II. The military dimension of Euro–Atlantic security frameworks: the European Union and NATO

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During 2014 it became increasingly clear that European countries face a large number of complex and serious security problems that must be addressed simultaneously. Conflicts in Iraq, Syria and Ukraine underlined to the most senior political leaders of the states participating in the main Euro–Atlantic security institutions that these complex problems have a military dimension. Moreover, military security concerns are becoming both more serious and closer to their common borders.

Complex issues surround all of the countries at the perimeter of the territory covered by Euro–Atlantic security institutions: first and foremost the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). While none is exclusively bilateral (NATO–Russia or EU–Russia), a significant number of the identified problems have a connection to Russia.

In May 2014 EU foreign ministers reaffirmed that the EU and its member states 'can bring to the international stage the unique ability to combine, in a coherent and consistent manner, policies and tools ranging from diplomacy, security and defence to finance, trade, development and human rights, as well as justice and migration'.[1] However, in their statements during the year, EU representatives also recognized that they are still far from having a comprehensive approach to external conflict and crises, and the EU Foreign Affairs Council conclusions in May 2014 called for steps to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of collective action. The attempt to develop a more integrated approach at EU level has a long history, however, in 2014 the growing seriousness of external challenges, combined with the arrival of a new senior management in the EU, were seen as a new opportunity to make changes in the way the EU approaches security policy.[2]

In October 2014 the new High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission, Federica Mogherini, described how to create a strong and coherent external agenda for the EU.[3] Mogherini emphasized the need to make full use of the innov-

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[1] Council of the European Union, Council conclusions on the EU's comprehensive approach, Foreign Affairs Council meeting, Brussels, 12 May 2014.
[2] Faria, F., *What Comprehensive Approach? Challenges for the EU Action Plan and Beyond*, European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) Briefing Note no. 71 (ECDPM: Maastricht, Oct. 2014).
[3] European Commission, 'Answers to the European Parliament questionnaire to the Commissioner Designate Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and

ations introduced by the new President of the Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker. A cluster of commissioners—those with portfolios that have important external implications—began to meet regularly in varying thematic and/or geographic formats. The critical importance of ensuring coherence with the national actions of member states was underlined—since the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) remain largely intergovernmental and decisions require unanimity among EU member states. Mogherini also drew attention to the need for a more coordinated approach between external and internal policies when addressing many of the security challenges facing the EU.

The May 2014 Council conclusions on the comprehensive approach to external conflict underlined that EU policies and priorities should follow from 'common strategic objectives and a clear common vision of what the EU collectively wants to achieve in its external relations or in a particular conflict or crisis situation'.[4] However, events have demonstrated that neither the EU nor NATO can currently develop large-scale, sustainable solutions to complex problems at short notice.

In comparison with other functional areas, where the EU has long experience and major activities, the military dimensions of EU documents on a comprehensive approach to external conflict and crises are relatively weak and underdeveloped. In recent years, by contrast, NATO has become accustomed to planning and executing a diverse set of military activities, including simultaneous management of multiple operations of different sizes and in different locations. However, NATO is not operationally engaged across the broad spectrum of issue areas that would need to be taken into account as part of a comprehensive approach to conflict and crises.

Not only are the actions taken in the Euro–Atlantic security institutions essentially reactive, they are also inadequately coordinated. The efforts to develop regular and efficient discussions between the EU and NATO have not produced the necessary results; ad hoc meetings arranged with great difficulty and in some secrecy have meant that efforts to cooperate have inevitably fallen short.

The events in the Middle East and Ukraine were the catalyst for internal reflection during 2014, leading to significant decisions at the September 2014 NATO Summit in Wales, the United Kingdom.

One of the main areas for reflection was whether the nature of military challenges was changing—in particular the challenge posed by so-called hybrid warfare. A typology of such a conflict would include attempts to

Security Policy, Vice-President of the Commission', 6 Oct. 2014, <http://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/cwt/files/commissioner_ep_hearings/mogherini-reply_en.pdf>.
    [4] Council of the European Union (note 1).

achieve a strategic objective with tactics that combine a military component (such as special forces) with non-military actions (such as information campaigns and violent disorder carried out by 'backdoor proxies').[5] However, from the perspective of analysts in NATO countries, existing classifications—such as low intensity conflict, insurgency or asymmetric warfare—did not capture the essence of hybrid warfare as practiced in Ukraine in 2014. Recent conflict analysis in Western countries has tended to focus on situations where the armed forces of states confront transnational and substate groups that operate globally and locally. A tendency in such circumstances is fragmentation—with various forms of violence (intercommunal, terrorist, insurgent and/or criminal) taking place in the same location. However, NATO analyses of Crimea were in no doubt that operations (including those carried out by local militias or civilian actors) were planned and controlled by a state—Russia—from beginning to end.[6]

In Crimea, Russian forces achieved 'a clear military victory on the battlefield by the operationalization of a well-orchestrated campaign of strategic communication, using clear political, psychological, and information strategies' so that 'in just three weeks, and without a shot being fired, the morale of the Ukrainian military was broken and all of their 190 bases had surrendered'.[7] Although Russian forces were present in significant numbers in Crimea when military operations began, they never had numerical superiority over Ukrainian forces, were not armed with heavy combat equipment and did not receive air support.[8] Prepared in advance through information operations targeted locally, and carried out by relatively small numbers of special forces, it might even be difficult to recognize straight away when a hybrid attack has been initiated.

At the same time, Russia also deployed significant conventional armed forces close to Crimea, capable of being used at short notice.[9] In the background, Russia also had significant deployed nuclear forces capable of being used at short notice. The impression that the Russian political leadership was both prepared to escalate, and ready to do so, was a deterrent to external intervention or local escalation by Ukrainian forces.

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[5] Kendal, B., 'Hybrid warfare: the new conflict between East and West', BBC News, 6 Nov. 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-29903395>.

[6] NATO, 'Hybrid war: hybrid response?', *NATO Review*, [n.d.], <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2014/Russia-Ukraine-Nato-crisis/Russia-Ukraine-crisis-war/EN/index.htm>.

[7] Berzins, J., *Russia's New Generation Warfare in Ukraine: Implications for Latvian Defense Policy*, National Defence Academy of Latvia (NDA), Center for Security and Strategic Research, Policy Paper no. 2 (NDA: Riga, June 2014), p. 4.

[8] Lavrov, A., 'Russian again: the military operation for Crimea', eds C. Howard, and R. Pukhov, *Brothers Armed: Military Aspects of the Crisis in Ukraine* (East View Press: Minneapolis, 2014), pp. 157–84.

[9] In Feb. 2014 Russia called a short-notice exercise to test the readiness of forces in the Western and Central Military Districts. On the pattern of military exercises in Europe, see chapter 14, section III, in this volume.

In advance of the Wales Summit, NATO member states were tasked with developing a package of measures that could respond to the new challenges and threats identified around the borders of the alliance. The package was intended to be the basis for immediate actions, as well as medium- and long-term programmes that could strengthen collective defence and crisis management capabilities.

The measures developed during 2014 and agreed at the summit included a Readiness Action Plan (RAP), a defence investment pledge, and the intention to develop tailored partnerships with countries that shared NATO objectives. The RAP included a mix of assurance measures and adaptation measures for the alliance. Assurance measures have been defined that are expected to increase the military presence and military activities of all 28 NATO member states participating on a scalable basis; and adaptation measures are changes to NATO military posture and capabilities.

The assurance measures that were endorsed at the Wales Summit build on decisions taken during 2013—such as increasing the number of combat aircraft participating in joint air-policing patrols over Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and the number of naval vessels on patrol in the Baltic, Black and Mediterranean seas. At the Wales Summit, NATO also expanded its rotational deployments of ground troops in the eastern parts of the alliance for training and exercises. The number and size of exercises in the eastern part of the alliance increased in 2014, including both exercises organized under NATO command and bilateral exercises (in particular bilateral exercises with United States armed forces).

Agreed adaptation measures included enhancing the NATO Response Force (NRF) to enable the movement of a division-size force at short notice, in order to rapidly respond to threats. As one part of restructuring the NRF, NATO leaders created a Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VHRJTF, also known as the Spearhead Force) to enable the deployment within a few days of several thousand ground troops, along with supporting air, maritime and special forces. NATO leaders set the end of 2015 as the date for establishing the Spearhead Force, and to that end accelerated projects already in place to pre-position military equipment and supplies. NATO plans also include establishing a command and control presence and adapting the logistic support in host countries to accelerate deployment of the newly enhanced response forces.[10]

The development of the NRF builds on a 2013 decision by NATO to endorse a proposal by Germany for a Framework Nation Concept, in which European states would cooperate closely in smaller groups in order to pro-

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[10] NATO, Public Diplomacy Division, 'NATO's Readiness Action Plan', Fact sheet, Dec. 2014, <http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2014_12/20141202_141202-facstsheet-rap-en.pdf>.

vide and sustain assets on a long-term basis. The Framework Nation would be expected to lead a cluster of states, providing the group with shared logistics, command and control assets. Smaller states would contribute specialized capabilities that could be assembled into force packages able to carry out and sustain complex operations.[11]

The defence investment pledge taken by NATO leaders codified the results of discussions that were initiated in 2013 on the need to rebalance the collective military resource base of the alliance. In 2013 the US Secretary of Defense, Chuck Hagel, is reported to have informed allies that the USA planned to reduce its share of overall NATO military spending to something closer to the 50 per cent considered normal during the cold war.[12] The rebalance would, to a certain extent, reflect reduced US military spending, including the effects of budget sequestration.[13] However, the pledge was also intended to reverse 'the trend of declining defence budgets', with the aim to 'increase defence expenditure in real terms as GDP [gross domestic product] grows'.[14]

The pledge was a recognition that, in present economic conditions, many NATO member states would find it difficult, if not impossible, to implement the existing NATO guideline of spending 2 per cent of GDP on defence, and investing 20 per cent of military spending on research, development and equipment acquisition. It focused on implementing the guideline over the course of a decade, and the decision to call it an investment (rather than a spending) pledge recognized the option of considering, for example, contributions in kind as a means of fulfilling the commitment. The intention was to stimulate thinking among NATO member states about how to enhance capabilities, rather than using a more traditional approach of using financial metrics to measure equitable burden sharing.

The implementation of the Wales Summit commitments has been emphasized as a test of the credibility of NATO as a provider of collective defence to member states. The incoming Secretary-General of NATO, Jens Stoltenberg, has emphasized in his speeches that progress in implementation will be measured, while the member states have agreed that an annual report will be prepared for future summits, documenting implementation.

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[11] Major C. and Mölling, C., *The Framework Nations Concept: Germany's Contribution to a Capable European Defence*, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) Comments no. 52 (SWP: Berlin, Dec. 2014).

[12] Benitez, J., 'Will the US "rebalance" its contribution to NATO?', Defense One, 20 Oct. 2013, <http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2013/10/will-us-rebalance-its-contribution-nato/72281>.

[13] US Department of Defense, 'Estimated impacts of sequestration-level funding', Apr. 2015, <http://www.defense.gov/pubs/2014_Estimated_Impacts_of_Sequestration-Level_Funding_April.pdf>.

[14] NATO, 'The Wales Declaration on the Trans-Atlantic bond', Press Release (2014) 122, 5 Sep. 2014. On NATO-related military spending, see chapter 3, section IV, in this volume.

NATO leaders also sought to increase the credibility of collective defence in public statements of solidarity—of which the most important in 2014 was the speech by US President Barack Obama in Tallinn, Estonia, on the eve of the Wales Summit. Obama said to the assembled crowd: 'In this Alliance, there are no old members or new members, no junior partners or senior partners—there are just Allies, pure and simple. And we will defend the territorial integrity of every single Ally . . . Because the defence of Tallinn and Riga and Vilnius is just as important as the defence of Berlin and Paris and London'.[15]

NATO has worked with non-member states in a diverse range of military operations, for example, in Afghanistan and Libya, and in naval counter-piracy missions. With the end of the main combat mission in Afghanistan, NATO is refocusing on how to sustain and expand its partnerships with non-member states.

Over time, NATO has developed a network of partnerships with individual countries, regions and other international organizations. During the operation in Afghanistan, NATO has had extensive interactions with global partners, including Afghanistan, Australia, Iraq, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mongolia, New Zealand and Pakistan. There are 22 countries participating in the Euro–Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace that are not NATO member states. NATO carries out a Mediterranean Dialogue with Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia, while Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates have joined the NATO Istanbul Cooperation Initiative. NATO also has a framework for dialogue with the United Nations, the EU and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), in particular on crisis management and so-called emerging threats—such as mass-impact terrorism. The alliance has also cooperated with other partners on specific projects, including the African Union and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

At the Wales Summit, NATO took steps to develop a new initiative—the Enhanced Opportunities Programme (EOP)—with a limited number of countries with whom the alliance has gained a lot of military operational experience. The EOP was established for those countries where the capacity to work in joint command structures and the interoperability of forces has been fully demonstrated in the field. The first group of enhanced opportunities partners are Australia, Finland, Georgia, Jordan and Sweden.[16] A new Defence Capacity Building Initiative was also endorsed,

[15] White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 'Remarks by President Obama to the people of Estonia', Tallinn, 3 Sep. 2014, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/03/remarks-president-obama-people-estonia>.
[16] Prior to the Wales Summit, NATO signed host country agreements with Finland and Sweden to facilitate closer cooperation. NATO, Allied Command Operations, 'Finland and Sweden sign

which is intended to help partners build their defence capabilities by pro-
viding training, education, exercises and targeted advice. The initial
participants in this initiative will be Georgia, Jordan and Moldova.[17]

memorandum of understanding with NATO', 5 Sep. 2014, <http://www.aco.nato.int/finland-and-
sweden-signing-a-memorandum-of-understanding-with-nato-for-operational-and-logistic-support.aspx>.
     [17] Lute, D., US Ambassador to NATO, 'The Wales Summit: strengthening NATO partnerships',
20 Nov. 2014, <http://nato.usmission.gov/sp_11202014.html>.