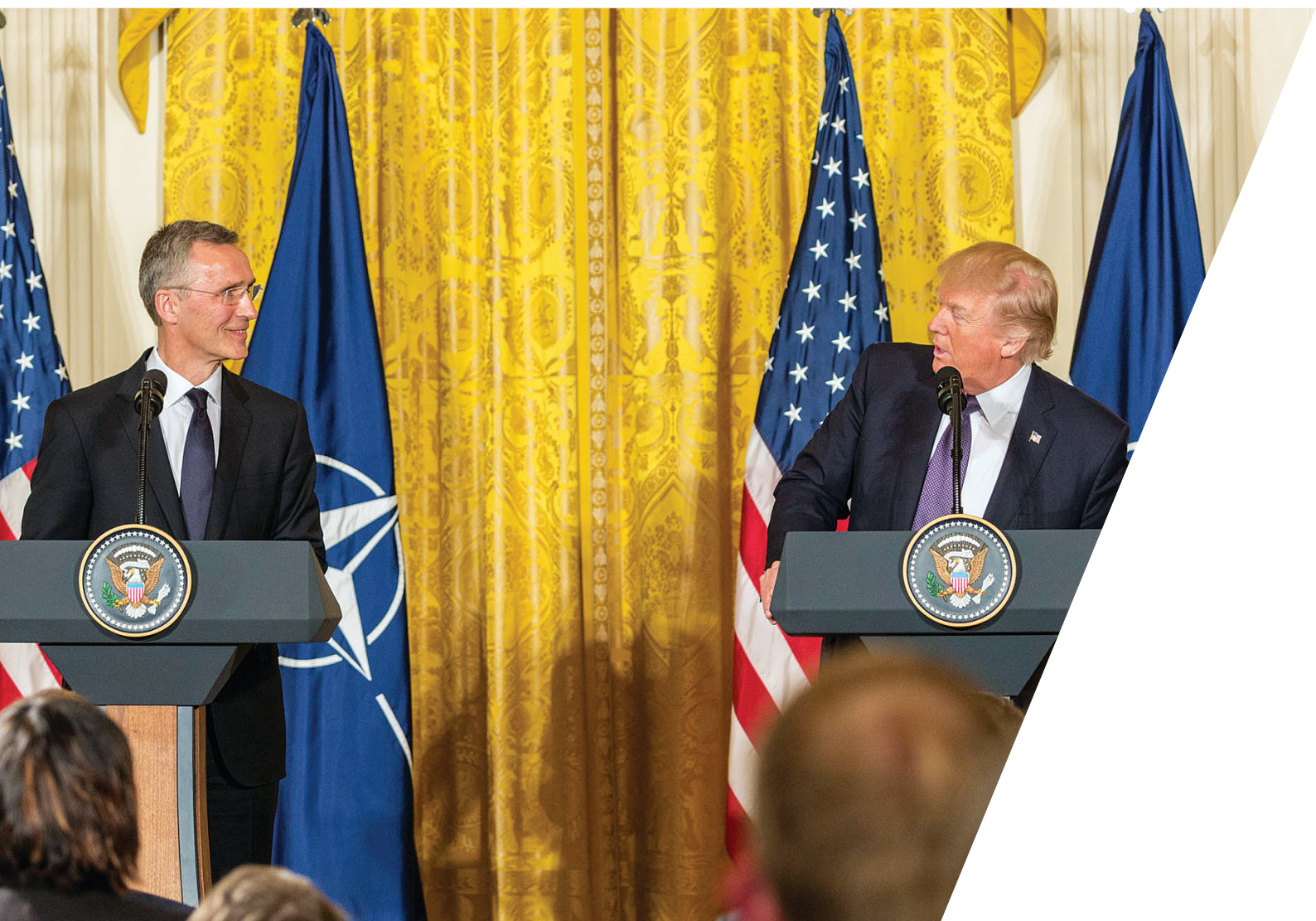# EUROPEAN SECURITY AT A TIME OF TRANSATLANTIC UNCERTAINTY

EDITED BY DR ANDREW FOXALL AND DR JOHN HEMMINGS

January 2019

Title: "EUROPEAN SECURITY AT A TIME OF TRANSATLANTIC UNCERTAINTY"
Edited by: Dr Andrew Foxall and Dr John Hemmings

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EUROPEAN SECURITY AT A TIME OF TRANSATLANTIC UNCERTAINTY

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Foreword

NATO can sometimes seem to be a strange phenomenon. It is an alliance that always seems to be in the grip of a new crisis or disagreement but which nonetheless manages to soldier on and still produce major initiatives and make important decisions when it really matters. Next year, in 2019, NATO will mark its 70th anniversary. For an organisation that was initially conceived to be required only for ten years, and thereafter with a treaty that needed to be reviewed after 20 years, this is quite an achievement.

Of course, the fault lines and vulnerabilities of NATO have been present since the Alliance's creation in 1949, and have never really found a cohesion. When President Donald Trump came to the NATO Summit in July 2018 and criticised the European allies for excessive dependence on the United States, he was echoing a concern first voiced by Republican Senators and the isolationist US media back in 1948 when the Treaty of Washington was first being negotiated. When the President at one stage seemed to question the US commitment to mutual defence (Article 5 of the Treaty), he was recalling a similar debate of the late 1940s about narrower or broader definitions of US security interests, and the extent to which the risks and obligations of alliance membership outweigh the benefits. At a time when the foundations of the liberal international order, with its focus on multilateralism, negotiation and compromise, are being challenged, it has hardly been a surprise that the debate about burden-sharing and the political willingness to meet the 2% defence spending target has broken out again within NATO.

Other debates, too, have a familiar ring to them. The Europeans worry anew about US reliability and whether the moment has finally come to build a truly autonomous European defence, even when, despite some of the rhetoric on both sides, there is no material evidence of the US decoupling from Europe. Indeed, the Trump Administration has recently increased its spending on its European Reassurance Initiative by 40% and sent more US forces, along with heavy equipment, to train and exercise with their European and Canadian counterparts. With the rise of populism and "illiberal democracy" in some parts of the Alliance, commentators have worried that the NATO of the future will no longer reflect democratic values. Yet we have been here before, when NATO included military regimes and dictatorships among its members, and the historical evidence is that over time alliance membership does put pressure on allies to remain committed to international law and the respect of democratic norms.

Perhaps these debates resurface in NATO periodically because there are no ultimate solutions. An alliance of free nations surviving in a turbulent world, with stresses from both within and without, is bound to experience constant upheaval and re-examination. All the more so as the functions that NATO has taken on continue to expand: collective defence is still the core, but today's NATO also strives to project stability to Eastern Europe, the Balkans and North Africa and the Middle East; to manage 42 security partnerships with non-NATO countries; to conduct operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as at sea in the Mediterranean; to build up allies' resilience against internal threats such as cyberattacks and terrorism; and to enlarge its membership to embrace new democracies such as Montenegro or the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

So despite the tensions, the factors that unite continue to far outweigh the factors that divide. NATO offers a framework for its members to handle both the common external challenges they all face and their own internal security issues and relationships, a framework that has never been surpassed. As Voltaire once said about God, if it did not exist, we would have to invent it, and Churchill's dictum that the only thing worse than fighting with allies is fighting without them remains true to this day. Yet, at the same time, NATO doesn't function on automatic pilot.

The quality of its political leadership and the way they interpret and frame the key challenges remains critical to success or failure. NATO can never rest on its laurels. The stimulus of the thinking of outside experts is also a necessary reality check, and a source of new blood and innovative ideas. I therefore congratulate the Henry Jackson Society, a transatlantic think tank based in London, for producing this excellent review of NATO. It has worked closely with the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, the well-known German institute, to frame the many challenges that NATO is facing in a fair, realistic, informed and constructive manner.

Certainly at times the fore of many of the observations may strike the reader as sober, if not pessimistic. This reflects the complex world in which we live and in which the security threats have never been as numerous or seemingly intractable. Yet, at the same time, the report that follows is driven by a profound concern for the continued vitality of NATO and the desire for it to succeed as the central pillar of the Western model and our liberal, multilateral international order. So in its clear analysis and call to action, it is to my mind the right review at exactly the right time. I commend it to political leaders as much as to the general public in the hope that they will learn from it and be inspired in their actions by its ideas, conclusions and recommendations.

Dr Jamie Shea
Deputy Assistant Secretary General, Emerging Security Challenges, NATO

Contents

1. Introduction

The UK's leaving of the European Union and Donald Trump's election as US President have produced sufficient uncertainty in the Transatlantic Alliance to suggest that a process of reassessment and reassurance of European security is required. Brexit threatens to result in weaker ties between the UK and continental Europe, and President Trump has taken his "America First" language from the campaign trail into the White House. Together with the spectre of a revisionist Russia to Europe's east and geopolitical instability to Europe's south, it is now necessary not only to recognise the importance of NATO to European security but also to grapple with intra-alliance disagreements. In doing so, the question of what role the UK will play in guaranteeing European security post Brexit will be paramount.

It is in this context that the Henry Jackson Society, in collaboration with NATO's Public Diplomacy Division and Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, hosted a one-day programme of activities devoted to discussing these issues. The programme included three closed-door round-table discussions and one public panel discussion. The first round table focused on "European Security Challenges" and attempted to take stock of non-traditional challenges facing Europe's security on its southern flank, in Africa and further to the east. The second round table explored "Internal Challenges to the Alliance" and attempted to understand the impact of burden-sharing and of populism, and the impact of Brexit on the Alliance. The third round table, "Defining, Delineating and Defending 'the West'", built on the previous round tables by exploring ways in which "the West" is evolving and whether its self-image as a security community alliance still resonates among its leaders and populations. The public panel discussion stood separate from the three round tables and provided an opportunity to publicly address the topic of "European Security at a Time of Transatlantic Uncertainty".

The programme took place on 12 June 2018 in Westminster, London, at the Henry Jackson Society at Millbank Tower and in the UK Parliament. The expert panels featured academics, think tankers, policy experts, and officials from a range of European think tanks and institutions. The audience, meanwhile, consisted of defence attachés and defence officials from the various embassies of NATO member states as well as representatives of the UK civil service, including the Cabinet Office and Ministry of Defence. Also present was a small group of "young leaders" – graduate students from British and European universities who represented a range of NATO member states. The public panel discussion in Parliament was addressed by Admiral James G. Foggo III, Commander of Allied Joint Force Command Naples, and Dr Jamie Shea, Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges. It was chaired by Dr Julian Lewis, Chair of the Defence Select Committee.

Overall, the participants were positive about the results of the programme, but under few illusions about the state of the Alliance. It remains beset with internal and external challenges. However, it is hoped that the NATO member states will react to the external challenges by aligning ever more closely.

2. NATO's External Challenges

This opening round table explored "European Security Challenges" and was structured around a number of key issues currently challenging Europe's security, including conventional and nuclear deterrence, cyberwarfare, non-linear warfare, and future security arrangements. As Europe's security agenda is redefined by internal security threats, shifting alliances at its borders, and changing transatlantic relations, this session discussed whether it is possible to reach a common security and defence understanding. This overview set the stage for the in-depth discussion of views on European security and NATO that followed.

2.1 Southern Flank

Threats to NATO along the Southern Flank stretch from Morocco in the west, across North Africa and to Iran in the Middle East. Last year, this region accounted for eight of the ten most lethal conflicts in the world.

For NATO, the Southern Flank has long been seen as shorthand for terrorism and migration. Because of this, a number of other issues have been overlooked, some of which are more pressing in the short term and others of which have longer-term importance.

Over recent years, a geopolitical vacuum has emerged along the Southern Flank. The absence of a regional hegemon mirrors broader changes in global power, as does the shift toward a situation of multipolarity as Iran and Russia – and, to a lesser extent, China – have become more active in the MENA region.

In thinking about the challenges posed by the Southern Flank, it is tempting to either (a) draw parallels with history, for example between Syria today and the situation in Yugoslavia in the 1990s, or (b) view the region in isolation. Both approaches, however, would be misguided.

For NATO to successfully meet the challenges posed along the Southern Flank, it is necessary to make use of the Alliance's full toolkit. This includes not only deterrence and defence measures, but also crisis-management and stability projection. This is difficult because, at the same time, NATO has had to relearn its collective defence posture along the Eastern Flank.

The Southern Flank has not been as "hardwired" into NATO thinking as, for example, the Eastern Flank. This has made dealing with the region over recent years difficult as – from a bureaucratic and institutional perspective – the Alliance lacks the capacity and capability to properly understand events there.

NATO is currently active along the Southern Flank in a number of ways. Most obviously, the Allied Joint Force Command Naples exists to prepare for, plan, and conduct operations in order to preserve the peace, security, and territorial integrity of the Alliance member states. NATO has a "Defence Capacity Building Project" with Jordan, is undertaking a training and capacity-building mission in Iraq, recently adopted a counterterrorism action plan, and is assisting Frontex (the European Union's border management agency) in the Aegean.

In planning its future activities along the Southern Flank, NATO should focus on defence institution-building and defensive capacity-building – both areas where NATO has real expertise and where local partners are lacking.

> *"China poses a strategic challenge to NATO, but the challenge is not solely military. It is conducting a form of hybrid warfare. It is also undertaking cyberattacks on both the Alliance and its member states."*

2.2 Africa

Until a decade or so ago, Africa was largely absent from strategic discussions within NATO. This is true from both a military and a political perspective. All of this changed, however, because of illegal migration.

According to the United Nations, the population of Africa in 2017 was around 1.3 billion people. This figure is projected to increase by the year 2050 to 2.5 billion people. At the same time, increasing numbers of Africans are willing to permanently migrate. Again according to the UN, 31% of the population of sub-Saharan Africa would rather live elsewhere permanently.

Thirty-one per cent of a projected population of 2.5 billion is 775 million people. If even half this figure has the means or will to migrate, that is a migration flow of around 375 million. It is reasonable to think that some, if not all, of these people will seek to migrate to Europe.

By contrast, the migration crisis that Europe is currently experiencing is comparatively small. Syria has a population of 18.4 million plus around 4 million people who have fled the country. Iraq has a population of 31.1 million. At the same time, the security challenges posed by such demographic growth in sub-Saharan Africa have the potential to be at least as significant, if not greater.

Issues with economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa compound the demographic situation. Annual economic growth of 5% is needed to maintain the status quo in the region. In 2017, the growth rate was 2.4%.

The US will remain one of the most important allies when it comes to security policy because it is the ablest. In Germany, there is still resistance to discussing the need for the military or the many security challenges confronting Europe.

NATO's members in southern Europe are keenly aware of the situation. Spain, Italy, Greece, and others are on the frontline of the illegal migration issue. Yet, only Greece meets NATO's target of spending at least 2% of its GDP on defence. Italy will spend 1.15% in 2018, while Spain will spend 0.93%.

2.3 China

It is obvious that China has emerged as a global power. We have seen in the past few years that China has very skilfully advanced its strategic interests through the Belt and Road Initiative. There are a number of indications that point to the fact that China has already arrived in our midst.

NATO does not have a strategy for dealing with China. However, a military dialogue between the two has existed since 2010, with yearly meetings. The dialogue was halted in 2016 and restarted earlier this year.

The Alliance is yet to look at China as a strategic global power. NATO engages with China primarily through its four partners in the Asia–Pacific – Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea, each of which has its own strategy for China – as well as through the nuclear threat posed by North Korea.

China is advancing its strategic interests through a number of key initiatives, such as the Belt and Road Initiative and its island-building programme in the South China Sea. At the same time, its military capabilities and capacities are improving.

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) is due to become a world-class fighting force by 2050. Looking at defence budgets and at what they actually put into exercises and into capability development across the board, this is quite significant for NATO.

China poses a strategic challenge to NATO. But the challenge is not solely military. It is conducting a form of hybrid warfare. It is also undertaking cyberattacks on both the Alliance and its member states. In addition, it has stepped up its space programme.

China dislikes engaging with multilateral organisations and would rather conduct diplomacy on a bilateral basis, having played "divide and rule" in order to isolate smaller countries. This is the main reason why NATO has struggled to engage with China over the past two or three decades.

It is unlikely that NATO will develop a joint approach to China. Alliance members are divided over the opportunities and threats that Beijing offers. A number of countries in Eastern and Central Europe, for example, are members of the 16+1 initiative and seek to embrace the economic opportunities China provides. Other members of the Alliance, by contrast, see China as an adversary.

What is missing is a joint NATO policy toward China, perhaps something similar to that held by the EU, which allows for a consensual approach.

2.4 Other Issues

One issue of importance but which is rarely discussed is that of energy security, particularly if that becomes a big facet of China's Belt and Road Initiative.

A major priority should be for NATO to increase the resilience of its member states to foreign interference – primarily from Russia and China – in their domestic politics.

NATO's Strategic Concept is important, but it is just a policy implementation document. Like other documents, it is not immune to changes and is likely to need to change in response to global dynamics.

In thinking about China and the South China Sea, there are discussions to be had with regard to what constitutes the proper remit of NATO.

In a relatively short period of time, NATO has moved to shore up its most vulnerable members – the Baltic States. The forward deployment of troops is small and symbolic, but the contribution is meant to be a tripwire to deter rather than defend.

Alliance members are often too self-critical. At times it seems as though NATO's adversaries believe in the Alliance's strength more than the Alliance itself does.

3. NATO's Internal Challenges

This round table explored "Internal Challenges to the Alliance" through discussions led by three speakers, each of which presented a "view" from a key NATO capital: London, Berlin, and Washington, DC. With elections having taken place in all three within a 24-month period, the discussion highlighted areas where interests and concerns have changed, and subsequent convergence or differentiation. Key issues for discussion included perceptions of US leadership in NATO, the impact of Brexit, Germany's role in the transatlantic alliance, the ramifications of Russia's revanchism in Eastern Europe, and outside interference in democratic processes.

3.1 Burden-sharing and the 2% Benchmark

Discussions of burden-sharing tend to focus on the 2% metric. NATO expects defence spending among its members to rise by 3.8% in 2018, but only five of the Alliance's members are on track to meet the NATO guideline of investing 20% of defence spending on major equipment this year, and more than half will not meet the 2% goal this year or any time soon thereafter.

There is a particular geography to the 2% metric. Eastern Europeans will deliver the fastest growth in defence spending. Their rises constitute an average of 1.6% of GDP in 2017 from 1.3% in 2013 and they are predicted to be at 1.8% by 2020. Western Europe averaged around a 2% increase in 2017.

Germany is a sort of swing state when it comes to encouraging other European allies to increase their share of spending. The country currently spends roughly €37 billion annually on the *Bundeswehr*, representing around 1.2% of GDP, and Chancellor Merkel wants defence spending to rise to 1.5% of GDP by 2025. If Germany were to meet the 2% metric, this would translate to €72 billion, turning Germany into the biggest European military spender in the Alliance, ahead of the UK, and after the US.

There are a number of criticisms with the 2% target. There is a lack of consensus over what constitutes "defence spending" and thus much ambiguity about what should and should not be included in official figures. It may be the case that a blanket 2% target is not appropriate for all allies, given that some have global interests (and commitments) while others have local interests and commitments. The 2% metric places too much focus on inputs rather than outputs; for example, what good is 2% if more than 70% of that sum is dedicated to personnel costs?

As mentioned above, another criticism often heard is that some allies have global security interests while others have local interests. The US allocates 3.6% to defence spending, but one might ask how much this goes to European defence, as opposed to Estonia's 2.1%, all of which goes to NATO-related security interests.

In response to these criticisms, a new "Three Cs" framework has been deployed by NATO HQ: Cash, Capabilities, Commitment. This latter aspect is important because it refers to the political commitments necessary to make increased defence funding available.

At a time when the 2% benchmark has become toxic among allies because of its association with President Trump, European

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allies must take ownership of the metric. Trump's statements on burden-sharing and NATO have led to a feeling that US interactions with its allies are increasingly quid pro quo transactional interactions and that he is not actually committed to alliance solidarity.

NATO's European members could take this ownership in at least three ways:

- NATO lacks the necessary authority to hold its allies accountable for their commitments, and thus should develop internal accountability processes that do not rely on Washington. Last year, NATO decided that allies must publish annual defence spending plans detailing cash capabilities and commitments. But the results have been mixed: some of the plans run from 2017 to 2020, some go beyond the 2020 goal and some simply do not exist. Something akin to the EU's Coordinated Annual Review (CAR) process is needed. CAR mandates member states to publish bi-annual reports on the priorities that member states spend their money on.

- The threat environment should be made clearer to European populations and concrete projects presented in which the money can be invested on the European level. An example of this is military mobility, or efforts to make it easier to move personnel and equipment around Europe. Another example is capability: most of Europe's tanks are located in the west rather than the east, are outdated or soon will be, and lack interoperability. Furthermore, Europe has 17 types of main battle tank, while the US only has one.

- Capability development and research and development (R&D) should be incentivised. Some bilateral treaties exist to do this – for example, between France and the UK – but more is needed. The EU's European Defence Fund, which coordinates and seeks to increase national investment in defence research and improve interoperability between national forces, is one type of effort which could be emulated.

3.2 President Trump

The fact that President Trump has not yet outlined his approach to foreign policy does not mean that he does not have one. On a number of issues, Trump has been consistent over many years. However, there were concerns in the roundtable that his behaviour since taking office suggests that he is not interested in defending the liberal world order and the norms and values that underpin it. For example, the fact that American negotiators did not seem to want the "rules-based liberal world order" in the G7 statement was very worrisome to the other six. Insofar as there is something akin to a "Trump Doctrine", there are three possibilities:

- Trump presents a worldview that is at odds with current liberal multilateralism. Even before he became President, Trump was critical of multinationalism and multinational organisations, including the EU and NATO. These positions have been reversed, especially by people in the administration, but it appears that the administration's approach towards alliances is highly transactional. So does this mean Trump is a realist President? We will have to see.

- Trump's approach has been somewhat ad hoc and fluid, and while this has its strengths, it also presents weaknesses to the US' allies. We have seen him criticise Justin Trudeau and other allies, and embrace Kim Jong-un and others' authoritarian regimes. Is he attempting to keep other states off balance purposefully? It might well be that this offers the US more leverage, however, this could breed a lot of discontent and lack of trust among Washington's European and NATO allies. Alliances really do need trust, predictability and certainty, so this approach might not serve US interests well, if that

is the approach the country is taking. And it seems that US allies are more destabilised by this approach than other authoritarian regimes.

- The third scenario is that Trumps seems to believe that, with all the trappings of power, a certain level of unilateralism is acceptable. Several US presidents have called for NATO members to increase defence spending; it's not just a Trump thing. But Trump is really serious about this – if you're a member of his golf club, you have to pay your dues. And if you don't pay your dues, you're not a member of the club. It appears that this is something he is not willing to compromise on at all.

"Countries appear to be dealing with Trump in three ways: Confront, Concede and Circumvent. Confront is what the EU is doing [on] trade ... Concede is what Europe is doing on defence spending ... and Circumvent is to go around Trump wherever possible ... with states, Congress or various American Chambers of Commerce."

Beyond these scenarios, there are a number of areas in which the US and Europe need to cooperate in order to strengthen the Transatlantic Alliance. For example, the US has a Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS), which reviews transactions that could mean a US business is controlled by a foreign person detrimental to national security. The EU, by contrast, only recently developed a body to screen China's malicious investments.

The tipping point to all this was possibly the Chinese purchases of Kuka and Midea. The first is the largest of Germany's robotics companies, while Midea – a white goods company – has begun making things for the PLA. This means that German engineers are designing products that could be used against the US at some point.

In contrast to his predecessors, Trump has approached the NATO defence budget issues, quite directly. China has long spoken of "100 years of humiliation", but now Trump is effectively saying, "There have been 70 years of humiliation; NATO don't pay their dues." Even at the G7 meeting he was effectively saying, "The United States has been taken advantage of for decades and decades." He has weaved this narrative into everything.

Trump's behaviour in the Asia–Pacific has an echo effect for Europe. For example, he announced in Singapore, "We have 32,000 soldiers in South Korea. And I'd like to be able to bring them back home, but that's not part of the equation right now ... We will be stopping the war games, which will save us a tremendous amount of money, unless and until we see the future negotiation is not going along like it should ... plus I think it's very provocative."[1]

In Europe, trust in the US to do "the right thing" on the international stage has crashed back to even lower levels than it was at the time of the Iraq War. This plummet in favourability has come after a long period of quite high levels. This may be reversible again, but the longer it goes on the more entrenched it might become, and it is a worrying trend. At the same time, European leaders have failed to make the case that not believing that Trump is likely to do the right thing does not equate to thinking that our interests and America's interests are fundamentally divergent.

Countries appear to be dealing with Trump in one of three ways: Confront, Concede and Circumvent. Confront is what the EU is doing in trade dossiers. So you say, you hit us and we will hit you right back. Concede is what Europe is doing on defence spending, which is to say, "Yes you have a point – we are not spending like the amount we should be doing, and the

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[1] 'Trump's optimistic news conference after meeting with Kim Jong Un, annotated', *The Washington Post*, 12 June 2018, available at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2018/06/12/trumps-optimistic-news-conference-after-meeting-with-kim-jong-un-annotated/?utm_term=.177729bd5f1e, last visited: 21 November 2018.

burden on the US is unreasonable." And Circumvent is to go around Trump wherever possible – engaging, for example, with states, Congress or various American Chambers of Commerce.

3.3 Brexit

It is tempting to think that Brexit is primarily a matter for the EU and does not affect NATO. There are a number of reasons, however, why this is not the case. In particular, there are two that will affect the Alliance negatively.

First, it is likely to have a negative impact on the contribution that the UK can make to the Alliance and to international security more generally. If one looks at the UK's defence budget, it has been difficult to stay above 2%. What we are likely to see, even in the most optimistic projections from the government itself on the impact of Brexit, is a reduction in the UK's GDP growth over the coming years by a minimum of 2% and perhaps as much as 8%. That is going to increase the overstretch in the defence budget.

The Chairs of the House of Commons Defence Committee and Public Accounts Committee wrote to the Prime Minister last week, warning that there will be an affordability gap, depending on assumptions, of between £4.9 billion and £20.8 billion over the next ten years in the Defence Equipment Programme, £2.9 billion within the next ten years in the Nuclear Programme, and £8.5 billion over the next 30 years in the Defence Estate. All of that was based on what they regarded as over-optimistic and unrealistic targets for efficiency savings, without which the gaps will get even bigger. If the UK economy shrinks, these problems will get worse. If the exchange rate slips again, the problems will get much worse. If there is slower growth, the UK will have lower government revenues, higher government borrowing and more pressure on government departments' budgets. And if the British government succeeds in reducing net migration as well, then greater labour market pressures will be added to the situation.

Second, there is likely be a disruption to European defence cooperation. This is happening just as the EU is pursuing a number of defence initiatives and the EU and NATO relationship is improving, as witnessed in the Warsaw Joint Declaration. The UK has been one of the prime proponents of the two organisations working together and, as it moves from being a member of both to being a member of one, this cooperation may become harder.

Although the UK insists that is unconditionally committed to European security, issues surrounding the UK's participation in Galileo, the EU's Global Satellite Navigation System (GNSS), suggest that this may be difficult. One could argue that the EU is sticking too rigidly to its rules on access of third-party countries to Galileo, but it is an EU project with an EU rulebook. It would be best for the UK to search for flexibility in the EU, rather than suggesting a spend of £3.5 billion on a system that would duplicate a European system, a system that the UK has said was unnecessary and did not want. Brexit is not just a British phenomenon; it is part of a much wider trend of populism and nationalism that is developing in a number of allied countries, including the US. For all the British government's brave rhetoric about Global Britain, the reality is that a lot of the people who voted for Brexit want Britain to be less entangled in foreign affairs. And that is not confined to this country – it is what Donald Trump has been telling his base; it is what Viktor Orban tells his base.

The populist politicians in this alliance are not internationalists. In fact, very few of them are fans of NATO at all, and few are still in the parties in and out of government around the NATO table, which have been brought one way or another into Moscow's orbit. We risk arriving at a situation where at least some of the countries around the table are not treating each other as allies at all but just as a different kind of outsider. This kind of thinking was not created by Russia, but it is exploited by Russia. We need now to develop again the kind of solidarity that saw us through the Cold War.

4. Defining, Delineating and Defending "the West"

This round table explored the idea that common liberal–democratic values and respect for free markets have formed the backbone of "the West" and that it is precisely in the realm of these ideas that our primary struggle lies. It did this by examining NATO, the European Union, and the transatlantic partnership, and how these overlapping sets of close diplomatic, economic and security arrangements are defined and delineated. In doing so, it necessarily considered how we defend our ideals from alternative models provided by state-capitalist and authoritarian powers, particularly in the sphere of political communications. The session, in effect, discussed not only where "the West" is heading, but also where it ought to be heading.

4.1 Liberalism and Democracy

Many observers argue that NATO is, at its heart, an alliance of liberal democracies founded on the basis of the defence of our values in the Cold War against the Soviet Union and other ideological threats. This is true, but only in part. From the founding of NATO, the US, the UK and others were concerned about the geopolitical threat, not just the ideological one. During the Cold War, for example, Turkey experienced several military coups and democracy was abolished for years at a time. However, Turkey was not expelled or suspended from NATO but instead continued to contribute to alliance cohesion. NATO has always been pragmatic.

Today, a number of NATO members do not appear to be as committed to liberal democracy as was assumed in 1991. It is difficult, for example, to see Poland, Hungary, or the Czech Republic as champions of democracy. It would be a mistake, however, to think of liberal democracy as a single entity. There is no risk in the foreseeable future of any of these countries not having genuinely free elections. Their interference with the judiciary and the rule of law, however, is a serious issue. What is often overlooked is that there are two sides to liberalism: political democracy/rights and social conservatism.

For the second half of the twentieth century and at start of the twenty-first century, the West had a very powerful narrative. People began to lose faith in the narrative as a result of two events: 9/11 in 2001, which marked the end of innocence with the attacks and the subsequent "War on Terror" (which led to a loss of confidence in the West's foreign policy); and the Global Financial Crisis in 2008, which marked the end of confidence (and led to a loss of confidence in the West's economic model).

Over the last decade, there has been a convergence of models from the East and the West. A new world of grey is emerging, in which state-based approaches to the economy appear more appealing. China is often held up as an example of a country that has been able to lift millions of people out of poverty, deliver viable infrastructure at an extraordinary pace and oversee economic growth. For the moment, however, countries are focusing on the short-term threat posed by Russia rather than the long-term threat posed by China.

For all of this, there is still a healthy majority in the West who believe in democracy. When the opponents to democracy and the liberal international order win, they do so by small margins in democratic elections. Because of this, we shouldn't panic. Democracy is a "work in progress".

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4.2 Decline of the West

The West is in decline, at least relative to what many people hoped would happen after 1991. Francis Fukuyama's "end of history" thesis is much misunderstood, but nevertheless it did not come to pass. Even before the illegal annexation of Crimea, in March 2014, Vladimir Putin had turned his back on the West, become more authoritarian at home, and attempted to reassert Russian influence in the states of the former Soviet Union.

For the first time in many people's lives, the West is no longer on the advance. From Bosnia to Afghanistan and in numerous places in between, NATO has, since 1991, intervened to implant democracy in post-Soviet states in Europe, figured out how to work with the UN and the EU in a common endeavour to create secure democratic institutions, worked on migration, worked out issues of minority vs majority rights, and upheld the "responsibility to protect" as the new standard of international law.

For a long time, there was a sense that whatever the West – and NATO – did, it was not just about our security, but instead part of an effort to build broader security by building a securer world. This has now gone. The West does not currently face a single existential threat that can end the Western project more or less overnight. But the "drip, drip" of challenges is clear:

- The West struggles with multi-tasking. During the Cold War, NATO focused on the single threat posed by the Soviet Union. Today, it is necessary to focus on multiple threats. Yet NATO lacks a central axis and its members tend to fragment around threats. For example, the countries in central and Eastern Europe see Russia as the major threat, yet countries in southern Europe see the Mediterranean as the major threat.

- Seemingly, everything in the world is now contested. Whether a banking system, media space, infrastructure, or influence over political parties, the days when there were clear boundaries between "us" and "them", "ours" and "theirs" are gone. Everybody is interfering with everybody's business.

- In the past, when the West had a "crisis of confidence", the international arena was stable, and vice versa. Today, the West faces internal fragmentation, and at the same time the international arena is gripped by external challenges. In a number of respects, Western nations are now as much in competition with each other as we are with our adversaries.

- The normative environment that the West built over decades is under threat. When nuclear weapons appeared on the scene, the West worked to create the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, or the INF Treaty. Yet we face a number of new challengers – from artificial intelligence and autonomous weapons systems to cyber and misinformation – and appear to have little sense of what the rules of international behaviour should be. The West has lost the ability to deal with the big strategic issues.

The biggest challenge the West faces is somehow to preserve its culture while continuing to evolve; this is as true for NATO as it is for the EU and other Western institutions.

- For NATO, the transatlantic relationship in the economic sphere needs to be readjusted. Europe is currently more dependent on the US than it has been for a very long time: the US contributes 70% of the total NATO budget; after 2019, three of the four battalions that NATO deployed in central Europe will be led by non-EU states; and, after Brexit, the EU's contribution to the NATO budget will drop significantly.

- NATO should support the EU in its efforts to integrate defence for three reasons:
    1) To rid the EU of its massive duplication; there are 180 weapons systems in the EU compared to 40 in the US.

2) The EU would be able to take the burden of securing the continent's security away from the US, thereby freeing the US to fill the gaps that NATO currently lacks the capacity to do.

3) The EU needs to find a way to involve the UK and other non-EU member states, and undertaking activates on the Southern Flank may provide an opportunity to do this.

- More broadly, how do we adjust our concept of security in a world where the centre of gravity is not so much borders or lands, but things that go on in the psychology and minds of our own citizens, where the struggle for supremacy is shaping not territory or borders, but perceptions? How do we adjust to a world where war, as a concept, is persistently being conducted by adversaries who wage full spectrum warfare while the West does not aggregate its instruments of power?

The great paradox of our time is that while the West remains the preeminent power (culturally, economically, militarily, politically, and so on), it is easily challenged by weaker adversaries, whose only discernible advantage is being able to synergise their various elements of power better than we do.

4.3 Globalisation

The West does not yet have a common understanding of what is (and is not) a legitimate part of globalisation and, therefore, what does (and does not) constitute strategic interference with security liabilities. A reason why Russia was so successful in interfering in the 2016 US Presidential elections was that much of what it did was legal: placing adverts on Facebook, boosting posts coming from right-wing or left-wing citizens' groups, and amalgamating groups.

In the early twenty-first century, the West has failed to define what "makes" it. What are the beliefs, ideas, and values that underpin the countries that self-identify as "Western"? And why has the concept of "the West" survived? Clearly, one thing is military and economic power. There is also the ability to rapidly integrate innovation, when innovation was coming to get a grip on it and use it in a productive way, in science and technology. There is also the rule of law.

4.4 Technology

Technology is transforming not only the West and what it means to be "Western"; it is also transforming how the outside world engages with the West.

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Applied Machine Learning.** The automation of previously white-collar jobs, applied in silos in aspects, is expanding at a much faster rate than previously thought. AI is best thought of as the lower half of the spear. It is what delivers the weapon. It does not matter what is used on the sharp end, whether that be flint, tactical nuclear weapons, or malware. AI focuses on delivering the weapon. This is going to change deterrence and how deterrence has to be conceived and worked through. When it comes to the next stage of technological development, in which machine-learning is driven by having vast amounts of data, authoritarian states are better placed to amass this data than democratic states.

- **The Internet.** The ability by someone in one country to incite, plan, fund, carry out terrorist attacks is another way. Of course, cyber takes it to a more professional and state level: cyberwarfare. Naturally, this is true of values as we see information weaponised against electoral systems. The Russians have done this quite well, but these are, perhaps, a taster of what will come later. That will collapse the separation of

systems as well. We are seeing a challenge to the fundamental tenant in the West of the rule of law. What is the rule of law if people are able to come here and kill their political opponents? What is left of the rule of law if people who live here may have a right to property that can be defended, but it can be taken away from them by the actions of another state? This is interesting, even more so: how would you feel to be a Russian oligarch and knowing that 15–20 wealthy Russians have died in mysterious circumstances in the UK? Ultimately, it is a form of psychological coercion. No matter where one goes, opponents to authoritarianism will be hunted down and murdered. It is a part of the ideological war.

- **Bio-engineering.** Talked about a lot less than digital at this stage, but making extraordinary leaps forward, especially without the boundaries of particular restraints. This refers to the editing of genes and proteins by using the adapted virus, CRISPR-Cas9, which is a buzzword in technology circles because it is moving so quickly. The person who discovered it four or five years ago, Jennifer Doudna, has become appalled at the way her discovery is being abused or used, depending on your point of view. But one thing is certain: it is developing very quickly, and China is investing in it heavily. It is necessary therefore to think about what this is going to mean in terms of adding AI, autonomous weaponing, and bio-engineering together. What are the implications for defence? How do we think about that?

- **Freedom and technology.** For the most part, technology has led to a massive uptick in individual freedom as more and more individuals are able to access jobs, markets, and media through their handheld devices. However, one exception is the People's Republic of China, which is building an extraordinary Orwellian system with technology. The people of China are subject to an extraordinary number of CCTV cameras in almost every street and every house, and are closely watched for minor transgressions. As has been developed in some cities, the PRC appears to be developing a points system, whereby individuals lose points for small infractions, political or criminal, and then a person's overall "score" is used to classify them. The pressure this applies on non-Han Chinese is, of course, immense. The PRC is primarily using modern information technology, and is profiling every citizen, requiring every citizen, both non-Chinese and Chinese, to self-circumscribe their behaviour. If they act in an anti-social way, which is anything the government dislikes, then they can lose access to housing, jobs, and good schools for their children, and they can be punished in various ways. This is very insidious, in a way that would not be remotely conceivable without technology.

5. Conclusion

This project proceeded from the assumption that the Western Alliance is currently confronting a range of challenges – some typical, and others less so.

In terms of its traditional challenge, NATO continues to work to guarantee European security in the face of Russian aggression and subversion, and the Alliance's efforts are devoted to working ever closer and more reliably in both reassurance and deterrence. The range of initiatives announced since 2014, including the forward deployment of troops to the Baltic States and Poland, are evidence of this.

However, as our experts have noted, Russia is only one of many global challenges confronting the West at the moment. As revealed by the immigration flows into Europe earlier this decade, many of these security challenges do not even take the form of state-driven threats. The possibility that 116 million sub-Saharan Africans – a conservative estimate according to our expert panel – will be highly motivated to migrate by 2050 is disconcerting and indicates that the current liberal approaches toward refugees and migration are only going to come under greater challenge, particularly as those flows of people bleed into terrorism challenges.

China was another area that was raised, both as a source of cyberattacks on NATO member states and in terms of its growing economic influence on Eastern European member states, but also as a status-quo challenger, which has militarised a major Asian–European trading lane. Managing that relationship and the growing tensions between Washington and Beijing will become a major issue for Europe – and consequently for NATO.

Our experts also focused on burden-sharing and the 2% issue – and this was obviously pertinent, given the outcome of the Brussels NATO Summit in July 2018. While past US administrations have pointed out burden-sharing issues as a growing problem, the approach by President Trump has been particularly brusque and has created a toxic atmosphere among European policy elites. While this was generally accepted by the group, it was clear that many in the room agreed in principle with the US President, and – perhaps because of its oversized role as an economic power and leader of the EU – Germany's alleged underspending came under particular scrutiny.

It is clear that NATO member states will have to do more if they wish the Alliance to remain a viable institution. This will require proper domestic conversations between political leaders and populations on the importance of NATO, as well as concerted efforts to counter the rise of populism. Our experts honed in on two particular manifestations of such populism in the West: Donald Trump's election victory and Brexit. Both have their roots in domestic movements that are connected to cultural changes and migration. While this could and should have been explored more fully, the discussions focused more on attempting to understand Trump's foreign policy. Similarly, Brexit's impact on NATO was explored and, while there were some mitigating factors, it was clear that the economic impact of leaving the European Union would affect the UK's overall military and political strength.

Following on from this, the discussion also explored how the West – as a concept – has been undermined internally as populations have begun to reconsider the overall structure of societies. It was felt that it has become imperative for the West to somehow learn how to preserve its culture while continuing to evolve; this is true for NATO as it is for the EU and other Western institutions. In the early twenty-first century, the West has failed to define what "makes" it. What are the beliefs, ideas, and values that underpin Western countries? And why has the concept of "the West" survived? Clearly, there has been a balance of military and

economic ideas that have allowed Western civilisation to flourish. There have also been institutions, such as the rule of law and the media, that have helped democracy to develop into a pillar of the Western model.

Last but not least, our experts looked at how ever-changing technology has begun to affect these Western institutions, including how the internet and AI have both offered greater liberties and access to international markets, while simultaneously weakening some pillars of liberal democracy and the international order. Examples include the hollowing out of the broadsheet newspapers, and the use of AI to monitor individual activities, in addition to the strides that China is now taking to build a surveillance state.

Thus, technology change, migration, cultural identity, and the rise of new authoritarian, non-capitalist models of governance have all begun to impact the Western Alliance. This requires a radical change in our approaches to problem-solving and a re-examination of some of the institutions and assumptions underlying the West for a badly needed cleaning-of-house.

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Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) is a political foundation. In Germany, 16 regional offices offer a wide variety of civic education conferences and events. Our offices abroad are in charge of more than 200 projects in more than 120 countries. The foundation's headquarters are situated in Sankt Augustin near Bonn, and also in Berlin. There, an additional conference centre, named The Academy, was opened in 1998.

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