclear use and deplores the fact that such significant decisions are removed from Britain’s government and parliament. It observes that recent government statements, supporting a strengthening of the NPT’s disarmament pillar, are not served by UK participation in NATO nuclear structures, or UK backing for US Missile Defence, which is contributing to global tensions and leading to a new nuclear arms race. The security of the UK and Europe is not best served by NATO’s adherence to the possession of nuclear weapons and its failure to reject first use of nuclear weapons.

INTRODUCTION

2. NATO is a nuclear-armed military alliance. As part of the alliance’s armaments, recent estimates indicate that hundreds of US nuclear weapons are based in five different European countries at seven different bases. This is in spite of the fact that all 26 members of NATO have signed the NPT, which obliges them to:

   “pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.”

3. Four of the five European countries with US nuclear weapons on their soil, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Netherlands and Turkey have signed the NPT as non-nuclear weapon states. The UK signed up to the NPT as a nuclear weapon state, and thus is required to take steps to achieve nuclear disarmament. Instead the UK allows over 100 US nuclear weapons to be kept on British soil at Lakenheath and has also assigned the UK nuclear weapons system, Trident—with around 160 nuclear warheads—to NATO. It is no doubt the case that any replacement for the Trident system, which will make the UK a nuclear-armed state into the 2050s, will also be assigned to NATO.

US NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN EUROPE

4. The US is the only country that deploys its nuclear weapons on other states’ territories under the NATO alliance. NATO regards these B61s, plus the UK’s Trident nuclear weapons system, as the “minimum level sufficient to preserve peace and stability”.

The B61 bombs are gravity bombs, termed tactical nuclear weapons. With a variable explosive power between 0.3 and 170 kilotons (the Hiroshima atomic bomb had a yield of around 15 kilotons) they are widely defined as being more usable in the battlefield. The use of just one would cause enormous and indiscriminate loss of life, massive destruction and poisonous radioactive fallout. Recent research shows that a so-called “small exchange” of 50 nuclear weapons could cause “the largest climate change in recorded human history” and a conflict “involving 50–100 weapons with yields of 15 kilotons has the potential to create fatalities rivalling those of the Second World War.”

UK NUCLEAR WEAPONS ASSIGNED TO NATO

5. The UK’s nuclear weapons have been assigned to NATO since the 1960s, under the sales agreement for the Polaris missiles. This arrangement was restated with the leasing of Trident missiles from the US. The UK warheads, widely believed to be based on the US W76 warhead that arm the US Trident system, have an explosive power of up to 100 kilotons. A future replacement of Trident is likely to be assigned to NATO. In June 2007 NATO commended the UK on this position:

   “We noted with appreciation the continuing contribution made by the United Kingdom’s independent nuclear forces to deterrence and the overall security of the Allies, reaffirmed the value of this capability and welcomed the recent UK White Paper in which the UK restated its commitment to provide this contribution.”

6. Ultimately the UK’s nuclear weapons could be used against a country attacking (or threatening to attack) one of the NATO member states since an attack on one NATO member state is seen as being an attack on all member states.
NEW CAPABILITIES FOR NATO

7. According to Hans Kristensen, of the Natural Resources Defense Council, the hundreds of B61 bombs in Europe continue to be modified with new capabilities that “enhance the reliability, use control, and safety of these retrofitted weapons.” US and UK Trident warheads are also to be equipped with a new Arming, Fuzing and Firing System, which may give them improved military capability against hardened targets. The UK and US are also both considering the eventual refurbishment or replacement of the Trident warheads.

FIRST USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

8. At the NATO summit in April 1999, Germany proposed that NATO adopt a “no first use policy”, but the proposal was rejected. As indicated by government statements, NATO still holds a policy of first use of nuclear weapons. This policy has serious implications for member states. The UK, for example, does not have an independent defence policy as it is circumscribed by its membership of NATO. When asked, in 2005, about ruling out the use of UK nuclear weapons on a “first use basis”, Geoff Hoon, the then Secretary of State for Defence, replied:

“A policy of no first use of nuclear weapons would be incompatible with our and NATO’s doctrine of deterrence, nor would it further disarmament objectives.”

It appears therefore that UK nuclear weapons policy, rather than being decided by the British government and Parliament, is being determined by NATO.

9. The European Constitution says something similar: that the EU Foreign and Security Policy shall, “respect the obligations of certain member states which see their common defence realised in NATO . . . and be compatible with the common security and defence policy established within that framework.”

NUCLEAR WEAPONS MAKE THE WORLD LESS SAFE

10. The presence of nuclear weapons in Europe makes the continent less secure. As long as there are nuclear weapons in the world there is always the danger that one will be detonated by accident or by design. If NATO countries believe that their nuclear weapons actually keep them safe then there is the possibility that other countries will also want them for their own safety, thus encouraging proliferation and a nuclear arms race.

11. It is widely accepted that the major threat to security now comes from terrorist attack. It is also accepted that nuclear weapons cannot deal with the problem of terrorism. Terrorists present no precisely locatable target and the risk of large-scale fatalities is more likely to encourage than deter terrorists. The US nuclear arsenal did not deter the attacks of September 11th 2001, nor did the UK arsenal deter the later attacks on London. There is also the risk that nuclear weapons bases could themselves become targets.

12. Other governments have taken a different approach to ensuring the security of their citizens. Large parts of the world are covered by Nuclear Weapon Free Zones treaties. The preamble to the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty of Tlatelolco, which now covers the whole of Latin America, states:

“The military denuclearisation of Latin America . . . will constitute a measure which will spare their peoples from the squandering of their limited resources on nuclear armaments and will protect them against possible nuclear attacks on their territories, and will also constitute a significant contribution towards preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and a powerful factor for general and complete disarmament”.

THE NATO STRATEGIC CONCEPT AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS

13. NATO’s policies are based on the 1999 Strategic Concept, which was re-affirmed at the June 2005 meeting, and includes the following:

“Article 42: The presence of United States conventional and nuclear forces in Europe remains vital to security in Europe.”

and

“Article 46: Nuclear weapons make a unique contribution in rendering the risks of aggression against the Alliance incalculable and unacceptable. Thus, they remain acceptable to preserve peace.”

14. This position was most recently re-affirmed by NATO’s Nuclear Planning Group and Defence Planning Committee in June 2007:

“We reaffirmed that the fundamental purpose of the nuclear forces of the Allies is political: to preserve peace and prevent coercion and any kind of war. We recalled that NATO’s nuclear forces are maintained at the minimum level sufficient to preserve peace and stability. In keeping with this goal, we continue to place great value on the nuclear forces based in Europe and committed to NATO, which provide an essential political and military link between the European and North American members of the Alliance.”
15. These policies are a block to the nuclear weapon states carrying out their obligations under the NPT to bring about global nuclear disarmament. Nuclear weapons do not “preserve peace”. The continued possession of nuclear weapons, in contravention of the NPT, is damaging to global security prospects. Each time it is asserted that nuclear weapons are necessary for defence, other states—as Kofi Annan has pointed out, may come to the same conclusion, thus fuelling the danger of proliferation:

“The more States have such weapons, the greater the risk. And, the more those States that already have them increase their arsenals, or insist that such weapons are essential to their national security, the more other States feel that they too must have them, for their security.”¹⁰

16. Recent statements by government ministers, recognising this to be the case, are very welcome. In June 2007, Margaret Beckett, the then Foreign Secretary, observed:

“Last year, Kofi Annan said—and he was right—that the world risks becoming mired in a sterile stand-off between those who care most about disarmament and those who care most about proliferation. The dangers of, what he termed, such mutually assured paralysis are dangers to us all. Weak action on disarmament, weak consensus on proliferation are in none of our interests. And any solution must be a dual one that sees movement on both proliferation and disarmament—a revitalisation, in other words, of the grand bargain struck in 1968, when the Non-Proliferation Treaty was established.”¹¹

Meg Munn, Foreign Office Minister, in July 2007 reiterated this position:

“Our efforts on non-proliferation will be dangerously undermined if others believe, however unfairly, that the terms of the grand bargain have changed, so we must do more than just have an exemplary record on disarmament to date. As my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, South (Margaret Beckett), the former Foreign Secretary, made clear in her speech in Washington, we need a renewed commitment to a world free from nuclear weapons, and a convincing plan.”¹²

NUCLEAR SHARING AND ITS ILLICITNESS UNDER THE NPT

17. NATO’s nuclear policies conflict with the legal obligations of the signatories under the NPT, who agree that:

“Article I
Each nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly; and not in any way to assist, encourage, or induce any non-nuclear-weapon State to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, or control over such weapons or explosive devices.”

“Article II
Each non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to receive the transfer from any transferor whatsoever of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or of control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly; not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; and not to seek or receive any assistance in the manufacture of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.”

18. The siting of US nuclear weapons in Europe clearly contravenes Articles 1 and 2 of the NPT. In addition to the contravention through transfer, it is also the case that many of the US nuclear weapons in Europe would be flown to their targets by the host countries’ own air forces. The US argues that the treaty will no longer apply in wartime, but maintaining nuclear weapons means that preparation for their use is required in peacetime including ongoing planning and personnel training by the host countries.

THE NUCLEAR DANGER OF THE EXPANSION OF NATO

19. The dangers of NATO’s nuclear policies, and its “nuclear burden sharing”, increase as NATO expands to include more nation states. South Africa argued in 1997:

“The planned expansion of NATO would entail an increase in the number of non-nuclear weapon states which participate in nuclear training and which would have an element of nuclear deterrence in their defence policies.”¹³

20. Although no nuclear weapons are believed currently to be stationed on the territory of the “new” member states, they, like all NATO member states except France, are involved in the planning arrangements for the use of nuclear weapons in time of war. Nor has NATO given guarantees not to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new member states, stressing only that it has no plans to do so. With the expansion of NATO to 26 states, Europe is rapidly becoming a nuclear-armed continent.

21. NATO has expanded despite protests by many states, including China and Russia. In the case of Russia, NATO now extends to its borders, including within NATO membership a number of former Soviet republics.
NATO AND US MISSILE DEFENCE

22. US Missile Defence plans to base interceptor missiles in Poland and a radar base in the Czech Republic have provoked strong reactions from Russia, which has threatened once again to target European countries with nuclear missiles, as it did during the Cold War.

23. In 2005 NATO approved the development of a theatre missile defence system to protect its troops in battle. The US has suggested that components of the new NATO system could be integrated with the expansion of the US Missile Defence programme into the Czech Republic and Poland, to form a European missile defence system. But there is no guarantee that Europe would be protected by such a system, even in the event of a developing missile threat, though member states would bear some of the costs.

24. The US also has plans to develop its missile defence programme beyond the arena of ground based interceptor missiles. Participant European countries will then become complicit in the future weaponisation of space.

CONCLUSION

25. The UK is committed under the NPT to begin the process of disarmament. The British government has recently reaffirmed its commitment to the NPT and its disarmament pillar. Continued membership of a nuclear-armed military alliance is incompatible with those goals. The UK’s right, as a sovereign state, to determine its foreign and defence policy is infringed by NATO membership. It appears that Britain is not able to adopt a “no first use” policy, as a result of NATO membership, even though a first-use policy is illegal under international law. Through continued membership of NATO, the UK is also complicit in the contravention of Articles 1 and 2 of the NPT, which forbid the transfer of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear weapons states. Through participation in US and NATO Missile Defence systems, the UK will be increasing global tensions and encouraging a new nuclear arms race.

26. The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament urges the government to reject the nuclear policies of NATO, adopt a nuclear “no first use” policy, assert UK sovereignty in its foreign and defence policies, and begin negotiations towards disarmament.

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3 December 2007
Memorandum from Professor Clive Archer

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 This presentation will examine the role of the Northern European states in the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) of the European Union, especially in the recently-formed Nordic battle group.

1.2 The “Northern European” states are here defined as the Nordic and Baltic states, that is Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. In this short presentation, special reference will be made to the role of the UK in the relationship of these states to the ESDP and NATO.

1.3 The Nordic and Baltic states are covered, and treated together, because of their closeness to each other, both geographically and in their general international cooperation, and because a number of these states have cooperated on security matters, not least in the setting up of the Nordic battle group.

1.4 However, these eight states have differences in their security policies, especially with Finland and Sweden not being NATO members. Furthermore, Norway and Iceland are not European Union members. Nevertheless, Finland and Sweden have engaged closely with NATO, especially in operations in former-Yugoslavia; and Norway and Iceland are both tied closely to the EU through the European Economic Area (EEA) and by their membership of the Schengen agreement.

1.5 The Petersberg tasks covered by the ESDP—“humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace making”—include ones familiar to Nordic troops in their previous UN roles as peacekeepers. However, the mention of “combat forces” suggests a harder edge to these operations, as could the addition by the Brussels European Council in 2004 of the new tasks of “joint disarmament operations, the support for third countries combating terrorism and security sector reform.”

1.6 From the start of ESDP, Denmark has recused itself from the defence aspect of the Policy under the “Edinburgh opt-outs” it obtained from the Maastricht Treaty. It is involved in the more general aspects of the ESDP and in its increasing civilian crisis management aspects. The Danish prime minister, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, after his re-election in November 2007, stated that he wanted a national referendum on dropping these opt-outs, including the defence one. The governing parties and a number of the opposition parties support an end to the Danish defence “opt-out”.

1.7 The UK has had a history of military cooperation within NATO with Denmark and Norway, both during the Cold War and after. In the wake of the end of Cold War, the UK also made an important contribution to the development of the defence of the three Baltic states. For example, Sir Garry Johnson led a team of retired officers from NATO states that advised the countries on security issues in the 1990s.

2. RESOURCES AND FORCES

2.1 The five Nordic and three Baltic states are all “small” in population terms, though clearly the Nordic states are also comparatively rich in GDP per capita terms, Norway topping the world lists (after Luxembourg) in those stakes.

2.2 During the Cold War and even shortly after its end, Norway and Sweden were steadily ahead of Denmark and Finland in both dollars per capita and percentage of GNP spent on defence. This could be seen even in 1992 when Norway spent 3.3% of GNP on defence, whereas Denmark spent 2.0%, Sweden 2.5% and Finland 1.9%. However, the final years of the Cold War had seen Finland increase its figure from 1.5% in 1985, while Sweden’s dropped from 3.3% in 1985. The starting figures for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in 1992 were, respectively, 0.6%, 0.5% and 0.7%. Since the end of the Cold War, all the figures for the percentage of GNP spent on defence have converged: Denmark 1.4, Estonia 1.6, Finland 1.4, Latvia 1.3, Lithuania 1.2, Norway 1.6, Sweden 1.6 (cf. UK 2.3; IISS figures for 2005; Iceland has no defence budget).

2.3 These states have contributed their forces to a number of operations under a variety of “hats”, some UN, some NATO, some multilateral ad hoc and some ESDP. The table below shows personnel contributions in 2006–07 as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Denmark</th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Norway</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Estonia</th>
<th>Latvia</th>
<th>Lithuania</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UN ops</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN obs</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>731</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>688</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,367</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>945</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(obs observer; ops operations; NATO: + 15 from Iceland; based on IISS figures)
2.4 Finland and Estonia were the only Northern European states with more than 10% of their deployed forces devoted to ESDP operations in 2006-07. Most of the “other” operations were those in Iraq where Denmark was the greatest contributor. However, Denmark withdrew 470 ground troops (and its Iraqi interpreters) from Iraq in August 2007, leaving about 50 military there.

3. **The Nordic Battle Group**

3.1 In early 2004, the EU adopted the battle group (BG) concept as forming the basis for a rapid response operation, especially in situations where NATO was not involved. The Berlin-plus agreement has allowed for coordination with NATO over deployment, though Turkish-Cyprus disagreements seem to have overshadowed these arrangements. Of the planned battle groups, one was to come from the Northern European region, though states there have decided to contribute to three of the battle groups (Finland will contribute to a German-led BG, as well as to the Nordic BG, and Latvia and Lithuania to a Polish-led BG).

3.2 The “Nordic battle group” is to be on standby for six months from 1 January 2008 with contributions from Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Norway and Sweden. This unit will consist of 2,800 soldiers with about 2,300 from Sweden, 200 from Finland, 150 from Norway, 80 from the Republic of Ireland and 50 from Estonia. The idea is that the force should be able to act in conflict areas within ten days of a decision to intervene and the intervention time is seen as 30 days with a possible extension to 120 days. The Nordic battle group is led by Sweden which provides a light mechanised rifle battalion as the core unit, with the other contributors providing support resources. For example, Ireland will contribute an Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Improvised Explosive Device Disposal contingent with its own security detail. In November 2007, the final exercise of the battle group took place in northern Sweden with a simulated crisis protecting an election process within a “nation in turmoil”. The battle group could be one of those deployed to Chad and the Central African Republic as part of the support for the UN-African Union peacekeeping mission to Darfur.

4. **The United Kingdom’s Role**

4.1 The UK’s permanent joint headquarters at Northwood is to be used as the operational headquarters (OHQ) for the Nordic battle group. During the standby period, the MoD has promised that Northwood will provide the OHQ building, technical and administrative support with trained staff. It seems this will be the strategic HQ for any distant operations.

5. **Problems and Prospects**

5.1 A main concern about the battle groups, as with the ESDP more generally, is that of duplication, especially with NATO activity. If the ESDP competes with NATO for increasingly scarce resources, does it not detract from the Western defence effort?

5.2 A counter-argument is that the ESDP undertakes operations where NATO either would not go or where NATO wishes to hand over. In some cases it may be more politically acceptable (both for providers and recipients) than NATO action. Furthermore it has further engaged non-NATO forces in a more leading role than they could take in NATO-led operations. For example, the Nordic BG has seen Sweden take a lead role and Finland & Ireland devote resources that would have been less readily available for NATO. Also it has stretched, in a positive way, the defence efforts of small states such as Estonia. The Nordic battle group has seen key Nordic states work more closely together on defence matters than before. Finally, the three Baltic states will soon be contributors to three battle groups. This will integrate them further into the Western defence system and also tie them more closely to the security policies of the European Union. Nevertheless, these basically political points do not resolve any questions of lack of resources.

5.3 The proof of the battle groups will be in their use. There has been a precursor in Operation Artemis in the Ituri region of the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2003 to which Sweden made a significant contribution, and which seemed to have some success. The next possible use is in Darfur as noted in 3.2 above. A hard test could come with Kosovo and this will be a trial of the Berlin-plus arrangement, NATO-ESDP relations generally, as well as the political cohesion of the Euro-Atlantic region. Another possible area for activity could be Cyprus, but deployment there would only come after a political agreement accepted by all parties and the UN. One aspect of the battle group concept is that it is supposed to be flexible enough to deal with “events”, especially crises coming out of the blue. Its next task may well be of such an unpredictable nature.

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*3 December 2007*
Memorandum from the Romanian Embassy

A ROMANIAN PERSPECTIVE

The end of the Cold War determined NATO to fundamentally revise its mission and structure. The disappearance of the common enemy—the Soviet threat—raised the voices questioning the continuing NATO legitimacy. The Alliance managed to contradict these voices, keeping its relevance through a process of constant adaptation to the changes that have occurred in the international security environment.

Conceived as a collective defense organization, the Alliance has progressively extended its field of action, becoming a complex institution, with a strong voice at global level, both militarily and politically. Besides continuing to stay the alliance based on collective defense against an attack on the territory of the member states, NATO gradually acquired a new mission, that of a security organization tailored to deal, through crisis management, with a multitude of threats, from any direction.

The membership of NATO, obtained in 2004 (after receiving the invitation to join the Alliance at the NATO Prague Summit in 2002), represents the cornerstone of the Romanian security policy. Romania is fully supporting the modernisation process of the Alliance, in order to give NATO the adapted instruments to respond to new security challenges as well as to take advantage of the new opportunities.

1. THE PRESENT STAGE OF NATO REFORM

Since the end of the Cold War and more intensively after the 9/11 attacks against the US, NATO has extended progressively, but firmly, its area of action, both functionally and geographically. There were changes at doctrinal and conceptual level and new capabilities have been created or are being developed. The Alliance that in 1949 defended the territory of 12 member states conducts today six operations and missions on three different continents and is an important actor in areas such as security sector reform or military training.

The geographical extension of NATO’s mission makes clear that the Alliance is not anymore suited just for its political and military tasks as they are phrased in the Treaty of Washington, but that has also a special responsibility in projecting stability far beyond the Euro-Atlantic area.

Politically, this has materialized in:

— Intensifying the relations with the states from the ex-soviet space—creating a Joint Permanent Council NATO—Russia (1997), followed by the creation of the NATO iRussia Council (2002), as well as the setting up of a Distinctive Partnership with Ukraine (NATO—Ukraine Commission, 1997), establishing an Intensified Dialogue with Ukraine and Georgia, deepening the relations with the other states in the Caucasus and Central Asia, including by developing Individual Action Plans of the Partnership, diversifying progressively the Partnership instruments and mechanisms, so that this program corresponds to the needs of all partner states, according to the basic principles of PfP—inclusiveness and self—differentiation.

— Developing the relations with states in the Mediterranean Sea and the broader Middle East, by launching the NATO’s Mediterranean Dialogue (1994) and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (2004).

— Initiating a profound reform of partnership relations and expressing, at the Riga Summit, the availability of developing the dialogue and cooperation with third states that can contribute to fulfilling the allied objectives and missions, independent of the geographical location of these states.

Strategically, it has materialized in:

— Enhancing the expeditionary character of NATO forces and focusing the allied efforts on developing the capability for missions and operations on the allied territory, at its periphery and at strategic distance.

— Developing new initiatives and projects helping to the enhancement of capabilities essentials for deploying, sustaining and acting in remote theatres of operations with or without host nation support—strategic airlift, special operations.

Operationally, it has materialized in:

— The taking over of ISAF in Afghanistan (2003), at present the biggest and most complex operation of NATO, complemented by establishing a cooperation partnership with Afghanistan, in order to support the security sector reform.

— The involvement in Iraq (2004), through a training and equip mission for the Iraqi security forces.

— The first NATO involvement in Africa, through a mission of support for the African Union in Sudan (2005).

— The assistance provided to the US for managing the consequences of Katrina and to Pakistan for managing the consequences of the earthquake in 2006.
In parallel with the geographical expansion of NATO a functional expansion can also be noticed and it can be seen in:

- Promoting a broader approach to security, already affirmed in the 1999 Strategic Concept and, as a consequence, a broader interpretation of the means of collective defense at NATO’s disposal. This has led to an increase of NATO’s involvement in crisis management, stabilization operations and missions, outside art. V of the Washington Treaty.

- Developing the relations with third countries, including a political dimension of dialogue and consultations, regarding issues of common interest, as well as a practical cooperation dimension, covering a wide range of subjects, such as interoperability, security sector reform, civil emergency planning.

- Developing the soft component of NATO’s action, by increasing the involvement of the Alliance in activities supporting the security sector reform, the restructuring and training of security forces, as well as by developing the classified information exchange, both among allies and with the partner countries. In this context, at the Riga Summit a new Training Cooperation Initiative was launched, aiming at training the security forces of the countries in the Middle East, an initiative that some allies believe could be applied to states in Africa as well.

- Increasing the complexity of NATO operations by including not only stabilization activities, but also reconstruction and development, relating with local authorities, with governmental and non-governmental organizations. One case in point is Afghanistan, where the provincial reconstruction teams constitute the support for the expansion of the NATO presence on the entire Afghan territory. It could be also mentioned the efforts to develop a comprehensive approach within NATO operations, that would combine in efficient manner military instruments for stabilization with reconstruction and development activities, including by developing the cooperation with other international organizations.

These evolutions show that NATO is an organization that has evolved from being a defendant of the Euro-Atlantic security to being an actor which provides stability at global level. This does not mean that NATO became a kind of worldwide alliance or a world policeman, but that the Alliance became one with worldwide interests and partners. The partners’ contribution to the fulfillment of the security objectives of the Alliance is demonstrating the wisdom of the considerable investment in the Partnership policies and of looking at security both functionally and geographically.

At the same time, NATO is no longer only a military actor, but a political—military one, having its own evaluations and positions regarding the areas or the fields of activity in which it gets involved operationally. While most of the initiatives related to the transformation of NATO are technical in nature, they also have profound political implications, being able to affect the future of the organization, including its role and place at international level (and in relation with other international organizations, especially the UN and the EU).

2. CHALLENGES

NATO has obtained impressive successes, some of them in difficult circumstances, proving the positive pace of the transformation process of the Alliance. The ultimate success of this process still cannot be taken for granted, especially in times where in Afghanistan the Alliance is facing major difficulties.

A major source of difficulties is related to the difference of interests and vision among the NATO member states regarding the future of the organization. Because of this difference of views, certain allies are sometimes hesitant in providing the necessary resources—financial and military—in order to ensure the success of NATO’s missions.

Some allies promote the implementation of an ambitious transformation of NATO, aimed at increasing its role at global level. In this context, they support NATO taking over new missions and responsibilities, a process that requires adequate resources.

Other allies continue to see NATO mainly as a military alliance and they are hesitant towards NATO getting involved in what they perceive to be traditional civilian tasks, towards developing relations with third states or other international organizations, towards deploying NATO forces outside the Euro-Atlantic space.

The biggest challenge for NATO future is therefore the fact that there is not a clear enough common vision of its member states regarding the role of this organization.

On a different level but related to the first one, there is a second major challenge, which has to do with the exploitation of these differences by third actors, having opposite interests and objectives to those of NATO.

These differences of view, while not exaggerated, should not be ignored. Some allies define NATO’s role taking into account the national evaluation regarding other existing international organizations and their potential of ensuring the achievement of the national interests and of promoting influence at international level. This is particularly relevant while we talk about the views of different allies on EU and NATO—EU relations.
That is why the allied states are likely to and should continue to reflect upon the delimitation of NATO role in the current international framework and the modalities of coordinating with other international organizations, especially with the EU, in order to avoid competition and unnecessary duplications.

3. PERSPECTIVES

Based on the current realities, could be assumed that, on a medium term perspective:

- the Euro-Atlantic area would continue to face different threats, both from inside (as the terrorist threats on the territory of the member-states) and from exterior, the latest having the potential to ask, in some cases, for military interventions;
- NATO—whose area of operation would inevitably enlarge—remains the best instrument that could be used to deal with this kind of challenging situations;
- NATO alone would not be sufficient; therefore the Alliance will need to closely coordinate with and to benefit from an active support to its action of other international organizations, especially EU and the UN;
- Transatlantic relations, even if revisited, will remain cooperative in nature; and
- the allies will have to accept that the new security challenges need the revival of their cohesion.

The question of how global can NATO become is a very topical one and extremely relevant for the future of the North Atlantic Alliance. The transformation of NATO into a true global actor, both political and military, is likely to remain top on the organization’s agenda, even if the allies’ views regarding the rhythm and the dimensions of this process will continue to differ.

At political level, this transformation might include the continuation of the enlargement process, possibly with new invitations being launched at Bucharest Summit, in 2008. The relations with Georgia and Ukraine are also considered, at least by certain allies, within the larger package of “extending the NATO family”. If the accession to NATO of the three current candidates (Croatia, Albania and Macedonia) is likely to follow, in general, the basic principles that have guided the previous rounds of enlargement (taking into consideration both the individual performances of the candidates and the political interests of NATO), a potential enlargement to the East will be different and more complex, given the Russia position regarding this space.

Finding a win—win solution with Russia regarding the relation with the countries in the former Soviet space interested in developing the cooperation with NATO will be very difficult, but is essential for ensuring security and stability in this area and for ensuring that those countries can make their own strategic and political choices in term of foreign policy.

The continuation of the NATO reform process and of the enlargement, the repositioning of the US military forces in Europe or the location of some components of the US missile defense system on the territory of Czech Republic and Poland are just some of the developments that Russia has criticized sharply, considering them as directed against its own interests.

The NATO—Russia Council has a tremendous potential that still needs to be explored and in which a new Kremlin administration should be engaged at the earliest possible stage.

Another important subject is the reform of the NATO partnerships. This includes both the re-balancing of the current partnership format, once some of the current partners become NATO members, as well as the development of relations with countries that share NATO values and contribute to fulfilling NATO objectives, such as Japan, South Korea, Australia or New Zealand. A profound reconfiguration of NATO partnerships and an extension of the partnership mechanisms and instruments for the so called “contact countries” will impose the development of a comprehensive vision of NATO regarding the strategic and operational cooperation with partner countries and other international organizations.

Developing NATO’s role in civilian fields exceeding the “traditional” missions of the Alliance—energy security, training and security sector reform—will remain high on the allied agenda, as part of the process of adapting NATO to the new realities, to a new strategic and security framework in which it needs to operate.

A new strategic concept should present a common vision of the NATO member states regarding the future of NATO, its role and place in international arena. It is likely that the debates concerning the possibility of adopting such a document will intensify. Currently, some allies are concerned about launching formally the process of reviewing the current strategic concept, while other allies argue that the current document no longer corresponds to reality and needs to be updated (the document was written before 9/11, before NATO’s involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq, before the biggest enlargement round of NATO, at the Prague Summit in 2002).

Still, some NATO members fear that launching a review of the strategic concept will re-open controversial debates and will be contrary to the spirit of trans-Atlantic reconciliation that characterized NATO after Iraq. The debates surrounding the Iraqi crisis in 2003 have shown a series of divergences among NATO members, that were later confirmed by the debates on other issues on NATO’s agenda, and these divergences are linked to the way in which the Alliance should answer to the new threats, including terrorism, as well as to the question if NATO should include among its missions promoting democracy. Could be questioned
even the NATO relevance in the new security framework, given the fact that some allied states are tempted to appeal more and more to coalitions of the willing for solving different crisis, while others support the development of a security and defense dimension of the EU.

In spite of all these difficulties, at the 43rd edition of the Munich security conference, in February 2007, talking about the priorities and the future of NATO, the Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer mentioned 2009 as a possible time horizon for adopting a new NATO strategic concept. It is likely that, even if the deadline of the Secretary General could hardly be met, the debates surrounding this issue will intensify in the near future. The final result is difficult to anticipate and will depend to a certain extent on the way in which the NATO transformation process develops, in general, but also on the way the operation in Afghanistan evolves.

Militarily and operationally, the main priorities will remain those related to the military transformation of NATO and to providing the necessary capabilities in order to ensure the success of NATO operations and missions in Afghanistan, Kosovo and Iraq. The adoption of the Comprehensive Political Guidance sets the premises for continuing the efforts for the development of modern high readiness military capabilities, adapted to the missions that the Alliance is likely to launch in the next 10–15 years. The efforts need to be sustained through an effective management that will ensure the coherence of the planning and capabilities within NATO. The discussion on the structural reform of NATO as well as on the review of the planning mechanism of the Alliance will thus continue to be high on the Alliance’s agenda.

In the next period, special attention is expected to be paid to:

— strengthening the NATO Response Force;
— increasing the expeditionary character of the military forces;
— developing the strategic airlift capabilities;
— developing a missile defence system and ground surveillance systems;
— improving the intelligence cooperation; and
— transforming the Special Forces.

Afghanistan will remain NATO number one operational priority. The focus will be increasingly on the training of the Afghan security forces and extending the authority of the Afghan government, while reducing the influence of the Taliban.

In Kosovo NATO will continue to have an important role to play in maintaining stability.

In Iraq the efforts to train and equip the Iraqi security forces will continue, both within the country and outside, through programs hosted by the allied states.

4. IMPLICATIONS FOR ROMANIA

In the current international security framework, the historical experience and its geographical position make Romania directly interested in NATO remaining a strong, relevant and credible organization. The main interests of Romania in NATO remain:

— the guarantee provided by art. V of the Washington Treaty;
— the possibility to promote its national security interests and to express its own views in the most important forum for the Euro-Atlantic defense and security; and
— the direct participation in the process of military transformation of NATO and extending the modernization effects at national level, by assuming new concepts, making use of the experience acquired in NATO operations and connecting to major reform trends promoted by NATO, as an organization.

Politically, Romania’s main priorities are naturally linked to its own and, at the same time, NATO’s neighborhood—the Western Balkans and the larger Black Sea Region.

While recognizing the fact that the tendency of NATO to become a global actor is perfectly justified by the new type of threats the Alliance is facing today, Romania will continue to argue that a coherent allied policy regarding its Eastern neighborhood remains extremely important and the complex issue raised by the relation with Russia should not inhibit the development of such a policy. While in the current security framework NATO can no longer choose its partners strictly on geographical criteria, the countries situated in the immediate neighborhood of the Alliance still need and deserve political attention and practical assistance. NATO, as an organization, and its member states have a direct stake in developing the relations with these countries.

Militarily, Romania will remain connected to the profound transformation process launched within NATO, contributing to advancing new concepts and fulfilling its national obligations related to the military requirements.
Romania started the national implementation of the Comprehensive Political Guidance and of the new initiatives adopted by NATO, including in the strategic planning documents. These will provide the basis for defining a coherent framework that will allow continuing the internal reforms with a focus on those fields identified as important by NATO.

In this spirit, Romania pays special attention to its participation to the NATO Response Force and to the conceptual development of this force, representing an engine for the military transformation of the Alliance. The national contribution to NRF is integrated in a broader process of developing the national response capabilities to the new threats. The main objectives of this process are:

- creating joint expeditionary forces and increasing the ability to deploy and sustain those forces;
- providing forces with bigger level of usability;
- increasing the ability to face asymmetrical threats; and
- ensuring the information superiority.

Romania will also continue to support the development of a NATO missile defense system, complementary and integrated to the American one and fully respecting the principle of the indivisibility of the security of the allied states.

At the same time, Romania will continue to act for developing the role of its armed forces, so that they are able to participate to complex stabilization and reconstruction missions.

NATO will continue to be a pillar of Romania’s foreign and security policy and, at the same time, an instrument of consolidating this policy and of promoting the national interests, in correlation with the interests of NATO allies. In a time when NATO assumes an ambitious agenda for transformation, Romania is prepared to contribute to this process and is extremely honored to host the next NATO Summit in 2008.

Romania’s belonging to the European Union, as well as its status as NATO member are two sides of the same coin, which mutually support and reinforce. These complementarities of objectives and instruments strengthen the confidence in the perspective of a wide cooperation between NATO and EU, process that Romania wants to contribute to in the future.

10 December 2007

Memorandum from Major General Graham Messervy-Whiting CBE (Rtd) (Fellow of RUSI)

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The aim of this brief submission is to flesh out some of the gaps in the answers given by colleagues, in oral evidence on 20 November 2007, to the following three of the nine questions they were asked to address:

- EU Battlegroups
- ESDP operations
- NATO-EU relations

EU BATTLEGROUPS

2.1 What are EU BGs for?

The EU BGs were designed to meet the requirement\(^{130}\) for an element of the catalogue of military forces made available by the Member States to be capable of very rapid military reaction, in response to crises within the field of CFSP, particularly requests for urgent action from the UN to the EU. BGs are designed to be in place and able to begin implementing their mission within 15 days of an initial green light and no later than 10 days after a formal EU Ministerial-level decision to launch an operation.

\(^{130}\)The text of the Helsinki Headline Goal includes (author's emphasis) . . . “To develop European capabilities, Member States have set themselves the headline goal: by the year 2003, cooperating together voluntarily, they will be able to deploy rapidly and then sustain forces capable of the full range of Petersberg tasks as set out in the Amsterdam Treaty, including the most demanding, in operations up to corps level (up to 15 brigades or 50,000–60,000 persons). These forces should be militarily self-sustaining with the necessary command, control and intelligence capabilities, logistics, other combat support services and additionally, as appropriate, air and naval elements. Member States should be able to deploy in full at this level within 60 days, and within this to provide smaller rapid response elements available and deployable at very high readiness. They must be able to sustain such a deployment for at least one year. This will require an additional pool of deployable units (and supporting elements) at lower readiness to provide replacements for the initial forces . . . .”.


2.2 Are they intended to generate deployable European forces or are they intended to be a mechanism for promoting military transformation?

The EU’s intention, initially articulated by the UK, France and Germany, was to arm the EU with a small but potent and rapidly deployable land force, backed by such enabling maritime and air capabilities as might be needed, “case by case”. A secondary aspiration was that, by setting up such a BG roster with all that this would imply (education, training, force generation, validation, deployability, capability development etc) military transformation within Member States would, over time, be fostered.\(^{131}\)

2.3 Should BGs be the principal form of EU force generation?

No! The EU needs to retain the capacity to generate the military (maritime, land, air) and non-military capability packages required, case by case and from the catalogues of military and non-military capabilities made available by Member States, to respond to a particular need identified, at unanimity, in the field of CFSP.

2.4 What scope is there for using BGs- where, when and in what circumstances?

BGs were initially conceived as forces capable of being the “first in, first out” for the more rapid-reaction “Petersberg” Tasks, such as disaster relief, evacuation of EU nationals and humanitarian assistance. They were also seen as potentially “first in” for other European Security Strategy roles such as stabilisation. Their missions would be tightly defined in terms of geography (small area), time (short duration), tasks (limited) and exit strategy. The EU operation at the back of the minds of the architects of BGs was ARTEMIS, where the EU deployed a scratch rapid-reaction force, some 2,000 strong, to Bunia, in the Ituri region of the DRC, within 10 days of the Ministerial decision to launch an operation. Its mission was local stabilisation until the deployment of a UN force, to which it handed over within around 10 weeks, then withdrew. BGs are not a war-winning tool. But some foreseen BG scenarios go well beyond the “soft” end of military utility. These types of mission envisage combat operations that, while not “top-end” warfighting, could involve intense combat. BGs have been configured with such tasks in mind, being reinforced both with combat support (eg close support artillery, air defence and engineers) and combat service support (eg medical, transport and repair). With the addition of “enabling” maritime and air power, the total number of personnel in some of the BG packages may now reach some 3,000. The EU term “BG” should not therefore be read across automatically in the UK as equating to a smaller British Army BG (nor indeed to a larger RN BG).\(^{132}\)

2.5 What impact have BGs had on the military capabilities of ESDP?

Such impacts are mid- to long-term in nature and more easily gauged retrospectively. With the BGs having only come fully on-stream in January 2007 and none having as yet been deployed operationally, their impact on capabilities is too early to assess.

ESDP Operations

3.1 What impact have operations in Bosnia, Kosovo, Congo and Afghanistan had on EU capabilities, interoperability and force generation?

A total of 17 ESDP missions have so far been mounted over the five years since the first, the EU Police Mission in Bosnia, started up in January 2003. The majority (12) have been mainly non-military in flavour; the minority (five) mainly military. In 2006 alone, ten ESDP missions were being conducted with over 10,000 men and women deployed to three continents.\(^{133}\) Of the five mainly military operations, two Macedonia-completed and Bosnia-ongoing) were launched with recourse to NATO assets and capabilities under the Berlin Plus arrangements; three (ARTEMIS-completed, military assistance to the African Union Missions in Sudan and Somalia-ongoing) were launched with recourse to NATO assets and capabilities under the GAERC 10 April and 14 September 2006; see 7771/06 and 12159/06; Open sources reported (June 2007) that US personnel have been offered for this potential operation.

For a first-rate factual account of the development of BGs, see Gustav Lindstrom’s “Enter the EU Battlegroups” (ISS Chaillot Paper No 97, February 2007).

For an analysis of the first 15 ESDP operations, see “ESDP Deployments and the European Security Strategy” (“Securing Europe?”), published by Centre for Security Studies, Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich, August 2006).

Joint Actions adopted by GAERC 10 April and 14 September 2006; see 7771/06 and 12159/06; Open sources reported (June 2007) that US personnel have been offered for this potential operation.

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131 For a recent study of many of these and other issues, see RUSI Occasional Paper “Launching EU Battlegroups”, co-authored by Graham Messervy-Whiting and Tim Williams and scheduled for publication by RUSI in December 2007.

132 For a first-rate factual account of the development of BGs, see Gustav Lindstrom’s “Enter the EU Battlegroups” (ISS Chaillot Paper No 97, February 2007).

133 For an analysis of the first 15 ESDP operations, see “ESDP Deployments and the European Security Strategy” (“Securing Europe?”), published by Centre for Security Studies, Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich, August 2006).

134 Joint Actions adopted by GAERC 10 April and 14 September 2006; see 7771/06 and 12159/06; Open sources reported (June 2007) that US personnel have been offered for this potential operation.
Kinshasa) were launched without recourse to NATO. Additionally, Ministers have decided: to establish an EU Planning Team for a possible international civil mission in Kosovo; and to conduct a deliberate (ie non rapid-reaction) bridging military operation in Eastern Chad and North-Eastern Central African Republic, following the adoption of UNSCR 1778. All these operations have undoubtedly added to the EU’s knowledge base at all levels, sharpened up force generation procedures and highlighted some particular priorities for capability and interoperability improvement.

3.2 Are there lessons for NATO from the EU’s holistic approach to civil-military cooperation?

Probably yes; but it might be politically and legally difficult if not impossible for NATO to amend its Treaty basis in such a way to enable it to do so.

NATO-EU Relations

4.1 Do ESDP’s attempts to increase European military capabilities enhance or detract from the effort to improve NATO capabilities?

They can only enhance them: there is now a large core of 28 European countries that are members or candidates/partners for both the EU and NATO. Only two EU countries (Cyprus and Malta) and two European NATO countries (Iceland and Norway) are now outside this core group.

4.2 What scope is there for coordinating the development of NATO and ESDP military capabilities?

Informal EU-NATO coordinating mechanisms have been in place since mid 2000; formal ones, such as the EU-NATO Capability Group since March 2003. In practice, both political and bureaucratic issues often intervene to frustrate closer practical NATO-EU cooperation; but the ultimate safeguards against any tendency towards an unnecessary duplication of military capability are the NATO nations/EU Member States, each with their “one set of forces” and stressed defence budgets.

4.3 Is there a case for a separate ESDP military headquarters or does this risk duplicating the work of SHAPE?

The EU has three options open for an Operation HQ (OHQ) from which command of an ESDP operation can be exercised: SHAPE Mons; one of the five national OHQs on offer (such as the UK’s PJHQ Northwood); and, from June 2007, the small EU Ops Centre in Brussels. Each provides a small framework of staff and facilities (offices, communications etc) on which the designated EU Operation Commander (Op Comd) and reinforcing staff, mainly from Member States, descend in the run-up to an ESDP operation.

— The EU OHQ at SHAPE Mons, with DSACEUR as the Op Comd, would undoubtedly be chosen for any ESDP operation with recourse to NATO assets and capabilities. Admiral Feist (Germany, DSACEUR) was appointed as the Op Comd for CONCORDIA in Macedonia and General McColl (UK, DSACEUR) is currently for ALTHEA in Bosnia.

— One of the national OHQs would undoubtedly be chosen be for any ESDP operation without recourse to NATO assets and capabilities which was heavily military in nature. For example, Major General Neveux (France, operating from the EU OHQ in Paris) was appointed Op Comd for ARTEMIS in Bunia, DRC; Lieutenant General Viereck (Germany, operating from the EU OHQ Potsdam) was appointed for the operation during elections in Kinshasa; and senior officer operating from PJHQ Northwood would be appointed should the Nordic BG need to be deployed during its standby period (January-June 2008).

— The EU Ops Centre in Brussels would probably be chosen for any future ESDP operation which was largely non-military in nature or military but small and at the lower end of the conflict spectrum (eg a disaster relief mission).

In all cases, the EU Political and Security Committee (PSC) exercises political control and strategic direction of the operation. The Director General of the EU Military Staff, currently Lieutenant General Leakey (UK) is not in the command chain but acts as the senior military staff officer in the Council General Secretariat (an analogous role to that of a senior officer in MODUK).

134Joint Actions adopted by GAERC 10 April and 14 September 2006; see 7771/06 and 12159/06; Open sources reported (June 2007) that US personnel have been offered for this potential operation.
135GAERC 16 October 2007 (13729/07 (Presse 237)).
136However, the relevant EU Council committees, such as PSC and EUMC, regularly meet in a 27+ format to include the current EU applicant countries as well as Iceland and Norway; and Norway contributes forces to the EU Nordic BG.
137The EU-NATO Capability Group acts to ensure the transparent and coherent development of capabilities across EU and NATO (EU Council doc 6805/03 dated 26 February 2003).
4.4 How have the Berlin Plus arrangements worked in practice?

All reports from the two EU operations with recourse to NATO assets and capabilities indicate the Berlin Plus has worked remarkably well. CONCORDIA, on the ground in March 2003 just a few working weeks after the EU-NATO agreements were signed in December 2002 and successfully completed in December 2003, was a steep learning curve for all concerned, not least DSACEUR as an EU Operation Commander. ALTHEA, up and running now since December 2004, has been the proof of the pudding; initial force levels were around 7,000 and were able to be reduced during 2007 to some 2,500. Indeed, some current NATO/EU practitioners are of the view that the detailed and now somewhat dated texts of Berlin Plus tend to act as a bureaucratic brake on enhanced cooperation.

12 December 2007

Memorandum from Daniel Keohane

What is EU defence policy?

The Balkan crises in the 1990s showed that Europe, and the EU specifically, was incapable of dealing with security problems in its backyard (or indeed elsewhere). Following a Franco-British agreement at St. Malo in November 1998, the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) was born at the Cologne summit of EU heads-of-government in June 1999. From the beginning ESDP has been about implementing the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)—that is to say it is a strictly inter-governmental policy, decided unanimously by EU governments, and neither the European Commission nor European Parliament play any role.

Furthermore, ESDP is not an EU version of NATO, because the EU is not a military alliance. There is no mutual defence commitment in the current EU treaties similar to NATO’s Article V, and EU defence is not about territorial defence. In essence, EU defence is an extra-EU crisis management policy, helping prevent conflict and re-build societies emerging from war. As a result, the EU approach to international security is broad, with the intention to use a wide range of tools from diplomats and development workers to judges and police, and—where necessary—soldiers. This is because today’s threats, such as terrorism or collapsing states, cannot be addressed using only, or even predominantly, military means. NATO’s approach, in contrast, is much narrower since it mainly uses military resources.

ESDP missions

Since 2003, the EU has completed or is carrying out 19 ESDP missions. Although they have been relatively small in size—the largest was a 7,000 strong peacekeeping operation in Bosnia, which now numbers 2,500—for the most part they have achieved their goals. Most ESDP missions have not been primarily military operations (although military personnel have helped plan most missions). More interesting has been their complexity and range, such as quelling civil unrest in Macedonia; reforming the Congolese army and the Georgian judicial system; training Iraqi police, judges and prisons officers; training Palestinian and Afghan police forces; and monitoring the border between Ukraine and Moldova.

In addition, the EU is increasingly the only international organisation that can help provide security in certain situations, as has been the case in Indonesia and Israel. From 2005–06 the EU successfully oversaw the implementation of a peace agreement in Aceh, and since 2005 it has monitored the Rafah crossing point in Gaza. And demand is growing. In September the UN Security Council mandated the EU to send a peacekeeping force to Eastern Chad. It is due to begin its deployment in early 2008, and will comprise of 4,000 soldiers. Plus EU governments have agreed to send 1,800 police, judges and customs officials to Kosovo, who will operate alongside 16,000 NATO peacekeepers, to help prevent a return to war-fighting in that region.

Demand for EU action is likely to continue growing in the future. The enlargement of the EU to 27 members brought it closer to the arc of instability that runs around its eastern, south-eastern and southern flanks. Plus, Turkey and other countries of the western Balkans may enter in the coming decades. The EU will therefore have many weak and malfunctioning states on its borders. It is bound to become more involved in countries such as Georgia and Algeria. Across the Atlantic US priorities will likely remain focused on countries such as Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and North Korea, and potential conflicts such as China-Taiwan and India-Pakistan. Washington will probably be reluctant to become too involved in conflicts around the EU’s eastern and southern flanks.

138Some 400 military personnel were contributed from a total of 27 EU (13) and non-EU (14) countries.
The EU will need to develop a more effective set of policies for stabilising North Africa, the Balkans and the countries that lie between it and Russia. Many of these policies will involve trade, aid and political dialogue. But EU strategy towards its near-abroad will also have to include a military component. Europeans should not expect the US to put out fires in their own backyard. After all, the principal rationale for creating the EU’s defence policy was to improve on the EU’s poor performance in coping with the Balkan crises of the 1990s. Plus, the EU’s efforts to tackle conflicts in its neighbourhood may require more than “mere” peacekeeping and state-building, as it has been doing in Bosnia and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Military capabilities

To meet their growing demands, EU governments will need access to adequate military resources. The 27 EU governments collectively spend close to €200 billion on defence. This means that, collectively, EU governments are the world’s second biggest defence spenders after the US. That amount of money should be enough to cover Europe’s defence needs. But despite these hefty financial resources, Europeans do not have nearly enough soldiers they can use. The EU-27 governments have close to two million personnel in their armed forces, but they can barely deploy and sustain 100,000 soldiers around the globe. This amounts to a measly 5% of EU armed forces. Plus some member-state armed forces are already over-stretched because of non-EU commitments in places such as Iraq and Afghanistan.

Part of the reason for a lack of deployable soldiers is that there are roughly 370,000 conscript troops in the EU. Conscripts—a legacy of Cold War military planning—are useless for foreign deployments. Another reason for Europe’s lack of military muscle is a shortage of useful equipment, such as transport planes and communications technology. Inefficiency abounds in European spending on defence equipment, with too many small procurement programmes for essentially the same capability. To illustrate: the EU-27 currently spend roughly £30 billion a year on some 89 equipment programmes; the US spends much more (roughly $100 billion annually) on only 27 projects.

European governments have been slowly reforming their armies since the end of the Cold War—some with more success than others—shifting from a focus on territorial defence to an emphasis on international deployments. The good news is that military reform is now widely recognised at the EU level as absolutely necessary if the EU is to fulfil its security aims. Member-states have agreed on a “headline goal”—a list of military capabilities EU governments have agreed to acquire—commitments they are supposed to meet by 2010. Although the EU, like NATO, has not yet managed to convince European governments to rapidly improve their military capabilities, the process of military reform in Europe will continue. Plus a number of major equipment investments started by EU defence ministries should enter into service in the coming years. These capabilities include A400M transport planes; A330 air tankers; Eurofighter, Rafale and Joint-Strike-Fighter jets; and three new Franco-British aircraft carriers.

The European Defence Agency

The European Defence Agency (EDA) was set up in 2004 to help EU governments improve their military capabilities. The EDA has achieved a lot in its first three years. In particular three achievements should be mentioned: the Long-Term Vision, the R&T Joint Investment Programme and the Code of Conduct on Defence Procurement. The Long-Term Vision project—which investigated what military skills EU governments will need over the next twenty years—is important because defence technology can take a decade or more to develop. Therefore, if EU governments want to have the right types of missiles or aircraft in 2020, they should start thinking now about what types of equipment they would need. In a similar vein, R&T spending indicates what new kinds of capabilities defence ministries should have in the future. Given that EU governments collectively spend only €9 billion on research and development (and only a little over €2 billion on research and technology), it is crucial that they eliminate duplication and collaborate as much as possible.

The Code of Conduct on Defence Procurement deserves special attention. Some 175 government contracts worth roughly €10 billion are currently posted on the Electronic Bulletin Board, which is an impressive result in such a short time. But the importance of the code lies as much in its principle as its practice. The idea of more open European defence markets has been around for decades, but with little or no progress until the code. Never before have so many European governments agreed that they should open up their defence markets to each other.

Battle groups

Fifteen battle groups have or are being set up, mostly multinational units of 1,500 troops, and the first of these became operational at the start of 2007. Each battle group should be able to draw on extensive air and naval assets, including transport and logistical support, for early and rapid responses to crises. The rationale for these EU combat units is to give the UN the rapid reaction capability that it currently lacks. This is why the EU sent a small UN-mandated intervention force to Bunia in Congo in June 2003, and a deterrent force to Kinshasa in 2006.
The Lisbon treaty

Europe’s lack of military muscle formed a major part of the discussion of the defence parts of the Lisbon treaty. EU leaders will formally sign the Lisbon treaty in December 2007, and if ratified by all 27 members during 2008, the treaty should improve the way EU defence policy works and is resourced. During 2008, EU defence ministries will start fleshing out what the Lisbon treaty means for EU defence policy in practice. The most important change is that the treaty would make it easier for a subset of EU countries to work together more closely on military matters, using a procedure known as “structured co-operation”. Those member-states which meet a set of capability-based entry criteria can choose to co-operate more closely after securing a majority vote. This clause makes a lot of sense. Military capabilities and ambitions vary widely among the member-states. So the EU could rely on a smaller group of the most willing and best-prepared countries to run its more demanding military missions.

At first glance, the defence group would seem, in some respects, to resemble the eurozone: some countries may stay outside because they choose to and some because they do not fulfil the entry criteria. During 2008, EU defence ministries will discuss what precisely the entry criteria should be, and some governments worry that they might be left out depending on the stringency of the criteria. That said, the wording of the treaty suggests an easy-to-meet set of capabilities thresholds for participation in the defence vanguard. For example, the draft says that one of the criteria that EU member-states should meet is to supply a combat unit—a national unit or as part of a multinational formation—that can be deployed between five and thirty days. In fact, 25 out of 27 EU member-states already supply these combat units as part of a “battle groups” plan that EU defence ministers approved in April 2004.

Another innovation for defence policy in the Lisbon treaty is that member-states can sign up to a “mutual assistance” clause: if a member-state is attacked it can ask for help—military or otherwise—from other EU member-states in accordance with the UN charter. But the six neutral countries for example would not be willing to give such an outright commitment, as it would imply the EU is a military alliance. Thus, another clause explains that this article “shall not prejudice the specific character and defence policy of certain Member States”—meaning the neutrals. In addition, to allay fears of Atlanticist governments such as the UK, Poland, and the Netherlands, that EU defence could undermine NATO, the treaty says that this EU commitment should be “consistent with commitments under the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, which, for those States which are members of it, remains the foundation of their collective defence and the forum for its implementation”.

The so-called “Petersberg tasks” set the parameters for EU military missions, which range from humanitarian relief to ending regional conflicts—essentially peace-support missions. The treaty adds some new types of military missions to this list, but they are things the EU has already been doing, like disarmament operations (such as de-mining), security-sector-reform (reforming armies and police) and military advice. Each EU government currently has a veto over every single EU military operation, and that veto power is enshrined in the Lisbon treaty. Although unlikely, if a member-state government vehemently opposed a particular EU military operation it could prevent it from happening. The treaty also says that governments are requested to provide the EU with military and civilian capabilities that would help the Union to deal with international crises—but purely on a voluntary basis. In other words, there is no obligation on a member-state to participate in any EU mission if it does not want to. In addition, the treaty does not establish a standing EU force, never mind a “European army”.

Conclusion

EU defence policy has come a long way since 1999. In early 2008, the EU is due to take on its twentieth mission in Chad, only five years after the first. Although EU governments still lack adequate amounts of useful military equipment, there is at least widespread agreement amongst defence ministries on what is needed. Plus, the EU is working hard to improve its mix of military and non-military resources—such as police, judges, aid workers—for coping with crises. This holistic approach to international security is what differentiates EU defence from NATO, which is primarily a military organisation founded on territorial defence. The hope is that the EU and NATO can find more effective ways of working together in the future, given that much of their security agendas overlap, for instance on counter-terrorism.

Research Fellow, EU Institute for Security Services

17 December 2007
Memorandum from Michael Codner

EVOLVING PURPOSE AND ROLES OF NATO AND THE EUROPEAN UNION
BY MICHAEL CODNER, DIRECTOR OF MILITARY SCIENCES,
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THE EVOLVING PURPOSE OF NATO

Since the end of the Cold War NATO has moved incrementally towards the necessary consensus for the development of the competence for intervention outside the Washington Treaty Article VI area and for operations other than the direct defence of the territory of member nations under Article V of the Treaty. Interventions in the former Yugoslavia were technically outside the Article VI area but directly related to the security of Europe. NATO’s resolve was very much tested in the Kosovo operation but a positive outcome, for whatever reasons history will conclude, reinforced NATO’S expeditionary role. However the ISAF operation in Afghanistan has been the first significant test of its will and capacity for intervention at distance and for reasons indirectly related to European security139.

The shift in emphasis from territorial defence to intervention at distance has important implications for NATO’s force planning. The force structure conceived for intervention includes the Allied Command Europe (ACE) Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) which was deployed operationally in Afghanistan. More recent development of the NATO Response Force (NRF) concept is directly related to capacity for intervention. The capability requirements including strategic lift and other logistic considerations are directly related to the scenarios defined by NATO’s military commands and endorsed by member nations.

There are a number of factors which affect NATO’s ability to encourage member nations to develop their individual military capabilities to contribute to effective intervention capacity with the reach of Afghanistan and other conceivable emergencies world wide. There is the continued importance of territorial defence for East European nations in particular coupled with re-emerging problems with Russia. Any perceptions of failure in Afghanistan will make nations reluctant to commit to elective operations at range. US initiatives on European missile defence appeal to European concerns about homeland defence even though theatre missile defence could be an important enabler for interventions in the future. On the other hand a more positive attitude by France to NATO could allow for a strengthening of NATO’s Strategic Concept and a more robust force planning process.

NATO’s Strategic Concept and Force Planning Process

During the Cold War NATO’s Strategic Concept of forward defence and flexible response was a powerful influence in individual nations’ force planning. The NATO force planning process included an interrogation of individual nations as to their contributions to the capabilities identified as the minimum necessary by the Strategic Commanders. It supported individual ministries of defence in their internal arguments for funding and sustained defence budgets. In the present situation, without any obvious imminent threat of invasion, there is evidence that NATO’s requirements do not have significant influence over the defence spending and capability choices of member medium powers.

However NATO’s common acquisition programmes and processes do provide some opportunities for defence manufacturers beyond conceptual and assessment studies and NATO does provide justification for smaller nations’ niche capabilities and for new members to improve their force capabilities to NATO standards.

In the longer term, as unit system costs are likely to rise more rapidly than defence budgets, the members with larger military capability are likely to see more value in a more integrated approach to acquisition. NATO could indeed be more useful in this timeframe in this respect. Of course in the NATO context US military capability dominates. The argument in favour of significant European and Canadian medium power capability is strongest in scenarios in which the US is not participating and these are not the bedrock for current NATO force planning.

NATO is unlikely in the short to medium term to be a dominant factor in the force development of major and medium powers. In the longer term however NATO and the EU between them could be increasingly important in achieving greater efficiency in European defence spending. Greater coherence between NATO and the EU is likely in the longer term and would also enhance efficient acquisition.

Continued Importance of Territorial Defence v Expeditionary Competence

Concerns about territorial defence and, in particular, about Russia, are a significant motivator for East European nations to join NATO and specifically to benefit from the Article V protection and extended deterrence provided by the US. Extended nuclear deterrence is but one aspect. The trans-Atlantic focus of these nations has been a reason for the willingness of some to support the US in Iraq and Afghanistan.

139Although some might argue that the initial US led operation following the 911 attacks was in the direct defence of the US, a NATO member, and was in accord with NATO’s invocation of Article V following 911.
European nations may be disinclined to acquire capability for expeditionary operations but may focus on enhance defensive capability. NATO conceptual work should focus on commonalities of capability between the needs of intervention, territorial defence and deterrence to ensure flexibility and cost effectiveness.

It will be important for the sustainment and development of NATO’s expeditionary competence for current operations in Afghanistan to provide evidence in the short to medium term of NATO’s military effectiveness. There is a risk that it will be assessed as a “bridge too far” by many NATO nations and this will directly affect their willingness to support and contribute to expeditionary competence. The reluctance of member nations to contribute to ISAF\(^{140}\) could be reinforced if there are not obvious incremental successes.

Perceived success in interventions will be important in influencing member nations’ expeditionary capacities and their support for NATO’s expeditionary role. There is likely to be stronger consensus in the future for the “near abroad”—the fringes of Europe, the Mediterranean, Near East and Maghreb.

If NATO’s involvement in Afghanistan were to be perceived in the longer term by member nations to have been useful, members would be more likely to commit to an expanded expeditionary role for NATO. Notwithstanding these uncertainties Afghanistan will have been particularly useful in developing structures and process for the Alliance’s contribution to a “Comprehensive Approach” (discussed subsequently).

NATO’s expeditionary focus is likely to remain tentative into the medium term. However the ability of the Alliance to contribute military capability to an inter-agency approach should be greatly enhanced by the experience of Afghanistan.

**French Support for NATO**

Previous French-led arguments in favour of an independent EU combat capability have attempted to strengthen the role of the EU as a competitor and therefore the inefficiencies of two parallel force planning systems that have not been well integrated. President Sarkozy’s recent statement suggesting the return of France to NATO’s Integrated Military Structure could be hugely significant if the idea is taken forward. It would enable the full integration of NATO and European Union force planning processes in the medium to long term and for NATO to factor the “minus US scenarios”, which should be the basis for EU force planning, into its own specifications of capability requirements or member nations. In the short term of course President Sarkozy’s needs to manage internal politics in favour of a substantially more trans-Atlantic approach and it is early days.

There is a good possibility that improved French attitudes to NATO would allow for more coherence between NATO and EU force planning, greater efficiency and better use of available national funds for defence.

**Russia**

Russia’s recent provocative behaviour must reinforce concerns amongst East European nations about territorial security. Indeed for NATO generally it resurrects the need for conventional military deterrent capability. There is no confidence in the intelligence community that the Russian political system will alter in a way that is benign from a Western viewpoint in the medium term.

The perceived requirement could be for “inherent” deterrence\(^{141}\) capability for European nations. The US has never abandoned the requirement to be able to dominate militarily against any potential opponent. For Europeans the need in the short in the medium to long term is to sustain and develop military capability not to defend against a specific aggressor but to deter any potential opponent from using the military instrument for inducement of European nations. Clearly some East European new members will see “direct deterrence” as highly relevant and perhaps increasingly so. West Europeans are likely to view direct deterrent policy and rhetoric as unhelpful in engaging Russia politically and economically. NATO as a whole is likely to use Russian capability as a benchmark of sorts for European members to sustain and develop aspects of common capability that relate to any future needs for containment and deterrence.

NATO is likely to agree a new Strategic Concept at some stage after the Bucharest Summit. A more robust Concept than hitherto since the end of the Cold War with more emphasis on the need for enduring conventional deterrence (with Russia as a benchmark) and expeditionary capability would be useful in galvanizing trans-Atlantic force planning certainly into the medium term. This is a matter which governments would do well to emphasise.

\(^{140}\)International Security Assistance Force

\(^{141}\)“Inherent” deterrence is deterrence that is not in published policy or rhetoric directed against any particular nation. “Directed” deterrence is deterrence against a particular threat. A directed deterrence policy would typically be reinforced by rhetoric directed at the particular nation or coalition that posed the threat. The Warsaw Pact in the Cold War was a threat that demanded direct deterrence. Inherent deterrence of course requires some benchmark potential threat capabilities on which to base deterrent force structures. These fundamental concepts are derived from Edward Luttwak’s classic work in this area.
European Missile Defence

One important area in which NATO could have an emergent purpose beyond conceptual work would be in the development of missile defence capability on a US led multilateral basis. If Iran were to acquire nuclear weapon capability, this could be the catalyst for NATO.

If a clear threat emerges in the short or medium terms, investment in missile defence by NATO and member nations could move rapidly beyond assessment and development on a wider scale than current projects. Significant investment is likely to be beyond the short term but could be urgent when initiated. NATO is the obvious vehicle for taking forward US aspirations and Europe’s needs coherently. The support of France under Sarkozy will be crucial to a comprehensive programme. In the longer term, as missile ranges of emergent threats increase, solutions which address both home and theatre missile defence needs are likely to command the greatest appeal to the largest number of members particularly where there is obvious cost benefit in enabling and enhancing US capability in what would otherwise be an unaffordable programme.

NATO’s Purpose in the Longer Term

There are some broad possibilities for the evolution of NATO’s purpose. Political Alliance It could cease to have much relevance as a military alliance and would be essentially a political alliance preserving the trans-Atlantic relationship perhaps with a new understanding between the US and EU which would allow acceptance that the EU would be the agent for European integrated command and control and the development of coherent capability.

NATO/EU integration Paradoxically a more coherent relationship with the European Union could strengthen both organizations militarily through the efficiencies of an integrated command structure and force planning processes. The EU could supply the diplomatic and economic instruments of power to military operations where these are conducted by NATO.

Global Interventionist NATO At the other extreme success in short and medium term interventions could provide NATO with the role of the de facto provider of military capability and command and control to the United Nations (UN) with possibly a membership that extended beyond Europe and North America, or, more likely, that there will be formal relationships with other regional multinational organizations and nations.

Repository of interoperability standards In any event NATO is likely to retain the important but low profile role of repository of standards for interoperability for North American, European and other nations.

The most likely range of possibilities for NATO will lie between the first and second above with NATO’s intervention capability focused predominantly on the near abroad and regions of direct relevance to European interests. If there is not more coherence between NATO and the EU, the EU is likely to be more influential in shaping the military capabilities and force structures of European nations in the longer term if only because it is “US minus” scenarios which have the greatest significance for European military capabilities except in a necessarily trans-Atlantic capability area such as missile defence.

Evolving Military Roles of the European Union

The 1998 St Malo Accord between France and the UK raised for the first time the possibility of a capability rather than institution based approach to ensuring the greater military effectiveness of the EU. Progress had hitherto been stalled by the perception that the EU and NATO were alternatives to European defence capacities. The former alternative had the sponsorship of France. The latter was supported by the UK conscious of the importance of US engagement in European security. Progress after St Malo was stalled as a result of disagreements over the Iraq War. Change of political leadership in the UK, France and Germany and the prospect of the presidential election in the US have allowed for a renewal of European initiatives perhaps taken forward in concert with a new US Administration which may see Europe’s Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) positively as a way of sustaining European military capabilities except in a necessarily trans-Atlantic capability area such as missile defence.
Factors associated with the EU’s ability to influence the force development and military capabilities of its members in the short term include perceptions as to the value of the military instrument in achieving security, funding priorities, and the difficulties of achieving internal coherence within the EU organization.

The Military Instrument

Most European nations had extremely traumatic experiences in the Second World War and earlier conflicts. The most powerful motivator in the formation of the parent institutions of the EU was to create an environment in which war would never again be an eventuality on the continent. Although the UK was not actually invaded, it shares a common European view as to the unpredictable consequences of violence and the limits to the usefulness of the military instrument in initiating and developing security policy beyond territorial defence and the direct protection of vital national interests. The view that the global security environment can be managed by the effective use of the military force has little support in particularly in Western and Northern Europe.

Recent interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq have reinforced the common European view that problems cannot be solved by the use of the military which is an instrument to be used to contribute to conditions in which other non-military activities can work towards better security. The threat of terrorism to internal security and its perceived relationship to external interventions also reinforces a reluctance to commit forces to intervention.

This common perception is unlikely to change, rather to strengthen, in the short term. Member nations of the EU will not become more militaristic.

National Defence Budgets

In relation to other nations in the world European nations, relatively prosperous as most are, are in the upper echelons of the global league. The total EU defence budget and military capability is very considerable. One problem is inefficient use of the money available across the EU when viewed and inability to exploit advantages of scale. Also individual European national defence budgets are proportionally far lower a proportion of national GDP than the US and the trend is downwards. One or two nations who still perceive external threats have somewhat higher budgets but they are the exception. Indeed new members of the EU are likely to see their membership of the EU and NATO in part as means of reducing defence budgets by virtue of common security and defence. The UK and France, the principal expeditionary European powers have defence policies born of their histories, interests and responsibilities that support somewhat larger defence budgets but these still fall short of the US.

In the short term European defence budgets are very unlikely to rise as a proportion of GDP and will probably continue to decline somewhat in particular in relation to the problem of rising unit costs of military systems. This decline is related to a European view that existing defence spending levels are reasonable in the absence of direct military threats.

Another factor discussed earlier is the view that the military instrument is not the only—nor necessarily the most effective—agent of security and that diplomatic and economic instruments, particularly international development, play to Europe’s strengths and the wishes of electorates. There may be very modest progress in using defence funding more efficiently through greater cooperation.

Coherent Security and Defence Policy

Real progress in the evolution of coherent and efficient development of military capability by integrated force planning is to a large extent dependent on the development of robust common security policy which can spawn a similarly robust common defence policy and military strategy. Such a process similar to that developed by NATO in the Cold War would allow common military concepts and common capability development. This process would not necessarily relate to greater federalization. It did not for NATO during the Cold War. But nations would be able to specialize in the capabilities that they developed at the strategic, operational and tactical levels depending on the size of the nation. Small nations would be able to develop niche capabilities comprehensively. Evolution along these lines would be dependent on individual nations sharing the large majority of their security objectives. In the absence of this commonality larger nations will resist creating dependencies on other nations whose contribution to operations cannot be guaranteed.

In the short term there is not the necessary commonality of national objectives. Nor is there clear evidence of trends in this direction. However smaller nations are more dependent on the EU and NATO to give purpose to their military forces and are more likely to develop niche capabilities and role-specialize in spite of this lack of common security objectives among nations. There is of course some regional commonality within Europe which allows for bi- and multi-national rationalizations (Baltic Republics are an example) and these initiatives are likely to be more promising.
Common Acquisition Structures and Processes

There have been a number of EU initiatives to develop the efficiencies of common procurement. The establishment of OCCAR and the European Defence Agency are the most prominent.

The usefulness of EU procurement agencies will remain modest and incremental in the short term because a robust overarching strategic policy framework does not exist. The value of multinational European procurements tends to be in harmonizing requirements to achieve advantages of scale when individual nations' needs coincide in requirement and timescale. Because all European nations possess and develop land forces and because there are a large number of land requirements that have lower costs, and shorter procurement times and life expectancies than ships and aircraft, the land sector could benefit proportionally from existing common acquisition structures.

Inter-Agency Coherence and the "Comprehensive Approach"

There are big institutional and cultural impediments internally between the EC and Council as well as in achieving coherence with NATO, the UN and other entities such as the International Committee of the Red Cross/Red Crescent (ICRC). However, if it could resolve these civil-military issues, the EU would be ideally placed to direct and control all the classic instruments of power (diplomatic, economic and military) for effective intervention to address security crises.

Military Aspects of the EU in the Longer Term

Long term trends would indicate a greater integration of European defence capability in the medium to long terms born of greater commonality of security objectives in the face of globalization and the rise of Asian power. Another factor for the larger European Slow progress is being made internally in the short term. Better integration reinforces the value of the military contribution to interventions and indirectly supports individual nations' defence spending but principally in the constabulary and benign capabilities of military land forces, their communications, information systems and networking.

Military powers is rising unit costs and the fact that balanced military capability for autonomous operations will be increasingly unaffordable. This factor itself is likely to force a reinforced St Malo type of approach emphasizing capability over institutions and process.

In the longer term the EU is likely to be an increasingly significant factor in defining member nations' military capabilities and indeed those of non-member European cohorts. Greater integration and the strategic role specialization of member nations will be very slow in coming. However rising unit system costs against defence budgets make the aspirations of medium powers for autonomous balanced military capability increasingly unaffordable and unrealistic. 2025 has been identified\(^{142}\) as the timescale for real change but this may be optimistic.

Nuclear Deterrence The costs for the UK and France of maintaining independent nuclear deterrent capability could force closer cooperation particularly if the EU is in other respects becoming more integrated in security and defence. It is most unlikely within the long term period of this study that the nuclear deterrent would become an EU owned capability. It is more likely that the UK and France would make savings on deployability by a more integrated approach reducing the requirement to maintain numbers of warheads, systems and platforms individually.

Director of Military Sciences

RUSI

10 January 2007

Supplementary memorandum from the Ministry of Defence

1. This memorandum is provided by the Ministry of Defence as written evidence for the House of Commons Defence Committee Inquiry: The Future of NATO and European Defence. It seeks to answer questions asked by the Committee in the first section of its letter of 11 January (in italics in the text), which requested further information on legal aspects of the EU reform treaty, as offered by the Secretary of State’s during his evidence session on 8 January.

What are the potential legal effects of the merging of the EC and the EU for CFSP and ESDP for UK domestic and international law?

2. While the European Community will disappear with the entry into force of the Reform Treaty, the European Union will succeed the European Community and in particular its rights and obligations under international law and, insofar as it is applicable, under law in the United Kingdom. This change will not affect CFSP since CFSP falls within the Treaty on European Union (TEU) under which the European Union is the actor rather than the European Community. CFSP includes ESDP as an integral part of it (see Article 28A(1) (Article 42(1) in new numbering) introduced by the table of equivalences in the Reform Treaty). CFSP will remain within the Treaty on European Union and will be distinct in a number of ways from those policies falling under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). One way in which CFSP will be distinct from policies falling under the TFEU will be that, with two, limited exceptions, the Court of Justice of the European Union will not have jurisdiction with respect to provisions relating to the Common Foreign and Security Policy or acts adopted under them (see TFEU Article 240a (Article 275 in new numbering)).

Is it the case that foreign and security policy (including CFSP) remains “inter-governmental”?

3. Yes.

What is the status in international law of the declaration which states that nothing in the treaties affects the existing powers of Member States to formulate and conduct their foreign policy, including monitoring their own national diplomatic services and membership of the United Nations Security Council?

4. The declaration sets out political commitments made by all 27 of the Member States. It records their understandings that any changes in the provisions of the TEU on CFSP, including the establishment of the new post of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and of the External Action Service, leave the existing powers of the Member States unaffected. It specifically recalls that the provisions governing the common security and defence policy do not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of the Member States. Declarations relating to a treaty form part of the context for its interpretation (see the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties Article 31(2)). The declaration and its companion declaration will be part of the context in which the common foreign and security policy is applied.

What is the effect of the EU as a whole acquiring “legal personality”? Does this mean the EU will be able to sign defence and military treaties?

5. The EU already has legal personality to the extent that it has the express power today to conclude international agreements, including defence and military treaties (see Article 24, Treaty on the European Union). Accordingly, the Lisbon Treaty’s assertion in Article 46A that the EU shall have legal personality does not give the Union any new power to conclude international agreements. In any event, it has already concluded about a hundred agreements. Any decision to sign a treaty with defence or security implications could only be taken by unanimity. The European Community has had legal personality from its beginning. Conferring express single legal personality on the Union is appropriate in order to achieve the aim of more coherent action internationally in the areas of the common foreign and security policy and the areas currently covered by external action in the European Community Treaty. Conferring express legal personality on the EU will bring about no changes in decision-making procedures or EU competences.

Does the exclusion of the Court of Justice from the common foreign and security policy in Article 11(1) provide comprehensive protection for all areas of foreign and defence policy of the Member States from jurisdiction by the Court? What is the definition of “common foreign and security” which the Court is likely to use when limiting its jurisdiction?

6. Article 11(1) TEU (Article 24(1) in new numbering) and the provision in the TFEU, Article 240a (Article 275 in new numbering) which is the article, among the various TFEU articles on the jurisdiction of the Court of Justice, dealing with the exclusion of jurisdiction from CFSP matters, together offer comprehensive protection for all areas of the common foreign and security policy, subject to the two exceptions referred to in those articles (monitoring compliance with TEU Article 25b (Article 40 in new numbering) and reviewing the legality of certain decisions as provided for by TFEU Article 240a(2) (Article 275(2) in new numbering).

7. The common foreign and security policy including ESDP is not defined in the TEU. The TEU, Article 11, states that the Union’s competence in matters of the common foreign and security policy shall “cover all areas of foreign policy and all questions relating to the Union’s security”. The Court could use the words in quotation marks as a working definition of “common foreign and security” when deciding on the limits of its jurisdiction. TFEU Article 240a expressly provides that the Court of Justice “shall not have
jurisdiction with respect to the provisions relating to the common foreign and security policy nor with respect to acts adopted on the basis of those provisions”. Any provisions relating to the common foreign and security policy including ESDP are caught by this exclusion of the ECJ’s jurisdiction.”

Is Article 3 (“The Union’s aim is to promote peace . . .”) justiciable by the Court and could this provide an avenue for widening the Court’s jurisdiction in future?

8. Article 2(1) TEU (Article 3 in new numbering), which sets out the Union’s objectives, including the Union’s aim to promote peace, will be justiciable by the Court of Justice. It will not however be justiciable insofar as it might relate to CFSP (pursuant to Article 240a). Nor would it be possible to use it as an avenue to widen the Court’s jurisdiction in future because Article 308(1), TFEU (Article 352(1) in new numbering), which sets out that, if action by the Union should prove necessary to attain one of the objectives of the Treaties, but that the Treaties have not provided the necessary powers, the Council can adopt the appropriate measures, is specifically excluded from applying to the CFSP by Article 308(4). Furthermore, any acts adopted under Article 308 must respect the limits set out in TEU Article 25b(2) (Article 40(2) in new numbering). Article 25b(2) TFEU (Article 40(2) in new numbering) provides that the implementation of Union policies under the TFEU shall not affect the application of the procedures and powers of the institutions acting under CFSP.

What obligations in international law are created by Title V? While not justiciable by the EU Court, are they still enforceable in international law? What is the effect of Article 11(3) which states:

“The Member States shall support the Union’s external and security policy actively and unreservedly in a spirit of mutual solidarity and shall comply with the Union’s action in this area.”

“The Member States shall work together to enhance and develop their mutual political solidarity. They shall refrain from any action which is contrary to the interests of the Union or likely to impair its effectiveness as a cohesive force in international relations.”

9. Title V TEU is part of a treaty, the Treaty on European Union, as amended by the Reform Treaty. It creates obligations for the Member States which are the parties to the TEU under the law of treaties. While a breach of a provision under Title V would be a breach of a treaty obligation like any other treaty obligation, it is inconceivable that a Member State would take another Member State before the International Court of Justice even if the necessary jurisdictional grounds were satisfied.

10. The question to do with the effect of Article 11(3) TEU (Article 24(3) in new numbering) is a different issue. This provision is about the duty of loyal cooperation owed by the Member States to the Union. A provision containing much the same language is to be found in the current Article 11(3) TEU. Having agreed to establish the Union and endow it with certain powers, the corollary is that the Member States agree not to undermine it and to support the action it is empowered by the Member States under the TEU to take in the area of the common foreign and security policy, through the High Representative and the External Action Service.

What is the effect of increased qualified majority voting under Title V?

11. The effect of increased qualified majority voting under Title V of the TEU as amended by the Reform Treaty does not apply to decisions with defence or military implications (see Article 15b (Article 31 in new numbering)).

Does the so-called “passerelle clause” (Article 33(7)) enable the EU to widen areas of qualified majority voting in foreign and defence policy? Would this require any reference to Parliament?

12. The passerelle clause in Article 33(7) (now Article 48(7) (Article 48(7) also in new numbering) does not apply to decisions having military or defence implications. Where it does apply, the European Council’s initiative to authorise the Council to act by QMV in a specific case or area must be notified to national Parliaments, including the UK Parliament. If any national Parliament is opposed to the initiative, the European Council may not adopt a decision moving to QMV. Furthermore the decision of the European Council is taken by unanimity. Clause 6(1)(b) of the Bill requires Parliamentary approval to be given before the United Kingdom can support the decision.

Does the role of High Representative materially increase his influence over the Union’s foreign and security policy?

13. The High Representative’s role is designed primarily to enable the EU to act more coherently on the international scene because he is not only the High Representative for the common security and defence policy but also a Vice President of the Commission for external affairs other than those under the common security and defence policy. He will be able to make proposals but will have to carry out decisions adopted by the Council and the European Council as mandated by their decisions. While he can conduct political
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dialogue with third parties and express the Union’s position in international organisations and conferences, this is ultimately under the control of the Member States deciding by unanimity. His role is primarily one of making proposals, coordination, implementation and the giving out of information.

Does the Commission have the right of initiative in foreign and defence policy?

14. The Commission, along with any Member State, may under the present Treaty on European Union, refer to the Council any question relating to the common foreign and security policy and may submit proposals to the Council. Under the TEU as amended by the Reform Treaty, the Commission does not have its own right of initiative. In future any Member State, the High Representative or the High Representative with the Commission’s support may refer to the Council any question relating to the common foreign and security policy and may submit initiatives or proposals to the Council as appropriate (see TEU Article 15a) (Article 30 in the new numbering).

How does the Lisbon Treaty affect the respective roles of the European and National Parliaments in decision-taking?

15. Under Article 48(7) (Article 48(7) new numbering) TEU, national Parliaments are for the first time involved in decision taking in the area of the common foreign and security policy. This is in the context of when the European Council seeks to adopt a decision authorising the Council to move from acting by unanimity in a given area or case to acting by qualified majority voting, except for decisions with military implications or those in the area of defence (which must always be taken by unanimity). Any initiative taken by the European Council on the basis of this provision must be notified first to the national Parliaments. If any national Parliament makes its opposition to the change known within six months of the date of notification by the European Council, the decision cannot be adopted by the European Council. The European Parliament also gives its consent under these provisions but not for decisions with military implications or those in the area of defence.

Does Article 27(7) duplicate NATO’s function as a mutual defence pact?

16. Article 27(7) on mutual defence is renumbered as 28A TEU (Article 42 in the new numbering). Article 28A(7) does not duplicate NATO’s function as a mutual defence pact because not all members of the European Union are members of NATO. The mutual defence provision provides an obligation on Member States to come to the aid and assistance of another Member State which is the victim of armed aggression on its territory. For the first time EU Member States which are not also members of NATO are now committed to the defence of their fellow Member States (to the potential benefit of the UK). The obligation to provide assistance falls on individual Member States, not the EU. The provision therefore does not provide a basis for the development of an EU collective defence organisation to rival NATO. The Reform Treaty makes clear that for members which are members of NATO, NATO remains the foundation of their collective defence and the forum for its implementation.

What does Article 27(2) mean for NATO?

17. Article 27(2) has become Article 28A(2) TEU (Article 42(2) in the new numbering). This provision does not have any implications for NATO. It is clearly provided that the policy of the Union in accordance with this provision shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of those Member States which are NATO members. It shall also respect the obligations of those Member States which see their common defence realised through NATO under the North Atlantic Treaty and be compatible with the common security and defence policy established within NATO. Decisions on framing a common Union defence policy require unanimity and, furthermore, would require Parliamentary ratification, in accordance with the constitutional requirements of each Member State. It is entirely possible that a decision leading to a common defence may never be adopted or come into force. The language of the provision is based on and in substance the same as equivalent language in the current TEU (Article 17(1)).

Does “permanent structured co-operation” provide for a single Member State’s absolute veto over EU foreign and defence policy?

18. The provisions on permanent structured co-operation including in the Protocol on permanent structured co-operation do not affect foreign and defence policy but are solely limited to the purpose of developing military capabilities. This is in line with UK objectives for improving European capability development.
Does the treaty limit the European Defence Agency (EDA) to the co-ordination of the defence industry in the EU, or is its role potentially wider? Does “permanent structured co-operation” in this context continue to provide for a single Member State’s veto over the EDA’s policies and actions?

19. The European Defence Agency has already been established. It was established by a joint action in 2004. Article 28A(3) (Article 42(3) in the new numbering) sets out the main roles of the Agency. These are to identify operational requirements, to promote measures to satisfy those requirements, to contribute to identifying and, where appropriate, implementing any measure needed to strengthen the industrial and technological base of the defence sector, to participate in defining a European capabilities and armaments policy, and to assist the Council in evaluating the improvement of military capabilities. Its task is further spelt out in Article 28D(1) (Article 45(1) in new numbering).

20. Decisions in relation to these matters would, like other decisions relating to the common security and defence policy, be adopted unanimously by the Council except where it is specifically provided that QMV applies. In the context of the European Defence Agency, the Council only acts by QMV when adopting a decision defining its statute, seat and operational rules (see Article 28D(2) (Article 45(2) in the new numbering)). Although the Reform Treaty provides for the adoption of such a decision, the matters to do with the EDA’s statute, seat and operational rules were decided upon in the 2004 joint action. It is not anticipated that there will be any further need for decisions in this area.

18 February 2008

Further supplementary memorandum from the Ministry of Defence

1. This memorandum is provided by the Ministry of Defence as written evidence for the House of Commons Defence Committee Inquiry: The Future of NATO and European Defence. It seeks to answer questions asked by the Committee in the second section of its letter of 11 January (in italics in the text), which requested further information on points that arose during the Secretary of State’s evidence session on 8 January.

A note outlining what the UK would like on the agenda for the NATO Heads of Government Summit at Bucharest in April 2008 (Q 218)

2. The UK’s priorities for the Bucharest Summit are:
   — a reaffirmation of Allied solidarity and purpose in current operations;
   — giving NATO the tools to work more effectively as part of a Comprehensive Approach to security challenges and in operations;
   — agreement to press forward in modernising NATO structures and procedures to manage complex expeditionary operations and orchestrate the development of Allies’ capabilities;
   — an invitation to the countries currently engaged in the Membership Action Plan (MAP) to join the Alliance, if they are judged to have met the required standards following the completion of the MAP cycle next month; and
   — a commitment to deliver NATO’s most pressing military requirements for operations, notably trainers/mentors and helicopters (including through the UK-initiated NATO work to identify and overcome technical/logistical problems currently inhibiting deployment of some Allies’ helicopters).

A note outlining which countries are being considered for membership of the Alliance at the Bucharest Summit and the criteria by which countries aspiring to be granted a Membership Action Plan are assessed (Q 217)

3. Albania, Croatia and Macedonia are due decisions on their applications to join NATO at the Bucharest Summit.

4. The 1995 Study on NATO enlargement was carried out by the Alliance to consider the merits of admitting new members and how they should be brought in highlighting that countries seeking membership would have to be able to demonstrate that they had fulfilled certain requirements. The Intensified Dialogue process aimed to provide these countries with concrete information regarding the rights and obligations inherent to NATO membership. Once admitted, a new member country would enjoy all of these rights, and assume all of these obligations. According to the Study, any country seeking to join the Alliance must meet key requirements, which include:
   — functioning democratic political system based on a market economy;
   — treatment of minority populations in accordance with guidelines established by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe;
   — commitment to peaceful resolution of disputes with neighbours;
   — the ability and willingness to make a military contribution to the Alliance and to achieve interoperability with other members’ forces; and
— commitment to democratic civil-military relations and institutional structures.

5. The Membership Action Plan (MAP) gives substance to NATO’s commitment to keep its door open and is a programme of advice, assistance and practical support designed to help countries wishing to join the Alliance in their preparations for potential membership and in their drive to meet NATO standards. The main features are:

— the submission by aspiring members of individual annual national programmes on their preparations for possible future membership, covering political, economic, defence, resource, security and legal aspects;
— a focused and candid feedback mechanism on aspirant countries’ progress on their programmes that includes both political and technical advice;
— a clearing-house to help co-ordinate assistance by NATO and by member states to aspirant countries in the defence/military field; and
— a defence planning approach for aspirants which includes elaboration and review of agreed planning targets.

6. MAP is guided by the principle of self-differentiation: aspirant countries are free to choose the elements of the MAP best suited to their own national priorities and circumstances. All aspirants submit an Annual National Programme on preparations for possible membership, covering five Chapters: political and economic, defence/military, resource, security and legal. They set their own objectives, targets and work schedules. These programmes are expected to be updated each year by aspirant countries. Throughout the year, meetings and workshops with NATO civilian and military experts in various fields allow for discussion of the entire spectrum of issues relevant to membership. An annual consolidated progress report on activities under the MAP is presented to NATO Foreign and Defence ministers.

7. Aspirant countries are expected to achieve certain goals in the political and economic fields. These include settling any international, ethnic or external territorial disputes by peaceful means; demonstrating a commitment to the rule of law and human rights; establishing democratic control of their armed forces; and promoting stability and well-being through economic liberty, social justice and environmental responsibility. Defence and military issues focus on the ability of the country to contribute to collective defence and to the Alliance’s new missions. Full participation in Partnership for Peace (PfP) is an essential component. Through their individual PIP programmes, aspirants can focus on essential membership related issues.

8. Partnership Goals for aspirants include planning targets which are covering those areas which are most directly relevant for nations aspiring NATO membership. Resource issues focus on the need for any aspirant country to commit sufficient resources to defence to allow them to meet the commitments that future membership would bring in terms of collective NATO undertakings. Security issues centre on the need for aspirant countries to make sure that procedures are in place to ensure the security of sensitive information. Legal aspects address the need for aspirants to ensure that legal arrangements and agreements which govern co-operation within NATO are compatible with domestic legislation.

The UK’s attitude to those countries currently aspiring to NATO membership

9. Albania and Macedonia have been part of NATO’s Membership Action Plan (MAP) since 1999, Croatia have been part of NATO’s MAP since 2002. All three are looking for a positive invitation by Allies to join NATO as full members at the Bucharest Summit in April 2008. At the Riga Summit in 2006, Allies commended the progress made by the three countries, saying that they intended to extend invitations in 2008 to those that had met NATO standards. We will be waiting to see the results of their annual MAP assessments before making any commitment of support a membership application. The UK wants all three countries to join NATO when they are ready as part of a wider attempt to enhance regional security in the Balkans and promote democratic, economic and human rights reform. If all three countries meet the standards and continue with their reforms, thereby receiving positive NATO assessments in February, we would support their accession.

10. Albania: NATO enjoys a high level of public support in Albania and membership is a stated political goal. The Riga Summit declaration stated that it was critical that Albania made sustained progress against organised crime and corruption.

11. Croatia is in a strong position, and remains on course to meet the requirements for NATO membership, with public opinion now around the 50% mark in favour of joining NATO.

12. Allies will want to see sustained progress by Macedonia on reform up until the Summit. Discussions continue under UN negotiator Matthew Nimetz over the country’s constitutional name.

13. Ukraine and Georgia are taking part in an Intensified Dialogue on their aspirations for NATO membership.

143 This additional note was requested at a closed HCDC session with Mr Jon Day and Lt Gen Peter Well on Iraq and Afghanistan, held on 22 January 2008.
14. Ukraine: The Ukrainian Government has written to the NATO Secretary-General requesting “positive decisions” on a Membership Action Plan (MAP) by Bucharest. The UK continues to support Ukraine’s progression on the path towards eventual membership.

15. Georgia: President Saakashvili has made Georgia’s deepening relationship with NATO a top foreign policy priority. The UK continues to support Georgia’s long-term Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

A note outlining the Government’s assessment of the success and shortcomings of the last NATO Heads of Government Summit in Riga in November 2006 (Q 219)

16. A detailed assessment of the NATO Summit at Riga was provided by the Secretary of State for Defence in his statement to the House on 30 November 2006 (Official Report, 30 November 2006, columns 1239—1251).

A note outlining the progress achieved in improving Alliance burden-sharing arrangements for the ISAF mission in Afghanistan (including the removal or revision of national caveats and the level of troop commitments) since the beginning of that mission (Q220-226)

17. NATO and Non-NATO nations are contributing a great deal towards, and engaging in, the ISAF Military effort in Afghanistan. In addition to the UK, there are 39 nations in Afghanistan, including all the 26 NATO nations.

18. A number of countries have removed some or all of the caveats they began with. More importantly NATO is aware of any restrictions and COMISAF is fully aware of any remaining national caveats and can plan around them. There has been agreement from all nations to extend their operations in the case of a requirement to provide in-extremis support.

19. There has been a substantial increase in troop levels since NATO started operating in southern and eastern Afghanistan in 2006. A number of force increases and pledges to the ISAF mission have been made recently including agreement from the Czech Republic to deploy two Weapon Locating Radars to Kandahar airfield in April 2009. Turkey has pledged to provide two additional Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLT) to help train the Afghan National Army. Poland has recently announced they will increase their contribution by eight Helicopters, a mobile training team and additional support to the Regional Command (E) Provincial Reconstruction Team. Germany will provide additional training teams for the Afghan National Army. President Sarkozy of France announced an additional deployment of an OMLT team in southern Afghanistan and has increased their Close Air Support contribution. The USA is the single largest troop contributor and amongst their force increases is the recent announcement of a seven month deployment of approximately 3,000 marines predominantly to the south. In addition to these contributions some countries offer assistance despite not having forces deployed in Afghanistan; Iceland who has paid for some strategic airlift used by NATO allies, is one example.

20. A number of countries have also recently renewed their parliamentary mandates to deploy forces to Afghanistan these include The Netherlands, Germany, and Denmark.

21. We continue to urge other nations in bilateral meetings and international fora to keep Afghanistan at the forefront of discussions, and we will continue to work with our ISAF partners to ensure that national caveats are kept to a minimum.

A note outlining the UK’s priorities for the reform of NATO’s organisation; what it would expect an internal reform process to achieve (Q 246)

22. For the UK, the aim of reform is to enhance NATO’s ability to manage complex operations like that in Afghanistan; to drive the development of new capabilities; build a network of partnerships; and communicate what it is doing to the public and to the wider world.

23. We would expect a reform process to achieve a stronger focus in the North Atlantic Council on giving greater strategic direction; swifter decision-making; better management of common resources; more effective working within and between each element of the NATO HQ and command structure, including greater integration between military and civilian staffs, and a command structure that is more affordable and better meets the priorities identified in NATO’s Comprehensive Political Guidance; stronger relations with other international organisations, including the UN and EU and institutions such as the World Bank; and a fresh approach to new partners, engaging with Japan, Australia, New Zealand and others.
A note outlining in the ways in which the UK believes the European Defence Agency has “lacked structure and orientation”—as the Secretary of State suggested—what the Government is doing to improve the performance of the EDA, and what it believes the EDA’s key priorities should be (Q 335)

24. The lack of structure and orientation in the EDA is primarily a result of a lack of a clear understanding of collective priorities. The initial emphasis was on pursuing activity in all four areas of the Agency: armaments, industry and markets, capabilities and research and technology, but this was perhaps at the expense of a coherent process across the Agency.

25. This lack of structure and orientation is being resolved with the development of a number of key strategies and initiatives within the Agency. The EDA Capability Development Plan has been devised to make the EU Long Term Vision (an assessment of the challenges that the EU may face in 2030) more practical and usable by Member States for long term capability planning and by the Agency to prioritise its future work programme. The European Defence Technical and Industrial Base (EDTIB) Strategy aims to define the industrial base needed to support European defence. The European Defence Research and Technology (EDRT) Strategy aims to identify key technologies that need to be maintained and the mechanisms that could be used to ensure they are.

26. Without prejudicing the results of the work on the Capability Development Plan the UK believes that the first priority of the Agency should be to address interoperability. If EU Member States are to work alongside each other on operations then being able to operate together is essential. We believe that the second priority should be deployability, both tactical and strategic. Any Member State involved in operations should be able to get their forces and equipment to the theatre of operation, sustain them in place and manoeuvre around the theatre of operations.

A table providing details of the expenditure on defence of each member of the NATO Alliance over the past five years, expressed in real terms and as a percentage of GDP

27. UK Defence Statistics 2007 provides details of the defence spending of NATO Allies expressed both in national currencies at 2000 prices and exchange rates and as percentage of GDP, and can be found at:

A table providing details of the contribution of each member of NATO to the collective budgets of the Alliance, including the civil, military and NSIP budgets

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<td><strong>622.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>652.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>640.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>634.9</strong></td>
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Maps showing the current membership of the Alliance, Membership Action Plan countries, Partnership for Peace countries, and Intensified Dialogue countries

28. The “NATO Member and Partner Countries” map, available on the NATO website (http://www.nato.int/icons/map/0706memb-part-e.pdf), shows the 26 members of NATO and the 23 members of Partnership for Peace. Of the Partnership for Peace countries, three (Albania, Croatia and Macedonia) have Membership Action Plans and two (Georgia and Ukraine) have an Intensified Dialogue.

12 February 2008