

Co-Authors: Julian Lindley-French | Yves Boyer
Strategic Advisors Group Co-Chairs: Chuck Hagel | Tom Enders
Chairman, Atlantic Council International Advisory Board: General Brent Scowcroft

THE NATO STRATEGIC CONCEPT: A SAG STRAWMAN STRATCON 2010

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Julian Lindley-French and Yves Boyer have led a Strategic Advisors Group project called STRATCON 2010 to provide provocative ideas and fresh thinking concerning the NATO Strategic Concept. Building on the SAG's April 2010 report 'STRATCON 2010: An Alliance for a Global Century,' the project leaders have written this strawman draft of the NATO Strategic Concept to influence the transatlantic debate as heads of state and government prepare to gather for the Lisbon NATO summit in November.

NATO'S PURPOSE AND MISSION

NATO's enduring purpose is to reaffirm the mutual commitment to the protection and defense of Allies in the event of an attack or threats to security; to demonstrate a readiness to help resolve international crises; and to cooperate with others to resolve common security threats. The Alliance exists to ensure the safety of NATO citizens and their institutions as part of a twenty-first century security alliance and transatlantic security forum that combines and balances political and military power.

NATO's enduring mission remains to promote stability and security through effective political approaches to conflict prevention and resolution, built on credible military capabilities to support deterrence and provide strategic reassurance to all Allies. The Alliance Strategic Concept is thus central to a new transatlantic relationship relevant and credible in a rapidly changing world.

WHY A NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT?

In a world of friction NATO remains an essential forum for the discussion of defense and security issues by Americans, Canadians and Europeans who share the same democratic values and commitment to freedom and respect for human rights. To that end, NATO unites the twin North American and European security and defense pillars when vital interests are at risk and provides allies and partners alike a powerful vehicle for influencing the world for the better. Central to NATO's mission is the need for rapid and effective consultation whenever the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any member is threatened. That duty persists. However, the security and defense context of the Alliance has changed beyond all recognition since the founding of the Alliance in 1949 and the end of the Cold War in 1989. Thus, NATO must seek to be credibly effective in a new and revolutionary strategic age if an open system of free speech, free movement and free trade is to be

safeguarded. Such a goal calls not only for a new Alliance strategic concept, but a new type of strategic concept able to speak to and reassure NATO citizens.

NATO'S ENDURING AND FUTURE ROLE

NATO is not only a defensive alliance but a cornerstone of stability, not just for the Euro-Atlantic community but the world beyond. Therefore, for NATO to play its full role in an age of austerity, a new affordable balance must be struck between active defense, credible deterrence, both conventional and nuclear, to ensure that risks and threats are kept at strategic distance. Critically, NATO must be seen to be able to act well beyond the transatlantic area. NATO's strategic role will thus require the further transformation of Alliance strategic and operational planning capabilities, the modernization of NATO's defense architecture, further reform of the command structure and above all sufficient numbers of deployable armed forces able to go anywhere, fight anywhere and stay anywhere.

NATO & THE NEW SECURITY AGENDA

The Strategic Concept reaffirms the security contract at the heart of a political alliance whereby all members gain security in return for the equitable sharing of responsibilities. NATO will of course continue to fulfill its first duty to provide an effective defense for the citizens of NATO members. In addition, NATO will meet the challenges of the new security agenda: combat terrorism, prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, deal effectively with the consequences of failing states and regional crises, counter the misuse of new technologies, help to provide cyber security, and ensure the flow of vital resources.

THE NATO STRATEGIC CONCEPT 2010

NATO'S POLITICAL ROLE:

1. The Political Mission

All members of the Atlantic Alliance retain a fundamental commitment to political liberty, democracy and human rights.

2. Political Consensus

Unity of purpose and effort built on consensus and solidarity remain the twin foundations of NATO decision-making. Defense solidarity is automatic and absolute. Equally, NATO today enshrines flexibility as the strategic method of the Alliance, to permit on occasions different members to lead during crises. To that end, NATO is establishing new guidelines for Alliance action beyond Euro-Atlantic borders in the event of crises.

3. Political Legitimacy & Partnership

Political legitimacy is vital to the Alliance. The UN Charter provides the framework within which NATO acts. Therefore, NATO seeks to build on the September 2008 framework agreement with the United Nations for closer consultation and cooperation. NATO and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) will continue to consult each other closely over regional security. NATO also stands ready, able and willing to support new institutional partners such as the African Union.

4. A New Transatlantic Security Forum

The North Atlantic Council remains the paramount decision-making body of the Alliance. Equally, in a complex security environment NATO must reach out to a broad security community. A new Transatlantic Security Forum is to be created that encompasses members and partners alike to reinforce the political mission at the heart of Alliance – to promote peace and stability. The Forum will ensure

that allies are better prepared to face and respond to a myriad of complex challenges that today's changing world will doubtless generate.

5. Afghanistan

NATO reaffirms its commitment to support the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to extend its influence and authority across the country and better establish rule of law, good governance and economic well-being. NATO's United Nations-mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) will remain for the foreseeable future.

NATO'S SECURITY & DEFENSE ROLE:

6. NATO's Defense & Strategic Reassurance

Collective defense remains the first mission of the Alliance. Equally, security and defense are no longer distinct efforts and whilst the Alliance faces no direct military attack, the mix of uncertainty, instability and the spread of dangerous technologies make strategic shock a very real danger. NATO therefore seeks a better balance between protection of the home base and the projection of stability. Article 5 defense needs to be modernized through the development of multi-layered and interlocking defense architectures that will provide credible and critical strategic reassurance to all. The new architectures will be transparent and open to partners. Emphasis will be placed on enhancing NATO's ability to better share critical intelligence, defend against rogue missile attack, thwart cyber attack, protect critical national infrastructures and help nations cope effectively with the consequences of attack. By treating terrorism and cyber security as new kinds of warfare, the Alliance will deprive the terrorist/cyber attacker of the capacity to inspire fear, to gain political effect, and thus undermine the shock value of such attacks. Exercising and training will also be modernized with NATO forces and structures being tested regularly across Alliance territory.

7. Nuclear Deterrence and Arms Control

NATO reaffirms its nuclear defense role. The defense of the Euro-Atlantic community will thus continue to a demand credible, minimum nuclear deterrent. Although responsibility for the nuclear deterrent will remain the responsibility of NATO's three nuclear powers, consultations among allies will be further promoted through a strengthened Nuclear Planning Group (NPG). Equally, the Alliance is committed to achieving a nuclear-free world and supports renewed strategic arms reduction talks (START) and Global Zero as part of multilateral efforts. The Alliance also supports modernization of the Conventional Forces Europe (CFE) Treaty.

8. Affording NATO Defense

In an age of austerity affordability of modern armed forces and equipment is critical. Indeed, in the absence of an existential threat defense spending is today discretionary for most NATO members and demonstrating value for money vital. Therefore, NATO is establishing a Critical Capabilities Initiative (CCI) that will identify core military capabilities and capacities that can be acquired by more efficient spending from within existing defense budgets. The cost of all NATO headquarters will be significantly reduced, together with the bureaucracy and procurement of common assets will be reformed and streamlined.

9. Modern Deployable Forces

Modern deployable armed forces organized through effective multinational formations are central to the NATO force concept. Today both collective defense and collective security missions require such forces. Therefore, in addition to the Critical Capabilities Initiative, NATO will work closely with members to generate new affordable capabilities and capacities. Central to that effort will be the further development of effective multinational forces such as a re-vitalized NATO Response Force (NRF) and High Readiness Forces (HRFs). Specific attention will be given to enhancing the

deployability and sustainability of Alliance forces, effective counter-insurgency and counter-terror operations, the fostering of critical civil-military partnerships in hybrid conflict (the Comprehensive Approach), and modernizing security and defense education across the Alliance.

10. Reform and Efficiencies

The existence of a comprehensive military command and control structure continues to distinguish NATO from all other multinational military organisations. Fully operational in peacetime, the NATO Command Structure permits the Alliance to undertake the complete spectrum of military activities, from small-scale peacekeeping tasks to large-scale high-intensity operations. Of equal importance, it provides the essential foundations that underpin such activities. However, further rationalisation is needed for effective and flexible command and control at all levels to better employ limited resources. To that end, the Joint Force Commands (JFC) will be reduced from two to one, with component and deployable headquarters reduced by fifty percent. A much tighter set of relationships will be established between operations and force transformation to prepare the Alliance for multiple futures. To that end, Allied Command Operations (ACO) and Allied Command Transformation (ACT) will be placed within a single strategic framework supported by a streamlined and reformed NATO International Staff and International Military Staff.

FUTURE MEMBERSHIP AND THE NEW PARTNERSHIPS

11. The Open Door Policy

NATO enlargement remains a fundamental political commitment to a Europe whole and free. To this end, the enlargement process will continue. With the accession of Albania and Croatia to membership in 2009, a further step was taken to the realization of NATO's enduring mission. Indeed, the ability of the Alliance to foster stability beyond its borders is intrinsically linked to stability within its border. Therefore, NATO's door remains open to any European country in a position to undertake the commitments and obligations of membership and to contribute to security in the Euro-Atlantic area.

12. Partnerships

Partnerships are central to a Euro-Atlantic community whole and free. Building on the Partnership for Peace, the Istanbul Co-operation Initiative (ICI) and the Alliance's partners across the globe, the Alliance offers an open mind and an open hand to all those who wish to work with it. Indeed, NATO is committed to effective and meaningful partnerships with its close and valued neighbors, as well as partner states in Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. Partnership for Peace will continue to promote close cooperation between the Alliance and all partners through practical steps in areas such Security Sector Reform.

13. Institutional Partnerships

The Alliance recognizes there will be times when others are better placed to act. Naturally, the European Union (EU) is the essential institutional partner for a stable Euro-Atlantic community and NATO seeks to deepen its relationship with the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), particularly in the field of civil-military co-operation.

14. Russia

The time has come to deepen relations with Russia. The NATO-Russia partnership is an enduring cornerstone of Euro-Atlantic security. Building on the NATO-Russia Founding Act, NATO will continue to promote a pragmatic program of partnership and cooperation with Moscow. Cooperation will be pursued primarily but not exclusively in the fields of nuclear non-proliferation, arms control, counter-terrorism, missile defense, effective crisis management, peace operations, energy security and maritime security.

15. New Partnerships

Operations in Afghanistan have demonstrated the need for close partnerships with countries the world-over that share the values of the Euro-Atlantic community and which work closely with NATO forces. NATO is open to such partnerships to foster both political and practical co-operation.

AN ALLIANCE FOR A NEW CENTURY

Much has changed in NATO's world since the 1999 Strategic Concept. Indeed, for the first time the Alliance has had to consider itself essentially in a global context rather than merely a Euro-Atlantic context. Given the friction in today's world it is clear that NATO will need to master change and uncertainty for the foreseeable future. Therefore, immediately following the Lisbon Summit, a small senior NATO group reporting to the North Atlantic Council is to monitor and audit progress in implementing the Strategic Concept. The group is to be headed by a senior and respected figure, independent from the NATO Secretariat, and is to be mandated to reach out to wider communities.

NATO remains the guardian of last resort for the Euro-Atlantic Community. However, to remain credible and relevant, the Alliance must grip the scale and scope of change in the world – in which possible opportunities for new partnerships must be grasped and old friendships renewed; and in which apparent risk and threat must be confronted and dealt with. That is the mission of NATO in the twenty-first century.

Julian Lindley-French is Eisenhower Professor of Defense Strategy at the Netherlands Defense Academy and Associate Fellow, Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House), London.

Yves Boyer is Professor of Geopolitics at Ecole Polytechnique and Deputy Director of Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, Paris. Both are members of the Strategic Advisors Group.

THE STRATEGIC ADVISORS GROUP

To tackle the tough issues facing NATO and the transatlantic community, the Atlantic Council created the Strategic Advisors Group (SAG). Co-chaired by Atlantic Council Chairman Senator Chuck Hagel and Airbus CEO Tom Enders, the SAG is comprised of North American and European preeminent defense experts. Founded in 2007 by then-Atlantic Council chairman General James L. Jones, General Brent Scowcroft and Atlantic Council President and CEO Fred Kempe, the SAG provides timely insights and analysis to policymakers and the public on strategic issues in the transatlantic security partnership through issuing policy briefs and reports, hosting strategy sessions for senior civilian and military officials and providing informal expert advice to decision-makers.

The SAG and its activities are generously sponsored by the Scowcroft Group, EADS North America and Airbus.

STRATCON 2010

The Strategic Advisors Group's STRATCON 2010 project seeks to shape and inform the transatlantic debate over NATO's new Strategic Concept. STRATCON 2010 issues publications to define the critical issues NATO must confront in drafting a new Strategic Concept. For more information about the SAG or STRATCON 2010, please contact Vice President and Director of the Program on International Security Damon Wilson at dwilson@acus.org or Program Associate Director Jeff Lightfoot at jlightfoot@acus.org.

Senator Chuck Hagel
U.S. SAG Co-Chairman
Chairman
Atlantic Council

Thomas Enders
European SAG Co-Chairman
President and CEO
Airbus S.A.S.

Fred Kempe
President and CEO
Atlantic Council

General Brent Scowcroft
Chairman
**Atlantic Council International
Advisory Board**
President and Founder
The Scowcroft Group

Damon Wilson
Program Director
Atlantic Council

Ian Brzezinski
Rapporteur
Atlantic Council

Neyla Arnas
Rapporteur
National Defense University

Paul Gebhard
Rapporteur
The Cohen Group

Mike Durkee
Rapporteur
Former Special Advisor to SACEUR

Jeff Lightfoot
Secretariat
Atlantic Council

Rafael L. Bardaji
Strategic Studies Group

Marshall Billingslea
Deloitte

Hans Binnendijk
CTNSP

Sven Biscop
The Royal Institute
for International Relations

Charles Boyd
Former Deputy EUCOM

Yves Boyer
Fondation pour la
Recherche Stratégique

Richard Burt
McLarty Associates

Ralph Crosby
EADS North America

Brian Dailey
Atlantic Council Board Director

Chris Donnelly
UK Defence Academy

Conrado Dornier
Dornier Aircraft

Julian Lindley-French
Netherlands Defense Academy

Ashraf Ghani
Institute for State Effectiveness

Edmund Giambastiani
Former Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of
Staff

Sebestyén L. Gorka
National Defense University

Marc Grossman
The Cohen Group

Annette Heuser
Bertelsmann Foundation

Robert Hunter
RAND Corporation

Robert Hutchings
University of Texas at Austin

Karl Heinz Kamp
NATO Defense College

Franklin D. Kramer
Atlantic Council Vice Chair

Harald Kujat
Former Chairman of NATO
Military Committee

Fabrizio W. Lucioli
Atlantic Council of Italy

Alexander Mirtchev
Krull Corporation

Boyko Noev
Center for the Study of Democracy

Ioan Mircea Pascu
Member of the European Parliament

Jean-Paul Perruche
Former Director-General,
EU Military Staff

Thomas R. Pickering
Hills & Company

Norman Ray
The Spectrum Group

Tomas Ries
Swedish National Defense College

Walt Slocombe
Caplin & Drysdale

Harlan K. Ullman
Atlantic Council

Kurt Volker
Atlantic Council

Chuck Wald
Deloitte

Rob de Wijk
Hague Centre for Strategic Studies

