

Capabilities, capabilities, capabilities

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Every mention in this publication of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is marked by an asterisk (*) referring to the following footnote: Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

Closing the capabilities gap

James Appathurai examines the nature of the capabilities gap and initiatives to overcome it.

To those who have followed NATO over the long term, the current discussion about the capabilities gap between the United States and its Allies might appear but the latest chapter in a never-ending story. After all, NATO has struggled throughout its history with questions of interoperability and burden-sharing, and yet the Alliance has flourished. Why should the current concern about the capabilities gap be any different?



Cold War capabilities: Western European countries developed heavy-metal armies to counter the threat from the East (© NATO)

The answer is simple: because this time it is more serious. During the Cold War, interoperability and burden-sharing problems had limited practical effects, because the transatlantic community had no choice but to share the same strategic goal and methods, in the face of a single and existential threat.

Today, the situation is very different. At the practical level, NATO forces are working together in robust, complex and difficult missions, but the US lead in military technology makes working together difficult for deployed forces. At the political level, the desire among Allies to work together is hamstrung by the growing complexity of doing so. At the strategic level, a growing transatlantic divergence in capabilities can perpetuate both legitimate grievances and unfair stereotypes over burden-sharing and influence.

Origins

The capabilities gap has three main foundations: historical, structural and financial. Each, individually, would have proven a daunting challenge to address.

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Together, they explain why the gap has become so significant.

While a capabilities gap has existed ever since NATO's creation, the legacy of the Cold War has made it particularly acute today. During four decades of military stand-off, all NATO Allies prepared to meet the major threat to international peace and security: a massive attack from the East through the central plains of Germany. For most Western European countries, this required the development of heavy armies built around armour, artillery and short-range air superiority fighters. Since the battle was to take place at home, there was no need to be able to project forces over great distances, or to sustain them far from home over long periods.

For the United States, by contrast, preparing for a major battle in Europe required precisely the capacities most of its European Allies did not need: mobility, sustainability, the capacity to project and sustain forces over distance and time. In essence, while the United States was busy preparing airlifts and mobile units, most of its European Allies never worried about getting to the battlefield; they quite reasonably planned for the war to come to their doorstep.

The end of the Cold War devalued Europe's capacities, and rewarded those of the United States. Massive, heavy-metal European armies — hard to transport, slow to move — were no longer the key to providing security. Rapid deployment capabilities, to handle unforeseeable contingencies far away from home, were required. For the United States, this meant building on an existing strength. For much of Europe, it meant quickly turning around a defence establishment built up over decades, at significant cost.

This challenge is even more daunting in light of the structure of European defence. Despite decades of European political and economic integration, defence remains very much a national prerogative. In the European Union, there are still 15 countries, each with their own foreign and defence policy orientations. There are 15 armies, 14 air forces and 13 navies, each with their command structures, headquarters, logistics organisations and training infrastructure. There are also multiple national defence industries, supported as often for reasons of national independence and prestige as for reasons of effectiveness. Taken

together, the result has unavoidably been duplication of effort and industry, lack of coordination in policies, and higher costs — all of which make it impossible for Europe to match US advances in technology development and defence procurement.

These historical and structural problems are compounded by the financial factor. The raw numbers tell a powerful story. Since the Berlin Wall fell, European countries have cut defence budgets by more than 16 per cent, to an average below 2 per cent of GDP. European major equipment procurement budgets have dropped by 18 per cent since 1996, compared with an 8 per cent decrease in the United States over the same period. The United States spends more than four times the European total on defence research and development. US spending per active duty service member is almost four times that of Europe's. The list goes on and on.

The result of this spending shortfall is clear. Europe, as a whole, is investing significantly less than the United States in the meaningful and substantive defence reform necessary to retool for modern requirements. Where it invests, it gets less return, in terms of capabilities. And European defence industrial development has been hampered by restrictions on industrial cooperation, both within Europe and on a transatlantic level.

Consequences

As a result of these historical, structural and financial challenges, Europe's defence establishment has entered the 21st century suffering from significant military shortfalls. These include insufficient air and sea transport to deploy European forces with their equipment; inadequate air-to-air refuelling; a lack of precision-strike, all-weather-offensive fighter capability and precision-guided munitions; insufficient reconnaissance and intelligence capabilities at both the strategic and tactical level; inadequate deployable command and control; inadequate capacity to suppress enemy air defence; and shortfalls in secure, interoperable communications.

Over the past decade, the impact of these deficiencies on transatlantic defence cooperation has been growing. In broad terms, the capabilities gap between Europe and North America is making practical cooperation more difficult. It is imposing a division of labour that

is politically difficult to manage. And it is reinforcing unhelpful stereotypes, on both sides of the Atlantic.

Problems of interoperability have been an issue for the Alliance since its inception. The difference today is that US advances in communications and data processing, in particular, are moving faster than those of most of its Allies, and in new directions.

The essential backbone of a multinational military operation is the capacity to communicate between forces, and to coordinate the actions of those forces quickly and effectively. That cooperation is becoming a challenge.

The United States is increasingly the only Ally, and indeed the only country in the world, with many of the capacities absolutely

necessary to operational success. For example, NATO's operation to halt ethnic cleansing in Kosovo in 1999 was critically dependent on the United States for precision strike capability, surveillance assets, refuelling, lift, and high-end command and control systems.

This divergence of capabilities poses the danger of creating a division of labour, whereby the high-tech Allies (principally the United States) provide the logistics, strategic air and sea-lift, intelligence and air-power, and the others, by default, find themselves increasingly responsible for the manpower-intensive tasks such as long-term peacekeeping. Such a division of labour, if it becomes too stark, is politically unsustainable. It would create different perceptions of risk, of cost, and of success, and would thereby put enormous strain on NATO's unity and cohesion.

The capabilities gap is also exacerbating another long-standing irritant in transatlantic relations: burden-sharing. Europe's inability to contribute, in a more equal way, to high-end operations, is encouraging those in the United States who see Europe as unwilling ever to take on its fair share of the burden. For their part, many Europeans feel frustrated at their limited capacity to contribute, and their correspondingly limited political influence.

This worsening debate over burden-sharing is reinforcing inaccurate and divisive stereotypes of Europe and the United States on both sides of the Atlantic. According to analysts such as Robert Kagan of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, it also heralds a divergence of strategic culture, whereby

NATO's success at developing the necessary capabilities requires sufficient resources

Europe and the United States differ on what should be done because they differ on what each can actually do.

Solutions

Three main efforts are underway to narrow the capabilities gap: in NATO, in the European Union, and in the United States.

NATO's efforts to narrow the capabilities gap, and to promote interoperability, date from the early days of the Alliance. These efforts have met with some success — particularly in light of the political and technical complexity of the task. The proof can be seen in the Balkans peacekeeping operations, where NATO Allies are able to work together seamlessly. It can also be seen in major operations based on NATO forces, including those in the Gulf War and in Afghanistan, where decades of cooperation and standardisation within the Alliance have allowed for good cooperation in coalitions of the willing.

However, much more work remains to be done. That was why, at the 1999 Washington Summit, NATO's heads of state and government approved the Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI), which identified 58 essential capabilities that the NATO Allies should create or develop, nationally or collectively. The DCI moved the yardsticks forward, but it suffered from ambiguity over targets and individual national contributions.

At the upcoming Prague Summit, NATO will adopt a new capabilities initiative, which will build on the DCI by sharpening its focus, and specifying targets and national contributors. [For more details, see the article by Edgar Buckley in this issue of *NATO Review*.]

This new initiative will complement, and reinforce, the European Union's efforts to develop, by 2003, its Headline Goal of a deployable corps-sized force. The European Union has already held two Capabilities Commitment Conferences, to assess what capabilities it has, and which it must work to develop. The European Union's Capability Action Plan identified some 25 broad areas for improvement, and panels have been set up to address the shortfalls. Improvements to the forces of EU members of NATO will benefit the Alliance; they will also help to balance transatlantic burdens more fairly, and contribute to a healthier dialogue on burden-sharing.

Another keystone in narrowing the capabilities gap is better defence industrial cooperation. Improved cooperation within Europe will improve economies of scale and remove unnecessary duplication. Improved

transatlantic cooperation will enhance economies of scale even further, and ensure that both Europe and North America can take advantage of the latest and best technology.

On this front too, there is encouraging progress. The US Defence Trade and Security Initiative, the new review of the US export control regime, and the UK-US Declaration of Principles will lead to a better environment for mutual defence equipment and industrial cooperation. Washington is also now poised to issue a National Security Presidential Directive mandating a comprehensive, six-month review of US arms export control policies. The Global Project Authorisation process for the Joint Strike Fighter could provide an important model for the future, and the recent US approval of the sale of Predator unmanned aerial vehicles to Italy will help Europe stay in step when it comes to high-end, important capabilities.

All of these measures to bridge the capabilities gap are necessary, both individual and collectively — but they are not sufficient. Success also depends on funding. Several European governments have halted the decade-long downward slide in their defence budgets, and some have even begun to increase them. This is an important development. NATO's success at developing the necessary capabilities, as much as the European Union's success in meeting its Headline Goal, requires sufficient resources. Only if these are spent in the right way will the European Union, NATO and the transatlantic relationship reach their potential to preserve Euro-Atlantic security today and into the future. ■

Attainable targets

Edgar Buckley considers prospects for NATO's new capabilities initiative to be unveiled at the Prague Summit.

As NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson never tires of saying, the Alliance's credibility is based on its capabilities. Indeed, it is the fundamental importance of enhancing capabilities that has led NATO defence ministers to commission a new initiative in this area to be unveiled at the Prague Summit in November. Some may feel a sense of déjà vu, since the new initiative is being prepared by the same High-Level Steering Group, under the chairmanship of NATO Deputy Secretary General Alessandro Minuto Rizzo, that has overseen implementation of the Alliance's 1999 Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI). What, therefore, is new?



Capability shortfall: NATO's Strategic Commanders have drawn up a capability-shortfall list that the Allies will be invited to address specifically
(© US DoD)

In one sense, not very much. The new initiative — its name is yet to be decided — will cover much of the same ground as the DCI, and its ultimate objective is identical: to deliver the urgently needed capability improvements that the Alliance needs to carry out its missions. In many ways, therefore, it should be seen as a continuation and reinforcement of the DCI rather than as its replacement. This is logical, because NATO is to a large degree building on the successful platform provided by the DCI. While the DCI's shortfalls are generally well-known, its achievements have also been considerable.

There are three main, significant differences between the new initiative and its predecessor, based on lessons learned in the DCI. First, the new initiative's focus will be much sharper than it was for the DCI. Second, it will be based on a different, much tougher

form of national commitment. And third, it will include a much greater emphasis on multinational cooperation, including role specification, and mutual reinforcement with the European Union's drive to develop military capabilities.

Sharper focus

Unlike the DCI, which addressed 58 different capability issues, the new initiative will have a sharper focus. Alliance defence ministers decided at their regular six-monthly meeting in Brussels in June to concentrate on four key areas of fundamental importance to the efficient conduct of all NATO missions, including defence against terrorism. These areas are defending against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear attacks; ensuring command, communication and information superiority; improving interoperability of deployed forces and key aspects of combat effectiveness; and ensuring rapid deployment and sustainment of forces.

Within these so-called Key Operational Capability Areas, the High-Level Steering Group is narrowing the field even more, with the help of the NATO Military Authorities, so as to ensure that scarce resources are directed to where they are most needed. A key part of this process is the production of a capability-shortfall list by the Strategic Commanders — the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe and the Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic — which the Allies will be invited to address specifically. This is a detailed list of specific shortfalls covering many areas, including theatre missile defence, an Alliance ground surveillance system, precision-guided munitions and additional air-to-air refuelling capabilities.

In the DCI, the Allies made a collective pledge to pursue capability improvements. In the new initiative, each Ally is asked to commit itself individually to the specific capability improvements that it will contribute, either alone or with others. This means that the Alliance will know from the outset what is expected from each Ally and what aggregate improvements should be delivered. Moreover, confidence in the delivery of commitments will be greater than under the DCI because each head of state or government will have given a specific assurance that each commitment will be delivered, within a fixed timeframe. This new approach will also allow for an element of peer pressure. This is because

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each Ally's contribution will be relatively transparent so that questions can be asked why particular Allies are not able to do more in particular fields. Lord Robertson has written to all Alliance defence ministers setting out the minimum improvements he expects from the new initiative and indicating that further political steps may be necessary if these are not achieved.

Multinational cooperation

It has long been clear that many of the improved capabilities required by NATO — and by the European Union — cannot be acquired separately by all Allies. It would be uneconomic, for example, for the smaller Allies each to procure air-to-air refuelling capabilities. In recognition of the need for stronger multinational efforts in this direction — whether through shared procurement, equipment pooling, role sharing, role specialisation, or jointly owned and operated forces — the new initiative will include a robust phase during which Allies will be asked to commit themselves multinationally to meet outstanding shortfalls. There is an obvious similarity here to the efforts being made under the European Union Capability Action Plan (ECAP) to acquire additional capabilities to support the European Union in achieving its Headline Goal, that is to be able to deploy by 2003 a rapid reaction force of up to 60,000 troops within 60 days to execute humanitarian, crisis-management, peacekeeping and peace-making operations.

NATO defence ministers agreed at their June meeting that the Alliance must achieve mutual reinforcement and full transparency with the related activities of the ECAP. The precise modalities for this are yet to be agreed. The intention is to channel efforts in NATO as far as possible along paths that will reinforce, and be reinforced by, what is taking place in the European Union. Likewise, EU member states have been encouraged to provide information about commitments or intentions under ECAP, which are related to their intended commitments under the new NATO initiative.

Prospects for success

The success of the new initiative depends to some extent on the criteria by which success is measured. It is unrealistic, for example, to expect the new initiative rapidly to bring about all the capability improvements sought by the Alliance's Strategic Commanders. The Allies and the Secretary General do not expect to put right every shortfall overnight. Moreover, given that last year the United States spent 85 per cent more

on defence than the other 18 Allies combined, yet in terms of manpower its forces are only half as large as the other Allies combined, it is also unrealistic to

expect the initiative to correct the capability imbalance between the United States and the other Allies. But the new initiative should improve overall NATO capabilities and narrow the capabilities gap between the United States and the other Allies, provided Alliance governments — especially those in Europe — make good their pledges.

The new initiative is well-designed and timely. It focuses on the right areas and fits well with ongoing efforts in the European Union.

It incorporates a good balance between national and multinational efforts. And it places responsibility for delivering improved capabilities clearly with the nations, where it belongs. The Secretary General and NATO's International Staffs can facilitate and monitor. The Secretary General can even cajole. But in the final analysis it is up to the Allied governments to decide whether to put their money where their communiqués have been. If they fail to do so, the rest of what is agreed at the Prague Summit will have an empty ring. ■

**Unlike the DCI,
which addressed
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capability issues,
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will have a sharp
focus**

Investing in security

In advance of NATO's Prague Summit, Lord Robertson explains why security must not be taken for granted.

Just over half a century ago, the heads of state and government of 12 countries from both sides of the Atlantic came together at a time of great uncertainty to form the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. In the process, they pledged themselves to their common defence and committed the necessary resources to meet the security challenges of their time.



Long-term vision: Today's Alliance leaders have the opportunity at Prague to show the same foresight as NATO's founding fathers (© NATO)

In the wake of the Second World War and in the face of the Soviet threat, they considered security to be the most valuable of commodities. But times have changed and after so many years of peace and prosperity it has become easy to take security for granted in the West. This complacency is dangerous. For the key to the peace and prosperity we have become accustomed to enjoying remains the investment we make in our security.

Modern challenges

The challenges we face today are not as immediately obvious as the threat posed by the Soviet Union during the Cold War. But they are equally real and, if anything, even more insidious. Increased instability is the most obvious challenge. Regions such as the Caucasus, Central Asia, North Africa and the Middle East are all going through political and economic transitions of historic dimensions. Even if these changes ultimately lead in the right direction, only the most blinkered optimist would argue that the process of change will take place without major convulsions.

Lord Robertson is secretary general of NATO.

Whereas geography once isolated Europe and North America from the fall-out of instability in other parts of the world, this is no longer the case today. Increasingly, we must expect far-away conflicts to spill over into our societies in the form of migration, rising numbers of asylum seekers and smuggling, of humans, drugs and weapons.

We must also expect more terrorism, more failed states and more proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The terrorist attacks against the United States of 11 September 2001 were a watershed. In the past, terrorists have sought to maximise publicity while minimising the number of victims in the interest of promoting a particular political agenda. Now, however, a special breed of terrorist has come to the fore, driven not only by unachievable aims, but also by fanatical extremism and the urge to kill in large numbers. It is difficult to imagine how this genie might be returned to its pre-9/11 bottle.

The ideal haven for today's terrorists is the failed state where they are able to operate with impunity. Even in an era of globalisation, the state remains the central organising principle of modern civilisation. But not every state is sustainable. During the past decade, several, including Afghanistan, have collapsed and fragmented into regions, run by warlords. Others risk a similar fate in the years to come.

In spite of the efforts of diplomats and counter-proliferation experts, the spread of weapons of mass destruction will be a defining security challenge of this century. And the ultimate threat to our societies will emerge should weapons of mass destruction end up in the hands of terrorists. Here, the sinister combination of rogue states developing the weapons and terrorists ready and willing to use them is particularly worrying.

Solutions to these challenges are by no means purely military and NATO is clearly not the only institution that must adapt to meet them. That said, military capability translates into political credibility and is the crucial underpinning of our safety and security. From dealing with regional conflicts to terrorism, from Kosovo to Afghanistan, today's security environment places new demands on our military forces and obliges us to put stronger emphasis on the long-range application of force, deployability, sustainability and effective engagement.

The Alliance needs capabilities for the future, not for the past. We need more wide-bodied aircraft, and fewer heavy tanks. We need more precision-guided weapons, deployable logistic support troops, ground-surveillance systems, and protection against chemical and biological weapons. We need forces that are slimmer, tougher and faster, forces that reach further, and can stay in the field longer. Such capabilities cost.

Military transformation

There are some encouraging signs that Europe has woken up to the problem. The decade-long decline in defence spending has been halted in many European countries, and some — France, Luxembourg, Norway and Portugal, as well as the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland — now project real growth in defence expenditure. The United Kingdom has also announced budget increases. But the fact remains that many European Allies still suffer from a “zero-growth budget” mentality that restrains their necessary military transformation.

The United States, by contrast, is engaged in a fast-paced military transformation — and is prepared to pay for it. As a result, the capabilities gap across the Atlantic is growing, with all its negative implications for interoperability, for effective coalition operations, and, ultimately, for maintaining a common security outlook. Concern about US unilateralism risks becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy unless Europe makes a more equal contribution to our common security. This is not because the United States wants to act alone but because Europeans do not have the capacity to cooperate effectively with US forces.

Even without major increases in defence budgets, it is possible to build greater capabilities — through reprioritisation, through role specialisation and through multinational cooperation. There are also gains to be made via innovative schemes for procurement and acquisition, such as leasing certain assets. And increased defence industrial cooperation both within Europe and between the two sides of the Atlantic will contribute to building more and greater capabilities for the same money.

The Prague Summit should be a decisive milestone towards changing the output from defence. I want nations to make clear commitments to provide specific capabilities within defined timeframes and I want the

aggregate of these new commitments to represent a significant breakthrough towards filling the gaps in critical areas, such as strategic lift and air-to-air refuelling. This is not a question of economics or procurement, or even of military judgement. It is a matter of political will. That is why it is appropriate to ask the Alliance’s heads of state and government to address the issue, and I am confident that they will.

The formula that NATO’s founding fathers committed themselves to met with historically unprecedented success and successive generations have benefited from their foresight. In just over a month’s time, today’s

leaders will have the opportunity to demonstrate the same vision. Like the statesmen in the late 1940s, they must commit themselves to the necessary security investment on behalf of their own generation as well as the generations to come. ■

**We must expect
more terrorism,
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Hitting the Helsinki Headline Goal

General Rainer Schuwirth examines EU efforts to develop military capabilities and meet the Helsinki Headline Goal.

For the past three years, EU member states have been working towards meeting the so-called Helsinki Headline Goal. This has required developing the necessary military capabilities to be able by next year to deploy, within 60 days, a force of up to 60,000 troops for humanitarian and rescue missions, peacekeeping, and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking, and to sustain that force in the field for at least a year. That deadline is looming and there are still many capability shortfalls that have to be addressed to ensure that the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy has teeth.



In the firing line: Europe has demonstrated its military potential in the NATO-led operations in Southeastern Europe (© NATO)

At roughly the same time that EU member states committed themselves to the Headline Goal, NATO members — of whom 11 are also in the European Union — signed up to the Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI), the Alliance's programme to raise its military capabilities to meet the challenges of the 21st century. The fact that these two high-level programmes have run in parallel has possibly contributed to confusion about their nature among commentators, some of whom have even speculated about competition between the two organisations. In reality, however, the European Union and NATO should be able to work effectively together as partners.

EU missions and capabilities

EU-led, crisis-management operations encompass all military missions with the exception of collective

defence. This covers support to civilian populations in areas of natural disasters; evacuation of EU citizens from crisis areas; monitoring of cease-fires, of borders, of air and sea-space and embargoes; establishing and maintaining a secure environment; stopping hostile actions; separation of parties by force; and other types of enforcement. With the exception of territories inside the European Union, such missions are possible whenever and wherever politically decided.

Considering this broad range of potential missions, it is clear that the military capabilities required may vary greatly. Many factors have to be examined during the planning of any operation, including the political and military objectives, the threats and risks, and time factors, such as the possible duration. In addition, the geographic location of operations and their specific political, military, logistical and social characteristics have to be taken into consideration. Assessing all these factors requires intelligence capabilities. At present, however, European countries have significant shortfalls in all areas of intelligence collection and there is no common system for intelligence fusion.

Equally, it is impossible to identify appropriate forces, generate, assemble and deploy them, command them, sustain them, react to changes in the situation and eventually to recover them without having effective military headquarters with multinational staffs in place. Moreover, all levels within the chain of command — from Brussels to the individual force element — must be linked with the appropriate information technology.

The drive to develop military capabilities in the European Union is not about building a competitor to NATO but about improving European capabilities in general and, in this way, both strengthening the European pillar of NATO and contributing more effectively to NATO-led operations. The European Union is not seeking to create a standing reaction force, but to be in a position to assemble a force on a case-by-case basis from existing capabilities on the principle of voluntary contributions. And the European Union will not be involved in collective defence, but in crisis-management operations, the so-called Petersberg tasks, where NATO as a whole is not engaged.

General Rainer Schuwirth is director general of the European Union Military Staff.

To avoid unnecessary duplication there is no intention to create, in addition to existing national and multinational headquarters, new ones for European purposes. Instead, either elements of NATO's integrated command structure, or those headquarters offered by states that have signed up to the Headline Goal, are to be used. In the latter case, headquarters need to be made multinational and prepared for future operations. If this approach is to function properly, considerable groundwork is required. This includes ensuring that headquarters possess up-to-date and appropriate communication systems for processing technical data.

An appropriate mix of force elements throughout the services and branches is necessary to conduct operations successfully. Here, the targets of the Headline Goal have, at least quantitatively, been filled in terms of offers from member states. However, information is still lacking as to the quality of these offers, in particular in relation to the interoperability of force elements to be assembled to ensure effective structure and composition. A reason for this is the mechanical approach of member states to meeting the Headline Goal: defining and listing the required individual force elements, accepting member states' offers at face value and matching requirements and offers individually. Attempts to develop a more sophisticated review process or capability-development mechanism, including a link to NATO's force planning system, have to date come to nothing. It is, nevertheless, clear that many shortfalls still need to be overcome. Moreover, the significance of these shortfalls goes beyond the issue of EU capabilities and may limit the ability of member states to contribute to both NATO-led and other operations.

Some shortfalls could be eliminated relatively easily through additional offers from member states. It is hard to believe, for example, that Europe lacks such force elements as infantry headquarters, armoured companies, general support engineering, headquarter augmentees or military observers. That said, many member states are simultaneously engaged in several missions around the world and may not, therefore, be in a position to make certain force elements available for EU purposes. Indeed, this is the case for all voluntarily generated forces, not just for the Headline Goal.

In other shortfall areas — such as intelligence gathering and reconnaissance systems, helicopters, suppression of enemy air defence, precision-guided ammunition, air-to-air refuelling or strategic transport — numerous national and multinational initiatives and projects already exist. In time, therefore, these capabilities should become available. However, further

clarity is still required as to whether such projects are designed primarily to upgrade the capabilities of the countries involved or whether they could also be used in a broader, multinational environment. If the latter is the case, equipment will have to be interoperable with that of other countries.

Finally, there are those shortfall areas where an upgrade of capabilities can only be achieved through considerable investment. This risks overburdening existing budgets and overheating future spending plans, which makes progress in these areas unlikely.

Maximum output for the defence Euro

At present, EU and NATO member states are working towards raising their military capabilities via the European Capability Action Plan (ECAP) and the DCI and it is in the interests of both organisations to coordinate these efforts. At a time of tight budgets and competing spending priorities, however, getting maximum output for the defence Euro will be critical to meeting capability targets. Achieving this will require new and innovative thinking and approaches towards security.

Arguably, the most important change required is psychological. Without losing sight of the broader transatlantic or NATO dimension, European decision-makers will have to think and act "European", if they wish to develop and improve European capabilities. In addition to thinking in national terms, decision-makers will have to ask themselves at every stage of force planning — from defining requirements to research, development and procurement — whether a particular force element or piece of equipment is sufficiently flexible to fit into a multinational system; whether it will add to European capabilities or just contribute to an existing surplus of capabilities while other deficits remain; and whether it would be possible to generate efficiency gains by joining forces with another country. Achieving so great a shift in mindset is extremely difficult, not least because the necessary discipline effectively entails self-imposed restrictions on sovereignty as well as a range of consequences for the national defence industry.

Such an approach also obliges countries to consider capabilities in terms of building compatible systems. When certain countries develop and procure intelligence-gathering or reconnaissance systems, they are, indeed, upgrading their own capabilities, but in the absence of the tools to fuse and disseminate the results, the return on the investment is not as great as it could be. Likewise, to maximise efficiency, new attack and support helicopters must be capable of operating together cohesively and being integrated

within a wider, multinational force. And to make the most of new transport capabilities, there must be effective coordination, the adoption of common loading measures and standards as well as sufficient loading and unloading capacities.

Achieving the necessary mind shift requires joint and combined force development and planning at the European Union as well as at NATO, and, equally important, coherent approaches between the two organisations with full support from capitals. Moreover, those involved, both now and in the future, should follow common training programmes to encourage them to think and act in multinational, European and transatlantic terms. This is as much the case for officials from the established members of both organisations as it is for their peers from countries that have only recently joined or are about to join. Moreover, common training programmes should not remain restricted to narrow areas, but should be enhanced and expanded to help inculcate common or at least compatible approaches, concepts and procedures in the relevant officials.

Collective capability goals

In addition to new and, hopefully, more coordinated force development and procurement procedures, European countries must also focus on those collective capability goals, to which they signed up at Helsinki. Here, intelligence is the indispensable tool for effective planning and decision-making.

Handling of intelligence is, of course, an extremely sensitive issue. However, if EU leaders are to have a sound basis for decision-making, if EU military commanders are to have the information they need to plan and run operations and if Europeans want to add value to NATO intelligence, more transparency and cooperation is required. The creation of a European intelligence fusion centre could provide the basis of a solution. Such a centre could take in information from the European Union's Satellite Centre and receive all source intelligence products from member states, compile and disseminate them. It might also receive intelligence requests and, with the benefit of some kind of tasking authority, could assist in the development of a better-coordinated European intelligence gathering and reconnaissance system for strategic and operational purposes.

A second area requiring improvement is command and control. At present, four European countries have put their national headquarters forward as potential operational headquarters for the European Union. In addition, at the secondary command level — that of force headquarters — many more offers have

been received. Moreover, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe and other elements of NATO's command structure provide another option as soon as relations between the European Union and NATO have been resolved. However, with a command structure review under way at NATO, and the imminent enlargement of both the European Union and NATO, decisions might well be delayed.

To avoid unnecessary duplication, the number of existing options might well be reduced and European efforts combined, especially where interoperable and compatible information technology is concerned. This, together with a fresh approach to intelligence, might considerably assist in the development of a common European intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) and command, control, communications and computing (C4) capability for EU purposes and, at the same time, strengthen NATO's European pillar.

Finally, there are also areas where Europe already possesses capabilities, but where a more comprehensive, systematic approach could imbue them with greater impact. The creation of a European Air Transport Coordination Cell under the European Air Group is a good example. Expanding its role to coordinate the full range of strategic deployment and transport, including the use of civilian assets to avoid unnecessary competition, could pave the way for a European deployment coordination centre. Combining the capabilities of several countries in combat search and rescue in a multinational European body would also help address what is at present a glaring deficiency.

Europe clearly has great military potential. Indeed, this has been demonstrated both in the ongoing NATO-led operations in Southeastern Europe and in missions involving EU member states elsewhere in the world. However, European capabilities alone are often not sufficient for the European Union to perform all the tasks it aspires to take on. Moreover, serious shortfalls remain in key areas. The Headline Goal was defined in order to help overcome these shortfalls, to give Europe the capability to act on its own and to strengthen the European pillar of NATO. This goal is yet to be met and greater efforts are required. The more coordinated these efforts are, the sooner the European Union will develop its capabilities and the greater the return on the defence Euro. ■

Can and should Europe bridge the capabilities gap?

Yves Boyer VERSUS Burkard Schmitt

YES



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NO



Burkard Schmitt is both a senior research fellow and the assistant director of the *European Union Institute for Security Studies* in Paris.

Dear Burkard,



With the United States spending 85 per cent more on defence than all the other NATO Allies combined last year and further increasing its defence spending this year, the difference between military capabilities on

the two sides of the Atlantic has probably never been greater. But while it is critical for European countries to ensure that their militaries remain interoperable with those of the United States, so that they can continue to work and fight together, a line has to be drawn between this imperative and the political consequences of technological choices that would create dependency.

As you are well aware, Western Europeans are currently being urged to close the “gap” between the military capabilities of their armed forces and those of the United States. This exhortation is, of course, as old as the Atlantic Alliance itself. But now, in addition to the traditional arguments used to persuade Western Europeans to increase their defence spending, the war against terrorism is being invoked. However, the case for increasing military expenditure based on the war against terrorism has yet to be demonstrated.

The next NATO Summit in Prague will no doubt be another occasion to highlight the gulf in defence spending between the United States and its Allies and an opportunity for US leaders to point to lacklustre European efforts to correct it. Here, it is worth bearing in mind that the European Union’s military capabilities largely exceed those of its immediate neighbours and, in international terms, stand second only to those of the United States.

The motives behind current US admonishments are perhaps more important than the capabilities gap itself.

Among those motives, two are of particular significance: first the failure by the Atlantic Alliance fully to implement the Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI), NATO’s latest high-level programme to raise capabilities; and second, a growing European assertiveness in key high-tech areas, with the risks for the United States of the creation of competitors in fields where it currently holds a virtual monopoly.

Under the DCI, NATO’s European Allies were effectively asked to transform their military posture according to visions elaborated by the US military. In this way, the Atlantic Alliance was to be transformed into a unified zone in strategic and defence affairs under US leadership. Indeed, technological progress effectively became a substitute for an identified threat to promote deeper military integration within the Atlantic area to a level not seen even during the era of the Soviet threat.

US views on future warfare have been strongly influenced by processing combat intelligence in a revolutionary manner and are epitomised in the notion of “network-centric warfare”. In the US vision, these were supposed to become the standard views in Europe as well. In emphasising technology as the main driver of military action, it was easy to highlight the significance of an apparent gap between the two sides of the Atlantic. Indeed, US expenditure on military R&D in 2001 alone was greater than Germany’s entire defence budget.

Closing the “gap” may of course also meet the expectation of key European defence companies eager to stabilise a declining domestic market and enter the US defence arena. But what would be earned in financial terms by Western Europe would be lost in political terms. Europe would become more dependent on the United States since Washington would be the

sole holder of the “keys” of the “system of systems” which is the essence of “network-centric warfare”. Is this a coherent policy at a time when the European Union is trying to acquire a political role and influence on the international scene that goes beyond the economic and monetary realm?

When the US model is followed, it can sometimes be damaging for Europe, as in the case of the Joint Strike Fighter programme. Here, three members of the European Union — Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom — will divert almost \$4 billion from potential European R&D resources in the coming years. This outlay, that will greatly benefit US companies, comes at the expense of European capacities when European research programmes, such as the European Technology Access Programme (ETAP), aimed at closing the gap in R&D, are crying out for greater investment. There does, nevertheless, appear to be much greater resolve among Europeans to invest in high-tech programmes, as, for example, with the decision to proceed with the Galileo project, a programme to create a commercially oriented satellite positioning system, despite US opposition and lobbying to kill it.

Instead of brooding over the issue of a capabilities “gap”, EU members would do better to reflect on the dynamic which surrounds the idea of a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) and look at the military needs Europeans may require to give it teeth. The question of developing the military means and operational doctrines that may flesh out the ESDP is, however, seldom discussed. Europe needs enhanced military capabilities. But Europeans have to invent a model of warfare that is specifically tailored to the needs of the European Union, one which is “made in Europe” and which will probably have considerably less emphasis on technology than its US equivalent.

Yours,
Yves

Dear Yves,



It is generally accepted that European forces have important capability shortfalls. The problem is both military and political. First, interoperability with US forces becomes increasingly difficult; second, the ESDP risks remaining a paper tiger.

Capability shortfalls are, of course, linked to budget constraints. The main problem with defence spending in Europe, however, is quality rather than quantity. Many European countries maintain force structures that are simply not up to the new security challenges,

and, even more important, all European countries consider armaments as a national *chasse gardée*. As a consequence, they continue to waste scarce resources on costly duplication — of capabilities, acquisition agencies, defence regulations and so on. Given the degree of integration Europe has achieved in other fields, this practice is not only outdated, but from the taxpayers’ point of view, outrageous. I would therefore argue that any defence budget increase should be linked to structural reforms, designed to promote a common European defence market and a common armaments policy.

As far as the DCI is concerned, I agree to a point. Of course the DCI is a bottom-up approach to implementing NATO’s Strategic Concept, and of course it is inspired by the US force structure. On the other hand, I doubt that the DCI can really become a backdoor to a unified zone in strategic and defence affairs under US leadership. I would argue that there is already a specific European approach towards the use of military power, which is embedded within a broader security approach and based on a specific security culture. True, this culture has not yet led to a European Strategic Concept, but there is an almost instinctive reluctance in many European countries to emulate the US focus on military power. This, in turn, has a profound influence on European decisions to avoid agreeing to DCI commitments that reflect the US security approach too much.

There are, of course, areas that appear on the shortfall lists of both the DCI and the European Union Capability Action Plan. It goes without saying that Europeans should give priority to these areas. Whether these gaps are filled by US or European equipment remains a decision of the national government concerned. European countries without a significant arms industry have traditionally bought American. This might be regrettable, but in part at least, it is also the fault of the big arms-producing countries which have failed to integrate their partners into a common political project.

However, even more embarrassing is the fact that even the big arms-producing countries do not seem to have a clear European strategy for their procurement policy and their defence industries. The problem goes beyond the DCI. Whether you look at the failure to create European champions in naval shipbuilding and land armaments, the delaying of major cooperative projects, or the impossibility of setting up a European Armaments Agency — there is simply not the political will to come to common solutions. Once again, the real problem is Europe’s weakness and lack of ambition rather than US strength and search for hegemony.

I am therefore less optimistic than you are about a European resolve to invest more in high-tech programmes. I am afraid that the example of Galileo is somewhat misleading. First, it is a civil project, which makes it politically much easier for certain European countries both to raise the funding and to compete with the United States. Second, I strongly doubt whether Galileo would ever have been launched without the European Commission acting as the driving force. As an intergovernmental programme, ETAP depends exclusively on the willingness of the countries involved to stick to their endeavour, and experience has demonstrated how difficult this can be.

The general problem, I would say, is the lack of clarity around the ESDP and its strategic and conceptual implications. Given the divergences among EU member states, a certain constructive ambivalence was probably necessary at the beginning to get the project off the ground politically. But divergences cannot be ignored endlessly, and the lack of clarity makes it increasingly difficult to make the ESDP operational.

If the ESDP is to become a reality, two things seem indispensable. Firstly, the European Union cannot avoid defining and spelling out its own Strategic Concept as the basis for effective planning. This will only be possible if member states agree that the European Union does not need to cover the same high-intensity scenarios as the United States. It does not suggest, however, that the European Union can remain focused exclusively on handling low-intensity conflicts. Secondly, Europeans have to improve dramatically the cost-efficiency of their procurement policies. This can only be achieved, if the European Union gets involved in the armament acquisition process, with a certain role for the European Commission included.

So basically you're right to say that EU members should focus more on how to give teeth to the ESDP. This would not only improve European capabilities, it would also facilitate transatlantic dialogue in general. Far from aggravating divergence, spelling out differences provides a firm basis for open and concrete discussions, which the Americans have always preferred.

Yours,
Burkard

Dear Burkard,



I agree with you that the process of giving the European Union a military capability of its own is far from easy. It has, nevertheless, been definitely set in motion. This is the logical consequence of a political commitment by the European Union's heads of state and government.

The legal framework was set up with the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 and the political countdown began at the Franco-British meeting in Saint Malo, France, in 1998. That said, it will probably require as many years as was necessary to create the Euro to bring this project to fruition. Indeed, we should not forget that when the idea of a common currency was first mooted it generated deep scepticism, if not outright hostility. Nevertheless, 20 years later, it has become reality and the consequences have not been cataclysmic.

The evolution of the Euro followed the traditional pattern of European construction. This was once described by former European Commission President Jacques Delors as a cycle in which years of stagnation are followed by swift advances which in turn lead to crisis and back to stagnation. The creation of a European defence policy seems to be following the same path.

Before Europeans achieve the goal of a common defence policy many complex issues will have to be resolved. Their resolution will probably be a far more painful process than any of us can even imagine. Two examples illustrate this. The first concerns technology; the second the military posture of each EU country.

As you rightly point out, Galileo is strictly speaking a civil project. It is, however, far more than that, since it also encompasses a military dimension that Europeans cannot ignore. Among many potential military uses, Galileo can provide the necessary data for using long-range precision-guided weapons. This would pave the way for a European targeting centre. It can also, at a tactical level, provide the necessary data for participating, for example, in de-mining activities where soldiers require millimetre precision. Moreover, this is a use of the US-developed GPS technology that the Americans have not always been willing to give to certain allies. Indeed, the military uses of Galileo are so extensive that Europeans will soon have to decide how to manage them. A logical solution would be to give the European Union's military staff a key role. This will no doubt generate a backlash in some European countries and precipitate a new crisis among Europeans. This may not be a bad thing, since it would oblige EU members collectively to deepen their understanding of what a common defence policy entails.

In the process, every EU country will have to reassess its military posture. Would it be rational, as you point out, for Europeans to improve the cost-efficiency of their procurement policies, while ignoring other aspects of EU defence? Creating a genuine common European defence policy will entail a structural and functional transformation of Copernican proportions. When the two of us recently participated in an international meeting of army cadets, most of whom were from

Europe, many advocated the creation of a common European training school. While this seems to be a pragmatic approach, it also raises a host of problems, such as the potential for career progression in an EU context. Indeed, as a common defence policy is constructed, many issues that have hitherto been ignored will have to come on the agenda. This includes: doctrine, training, force specialisation and career progression, as well as defence industry consolidation and procurement. Getting it right will require vision, innovation and courage.

Yours,
Yves

[Dear Yves,](#)



I really hope that your comparison between ESDP and the Euro is right. However, sometimes I doubt whether the political will that underpins European defence is as strong as it was for the common currency. In any case, we should never forget that a European military capability is not an objective in itself, but an instrument to achieve political goals. In other words, building ESDP without strengthening the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) does not make sense.

However, developments since 11 September 2001 have shown how difficult it is for Europeans to resist the centrifugal forces that come from strong external pressure. When push comes to shove, traditional national reflexes and divergences about the role of the European Union reappear. Some EU countries prefer simply to stay out of world affairs. Others try to prevent the “hegemony” of bigger partners rather than to strengthen the common project. And the big member states still believe that they can play a more important international role if they act outside the European convoy. However, without a) the ambition to play an international role and b) the honest recognition that this role can only be played together, the technical, military and financial obstacles in the way of a common defence policy will not be overcome. If we fail, both the European Union as a whole and its member states individually will end up in international insignificance.

You are right to say that the transformation that is needed would be of Copernican proportions. I simply wonder who could be the driving force to push this transformation through. This is, by the way, why I pointed at the differences between Galileo and ETAP. Of course you are absolutely right when you say that Galileo has important potential military applications. However, so far, we talk about potential, not reality. My

point here is that the European Commission could play a decisive role only because Galileo was launched as a civil project. I’m convinced that defence projects would greatly benefit if they also had a powerful, genuine European actor supporting them.

This does not mean that a communitarisation of European defence would be a realistic option for the foreseeable future. However, I simply cannot imagine an efficient ESDP organised in a purely intergovernmental way. From my point of view, some sort of integration and a certain dose of supranationalism cannot be avoided, if we want to be serious about our ambitions. This is why I focus so much on procurement and defence markets. Budgetary pressures and the influence of commercial aspects make these the areas in which I see the most urgent necessity and the best chance to overcome the traditional intergovernmental approach.

The challenge is impressive, and the current international situation doesn’t make things easier. A possible war against Iraq and its consequences, the ongoing economic crisis, EU enlargement — all these issues can put the European Union in general, and CFSP/ESDP in particular, under enormous pressure. But maybe Europeans need a crisis to force them into brave and innovative steps.

Yours,
Burkard

[Dear Burkard,](#)



You raised a crucial issue when you said that an efficient ESDP could not be organised in a purely intergovernmental way. However, we are obviously a long way from moving beyond such an approach. Indeed, in most

EU countries, it would be almost impossible to discuss such an eventuality out loud. But the idea will surely surface sooner rather than later. Consider, for example, the evolution of our debate. We began by discussing the ways, means and structures needed to develop the ESDP and we agree these are serious, real and concrete issues. Moreover, politicians, bureaucrats and soldiers are now working on them every day. Their work is, however, long, painful and seldom rewarding. It is easy, therefore, to point to deadlock and setbacks, especially when compared with the achievements of the past half-century at NATO.

In the course of our debate, we have, nevertheless, reached a deeper appreciation for the ESDP. If we step back from the crises of the moment, we can see how far the ESDP has come. In most EU countries, the defence agenda does now encompass a European dimension.

Given where things stood ten years ago, this is huge progress.

Such progress is probably the result of seismic movements just below the surface. Indeed, ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the geography of European security has been shifting. Whereas the Soviet threat effectively put national sovereignty in security matters on hold and created a virtually automated decision-making process at NATO, this ceased to be the case as soon as the Cold War ended. The new circumstances have not led to chaos but to a growing malaise within the Alliance, as witnessed during both the Kosovo and the Afghan crises, when NATO struggled to build political consensus.

Transatlantic relations remain dynamic as a result of shared values, common interests and historical experience. However, the complexity of international security today has revealed emerging differences in attitude and approach between the two sides of the Atlantic. The perception of threat in the European Union on the one hand and in the United States on the other is no longer necessarily the same, as in the recent past. This fact is slowly but surely leading EU countries to contemplate building a common defence policy. Indeed, it is noteworthy that the decision to launch an ESDP at Maastricht was taken at precisely the moment when NATO's automated decision-making process broke down. The incentive to take this process forward is more pressing than ever.

Yours,
Yves

Dear Yves,



I agree that transatlantic relations are going through a process of change that reflects a more fundamental transformation of the international system. In such a situation, it is not surprising that divergences between the United States and Europe exist and even grow. However, the problem is not so much divergence per se, but the way in which the two sides deal with it.

Both the United States and the European Union have an enormous responsibility for peace and stability in the world. Europeans often complain, for good reason, about US policy, but they undermine their arguments by refusing to assume their own responsibilities. Facing the challenges of the third millennium, it is almost a moral obligation for Europe to intervene in world affairs and to become a serious partner for the United States. In spite of all its deficiencies, the European Union remains the only possible framework within which its member states can achieve this objective.

This means, in turn, that the European Union needs efficient structures and the necessary political and military tools. Improving military capabilities is only one aspect among others, and may be not even the most important one. However, current capability shortfalls can and should be tackled. The more Europeans are willing to engage in serious structural reform, the less expensive this endeavour will become.

Having different perceptions, concepts and objectives, it is natural that Europe spends less than the United States on defence and has different budgetary priorities. Therefore, you are right to say that the benchmark for European efforts should not be set by comparisons with the United States, but according to the European Union's own ambitions. An efficient CFSP and ESDP would not only enhance Europe's role in the world, but also improve the transatlantic partnership. If, by contrast, EU member states fail to take the necessary steps to achieve that objective, they will be punished by irrelevance.

Yours,
Burkard



Improbable survivor

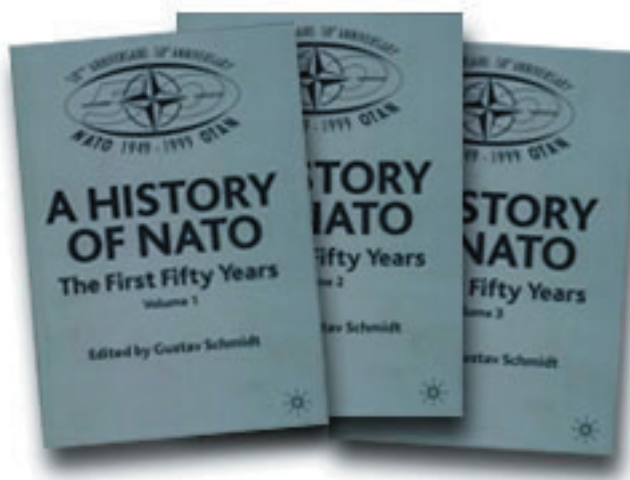
Nicholas Sherwen reviews Gustav Schmidt's edited three-volume magnum opus "A History of NATO: The First Fifty Years".

A fine compilation of articles, transcripts of oral presentations, conference papers and extracts from larger studies, beautifully packaged and presented, *A History of NATO: The First Fifty Years* (Palgrave, New York, 2001) contains riches that any student of the politics of international security will be delighted to get his or her hands on. It is a fascinating collection, and, for anybody wanting to begin to understand what it is about the first fifty years of NATO that has made such an indelible stamp on world affairs, what implications this has and what responsibilities it carries for the future, all three volumes are a source of stimulation. But they are not a history of NATO.

In his advice to contributors at the 1999 conference to launch this project, the compiling editor, Gustav Schmidt, evokes a theme that can serve the reader well as a navigational aid. Citing Sean Kay's work on NATO and the Future of European Security, he attributes the longevity of the Alliance to two facts. The first is awareness on the part of Western leaders that: "The removal of NATO from the region would expose the weakness of other institutions." The second is NATO's proven ability to change with the times and to survive internal strains and external threats, emerging with "a sort of institutional wisdom which helps to master forthcoming problems".

What is it about NATO that has enabled it to adapt — so far — without fundamental damage to the principles that hold it together? Many authors offer pointers. Perhaps it is the simplicity of the Washington Treaty itself and the creation of a single institution — the North Atlantic Council — with the authority to build the mechanisms needed to fulfil its task. Or is it the removal of any hierarchy in the levels at which the Council meets and therefore any room for doubt about the validity of its decisions and the degree of national commitment they

represent? Is it the successful marriage between short and longer-term interests of member countries that has discouraged any of them from seeking divorce? Or is it the sub-conscious recollection that, whatever current frustrations and difficulties may be experienced, the Alliance's very existence has banished the prospect of generalised conflict among members, only a few decades after several were engaged in mortal combat? Or finally, is it pragmatism of the "not broke, don't mend it" variety? NATO works — don't meddle with it.



Whatever it may be, the reader does well to have such considerations in mind when trying to unravel the multiple layers of the Alliance tapestry. There are more than 60 contributors to these volumes, their offerings ranging from academic doodling to trenchant analysis of issues with roots in earlier periods but continued relevance

to today's agenda. Whether we are discussing the influence of military spending on economic performance in the 1950s or tracing the course of the transatlantic burden-sharing debate, there are useful pointers to developments that have had lasting effect on the way the security business is managed today.

Alan S. Millard tells us early in the first volume that: "There was no battle plan for winning the Cold War other than guaranteeing the allegiance of populations to the capitalist state." However, he draws attention to a fundamental change attributable to the Alliance with regard to military economic planning. From 1949, it was no longer a case of raising war chests for foreign military campaigns or for territorial defence in the knowledge that the fund-raising would end with the action. Alliance members would henceforth need to raise public revenue for defence budgets "with no definite time horizon by which they would be cut".

Jack L. Granatstein examines NATO's relationship with the United Nations, exploring the unrealistic early hopes placed on the United Nations to deliver collective security; the years of vetoes in the Security

Nicholas Sherwen has worked for NATO's Office of Information and Press since 1979, edits the "NATO Handbook" and has written and published widely on Alliance issues.

Council; and the transition of the 1990s. The extent of the early hope placed in the United Nations should not be underestimated. Lester B. Pearson, whose name as an Alliance statesman adorns the door of one of NATO's conference rooms, initially saw NATO as a second-best solution, only needed if the United Nations failed to shape up. With the outbreak of the Korean War, the die had been cast. Stalin's miscalculation convinced Western leaders that they had to look beyond the United Nations and build a strong, militarised NATO to meet the Soviet threat.

With the evolution of the United Nations as a point of reference for conflict resolution but not necessarily a catalyst for action, NATO itself underwent a parallel but almost imperceptible transition from a body that could consult about "out-of-area" threats to one that could act upon them. The process is central to understanding NATO's role today, but is passed over superficially. Nevertheless, the reader is left in no doubt that it was the experience of operating in Bosnia and Herzegovina through the United Nations that convinced Alliance members of the need for a different approach.

Today, Hall Gardner points out, NATO legitimacy depends on UN principles, not UN procedures. It is significant how far the debate about reinforcing the United Nations actually went and which individuals — UN Secretary-General Trygve Lie, Albert Einstein and Senator Robert A. Taft among others — were initially opposed to NATO's creation. Some wanted language in the Washington Treaty explicitly listing the articles of the UN Charter that would govern NATO's actions. They lost out to those who saw the dangers and insisted on near maximum freedom of manoeuvre for the Alliance.

Having grappled with the way in which the Treaty was set up and how things might have turned out differently, the reader is obliged to shift focus early in the first volume to juggle with more recent developments. Mats Berdal's chapter is one of several devoted entirely to the 1990s, but offering some basic truths that can legitimately be regarded as part of the historical legacy. Intra-Alliance disagreements, for example, are no longer automatically attenuated by the unifying influence of a common external threat.

In subsequent chapters, history is more or less abandoned in order to investigate such matters as the role of "cultural interoperability" in determining NATO's effectiveness in the Balkans, and the implications of differences between NATO and UN chains of command.

Douglas T. Stuart gives an enjoyable retrospective on George Kennan's proposal for a three-tier membership. This was designed to bring a global

dimension to NATO, described by Robert Lovett as "resident members, non-resident members and summer visitors". How, one wonders, would he have described today's members, aspirants, Partnership for Peace participants and special or distinctive partners? Kennan's idea was soon abandoned and every time the enlargement debate has surfaced, the notion of different classes of membership has been effectively squashed. The notion of a global dimension, however, continues to lurk under the surface.

Stuart's analysis of 31 tests of NATO solidarity in relation to out-of-area disputes also turns up much interesting material. These are listed in five categories: distaste for out-of-area policies of another Ally; intrusions into a *domaine réservé* of another Ally; exploitation of the Alliance for independent, out-of-area initiatives; disagreements over burden-sharing resulting from out-of-area activities; and differences in defining threats. This is highly recommended reading. Not least, it shows at least one historical event in its correct context. The Gulf War is depicted as the last out-of-area issue of the era, not the first test of NATO's post-Cold War missions.

In examining why out-of-area disputes did not fatally damage the Alliance, even if they caused divisions among groups of Allies, several authors point out that most contentious issues — Korea, Indochina and so forth — were not played out on the NATO stage. Holding consultations on out-of-area issues without contemplating action that might jeopardise cohesion on tasks closer to home provided a safety valve. Frode Liland illustrates this with a well-argued piece shedding light on the factors at play in the 1986/87 Gulf crisis. These included consultations without commitments, pragmatic solutions to find a non-NATO framework (the Western European Union) for cooperation among Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom; and arrangements to enable others (Denmark, Germany and Norway) to pick up slack created in NATO. The upshot: no dilution of NATO effectiveness in-area and no serious drain on NATO resources.

In a more authentically historical piece, Lawrence Kaplan leads us through NATO enlargement. He identifies six phases, two of which took place before the signing of the Washington Treaty. First, the addition of Canada added credibility to the notion of a truly Atlantic Alliance, as opposed to one designed to facilitate US involvement in European affairs. Second, five nations absent from the 1948 negotiations — Denmark (including Greenland), Iceland, Italy, Norway and Portugal (including the Azores) — joined the process. In each case, geo-

strategic reasons had much to do with this. Germany, Greece and Turkey had been countries-in-waiting from the outset and it was just a question of time before circumstances enabled them to join. Spain would have joined earlier but for Allied hostility to Francisco Franco. Kaplan's essay also looks in well-informed detail at the post-Cold War enlargement process and suggests that its future pattern will follow precedent — full integration of aspirants into the fabric of Europe being as important a contribution to the Alliance's objectives as their contribution of military assets.

A further five chapters take up the enlargement theme. Karl-Heinz Kamp was writing at a time when the indicators suggested that further enlargement decisions would be postponed and recalls the role played by the cost factor, as opposed to political or strategic considerations, in the ratification debates in the US Congress. Kay sees enlargement as a winner's game for the United States, for European Allies, for new members themselves, and also for Russia, but perhaps not for an over-stretched NATO. A Europe decoupled from the United States and a NATO unable to cope with too much too soon, and with reduced military credibility, is a spectre which concerns more than one author.

The editor reveals by omission that he does not consider the influence exercised by the Alliance's secretaries general as significant. He is wrong, but can be forgiven, for it is much harder to analyse the exercise of influence than to investigate the exercise of power, and power has always remained in the hands of the nations. Nevertheless, there are clues to the true nature of the Alliance to be found in studying its leadership that cannot be found elsewhere, so it is a pity that not one chapter looks at this aspect.

Clarity and sharpness are early victims in the second volume, where some offerings recall lecture notes that have been accidentally dropped minutes before delivery. But with Robert P. Grant we get closer to the heart of what constitutes the barometer of the US commitment to NATO. His chapter is well argued, cruelly uncompromising and worth studying for its restatement of the options concerning a parallel weakening of transatlantic security ties and of European security cooperation, or a strengthening of both.

Frédéric Bozo recognises the difficulty of establishing a meaningful separation between collective security, UN-style, and collective defence, NATO-style — but tries. This is another contribution that neither draws on what proceeds it, nor sets the scene for what follows. It is, nevertheless, a well-written and valid analysis. Looking back at the influence of the 1967 Harmel Report, the author does well

to remind us that the search for an appropriate balance between NATO's functions remains key.

The second volume includes a rather tortured look at the interplay between French/German, German/US and French/US attitudes, aspirations and policies. The centrality of the German issue to the Alliance from its earliest days features strongly, but the contributions lack coherence. Vojtech Mastny's investigation of Eastern European efforts, under impossible constraints, to loosen the Soviet grip on the Warsaw Pact is, by contrast, fascinating. It is followed by a doctrinal discussion (Michael McGwire) of shifts in Soviet military thinking and a more pertinent historical look (John G. McGinn) at the impact of the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia. Flagging Western enthusiasm for NATO was more than once indebted to Soviet actions during the course of four decades.

John English and Charles G. Cogan walk us through some North American perspectives on NATO's origins and meaning, often using the views of contemporary personalities on the international stage — Harold S. Truman, Pearson and others — to convey a sense of the times. They lead us back to the origins of the Cold War. Cogan finds the US influence on Western Europe less coercive but no less pervasive than that of the Soviet Union on Eastern Europe. However, once it had become clear that Stalin only had one agenda, and regarded the 1945 peace as a temporary lull before the inevitable conflict, they demonstrate there was never really any alternative to NATO.

The third volume begins with defence industrial relations. The risks from the lack of a "cooperative portfolio of activities" in this sphere and European/US competition in markets across the globe are spelled out — again — as are its political and practical consequences. NATO's 1999 Defence Capabilities Initiative is shown to be one in a long line of attempts to address these problems. Will a new Prague capabilities initiative come closer to solving them? Trevor Taylor's chapter, exploring different episodes in the saga of transatlantic armaments cooperation, makes painful reading. Jacqueline MacGlade looks at the 1950s and identifies the same problem — lack of reliable mechanisms to harness national interests. Both the problem and the diagnosis, it seems, remain largely unchanged.

Examining whether defence industrial conflict automatically translates into corrosion of Atlantic solidarity, David G. Haglund concludes on a more optimistic note — the resulting friction is a minor inconvenience rather than a serious strategic risk. He, nevertheless, believes that the realignment of NATO's defence industrial base remains "the major

unfinished task". Some authors conclude that there is little governments can or would be willing to do. If there is a solution, it will come from the private sector. Other authors attribute the limited success of the DCI to its perception as a strike against Europe's embryonic defence industry — a perception that will have to be altered if the DCI successor is to have a chance. There is also the suggestion that European competition in this sector merely makes it easier for the United States to walk away with the contracts.

Joachim Rohde's sine qua non for success is a harmonised or even joint European arms export policy, achieved through a series of practical steps initiated at the government or at the private industrial level. But there are reminders throughout this discussion that any adjustments governments are willing to make in their attitude to their defence industries inevitably have a knock-on effect on security, defence, foreign affairs, foreign trade, technical, industrial and economic policies. So that, it would seem, would kill off that possibility. Keith Hayward is equally gloomy, ending a detailed look at globalisation convinced that unless governments play a more robust role in directing matters, the European industrial pillar will wither on the vine.

Discussion of nuclear policy reveals more about the process than the results. Despite the leading role of the United States as provider and facilitator of NATO's ultimate resort, the US view has had to be modified on many occasions to take account of the interests of its Allies. Sean M. Maloney adds a Canadian perspective but reinforces the impression that the United States has not had it all its own way. What is clear is that at least up to the end of the 1960s, nuclear matters dominated and were central to practically every larger intra-NATO debate.

Nor is the issue of non-proliferation new. The principle was enshrined in US policy even in 1945 and applied at least in theory to France and the United Kingdom. Maurice Vaisse contributes a balanced chapter on the divisiveness generated by this issue in the period from 1957 to 1963 that is well worth reading. The tension between traditional collective defence and collective security "of a holistic, humanitarian, post-national kind" is well identified.

Klaus Wittman provides an authoritative account of the process leading to the adoption of the 1999 Strategic Concept. Rare among analysts, he highlights continuity. The new concept is in fact Harmel taken one stage further. The more cooperation, the less need for deterrence. He is eloquent too on some of the dilemmas. How was flexible response to be abandoned without implying that both flexibility and the need to respond were to be jettisoned?

And for those who argue that the new Concept makes the Alliance more political, he provides the appropriate correction. The Concept represents a return to the political objectives of the treaty after the 40-year diversion occasioned by the Cold War.

Wittman also reminds us that for much of its existence, NATO policy has been based on demonstrating that the cost of war to an aggressor will be greater than the potential benefit and that aggression would not therefore be a rational option. When we ask the question "What has really changed?" it is perhaps here that we have to pause for thought. In the context of terrorism, the rational option does not apply. Yet at the Prague Summit, the validity of the 1999 Strategic Concept will be reaffirmed, for no one has yet worked out how to design a strategic or security concept based on the irrational.

Final chapters broach the long-standing question of what NATO does or should do when two members are at loggerheads. The only factually accurate but limited answer relies on two planks. First, NATO was not and is not constituted to resolve internal disputes but to deal with external threats. Second, although it is not the Alliance's primary role, it has conferred on its Secretary General a watching brief which enables him — and by extension the rest of the Alliance — to keep an eye on things and to offer mediation if all parties so wish. Sometimes they do; more often they do not. But the option is there and exerts a restraining influence. What is almost more important but for which empirical evidence is harder to obtain, is that the chemistry of the Alliance has played a decisive role in preventing open conflict between Allies.

This bumpy journey ends by examining the prospect of a future Alliance which does not just exercise a restraining influence but adopts measures making the resolution of internal disputes a fundamental task. It is significant that aspirant countries dutifully implementing the Membership Action Plan have made great strides in resolving regional disputes as a condition of membership. For this NATO can take some credit. However, this is a long way from establishing internal conflict resolution as a *raison d'être* of the Alliance in a manner that would call into question the daily reality of consensus politics. And if there is one clear decision made by Allied governments in anticipation of the reforms to be initiated at the Prague Summit, it is that the consensus principle is set in concrete. However tempting to imagine the achievements possible were it to be otherwise, there may be considerable wisdom in that decision. ■



For information on the publisher, Palgrave Macmillan, see <http://www.palgrave.com>

General William F. Kernan: military moderniser

General William F. “Buck” Kernan is commander-in-chief of the United States Joint Forces Command and was, until 1 October, the Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic (SACLANT), both based in Norfolk, Virginia. The first army general to hold both posts, he has stepped down as SACLANT to focus on maximising the present and future military capabilities of the United States. A Texan who joined the US Army in 1968, General Kernan has been the commander for two airborne companies, two Ranger companies, a rifle company in the British Parachute Regiment while an exchange officer, an airborne infantry battalion, a ranger battalion, the 101st Airborne Division and the XVIII Airborne Corps.

NATO REVIEW: How can NATO better contribute to the war against terrorism?

WILLIAM F. KERNAN: I think the Alliance has been particularly candid about what it can and can't do militarily. During a speaking engagement in June, Lord Robertson captured the current situation very well when he acknowledged that the threat of global terrorism would require NATO to develop new capabilities. Specifically, he suggested that the Alliance focus on four critical military capabilities: communications; logistics and sustainability; interoperability; and defence against weapons of mass destruction. The Alliance and NATO member states continue to be extremely responsive. The day after 11 September, NATO invoked Article 5 for the first time in its history. What followed was not just powerful political support, but also the rapid deployment of highly trained personnel and state-of-the-art equipment. NATO's resident forces were likewise called into play as the Standing Naval Forces supported operation Active Endeavor in the Eastern Mediterranean. Similarly, NATO AWACs aircraft and crews were deployed from their home base in Geilenkirchen, Germany, to the United States in support of operation Noble Eagle. The performance of all of these units has been superb.



(© US DoD)

threats arguably places NATO nations at even greater risk than before. Secondly, coalitions of the willing in no way undermine the efficacy of NATO. The Alliance is still the organisation of choice to deal with the spectrum of transatlantic challenges, from contingency and humanitarian operations, to Article 5 missions.

NR: In the light of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, how should the Alliance evolve to deal with the new threats it faces?

WFK: This question is at the heart of the Allied transformation initiative. Technology is a part of this process, but only a part. We want to make our forces dramatically more effective by making them more flexible, adaptable, and responsive. To do this, we intend to use technological advances in conjunction with a holistic approach to doctrine, organisation, training, material, leader development, personnel, and

facilities. Stove-piped and lethargic procedures of the past must be reengineered to integrate all instruments of international power to bring about the intended result, whether that is peacekeeping, peace enforcement, or decisively defeating an adversary. Here, it is important that our efforts are synergistic and should, possibly, be coordinated with a NAC-directed military plan. The evolution of the Alliance must be driven by thorough strategic and operational analysis.

NR: How do you judge NATO's relevance in the current strategic environment?

WFK: Firstly, I think that NATO remains extremely relevant to the geo-political issues in and around Europe. I also think that it is as critical now to have a cooperative of democracies as it was during the Cold War. The threat to our collective security may have changed forms but the instability caused by nascent

NR: A key initiative emerging from the Washington Summit was that of the Combined Joint Task Force. As the first Army general to be appointed SACLANT, what changes do the Alliance's navies need to make to become integral parts of this initiative and how well are they being implemented?

WFK: For a CJTF to function properly, it must be properly manned, fully interoperable, joint, and highly trained. The requisite situational awareness must be achieved through a network of intelligence sources that are fused and critically analysed, often by leveraging expertise across traditional lines of authority. The result is a common operating picture that can be focused into a common relevant operating picture. This accomplishment provides unprecedented levels of situational awareness and makes possible a comprehensive strategy of engagement providing feedback and command and control adjustments that are near real-time. While not the end product itself, fused intelligence is critical to making our military efforts more effective. In large part, being more effective means achieving military goals and political objectives much more rapidly with less loss of life, less destruction, and less political aftershock than is possible with current capabilities. As part of our ongoing process to develop this capability, we recently conducted a major NATO exercise called Strong Resolve, where the CJTF concept was tested in an incredibly robust scenario. The CJTF commander, Vice Admiral Cutler Dawson, was extremely successful in achieving and maintaining situational awareness while operating aboard the command ship, USS Mount Whitney. In this exercise we were able to validate crucial portions of a concept that we've been developing over several years. Once it is fully operational, the CJTF model will allow us to initiate rapidly moving, integrated, adaptive, and overwhelming action against an adversary. With these acquired insights in mind, it's clear that joint procedures and technical interoperability are the keys to success. The navies of NATO have traditionally done an exceptional job on procedural standardisation and technical integration of operational units.

NR: Under your dual US/NATO appointment, you have been responsible for enhancing interoperability among NATO nations. What key issues do Alliance member states need to address?

WFK: Technical interoperability is key to NATO's continued success and the CJTF is a critical piece of our future capabilities strategy. NATO's CJTFs must possess highly trained personnel with compatible equipment, if they are to be effective. Notice I said compatible, not identical, equipment. We are very aware of the importance of a nation's industrial base and are simply proposing that NATO develop overarching technical architectures and protocols that will allow individual nations to manufacture domestic equipment that seamlessly plugs into the overall network. This is an important element in a renewed approach to Allied interoperability. In addition to technology, many areas of tactics, techniques, and procedures also need standardisation and

coordination. NATO forces have traditionally been very effective in this area. However, we must realise that technical challenges and even policy considerations, like rules of engagement, continually influence our ability to exercise military operations. We are finding that concept development and experimentation, both in Europe and the United States, is starting to pay big dividends and provide us with the process necessary for effective interoperability, improved capability, and efficient resource management. Not everything we try will work as planned. Our experiments are designed to determine what works, what doesn't work and what we have to do better in the future.

NR: The Defence Capabilities Initiative, which was also unveiled at the Washington Summit, has not achieved as much as had been hoped. What are the likely repercussions on the viability of future military operations?

WFK: The DCI has not met all of its intended goals. Funding has been decidedly scarce as many nations wrestled with competing domestic issues and a fluctuating global economy. Furthermore, the resources that were made available were being distributed over too many areas. Despite this set back, I believe the concept is a good one and we are in the midst of a DCI makeover that will reduce our overall scope, prioritise our requirements, and consolidate our efforts for maximum effectiveness. Our focus will be on these areas: logistics, connectivity, and modernisation as well as defence against nuclear, biological, chemical and missile threats. Reinforcing these areas will enhance and ensure a viable future capability.

NR: NATO is likely to issue membership invitations to several countries at the Prague Summit. How can these countries best be integrated into the Alliance?

WFK: There may be a technical gap between aspirant nations and existing members but that doesn't mean that future members won't contribute to our overall capabilities. NATO is realistic about what the new nations will militarily bring to the table. We don't expect across-the-board capabilities from most nations. Instead, we see great benefit in specialisation and niche contributions. These concepts, along with resource pooling, will undoubtedly add value to the Alliance.

NR: NATO is reviewing its Command Structure. How do you see this review developing and what will it mean for SACLANT's future role?

WFK: This and enlargement are the two biggest issues facing NATO today. The United States made its intentions known with regard to United States Joint Forces Command. As of 1 October 2002, the Commander, US Joint Forces Command will divest

his responsibilities as SACLANT. This was done to enable Joint Forces Command to focus primarily on the transformation of the US Armed Forces. This may prove extremely beneficial to the Alliance. The United States is firmly committed to Europe and to resolving the Command Structure issues and ensuring it is relevant to 21st century challenges. The Command Structure review and the dialogue surrounding it is not only necessary, it is also healthy for the Alliance and will strengthen NATO for future challenges. One of the ways in which I think the structure will change is with the new role for ACLANT. I believe that the idea of a strategic, functional command responsible for Allied transformation is gathering a great deal of momentum in Europe. If approved during the Prague Summit, this realignment would allow us to focus on our future requirements and capabilities, and accelerate critically needed transformational development throughout the Alliance.

NR: How has the military profession changed during your career?

WFK: The army of today is very different from than the one I joined in 1967, which is not necessarily a bad thing. The professional military of today is just that, professional. It is comprised of well-educated, well-trained volunteers. During the 1960s, the social climate was dramatically different and an unpopular war caused many personnel challenges. Through it all though, patriotism and courage have remained the constant. The world has changed and most of the world's militaries have adapted accordingly and we are all better for it. ■

A similar interview is also appearing in the latest issue of the magazine EN Vision



For further details on the Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic, consult <http://www.saclant.nato.int>

Helping turn Russian soldiers into civilians

A NATO programme aimed at helping recently and soon-to-be-discharged Russian soldiers prepare for lives outside the military is up and running in Moscow and should herald greater NATO-Russia cooperation in a range of fields.



Students and staff of the NATO-Russia Information, Consultation and Training Centre with Emilio Gasparini (front row, fourth from left) (© NATO)

The groundbreaking initiative involves the training of individuals who will themselves run orientation courses for former and soon-to-be discharged military personnel and their families throughout Russia to assist their reintegration into civilian life and help them find work. The first course began in June, less than a month after the signing of the Rome Declaration, the document establishing a NATO-Russia Council, though the programme has been three years in the preparation.

“This is the first real cooperative project between NATO and Russia,” said Emilio Gasparini, project coordinator at NATO headquarters. “And it is helping address an issue of critical importance for Russian society.”

The Russian armed forces are currently estimated to have some 1.4 million personnel, of whom some 400,000 are — according to Russian plans — likely to be made redundant in the near future. Since many of these soldiers have several dependants, the livelihood of more than a million people is at stake.

Given the scale of the challenge facing Russian society, the NATO programme is modest. The Alliance has earmarked \$190,000 for the first year, a sum that is dwarfed by programmes of several, individual NATO members, the European Union and Japan in this sector. It is, however, of great psychological importance and could pave the way for greater, practical cooperation between the Alliance and Russia in Russia itself and more ambitious assistance programmes.

In addition to supporting programmes for the retraining of military personnel, NATO is exploring ways of assisting Russia in converting former military sites to civilian uses. The Alliance may also offer expertise in dealing with macro-economic issues, such as defining the place of defence within the national economy, and in improving the administration of the armed forces.

The local partner that NATO selected to run the “train-the-trainers” programme is the Moscow State University for Economics, Statistics and Informatics (MESI). This institution is partly state-funded, partly privately funded with more than 60,000 students in locations throughout Russia. The NATO-Russia Information, Consultation and Training Centre is located in two large rooms on MESI’s Moscow campus, equipped with computers and it employs seven full-time staff.

The Centre is running five courses this year, each catering for 20 trainers. Courses include modules on Russian welfare legislation and how it affects the resettlement of discharged military personnel and their families; theory and methods of resettlement of former military personnel; organisation of professional retraining and upgrading of the skills of servicemen; the Russian labour market; the organisation of small and medium enterprises; and international programmes for professional retraining with regard to resettlement. The first class graduated in July with diplomas that are recognised by the Russian authorities and a second course is scheduled to begin in late September.

In addition to the courses, the Centre has established a telephone help line and an official web site with information of use to former military personnel as they forge new careers outside the armed forces. Among other useful information, the web site includes details of former soldiers who have set up businesses since leaving the military. NATO-Russia relations have improved steadily since Vladimir Putin became president of Russia at the beginning of 2000 and more dramatically during the year since the terrorist attacks against the United States of 11 September 2001. The improvement in relations led to the creation of the NATO-Russia Council, a body in which all 19 NATO members and Russia deliberate together as equal partners to devise strategies to combat common security problems, and has generated great expectations about future developments. ■



The web site of the NATO-Russia Information, Consultation and Training Centre can be consulted in Russian at <http://www.centre.russia-nato.info>.

Boosting efficiency in multinational operations

A programme is being established in Slovakia to prepare junior officers from future NATO members and Partnership for Peace countries to work more effectively in multinational operations and exercises. Starting in May 2003, it will offer three 12-week courses a year to a total of 180 officers.

Based at Liptovsky Mikulas, a city in north-central Slovakia that is also home to the Slovak Armed Forces' military academy, the Junior Staff Officers' Course (JSOC) is a joint venture between the Netherlands, Slovakia and the United Kingdom. Once it is up and running, Slovakia will seek recognition of the Liptovsky Mikulas Military Academy as a Partnership for Peace Training Centre. The first Dutch member of staff is already in place and preparing the ground for the first course.



The Junior Staff Officers' Course should be particularly useful to officers serving in multinational headquarters such as SFOR (© SFOR)

The JSOC seeks to fill a gap in the training of junior officers in the target countries. It therefore complements a Czech-UK Centre in Vyskov, the Czech Republic, that trains the trainers of courses aimed at warrant officers and non-commissioned officers and a UK-sponsored Regional Training Centre in Bucharest, Romania, that trains more senior officers in tri-service operational planning techniques.

"Most target countries will be volunteering individuals or units to multinational operations," says Lt-Col Simon Cleveland, the UK project officer behind the course. "We aim to help make the junior officers involved in these missions more effective." Courses are designed for senior lieutenants, captains and majors in ground forces, including ground-based air defence forces, marines and naval infantry. They should be particularly useful to officers serving in multinational headquarters. It is also intended to assist in the training of junior staff officers appointed to the headquarters of the many new multinational units and formations which are being established in Central and Eastern Europe, ranging from the South East European brigade to the Central Asian battalion.

The JSOC syllabus is based on that used by the British Army to train its junior officers but will concentrate on NATO doctrine and procedures as well as experiences from international operations, including the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, KFOR in Kosovo, and SFOR and the UN Protection Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Teaching is carried out in English by British and Dutch instructors, who will be based in Liptovsky Mikulas. Students will be obliged to demonstrate proficiency in the language in their own countries before being accepted on the courses. If necessary, language training assistance and validation may be obtained through the British Council in their capitals. Effective use of information technology forms part of the curriculum. Students are not, however, required to have

computer skills before joining the course, as many do not have access to computers in their home countries. By the end of the course, they should have reached a level of proficiency akin to the so-called "European Computer Driving Licence".

British and Dutch defence attachés in target countries will help identify students for the courses, which will also be incorporated into NATO's Partnership for Peace Work Programme. The Netherlands

and the United Kingdom will sponsor places on courses and are encouraging other Allies to do the same.

In addition to the 12-week courses for junior officers, the JSOC will offer short senior officer briefing courses for senior personnel from general staffs and defence ministries. These two-to-three-day visits are designed so that senior officers can ensure that the JSOC receives the most appropriate students and learn what additional capabilities these individuals will have when they return home. The JSOC, which has British, Dutch and Slovak staff, will have a British Commandant and a Dutch Deputy Commandant. It has taken over and refurbished one floor of a teaching block with an auditorium that seats 80 and five floors of an accommodation block from the Slovak military academy. Slovakia is also making a considerable contribution to the project in the form of locally employed staff, transport, mapping, infrastructure and access to a Combined Arms Staff Trainer (a tactical simulator). The annual cost of the JSOC is £1.7 million (2.6 million Euros), of which the Netherlands is contributing 25 per cent and the United Kingdom 75 per cent. The overall figure includes personnel costs from the United Kingdom, but not from the Netherlands, which are estimated to be an additional 420,000 Euros in 2003. Funding comes from the foreign and defence ministries of both countries. In addition, Slovakia has contributed £200,000 (318,000 Euros) to the start-up costs. ■

Slowly but surely

Stewart Henderson examines the role of the Stability Pact in security sector reform in Southeastern Europe.

After the Sarajevo Stability Pact Summit in summer 1999, the whole of Southeastern Europe was gripped with enormous expectations. Indeed, commemorative postage stamps were even issued for the occasion. There was great hope that the international community would be able to generate immediate and massive transfers of assistance that would transform the region overnight. However, when the bulldozers and other heavy construction equipment did not appear, there was a significant letdown and a broad sentiment emerged in the region that the Stability Pact had failed to deliver on its promises.



European dream: Southeastern Europe was gripped with expectation in the wake of the Sarajevo Stability Pact Summit (© SFOR)

Part of the problem was a lack of understanding of what the Stability Pact was and what it could realistically achieve. For the Stability Pact was an attempt to replace the reactive, crisis-intervention policy that had characterised international responses to conflict in Southeastern Europe with a comprehensive, long-term conflict-prevention strategy. As such, it is not a funding body or implementing agency. Rather it is a body made up of some 40 countries and international organisations that seeks to develop and promote coordinated strategies to address problems that affect the whole of Southeastern Europe, help achieve synergies among the many actors involved and bring out the best of the implementing agencies working on the ground. In this way, three working tables were set up to cover democratisation and human rights, economic reconstruction and security issues.

Positive picture

In spite of much criticism, an analysis of developments in Southeastern Europe during the past three years indicates that a positive picture is emerging. First of all, donor support has increased and, despite demands for assistance elsewhere in the world, is being maintained. This was demonstrated clearly at the Second Regional

Conference in Bucharest, Romania, in October last year when about three billion Euros in support of further Stability Pact activities was unveiled, bringing total donor assistance to some six billion Euros.

The original aim of moving the countries of the region closer to European and Euro-Atlantic institutions and structures is being realised. All countries in the region have been given the perspective of someday becoming EU members through the process of Stabilisation and Association Agreements. Most countries are now members of NATO's Partnership for Peace programme and the Council of Europe. All are

now active members of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). And there is the very real possibility that Bulgaria and Romania may become full NATO members, sooner rather than later. Reforms are being carried out throughout the region to fight organised crime and corruption, to create a more attractive environment for trade and investment and to encourage small and medium-sized business.

The goal of establishing a "virtual free trade area" in Southeastern Europe, under the Memorandum of Understanding on Trade and Liberalisation the Stability Pact brokered in June 2001, is moving ahead as countries accelerate their efforts to honour their commitments to conclude a network of bilateral free-trade agreements by the end of this year. While there is still too little foreign direct investment in the region, such investment is increasing and the elimination of intra-regional trade barriers should make the region considerably more attractive to foreign capital.

Perhaps most importantly, contacts between the countries of the region have been intensified and regularised. A network of initiatives has been established throughout Southeastern Europe to deal with what are now recognised as common problems. Serbia and Montenegro are now full partners in this process and even hold the presidency of one of the

Stewart Henderson, a Canadian diplomat on secondment to the Stability Pact, is director of the Working Table on Security Issues.

more promising regional initiatives, the South East European Cooperation Process. Launched in 1996 at Bulgaria's suggestion, this process seeks to lay the foundations for cooperation among the countries of Southeastern Europe and create a climate of trust, good neighbourliness and stability. Belgrade has made it clear that it will inject much energy into this process during its one-year presidency and the Stability Pact will do what it can to help support this effort.

These regular contacts have begun to change attitudes. There is a growing appreciation that regional cooperation is not a substitute for EU membership, but rather a corollary, if not a prerequisite. European Commissioner Günther Verheugen has underscored this point noting that: "If countries want to join the European Union, they have to demonstrate that they can develop regional cooperation and solve their problems in cooperation with their neighbours." And the same goes for NATO membership. Regular contacts are reducing suspicion, promoting patterns of dialogue and cooperation and gradually improving the security situation. As a result, the possibility of any renewal of inter-state armed conflict in the region now appears extremely remote.

Of course, much work remains to be done. One challenge is maintaining the necessary levels of donor support as the problems of Southeastern Europe fade from the headlines and donor attention shifts elsewhere. Another is ensuring that the countries of the region remain committed to implementing the reforms to which they have signed up. As we move to the second phase of the Stability Pact's existence under Special Coordinator Erhard Busek — who succeeded Bodo Hombach in January of this year — contributing to regional cooperation on issues of common concern will remain our top overall goal. But to be successful, the Stability Pact must be seen as an initiative that is owned by the region.

Current priorities are trade, investment, infrastructure, energy, refugee returns, fighting organised crime, reducing levels of small arms and light weapons and the establishment of a sub-regional cooperation process designed to engage Kosovo with its immediate neighbours on a number of practical issues. However, our overall activity will be broader. Under the justice and home affairs element of the Stability

Pact's Working Table on Security Issues, we are taking forward initiatives in the fight against human trafficking and corruption, we are supporting enhanced regional police training, and are addressing the very serious issues of asylum and migration. In the field of defence and security, we are promoting initiatives on military downsizing and base conversion, cross-border cooperation in handling emergencies and disasters, de-mining, and strengthening the democratic control of the armed forces.

Future security strategies

Since the creation of the Stability Pact, we have always stressed that we do not wish to re-invent the wheel or try to do what others might do better. This principle is particularly critical in the area of defence and security where there are already a large number of committed actors. To be effective here we must look to our potential for being a catalyst, bringing countries and institutions together which might not otherwise be in contact, building coalitions of donors around good ideas and encouraging the beneficiaries to take a greater leadership role in these initiatives.

We have looked carefully for actions and initiatives that contribute to our overall goal of conflict prevention by raising levels of confidence and trust and creating new habits of dialogue and new patterns of cooperation. A good example is our effort to reintegrate into civilian labour markets military officers affected by the downsizing of their countries' armed forces. The Stability Pact played a central role in launching this initiative by facilitating contact between NATO and the World Bank, organisations that had not previously dealt with one another. The initial programme for officers that the World Bank financed in Romania has now been expended to Bulgaria and Croatia, and similar schemes are now under consideration in Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The formula of using NATO expertise to increase the credibility of national programmes with the World Bank and other donor institutions and countries has been expanded to the related area of military base closure and conversion to civilian use. The Stability Pact framework has provided the backdrop to work between NATO and several international financial institutions and other donors to work on a series of pilot projects in Bulgaria and Romania. In this way, the real property of former military bases is being put to use for a variety

Lack of transparency will almost certainly undermine a country's economic and political stability more than transparency will threaten its security

of social and business purposes that stimulates the economy and creates jobs.

The Stability Pact has also been active in promoting work in the area of de-mining and supports the efforts of the Reay Group, a mine-action coordinating body named after the late Canadian General Gordon Reay, to achieve a stockpile-free Southeastern Europe. In November 2001, the Stability Pact's Security Working Table endorsed a comprehensive regional implementation plan to combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The Belgrade-based South Eastern Europe Clearing House for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons is now one of the region's leading actors in this area.

At the June 2001 Regional Table, the policy-setting instrument of the Stability Pact, the Security Working Table was tasked to direct its attention increasingly to the area of security sector reform while avoiding duplication of existing efforts undertaken by the European Union, NATO, the OSCE and the United Nations. To follow up this request, we have developed a Southeastern Europe security sector reform database to provide a departure point for a regional gaps and needs analysis. This web-based database should be operational before the end of the year.

While the gaps that the Stability Pact can fill will be clearer after this work has been finished, the report of the ad hoc working group established to consider our work in the area of security sector reform has suggested particular themes that should be of primary concern to the Stability Pact. The first is the professionalisation and development of civil service and civil society expertise to help ensure democratic oversight and control of defence and security institutions. The second area is the continuation and expansion of on-going, country-specific programmes, particularly the retraining and alternative employment of demobilised military personnel and work on base conversion, where NATO's Economics Directorate has taken the lead.

A central element and key partner in our work as we proceed will be the Regional Arms Control and Verification Implementation Centre that was established under Stability Pact auspices in Zagreb, Croatia, in 2001. The Centre already provides an effective forum within the region for professional dialogue, enhanced cooperation and confidence building in Southeastern Europe. The fact that military personnel from all the countries of the region, including Serbia and Montenegro, now regularly participate in programmes there is a clear demonstration of how far the region has come. In addition to the Centre's primary

mission of assisting the countries of the region to fulfil their international arms-control commitments, we hope that it will play an increasing role in promoting the full integration of the military into democratic societies and reinforcing the democratic oversight and control of military establishments.

Another innovative Stability Pact programme is the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative. This was launched for the obvious reason that natural disasters do not recognise borders, while recognising that a regional capacity to respond to disasters did not exist. Regular contacts between national emergency centres in the region have been established and procedures for the coordination of relief requests and responses developed. Two major field exercises scheduled this year will test these links and procedures. The first, called Taming the Dragon 2002, took place in Croatia in May and was the largest European fire-fighting exercise ever mounted. The second is Seesim 2002, a Greek earthquake-simulation exercise scheduled for December.

Justice and home affairs activities

In the field of justice and home affairs, we are concentrating on enhancing the region's capacity to fight organised crime and criminality. The Stability Pact's Organised Crime Initiative has been moved to Bucharest, Romania, and will be effectively co-located in the parliament building with the already operative Regional Centre for Combating Transborder Crime. This physical proximity will create greater opportunities for efficiency while highlighting our determination to base more of our activities in the region.

The Vienna-based Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings will be taking forward its three-year action plan. Its strategy is to counter the activities of traffickers and assist victims through programmes for awareness raising, training and exchange programmes, cooperation in law enforcement, victim-protection programmes, return and reintegration assistance, legislative reform and prevention.

The Asylum and Migration Initiative is developing national and regional programmes and is supporting strengthened regional cooperation to encourage orderly migration policies in line with European standards. This is an example of how the Stability Pact seeks to complement the European Union's Stabilisation and Association Process.

The Anti-Corruption Initiative will continue to foster political dialogue between countries and international

experts, national programmes and joint-monitoring procedures. It seeks to ensure that the countries of the region adopt and implement European and other international instruments, strengthen relevant legislation, promote integrity in business and encourage active civil society involvement.

Finally, the Stability Pact's efforts to further regional police cooperation through a programme developed by the Association of European Police Colleges should be noted. This initiative seeks to improve police skills, enhance democratic policing and develop regional networks and cross-border cooperation. In 2002, courses cover combating small arms and light weapons trafficking, combating drug trafficking, combating financial crimes and money-laundering, police management, police ethics and policing a multicultural society.

This full agenda has a strong emphasis on the practical, setting activities in motion that generate patterns of dialogue and cooperation and that empower those who are seeking to create lasting democratic institutions in the region. At the same time, our overall efforts in the security field are based on a number of basic principles.

We must accept the principle that democracy is the cornerstone of good governance. If security sector reform is to succeed, we must have effective democratic institutions and capable civilian leadership. Transparency in planning, management and budgeting must be promoted. Lack of transparency will almost certainly undermine a country's economic and political stability more than transparency will threaten its security. We must assist the creation of environments where civil society is able to monitor the security sectors. We need to strengthen the capabilities of non-governmental organisations to carry out this activity. And, of course, we need to continue to give priority to initiatives that promote regional and sub-regional activities.

The Stability Pact is not a panacea for Southeastern Europe. But the region is moving in the right direction and the Stability Pact is increasingly influential in this process. Attributing credit for progress is clearly impossible. However, security sector reform probably benefits more from a coordinated approach than any other area and this is the added value that the Stability Pact seeks to bring. The way forward is, nevertheless, difficult and many years of hard work from all the many actors involved, both regional and international, lie ahead. ■



For further information on the Stability Pact, see
<http://www.stabilitypact.org>

Beyond Prague

Andrew Cottey, Timothy Edmunds and Anthony Forster examine military reform in Central and Eastern Europe and the capabilities of potential NATO members

By the middle of the decade NATO and the European Union may have up to ten new members from Central and Eastern Europe. Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia are widely thought likely to be invited to join NATO at the Prague Summit. Together with the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, which joined NATO in 1999, these are also the countries from the region currently negotiating for membership of the European Union. The addition of ten new members from Central and Eastern Europe will add an important new dimension to the ongoing debate on defence capabilities and burden-sharing within NATO, as well as to the European Union's emerging European Security and Defence Policy. However, an issue that has not yet been adequately addressed is what the new members can and should contribute to NATO and the European Union militarily, and how their national defence reform programmes relate to wider collective NATO and EU defence-modernisation efforts.

If all these states are invited to join NATO at the forthcoming Prague Summit, the Alliance's total population will have increased from 735 million to 839 million since 1999 — an expansion of 104 million or roughly 14 per cent (see table with data from 2000, the most recent year for which detailed comparative information is available). NATO's active armed forces will have increased by a similar proportion, from 3,448,590 to 3,986,045 — an expansion of about 16 per cent. Reserve forces, however, will have grown substantially in size, with the Central and Eastern European states bringing an additional 1,714,700 reserves to the "old" NATO's 3,774,000 — an increase of about 45 per cent. In contrast, the annual gross

domestic product (GDP) of the Central and Eastern European states was only \$372 billion in 2000, compared to \$18,074 billion for the longer-standing NATO members — an increase of only 2 per cent in the Alliance's total GDP.



Entering the fray: Central and Eastern European countries have increased their contributions to international peace-support operations (© SFOR)

Figures for defence spending are similar. In 2000, the old NATO members spent \$460 billion on defence, whereas the Central and Eastern European states spent \$7 billion. Their accession to NATO will therefore result in a defence spending increase of only 1.5 per cent for the Alliance as a whole. These numbers illustrate a sharp reality. Although the total armed forces of NATO's member states

will increase significantly as a result of enlargement, the new members are relatively poor when compared to the old members and the real resources they can commit to defence are much more limited.

National comparisons

National comparisons illustrate this point. Spain has a population of nearly 40 million people, with a GDP of \$568 billion. By devoting 1.27 per cent of GDP to the military it is able to generate a defence budget of \$7.2 billion that is used to support an active armed forces strength of 143,450. Poland has a similar population (nearly 39 million people), but has a significantly smaller annual GDP of \$160 billion. Despite devoting a much higher proportion (2.06 per cent) of GDP to defence, at \$3.3 billion its defence budget is less than half that of Spain's. In addition, it supports larger armed forces with an active strength of 206,045. Similarly, the Netherlands has a population of nearly 16 million people and a GDP of \$347 billion. Allocating 1.87 per cent of GDP to defence, it has a defence budget of \$6.5 billion, supporting active armed forces of 50,430. In contrast, Romania, with a population of more than 22 million people has a GDP of only \$38.4 billion. Despite directing 2.45 per cent of GDP to defence, it has a defence budget of just under \$1 billion, supporting active armed forces of 103,000.

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Another way of comparing new and old NATO members is in terms of their contributions to international peace-support operations, including the NATO-led operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,* but also other UN-led or mandated missions. In 2000, the old NATO members contributed 63,293 troops to peace-support operations, while the Central and Eastern European states provided 4,294 personnel. The new member states would therefore contribute an additional 7 per cent to the peacekeeping forces deployed by NATO members — a significant contribution, but also less than their proportion of the enlarged Alliance's total population. Again, national comparisons highlight the point. Belgium with a population of 10 million contributes nearly 1,500 troops to peace-support operations. The Czech Republic with a similar population contributes just under 700 soldiers. Latvia, with a population of 2.3 million contributes just over 100 troops to peace-support operations; whereas Norway with a population of 4.5 million provides more than 1,100 soldiers to peace-support operations.

Central and Eastern European states have faced major defence reform challenges since the early 1990s. Following the collapse of Communism, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia inherited Soviet-model armed forces structured for Warsaw Pact operations. It was generally recognised that these countries' armed forces were too large for the new international situation and high defence spending imposed too great a burden on their struggling economies. In the early-to-mid 1990s, major cuts in defence spending were introduced which broadly reduced defence spending by half compared to the Cold War high of the late 1980s. In addition, the size of the armed forces was reduced significantly, forces were re-orientated away from their Warsaw Pact roles, most procurement was abandoned and training levels were reduced. The newly independent Baltic states and Slovenia faced the different challenge of building national armed forces from scratch (although in the Slovene case this occurred on the basis of territorial defence forces that had been created while the country was part of the former Yugoslavia). For these states, the initial focus was on developing lightly armed territorial defence forces.

Defence reform

Since the mid-1990s the Central and Eastern European states have — with NATO's support and encouragement — instituted further defence reforms. These have generally focused on further reductions in the overall size of armed forces and the development of forces capable of contributing to peace-support

operations. The decline in defence spending bottomed out in the mid-1990s. Since then most of the Central and Eastern European states have introduced small increases in their defence budgets. The prospect of NATO membership has played a central role in generating political pressure for further defence reforms, contributions to NATO-led operations in the Balkans and increases in defence spending. Moreover, NATO's Partnership for Peace programme, its Planning and Review Process and the Membership Action Plan have provided an institutional framework for thinking through defence reform issues. As the table shows, the Central and Eastern European states now spend an average of 1.81 per cent of their GDP on defence — less than the old NATO average of 2.12 per cent but broadly comparable with the EU average of 1.85 per cent.

These developments have had a number of impacts. Most positively, the Central and Eastern European states have increased their contributions to international peace-support operations, in particular the NATO-led operations in the Balkans. Central and Eastern European forces that have participated in these operations have generally performed well and have gradually taken on more demanding roles. Participation in these operations has contributed to the professionalisation of the participating units. It may also have a positive trickle-down effect on the countries' armed forces more broadly, as soldiers are rotated into and out of the operations. However, some critics have argued that the Central and Eastern European states are increasingly developing "two-tier" militaries, divided between elite cadres capable of operating alongside NATO Allies and the conscript-based bulk of the armed forces whose operational effectiveness is degrading. Indeed, reductions in defence budgets and the prioritisation of elite forces has often resulted in significant reductions in spending on maintenance, operations and training for the majority of the armed forces. For example, in 2000, Romanian Chief-of-Staff General Mihail Popescu acknowledged that 70 per cent of Romania's air force pilots were not operational due to insufficient flying time. Similarly, due largely to budgetary constraints, Hungarian pilots fly an average of between 50 and 75 hours a year. In comparison, the US Air Force considers 100 hours flying time a year a dangerously low amount. In the Hungarian case, this situation appears likely to continue for the foreseeable future, except in the case of 30 Mig-29 pilots who will be assigned to NATO missions.

The countries of Central and Eastern Europe face continuing and serious problems in relation to defence reform. When they join NATO, their national defence

dilemmas will increasingly become part of the wider defence capabilities and burden-sharing questions facing the Alliance as a whole. The relative poverty of the Central and Eastern European states and the many other social and economic problems they face mean that, even with increases in defence budgets, the resources available for their armed forces will remain limited. While there is broad political support for the United States' war on terrorism, the absence of direct and immediate threats to the Central and Eastern European states suggests that more dramatic increases in defence spending are unlikely in future. Central and Eastern European governments face the difficult task of reconciling their limited resources available for defence with their commitment to participate in international peace-support operations, the declining operational effectiveness of the bulk of the armed forces and postponed procurement decisions.

Defence reviews

Since joining NATO, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland have all undertaken new and important defence reviews. In each case, these recommended modest increases in defence spending alongside further downsizing of the armed forces and a move towards the establishment of largely volunteer, rather than conscript-based, forces. This points to one approach to defence reform: downsizing armed forces (both active and reserve) to free up resources to improve the capabilities and operational effectiveness of the remainder. How far this approach enables the Central and Eastern European states to resolve their defence dilemmas remains to be seen. More radical steps may be necessary to generate the resources required for a more wholesale modernisation of armed forces.

In an environment where ground invasion threats appear unlikely, it may make sense for Central and Eastern European states to place more equipment, such as tanks and armoured personnel carriers, into long-term storage and disband the associated units rather than attempt to maintain such forces at low levels of readiness. Moreover, all the Central and Eastern European states still have large reserve forces compared to the old NATO members. With conscription periods being reduced in duration (often to less than a year), conscientious objection and draft-dodging levels high and refresher call-up periods reduced in both frequency and length, the military effectiveness of these reserves must also be open to question. As a result, this too might be an area where savings can sensibly be made.

Central and Eastern European states have faced major defence reform challenges since the early 1990s

On the assumption of a warning time of some years before any possible ground invasion threat, this strategy would imply a much longer-term concept of mobilisation that would rely on the ability to bring equipment out of storage and train new forces, rather than simply mobilise pre-existing reserves.

The Central and Eastern European states also face major procurement decisions. Having inherited Soviet-era equipment and postponed major defence purchases in the 1990s, this issue is now pressing. The Czech Republic, Hungary and

Poland are all engaged in controversial debates about whether to procure new fighter aircraft, which aircraft to buy and in what numbers. Even if undertaken with Western support and subsidies, the purchase of major equipment such as fighter aircraft and attack helicopters is likely to swallow up a large proportion of Central and Eastern European defence budgets. In 1999, for example, Romania cancelled its decision to procure US Bell 96 Cobra AH-1 attack helicopters after widespread criticism that the purchase was a largely symbolic gesture that could not be properly utilised or supported in the confines of the country's defence budget. And the Czech Republic has been forced to put off and possibly abandon plans to purchase 24 Gripen fighters as a result of the cost of this summer's floods in Central Europe. Moreover, the relatively small size of the Central and Eastern European states means that they are likely individually to procure only small numbers of expensive assets such as fighters, while duplicating much of the support infrastructure necessary for their maintenance.

Debate

There is a need for a more thorough debate on such procurement issues. For many of the Central and Eastern European states, it may well make more sense to allocate resources to ground-based air defences, airspace monitoring systems and developing base infrastructure for the forward deployment of aircraft from larger Allies. An alternative approach might involve the development of a few genuinely multinational squadrons of fighter aircraft — perhaps linking Eastern and Western European states, and even possibly including non-NATO members such as Sweden — designated to provide air defence for all participating states. This would reduce the duplication and costs involved in maintaining separate national forces, while giving military substance to the political principle of collective security. The successful development of a

Danish-German-Polish corps illustrates the way in which joint forces can act as force multipliers and give substance to the NATO security guarantee.

Another related option is role specialisation, with states choosing to direct resources to areas where they have particular strengths while abandoning the attempt to maintain some other capabilities. The Czech armed forces, for example, have expertise in the area of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons defence. If this approach is adopted (even in part), more should be done to consider collectively at the NATO and EU level what specialist capabilities are needed, which states might contribute to these and how other states could then direct their resources elsewhere.

Moving further down the road of joint procurement, multinational forces and role specialisation may be difficult, however. Such ideas run counter to the understandable principle of maintaining the widest possible range of national defence capabilities as insurance against worst-case contingencies. They also confront the contentious problem of allocating the economic benefits associated with the production of equipment and maintenance of forces — as disputes among the various partners to Western European projects such as the Eurofighter illustrate. In the context of the ongoing debate about defence capabilities, these are problems for NATO and the European Union as a whole. Nevertheless, given their limited defence resources, the case for the Central and Eastern European states to follow this path is compelling.

Progress

Despite these difficulties, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have made significant progress in reforming their armed forces since the early 1990s. They have put in place mechanisms for democratic, civilian control of the armed forces and are now active contributors to international peace-support operations in the Balkans and beyond. In the space of a decade, the Baltic republics have gone from states with no armed forces to participants in the NATO-led missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. Various countries from the region are already making, or have the potential to make, important specialist military contributions in niche areas such as nuclear, biological and chemical defence or de-mining.

Nevertheless, the Central and Eastern European countries also face serious problems in the defence field. The development of elite cadres capable of operating alongside NATO Allies has to some extent camouflaged the declining operational effectiveness of the larger part of these countries' armed forces. Air forces whose pilots fly too few hours to be ready for combat environments and ground forces whose

equipment does not function adequately are of little use to either the Central and Eastern European states themselves or NATO as a whole. The relative poverty of these countries means that, even with modest increases in defence spending, they will not be able greatly to increase real defence expenditures.

Central and Eastern European governments and NATO as a whole need to acknowledge this reality and collectively explore possible ways forward. Solutions may involve more radical reductions in overall forces, the abandonment of some high prestige but expensive procurement plans, the development of more multinational forces and procurement projects, greater national role specialisation within NATO and the European Union, and the direction of more attention to the less glamorous aspects of defence policy such as training, operations and maintenance, and communications equipment. This will involve addressing difficult and sensitive issues, both nationally and collectively within NATO and the European Union. Without taking these steps, the Central and Eastern European military contribution to NATO and the European Union will be less than it could or should be, and the benefits of enlargement will not be fully reaped. ■



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