

## Chapter 26

# Renewing the Vows: NATO @70

*Mircea Geoană*

*“Et Si Tu N’Existais Pas?”* (What If You Didn’t Exist?)—this famous Joe Dassin song is a rhetorical question that we should ask ourselves about the present and future of NATO. A frantic conversation is under way in all possible formats and fora; time and energy are spent with the hope to find the miraculous cure to the current malaise and acrimony among key Allies, and to identify a miraculous solution to the current state of affairs in transatlantic relations. Reasons for concern abound from both sides of the Atlantic, rendering each of us weaker, to the satisfaction of our adversaries or competitors, who have been offered a “wild card” to re-enter the new Great Game.

NATO @70 should be more than just a celebration of past accomplishments. It should mainly be a realistic appraisal of the situation as it stands and of the few possible ways forward. We should not shy away from facing the reality: strong headwinds are facing our Alliance. If the hesitations to organize a proper NATO Summit on its 70th anniversary are any indication, imagine the difficulties to mobilize political energies for a new way forward. It is very good that London will host a special anniversary “Summit” at the end of 2019. But nice and well-scripted meetings cannot hide the truth: our Alliance is in crisis. Even the Munich Security Conference, the ultimate temple of transatlanticism, was engulfed in an exchange of jibes between American and German leaders, much to the sarcastic delight of the Russian foreign minister. We just cannot afford to continue to prepare for NATO summits fearing that Alliance leaders will fail to agree on the major challenges facing us.

Would it be too much to expect from our leaders to reconfirm in London the first paragraph of the Declaration adopted at the 60th NATO anniversary in Strasbourg and Kehl?

We, the Heads of State and Government of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, met today in Strasbourg and Kehl to celebrate the 60th anniversary of our Alliance. We have reaffirmed

the values, objectives and obligations of the Washington Treaty which unite Europe with the United States and Canada, and have provided our transatlantic community with an unprecedented era of peace and stability.<sup>1</sup>

Or, to solemnly restate the (no longer so obvious) essence of our very existence?

NATO continues to be the essential transatlantic forum for security consultations among Allies. Article 5 of the Washington Treaty and collective defense, based on the indivisibility of Allied security, are, and will remain, the cornerstone of our Alliance. Deterrence, based on an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional capabilities, remains a core element of our overall strategy.<sup>2</sup>

NATO's Open Door policy has been a cornerstone of the transatlantic partnership. During the Cold War and after, the Alliance welcomed new Allies as different as Germany, Greece and Turkey, new members formerly belonging to the Warsaw Pact, and former Yugoslavia's new independent nations. 2019 is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NATO's enlargement to Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. It is the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the enlargement to Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. And it is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the enlargement to Croatia and Albania. Accession of the Republic of Northern Macedonia, anticipated in 2019, may be considered as being part of the latter wave of enlargement, as the 2009 NATO Bucharest Summit extended invitations to the three countries, with the caveat that Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia would resolve their dispute regarding the country's name, which they have now done.

Especially after the fall of communism, the rationale for the successive waves of enlargement was not as obvious as it appears today, mainly in the U.S. security, academic and political establishments. Each of these successive enlargements had a common thread, but also distinct conditions and significance.

The first wave of enlargement to Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic was mainly about addressing the security architecture in Europe after German reunification and the demise of the Soviet Union.

The most ambitious enlargement to seven countries from the Baltic to the Black Sea in 2004 was possible also because terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001 dramatically transformed American threat perceptions. The first invocation of the North Atlantic Treaty's Article 5, used as a sign of European solidarity with the United States and implemented in Afghanistan, pushed the Alliance toward an "out-of-area" stance. The terrorist threat became a dominant factor in military planning and coalition-building in, and beyond, NATO's membership and contributions.

It is worth mentioning that the successful integration and smooth ratification in the U.S. Senate of the 1999 group of new Allies, as recounted by Jeremy Rosner in this volume, also played an important role in the "big-bang" approach to take in seven countries in 2004.

In addition, the Russia factor continued to play a role, especially with regard to including the three Baltic republics, as did the logic of "unfinished business" from the 1999 enlargement, when Romania and Slovenia were considered but not invited.

Over this time, European Allies have become more influential with regard to the decision-making process regarding enlargement. In the case of the 1999 wave, France pushed hard for Romania, yet failed in the face of U.S. and German opposition. By the time of the 2008 Bucharest Summit, it was the George W. Bush Administration that pushed hard, yet failed, to secure Alliance agreement to extend Membership Action Plans to Georgia and Ukraine in the face of strong German and French opposition.

The inclusion of Balkan states in the 2009 enlargement can also be interpreted as a continuation of the NATO pacification effort after its involvement in the wars in Bosnia in 1994 and Kosovo in 1999, but also as a response to Russia's resumption of a more aggressive stance in the region after its 2008 war on Georgia of 2008. That aggression has continued, marked by the 2014 annexation of Crimea, quasi-occupation of Eastern Ukraine, and military build-up in the Black Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean.

How may the situation develop? Three main scenarios may be envisaged: a further degradation of the situation; a buying-time, wait-and-

see, muddling-through approach; or, preferably, a wake-up call for a new chapter of transatlantic ties, adapted to our time.

### **The Worst-Case Scenario**

Let's take the worst-case scenario: what if NATO would cease to exist or to function properly? A crippled or dysfunctional Alliance is a remote possibility, but it cannot be completely ruled out. After all, nothing in life or history is inherently immune to changes that shifting circumstances may impose on any human, societal or political construct. Future generations will not necessarily receive a NATO certificate at birth, as our forefathers gave us. After all, the 30 years since the fall of communism have been more of an historical exception when it comes to the logic of Great Power confrontation, violence, and conflict.

A world without NATO? What if the United States decides to "go bilateral" by abandoning the multilateral framework that binds it to those some Americans consider to be ungrateful free riders? What would the impact be of such a huge vacuum on the world and on our interests? Is there a realistic and practical alternative?

I use such a dire and apocalyptic scenario as a pretext to force us to think and act differently and to rescue not only "the-most-successful-alliance-in-history." but our civilization, our way of life, our freedom. Nature abhors a vacuum. What would replace NATO as the ultimate security arrangement? The most likely answer is that a web of bilateral and regional security arrangements would begin to form, as so many times before in history. The United States would probably enter into a logic very much to the liking of the current Administration: concluding a series of bilateral defense deals that would link bilateral security guarantees to preferential economic and trade arrangements. The example at hand is the future of U.S.-UK commercial and security arrangements after Brexit.

Poland's proposal for "Fort Trump" and the defense deal recently signed by the United States and Hungary are improvisational examples of a trend that could be consolidated and eventually become mainstream. Nordic cooperation will inevitably strengthen, with Norway, Finland, Sweden, Iceland and Denmark finding even more common ground. After Brexit the United Kingdom will try to leverage its new-

ly-found freedom by proposing bilateral/regional arrangements not only to the United States, India and Japan but also to those EU and non-EU countries in Europe and around the world who share important strategic, military and intelligence with their British counterparts. The Visegrád 4 could coalesce around Poland's relatively robust defense posture and will try to lure other Central and Southeast European countries into variable geometry formats. The Polish Inter-Marum concept, resuscitated today in the Three Seas format, could conceivably become a framework in which countries between Russia and Germany come together in formalized security arrangements. Other European powers, large and small, could follow suit. European history is littered with similar efforts (*Entente Cordiale*, *Little Entente*), often with disastrous consequences.

Countries with strong transatlantic inclinations and interests like Romania or Poland will continue to consider the link to the United States as their primary security insurance. Others in the region will try to hedge their security risks, as may already be seen. Germany and France will try to boost European defense initiatives and industrial cooperation and attract as many current EU members as possible to join. A Franco-German "army" is not unthinkable after the signing of the Aachen/Aix-en-Provence new bilateral treaty.

The likely result of all this? The European security landscape would look more like Swiss cheese than a homogenous surface. Both the center and the peripheries would become weaker, with Russia and possibly China offered an undeserved "terrain de chasse." Turkey and possibly Greece would be more tempted to mitigate the political and economic risks and opportunities with closer ties to both Russia and China. The Western Balkans would re-enter the logic of Great Power competition, with complex consequences for the regional system of allegiances. Nuclear deterrence and anti-ballistic systems would continue to operate as a U.S. bilateral security anchor, with Romania and Poland in this category. The future of the Incirlik base in Turkey would come into question.

Not only would Europe become weaker in such a scenario, so would America. No one can anticipate the future of Russian-Chinese cooperation. A Russia-China "Kissinger" move, a tactical alliance to counter the dominant status of the United States, is not as unimaginable as

some American pundits profess. A coordinated offensive towards Europe and the South China Sea could be an interesting war game to analyze.

A new OSCE-type arrangement with Germany and Russia at the core of a new pan-European security arrangement is a distinct possibility. After all, General de Gaulle was thinking of a Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals and some German leaders are again entertaining this idea. Speaking in favor of the Nord Stream II natural gas pipeline bypassing Ukraine, former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder has expressed the clear view, popular in many business and political circles, that Germany needs Russian resources to continue to expand its economic and export-oriented power house. After all, if America becomes mercantilist in its interpretation of international affairs, why shouldn't Germany?

The European Union itself would become the collateral victim of such a catastrophic series of events. Europe would return to its old habits. Old demons could resurface.

### **Muddling Through**

This is the most likely scenario. Incremental change should be tried, as Nicholas Burns and Douglas Lute have proposed.<sup>3</sup> Buying time is sometimes the wise thing to do. Elections in America are looming large. Most of the Democratic hopefuls call for strengthening the Alliance—some of out of conviction, others because they believe President Trump's eclectic style of foreign policy and international affairs is vulnerable to Democratic pushback. Congress is and will continue to be active in this conversation a bipartisan way, including in the form of binding and non-binding legislation.

In this scenario, the Strategic Concept and other decisions adopted at previous NATO Summits would be carried out, if sometimes reluctantly. The 2024 target for all Allies to comply with the "Wales pledge" of 2% of GDP for defense would probably be met, with the caveat that some important European Allies will insist in introducing in the overall amount other budget items pertaining to cyber security (as Italy recently suggested) or peacekeeping or peace-building costs conducted outside NATO operations (as Germany insists). In terms

of procurement, the 20% target for new equipment could be met but with a caveat: those European Allies who possess national/European defense industry capabilities are likely to insist on an implicit or explicit “buy European” clause. Countries without such industrial prowess would continue to navigate (and mitigate) the growing competition in procurement between the United States and core Europe for military and dual-use equipment.

Even in such circumstances, the NATO’s ‘vows’ would require a solemn reaffirmation of the sanctity of the Article 5 mutual security guarantee. The perception that NATO was a “paper tiger” Alliance would be likely to grow. Lack of Allied unity would be likely to boost the probability of new quasi-Article V Russian provocations.

In such a scenario, NATO would probably continue to invest in deterrence measures against Russia’s aggressive stance on the Eastern flank. Still, the Alliance would be marginally involved in the broader security and stability of the Southern neighborhood in Northern Africa and the broader Middle East. Terrorism would continue to be a menace to the transatlantic world and weak or accomplice states would continue to be targeted by ISIS and other radical Islamic movements. Russia, Pakistan and China would try to fill the void left by NATO’s withdrawal from Afghanistan, with implications for the balance of power for the rest of Central Asia and Eurasia as a whole.

The situation in the Black Sea would continue to be tense as Russia proceeded to modernize its capabilities. Turkey’s ambivalent stance on critical issues like Syria, and its flirtations with Russia and Iran, would also probably continue. The tensions between the United States and Germany, France and the UK over the Iran sanctions dossier would add to the mounting number of strategic uncertainties and security risks in the broader Black Sea, Caspian, Eastern Mediterranean and the Gulf areas.

In such a context, it would be more difficult to achieve a common NATO response to Russia’s subversive measures in cyber defense, meddling in democratic processes, and use of energy as a political instrument. Bilateral support for Ukraine and Georgia would continue, but would most probably stop short of a more formalized relationship with the Alliance. In the Western Balkans, Northern Macedonia’s accession

to NATO will help maintain the credibility of the “Open Door” policy for the region.

NATO’s partnerships around the world would continue to operate but be more resource-constrained. If Brexit becomes reality, the United Kingdom would use its influence in NATO to stay relevant in continental European affairs. Under this scenario, the currently incipient European defense institutions would gradually evolve. Suspicion over the final motives of the much proclaimed “strategic autonomy” of the EU from the United States would continue to corrode bonds of trust among the key Allies.

Lip service would be paid to streamlining Alliance decision-making processes, but with no measurable results. As long as Allies see eye to eye, NATO’s consensus rule serves to unify. In more tense situations, however, it could also play the opposite role. European Allies are right in criticizing the fact they found out from open sources that the United States decided to withdraw from Syria or Afghanistan. Americans are right to criticize some European Allies for free riding on the U.S. security blanket.

Failure to adapt to a changing world is also a form of incipient irrelevance. The old saying “out-of-area or out-of-business” will come to haunt us, as the attention of the United States (rightly, in my view) is moving toward the competition for supremacy with China.

### **Back in Business: Ensuring Our Long-Term Security and Shaping the New World Order**

The situation in NATO cannot be seen in isolation from the broader set of political, economic issues in transatlantic relations or from the overall state of world affairs. Neither Washington nor European capitals will invest new energy in their relations until and unless each once again realizes one simple truth: we thrive together, or we falter alone. There is no other logical solution. The United States or Europe must put their resources together if either is to have any hope of maintain influence and relevance in our turbulent times. We might differ on many tactical aspects, but a reality test should represent a wakeup call for the Western world: we simply cannot afford to continue to diverge. What is to be done?

*Back to fundamentals: shared values and common interests*

NATO is so much more than a mere security arrangement. It is the foundation of our free societies. The London anniversary Summit should solemnly reaffirm this indestructible foundation of our Alliance.

While America's vital role should be reaffirmed by all Europeans, Washington's Europe-bashing must stop. The United States and Europe are indispensable partners. This obvious reality is sometimes obscured by the raging conversation about the right balance between bilateralism and multilateralism, globalization and national interests. There is no possible way for the new or renewed world order to reflect and protect the interests of the West and of our democratic friends and allies around the world without America and Europe pulling together their still plentiful resources. The rise of authoritarianism, closed societies and state capitalism cannot be fought by America or by Europe alone. Any additional wedge between the two sides of the Atlantic not only weakens our own hand, it plays directly into the interests of our rivals and real competitors. Values and interests inside the Alliance should be realigned. Differences in risk and opportunity assessment among Allies should be recognized and dealt with punctually. The "strategic autonomy" of Europe should be seen as a sign of emancipation not from America but from our own strategic impotence. A more assertive Europe is an indispensable ingredient in our common success and relevance in decades to come.

*Reviving American leadership of the Alliance should go hand-in-hand with reaffirming the sanctity of Article 5*

We should not shy away from recognizing the damage that statements of President Trump have inflicted on Europe's trust in the resolve of the United States in fulfilling its Washington Treaty obligations. At the same time, we should also not exaggerate the significance of those statements, because if U.S. efforts to extract a better "deal" from other Allies works, this would not be such a bad proposition—maybe just the opposite. Meanwhile, Congress should pass legislation reconfirming unequivocally that there is bipartisan support for Article 5 and America's commitment to the Alliance as a whole. Congress should also continue to fund the "European Deterrence Initiative" against Russian aggression and expand it with new measures to counter

the non-Article 5 threats Russia has so viciously employed in cyber warfare, hacking and election meddling. The next NATO Strategic Concept review should be started in London in December 2019. Alliance leaders should expressly demand a tight schedule to upgrade of NATO's strategic response to the deteriorating international security environment. This response should go beyond conversations about capabilities and burden-sharing. It should reconfirm and redefine the key role of NATO as the backbone of international security. New spending is critical to produce added NATO defense capabilities, including intelligence-surveillance-reconnaissance, cyber and digital technologies.

*European Allies must step up their game*

Procrastination on the 2% of GDP for defense targets should stop. It is our continent and our nations who are the most vulnerable to a multitude of traditional and non-traditional security threats. The 2024 deadline should be met by all Allies, from Germany to Canada and from the Netherlands to Italy and Spain.

The illusion that Russia is a threat only to Eastern flank countries should stop immediately. Russia's return to the Middle East, its flirtation with Turkey and Iran, its new assertiveness in the Arctic region, its ballistic posture in Crimea and Kaliningrad should be a strong incentive for all Allies to rouse themselves from strategic naivete, ambivalence or mere wishful thinking. Russia is a threat. We all should treat it as such, without giving up on efforts to engage and de-escalate the current situation.

Cold War rhetoric from Russia should not be reciprocated by the Alliance. But credible deterrence speaks more than a thousand communiques. Energy diversification in Europe must continue. This is more than the mercantilist interest of the United States to export its energy bounty to Europe. It is a security issue. The solution is not to stop doing business with Russia but to stop putting them in a dominant, monopolistic position. This not only would reduce the capacity that Moscow has in (ab)using energy as a strategic lever, but is an indispensable part of any strategy that envisages a more constructive relationship between NATO, Europe, and the Russian Federation.

After Brexit, 80% of NATO's defense spending will come from non-EU Allies. Only by investing more—appropriating more resources to

NATO, strengthening the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), the European Defense Fund (EDF) and military mobility improvements—can Europe escape the strategic irrelevance it faces. Strategic prowess, strategic responsibility and specialization must become reality, and not just remain catchy phrases in speeches of European leaders.

*NATO is so much more than Article 5 or the 2%...*

Article 3 of the Washington Treaty stipulates that “The Parties to this Treaty (...) are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.” The erosion of democracy and of the rule of law is “the enemy from within,” inevitably producing a severe breach in the very foundation of the edifice on which the Alliance is built. NATO should emulate the way in which the European Union deals with democratic slippages of its members under Article VII of the EU Treaty and introduce a similar mechanism of scrutiny and correction. This is a difficult change to be introduced but a mechanism (independent and/or with a peer review/Secretary General’s assessment) should be crafted and formally put on the table.

*...but new, bold, measures are badly needed in order to keep the Alliance relevant in the 21st century*

Restoring European defense strength and credibility will take more than grudgingly upholding the Alliance’s “Wales Pledge” for 2024. Here are a few suggestions.

- Implement an upgraded Quadrennial Defense Review, including a mechanism for peer and independent reviews. This should be announced on the occasion of the 70th anniversary and given as a task for the next NATO Summit. In addition to maintaining the commitment of appropriating 20% of defense spending for major new equipment and R&D of new capabilities, another 10% should be dedicated to countering the new array of threats. National cybersecurity and (military) intelligence efforts should be included in the calculation of the 2% benchmark of NATO-related expenditures, as some Allies suggest. European defense industry concerns related to access barriers to the U.S. market should

also be addressed. More common ventures in traditional and new defense-related areas like A.I., robotics or outer space cooperation should be envisaged. The ultimate goal should be the creation of a transatlantic defense area, where cooperation and technology transfer should be the norm, not the exception. New spending is critical to produce added NATO defense capabilities, including intelligence-surveillance-reconnaissance, cyber and digital technologies. Transatlantic cooperation in these critical fields should be supported by the creation of a transatlantic R&D and Innovation Fund/Trust.

- Addressing vulnerabilities in the area of hybrid warfare should go hand-in-hand with active measures of deterrence of hybrid (sub-conventional) attacks short of the narrow Article 5 definition of an “armed attack.” Adapt traditional deterrence principles to the cyber realm. Cyber offensive options to deter Russia and China have become a strategic necessity.
- Containing Russia on the Eastern flank should include additional deterrence measures in the Black Sea, including by adding one more Multinational Battlegroup to the 4 decided for the Baltics and Poland. The NATO Readiness Initiative, which aims to provide 30 ready battle groups, air squadrons and naval combatants in 30 days should be complemented by a comprehensive Porcupine Defense strategy as suggested by the Naval War College.
- NATO should be winning the technology competition in the Digital Age—by aggressively investing in the NextGen of Warfare and maintaining the lead in military and intelligence. The EU should emulate the U.S. system of R&D between military and civilian, business, academic actors.
- Establish an Eisenhower Fund for Military Mobility, Logistics and Resilience in Europe. Military mobility and logistics represent key components of NATO’s capabilities to operate, fight and deter. The shift from the doctrine of conventional war to out-of-area operations led to a downgrade of NATO’s overall military mobility in the European theatre. Moreover, recent military exercises in Eastern flank countries revealed severe weaknesses in transport, infrastructure, logistics and supply chains, underlying significant practical obstacles in readiness and easily deployable

NATO assets in the region. The truth is that the “fine weather” atmosphere in which the last three rounds of enlargement took place inhibited the need to also invest in the density and quality of dual-use infrastructures and organic transport capabilities in Central and Southeastern Europe similar to how Western Europe invested in established routes during the Cold War. The 2014 conflict in Ukraine was the turning point in military in contingency planning aimed at ensuring credible and effective Article 5-type operations not only for reinforcements but for proper combat operations.

- The meager quality of such infrastructure in the new member states represents a major liability, making military planners face the unpleasant reality of weak force sustainment, given untested supply lines and transport capabilities, all the way from the Baltic to the Black Sea. The situation is complicated by numerous other problems, such as the time needed to get national movement permits, the complexity of cross-border, multinational and EU regulations, and coordination of military transport with civilian transport routes. Vital infrastructure assets like bridges, tunnels, roads and railroads are antiquated and incapable of handling heavy military transports. The time has come to address this intolerable situation. A number of ideas have been tested, including in the Three Seas format, but the level of resource needs requires bolder moves.
- Resilience in our societies should go beyond protecting physical infrastructures and coordination. NATO should define common standards for national resilience and clarify shared responsibilities for deterring hybrid attacks, where information-sharing and investment are paramount.
- The creation of the Eisenhower Fund (recognizing the role of the President in the founding of the Alliance on 1949) would represent the military and security equivalent of the Juncker Plan, introduced after the financial and economic crisis of 2008-2009, with the European Investment Bank as the primary lender, in association with commercial banks and the private sector. The Eisenhower Fund would also focus its activities towards dual-use infrastructures and involve the private sector and a number of in-

stitutional investors like the European Investment Bank (EIB), EBRD and OPIC/IFC. A portion of the next European Financial Framework (the 2021-2028 EU budget) should be dedicated to such dual-use projects, including in the energy sector. The European Defense Fund should also be significantly beefed-up. EU-NATO cooperation on this direction will prove critical, beyond the 2016 NATO-EU Joint Declaration on strategic partnership and the EU and NATO Councils' 34 new actions for cooperation. The new European Commission should revisit the Joint Communication of the current Commission and further clarify cooperation between military and non-military activities, expedite military mobility, and ensure the necessary conditions for strategic pre-deployment of military forces and resources. The European Defense Agency should also play its part in ensuring the right synergies between military and non-military capabilities.

*NATO is more than our military. It's about our people*

Many in our young generations know nothing about the horrors that lead to the creation of the Alliance and of the array of global institutions at the end of World War II. Employees at Microsoft refuse to work for applications that could be used by the military. We speak more and more of American values or European values, but not that much of Western values. Surveys indicate a very low desire among publics in some European countries to come to the rescue of other Allies in case of foreign aggression. The perception of the United States in Europe is deteriorating, and Europe is beginning to be perceived more as a competitor than as an indispensable ally. Investing in a new generation of transatlantic leaders and in the trust of our citizenry represents a priority as important as any of the critical issues tormenting our ties across the Atlantic.

An ambitious Columbus Scholarship Program should be launched—a combination of Erasmus Plus (that allows exchanges of students and faculty) and the Fulbright/Rhodes Scholarship programs. Institutions like the German Marshall Fund of the United States should find a number of counterparts in Europe, with government and private sector support.

Renewing the Vows @70 should also mean strengthening the democratic nature of the Alliance and its democratic processes. The role and scope of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly should be enhanced. National parliaments should appoint to the NATO PA the most relevant politicians. Formalism in the relations between the NATO General Secretariat should be replaced by permanent exchange of information and enhanced role for democratic scrutiny of the Assembly on the activities and functions of the Alliance.

*Out of area or out of business? NATO after Afghanistan*

Ending the Afghan War is in sight and maintaining readiness of highly trained servicemen and women will be a challenge. A joint Spirit of NATO effort should be launched, using as a model the fantastic work of Spirit of America for U.S military personnel and diplomats. The entire southern neighborhood of NATO and Europe remains highly unstable. Further engagement of NATO in the Mediterranean Dialogue, established with seven of the partners in the region, should be broadened and deepened. Selectively, more of these partnerships should be brought up to the level of Individual Cooperation Programs (ICP) with Egypt and Israel, thus establishing long-term, structured and effective cooperation with these countries. Trust funds established for Jordan or Mauritania in previous years should be offered to all interested Mediterranean Dialogue partners. The NATO training cooperation initiative with partners in the Greater Middle East should be beefed up, with significant contributions from European allies and partners. A transatlantic stability and security toolbox for the Greater Middle East should be decided upon at the next NATO-EU Strategic Partnership meeting.

*A NATO global partnership network?*

The NATO Summit in 2008 welcomed the largest number of NATO partners to date. The Bucharest Declaration still stands and should be brought to the next level on the next appropriate occasion: "The Alliance places a high value on its expanding and varied relationships with other partners across the globe. Our objectives in these relationships include support for operations, security cooperation, and enhanced common understanding to advance shared security interests and democratic values. We have made substantial progress in build-

ing political dialogue and developing individual Tailored Cooperation Packages with a number of these countries.” The significant contributions or support offered by Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore or the Republic of Korea to NATO-led efforts in Afghanistan should not be wasted but used to step up a NATO global partnership network.

The rise of a more assertive China will call on much closer cooperation with democratic nations in the Indo-Pacific area. Competition to develop new technologies like A.I., cyber, robotics, quantum computing and biotechnology would mean a much closer cooperation between the United States and Europe. NATO should play its part in anticipating the next generation of warfare, not only in Europe but also in the Asia-Pacific.

### *Missile Defense*

Ballistic missile proliferation and the Russian build-up in Kaliningrad, Crimea and Syria pose an increasing threat to Allies’ forces, territory and populations. Especially after losing the INF Treaty and on the way to the renewal of the START Treaty in 2021, missile defense forms an indispensable part of the response to counter this threat. The substantial contribution to the protection of Allies from long-range ballistic missiles to be provided by European-based U.S. missile defense assets in Romania and Poland remains paramount, as an integral part of any future NATO-wide missile defense architecture. Bearing in mind the principle of the indivisibility of Allied security as well as NATO solidarity, options for a comprehensive missile defense architecture to extend coverage to all Allied territory and populations not otherwise covered by the United States system should become a priority.

## **Conclusion**

Restoring trust in the transatlantic relationship seems like a daunting task. Some suggest we should wait for the next American president and recognize that NATO as we knew it is “dead.” Others remind us that this is not the only difficult moment in the last 70 years of transatlantic relations and that we will eventually get over this one, too. Over time, even the most durable marriages lose some of the original magic and transform into a more pragmatic contract. If we were to renew the

vows at our 70th anniversary, what should we say before the high priest of history? That in complicated times, we are stronger together or we just give up? That what unites us is more valuable and enduring or what separates us? And, more importantly, that we have an obligation to the next generations to do whatever it takes to make sure they also will live in peace, freedom and democracy or they will go through the tragedy and destruction we thought over forever?

And ask our current leaders to imagine the world without this formidable alliance of democracies: *Et Si Tu N'Existais Pas?*

## Notes

1. Declaration on Alliance Security Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Strasbourg / Kehl on April 4, 2009, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news\\_52838.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_52838.htm).
2. Ibid.
3. See the recent Harvard Kennedy School Belfer Center Report, "An Alliance in Crisis," conducted by Ambassadors Nicholas Burns and Douglas Lute.