

“France and the New Trans-Atlantic Deal”



Session at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Paris – Monday 16 February

The presentation was structured in three sections: global context, US-EU relations and the role of France in the transatlantic dialogue.

Global context

The world is now confronted with a systemic and governance challenge stemming from the incapacity of the institutional system built after 1945 (UN, World Bank, IMF, NATO) to cope with the new economic, political, security and social problems of our time. How to act collectively in the spirit of legitimacy and effectiveness? The answer lies in more coordination of public and private actors and in better use of the added value of all existing institutions. The US is an indispensable actor, Europe has made much progress in economic integration, but less in the political one, BRIC countries' request for more power needs to be matched by increased responsibilities, and one needs to bring into the system struggling countries such as Belarus, Cuba, Iran and Venezuela. The old saying that globalization weakens states seems to not hold true anymore, if we consider the call for more state intervention to address the ongoing financial and economic crisis. The key issue is yet how to transfer multipolarity into effective multilateralism? The answer depends on five factors: 1) the attitude and the type of leadership exercised by the US; 2) relations between the EU

and the US; 3) reform of international institutions; 4) their effectiveness; 5) the degree of justice and legitimacy. The election of the president Barack Obama raised high expectations in the world, but they need to be managed and tuned down due to the US constraints (budgetary, institutional and political establishments, power politics etc).

US-EU relations

The US and the EU need to engage into a strategic dialogue and forge a common vision and a strategic agenda related to how to better work collectively in international organizations, how to address the current financial crisis, to restore confidence between Russia and the West, to stabilize Iraq and Afghanistan, to advance a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian problem as well as to the Iranian nuclear ambitions. The US and the EU need to make the best of the current global context and preserve their unity while trying to deliver policy responses to global policy problems. The US was never so supportive of the ESDP as it is now. However, some EU states still want to further rely on US security guarantees.

Role of France in the transatlantic dialogue

France favours both a strong EU defence and a strong NATO. EU and NATO need to complement and not duplicate each other. Against this background one needs to understand France's decision to reenter the integrated military structure of NATO, which is accompanied by an intense domestic political debate. Both the Gaullist and the leftist politicians ask whether it is worth for France coming back into NATO, whether France will lose its capacity to choose or how much influence will thus France have in the Alliance. But in reality France never left the Alliance. Its reintegration into NATO military structure will increase its power and make it more reliable in the eyes of the allies.

Conclusions

2009 will be a challenging year: the financial and economic crisis ask for immediate and effective answers; the Iran issue will come to "maturity"; progress in Afghanistan is to be made. Quintessential is that the US and the EU take the leadership and work together to successfully address these key issues.

“NATO towards Strasbourg/Kehl”



Session at the Royal High Institute for Defence
Brussels – Thursday 19 February

The presentation briefly conceptualized the main stages of NATO development during the 60 years of its existence and gave an overview of the main challenges the Alliance is facing today.

It was underlined that US-EU cooperation proved to be a timeless idea. Despite the fact that today, NATO is facing its biggest ever challenges, it was argued that NATO used to overcome them. 60 years of history which can be divided into three stages shows NATO's ability to adapt. The main feature of the first stage (the Cold War) was deterrence. During the Cold War, the use of force by NATO would have been considered as a failure. The end of the Cold War marked the beginning of the second stage, and a change in the paradigm. The hostile environment had been replaced by a partnership environment in which deterrence was not a sufficient role for NATO to play. The second stage can be referred to as the consolidation of Europe, but already in the 1990's NATO had realized that the new security interests exceeded the Euro Atlantic area. 9/11 made it clear that NATO has a global role to play and it also marked the beginning of a new NATO development phase. The third and current stage is the most demanding so far. For the first time, NATO operates in a combat environment and suffers casualties.

Furthermore, today, NATO success does not solely depend on military performance. NATO is dependent on other actors. It was argued that in this context some fundamental questions have to be answered. Such as the NATO response to new security threats, the future of the Alliance's military transformation, NATO's role in Afghanistan, modalities of NATO relations with the EU, UN and third countries, as well as the future of Europe's consolidation agenda, in particular the future of enlargement and their relationship with Russia. Reference was made to the debate on the new NATO Strategic Concept as a process which can help to identify some answers. A new strategic concept will probably now solve all the problems NATO has, but it can definitely serve as a therapy. In the Q&A session debate focused on two main issues – Russia's proposal to discuss the new pan-European security architecture and Afghanistan. It was noted that NATO countries have mixed feelings concerning the Russian proposal. However, it was argued that the Russian initiative will probably not lead anywhere, as Russia's actions in Georgia do not make the Russian proposal credible. Discussing Afghanistan, the focus was on the need to look for a regional solution.

The Afghan ownership issue was emphasized and it was noted that regardless of increasing international involvement in Afghanistan, NATO is the only organization for which Afghanistan is the priority.

“The American View of NATO’s Political Agenda”



Session at the Royal High Institute for Defence Brussels – Thursday 19 February

This presentation focused on European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) and the American response to this process. Firstly it was noted that the administration of President Obama is still developing its approach to European security in general – and in particular its approach to ESDP and the NATO alliance. That being said – a framework of the American position was laid out.

The United States does not view the European Union and NATO as competing – zero sum game entities. The American position is not NATO or the EU but rather NATO and the EU. America is willing to talk to the EU with reference to European Security. While the US will continue to view NATO as an institution to deal with security issues at large – it recognizes the increasing political strength of the EU institutions and the increasing political will of European Union member states to stake out a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) that reflects European values. This approach reflects a traditional American pragmatic view on problem solving – using the strengths of both institutions to get things done.

This view was supplemented with a discussion regarding European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI). The US supports ESDI if it works in harmony to fund and increase both capabilities and capacities best designed to counter today’s security challenges – mainly irregular warfare activities. The US welcomes such investment in areas such as strategic lift (both air and surface), Command, Control, Computers, Communications, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (C4ISR), tactical mobility – particularly rotary wing

aviation – and the implementation of doctrine and force structure changes that enable military units to fight full spectrum operations (beyond the traditional aspects of territorial defense). The US does not support the duplication of efforts (that NATO already has sufficient capacity) such as Headquarters for political purposes only.

Three major areas were discussed where the US and Europe have common interests. First, the struggles in South Asia, Afghanistan, Pakistan and the surrounding countries of the region is a generational struggle. It is in the common interest of both the US and Europe to create conditions of stability in this region in order to enhance our own security. This struggle will be measured in decades and generations vice months and years. Both the US and Europe need to communicate this to their respective populations who do not understand the why and the nature of how this conflict is emerging. Both risk losing popular support for these policies. Secondly, the speaker addressed Russia. Russia is still searching for its own identity – even 20 plus years after the fall of communism. The west (US and EU) and bilateral (US – Russia) (Russia with various EU Members) and (Russia-NATO) have a mixed record. While members of the Atlantic Alliance and EU feel there has been some success in this strategy – the Russians see it a different way. Russia sees its security interests as not being addressed and sees EU and NATO as the two principle European Security institutions – neither of which they have a formal role to play in. The US and EU need include Russia as a player in European security. This does not mean Russia gets to dictate or dominate the European security agenda – but it needs to have a voice. Otherwise we risk further isolation of Russia and potential radical behavior.

The third issue addressed was Transnational Terrorism. Both the EU and US have common interests in challenging Transnational Terror organizations. In particular is the recognition that Islam and the Islamic world is going through its own internal struggles and political developments – very similar to Christianity up to the Enlightenment and Renaissance period of the 16-18 century. This period was a very violent one for Christianity – with such events as the Spanish is going through its own violent period – where the voices of moderates and radicals are struggling for control and establishing an Islamic identity. This struggle effects both the US and EU (as well as the Islamic world) – and is likely to play out for the next 2 plus generations. Again, returning to an earlier theme – the speaker articulated that both EU and US political leaders need to articulate this point to our populations – in order to gain their understanding for this challenge.

“The Role of Post-Cold War NATO”



Session at the Royal High Institute for Defence Brussels – Thursday 19 February

Our guest speaker is a current civilian member of the NATO staff in Brussels who had vast experience in NATO beginning prior to the fall of the Soviet Union.

-The questioning of the role of NATO after the collapse of the Soviet Union was acknowledged and the speaker spoke of the effectiveness of NATO's post-Cold War role as an institution for security within Europe

-The speaker's own experience was described during the tumultuous period after the fall of the Soviet Union and the speaker saw NATO as the sole institution that provided stability. While member states were determining status of relations with Russia and members of the former Warsaw pact, NATO provided a foundation from which security in a greater Europe was possible.

-The speaker was extremely frank to the satisfaction it seems of many but not all in the audience, especially in response of the Russian aggression in Georgia. The speaker did not leave the Georgian Government inculpable, but certainly believed the Russians showed poor judgment in the manner and ferocity with which they proceeded.

-The speaker also addressed the taboo topic of Israel and its operations in Gaza. The speaker thought Israeli actions were not proportional and that while they had a right to defend themselves, the effectiveness of Gaza rocket attacks did not warrant the violence returned.

-Almost with an amused sense, the speaker spoke of the frustrations within NATO over the inability of the EU and NATO to coordinate actions as a result of the disagreements over the status of Cyprus. Both EU and NATO have been stalemated on even seemingly minor issues where operations with non-aligned nations like Sweden have been very effective.

-In addition to Sweden's active role in NATO sponsored operations, the speaker also mentioned the significance and importance of other special relationships, like that of North Korea, Japan, and Australia, especially against the backdrop of ISAF operations in Afghanistan.

“NATO's Military Transformation and the Utility of Force, a German Perspective”



Session at the Royal High Institute for Defence

Brussels – Thursday 19 February

1. Setting

- After the Cold War, NATO started a transformation to become one of the most powerful global actors.
- In the meantime, some (non NATO) states became single actors and behave accordingly (e.g. Iran).
- During the 7. decade of NATO, there are already a lot of changes from the military and the political point of view.

2. Ongoing

- Forces are requested to be more deployable, which means much more money but also better results in engagements.
- NRF turned out to be a top idea, but is in full crisis and its value is the one of a paper tiger. Not more then 50% of the targeted forces are available, tremendous lack of funding and filling.
- Remember: Since NATO exists, there was never such a thing as NATO forces, ALL are

purely national – if they are – and strings are attached.

3. Upcoming

- For the upcoming summit in Kehl and Strasbourg expectations are set for a “new” strategic guidance. Outlines should be fixed for a development covering 10 - 15 years to enable an efficient national and NATO planning cycle.
- Today’s and future conflicts are definitely in need for an effect based comprehensive approach.
- Nowadays changing forces in NATO are driven by ongoing and upcoming operations. Drivers are:
 - o Comprehensive approach = go’s and no go’s by NATO in theatre.
 - o Implementation of the Ministerial Guidance 2006.
- Hope is for a new command structure, it has to be streamlined and more efficient.

4. Outlook

- The NATO defence planning process is still from the Cold War, adaptation is needed, and Germany will be in lead.
 - The force generating process needs to overcome shortfalls:
 - o Steady mission review needed for operations.
 - o Cost sharing needs to become a standard (today: who provides, pays for).
- High on the agenda: Usability targets for each nation, meaning:
- o 100% strength of forces.
 - o 40% deployable forces (equipped, sustained, prepared).
 - o 8% sustainable forces for forces deployed in operations.
- Transformation is not going to be finished, the comprehensive approach is to widen and link to a full theatre spectrum. Cyber defence has not yet been taken up to full stage; it is going to influence transformation in the future.

5. Urgent

- Afghanistan and Pakistan deserve to be strategic priorities.
- How is the alliance going to deal with Russia?
- How to come out of the Balkan crisis? From the US side, this is widely understood as an EU business.
- NATO and EU should not compete, but complete each other. To tackle:
 - o NATO is successful with CIMIC, which is not the same as EU’s CIVMIL. If the EU leaves the mil part to NATO, the “product” of both would be surprisingly successful in a theatre.
 - o NATO’s NRF and EU’s battle groups are similar concepts, but based mostly on the same troops. Concept is on both sides meaningful, but resources will determine.

“The Russian View of NATO’s Political Agenda”



Session at the Royal High Institute for Defence
Brussels – Thursday 19 February

The speaker began the session by emphasising how difficult it was for Russia to establish a relationship with NATO. Russia in the early 1990’s wanted to avoid confrontation and found a common denominator. The commitment of NATO not to position substantial troops in the new member states (which was broken later on) provided a good starting point. Russia had to freeze the relation because of the violation of international law by NATO in Kosovo. After 9/11 Russia tried again to find new forms of cooperation. The agreement signed focused on: fighting new challenges; cooperating as equal partners and working together in the NATO-Russia Council.

Cooperation in 19 areas began. The most important ones were: 1. missile defence; 2. air space initiative (ICAO); 3. fighting narcotics; 4. extensive military cooperation (e.g. Russia’s participation in NATO naval operations conducted under Art. 5). During the Georgian War, Russia asked for an emergency session of the NATO-Russia Council but the decision was blocked by one NATO member state. NATO froze all forms of cooperation and thus interrupted conflict resolution on the political level. By now NATO countries realized that this was a mistake. Russia also wants to “reset” relations. There is a need to be listened to especially after NATO expansion (note: not enlargement) undermined security. At the moment there is no security for all, especially not for Russia.

The speaker also commented on the Bucharest Summit and claimed that the decision to bring Ukraine into NATO was not democratic as there is no majority for this step amongst the Ukrainian population. Further, he claimed that the CFE Treaty has nothing to do with the Istanbul Commitments, as they are just bilateral commitments. Russia suspended the CFE Treaty because NATO didn’t respond to anything. The build-up of a missile defence system in Poland and the Czech Republic against an alleged Iranian threat would be wrong. In the second shorter part of his speech the speaker focused on the perspectives of NATO-Russian relations. He emphasized the will of Russia to cooperate, especially in the NATO-Russian Council. The permission given to NATO to transport non-lethal goods to Afghanistan through Russia was presented as an example for Russia’s good will. There

were also many opportunities to work together on missile defence issues, if the U.S. would stop their missile defence system in Poland and the Czech Republic.

The Q&A session focused on Georgia. It was claimed by the speaker that FM Lavrov had never said “Russia will do everything to prevent Georgia’s NATO membership”. Instead Georgia’s claim that 80% of its population would be in favour of NATO membership was wrong. Abkhazia and South Ossetia had not taken part in the referendum. Russia had foreseen Georgian military action. There was a Georgian military build-up taking place for four years. During this period Georgia had not accepted any mediation. It was Russia who stabilized the region for years. It was Russia who paid the pensions. One to two million people became Russians (even the Georgian FM has a Russian passport). It was Russia who prevented a civil war. Because of Georgia’s claim to start the war again Russian military presence is needed for the future. Asked what the legal basis for recognizing Abkhazia and South Ossetia would have been, the speaker asked in return: “Tell me, what is the legal basis for Kosovo?” Concerning NATO “expansion” it was highlighted that NATO is a military block whose bases came closer and closer to the Russian border. The relationship with NATO would have worsened significantly after the Baltic’s had become members. With its “expansion” NATO has created security for itself at the expense of Russia. Russia was never invited to become a member because no one wanted to have another France in NATO. France would have pushed ESDP because it felt U.S. hegemony. In addition any cooperation between the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and NATO was blocked by NATO countries because of the alleged domination of CSTO by Russia. But one should keep in mind that all CSTO members are sovereign nations. The speaker also pretended to be astonished that NATO-Russia cooperation concerning Afghanistan would not have been utilized better. Russia would have offered extensive help to NATO. This cooperation would be in the interest of both actors.

Russia’s aid to Kyrgyzstan would have nothing to do with the announced closure of the U.S. air base in Kyrgyzstan. The U.S. didn’t want to pay what was asked for and they behaved badly in the past. It was a sovereign decision of Kyrgyzstan. Russia is not interested in Iran possessing nuclear weapons. Russia would therefore actively engage in the group of 6 and would favour a patient approach without any threats. Pressure would only lead to counter-pressure. The international community would have to show to the Iranian people that a civilian nuclear option would be supported. Closely related to this topic is the build-up of the U.S. missile defence system in Europe. It is not about the 10 interceptors we are talking about at the moment. It is about multiple kill vehicles and more warheads in the near future. Therefore the program should be stopped now. Otherwise it would increase unpredictability and undermine strategic stability. If Iran should really be on the way to have nuclear missiles in 15-20 years, an American ally will destroy them before. If security is needed, do it with Russia. In general it is important to understand: 1. Don’t push Russia in a corner – it will respond. 2. In the international financial crisis we are all in the same boat because Russia has become part of a globalized world.

“ACO General Brief on NATO’s Operations – Global Picture including a focus on Afghanistan”



Session at SHAPE

Mons – Friday 20 February

NATO’s STRUCTURE AND TRANSFORMATION

The speaker briefed the participants that The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) comprises civilian and military structure, as well as a number of organizations and agencies. Allied Command Operations (ACO), covering all the Alliance’s operations and Allied Command Transformation (ACT), dealing with the transformation of the organization and the improvement of NATO’s military capability, are the two Strategic Commands of the Alliance. The presenter stressed that compared to the period till 1993, NATO has significantly reduced the number of its HQ’s (from 32 to 11), has launched 6 operations and has deployed 68 000 troops.

At the present time NATO conducts an open-door policy. Seven new members joined the organization in 2004 and in 2008 two other nations started accession talks to join soon.

ACO’s COMMAND STRUCTURE

The presenter intimated participants that ACO or SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe) is situated in Mons, Belgium. ACO is commanded by the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR). The ACO’s operational command structure includes two Joint Force Commands (JFC) in Brunssum, the Netherlands and in Naples, Italy and a Joint Headquarters (JHQ) in Lisbon, Portugal. The two JFC’s can conduct operations from their location while authority of JHQ is more limited. At tactical level, ACO’s command structure includes various commands. Other players at ACO are the National Military Advisors, EU Operation HQ, NATO Airborne Early Warning and Control Force and NATO Communication and Information Systems Services Agency.

ACO’s KEY FOCAL POINTS

In his brief, participants were informed that the key focal points of ACO are: maintain and support Operations; develop and sustain the NATO Response Force (NRF); addressing asymmetric threats; transformation. The level of commitment includes ISAF in Afghanistan, KFOR in Kosovo, Active Endeavor in the Mediterranean, NTM (I) in Iraq, support to the African Union, Baltic and Slovenian Air Surveillance, support to EU's Althea Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

ISAF

The speaker gave an overview of ISAF and briefed the participants with its main challenges, with national caveats being on the top of the list, as well as with its way ahead: increase the support for ANA's equipment and training, fully resource CJSOR, working with IC in the framework of a comprehensive approach, continue to engage with Pakistan, increase support to CN efforts, improve strategic communications.

BALKANS

In the framework of NATO's engagement on the Balkans, the presenter emphasized that the Alliance has Headquarters in Sarajevo, Skopje and Tirana, provides support to the EU conducted ALTHEA operation in BiH under the Berlin Plus arrangements. In Kosovo NATO continues KFOR operation which tasks focus on cordon and search, walk and talk, coordination and intelligence.

NRF

Participants were briefed that ACO is responsible for the standards, certification and exercises of NRF, which strength totals 25 000 and which has been deployed twice – in the aftermaths of Hurricane Catherine and Pakistan earthquake subsequently.

NATO RELATIONSHIPS

The presenter touched upon the issue by explaining the numerous formats of partnerships the Alliance is maintaining with various countries/groups of countries, including Partnership for Peace, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, Mediterranean Dialogue, Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, NATO-Russia Council, NATO-Ukraine Commission, etc.

THE ROAD AHEAD

The speaker concluded its presentation by pointing out the main directions of future efforts, highlighting the need for more robust support from the nations, including capability development, achieving success in the mission of the Alliance and firmly maintaining cohesion and solidarity among its members.

“The Strategic Challenges of Current NATO Operations”



Session at SHAPE

Mons – Friday 20 February

The speaker began the session by outlining his perspectives on current NATO Operations in Iraq, Kosovo and Afghanistan and its future policy. The NATO Training Mission in Iraq is small but useful. NATO is there at the invitation of the Iraqi authorities to provide training to police and army officers. The mission is continuing despite security difficulties as US forces reconfigure. EULEX Kosovo, the EU civilian mission, reached Initial Operational Capability on 9 December 2008. It has been able to have a presence north of the Ibar river, which has been helpful to NATO. At present there is a safe and secure environment with no great difficulties. NATO's efforts are focused on standing down the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) and standing up the Kosovo Security Force (KPF). There are ongoing discussions on the future of the mission and these discussions are likely to intensify in the middle of the year. It has been a difficult twelve months in Afghanistan with a decline in the security situation although most activity is confined to certain districts. An increase in narcotics has added to the insurgency. However, there are positive developments in Afghanistan with economic growth up 10% in recent years and improved health and education. NATO is clear in the objectives for the mission. However, it must be resourced properly and the promise of better national and local governance must be fulfilled.

The main policy areas of NATO are the development of the NATO Response Force, the accommodation of France in NATO military command structures, the new Strategic Concept and the Declaration on Security. The remainder of the session was devoted to Questions and Answers. Most questions related to Afghanistan but the NATO Response Force and Ukrainian Membership of NATO also featured. With regard to the NATO Response Force, the speaker outlined the difficulties encountered during the previous two years in force generation. Initially, NATO tried to source a force of 25,000 troops with all capabilities. Then it developed a graduated option of seven missions with associated

Combined Joint Statement of Requirements (CJSOR). However, it failed to generate a force for even the least complex of the seven missions. It has now developed a concept with three possible options to which Member States can contribute if they wish.

Ukraine's accession to NATO is a question for Ukraine. It must decide whether to join and what NATO would bring to it in terms of security. However, it would be unhealthy to make a major change in policy if most people do not support it. The experience in Georgia does not affect the decision on Ukraine. There were specific circumstances in Georgia which led to the actions there. Hence, the case does not serve as an example for other countries. NATO needs to do further analysis to understand what happened in Georgia and why.

Discussions on Afghanistan covered a number of topics, including the general situation, NATO Forces, the end-state and the regional situation. There was no one simple problem in Afghanistan. Among the problems are narcotics and the nexus with corruption, the regional situation including Pakistan, economics and poor governance. Coordination between ISAF and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) has improved, especially since both American forces are now under the same command. The recent increased contribution of US forces, which are subordinate to NATO and are based in the East and South, is very welcome but not enough. It was reasonable to expect other nations to do more but each country was coming from a fragile political base, especially Netherlands and Canada, the latter having suffered proportionally heavy losses in the campaign. While everyone is against the evil of drugs, Member States do not see operations against criminality as a reason for sending troops abroad. Governments do not have a huge pool of Armed Forces to send as they change from conscription to professional armies at a time when there is less money for defence.

The end-state of the mission in Afghanistan cannot be measured in time but must be conditions-based. The International Community will decide the end-state when the Afghan Government becomes authoritative and takes control. As the process moves forward, the training of the Afghan army and police security forces is very important. The target of training 122,000 by 2011 may not be fully delivered but there will be a continuing requirement for training. There will be a declining military involvement in Afghanistan for another ten years, similar to the situation in Iraq. There must be a regional solution to the situation in Afghanistan. The continuing development of extremism in Pakistan has spread to other countries. While supply routes in the south are ok, there is a need for durability and flexibility in the north to ensure that lines of communication remain open.

Reconciliation with the Taliban is ultimately a matter for the Afghan Government. If the governance and economic situation is right, some Taliban would be open to reintegration into the community but others would not, no matter what was done. It is, however, not helpful to make public NATO's approach to reconciliation from a position of weakness. You must negotiate from a position of strength as the Taliban is not interested in negotiating when it is strong. Afghanistan is not the same as Iraq. The policy pursued in Iraq was based on an understanding of Iraq. Similarly, the policy to be pursued in Afghanistan must be based on an understanding of Afghanistan although lessons can be learned from Iraq.

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