
NATO: Enlargement and Effectiveness

By

Daniel Fried

Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs

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NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] is not just a military alliance; it is an alliance of values. And NATO's success in the past and promise for the future reflect its fusion of strength and democratic values. I will speak today about how the Alliance is transforming itself to address global security challenges; its current missions and challenges, including ongoing operations in Afghanistan; and our goals for the Bucharest Summit and beyond.

NATO provided a foundation for freedom's victory in the Cold War. It is now evolving into its 21st century role: defending the transatlantic community against new threats and meeting challenges to our security and values that are often global in scope.

NATO's mission remains the same: the defense of its members. But how NATO fulfills this mission is evolving. Much of what I discuss today has to do with this important ongoing adaptation.

During the Cold War, NATO was superbly prepared to face the Soviet Army across the Fulda Gap but never fired a shot. Yet, by maintaining the peace in Europe, the Alliance provided time and space for the internal decay of the Soviet system and the Warsaw Pact and for forces of freedom in Warsaw, Vilnius, Budapest, Prague, Bucharest, Kyiv, and even Moscow to prevail.

NATO's other historic achievement is not mentioned often but is no less important: it served as the security umbrella under which centuries-old rivalries within Europe were settled. NATO provided an essential precondition for the European Union [EU], a united Europe, to take shape. Since 1945, Western Europe has enjoyed its longest period of internal peace since Roman times.

After the end of the Cold War, NATO faced two fundamental challenges: first, should it remain fixed in its Cold War-era membership? Second, should it remain fixed in its Cold War activities?

Three successive American Administrations—those of President George W. Bush, President Bill Clinton, and President George H.W. Bush—have demonstrated leadership in helping transform NATO from a Cold War to a 21st century profile. Members of this Committee played, and continue to play, a major part in that bipartisan policy effort.

In the 1990s, under American leadership, NATO enlarged its membership for the first time since the fall of the Berlin Wall. It did so again in 2002.

Also in the 1990s, NATO engaged in its first military combat operations to force an end to ethnic cleansing in the Balkans. NATO's operational role has continued to grow since then.

On September 12, 2001, a day after the attacks on New York and Washington, NATO invoked for the first time the Washington Treaty's critical Article Five clause of collective defense. In the 52 years of NATO's existence prior to that date, no one ever expected that Article Five would be invoked in response to a terrorist attack; an attack on the United States rather than Europe; and an attack plotted in Afghanistan, planned in Pakistan, Malaysia, and Germany, carried out inside the United States, and financed through Al Qaeda's fund-raising network.

I was in the White House on September 11 and 12; I remember and greatly appreciate NATO's act of solidarity. That decision, and its implications, eventually brought an end to NATO's now seemingly "quaint" debate about going "out of area."

But let me be frank: in 2001, despite this decision, NATO lacked the capability of responding to the challenge of September 11. And, to be even franker, at that time, the United States had not thought through how to work within NATO so far a field as Afghanistan. But within months, several individual Allies had joined us in Afghanistan; and on August 11, 2003, NATO took over the UN[United Nations]-mandated International Security Assistance Force [ISAF] mission in Kabul. From that moment, NATO had crossed into a new world; and transformation became an operational as well as a strategic necessity.

NATO has come far since the Cold War. In the early 1990s, NATO was an alliance of 16 countries, which had never conducted a military operation and had no partner relationships. By the middle of this decade, NATO had become an alliance of 26 members. And its soldiers and sailors had experienced:

- Bringing security and stability to Afghanistan
- Maintaining security in Kosovo and Bosnia
- Supporting and training peace-keepers in Africa
- Training the Iraqi security forces
- Delivering humanitarian aid in Pakistan after the earthquake and in Louisiana after Katrina
- Patrolling shipping in the Mediterranean to prevent terrorism

NATO also has established partner relationships with over 20 countries in Europe and Eurasia, seven in North Africa and the Middle East, [and] four in the Persian Gulf and has global partners such as Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and Singapore, which are working with NATO in Afghanistan.

I should also add that one of the transformations we have tried to make at NATO is to build a new kind of relationship with Russia—one where NATO and Russia can work together to address common interests. This was the thinking behind the NATO-Russia Founding Act in 1997 and the NATO-Russia Council, created in 2002. I must admit that we have been disappointed that the NATO-Russia Council still has not lived up to its potential.

The Russian Foreign Ministry has announced that President Putin plans to attend the meeting in Bucharest. This represents both an opportunity and a challenge. The opportunity is to renew efforts to work together on issues where NATO and Russia really do have common interests— from nonproliferation, counterterrorism, to border controls and counter-narcotics with respect to Afghanistan. The challenge, however, is to make sure that NATO takes decisions on issues on their own merits—based on what is good for the Alliance and good for the issues at hand—without undue pressure from any outside actors. Whether on enlargement, missile defense, or a Membership Action Plan, NATO must make its own decisions for the right reasons.

Fifteen years ago, no one would have predicted such far-reaching changes for NATO. So we must be modest about predicting the future challenges NATO will face and the way NATO will adapt to them.

But I can report to you about NATO's ongoing transformation to address global security challenges and indicate how we believe this will be addressed at NATO's summit in Bucharest next month and beyond.

- First, I will deal with capabilities NATO must build in this new era. NATO is making progress, but this task is not done

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- The second issue is how NATO is bringing these new capabilities to bear in ongoing operations, particularly:
 - In Afghanistan, where NATO is helping establish security and stability, to enable reconstruction, development, and good governance
 - And in Kosovo, where NATO is maintaining peace and freedom of movement in a now independent and sovereign country
 - Third, I will speak about enlargement. NATO is taking on new members and helping others prepare to become members in the future if they so desire

Capabilities

NATO must strengthen its capacity in three key areas: an expeditionary capacity to operate at strategic distance against new and diverse threats, a comprehensive capability to better integrate military and civilian activities, and a missile defense capacity to protect Alliance territory and populations against emerging missile threats.

First, on **hard capabilities**, NATO is developing these step by step. NATO has established:

- A **NATO Special Operations Coordination Center** in Mons, Belgium that boosts the effectiveness of Allies' special operations forces by increasing interoperability between nations, sharing key lessons learned, and expanding and improving training, all of which are yielding concrete gains on battlefields in Afghanistan
- A **NATO Response Force** that is being "updated" to make it more usable and deployable if the need arises
- A **strategic airlift consortium** to allow interested Allies and partners a mechanism to pool limited resources to own and operate C-17s
- An initiative to enhance **NATO helicopter capacity**, first in Afghanistan, to lease private helicopters for non-military transport. In the medium- and long-term, we are examining ways to pool support and maintenance functions and to acquire additional helicopters
- A **NATO Cyber Defense Policy**, to be endorsed at Bucharest, will enhance our ability to protect our sensitive infrastructure, allow Allies to pool resources, and permit NATO to come to the assistance of an Ally whose infrastructure is under threat. I thank the Senators on this Committee for focusing attention on this issue following the cyber attacks against Estonia
- A new focus on **Energy Security**, for example, by reviewing how NATO can help mitigate the most immediate risks and threats to energy infrastructure. I appreciate the leadership of Senators on this Committee for their involvement in energy security and believe NATO is building a response to the concerns you have raised
- A **Defense Against Terrorism** Initiative, in which Allies have improved their precision air-drop systems and enhanced intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance technologies to detect terrorists. The Allies have also equipped large aircraft to defend against Man-portable Air Defense [MANPADs] weapons and worked together on technologies to detect and counter improvised explosive devices

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- A NATO **Maritime Situational Awareness** initiative, to ensure Information Superiority in the maritime environment, thus increasing NATO's effectiveness in planning and conducting operations

I could go on. But let me stop here just to note that, notwithstanding all the concerns we have about levels of defense spending among the Allies and Allies' need to develop and field more expeditionary forces for NATO operations, NATO's military capabilities are better off than they were seven years ago. We are continuing to work to make them better still.

Many of these new capabilities are being tested in Afghanistan—which is also where we are learning how to **better integrate civilian and military** efforts. With each passing month, all of us Allies learn more about what it takes to wage a 21st-century counterinsurgency effort—a combined civil-military effort that puts soldiers side by side with development workers, diplomats, and police trainers. Whether flying helicopters across the desert at night, embedding trainers with the Afghan military and police, conducting tribal councils with village elders, or running joint civilian-military Provincial Reconstruction Teams, our institutions are reinventing the way we do our jobs.

As Defense Secretary Robert Gates has said, this requires new training, new equipment, a new doctrine, and new flexibility in combining civil and military efforts in a truly comprehensive approach to security.

And a final point on capabilities is **missile defense**. Article 5 of the NATO Treaty says NATO Allies will provide for collective defense. It does not allow for exceptions when the threat comes on a missile. NATO has been studying missile defense for years; and we expect that at the Bucharest Summit NATO will take further steps to acknowledge growing missile threats, welcome U.S. contributions to the defense of Alliance territory, and task further work in strengthening NATO's defenses against these new threats. We have taken on board advice from some in Congress and some of our Allies, as we have advanced a more NATO-integrated approach to missile defense.

NATO's work is focused on the short-range missile threat, technical work regarding future decisions on possible long-range threats, and possible opportunities for cooperation with Russia. The U.S. and NATO efforts are complementary and could work together to form a more effective defense for Europe.

Afghanistan

NATO is in action in two major operations, ISAF, in Afghanistan, and KFOR [Kosovo Forces], in Kosovo.

More than anywhere else, Afghanistan is the place where our new capabilities are being developed and tested. Allies are fighting and doing good work there, but NATO—all of us—have much more to do and much more to learn.

Let me be blunt: We still face real challenges in Afghanistan. Levels of violence are up, particularly in the south where the insurgency has strengthened. Public confidence in government is shaky because of rising concerns about corruption and tribalism. And the border areas in Pakistan provide a haven for terrorists and Taliban who wage attacks in Afghanistan.

Civilian-military cooperation does not work as well as it should, and civilian reconstruction and governance do not follow quickly enough behind military operations. In this regard, we welcome the appointment of Kai Eide as Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Afghanistan. In this capacity, Ambassador Eide will coordinate the international donor community and raise the profile of the UN's role in Afghanistan in supporting the government of Afghanistan. The United States will lend its strongest support to Ambassador Eide's efforts. It will be critical to ensure that he is empowered to

work in concert with NATO and to coordinate broad civilian efforts—and go back to capitals for more resources—in support of the sovereign Government of Afghanistan. We look forward to Ambassador Eide's confirmation by the UN Security Council later this week and hope he will be present at the Bucharest Summit in April.

Narcotics remain a serious problem. Efforts to counter this scourge are working in some but certainly not all parts of the country. The Taliban are using the profits from drug revenues and the instability spread by corruption and lawlessness to fund their insurgent activities. Helmand Province continues to be the epicenter, with fully 53 percent of total cultivation; and our eradication efforts there have had insufficient traction, significantly due to the absence of adequate force protection for our eradication force. Yet there is good news too. In much of the north and east, poppy cultivation is down. In a secure environment, farmers can more easily exercise alternatives and are not subject to the same threats and intimidation by insurgents. According to UN data, we expect that this year 22 of 34 provinces are likely to be either poppy free or cultivating fewer than 1,000 hectares of poppies. With improved governance and security conditions, we believe it will be possible to achieve reductions in cultivation in the remaining provinces in coming years.

NATO is working hard but needs to focus on counterinsurgency tactics, provide both more forces in order to facilitate increased and faster reconstruction assistance, and improve performance in supporting robust Afghan counter-narcotics efforts. Fundamentally, NATO needs to show greater political solidarity and greater operational flexibility for deployed forces.

But while we are sober about the challenges, we also must recognize our achievements. There is good news. NATO had some real operational successes last year with our Afghan partners. Despite dire predictions, the Taliban's much-vaunted Spring Offensive never materialized in 2007. Think back to a year ago, when the Taliban were on a media blitz threatening to take Kandahar. Today we hear no such claims because we stood together—Afghans, Americans, Allies, and our partners—to stare down that threat.

We pursued the enemy last year; and over the winter we maintained NATO's operational tempo, capturing or killing insurgent leaders and reducing the Taliban's ability to rest and recoup. Some districts and villages throughout eastern and southern Afghanistan are more secure today than they have been in years or decades.

Roads, schools, markets, and clinics have been built all over the country. Six million Afghan children now go to school, one third of them girls. That is two million girls in school when under the Taliban there were none, zero. Some 80 percent of Afghans have access to health care—under the Taliban it was only eight percent. Afghan soldiers are increasingly at the forefront of operations, and the number we have trained and equipped has swelled from 35,000 to almost 50,000 in the last year. This spring, the United States will send an additional 3,200 Marines for about seven months to capitalize on these gains and support the momentum. Of this number, 2,000 Marines will be added to ISAF combat missions in the south and 1,200 more trainers for the U.S.-led Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan. We are urging Allies to match these contributions, so they can take on the same roles when our Marines leave this autumn.

Afghanistan is issue number one for NATO's Bucharest Summit next month. NATO is preparing a common strategy document on Afghanistan that will help explain to publics the reasons we are fighting in Afghanistan and how we are going to succeed.

We will also look at force contributions and hope to have more forces identified at Bucharest. All contributions are valuable—from all 26 Allies and the 14 partners there with us.

Some Allies deserve special praise for taking on the hardest missions in the south—particularly the Canadians, British, Dutch, Danes, Australians, Romanians, and Estonians.

Others deserve recognition for increased contributions over the past year. Top of that list is Poland, a new and committed Ally that has twice sent in more troops to eastern Afghanistan—first in Fall 2006 when it added 1,000 and then again in this winter with a pledge for 400 more troops and eight vital helicopters. Australia more than doubled its forces in 2007, to a total of 1,000 in the southern province of Uruzgan. The UK has added over 1,400 troops in Helmand Province since late 2006 to meet increased security needs, while Denmark added 300 to double its contribution in the same area. France meanwhile has moved six fighter and reconnaissance aircraft to Kandahar and pledged four training teams.

Do we need more Allies fighting? Yes. With this in mind, we very much welcome President Sarkozy's pledge that "France will stay engaged in Afghanistan for as long as necessary because what is at stake there is the future of our values and that of our Atlantic Alliance."

We also need Allies and partners to do more to train and equip the Afghan national security forces, the Army, and the police. NATO is providing small embedded teams directly into Afghan forces to serve as coaches, trainers, and mentors to the Afghan Army units. Currently, there are 34 NATO training and mentoring teams (called Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams, OMLTs) deployed in Afghanistan. But we need at least 22 more by this time next year, and we are asking all of our Allies and partners to step up and do more.

In addition to more troops, we need to give Allied commanders on the ground more flexibility; so they can use their forces most effectively. We understand the political constraints under which our Allies operate, but less flexibility requires more troops and prolongs the mission.

At the same time that we build a more capable NATO, we also want to see a stronger and more capable EU. If Afghanistan has taught us anything, it is that we need a better, more seamless relationship between the two. Bureaucratic hurdles should not put soldiers' lives on the line. We can't keep showing up side by side in far flung parts of the world and play a pick-up game. We must work together to develop better NATO-EU cooperation.

Kosovo

Let me now turn to Kosovo, NATO's second largest operation after Afghanistan. We all know the history. In fact, I was there a few days ago. As I had the privilege of testifying on Kosovo before this committee last week, I will keep my remarks brief.

Kosovo's declaration of independence ends one chapter, but our work is not yet done. We must deal with short-term challenges of security and longer-term challenges of Kosovo's development. These are serious. But the status quo was unsustainable, and seeking to sustain it would have led to even greater challenges.

NATO, through KFOR, continues to provide security, freedom of movement, and protection for minorities and religious and cultural sites in this, the world's newest state. There has been no significant interethnic violence, no refugees or internally displaced persons, and no trouble at patrimonial sites. KFOR remains authorized to operate in Kosovo under UNSCR [United Nations Security Council Resolution] 1244. Almost 90 percent of the KFOR forces are European.

We expect that NATO will also play a key role in the establishment of a new, multiethnic Kosovo Security Force and a civilian agency to oversee it, as well as in the dissolution of the Kosovo Protection Corps. Kosovo is eager to contribute to NATO, the organization that intervened to save the people of Kosovo during their darkest hour.

Our current challenge is dealing with Serbian extremists who seek to foment violence, chaos and perhaps de facto partition of Kosovo. NATO and UNMIK [United Nations Interim Administration

Mission in Kosovo] are responding to this challenge firmly, defusing conflicts before they escalate; and KFOR deserves credit for its prompt, effective actions thus far. KFOR however is just one piece of the puzzle; and we are working closely with the UN, EU, and the Kosovo government itself.

NATO Enlargement

Now, let me speak about NATO enlargement, a major part of the Bucharest Summit.

NATO enlargement has been a major success, thanks to the work of many on this Committee. The Administration strongly supports the aspirations of Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to join NATO. They have all made substantial progress, especially over the past one to two years. Their forces serve with us in Afghanistan and other global peacekeeping operations. They continue to play important roles in Kosovo. In short, they have shown a clear commitment to bearing the responsibilities of NATO membership.

Albania has made steady progress on combating corruption, with arrests of high-level government officials among others, substantial progress on judicial reform, and progress on laws to increase transparency and efficiency within the court system. In addition to the strong support and leadership on Kosovo, Albania is the greatest per-capita contributor to NATO and Coalition operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Croatia has a proven track record of political and economic maturity and is also an important partner on the battlefield. Significant progress on military reforms has created more modern and deployable armed forces, in addition to Croatia's support in promoting regional stability.

Macedonia has made significant strides since 2001 in building a multiethnic democracy. The government has taken strong steps on rule of law by implementing several critical laws on its courts and police and taking action against trafficking in persons. Macedonia, like the other aspirants, is punching above its weight in operations; and its progress on defense reforms has been impressive.

One issue threatens Macedonia's NATO candidacy—the dispute between Greece and Macedonia over Macedonia's name. Without a resolution of this issue, Greece has said it would block an invitation for Macedonia to join NATO. The Administration repeatedly has emphasized its support for the ongoing UN-facilitated talks on the name issue. It has urged both parties to work together and with UN negotiator Matt Nimetz to use the time remaining before Bucharest to come to a win-win solution—and not to allow this issue to prevent Macedonia from being invited to join NATO.

Are the aspirants perfect? No. Have they done significant work and put themselves on a trajectory for success? Yes. The United States and our Allies need to consider whether it is better for the security of the Alliance and the stability of the Balkans to have these countries in or to keep them out. We know from experience that countries who join NATO continue to address remaining reforms and build security in their region and the world. An invitation for membership is not a finish line, and these countries know that.

Ukraine and Georgia have expressed an interest in joining NATO. We have always supported their aspirations. They are not ready to be NATO members now, as they themselves recognize. We can help them to help themselves, as they are asking, just as we have helped others, through the Membership Action Plan (MAP). MAP is the next step for them, and the timing of that step will be a key issue for the Bucharest Summit.

Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Serbia joined NATO's Partnerships for Peace in November 2006. While it was a controversial issue at the time, I think that doubters now see that it was the right decision. These countries are also members of the Euro-Atlantic community and must be supported in their efforts to join its institutions, to the degree they are prepared and seek to. Montenegro and Bosnia-

Herzegovina have expressed interest in beginning an Intensified Dialogue (ID) on membership issues with NATO, and we believe that NATO should extend those offers at Bucharest. And when the day comes and Serbia is prepared to take up its European future, make further reforms, and seek closer cooperation with NATO, we will welcome that as well.

NATO's door to enlargement must remain open. Every country has the right to choose its relationship with NATO; and the Alliance's decision to invite a country to become a member will be made according to its performance, willingness and ability to contribute to the security of the Euro-Atlantic area, and desire to join. No country outside of NATO has a right to decide that question for them. No amount of outside pressure or intimidation should sway Allies from doing what is in NATO's best interests.

Depending on the decision at Bucharest, we look forward to working with the Senate to ratify additional protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty for each state's new membership.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Lugar, and other Members of the Committee, several Administrations have worked assiduously to help build a Europe that is whole, free, and at peace. NATO has been an indispensable instrument of this noble objective, and NATO is becoming a multilateral instrument of transatlantic security for the 21st century—far a field but closely tied to its original purposes and values. We will strive to hand over to the 44th President of the United States in 2009, whoever he or she may be, this great undertaking.