

MAANPUOLUSTUSKORKEAKOULU STRATEGIAN LAITOS
JULKAISUSARJA 4: TYÖPAPEREITA No 33

NATIONAL DEFENCE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF STRATEGIC AND DEFENCE STUDIES
SERIES 4: WORKING PAPERS No 33

NATO – TOWARDS A NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT 2010

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Strategian laitos

HELSINKI 2009

Agilolf Kesselring: NATO – Towards a New Strategic Concept 2010.
Maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu, Strategian laitos
Julkaisusarja 4: työpapereita No 33
National Defence University, Department of Strategic and Defence Studies
Series 4: Working Papers No 33

Recent publications in pdf-format:
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Cover design: Janne Kopu

ISSN 1236-4983
Maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu – National Defence University
Strategian laitos – Department of Strategic and Defence Studies

Edita Prima Oy
Helsinki 2009

NATO – TOWARDS A NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT 2010

Agilolf Kesselring

The aim of this paper is to present and analyse the emerging decisions on the future strategy of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in a broader context. As NATO is the main provider of security in Europe, a change in its strategy is not just a matter for the alliance itself, but affects – at least – the whole continent of Europe. The procedure of developing the new Strategic Concept is still at an early stage. A strategy paper will be formulated by the time of the Portugal summit in spring 2010, where it should be adopted by the NATO member states. Its content cannot be anticipated, of course. The main focus of this brief study will be on NATO's current security debate and the implications of that debate for NATO's "New Strategic Concept 2010". It will approach the basic lines of the future strategy by highlighting the open questions, difficulties and opportunities that exist at present in the context of NATO's own strategic history.

After the crisis which started with the Prague summit in 2002, where the USA clashed with France and Germany over basic disagreements regarding George W. Bush's anti-terror strategy,¹ the recent 60th Anniversary summit at Strasbourg and Kehl gave a demonstration of orchestrated unity.² This "new unity" was underlined by symbolic acts, such as the fact that France and Germany co-hosted such an event for the first time in NATO's history, or the choice of Strasbourg for the event, with its symbolic value of a "European capital" and a focal point for German-French reconciliation.³ The reintegra-

tion of France into NATO's military structures had also been orchestrated as a rapprochement between the different positions adopted within the Alliance.⁴ The political agenda for the summit in Strasbourg and Kehl focused on "broader and more strategic issues that face the organization", these being "the strategy review undertaken by the new US Administration, relations with Russia, France's closer involvement in the Alliance and its impact on NATO-EU

¹ *Neue Feinde, neue Nato. Allianz am Wendepunkt: In Prag will US-Präsident Bush seinen Anti-Terror-Kurs durchsetzen*, Focus Nr. 47 (2002), 18.11.2002. [www.focus.de/politik/ausland/gipfeltreffen-neue-feinde-neue-nato_aid_206239.html / 22.4.2009]

² *Inszenierte Einigkeit am Nato-Gipfel*, Neue Züricher Zeitung, 6.4.2009. [www.nzz.ch/nachrichten/international/inszenierte_einigkeit_am_natogipfel_1.2337199.html / 6.4.2008]

³ Strasbourg is the official domicile of the European Parliament, the European Council and the European Court of Human Rights. Strasbourg official homepage.

[www.strasbourg.eu/international/europe_strasbourg/accueil?ItemID=587026657 / 13.5.09]. Both Chancellor Angela Merkel and President Nicolas Sarkozy emphasized this symbolism in their respective speeches and declarations at the summit. See *Government Statement by Chancellor Merkel on NATO Summit*, 26.3.2009. [www.usa.diplo.de/Vertretung/usa/en/_PR/P_Wash/2009/03/26_Merkel_NATO_sp.html / 13.5.2009].

⁴ *Sarkozy to end France's 40 years NATO feud*, The Guardian online, 11.3.2009. [www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/mar/11/france-sarkozy-nato / 13.5.2009]. *Cinco claves para entender la Alianza*, El País, 5.4.2009, p. 6. *President gains little amid NATO rifts*, International Herald Tribune, 6.4.2006, p. 3.

relations.”⁵ Furthermore, NATO has decided to initiate work on a New Strategic Concept to be ready to be signed at the NATO summit in Portugal in 2010. The paper called “Declaration on Alliance Security”, which may be understood as the basic blueprint for the process of developing this New Strategic Concept, calls on “the Secretary General to convene and lead a broad-based group of qualified experts, who in close consultation with all Allies will lay the ground for the Secretary General to develop a new Strategic Concept and submit proposals for its implementation for approval at [the] next summit.”⁶ Even so the document makes “only very general political statements, it sets the tone for the upcoming debate”.⁷

⁵ *Strasbourg, France / Kehl, Germany, 3-4 April 2009 Agenda outline.* [www.nato.int/docu/comm/2009/0904-summit/agenda.html / 2.4.2009]

⁶ *Declaration on Alliance Security, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Strasbourg / Kehl 4.4.2009, Press Release (2009) 043.* [www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_52838.htm?mode=pressrelease / 6.4.2009] The other declarations deal with more current issues: *Strasbourg / Kehl Summit Declaration, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Strasbourg / Kehl 4.4.2009, Press Release (2009) 044* [www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_52837.htm?mode=pressrelease / 6.4.2009]. *Summit Declaration on Afghanistan, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Strasbourg / Kehl 4.4.2009, Press Release (2009) 045* [www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_52836.htm?mode=pressrelease / 6.4.2009]

⁷ Karl-Heinz Kamp, *The Way to NATO's New Strategic Concept*, Research Paper No. 46, Research Division, NATO Defense College, Rome, June 2009, p. 2.

The setting: NATO ten years after the Alliance's Strategic Concept (1999)

It has often been stated that NATO needs a new Strategic Concept, because the security environment has changed since the currently valid Alliance's Strategic Concept was approved in 1999. It is therefore reasonable to begin by taking a closer look at the Strategic Concept of 1999 with respect to the often cited “changed world”.

About one year before the approval of the concept, NATO decided to work out military options for deployment against Yugoslavia. This followed Milošević's denial of international help in settling the Kosovo conflict by peaceful means and was in full accordance with NATO's emerging strategy, which could also be seen as an answer to the massacre of about 7000 Bosniaks by Serb troops in the West Bosnian town of Srebrenica in June 1995. At the time when the concept was being approved by the heads of state and government at NATO's 50th Anniversary meeting, NATO's air strikes in the context of Operation Allied Force had been already going on for one month. During the Kosovo campaign the Alliance's members proved their solidarity and the incontestable power of NATO as an international player. Although Russia was not willing in the UN Security Council to condone the threatening of Milošević with NATO airpower, the application of military force took place anyway. It was at this moment at the latest that the era of a bipolar world order came to an end.

The Alliance's Strategic Concept (1999) defines NATO as “an Alliance of nations committed to the Washington Treaty and the United Nations Char-

ter”⁸ with certain “fundamental security tasks”, namely “Security” (for the Euro-Atlantic security environment), “Consultation” (on any issues that affect its members’ vital interests, under NAT, Art. 4), “Deterrence and Defence” (against any threat of aggression against any NATO member state, under NAT, Art. 5), “Crisis Management” (by consensus, under NAT, Art. 7, and explicitly including crisis response operations) and “Partnership” in the Euro-Atlantic area. The document stresses the important role of developing a European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) within the Alliance as well as the importance of the United Nations (UN), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union (EU) and the Western European Union (WEU) as “central features of the security environment”.⁹

The strategy paper is based on a wide approach to security problems, “complex new risks to Euro-Atlantic peace”, including “oppression, ethnic conflict, economic distress, the collapse of political order, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction”. Under the chapter “Security challenges and risks”, the paper states that “Alliance security interests can be affected by other risks of a wider nature, including acts of terrorism, sabotage and organ-

ized crime, and by the disruption of the flow of vital resources”.¹⁰

At a conference in Budapest in March 2009, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer stated that the Alliance needed to define a new strategy to deal with the challenges it now faces, such as the mission in Afghanistan, the relationship with Russia and new threats as exemplified by cybercrime, energy security and piracy, which could only be contained by a “comprehensive approach” to the security challenges of our time.¹¹ The concept would need to “combine the Alliance’s core purpose of collective defence [...] with the many requirements of out-of-area operations”¹² All these issues can already be found implicitly or explicitly in the Alliance’s Strategic Concept (1999), in that the 1999 document refers in many ways to questions ranging from Afghanistan firms affected by terrorism to Russia and its problems (including the Ukraine) and stressing the partnership aspect. Similarly, cybercrime can be understood as a specific form of sabotage, energy security can be described as an aspect of the “flow of vital resources”, and piracy can be seen as one specific kind of “organized crime” or an effect of “the collapse of political order”, as in the case of Somalia. Piracy has also been identified as a threat at

⁸ *The Alliance’s Strategic Concept, Approved by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington D. C. on 23rd and 24th April 1999*, Press Release NAC-S(99)65 [www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-065e.htm / 7.4.2009]; following citations refer to the same source.

⁹ *The Alliance’s Strategic Concept, Approved by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington D. C. on 23rd and 24th April 1999*, Press Release NAC-S(99)65, nr. 13, 14 [www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-065e.htm / 7.4.2009].

¹⁰ *The Alliance’s Strategic Concept, Approved by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington D. C. on 23rd and 24th April 1999*, Press Release NAC-S(99)65, nr. 24 [www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-065e.htm / 7.4.2009].

¹¹ *NATO chiefs wants new strategy for the alliance*, PR-inside.com, 12.3.2009 [www.pr-inside.com/print1109572.htm / 2.4.2009].

¹² Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, *Speech at the Seminar on “NATO Challenges and Tasks Ahead” in Warsaw, Poland*, 13.3.2009 [www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_51770htm / 2.4.2009]

the Kehl / Strasbourg Summit; the North Atlantic Council is already preparing a political directive for NATO's long term role in counter piracy activities.¹³ Also, "the comprehensive approach", which is so fashionable nowadays and to which the German chancellor Angela Merkel pointed as a "revolution",¹⁴ can already be found in paragraph 60 of the 1999 paper. Article 5, of course, has been seen as lying at the core of the Treaty ever since 1949.

So why is a new Strategic Concept needed? The security environment has in fact changed since 1999. It is obvious, that the terrorist attacks on the USA on 9/11 fundamentally altered the US-American perception of existing threats.¹⁵ NATO seemed no longer to be confronted only by threats in the European theatre (the Balkans, the transition in the post-Soviet era), but suddenly the most seriously threatened area seemed to be the USA. This new threat could not be combated at national or alliance borders, as the violent radical Islamic ideology lying behind it turned out to be a global phenomenon. Even so, NATO decided quickly that NAT, Art 5, would have to be applied – in a different manner from that postulated in the valid Strategic Concept. NATO did not turn out to be "the essential transatlantic forum for Allied consultations on any issues that affect their vital interests".¹⁶ In other words, the decisions on

the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan – which were crucial for US security – were not made in Brussels but in Washington. As a consequence of this radical shift towards unilateralism, a growing NATO with new members accepted in 2004 fell more into the role of a contributor of troops or "cleaning up" organization for US missions. At the same time the enlargement policy in combination with US and NATO engagement in traditional Russian zones of interest, such as Afghanistan or the former Yugoslavia (e.g. the former Serbian province of Kosovo) could not be communicated as forms of partnership with Russia – but might have been said to be perceived as "encircling Russia".

Future historians could describe 2008 as a crisis year in relations between Russia and NATO. The problems with Russia escalated with the Ukrainian gas dispute and Russian policy in Georgia (which Russia had openly threatened to implement earlier in the case of a unilateral declaration of independence for Kosovo).¹⁷ NATO had given both Ukraine and Georgia a clear perspective on NATO membership and the Russian reactions can to a certain extent be interpreted as an answer to Western Kosovo policy or as a "veto" against further NATO enlargement into the "Russian sphere of interest".¹⁸ The unilateral

¹³ NATO International Military Staff, PAA Office, *News Release* 7.5.2009.

¹⁴ *Regierungserklärung, Kämpferische Merkel will Nato-Strategie ändern*, 26.3.2009, Zeit ONLINE [images.zeit.de/text/online/2009/14/merkel-nato / 2.4.2009].

¹⁵ *Die Nato – zu spektakulärem Wandel fähig. Nur teilweise verdaute folgen von Mauerfall und "Nine Eleven"*, Neue Züricher Zeitung, 4./5.4.2009, p. 7.

¹⁶ *The Alliance's Strategic Concept, Approved by the Heads of State and Government partici-*

pating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington D. C. on 23rd and 24th April 1999, Press Release NAC-S(99)65, nr. 10 [www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-065e.htm / 7.4.2009].

¹⁷ The Republic of Kosovo declared its independence unilaterally but with the approval of most NATO and EU states in February 2008.

¹⁸ For a deeper understanding of the Russian view towards NATO enlargement see: Alpo Juntunen, *Itään vai länteen? Venäjän vaihtoehdot*, Gummerus, Jyväskylä 2003, p. 62-78 and Alpo Juntunen, *Venäjän imperiumin paluu*, Maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu, Strategian Laitos, Helsinki 2009, p. 124-126.

declaration of independence for Kosovo was backed up by most of the NATO member states (but not by the organization itself due to the policies of Spain and Greece) and can be understood as a setback for Russia's position in South-eastern Europe. About the same time Russia started a more pro-active policy vis-à-vis the NATO members and former Soviet republics of Estonia (2007) and Lithuania (2008). Cyberconflicts following the same scheme as seen during the conventional armed conflict in Georgia could be witnessed as epiphenomena.¹⁹ On the other hand, the US and NATO policy in Afghanistan and Iraq – though forming an impressive show of American military power in 2002/3 – seemed to be based on weak political concepts and lacking in common acceptance within the NATO states.

Having said all this, it can be stated that the Alliance's Strategic Concept (1999) is not in itself outdated, but it simply has not been implemented any longer since the terrorist attacks of 9/11. NATO policy has not been stringent, and "the writing has been on the wall" regarding a division between "new" and "old" NATO members in Europe since 2002. It is not only the open disagreement with France and Germany over the war in Iraq that should be held responsible for the often-mentioned crises in NATO, for the ESDI in Europe has not developed into NATO's strong "second pillar" as was still expected – or at least envisaged – in 1999. Now the global economic crisis that began in 2008, which is seen as the biggest threat to security by the transatlantic

partner, the USA, has slightly altered the US threat perception once again.

All this leads us to the conclusion that the aim of the New Strategy paper for 2010 will largely be to reunite the USA and Europe in times perceived as "tough" in terms of a combination of economics, classic security and "new threats". The point will be to "rediscover" rather than "reinvent" NATO. Any sorrowfully conducted analysis is bound to come to the result that it is not NATO as an organization which needs a new direction, but the national policies of its member states, which can only start again to act convincingly like true allies if they "remember" their common transatlantic interests. Being perceived a "true Allies" by others is a basic precondition for any kind of deterrence. Therefore a "soft asset" such as consultations about issues concerning their vital interests, as agreed on in NAT, Art. 4, means much more than "just talking". But again, why does the Alliance need a new strategy paper in such a situation? A look into the past may perhaps help us to understand this issue.

"Déjà vu"? - Strategy papers and NATO's problems in the past

From its very first days onwards NATO has been struggling for common strategic concepts. The organization of NATO was already causing difficulties in 1951. One major disagreement, for example, arose between Great Britain and the USA out of the question of leadership of the Supreme Allied Command Atlantic (SACLANT), which led to the establishment of a separate British command, the Allied

¹⁹ *Cyber attacks Against Georgia. Legal Lessons Identified.* Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence (CCDCOE), NATO Unclassified, Version 1.0, Tallinn, November 2008, p. 44.

Command Channel, in 1953.²⁰ Also, after the second NATO enlargement with the incorporation of the Federal Republic of Germany, structures and strategic concepts had to be adjusted to the changed situation. In structural terms, it took six years, until 1961, with the establishment of Command Baltic Approaches (COMBALTAP), to solve the dilemma of the West-German Fleet being divided under two NATO commands. The strategic question of “forward defence” (*Vorneverteidigung*) led to distinctive views on how to counter the Soviet threat (on which all members were as such agreed).

The German view during the 1950s and 1960s was that defence should be implemented as far east as possible, to save as much German territory as possible and to add a more aggressive character to the Alliance’s strategic arsenal. Against that stood the Norwegian position, which could be explained as a strategy of de-escalation or “don’t wake the bear” – trying not to “provoke” the Soviet Union – on the grounds that in the case of war their own territory would be anyway be lost or destroyed.²¹

²⁰ Gregory W. Pedlow, Putting the »O« in NATO: The Organizational Development of the North Atlantic Alliance, 1949-1956, in: Hans-Joachim Harder (ed.), *Von Truman bis Harmel. Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland im Spannungsfeld von NATO und europäischer Integration*, Oldenbourg Verlag, München 2000, p. 153-168.

²¹ Helge Ø. Pharo, Knut Einar Eriksen, *Norwegen in der NATO 1950-1956*, in: Norbert Wiggershaus, Winfried Heinemann (eds.), *Nationale Außen- und Bündnispolitik der NATO-Mitgliedstaaten*, Oldenbourg, München 2000, p. 79-99. Bruno Thoß, *NATO-Strategie und nationale Verteidigungsplanung. Planung und Aufbau der Bundeswehr unter den Bedingungen einer massiven atomaren Vergeltungsstrategie 1952 bis 1960*, Oldenbourg, München 2006, p. 260.

The sources of this difference have proved to lie in different perceptions of Soviet policy: while the idea predominated in Norway that the Soviet Union would follow a realistic defensive policy after all, the perception in West Germany was that it would follow an ideologically determined expansionist policy. Both perceptions have been “true” in a regionally historical sense: for while the historical experience in Norway had been that the Red Army had left voluntarily after having marched into North Norway, the Soviet zone in Germany had been manned by enemy troops, leading to a *de facto* partition and the presence of a repressive Soviet communist satellite on German soil. One result of such different historical experiences is that different perceptions emerged, so that the Germans agreed to the stationing of nuclear weapons on German soil but Denmark and Norway adopted a restrictive policy on the same issue. Thus, although Denmark, Norway and (West) Germany shared similar threat perceptions on a more abstract level and had a common task in securing the northern flank of NATO, they could still adopt differing approaches towards such central defence issues as the deployment of nuclear weapons. History matters – or as Donald C. Watt had already made clear in 1988, today’s differing threat assessment can only be understood within the context of differing perceptions rooted in the history of the previous 20 to 100 years.²²

²² Donald C. Watt, *Bemerkungen mit dem Ziel einer Synthese*, in: Norbert Wiggershaus, Roland G. Foerster (eds.), *Die westliche Sicherheitsgemeinschaft 1948-1950. Gemeinsame Probleme und grundsätzliche Nationalinteressen in der Gründungsphase der Nordatlantischen Allianz*. Boppard a.Rh. 1988, [also available in English under the title: *The Western Security community 1948 – 1950. Common Problems and Conflicting National Interests*

The problems described above reflect disputes over troop dislocation or chain-of-command settings. Strategic documents have always been influenced by both inner difficulties *and* changing perceptions of external threats. The first major change in NATO's threat assessment can be said to have occurred during the mid 1950s, after the death of Stalin and with the emergence of the Soviet "new look" and "peaceful co-existence" policies under Khrushchev. In those days the perceived threat changed from the idea of a direct Soviet attack against NATO territory to that of a long-term arms race and global political "chess game" – referred to as "the long haul".²³

NATO's problem was to build up and maintain strong bodies of troops while at the same time trying to use this phase of a first *détente* to find a *modus vivendi* with the Eastern block, and to accomplish all this, if possible, while ensuring unity among its own lines just in case Khrushchev was only bluffing. And all this had to be done in a critical environment of freedom of speech and democracy, where – like today – the people had to be "taken along" to support their government's decisions. For NATO to be successful in this "long haul" phase, the Belgian Foreign Minister, Paul Henri Spaak, suggested that it should implement its NAT, Art. 2²⁴ and

During the Foundation Phase of the North Atlantic Alliance, Berg, Oxford 1993.], p. 346.

²³ NATO Archives, C-R(55)46, Policy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and the education of NATO public opinion.

²⁴ Art. 2, NAT, which was supposed to deal with economic and social cooperation, had been a matter of major dispute when deciding on the NAT in 1949. While Canada, France, Belgium and the Netherlands thought NATO should go beyond military matters, the US opinion was that economic and social cooperation would divert attention from the "straight

4, by giving itself the economic, social and propaganda tasks of adapting to the new trends in Soviet policy. The NAC decided to establish a commission of "three wise men": the foreign ministers of Canada, Norway and Italy. As the US was not in those days in favour of giving NATO political tasks in the fields of economics or development policy, the document produced by the "three wise men" dealt only with issues under Art. 4, and little of what they said about those could actually be implemented.²⁵ It is worthwhile mentioning, however, that NATO already had a "wide" understanding of security in the 1950s, including "soft power" assets such as economics, social issues (mainly to counter the internal communist threat) and development politics. On the other hand, NATO had not been required to deal with these "soft power" aspects – mainly due to US concerns over the probable transfer of sovereignty to a multinational organization. There is also another interesting point: in 1956 NATO referred to the commission charged with "advising the Council on ways and means to extend cooperation in non-military fields and to strengthen unity in the Atlantic Community"²⁶ as a "council of wise men",

defence arrangements". *Secretary of State for External Affairs to Ambassador in France, in Belgium and in the Netherlands*, Documents on Canadian External Relations, vol. 15, 1949, Chapter IV, p. 52, in: NATO DECLASSIFIED 1949-1959, NATO Public Diplomacy Division, CD-ROM, NATO, Brussels 2009.

²⁵ Winfried Heinemann, *Vom Zusammenwachsen des Bündnisses. Die Funktionsweise der NATO in ausgewählten Krisenfällen 1951 bis 1956*, Oldenbourg, München 1998, p. 244-260. See also: Joseph P Sinasac, *The Three Wise Men. The Effects of the 1956 Committee of Three on NATO*, MA Thesis, University of Waterloo, 1989.

²⁶ Lawrence S. Kaplan, *Report of the "Three Wise Men": 50 years on*, NATO Review,

and similarly in 2009, the wish was expressed, especially by the Germans, to entrust the task of developing the strategy paper to “wise men” instead of only to NATO staff.²⁷ Where the issue of excluding the smaller allies from decision-making processes brought suggestions for consultations on foreign policy and cooperation in the fields of economics, culture and information in the 1950s,²⁸ the question nowadays is rather one of whether NATO should also deal with issues such as energy or climate change (as suggested by the US but disapproved of by France and Germany), or whether the future role of NATO should be one of dealing with European security problems or also with those of the Pacific region (the latter being advocated by the USA, Canada and Poland).²⁹ The question of whether NATO would be limited to “regional defence planning” (as advocated then by the USA and the United Kingdom) or whether it should provide “a medium for the planning of global strategy” (as advocated by France) was already being discussed in 1949.³⁰ As in the 1950s, it is thought that passing on the task to “wise men” might provide a chance to enable thinking to

come “out of the box” and probably also to bypass the institutionalized superiority of the USA in NATO and thereby to be able to place stronger emphasis on the security needs of the Central European powers.

The main difference between a paper written inside an institutional process and one written by “wise man” is that the inevitable controversies have a higher degree of transparency before the paper is endorsed than is the case within a bureaucracy, where it is easy to decide upon certain concepts before they have even been discussed.

It was the Suez Crisis in 1956 which led to a major rupture in the Alliance, as British and French security interests concerning their colonial heritage were fundamentally opposed to the traditionally anti-colonialist US policy. One year later a new strategy paper had been decided on, introducing a conventional accent into the absolute strategy of massive retaliation: the nuclear-determined sword-and-shield doctrine also known as MC 14/2. The nuclear “sword”, the US Strategic Air Capability, was to be covered by a European territorial (nuclear and conventional) “shield”. This new doctrine not only formed a transatlantic compromise but it also led to a concentration on unifying issues and common interests in NATO. Despite MC 14/2, however, a deep mistrust grew up in Europe as to whether the USA would really defend the Europeans against a Soviet threat of a total nuclear attack. In the end the solution proved to be a fairly practical one: the United States responded to the growing European mistrust by integrat-

Spring 2006. [www.nato.int/docu/review/2006/issue1/english/history.html / 13.5.2009]

²⁷ *Nato beschließt Ausbildungsmission in Afghanistan*, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 6.4.2009, p. 3.

²⁸ *Text of the Report of the Committee of Three on Non-Military Cooperation in NATO*. [www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b561213a.htm]

²⁹ *Nato in der Sinnkrise*, Handelsblatt, 3.4.2009. [www.handelsblatt.com/politik/international/nato-in-der-sinnkrise;2223552;2 / 13.5.2009]

³⁰ *Memorandum from Secretary of Chiefs of Staff Committee to Secretary to the Cabinet*, Documents on Canadian External Relations, vol. 15, 1949, Chapter IV, p. 633, in: NATO DECLASSIFIED 1949-1959, NATO Public Diplomacy Division, CD-ROM, NATO, Brussels 2009.

ing its European nuclear basis into the Alliance's structures.³¹

As today, strategy papers alone were unable to bring unity; only their practical implementation could do this. In practical terms, the main guarantee against deeper ruptures in the Alliance has consisted of the General Defence Plan, welding the NATO troops and thereby also the NATO member states, into one and the same Central European theatre, sharing the same dangers and in that way building up mentally a common defence identity.

Rediscovery: NATO's common values

US President Barack Obama referred in his first letter to the Secretary General of NATO, in which he called for a renewal of the Alliance, to the common values and aims of the NATO members: "Our nations share more than a commitment to our common security – we share a set of common values. [...] The lesson of the 21st century is that the security of our nations and our people is shared."³² What are the values which make NATO more than "just another defence alliance"? Basically they can be seen as "Western values". Following the preamble of the North Atlantic Treaty, NATO members "are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the

rule of law."³³ NATO's aim is defined as "to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area."³⁴ At the meeting of the North Atlantic Council (NAC) in May 2009, NATO's heads of state and government endorsed a "Declaration on Alliance Security", reaffirming the "values and objectives and obligations of the Washington Treaty which unite Europe with the United States and Canada".³⁵ Furthermore, NATO is stated to be "the essential transatlantic forum for security consultations among Allies" and NATO's enlargement is called "a historic success in bringing us closer to our vision of a Europe whole and free".³⁶ This leads the analysis of the new NATO paper in two similar directions: by stressing the core NATO values "individual liberty, democracy and rule of law", NATO is backing up the "new look" of US policy concerning the "war against terror", especially the release of the Guantánamo Bay prisoners. This can already be seen as a – more than symbolic – move towards a common policy under Art. 4. Such an approach, by emphasizing "the essential transatlantic forum", points towards the Alliance's Strategic Concept (1999) and its references to Art. 4.

US Vice-President Joseph R. Biden made the point at his Munich speech in February this year that the new US government would not believe in a

³¹ Agilolf Kesselring, *60 Jahre NATO. Wechselnde Bedrohungen- neue Strategien*, Militärgeschichte (1/2009), p. 4-7.

³² Barack Obama, *Letter to the Secretary General of NATO and the Members of the North Atlantic Council* 20.1.2009. *World Security Network* [www.worldsecuritynetwork.com/printArticle3.cfm?article_id=17075 / 2.4.2009]

³³ *The North Atlantic Treaty* 4.4.1949 [www.nato.int/docu/basic/txt/treaty.htm / 7.4.2009].

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ *Declaration on Alliance Security, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Strasbourg / Kehl* 4.4.2009, Press Release (2009) 043 [www.nato.int/cps/en/nato-live/news_52838.htm?mode=pressrelease / 6.4.2009]

³⁶ Ibid.

“clash of civilizations”,³⁷ but would fight a battle against “extremism”. For this fight a European partner would be needed.³⁸ The British Foreign Minister David Miliband also emphasized that Europe and the USA share the convictions that only “freedom, equality and justice” could form a basis for “peace and welfare”,³⁹ while the French President Nicolas Sarkozy emphasized on the same occasion that “freedom” was a value “for all”⁴⁰ and the German chancellor Angela Merkel spoke of “freedom and democracy”.⁴¹ As in the 1950s, NATO has to be “sold” to the citizens of its member states within the “long haul” for preserving the Western “way of life”. This is also why emphasis is placed on common values, while another reason is that the USA under Obama presents itself as having regained its values and is now consequently also intent on regaining its allies, which are perceived as having been something like the “conscience of the USA.” Pure power alone does not bring sympathies – but power applied for “good” might do better.

NATO, as the Western Alliance, is not defined as Western only by geography, but is also Western “in the mind”. If we can set this “cultural paradigm” on one side, we can stress the point that NATO’s approach is not determined (negatively) by any kind of enemy, but (positively) by its own values. This is a

defensive approach to security, but it is not limited to territorial issues. On the other hand, as far as freedom, democracy and justice are concerned, advocating Western values also defines the “threat”: Generally speaking, all those who are against these values are potentially dangerous. With Albania joining NATO as the second state with a high percentage of Muslims in its population after Turkey, this can be interpreted as a clear policy of offering partnership towards the *moderate* Islamic (but not extreme Islamist) world. Turkey and Albania can both be regarded as countries with pro-American elites and strong political traditions of doctrines based on the originally Western idea of laicism. In Turkey the Kemalist doctrine of laicism is backed up by the military in an overall Muslim environment, while in Albania, which has been an officially atheistic country for years, the traditional Bektashi kind of Islam with its tolerance for catholic Christian beliefs (which are also present in the country)⁴² can serve as a “Western style” alternative to political Islamism. Since the Balkan Wars of the 1990s, radical forms of Sunni Islam such as Wahhabism have been gaining weight in European countries such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and the former Yugoslavian republic of Macedonia, which are traditionally known for their tolerant forms of Islam.⁴³

³⁷ Referring to Samuel P. Huntington’s idea of five competing cultural paradigms, which was adopted by the Republican government of George W. Bush.

³⁸ Joseph R. Biden, 7.2.2009, *Europäische Sicherheit* (3/2009), p. 30-33.

³⁹ David Miliband, 7.2.2009, *Europäische Sicherheit* (3/2009), p. 34-35.

⁴⁰ Nicolas Sarkozy, 7.2.2009, *Europäische Sicherheit* (3/2009), p. 26-29.

⁴¹ Angela Merkel, 7.2.2009, *Europäische Sicherheit* (3/2009), p. 23-25.

⁴² Miranda Vickers, *Islam in Albania*, Advanced Research and Assessment Group, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, March 2008, p. 11-12. Nuray Bozbora, *Die Rolle der Religionsgemeinschaften unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Islams*, in: Bernhard Chiari, Agilolf Kesselring, *Wegweiser zur Geschichte Kosovo*, Schöningh, Paderborn (3rd ed.) 2008, p. 201-213.

⁴³ Armina Omerika, *Der Islam – zur Bedeutung der Religionsgemeinschaften*, in: Agilolf Kesselring, *Wegweiser zur Geschichte Bos-*

NATO is emphasizing that it does not intend to act randomly nor to be just a “club of the wealthy and powerful”, but wishes to be a promoter of the Western model – globally. From an American perspective, the Republican “clash of civilizations” paradigm had been replaced by a Democrat “clash of values” paradigm. This is a policy on which all NATO members seem to agree, as shown by the effort to oppose the new, allegedly discriminatory law on women’s rights in Afghanistan, a media-relevant by-product of the NATO summit in May 2009.⁴⁴ Such a policy is likely to be interpreted as “Western imperialism” by those who do not agree with NATO’s common values, but this seems to have already been taken into account. It should be noted that, on the level of common values, the basic outlines of a future strategy will match completely with the paper “Towards a Grand Strategy for an Uncertain World” launched in 2007 by five high-ranked retired NATO generals, alluding to “the attraction of a free society” as “the most powerful weapon in their inventory”.⁴⁵ Like the title of the paper, this accords well with the idea of a new “long haul”. In the USA the term “Long War” is a second name used for what was previously called the “Global War on Terror”.⁴⁶ As in the immediate post-

nien-Herzegowina, Schöningh, Paderborn (2rd ed.) 2007, p. 129-135. Kenneth Morrison, *Wahhabism in the Balkans*, Advanced Research and Assessment Group, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, February 2008, p. 11-12.

⁴⁴ *Karzai orders review of new law on women*, International Herald Tribune, 6.4.2006, p. 8.

⁴⁵ Henk Van den Breemen, Peter Inge, Jacques Lanxade, Klaus Naumann, John M. Shalikashvili, *Towards a Grand Strategy for an Uncertain World. Renewing Transatlantic Partnership*, Noaber Foundation 2007, p. 102.

⁴⁶ Scott Wilson, Al Kamen, ‘*Global War on Terror*’ is Given New Name, The Washington Post, 25.3.2009 [www.washingtonpost.com/

Stalinist times, NATO is emphasizing its core values. Such a concept provides the benefits of serving both as cohesion force within the alliance and as a “positive” approach in the long-term information war being waged against global radical Islamism.

NATO’s common aims

The common aims of NATO are defined as stability and security for the Euro-Atlantic region. They are twofold: security *in* and security *for* Europe and North America.⁴⁷ Security *in* Europe and North America refers to a regionally defined NATO, which will be defended against any threat to its “territorial integrity” and “state sovereignty” (Art. 5, NAT). This NATO has the potential to be enlarged in Europe and under certain conditions enlargement may be part of its overall long-term strategy. This is what could be seen as the “traditional NATO”, strictly defensive, forming a collective security system on the inside and a defence alliance against the outside and interlinked with a collective security system of “partners”. Relations with Russia are crucial in this context. Security *for* Europe and North America is the “new” NATO after the Cold War. This NATO is a global player but limited by its defined values. Promoting common values means accepting the “new” task of NATO, but not forgetting the “old” one. All relevant speeches and all recent documents lay emphasis on Art. 5. This defence function is – as is common agreed among all members – to be seen as lying at the heart of NATO it-

wpdyn/content/article/2009/03/24/AR2009032402818.html / 5.4.2009]

⁴⁷ *Cinco claves para entender la Alianza*, El País, 5.4.2009, p. 6.

self. “Collective Defence is, after all, the bedrock of the Alliance.”⁴⁸

To sum up so far, NATO is likely to continue to have the same four main tasks in the Alliance’s Strategic Concept (2010): *Security* (for the Euro-Atlantic security environment), *Consultation* (on any issues that affect members’ vital interests, under Art. 4 (NAT)), *Deterrence and Defence* (against any threat of aggression against any member state, under Art. 5 (NAT)), and *Crisis Management* (under Art. 7 (NAT), to promote NATO’s values of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law). In the above-mentioned paper by the “wise men”, “Towards a Grand Strategy for an Uncertain World”, which adopted a wide approach covering political, economic and social aspects of security, the “four phases of strategy implementation” read as follows: *preventive protection, pro-active crisis management, enforcement by military intervention and post-intervention stabilization*.⁴⁹ Although this may sound more aggressive than the formulations in the Alliance’s Strategic Concept (1999), it means basically the same thing. This is even more the case if we bear in mind that the Strategic Concept had been adopted by the time the military intervention actually happened in Kosovo, so that it is subsumed under “crisis management” in the paper.

⁴⁸ Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, *Launching NATO’s New Strategic Concept*, Introductory remarks by NATO Secretary General at the opening of the strategic concept seminar 7.7.2009 [www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_56513.htm / 21.7.2009]

⁴⁹ Henk Van den Breemen, Peter Inge, Jacques Lanxade, Klaus Naumann, John M. Shalikashvili, *Towards a Grand Strategy for an Uncertain World. Renewing Transatlantic Partnership*, Noaber Foundation 2007, p. 101-110.

What could be new in the Alliance’s Strategic Concept (2010) as seen from the perspective of values and aims? If we compare it with the Alliance’s Strategic Concept (1999), probably not much is going to sound different. The main point might be the *political function* of reunifying the Alliance to face a changing threat perception. Furthermore a stronger accent might be seen on pro-active crisis management, and the – already exercised – practice of military intervention as *ultima ratio* might be formulated more clearly. But the United States not only has a new president, but probably also a new threat perception. As it seems now, the Alliance is going to prepare itself for the new threats of the coming years (and not for what were called “the new threats” ten years ago). What are those threats thought to be?

Perceived threats and challenges

On February 12th 2009, the US Director of National Intelligence, Dennis C. Blair, presented the “Annual Threat Assessment of the Intelligence Community”.⁵⁰ A brief analysis of the threats as described in that paper may help us to understand the USA’s new threat perception and will therefore help us to plunge deeper into the issue of NATO’s future strategy. Two points have to be kept in mind: the U.S. threat assessment may be slightly different from NATO’s view – as was the case in Prague 2002 or during the 1960s, due to the differences in geo-strategic contexts and historical developments in America and Europe. Threat assessment is a permanent process and the priorities

⁵⁰ Dennis C. Blair, *Annual Threat Assessment of the Intelligence Community for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence*, 12.2.2009 [www.dni.gov/testimonies/20090212_testimony.pdf / 20.4.2009]

among the different threats might still be discussed and re-evaluated slightly among the Allies in the time elapsing until the envisaged presentation of the new Strategic Concept (2010). Anyway the US view is likely to be the dominant one in NATO.

The recently published paper on threat assessment gives a – probably unconventional – new view of the primary security threat: the “global economic crisis”.⁵¹ This shows a wide understanding of security, including economic, social and developmental issues. The paper goes on to highlight the “geopolitical implications” of this crisis, listing the various threats. Above all “violent extremism”, meaning global “extremist Muslim groups” is seen as the main threat. Particular mention is made of terrorist organizations such as al-Qa’ida, al-Qa’ida in the Lands of Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) or Jemaah Islamiya (JI) all over the world, including key regions such as Afghanistan / Pakistan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and North and East Africa, but also Europe.⁵² In a regional sense, the security threats are attributed to the “Arc of Instability” (ranging from the Middle East over the Levant and Iraq to Afghanistan and Pakistan),⁵³ the rising nations of Asia (above all China and its commitment in Africa, Taiwan, India and North Korea),⁵⁴ Russia and Eurasia (particularly Russian politics concerning Eurasia, the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Balkans),⁵⁵ South America and Africa (emphasizing the Chinese grip, drug trafficking, Islamic fundamentalism and

the overstretch of the African Union)⁵⁶. A special chapter deals with “Cyber-crime and Organized Crime”.⁵⁷ Blair’s threat assessment concludes with the statement that “no dominant adversary faces the United States and threatens our existence with military force, but the global financial crisis has exacerbated what was already a growing set of political and economic uncertainties”.⁵⁸

The security threat perceived by the USA can be summed up under the headings of world disorder and extremism. These dangers are thought to be global and interlinked, but can be attributed to certain areas. It is worthwhile to emphasize that it is not certain areas or states that are seen as a threat but what is happening there. It is significant, though, that even though Islamic terrorism (in the worst case linked with proliferation of weapons of mass destruction) is still on the top of the list of concrete threats and other “new” threats such as a cyberwar, piracy or organized crime are highlighted, substantial support can be found for what at first sight could be thought to be “old threats” – mainly in the context of China and Russia. Not only does each of these political players (named by region) have a chapter of its own dedicated to it, but they are also mentioned throughout the paper (China 47 times and Russia 34 times) and in all cases in a less than flattering context. But even here careful reading shows that China and Russia are not mentioned as threats on their own – as used to be the case in Cold War times – but rather as factors of disorder, impeding the settlement of important problems (e.g. in Iran, North Korea and Palestine) and countering US policy on points of

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 2, “The primary near-term security concern of the United States is the global economic crisis and its geopolitical implications”.

⁵² Ibid. p. 3-8.

⁵³ Ibid. 9-21.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 21-26.

⁵⁵ Ibid. p. 26-28.

⁵⁶ Ibid. 34-38.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 38-44.

⁵⁸ Ibid. p. 44.

principle and thereby worsening the problems already catalysed by the economic crisis. In the field of cybercrime, Russia and China are seen as potential “cyberaggressors” alongside al-Qaida.⁵⁹

It could be said, that in the eyes of the US Intelligence Community, China and Russia are thought to be part of the “new” threats due to their Cold War-style behaviour, instead of helping to fight the “real threat” of violent Islamic radicalism. In other words, they have in a sense chosen an anti-American stance.

What does such a threat assessment tell us about the future NATO strategy? It seems that – if this threat assessment is more or less adopted by NATO – the Alliance’s threat perception will bear some *structural* similarities to those of the mid-1950s. Even so, *the origin of the threat itself* will genuinely be seen differently.

The most striking similarity will be that – as after the death of Stalin – a major attack on NATO territory will not be regarded as likely in the near future. But a major threat to Western values will be perceived *in the longer run*. This threat – as in the 1950s – will not only need to be countered on the military front but will also come from “inside”. The badly integrated 15-20 million Muslims in Western Europe⁶⁰ are

⁵⁹ Ibid. 39, “We assess that a number of nations, including Russia and China have the technical capabilities to target and disrupt elements of the US information infrastructure and for intelligence collection”. As examples the paper mentions explicitly the Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks on Georgia (2008) and Estonia (2007).

⁶⁰ Ibid. 5, “The social, political, and economic integration of Western Europe’s 15 to 20 million

thought likely to serve as a “fifth column” of radical Islamism, like the “fellow travellers” during the Cold War.

The Western world seems to be in a “long haul” situation with regard to the question of whether NATO’s values, democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law, will win out over the ideas of radical Islam. This question will be of special interest for European countries such as Great Britain, France and Germany, which already have a Muslim population of their own. NATO can only fight such threats by continuing its engagement “out of area”, but only a comprehensive approach, including political and economic stabilization, will be appropriate to the “long haul” scenario. It is also likely that the USA will wish Europe to “take care” of the African problems, as they will pose a challenge for European security first. The Declaration on Alliance Security mentions explicitly “cooperation with [...] the African Union, in order to improve our ability to deliver a comprehensive approach to meeting these new challenges, combining civilian and military capabilities more effectively.”⁶¹ On the other hand, the difficulties with Russia and the emerging threats to stability posed by Russian politics that run counter to NATO aims will make it necessary to find a new partnership between NATO and Russia.

It should be mentioned that the preconditions for a substantial NATO-Russia

Muslims is progressing slowly, creating opportunities for extremist propagandists and recruiters.”

⁶¹ *Declaration on Alliance Security, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Strasbourg / Kehl* 4.4.2009, Press Release (2009) 043 [www.nato.int/cps/en/nato-live/news_52838.htm?mode=pressrelease / 6.4.2009].

partnership are different from those that existed in 1999, as “Russian challenges [...] now spring more from Moscow’s perceived strengths than from the state weaknesses characteristic of the 1990s”⁶²

NATO will definitely not wish to open “a new front” vis-à-vis Russia, if only because the Alliance is already more than occupied with fighting violent Islamic terrorism at the same time as being faced with a drastic economic crisis. This will continue to be NATO’s main task, to be accomplished with a “sword” of light troops embedded in a “comprehensive approach” and covered by a “shield” of a community of values within the NATO area. The “sword” will be intended to be used only for short periods of time and to be replaced as soon as possible by various forms of post-intervention stabilization, while the shield will be secured with a “mix” of military assets (nuclear forces, missile defence and “territorially based” conventional forces) and political partnership with Russia. The European NATO partners will play an important role in building this partly contradictory “shield”.

Since partnership can only be based on common interests, unity and strength within NATO, the highly symbolic “show of unity” in Strasbourg and Kehl might already be seen as an (information warfare) part of the new strategy for a “long haul”.⁶³

⁶² Dennis C. Blair, *Annual Threat Assessment of the Intelligence Community for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence*, 12.2.2009 [www.dni.gov/testimonies/20090212_testimony.pdf / 20.4.2009]

⁶³ As de Hoop Scheffer puts it: “We will have to provide a clear vision for what NATO is for; and get that public support by involving public opinion in our Strategic Concept exercise. [...] the medium is the message.” Jaap de Hoop

The new focus on cyberwarfare is also likely to be formulated in NATO’s next strategy paper – a clear signal to the NATO members with the most traditional (Russian-based) threat perceptions, Estonia and Lithuania. The strength of NATO in the 1950s and 1960s lay in a common understanding of the threats not only based on same values, but also focusing on common interests. Another important capability continues to be the ability to formulate compromises among different opinions. In the words of the NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, NATO’s future will be determined by three key factors: evolution of the global security environment, a sense of common purpose among the Allies (threats and responses) and both sufficient political influence and the accompanying military means (referring to the political and military power of NATO as an institution).⁶⁴

NATO’s limits

One important question remains unanswered in this context: what are the geographical limits of NATO? It is crucial to understand that this is a problem imposed by the Alliance’s strength rather than by its weakness. The limits of enlargement are set by the geographical limits of Europe, by the values espoused by NATO and – probably – by Russia. The “Declaration on Alliance Security” states that NATO enlargement has been a success and that

Scheffer, *Launching NATO’s New Strategic Concept*, Introductory remarks by NATO Secretary General at the opening of the strategic concept seminar 7.7.2009 [www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_56513.htm / 21.7.2009]

⁶⁴ Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, *Speech at the GMF Brussels Forum “The Future of NATO” in Brussels, Belgium 22.3.2009*. [www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_52005.htm / 2.4.2009].

further enlargement is envisaged: “NATO’s door will remain open to all European democracies which share the values of our Alliance, which are willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership, and whose inclusion can contribute to common security and stability”.⁶⁵ This adds a further condition for the acceptance of potential NATO member states. New members don’t merely have to be European, democratic and able to do their share, but they should also add stability to the Alliance. The condition of having to be “European” already makes it clear that plans for replacing the European-centred NATO with a Pacific-centred United States by including Japan and other pro-US states is not likely to happen. At least in the near future, the main “link” between Atlantic and Pacific interests is going to remain the USA itself.

Strengthening the European side has been on the agenda ever since NATO was founded. European weakness stood out from the beginning, and European security was the main political task throughout the Cold War era. It is interesting to note that while NATO is perceived in Europe as “something American”, it is traditionally thought of in North America as the “security tool” for Europe. It often seems that from a US perspective “Europe” means the European NATO countries, just as, “Europe” is understood in a political sense within the continent itself as meaning the European Union. Defining

⁶⁵ *Declaration on Alliance Security, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Strasbourg / Kehl* 4.4.2009, Press Release (2009) 043 [www.nato.int/cps/en/nato-live/news_52838.htm?mode=pressrelease / 6.4.2009].

“Europe” and its limits is also an issue that is being heavily disputed in the EU.

This brings us back to the question of values, which is also highly applicable to the theme of EU enlargement. The growing geopolitical role of Turkey has been stressed in the context of the NATO summit in Strasbourg and Kehl,⁶⁶ and President Obama has made it clear that the USA would wish to see Turkey as an EU member state, which actually clashes with German and French opinions on this issue.⁶⁷ The American understanding of the congruence of the EU with the European part of NATO corresponds to the idea of a NATO ranging “from Alaska to Finland” as a community of values and democracies visualized in the long run in the (non-NATO) document “Towards a Grand Strategy for an Uncertain World”.⁶⁸ As those major questions are not likely to be agreed on before 2010, they will most probably not be reflected in the next strategic paper, but they will still form important issues in the background, as EU enlargement and NATO enlargement are *de facto* inter-linked procedures. In the short term only Macedonia is likely to become a new NATO member as soon as the name dispute with Greece can be solved. Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo,

⁶⁶ *U.S., Turkey: Washington’s Growing Confidence in Ankara*, STRATFOR, 24.4.2009 [www.stratfor.com/memberships/136663/analysis/20090424_u_s_turkey_washingtons_growing_confidence_ankara / 24.4.2009]

⁶⁷ *Europäische Union. Barack Obama will Beitritt der Türkei forcieren*, Welt online, 6.4.2009 [www.welt.de/politik/article3511992/Barack-Obama-will-Beitritt-der-Türkei-forcieren.html / 6.4.2009].

⁶⁸ Henk Van den Breemen, Peter Inge, Jacques Lanxade, Klaus Naumann, John M. Shalikashvili, *Towards a Grand Strategy for an Uncertain World. Renewing Transatlantic Partnership*, Noaber Foundation 2007, p. 116, 132.

Montenegro and – if it wishes – Serbia seem to welcome as NATO candidates in a medium-term time frame.

NATO, quo vadis?

Although the emphasis in NATO's Strategic Concept (2010) is likely to lie on the "soft powers" (referring to Art. 2 and 4 (NAT)) and on the comprehensive approach rather than on the "hard" issues of Article 5 (NAT), it is most probable that Art. 5 will remain at the heart of NATO. Cooperation with the UN, OSCE, EU and – a new aspect – the African Union will be stressed. The development of concrete partnership issues with Russia will be envisaged, but it is not likely that NATO would be willing or obliged to give up any central position such as its "open door policy". In practice it might be that membership for Georgia will be postponed on account of the "stability paradigm", while membership for the Ukraine seems to be more likely, but most probably in the longer run. In territorial terms, Eurasia and the Caucasus will remain of high geopolitical relevance for NATO, while Africa is likely to grow in importance. NATO is clearly planning to expand into the Balkans, and more attention is likely to be paid to the southern than the northern flank.

A stable NATO area will serve as an economic, social and military "shield" for the "swords" of pro-active crisis management (including, if necessary, peace enforcement by military intervention) and regional post-intervention stabilization. The current situation will be perceived *structurally* as a "long haul", as in the late 1950s, while on the operative level the fight against al-Qa'ida and other terrorist groups will continue to be the principal task, although it looks as if troops might be pulled out

quickly if regimes compatible with Western aims and values could be established. NATO will probably coordinate civil and military efforts and serve as a platform for common state building efforts in the context of stabilization.

The key to the effectiveness of the "new strategy" will lie in Europe and the European contribution to the common efforts. For the USA, it seems to be of little relevance whether of the European nation states make their contributions under a NATO membership, Partnership-for-Peace or EU label – as long as they do make them and bring some relief to the US efforts. The more robust economic strength of the "old" European NATO-members will probably mean that their weight will grow within the context of the global economic crises by comparison with the "new" European countries (e.g. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania or Poland), whose bilaterally US-centred political agendas based on troop contributions could face greater problems.

From a current perspective NATO's Strategic Concept (2010) might look a lot like the Strategic Concept (1999), but anyway it will offer good possibilities for overcoming the crisis of unity that NATO has been facing since 2002. The reintegration of France into the military structures of NATO might be a symbolic step, and this may also be the case with most of the steps which the Obama administration has taken towards NATO. Anyway, it does seem that the United States of America is willing to renew its strategic partnership with Europe, and that NATO is the best instrument available for such a purpose. In this context it should be mentioned that after the summit of Kehl and Strasbourg the general perception among analysts has been oscillating

between the poles of American⁶⁹ and European weakness.⁷⁰ Both observations might be true in a globalizing world, but only if the two aspects of the Alliance on their respective sides of the Atlantic Ocean are regarded separately. Once this relative weakness is recognized, it could show the way for a balance of naturally diverging interests within NATO.

⁶⁹ *Abdankung der USA als Führungsmacht?* Strategische Studien, 15.4.2009
[[www.strategische-studien.com/index.php?id=64&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=89&tx_ttnews\[year\]=2009&tx_ttnews\[month\]=04&tx_ttnews\[day\]=15&cHash=54221207c6](http://www.strategische-studien.com/index.php?id=64&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=89&tx_ttnews[year]=2009&tx_ttnews[month]=04&tx_ttnews[day]=15&cHash=54221207c6) / 24.4.2009].

⁷⁰ *U.S., Turkey: Washington's Growing Confidence in Ankara*, STRATFOR, 24.4.2009
[www.stratfor.com/memberships/136663/analysis/20090424_u_s_turkey_washingtons_growing_confidence_ankara / 24.4.2009].

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