

BACKGROUND

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The 2012 NATO Summit in Chicago: NATO in Need of American Leadership

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Abstract

The 2012 NATO Summit in Chicago is an opportunity for the U.S. to provide much-needed leadership for NATO. The United States should push NATO members to keep their current commitments to Afghanistan and commit to supporting Afghanistan after NATO forces withdraw. At the Chicago Summit, the Obama Administration also needs to make the cases for transition, enlargement, and more defense investment and, ultimately, the case for NATO's role in the 21st century. Without American leadership, NATO will continue to face an uncertain future.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will meet in Chicago on May 20–21, 2012. This will be NATO's first summit in the U.S. in more than 13 years and the first in the U.S. held outside Washington, DC.¹ The theme running through the conference is expected to be renewing the transatlantic relationship between North America and Europe.

The agenda will likely contain three major items:

- **Afghanistan.** The summit will finalize the plan to transfer all security responsibilities to Afghan forces by the end of 2014. The summit will also establish enduring political and financial commitment to Afghanistan.
- **Smart Defense.** NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen's proposal to better coordinate investment in defense capability in an era of reduced defense spending.
- **NATO's partnerships.** In light of the interdependent and globalized nature of the world, the summit will examine how NATO can better work with non-NATO partners.

TALKING POINTS

- The Chicago Summit will be NATO's opportunity to finalize the Afghan Transition Strategy and confirm NATO'S long-term enduring partnership with Afghanistan.
- Any withdrawal of NATO forces from Afghanistan must be based on improved security conditions on the ground. When these conditions are met, the withdrawal should be a phaseout, and not a walkout.
- Without any new investment by America's European Allies NATO's Smart Defense initiative will not amount to anything more than a list of unfunded aspirations.
- President Barack Obama should use American leadership to ensure that there is a meeting between NATO and the four NATO aspirant countries of Macedonia, Georgia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro at the heads-of-government level.
- NATO needs to review the way it works with its global partners, especially regional partners in the Middle East and North Africa.

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The summit will also address other issues, such as solidifying agreements made at the Lisbon Summit on NATO transformation, the future of NATO ballistic missile defense (BMD), NATO's open door to enlargement, and the future of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons in Europe.

Equally significant, the agenda does not include enlargement, even though Macedonia is more than ready to formally join the alliance; Russia, which has chosen not to attend; or any meaningful discussion of Syria.

This summit will pose unique challenges for some NATO leaders. With the U.S. presidential election later this year, the Obama Administration will want a carefully choreographed and "good news" summit. The British Prime Minister, David Cameron, will attend the summit at a time when his poll numbers are the lowest since the election in May 2010. Finally, newly elected French President François Hollande, who has promised to bring home all 3,300 French troops in Afghanistan by the end of the year, will attend the NATO summit only a fortnight after his election.

NATO leaders need to use the summit to put the alliance on a path toward true reform. NATO needs to finalize the transition plan for Afghanistan and ensure that it is based on conditions on the ground. The Obama Administration needs to state clearly that the low levels of defense spending in Europe are unacceptable. To learn the lessons from the recent Libya operation, the alliance should also broaden

the membership of its Istanbul Cooperation Initiative and invite Libya to become a member of the Mediterranean Dialogue. Finally, although the summit will regrettably not consider enlargement, NATO leaders need to include clear language in the summit's declaration reaffirming the eventual NATO membership of the four aspirant countries: Georgia, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Road from Lisbon

In November 2010, NATO leaders met in Lisbon, Portugal, for NATO's 24th summit. The summit focused on publishing NATO's new Strategic Concept, which defined the alliance's strategic priorities for the next decade. However, the summit is most remembered for the formal beginning of the Afghan transition strategy and NATO's agreement to conclude combat operations by the end of 2014.

The Lisbon Summit produced several notable outcomes:

- **The transition plan for Afghanistan.** In addition to the usual summit declaration, the summit agreed to two Afghanistan-related declarations: the Declaration by NATO and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on an Enduring Partnership and the Declaration by the Heads of State and Government of the Nations contributing to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The summit formally agreed that

ISAF-led combat operations in Afghanistan would cease by the end of 2014 with full transfer of security responsibilities to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF).

- **The publication of the Strategic Concept.** NATO published its third strategic concept since the end of the Cold War. The document charts a path for NATO over the next decade by examining the capabilities that the alliance will need to prepare for future threats.
- **NATO transformation.** Transformation, probably the summit's biggest accomplishment, went largely unnoticed. After decades of bloated and costly NATO command structures, NATO agreed to a new command structure that significantly reduced the number of headquarters and manpower, producing a savings of 35 percent. NATO members also agreed to reform and consolidate NATO's 14 agencies down to three: Communications and Information Agency, Support Agency, and Procurement Agency.²
- **NATO–Russia relations.** The NATO–Russia Council meeting at Lisbon focused on mutual security concerns including Afghanistan, regional terrorism, and counternarcotics. Although vague, language in the summit declaration invited Russia to

1. News release, "We Know Chicagoans Will Warmly Welcome Our NATO Allies," Office of Senator Mark Kirk (R-IL), March 30, 2012, http://www.kirk.senate.gov/?p=press_release&id=467 (accessed April 19, 2012).

2. News release, "NATO Achieves Important Milestone in Reform of Its Agencies," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, January 23, 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_83637.htm (accessed April 18, 2012).

cooperate with NATO on missile defense. The declaration also included strong language calling on Russia “to reverse its recognition of the South Ossetia and Abkhazia regions of Georgia as independent states.”³

In addition, NATO agreed at the Lisbon Summit to:

- **Develop a missile defense capability to protect all NATO European populations, territory, and forces.**
- **Continue to review NATO’s overall defense and deterrence posture.** This further delayed the decision on U.S. tactical nuclear weapons in Europe.
- **Maintain its open door policy for democratic European countries wishing to join NATO.** Although NATO did not grant Georgia a Membership Action Plan (MAP), the alliance reaffirmed its commitment to eventual Georgian membership as agreed at the 2008 NATO Summit in Bucharest.

What to Expect from the Chicago Summit

At the summit, NATO will address several issues, including Afghanistan, Smart Defense, and NATO partnerships. The conference may also discuss missile defense, enlargement, NATO–Russian relations, U.S.

tactical nuclear weapons in Europe, and Syria.

Afghanistan. The current situation in Afghanistan remains stable but fragile. The surge of U.S. and coalition troops and the robust population-centric counterinsurgency strategy in 2010 have achieved notable security gains on the ground.

Levels of violence are also lower across the country, and the recent attacks in Kabul should not be viewed in isolation. Although Kabul accounts for almost 15 percent of Afghanistan’s population, the city accounts for less than 1 percent of the country’s violence. Nationally, the level of enemy-initiated attacks during the past three months is 21 percent lower than the same period in 2011. Each month since May 2011 had fewer enemy-initiated attacks than the corresponding month one year earlier. This is the longest sustained downward trend in enemy-initiated attacks recorded by ISAF.⁴

EACH MONTH SINCE MAY 2011 HAD FEWER ENEMY-INITIATED ATTACKS THAN THE CORRESPONDING MONTH ONE YEAR EARLIER.

Since late 2009, the military campaign has focused its main effort on southern and southwestern Afghanistan, mainly Zabul, Kandahar, and Helmand provinces, which are considered to be the center of the Taliban-based insurgency. With the security situation

largely improved in southwestern Afghanistan,⁵ the main effort will shift to eastern Afghanistan, primarily Paktika, Paktiya, and Khost provinces (the P2K region). This area borders Pakistan’s Federally Administered Tribal Areas, contains many of the traditional avenues of approach from the Pakistani border regions to Kabul, and is the home base of the Haqqani Network. Securing Highway One between Kabul and Kandahar will also be an ISAF priority.

At the 2010 Lisbon Summit, NATO agreed on a plan to transfer security responsibility to the Afghans. The first tranche of provinces, districts, and municipalities, which has 25 percent of Afghanistan’s population, was handed over to the Afghans in July 2011. The second tranche was announced in November 2011. Currently, the Afghans take the lead on security for more than 50 percent of the country’s population.⁶ The next round will take place before this summer, and the Chicago Summit is expected to decide the final stages. The goal is to transfer responsibility for all of Afghanistan to Afghan security forces by the end of 2014.

For the Chicago Summit to be considered a success, NATO must realize two outcomes regarding Afghanistan.

First, countries should not use the transfer from ISAF to Afghan security as an excuse to leave Afghanistan prematurely. Any withdrawal of

3. News release, “Lisbon Summit Declaration,” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, November 20, 2010, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_68828.htm (accessed April 21, 2012), and news release, “Media Availability with Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta,” U.S. Department of Defense, February 1, 2012, <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4967> (accessed April 23, 2012).

4. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, International Security and Assistance Force, “ISAF Monthly Data: Trends Through March 2012, April 22, 2012,” April 22, 2012, http://www.isaf.nato.int/images/20120422_niu_data_release_final.pdf (accessed April 24, 2012).

5. In Regional Command Southwest, enemy-initiated attacks in the past 12 months are 35 percent lower than during the previous 12 months.

6. News release, “Statement by NATO Secretary General on Afghan Transition Announcement,” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, November 27, 2011, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-656CC458-77FAA000/natolive/news_81068.htm (accessed April 20, 2012).

ISAF forces from Afghanistan should be based on improved conditions on the ground and on military advice. When these security conditions are met, NATO's withdrawal should be a phaseout, not a walkout.

The Lisbon Declaration stated that the "transition will be conditions-based, not calendar-driven, and will not equate to withdrawal of ISAF-troops."⁷ Since then, the use of "conditions-based" language has all but disappeared. NATO leaders need to ensure that the Chicago Declaration uses similar language. However, words are not enough. NATO actually needs to implement a conditions-based strategy.

Many European NATO allies are under considerable public and political pressure to leave Afghanistan. U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta exacerbated the situation earlier this year by stating that the transition process could be completed by 2013⁸—one year earlier than the end of 2014 deadline set at the Lisbon Summit.⁹ Comments suggesting that the U.S. might end combat operations earlier than agreed at the Lisbon Summit could potentially persuade many European allies to leave Afghanistan sooner than originally planned.

The U.K. will soon decide its rate of withdrawal when its National

Security Council meets later this year. In fact, it would come as no surprise if Prime Minister Cameron announced further troop reductions at Chicago. Such an announcement would be popular back in the U.K. at a time when the government is polling low. It is well known across Whitehall that some cabinet members would leave Afghanistan tomorrow if given the opportunity.

Some European partners have announced troop reductions for 2012. The issue of Afghanistan featured prominently in the recent French presidential campaign. Former President Nicolas Sarkozy promised to speed up France's withdrawal timetable, pulling out 1,000 troops instead of the originally planned 600 by the end of 2012 with the rest of French troops leaving the country by the end of 2013.¹⁰ His socialist presidential contender and ultimate victor, François Hollande, campaigned on bringing all French troops home in 2012.

Most recently, Australia has announced that all of its troops will be leaving Afghanistan by the end of 2013, instead of the end of 2014 as previously planned. There are concerns in Australia that politics motivated Prime Minister Julia Gillard's announcement because the new time line would bring Australian

troops home before the next general election.¹¹

Georgia is the only country committing more troops to Afghanistan in 2012. It will double its contribution later this year in Helmand province, making it the largest contributor per capita in the ISAF—an example for all of NATO.

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Second, NATO needs to make a clear commitment to the NATO–Afghan relationship past 2015. Afghanistan will need financial support from the international community for the foreseeable future.

A major part of the post-2015 commitment to Afghanistan will be mentoring, training, and funding the ANSF. The Afghan National Army has 194,466 troops, and the Afghan National Police more than 149,642 policemen.¹² Afghanistan will also be integrating the members of the Afghan Local Police,¹³ which currently number around 12,000 personnel with a goal reaching 30,000.¹⁴

Under current plans ANSF numbers are expected to fall to 240,000 sometime after 2014. Maintaining this reduced ANSF will still cost the

7. News release, "Lisbon Summit Declaration."

8. News release, "Media Availability with Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta."

9. News release, "Lisbon Summit Declaration."

10. Associated Press, "France to Leave Afghanistan in 2013, Sarkozy Says," France 24, January 28, 2012, <http://www.france24.com/en/20120127-karzai-sarkozy-visit-paris-military-withdrawal-afghanistan-nato> (accessed April 22, 2012).

11. BBC News, "Australian PM Sets Out Afghan Exit Plan," April 17, 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-17737592> (accessed April 22, 2012).

12. U.S. Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Towards Security and Stability in Afghanistan: United States Plan for Sustaining the Afghanistan National Security Forces*, April 2012, p. 4, http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/Report_Final_SecDef_04_27_12.pdf (accessed May 1, 2012).

13. Established in July 2010, the Afghan Local Police allows local Afghan villages to have a stake in their own security where there is limited or no formal ANSF presence. The ALP is closely monitored and falls under the responsibility of the Afghan Ministry of Interior.

14. C. J. Radin, "Afghan Local Counterinsurgency Programs Prove Successful," *The Long War Journal*, April 4, 2012, http://www.longwarjournal.org/threat-matrix/archives/2012/04/report_local_counterinsurgency.php (accessed April 22, 2012).

international community approximately \$4 billion per year—what the U.S. currently spends every 12 days in Afghanistan.¹⁵ While NATO may not finalize an agreement in Chicago, it needs to lay the groundwork for the next international summit on Afghanistan in Tokyo this summer.

However, NATO is debating internally how big the ANSF should be. Of course, this will affect its future funding requirements. NATO leaders should resist the temptation to reduce the ANSF's size and capability for simply financial reasons because it would reduce the security of the Afghans. Afghan Defense Minister General Abdul Rahim Wardak recently pointed out:

Nobody at this moment, based on any type of analysis, can predict what will be the security situation in 2014. That's unpredictable. Going lower [in Afghan troop numbers] has to be based on realities on the ground. Otherwise it will be a disaster, it will be a catastrophe, putting at risk all that we have accomplished together with so much sacrifice in blood and treasure.¹⁶

The ANSF are just developing the capability to carry out autonomous operations. The ANSF are far from being perfect, but that was never the goal. The goal is to raise the forces to a level where they can handle the insurgency themselves, without tens of thousands of Western troops on the ground.

Smart Defense. After Afghanistan, the Smart Defense initiative will feature prominently on the summit's agenda. According to NATO's website, Smart Defense aims to encourage allies to cooperate in developing, acquiring, and maintaining military capabilities in a more economically efficient manner in the new age of economic austerity and defense cuts. In sum, the goal is to do more with less by changing NATO members' mindset on how to do business and being "smarter" when investing in defense capabilities.

Smart Defense is the brainchild of the current NATO Secretary General, and he has invested a lot of personnel and political capital in developing it. While the aims of Smart Defense are noble and ambitious, it will likely amount to very little in terms of substance and real capability. For this reason NATO leaders should avoid placing all of their hopes on Smart Defense as the panacea for NATO's capability shortfalls.

Although Smart Defense was not a Lisbon Summit issue, the leaders of NATO endorsed the Lisbon package of reforms, which planted the seed of Smart Defense.

The goal of the Lisbon package was to provide a renewed focus inside the alliance to ensure that critical capabilities required by members were available on time and on budget. In turn, this would allow NATO to meet the demands of its ongoing operations, prepare for evolving and emerging security challenges, and acquire key enabling

capabilities.¹⁷ While NATO has been good at identifying the trend of future threats, its members have been less reliable in funding the needed capabilities.

As Libya and other NATO campaigns have demonstrated time and again, Europe relies too much on the U.S. to pick up the slack in key enablers required for alliance operations, such as air-to-air refueling, intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition, and reconnaissance. This is mainly the result of reduced defense investments by NATO members since the end of the Cold War and the lack of political will to use military capability when and where it is needed.

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Many leaders in Europe say that the first duty of government is the defense of the realm, but few leaders actually implement this view in practice. Spending is about setting national priorities, and Europeans have become complacent about their own defense and overly dependent on the U.S. security umbrella.

Since 2008, the 16 European members of NATO have reduced

15. This figure is based on an American monthly expenditure of \$10 billion.

16. Yaroslav Trofimov, "Afghan General Sounds Alarm," *The Wall Street Journal*, February 18, 2012, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204059804577229081438477796.html> (accessed April 20, 2012).

17. News release, "Lisbon Summit Declaration."

their military spending. Reductions in many NATO countries have exceeded 10 percent.¹⁸ In 2011, just three of the 28 NATO members—the United States, Britain, and Greece—spent the required 2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) on defense. As expected, France fell below the 2 percent mark in 2011.¹⁹ However, Estonia claims it might reach the 2 percent requirement this year.²⁰ To put this into perspective, New York City spends more on policing (\$4.46 billion in fiscal year 2011)²¹ than 13 NATO members spend on defense.

The U.K. is currently meeting the 2 percent benchmark because of expenditures on combat operations in Afghanistan. However, the current government has committed to the 2 percent benchmark only through the end of the current Parliament in 2015.²² It is difficult to tell if America's number one ally will even meet the NATO threshold by 2015.

Furthermore, NATO uses a very generous definition to calculate the 2 percent benchmark. It includes the core defense budget, extra expenditures on operations, and expenditures on military pensions. Even so, only a handful meet this benchmark of 2 percent.

Spending on European Union (EU) defense initiatives also exacerbates the dire financial situation by diverting scarce resources away from NATO. For example, the proposal to

create a permanent EU headquarters would have cost hundreds of millions of euros at a time when NATO is streamlining and reducing the number of its headquarters. Thankfully, the British vetoed this proposal. Every euro or pound spent on EU defense is one not invested in NATO capabilities. For this reason the U.S. should clearly and unequivocally signal that it opposes EU defense investment and integration.

EVERY EURO OR POUND SPENT ON EU DEFENSE IS ONE NOT INVESTED IN NATO CAPABILITIES.

Proponents of EU defense integration argue that EU capabilities can be made available to NATO. However, capabilities developed through the EU are not guaranteed to be readily available to NATO. Six veto-wielding EU members are not members of NATO. Some, such as Cyprus, are politically hostile toward NATO.

The European Union can never be a serious defense actor because it has six neutral member states: Sweden, Finland, Ireland, Cyprus, Malta, and Austria. The EU also excludes Norway and Turkey, two important NATO defense partners, from its defense and security decision-making process. Furthermore, NATO and the EU cannot formally cooperate because Cyprus regularly

blocks NATO–EU cooperation for self-serving reasons. Therefore, EU defense initiatives are not only a waste of resources, but also politically pointless.

At the Chicago Summit, NATO will likely agree on a number of Smart Defense measures dealing with force protection, communications, surveillance and intelligence gathering, and missile defense. However, some of NATO's Smart Defense measures have proven to be neither new nor smart, such as Allied Ground Surveillance (AGS) and Baltic Air Policing. AGS is a NATO initiative designed to increase the alliance's intelligence gathering and surveillance capabilities. However, NATO took 20 years to develop and agree on AGS—hardly a model for Smart Defense. The addition of Baltic Air Policing in 2004 was the natural extension of the comprehensive system of air surveillance that has been in place since the 1970s—not a particularly new way of doing business.

The Chicago Summit is expected to formally approve the Secretary General's Connected Forces Initiative as a key part of Smart Defense. According to the Secretary General, the Connected Forces Initiative will complement Smart Defense by “mobilizing all of NATO's resources so we strengthen our ability to work together in a truly

18. News release, “Military Balance 2012,” International Institute for Strategic Studies, March 7, 2012, <http://www.iiss.org/publications/military-balance/the-military-balance-2012/press-statement/> (accessed April 22, 2012).

19. News release, “Financial and Economic Data Relating to NATO Defence,” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, April 13, 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_85966.htm (accessed April 22, 2012).

20. Claudio Bisogniero, “Speech on NATO's Smart Defence Initiative,” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, December 15, 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-59141228-30D24899/natolive/opinions_83096.htm (accessed April 22, 2012).

21. City of New York, New York City Council, “Hearing on the Mayor's Fiscal Year 2012 Preliminary Budget & the Fiscal Year 2011 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report,” p. 2, http://council.nyc.gov/html/budget/PDFs/2012/nypd_056.pdf (accessed May 14, 2012).

22. U.K. Ministry of Defense, “Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The Strategic Defence and Security Review,” October 2010, p. 3, http://www.direct.gov.uk/prod_consum_dg/groups/dg_digitalassets/@dg/@en/documents/digitalasset/dg_191634.pdf (accessed April 17, 2012).

connected way.”²³ The Connected Forces Initiative has three parts:

- 1. Training and education.** This part focuses on getting more value for the alliance from national education facilities.
- 2. Increased exercises.** NATO training has been reduced over the years due to the high operational tempo of NATO forces, which have been deployed in Afghanistan and other locations. As these operational commitments decrease, the number of training events should increase.
- 3. Better use of technology.** The initiative will use technology to improve interoperability among NATO partners.²⁴

For Smart Defense to work, NATO members must be willing to give up certain capabilities so that the alliance can collectively fund and maintain them. However, this creates the risk that a shared capability will not be available or authorized for use when another member state needs it. For example, the alliance has shared Airborne Warning and Control System (AWAC) planes since 1982. This has allowed member states to pool a niche capability, allowing them to invest more in other capabilities. However, during the run-up to the 2003 Iraq war, Turkey requested NATO AWACs to

defend its airspace²³ against possible Iraqi intrusion. Initially, Germany, Belgium, and France vetoed this request on the grounds that any move by NATO to protect Turkey’s airspace would implicitly support the pending U.S.-led invasion of Iraq. Eventually, they reached an agreement to deploy NATO assets, but only after using a parliamentary procedure that allowed NATO to authorize the deployment through its Defense Planning Committee, which did not include France at the time. With French opposition sidelined, Germany and Belgium eventually supported the move. If not for this maneuver, Turkey would have been denied the use of a capability in which it had invested and thought necessary for its national security.

A similar situation involving AWACs occurred during the recent Libya operation. Germany would not allow its crews to operate the NATO AWACs over Libya, so German crews backfilled other NATO crews serving in Afghanistan so they could be diverted to NATO operations over Libya.

The Smart Defense initiative risks allowing European countries to believe that they can do more with less, when in actuality they will be doing less with less. Countless conferences, meetings, and seminars have discussed Europe Smart Defense, but have produced very little beyond a list of aspirations. The language describing Smart

Defense may read well in a summit declaration, but until real money is invested and delivers real capabilities to the modern-day battlefield, it will be meaningless to the men and women on the front lines. To work, Smart Defense requires real military capability and real money. No clever nomenclature can evade this problem.

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NATO Partnerships. The 2010 Strategic Concept states that cooperative security is one of NATO’s three essential core tasks.²⁵ As NATO becomes a security actor in more places around the world, the alliance will need to continuously adjust how it manages its external relationships.

Every current NATO-led mission includes non-NATO partners. The Afghanistan mission includes 22 non-NATO partners.²⁶ NATO’s Kosovo Force (KFOR) has seven non-NATO partners, including more than 100 Moroccans.²⁷ Operation Ocean Shield, NATO’s counterpiracy mission, regularly cooperates with non-NATO countries, including Russia and India. Most recently, the NATO-led operation in Libya included four

23. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, “Remarks,” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, February 4, 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-AD1FADE5-491706F7/natolive/opinions_84197.htm (accessed April 19, 2012).

24. Ibid.

25. Collective Defense and Crisis Management are the other two.

26. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “Troop Numbers and Contributions,” April 2012, <http://www.isaf.nato.int/troop-numbers-and-contributions/index.php> (accessed April 23, 2012).

27. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “Kosovo Force (KFOR): Key Facts and Figures,” March 30, 2012, http://www.nato.int/kfor/structur/nations/placemat/kfor_placemat.pdf (accessed April 22, 2012).

non-NATO partners. Therefore, it is important that NATO is able to plan, coordinate, and fight alongside non-NATO partners.

NATO manages its relationships with regional and global partners through a myriad of networks with non-NATO countries. These include:

- **The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace** form the basis of NATO relations with Euro-Atlantic partners that are not formally part of the alliance.
- **The Mediterranean Dialogue**, launched in 1994, forms the basis of NATO relations with its Mediterranean partners. Participants include Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia. Although these relations are normally done on a bilateral basis (NATO+1), on occasion this forum meets as NATO+7, placing Israel at the same table as some of its regional neighbors, where it otherwise would not be.
- **Istanbul Cooperation Initiative**, launched in 2004, forms the basis of NATO relations with the Gulf States. Although all six countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council were invited to join, only Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have become participants so far.
- **Contact countries or global partners concept** allows NATO to cooperate with countries well outside the traditional

Euro-Atlantic area, such as Australia, Japan, and South Korea.

Any nation participating in any of these groupings can also agree to establish an Individual and Partnership Cooperation Program (IPCP, formerly the Individual Cooperation Program). The IPCP allows increased political and security cooperation on a bilateral basis to meet the specific needs of the participating country.

The Lisbon Summit Declaration agreed to further develop political dialogue and practical cooperation with NATO partner nations. The declaration strongly reiterated the importance of these relationships, but beyond the usual flowery language it offered few concrete proposals to develop these relationships.

Although NATO partnerships have been touted as one of the big three agenda items, it is unclear how NATO leaders plan to enhance them at Chicago. However, in light of the popular uprisings across North Africa and the Middle East in 2011, the nuclear threat from Iran, and the recent operation in Libya, many in NATO have rightly decided to place a renewed focus on how NATO works with regional partners on its periphery.

To date, both the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative have received mere lip service. Beyond the occasional meeting or limited joint training exercises, little has been done between NATO and these organizations. The Chicago Summit could produce a formal invitation for Libya to join the Mediterranean

Dialogue—an idea that the U.S. Ambassador to NATO floated in November 2011.²⁸ This would illustrate NATO's commitment to the new Libyan government by formalizing an already existing relationship.

Building on lessons learned from Libya, the summit could produce more concrete proposals to enhance the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative. The Libyan operation was the first time that the air forces of the UAE and Qatar were fully integrated into a NATO command. NATO could use this experience to increase cooperation and to reach out to other countries in the Middle East that are not participating in the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative. With its focus on the Gulf, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative could become increasingly important as Iran continues to develop its nuclear weapons program.

In the Mediterranean Dialogue, only Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, Mauritania, and Tunisia have IPCPs with NATO. None of the participants in the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative have an IPCP with NATO. At the Chicago Summit, NATO could offer to invite credible partners in the Gulf, such as Qatar and the UAE, an opportunity to agree to IPCPs with NATO.

NATO Enlargement. Missing from the summit's agenda is NATO enlargement. Since taking office, President Barack Obama has done little to support the membership of qualified candidates.

NATO's "open door policy" is critical to mobilizing Europe and its allies around a collective transatlantic defense. Under Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty, any European

28. Ivo Daalder, "The Success of NATO Operations in Libya and the Vital Contributions of Partners Outside of NATO," speech at Washington Foreign Press Center, Washington, DC, November 7, 2011, <http://nato.usmission.gov/fpcroundtable2011.html> (accessed April 23, 2012).

state that fulfills the requirements of the treaty and demonstrates the competency to contribute to the alliance's security is eligible for membership. The U.S. should work to continue the open door policy.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Macedonia, and Montenegro are NATO aspirant countries. Regrettably, the NATO+4 meeting at the summit will be held at the foreign minister level. In order to achieve the desired political effect, and send the right messages, this meeting should be held at the heads-of-government level.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, GEORGIA, MACEDONIA, AND MONTENEGRO ARE NATO ASPIRANT COUNTRIES.

Macedonia. Upon completing its Membership Action Plan (MAP) in 2008, Macedonia anticipated an invitation to join the alliance at the NATO summit in Bucharest. Yet despite fulfilling all necessary requirements for membership, Macedonia's accession was vetoed by Greece, which has a long-standing dispute with Macedonia over its constitutional name. In December 2011, the International Court of Justice found that Greece's veto was a blatant violation of the 1995 U.N.-brokered Interim Accord, in which Athens agreed not to impair Macedonia's integration into Europe. Greece has jeopardized NATO's open door policy, and NATO members should pressure Greece to work with Macedonia on reconciliation.

Montenegro. Montenegro is steadily progressing along its path to

NATO membership. Having received a MAP in 2009, Montenegro is in its second Annual National Program (ANP) cycle. Despite its progress, Montenegro will not be ready to join the alliance by the summit.

Bosnia and Herzegovina. Offered its MAP in 2010, Bosnia and Herzegovina must make substantial improvements politically and militarily to become a serious NATO aspirant. Bosnia and Herzegovina has made some progress and even deployed troops to Afghanistan. However, before beginning work on the MAP, the government must register all immovable defense properties as state property for use by the country's defense ministry, and it has made little progress on this.

Georgia. At the Bucharest Summit in 2008, Georgia was promised NATO membership. However, owing to opposition from France and Germany, the alliance substituted MAP for the the NATO-Georgia Commission. Regrettably, the NATO-Georgia Commission is not expected to meet during the Chicago Summit.

Georgia has made significant strides toward defense reform and spends approximately 4 percent of GDP on defense, when the NATO average is less than half of that. While many NATO members have announced troop reductions in Afghanistan for 2012, Georgia is the only country committing more troops to the mission this year. Georgia has become a serious security actor in recent years. In addition to Afghanistan, Georgia has contributed to peacekeeping missions in the Balkans and, at the time of the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008, was the second-largest troop

contributor to Iraq after the United States.

For some European countries the biggest hurdle for Georgian membership is the continued Russian occupation of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, which comprise 20 percent of Georgia's internationally recognized territory. Georgian officials say that they are happy to accept a NATO membership arrangement or compromise that excludes the two occupied territories from NATO's Article 5 security guarantee until the matter is resolved peacefully with the Russians. NATO should continue to support and assist with Georgia's reform process and offer a MAP. However, the U.S. should also point out that MAP is not the only pathway to NATO membership.

Missile Defense. According to NATO's strategic concept, "The greatest responsibility of the Alliance is to protect and defend our territory and our populations against attack, as set out in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty."²⁹ While NATO continues to improve its ballistic missile defense capability and has achieved some significant milestones, the United States and its allies need to ensure that their missile defense programs keep pace with the threat. NATO has expanded its Active Layered Theater Ballistic Missile Defense (ALTBMD) program, a command and control backbone of the alliance's theatre missile defense system and future layered missile defense system.

At the Chicago Summit, the United States and its allies plan to declare that NATO has achieved an interim capability in ballistic missile defense. The first steps in

29. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Active Engagement, Modern Defence: Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization," November 19, 2010, <http://www.nato.int/lisbon2010/strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf> (accessed April 30, 2012).

implementing the Phased Adaptive Approach, President Obama's missile defense plan for Europe, will be part of this capability. In the past year, Turkey agreed to host the X-band radar on its territory, and the radar is already operational. Romania and Poland agreed to host land-based interceptor sites in the future, and Spain will host U.S. BMD-capable ships. France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, and Spain have their own short-range missile defense systems. The Netherlands, Germany, and France are also exploring options to contribute sensor capabilities and early warning.

AT THE CHICAGO SUMMIT, THE UNITED STATES AND ITS ALLIES PLAN TO DECLARE THAT NATO HAS ACHIEVED AN INTERIM CAPABILITY IN BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE.

NATO–Russia Relations. This year marks the 15th anniversary of the NATO–Russia Founding Act and the 10th anniversary of the NATO–Russia Council. Even so, NATO–Russian relations remain frosty because the current Russian leadership and its military doctrine view NATO enlargement as a threat to Russian security.

Russian President Vladimir Putin will not be attending the summit, and Secretary General Rasmussen's explanation for his absence at the summit bears little relation to reality:

What I told you is that I have talked with President-elect Putin, and we agreed that due to a very

busy domestic political calendar in Russia, just a few weeks after his inauguration as a new president of Russia, it's not possible and not practical also to have a NATO–Russia Summit meeting in Chicago.³⁰

More likely, Putin knew he could not secure the deal on NATO missile defense that he wanted, so he decided to save face by not attending. Regardless of who made the final decision, Russia's absence demonstrates the chasm between Moscow and the alliance, despite cooperation on Afghanistan.

The NATO–Russia Council met at the foreign minister level at the April 2012 NATO Ministerial in Brussels. During this meeting, the council discussed Afghanistan, specifically Russian training of Afghan counter-narcotics personnel and Afghan helicopter technicians.³¹ At the Brussels meeting, the Secretary General invited Russia to send a representative to the Afghanistan meeting at the Chicago Summit.

When dealing with international actors, Russia follows its own geopolitical calculus and seeks to defend its national priorities, which are largely defined in 19th-century terms, such as spheres of influence, economic interests, and hard security. Russia respects two attributes: strength and consistency. NATO needs to demonstrate both. NATO's relationship with Russia should be built on a foundation of shared and common interests, but based on realism and pragmatism. Russia and NATO have plenty of scope for cooperation, including countering

piracy, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, combating Islamic extremism, and cooperation in the Arctic. However, NATO should not ignore other areas, such as missile defense and Russian actions in its periphery, especially Russia's occupation of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. In October 2011, Putin proclaimed the creation of the Eurasian Union as a long-term geopolitical goal, viewing the former Soviet space as the "zone of privileged interests," another term for the quasi-imperial sphere of influence.

Nothing indicates that Russia is on a path toward reform. Despite economic growth based on exports of hydrocarbons and other raw materials, its demographic decline and aging population are putting pressures on the state, which has become what some describe as a "thugocracy" or "plutocracy." The country is also run by a symbiosis of secret services and organized crime. Democratic freedoms are threatened, corruption is endemic and rampant, and the future is bleak.

Even with Russia's internal difficulties, Vladimir Putin clearly indicated during his presidential campaign that he will invest heavily in Russia's military. In an article in *Rossiiskaya Gazeta*, Putin stated:

Under these circumstances, Russia cannot rely on diplomatic and economic methods alone to resolve conflicts. Our country faces the task of sufficiently developing its military potential as part of a deterrence strategy. This is an indispensable condition for Russia to feel secure and

30. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, "Statement," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, April 19, 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_86234.htm (accessed April 23, 2012).

31. News release, "NATO–Russia Ministers Discuss Closer Cooperation," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, April 19, 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-A18CBF07-E04EEDDD/natolive/news_86221.htm (accessed April 23, 2012).

for our partners to listen to our country's arguments.

We have adopted and are implementing unprecedented programs to develop our armed forces and modernize Russia's defense industry. We will allocate around 23 trillion rubles [\$775 billion] for these purposes over the next decade.³²

Putin has linked the strengthening of the Russian economy with modernization of its armed forces as many czars and Soviet General Secretaries did before him. Putin suggested that financial investment in modernizing the Russian Armed Forces must "serve as fuel to feed the engines of modernization in our economy, creating real growth and a situation where government expenditure funds new jobs, supports market demand, and facilitates scientific research."³³

Although Russia should not be a driving force for NATO, the second-order effects of Russian-induced instability in Eastern Europe should be of concern. The fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the recent Russian occupation of Georgian territory caught many by surprise. Western leaders should not allow a resurgent Russia to surprise them again. From the Arctic Sea to the Caspian Sea, 21st-century Russia has exhibited 19th-century mindset and ambitions. As soon as Russia

realizes that the East, not the West, poses the greatest threat to Russian national security, NATO–Russian relations will improve.

U.S. Tactical Nuclear Weapons in Europe. The threats associated with nuclear proliferation make the world more dangerous today than it was during the Cold War, making it important that NATO maintains its "nuclear culture." In addition to the nuclear capabilities of France and the United Kingdom, the U.S. maintains tactical nuclear weapons in Europe. The U.S. is believed to have maintained around 2,500 such weapons in Europe through the end of the Cold War. Unofficial estimates put the current figure between 150 and 200, which are based in Italy, Turkey, Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands.³⁴ All of these are free-fall gravity bombs designed for use with U.S. and allied dual-capable aircraft.

Encouraged by the Obama Administration's policy of unilateral nuclear disarmament, some in NATO have suggested that American tactical nuclear weapons in Europe are a Cold War anachronism and should be removed from the continent. The ongoing debate inside the alliance on the future of nuclear weapons has been carried out under the auspices of the Deterrence and Defense Posture Review.

The 2010 Lisbon Summit Declaration stated that the alliance "agreed to continue to review NATO's

overall defense and deterrence posture" and decided to further delay a final decision regarding the future of these weapons. The Chicago Declaration will likely use similar language because there is far too much disagreement inside the alliance to settle the issue at the summit.

AS SOON AS RUSSIA REALIZES THAT THE EAST, NOT THE WEST, POSES THE GREATEST THREAT TO RUSSIAN NATIONAL SECURITY, NATO-RUSSIAN RELATIONS WILL IMPROVE.

The U.S. should ensure that tactical nuclear weapons remain part of the alliance's nuclear strategy. This is an important and often overlooked part of alliance burden sharing. NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept stated that the strategic nuclear forces of the alliance provide the supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies. As long as the West could face a nuclear threat from any part of the world, NATO needs to remain a nuclear alliance.

Syria. Rightfully, NATO as an alliance has clearly stated that it neither supports military intervention in Syria, nor is planning to intervene.³⁵ As Heritage Foundation analysis has pointed out, an outside "peacekeeping" force would only become embroiled in the conflict as a combatant. That might increase the suffering of the Syrian people, which is sure to continue as long as Assad

32. Vladimir Putin, "Being Strong: Why Russia Needs to Rebuild Its Military," *Foreign Policy*, February 21, 2012, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/02/21/being_strong (accessed April 11, 2012).

33. *Ibid.*

34. Malcolm Chalmers and Simon Lunn, "NATO's Tactical Nuclear Dilemma," Royal United Services Institute *Occasional Paper*, March 2012, p. 1, http://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/NATOs_Nuclear_Dilemma.pdf (March 23, 2012).

35. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, "Monthly Press Briefing," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, April 2, 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_85692.htm (accessed April 22, 2012).

remains in power.³⁶ Syria will likely be kept off the agenda unless Turkey insists on addressing the issue.

After the recent cross-border incident that wounded at least five people, including two Turkish officials, Ankara has hinted that it may seek NATO help with defending its border.

Soon after the incident Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said:

We have many options. A country has rights born out of international law against border violations. ... Also, NATO has responsibilities with regards to Turkey's borders, according to Article 5.³⁷

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu added:

Turkey's border is also a NATO border. Therefore, with regards to NATO member countries' mutual responsibilities, this would become an issue of interest to all these countries ... in terms of protecting the borders.

Article 5 of the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty guarantees the alliance's collective security and has only been invoked once—after the terrorist attacks on 9/11. While this incident would not merit invoking NATO's Article 5, Turkey is using it to prioritize Syria on the international stage, especially at the G8 meeting in May and NATO's Chicago Summit.

If the border clashes continue and Turkey feels that its international borders are threatened, it could invoke Article 4 like it did in 2003.

This would require all NATO members to meet to address the security concerns of the alliance member invoking the article. However, until there is an armed attack on Turkey's territorial integrity, invoking Article 5 would be difficult to justify.

How the U.S. Can Lead

The potential for American leadership to exercise real influence on a head of state at a summit should not be understated. To make the summit a success, the U.S. should:

- **Ensure that the transition of Afghan security is based on conditions on the ground, not driven by the calendar.** Specifically, the Chicago Summit Declaration should include security-based language, not calendar-driven language, such as was used in the Lisbon Summit Declaration. Even as Afghan security is taking the lead in more of the country, NATO should not use this as an excuse for countries to leave Afghanistan prematurely. Any withdrawal of ISAF forces from Afghanistan should be based on improved conditions on the ground and on military advice. When these security conditions are met, NATO's withdrawal should be a phaseout, not a walkout.
- **Encourage NATO allies to commit to financing the ANSF well into the future and lay the groundwork for the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan in July.** Supporting the ANSF after 2015 will cost an estimated

\$4 billion. This is a fraction of the total cost the international community pays to keep international troops in Afghanistan. To succeed, the transition strategy needs a capable ANSF. The international community including NATO, China, India, and Japan need to make firm financial pledges to ensure the ANSF's viability in the coming years.

- **Maintain pressure on America's European allies to invest in defense and to meet the benchmark of spending 2 percent of GDP on defense.** In practice, America can do little to force European countries to spend more on defense. However, this should not prevent the U.S. from expressing displeasure at the failure of many European allies to invest enough in defense.
- **Help Macedonia obtain NATO membership by pressuring Greece to resolve its name dispute with Macedonia.** Macedonia has been ready for full NATO membership since 2008, blocked only by Greece. It is absurd that the Greeks, who heavily rely on the financial goodwill of their European neighbors, continue to veto Macedonia's membership because of a name dispute. The U.S. should pressure the Greeks to agree to a compromise with Macedonia.
- **Ensure that a NATO+4 meeting at the heads-of-government level takes place and that the Chicago Declaration explicitly**

36. James Phillips, "Next Steps for U.S. in Syria Crisis," Heritage Foundation *Issue Brief* No. 3506, February 15, 2012, <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2012/02/next-steps-for-us-in-syria-crisis> (accessed April 22, 2012).

37. Reuters, "Turkey Says NATO Is Option to Defend Syrian Border," Yahoo News, April 12, 2012, <http://news.yahoo.com/turkey-says-nato-option-defend-syrian-border-064107261.html> (accessed May 1, 2012).

reaffirms NATO's open door policy. With enlargement off the agenda, a NATO+4 meeting would be a very important deliverable for the four NATO aspirant countries.

- **Urge NATO members to provide Georgia with a MAP and reaffirm NATO's commitment to Georgia's territorial integrity in the summit's declaration.** Georgia spends approximately 4 percent of GDP on defense and will soon be the largest per capita contributor of troops in ISAF. Georgia is an example to all of NATO. The summit declaration should include strong and clear language reaffirming NATO's commitment to Georgia's eventual membership.
- **Encourage NATO to strengthen its relationship with the Gulf States through the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative.** NATO could build on lessons learned from working with Gulf states during the Libya operation by expanding membership of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative or agreeing to Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programs with Gulf States.
- **Encourage NATO to formally invite Libya to join the Mediterranean Dialogue.** An invitation for Libya to join the Mediterranean Dialogue would formalize NATO's relationship with Libya and send the right signals to others in the region that NATO wants to cooperate

and work with countries on its periphery.

- **Publicly denounce the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy and reaffirm the primacy of NATO for all European defense and security matters.** Spending on EU defense initiatives exacerbates the dire financial situation by diverting scarce resources away from NATO. Every euro or pound spent on EU defense is one less invested in NATO. For this reason the U.S. should send a clear message that it does not support EU defense integration.
- **Continue to expand the cooperation on missile defense.** This could include jointly developing missile defense systems, establishing command-and-control systems, and preparing operational plans. NATO will need to clearly define key missile defense capabilities and the assets required to achieve them. In addition NATO will need to explore options to field a variety of land-based, air-based, sea-based, and space-based systems capable of intercepting ballistic missiles in all three stages of flight: the boost, midcourse, and the terminal phases.

Conclusion

NATO has done more to promote democracy, peace, and security in Europe than any other multilateral organization, including the European Union. Continued active U.S. participation is essential to the alliance's prosperity.

NATO's future depends on succeeding in its current operations, whether the peacekeeping mission in Kosovo, combating piracy off the Horn of Africa, or the NATO-led campaign in Afghanistan. If NATO cannot meet the objectives of its current commitments, then the alliance's future is in doubt. Furthermore, the U.S. needs to pressure its European allies in public and in private to invest in defense. Regrettably, the recent U.S. defense cuts put the Obama Administration in a weak position to make this argument.

Flowery words in a summit declaration are not enough. Meeting the objectives of Smart Defense will require real investment. Meeting NATO objectives in Afghanistan after 2015 will require real commitment. Leadership and engagement are essential to forging the partnerships that NATO needs to operate successfully in an interdependent and globalized world.

America's European partners not only value, but also rely on American leadership in times of crisis and turmoil. At the Chicago Summit, the Obama Administration needs to make the cases for transition, enlargement, and more defense investment and, ultimately, the case for NATO's role in the 21st century. Without American leadership—which has been notably absent of late—NATO will continue to face an uncertain future.

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