



NATO  
OTAN



# Managing crisis

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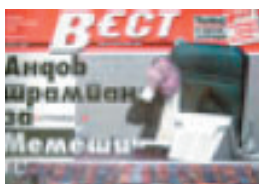
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Every mention in this publication of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is marked by an asterisk (\*) referring to the following footnote: Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

## Debating intervention

*Dana H. Allin examines the evolution of attitudes to intervention since the end of the Cold War and the impact of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001.*

In the decade before 11 September 2001, there were plenty of conflicts around the world, but little clarity among Western powers about their strategic interests and moral responsibilities for ending them. The absence of the strategic focus that had been provided by the East-West struggle was keenly felt and could be seen in the confusion of Western responses to state breakdown and civil war in a range of countries, including Afghanistan, Angola, former Soviet Republics in Central Asia and the Caucasus, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Yugoslavia and Zaire/Congo. Some of these civil conflicts, as in Afghanistan and Angola, were continuations of Cold War-era proxy wars that maintained their deadly momentum long after Super-Power patrons had lost interest. Others — some former Soviet republics and Yugoslavia — were the consequence of the collapse of multi-national states.



*Afghan aftermath: An international security presence is required to help rebuild Afghanistan. (© Crown Copyright)*

Since both these categories of conflict fit into the category of unfinished business from the 20th century's cold and world wars, it was possible to hope that the local carnage of the 1990s was a kind of final, residual nightmare — terrible, but temporary. This interpretation fits the general optimism engendered by the peaceful conclusion of the Cold War. A theory of benign globalisation suggested that these poor and conflict-ridden regions would eventually be swept up in the tide of global progress and peaceful development. If this was the long-term prospect, then it could be argued

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that the main responsibility of the powerful, advanced and wealthy states was to maintain the requisite global conditions — free trade, free movement of human and financial capital, secure sources of energy, the absence of Great-Power conflict — while attending in the short term to the humanitarian consequences of local conflicts.

### Failed states

As the 1990s dragged on, however, the multiplicity, obduracy, brutality, and sheer anarchy of such conflicts pointed to a darker interpretation — that a strong state and competent governance were preconditions for peaceful progress, but that these preconditions were not natural or perhaps even attainable in many places. The concept of a “failed state” entered the discourse of international relations, together with the overriding question: What, if anything, could and would be done to halt their wars and resurrect them?

This question became entangled with two other emerging aspects of the post-Cold War international system. Increasing recognition of the primacy of US military might was combined, perhaps inevitably, with increasing concern about the steadfastness of the United States' exercise of its preponderant power. In relation to the problem of failed states, the focus on the United States came as alternative solutions were, or appeared to be, discredited. With the end of the Cold War, new expectations and great demands were placed on the United Nations as an organisation, and although it performed admirably in many places, some notable failures — especially in Rwanda and Yugoslavia — underscored its material and cultural limits. And Europe, both its institutions and its major powers, proved unable to meet the challenge presented by the disintegration of Yugoslavia. Indeed, the notion of the United States as the “indispensable power” owed much to the way it was drawn into the role of leading peacemaker to pick up the pieces from the wars of Yugoslav dissolution, first in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia), then in Kosovo.

Yet looking at the 1990s as a whole, the US record in dealing with the most horrific consequences of state failure was uneven. Its flight from Somalia propagated the new conventional wisdom that a ruthless warlord need only fill a few body bags to dispatch the last remaining Super Power. Haunted by that experience,

the United States not only balked itself but also stymied effective UN Security Council action to halt the Rwandan genocide. In Haiti, the US role was more honourable and marginally more successful, but critics noted that the motivating interest was in large measure the prospect of more waves of Haitian refugees. And even in the former Yugoslavia, where the United States led its NATO Allies in doing the right thing in the end, initial US diffidence hampered an effective Western response until much of the damage — especially in Bosnia — had already been done.

Still, the 1990s was a decade in which NATO as a whole climbed a steep learning curve. The Allies came to a consensus on the necessity and the feasibility of humanitarian interventions in at least the one area — Southeastern Europe — where moral imperatives were reinforced by a compelling interest in European stability. A confused and morally debilitating passivity in the face of crimes against humanity in Bosnia — after reaching a nadir in summer 1995 — gave way to more assertive policies to defend the Bosnian government and the civilians who were the main target of the war. It was, of course, the harrowing and humiliating experience in Bosnia that weighed on the minds of Western leaders and strictly limited their patience with the actions of then Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic in Kosovo.

In many European states — notably Germany — strategic discourse had been distorted by heavy pacifist baggage. Over the course of the 1990s, as European publics and elites were confronted with the logic and consequences of wars of ethnic cleansing, much of this baggage was unloaded. As a consequence, by the time of the Kosovo campaign, the European members of NATO were more ready to use force and take sides in conflicts where moral judgements, although often difficult, were by no means impossible. And in the case of the United States, the Clinton Administration gradually became more confident about matching its moralistic rhetoric with military engagement.

Such was the background to one of the few debates in the 2000 US presidential contest devoted to foreign policy. In it, the Bush campaign accused the Clinton Administration of causing the United States to lose its strategic focus and squandering its military assets and energy on humanitarian interventions, peacekeeping

and nation-building exercises in places far removed from the country's vital interests. Vice President Al Gore responded with a spirited defence of such US engagements, the salient issue at the time being the deployments in the former Yugoslavia. He noted that nation-building in Germany and Japan had been key ingredients to the United States' post-war and Cold War foreign-policy triumphs.

### Terrorist attacks

The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 should have settled this particular debate. Osama bin Laden and al Qaida had in effect hijacked the failed states of Sudan and then Afghanistan to serve as a base for their operations. Since the enormity of the threat from al Qaida has now been firmly established, it would seem to follow that the world community, and not least the United States, can no longer tolerate the scourge of failed states for strategic as much as moral reasons.

This apparent lesson was underscored by President George W. Bush's promise to Afghanistan, at the outset of the US campaign there, that the

United States would not again abandon the country to its post-war fate. Implicit in this promise was the idea that US indifference to the country in the decade after the Soviet withdrawal had been a catastrophic mistake. Likewise, the debate about military action for regime change in Iraq has centred to a large extent on questions of responsibility for the aftermath. Indeed, the strategic threat posed by failed states was highlighted in the Bush Administration's National Security Strategy document, which stated on page one that: "America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones."

Yet it is not clear how the United States, the Atlantic Alliance or a nascent "world community" can consistently enforce, worldwide, the principles that NATO fought for in Kosovo. Washington's early reluctance to countenance the extension of the Afghan peacekeeping mission, the International Security Assistance Force, from Kabul to the entire country underscored the limits of US and, by extension, international commitment. Moreover, whatever the merits in principle of the argument that state failure around the globe was intolerable to the international conscience and international security, and however blurred the distinction between "wars of necessity"

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and “wars of choice”, the practical problem of strategic choice will not easily go away.

In the best of all plausible worlds, some failed states would be the (presumably fortunate) objects of international administration, and some would not. The criteria for choosing who gets pulled into the lifeboat are, however, murky — certainly in moral terms but also in terms of national interest. One serious attempt to lay out such strategic-choice criteria was attempted in the late 1990s by a team of scholars led by Paul Kennedy. They drew up a list of “pivotal states” that the Western and international communities could not afford to let fail. Yet the inherent flaw in any such attempt at list making is easy to see: it is unlikely that Afghanistan, before 11 September 2001, would have made the short-list.

There is no doubting that since 11 September 2001 the United States has been even more inclined to focus on what Washington “realists” consider the central strategic tasks of the world’s only Super Power. The United States, shockingly vulnerable, with unique geostrategic burdens and, therefore, unique vulnerability around the world, was going to concentrate on the hard cases. By this cold logic, an Iraq armed with weapons of mass destruction was more intolerable to the United States than, for example, genocidal war in Africa.

## Pre-emption debate

The controversy surrounding the Bush Administration’s purported new doctrine of “pre-emption” is, in this regard, something of a distraction. As the Administration rightly stated in the National Security Strategy document laying out the case for pre-emption, it was mainly a matter of “common sense”. Few states with the military means to pre-empt an attack would stand passive and wait for it. In any event, the prospect of a second US campaign against Iraq is a matter of “preventive” rather than pre-emptive war. The United States considers Iraqi possession of nuclear weapons and their delivery means intolerable and is preparing for war to prevent it. Internationally, this position might be more controversial if applied to certain other states. But in the case of Iraq it should not be considered such an extreme case of unilateralism — consistent as it is with more than a decade of UN Security Council resolutions, now augmented by renewed demands for Iraqi disarmament, and with them the implicit threat of military enforcement.

The real question is whether the marriage between US forcefulness and European humanitarianism — a marriage that was consummated in the Kosovo intervention — will survive the undoubtedly greater

insularity of US decision-making after both the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 and the electoral triumph of conservative Republicanism.

If there is a problem of US unilateralism, it is not so much that US policy is over-militarised as that it is insufficiently ambitious. To those worried about the United States’ overweening power and swagger on the world stage, this may seem like an odd observation. However, although the new National Security Strategy lays out a bold vision for “extend[ing] the peace by encouraging free and open societies on every continent”, implying, for example, a democratic remaking of the Middle East, such rhetorical ambition is not matched by the will for the patient, difficult and often dreary task of nation-building that might make it a reality. Indeed, it was UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, who, in his Labour Party Conference speech a few weeks after 11 September 2001, articulated a strategic vision that coupled a full-scale war against al Qaida with the determination to leave the post-war world better off for the great majority of humanity. In laying out this vision, he claimed a continuity between the humanitarian interventions of the 1990s and the arguably more demanding strategic era of the early 21st century.

The challenge, then, is for the wealthy, democratic states to fight the most serious immediate threats — above all, al Qaida — and at the same time mobilise themselves for other projects that are arguably the “moral equivalent of war”. The most often cited example of such mobilisations on the basis of enlightened national interest was the Marshall Plan, when the United States — far less wealthy than today — transferred something in the order of 2 per cent of its gross national product for the reconstruction and stabilisation of war-ravaged Europe.

A standard response to the use of this example is that those were special times with a special threat. Half a century later, it is claimed that US society (or indeed, any of today’s rich societies) cannot be expected to mobilise on such a scale. Yet given global disparities of wealth, the seeming permanence of human poverty, the extent of failed governance around the world, the vast loss of lives in civil conflicts, and the “demonstration effect” of non-state actors turning their grievances against the West into mass murder on a spectacular scale, is this standard response still valid? ■



The website of the International Institute for Strategic Studies can be found at <http://www.iiss.org>

## Back from the brink

*Mihai Carp describes and examines NATO's groundbreaking efforts to head off conflict in Southern Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.\**

**T**his year looks likely to be the first in more than a decade in which good news has eclipsed bad in Southeastern Europe. This is, no doubt, partly attributable to the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 against the United States and the shift in media attention to other parts of the world. But it is also the result of genuine improvements in conditions on the ground which appeared extremely unlikely a year earlier.



*Lethal weapons: During Essential Harvest, NATO soldiers collected close to 4,000 weapons in 30 days. (© NATO)*

In early 2001, an armed conflict in Southern Serbia, pitting ethnic Albanian extremists against Serbian and Yugoslav security forces, threatened the stability of the region. Its peaceful resolution was in large part the result of a concerted conflict-prevention strategy pursued by NATO and other international organisations. A few months later, in the neighbouring former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* a full-blown civil war with potentially disastrous consequences for the country, its population, and international engagement in the region was also successfully averted.

In both cases, NATO, together with other international organisations, played a key role in creating the conditions for re-establishing peace and stability. Working closely with the governments in Belgrade and Skopje, the international community helped put in place a comprehensive set of reform and confidence-building

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measures to underpin broad political agreements that were worked out to end the two conflicts. And in both cases, ethnic Albanian extremists were persuaded to lay down their arms. After years of public debate and setbacks for the international community in the former Yugoslavia, both cases might go down as the first examples of effective crisis management and conflict prevention.

### Trouble in the Presevo Valley

When Serbian and Yugoslav security forces withdrew from Kosovo in June 1999 in the wake of NATO's air campaign, few were aware that another potential conflict was brewing just over the border in Southern Serbia. In the Presevo Valley, however, a large ethnic Albanian community remained under Serbian direct rule lacking adequate political and social rights with little prospect for a decent future. The fact that many of the special Serbian police forces and Yugoslav Army units that had earlier been responsible for holding down the ethnic Albanian population of Kosovo were temporarily stationed in Southern Serbia added to local tensions.

At the time, as a result of a Military-Technical Agreement signed between the Alliance and the Yugoslav Army, the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) supervised a five-kilometre-wide buffer zone along Kosovo's internal boundary with Serbia. KFOR troops were not physically present in this strip of land — known as the Ground Safety Zone (GSZ) — but retained oversight of Yugoslav activities there. In this way, KFOR ensured that it was off limits to the Yugoslav Army, though not to local police.

In the second half of 2000, lightly armed ethnic Albanian extremists launched a series of attacks in the GSZ on Serbian security forces, under the premise of creating more equal rights for their ethnic kin. Calling themselves the "Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac" (UCPMB), the extremists killed four Serbian policemen in November. And despite robust patrolling by KFOR of the boundary inside Kosovo, UCPMB control of many ethnic Albanian villages quickly spread to three municipalities: Bujanovac (by far the most important with a mostly mixed population); Presevo (where ethnic Albanians are in a clear majority); and Medvedja, (where there is a majority of

Serbs). By late December 2000, the number of armed and uniformed ethnic Albanian militants had grown to a few hundred with no solution in sight to the standoff.

For KFOR and NATO, the rapidly escalating conflict presented a serious security risk with immediate implications for Kosovo. For one, the GSZ could not become a safe haven for ethnic Albanian extremists. There were also concerns that a full-scale military response by Belgrade would not only risk drawing more ethnic Albanian fighters to the area but that thousands of refugees might be forced to flee Southern Serbia into Kosovo.

As KFOR had no direct mandate in the area, it was clear that a political solution was needed both to guarantee enhanced rights for ethnic Albanians in Southern Serbia and equally to uphold the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Indeed, as early as December, the international community, represented by the European Union, NATO and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), agreed that a common approach was necessary to forestall further violence and re-establish stability in the area. The international community's early involvement in the crisis also coincided with the ouster of Slobodan Milosevic in Belgrade that opened new prospects for Serbia and Montenegro to return to the Euro-Atlantic fold.

In what became the first in a series of high-level contacts between NATO and Belgrade since the end of the Alliance's Kosovo campaign, Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Nebojsa Covic came to Brussels in February 2001 to brief the North Atlantic Council on proposals for a longer-term solution to the problems in Southern Serbia. Part of the so-called Covic Plan was for NATO to agree to a reduction of the GSZ that would allow Yugoslav authorities to re-establish control over the area. As such a reduction could not be considered lightly, given the potential for further clashes, the North Atlantic Council stressed that Belgrade would first have to show good faith by introducing a number of confidence-building measures to persuade the ethnic Albanians to lay down their arms. The Secretary General also appointed a Special Representative, Pieter Feith, to facilitate contacts between Belgrade and the ethnic Albanian community.

In the next four months, Mr Feith and a small team of dedicated NATO staff undertook numerous missions to

the area. In the course of these missions, the NATO team helped negotiate cease-fires and establish direct channels of communication between Serbian authorities and ethnic Albanian armed groups. The team also oversaw the withdrawal of heavy weapons and the implementation of confidence-building measures, including amnesty for ethnic Albanian fighters, and, eventually, the demilitarisation of the UCPMB.

While Mr Feith and his team were often involved in traditional shuttle diplomacy (all within a 20-kilometre radius), NATO did not have a formal mediation role. Complementing the high-level contacts and consultations in Brussels between NATO and the European Union, a representative of the European Union's Policy Planning Unit accompanied the NATO team at all times. This joint, hands-on approach proved extremely effective in fostering a common international strategy and impressed upon the parties that the international community would not tolerate

escalation. The missions also provided the North Atlantic Council and the European Union with crucial information they needed to make informed decisions.

After complicated negotiations in the field, and despite occasional setbacks, the North Atlantic Council eventually agreed to a phased and conditioned relaxation of the GSZ in four distinct steps during spring 2001. Relaxation meant that while the KFOR Commander retained overall responsibility for the area, Yugoslav forces were allowed to re-enter the buffer zone up to the administrative boundary with Kosovo. At each interval, the North Atlantic Council took into account NATO military advice and the evolving situation on the ground, with the whole process culminating in the return of Yugoslav forces to the most sensitive area, Bujanovac, in mid-May. A related demilitarisation agreement that effectively ended the rebellion was signed by the UCPMB and the Serbian government on 21 May.

In return for the disbanding of the UCPMB, Belgrade agreed a broad set of measures to facilitate the speedy integration of ethnic Albanians into political and administrative structures in the region. To this end, the international community agreed to provide help, where needed. Refugees were encouraged to return to their homes and relief agencies ensured that materials were available to make them habitable. The OSCE set up a specialised programme for training a multi-

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## Early international engagement can help avert a worst-case scenario

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ethnic police force for deployment in mostly Albanian villages formerly held by the rebels. And local elections to provide for more fair and equal representation of all ethnic groups at municipal level were promised.

## Skopje on the brink

International and NATO efforts in Southern Serbia were, however, soon overshadowed by an eruption of violence in the neighbouring former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.\* In what many observers at the time saw as a coordinated effort by ethnic Albanian extremists to foment further unrest, clashes between state security forces and the so-called National Liberation Army (NLA), had already led to serious loss of life and damage to property around the city of Tetovo in the north-west of the country in March. By early summer, ethnic Albanian militants had taken control of large swathes of territory in the eastern and northern part of the country. The government, in turn, was using disproportionate force in its efforts to quell the uprising. For NATO, this risk of renewed instability posed grave political challenges, as the very survival of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* as a state was in jeopardy.

From the beginning of the crisis, the NATO Liaison Office in Skopje, then headed by Ambassador Hans-Joerg Eiff, a German career diplomat, was involved in trying to defuse it, liaising with the host government and the other international organisations represented in the country. Drawing on some of the lessons of the crisis in Southern Serbia, the international community embarked on a concerted effort to find a political solution, in cooperation with the Skopje government. In this way, the European Union and the United States began working with representatives of the country's main political parties to devise a broad framework both to enhance the status of the ethnic Albanian community and to preserve the unity of the state.

For its part, NATO — with the consent of the highest levels of the Skopje government — was tasked with security matters. This included securing an end to the fighting and creating conditions for an effective disengagement of the army and security forces, and the NLA. As in the case of Southern Serbia, Lord Robertson called on Mr Feith and his crisis-management team to open a channel of communication with the armed groups with a view to securing necessary cease-fires and persuading them to support the ongoing political negotiation

process. At the request of the President of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, Boris Trajkovski, the Secretary General also dispatched Mark Laity, his special adviser and NATO deputy spokesman, to work from the President's Office and serve as a key point of contact [See accompanying article by Mark Laity in this issue of *NATO Review*, page 10].

As the crisis escalated, it became clear that Skopje could not resolve it on its own. In this way, NATO received a request on 14 June from President Trajkovski for help with implementing a plan for defusing the crisis, notably to assist with the disarming of the armed groups. In response, the North Atlantic Council commissioned military advice that, in turn, stressed that any NATO operation would have to be limited in scope, size and time.



Special Representative Pieter Feith.  
(© Pieter Feith)

The challenge was daunting as it meant convincing the NLA voluntarily to hand over their weapons in return for a comprehensive peace plan and the prospect of integration into mainstream society. Given the specific nature of the mission, four prerequisites for the deployment of NATO troops were set: a successful conclusion of the general political agreement among the main political parties; proper legal arrangements for NATO troops carrying out the operation on the territory of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia;\* a plan presented by NATO

and agreed between NATO and Skopje specifying the modalities and timetable for weapons handovers; and an enduring cease-fire among the parties.

After an intense few weeks, all of the above finally came together, culminating in the signing of the EU/US-brokered Framework Agreement on 13 August in the lake resort of Ohrid. NATO's weapons-collection plan, Operation Essential Harvest could begin. Over the next 30 days, a NATO force comprising several thousand troops collected close to 4,000 weapons at several designated collection points. By early October, the task was complete and the NLA had ceased to exist as a structured, armed organisation. Former NLA fighters would soon be granted an amnesty by the government with a view to facilitating their return to civilian life.

As a follow-on to Essential Harvest, NATO also agreed, at Skopje's request, to retain a much smaller force of a few hundred military personnel in the country to protect observers from the European Union and OSCE, tasked with monitoring the re-entry of the state security forces

into former crisis areas. The new NATO force, Task Force Fox — numbering only a few hundred men and women — has since been operating under a narrowly defined mandate. Its presence has, however, helped keep the peace process on track.

### What a difference a year can make

Just over a year after the troubles in Southern Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* it is perhaps too early to draw final conclusions. As ever, the wounds of past conflicts do not heal quickly. However, there is widespread agreement that the international community's early and efficient engagement in both theatres, has paid invaluable dividends.

In this regard, Southern Serbia might be the most telling example. Following last year's demilitarisation agreement, Yugoslav forces re-entered the GSZ without major incident. And while occasional acts of violence have been reported over the past year, the security situation has improved markedly, with Serbian and Yugoslav security presence in the area reduced, and several hundred members of a multi-ethnic police force deployed to places formerly held by the UCPMB. Local elections, carried out by the Serbian government, with the help of the OSCE, took place in August of this year and are considered to have been the most important confidence-building measure in the area to date. In the most symbolic and visible sign of redressing past grievances, an ethnic Albanian was elected mayor of the ethnically mixed municipality of Bujanovac for the first time in 50 years. The Alliance's facilitation efforts last year also paved the way for a steady improvement of relations between NATO and Belgrade that could culminate in the accession of Serbia and Montenegro to the Partnership for Peace programme.

In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* the situation remains more fragile but prospects for peace are better than at any time during the past two years. The general elections held in mid-September produced a landslide victory for the opposition coalition — a triumph, above all, for the citizens of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* who have opted peacefully for change.

### Lessons learned

Looking back at the experience of both NATO and the international community in general in Southern Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* a number of considerations might prove helpful in addressing similar challenges in the future.

#### **Early engagement**

In a future crisis, early international engagement

can help avert a worst-case scenario. Still traumatised by its failure to act early and decisively in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the early 1990s, and after considerable investment in Kosovo, the international community was well aware that it could not let events in Southern Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* degenerate.

In the case of Southern Serbia, NATO had to maintain a secure environment in Kosovo, and had to ensure full compliance by the Yugoslav Army with the provision of the Military-Technical Agreement in the GSZ. There was not only an urgent need to halt the spread of ethnic Albanian extremism, but also an imperative to address the root causes of instability in the area. In this way, Belgrade's request for assistance in helping implement a broad peace plan was taken up without delay. In the case of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* the international community was equally aware that it could not afford the price of a full-scale civil war, and worked insistently with the authorities in Skopje towards achieving an early political agreement.

#### **Consistent follow-up**

Persistent follow-up, and tenacity in post-conflict management remain equally important. Since the end of armed hostilities in Southern Serbia, the OSCE, the main implementing agency, has provided invaluable advice and expertise to the Serbian authorities in setting up the multi-ethnic police force, a local multi-ethnic media reform programme, and preparing for local elections. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* the signing of the political Framework Agreement last August was just one, albeit an important step in the peace process. Follow-on work on the re-entry of state security forces into former crisis areas, proper implementation of the amnesty law, and preparations for free and fair, general elections in cooperation with the government in Skopje, have since been the main focus of international activity. Other tasks will follow in the months ahead to keep the peace process on track.

#### **It's not the numbers that count**

Compared to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, where NATO has deployed tens of thousands of troops over the years, the overall investment in manpower on the ground in both Southern Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* has been minimal. Indeed, in Southern Serbia a NATO military presence was neither contemplated nor feasible. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* both Essential Harvest and Task Force Fox have been highly effective with many fewer troops than NATO deployments in other parts of the former Yugoslavia. The very presence of these missions, however, has



had an impressive dissuasive effect and represents an innovative way of utilising targeted military operations in support of a broad political strategy. In this way, greater international involvement at a later stage has been avoided.

### ***International cooperation and coordination***

The value of senior-level, inter-agency coordination was clearly demonstrated in 1999 already when Carl Bildt, then the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Balkans, brought together key individuals from the European Union, NATO, the OSCE and the United Nations for regular meetings. But in the international responses to the crises in both Southern Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* cooperation and coordination reached new levels, thereby contributing to the overall success of international efforts to halt the violence. When fighting erupted in the Presevo Valley and later in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* the main international players quickly realised that a coordinated effort would be key to solving problems, especially by applying pressure on the parties to reach a political solution and helping with the implementation of confidence-building measures. In managing both crises, the international organisations involved successfully avoided duplication of efforts and engaged in the areas in which they had the most expertise.

Throughout, coordination and cooperation among international organisations took place in such a way that every organisation helped re-enforce the missions and goals of the others. In Southern Serbia, for example, the European Union enhanced its monitoring presence in the area while the OSCE quickly set up its multi-ethnic police-training programme as soon as they had received NATO/KFOR support for possible emergency extraction.

In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* NATO's efforts on the security front underpinned the complex political negotiating process that was taking place under EU and US auspices. Moreover, frequent joint high-level visits by the NATO Secretary General, the EU High Representative, and the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to Skopje added political weight to the international leverage over the main players and underscored the international community's unity of purpose and vision. Despite heavy conflicting schedules and other pressing responsibilities, near-weekly meetings by the Troika of Lord Robertson, Javier Solana and Mircea Geoana to the offices of President Trajkovski and other senior government officials in Skopje became a common feature and, more than symbolically, underscored international commitment.

### ***New missions, new working methods***

Finally, in both Southern Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* NATO had the freedom to respond flexibly, whether by applying political pressure or deploying forces for specific limited-duration missions, underscoring the ability of the Alliance to respond effectively in future crises, together with other organisations.

In both cases, NATO acted at the request of the legitimate governments in Belgrade and Skopje: in Southern Serbia, assisting with the implementation of the Covic Plan, and in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* assisting with the collection of weapons handed over by the NLA. Moreover, the dispatching of the Secretary General's Special Representative, who could interact directly with the host government and representatives of the ethnic Albanian armed groups, proved invaluable in securing the latter's eventual support for the political process, securing cease-fires and the disengagement of forces. Finally, as the North Atlantic Council prepared for crucial political and operational decisions, NATO member states — while retaining oversight — allowed the Special Representative sufficient leeway and flexibility to work effectively on the ground.

Looking ahead, the international community still has much work to do in Southeastern Europe. The goal of creating self-sustaining peace processes remains elusive. However, the international community has demonstrated in both Southern Serbia and in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* that, under the right circumstances, it can make a critical difference. In this regard, the move from a theoretical appreciation of the benefits of conflict prevention to the practical implementation of a strategy to manage crisis and head off full-scale war must rank as one of the greatest successes of the past decade of international intervention in the region. ■

\* Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

## Battling the media

*Mark Laity describes and analyses the media policy that has underpinned NATO's conflict-resolution work in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.\**

*"I mean come on let's get real... Such imaginative constructions as I have just heard should be consigned to the comics; it is certainly not the work of a serious journalist."*

NATO spokesman at NATO press conference, Skopje, 4 September 2001

Such blunt criticism of the media is not usually a recommended tactic to get your message across. The fact that such shock tactics were needed shows just how difficult a job NATO's media team had last year at a critical time for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.\* After six months on the brink of civil war, the main political parties had just signed a controversial political deal, and NATO was deploying thousands of troops to collect weapons handed over by fighters of the ethnic Albanian National Liberation

Army (NLA). But at this turning point for the country, hardliners were using their media domination to launch massive criticism of NATO and the peace agreement.

NATO's fear was that the hardliners' disinformation campaign could undermine our ability to do a job that depended on consent and cooperation rather than force. Success relied on the willingness of ethnic Albanian fighters voluntarily to hand over weapons, which was in turn linked to ethnic Macedonian parliamentarians voting through radical political changes many disliked. Our presence was at the request of a deeply divided government and the impact of the media's reporting on a fearful ethnic Macedonian public already suspicious of NATO, and willing to believe the worst, could not be underestimated. In such circumstances, the media were key players, and at this stage we were losing the public relations battle.

But a year later the NLA has been disbanded, and the August 2001 Framework Agreement is law. Political violence has drastically declined, and free and fair elections have now been successfully completed. Much remains to be done, but the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* has turned a corner. This is, above all, a success for the people of the country themselves. But the international community also emerges with much credit. Indeed, international intervention in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* is already being seen as a classic (and rare) example of successful pre-emptive diplomacy, and some of that success can be attributed to the turnaround in the media.

### Media Campaign

NATO's media campaign in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* became a very different kind of operation to those in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. Those NATO missions were more narrowly military and reflected the powerful role of the international community. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* NATO's mission was more political while the Skopje government was proudly sovereign. NATO was and is a partner to the government, and can only operate with its full consent.

The original NATO media operation was relatively small. It was responsible for the public relations activities of the logistical support to KFOR in the former



PR problem: Even good-news stories like the collection of NLA weapons could be interpreted negatively. (© Mark Laity)

*Mark Laity is special adviser to NATO's Secretary General and is the Alliance's deputy spokesman.*

Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* the so-called KFOR Rear, which had no role within the country itself, but controlled the transit of KFOR supplies from Greece to Kosovo. As NATO became more involved in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* the media operation became increasingly overloaded.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* had been sliding into civil war since the emergence of the NLA in spring 2001. But it was the appointment that summer, at the request of the country's president and prime minister, of a NATO official, Pieter Feith, to make contact with NLA leader, Ali Ahmeti, which catapulted NATO into the heart of media controversy. By that stage, the European Union had brokered a grand governing coalition of the main ethnic Albanian and ethnic Macedonian political parties. It was the only way to get agreement on the painful political changes needed to avoid civil war, but it also imported into government many bitter divisions and rivalries.

That disunity focused on the clash between hardliners and moderates over handling the fighters of the NLA. Hardliners wanted a military solution and regarded the NLA as terrorists to be fought, while moderates accepted that a political agreement was needed to meet legitimate ethnic Albanian political aspirations and take away the reasons for any further conflict. Western militaries regarded the state security forces as incapable of winning a guerrilla war, while diplomats saw a political deal as the only alternative to a civil war and partition.

In such a situation, Mr Feith's contacts with Mr Ahmeti, to seek a cease-fire and the NLA's disbandment, put him at the centre of the media storm. His contacts were at the specific request of the government, but in such a disunited government that did not protect NATO from criticism. The hardliners were very public in their attacks on NATO, but even the ethnic Macedonian ministers who accepted the necessity of speaking to Mr Ahmeti found it hard to defend in public, what was for them, such a distasteful course.

This was all made worse in June when NATO organised the withdrawal of NLA fighters from the town of Aracinovo near Skopje. Military attempts to drive out the NLA had totally failed, and, as the military

and political situation rapidly deteriorated, NATO and Mr Feith were asked by the Skopje government to persuade the NLA to leave. It was a tough and risky task but they succeeded, although only at the price of a government crisis and a massive media backlash. The public was told NATO had saved the NLA from defeat, not defused a crisis, while hardliners in the government criticised actions they had in fact agreed to.

It also gave NATO the dilemma it was to wrestle with throughout the coming months — how to respond to criticism which often came from elements within the government that had asked NATO to be there and do exactly what it was doing. Meanwhile, hardline media were fanning the flames of ethnic hatred and whipping up war fever. A European Commission report concluded: "Media coverage during the 2001 crisis significantly contributed to worsening the political situation."

Over the summer, NATO faced regular accusations of active military cooperation with the NLA, including providing helicopters to supply and transport them. The official government spokesman routinely accused NATO officials of "abusing their trust" and "brutal behaviour" as part of a deliberate coordinated campaign to cause war. It is a huge tribute to the courage of many in the Skopje government that despite the pressure they themselves were under, they

still managed to agree the Framework Agreement in August. Despite the reservations of their own public and in the face of such media criticism, they made many tough decisions.

Until Task Force Harvest deployed in September 2001, NATO had rarely sought the media limelight. The Feith team's contacts with Mr Ahmeti, like so much crisis diplomacy, relied on discretion to succeed, but their self-imposed low profile had made NATO vulnerable to disinformation. NATO was both misunderstood and unpopular with much of the ethnic Macedonian public. The arrival of several thousand NATO troops produced a wave of media attention and hostility that swamped the existing public relations team, despite the excellent work of the existing military spokesman, Major Barry Johnson.

Our low point came with an early September visit by the Secretary General to coincide with the display of

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the first tranche of weapons collected from the NLA, completed well ahead of schedule. It should have been a good-news story, but it went wrong. Despite an overwhelming preponderance of good serviceable weapons, we managed to put all the dirtiest and oldest weapons closest to the media. The Secretary General's press conference at the weapons site descended into chaos as journalists broke away and mobbed him. Local media said the process was a sham, and international media predicted failure.

## Turning point

It proved a turning point, as the media team was extensively upgraded and re-organised, and the decision was made to take a far more forceful public approach to combat the lies and distortions. The most obvious difference was the appointment of a civilian spokesman, myself, to answer the highly political questions and criticisms that a military spokesman could not.

For the media it was a shock. The worst media had interpreted our reactive and low-key response as a manifestation of weakness and lack of confidence in our own case, and polite rejections of outrageous allegations were brushed aside. Our previous refusal to engage on political issues had also been seen as weakness by journalists who did not understand the limitations of what Western military officers can say. Suddenly, they themselves were challenged, and because NATO's daily press conferences were the media highlight of the day, they had little choice but to report what we said. Every night the NATO press conference took up huge chunks of television airtime. Much of the analysis was still distorted, but NATO's messages and agendas were being heard in a way they had never been heard before, and many of the



Marc Laity at a press conference (© Mark Laity)

worst of the outright fictions disappeared. It was never easy, but when powerful hardliners started to argue that NATO should not have daily press conferences,

we knew that our public relations efforts were having the right effect. Direct confrontation with hardline ministers was avoided, but the key messages included constant reminders that our presence was at their request, and therefore their responsibility.

The theatre of the daily conference was only part of the media strategy. More resources, better planning and better briefing on the needs of the media produced immediate results in the visits and trips to see Task Force Harvest at work. For instance, the next display of weapons presented them laid out in a way that truly illustrated the scale of the success; a helicopter was laid on for filming; and the worst of the dirt was removed from weapons to show them for what they were — highly serviceable killing tools, and certainly not junk.

Media strategy was also an integral part of the commander's morning conference, woven closely into overall policy, and the media advisers very much felt a valued part of the team. There was even a second media meeting straight after the main conference to get the details right, and the force commanders and senior political representatives took a direct role in directing the strategy to help the overall mission.

At times, it also produced a conscious linking of background pressure and diplomacy with public statements. For instance, pressure to get ethnic Macedonian hardliners to pull back paramilitary units that were deliberately provoking firefights was done by a combination of talking to politicians and taking our evidence to the media. Here, as elsewhere, it was an absolute rule never to give out false information.

The NATO media team also found it easier to get information whenever something happened. Getting good information fast is fundamental to media success, and often a big problem in military operations relying on a chain of command. However, the commanders' clear support for their media team meant we mostly got what we needed when we needed it. Our ability to provide accurate, timely information gave NATO a big advantage in the battle to get the media's attention.

## International cooperation

Cooperation with other international organisations was also vital. The NATO/EU link was particularly valuable, and throughout NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson and EU High Representative Javier Solana were not just key political brokers but also the ultimate media heavy artillery, putting over international policy in a way no one else could, especially as their visits usually came at the most critical times. But the Skopje-based political representatives also increasingly

coordinated their media strategy, and for NATO it was always a high priority to get other international organisations onto the platform of the daily press conference. When we spoke together, it always had more effect, and the reverse also applied, with the hardliners always looking for gaps to exploit.

But the most important requirement for success was simple, though not easy — credibility. At the heart of our problems last summer was the fact that ethnic Macedonians did not believe us. We knew we were speaking the truth, but we had to persuade sceptical media that this was the case. The forceful refutation of others' lies and disinformation had to be followed by building up a record of accuracy in our information, as well as gaining acceptance that our strategy was at least honest and sincere, even if some still disagreed with it.

The success of Task Force Harvest helped provide this credibility. We said the weapons would be collected, and they were. We said the NLA would disband, and it did. We said ethnic Macedonian paramilitary units were causing violence, and when they were withdrawn the incidents ceased. And after the press conferences were over we talked individually with journalists, arguing and briefing over coffee, comparing notes. The problem the journalists had was that it was hard to know what to believe, because for months they had been fed a diet of distortion and conflicting views. Despite this, and despite the bias of the organisations they worked for, many wanted to get it right. Others were already well-informed, but were not allowed to write what they knew. In such circumstances personal relationships were vital, learning to trust each other as individuals, even as friends.

NATO's media strategy helped open up the media, and the success on the ground, actively promoted and explained, built up NATO's credibility. By the end of Task Force Harvest in October 2001, a core group of journalists basically trusted NATO, and regarded our version of events as most reliable. Over the next year that was increasingly reflected in the output of the ethnic Macedonian media, which split between moderates and hardliners as more normal politics reasserted itself.

Last year, media in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* were seen as a significant cause of their country's slide towards civil war. In the successful elections that took place in September, while some still opted for bias and lies, large portions of the same media played a truly constructive role. In spite of threats and intimidation in some instances, many brave individuals and publications were determined to be part

of the solution, not part of the problem. It is particularly noteworthy that some of those who were threatened came to NATO for help, and we spoke loudly on their behalf. We have indeed come a long way.

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\* Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

## Anticipating crises

*John Kriendler examines the importance of early warning in crisis management, the Alliance's approach to early warning and NATO's new Intelligence Warning System.*

Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has been on a steep learning curve. It took years — too many years — for the Alliance to take action to stop civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. NATO reacted far more quickly over the Kosovo crisis, but still too late to prevent ethnic cleansing and terrible human rights abuses. Most recently, the Alliance intervened in Southern Serbia and in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* before tensions exploded into open conflict — with the result that mass bloodshed was averted, and peace maintained at a relatively low cost.



*Timely intervention: NATO intervened in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* before tensions exploded into open conflict. (© Crown Copyright)*

The lesson of the past decade in the Balkans and elsewhere is clear. Early warning of impending crises is vital. Early action — and the right action — is invaluable. But knowing how and when best to become involved in an emerging crisis is extremely difficult. It requires rapidly obtaining as clear a picture of the situation as possible and adopting a course of action designed to achieve the best outcome.

In recent years, many international organisations have sought to develop and improve capabilities in the field of early warning. The United Nations has, for example, established its own Humanitarian Early Warning System and the European Commission sponsors the Conflict Prevention Network. Moreover,

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many academic institutions, think tanks and non-governmental organisations have also built useful expertise over the years. But given that NATO has unique crisis-management capabilities, it has been particularly important for the Alliance to enhance this dimension of its activities.

The benefits of early warning of emerging crises are obvious. It provides more time to prepare, analyse and plan a response and, in the event of intervention, enhances its likelihood of success. Early warning can also contribute to the establishment of goals to be achieved, development of courses of action and their comparison, leading eventually to implementation of chosen options, and finally analysis of the reaction of the parties involved and potential scenarios. Because of the importance of early warning, crisis-management and conflict-prevention procedures focus in the early stages on information acquisition, assessment and analysis.

### Cold war procedures

During the Cold War, NATO used a system of indications and warning, which could provide early warning of strategic attack and track developments. At the time, "indications" were essentially steps an adversary would have to take to prepare for a military action and which could be expected to become visible to outside observers at some stage. "Warning" was the formal alerting of political and military decision-makers and commanders to the potential for crisis or attack. The indications and warning system used during the Cold War focused largely, although not exclusively, on military indications that tended to be largely quantitative.

Changes in the security environment at the end of the Cold War obliged NATO to revise its indications-and-warning methodology. As a result of reduced risk of armed conflict between states and increased risk of conflict within states, the Alliance has broadened its approach to early warning in a number of ways. Firstly, the range of potential risks addressed has been extended well beyond the threat of direct aggression to Alliance territory to encompass non-military risks and even unconventional threats such as terrorism. Secondly, increased interaction with members of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) further contributes to early warning. And thirdly, NATO has

developed a new Intelligence Warning System (NIWS). In general terms, NATO seeks to obtain early warning through a variety of mutually reinforcing processes. These include meetings of the North Atlantic Council, the Policy Coordination Group, the Political Committee and the Military Committee, as well as other committees, in which Allies share intelligence and information about potential and ongoing crises. In addition, EAPC meetings and meetings of committees in EAPC format, provide a forum for Allies and Partners to share information which can contribute to early warning and to consult on developing crises. And regional working groups, meeting under the auspices of the Political Committee, bring together national experts once or twice a year, usually with Partners, to examine trends in different geographic regions.

Contacts with individual Partners, where they have the opportunity to discuss potential crises of concern to them, provide another opportunity to gather information on impending crises. Allies also share intelligence both with other Allies and with Partners in the context of ongoing crisis-response operations and Partnership-for-Peace activities. NATO's Situation Centre monitors incoming messages and open-source information around the clock. And NATO's International Military Staff's Intelligence Division monitors developments — on the basis of intelligence reporting by Alliance member states — in particular through the Current Intelligence and Warning Branch.

The NIWS was designed to be a much more inclusive warning system than its predecessor and to take account of the risks identified in the Alliance's 1999 Strategic Concept. To accomplish this task, the NIWS is based on the informed judgement of analysts. Accordingly and in contrast to its predecessor, the NIWS relies on qualitative analytical processes, not the more mechanical measurement of multiple, precisely defined and specific events. As such, it covers not only threats to NATO, but also a wide variety of military and non-military risk indicators, including uncertainty and instability in and around the Euro-Atlantic area, and the possibility of regional crises on the periphery of the Alliance. Moreover, it both provides warning of any developing instability, crisis, threats, risks, or concerns that could impact on the security interests of the Alliance and it monitors de-escalation of a crisis.

Here, it is important to understand that "warning" is not an event, but a cyclical process in which an identifiable

crisis, risk or threat is assessed, a warning problem is defined and a critical indicator list is developed. Clearly, this is more difficult in today's more complex and varied security environment. Next, the critical indicators are continuously monitored and the assessment matrix is updated as required. Warning is issued, and the cycle resumes. The crucial sub-text to this process is recognition that the effectiveness of warning is dependent upon the extent to which it is integrated into the crisis-management and response measures available to decision-makers.

### Identifying critical indicators

The crises that shattered European stability in the decade following the end of the Cold War did not come as a surprise to analysts of conflict. In Kosovo and in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,\* for example, an eruption of violence had been forecast for many years before latent tensions boiled over into bloodshed. Indeed, the United Nations had even placed a small force, UNPREDEP, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* between 1992 and 1998 to help stabilise the country in its early years as an independent state and prevent it disintegrating in warfare in a similar fashion to other former Yugoslav republics. The key issue for early-warning systems, however, is determining the factors that will correctly predict when political tension will degenerate into crisis and helping to shape a crisis response that will inevitably be based largely on subjective, analytical judgements.

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NIWS methodology calls for analysts to decide well in advance which events, or critical indicators, can serve as decision points for any given warning problem. These events are intended to be so critical that, if they occur, they indicate a significant change in ongoing developments and therefore require a comparable change in judgement of the likely end state of the emerging situation. By focusing on these critical indicators, analysts no longer base judgements on a mathematical, mechanical and quantitative approach to indications and warning. Instead, they can provide qualitative, forward-looking, predictive assessments for the outcome of a clearly defined situation.

By definition, a critical indicator is intended to be a significant clue about what is happening and the eventual end state of a series of events. An obvious example in the case of the Federal Republic of

Yugoslavia was the leadership situation. Would President Slobodan Milosevic step down, win re-election or be overthrown? To fulfil their intended functions, critical indicators must be defined so that they occur early in the evolution of the crisis in such a way that, if identified, decision-makers have time to react. They also have to be reliable so that policy-makers are willing to take decisions based on them. In general, indicators must be collectable and identifiable, so there is a realistic expectation of perceiving them if they exist.

No matter how well-structured an early-warning system, its success depends, above all, on the judgement and vision of political authorities. Ultimately, the political will to act, individually and collectively, and, if necessary, to intervene is more important than any early-warning tool. However, political will depends on more than an analysis of the likely evolution of a conflict and is clearly affected by a host of other issues, including electoral cycles, competing domestic priorities and public opinion. It is especially difficult to muster in the early stages of a crisis, when the parameters and stakes involved may not yet be clear, and may still be lacking much later.

With the NIWS, NATO has a rigorous and reliable mechanism for anticipating crises and, if necessary, taking action to prevent crisis and conflict. At the same time, the Alliance is putting in place the political and military tools for acting upon warning indicators, in the form of high-readiness, rapidly deployable headquarters and forces. Together, these complementary capabilities should help ensure that the Alliance continues to play an effective role in crisis management. ■



For more information on the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, see <http://www.marshallcenter.org>

\* Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.



## Is military power still the key to international security?

*Steven Everts VERSUS Gary Schmitt*

NO



Steven Everts is a senior research fellow with the London-based Centre for European Reform and director of its transatlantic programme.

YES



Gary Schmitt is executive director of the Project for the New American Century in Washington DC.

Dear Gary,



The question of the relative importance of military power in achieving foreign policy goals in today's world is crucial. Achieving transatlantic consensus on this strategic, overarching issue is perhaps even more important than getting agreement on policy towards Iraq, Israel-Palestine or the International Criminal Court.

It is clear that tackling the vast majority of today's global problems requires a careful mix of hard and soft security instruments. We can probably agree that the international security environment has moved on decisively from the bad old days of the Cold War, with its familiar lexicon of détente and deterrence. In this post-post Cold War era, we have moved from risks to threats: from the single risk of a thermo-nuclear exchange to the multiple threats of globalised insecurity. As a result, we have a much more diffuse security environment to contend with. Between black and white, there are now a thousands shades of grey. One of the consequences of this transition is that military power has become less important, because it is often ill-suited to solve the complex political and security problems we face.

Whether the issue is messianic terrorism, weapons proliferation, failed states, managing regional conflicts or whatever other international problem one may care to name, the conclusion is always the same. Solving these problems is hard. But states that can draw on the full spectrum of available instruments and which have a demonstrable desire to work with like-minded partners, stand a much greater chance of success. It is for this pragmatic reason that I am concerned with the

current trend towards over-militarisation in the United States. Unlike some on the European left, I have no problem with US power. Constructive and multi-faceted US international engagement is clearly needed in a world beset by rising levels of international tension. But I do believe that the trend towards spending ever more on defence — now comfortably over \$1 billion a day — while allocating pitiful sums of money to non-military forms of international engagement is unhelpful, because it means that fewer resources are directed at actually resolving international problems. To illustrate: the percentage of the federal budget devoted to international affairs excluding defence spending — such as the excellent Nunn-Lugar programmes aimed at preventing Russian nuclear weapons and materials getting into the wrong hands — has fallen from four per cent in the 1960s, via two per cent in the 1970s, to just over one per cent today.

Of course, overwhelming military force can be necessary and effective in certain circumstances, as in the campaign against the Taliban in Afghanistan. But military force alone rarely works, even in the medium-term. Just consider Afghanistan today. More broadly, I don't think that "full-spectrum dominance" alone will help the United States win its war on terror. Defeating terrorism is essentially a job for intelligence and police authorities and of winning hearts and minds, as Europeans have learned — usually the hard way. Nor will it help anchor Russia in a West-leaning direction, manage the integration of China into the global system, or promote a peace settlement in the Middle East.

The instruments states have at their disposal inevitably have a knock-on effect on their "world view". Increasingly, US behaviour reminds me of the saying:

“If the only instrument you have is a hammer all your problems start looking like a nail.” The rather Hobbesian worldview of the new National Security Strategy, with a doctrine of pre-emptive strike as its centre piece, has added ammunition to European fears that on the all-important question of global strategy Europe and the United States are drifting apart.

In response to European gripes about US unilateralism, Americans often point to Europe’s pathetic levels of defence spending. Clearly, there is a strong case for Europe to improve its hard security capabilities. Thankfully, some countries — like France and the United Kingdom — are now increasing their defence spending. Like many analysts I subscribe to the mantra that without more, and smarter defence spending Europe will fail to realise its foreign policy ambitions. In debates among Europeans, I argue for boosting European military capabilities, not to “please” Americans but so that Europe can fulfil the tasks that it has set for itself — both in NATO and the European Union.

But there are three perfectly sensible reasons for Europe’s reluctance to prioritise defence spending. First, US choices in these matters are leaving a security vacuum that Europe must fill. Put simply, if the United States is not doing conflict prevention or post-conflict reconstruction, who will? Second, many Europeans are sceptical whether more defence capabilities will, as some analysts argue, get them more influence in Washington. The tendency in the United States, particularly with this administration, is first to decide strategy and then to push and cajole allies to support it. The phrase used in Europe — only partly tongue-in-cheek — is that the United States is not looking for coalitions of the willing and able but of the willing and compliant. Third, we come back to the question of effectiveness. If military force is only useful for a small and perhaps shrinking set of international problems — and often only for a short period of time — then what is the point, many Europeans wonder, in spending much more on defence?

Clearly we need a frank transatlantic debate over what counts as the most important global problems (the “mad men and loose nukes” agenda versus the dark side of globalisation), and over which strategies work best (unilateral military force and pre-emptive strikes or broad-based coalitions and a mix of hard and soft security).

These days it is almost mandatory in Washington to lambast Europeans for their failure to spend adequately on defence. But upon reflection it should be clear that the imbalance on the US side is greater and more troubling. I look forward to the day when the United

States realises that it has got its spending priorities wrong. US-style military supremacy may make the country feel important — but it does little for solving the growing problems of a troubled world.

*Yours,*  
Steven

Dear Steven,



Before I respond to your comments, I should set out my answer to the specific question we’ve been asked to address: “Is military power still the key to international security?” The short answer is “no”. The key, as it always has been, is the character of the regimes that make up the international order. And, in modern times, the key to international security is whether a state or states are liberal democracies. By far, the greatest advancement in international security theory has been the “discovery” that international peace and prosperity is directly proportional to the spread of liberal democratic governments throughout the globe.

That said, is military power the next most relevant key to international security? Here my answer is “yes”. Is it the only key? No. Can it solve all problems? No. But it is the next best explanation of why most states behave the way they do, why they don’t behave as they might, and why being superior in this element of statecraft paves the way for making other tools more effective. Indeed, the only reason we are having this debate is, ironically, because US military power is so omnipresent that the benefits it provides in terms of global stability get taken for granted. A good example of this is your remark that military force can’t “help anchor Russia in a West-leaning direction, manage the integration of China into the global system, or promote a peace settlement in the Middle East”. Military power can’t “solve” these problems obviously but predominant military power in the hands of the United States or Israel does in fact preclude Russia, China and the Palestinian Authority from adopting policies that are more ambitious and disruptive of the international order. Military power, in short, matters not only because some problems are “nails” (Milosevic, Bin Laden, et al.), but also because having the upper hand militarily can keep a host of other problems at bay. All one has to do is imagine a situation in which the United States did not have its global military capabilities to see just how different (and more dangerous) a world this would be.

In contrast, your overarching point is that the United States has not recognised that, with the passing of the Cold War, “military power has become less

important” in this supposedly more “complex political and security” environment. Putting aside the fact that your characterisation of the security problems the United States faced during the Cold War — “black and white”, reducible to a “thermo-nuclear exchange” — is not accurate (and I might add very Euro-centric), it is also wrong to describe current US statecraft as one of “over-militarisation”.

Since the end of the Cold War, America’s military budget has declined, just as it has in Europe. A decade ago, US defence spending was just short of 5 per cent of GDP. When George Bush took office, it was barely 3 per cent. And, indeed, until 9-11, the Bush Administration had made it clear that it did not intend to increase defence spending in any significant way. Of course, given the size of the US economy, 3.4 or 3.3 per cent of GDP (which are the estimates of the defence burden for the next two years) still buys you quite a bit. But given the United States’ global security responsibilities — in Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and now at home — it is arguably barely enough. Moreover, having a military-second-to-none has not led the United States to be quick on the draw. For example, there was no hurry to jump into Bosnia and Herzegovina or Kosovo. Nor did the United States take decisive military action against Bin Laden until after 9-11, despite the fact that al Qaida had killed hundreds in strikes on US targets in previous years. Even the looming conflict with Iraq comes after more than a decade of Baghdad’s failure to live up to its cease-fire obligations. And I don’t see Washington rushing off to address the crisis on the Korean Peninsula with surgical air strikes.

You continue with this cartoon version of American statecraft by stating that the new National Security Strategy is guided by a “Hobbesian worldview”, and has “as its centre piece” the doctrine of pre-emptive strikes. First, if it were truly Hobbesian, the strategy would not put such a heavy emphasis on the need to expand liberal political and economic principles around the globe. And, second, any fair reading of the document would conclude that the option of pre-emptive strikes is not central to the new strategy. Does it have increased relevance in a security era in which weapons’ proliferation has got dangerously out of hand? Yes. Is it the defining element of the overall strategy? Hardly.

Finally, to support your claim about US statecraft being “over-militarised”, you assert that Washington allocates “pitiful sums of money to non-military forms of international engagement”. Now, one can argue about whether the United States allots enough money (\$12.7 billion in 2000) for foreign assistance or whether

foreign assistance makes much difference at all, but to call the US levels of aid “pitiful” is simply hyperbole. Besides Japan, no other country spends as much on government foreign assistance as the United States and, next year, no one will be spending more. Even now, the aid provided by the United States is done on more generous terms. (Japan provides much of its assistance in the form of loans — over grants — and requires, like several European states, that its aid be spent on buying goods and services from it.) The fact is that the US government is the world’s largest bilateral donor to the developing world: providing \$11 billion in official development assistance and over \$17 billion in all forms of assistance. It is also the world’s leader in humanitarian assistance; the largest donor to the multilateral development banks; the leader in private charitable donations; and the greatest source of private capital to developing states. Indeed, well over \$30 billion in private remittances alone go from the United States to the developing world each year — a sum equal to or larger than the defence budget of every NATO state except France, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Europeans like to tell themselves that they have, as you argue, a more balanced and nuanced sense of what is required to handle today’s security problems than those “cowboys” in America. But the facts indicate that the United States not only carries the biggest “hammer” in the world but also retains the most generous “pocket”. It strikes me that this is far more in balance than, say, in Germany, where, when you add up the monies spent on foreign assistance and the military, the total still falls well short of 2 per cent of GDP. Frankly, this is not surprising since Germany and, more broadly, Europe relies on the United States to do most of the heavy lifting in managing the globe’s biggest security concerns. Fine. But Europeans should stop trying to turn this point of weakness into some new insight into what is key to international security in the post-Cold War world.

*Yours,*  
Gary

*Dear Gary,*



Let me make three points in response. They are about the nature of the transatlantic security agenda; the effectiveness of military force; and budgetary choices.

I am glad we agree that the key to international security is not whether states have abundant military power, but whether they are liberal democracies or not. The finding that liberal democracies don’t fight each other

is indeed the closest we have come to establishing an “empirical law” in international relations. The question now is: how can we expand the democratic peace? I suggest that building liberal democracies is best done through the kind of conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction that Europeans (and others) so often do — and which Americans often reject or belittle. Higher defence spending is great if the United States wants to extend its military lead even further. But what will it do to prevent fragile or failing states from descending into anarchy? How will it help to prevent Afghanistan from becoming — yet again — a playground for warlords and fanatical Islamic groups?

Rebuilding war-torn societies is difficult and unglamorous. It is also much more expensive and time-consuming than the war-fighting phase. It would be great if the United States rethought its opposition to “nation building” and offered the necessary financial resources and political commitment. On the military side, the United States could join its European Allies in contributing more forces to UN missions. At the moment the United States has one — yes one — soldier involved in UN-run peace operations (out of a total of 36,000). Both the United States’ international image and global security would benefit enormously if it did.

Clearly, using military force is sometimes necessary. Diplomacy not backed up by the threat of force can be ineffective, as we saw, for example, in the former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. But military force without a diplomatic or political strategy is often worse and can create more problems than it solves. Take Somalia in 1991-92. Or consider the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, where violence declined after the start of peace negotiations not because of British military supremacy. Your point that predominant military power in the hands of Israel has precluded “the Palestinian Authority from adopting policies that are more ambitious and disruptive of the international order” is, at a minimum, debatable. Israel’s (self-image of) military supremacy has led to a disastrous invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and is now feeding the illusion that if only its military crackdown were implemented more decisively all suicide bombings would stop. Regardless of where one stands on the Israel-Palestine question, only a tiny, extremist minority (on both sides) believes there is a military solution to this problem.

Finally, budgetary choices. You valiantly defend the US record on development aid and trot out some deceptively impressive figures. But they do not stand up to scrutiny. First, the term “pitiful” is not mine, nor is it European hyperbole. It is Joseph Nye’s characterisation of the sums of money the United

States is devoting to “soft security” today. Second, the \$11 billion the United States provides in overseas aid looks less impressive if you realise that more than \$5 billion of that money goes to Israel and Egypt alone. Of course the United States is often, but not always, the largest bilateral donor and of course it makes significant contributions to the budgets of the United Nations, IMF, World Bank and other international organisations. But if you group what Europeans are doing together, their contributions dwarf that of the United States — and relative figures bear this out. As Chris Patten never tires of saying: “The European Union and the member states account for 55 per cent of all international development assistance and some 66 per cent of all grant aid. They finance 50 per cent of all aid to the Palestinians, over 60 per cent of all aid to Russia and more than 85 per cent to the Balkans”.

The point here is not to win a “foreign aid beauty contest”, but to argue that changes in the global security agenda require a multi-faceted approach and a blending of hard and soft security instruments. Clearly, Europeans need to improve the coherence and effectiveness of their foreign policy performance. But global security governance probably requires more significant changes in the United States. The mindset of some of the administration’s hawks and the instruments the United States has at its disposal, are often ill-suited to today’s security agenda. The guiding principle of transatlantic debate on contributions to global security should be: first redefine, then rebalance.

*Yours,*  
Steven

[Dear Steven,](#)



OK, we agree that the key to international peace and security is whether a state or states are liberal democracies. But your response to the question “how can we expand the democratic peace?” is telling. “Building liberal democracies,” you write, “is best done through conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction that Europeans (and others) so often do — and which Americans often reject or belittle.”

First, the democratic peace depends not only on expanding the number of democratic states in the world. It’s also about preserving and protecting existing democracies. You argue as though the peace and security the world’s democracies enjoy today is self-sustaining. But of course it isn’t. In a multitude of ways, that peace rests on the kind of military capability you seem so eager to pass over. Do you really think that

absent the United States' military power South Korea's democracy would be safe from North Korea's vast arsenal? Do you really think absent US aircraft carrier groups Taiwan's democracy would last for more than a week in the face of China's stated goal to acquire Taiwan by force? Do you really think absent US military superiority Iraq would not have gained control of the vast oil reserves Western democracies depend on? Do you really think that democratic Israel would exist today if its military were not vastly superior to that of Syria? Iraq? Would Egypt have ever signed a peace treaty with Israel if it had not been decisively defeated twice on the battlefield? For that matter, why is it the case that the first thing the new democracies of Europe strive for is NATO membership, and then membership in the European Union? Isn't it because they know the first order of business is establishing security? And security rests on being associated with the dominant military power?

As for your other points, I never claimed that there is a military solution to the Israeli-Palestinian problem. However, it is obvious that if Israel's military capability were on the order of, say, Lebanon's, there would be even less chance of a "peace process", since Arafat and his friends have only trimmed their goals — which has included the destruction of Israel — in the face of Israel's ability to defend itself. Along the same line, you seem to want to jump to "post-conflict reconstruction" without acknowledging the obvious: In case after case, until you get rid of the thugs in power — who, by the way, do not seem especially troubled by your "pre-conflict" admonitions — you can't expand the democratic peace. Whatever problems we face in bringing decent and stable self-rule to Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, the very possibility of establishing decent regimes in each exists because predominant military power was exercised first. Even your reference to the conflict in Northern Ireland proves this point. Although violence might have declined after peace negotiations began, it was the successful application of British military-intelligence-police power that forced the IRA to realise that it could not accomplish its goal through terrorism.

Finally, you continue with your cartoon version of US statecraft. Your latest fact: the United States has only "one — yes one — soldier involved in UN-run peace operations". What you omit is that the United States pays for more than a third of those operations (more than twice what any other power in the world contributes) and that, in addition to all its other global military responsibilities, the United States in 2001 remained the largest contributor to multilateral peace operations.

Now, it's true that Europe as a whole spends more on government-funded international development assistance than the United States. But there is also the question of effectiveness. US development assistance from the private sector totals \$36 billion a year. That figure far surpasses any comparable figure from the European Union and reflects a judgement in the United States that most assistance is more effective and more effectively managed in the hands of private non-governmental organisations. It's a tad ironic that Joe Nye, the guru of American "soft power", would be oblivious to that "soft power" fact. In the meantime, Europe, collectively and individually, has been the overwhelming provider of development assistance to pre-9/11 Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, the Palestinian Authority and Syria. Maybe Chris Patten can explain how these hundreds of millions of dollars have made the world more peaceful and expanded the democratic peace. But I doubt it.

*Yours,*  
Gary

Dear Gary,



In bringing this debate to a close, let me reiterate my main argument: to solve the vast majority of today's security problems, countries, or rather groups of countries, need a multi-faceted approach — blending hard and soft security instruments — and a demonstrable willingness to stay the course. I will let others decide whether I have repeatedly presented a "cartoon version" of US policies — reading back the debate you may find I was a bit more subtle. At the risk of repetition, let me stress again that I strongly favour active US involvement in world affairs. To give just one example: US policies in the first decade after the Second World War were far-sighted, generous and spectacularly successful. And I recognise that there will always be differences in emphasis in the contributions that Europe and the United States will make to global security.

But what really concerns me is that while Europe is hesitantly and imperfectly trying to address its weaknesses, I see no comparable developments in the United States. If anything, the imbalances, in mindset and resources, are increasing. This matters because the painful truth is that the more the United States relies on hard power and coercion, the less successful it is in deploying soft power and persuasion. There is a huge danger of creating a self-fulfilling prophecy here. And the world is a less secure, less peaceful place as a result.

*Yours,*  
Steven

Dear Steven,

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I also agree that international problems require a multi-faceted approach. That said, it is interesting that you think the policies adopted by the United States in the decade following the Second World War “were far-sighted, generous and spectacularly successful”. I agree with that judgement, as well. But what were those policies? Principally, they consisted of the creation of an international economic and financial system, the establishment of a network of alliances with democratic states around the globe, aid to rebuild nations destroyed by war, and a massive re-armament programme. Allowing for changes in circumstances and, hence, how they are used, these remain the basic elements of US statecraft.

Frankly, the real problem Europeans have with the United States today is not that Washington doesn't have a multi-faceted approach to world affairs, but that the United States is not interested in expanding that approach to include a new set of multilateral institutions and treaties designed to tie power down. For a variety of reasons past and present, it appears that many in continental Europe have lost faith in the ability of liberal democratic states to hold power, and to use it wisely. That is not the case in the United States. We still believe that the world's peace and prosperity ultimately rests on the democrats of the world maintaining more firepower than the thugs of the globe.

Yours,  
Gary



The Center for European Reform can be consulted online at <http://www.cer.org.uk>

For more information on the Project for the New American Century, see <http://www.newamericancentury.org>

## Re-examining the transatlantic bargain

*Michael Rühle reviews two must-read accounts of NATO's past, present and future: one a history, the other a classic insider's tale.*

Everybody can talk about NATO, but few can write about it. Capturing the multi-purpose character of the Alliance is far more difficult than most would-be authors believe. As a result, the books they produce turn out to be either boring clones of the NATO Handbook or too outlandish to warrant serious consideration. Fortunately, the two books reviewed here do not suffer from these shortcomings. They are written by authors with considerable experience in the worlds of both academia and policy-making. And it shows.

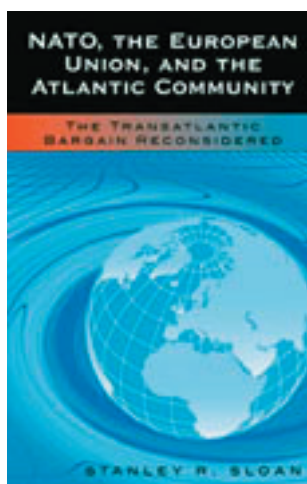
Stanley Sloan's *NATO, the European Union and the Atlantic Community: The Transatlantic Bargain Reconsidered* (Rowman & Littlefield, Boulder, Colorado, 2002) is a history of NATO written for a wide audience. Sloan worked in the Congressional Research Service for 25 years as the senior specialist in international security policy. His work for Congress, for the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, and for the Senate NATO Observer Group make him a seasoned observer of the transatlantic security scene. Building on his 1985 book *NATO's Future*, Sloan examines the Atlantic Alliance from its origins to the aftermath of the 11 September attacks. Using the term for the Alliance that was originally coined by former US NATO Ambassador Harlan Cleveland, namely the "transatlantic bargain", Sloan traces the various metamorphoses of this deal from the late 1940s to the present.

The general outline of this bargain — the United States pledging continued involvement in European security arrangements in return for a European commitment to organise itself both for external defence and internal stability — remained unchanged. Yet, as Sloan demonstrates, its implementation remained a source for continuous friction. Indeed, the bargain had to be revised almost as soon as the Washington Treaty was signed. Once it became clear that the European Allies would fail to meet the ambitious force goals they had set for themselves, the United States had to engage in Europe in far more substantial ways than initially envisaged, bequeathing "a legacy with which NATO struggled until the end of the Cold War".

*Michael Rühle is head of policy planning and speechwriting in NATO's Political Affairs Division.*

Over several chapters, Sloan covers the main elements of NATO's post-Cold War transition. One chapter focuses on the evolution of NATO's military tasks and strategy, and the influence of NATO's Balkan engagement on that evolution. An examination of the development of NATO nuclear strategy and forces follows. Another chapter is devoted to NATO's policy of Partnership, enlargement, and relations with Russia and Ukraine. In line with his overarching theme, he also devotes much room to the development in the 1990s of a new transatlantic bargain, first through creation of a European Security and Defence Identity and then through the establishment of an autonomous Common

European Security and Defence Policy by the European Union.



In covering the many changes taking place within the Alliance, Sloan keeps an eye on the factors of continuity. By putting developments in historical perspective, or by drawing parallels between similar events from different times, he offers the broader historical context other publications on NATO sometimes lack. His observations never fail to enlighten. For example, he convincingly argues that NATO's 1967 Harmel Report not only

injected a new sense of purpose into the Alliance after a series of crises, but that it also gave NATO the enhanced "political" personality that enabled the Alliance to play a crucial role in winding down the Cold War almost 25 years later. Equally enlightening is his discussion of geographic and historic differences between North Americans and Europeans, which account for many of NATO's persistent difficulties.

Will the transatlantic bargain remain intact? In Sloan's view, NATO has done remarkably well, but is now confronted with changes in the transatlantic relationship that may well pose an existential challenge. The marginal role the Alliance played in the aftermath of the 11 September terrorist attacks pointed to the shape of things to come. According to Sloan, both sides of the Atlantic are to blame. The Europeans, through their insufficient defence efforts, have contributed to a widening transatlantic capability gap. The United States, on the other hand, by under-utilising NATO in the aftermath of the 11 September

attacks, “missed an opportunity to move the NATO consensus well beyond the 1999 strategic concept”. Sloan’s analysis is pertinent, and he has every reason to feel vindicated: the recent US proposal for a NATO Response Force comes very close to an idea he floats in his book.

Yet more needs to be done. In Sloan’s view, the time has come for something more ambitious: an institutionalised “Atlantic Community Treaty”. He argues that: “It is increasingly clear that the challenges faced by the Euro-Atlantic Allies cannot be completely resolved within the narrow confines of the Alliance”, and suggests that this new forum should include all members of, and applicants for, membership in both the European Union and NATO. “It would provide the best setting in which to discuss US plans for a national missile defence as well as a constructive framework for the management of future trade and economic ties. And it would help close current organisational and membership gaps between NATO and the European Union without undermining either.” He admits that such a new Atlantic Community “may remain beyond the political will and energy of the Euro-Atlantic democracies in the years immediately ahead”. But asserts that: “The story that began following World War II, which has led to an unprecedented level of cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic area, is far from over.”

The book’s systematic structure is both its strength and its weakness. Many issues are revisited in several chapters, albeit from different angles. This does not matter if one reads individual chapters selectively, as most students will do. Yet as a whole, this approach makes the book repetitive. The narration veers between factual passages and personal reflections. And Sloan’s plea for a comprehensive “Atlantic Community Treaty”, a clarion call for a rejuvenation of transatlantic ties, remains unconvincing. Treaties cannot substitute for a lack of common interests. Still, Sloan succeeds in providing the reader with a rock solid and bang up-to-date NATO history. Its accessible style and its comprehensive coverage make it both a primer and a book for the specialist reader. *NATO, the European Union and the Atlantic Community* will be required reading for students and practitioners alike.

### Enlargement conundrum

Sloan ends his most instructive chapter on enlargement with the observation that NATO’s transition from an exclusive club to a more open one has been largely successful. This was by no means a foregone conclusion. In the early 1990s, the very idea of inviting new members into NATO, yet at the same time remaining on good terms with Russia, seemed a

bridge too far. So how was it achieved? Ronald Asmus’ book *Opening NATO’s Doors* (Columbia University Press, New York, 2002) gives the answer: the process was well managed.

Asmus covers the enlargement process from the end of the Cold War to the Senate vote on ratifying the accession of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland in 1998. That Asmus’ book is the definitive account of NATO enlargement should not come as a surprise. After all, Asmus has been a key player in both developing and implementing this policy. At RAND, he co-authored the 1993 Foreign Affairs article that gave NATO enlargement intellectual credibility. He then worked closely with individuals from the Clinton team, and in 1997 joined the State Department’s European Bureau, working with then Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and then Secretary of State Madeleine Albright on NATO-Russia issues.

Asmus, who also served as Albright’s principal speechwriter, provides a fascinating tale of how an idea from the fringes is turned into mainstream policy. Once past the first chapter — in which the author only just stops short of claiming that he and Clinton were the reincarnations of Dean Acheson and Harry S. Truman — the book makes for an excellent read. Asmus sticks to a chronological narrative, and he refrains from writing from the perspective of hindsight. In this way, he gives the reader an authentic feeling of the policy dilemmas the United States was facing at each phase of the process. Asmus’ masterful way of weaving excerpts from de-classified State Department memos into the text only serves to further enhance the book’s authenticity.

Asmus notes that: “Had it been up to NATO alone, enlargement might very well have stopped at the Eastern German border.” There was simply no impetus in the West to move beyond what had been achieved in 1990 and what already appeared like a miracle in its own right: German unification in NATO. Soon, however, things started to change. Once the Central and Eastern European democracies began to push for NATO membership as a vehicle to integrate with the West, the issue was on the agenda. With the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe “too weak” and the European Union “too slow” in Asmus’ words to integrate these countries within a reasonable timeframe, no alternatives were in sight. The “NATO magnet”, to use then National Security Adviser Sandy Berger’s term, was exerting its pull.

For the Clinton Administration there were many reasons to be in favour of NATO enlargement — and against it. On the “pro” side, there was, above all, the



idealistic notion of consolidating Europe as a united continent, of doing for Europe's Eastern half what NATO had previously done for the continent's Western half. Other reasons in favour of enlargement were the need to establish the Administration's foreign policy credentials, to fend off Republican critics, and to look for a common transatlantic project that could mend the rift that had emerged over the wars of Yugoslav dissolution. On the "con" side, there was, above all, Russia. Only if Russia could be made to play along would NATO enlargement deliver the goods it was supposed to deliver. "Losing Russia" over NATO enlargement was not an option anyone considered acceptable. A modus vivendi with Russia had to be found, even more so as the European NATO Allies remained nervous throughout. As Asmus puts it: "The Administration faced a paradox: to get the Allies on board it needed a NATO-Russia agreement... But to get Moscow to negotiate seriously on a NATO-Russia agreement, it needed to convince Moscow that Allied support was solid and enlargement inevitable."



Not surprisingly, therefore, *Opening NATO's Doors* is as much about Russia as it is about NATO. In essence, it is about getting the Russian leadership to swallow the bitter pill of a US-dominated military alliance moving towards its country's borders. Talbott and his aides had to convince Russia that the "monster" of NATO enlargement, as then Russian President Boris Yeltsin called it, was actually pretty tame, and that, instead of resisting the inevitable, Russia should grasp the opportunity to re-define its relationship with the West. In great detail Asmus recounts the numerous meetings in which the Russians appeared simultaneously determined and undecided, cunning and honest, cool-headed and neurotic. It was presumably in their neurotic moments that the Russians proposed forgetting about the Europeans altogether and simply establishing a Russo-US condominium over Europe — prompting Talbott to remark dryly that they might just as well have proposed Yalta as the place to agree on it. In the end, however, the Russians gave in and settled for "damage limitation", to employ the term that former Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov used in his memoirs, by signing the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act. NATO enlargement could proceed, seemingly irreconcilable objectives were reconciled, and Washington had demonstrated that it is possible to have one's cake and eat it.

Like Sloan, Asmus effectively dismisses claims that NATO enlargement was primarily driven by US domestic politics. Yet he provides interesting insights about the difficult struggle on the "home front", with the Clinton Administration trying to shield the NATO enlargement process from its critics as well as from its most ardent supporters. In the end, things fell into place, but only after its fair share of cliff-hangers. One was NATO's 1997 Madrid Summit, where French President Jacques Chirac, in a last minute Franco-US showdown, argued against the US position of inviting only three countries into NATO, opting for five instead. Another was the ratification process in the United States itself, which required the Clinton Administration to stroke many — mostly Republican — egos in order to steer the process towards its happy ending: a comfortable 80 to 19 vote in the Senate in favour of enlargement.

That the book does not quite deliver on its subtitle — How the Alliance remade itself for a new era — is only a minor flaw that does not detract from the volume's overall value. Other authors, including Asmus himself, have dealt with the issues of NATO's broader reform elsewhere. For the European reader, however, one observation remains striking: the virtual absence of the European Allies in the NATO enlargement process. Although some inflated egos in Berlin may still claim that they invented NATO enlargement, the whole process was US-driven. As Asmus shows, even the German government remained in two minds as to the benefits of no longer being on the frontline and the drawbacks of alienating Russia. Other European Allies also get short shrift. Some bickered, some wavered, and, in the end, then Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke steamrolled them into submission. Considering the benign outcome of the process, this may not necessarily have been a bad thing. Yet it remains puzzling that more than half a century after the Second World War Europeans quietly accept that the United States should re-order their continent for them — and do so through the expansion of a military alliance.

Asmus' book is a success story — a story about an idea being born, debated, moulded into policy, and then carried through with remarkable persistence. Yet the question remains: was it really NATO enlargement that brought about the new undivided Europe? Or was it rather the elaborate cooperative network that NATO built around enlargement — including the Partnership for Peace and special relations with Russia and Ukraine — in order to cushion the potentially negative impact of moving NATO to the East? Asmus' book can be read both ways. But in the end, the point may be moot. It worked. And, as the saying goes, everybody loves a winner.

## Kristin Krohn Devold: Norwegian defence minister

*Kristin Krohn Devold became Norway's minister of defence in October 2001. As such, she has taken a hands-on approach to security and become extremely popular with service men and women by joining in many of their activities. A member of the Conservative Party, she is overseeing major restructuring of the Norwegian armed forces and a historically unprecedented increase in defence spending.*

**NATO REVIEW:** How have the terrorist attacks against the United States of 11 September 2001 influenced security thinking in Norway?

**KRISTIN KROHN DEVOLD:**

The attack had a profound impact on our threat assessment and security framework. Already in June 2001, we had decided to restructure our armed forces. At the time, however, people did not fully understand why. In the wake of the terrorist attacks of 11 September, the reasons became clear and the restructuring got much broader support in parliament, among our officers and with the general public.



(© NATO)

**NR:** In terms of population, Norway is one of the smaller Allies, yet it often gives the impression of being one of the largest through its actions. How has Norway contributed to the US-led war on terrorism?

**KKD:** Our first move was to send six staff officers to the US command centre in Tampa, Florida. That was important to coordinate the rest of our engagement. We then contributed personnel to the AWACS aircraft sent from Europe to patrol US airspace. Indeed, I think that Norwegians made up about 12 per cent of the AWACS crews. And from 1 January 2002 our special forces deployed in Afghanistan. We also sent mine-clearing personnel to Afghanistan and they cleared both Bagram and Kandahar airports of mines. In addition, Norway has been the framework nation for the C130 air-transport operation run jointly by Norway, Denmark and Netherlands at Manas airbase in Kyrgyzstan. And we have deployed six F16 fighters there, together with six from Denmark and six from the Netherlands since 1 October of this year. In addition, a Norwegian frigate and a Norwegian submarine are participating in Active Endeavour. We also have personnel in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and have donated equipment — including uniforms for one battalion and medical supplies — to the Afghan national army.

**NR:** Norway is restructuring its armed forces to meet contemporary security challenges. How is this process developing and where will it lead?

**KKD:** Restructuring is proceeding according to plan and schedule. The overall aim is to have armed forces capable of carrying out more complex missions together with Allied forces more rapidly and more effectively than is currently possible.

**NR:** Norway is increasing the proportion of national wealth devoted to defence, even though it is already a big defence spender in comparison with other Alliance members. How can Norway afford such expenditure and how has the

government made the case for increasing the defence budget to the electorate?

**KKD:** Parliament has earmarked 118 billion Norwegian Kroner, that is \$16 billion, for the period 2002 to 2005. This implies a real net increase over the four-year period of approximately 11.7 per cent compared to the previous four years. This is the largest defence budget for many years and may be the largest ever. We worked hard to ensure cross-party support for this settlement and succeeded in getting agreement among all three parties that make up the government as well as the Labour Party, the principal opposition party. In this way, four parties back the settlement and this should ensure that a majority in parliament will continue to support defence spending of this magnitude, even if there is a change of government. This is one important step. The second important step was the decision to integrate the top level of the chiefs of defence staff into the ministry of defence. This makes for a much closer link between defence policy and planning. We now know precisely what resources we will have every year for the next four years because of the broad agreement of the parliament. This is an unprecedented situation.

**NR:** Norway is not a member of the European Union, but has been supportive of efforts to build EU military capabilities. What kind of security relationship is Norway seeking to build with the European Union?

**KKD:** Norway firmly supports EU efforts to establish a European security and defence policy. However, we want this to be in close cooperation with NATO because we want to make sure that existing and future structures are not duplicated. We believe that this will strengthen the European pillar within NATO, improve European nations' defence capabilities and contribute to more even transatlantic burden-sharing. For us, ESDP is also a process to make sure that Europe carries its part of the defence burden. As we are a European country, we need to work together with the European Union on this, even if we are not an EU member. In practice, we have pledged up to 3,500 personnel to help meet the EU Headline Goal. In the event, therefore, of an EU-led operation, Norway will be prepared to participate in the same way that we participate in NATO-led operations. But it is important that these two organisations do not duplicate capabilities and that there is a clear division between roles. The European Union should focus on peacekeeping operations and NATO on the full spectrum of missions that the Alliance takes care of today.

**NR:** Norway shares a border with Russia and clearly has a vested interest in cooperation with that country. How do you evaluate prospects for the new NATO-Russia Council?

**KKD:** I am encouraged by the creation of the NATO-Russia Council and think it should gradually evolve into a real consensus-building body with decision-making authority in a number of areas. For us, it is above all important to involve Russia in practical activities. We think that structures should follow substance. This means that we have to identify more projects in which we can involve Russia. Since Norway's coastline is immediately next to Russia's and there is a lot of activity in these waters, cooperation in search and rescue at sea is important to us. Another area in which we see great potential for cooperation is defence-related environmental cooperation. We see a close linkage between the fight against terrorism and cooperation with Russia in environmental matters. This is because the issue of the spread of nuclear waste, for example, is important both to the fight against terrorism and the environment.

**NR:** As more countries join the Alliance, many of them with populations smaller than that of Norway, issues like defence cooperation and role specialisation will increasingly come to the fore. What can potential new members learn from the Norwegian experience?

**KKD:** The most important lesson is that it is essential

for small members to be able to make effective contributions. That means that we need to develop special expertise, so-called niche capabilities. Norway has focused on developing capabilities like special forces and mine-clearing teams. In this way, Norway is able to contribute capabilities to operations like Enduring Freedom that are really needed and can play an important role even in a large multinational operation. Another example I would like to point to is cooperation between Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands on C130 transport aircraft and F16 fighters. By working together, these three countries have been able to contribute capabilities in Afghanistan that normally only large countries can deliver. One solution for smaller countries, therefore, is to identify strategic partners and to work together with them to maximise capabilities. Another is to identify niche capacities in areas where they already possess special expertise. In Norway, we have ideal natural conditions to develop expertise in winter training for special forces. I'm sure that other small countries can identify areas in which they have special expertise in which they can develop niche capabilities.

**NR:** In contrast to most NATO members, Norway appears wedded to the concept of conscription. Why is this and might this policy change in the coming years?

**KKD:** The main reason for retaining conscription is the size of the force structure. If we, a nation of four million citizens, wish to maintain armed forces with some 150,000 personnel, we need conscription. Nevertheless, the conscription system is evolving. We actually have a combination of conscription and a professional military. For example, the contingents we sent to participate in Enduring Freedom and ISAF consisted mainly of professional soldiers. By contrast, the Norwegian contribution to KFOR, consists largely of soldiers who have been conscripts for one year and who then volunteered for the assignment. Indeed, the reason that we are able to make so large a contribution to the peacekeeping operations in Kosovo is because we have conscription. At the same time, because we have developed special capabilities, we are also able to contribute relevant capabilities to the international operations in Afghanistan. The combination of conscription and a professional military works particularly well in Norway with the result that we will continue to develop both.

**NR:** Norway's armed forces are among the most progressive in NATO in terms of the employment of women. What targets exist for the recruitment of women and how are women encouraged to pursue military careers?

**KKD:** The single most important factor as far as female recruitment is concerned is that all military functions are

open for women and have been since 1985. This means that we have had a female submarine commander, we have serving pilots, and we have women in combat units. It is important to identify women who hold these positions and hold them up as role models to encourage more young women to aspire to military careers. We believe that having a broad representation of gender and ethnic backgrounds in any modern organisation will improve its ability to fulfil its duties. We have special campaigns to recruit women into the armed forces. For example, in addition to general information on the internet, we use targeted e-mails and SMS messages. We also send female officers around schools and colleges to discuss career opportunities in the armed forces. And we organise winter camps where young women are given a practical introduction to military training and a taste of what a military career could be like. I suspect that the fact that many young women in Norway are involved in sport also contributes to making a military career appealing. The armed forces offer active, young women the kind of physical and mental challenge that they like. ■



For more information about Norwegian security policy, see the Norwegian Defence Ministry's website <http://odin.dep.no/fd/engelsk>

## Discussing European security

**E**ven before precise working arrangements between the European Union and NATO have been agreed, an informal EU-NATO dialogue has begun with the aim of promoting debate about security policy and encouraging consensus on key defence issues.

The dialogue is taking place under the auspices of the New Defence Agenda (NDA), an initiative launched within the framework of Forum Europe, the Brussels-based events organiser and European issues group, in May of this year under the patronage of EU High Representative Javier Solana, European Commissioner for External Relations Chris Patten and NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson. Participants include senior officials and policy-makers in both the European Union and NATO as well as security analysts and industry representatives.

“The NDA is not going to duplicate the work of any existing think tank or research body,” says Giles Merritt, director of both Forum Europe and the NDA. “Its aim is practical: to fill the empty ground between the European Union and NATO, and to give a higher media profile to the complex questions of Europe’s new defence and security policies. We have got to bring the European Union and NATO closer together and headed in the same direction.”

NATO is currently modernising itself to ensure that it is equipped to meet the security challenges of the 21st century as effectively as it met those of the last. Meanwhile, the European Union is seeking to develop military capabilities to be able by next year to take on a range of crisis-management missions, the so-called Petersberg tasks. As a result, European defence and security matters have become a dynamic area of new ideas and fresh developments. Despite this, they are not widely reported by media, and Brussels has not had a meeting point for the separate worlds of the European Union and NATO to come together.

The NDA has set up three working groups covering European force projection and capabilities; the transatlantic relationship; and defence-led research



Merritt: “We’ve got to bring the European Union and NATO closer together.” (© Forum Europe)

and development and industrial innovation. These groups meet quarterly, operating under “Chatham House rules” so that contributions to discussions will not be directly attributable to individual participants, and produce working papers that can be downloaded from the web site.

As of mid-2003, the NDA is also to organise an annual high-level security and defence conference in Brussels at which it will bring together major players from around the world. And it plans to publish discussion papers that will be circulated to national and international leaders and media.

In addition to the working groups, conferences and publications, the NDA has created a so-called rapid reaction forum. This body is designed to raise the public profile of defence-related issues and consists of 20 prominent defence experts — including senior EU and NATO officials, four leading NATO ambassadors, four MEPs, leading security analysts and Eduardo Serra, the NDA president and a former Spanish defence minister — all of whom are able to offer regular briefings on security matters to international media. In the course of September and October the three working groups met for the first time. A second round of meetings is scheduled for December this year and January next year, a third round in March and April 2003 and a final round in June 2003. Meetings take place at Forum Europe’s headquarters at the Bibliothèque Solvay, next to the European parliament, and are open to NDA members and invited guests.

The NDA is funded via membership fees and corporate sponsorship. Supporting companies include Agusta, BAE Systems, Dassault, EADS, the European Defence Industries Group, Finmeccanica, Snecma and the Western European Armaments Groups. ■



Further information on NDA activities and membership can be found on the Forum Europe web site at <http://www.forum-europe.com>

## Rewarding scientific excellence

The first NATO Science Partnership prize has been awarded to a trio of scientists from Russia, Ukraine and the United Kingdom for their collaboration on innovative cooling techniques for gas turbines.

The award was formally presented to Artem Khalatov of the Institute of Engineering Thermophysics, Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, Aleksandr P. Kozlov of the Kazan Science Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and Nick Syred of Cardiff University at an October ceremony at NATO headquarters by NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson. It included a trophy, certificate and research grant of 10,000 Euro for each scientist.

The design of gas-turbine engines and the development of new techniques for improving efficiency had been the focus of research in both Western countries and the former Soviet Union for many years. It was not, however, until the end of the Cold War that scientists from East and West were able to pool expertise and the combined potential of both communities could be realised.

The NATO grant was awarded in 1998, and helped the three scientists work together over the next two years. The results of their research, namely enhanced cooling techniques, could be applied to the next generation of jet engines, to allow more efficient operating temperatures. This should translate directly into fuel savings, longer ranges, higher performance, lower costs and improved logistics for both civilian and military aircraft.

In an acceptance speech, Professor Khalatov contrasted the world today with that of the Cold War, saying: "It is extremely important that NATO and Partner countries are now working together for peace and world stability. Such scientific collaboration is much better than any competition in military areas and can bring substantial benefits to all parties involved."

The NATO Science Partnership prize was created to recognise excellence in collaboration between scientists in NATO member states and in countries

belonging to either the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council or the Mediterranean Dialogue. Established under the NATO Science Programme, the annual prize would normally be awarded jointly to two scientists — one from a NATO country and one from a Partner or Mediterranean Dialogue country who have collaborated as a result of a grant awarded through the Programme.



Prize-winners: (from left to right) Professors Khalatov, Kozlov and Syred  
(© NATO)

In selecting three winners for the first prize instead of two, the NATO Science Committee Selection Board recognised the essential three-way collaboration between the researchers who each brought unique expertise and research knowledge to the project.

The NATO Science Programme was created in 1958 on the basis of the recommendations of a Committee on Non-Military Cooperation in NATO. The report of the so-called "Three Wise Men" asserted that progress in the fields of science and technology could be decisive in determining the security of nations and their positions in world affairs, and stated that science and technology was an area of special importance to the Atlantic community.

Since the early 1990s, the NATO Science Programme has served a wider scientific community, as researchers from countries belonging to the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and Mediterranean Dialogue became eligible for support. And it was transformed in 1999 so that support is now focused on collaboration between Partner-country and NATO-country scientists and supporting research in Partner countries.

The NATO Science Programme does not fund research as such, but rather provides the funding for researchers to collaborate, primarily through travel and subsistence support. In this way, NATO financial support can be a catalyst for generating long-term research cooperation and close working relationships among scientists from NATO and Partner countries. About 10,000 scientists currently participate in NATO Science activities each year. ■



For more information on the NATO Science Programme, see <http://www.nato.int/science/index.html>

## The responsibility to protect

*Gareth Evans examines how and when states and intergovernmental organisations should intervene on humanitarian grounds.*

The dilemma of humanitarian intervention has been overtaken since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 with other preoccupations, but it has not been resolved and it has not gone away. When, if ever, is it appropriate for states, individually or collectively, to take coercive action, and in particular military action, against another state – not for the purpose of self defence, and not in order to address some larger threat to international peace and security as traditionally understood, but for the purpose of protecting people at risk within that state?



*Security Council in special session: The United Nations is unquestionably the principal institution for building, consolidating and using international authority (© United Nations)*

The issue was the subject of countless debates through the 1990s, not least for NATO. The main cases – ones both when intervention took place, and when it did not – are etched in our memory. None of them was well or confidently handled: the debacle of international intervention in Somalia in 1993; the pathetically inadequate response to genocide in Rwanda in 1994; the failure of the UN presence to prevent murderous ethnic cleansing in Srebrenica in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1995; and then NATO's intervention, without Security Council approval, in Kosovo in 1999.

Every one of the big cases generated major international controversy, but usually too late to be useful, and never enough to settle the issues of principle once and for all, including the role and responsibility of the United Nations, and the nature and limits of state sovereignty. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan challenged the General Assembly in 1999, and again in 2000, to find a way through these dilemmas, posing the issue in the starkest of terms: "If humanitarian intervention is, indeed, an unacceptable assault on sovereignty, how should we respond to a Rwanda, to a Srebrenica -- to

gross and systematic violations of human rights that affect every precept of our common humanity?"

His question, however, went unanswered. Advocates of intervention on humanitarian or human rights grounds, and anxious defenders of state sovereignty, dug themselves deeper and deeper into opposing trenches from which they have still not emerged. The new century began with intense disagreement persisting as to whether there is a right of intervention, how and when it should be exercised, and under whose authority.

Since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, attention has shifted to other dilemmas:

how to capture and punish terrorists, how to mount sustainable defences against them and the states who support them, and whether it is ever permissible to mount pre-emptive attacks against countries believed to be irresponsibly acquiring weapons of mass destruction. But echoes of the older debate persist even in this new context. US President George W. Bush – and to some extent UK Prime Minister Tony Blair – have repeatedly sought to bolster the case for military action against Saddam Hussein by citing the Iraqi regime's "brutal suppression of its own people". And in the case of Chechnya, anxieties persist as to whether Russia's right to wage internal mayhem in the name of confronting terrorism should really be allowed to continue unrestricted and unchallenged.

Elsewhere, it is only a matter of time before reports emerge again from somewhere in the world of massacres or mass starvation, or rape or ethnic cleansing, occurring or apprehended. The possibility of Zimbabwe embarking on a deliberate policy of not just suppressing but starving is a chilling current case in point. And then the question will arise all over again in the Security Council and in capitals and in the media – what do we do? This time round we must have the answers.

*Gareth Evans co-chaired the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. A former foreign minister of Australia, he is currently president of the International Crisis Group.*

## Changing the terms of the policy debate

It was to try to provide answers that Canada established in September 2000 the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, which I co-chaired along with the Algerian diplomat and UN Special Adviser Mohamed Sahnoun. Our colleagues were highly experienced, high-profile and globally representative analysts and practitioners: Gisele Cote-Harper, Lee Hamilton, Michael Ignatieff, Vladimir Lukin, Klaus Naumann, Cyril Ramaphosa, Fidel Ramos, Cornelio Sommaruga, Eduardo Stein and Ramesh Thakur. We consulted comprehensively, meeting in Africa and Asia as well as Europe and North America, and holding roundtables and other consultations in China, Latin America, the Middle East, and Russia.

The Commission recognised from the outset that if its report was to be useful it had to be not only intellectually satisfying, but practical and politically savvy: capable of mobilising support from both North and South, and actually guiding and motivating action. To bridge the gulf between state attitudes it had to be innovative, not just restating the familiar but unhelpful academic refrain that sometimes hard choices had to be made between what was “legal” and what was “legitimate”.

The course we chose was to turn the debate on its head, and to recharacterise it not as an argument about the “right to intervene” but rather about the “responsibility to protect”. Casting the issue in this way has four big advantages. It looks at the issues from the perspective of those seeking or needing support, rather than those who may be considering intervention. The searchlight is back where it should always be: on the duty to protect communities from mass killing, women from systematic rape and children from starvation. It implies that the primary responsibility rests with the state concerned, and that it is only if the state is unable or unwilling to fulfil the responsibility to protect, or is itself the perpetrator, that it becomes the responsibility of the international community to act in its place. To “protect” implies more than to “intervene”. It embraces not just a responsibility to react, but to prevent and rebuild as well. Both of these dimensions have been much neglected in the traditional humanitarian intervention debate, and bringing them back to centre stage, to rank in priority alongside reaction, makes reaction itself – in appropriate cases – more palatable. Above all, new language helps de-prickle the policy

debate: the actors have to change their lines, and think afresh about what the real issues are.

The language of humanitarian intervention – which itself has been so divisive, offending those who have hated any association of the word “humanitarian” with military activity – is no longer the language of the debate. Consensus becomes easier to find. The starting point in justifying this conceptual shift is the concept of state sovereignty itself. We argued that

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**When the next case of threatened mass killing or ethnic cleansing comes along, it must be dealt with expeditiously, and in a systematic, thoughtful and above all principled way**

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its essence should now be seen not as control but as responsibility. A large and growing gap has been developing between the codified best practice of international behaviour as articulated in the UN Charter, whose explicit language emphasises the respect owed to state sovereignty in its traditional Westphalian sense, and actual state practice as it has evolved in the 56

years since the Charter was signed. The new focus on human rights and, more recently, on human security, emphasises the limits of sovereignty. The Commission was intrigued to find, in our worldwide travels, just how much that gap was acknowledged. The defence of state sovereignty, by even its strongest supporters, did not include any claim of the unlimited power of a state to do what it wants to its own people.

We did not argue that there is now a sufficiently strong basis in principle and practice to claim the existence of a formal new principle of customary international law. But we did argue that the “responsibility to protect” is an emerging international norm, or guiding principle of behaviour for the international community of states, which may well become customary international law if further consolidated in state and intergovernmental practice.

## Six criteria for military intervention

Whatever else it encompasses, the responsibility to protect implies above all else a responsibility to react to situations of compelling need for human protection. When preventive measures fail to resolve or contain the situation, and when a state is unable or unwilling to redress the situation, then interventionary measures by other members of the broader community of states may be required. These coercive measures may include political, economic or judicial measures, and in extreme cases – but only extreme cases – they may also include military action.



But what is an extreme case? Where should we draw the line in determining when military intervention is, *prima facie*, defensible? What other conditions or restraints, if any, should apply in determining whether and how that intervention should proceed? And, most difficult of all, who makes all these decisions: who should have the ultimate authority to determine whether an intrusion into a sovereign state, involving the use of deadly force on a potentially massive scale, should actually go ahead? These questions have generated an enormous literature, and much competing terminology, but on the core issues there is a great deal of common ground. All the relevant decision-making criteria seemed to the Commission to be subsumed under the following six headings, involving a threshold criterion, four precautionary criteria and an authority criterion.

**Just cause threshold:**

*For military intervention for human protection purposes to be warranted, there must be serious and irreparable harm occurring to human beings, or imminently likely to occur, of the following kind: large scale loss of life, actual or apprehended, with genocidal intent or not, which is the product either of deliberate state action, or state neglect or inability to act, or a failed state situation; or large-scale ethnic cleansing, actual or apprehended, whether carried out by killing, forced expulsion, acts of terror or rape.*

The threshold needs to be set high and tight, for both conceptual reasons (military intervention must be very exceptional) and practical political ones (if intervention is to happen when it is most necessary, it cannot be called upon too often). Two situations only are identified as legitimate triggers. No attempt is made to quantify what is “large scale”, but it is made clear that military action can be legitimate as an anticipatory measure in response to clear evidence of likely large-scale killing or ethnic cleansing. Without this possibility of anticipatory action, the international community would be placed in the morally untenable position of being required to wait until genocide begins, before being able to take action to stop it.

The threshold criteria articulated are wide enough to cover not only the deliberate perpetration of horrors such as occurred, or were anticipated, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Rwanda, but situations as well of state collapse and the resultant exposure of the population to mass starvation and/or civil war (as in Somalia). Also potentially covered would be overwhelming natural or environmental catastrophes, which are not in themselves man-made, but where the state concerned is either unwilling or unable to cope, or call for assistance, and significant loss of life is occurring or threatened.

What are not covered by the “just cause” threshold criteria as set out here are situations of human rights violations falling short of outright killing or ethnic cleansing (such as systematic racial discrimination or political oppression), the overthrow of democratically elected governments and the rescue by a state of its own nationals on foreign territory. Although eminently deserving of external action of various kinds – including in appropriate cases political, economic or military sanctions – these are not cases which would seem to justify military action for human protection purposes.

**Right intention:**

*The primary purpose of the intervention, whatever other motives intervening states may have, must be to halt or avert human suffering.*

There are a number of ways of helping ensure this. One is to have military intervention always take place on a collective or multilateral rather than single-country basis. Another is to look to whether, and to what extent, the intervention is actually supported by the people for whose benefit the intervention is intended. Yet another is to look to whether, and to what extent, the opinion of other countries in the region has been taken into account and is supportive.

The absence of any narrow self-interest may be an ideal, but it is not likely always to be a reality. Mixed motives, in international relations as everywhere else, are a fact of life. Moreover, the budgetary cost and risk to personnel involved in any military action may in fact make it politically imperative for the intervening state to be able to claim some degree of self-interest in the intervention, however altruistic its primary motive.

**Last resort:**

*Military intervention can only be justified when every non-military option for the prevention or peaceful resolution of the crisis has been explored, with reasonable grounds for believing lesser measures would not have succeeded.*

The responsibility to react – with military coercion – can only be justified when the responsibility to prevent has been fully discharged. This does not necessarily mean that every such option must literally have been tried and failed: often there will simply not be the time for that process to work itself out. But it does mean that there must be reasonable grounds for believing that, in all the circumstances, if the measure had been attempted it would not have succeeded.

**Proportional means:**

*The scale, duration and intensity of the planned military intervention should be the minimum necessary to secure the defined human protection objective.*

The action taken has to be commensurate in scale with its stated purpose, and in line with the magnitude of the original provocation. The effect on the political system of the country targeted should be limited to what is strictly necessary to accomplish the purpose of the intervention.

**Reasonable prospects:**

*There must be a reasonable chance of success in halting or averting the suffering which has justified the intervention, with the consequences of action not likely to be worse than the consequences of inaction.*

Military action can only be justified if it stands a reasonable chance of success, and will not risk triggering a greater conflagration. Application of this precautionary principle would on purely utilitarian grounds be likely to preclude military action against any one of the five permanent members of the Security Council, even with all other conditions for intervention met: it is difficult to imagine a major conflict being avoided, or success in the original objective being achieved. The same is true of other major powers.

This raises the familiar question of double standards. Here, the only answer is that the reality that it may not be possible to intervene in every case where there is justification to do so, is no reason never to intervene.

**Right authority:**

*There is no better or more appropriate body than the United Nations Security Council to authorise military intervention for human protection purposes. The task is not to find alternatives to the Security Council as a source of authority, but to make the Security Council work better than it has.*

When it comes to authorising military intervention for human protection purposes, the argument is compelling that the United Nations, and in particular the Security Council, should be the first port of call. The difficult question – starkly raised by Kosovo – is whether it should be the last.

The issue of principle here was in the Commission's view unarguable. The United Nations is unquestionably the principal institution for building, consolidating and using the authority of the international community. Those who challenge or evade the authority of the United Nations as the sole legitimate guardian of international peace and security in specific instances run the risk of eroding its authority in general and also undermining the principle of a world order based on international law and universal norms.

If the Security Council is for any reason unable or unwilling to act in a case crying out for intervention, there are on this view only two institutional solutions available. One is consideration of the matter by the General Assembly in Emergency Special Session under the "Uniting for Peace" procedure (used as the basis for operations in Korea in 1950, Egypt in 1956 and the Congo in 1960), which may well in fact have delivered, and speedily, a majority recommendation for action in the Rwanda, and especially Kosovo, cases. The other is action by regional or sub-regional organisations under Chapter VIII of the Charter within their area of jurisdiction, subject to their seeking subsequent authorisation from the Security Council (as happened with the West African interventions in Liberia in the early 1990s and Sierra Leone in 1997).

Interventions by ad hoc coalitions (or, even more, individual states) acting without the approval of the Security Council, or the General Assembly, or a regional or sub-regional grouping of which the target state is a member, do not – it would be an understatement to say – find wide international favour. There are many reasons to be dissatisfied with the role that the Security Council has played so far -- its generally uneven performance, its unrepresentative membership, and its inherent institutional double standards with the Permanent Five veto power. But the political reality is that if international consensus is ever to be reached about when, where, how and through whom military intervention should happen, it is very clear that the central role of the Security Council will have to be at the heart of that consensus.

But what if the Security Council fails to discharge its own responsibility to protect in a conscience-shocking situation crying out for action, as was the case with Kosovo? A real question arises as to which of two evils is the worse: the damage to international order if the Security Council is bypassed, or in the damage to that order if human beings are slaughtered while the Security Council stands by. The Commission's response to this dilemma was to articulate two important, essentially political, messages.

The first message is that if the Security Council fails to act, other states may act – and get it wrong. Such interventions, without the discipline and constraints of UN authorisation, may not be conducted for the right reasons or with the right commitment to the necessary precautionary principles. The second message is that if the Security Council fails to act, other states may act – and get it right. The ad hoc coalition or individual state may fully observe and respect all the necessary

threshold and precautionary criteria, intervene successfully, and be seen to have done so by world public opinion – with this then likely to have enduringly serious consequences for the stature and credibility of the United Nations itself. That is pretty much what happened with the NATO intervention in Kosovo, and the United Nations cannot afford to drop the ball too many times on that scale.

The bottom line of the Commission's report is that when the next case of threatened mass killing or ethnic cleansing comes along, as it surely will, it must be dealt with expeditiously, and in a systematic, thoughtful and above all principled way. The erratic indifference of the 1990s must not be repeated. A good place to start in ensuring this would be agreement by the Security Council, at least informally, systematically to apply the principles here set out in any such case. So too would be a declaratory UN General Assembly resolution giving weight to those principles and the whole idea of the "responsibility to protect" as an emerging international norm.

We cannot be content with reports and declarations. If we believe that all human beings are equally entitled to be protected from acts that shock the conscience of us all, then we must match rhetoric with reality, and principle with practice. We must, as an international community, be prepared to act. There must be no more Rwandas, and no more Srebrenicas. ■



The findings of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty are contained in the report *The Responsibility to Protect* that is available at [www.iciss-ciise.gc.ca](http://www.iciss-ciise.gc.ca).