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**TRANSFORMATION AND ADAPTATION – A PERMANENT
FEATURE OF NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY
ORGANIZATION**

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Abstract:

This paper examines the main transformation and adaptation measures taken by NATO between its establishment in 1949 and with a view to the upcoming Warsaw Summit in 2016. NATO has been engaged in continuous transformation for many years to ensure that it has the policies, capabilities and structures required to deal with current and future challenges, including the collective defence of its members. With Allied forces militarily engaged across several continents, the Alliance needs to ensure that its armed forces remain modern, deployable, interoperable and sustainable. The changes in the security environment have forced the Alliance to adapt continuously. The effects of financial crisis, reset the relationship with Russia, NATO's nuclear status, creating anti-missile shield, NATO commitment in Afghanistan, new threats like cyber-attacks and hybrid warfare, the ambitions of international terrorist groups, the emergence of new players in the world are the main factors that gave rise to the need to transform the Alliance to ensure an adequate response.

I do consider the subject of major relevance today as well as in the next future, and the paper could provide a ground for further analyses and improvements to be useful for those interested in understanding how and why the Alliance resisted over time and what still needs to be done to remain relevant as a political-military Alliance.

Key words: *NATO, Alliance, transformation, adaptation, reform, Summit, measures.*

1. Introduction

“Everything has to change in order for everything to stay the same”.

Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, Italian writer

The world is changing and NATO has thus to adapt. Currently, the Alliance is transforming but with the purpose of doing better and more tasks. In a time of financial meltdown and decreasing defense budgets, one could ask: who needs NATO? Once upon a time there was a simple answer. “NATO,” said General Lord Ismay, its first Secretary General, was “to keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down.” In the post-Cold War world, however, the answer is much more nuanced. [4]

The present era is similar to the period following World War II, during which the international system was fundamentally remade. This assigns a special responsibility to all major actors. The way in which rules are being remade and the way in which the structures of world politics and institutions are being changed will profoundly shape international politics

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for many years to come. The adaptation of NATO to the new global problems is part of this process because the Alliance will have to deal with the essential security challenges of the new era. [9]

The Alliance's fundamental purpose is to provide collective defence for its members. At the same time, since the end of the Cold War, NATO has been adapting its structures and policies to help provide increased security to Europe as a whole, as well as a stable and peaceful framework for consultation between Allies and neighbouring countries. The Alliance not only aims to ensure the defence of its members, but more broadly tries to reinforce and contribute to peace and stability in and beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. [1]

Today, more than sixty-five years later, the threats facing the alliance's members have changed considerably. An attack in North America or Europe by the regular army of an outside state is highly unlikely. Instead, the alliance must confront an array of more diffuse challenges, ranging from terrorism and nuclear proliferation to piracy, cyber-attacks, hybrid warfare, and the disruption of energy supplies. NATO has therefore engaged in a much broader range of activities that are designed to promote political dialogue and cooperation, and confront proactively the security challenges, which could, or already do, affect the safety or the interests of its member states and their populations. This means that it has been deepening and extending its partnerships, modernizing its forces and conducting crisis response operations beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. Effectively, it is accelerating its transformation to develop new political relationships and stronger operational capabilities to respond to an increasingly globalized and more challenging world. [5]

Only an organization with broad political objectives supported by a flexible and comprehensive „toolbox” of means and, in the same time able to share its strategic vision, to facilitate networking at global level and to project forces and capabilities wherever needed, will adapt and survive.

Considering the facts presented above, I have chosen to enhance the studies and analyses on transformation and adaptation of the Alliance and therefore I managed to present in this paper, in a coherent and systematic way, the process of NATO reform over time.

The paper is structured in three main chapters, and also comprises an introduction part, conclusion and references in the end. In the first chapter I have made a short introduction to NATO, and then moved on to the transformational aspects, with regard to adaptation measures taken in the past and also focusing on the tools of partnerships to enhance the process. The second chapter focuses on more recent outcomes from the latest Summits which are related to NATO transformation and adaptation. The final chapter describes the current and future challenges posed by the continuously changing security environment and the new topics related to transformation in view of the upcoming Summit in July this year.

2. NATO - a continuous transforming Alliance

2.1 Short introduction to NATO

NATO's essential purpose is to safeguard the freedom and security of its members through political and military means. Therefore, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a political-military Alliance. It is political because it promotes democratic values and encourages consultation and cooperation on defence and security issues to build trust and, in the long run, prevent conflict. The military dimension is obvious: NATO seeks security through the lowest use of force and NATO is committed to the peaceful resolution of disputes. If diplomatic efforts fail, it has the military capacity needed to undertake crisis-management operations. These are carried out under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty - NATO's founding treaty - or under a UN mandate, alone or in cooperation with other countries and international organizations.

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The Washington Treaty - or North Atlantic Treaty - forms the basis of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The Treaty was signed in Washington D.C. on 4 April 1949 by 12 founding members.

The Alliance began work in 1949 when the Cold War was just underway, sharply dividing the democratic West from a communist East. In Article 4, Allies pledged “to consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened”. Collective defence is at the heart of the Treaty and is enshrined in Article 5, in which members agreed “that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all”.

For more than six decades, NATO has provided the shield behind which the democracies of Europe have prospered in peace. By standing together, the allies prevented another major conflict in Europe so their societies could rebuild from the catastrophic destruction of World War II. The safety and security provided by NATO was one of the factors that made it possible for the Western democracies to recover from war and achieve greater levels of economic prosperity than ever before in the history of Europe.

What role and what future does NATO have? To answer this question, it is first necessary a generalization about alliances. NATO is an institutionalized alliance. Alliances emerge to counter a threat. This is why NATO was founded. After the end of the Cold War, we had the alliances, but not the threat. However, NATO did not disappear. While during the Cold War, when the structure of international politics was strictly bipolar, NATO had just defensive and deterrence duties, after the Cold War, with the reconfiguration of world politics, NATO acquired new tasks, and expanded both in its operations and its membership. What then is going to be its future? Clearly, the answer depends on the structure of world politics in the years ahead. [4]

NATO today has grown considerably and is quite different in its composition from the original 12 charter members. The newer members have taken their place along with the older members in NATO’s current struggles. With the last round of additions in 2009 (Albania and Croatia), NATO has grown to 28 countries, and the door remains open for further expansion.

2.2 Transformation as a permanent feature

In the course of over sixty-five years of existence, both the Alliance and the wider world have developed in ways that NATO's founders could not have envisaged.

NATO has been constantly reviewing its tasks and objectives in view of the evolution of the strategic environment. Transformation is a permanent feature of the Alliance. At the Strasbourg-Kehl Summit 3-4 April 2009, NATO leaders endorsed a “Declaration on Alliance Security”. It stressed the need for a new Strategic Concept, which takes into account fundamental changes in the security environment since 1999 when the Strategic Concept was last reviewed. Following this decision, a new Strategic Concept was developed and approved in Lisbon in 2010. [1]

In order to ensure its relevance, NATO needs to adapt to new internal challenges, surroundings, and emerging security threats. This process of adaptation and transformation focuses on changing the Alliance into a leaner and more relevant military organization in order to ensure relevance by aligning capabilities, organization, and mindsets with the Alliance’s ambitions. In short, transformation means equipping and adapting NATO for the 21st century. This transformation is challenging and time-consuming enough on state level. Acquisition of new equipment, changes in large, rigid, and institutionalized military structures, adapting doctrines to new technology and equipment and not least training to handle them are all challenges, where defense spending continuously must be justified to the public, especially in times of austerity.

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The dependence and need for transformation became even stronger as the Alliance gained more operational experience in terms of lessons identified and lessons learned from the Balkans and then Iraq and Afghanistan, and indicated that the Alliance needed to rethink how it organized and planned its capabilities and organization to meet new strategic challenges.

With the end of the Cold War, NATO started to address a broader spectrum of security challenges than in the past. New forms of political and military cooperation were required to preserve peace and stability in Europe and prevent the escalation of regional tensions. NATO engaged in partnerships with former adversaries and committed itself to its first crisis management operations as early as 1995. The 9/11 terrorist attacks brought the threat of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction to the fore. NATO needed to protect its populations both at home and abroad. It therefore underwent major internal reforms to adapt military structures and capabilities to equip members for new tasks.

The long term adaptation runs in 3 major strengths: political, military and institutional adaptation. Within all these strengths, there is a number of tasks and measures and in terms of military, it's primarily the Readiness Action Plan (RAP) adopted at the Wales Summit in 2014.

NATO provides a unique forum for discussion and cooperation on defence and security issues in the sense that it not only brings together two continents – Europe and North America - but it also conducts multinational initiatives and offers coordinated action in many different areas. Its activities have evolved over time.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has had 15 Summits, occasions where Heads of State and Government (HOSG) of NATO member countries meet to evaluate and provide strategic direction for Alliance activities. From the Summit in Brussels in 1994 to Wales Summit in 2014, the Summits have dealt with the overarching questions on “why we fight” and “how we fight”, and last not least how to match the two essential questions with each other.

The institutional adaptation process had already started in 2010 with the internal reorganization of NATO Headquarters, i.e. the NATO Committee review. In parallel, NATO also engaged in the reform of its Command Structure – the NATO Command Structure Review - and that of its Agencies – the NATO Agencies Review.

However, while the nature of the threats faced by member states and the way in which NATO deals with them are changing, the basic tenets of cooperation within the Alliance remain true to the principles of the Washington Treaty: collective defence, the peaceful resolution of disputes and NATO's defensive nature. These still characterize the Alliance and in order to assure its members security, the Alliance must and will continue fulfilling effectively three essential core tasks, all of which contribute to safeguarding Alliance members, and always in accordance with international law: collective defence, crises management and cooperative security.

The latest Strategic Concept also “commits NATO to continuous reform towards a more effective, efficient and flexible Alliance, so that our taxpayers get the most security for the money they invest in defence”. In addition, NATO remains an essential transatlantic forum for consultation, which aims to defend and promote common values founded on the principles of democracy, solidarity, shared purpose, fair burden sharing and the rule of law, and continues to take decisions by consensus – a decision making process that can be considered as one of the keys to the Alliance's durability.

2.3 Earlier reform process

NATO is an ever-evolving part of an also-evolving international security framework. Its mission of self defence has always hinged, in part, on events beyond its borders. The fact

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that NATO troops are now deployed in distant locations is not a departure from NATO's fundamental purpose.

Back in 1967, a team of experts was assembled under the leadership of Belgian Foreign Minister Pierre Harmel. The Harmel Report observed that "The North Atlantic Treaty area cannot be treated in isolation from the rest of the world". It also described NATO as an Alliance that is "constantly adapting itself to changing conditions" and that had two core functions: the first to maintain the strength and solidarity required to deter aggression and the second to pursue a more stable long term political environment. This description still fits nowadays.

NATO's framework has changed drastically since the Cold War as it has tried to adjust itself to a new security context, and thereby new military challenges. In the wake of the end of the Cold War, NATO entered into an identity crisis, which consequently led to several steps of transformations in terms of vision and goals, military capacity, and geographical field of operations in order to adapt itself to its new era and context.

Changes and transformation in NATO have been determined by political ambitions and operational experiences after the Cold War. In 1991, the Alliance released a series of documents, which spoke to its further development. In June, in Copenhagen, it approved the "Partnership with the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe". In November, in Rome, it approved a new strategy, "The Alliance's Strategic Concept" - a new political direction that adjusted NATO's threat perception from a fear of Russian intervention on European soil, to "diverse and multi-directional risks", as well as a "Declaration on Peace and Cooperation". These latter two documents served as the cornerstones for the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. The documents defined the nucleus for the transformation of NATO and were therefore of immense strategic importance. The process was based on a diverse set of partnerships and it led to the enlargement process. As a result, budgets, strategic planning, and force and command structures went through a series of reforms that signaled the start of NATO transformation after the Cold War. From an operational perspective the Balkan operations made alliance members realize that the political context it was operating within was in rapid change. Apart from the fact that these were the first operations ever executed under the NATO flag, the operations also sent NATO into a completely new business, namely the business of "out-of-area" - operations.

The accession of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to the Alliance changed NATO's internal structure, geo-strategic position and security situation. A new strategy was needed. It was approved in Washington in 1999. Even the most pessimistic security experts, however, did not predict the change in international security and insecurity which occurred after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, attacks which marked the emergence of a series of new global threats and risks.

NATO's three strategic concepts were preceded by major geopolitical events: the end of the Cold War in 1991, the Kosovo war in 1999, and the highest level of NATO's engagement in Afghanistan in 2010. Each time, NATO's priorities, membership, and partnerships were redefined. With this transformation, NATO evolved from a purely collective defense organization to a collective defense and security organization by engaging in crisis management operations as diverse as counterinsurgency and counter-piracy.

At its 2002 Summit in Prague, Allies began to adapt to the changed security situation generated by the 9/11 attacks and to the prospect of helping to restore stability to Afghanistan. The Alliance approved a plan to improve defence capabilities, established Allied Command Transformation (ACT) to steer the development of those capabilities, and created a NATO Response Force (NRF) to "move [forces] quickly to wherever needed", which reached its Full Operational Capability in 2006.

ACT's priority was to be NATO's engine and coordinating actor for change, and include transforming NATO's military capabilities; preparing, supporting and sustaining

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Alliance operations; implementing the NRF and other deployable capabilities; and, of equal importance, assisting the transformation of partner capabilities.

ACT's current mission is to contribute to preserving the peace, security and territorial integrity of Alliance member states by leading (at the strategic command level) the transformation of military structures, forces, capabilities, and doctrines to improve the military effectiveness of NATO. ACT's main lines of effort are: Strategic Foresight, Capability Development, the Connected Forces Initiative, Education and Training (E&T), Partnerships, Centres of Excellence, and the Transatlantic Link.

At the Riga Summit in 2006, Alliance leaders adopted the Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG), which set out the framework and priorities for all Alliance capability issues, planning disciplines, and intelligence for the foreseeable future.

At the Bucharest Summit in 2008, the Alliance further expressed its commitment to member countries to support capability development as part of the adaptation process.

2.4 Adaptation through cooperation and partnerships

Over the past two decades, the Alliance has developed a network of structured partnerships - understood between NATO and non-NATO countries - with countries from the Euro-Atlantic area, the Mediterranean and the Gulf region, as well as individual relationships with other partners across the globe. It is obvious that NATO, by itself, would not have the full capability to respond to all challenges. There lies NATO's interest in new partnerships. As of now, NATO's cooperation pattern is in concentric circles. At the inner-most core are the 28 Alliance members. Beyond this is the Partnership for Peace Programme (PfP) through which there is consultation and cooperation with another 22 countries of Europe. Then there are special frameworks for NATO's relations with Russia (all practical civilian and military cooperation under the NATO-Russia Council was suspended in April 2014 in response to the Russia-Ukraine conflict), Ukraine and Georgia.

The PfP initiative was complemented in 1995 with a Mediterranean Dialogue with six countries-Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. A few of the Dialogue countries have even contributed troops for some NATO operations.

In 2004, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) was launched to reach out to the Middle Eastern countries that are not in the Mediterranean Dialogue. These were Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and the UAE.

Today, NATO pursues dialogue and practical cooperation with over 40 partner countries and engages actively with other international actors and organizations on a wide range of political and security-related issues. Since the 1990s, NATO has developed close working relations with the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). This is an integral part of the Alliance's ongoing transformation to address effectively the complex challenges of crisis management, as well as terrorism and emerging security challenges.

The EU is a unique and essential partner to NATO. The two institutions have a largely overlapping membership, and these common member states have only one set of forces and one set of taxpayers. Full complementarity between NATO and the EU will be essential if the Allies are to forge a comprehensive and cost-effective approach to security.

NATO's Strategic Concept identifies "cooperative security" as one of NATO's three essential core tasks. It states that the promotion of Euro-Atlantic security is best assured through a wide network of partner relationships with countries and organizations around the globe. These partnerships make a concrete and valued contribution to the success of NATO's fundamental tasks and partners offer substantial capabilities and political support for Alliance operations and missions. A focused effort to reform NATO's partnerships policy was launched at the Lisbon Summit in 2010 to make dialogue and cooperation more inclusive, flexible, meaningful and strategically oriented. This resulted in a new partnership policy,

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which was endorsed by NATO Foreign Ministers at their meeting in Berlin in April 2011. The principal outcome from this policy is a tool called Partnership Cooperation Menu, comprising approximately 1500 activities that are accessible to all NATO partners.

NATO has developed a number of partnership tools and mechanisms to support cooperation with partner countries through a mix of policies, programmes, action plans and other arrangements. Many tools are focused on the important priorities of interoperability and building capabilities, and supporting defence and security-related reform.

Recognizing the essential role that partners play in addressing security threats, at the Wales Summit in 2014, the Allies launched two initiatives to deepen NATO's security cooperation with partners. The Partnership Interoperability Initiative aims to maintain and deepen the ability of partner forces to work alongside Allied forces.

The Defence and related Security Capacity Building Initiative builds on NATO's expertise in supporting, advising, assisting, training and mentoring countries requiring capacity-building support of the Alliance.

The new policy concerns not only partnerships with non-member countries but also NATO's cooperation with other international actors and organizations. The complexity of today's peace-support and stabilization operations and the multifaceted nature of 21st century security challenges call for a comprehensive approach that effectively combines political, civilian and military instruments.

In the future, NATO must strive to clarify and deepen relations with key partners, to establish new relationships where appropriate, to expand the range of partnership activities, and to understand that each partner and partnership must be dealt with on its own terms.

3. Ongoing transformation and adaptation measures

The Alliance's transformation is intended to provide it with the capabilities necessary to face the challenges of the future. This implies two different focuses. On the one hand, the organization has to transform itself. On the other, it has to transform its capabilities. Since NATO relies on its members' forces, this means transforming them. In addition, transformation includes a political dimension, which means that it needs the political will and the resources from the member countries.

3.1 Lisbon Summit 2010

In line with the 2010 Strategic Concept, adopted in Lisbon and taking into account all the new non-traditional challenges and threats, over the last few years the Alliance has been engaged in a process of continual reform by streamlining structures, improving working methods and maximizing efficiency.

Allies agree to streamline NATO's partnership tools in order to open all cooperative activities and exercises to all partners and to harmonize partnership.

As part of the institutional transformation, a reforming of NATO's structures has begun. The Alliance's military command structure is being transformed into a leaner, more effective and affordable structure. Agencies reform aims to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of capabilities and services, to achieve greater synergies between similar functions and to increase transparency and accountability. The new structure reached Initial Operational Capability in December 2013, opening the way to an entity that is more agile, flexible and better able to deploy on operations, including Article 5 contingencies. Full Operational Capability was supposed to be achieved in December 2015. NATO Headquarters has also been reformed, including with regard to a smaller but more efficient International Staff, intelligence-sharing and production, and a significant reduction in the number of committees. The Committee Review has been fully implemented. Furthermore, the transition to the new NATO Headquarters, which is planned for 2016-2017, will enable further improvements to efficiency and effectiveness of the Alliance. Allies agreed also to streamline

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the 14 NATO Agencies into three major programmatic themes: procurement, support, and communications and information. The reform has been implemented through several phases, to incrementally achieve increased effectiveness, efficiency and cost savings, while preserving capability and service delivery.

Since the agreement to extend NATO's Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) in 2010, significant progress has been made to ensure that the capabilities and systems that comprise NATO's BMD are properly aligned and that the mechanisms for command and control are fully operational. In 2015, achievements include: two US BMD-capable Aegis ships, the USS Carney and the USS Porter, arrived at their home port in Spain – these are in addition to two (USS Donald Cook and USS Ross) that arrived in Rota in 2014; the construction of the US Aegis ashore site in Romania was completed; technical infrastructure and command and control arrangements have been enhanced; several Allies are contributing to the system with their own assets; a number of Allies took important national decisions on acquiring BMD assets that might be offered to NATO: Poland announced a plan to acquire Patriot batteries to support its ground-based air and missile defence; Germany announced its intention to acquire MEADS systems to do the same; Denmark and the Netherlands continued upgrades to their sea-based sensors for missile defence; Turkey cancelled the tender for a ground-based air and missile defence system from abroad and decided to develop it indigenously.

3.2 Chicago Summit 2012

The Chicago Summit took place against the background of the financial crisis still depressing defence budgets, and of the already agreed end of ISAF in Afghanistan by 2014.

At the May 2012 Summit in Chicago, Allied leaders reaffirmed their determination to ensure that NATO retains and develops the capabilities necessary to perform its essential core tasks: collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security – and thereby to play an essential role promoting security in the world.

The transformation package agreed under the banner of NATO Forces 2020 at the Chicago Summit in 2012 outlines the goal for Alliance forces: a coherent set of deployable, interoperable and sustainable forces equipped, trained and exercised to be able to operate together and with partners in any environment. This constitutes the Chicago Defence Package, which is based largely on existing plans and programmes and a realistic projection of resources and consists of a mix of new and existing initiatives. The enhanced NATO Defence Planning Process, Smart Defence and the Connected Forces Initiative are the principal ways and means NATO employs to deliver this goal.

3.3 Wales Summit 2014

How can NATO transform itself into a global security alliance and yet respond to the local challenges posed by a resurgent Russia?

The ongoing crisis in Ukraine has provided NATO with new challenges. It has certainly renewed interest in the Alliance just at a time when it risked fading into strategic irrelevance. However, renewed confrontation with Russia also complicates NATO's efforts to transform itself into a global security institution.

The Summit launched a series of initiatives designed to bolster NATO's readiness and ability to live up to its Article Five commitments.

In response to the challenges posed by Russia and their strategic implications and also to the risks and threats emanating from southern neighbourhood, the Middle East and North Africa, NATO approved the Readiness Action Plan (RAP). This is the most significant reinforcement of NATO's collective defence since the end of the Cold War. NATO's Readiness Action Plan includes increased military activity in the eastern part of the Alliance, which has been in place since May 2014 ("assurance measures"), and longer-term changes to

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NATO's force posture ("adaptation measures"). The adaptation measures will increase NATO's readiness and responsiveness.

Adaptation measures include: enhancing the NATO Response Force (NRF) - in 2015 the size of the NRF roughly tripled, from 13,000 to about 40,000 troops; creating a Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) that is able to deploy at very short notice; Enhancing NATO's Standing Naval Forces; Establishing small multinational NATO headquarters - or NATO Force Integration Units (NFIUs) on the territories of eastern Allies (Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Romania) - were activated in September 2015 and two more NFIUs will be set up in Hungary and Slovakia; raising the readiness and capabilities of the HQ Multinational Corps North East (Szczecin-Poland) and enhancing its role as a hub for regional cooperation; establishing a new multinational headquarters for the Southeast in Romania - activated in December 2015; pre-positioning of military equipment and supplies; improvements to NATO's ability to reinforce its eastern members through the preparation of national infrastructure (airfields and ports); setting up a new standing Joint Logistic Support Group Headquarters, to support deployed forces; update NATO defence plans for eastern Europe.

Full implementation of the Readiness Action Plan is resulting in a significant change of NATO's defence posture and is enhancing its ability to effectively respond to threats from any direction. However, the Alliance needs to continue this development through a long-term adaptation process. This longer-term work is grouped into three interlinked strands: political, military and institutional adaptation which will ensure that NATO can deliver a unified Alliance with the required awareness, resilience, responsiveness, solidarity, and engagement in light of the challenges it faces today and is likely to meet in the future.

In addition to the specific measures agreed above, at the Wales Summit, the HOSG adopted the Defence Investment Pledge (DIP) in order to reverse the trend of declining defense budgets and to make the most efficient use of the funds available through greater defense industrial cooperation, pooling and sharing and cooperative initiatives where possible. NATO members agreed to 'move towards' the two percent threshold for defence expenditure within a decade and to spend at least twenty percent of that on major equipment and related research and development.

Allies have also agreed a Defence Planning Package with a number of priorities, such as enhancing and reinforcing training and exercises; command and control, including for demanding air operations; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; NATO's ballistic missile defence capability, in accordance with the decisions taken at the 2010 Lisbon and 2012 Chicago Summits, including the voluntary nature of national contributions; cyber defence; as well as improving the robustness and readiness of land forces for both collective defence and crisis response. Fulfilment of these priorities will increase the Alliance's collective capabilities and better prepare NATO to address current and future threats and challenges.

The Connected Forces Initiative (CFI) aims to retain and build on NATO's operational experience, particularly gains in interoperability between Allies and with partners. The implementation of CFI is one of the key means to deliver NATO Forces 2020 and to enable the training and exercise elements of NATO's Readiness Action Plan. At the 2014 Wales Summit, Allied leaders endorsed six key CFI measures: an updated NATO Education, Training, Exercise and Evaluation Policy; a broader NATO Training Concept from 2015 to 2020; a high-visibility exercise (Trident Juncture 2015); a major NATO exercise programme from 2016 onwards; continued implementation of the technological aspects of CFI, and a Special Operations Component Command Headquarters under the operational command of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR).

Allies have also endorsed the NATO Framework Nations Concept (FNC). It focuses on groups of Allies coming together to work multinationally for the joint development of

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forces and capabilities required by the Alliance, facilitated by a framework nation. Its implementation will contribute to providing the Alliance with coherent sets of forces and capabilities, particularly in Europe. It will help demonstrate European Allies' willingness to do more for the common security and also improve the balance of the provision of capabilities between the United States and European Allies as well as among European Allies themselves.

At the Wales Summit, the Allies launched two initiatives to deepen NATO's security cooperation with partners: the Partnership Interoperability Initiative and the Defence and related Security Capacity Building Initiative.

The Alliance has also suspended military cooperation with Russia, including exercises and formal exchanges and all the activities under the NATO-Russia Council.

While the Wales decisions were clearly important, the Alliance needs to decide whether these decisions are far-reaching enough and, if not, which supplementary decisions need to be taken at the up-coming Warsaw Summit.

4. Challenges and the way ahead

4.1 Current and future challenges

The broader transatlantic community faces a new and dynamic security environment, which includes a newly assertive Russia intent on altering the European security order in its favor and a turbulent and violence wracked Middle East and North Africa that has, among other things, spawned the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) and refugee flows not seen since the end of World War II. Europe's security climate is arguably at its worst in over twenty-five years.

NATO today finds itself in the most difficult security environment in its 67-year history. In the past, the Alliance had to perform only one core task at a time, whether it be collective defense in Europe or crisis management beyond. Now NATO is simultaneously confronted with many very real security threats at once, both inside and outside Europe, and from the east now as well as the south. These threats originate from multiple factors: a resurgent Russia that has not only abandoned strategic cooperation with NATO, but is no longer restrained from challenging it directly; growing disorder, even chaos in North Africa and the Middle East, obliging NATO to rethink its partnership arrangements with the majority of the fragile states in these regions; and the rapid growth of jihadist movements, fuelled by abundant weaponry, control of local economic resources, vanishing national borders and close links to organized crime. It is not only the broad geographical extent of the deterioration that should worry Alliance leaders but also its speed. [6]

Safeguarding freedom and security has always been NATO's aim. As the security environment has evolved, NATO has adapted to ensure that it can deliver for the citizens it was created to defend. The security environment in 2015-2016 was one of complex challenges and unpredictable threats to the safety of citizens in the Euro-Atlantic area and around the world. Violent extremism and instability in the Middle East and North Africa persisted, worsening the humanitarian crises in Syria and Iraq, and fuelling the largest flow of refugees in decades. Terrorists attacked in Ankara, Paris, Beirut, San Bernardino and recently in Brussels. They killed indiscriminately, bombing a plane of Russians on holiday in Egypt, shooting tourists in Tunisia, gunning down concert-goers and others out for an evening in France and bombing civilians in Belgium. Through these acts, terrorists attempted to disrupt people's everyday lives and fragment the rules-based societies and systems that are the foundation of stability and prosperity. Russia continued to pursue a more assertive and unpredictable military posture in 2015. While persisting in illegally occupying parts of Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, and continuing to support separatists fighting in eastern Ukraine, Russia also began a military operation in Syria, not as part of the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL but in support of the Assad regime.

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The hybrid nature of security challenges - combining military and non-military means of inflicting damage or creating instability - also continued to color the security environment in 2015. While the notion of hybrid warfare is not new, the scale, speed and intensity of the challenge demanded a new approach to preparing for, deterring, and defending against these threats.

The most probable threats to Allies in the coming decade are unconventional. Three in particular stand out: an attack by ballistic missile (whether or not nuclear-armed); strikes by international terrorist groups; and cyber assaults of varying degrees of severity. Other threats also pose a risk, including disruptions to energy and maritime supply lines, the harmful consequences of global climate change, and financial crisis.

The danger posed by unconventional threats has obvious implications for NATO preparedness, including its definition of security, its conception of what constitutes an Article 5 attack, its strategy for deterrence, its need for military transformation, its ability to make decisions rapidly, and its reliance for help on countries and organizations from outside the Alliance.

In the current day, uncertainty is magnified by such factors as: the proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction; the ambitions of international terrorist groups; the persistence of corrosive regional, national, ethnic, and religious rivalries; the world's increased reliance on potentially vulnerable information systems; the competition for petroleum and other strategic resources (thereby highlighting the importance of maritime security); demographic changes that could aggravate such global problems as poverty, hunger, illegal immigration, and pandemic disease; and the accumulating consequences of environmental degradation, including climate change.

Because of its visibility and power, NATO may well be called upon to respond to challenges that do not directly affect its security but that still matter to its citizens and that will contribute to the Alliance's international standing. These challenges could include the humanitarian consequences of a failed state, the devastation caused by a natural disaster, or the dangers posed by genocide or other massive violations of human rights.

The transatlantic community faces a long-term future of turbulence and competition, which features both state and non-state adversaries, as well as strategic shocks and sudden change. Strengthening European defense capabilities will be a key building block to ensure that NATO can remain relevant and able to defend the values and interests of its members, and provide for peace and stability in Europe. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg emphasized: "We are facing the biggest security challenges in a generation. They are complex, interrelated and come from many directions. . . . So now is the time to invest in our defense." [3]

4.2 Roadmap to Warsaw Summit 2016

In a few months, NATO's leaders will gather for a Summit meeting in Warsaw, Poland. They will discuss many challenges faced by the Alliance. Strengthening European defense will be a common element that contributes to overcoming these multiple threats to NATO. Strengthening European defense will provide the resources to help deter the threat from the East and prevail over the dangers from the South. Strengthening European defense will also provide the capabilities to tackle new threats, such as cyber-attacks and the spread of ballistic missiles. And strengthening European defense will help restore balance to the transatlantic relationship and facilitate continued investments in European security from Allies in North America. [3]

NATO is confronting the most rapid negative change in its security environment since its founding, compelling Allies to refocus on collective defence in Europe and re-examine the relevance of NATO's strategy. While this effort started in advance of NATO's previous Summit in Wales, the Alliance's latest adaptation has only just begun. The crises of today

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combined with long-term trends require both urgency to NATO's responses and a sustained commitment to its transformation. The July 2016 Warsaw Summit offers a compelling opportunity to significantly advance this adaptation.

Nonetheless, Allies acknowledge that Wales was only a first response. It reflected Allied solidarity by focusing on how to strengthen collective defence. In essence, the Wales' agenda was about protecting our own. Therefore, NATO doctrine must address threats to Allies' security from wherever they may originate. Today, it is clear that Allied populations and territory may not be secure as long as fires rage on their periphery, from Ukraine to Libya to Syria and Iraq, and as long as potential adversaries' capabilities close the gap with our own.

The challenge looking forward to the July 2016 Warsaw Summit therefore is to build on Wales with a sense of urgency in the face of on-going crises, while using the Warsaw Summit to advance a far-reaching transformation of the Alliance commensurate with this new security environment. NATO needs a strategy for the long-term reflecting the reality of today's evolving challenges.

Six key insights emerged from the Seminar on NATO transformation held in 2015 in , Washington, DC providing a potential agenda for NATO's on-going work in the run-up to the Warsaw Summit:

1. NATO's Strategy. Without reopening the Strategic Concept, a "strategic realignment" should be announced at the Warsaw Summit to recognize the changed assumptions and adapt the Alliance's core tasks accordingly;

2. Hybrid Warfare and Cyber security. Russia and other adversaries will exploit vulnerabilities in and integration among our own societies necessitating a more comprehensive approach to Alliance security at home (not only in operations), including factors considered beyond the traditional purview of NATO;

3. Innovation. An innovation strategy is imperative for NATO. Innovation is an essential tool that the Alliance must leverage to catalyze investments, to enhance operational effectiveness, resilience, responsiveness, in order to open the gap between NATO and potential adversaries, and to sustain Allied interoperability;

4. Strategic Awareness. An enduring reform of information and intelligence sharing and collection is required as rapid collective responses require a better understanding of warnings before a crisis erupts;

5. Readiness and Deterrence. NATO forces must be able to react quickly and be stationed in ways that restore deterrence as a central tenant of Alliance strategy;

6. Strengthening NATO's Partnerships: Strategic implications of the crises in the East and South. NATO should develop a more coherent strategy of engagement toward strategic neighbors in the East and the South to bolster their security and capacities, as well as continuing to foster cooperation with the EU. A focused and resourced partnership initiative in conjunction and complementarity with the EU could serve as an aggregator and force-multiplier of current partnership tools and prioritize capacity-building efforts to help foster functional, capable nation states around NATO's borders. [7]

This roadmap for Warsaw provides NATO with a host of varied challenges that will structure the way it works in the future, and that will also have deep implications on how member states will calibrate their engagement with NATO. The Warsaw Summit may well be the most difficult in the past 25 years. Its success will depend on how the Alliance's transformation will tap into the strategic interests of the member states that drive security and defense policy in Europe, while at the same time taking stock of the position of the United States and its desire to continue to shape the Alliance's future.

4.3 The way ahead

Last year, NATO Defence Ministers discussed NATO's long-term political, military and institutional adaptation. "The world is changing fast and our job is to stay ahead of the

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threats,” Mr. Stoltenberg said. He highlighted the continued implementation of the Readiness Action Plan that was agreed at the Wales Summit.

NATO will also strengthen its ability to counter threats including hybrid warfare, cyber attacks and missile proliferation. Ensuring effective decision-making and building on partnerships to the North, East and South will be further key areas of work ahead of the Warsaw Summit in 2016.

Allies have agreed on a set of principles to modernize NATO’s defence and deterrence posture to make it clear an attack against one Ally is an attack against all Allies, and that the Alliance as a whole will respond. As part of this decision, NATO Defence Ministers agreed on an enhanced forward presence in the eastern part of the Alliance, which will be multinational, rotational and supported by a programme of exercises.

The countries that do not feel under threat from Russia have a great responsibility in devising a concrete strategy for NATO’s southern border, and should do so keeping in mind the constant and real necessity to express solidarity with both frontline states and the states that are between NATO Article 5 borders and Russia. This momentous challenge shows that NATO is at a crossroads. Finding this balance will determine whether NATO can evolve in a context that is neither one of full-on war or full-on peace. The Alliance does not need a new vision: it needs to be able to showcase its credibility as a security provider, and it will not be able to do so without ensuring that all its member states share the goals that NATO has set for itself, and that these countries can participate in reaching these goals.

The idea of a NATO “transformation” reflects the idea of increased Alliance structure flexibility, while at the same time it points to certain aspects of decision-making that need to be improved.

The foremost example would be to facilitate the process by which NATO can provide plug-and-play capabilities, especially in terms of command and control facilities, which the EU lacks, to allies (and partners) who undertake an operation that furthers the interests of the Alliance as a whole. While this idea reshuffles the Alliance’s consensus decision-making, it also provides a path to keep NATO as the primary transatlantic military tool of choice for willing and able nations, and would force an important discussion on how NATO can foster speedy decision-making in situations that require it, such as devolving authority to the Supreme Allied Commander Europe to engage the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force in well-defined situations. [2]

Creating the conditions for higher levels of political autonomy within a defined Alliance framework would send a strong message to all member states that they have a role to play in NATO and that NATO has a role to play in defending their interests, and would at the same time send a strong message regarding NATO’s ability to respond to crisis in a unitary and speedy fashion.

In order to go through with such a transformation, NATO and its member states need to ask themselves a set of questions that the Wales Summit could not address, starting with the issue of leadership. This debate takes on varying levels of complexity, with two main factors: the evolving role of the United States and the lack of a European nation taking over leadership of Alliance-wide debates in a decisive fashion. But in the long run, the transatlantic relationship is probably going to change. The United States will probably not indefinitely support the burden of reassurance in Europe or its periphery, nor pay 73 percent of the total allied defense budgets. It can neither be the sole source of many strategic enablers, nor spend nearly four times per soldier as the European average. In the future, any U.S. re-engagement in Europe should be followed by higher levels of European engagement. European strategic autonomy will necessitate more capabilities, as well as strategic thinking in order for European nations to be able to act alone when necessary.

In the adaptation process, two keys are readiness and responsiveness. NATO will continue to work on these readiness and responsiveness issues that brings the force to a better

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position to be able to react to all challenges. General Mercier, SACT, said that the adaptation is done in three ways: reinforcing collective defence and also deterrence and defence; then managing NATO relations with a resurgent Russia; and supporting the European neighbours. The idea was further enhanced by the Secretary General, who illustrated three priorities: modernized deterrence, relations with Russia, and the southern dimension.

NATO should maintain up-to-date memoranda of understanding with key institutions such as the UN, the EU and the OSCE, as well as other national and regional bodies and major NGOs. The Alliance also needs to maintain and increase cooperation in different formats with partners all over the globe.

But in the long run, the transatlantic relationship has to change. The United States cannot indefinitely support the burden of reassurance in Europe or its periphery, nor pay 73 percent of the total allied defense budgets. It can neither be the sole source of many strategic enablers, nor spend nearly four times per soldier as the European average. After the crisis in Ukraine, any U.S. re-engagement in Europe should be followed by higher levels of European engagement. European strategic autonomy will necessitate more capabilities, as well as strategic thinking in order for European nations to be able to act alone when necessary.

NATO will have to reorient its purpose from an alliance for defending against aggression that has become but a theoretical possibility to an alliance that uses all available means of diplomacy, development policy, and military means to deal with problems as they arise and as they turn into security threats. This will occasionally require forms of intervention that are designed to prevent such problems from escalating to an unacceptable threat level.

NATO remains valuable to both the United States and Europe, and the member states should continue to invest in the alliance. Keeping NATO strong does not come for free. So NATO and its members must redouble the efforts to meet the defence investment pledge and also must think of the most effective way of spending money.

5. Conclusion

The history of NATO is one of adaptation. We are entering the next chapter in this history as transformation remains a necessity.

Over the past years, NATO has evolved greatly, surviving the type of crisis which caused many military alliances to break up and become merely a part of history. NATO's role has changed very little: it ensures the security of its member states through collective action. But in a much more complex and thorough sense, NATO's role in the international community has greatly evolved and changed. No longer is it a defensive, reactionary organization, with the unstated sole purpose of deterring a specific state. Rather, it is now a pro-active alliance, responding to contemporary security problems, which often arise from weakness in foreign political and state structures, through a variety of preventative political, military and humanitarian responses.

NATO and its partners in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council are the world's largest permanent coalition. And NATO is preeminently the world's most effective military organization. It will not be in the lead in every crisis. But it has a role - in my view the vital role - to play in multinational crisis prevention and crisis management. Nonetheless, to maintain that role, NATO must continue to evolve. The context for our security is changing, and everybody in the security business has to adapt.

NATO, as an Alliance – and as all alliances in history – is context-driven. Its future depends on its surrounding strategic environment. Hence, to understand the kind of role NATO has in the future, it is first necessary to see what kind of future NATO is entering in. This is why understanding the future strategic environment is so important. If NATO will be given greater and greater duties and tasks, while its external environment will permit the organization to have just a small role, then NATO's future will be troubled. In contrast, if the

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goals of the organization will be coherent with its future strategic environment, then NATO will work and fulfill its duties with ease.

NATO deterrence and defence must be flexible and tailored. In the future, NATO must be able to respond to the full spectrum of threats from any direction, whether they come from state or non-state actors with state-like aspirations.

From my point of view, NATO forces must have the capacity to defend Alliance territory, undertake demanding missions at strategic distance, contribute to a more secure international environment, and respond to unpredictable contingencies when and where that is required. Thus, there is a continuing need to transform NATO forces from the powerful but static posture of the Cold War into a posture that is more flexible, mobile, and versatile. The Alliance must also make a firm commitment to smarter spending through a variety of efficiency and reform measures.

To succeed, NATO must have the sustained commitment and united effort of its members. Looking to the future, we know that global and regional risks must naturally command NATO's attention, but that these impermanent worries must never be allowed to define the organization. In 1949, NATO members came together not because of the forces they feared, but because of their faith in each other and in the democratic values they embraced. In the years since, Allied leaders have learned that their Alliance must constantly adapt to the demands of political and technological change, but they have also learned what must not change.

By working together in NATO, Alliance members are better able to ensure the security of their citizens than would be possible by acting alone. Over the past six decades, they have cooperated closely together, have made firm commitments and taken a range of initiatives to strengthen capabilities in key areas.

In the near-term, I do not consider necessary to adopt a new Strategic Concept, as the core tasks of collective defence, crisis management, and cooperative security remain valid. But it does require recognition of the changed assumptions to NATO strategy, perhaps in clear statement in Warsaw, and an integration of these three core tasks into an effective strategy to protect Allies at home and project security and stability on its periphery, while being prepared for the unexpected. Perhaps, taking into consideration that NATO already agreed on measures to enhance the NATO Defence Planning Process and to expand it into long-term, it will be useful to address all these changes and improvements into a unified document, maybe rethinking the Outline Model for Defence Planning.

You may ask what is the future of NATO? What kind of challenges the Alliance will have to face in the future, and how able will it be? In sum, the international system is changing. And on this change depends the future of NATO. But I consider that the Alliance's success depends very much on how its members understand and want to respond to this transition.

Without NATO in the future, the prospects for international stability and peace would be far more uncertain than they are. NATO might not be great, but for the time being it is good enough and improving itself.

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