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A PROPOSED FRAME FOR A NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT FOR NATO

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READIER, MORE COHERENT, RESILIENT AND RELEVANT

The NATO Heads of State and Government took the decision to initiate a reflection process at the London Summit of 3-4 December 2019. In line with this decision NATO Secretary General designated a Group of Experts to carry forward the process on 31 March 2020.

This Group is expected to submit the outcome to Secretary General to consult on the set of recommendations for a new Strategic Concept to be adopted by NATO most probably in 2021.

I. INTRODUCTION

At their Summit meeting in in.....2021, NATO Heads of State and Government approved the Alliance's new Strategic Concept.

NATO has been the most successful politico-military Alliance for the last seven decades safeguarding the freedom and security of its members against different threats and challenges. The Alliance will continue to defend the shared values of pluralistic democracy, liberty, human rights and the rule of law. NATO has always been at the forefront of the Euro-Atlantic peace and security based on a robust community of shared values which make it unique and indispensable.

It is the forum solidly representing the transatlantic bond which lies at the core of its success and makes it relevant and resilient for its members. This fundamental nature of NATO has not changed and it must be preserved.

The security of Europe and that of North America is indivisible as is the indivisibility of security for all of NATO's members.

The purpose of this study herebelow is to contribute to the reflection process already launched within NATO by offering a blueprint in a synoptic form of a new strategic concept for the Alliance. It should be seen as a food for thought for the process and, therefore, does not deserve any further attribute.

NATO will remain as the enduring transatlantic forum for Allied consultations on any issues that affect their vital interests, including all challenges posing risks and threats for its members' security, and for concerting their efforts in a coherent way in fields of common concern.

The founding treaty of NATO, the Washington Treaty, is a whole and must be implemented in its entirety. It is, therefore, necessary not to dissect its provisions. In this vein, compartmentalisation of its provisions should be avoided. All of its provisions carry the same weight for all Allies. The politico-military character of NATO is embedded in the Washington Treaty and it remains indisputable.

The Alliance must take the necessary steps to give further substance to its political dimension to complement and support its measures in the defence field. This has become necessary more than ever before to make NATO respond better to the everchanging security situation, meet the expectations of its populations, and render it readier, more resilient and relevant.

II. THE EVOLVING SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

- The vision adopted in the post Cold War era that Europe is whole, free and at peace is no more.
- Since 2014 the rules-based international order has been overtaken by events and this dealt a serious blow to the security of the Euro-Atlantic area.
- The current and anticipated security challenges facing the Alliance constitutes a compelling need for NATO to further reinforce its political role and responsibilities on par with its defensive posture in and beyond the Euro-Atlantic area.
- To sustain its readiness, resilience and relevance, the Alliance will have to explore further means of enhancing its unity and solidarity as its main center of gravity to address complex and challenging risks and threats.
- In strengthening its political role, an inventory of potential political contingencies in need of further consultations should be initially made with a view to reinforcing the political dimension of the Alliance.
- The existing and prospective risks and challenges for the Alliance in the coming decade and beyond the horizon necessitate a renewed and in-depth analysis of geopolitical and geostrategic landscape. This analysis should assess both current and evolving risks and challenges as well as opportunities which may arise.
- The Alliance currently faces two main threats to the Euro-Atlantic security from the East and the South.
- Those multidirectional and multifaceted challenges will continue to require a comprehensive approach comprising both deterrence and defence as well as projecting stability related work and activities. They must, therefore, be treated as a whole on an equal footing.
- The aggravation of the security situation affecting the Euro-Atlantic area is caused by both state and non-state actors and this will remain on the Alliance's agenda in the coming decades.
- The aggressive actions of Russia in Ukraine which undermined the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of that country clearly demonstrated that Russia is no longer

a reliable partner for NATO. Although NATO intends not to seek adversarial relations with Russia, the state of affairs established between the Alliance and Russia before 2014 will not be achieved in the foreseeable future.

- It is in this context that the Alliance will have to continue implementing robust deterrence and defence measures against Russia to safeguard the security and stability of its members.
- Implementation of such measures and seeking dialogue with Russia on the future of the transatlantic security are not mutually exclusive. Open channels of communication with Russia should be sustained with a view to maintaining and reinforcing the deterrence and defence posture of the Alliance.
- The current and future posture of NATO vis à vis Russia should continue until Russia decides to join the European family of nations, thus contributing to harmonious and peaceful relations in the transatlantic area.
- All forms and manifestations of radicalism and extremism, notably terrorism, be it of religious or ethnic nature, are a cause of grave concern for the Alliance and its members.
- Terrorism is the clear and imminent threat for the Alliance and its members. It will continue to remain high on the agenda of NATO. It is the most powerful weapon in the hands of non-state actors aiming to disrupt individual liberty, pluralistic democracy, human rights, the rule of law and the way of life in the Alliance members. It is also used to project instability by states to advance their hybrid warfare agenda against the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area.
- Terrorism neither recognises borders nor there exists immunity against it like cyber and hybrid threats. It is, therefore, a common area of concern for the Alliance members and requires constant attention and vigilance.
- It is, therefore, essential to take all the measures individually and collectively to counter terrorism and effectively address its root causes. To further contribute to efforts in countering terrorism the Alliance should continue to explore how it can better use its capacity in a more coherent manner to rise up to this challenge. To that end a renewed

and more dynamic Road Map and Plan of Action Against Terrorism to implement it beyond the current framework should be developed.

➤ Recent steps taken by China in the military and intelligence fields should be under constant monitoring by the Alliance. China, like Russia, should be engaged by the Alliance to the extent possible with a view to developing counter measures, as necessary, that have the potential to undermine the Euro-Atlantic security.

➤ Emerging security challenges such as disruptive technologies, new forms of hybrid warfare, novel space capabilities, robotics, artificial intelligence and ISR capabilities already deployed or being developed by adversaries and pandemics should guide Alliance efforts and work in the future. The Alliance as a whole must remain in

a position to protect its technological edge when addressing the current and evolving challenges in the security and defence domains of direct concern for the prosperity and stability of its populations and territory.

➤ Despite setbacks in recent years to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, NATO should continue to support arms control both in Europe and beyond to maintain international peace and security. The priority in this respect should be given to the extension of New START Treaty between the U.S. and Russia. The means of involving China in this process should be sought to expand the scope of the Treaty for enhancing security and stability on a global basis.

➤ Unequivocal commitment by the Alliance members to the Non-Proliferation Treaty is essential.

III. CORE TASKS AND OBJECTIVES

➤ The tasks for NATO are enshrined in its founding Washington Treaty. Its primary task and objective are to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by all the means and instruments at its disposal.

➤ The Alliance firmly represents a unique set of values, committed to the principles of individual liberty, pluralistic democracy, human rights and the rule of law. NATO is also firmly committed to the purposes and principles of the U.N. Charter.

➤ The Alliance embodies the indispensable transatlantic bond between Europe and North America since 1949. This bond remains strong and should be preserved for sustaining Euro-Atlantic peace and security. Recent events on a global scale have once again demonstrated the clear need for upholding and reinforcing the transatlantic link more than ever before.

➤ The security of all NATO members is indivisible. The sense of equal security for all should guide all strands of work and activities within the Alliance.

The principle of one for all and all for one is as valid and relevant as ever. That requires solidarity in letter and spirit,

unity of purpose and action and fair burden-sharing as well as role and responsibility sharing.

➤ The era of benefitting from peace dividend provided by the end of the Cold War is over and the Alliance has been facing new and divergent challenges since 2014 from many directions. It has become evident such challenges and the like will continue to engage the Alliance for the coming decades and they will not disappear from the security landscape.

➤ The need to act collectively in a coherent and comprehensive manner for any risk and threat from any direction will require foresight, solidarity, resolve, and determination to act in the face of the current and evolving challenges with full respect for international law.

➤ The nature and scale of modern challenges necessitate to leverage to the maximum extent possible enhanced and active multilateralism. Absent mutually reinforcing multilateral frames, it would prove impossible for the Alliance to meet the full spectrum of its tasks and objectives.

The core tasks of NATO in modern times remain the same:

a. Collective defence.

- NATO members are bound by Article 5 of the Washington Treaty committing each member to assist other members against armed attack. This commitment is ironclad and constitutes the backbone of the Alliance. NATO will deter and defend against any threat of aggression, and against current and evolving security challenges when and where they threaten the fundamental security of individual Allies or the Alliance as a whole.
- NATO should be prepared to act decisively and swiftly to surmount challenges it faces to defend its members against different forms and manifestations of threats. It, therefore, needs a more efficient and fast decision making process to be ready and resilient against divergent sources of multidirectional and multifaceted challenges. The novel decision making edifice should not be at the expense of the fundamental consensus rule.
- Readiness levels of Alliance forces should be under constant review, an Enhanced Mobility Concept and Doctrine should be developed and tested on regular intervals and wider scales.
- Sophisticated early warning capabilities such as ISR are needed both for military and intelligence purposes. The introduction and deployment of modern and sophisticated capabilities across the services in this field should proceed unabated.
- New methods and practices should be sought and implemented against the use of hybrid warfare and cyber capabilities by adversaries, be they state or non-state actors. The pool of individual and common assets and capabilities should be strengthened and diversified to counter cyber and hybrid threats. Innovative methods and techniques will have to be developed and shared among the Allies to surmount the challenge of identifying attribution for cyber attacks.
- Force, defence, and operational planning should come under a single structure, thus creating synergy among all defence related planning. This requires a structural reform within the Alliance with a view to increasing the efficacy of work on all pillars of defence.
- The Level of Ambition of the Alliance should remain intact against conventional and nuclear threats. In this

vein, deterrence will have to be based on an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional, missile, cyber, and space capabilities. The space dimension of deterrence will have to be elaborated in further detail.

- As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance. The supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies is provided by the strategic and sub-strategic nuclear forces of the Alliance, particularly those of the United States; the independent strategic nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France, which have a deterrent role of their own, contribute to the overall deterrence and security of the Allies.

b. Crisis Management

- It is evident that inter and intra-state crises and conflicts beyond the borders of the Euro-Atlantic area carry actual and potential risks and threats to the transatlantic security. It is, therefore, essential to detect, monitor and contain such crises before they become conflicts with spillover effects on the security of the Allies.
- NATO's success in managing crises is well proven. The body of experience and practices adopted since the Balkans crisis up to and including Afghanistan and Iraq and the lessons learned from such operations and missions are important building blocks to anticipate and handle future potential tasks in crisis management.
- NATO should be politically and militarily vigilant and ready to more effectively use its toolbox to stem crises affecting the security of Allies.
- Recent challenges, both actual and evolving, make it necessary for NATO to play a more prominent role before, during and after conflicts. That would give NATO the necessary space to improve its political role in times of crisis.
- The primary objective of NATO in crisis management is to anticipate crises by investing more in early warning and intelligence capabilities, including human resources, at its disposal. This requires political will to employ an appropriate mix of crisis management instruments at an early stage. It is equally important to take additional steps to expedite the decision making process within the Alliance

- There should be fresh efforts to review NATO's crisis response manual with more emphasis on expediting the decision making process without prejudice to the fundamental consensus rule.
 - Expeditionary forces cannot be employed at the right time and place without expedited decision making. Hence the need for more political willingness and flexibility.
 - In the face of particularly pandemics, recognising no borders, threatening the security and prosperity of Allies, the members should place more premium by way of placing more financial and human resources to expand the scope of and resources for civil emergency planning within NATO.
 - Enhancing civil preparedness for emergencies such as COVID-19 pandemic is necessary for maintaining resilience of the Allies. To that end the current Baseline Requirements for Civil Resilience must be implemented.
 - To contribute to fight pandemics NATO should lay out a new Concept based on lessons learned by the recent COVID-19 contagion and Enhanced Baseline Requirements complemented by a Pandemics Contingency Plan. This has become more necessary than ever before.
 - In managing crises the role of trained local forces is undeniable. In that regard, such forces should be pre-identified by NATO before a decision is made to employ them. NATO should develop a pool of designated local forces for different potential crisis areas when there emerges a need to cooperate with such forces. It is essential that there should be no room left for such forces to pursue their own agendas, but to serve the overall interests and objectives of the Alliance to contribute to the security of the Euro-Atlantic area.
- The existing overall structure for partnerships has considerably served its purpose in the post Cold War era. A novel structure is needed to achieve more to improve the benefits of partnerships. Merges among different layers of partnership structures and mechanisms should be considered to accomplish a leaner and more effective model of cooperative schemes. Regionally based criteria should be developed and applied to merge certain groups. This would contribute to further institutional reform and save human and financial resources.
 - The current ties between NATO and the UN should be tightened at a time of ever changing nature of risks and challenges.
 - The NATO-EU partnership will remain unique and essential. Further efforts could be contemplated to make this partnership more effective. This should not be achieved at the expense of the principles underlying it. While furthering it, the increasing role of non-EU Allies should be recognised.
 - The current and evolving security landscape necessitates exploration of innovative ways and structures to increase outreach activities to regional organisations such as OSCE, the African Union, GCC, and the Arap League.
 - While streamlining the partnership structures and mechanisms the establishment of a joint NATO-China Working Group should be conceived. Ways should also be explored to establish a liaison relationship with ASEAN.
 - The recent setbacks in arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation fields should not be a pretext to step back from this important domain of Alliance activity. The future of these domains should continue to constitute a standing agenda item for NATO.

c. Cooperative Security

- It is in the realm of cooperative security where enhanced and active multilateralism plays a critical role. This also necessitates to leverage more from NATO's influence and instruments with a global reach.
- In the wake of current challenges the partnerships with countries and the relevant international/regional organisations have become more important than ever before.

- The principles guiding the Open Door policy of NATO are still valid. Based on those principles the Alliance should develop a Plan of Action for the remaining Balkan countries to accede to NATO latest by the year 2030. The Alliance should facilitate conducive grounds for those non-NATO Balkan countries to adopt its principles to join NATO.
- Accession of Georgia and Ukraine to the Alliance will serve the overall political interests of NATO when necessary conditions are in place. The decisions taken in

that regard are and will remain valid. This aspect should feature prominently in future endeavours of NATO.

- The Alliance will remain relevant, ready and resilient as it continues its reform, modernisation and transformation in political, military and institutional domains.

IV. CONCLUSION

We, the political leaders of NATO, are determined to uphold the fundamental principles and values on which the Alliance stands as well as the provisions of the Washington Treaty in their entirety.

We are resolved to make NATO more relevant, coherent, resilient and ready in performing all its functions and tasks in the coming decades.

In addressing the current and evolving security challenges the Alliance will play a key role in serving the shared values

and the security and defence of the transatlantic community. NATO will continue to be the beacon of hope for its members and partners in defence of common values of individual liberty, pluralistic democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

The Alliance will continue to play a key role in this century to defend those fundamental values through unity, solidarity, resolve and concerted efforts for international peace and security.



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