ATLANTIC STUDIES

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The future of nato and the role of italy

Elements of reflections

ITALIAN ATLANTIC COMMITTEE

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THE FUTURE OF NATO AND THE ROLE OF ITALY

Elements of Reflections

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ITALIAN ATLANTIC COMMITTEE

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PREFACE

The war *against* Ukraine has caused a tectonic shift in the security scenario, giving rise to new geopolitical configurations and the emergence of "systemic rivals" that challenge the values and rules that constitute the connective tissue of free democratic Western societies.

The threat from the Russian Federation and the global challenge posed by China require a strategic vision and a cohesive and forward-looking action from a renewed West.

The Euro-Atlantic community has found itself united with Kyiv in defending and revitalizing a new West, still in the making, which, by recovering the original values of the liberal international order, can go beyond traditional geographical boundaries and welcome countries and organizations that share the same principles of freedom and respect for the rule of law.

In this perspective, the Italian Atlantic Committee intends to offer some Elements of Reflection that are useful for the ongoing discussion at the national and international levels and aimed at strengthening Italy's role in the Atlantic Alliance.

Special thanks go to Amb. Gabriele Checchia, President of the Strategic Committee, Lt. Gen. Giorgio Battisti, President of the Military Commission, R.A. Cesare Ciocca, Scientific Coordinator, and Dr. Carmine Bencivenga, National Coordinator.

Fabrizio W. Luciolli
President

PART I

THE NEW INSECURITY SCENARIO

NATO'S ADAPTATION

NATO is the most successful security organization in history. A study conducted by the Brookings Institution (2010) quantified the average lifespan of defense and military organizations or alliances throughout history at 15 years. In the last five centuries, only 10 out of the 63 security organizations examined in the research surpassed the 40-year mark.

The success of NATO lies in its extraordinary capacity for "adaptation" to changes in the security scenario. Sometimes expressed with the term "transformation," this capacity for "adaptation" actually corresponds more accurately to what can be defined as "evolution" in Latin languages, as the **goals of the Atlantic Alliance remain anchored to those established by the Washington Treaty** of April 4, 1949, namely:

a.   the defense of the billion citizens of member countries.

b.   the defense of their respective territories.

c.   the defense of a system of values, rights, and freedoms, including market-based freedoms, based on respect for the rule of law.

What has been "adapted" over time are the strategy and tools to implement the Treaty's objectives, according to the indications of various Strategic Concepts[1] that have defined NATO's tasks in line with the evolving security scenario.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE SCENARIO

911 is not only an emergency number in the USA but also a palindrome number useful for distinguishing the first three phases of the evolution of the Atlantic Alliance. It allows us to remember the fundamental dates of the fall of the Berlin Wall (November 9, 1989) as well as the fall of the Twin Towers (September 11, 2001).

–   During the **Cold War** and in a **bipolar** world, the concept of security was limited to a mere military meaning of **static** territorial defense, represented by **collective defense** enshrined in **Article 5** of the Washington Treaty.

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[1] General course of action adopted following the assessment of the strategic situation. It consists of a declaration regarding the objectives to be achieved, expressed in sufficiently broad and flexible terms to be used as a framework for military, diplomatic, economic, psychological, and other actions derived from it. NATO AAP - 06 (2021).

– With the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Alliance transitioned **from confrontation to a phase of cooperation**. The concept of security has acquired new political, economic, social dimensions, up to the current energy, climate, and health dimensions that increasingly place human security at the center and even a **Responsibility to Protect**, based on UNSCR 1973 of 2011 that authorized NATO's Operation Unified Protector in Libya. It is a more **dynamic security** that requires **projection of stability (partnerships)** and **forces for crisis management** (Crisis Response Operations - CROs such as IFOR-SFOR, KFOR) that originate beyond the geographic borders of the Alliance but have an impact on its security.

– The fall of the **Twin Towers** activated Article 5 for the first time in NATO's history[2], accelerating the processes of Euro-Atlantic accession and integration and making the Alliance even more **expeditionary**[3] as it was requested to intervene under the mandate of the United Nations in Afghanistan (ISAF), where the threats originated.

– The transition from confrontation to cooperation with the **Russian Federation**, which began with the signing of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security in Paris in 1997, seems to find its consecration with the summit promoted by Italy on May 28, 2002, in Pratica di Mare, where a "strategic" partnership is established, offering the Russian Federation the opportunity to discuss "at 20," on an equal footing with the then 19 NATO members, eight and any further relevant item among the Alliance security agenda.

– The speech by President Putin in February 2007, during the Munich Security Conference, the subsequent occupation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in 2008, and above all the **illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014**, dramatically change the security scenario and **require NATO to strengthen its deterrence and defense measures**, carrying out the most significant increase in operational readiness and deployment of military assets since the end of the Cold War. "Reassurance" measures are adopted towards the Baltic countries with the establishment of multinational Battle Groups, and the deterrence and defense of the Eastern Flank are strengthened through the adoption of a more robust command structure and NATO Response Force.

– The illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 constitutes the prelude to the barbaric aggression that will be once again carried out against **Ukraine on February 24, 2022**, driven by Putin's delusional veteran-imperialistic visions, probably partly fueled by the weakness demonstrated by the West in August 2021 with the disorderly withdrawal of the United States and therefore the Allies from Afghanistan.

– However, it is in the **Southern Flank** that the most dangerous instabilities caused by the rise of Daesh manifest themselves in 2014.
Two arches of instability to the East and South converging with their tensions in the Middle Eastern quadrant characterized by the crisis in Syria.

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[2] Operation Eagle Assist for the defense of US airspace and Active Endeavour for Mediterranean patrol
[3] Projection of military force into a remote operational area along extended lines of communication in order to achieve a specific objective. NATO AAP-6 (2021).

NEW THREATS AND CHALLENGES

Respected analysts have identified a return to the Cold War in the current security scenario. Unfortunately, the elegant simplicities of the Cold War have disappeared, and the scenario that the Atlantic Alliance faces appears to be of epochal **complexity**, necessitating deep reflection and **further historic adaptation of NATO**.

New factors of complexity give rise to the following considerations:

- In the succession of a first historical phase characterized by the Cold War and a **bipolar** world, and a second phase following the fall of the Berlin Wall, which revealed a **unipolar** strategic scenario, the Alliance is currently confronted with a **multipolar** and evolving scenario of insecurity.

- Unlike the previous historical phases of its evolution, NATO now finds itself having to **simultaneously** address both tasks of **collective defense** in the East (typical of the first phase) and **crisis management** (second phase) in the South.

- In addition to the traditional three operational domains (air, land, sea), the **cyber** domain and **space** have been added. Furthermore, the next emerging operational domain is the **submerged** one, where cables that enable 90% of transatlantic transactions pass through, as well as pipelines for the energy supplies necessary for the sustenance of European economies.
  This submerged world is where scientific research is being conducted for the future exploitation of mineral resources in the ocean depths.

- Today's threats manifest with unprecedented **speed**, not only in the cyber domain but also in the development of hypersonic weapons.

- New Emerging and Disrupting Technologies (**EDTs**), ranging from Artificial Intelligence to quantum technologies and cognitive biotechnologies, are emerging.[4]

- Conflicts, therefore, require a **multidomain** response and are often prepared and conducted through **hybrid warfare** tools that operate below the threshold of Article 5, although they can cause significant damage, including kinetic damage, to Western societies that are characterized as free, democratic, open, and therefore more vulnerable.

- In this context, **disinformation** assumes its own relevance in its various forms, to which both the Atlantic Alliance and the European Union have failed to respond proactively with an effective communication strategy (**STRATCOM**). Furthermore, the financial and non-financial resources dedicated by NATO and the EU to Public Diplomacy activities, besides being insufficient, are mostly fragmented across numerous programs that consequently have modest scope and impact.

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[4] EDTs (Emerging Disruptive Technologies) are innovative technologies that have the potential to impact military operations, defensive capabilities, force protection, and decision-making processes from the strategic to tactical levels. In the military domain, they include big data, artificial intelligence, autonomous systems, hypersonic weapon systems, quantum computing, space technologies, biotechnology, and advanced materials. NATO Science & Technology Trends 2020-2040, March 2020.

–   The growing proliferation of **Private Military Companies** (PMCs) undermines the principle of the state monopoly on the use of force to a much greater extent than Private Security Companies (PSCs). It is necessary to adopt strict legislation based on international humanitarian law.

–   The risks of **nuclear proliferation** in the Middle Eastern region appear real and increasing.

–   The **concept of deterrence** seems inadequate in the new scenario of insecurity, and the appropriate balance between deterrence by denial and deterrence by punishment needs to be further explored. Strengthening the concept of deterrence is essential to continue ensuring the maximum **credibility of Article 5**, the attractive core and magnet of the Atlantic Alliance.

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

Although the action of NATO, specifically the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC), during the pandemic has been vital in coordinating aid and logistical support, the impact of Covid on the fundamental tasks and articles of the Atlantic Treaty still appears underestimated and insufficiently explored. Considering that in the future a biological threat could be deliberately spread, rather than by accident, the implications become even more significant.

Covid-19 has had an impact on the following articles of the Atlantic Treaty:

–   **Article 3**: which establishes the principle and national responsibility for **resilience**. During the pandemic, entire allied units and naval vessels were affected by Covid and had to remain in isolation and non-operational. Therefore, it will be necessary to establish alarm systems, prevention measures, and containment strategies, along with doubling certain essential units (and their associated costs) to ensure the same pre-Covid operational efficiency.

–   **Article 4**: increased **political consultation** should be provided for the purpose of coordinating responses, including in the health sector and phenomena related to climate change.

–   **Article 5**: the **"all for one, one for all" Three Musketeers rule risks losing absolute validity** as it was conceived for an armed attack against one state. In the case of a biological threat that is intentionally originated rather than through grave negligence, it could simultaneously all affect member countries of the Alliance, requiring a significant commitment from the Organization to support all Allies or at least a greater number of them.

The role of the Committee of the Chiefs of Military Medical Services (**COMEDS**), the Science & Technology Organisation (**STO**), the database of 6,000 scientists within the Alliance's agenda, and **SHAPE** itself for emergency planning and early warning should, therefore, be rapidly strengthened.

THE NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT

The adoption of a new Strategic Concept at the Madrid Summit on 29 June 2022, leads to the following reflections:

–   Although the new Strategic Concept "formally" maintains the 3 Core Tasks of Deterrence & Defense, Crisis Prevention & Management, and Cooperative Security, compared to the 2010 Concept, these tasks appear to be "subsystems" for the achievement of the Alliance's sole purpose, which is **collective defense**.

–   This assumption, along with the war in Ukraine and the entry of Finland and soon Sweden, significantly shifts the **Alliance's center of gravity towards the North**, at the expense of Italy's security interests in the **Enlarged Mediterranean**, which is mentioned only once in the new Strategic Concept while the South is mentioned twice.

–   The Strategic Concept is given a **ten-year horizon**, which now seems asynchronous compared to the rapidly changing nature of the current security scenario. **Fine-tuning** in closer timeframes could contribute to greater effectiveness of the Alliance's actions.

–   For the first time, the Strategic Concept introduces the **Indo-Pacific** as a region of interest for the Alliance due to its implications, not only in economic and trade terms but also for the member countries and identifies China as a "strategic competitor" rather than a military threat.[5]

–   The Indo-Pacific, where China is exerting its main effort to establish itself as a global maritime power, is connected to the Mediterranean through the Suez Canal (a chokepoint controlled by China) and maritime traffic heading west. Sixty percent of global maritime traffic transits through the Strait of Malacca and the Suez Canal.

–   In this context, the role of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (**SCO**), an economic (and military) alliance between China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, should be taken into consideration.

THE THREAT OF RUSSIA

The Strategic Concept states that the Russian Federation represents the "most significant and **direct threat**" to Euro-Atlantic security. While the consequences of the disastrous war in Ukraine have placed Russia in conditions akin to a failed state (politically, strategically, militarily, economically, and socially), the increased Russian presence in Syria (with the doubling of the Tartus base), the construction of a naval base in Sudan, and the pervasive actions of Wagner mercenaries in **Libya**, Mali, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Central African Republic should not be underestimated. It is estimated that 57% of arms sold in Africa are of Russian origin.

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[5]   In the 49 points (laundry list) that make up the Strategic Concept, Russia is mentioned 12 times, China 10 times, the Balkans 2 times, and the Mediterranean 1 time.

Furthermore, The Russian Federation also maintains very close ties with the **Balkans**, including through the action, not always driven by religious spirit, of the Orthodox Church in Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as in NATO countries such as Bulgaria. These connections allow the Russian Federation, when necessary, to reignite sources of instability in the region, as has happened in **Kosovo**.

The first SACEUR, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, believed that "the only thing worse than a Russian victory is a Russian defeat." Therefore, it is appropriate to begin reflecting now on what strategy the Euro-Atlantic Community intends to pursue in the next decade regarding the Russian Federation, whether to opt for a **strategy of "defeat" or a "conciliatory"** approach, considering the risks posed by a potential fragmentation of the Russian Federation into several failed states, armed with nuclear weapons, and with a public opinion fiercely anti-Western due to disinformation.

THE CHALLENGE OF CHINA

– While the West was prepared to face a 20th-century war fueled by a resurgent Russian imperialism, the global "challenge" brought by China, a "**systemic rival**" to the democratic and value-based ecosystem founded on the respect for the rule of law, appears far more complex.

– China is mentioned for the first time in NATO's Strategic Concept as a "**challenge** to our interests, security, and values." This "challenge" is not only **global** geographically, with attempts to encircle Europe through control of its ports and infrastructure, colonization, and debt dependence on African countries, exploitation of their resources and "rare earths," but it also proves to be global because China brings this challenge through a holistic strategy characterized by the **"fusion" of all possible civil and military tools**.

– In this perspective, the Belt & Road Initiative should be considered as a component, a backbone of a much broader and articulated strategy that encompasses the acquisition of civil and military technologies, infrastructure, logistics chains, the European green economy, and the exploitation of the African continent, where China has established an imposing naval base in Djibouti.[6]

– China's assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific region, particularly in the South China Sea, as well as its *no-limit strategic partnership* with the Russian Federation, **directly impact Euro-Atlantic security** and NATO more than it may appear. A potential crisis with **Taiwan**, in addition to depriving Western high-tech companies of 90% of semiconductors, would significantly engage the United States in the Pacific, weakening U.S. support for European security to the advantage of the Russian Federation.

– China's conduct in the South China Sea raises concerns for the freedom of navigation in the Sea Lines of Communication (**SLOCs**) and chokepoints, such as the Strait of Malacca, where currently 60% of global goods transit.

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[6] Military bases are reportedly being set up and planned in Cambodia, the United Arab Emirates, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique, and Tanzania.

– China's behavior is associated with an exponential growth of its military capabilities, especially in the Navy, which is approaching parity with the United States, as well as strategic nuclear weapons estimated to reach 1,000 warheads. This further complicates the search for **a strategic nuclear balance among the United States, the Russian Federation, and China**.

– While China pragmatically maintains its international relations primarily on a bilateral basis, it is through the **control of multilateral organizations** such as **BRICS**[7] and the **Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)** that China will challenge the West. The decline of the Russian Federation's role and the rise of Chinese hegemony in these organizations could be exploited by Beijing to take the lead of a **Global South** with an anti-Western agenda, aiming to undermine the *West's* leadership in values and technology compared to *The Rest*.[8]

– China's role in facilitating the diplomatic relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia and its **ambiguous "peace plan"** for the Ukrainian conflict suggest a broader Chinese initiative to position itself on the international stage as an "intermediary" and resolver of regional disputes, questioning the role of traditionally designated organizations for such tasks (United Nations, European Union, African Union, etc.).

UKRAINE: THE KNOTS OF NEGOTIATION

The article "The West Needs a New Strategy in Ukraine" by Richard Haass and Charles Kupchan[9] reflects the hope of the Euro-Atlantic community to achieve a ceasefire in Ukraine by the end of 2023, before the start of the U.S. presidential and European Parliament election campaigns. However, there are significant uncertainties surrounding each option available.

Among the knots and questions to consider are:

– Who could serve as possible guarantors of Ukrainian territorial integrity?

– Should Ukraine adopt a state of neutrality or a "Kyiv Security Compact"[10] that includes NATO Security Arrangements with guarantees approaching Article 5 and quasi-membership?

– What should be the size and role of the Ukrainian Armed Forces?

– Should Ukraine pursue EU membership? What impact would it have on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and on Italy?

– Which status for Crimea?

– What is the role of the United Nations, and how can the approval of a resolution be achieved given Russia's veto power in the Security Council?

– How to negotiate with individuals responsible for war crimes and bring them before a special tribunal?

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[7] Brasil, Russia, India, China, South Africa.
[8] Niall Ferguson, Civilization: *The West and the Rest*, 2011.
[9] *Foreign Affairs*, 13 April 2023.
[10] Anders Fogh Rasmussen e Andrii Yermak, *Kyiv Security Compact*, 13 September 2022.

– Should there be an international conference on future European arrangements? Towards a New Helsinki?

– Which is the role of Turkey? It collaborates with Russia on S-400 and Rosatom while also being the largest investor in telecommunications and infrastructure in Ukraine, to which it supplies TB2 drones.

PART II
TOWARDS A NEW WEST

THE NEW WEST

The war *against* Ukraine has caused a tectonic shift in the security landscape, giving rise to new geopolitical configurations and the emergence of "systemic rivals" that challenge the values and rule-based system that constitute the connective tissue of free democratic Western societies. The threat from the Russian Federation and the assertive global challenge posed by China require a **strategic vision** and cohesive and far-sighted action from a **renewed West**.

The Euro-Atlantic community, which appeared divided and even accused of "brain death" by one of its own "brains," has found itself united with Kyiv in defending and revitalizing a new West, still in the making. This **new West**, by reclaiming the **original values of the liberal international order**, should transcend traditional geographical boundaries and embrace countries and organizations that share the same principles of freedom and respect for the rule of law.

It is an **ideological West** rather than a purely geographical one, capable of uniting the free democracies of **Oceania**, **North America**, **Europe**, the **Pacific**, and even the **broader Mediterranean and Middle East**. Only through a far-sighted strategy can the West **avoid division into blocs** (Oceania, North America, and Europe) and effectively confront the authoritarian challenge from China, once again representing a values-based model and maintaining leadership, including technological leadership, vis-à-vis emerging autocracies in Asia and South America.

THE NATO-EU STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

The core of a **new Western security architecture** should be the Euro-Atlantic community, which can express its values, freedoms, and capabilities through a strengthened strategic partnership. The NATO-EU Joint Declarations (2016, 2018, 2023)[1] demonstrate the increasing level of cooperation between NATO and the European Union. This cooperation is translated into concrete action through 74 working tables dedicated to various aspects of common security. The European Union has assumed new and significant responsibilities, from the Military Mobility program to the commitment of the European Peace Facility (EPF) in support of Ukraine.

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[1] Actually, it is the fourth declaration if we consider the first NATO-EU declaration on the European Security and Defense Policy from December 16, 2002.

The strategic partnership between NATO and the European Union should be made even more effective by strengthening coordination and task division between the two organizations. **NATO should focus on its core business** while delegating certain aspects (protection of some infrastructure assets, maritime monitoring, Women Peace & Security, Green initiatives, etc.) predominantly, but always in a synergistic manner, to the European Union.

The consolidation of NATO-EU cooperation in the field of security and defense is facilitated by the accession of **Finland** to the Alliance and the prospective accession of **Sweden**. These accessions will bring **23 out of 27** EU countries into NATO, with 96% of European citizens benefiting from the security provided by the NATO umbrella.

THE POLITICAL ROLE OF NATO

–   In addition to strengthening its military structure (Commands and Forces) and deterrence and defense capabilities against the Russian Federation, NATO should reclaim and enhance its **political vocation** through a new and **more ambitious role for the Atlantic Council**.

–   Rather than dispersing energy with scattered partnerships and bi-multilateral initiatives, the Euro-Atlantic Community (NATO and EU) should make use of the extraordinary capabilities offered by the **Atlantic Council**, **a unique transatlantic forum for security consultations** that could effectively be utilized according to the consultation model provided for in **Article 4**.

–   Within this framework, partnership programs can be revitalized, and new dialogues and cooperation can be initiated with multilateral forums. These include the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue between Australia, Japan, India, and the United States (**QUAD**) in the Indo-Pacific, and the Pact between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States (**AUKUS**), aimed at a more coherent development and cooperation with the Anglosphere to maintain competitiveness and technological superiority.

–   The range of political, economic, and social assets, as well as military and law enforcement capabilities, of the European Union and its institutional structure, allow for effective engagement with the 55 countries of the **African Union**. A European programming of structured interventions, based on the same foundations as the *Mattei Plan* proposed by the Italian Government, could offer an alternative approach to development and stability compared to Russian and Chinese exploitation of the continent.

–   Regarding the Middle East region, the Indo-Abrahamic cooperation initiative between India, Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States (**I2U2**) assumes relevance, highlighting the interconnections between different geopolitical quadrants in the current in-security scenario.
     Italy's membership would provide extraordinary added value to this initiative.

THE FUTURE OF EURO-ATLANTIC SECURITY

Such a renewed Euro-Atlantic security architecture would:

–   Reclaim the **political vocation** of the Atlantic Alliance by enhancing the intergovernmental coordination function of NATO (Article 4) through a higher level of ambition and an **increased political role of the Atlantic Council**.

–   Strengthen **deterrence** and, with it, the **credibility of Article 5**.

–   Shape a more **European NATO** by strengthening the synergies of the **NATO-EU strategic partnership** and further enhancing the multiple civilian and military capabilities of the European Union.

–   Consolidate the **transatlantic bond**, avoiding decoupling between the two sides of the Atlantic.

–   Enable the United States to more easily engage in the **Pacific** through a more balanced risk-sharing approach.

–   Promote **transatlantic economic cooperation** for **technological development** (Article 2), avoiding unnecessary duplication in military capabilities and the risk of a technological gap between Europe and the Anglosphere, while promoting economies of scale in capability development.

–   Adopt a comprehensive **360-degree approach** through **EU-African Union** cooperation and with **I2U2**, with a potential role for Italy.

–   Initiate dialogue and collaboration with other regional organizations, such as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue between Australia, India, Japan, and the United States (**QUAD**) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (**ASEAN**).

–   Respond in a unified and more effective manner to the challenge that **China** poses to the values and economy of the West, potentially considering an **"economic" Article 5**[2] by the Western community, to be implemented in defense and support of countries subject to energy or other forms of blackmail by authoritarian regimes, such as those operated by China against Australia, Japan, Lithuania.

–   Avoid compartmentalization and competition among Western blocs (Oceania, North America, Europe).

–   Preserve the West as an attractive values-based and technological development pole for the **Global South**.

–   More effectively protect the vulnerabilities of Western societies and economies, which are free and open, from new threats and challenges such as Emerging and Disruptive Technologies (**EDTs**)[3], **hybrid** threats, **CBRN** (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear) threats, and **climate change**.

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[2]   I. Daalder., A.F. Rasmussen, *An Economic Art. 5 to Counter Authoritarian Coercion*, June 2022.
[3]   Artificial Intelligence (AI), autonomous systems, quantum technologies, biotechnology and human enhancement, hypersonic systems, space technologies, new materials and energy production, and propulsion, next-generation communication networks.

– Counter **disinformation** and promote **public awareness** of the role and increased commitments and costs of international organizations in the current, more burdensome insecurity scenario.

THE ROLE OF ITALY

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Italy, as a **founding member of the Atlantic Alliance and the European Union**, has always believed that its national interests can be more effectively pursued through **active participation** in international organizations and by supporting the complementarity and mutually reinforcing role between the transatlantic bond and the European integration process.

Since its inception, Italy has played a decisive role in the development of the **political dimension** of the Alliance. In 1956, Italian Foreign Minister Gaetano Martino chaired the Committee of the Three Wise Men, composed of his Norwegian and Canadian counterparts Halvard Lange and Lester Pearson, which authored the Report on Non-Military Cooperation within NATO. In 1967, Ambassador Manlio Brosio served as the Secretary General of NATO, during which the Harmel Report on the "Future Tasks of the Alliance" was released. In the early 1980s, Italy lead the decision on the deployment of Euromissiles. In 2002, Italy hosted the historic summit in Pratica di Mare, aiming to initiate a strategic partnership with the Russian Federation, which Putin ultimately disregarded by brutally invading Ukraine.

Over the years, numerous Italian representatives have held the position of NATO Deputy Secretary General.

Moreover, Italy:

– Significantly contributes to the budget of the Alliance and NATO operations, often assuming leadership roles in NATO operations in the Balkans and the Middle East. Italy participates in and leads Battlegroups and patrols in the Baltic and the Balkans.

– Represents a key ally in the agreements on **Nuclear Sharing**.

– Hosts important NATO **commands** (JFC-Naples, NSDS-Hub, NRDC-ITA) and U.S. bases.

– Contributes to and promotes the Alliance's technological innovation processes, such as the Defence Innovation Accelerator (DIANA).

ENLARGED MEDITERRANEAN

– By projecting itself with 8,000 km of coastline into the "Enlarged" Mediterranean, Italy occupies a central position, not only geographically but also in relation

– to regional political-military and security organizations and their cooperation programs. These include the 5+5 Initiative, Adrion, the NATO Mediterranean Dialogue, and organizations such as the Arab League, the Yaoumé Architecture in the Gulf of Guinea and Central-West Africa.

– The increasing strategic importance of the **Mediterranean requires greater attention** and resources from the Alliance, including strengthening training programs, modeling, simulation, training, and Security Force Assistance (SFA), as well as establishing a **NATO Maritime Command**, similar to the one previously based in Nisida.
Without modifying the current structure of NATO Commands, Italy could immediately offer existing assets such as the Naval Fleet Command, which already possesses command and control capabilities over the enlarged Mediterranean and beyond.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

– While *Commitments* to operations and investments in modernization and *Capabilities* are in line with the Alliance's requirements (20%), achieving the 2% GDP target for defense spending – which is now considered a baseline rather than a ceiling – appears unattainable unless these expenses are exempted from the strict constraints imposed by the European Union's Stability Pact.
Furthermore, Italy demonstrates a greater deployment capability of troops in NATO missions compared to many other allies. Despite its shortcomings in cash contributions, Italy has managed to fulfill its commitments regarding *Capabilities* and *Commitments*.

– Looking ahead, the significant increase in the number, duration, and intensity of NATO exercises risks further straining the **ordinary defense budget**, more so than in the past when the Italian Armed Forces mostly trained by participating in internationally missions approved by the Parliament together with *ad hoc* additional funds.

– The ongoing war *against* Ukraine and the extension of NATO exercises, including on Italian territory, risk weakening parliamentary support for the government's actions in the Euro-Atlantic sphere and alienating a portion of **public opinion** that is subject to relentless disinformation campaigns.

– Similar to what occurred in the late 1970s and early 1980s during the decision on the deployment of Euromissiles, Italy and Germany find themselves targeted by massive **disinformation** campaigns that, amplified by today's *social media*, influence broad segments of public opinion, including qualified individuals.

– The entry of **Finland** into NATO and, soon, **Sweden**, will shift the Alliance's center of gravity northward and prioritize the allocation of future NATO civilian and military vacancies and positions to newly members countries.
In this regard, Italy will need careful planning of the positions it aims to compete for, in order to ensure an adequate national presence within NATO, given its role also as a founding member.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ITALIAN ATLANTIC COMMITTEE

The Italian Atlantic Committee has been carrying out activities in analysis, study, education (civil and military), and information for over 65 years on topics related to foreign policy, security, and defense concerning the Atlantic Alliance, with the aim of promoting Italy's role in NATO.

In addition, the Italian Atlantic Committee ensures Italy's presence within the Atlantic Treaty Association (ATA), an international organization that serves as a bridge between NATO and the public opinions of Alliance member and partner countries. 37 national Atlantic Committees are belonging to ATA.

To fulfill its institutional tasks, the Italian Atlantic Committee is committed to carrying out a wide range of activities at both national and international levels, including:

–   Promoting national interests among the 37 Atlantic Committees affiliated with the Atlantic Treaty Association (ATA).

–   Strengthening cooperation with the Atlantic Committees and Associations in the Balkans and the Mediterranean.

–   Collaborating with the Italian Delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

–   Developing intellectual contributions and Atlantic initiatives for policymakers.

–   Supporting the NATO Public Diplomacy Division.

–   Organizing an annual international Atlantic Forum in Italy aimed at raising awareness among NATO countries about challenges coming from the South.

–   Promoting a culture of security among younger generations, including through the network of regional and local Atlantic Clubs and the presence of youth Atlantic associations (YATA) throughout the country.

–   Encouraging academic institutions to delve into foreign policy and international security issues related to the Atlantic Alliance, assisting students in their research for university thesis development.

–   Increasing ongoing collaboration with NATO Centers of Excellence and national military institutions, including planning modeling and simulation training activities for civilian and military personnel.

PART IV
CONCLUSIONS

The epochal upheavals characterizing the current in-security scenario require the Alliance to once again resort to its historic capacity for "adaptation" and to implement the NATO Strategic Concept with **an innovative and forward-thinking vision**. This vision should not only focus on the rear-mirror to address the "direct threat" posed by the Russian Federation but also adopt the necessary tools to effectively respond to the new "challenges" posed by China in a complex, multipolar, multidimensional, and multidomain security environment.

It calls for a new and **more ambitious level of ambition for NATO**, in even closer strategic partnership with the **European Union**, to fully recover its original **political vocation** and become the **attractive pole of a new West**. This new West should be founded on values and respect for the rule of law, capable of pursuing the objectives of the Treaty by coordinating with a **global approach** alongside organizations and partners that share the same democratic and freedom-based ecosystem.

The prospect of a new security architecture that places the Euro-Atlantic Community at the center of a wind rose, with connections to multilateral initiatives, organizations, and like-minded countries, and with the **NATO Atlantic Council as a coordinating hub**, would allow **Italy** to once again be a protagonist, perhaps more easily than through a Carolingian-characterized European Union.

STRATEGIC CONCEPT

**Adopted by Heads of State and Government at the NATO Summit
in Madrid 29 June 2022**

Preface

We, the Heads of State and Government of the NATO Allies, have come together in Madrid at a critical time for our security and for international peace and stability. Today, we endorse a new Strategic Concept to ensure our Alliance remains fit and resourced for the future.

For more than seventy years, NATO has ensured the freedom and security of Allies. Our success is the result of the service and sacrifice of the women and men of our armed services. We owe them and their families a great debt of gratitude.

We remain steadfast in our resolve to protect our one billion citizens, defend our territory and safeguard our freedom and democracy. We will reinforce our unity, cohesion and solidarity, building on the enduring transatlantic bond between our nations and the strength of our shared democratic values. We reiterate our steadfast commitment to the North Atlantic Treaty and to defending each other from all threats, no matter where they stem from. We will continue to work towards just, inclusive and lasting peace and remain a bulwark of the rules-based international order.

We will retain a global perspective and work closely with our partners, other countries and international organisations, such as the European Union and the United Nations, to contribute to international peace and security.

Our world is contested and unpredictable. The Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine has shattered peace and gravely altered our security environment. Its brutal and unlawful invasion, repeated violations of international humanitarian law and heinous attacks and atrocities have caused unspeakable suffering and destruction. A strong, independent Ukraine is vital for the stability of the Euro-Atlantic area. Moscow's behaviour reflects a pattern of Russian aggressive actions against its neighbours and the wider transatlantic community. We also face the persistent threat of terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations. Pervasive instability, rising strategic competition and advancing authoritarianism challenge the Alliance's interests and values.

Our new Strategic Concept reaffirms that NATO's key purpose is to ensure our collective defence, based on a 360-degree approach. It defines the Alliance's three core tasks: deterrence and defence; crisis prevention and management; and cooperative security. We underscore the need to significantly strengthen our deterrence and defence as the backbone of our Article 5 commitment to defend each other.

The fundamental purpose of NATO's nuclear capability is to preserve peace, prevent coercion and deter aggression. As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance. NATO's goal is a safer world for all; we seek to create the security environment for a world without nuclear weapons.

The Strategic Concept emphasises that ensuring our national and collective resilience is critical to all our core tasks and underpins our efforts to safeguard our nations, societies

and shared values. It also emphasises the cross-cutting importance of investing in technological innovation and integrating climate change, human security and the Women, Peace and Security agenda across all our core tasks.

Our vision is clear: we want to live in a world where sovereignty, territorial integrity, human rights and international law are respected and where each country can choose its own path, free from aggression, coercion or subversion. We work with all who share these goals. We stand together, as Allies, to defend our freedom and contribute to a more peaceful world.

Purpose and Principles

1. NATO is determined to safeguard the freedom and security of Allies. Its key purpose and greatest responsibility is to ensure our collective defence, against all threats, from all directions. We are a defensive Alliance.

2. The transatlantic bond between our nations is indispensable to our security. We are bound together by common values: individual liberty, human rights, democracy and the rule of law. We remain firmly committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty.

3. NATO is the unique, essential and indispensable transatlantic forum to consult, coordinate and act on all matters related to our individual and collective security. We will strengthen our Alliance based on our indivisible security, solidarity, and ironclad commitment to defend each other, as enshrined in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. Our ability to deter and defend is the backbone of that commitment.

4. NATO will continue to fulfil three core tasks: deterrence and defence; crisis prevention and management; and cooperative security. These are complementary to ensure the collective defence and security of all Allies.

5. We will enhance our individual and collective resilience and technological edge. These efforts are critical to fulfil the Alliance's core tasks. We will promote good governance and integrate climate change, human security and the Women, Peace and Security agenda across all our tasks. We will continue to advance gender equality as a reflection of our values.

Strategic Environment

6. The Euro-Atlantic area is not at peace. The Russian Federation has violated the norms and principles that contributed to a stable and predictable European security order. We cannot discount the possibility of an attack against Allies' sovereignty and territorial integrity. Strategic competition, pervasive instability and recurrent shocks define our broader security environment. The threats we face are global and interconnected.

7. Authoritarian actors challenge our interests, values and democratic way of life. They are investing in sophisticated conventional, nuclear and missile capabilities, with little transparency or regard for international norms and commitments. Strategic competitors test our resilience and seek to exploit the openness, interconnected-

ness and digitalisation of our nations. They interfere in our democratic processes and institutions and target the security of our citizens through hybrid tactics, both directly and through proxies. They conduct malicious activities in cyberspace and space, promote disinformation campaigns, instrumentalise migration, manipulate energy supplies and employ economic coercion. These actors are also at the forefront of a deliberate effort to undermine multilateral norms and institutions and promote authoritarian models of governance.

8. The Russian Federation is the most significant and direct threat to Allies' security and to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. It seeks to establish spheres of influence and direct control through coercion, subversion, aggression and annexation. It uses conventional, cyber and hybrid means against us and our partners. Its coercive military posture, rhetoric and proven willingness to use force to pursue its political goals undermine the rules-based international order. The Russian Federation is modernising its nuclear forces and expanding its novel and disruptive dual-capable delivery systems, while employing coercive nuclear signalling. It aims to destabilise countries to our East and South. In the High North, its capability to disrupt Allied reinforcements and freedom of navigation across the North Atlantic is a strategic challenge to the Alliance. Moscow's military build-up, including in the Baltic, Black and Mediterranean Sea regions, along with its military integration with Belarus, challenge our security and interests.

9. NATO does not seek confrontation and poses no threat to the Russian Federation. We will continue to respond to Russian threats and hostile actions in a united and responsible way. We will significantly strengthen deterrence and defence for all Allies, enhance our resilience against Russian coercion and support our partners to counter malign interference and aggression. In light of its hostile policies and actions, we cannot consider the Russian Federation to be our partner. However, we remain willing to keep open channels of communication with Moscow to manage and mitigate risks, prevent escalation and increase transparency. We seek stability and predictability in the Euro-Atlantic area and between NATO and the Russian Federation. Any change in our relationship depends on the Russian Federation halting its aggressive behaviour and fully complying with international law.

10. Terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, is the most direct asymmetric threat to the security of our citizens and to international peace and prosperity. Terrorist organisations seek to attack or inspire attacks against Allies. They have expanded their networks, enhanced their capabilities and invested in new technologies to improve their reach and lethality. Non-state armed groups, including transnational terrorist networks and state supported actors, continue to exploit conflict and weak governance to recruit, mobilise and expand their foothold.

11. Conflict, fragility and instability in Africa and the Middle East directly affect our security and the security of our partners. NATO's southern neighbourhood, particularly the Middle East, North Africa and Sahel regions, faces interconnected security, demographic, economic and political challenges. These are aggravated by the impact of climate change, fragile institutions, health emergencies and food insecurity. This situation provides fertile ground for the proliferation of non-state armed groups, in-

cluding terrorist organisations. It also enables destabilising and coercive interference by strategic competitors.

12. Pervasive instability results in violence against civilians, including conflict-related sexual violence, as well as attacks against cultural property and environmental damage. It contributes to forced displacement, fuelling human trafficking and irregular migration. These trends pose serious transnational and humanitarian challenges. They undermine human and state security and have a disproportionate impact on women, children and minority groups.

13. The People's Republic of China's (PRC) stated ambitions and coercive policies challenge our interests, security and values. The PRC employs a broad range of political, economic and military tools to increase its global footprint and project power, while remaining opaque about its strategy, intentions and military build-up. The PRC's malicious hybrid and cyber operations and its confrontational rhetoric and disinformation target Allies and harm Alliance security. The PRC seeks to control key technological and industrial sectors, critical infrastructure, and strategic materials and supply chains. It uses its economic leverage to create strategic dependencies and enhance its influence. It strives to subvert the rules-based international order, including in the space, cyber and maritime domains. The deepening strategic partnership between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation and their mutually reinforcing attempts to undercut the rules-based international order run counter to our values and interests.

14. We remain open to constructive engagement with the PRC, including to build reciprocal transparency, with a view to safeguarding the Alliance's security interests. We will work together responsibly, as Allies, to address the systemic challenges posed by the PRC to Euro-Atlantic security and ensure NATO's enduring ability to guarantee the defence and security of Allies. We will boost our shared awareness, enhance our resilience and preparedness, and protect against the PRC's coercive tactics and efforts to divide the Alliance. We will stand up for our shared values and the rules-based international order, including freedom of navigation.

15. Cyberspace is contested at all times. Malign actors seek to degrade our critical infrastructure, interfere with our government services, extract intelligence, steal intellectual property and impede our military activities.

16. Strategic competitors and potential adversaries are investing in technologies that could restrict our access and freedom to operate in space, degrade our space capabilities, target our civilian and military infrastructure, impair our defence and harm our security.

17. Emerging and disruptive technologies bring both opportunities and risks. They are altering the character of conflict, acquiring greater strategic importance and becoming key arenas of global competition. Technological primacy increasingly influences success on the battlefield.

18. The erosion of the arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation architecture has negatively impacted strategic stability. The Russian Federation's violations and

selective implementation of its arms control obligations and commitments have contributed to the deterioration of the broader security landscape. The potential use of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear materials or weapons against NATO by hostile state and non-state actors remains a threat to our security. Iran and North Korea continue to develop their nuclear and missile programmes. Syria, North Korea and the Russian Federation, along with non-state actors, have resorted to the use of chemical weapons. The PRC is rapidly expanding its nuclear arsenal and is developing increasingly sophisticated delivery systems, without increasing transparency or engaging in good faith in arms control or risk reduction.

19. Climate change is a defining challenge of our time, with a profound impact on Allied security. It is a crisis and threat multiplier. It can exacerbate conflict, fragility and geopolitical competition. Increasing temperatures cause rising sea levels, wildfires and more frequent and extreme weather events, disrupting our societies, undermining our security and threatening the lives and livelihoods of our citizens. Climate change also affects the way our armed forces operate. Our infrastructure, assets and bases are vulnerable to its effects. Our forces need to operate in more extreme climate conditions and our militaries are more frequently called upon to assist in disaster relief.

NATO's Core Tasks

Deterrence and Defence

20. While NATO is a defensive Alliance, no one should doubt our strength and resolve to defend every inch of Allied territory, preserve the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all Allies and prevail against any aggressor. In an environment of strategic competition, we will enhance our global awareness and reach to deter, defend, contest and deny across all domains and directions, in line with our 360-degree approach. NATO's deterrence and defence posture is based on an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional and missile defence capabilities, complemented by space and cyber capabilities. It is defensive, proportionate and fully in line with our international commitments. We will employ military and non-military tools in a proportionate, coherent and integrated way to respond to all threats to our security in the manner, timing and in the domain of our choosing.

21. We will significantly strengthen our deterrence and defence posture to deny any potential adversary any possible opportunities for aggression. To that end, we will ensure a substantial and persistent presence on land, at sea, and in the air, including through strengthened integrated air and missile defence. We will deter and defend forward with robust in-place, multi-domain, combat-ready forces, enhanced command and control arrangements, prepositioned ammunition and equipment and improved capacity and infrastructure to rapidly reinforce any Ally, including at short or no notice. We will adjust the balance between in-place forces and reinforcement to strengthen deterrence and the Alliance's ability to defend. Commensurate with the threats we face, we will ensure our deterrence and defence posture remains credible, flexible, tailored and sustainable.

22. We will continue to enhance the collective readiness, responsiveness, deployability, integration and interoperability of our forces. We will individually and collectively deliver the full range of forces, capabilities, plans, resources, assets and infrastructure needed for deterrence and defence, including for high-intensity, multi-domain warfighting against nuclear-armed peer-competitors. We will ensure a robust, resilient and integrated command structure, increase the alignment of national and NATO defence plans and strengthen and modernise the NATO force structure. We will strengthen training and exercising, adapt and streamline our decision-making processes, enhance our planning and improve the effectiveness of our crisis response system.

23. Maritime security is key to our peace and prosperity. We will strengthen our posture and situational awareness to deter and defend against all threats in the maritime domain, uphold freedom of navigation, secure maritime trade routes and protect our main lines of communications.

24. We will expedite our digital transformation, adapt the NATO Command Structure for the information age and enhance our cyber defences, networks and infrastructure. We will promote innovation and increase our investments in emerging and disruptive technologies to retain our interoperability and military edge. We will work together to adopt and integrate new technologies, cooperate with the private sector, protect our innovation ecosystems, shape standards and commit to principles of responsible use that reflect our democratic values and human rights.

25. Maintaining secure use of and unfettered access to space and cyberspace are key to effective deterrence and defence. We will enhance our ability to operate effectively in space and cyberspace to prevent, detect, counter and respond to the full spectrum of threats, using all available tools. A single or cumulative set of malicious cyber activities; or hostile operations to, from, or within space; could reach the level of armed attack and could lead the North Atlantic Council to invoke Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. We recognise the applicability of international law and will promote responsible behaviour in cyberspace and space. We will also boost the resilience of the space and cyber capabilities upon which we depend for our collective defence and security.

26. We will pursue a more robust, integrated and coherent approach to building national and Alliance-wide resilience against military and non-military threats and challenges to our security, as a national responsibility and a collective commitment rooted in Article 3 of the North Atlantic Treaty. We will work towards identifying and mitigating strategic vulnerabilities and dependencies, including with respect to our critical infrastructure, supply chains and health systems. We will enhance our energy security and invest in a stable and reliable energy supply, suppliers and sources. We will ensure civil preparedness to provide for continuity of government, the delivery of essential services to our populations and civil support to our armed forces. We will boost our capacity to prepare for, resist, respond to, and quickly recover from strategic shocks and disruptions, and ensure the continuity of the Alliance's activities.

27. We will invest in our ability to prepare for, deter, and defend against the coercive use of political, economic, energy, information and other hybrid tactics by states and non-state actors. Hybrid operations against Allies could reach the level of armed attack and could lead the North Atlantic Council to invoke Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. We will continue to support our partners to counter hybrid challenges and seek to maximise synergies with other relevant actors, such as the European Union.

28. The fundamental purpose of NATO's nuclear capability is to preserve peace, prevent coercion and deter aggression. Nuclear weapons are unique. The circumstances in which NATO might have to use nuclear weapons are extremely remote. Any employment of nuclear weapons against NATO would fundamentally alter the nature of a conflict. The Alliance has the capabilities and resolve to impose costs on an adversary that would be unacceptable and far outweigh the benefits that any adversary could hope to achieve.

29. The strategic nuclear forces of the Alliance, particularly those of the United States, are the supreme guarantee of the security of the Alliance. The independent strategic nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France have a deterrent role of their own and contribute significantly to the overall security of the Alliance. These Allies' separate centres of decision-making contribute to deterrence by complicating the calculations of potential adversaries. NATO's nuclear deterrence posture also relies on the United States' nuclear weapons forward-deployed in Europe and the contributions of Allies concerned. National contributions of dual-capable aircraft to NATO's nuclear deterrence mission remain central to this effort.

30. NATO will take all necessary steps to ensure the credibility, effectiveness, safety and security of the nuclear deterrent mission. The Alliance is committed to ensuring greater integration and coherence of capabilities and activities across all domains and the spectrum of conflict, while reaffirming the unique and distinct role of nuclear deterrence. NATO will continue to maintain credible deterrence, strengthen its strategic communications, enhance the effectiveness of its exercises and reduce strategic risks.

31. We will continue to invest in our defence against Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear threats. We will enhance our policies, plans, training and exercises and assess our capabilities to ensure that these requirements are integrated into our deterrence and defence posture.

32. Strategic stability, delivered through effective deterrence and defence, arms control and disarmament, and meaningful and reciprocal political dialogue, remains essential to our security. Arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation strongly contribute to the Alliance's objectives. Allies' efforts on arms control, disarmament and nonproliferation aim to reduce risk and enhance security, transparency, verification, and compliance. We will pursue all elements of strategic risk reduction, including promoting confidence building and predictability through dialogue, increasing understanding, and establishing effective crisis management and prevention tools. These efforts will take the prevailing security environment and the security of all Allies into account and complement the Alliance's deterrence and defence posture. We will make use of NATO as a platform for in-depth discussion and close consultations on arms control efforts.

33. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is the essential bulwark against the spread of nuclear weapons and we remain strongly committed to its full implementation, including Article VI. NATO's goal is to create the security environment for a world without nuclear weapons, consistent with the goals of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

34. Countering terrorism is essential to our collective defence. NATO's role in the fight against terrorism contributes to all three core tasks and is integral to the Alliance's 360-degree approach to deterrence and defence. Terrorist organisations threaten the security of our populations, forces and territory. We will continue to counter, deter, defend and respond to threats and challenges posed by terrorist groups, based on a combination of prevention, protection and denial measures. We will enhance cooperation with the international community, including the United Nations and the European Union, to tackle the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.

Crisis Prevention and Management

35. NATO Allies have a shared interest in contributing to stability and managing conflicts together through NATO. We will continue to work to prevent and respond to crises when these have the potential to affect Allied security. We will build on the unique capabilities and expertise we have acquired in crisis management. To that end, we will invest in crisis response, preparedness and management, through regular exercises and leverage our ability to coordinate, conduct sustain and support multinational crisis response operations.

36. We will ensure the resources, capabilities, training and command and control arrangements to deploy and sustain military and civilian crisis management, stabilisation and counter-terrorism operations, including at strategic distance. Building on the lessons learned over the past three decades, including through our operations in Afghanistan, we will continue to improve our readiness, our military and civilian capabilities and civil-military planning and coordination. We will further develop the Alliance's ability to support civilian crisis management and relief operations and to prepare for the effects of climate change, food insecurity and health emergencies on Allied security. This will allow us to respond to any contingency at short notice.

37. Partners make an important contribution to NATO-led crisis management. We will continue to ensure sustained political engagement and military interoperability with partners who express an interest in contributing to our missions and operations.

38. We will increase our efforts to anticipate and prevent crises and conflicts. Prevention is a sustainable way to contribute to stability and Allied security. We will enhance support for our partners, including to help build their capacity to counter terrorism and address shared security challenges. We will scale up the size and scope of our security and capacity-building assistance to vulnerable partners in our neighbourhood and beyond, to strengthen their preparedness and resilience and boost their capabilities to counter malign interference, prevent destabilisation and counter aggression.

39. Human security, including the protection of civilians and civilian harm mitigation, is central to our approach to crisis prevention and management. We will work with

other international actors to address the broader conditions fuelling crises and pervasive instability and contribute to stabilisation and reconstruction. We will reinforce our coordination and cooperation with the United Nations and the European Union, as well as with other regional organisations such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the African Union.

Cooperative Security

40. NATO's enlargement has been a historic success. It has strengthened our Alliance, ensured the security of millions of European citizens and contributed to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. We reaffirm our Open Door policy, consistent with Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty, as an expression of our fundamental values and our strategic interest in Euro-Atlantic peace and stability. Our door remains open to all European democracies that share the values of our Alliance, which are willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership, and whose membership contributes to our common security. Decisions on membership are taken by NATO Allies and no third party has a say in this process.

41. The security of countries aspiring to become members of the Alliance is intertwined with our own. We strongly support their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. We will strengthen political dialogue and cooperation with those who aim to join the Alliance, help strengthen their resilience against malign interference, build their capabilities, and enhance our practical support to advance their Euro- Atlantic aspirations. We will continue to develop our partnerships with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia and Ukraine to advance our common interest in Euro-Atlantic peace, stability and security. We reaffirm the decision we took at the 2008 Bucharest Summit and all subsequent decisions with respect to Georgia and Ukraine.

42. Political dialogue and practical cooperation with partners, based on mutual respect and benefit, contribute to stability beyond our borders, enhance our security at home and support NATO's core tasks. Partnerships are crucial to protect the global commons, enhance our resilience and uphold the rules-based international order.

43. The European Union is a unique and essential partner for NATO. NATO Allies and EU members share the same values. NATO and the EU play complementary, coherent and mutually reinforcing roles in supporting international peace and security. On the basis of our longstanding cooperation, we will enhance the NATO-EU strategic partnership, strengthen political consultations and increase cooperation on issues of common interest, such as military mobility, resilience, the impact of climate change on security, emerging and disruptive technologies, human security, the Women, Peace and Security agenda, as well as countering cyber and hybrid threats and addressing the systemic challenges posed by the PRC to Euro-Atlantic security. For the development of the strategic partnership between NATO and the EU, non-EU Allies' fullest involvement in EU defence efforts is essential. NATO recognises the value of a stronger and more capable European defence that contributes positive-

ly to transatlantic and global security and is complementary to, and interoperable with NATO. Initiatives to increase defence spending and develop coherent, mutually reinforcing capabilities, while avoiding unnecessary duplications, are key to our joint efforts to make the Euro-Atlantic area safer.

44. We will strengthen our ties with partners that share the Alliance's values and interest in upholding the rules-based international order. We will enhance dialogue and cooperation to defend that order, uphold our values and protect the systems, standards and technologies on which they depend. We will increase outreach to countries in our broader neighbourhood and across the globe and remain open to engagement with any country or organisation, when doing so could bolster our mutual security. Our approach will remain interest-driven, flexible, focused on addressing shared threats and challenges, and able to adapt to changing geopolitical realities.

45. The Western Balkans and the Black Sea region are of strategic importance for the Alliance. We will continue to support the Euro-Atlantic aspirations of interested countries in these regions. We will enhance efforts to bolster their capabilities to address the distinct threats and challenges they face and boost their resilience against malign third-party interference and coercion. We will work with partners to tackle shared security threats and challenges in regions of strategic interest to the Alliance, including the Middle East and North Africa and the Sahel regions. The Indo-Pacific is important for NATO, given that developments in that region can directly affect Euro- Atlantic security. We will strengthen dialogue and cooperation with new and existing partners in the Indo-Pacific to tackle cross-regional challenges and shared security interests.

46. NATO should become the leading international organisation when it comes to understanding and adapting to the impact of climate change on security. The Alliance will lead efforts to assess the impact of climate change on defence and security and address those challenges. We will contribute to combatting climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving energy efficiency, investing in the transition to clean energy sources and leveraging green technologies, while ensuring military effectiveness and a credible deterrence and defence posture.

Ensuring the Alliance's Continued Success

47. Investing in NATO is the best way to ensure the enduring bond between European and North American Allies, while contributing to global peace and stability. We will continue to reinforce our political unity and solidarity and to broaden and deepen our consultations to address all matters that affect our security. We commit to reinforce consultations when the security and stability of an Ally is threatened or when our fundamental values and principles are at risk.

48. We will share equitably responsibilities and risks for our defence and security. We will provide all the necessary resources, infrastructure, capabilities and forces to deliver fully on our core tasks and implement our decisions. We will ensure our nations meet the commitments under the Defence Investment Pledge, in

its entirety, to provide the full range of required capabilities. We will build on the progress made to ensure that increased national defence expenditures and NATO common funding will be commensurate with the challenges of a more contested security order.

49. NATO is indispensable to Euro-Atlantic security. It guarantees our peace, freedom and prosperity. As Allies, we will continue to stand together to defend our security, values, and democratic way of life.

THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY

Washington D.C. - 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[1]

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[2], on the territory of Turkey 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.

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.[3]

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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1. 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.

2. 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.

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