

The Trans-Atlantic Alliance

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This paper will attempt to construct a framework through which one can more closely examine the trans-Atlantic alliance as it stands today with the hope of predicting possible scenarios for the alliance’s future, thus lending insight into members’ security and economic prosperity over the long term.

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INTRODUCTION

The trans-Atlantic alliance (TAA) that emerged in the wake of the Second World War achieved stunning success throughout its first 40 years. Politically, the alliance stabilized Europe which allowed for the gradual march toward integration culminating in the formation of the European Union. In addition, the institutions that govern the world today, including the United Nations, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and others, formed as a result of trans-Atlantic cooperation. Economically, the alliance helped Europe recover from the ravages of war through instruments such as the Marshall Plan, while high trade volumes contributed to the steady growth of economies on both sides of the Atlantic in the ensuing years. Finally, in terms of security—the purpose for the alliance’s creation, following 40 years of fear that Soviet tanks would push the democracies of Western Europe into the Atlantic or that a nuclear exchange would obliterate mankind—Gorbachev, in essence, surrendered, giving rise to a peaceful TAA victory in the Cold War.

The collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989, as some observers believe, removed the glue from the alliance. A task force co-chaired by Henry Kissinger and Lawrence Summers agreed, writing, “The alliance...became a victim of its own success.”¹ While there were major differences of opinion between European and U.S. leaders throughout the Cold War, they resolved or set aside their disagreements in favor of uniting against potential Soviet aggression. Even though key tenets of the alliance remain intact today, such as cultural traditions, similar liberal democratic forms of government, interdependence of trade, and a sense of partnership which grew out of the success the alliance achieved, in the absence of a Soviet threat, political, economic, and security disputes led many to conclude that this alliance, in the tradition of so

¹ Henry A. Kissinger, Lawrence Summers, and Charles Kupchan, “Renewing the Atlantic Partnership,” *Report of an Independent Task Force* (New York, New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2004), 2.

many others, is destined to dissolve. However, there is an equally strong opinion held by others to the contrary. They believe the foundation of the alliance is undamaged and that the partnership between Europe and America is certain to continue for the foreseeable future.

The purpose of this analysis is not to predict which course the alliance will take in the years ahead. Similarly, the intention is not to closely examine the issues that divide the alliance. Rather, this analytical exercise supposes that future economic growth on both sides of the Atlantic rests in large measure on security and stability. Predicting future economic growth then requires more than an analysis of labor markets, capital flow, regulation, monetary policy, and all the other measures economists rely on to make forecasts. Each of these measures are based largely on the assumption that the nations involved have stability and relative security. The trans-Atlantic alliance as discussed above has been the prime driver of security and stability for more than 60 years through common defense policies, thus allowing economies around the world to experience unprecedented growth. Therefore, this paper will attempt to construct a framework through which one can more closely examine the trans-Atlantic alliance as it stands today with the hope of predicting possible scenarios for the alliance's future, thus lending insight into members' security and economic prosperity over the long term.

First, this discussion will consider three essential components needed for collaboration and successful burden-sharing within TAA, as defined by Gustav Lindstrom in his essay "EU-US Burdensharing: Who Does What?" The three components analyzed include 1) view of the security environment, 2) ability to contribute, and 3) political support.² Second, arguments which seek to explain the similarities and differences outlined in the analysis of the three points

² Gustav Lindstrom, "EU-US Burdensharing: Who Does What?" European Union Institute for Security Studies, *Chaillot Papers*, no. 82 (September 2005): 20.

will be discussed. Third, taking the information studied above, three possible scenarios for the future of transatlantic cooperation will emerge. Finally, this analysis will conclude with a discussion about the necessity of a trans-Atlantic alliance looking ahead into the 21st century.

THREE ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS NEEDED FOR COLLABORATION

VIEW OF THE SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

The attack of September 11, 2001, sparked a renewed commitment in TAA cooperation regarding security issues. The 2002 National Security Strategy of the U.S. and the 2003 European Security Strategy identified several shared security challenges, including global terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and instability as a result of regional conflicts and failed states.³ The European Security Strategy concluded its findings by noting, “The trans-Atlantic relationship is irreplaceable. Acting together, the European Union and the United States can be a formidable force for good in the world.”⁴

The United States updates its view of the security environment every four years following a Presidential election through a process mandated by Congress called the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). The 2006 QDR enhanced these shared TAA security goals by creating a framework to address the threats. An identification of four strategic challenges the TAA faces in the near term resulted from this framework.⁵

The first challenge is “irregular” war which is fought using insurgency or terror tactics. According to the 2007 U.S. Army Posture Statement, non-state actors, such as Al-Qaeda, have

³ Frances G. Burwell and others, “Transatlantic Transformation: Building a NATO-EU Security Architecture,” The Atlantic Council of the United States, *Policy Paper* (March 2006): vii.

⁴ European Commission, “A Secure Europe in a Better World,” *European Security Strategy* (Brussels: December 2003), 13.

⁵ The White House, “Transform America’s National Security Institutions to Meet the Challenges and Opportunities of the 21st Century,” *The National Security Strategy of the United States*, 2006, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2006/print/sectionIX.html>.

set a clear goal to “gain control in the Islamic world by establishing a unified caliphate, stretching from North Africa to Indonesia.”⁶ In order to address this threat, as Thom Shanker noted in a recent article in the *New York Times*, “America [TAA] will be confronted with lots of Afghanistans.”⁷ A security environment such as this, in which the TAA is forced to confront terrorists throughout the globe, will require lighter, more mobile forces, which represents a significant change from the heavy forces the militaries of the TAA relied on during the Cold War.

“Catastrophic” war, the second challenge, involves use of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). The effect of these weapons will be felt not only on the total loss of their target, but on the world economy. Key states to engage regarding WMD include: North Korea, Iran, Syria, Sudan, and an Islamist controlled Pakistan. Deterrence will likely continue to prevent these and other states from utilizing WMD against the TAA. The objective will be to prevent fissile material necessary for making a nuclear weapon to be transferred or stolen to a group such as Al-Qaeda. In addition to pursuing diplomatic and institutional methods, the TAA must develop the intelligence and special forces capability necessary to confront the threat.

The third challenge is “disruptive” whereby key systems, such as power grids, are attacked, crippling nations of the TAA. The same type of attack can also be used against the TAA’s increasingly sophisticated military technology, where successful hacking, jamming, or satellite destruction could render key areas of command and control impotent. Strong homeland security and anti-cyber operations are key capacities needed to confront this type of threat.

⁶ The United States Army, 2007 Army Posture Statement, <http://www.army.mil/aps/07/execsummary.html,ii>.

⁷ Thom Shanker, “Meeting Today’s Military Demands, With An Eye On Tomorrow’s,” *New York Times*, September 30, 2007, 12.

The fourth challenge is “traditional” whereby the TAA is confronted by traditional military means. Apart from Major Theater War (MTW), such as the effort in Iraq, the traditional challenge also relates to protecting such vital interests as shipping lanes and access to resources.⁸ Conventional weapons such as ships, aircraft, tanks, and well trained soldiers are key capabilities needed to confront these threats.

General agreement on the above framework and overall security environment was an important step toward TAA collaboration—one that suggests Lindstrom’s first criteria has been met. However, the stark contrast in opinions about the 2003 Iraq War within the TAA, for example, suggest that agreement on the viability of a security threat versus methods for dealing with the threat are different. This discussion will be continued in the next section.

ABILITY TO CONTRIBUTE

The new security environment agreed upon by the trans-Atlantic partners requires a different set of capabilities to address the key threats than those capabilities relied on during the Cold War. For example, in this security environment, premium competencies include: 1) capability to rapidly deploy light units, 2) capability to effectively conduct stabilization and transition operations, 3) capability to prevent the proliferation of WMD, and 4) capability in the area of homeland security.

When considering the formidable challenges to TAA security, the Kissinger-Summers task force concluded, “Tackling these challenges requires a concerted effort by Europe and the United States, one comparable to the effort waged during the Cold War to assist and win over much of the developing world. Such an undertaking requires considerable resources over a

⁸ Some concepts in this section were excerpted from a previous paper by the author written November 29, 2007.

sustained period.”⁹ The agreement of the U.S. with this sentiment is reflected in the return to Cold War-size defense budgets. Today, U.S. defense appropriations account for nearly two-fifths of all military spending in the world. In fiscal year 2004, the total budget for the Pentagon was \$453.6 billion, a figure comparable to 3.7% of the GDP in the U.S.¹⁰

Some claim the U.S. spending figure is misleading because the costs to fund the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are so high. Yet, these individuals often fail to account for the additional defense supplemental bills passed by Congress to fund major portions of the war. In 2004, for example, the supplemental appropriation pushed total defense spending past the \$500 billion threshold. While the U.S. military is known for its penchant to appropriate significant funds toward big ticket projects such as the new F/A-22 stealth fighter or the DD(X) stealth destroyer, programs which give the U.S. the capacity to effectively confront most threats in the traditional challenge area, increasingly, the U.S. military directs spending to address the new threats outlined above. For example, the U.S. Army has begun to reorganize itself through a program called Modularity. Instead of confronting threats with heavy divisions, which consist of 20,000 soldiers and 300 tanks and are generally transported by sea resulting in a slow deployment to the theater of combat, the Army equips brigades—a force of 5,000 soldiers—with intelligence, communication, and logistics—support functions usually provided by a division—and deploys these lighter units to deal with threats. Rather than supporting these brigades with a full complement of tanks and artillery, the brigades rely on air and naval units to bring maximum firepower down on their targets. This reorganization allows the Army to deploy combat units

⁹ Kissinger, “Renewing the Atlantic Partnership,” 23.

¹⁰ Lindstrom, “EU-US Burdensharing,” 29.

anywhere in the world within 96 hours.¹¹ Responding to the need for a larger force to participate in stabilization and reconstruction operations, the Army is expanding its operational, deployable force¹² by adding 35,000 soldiers, extending its end strength to 547,000, while the Marines are adding 28,000 soldiers, bringing its capability to 200,000. As for combating WMD proliferation, conducting counter-terrorist missions, and other special operations functions, the U.S. military is also in the process of increasing special operations forces by 60%.

The final capability upgrade of note has been ongoing for some time and is represented in a concept the military calls Dominant Battlespace Knowledge (DBK).¹³ DBK is designed to integrate all aspects of U.S. military power into one seamless operation in each theater it manages. Satellites, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVS), intelligence, and special forces behind enemy lines all combine to provide a clear picture of the battlefield to U.S. commanders. This data can be transferred to forces in real time, allowing a coordinated attack from land, sea, and air units. Because DBK enhances the effectiveness of U.S. forces so significantly, fewer troops and less equipment are needed in standard engagements enabling the U.S. to direct resources elsewhere. These four changes in military capability and the rise in funding to support them are signs that the U.S. is adapting to the new security environment.

The data on defense spending and resulting capability show a stark contrast across the Atlantic. Comparing Fiscal Year 2004 data, taken as a whole, the EU spent \$186.3 billion, compared to \$453.6 billion (not including supplemental spending) by the U.S. In terms of GDP,

¹¹ Stuart Johnson, lecture at Columbia University in Planning US Military Forces, October 4, 2007.

¹² United States Army, "Army Posture Statement," ii.

¹³ Admiral William A. Owens, "The Emerging U.S. System of Systems," in *Dominant Battlespace Knowledge*, ed. Stuart Johnson (Washington, D.C.: NDU Press, 2005), <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/books/books%201990%20to%201995/Dominant%20Battlespace%20Knowledge%20-%20Oct%2095/dbk1.html>.

the EU spent less than 2% on defense, as compared with 3.7% by the U.S.¹⁴ Categorizing the EU defense spending by country, the United Kingdom led the way by spending \$49 billion, followed by France's \$40 billion, Germany's \$29.7 billion, and Italy's \$17.5 billion. From there, spending drops precipitously down to Lithuania's defense appropriation of \$31 million.¹⁵ Philip Gordon, a senior fellow of Foreign Policy at the Brookings Institution, wrote in 2003, "With a collective population of 377 million and a GDP of some \$8.5 trillion, the member states of the European Union certainly have the potential to develop formidable military power but have chosen not to."¹⁶ Since 2003, the population and GDP of the EU have increased, only strengthening Gordon's assertion that the EU has the capacity to contribute more to TAA security.

While there is a clear disparity in defense spending within the TAA, the EU does contribute several important capabilities that bolster TAA security. The Kosovo conflict of 1999 whereby the EU turned to the U.S. to manage the crisis because it lacked the capacity to do so, highlighted for many in Europe the need to acquire new capabilities.¹⁷ That same year, at the Helsinki European Council meeting, EU leaders took the first step toward improving its capacity to respond to crises by creating the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). As a follow up, in December 2003, EU leaders committed to Headline Goals 2010 which call for a, "60,000-strong reaction force, deployable within 60 days and able to sustain operations for at least one year."¹⁸ This force would be divided into units of 1,500 troops capable of deploying ten days

¹⁴ Lindstrom, "EU-US Burdensharing," 29.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Philip H. Gordon, "Bridging the Atlantic Divide," *Foreign Affairs* 82, no. 1 (January/February 2003): 70.

¹⁷ Kristin Archick and Paul Gallis, "NATO and the European Union," Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.: CRS Web, April 6, 2004), 2.

¹⁸ Burwell, "Transatlantic Transformation," 5.

following a given order.¹⁹ Such a capability is important to the necessity of rapid deployment as discussed in the security section. In terms of stabilization operations, the EU has also taken steps to identify 5,000 police officers and 300 civil servants such as judges, prosecutors, and administrators²⁰ to deploy in post-conflict zones to assist with the transition to a stable government. Assessing the overall capability of EU forces, the Atlantic Council published a paper that cited stabilization, reconstruction, and homeland security²¹ as key areas where the EU is best able to contribute to TAA security.

In terms of military capacity, Britain and France lead the EU. At present, the UK has 195,900 soldiers under arms and is supported by a 44 ship navy.²² While relatively small when compared to the size of the U.S. force, the British military possesses some of the most sophisticated weaponry in the world and is focusing its defense procurement on increasing this advantage. Having secured a \$15.8 billion increase in defense spending over the next three years, the British Navy placed an order this year for two 65,000-ton air craft carriers which will allow the UK to more effectively project power to the remote corners of the globe.²³ Future plans include the procurement of the high tech F-35B Joint Strike Fighter to stock the carriers. Other programs working their way through the procurement process include 25 A400Ms (large transport aircraft), 4 ASTORs (ground surveillance aircraft), and 67 WAH-64 Apache attack

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid, 7.

²¹ Ibid, viii.

²² Max Boot, "Allies on the Cheap," *Los Angeles Times*, February 28, 2007, sec. A.

²³ Joris Janssen, "U.K. Defense Budget Increase Spurs Order for Two Carriers," *Aerospace Daily & Defense Report* 223, no. 18 (July 26, 2007): 1.

helicopters.²⁴ The addition of this equipment is a clear sign of British intentions to remain an active force in global military affairs.

France recently demonstrated its prowess in the air during an October 2007 10-day NATO exercise designed to simulate a Kosovo-type conflict. The French Air Force led the NATO Response Force (NRF) and showed its “ability to handle 800-1,000 sorties daily.”²⁵ The French Navy is anchored by a soon-to-be nuclear powered aircraft carrier and two new 21,600 ton command ships which double as helicopter carriers, landing ships, and floating hospitals.²⁶ Similar to the UK, France maintains a well equipped fighting force. Projects moving through the procurement process at present include 50 A400M transport aircraft, two aerial refueling aircraft, 500 scalp air-launched cruise missiles, and two Barracuda-class attack submarines.²⁷ The addition of this equipment to its arsenal will maintain France’s edge as one of the world’s leading military powers.

Beyond force capability, two additional areas that European leaders point to as critical contributions to TAA security are development and humanitarian assistance and UN peacekeeping troops. In 2004, the EU provided \$43 billion or .30% of GDP in assistance to developing nations. Further, the EU contributed €1.5 billion in humanitarian assistance in 2004.²⁸ Relating such assistance to security, European leaders believe these resources prevent problems by stabilizing areas and providing benefits to people in need. In terms of stability operations managed by the UN, the EU provides 40% of peacekeeping troops, compared to the

²⁴ Phillips Business Information, “Audit: Top 20 British Defense Projects Continue Improvement on Cost, Delays,” *Defense Daily International* 3, no. 56 (December 6, 2002): 1.

²⁵ Michael Taverna, “Stepping Up: French NATO Commitment Grows as it Prepares to Take Command of NRF Forces,” *Aviation Week & Space Technology* 167, no. 18 (November 5, 2007): 39.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Phillips Business Information, “France Increases Defense Spending Through 2008,” *Defense Daily International* 3, no. 45 (September 13, 2002): 1.

²⁸ Lindstrom, “EU-US Burdensharing,” 28, 67.

U.S. which provides only 25% of peacekeepers.²⁹ Because the UN is engaged in vital areas across the globe, EU contributions in this respect certainly contribute to TAA security.

The first EU mission, Operation Concordia, to jointly deploy military forces occurred in Macedonia. In an interview conducted with Aleksandar Nikoloski, a member of parliament in Macedonia, Nikoloski praised Operation Concordia as “one of the most successful missions of the EU.”³⁰ Because the EU mission stabilized and strengthened the country, Macedonia now has the capacity to support EU and NATO efforts. Nikoloski noted, “We now have our own forces in Bosnia, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Lebanon.”³¹

Since Operation Concordia, the EU mounted several successful operations, including missions in the Congo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Gaza.³² The success of these missions underscores the capacity of the EU to project force and contribute to stabilization and regional operations.

Despite the good intentions of the EU’s Headline Goals 2010, some observers question the viability of their achievement. Writing in *Military Technology*, Giovanni de Briganti believes, “Europe has for decades unquestionably pursued the ideal of a common defense but, like the proverbial pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, this still appears as remote today as it was 50 years ago.”³³ Echoing this sentiment in September 2007, the defense minister of Portugal wrote an opinion piece regarding the EU’s ability to face threats such as terror and proliferation of WMD: “Europe’s response has been slow and falls far short of what is necessary in light of

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Aleksandar Nikoloski, personal interview by email with author, December 7, 2007.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Burwell, “Transatlantic Transformation,” v-32.

³³ Giovanni de Briganti, “Does Europe Need a Common Defense?” *Military Technology* 30, no. 12 (2006): 8.

our responsibilities.”³⁴ Continuing the criticism, UK Foreign Secretary David Millband said in a recent speech that appeared in the *EU Observer*, “It’s frankly embarrassing that when European nations – with almost two million men and women under arms – are only able, at a stretch, to deploy 100,000 at any one time.”³⁵

Looking specifically at military capabilities, the EU held a Capabilities Improvement Conference (CIC) in November 2001. The conference concluded that, by 2003, the EU should have the ability to independently manage a series of tasks including combat missions and crisis management. The conference identified 42 capability shortfalls that must be addressed in order to meet the stated objectives. Three years later, a review of the progress made showed that only seven of the capability shortfalls had been solved.³⁶ Experts often cite budget constraints as the primary reason the capabilities have yet to improve significantly. According to a recent report, combined defense budgets of EU members have declined since the 1990s. It goes on to indicate that defense analysts suggest not only are budget increases unlikely, but, “it will be a considerable achievement if defense budgets do not fall even further.”³⁷ As for the UK defense increase over the next three years, a May 2007 editorial in the *Economist* noted, “although the defense budget has been increasing in real terms, it has declined as a share of GDP.”³⁸ Looking at France, despite an election pledge to keep defense spending to 2% of GDP, President Sarkozy served notice last summer of “impending cuts in defense spending.”³⁹ Should the trend of

³⁴ Nuno Severiano Teixeira, “Comment & Debate: Defense is our Priority,” *The Guardian*, London, September 26, 2007, 28.

³⁵ Elitsa Vucheva, “EU Must Improve Military Capabilities, UK Says,” *EU Observer*, November 16, 2007.

³⁶ Paul Cornish and Geoffrey Edwards, “The Strategic Culture of the European Union: A Progress Report,” *International Affairs* 81, no. 4 (2005): 804.

³⁷ Burwell, “Transatlantic Transformation,” 10.

³⁸ The Economist Newspaper, Ltd. “Britain: The Battle of the Budget,” *The Economist* 383, no. 8527 (May 5, 2007): 29.

³⁹ Giovanni de Briganti, “Sarkozy’s Warning,” *Military Technology* 31, no. 8 (August 2007): 5.

shrinking defense budgets continue, it is unlikely that the EU collectively will reach its Headline Goals 2010 and therefore will not be able to deploy a significant force independent from U.S. support.

Max Boot, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations and leading U.S. expert on military capability, recently examined the British armed forces. In an editorial published in the *Los Angeles Times*, Boot praised the British and Canadians for doing more than their fair share in combating terror and for “their willingness to fight hard and take casualties” compared to other NATO nations.⁴⁰ Yet in his analysis of the British force, he found that a country that has 60 million people and the world’s fifth largest economy is struggling to support a troop commitment above 5,500 soldiers in Afghanistan. Boot notes that the British Army today is almost half the size of the U.S. Marine Corps and that the Royal Navy is at its smallest size “since the 1500s.”⁴¹ He concludes his editorial by raising the point that relates directly to the Lindstrom criteria: “We (the U.S.) act alone, or almost alone, not out of choice but out of necessity.”⁴²

Given Boot’s assessment of Europe’s leading military, the assessments noted above by several key officials and reports, and the projections for reduced spending, one may conclude that the EU does not match Lindstrom’s criteria for ability to contribute. Yet, others suggest that willingness to contribute is different from ability to contribute, citing the strength of the European economy as evidence that future contributions could be greater. This discussion will resume in the next section.

⁴⁰ Boot, “Allies on the Cheap.”

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

POLITICAL SUPPORT

Political support or disapproval of an alliance is difficult to analyze over the long term. One could point to the strength and zeal of public support throughout the Cold War as an indicator of future backing for the TAA. Yet, as has been discussed, the threat that America protected the Europeans from has evaporated, thus exposing issues of contention. Therefore, historical measures of support may not predict future backing. Not to be discarded entirely however, the Cold War level of support is useful as an indicator of the power of a threat to increase public opinion favorably toward the TAA. Therefore, should the public on both sides of the Atlantic feel a common threat, perhaps Lindstrom's criteria would be met.

The German Marshall Fund conducts an extensive annual survey of trans-Atlantic trends. One of the key findings in the 2007 survey showed that Americans and Europeans cited energy dependence and international terrorism as threats by which they "felt most likely to be personally affected."⁴³ A breakdown of the survey shows 88% of Americans and 85% of Europeans cited energy dependence as a key threat. Regarding international terrorism, 74% of Americans and 66% of Europeans believed they would be personally threatened.⁴⁴ Another key finding of the survey suggests that the public on both sides of the Atlantic prefers to address threats in partnership. For example, "73% of Americans viewed strong leadership by the EU in world affairs as desirable."⁴⁵ Whereas, "54% of Europeans felt the EU should take greater responsibility for global threats in partnership with the United States."⁴⁶ These two responses indicate overall public support for the TAA.

⁴³ German Marshall Fund of the U.S., "Key Findings 2007," *Transatlantic Trends*, 3.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 4.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 12.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 13.

One of the most significant findings of the survey focused on attitudes toward the use of force. In the survey, 88% of Europeans said the EU should take a more active role in dealing with threats. Yet of those 88%, only 20% supported committing more troops for combat actions. Instead, large majorities indicated the EU should increase aid for development, increase trade, and commit more troops to UN peacekeeping missions. Taking the issue a step further, the Marshall Fund asked about operations in Afghanistan—a combat zone where article five of the NATO treaty was invoked for the first time, committing all alliance members to participate. A solid 64% of Europeans supported contributing troops to international reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. Yet, only 30% supported committing troops for combat operations against the Taliban. U.S. citizens by contrast, support combat operations in Afghanistan by 68%.⁴⁷

These findings indicate that, while Europeans support a trans-Atlantic partnership and feel threatened by similar issues, their approach to dealing with the threats is markedly different than the course pursued by Americans. Thus, Lindstrom’s public support criteria is met on the one hand yet may be undermined on the other hand, depending on the approach the alliance takes toward dealing with a particular threat. This consideration will return in the next section.

EXPLANATION OF SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

Throughout the three sections analyzed above, members of the alliance met Lindstrom’s criteria on one level but seemed to fall below the threshold of the criteria on another level. In the security environment section, for example, the U.S. and EU governments agreed officially on shared threats, thus meeting the criterion. Yet, divergence on approaches meant to deal with the threats, as illustrated in the disagreement over the 2003 Iraq War, call into question whether the criterion has been fully met. Similarly, in examining the ability to contribute criterion, the same

⁴⁷ Ibid, 18.

result occurred only in reverse. In this case, the Europeans as a whole do not possess the ability to contribute significantly to combat operations relative to the U.S., thus raising doubts that the criterion is met. Yet, if one aligns the U.S. approach to threats with its capabilities, there is a parallel relationship. The same holds true with the EU. Europeans prefer to deal with threats through development assistance and UN peacekeeping, and their defense spending and capabilities match that preference. Extending the discussion to the final criteria, one finds that the public on both sides of the Atlantic generally support their government's approach to threats.

There are two primary factors that need to be considered when analyzing this information. First, when considering the European side of the alliance, it is important to evaluate the criteria not only from the perspective of the EU, but also from the point of view of individual nations that form the union. Thus, a closer look at differences within the EU is likely to illuminate the discussion above about the impact of these diverging approaches between America and Europe more broadly. Second, a quick look at the markedly different experiences Europe as a whole and the U.S. faced throughout the 20th century will provide further insight into the source from which the different approach to threats today derives.

State sovereignty is a powerful force, especially when it involves foreign and security policy. While the EU has made several attempts to institutionalize the ability to speak with one voice on matters of foreign affairs, it has continually met resistance. The defeat of the EU constitution, most notably at the hands of French voters, was a major setback in this regard because the constitution would have created, "a new international actor with its own foreign minister and its own foreign policy."⁴⁸ In his paper, 'Europe and the new balance of global

⁴⁸ Jeffrey Cimballo, "Saving NATO from Europe," *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 6 (November/December 2004): 111.

order,” Hanna Maull helps explain the sentiment working against this integration of international affairs.

The EU is, namely a community of sovereign yet closely intertwined democratic states and peoples. For the same reason the EU may have limited ability to exercise diplomatic leadership, to promote major international initiatives, and generally to pursue coherent, cohesive, and proactive policies with a clear purpose.⁴⁹

An historical review of a few of the EU nations is illustrative of this point. Finland for example, historically has remained a neutral country. Germany is reluctant to use force because of its past. Poland is often seen as eager to use force in part because of its experience with both German and Soviet aggression and occupation. France has a proud diplomatic tradition and tends to pursue its own course, separate from the U.S. The United Kingdom often closely allies with the U.S. and has the most capable European military and a long history of using force. The stark differences of these five member countries is amplified when one considers the varying tradition of the remaining 22 EU nations.

This penchant for independence in foreign policy by the individual states was expressed most recently in time leading to the 2003 Iraq War when France and Germany found themselves “at odds with several current and prospective EU members – most conspicuously Great Britain, Italy, Spain, and Poland – who supported the position of the United States.”⁵⁰ Some speculate that the difficulties in Iraq today are driving these nations together and may help prevent such stark disagreement in the future. However, the dispute over the best response to the Iraqi threat is just one disagreement among a litany that has been a part of the entire EU integration process.

⁴⁹ Hans Maull, “Europe and the New Balance of Global Order,” *International Affairs* 81, no. 4 (2005): 793.

⁵⁰ Kissinger, “Renewing the Atlantic Partnership,” 14-15.

One of the most notable disagreements came in 1963 when French President Charles de Gaulle vetoed Great Britain's application for membership into the European Economic Community. Recalling a conversation with De Gaulle, French Ambassador to Great Britain Jean Chauvel wrote, "[T]he general told me that it [i.e. the British proposal] was simply a device by which to gain entry into our nuclear domain where the English would be able to observe and possibly intervene on behalf of the Americans."⁵¹ Given this dramatic example, it can hardly be said that the Iraq War was the first, or likely the last, time the Europeans will disagree on matters of foreign affairs, especially when the U.S. holds an alternate position.

The final reason why it is important to consider Europe as a collection of nations rather than simply one supra-national entity in security affairs, is because of separate defense procurement. Defending one's homeland lies at the heart of sovereignty, and procuring military equipment is the foundation of a nation's military capability. As a result, states, even in the EU, have been reluctant to participate in common procurement. French President Sarkozy described the problem the EU faces when he said, "With [cumulative] defense budgets much less than the U.S. budget, Europe cannot afford the luxury of funding five separate surface-to-air missiles programs, three combat aircraft programs, six attack submarine programs and about 20 armored vehicle programs."⁵² The redundancy in spending within the EU is massive. A 2006 report commissioned by the European Parliament estimated that "although EU governments spend about half the amount Americans do on defense, their defense capacities are only about 10 percent as efficient as the U.S."⁵³ The significance of this report has not been lost on the EU because the commission has moved forward with plans to implement a "common defense

⁵¹ Geoffrey Warner, "Why the General Said No," *International Affairs* 78, no. 4 (2002): 875.

⁵² Briganti, "Sarkozy's Warning," 5.

⁵³ Jochen Luypaert, "Brussels Moves to Open EU Defense Industry Market," *EU Observer*, December 5, 2007.

market” in the EU. While talks of collaboration on Joint Strike Fighters and a British/French carrier have occurred, on the whole, common procurement has yet to materialize into a significant improvement in military capacity or cost savings.

Keeping in mind the inherent differences within the EU, it is important to examine the source that impels the EU and the U.S. to approach security threats differently. Kristin Archick and Paul Gallis, in their paper “NATO and the European Union,” discuss a rationale for the European approach to security. “The legacy of two world wars in Europe remains a central factor in shaping government’s policies... this view lies behind the general European opposition to the Bush administration’s doctrine of “pre-emptive action.”⁵⁴ Further, in the second half of the 20th century, nations that had been at war with each other on and off since the signing of the treaty of Westphalia in 1648 (and before) came together and through diplomacy, consensus, and institution building, ended the multi-century armed conflict. The success of this process, contrasted with the disaster of the two World Wars, has ingrained an aversion to force and a penchant for diplomacy and peace in the minds of many European leaders.

Compare this experience with that of the United States, a nation that possesses insular geography in that it is surrounded by two oceans and two peaceful and comparatively weak nations. Because it has not been directly threatened on the level of the European experience (i.e. three German invasions of France), the U.S. is inclined to view the world differently. Prior to WWI and in the pre-war period until the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1942, the U.S. view of the world had been largely isolationist precisely because of its geographic positions vis-à-vis the rest of the world. However, the U.S. rejected isolationism when it felt threatened by German and Japanese aggression. The lesson U.S. leaders took from WWII that had not been learned

⁵⁴ Archick, “NATO,” 10.

following the first world War, was that the U.S. needed to stay engaged in the world and that the use of force was a critical aspect of that engagement. This lesson was further ingrained in the mindset of U.S. leaders during the Cold War. Again, the U.S. felt threatened because its favorable geographic position could not protect it from Soviet nuclear attack. The U.S. relied on a strong conventional and nuclear force to deal with this threat. Today, with the possibility of a terrorist detonating a nuclear weapon on U.S. soil, America feels compelled again to protect itself and return to the instrument that has worked in the past: use of force. Robert Kagan writes, “The United States’ vast military power, technological prowess, and history of unparalleled accomplishment have imbued Americans with a sense of “can-do” optimism about the world.”⁵⁵ This view led to the U.S. policy of pre-emptive war—a belief that problems can be fixed before they materialize. As U.S. Secretary of Donald Rumsfeld wrote in 2002, “Our goal is not simply to fight and win wars; it is to prevent them.”⁵⁶ This view runs directly counter to that of most partners within the TAA.

Are these fundamentally differing approaches to dealing with threats catalysts that will destroy the alliance due to constant fighting and disagreement, or are these divergent approaches complementary that will make the alliance stronger? The answer to this question will likely predict the future of the trans-Atlantic alliance.

THREE POSSIBLE SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE OF TRANS-ATLANTIC COOPERATION

Taken together—the above consideration of the collaborative criteria (including the similarities and differences) and the TAA’s history of cooperation, shared culture, similar governing identity, and economic inter-dependence—three primary scenarios of the future TAA

⁵⁵ Gordon, “Bridging the Atlantic Divide,” 70.

⁵⁶ Donald Rumsfeld, “Transforming the Military,” *Foreign Affairs* 81, no. 3 (May/June 2002): 20.

emerge. 1). The trans-Atlantic alliance strengthens, representing the most ideal scenario, 2) The trans-Atlantic alliance weakens significantly, representing the least ideal scenario, and 3) The trans-Atlantic alliance continues to operate imperfectly, representing the most likely scenario.

SCENARIO 1 – THE TRANS-ATLANTIC ALLIANCE STRENGTHENS

On January 20, 2009, a new president will lead the United States, thus completing a transition of power in each of the major nations involved with the split over Iraq policy. Capitalizing on lessons learned in engagements since September 11, 2001, America will approach its European partners with a proposal. Moving forward in dealing with agreed upon threats such as WMD proliferation, terrorism, and energy dependence, the U.S. will increase its capacity to conduct combat operations in the relevant shared threat areas. However, the U.S. appeals for the EU to significantly increase its capacity in the areas of stabilization and reconstruction and commit these units under NATO command. Further, the U.S. requests, independently of NATO, that the EU increase its homeland security capability, its UN peacekeeping presence, and its humanitarian and development aid.

In exchange for these increased commitments, the U.S. pledges to refrain from covert military action without the approval of either the UN Security Council or NATO.⁵⁷ Such an arrangement requires sacrifice on both sides of the alliance. The U.S. must sacrifice some independence of action, and the EU may be forced to re-allocate some welfare spending to defense. The option is ideal in the sense that it aligns the preferences and capabilities of each side of the Atlantic with an area of responsibility necessary to dealing with common threats. Furthermore, it unites TAA decision-making within NATO—allowing for the seemingly

⁵⁷ A specific voting mechanism to determine approval for military action within NATO will have to be worked out and approved.

inevitable disagreement among EU nations to be decided in a context that does not require the abdication of sovereignty while giving the EU parity with the United States on decision making.

Critics of this scenario make two distinct arguments against it, depending on the side of the Atlantic in which they reside. From the U.S. perspective, critics argue the scenario is too idealistic in that America's preponderance of military power in the world gives it no reason to concede decisions on when to use force to any outside entity. Opponents of this position may point to U.S. difficulty in dealing with the insurgency in Iraq as an historical warning for those who believe U.S. force can independently accomplish any goal set by the Americans. In reality, EU support, especially in the increased capacities noted in the proposed agreement, will enhance U.S. power to confront threats. This enhancement is the incentive needed for the U.S. to cede some of its decision-making authority. Furthermore, by doing so, should NATO agree to a proposed operation, the U.S. would then be provided with critical post-combat support, a key ingredient to success.

European critics are likely to point to the diverging interests following the Cold War and resulting policy disagreements as signs that the alliance is headed toward dissolution rather than agreed-upon collaboration as this scenario proposes. Yet, as Kissinger and Summers point out in their task force report, the differences within the alliance today "are no more serious than those that existed in the past over the Suez crisis in the 1950s, the Vietnam War in the 1960s, the Yom Kippur War and the energy crises of the 1970s or the debate over missile deployment in the 1980s."⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Kissinger, "Renewing the Atlantic Partnership," 8.

SCENARIO 2 – THE TRANS-ATLANTIC ALLIANCE WEAKENS SIGNIFICANTLY – MOVING TOWARD DISSOLUTION

The deterioration of the TAA is a slow process that began with disagreements over the re-unification of Germany, continued during the post-Cold War era, and accelerated following September 11, 2001, most notably over the disagreements centered on the response to the new threat. France and Germany—appalled at the U.S. policy of preemptive war and unilateral decision making—capitalize on negative British sentiment following their arduous experience in Iraq and institutionalize a common European foreign and security policy. Key tenets of the new policy are: 1) a shift away from NATO to independent, EU forces that “consult” with the alliance, 2) a development of “niche” defense spending whereby EU member states are responsible for key capabilities, thus reducing redundancy, and 3) accelerated implementation of the joint procurement plan so that costs can be saved and reinvested in increasing overall capacity. In response to these actions, Washington pulls back logistical support for NATO’s NRF and scales back diplomatic consultation regarding strategic foreign policy decisions. While the EU is still allied with the U.S. in this scenario, a significant shift toward EU independence will result. As China and Russia gain strength as regional and possibly global powers, the EU will ally with them and other nations against Washington on a more frequent basis, thus giving rise to the historic French desire for a multi-polar system of international relations.

Critics of this scenario make several points. First, they argue, citing the Lindstrom criteria above, that both sides of the Atlantic share common threats and that European movement away from the U.S. (the nation with the military power to assist them in dealing with threats) is unlikely. Second, the rejection of the EU constitution that would have institutionalized a common foreign and security policy and the analysis of different security traditions represented

within the EU coupled with the strength of sovereignty suggest the idea of an EU common defense is unlikely. Third, critics may point out that even if the EU were to develop a common security policy, independent of NATO, because of declining defense budgets in the EU, without NATO (i.e. U.S.) support, EU forces are not capable of projecting significant power for long durations of time. Fourth, critics argue that even in the face of security disagreements, the interdependence of the TAA economies in many ways has replaced the Cold War threat as the glue of the alliance and will therefore compel both sides to mitigate differences. Finally, critics point to the danger of an international system based on the balance of power and argue that the Europeans, who experienced two world wars as a result of that system of international relations, are unlikely to take serious steps in that direction. To this point, Kissinger and Summers note, “If Europe defines its identity in terms of countering U.S. power, the world is likely to return to a balance of power system reminiscent of the era prior to World War I – with the same disastrous consequences.”⁵⁹

Proponents of this scenario dismiss such arguments citing three key factors. First, they contend that there has been a “clear erosion in the sense of shared interests and values” on both sides of the Atlantic.⁶⁰ Jeffrey Cimbalo adds to this sentiment writing in *Foreign Affairs*, “Judging by both past behavior and current rhetoric, the EU does not have far to go to get from ‘not American’ to deliberate strategic competition with the United States.”⁶¹ Second, proponents of a common EU foreign and security policy argue that “security and defense are amendable to

⁵⁹ Kissinger, “Renewing the Atlantic Partnership,” 15.

⁶⁰ Maull, “Europe,” 776.

⁶¹ Cimbalo, “Saving NATO,” 111.

integration”⁶² following the same theories of economic integration that led to monetary union. Third, several proponents believe that EU military capacity is increasing, aided by the common procurement that is underway.⁶³ Further, they cite EU operations in the Balkans, Africa, and elsewhere as key examples of the progress in operational capacity, all of which combine to give “the Union a new self-confidence.”⁶⁴

SCENARIO 3 – THE TRANS-ATLANTIC ALLIANCE CONTINUES TO OPERATE IMPERFECTLY

With the first two scenarios representing more extreme positions as potential futures of the TAA, this third scenario encompasses the massive grey area in between. The best example of what an imperfectly operating alliance would look like is the TAA of today. In this scenario, both sides share many common threats but often seek to approach them differently. The Americans possess a significantly superior combat force, and the EU emphasizes development and peacekeeping as key tenets of its security policy. There is no clear division of labor within the alliance as the U.S. gears up its stabilization capacity, and EU nations such as the UK and France maintain serious military capacity. NATO exists alongside a European defense force with ostensibly different missions, yet both entities rely on EU troops that are “double hatted.”⁶⁵ When threats arise that require a significant operational response, the U.S. leads a “coalition of the willing” whereby the UK, Poland, Italy, and other EU members (potentially Spain, France, and Germany depending on the type and severity of the threat, as well as the proposed response) band together to conduct the operation. There are three main factors that hold this alliance

⁶² Hanna Ojanen, “The EU and NATO: Two Competing Models for a Common Defense Policy,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 44, no. 1 (2006): 57.

⁶³ Seth Jones, “The Rise of Europe’s Defense Industry,” *US-Europe Analysis Series* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, May 2005), 1.

⁶⁴ Kristin Archick and Vince Morelli, “The United States and Europe: Current Issues,” Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.: CRS Web, November 21, 2006), 2.

⁶⁵ Archick, “NATO,” 6.

together. The first is shared culture, history, and governance—factors that are highly unlikely to change. Second, economic interdependence provides a strong motivation to allow sizeable disagreements to occur without tearing the alliance apart. Third, shared threats bind the alliance together, though the ties tend to strengthen as threats increase and loosen as they abate or when disagreement about confronting threats mounts.

The arguments in favor of scenario one and two outline the criticism of this scenario; proponents of those positions believe the alliance will move past its present state toward their position. While the counterarguments above, then, provide insight into the defense of the third scenario, it's important to consider the following ideas as well. Scenario three is more likely than the closer collaboration represented in the first scenario because the U.S. is unlikely to agree to abdicate its decision-making authority to defend itself when it feels threatened. While the U.S. is likely to seek legitimization and will work to build allied support for the reasons outlined in scenario one, in the absence of NATO support, the U.S. possesses the capacity to lead a coalition of the willing and ultimately to conduct operations unilaterally if necessary. Second, from the European perspective, differing histories and the strength of sovereignty in the realm of security and foreign policy indicate that nations will perceive threats differently than others in the EU, let alone vis-à-vis the U.S. Therefore, the requirement to deploy forces based on a NATO resolution is not likely to appeal to EU countries any more than their current disregard for deploying forces based on EU authorization. The Marshall Fund survey found, for example, that only 42% of Europeans agreed that their country should abide by a decision the EU makes to use

military force.⁶⁶ These factors, among many others, indicate that the TAA is more likely to maintain the status quo represented in the third scenario than to move toward scenario one.

The same point holds true for scenario two; significant forces will likely hold the alliance together. First, the track record of success of the TAA is a clear indication that the U.S. and the EU together “can accomplish much more when they work together.”⁶⁷ Apart from the issues discussed that keep TAA together, such as terrorism and WMD proliferation, looking to the future, in a paper titled, “The trans-Atlantic Economy 2020: A Partnership for the Future?” the authors write, “[B]y working together to anchor China and the broader Middle East within the international trading system, the United States and the EU can both bolster the trading system of which they have been leaders, and also reinforce their partnership more broadly.”⁶⁸ This point is critical in that it underscores the potential rise of China and the importance of the TAA to work to ensure the rise is peaceful and productive. The point is also important because it serves as a reminder of the significance of a stable international economy and the importance TAA plays in maintaining that stability. Next, when examining NATO versus a European defense force, Archick and Gallis remind us, “The EU stresses that ESDP is not aimed at usurping NATO’s collective defense role nor at weakening the transatlantic alliance. Most EU members, led by the UK, insist that ESDP be tied to NATO...and that EU efforts to build more robust defense capabilities should reinforce those of the alliance.”⁶⁹ If this sentiment holds, then the move toward scenario two will become highly unlikely. To strengthen this point, despite his seeming support for scenario two, Maull admits, “the ability of the EU to conduct truly ‘common’ foreign

⁶⁶ German Marshall Fund of the U.S., 13.

⁶⁷ Archick, “The United States,” 1.

⁶⁸ Atlantic Council of the United States, “The Transatlantic Economy in 2020: A Partnership for the Future?” *Report of a Working Group*, November 2004, 28-29.

⁶⁹ Archick, “NATO,” 12.

and security policies... will remain limited as long as there are no...institutional leaps into supranational integration.”⁷⁰ From the U.S. perspective, many argue that it is in America’s interest to prevent the alliance from moving toward scenario two because the U.S. needs Europe to share the security burden. Gordon reminds us that Washington cannot “run up massive fiscal deficits and expand its military commitments” into perpetuity.⁷¹

CONCLUSION: SECURITY AND THE TRANS-ATLANTIC ECONOMY

To close this essay, it is incumbent to return to its origin by briefly examining the relationship between security and the economy through the lens of three future security scenarios. First, terrorists acquire several nuclear weapons. One is detonated in New York and another in Paris. The results are devastating. Al Qaeda demands that all troops on foreign soil be withdrawn and that Western trade with Islamic nations cease within one month or the destruction of Western cities will continue. Second, in response to Ukraine’s accession into the EU, an increasingly belligerent Russia cuts off natural gas supplies through its pipeline to Europe in the height of winter, bringing devastating effects to citizens and the economy of the EU. Third, a rising China uses its newly acquired state-of-the-art navy to block shipping lanes throughout Asia. The Chinese inform the West that they have no wish to impede their territory but that they intend to exercise full control of access to markets throughout Asia.

Destruction of cities, nuclear blackmail, dependence on foreign sources of energy, and blocked access to key markets—these and countless other security threats directly relate to the stability of the international economy. A TAA that follows scenario two may waste so many resources in terms of redundant capabilities and needless friction among competing poles that

⁷⁰ Maull, “Europe,” 791.

⁷¹ Gordon, “Bridging the Atlantic Divide,” 70.

terrorists succeed in their ultimate goal of acquiring WMD. Because limited defense budgets are spent on largely redundant capabilities, homeland security funding is scarcer, making it easier for the terrorists to detonate their weapons in prime target cities. An independent Europe not backed with U.S. force is a much easier target for Russia seeking to exact revenge for EU expansion. Finally, a rising China seems likely. A strong, yet belligerent China need not be necessary however, if the TAA works now to tie China into the international system making it counterproductive for it to take antagonizing steps because it would feel economic effects concurrently with the West.

From the outset, the purpose of this analysis is not to recommend the option the TAA should pursue. While the previous paragraph indicates that the scenario leading to the slow but eventual dissolution of the TAA should not be pursued, there remains an important choice between scenario one and three. The differences between the two remaining scenarios are stark, with significant swaths of grey area in between for foreign and defense ministers as well as heads of states to rectify in order to build a new trans-Atlantic consensus that recognizes the interests and capabilities of each partner, while working to provide the international security its citizens expect and the stability needed to preserve the conditions for the trans-Atlantic economy to flourish. Recently, French President Nicolas Sarkozy declared his intention to use France's EU presidency next year to move forward on common defense policies and institutions.⁷² Concurrently, the United States will be electing a new leader thus moving the war on terror into its next phase. The conditions are suitable, as this analysis has shown, for a consensus to emerge and for the

⁷² Ian Traynor Bruges, "Britain Scorns France's Plans for EU Defense," *The Guardian*, London, November 16, 2007, 26.

trans-Atlantic alliance to strengthen, weaken, or maintain the status quo. The choice, or lack thereof, will bear significant effects for the world.

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