

Global Threats, Atlantic Structures

by Tiziana Stella

Once again transatlantic matters are moving forward with fresh energy. Since its institutionalization in 1949, after half a century of gestation, the Atlantic Alliance has gone through three major phases: first the Cold War, second the enlargement to Eastern Europe, a process not entirely completed, and now a phase of global reach and intensified restructuring. Meeting the test of this third phase depends upon three factors: matching the scope of the task ahead with innovative solutions –anchoring them to the framework of previous commitments – and dealing with unresolved old business.

Despite the divergences in sentiment on the two sides of the Atlantic in recent years – which have not been unusual in Alliance history – basic sentiments are falling into compatible places. “Unilateralism is out. Effective multilateralism is in,” said Daniel Fried, assistant secretary of state for European affairs, on May 2, 2006. Much has been written about the “transatlantic drift” in the last few years. Spurred by the debate between unilateralism and multilateralism, the discussion has led to a new reality today: both Europe and the US recognize in principle that effective multilateralism is the basis for successful cumulative results. However to make this declaration of principles an operational reality the transatlantic community has to undergo a series of changes. Many of the recent proposals touch upon one or more of

the necessary changes. In fact, after a phase of stagnation, there is currently an abundance of new thinking flourishing in the transatlantic world.

However the most pressing need is to develop a unified and common transatlantic perspective, within which the new proposed arrangements would fall into place as part of an overall end vision, instead of proceeding or not as individual measures of upgrading. But, without setting into motion processes toward a bolder vision of transatlantic union, even full implementation of current proposals would not be sufficient to bring about such perspective.

The tasks ahead can be divided into four areas in each of which proposals for reform are on the table.

First, dealing with much delayed internal adjustments in the transatlantic structures. These include revision of decision-making procedures, enhancing common funding, and willingness to delegate to NATO more of the operational aspects of commonly agreed upon missions. They were initially discussed in the 1950s but returned in the 1990s when NATO changed, in the words of Jamie Shea, from a “preparation” institution to a “performance” institution.

Second, development of common external vision, through an incipient common foreign policy, as is indispensable in an era of out-of-area missions. To conduct successful action the transatlantic world needs to look outward through a single set of lenses. Joint strategic review and planning processes need to be deepened, along with internal mechanisms for

This article is based on a paper prepared for an international conference that took place on April 4-5 in Sofia, Bulgaria. The conference, entitled “The Atlantic Community in the 21st Century: The Power of Values and the Value of Power,” marked the 15th anniversary of the organized Atlantic movement in Central and Eastern Europe, and was organized by the Atlantic Club of Bulgaria with the patronage of Georgi Parvanov, the President of Bulgaria, and the cooperation of the Bulgarian Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense. Among those in attendance were Solomon Passy, the former Bulgarian Foreign Minister; Dr. Jean Fournet, the NATO Assistant Secretary General for Public Diplomacy; Dr. Valeri Rachev, the Bulgarian Ambassador to Iraq and Vesselin Bliznakov, the Bulgarian Minister of Defense. The full proceedings of the conference will be published in a book.

adapting and updating the shared conclusions and keeping outlooks together. Otherwise it will be hard to give reliable substance to the phrase “effective multilateralism”. At the base level, it is necessary to forge the elements of a “transatlantic identity” able to reach the public at large.

Third, development of a unified transatlantic view on “the global role” of NATO. New global threats will continue to affect the transformation of transatlantic structures. No deep transatlantic perspective could long endure absent a shared global perspective. The alliance survived for decades while diverging frequently over out-of-area issues, but that was when core NATO-area conventional defense issues were central. Today out of area military and foreign policy issues are central for core area security. Moreover, complex diplomatic actions are involved in extending the alliance to areas beyond the Euro-Atlantic region. Absent a sufficiently unified perspective, there is the danger that internal disagreements, compounded by the resistance of external powers that fear the process, will bring the process to stall.

Fourth, increased cooperation between the Atlantic and global levels of institutions. These two levels are both critically important in global affairs, and the future of global management depends largely on the extent to which they work together. There is plenty of space for strengthening the UN-NATO relationship and for more effective coordination of actions on peacekeeping and security.

Real steps have already been taken in each area, and proposals for further development are underway. The challenge ahead is no longer a lack of vision, in fact for the first time since the end of the Cold War the transatlantic world has elaborated the starting points of a comprehensive New Atlanticism with a concept of deepening as well as widening the alliance.

1. Internal Adjustments

Ever since the first tranche of post-1991 NATO enlargement, the adequacy of decision-making pro-

cedures has been a subject of discussion. The argument, for those supporting its reform, is that with more members NATO will become less viable as “consensus” will be more difficult to achieve. Several options have been proposed, ranging from consensus minus one or two, to “constructive abstention”, or in some cases even qualified majority. This remains, up to now, unresolved old business, but one that calls for special attention. Unilateral action occurs more often when common structures are paralyzed by slow decision making. Multilateralism to be effective needs, among other things, to rest on reliable and fast decision-making procedures. Progress in this direction will inescapably have to pass through some change in decision-making procedures. The need is increased by current speculations to include in NATO countries beyond the traditional Euro-Atlantic area that could slow NATO decision making down due to broader strategic divergences.

A second internal adjustment under discussion today is NATO funding. This too is needed if NATO and its newly created NATO Response Force are to perform adequately in the new era. The issue is intertwined with decision-making adjustments. In recent years the problem has arisen on more and more occasions. General Jones, NATO Supreme Commander in Europe, has been “campaigning” strenuously to bring attention to this matter, followed by NATO Secretary General De Hoop-Scheffer, and by Victoria Nuland, U.S. Ambassador to NATO. Recently leading figures in the U.S. military have also pointed to the urgency of the question.

Recently two major U.S. officers, commenting on what was learned through the microcosm of the NATO Training Mission - Iraq (NTM-I) experience, highlighted a series of problems flowing from current funding and decision-making procedures and called for “rethinking the 50-year policy of consensus decision-making.” Their observations stressed how the growing gap between strategic and operational concepts on the one hand, and funding mechanisms on the other, may indeed lead NATO operations to disaster. (*See opposite page*)

The “executive side” is not alone in calling for such changes. Last November the NATO Parliamentary Assembly passed Resolution 337 with recommendations for enhanced common funding of NATO



Looking to the Future: NATO Training Mission-Iraq

by Rick Lynch and Phillip D. Janzen

“The Alliance has struggled to apply outdated mechanisms and policies to the fluid environment of the out-of-area support mission... The most significant lesson from this mission involves supporting political pronouncements with political will. At the Istanbul Summit, all 26 members committed to support the government of Iraq “with the training of its security forces” and sought further proposals for that support “as a matter of urgency.” This statement soon rang hollow as political consensus was overshadowed by political posturing over involvement in Iraq.”

“With each step, from the reconnaissance mission in July 2004 to the delay in funding for the training institution at Ar Rustamiyah, some countries have capitalized on the Alliance regimen of consensus to block significant advances. Not only has the mission been needlessly delayed by political debate, but these debates consume immense energy and focus from all levels of command. ...

The lesson is that once the political decision is made to commit national treasure and personnel ... for a NATO-led operation, ensuing operational decisions should not be held hostage to the political process. **This may require rethinking the 50-year policy of consensus decision-making. When even the most picayune operational decision requires a 26-member consensus, any nation can block progress on overarching objectives with the wave of a finger.** For example, some Allied nations that stood behind the Istanbul pledge to support Iraq and have contributed to out-of-country support have also in practice politically blocked progress on the main effort of in-country training. The lesson is clear: once the commitment is made and plans are approved, nations must be obligated to support the efforts politically if not materially. ...

The Alliance is well into the transformation process from a static defense organization to a more flexible, deployable mechanism for operations in and out of Europe. The NRF concept and its inherent structures illustrate how NATO is transforming into a more responsive joint and combined force. However, **as the command structure and strategic and operational concepts have rapidly evolved to meet changing threats, financial support mechanisms have not adapted.** For example, the concept of “costs-lay-where-they-fall” restricts participation to countries able to pay, while excluding willing but less financially capable members. This drastically reduces the pool of force contributors while burdening contributors. A related and misunderstood financial concept is NATO common funding. Common funds and nationally borne costs are separate sources. However, in reality, both are paid from the same pool of resources, national defense budgets. In essence, NATO pays both ways -- through common funding or a member’s own purse.

The idea of trust funds to support an operation is also fraught with disaster. Announcing support for an operation plays well in the international arena; however, trust funds allow nations to avoid any financial obligation associated with their verbal pronouncements. A nation can politically support an operation at absolutely no cost to its own treasury. Trust funds also attract an even more complex political dimension: the caveat. Contributing nations can place restrictions and constraints on the use of their contributions, creating an unwieldy system of accounting checks and balances. **NATO should revisit its funding policy**, which penalizes contributing nations by forcing them to pay for their participation. The use of trust funds is also a growing failure. NATO has committed the political capital of the Alliance and all 26 nations represented to train Iraqi officers. It is now prepared to squander that capital by failing to fund the commitment... These are just a few operational issues directly related to funding that highlight what any military thinker will understand. **Without adequate financial resources, and the flexibility to apply those resources at the decisive points in an operation, mission failure becomes a strong possibility.”**



Excerpted from *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Issue 40, May 2006.

Major General Rick Lynch, USA, is deputy chief of staff, Political/Military/Economic, Multi-National Force–Iraq, and was deputy chief of staff for Operations at Joint Forces Command Naples. Lieutenant Colonel Phillip D. Janzen, USA, is Iraq desk officer in the Political Advisor’s Office at Joint Forces Command Naples.

operations.

A third internal adjustments will in fact have to deal with building an Atlantic identity and overcoming the poor image that NATO seems to have in Europe and to a lesser extent in the US. Recently, comparing NATO to the EU, Victoria Nuland acknowledged: “We do a lousy marketing job. Every time a European opens his wallet these days, the euro is staring him in the face.... We need to name our missions NATO... Our soldiers need to wear the NATO patch.... We’ve got to become a 21st-century organization that the population sees as keeping it safer every day.”

2. A Common External Vision

The working area of NATO has changed, for the very nature of the enemies – terrorism, WMD and proliferation – has added a new layer to transatlantic security. More and more, security is becoming a result of coordinated external and domestic action. The enemy is not primarily beyond a particular geographical line, as was the case until 9/11. A working transatlantic community should aim at elaborating in advance, rather than *ex post facto*, a common perspective toward emerging global threats. Solidly based unity of outlook – within the framework of a common transatlantic foreign policy and security strategy, with enough consensus on fundamentals that it is possible for allies to take a relaxed view of day to day differences of opinion – is needed. Developing a common approach to the Middle East and the Islamic world, is high in the list of priorities.

At the same time, almost paradoxically, transatlantic “external relations”, while extending much farther than before, cannot be disentangled from elements of internal security. Internal security is both domestic and collective (among the Atlantic countries combined). A common external vision would have to reflect this new layering.

Does this mean that NATO has to receive a place in the domestic policies against terrorism? Should a common transatlantic homeland security be developed in NATO? Is there a “NATO Homeland”?

Former Spanish Prime Minister Aznar makes the argument (in the report released at the end of 2005,

NATO: An Alliance for Freedom”) that NATO should include homeland security as part of its collective defense role. He suggests that anti-terrorism policy be integrated in NATO, that NATO Council meetings for NATO countries’ ministers of home affairs also be held, and that a ‘counter-terrorism command’ be created.

The notion of a common Transatlantic Homeland Security was first voiced in the fall of 2004 by Tom Ridge, former US Secretary of Homeland Security. Since then the SAIS Center for Transatlantic Relations has been steadily exploring the concept of a “NATO Homeland”, and how to “organize our respective efforts at societal protection in a more systematic and coordinated ‘transatlantic’ fashion”. It is pointed out that the invocation of Article 5 after 9/11 created *de facto* a “NATO Homeland” as a space to which we are mutually committed for common defense.

In May 2006, the National Defense University published a special report “Transatlantic Homeland Defense”, proposing that enhanced transatlantic



The Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Taro Aso, visits NATO in May 2006.
NATO website

homeland defense be a major initiative for adoption at the 2006 Riga Summit and completion at the 2008 summit. The report argues that “As NATO develops its capabilities for expeditionary operations, it needs to revitalize plans and capabilities essential to realize its core mission: protecting Alliance territory as outlined in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty... This initiative would offer NATO both a 21st-century approach to Article 5 and new meaning and credibility in the eyes of NATO publics who are concerned

about threats to their homelands.” To implement these measures, according to the report, will require “close coordination and harmonization with national governments, many of which view control of homeland security resources as vital manifestations of their sovereignty.”

works without structures . If the full set of proposals to reform NATO were to be adopted, the new structure might be contrasted sharply to the first Bush administration's amorphous use of the idea of 'coalitions of the willing' which was widely viewed as dissolving the focus on NATO. However, it would flow with considerable continuity from NATO's 1990s concept mixing the Partnership for Peace (PfP) with Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF) to produce NATO-centered coalitions of the willing.

4. NATO-UN and the Atlantic-Global systems

NATO's newly proposed relationship with global security partners, along with current discussions on further enlargement, have been portrayed by some as a threat to the UN and the EU. NATO would develop into a "United Nations of the willing", marginalizing the role of the existing UN. Such perceptions are understandable but mistaken. Despite recent slogans in a few quarters, NATO is not an ephemeral coalition of countries which happen to have convergent views on a few issues, but a security union of countries with deep commonalities. NATO, as a security union of a distinctive sector of the world, has global responsibilities to those members, but it cannot be the sole "guarantor of global security" for them, much less for all the world.

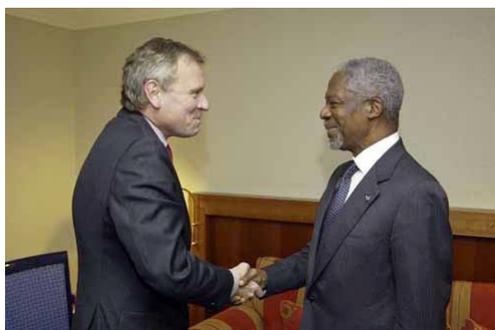
In reality, the multilayered levels of partnership that the Alliance is setting in place resemble a concept that the Atlantic movement had foreseen from its inception, a concept that enhances the global level through complementarity with it, rather than detracting from it. Today, the complexity of new global threats is forcing the Alliance to move toward a more sophisticated form of unity and functions, with the flexibility for multitasking, for operating in different environments, and for cooperation not only with national partners around the world but with institutional partners on the global level.

The good news is that there has been an increasing cooperation between the Atlantic level of institutions and the global level. This is a central develop-

ment in international relations. The UN system and the Atlantic system have been rubbing more and more into each other, thanks largely to the nature of the new threats. There is a deeper underlying cause of this trend: in a globalizing and ever more interdependent world, with the industrial democracies playing a major role as security providers, both systems have become increasingly dependent upon each other for their success. The Atlantic system is growing into the role of a core subsystem of the UN system.

In a speech delivered on May 2, Assistant Secretary of State Daniel Fried tried to clarify the issue, pointing out that while the United States and Europe are "working to make NATO the centerpiece alliance through which the trans-Atlantic democratic community deals with security challenges around the world", NATO is not a "counterweight" to the larger United Nations. The 26-nation NATO alliance has no ambitions for becoming a global organization, but it is "capable and actually, in fact, dealing with global challenges."

Put differently, there are two or three different meanings to "going global". NATO is going global in that its tasks can be anywhere in the world, and its members can come from any corner of the globe, but it is not going global in the sense of accepting all countries into its ranks, nor in the sense that its involvement in global issues is meant to be exclusive or exhaustive. The Atlanticist conception, elaborated already in full force in the 1930s, was that the group



NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer meets with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.
UN website

of Atlantic countries would play a "global role" in more than one sense, and that their core role would assist that of the global institutions within the League of Nations system. Indeed, it was observed that the League of Nations worked, creakingly, on the occasions when the Atlantic allies or ex-allies from World War I agreed, and didn't work at all when they diverged; so it seemed that greater efficiency and cohesion of the Atlantic

grouping was needed, inter alia, for the larger global grouping to succeed.

The degree to which the UN and NATO are actually cooperating would have been unimaginable only

a few years ago and goes well beyond their common engagement in bringing peace and stability to crisis-hit regions. Consultations between NATO and UN specialized bodies now cover a wide range of issues. NATO unlike the Warsaw Pact outlived bipolarity and gradually recovered its memory of the deeper, permanent purposes of Atlantic unity. NATO came to be recognized by the UN as one of its many constructive “regional institutions” in the course of the 1990s, then de facto came to be relied upon by the UN as a uniquely important regional or interregional enforcement institution – even if with considerable delay and reluctance – in the Balkan wars.

Atlantic structures seem to be heading toward a more important role on the UN level, one on which both NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer and Secretary General Kofi Annan agreed, speaking of an enhanced NATO-UN cooperation based upon a deeper and more structured relationship. And yet again, as a U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State recently noted, success in this fourth level is interdependent with success in the others. “We believe NATO should do more to assist the United Nations and African Union in Darfur, in accordance with the recent UN Security Council Resolution and a request from the UN Secretary General. NATO’s 2005 humanitarian missions in the Gulf Coast and Pakistan are unlikely to be its last. NATO must have the manpower and means to be as generous and responsive as it can when disaster strikes. It must also reform further to ensure it has the capability and flexibility it needs to meet threats wherever and whenever they arise. NATO activated the NATO Response Force (NRF) for the first time after the earthquake in Pakistan. In the run-up to Riga, our goal is to ensure that the NRF is strengthened, trained, and funded (as well as opened to capable partners) to make sure that it is usable. This process will likely require creative new approaches, including common funding to ensure that the financial burdens of NATO operations are shared more equitably.”

After 9/11 what was at stake was whether the measures adopted by the West were inchoate and transitory, or coherent and enduring; whether they



**NATO-UN cooperation:
the shape of the future?**

were unconvincing and the trans-Atlantic cohesion behind them easily undermined, or convincing and robust; and above all, whether they could galvanize enough forces in the opposition as to induce a new bipolar system, or, on the contrary, whether they would be of a sufficiently open nature as to have good chances of undermining the cohesiveness of any potential oppositional pole. During the war in Afghanistan, the policy was convincing and the global cohesion impressive,

but the structural foundations were undermined rather than nurtured for proceeding together with further steps. The cost was seen in the Iraq war, when the policy itself alienated allies, and its aftermath when trans-Atlantic divisions were mirrored in partial coalescence among oppositional forces. Nevertheless Atlantic cohesion remains as yet greater and deeper than the cohesion of anti-Atlantic or “Atlantic skeptic” forces. Ample space remains for the new stage of Atlantic recovery. The new NATO approaches could help both in overcoming unilateral tendencies and avoiding a new bipolar world. By leaving the door open for new governments to participate in various degrees in common global efforts, they can also provide an incentive toward the spontaneous flourishing of bridges of like-mindedness with individuals and civic society organizations across national borders of hostile regimes. □

— Dr. Tiziana Stella is Executive Director of the Streit Council