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AIV

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# Foreword

In October 2016, the government asked the AIV to prepare a detailed analysis of NATO's long-term adaptation requirements in light of the diffuse and variable nature of the threat situation and to examine the implications of these developments for Dutch security policy and defence efforts.[1] In its request for advice, the government noted that several key steps were taken at the NATO summit meetings in Wales (September 2014) and Warsaw (July 2016) to adapt the Alliance to the new security environment, and that it is vital that NATO continue to reflect on the scope and effectiveness of these measures in the coming years. On 10 March 2017, in advance of the full advisory report, the AIV published an advisory letter entitled 'Russia and the Defence Efforts of the Netherlands', in which it specifically examined the implications of the Russian threat for the Dutch armed forces.[2]

The present advisory report also addresses the other questions in the request for advice. Following an introductory chapter, chapter II examines developments in security policy on the Alliance's eastern flank, in particular the change in Russia's political stance and its military build-up. Chapter III addresses the security threats emanating from the Middle East and North Africa. Chapter IV analyses the various measures NATO has taken to tackle the aforementioned threats. Chapter V looks at the possibilities for diplomatic consultations with Russia and conventional arms control. Chapter VI examines the Alliance's internal unity and transatlantic cooperation. Chapter VII discusses EU-NATO cooperation, NATO enlargement and cooperation with partner countries. Chapter VIII focuses on the implications of the above for Dutch security and defence policy. Finally, chapter IX contains a summary of the report, as well as the AIV's conclusions and recommendations.

The report was prepared by the AIV's Peace and Security Committee (CVV), consisting of Professor J.J.C. Voorhoeve (chair), Lieutenant General (ret.) M.L.M. Urlings (vice-chair), Professor E. Bakker, D.J. Barth, A.J. Boekestijn, L.F.F. Casteleijn, Professor J. Colijn, Dr N. van Dam, Dr N. de Deugd, Dr M. Drent, Professor I. Duyvesteyn, P.C. Feith, Dr A.R. Korteweg and Lieutenant General (ret.) Dr D. Starink. The executive secretary was Ms M.E. Kwast-van Duursen, assisted by M.L.I. van Laake and Ms R.M. Guldemond (trainees). The civil service liaison officers were J.W.K. Glashouwer of the Ministry of Defence and B. Wels of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The AIV adopted this advisory report on 6 October 2017.

1 See annexe I for the request for advice.

2 AIV advisory letter no. 31, 'Russia and the Defence Efforts of the Netherlands', The Hague, March 2017.

# I Introduction

The security challenges facing the Alliance are substantial and complex. European security is under threat both from Russia's destabilising actions and from various countries in the arc of instability spanning the Middle East and North Africa. Russia is harming European security by violating the integrity of sovereign states and through its attempts to expand its influence in the 'near abroad' and undermine the credibility of NATO and the EU. In addition, Europe is vulnerable to terrorist attacks and must, for the foreseeable future, bear in mind the serious prospect of terrorist acts by organisations, lone actors or ISIS fighters returning from Syria and Iraq. Europe faces direct security threats emanating from North Africa, including terrorism and religious extremism, drug trafficking and people smuggling, and arms proliferation.[3]

In light of these significant threats, it is all the more worrying that NATO's internal unity is under pressure. The unpredictable nature of US foreign policy under President Donald Trump is causing uncertainty regarding the United States' involvement in NATO and the value of article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. Since January 2017, NATO's largest member country, which has formed the political and military backbone of the Alliance since its establishment in 1949, cannot be depended upon to provide leadership. Relations with strategically located NATO member Turkey are becoming increasingly difficult as President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan takes less and less notice of his NATO Allies. The United Kingdom's impending departure from the EU as a result of the Brexit referendum has dealt a heavy blow to the EU's global position.[4] In addition, the European Allies disagree on NATO's priorities. The Baltic states and Poland fear Russian expansion. In contrast, certain members of ruling coalitions in countries such as Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey sympathise with Russia. The countries of southern Europe are particularly concerned about security threats emanating from the Middle East and North Africa.[5] Internal disagreement is not uncommon within NATO, but current divisions are seriously testing the Alliance's unity.

The new security environment appears to provide ample grounds for a review of NATO strategy. Its most recent Strategic Concept, entitled called 'Active Engagement, Modern Defence', which defined the Alliance's core tasks as collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security, dates from 2010.[6] In its first 40 years, until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, NATO was dominated by the East-West divide. The balance of power between the United States and the Soviet Union shaped security

3 See AIV advisory report no. 101, 'Security and Stability in Northern Africa', The Hague, May 2016, p. 44.

4 See AIV advisory report no. 103, 'Brexit Means Brexit: Towards a New Relationship with the UK', The Hague, March 2017.

5 According to Binnendijk et al., the disagreement within NATO on whether to prioritise the eastern or southern flank is based on a false distinction: 'The unfortunate reality is that borders and principles are being tested both to Europe's east and to its south, and the dangers of each region have great potential to come together in ways that can directly threaten Europeans, Americans and many others around the globe.' See Hans Binnendijk, Daniel S. Hamilton and Charles L. Barry, 'Alliance Revitalized: NATO for a New Era', Washington, April 2016, p. v.

6 See: <http://www.nato.int/lisbon2010/strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf>.

policy in Europe. At that time, the core tasks of the Atlantic Alliance consisted of deterrence and defence. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the strategic context changed, most former adversaries joined the EU and/or NATO and the Alliance's focus shifted to crisis management, realising that it must go 'out of area or out of business'.[7] Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 put an end to what now appears to have been an exceptional interlude. NATO is being forced to once again think about collective defence as the core task of the Alliance. The current lack of US leadership, combined with internal differences of opinion, is hampering agreement on a new Strategic Concept.

Nevertheless, in the coming years, NATO will have to make decisions on a range of issues that will determine the future of the Alliance. These decisions concern the following questions: Are the measures adopted during the NATO summit meetings in Wales (September 2014) and Warsaw (July 2016) sufficient to cope with the Russian threat or is more action needed? How can the dialogue with Russia be rekindled? How can conventional arms control be revived? How can NATO strengthen the political dimension of the Alliance? What role can it play in containing the security threats emanating from the Middle East and North Africa, such as terrorism and irregular migration? How can Europe increase its contribution to the defence of the Alliance and how can EU-NATO cooperation be intensified? The present advisory report considers these questions. In doing so, it also examines the implications for the Netherlands' position within NATO and for Dutch security and defence policy.

7 Richard G. Lugar, 'NATO: Out of Area or Out of Business', Remarks delivered to the Open Forum of the U.S. State Department, August 2, 1993.

# II Security policy developments on the eastern flank

## II.1 Russia's political objectives

President Vladimir Putin sees it as his mission to obtain recognition of Russia's status as a major power. In his view, only military power will enable Russia to regain its rightful place in history. Russia believes that the West is pursuing a policy of containment, in part through NATO and EU enlargement. Russia is laying claim to a greater say – and a right to intervene – in the near abroad.[8] This is also reflected in the doctrine of *Russkiy Mir* (the Russian world), which holds that Russia is entitled to come to the aid of Russians living outside the country's borders, using force if necessary.[9] Another of Putin's key motives is of a domestic nature, namely his desire to prevent a 'colour revolution' in Russia. Consequently, a series of restrictive measures were announced following the large-scale protests surrounding the 2011 elections. The centralisation of power structures has resulted in the emergence of an authoritarian political system in which the state exercises near-total control over media outlets, the internet, education, youth movements, the cultural sector and academic life. Political opponents are intimidated, prosecuted on dubious grounds or murdered, and human rights are restricted by repressive measures.[10] Putin sits at the centre of a powerful network consisting of 30-40 powerful stakeholders.[11] The state apparatus ensures the survival of this network, which comprises intelligence and security officials, entrepreneurs, large companies, state-owned companies and criminal organisations. In 2016, a 400,000-strong National Guard falling directly under the president was established as a counterweight to other domestic security organisations. This 'makes a statement about the Kremlin's will to maintain power'.[12] All efforts are currently focused on Putin's re-election in 2018.[13]

The annexation of Crimea and the subsequent conflict in Ukraine have resulted in an almost complete break in political, economic and cultural relations with the West. As a result of Russia's military intervention, a stalemate has developed in eastern Ukraine.

8 Timothy Ash, 'Russia's long-term aims and how the west will respond', *Financial Times*, 1 August 2016.

9 Hubert Smeets, 'Nu zuchten wij onder die "totale triomf"' (Now we are weighed down by that 'total triumph'), *NRC Handelsblad*, 19 August 2016.

10 Jakob Hedenskog, Gudrun Persson and Carolina Vendil Pallin, 'Russian Security Policy', in Gudrun Persson, ed., *Russian Military Capability in a Ten-Year Perspective – 2016*, Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), December 2016, p. 76. See also AIV advisory report no. 104: 'The Will of the People? The Erosion of Democracy under the Rule of Law in Europe', The Hague, June 2017.

11 James Sherr, 'The New East-West Discord: Russian Objectives, Western Interests', Clingendael Report, December 2015, p. 19.

12 Mark Galeotti, 'National Guard: the watchdog that could break the leash', Raam op Rusland, 14 August 2017. See: <https://www.raamoprusland.nl/dossiers/militair-beleid/677-national-guard-the-watchdog-that-could-break-the-leash>.

13 Timothy Ash, op. cit.

The Minsk II agreements are not being observed, and the front has barely shifted.[14] Russia is increasingly seeking to influence political developments in Central and Eastern Europe. To this end, the Kremlin has adopted a two-track approach: on the one hand, it is trying to take control of strategic economic sectors in Eastern European countries such as Hungary, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Serbia; on the other, it is establishing relationships with nationalist, populist and anti-European parties.[15] The politically unstable countries in the Balkans have become more vulnerable, as insufficient progress has been made on economic reforms, strengthening the rule of law and fighting corruption and organised crime, while the ethnic reconciliation process is also moving slowly. This convergence of ineffective governance and latent nationalism presents Russia with opportunities to expand its influence. For example, it actively intervened in Montenegro's domestic affairs when the country was preparing to join NATO.[16]

### II.2 Russia's military build-up

Russia has thoroughly revamped its armed forces over the past decade, and a series of investments are planned for the coming years as well. Keir Giles describes this as 'the unprecedented near-total transformation of Russia's armed forces since 2008'.[17] It is thought that, by 2020, 70% of the Russian armed forces will have been upgraded, at a cost of $700 billion.[18] The army is investing primarily in tanks, armoured vehicles, mobility, missile and artillery systems with precision-guided munition, and electronic warfare. In the air force, the focus is on new combat aircraft and ground-based air

14 Minsk II includes agreements on the following issues: a ceasefire, the withdrawal of heavy weapons, the release of hostages and prisoners and the withdrawal of all foreign troops and mercenaries. See further Gert Jan Rohmensen, 'Akkoord "op hoofdlijnen" bereikt over Oekraïne, na 17 uur praten' ('Main' points of agreement reached on Ukraine, after 17 hours of talks), *Trouw*, 12 February 2015. See: <http://www.trouw.nl/home/akkoord-op-hoofdlijnen-bereikt-over-oekraine-na-17-uur-praten~abcd8c91/>. Russia's decision of 19 February 2017 to temporarily recognise passports and other identity documents of separatists in eastern Ukraine (Donetsk and Luhansk) constitutes a violation of the Minsk agreements.

15 Christopher Bennett, 'Backsliding in the Western Balkans', *NATO Review*, 2 February 2017. See: <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2017/Also-in-2017/backsliding-western-balkans-kosovo-servia-bosnia/EN/index.htm>.

16 According to Dimitar Bechev, Russia's power and influence in the region should not be overestimated: 'Russia plays the spoiler - relying on media, friendly politicians, civil society with traditionalist and nationalist bent, Orthodox clerics to fight against the West. Yet this is a low-cost strategy, which cannot secure permanent allies amongst those who actually hold power.' See Dimitar Bechev, 'The Influence of Russia and Turkey in the Western Balkans', European Western Balkans, 1 July 2016. See: <https://europeanwesternbalkans.com/2016/07/01/the-influence-of-russia-and-turkey-in-the-western-balkans/>.

17 'Two specific tools for exercising Russian power demand close study: the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation; and the state's capacity for information warfare. In both of these fields, Russia's capabilities have developed rapidly in recent years to match its persistent intentions. The most visible demonstration of this has been the unprecedented near-total transformation of Russia's armed forces since 2008.' Keir Giles, 'Russia's "New" Tools for Confronting the West: Continuity and Innovation in Moscow's Exercise of Power', Research Paper, Chatham House, March 2016, p. 2.

18 Margarete Klein, 'Russia's Military: On the Rise?', 2015-2016 Paper Series, no. 2, Transatlantic Academy, Washington, 2016, p. 11.

defence. The Russian navy is purchasing new submarines. However, plans to acquire large surface vessels have been postponed. This has far-reaching implications for Russia's maritime ambitions, especially since its naval forces are already no match for those of the European NATO countries.[19]

These substantial investments have significantly increased the combat strength and deployability of the Russian armed forces. It remains to be seen whether Russia will be able to sustain such high levels of defence expenditure, given that the oil price remains relatively low and the economic outlook is moderate. In addition, Russia's arms industry has been adversely affected by Western sanctions and by the fact that Ukraine is no longer supplying components. For the time being, however, the effects of these developments have been limited, and there is no evidence of a significant slowdown in the modernisation programme.[20] Furthermore, it is worth noting that, on a similar budget, Russia can acquire substantially more defence materiel than most NATO Allies.[21]

Russia's military actions in Ukraine have shown that its weaponry is more advanced than that of Western armed forces in several key areas. For example, Russia is using a new generation of cluster munitions filled with thermobaric explosives, which are significantly more lethal than conventional explosives. Because most NATO countries are no longer allowed to use cluster munitions, Russian artillery is much more effective.[22] Russia's extensive use of tactical drones for target acquisition further increases its effectiveness. It has also become apparent that Russia has access to highly effective electronic warfare assets (e.g. for jamming GPS, radio and radar).[23] In May 2016, while serving in a previous role, President Trump's current National Security Adviser, Lieutenant General

19 'In terms of naval forces, Europe not only out-matches but also out-builds Russia over the foreseeable future.' Gustav Gressel, 'Russia's Quiet Military Revolution, and What It Means for Europe', ECFR Policy Brief, October 2015, p. 9.

20 Edward Hunter Christie, 'Does Russia Have the Financial Means for its Military Ambitions?', *NATO Review*, 21 October 2016.

21 For example, there is a significant difference in purchasing power between the Netherlands and Russia. The costs of defence materiel and personnel are substantially lower in Russia. Calculated in terms of Dutch purchasing power, Russia's military expenditure is not $66 billion but $164 billion. See Maarten Schinkel, 'Poetins oorlog: nu 2,5 maal voordeliger' (Putin's war: now 2.5 times cheaper), *NRC Handelsblad*, 19 January 2017.

22 An explosive bomb, grenade or missile that releases or ejects a large number of explosive bomblets. Their use is highly controversial because it results in relatively high numbers of civilian casualties. See Convention on Cluster Munitions (2008).

23 See, inter alia, Robert H. Scales, 'Russia's superior new weapons', *The Washington Post*] 5 August 2016; Deborah Haynes, 'Russia has edge over us in battle, army admits', *The Times*, 10 August 2016; Franz-Stefan Gady, 'Russia's T-14 Armata: "The Most Revolutionary Tank in a Generation"?', *The Diplomat*, 8 November 2016; Daniel Gouré, 'Near-Term U.S. Army Modernization: Buying What Is Available and Buying Time', Executive Summary, Lexington Institute, 11 January 2017; David A. Shlapak and Michael W. Johnson, 'Outnumbered, Outranged, and Outgunned: How Russia Defeats NATO', War on the Rocks, 21 April 2016; Mark Pomerleau, 'Threat from Russian UAV Jamming Real, Officials Say', C4ISRNET, 20 December 2016; Keir Giles, 'Assessing Russia's Reorganized and Rearmed Military', Task Force White Paper, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 3 May 2017.

H.R. McMaster, concluded: 'Should U.S. forces find themselves in a land war with Russia, they would be in for a rude, cold awakening'.[24]

Within the boundaries of the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), Russia is carrying out a large-scale modernisation of its strategic nuclear forces. A significant proportion of the intercontinental ballistic missiles that are to be upgraded are no longer located in silos but on mobile launch platforms that regularly take part in large-scale military exercises.[25] Russia's deployment of new nuclear cruise missiles with a range of more than 500 km appears to violate the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. Russia cites the stationing of US ballistic missile defence (BMD) systems in Romania (operationally under NATO command since July 2016) and Poland as a justification for deploying nuclear weapons, in Kaliningrad and Crimea in particular. NATO points to the defensive nature of the BMD systems as a response to the missile threat, particularly from Iran. Russia nevertheless argues that the systems, including their radar components, are targeted against its territory. However, BMD systems are not capable of intercepting Russian intercontinental ballistic missiles, since their US-bound trajectories go over the North Pole.

Since 2009, Russia has significantly increased the number, duration and complexity of its military exercises. Since 2013, it has been conducting snap exercises[26] and large-scale, complex military exercises, with the use of nuclear weapons often part of the scenarios.[27] In September 2017, it conducted a large-scale military exercise in and with the participation of Belarus (Zapad-2017). Russia recognises the political and strategic significance of being the first to carry out a 'demonstration strike' with nuclear weapons in order to 'de-escalate' an escalating conflict. The purpose of such a strike might be to discourage NATO countries from taking any further action. Public references to nuclear weapons and their simulated deployment against targets such as Warsaw, Stockholm and the Danish island of Bornholm seem to point in this direction. During the annexation of Crimea, President Putin referred explicitly to Russia's nuclear capability.[28] Since the beginning of 2014, a force of 20,000-30,000 troops has been stationed along the border with Ukraine. These units are rotated between the various districts every two to three months, which means that they are undergoing constant training.[29] According to some

24 Patrick Tucker, 'How the Pentagon is Preparing for a Tank War With Russia, *Defense One*, 19 May 2016. See: <http://www.defenseone.com/technology/2016/05/how-pentagon-preparing-tank-war-russia/128460/>.

25 Alexey Arbatov, 'Understanding the US-Russian Nuclear Schism', *Survival:* Global Politics and Strategy, vol. 59, no. 2 (April-May 2017), pp. 34-36.

26 Snap exercises are exercises conducted without prior notification.

27 Johan Norberg and Fredrik Westerlund, 'Russia's Armed Forces in 2016', in Gudrun Persson (ed.), *Russian Military Capability in a Ten-year Perspective – 2016*, Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), December 2016, p. 51.

28 Adam Withnall, 'Vladimir Putin says Russia was preparing to use nuclear weapons "if necessary" and blames US for Ukraine crisis', *The Independent*, 15 March 2015. See: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/vladimir-putin-says-russia-was-preparing-to-use-nuclear-weapons-if-necessary-and-blames-us-for-10109615.html>.

29 International Institute for Security Studies (IISS), *The Military Balance 2016*, p. 166.

experts, Russia has the ability to mobilise up to 47,000 troops within 48 hours, deploy up to 60,000 troops within two to three weeks and sustain such a deployment for up to twelve months.[30]

The importance of unconventional military assets is on the rise. There has been an increase in 'hybrid' or 'non-linear' warfare, in which there is no clear distinction between situations of war and peace, regular and irregular units or military and non-military units. Russian military doctrine describes non-linear, hybrid warfare as the 'integrated use of military force and political, economic, informational, or other non-military measures with the wide use of the protest potential of the population and of special operation forces'.[31] The diagram below presents an overview of the assets that may be used in the context of hybrid warfare, which include both kinetic and non-kinetic capabilities. Thus, regular military units also belong in this category.

Source: *Munich Security Report 2015: Collapsing Order, Reluctant Guardians?*, Munich, 2015, p. 35

Elements of this integrated approach were applied in Estonia (2007) and Georgia (2008). In both cases, Russia made use of organised protests and cyberattacks. The same approach was later employed during the annexation of Crimea and in eastern Ukraine, which also saw the use of disinformation, cyberattacks and the deployment of military and paramilitary units and 'little green men'. The simultaneous use of military and non-military assets is not a new phenomenon in Russian strategic thinking, but it has become much more widespread in recent years. The internet industry is Russia's third-largest sector after fossil fuels and arms. Besides state institutions such as the FSB (secret service), cyber criminals and private companies are also involved in the government's

30 House of Commons Defence Committee, 'Russia: Implications for UK Defence and Security', First Report of Session 2016-2017, June 2016, p. 12.

31 Margarete Klein, op. cit., p. 9.

activities in this area.[32]

By deploying military and non-military tools of warfare, such as special forces, proxy forces, disinformation and cyberattacks, Russia seeks to influence the perception and conduct of other actors, disrupt communications and destabilise states.[33] This includes a wide range of activities, such as the theft, posting, interception, manipulation, misrepresentation or destruction of information by state-funded programmes that seek to influence public opinion through real or fake news, online trolling campaigns, text messages and YouTube videos. In addition, various Russian TV channels and websites, such as RT (formerly Russia Today) and Sputnik, play a key role in disseminating fake news reports.

Disinformation and cyberattacks were also used during the last US presidential election. The FBI, the NSA and the CIA claim to possess enough intelligence to establish that Russia – and President Putin in particular – was responsible for hacking the Democratic National Committee (DNC).[34] In addition to governments and democratic processes, non-governmental and non-profit organisations are frequently targeted by cyberattacks.[35] The Netherlands has also been exposed to Russian disinformation and cyberattacks. In the days immediately following the downing of flight MH17 on 17 July 2014, and at the time of the presentation of the reports of the Dutch Safety Board (OVV) and the Joint Investigation Team, Russia disseminated various contradictory stories concerning the circumstances of the crash. Before and after the presentation of the OVV's report on 13 October 2015, intelligence agencies directed by Russia apparently tried to break into the OVV's systems by means of a cyberattack.[36] According to the General Intelligence and Security Service (AIVD), Russia presents a significant cyber threat to the Netherlands.[37]

32 'According to US researchers, the Russian government and the flourishing digital underworld have enjoyed a "symbiotic relationship" for the past 10 years. And convicted cybercriminals with proven talent are actively recruited by the Russian services.' Steven Derix, 'Wie zijn de Russische cybersoldaten' (Who are the Russian cyber soldiers?), *NRC Handelsblad*, 9 January 2017. See: <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2017/01/09/wie-zijn-de-russische-cybersoldaten-6139697-a1540443>.

33 Lieutenant Colonel A.J.C. Selhorst, 'Russia's Perception Warfare: The development of Gerasimov's Doctrine in Estonia and Georgia and its Application in Ukraine', *Militaire Spectator*, vol. 185, no. 4, 2016. See: <http://www.militairespectator.nl/thema/strategie-operaties/artikel/russias-perception-warfare>. According to Keir Giles, disseminating disinformation serves a dual purpose: 'isolating the domestic audience from non-approved information so that state actions are permissible; and influencing foreign decision-making by supplying polluted information, exploiting the fact that Western elected representatives receive and are sensitive to the same information flows as their voters'. Keir Giles, op. cit., p. 39.

34 Intelligence Community Assessment, 'Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections', 6 January 2017.

35 'Full text: James Comey testimony transcript on Trump and Russia', *Politico*, 8 June 2017. See: <http://www.politico.com/story/2017/06/08/full-text-james-comey-trump-russia-testimony-239295>.

36 'Rusland zat achter cyberaanval op onderzoek ramp MH17' (Russia was behind cyberattack on investigation into MH17 disaster), *De Volkskrant*, 9 June 2016. See: <http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/-rusland-zat-achter-cyberaanval-op-onderzoek-ramp-mh17~a4317040/>.

37 Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, General Intelligence and Security Service, 'Jaarverslag AIVD 2015' (AIVD annual report 2015), April 2016, p. 21.

# III Security policy developments on the southern flank

Terrorism is a security threat that affects almost all NATO countries. Although it does not constitute an existential threat to the territorial integrity of individual member countries or the Alliance as a whole, the only event in the history of the Alliance to trigger article 5 was in fact a terrorist attack. The attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001, which were orchestrated from Afghanistan, were regarded as an attack on all. They swiftly triggered a growing awareness that the terrorist threat needed to be tackled outside NATO territory as well as within, namely in Afghanistan, the Middle East and other areas. Counterterrorism has been high on NATO's agenda ever since.

In the years following 9/11, NATO developed a number of counterterrorism policy guidelines as part of its collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security tasks. The guidelines aim to improve awareness of the threat and enhance the capabilities and engagement of NATO members in support of a comprehensive approach to counterterrorism.[38] In 2005, moreover, NATO established the Ankara-based Centre of Excellence – Defence against Terrorism (COE-DAT), which organises and shares information and expertise among NATO countries in the field of counterterrorism.[39] In practice, NATO's counterterrorism policy consists mainly of its missions in Afghanistan and Libya, its training and advisory activities in Iraq and Jordan and cooperation as part of the global coalition against ISIS. The following sections briefly discuss the situation and NATO's activities in and around Libya, Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.

## III.1 Terrorism and instability in North Africa

*Libya*

At its summit meeting in Warsaw, NATO expressed political support for the UN's activities in Libya and gave its backing to the national unity government as the country's sole legitimate authority. The summit also agreed in principle on a potential role for NATO to supplement or support the EU's activities in Libya and the Mediterranean Sea. NATO could contribute to the European Union Naval Force Mediterranean (EUNAVFOR MED) mission to combat people smuggling, by means of intelligence gathering, surveillance and reconnaissance or by enhancing the capacity of the Libyan coastguard and navy.[40]

At the summit meeting in Warsaw, NATO also reiterated that it is willing to support Libya's national unity government in the field of defence and security institution building, as previously pledged during the summit meeting in Wales.[41] Such support is crucial to preventing Libya – a deeply divided country with a very weak central government – from

38 'NATO's Policy Guidelines on Counter-Terrorism', Brussels 2015. See: <http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2015_11/20151105_151105-ct-policy-guidelines.pdf>.

39 See: <http://www.coedat.nato.int/>.

40 Warsaw Summit Communiqué, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Warsaw, 8-9 July 2016. See: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm>.

41 Ibid.

becoming a safe haven for jihadist groups. In recent years, Islamic State (IS) has gained a foothold in Libya. However, in contrast to Syria and Iraq, it has proved unable to seize control of large areas of the country. At the beginning of 2017, IS lost control of Sirte, a major city and the group's only base in Libya. The large quantities of weapons circulating in Libya pose a threat to Europe.

### III.2 Activities in the Middle East and Afghanistan

*Syria and Iraq*
As part of the anti-IS coalition, NATO is providing AWACS[42] data and other information, which is being used to monitor and analyse the situation on the ground in Syria and Iraq. In addition, various individual NATO member countries are supporting the coalition in various ways, for example by carrying out airstrikes against IS, deploying special forces and training Kurdish militias, the Iraqi armed forces or moderate rebels in Syria. This training focuses specifically on detecting and clearing improvised explosive devices (IEDs), which is an important task following the liberation of IS-controlled areas, as is evident in and around Mosul.[43]

In 2017, IS lost a lot of territory not only in northern Iraq but also in other parts of the country and in Syria. Its military strength has been severely weakened, in part by the actions of the US-led anti-IS coalition and other coalitions (including the one led by Russia). The extremist organisation has now been driven out of all major cities in Syria and Iraq. The key question that remains is how to transition from military intervention to a form of non-military intervention that can bring peace, security and stability to the region in the medium to long term. A successful peace process aimed at achieving a lasting ceasefire, power-sharing arrangements and reconciliation between ethnic and sectarian groups in Syria is a prerequisite in this regard. Lessons can be drawn from Afghanistan and Libya, especially with regard to enhancing the capacity of governments to provide security. Experiences in these countries show that this is a long and arduous process and that foreign support is desirable, although countries should try to do as much as possible themselves. NATO and its members are currently involved in such a process in Iraq.

*Afghanistan*
NATO led the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan from August 2003 to December 2014. The transition process initiated by this stabilisation mission, which placed responsibility for security in Afghanistan in the hands of the Afghan authorities themselves, began in 2011 and was formally completed in December 2014. Since then, NATO has been contributing to security in Afghanistan through the Resolute Support Mission (RSM), which focuses on training, advising and supporting Afghan security forces and institutions. At the NATO summit meeting in Warsaw in July 2016, a decision was made to continue the Resolute Support mission beyond 2016. Agreements

42 Airborne Warning and Control System.

43 In the framework of the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative, NATO's support activities in Iraq fall into seven key areas: security sector reform (SSR), countering IEDs, explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) and demining, support for civil-military planning, cyber defence, medical support and civil-military emergency planning.

are currently being concluded in order to maintain military contributions after 2017.[44] President Trump's recent announcement that the United States will continue to work towards a secure and stable Afghanistan is consistent with this and paves the way for military reinforcements and new diplomatic and economic initiatives.[45] NATO is expected to maintain a civilian presence in Afghanistan after the mission has ended in order to continue providing the Afghan security institutions with advice and financial support.[46] This is meant to ensure that Afghanistan can never again become a base for al Qa'ida or other jihadist terrorists.

The fact that the threat on the southern flank needs to be taken seriously in the coming years is apparent from the decision of the Allied defence ministers of February 2017 to create a Hub for the South within NATO's Joint Force Command in Naples. The purpose of this hub is to improve the Alliance's ability to monitor threats and challenges on its southern flank. The AIV believes that NATO also needs to keep a close eye on the situation in North Africa, the Middle East and Afghanistan and establish partnerships with relevant actors. The terrorist threat emanating from this part of the world does not stop at the Mediterranean Sea, as demonstrated by the attacks in Paris, Brussels, Berlin and Barcelona. Furthermore, NATO member Turkey is confronted on a daily basis with the consequences of the civil wars in Syria and Iraq and the influx of migrants from Afghanistan and other countries.

For the past 15 years, NATO has pursued a twofold strategy towards these and other out-of-area threats. On the one hand, it has pursued a military approach and, on the other, an approach aimed at building security institutions. NATO's added value lies in its security expertise and its ability to operate in non-permissive environments. In order to continue withstanding the threats on its southern flank in the future, NATO will have to keep pursuing both approaches.

44 Letter from the Minister of Defence to the President of the House of Representatives of the States General reporting on the meeting of the NATO Ministers of Defence on 29 June 2017 and the end of the Dutch contribution to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), The Hague, 20 July 2017, p. 3.

45 Julie Hirschfeld Davis and Mark Landler, 'Trump outlines new Afghanistan war strategy with few details', *The New York Times*, 21 August 2017. See: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/21/world/asia/afghanistan-troops-trump.html>.

46 'NATO and Afghanistan'. See: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_8189.htm>.

# IV From Wales, via Warsaw, to Brussels and beyond

## IV.1 Enhancing NATO's deterrence and defence posture

Various steps have been taken in recent years in response to the renewed importance of collective defence. While the summit meeting in Wales (September 2014) focused on reassuring the eastern Allies by launching the Readiness Action Plan (RAP), the summit meeting in Warsaw (July 2016) emphasised deterrence, not least in light of the continued deterioration of the security situation. In the framework of the RAP, a Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) was established. This multinational 'stand-by' brigade of approximately 5,000 troops, which is part of the NATO Response Force (NRF), can be deployed at very short notice (one battalion within 48 hours and the rest within five to seven days). If necessary, the VJTF can be supported by, for instance, air force, navy and special forces units with a total strength of approximately 13,000 troops. In addition, the NRF includes an Initial Follow On Forces Group (IFFG) consisting of a 'stand-down' brigade (the previous year's VJTF), which must be ready to deploy within 30 days, and a 'stand-up' brigade (the following year's VJTF), which must be ready to deploy within 45 days. The NATO Air Policing mission was reinforced and expanded to Romania. Furthermore, for the first time in several years, a number of large military exercises were conducted. In June 2015, the NATO defence ministers decided to modify the Alliance's political and military decision-making procedures to enable it, if necessary, to take action more rapidly. They granted the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) the authority 'to prepare troops for action as soon as a political decision is made'. In addition, they approved a new concept for advance planning.[47] Eight NATO Force Integration Units (NFIUs) in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Bulgaria and two new headquarters in Poland and Romania are to facilitate the rapid deployment of NATO forces.

At the summit meeting in Warsaw, the decision was made to increase the prominence of NATO troops in the eastern part of the Alliance without resorting to the permanent stationing of troops, as this would constitute a violation of the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act.[48] Within the framework of the Enhanced Forward Presence, the NATO member countries agreed to station four multinational battalions made up of rotating units in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. Seventeen NATO countries supply units to these

47 'To enhance the ability to respond quickly and effectively to any contingency, we have significantly adapted our advance planning. We have also adapted our decision-making procedures to enable the rapid deployment of our troops.' Statement by NATO Defence Ministers, Brussels, 25 June 2015. See: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_121133.htm?selectedLocale=en>.

48 'NATO reiterates that in the current and foreseeable security environment, the Alliance will carry out its collective defence and other missions by ensuring the necessary interoperability, integration, and capability for reinforcement rather than by additional permanent stationing of substantial combat forces. Accordingly, it will have to rely on adequate infrastructure commensurate with the above tasks. In this context, reinforcement may take place, when necessary, in the event of defence against a threat of aggression and missions in support of peace consistent with the United Nations Charter and the OSCE governing principles, as well as for exercises consistent with the adapted CFE Treaty, the provisions of the Vienna Document 1994 and mutually agreed transparency measures. Russia will exercise similar restraint in its conventional force deployments in Europe.' Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, signed in Paris, France, 27 May 1997. See: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_25468.htm>.

battalions. The participation of so many Allies reflects their mutual solidarity but dilutes military effectiveness. A decision was also made to station a multinational brigade in Romania, with contributions from Bulgaria, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Turkey and the United States, as part of the tailored forward presence in the southeastern part of the Alliance.

In Wales and Warsaw, the NATO member countries also concluded agreements concerning several unconventional threats. For the first time, it was established that a hybrid attack could be regarded as an event that triggers article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, even in the absence of regular military action.[49] In Wales, the member countries approved the Enhanced Cyber Defence Policy and specified that cyber defence falls under collective defence within the meaning of article 5. Offensive cyber operations are currently not part of NATO strategy. The AIV believes that the offensive cyber capabilities of individual NATO countries should play an important role in contributing to the Alliance's deterrence.

As regards cybersecurity, the NATO member countries are responsible for protecting their own national networks and infrastructure. NATO focuses on defending the Alliance's communication and information systems and sharing information and can assist Allies by deploying NATO Cyber Rapid Reaction Teams.[50] In Warsaw, cyberspace was recognised as the fourth operational domain: 'We affirm NATO's defensive mandate, and recognise cyberspace as a domain of operations in which NATO must defend itself as effectively as it does in the air, on land, and at sea'.[51]

The Warsaw Summit Communiqué places a slightly stronger emphasis on the role of nuclear weapons. It repeats the usual mantra: 'As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance.' However, whereas the Wales Summit Declaration merely states that 'the circumstances in which any use of nuclear weapons might have to be contemplated are extremely remote', the relevant passage in the Warsaw Summit Communiqué states that 'the circumstances in which NATO might have to use nuclear weapons are extremely remote'. This appears to be a message from NATO to Russia.[52] For the first time, the communiqué also describes circumstances in which NATO might deploy nuclear weapons: 'If the fundamental security of any of its members were to be threatened however, NATO has the capabilities and resolve to impose costs on an adversary that would be unacceptable and far outweigh the benefits that an adversary could hope to achieve.'[53]

49 'The Alliance and Allies will be prepared to counter hybrid warfare as part of collective defence. The Council could decide to invoke Article 5 of the Washington Treaty.' Warsaw Summit Communiqué, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Warsaw, 8-9 July 2016. See: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm>.

50 Judy Dempsey, 'Judy Asks: Can Europe Deal With Cyberattacks?', Carnegie Europe, 17 May 2017. See: <http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/69992>.

51 Warsaw Summit Communiqué.

52 Michael R. Turner, 'Deterring to Defend: NATO after the Warsaw Summit', Report of the President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly Brussels, 2016, p. 51. See: <https://www.nato-pa.int/document/nato-after-warsaw-summit-turner-2016>.

53 Warsaw Summit Communiqué.

The NATO summit meeting in Brussels in May 2017 had a limited agenda: the opening of the Alliance's new headquarters and the first meeting with the new US president. In this sense, it was incomparable with the summit meetings in Wales and Warsaw. President Trump's speech at the summit, in which he attacked the other NATO countries over their defence budgets and failed to mention article 5, appeared to herald a new era in transatlantic relations.[54] The language on the 2% guideline agreed at the summit meeting in Wales was reaffirmed and a monitoring report was approved.[55] Finally, partly in order to meet President Trump's wishes, it was decided to have NATO as an organisation participate in the anti-IS coalition and to use the Alliance to combat terrorism.

## IV.2 Scenarios

The government has asked the AIV to examine how NATO should respond to provocations and conflict situations that remain below the threshold of article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. In the current, diffuse security environment, which is characterised by security threats on the Alliance's eastern and southern flanks, an unpredictable US leadership, a divided EU, terrorist threats and hybrid warfare, there is a wide range of conceivable scenarios in which such a situation could potentially arise.[56]

The highest decision-making body within NATO is the North Atlantic Council (NAC), which meets at ministerial or ambassadorial level (or at the level of heads of state and government during summit meetings). The Council's agenda focuses on the main crisis areas. International representatives, for example from the EU, the United Nations, the African Union, Australia, Ukraine and China, are often invited to its meetings. Within the Alliance, any decision to deploy military assets or take other measures is made at the political level. The Allies are engaged in a continuous process of information-sharing and discussion, partly with a view to the possibility of preventing crisis situations in their early stages. It is very important that all countries contribute generously to this process, since it forms the basis of their unity and mutual solidarity. In the event of rising tensions, a NATO member country can initially invoke article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which states: 'The Parties will consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened.' Several countries have invoked this article in recent years, including Poland in 2014 (to discuss tensions in Ukraine) and Turkey in 2015 (in connection with terrorist attacks in the country).

Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty contains the mutual assistance clause: 'The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America

54 'Highlights: In Brussels, Trump scolds Allies on cost-sharing, and stays vague on article 5', *The New York Times*, 25 May 2017. See: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/25/world/europe/trump-brussels-nato.html?_r=0>.

55 1. How the increase to at least 2% of GDP and the investment quota of 20% will be achieved; 2. The extent to which additional financial resources will be used to procure the capabilities requested by NATO; 3. What contributions to missions and operations within and outside the NATO framework have been planned for the forthcoming calendar year. Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Defence to the President of the House of Representatives of the States General reporting on the special meeting of the Heads of State and Government of the NATO member countries in Brussels on 25 May 2017, The Hague, 15 June 2017, p. 2.

56 For the purposes of the present report, the 'southern flank' refers to North Africa and the Middle East.

shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.' As previously noted, article 5 has only been invoked once in recent decades, namely in 2001 following the attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon.[57] Besides, it is up to each individual Ally to decide what kind of assistance it wishes to provide. It is thus not a foregone conclusion that such assistance will involve military assets.

For a decision to be made in favour of military action, NATO's decision-making process must pass through various stages involving the NAC, SACEUR, the Military Committee and the national parliaments of the NATO countries. Partly as a result of the consensus rule, the political decision-making process can take a long time, which is a problem if the VJTF needs to be in a certain location within a short timeframe. The military recommendations on which the NAC bases its decisions must also address the complexity of modern crisis situations and the hybrid nature of modern warfare, including disinformation and potential cyber threats. NATO's decision-making procedures should therefore be rehearsed – and their speed and effectiveness tested – on a regular basis and at every level, right up to the very highest. The degree of political agreement between national capitals is what ultimately determines the Alliance's ability to take decisive action.

The AIV wishes to draw particular attention to the role of national parliaments, whose consent is needed to ensure broad-based support for risky military action. Given the Allies' divergent views, this is not a foregone conclusion. In AIV advisory report no. 96 on the deployment of rapid-reaction forces, the AIV highlights the importance of informing and involving parliament as fully as possible in the event of potential or actual military action, if necessary in confidence if circumstances do not permit a public debate. The same applies to the deployment of the VJTF in an article 5 situation or in the event of rising tensions. In the same report, the AIV advises parliament to reflect in detail every year on the government's decision to allocate units to the NRF/VJTF and other rapid-reaction forces.[58] If article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty is invoked, article 97 of the Dutch Constitution applies. Article 97 states that there shall be armed forces 'for the defence and protection of the interests of the Kingdom, and in order to maintain and promote the international legal order.' It says nothing about the role of parliament, in contrast to article 100 of the Constitution, which grants parliament a de facto right of consent. Over the past few decades, the House of Representatives has regularly discussed parliament's role in the deployment of the armed forces. However, such debates have not been conducted in recent years, although the AIV believes that there is every reason to do so given the deterioration of the international security situation, the likely increase in demands on the Dutch armed forces and the need to intensify European defence cooperation.

Selected scenarios

The AIV can conceive of various scenarios involving Russia that could potentially require a NATO response. The following non-exhaustive list of scenarios is discussed below: an

57 Edgar Buckley, 'Invoking Article 5', *NATO Review*, summer 2006. See: <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2006/issue2/english/art2.html>.

58 AIV advisory report no. 96: 'Deployment of Rapid-Reaction Forces', The Hague, October 2015, pp. 40-44.

unintentional incident, a cyberattack, a threat to launch a nuclear attack, an attack on a non-NATO country and a military intervention in a NATO country.

*Unintentional incident*
A collision involving Russian and NATO military aircraft – a military-military incident – could unintentionally lead to a military confrontation.[59] In recent years, NATO aircraft have frequently followed and intercepted Russian aircraft.[60] Turkey's downing of a Russian fighter on 24 November 2015 could have resulted in a military confrontation. A military-civil incident could also trigger a confrontation. Russian military aircraft often fly with their transponders turned off, increasing the risk of collisions with civil aircraft.[61] Since Russia's annexation of Crimea, there has been a significant increase in military activity in the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea, the Arctic Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean and close to the border between Russia and the NATO Allies. This also increases the risk of unintentional escalation.[62]

*Cyberattack*
A Russian cyberattack could also lead to a military confrontation. A diffuse situation may arise in which it is unclear whether a cyberattack qualifies as an armed attack within the meaning of article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty (and article 51 of the UN Charter). The Wales Summit Declaration states as follows in this regard: 'Cyberattacks can reach a threshold that threatens national and Euro-Atlantic prosperity, security, and stability. Their impact could be as harmful to modern societies as a conventional attack. We affirm therefore that cyber defence is part of NATO's core task of collective defence. A decision as to when a cyberattack would lead to the invocation of Article 5 would be taken by the North Atlantic Council on a case-by-case basis.'[63] This statement is consistent with the

59 'With the increase of military activities in the region there is also the risk of unintentional escalation as a result of miscommunication or miscalculation. Incidents in the Baltic and Black Seas, involving fighter aircraft conducting high-speed passes of warships, aggressive interceptions of reconnaissance aircraft, and other encounters continue to carry a risk to life, as has been clearly demonstrated by the Turkish downing of a Russian aircraft over its Syrian border last November.' Thomas Frear and Denitsa Raynova, 'Russia-West Military Incidents: Skirting the Law', European Leadership Network, 7 December 2016. See: <http://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/russia-west-military-incidents-skirting-the-law_4270.html>.

60 In 2016, NATO aircraft were scrambled from European air bases 780 times. Lizzie Deardan, 'Nato intercepting highest number of Russian military planes since the Cold War as 780 incidents recorded in 2016', *The Independent*, 22 April 2017. See: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/nato-russian-planes-intercepted-eu-europe-fighter-jets-scrambled-bombers-raf-typhoons-alaska-putin-a7696561.html>.

61 Incidentally, this practice is not illegal, since military aircraft do not fall under the rules of the International Civil Aviation Organization.

62 Lukasz Kulesa, Thomas Frear and Denitsa Raynova, 'Managing Hazardous Incidents in the Euro-Atlantic Area: A New Plan of Action', European Leadership Network, November 2016, p. 7. See: <https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/policy-brief/managing-hazardous-incidents-in-the-euro-atlantic-area-a-new-plan-of-action/>.

63 Wales Summit Declaration, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales, 5 September 2014. See: <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm>.

approach previously advocated by the AIV and the Advisory Committee on Issues of Public International Law (CAVV) and the rules set out in the *Tallinn Manual*.[64] The threshold for invoking article 5 nevertheless remains high. The AIV and the CAVV concluded as follows: 'A serious, organised cyberattack on essential functions of the state could conceivably be qualified as an "armed attack" within the meaning of article 51 of the UN Charter if it could or did lead to serious disruption of the functioning of the state or serious and long-lasting consequences for the stability of the state. In such cases, there must be a disruption of the state and/or society, or a sustained attempt thereto, and not merely an impediment to or delay in the normal performance of tasks […]'.[65]

NATO believes that, in the event of a cyberattack or another type of non-kinetic hybrid attack, the country that has been attacked bears primary responsibility for taking appropriate measures. NATO can provide support, either through consultation in the framework of article 4 or otherwise. Moreover, in the event of a non-kinetic hybrid attack, NATO action under article 5 is not unthinkable. The Warsaw Summit Communiqué states that 'the Alliance and the Allies will be prepared to counter hybrid warfare as part of collective defence. The Council could decide to invoke Article 5 of the Washington Treaty.'[66] According to Keir Giles, Russia's methods lead to 'the specific question of when, or whether, hostile action in information space or cyberspace constitutes an act or state of war.'[67] This is difficult to determine in the case of a cyberattack, which in turn raises key questions for NATO, such as: Who is the aggressor? Does this qualify as an article 5 situation? How should NATO respond? What would constitute a proportionate response (a symmetric or an asymmetric response)? At what point must the NAC decide how to proceed?[68]

The use of other forms of hybrid warfare by Russia could lead to similar uncertainty and introduce difficult questions into NATO's planning and decision-making processes. This could lead to disagreement between NATO Allies regarding whether and how to respond (collectively or individually, militarily or non-militarily; what to do if the aggressor is unknown). According to Binnendijk et al., Russia deliberately opts for a hybrid approach 'to achieve strategic aims without war by staying below NATO's threshold for reaction, dividing Europeans from each other as well as from their North American allies, and slowing, if not outright blocking, NATO decision-making and unity of purpose'.[69]

64 AIV/CAVV advisory report no. 77/22: 'Cyber Warfare', The Hague, December 2011. See also Michael N. Schmitt (ed.), *Tallinn Manual on the International Law Applicable to Cyber Warfare*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013, p. 258.

65 According to this approach, the large-scale (short-lived) cyberattacks on Estonia's governmental, economic and financial institutions in 2007 did not cross the article 5 threshold.

66 Warsaw Summit Communiqué.

67 Keir Giles, 'Handbook of Russian Information Warfare', Fellowship Monograph. Research Division, NATO Defense College. Rome, November 2016, p. 76.

68 F. Stephen Larrabee et al., 'Russia and the West after the Ukrainian Crisis: European Vulnerabilities to Russian Pressures', RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, 2017, p. 11.

69 Hans Binnendijk et al., op. cit., p. 3.

*Threat to launch a nuclear attack*
The third scenario consists of a threat to launch a nuclear attack, using nuclear weapons not just for deterrence but also as a form of intimidation or blackmail.[70] In 2013, a Russian military exercise included a simulated nuclear attack on Sweden.[71] In 2015, Russia's ambassador in Copenhagen informed Denmark that, if it were to install missile defence systems on its warships, those warships would become 'targets for Russian nuclear missiles'.[72] In addition, as previously noted, President Putin referred explicitly to Russia's nuclear capability during its annexation of Crimea.

*Attack on a non-NATO country*
Invoking article 4 would also be conceivable in the event of a Russian attack on a non-NATO country. In the case of Finland or Sweden, which are both members of the EU, consultation would be the obvious choice, since both countries cooperate closely with the Alliance. In such a situation, the EU's mutual assistance clause (article 42.7 of the TEU) might also be invoked. In the case of countries such as Ukraine, Georgia or parts of the former Yugoslavia, NATO would have to determine what action was appropriate on a case-by-case basis.

If the conflict in eastern Ukraine were to suddenly intensify, there is a risk that parts of the country would gradually fall under de facto Russian control. If Russia continues to build up rapid-response forces on its border with Ukraine, its chances of successfully undermining the country's independence by military means will increase. Preserving the integrity of Ukraine, which was guaranteed by the United States, the United Kingdom and Russia in the 1994 Budapest Memorandum, is important for the security and credibility of the members of NATO and the EU.

*Military intervention in a NATO country*
The fifth scenario involves a conventional military intervention in a NATO country, for example in the form of a surprise attack carried out under cover of a snap exercise. In accordance with Russian doctrine, such an intervention would always be accompanied by various other activities, as illustrated in the diagram on hybrid warfare, such as information and propaganda measures and cyberattacks. Russia has a number of significant advantages over NATO, including its geographic proximity to the relevant areas, its higher level of readiness, its ability to rapidly bring in troops from other military districts and its faster decision-making process. Various studies describe how vulnerable the Baltic states in particular are, and how difficult it would be for NATO to assist them effectively in an emergency. Russia could occupy the strip of land along Lithuania's roughly 100-kilometre-long border with Poland between Kaliningrad and Belarus, known

70 Jacek Durkalec, 'Russia's Evolving Nuclear Strategy and What It Means for Europe', European Council on Foreign Relations, 5 July 2016. See: <http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_russias_evolving_nuclear_strategy_and_what_it_means_for_europe>.

71 Damien Sharkov, 'Russia Practiced Nuclear Strike on Sweden: NATO Report', *Newsweek*, 4 February 2016. See: <http://www.newsweek.com/russia-practiced-nuclear-strike-sweden-nato-report-422914>.

72 'Russia Threatens to Aim Nuclear Missiles at Denmark Ships If It Joins NATO Shield', Reuters, 22 March 2015. See: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-denmark-russia-idUSKBN0MI0ML20150322>.

as the Suwalki Gap.[73] By launching an attack from Kaliningrad and Belarus, Russia could close off the Suwalki Gap, thus making it impossible for NATO to send reinforcements by land or air.

Rusland = Russia

Letland = Latvia

Litouwen = Lithuania

Kaliningrad = Kaliningrad

SUWALKI-GAP = Suwalki Gap

Wit-Rusland = Belarus

Polen = Poland

The expansion and stationing of Russian missile and missile defence systems in Kaliningrad form a key obstacle preventing NATO from coming to the aid of the Baltic states, since they partially prevent it from using the relevant land, sea or airspace. By establishing such Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) zones, Russia has fundamentally altered the military balance in the Baltic region and significantly increased its influence in the Black Sea region, the eastern part of the Mediterranean and the Middle East. This raises the question whether NATO can attain air superiority in strategically important theatres, especially in the Baltic states, as well as in key areas around the Black Sea, the northern part of Poland, parts of Turkey and elsewhere.[74] In contrast to the Baltic states, reinforcements can actually be sent to the area around the Black Sea by land or air. It can also be reached via the Dardanelles, which are controlled by Turkey, although cooperation with this particular NATO Ally is becoming increasingly difficult.[75]

*Conclusion*

The unstable political situation in various Balkan countries, such as Kosovo, could also prompt Russia to actively intervene in domestic political situations in the event of

73 Agnia Grigas, 'NATO's Vulnerable Link in Europe: Poland's Suwalki Gap', Atlantic Council, 9 February 2016. See: <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/natosource/nato-s-vulnerable-link-in-europe-poland-s-suwalki-gap>.

74 Rem Korteweg and Sophia Besch, 'No Denial: How NATO Can Deter a Creeping Russian Threat', Insight, Centre for European Reform, 9 February 2016. See: <https://www.cer.org.uk/insights/no-denial-how-nato-can-deter-creeping-russian-threat>.

75 Octavian Manea, 'Dealing with the Access – Denial Challenge in Europe', Defence Matters, 5 October 2016. See: <http://defencematters.org/news/dealing-access-denial-challenge-europe/1137/>.

rising tensions.[76] The situation in these countries is volatile because of poor social and economic development, political and ethnic divisions and weak democratic structures. In addition to influence from Russia (as well as China, Turkey and the Gulf states), the Balkan countries have to deal with the destabilising effects of irregular migration and terrorism. In several countries, uncertainty as to Europe's true level of engagement in the region and doubts regarding the credibility of their accession prospects appear to have opened the door to internal and external forces that oppose the democratic reform agenda and the region's further integration into the Euro-Atlantic political and security structure.[77] The EU is closely involved in the region through the European Union Force (EUFOR) Althea (600 troops), the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), the accession negotiations and the reform agenda. NATO is also directly involved through the Kosovo Force (KFOR) (4,300 troops), the Partnership for Peace and various capacity-building activities. The security-related tensions in this region do not primarily require a military solution but do compel NATO to adopt a vigilant and proactive approach in order to prevent escalation.

NATO should further be prepared for situations on its southern flank in which article 4 or 5 could be invoked, as occurred in 2015, when Turkey invoked article 4 after experiencing several terrorist attacks. The invocation of article 4 or 5 would be conceivable if, for example, a terrorist group (with branches in Europe) were to attack a NATO Ally using a hijacked passenger aircraft. Once article 4 has been invoked, the Alliance can demonstrate its solidarity and intelligence can be exchanged, especially with the United States. Such events would obviously give rise to extensive consultations and would likely result in close cooperation between NATO and the EU.

The AIV believes that regular exercises involving various actors, including the NAC, SACEUR, the Military Committee and the national parliaments of the NATO countries, are vital to ensure that NATO is able to take effective action where necessary. Such exercises should focus, in particular, on decision-making in conflict situations, such as cyberattacks, that fall below the threshold of article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

### IV.3 Evaluation of measures agreed in Wales and Warsaw – credible military deterrence

Deterrence can be achieved through the deployment of military and non-military instruments of power. Non-military options include diplomatic and economic sanctions and the denial of access to the SWIFT international payment network. Deterrence by military means can take the form of 'deterrence by denial' or 'deterrence by punishment'.[78] The first strategy is preventive and aims to convince an adversary that it cannot achieve its objective. This approach requires the defender to maintain a strong

76 See also Arend Jan Boekestijn, 'Zal Poetin zich kunnen beheersen?' (Will Putin be able to control himself?), Raam op Rusland, 16 February 2017. See: <https://raamoprusland.nl/dossiers/geopolitiek/462-zal-poetin-zich-kunnen-beheersen>.

77 Sabina Lange, Zoran Nechev and Florian Trauner (eds.), 'Resilience in the Western Balkans', EUISS Report no. 36, August 2017. See: <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/resilience-western-balkans>.

78 Wesley Clark, Jüri Luik, Egon Ramms and Richard Shirreff, 'Closing NATO's Baltic Gap', RKK/ICDS Report, Tallinn, May 2016, p. 14. See: <https://www.icds.ee/fileadmin/media/icds.ee/failid/ICDS_Report-Closing_NATO_s_Baltic_Gap.pdf>.

and visible conventional presence in the territories that the aggressor might attack. The second strategy aims to convince an adversary that any objective it achieves is only of temporary value because it will always be followed by a response that more than wipes out any advantage it has gained. Possession of nuclear weapons contributes to both forms of deterrence.

Effective military deterrence rests on three pillars: capabilities (possessing sufficient military striking power to prevent an adversary from achieving its objectives), credibility (convincing an adversary that, if necessary, all available assets can and will be deployed) and communication (clearly communicating one's willingness, if necessary, to deploy all available assets). One of the questions in the government's request for advice concerns the effectiveness of the measures relating to military deterrence agreed at the summit meetings in Wales and Warsaw. These measures accordingly need to be assessed against the three pillars. For instance, what impact would they have on a potential Russian invasion of one of the Baltic states, where NATO is at its most vulnerable?

Various studies argue that the measures taken by NATO are insufficient to counter potential Russian aggression. A study by the Rand Corporation, entitled 'Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO's Eastern Flank', reveals how vulnerable the Baltic states are to a Russian attack. Russian forces would be able to reach Tallinn or Riga within 60 hours, leaving NATO with a limited number of – rather unattractive – options: launch an armed response, threaten escalation or concede defeat. The third option would not only involve sacrificing one or more Baltic states but would simultaneously place the very future of NATO in jeopardy.[79] In order to prevent this scenario, NATO would have to station seven brigades, including three heavy armoured brigades, in the Baltic states, along with a sufficient number of support units (e.g. artillery) and adequate air support.

It is debatable whether the European NATO countries are currently able to mobilise deployable brigades at short notice. According to Michael Shurkin, countries such as France, Germany and the United Kingdom are virtually or completely unable to do so. In a new study published by the RAND Corporation, entitled 'The Abilities of the British, French, and German Armies to Generate and Sustain Armored Brigades in the Baltics', he paints a shocking picture: '[E]xpectations for European contributions to defending the Baltic nations must be low. Beyond rushing initial units of light infantry into theater, perhaps to serve as a tripwire force (the three armies could probably generate light companies within a day), they would have a hard time generating armored forces quickly and subsequently sustaining their forces. A single armored brigade each appears to represent a maximum sustainable effort.'[80] In order to prepare a mechanised brigade for deployment, Germany would probably need a month, France would need several weeks to a month and the United Kingdom would need 30 to 90 days. According to experts, this is

79 David A. Shlapak and Michael W. Johnson, 'Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO's Eastern Flank: Wargaming the Defense of the Baltics', RAND Corporation, 2016. See: <https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1253.html>.

80 Michael Shurkin, 'The Abilities of the British, French, and German Armies to Generate and Sustain Armored Brigades in the Baltics', RAND Corporation, 2017, p. 9. See: <https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1629.html>.

particularly worrying, because there is no alternative to forward deployed tank units.[81]

In 'NATO: The Enduring Alliance 2016', Julian Lindley-French outlines a scenario in which the United States is involved in a conflict with China in the South China Sea and Russia is simultaneously conducting large-scale military exercises in and around the Kola Peninsula, Kaliningrad and Belarus, on the Ukrainian border, and in the Black Sea region. If the NAC were to put the VJTF on notice to move by way of a countermeasure, Russia might interpret this as an act of aggression and occupy land on the Lithuanian and Polish sides of the Suwalki Gap in order to safeguard access to Kaliningrad. If NATO were to subsequently threaten to invoke article 5, Russia might respond by threatening to launch a nuclear attack against European cities. Within such a short time frame, NATO would be unable to deploy the VJTF and, due to Russia's greatly improved A2/AD capabilities, NATO aircraft would be unable to penetrate Russia's airspace without suffering heavy losses. Lindley-French anticipates that, in such a scenario, NATO would yield in the face of Russia's nuclear threat.[82] He further believes that NATO should conduct a fundamental discussion on what deterrence actually entails in this day and age.[83]

Jens Ringsmose and Sten Rynning reveal a similar lack of optimism in their policy brief 'Can NATO's new Very High Readiness Joint Task Force deter?'. They regard the total figure of 40,000 troops for the NRF as an example of creative accounting, because the majority of the units – the Initial Follow On Forces Group – can only be deployed after 30-45 days.[84] Any subsequent follow-on forces will need even more time to prepare for deployment. In addition, the authors argue that NATO cannot pursue the preferred option of 'deterrence by denial'[85] because it simply lacks the necessary troop strength. The Alliance therefore has no choice but to fall back on 'deterrence by punishment'. This weak posture thus increases the risk of having to resort to nuclear weapons. With its VJTF, NATO is no match for Russia's superior conventional forces. Like the forward deployed multinational battalions, the VJTF and the US units operating in the framework of the European Reassurance Initiative serve as a tripwire. Ringsmose and Rynning also

81 Octavian Manea, 'Warsaw Summit: Why NATO Needs a Heavy Defensive Ground Force', Defence Matters,11 July 2016. See: <http://defencematters.org/news/deterrence-nato-needs-heavy-defensive-ground-force/969/>.

82 Julian Lindley-French, 'NATO: The Enduring Alliance 2016', Foundation for Polish-German Cooperation, Warsaw, June 2016. See: <http://atahq.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/FWPN-JLF-NEA-2016-FINAL-230616.pdf>.

83 'If NATO is to fulfil its mission the Alliance must not only fill the deterrence gaps, it must think anew about just what deterrence actually means and demands in the twenty-first century'. Julian Lindley-French, 'Closing NATO's Deterrence Gaps', 4 November 2016. See: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/closing-natos-deterrence-gaps-professor-dr-julian-lindley-french>.

84 Jens Ringsmose and Sten Rynning, 'Can NATO's new Very High Readiness Joint Task force deter?', NUPI Policy Brief 15/2016, pp. 1-2. See: <https://brage.bibsys.no/xmlui/handle/11250/2392132>.

85 Deterrence by denial implies that one's own military strength (NATO's, in this case) is sufficient to convince an adversary that it cannot gain an advantage by carrying out an attack. Deterrence by punishment implies that an adversary can be convinced that any advantage it achieves by carrying out an attack is only of temporary value because it will always be followed by a – NATO – response that more than wipes out this advantage.

note that speedy political decision-making is vital to facilitating the deployment of the first VJTF units within 48 hours.[86] The eastern Allies will want such a decision to be made as quickly as possible, while the western Allies would probably prefer to postpone it for as long as possible.

In 'Closing NATO's Baltic Gap', Wesley Clark, Jüri Luik, Egon Ramms and Richard Shirreff also argue that NATO's current posture lacks credibility.[87] The military exercises conducted by Russia in recent years seem to indicate that scenarios involving an attack on the Baltic states are possible. According to the authors, the Alliance's decision-making process will always be slower than Moscow's. 'This can be compensated for by a larger forward presence, greater automaticity and adequate delegated authority, which so far has not been carried out at the level required.' This is because SACEUR has the authority 'to stage and prepare forces' but not to 'deploy and commit those forces'. The authors note that the decrease in Allied land forces in particular has been remarkable. 'Combat forces with sufficient firepower have been replaced with light capabilities better suited to expeditionary crisis response and counter-insurgency operations. NATO has limited capacity to conduct a combined arms battle at brigade level, let alone divisional or corps level.' In order to achieve credible deterrence, a brigade-sized unit with sufficient striking power should be deployed in each Baltic state. The authors also recommend transforming the current air policing mission in the Baltic states into a fully fledged air defence operation.[88]

In his report 'Deterring to Defend: NATO after the Warsaw Summit', the president of NATO's Parliamentary Assembly, Michael Turner, argues that NATO needs to adopt a range of far-reaching measures to enhance its rapid response capability, such as finding a solution for the funding of the VJTF (which is currently based on the principle of 'costs lie where they fall'), granting SACEUR pre-authorisation to deploy the VJTF, enabling governments and parliaments to regularly exercise rapid decision-making, reviewing NATO's command structure, finding a response to Russia's A2/AD capabilities, increasing the prepositioning of equipment, lifting logistic and other obstacles to the swift movement of military units and materiel across national borders (a military Schengen zone[89]), conducting larger and more realistic exercises, developing more structured cooperation with Finland and Sweden, and permanently stationing NATO units in former Warsaw Pact countries.

86 See also AIV advisory report no. 96 'Deployment of Rapid-Reaction Forces', The Hague, October 2015.

87 Wesley Clark et al., op. cit., p. 14. The authors of this report already took the stationing of battalions in the Baltic states into account. In their view, however, this would not be sufficient. 'These units should be "battalion-plus" battle groups. They should have full manpower, combined arms, high firepower, high tactical mobility, a robust anti-armour capability, and organic Combat Support and Combat Service Support such [ADD] as artillery and tactical missiles, ground-based air defence, attack helicopters and other enablers. These units should have detailed and immediately executable plans (…), Rules of Engagement and the pre-authorisation to respond to Russia's aggression immediately.' Ibid., p. 22.

88 Ibid., p. 22.

89 Elisabeth Braw, 'A Schengen Zone for NATO: Why the Alliance Needs Open Borders for Troops', *Foreign Affairs*, 6 June 2016. See: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian-federation/2016-06-06/schengen-zone-nato>.

Having considered all the relevant factors, the AIV believes that it is highly debatable whether the measures adopted at the NATO summit meetings in Wales and Warsaw to enhance the Alliance's forward presence have sufficient deterrent force to prevent Russia from expanding its sphere of influence by military means at some point. Deterrence by denial relies on the visible size, strength and location of NATO's forward deployed forces in peacetime. However, the multinational battalions stationed in the Baltic states lack striking power and serve exclusively as a tripwire.[90] Even the VJTF – should it be able to reach the deployment area within the specified response time – consists largely of light units and does not provide the additional power needed to prevail in a military confrontation with Russian troops. The IFFG, which complements the NRF, has a lengthy response time of 30 or 45 days and thus would provide scant relief in the event of a surprise attack. In the context of NATO's current defence and deterrence posture, a strategy based on deterrence by denial therefore lacks credibility. Such weakness may provoke aggression and could increase the risk of the defender having to resort to nuclear weapons.

At present, NATO is thus obliged to rely on deterrence by punishment. Under this strategy, its true military strength must come from deployable and available follow-on forces, in conjunction with nuclear weapons and a credible nuclear strategy. US involvement is crucial to this strategy too. Credible deterrence by punishment requires that the aforementioned follow-on forces be available and that NATO be able to reach a decision by consensus with regard to military deployment involving heavy losses. Years of cuts in defence spending and a focus on light units and counter-insurgency and stabilisation missions have seriously eroded the capability of the European NATO countries, in particular, to operate successfully in high-intensity conflicts. Significant improvements would be required in a large number of areas for a period of several years in order to achieve credible deterrence by punishment and reduce NATO's reliance on nuclear weapons.

For NATO, the greatest weakness of a deterrence-by-punishment strategy lies in the requirement to reach decisions by common consent during a military conflict with Russia. The question arises whether Russia can be prevented from paralysing the decision-making process by exploiting a lack of unity, cohesion and solidarity within NATO, for example through intimidation, including nuclear threats, and by spreading disinformation. For this reason, too, deterrence by punishment is significantly riskier than deterrence by denial.

In all likelihood, Russia is not intent on a prolonged, large-scale conflict with NATO. Among the many relevant considerations, certain non-military factors and risks may persuade Moscow to exercise caution, such as the cost of Russia's ongoing interventions in Ukraine and Syria, the economic impact of tighter Western sanctions, and popular opposition to a new military adventure. At regional level – especially in the Baltic region, which lacks strategic depth – Russia could achieve military dominance by carrying out a rapid surprise attack. The AIV believes that the greatest risk facing NATO is misjudgement on the part of Russia. Russia should not be tempted to swiftly create a fait accompli, for example by suddenly invading one of the Baltic states.

90 The rationale for the tripwire lies not so much in its military strength as in its political significance, namely the assumption that Russia would not be willing to 'set it off', since doing so would result in a military confrontation with NATO involving an unacceptable risk of escalation and punishment in subsequent stages.

The AIV believes that NATO's strategy should therefore focus as much as possible on deterrence by denial. The Alliance's decision-making processes will always be considerably slower than Russia's. Credible deterrence by denial requires that the rotating forward deployed forces, particularly those in the Baltic states, be reinforced, for example by deploying a brigade-sized unit, of sufficient striking power and with adequate air cover, in each of those states. This would create additional response time for deploying the VJTF, which is particularly important given the impossibility of pre-positioning military equipment and supplies for the VJTF on account of the force's multinational character and the fact that its composition changes with each rotation. In addition, NATO should transform the current air policing mission into an air defence mission, reinforce the Standing Naval Forces in the Baltic Sea and ensure the availability of deployable follow-on forces as soon as possible. After all, if deterrence by denial fails, NATO must be able to fall back on these follow-on forces. Furthermore, it should be absolutely clear to Russia that deploying nuclear weapons in a conventional conflict would fundamentally change the nature of that conflict. In order to ensure that nuclear weapons never have to be deployed in practice, a credible NATO nuclear strategy is thus essential.

It is important to be able to swiftly move the VJTF to a designated deployment area. In order to make this possible, several problems need to be resolved urgently, such as the lack of rail and road transport options for heavy military materiel. A key stumbling block is the time-consuming process of obtaining permission for NATO units to cross national borders. At present, every time the VJTF needs to cross a national border, the relevant NATO country has to grant it permission to do so. The swift movement of the VJTF to a crisis area (or its vicinity) can be instrumental in preventing a military conflict and contributes to the credibility of deterrence by denial. It is therefore imperative that restrictions on transporting military units and materiel across national borders be lifted as soon as possible. In practice, this would involve creating a 'military Schengen zone'. The establishment of such a zone would obviously require close cooperation between NATO and the EU.

It is clear that the need to enhance conventional military capabilities is not the only issue. NATO will also have to develop an effective offensive cyber strategy and a credible nuclear strategy in order to create a credible military deterrent. Further measures are needed to counter other hybrid threats emanating from Russia, particularly in the area of disinformation. These types of threats can place significant demands on societal resilience in NATO countries. The AIV therefore believes that NATO-EU cooperation, mutual solidarity and cohesion within the Alliance are more crucial than ever.

### IV.4 Projecting Stability

The security threats emanating from the Middle East and North Africa are increasingly demanding NATO's attention. As a result of various terrorist attacks and the recent influx of migrants and refugees, NATO and the EU are both increasingly engaged in these regions. Many NATO members are contributing to the anti-IS coalition, the Alliance is training Iraqi security forces and measures have been taken to enhance Turkey's defences. In addition, two of NATO's Standing Maritime Groups are currently operating in the Aegean Sea.

At the NATO summit meeting in Warsaw, it was decided to expand the training mission in Iraq by actually hosting training in Iraq – and not just in Jordan – from now on. In addition, NATO decided to deploy AWACS aircraft and launch Operation Sea Guardian in support of the EU's EUNAVFOR MED operation Sophia. NATO's contribution is modest, as several

member countries believe that the EU is better equipped for operations in this region. Moreover, several member countries, including Germany, are opposed to direct military involvement by NATO. It was announced in Warsaw that, as part of the Readiness Action Plan (RAP), NATO is developing a framework for its 'adaptation in response to growing challenges and threats emanating from the south'.

The Alliance's efforts in the Middle East and North Africa are part of its Projecting Stability initiative, a catch-all concept employed by NATO that lacks clear geographical or substantive boundaries. This illustrates the diffuse and ambiguous nature of NATO's involvement in these regions. Despite establishing several collaborative frameworks, such as the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (see section VII.3), NATO still lacks a clear and consistent strategy for its southern flank. The Alliance's activities in the field of counterterrorism, the Framework for the South, the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative and the Partnerships and Cooperative Security Committee (PCSC) all operate more or less in parallel, but there is no overarching vision. The AIV believes that NATO would be wise to develop a southern strategy that focuses on capacity building and the Alliance's role as a consultative forum. NATO's Secretary-General can take the lead in this area, for example by organising regular meetings at ministerial level. The AIV considers it important for NATO not to remain on the sidelines and cede the playing field to countries such as Russia, Turkey and Iran. At the same time, the AIV is well aware that NATO can play only a limited role and that close cooperation with the EU is therefore critical.

# V Dialogue with Russia

## V.1 Diplomatic instruments

'Business as usual' in the dialogue and cooperation between NATO and Russia ended in April 2014 because of Russia's annexation of Crimea and the ongoing destabilisation of eastern Ukraine. The main forum for this relationship is the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), which was established in 2002 on the basis of the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act. This Act created a strategic partnership between the parties. The key issues on the NRC's agenda are the regular political consultations between the NATO countries and Russia, joint actions, practical cooperation on civil and military matters and combined peacekeeping operations. NATO worked closely with Russia during the ISAF mission in Afghanistan.

By 2014, relations between the parties had already deteriorated owing to disagreements concerning the status of Kosovo and Russia's military action against Georgia, followed by Moscow's recognition of the breakaway Georgian provinces of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. In response to the developments in Ukraine, the EU and the G7 imposed sanctions on Russia. In return, Russian president Vladimir Putin sharpened his anti-Western rhetoric, especially after securing a third term of office in 2012, and accelerated the implementation of the modernisation programme of the Russian armed forces. All this contributed to an atmosphere of confrontation, which continues to this day.

At the summit meeting in Wales in 2014 the Allies declared that they were willing to engage in a dialogue with Russia focusing on risk reduction, transparency and predictability. However, they added that it would be impossible to return to business as usual in the absence of a change of course by Russia. A similar message emerged from the Warsaw summit. NATO proposed a 'periodic, focused and meaningful' dialogue. This implied that the Alliance would assess the pace of the meetings and the contents of the agenda on a case-by-case basis. In addition, it offered Russia the opportunity to discuss NATO's emerging ballistic missile defence (BMD) system, which recently achieved initial operational capability. The NATO countries also clarified that, as far as the Alliance is concerned, the conflict in Ukraine should in any case remain at the top of the NRC's agenda. In parallel with the expansion of the Readiness Action Plan (RAP) to strengthen collective defence, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg announced a two-pronged 'defence and dialogue' approach towards Russia.

The meetings of the NRC at ambassadorial level in 2016 and 2017 produced little in the way of new developments. The NRC remains the primary forum for consultations with Russia. There is no willingness to allow Moscow to take part in decision-making on NATO matters. In Russia's view, it is thus not being treated on an equal footing. The Russian delegation nevertheless intends to keep using this channel – or at least ensure that each meeting of the NRC is not its last.[91] The logistic supply lines of the current NATO presence in Afghanistan could form an interesting topic for closer cooperation with Russia.

91 Meeting with Ambassador Alexander Grushko (Permanent Representative of the Russia Federation to NATO), 6 March 2017.

Putin's policy is determined by domestic and foreign considerations.[92] On the international stage, NATO enlargement is a key source of Russian concern. There are different opinions as to whether Western efforts in this area during negotiations following the fall of the Berlin Wall violated existing agreements.[93] Whatever the case may be, Russia's suspicions were further aroused by NATO's decision that Georgia and Ukraine could join the Alliance in due course. During the 2008 Bucharest summit, President Putin registered his country's objection to this decision, which was met with understanding by France and Germany. Russia regards NATO enlargement as a threat to its security.

In addition, Russia is dismayed that NATO is actively strengthening its defensive capabilities through the RAP, although the Alliance's efforts in this regard are in no way proportionate to the build-up of Russia's armed forces. Moscow is particularly concerned about areas it considers strategically important, both from a maritime perspective and more generally, such as the Baltic Sea and Black Sea regions. For this and other reasons, talks regarding the status of Crimea and the Minsk Process have stagnated. This process, which is meant to resolve the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine, is based on the implementation of various agreed steps, such as a lasting ceasefire, the withdrawal of heavy weapons, and autonomy for Donetsk and Luhansk. Moscow also claims to feel threatened by the creation of NATO's BMD system, which was recently activated in Romania. The system is designed to intercept missiles originating outside the Euro-Atlantic area. On this issue, too, Moscow wishes to have a real say. It has some far-reaching arrangements in mind, such as a right to veto the system's deployment or transferring responsibility for a specific air defence sector (e.g. the Baltic region) to its armed forces.

The election of Donald Trump as president of the United States has added a great deal of uncertainty to the mix. During the election campaign, Trump declared his willingness to personally conclude agreements with Putin on strategic matters and regional conflicts. However, the Trump administration has yet to develop a coherent policy on Russia and the implications of its actions for NATO. At present, therefore, reflections on the future of the political dialogue with Russia have come to a standstill at NATO headquarters.[94]

It remains to be seen whether Russia is truly interested in a meaningful and constructive dialogue in the immediate future. In its advisory letter of 10 March 2017, the AIV notes the following: 'Although unlikely in the short term, it cannot be ruled out that the Russian president will eventually be willing to launch constructive talks on confidence-building measures or even take steps in the field of conventional and nuclear arms control and disarmament, provided this is reconcilable with his wish to remain in power.'[95] This moment would not appear to have arrived yet. Moscow also appears to be waiting until Washington has determined its position. In its response of 11 November 2015 to AIV

92 See AIV advisory letter no. 31: 'Russia and the Defence Efforts of the Netherlands', The Hague, March 2017.

93 Rodric Braithwaite, 'NATO Enlargement: Assurances and Misunderstandings', Commentary, European Council on Foreign Relations, 7 July 2016. See: http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_nato_enlargement_assurances_and_misunderstandings.

94 Meetings with NATO's International Staff, 6 March 2017.

95 AIV advisory letter no. 31: 'Russia and the Defence Efforts of the Netherlands', The Hague, March 2017, p. 8.

advisory report no. 94, 'Instability around Europe: Confrontation with a New Reality', the government notes: 'The Netherlands' response to Russia is a combination of pressure and dialogue, in which unity with our EU partners and NATO allies is essential. […] [T]he political dialogue [is] aimed at finding a solution to the conflict in Ukraine.'[96] This remains the AIV's guiding principle as well.

In addition, the Netherlands must bear in mind that the Allies have differing views on NATO's relationship with Russia. Some eastern countries feel directly threatened, while France is also keeping an eye on instability emanating from the south and Germany wishes to keep the lines of communication with Moscow as open as possible. New measures should not imply any kind of recognition of Russia's territorial conquests in Ukraine and Georgia. All in all, the two sides' contradictory principles, perceptions and political interests, as well as the mutual mistrust and suspicion concerning each other's intentions, leave little room for an improvement in NATO-Russia relations. On the other hand, there is an unmistakable need to stabilise the current situation as soon as possible, before accidents and misjudgements lead to a serious escalation.

Thought should be given to the possibility of exploiting the complementarity between the NATO-Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security and the EU-Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement in order to hold trilateral consultations on issues of common interest that also fall within the EU's sphere of competence. This applies, for example, to the issue of counterterrorism, as Russia is interested in working together in this area, while the NATO countries themselves still need to further their coordination on this issue.

### V.2 Conventional arms control

Russia's military build-up, the rising number of incidents involving Russian aircraft and the tense relations between Russia and the West make it all the more important to push for maximum transparency in order to prevent misunderstandings. This would reduce the risk of dangerous reactions and increase predictability and mutual trust, thus enhancing stability and security.[97] The AIV therefore believes it is vital to search for opportunities to renew the conventional arms control talks, which have been deadlocked for some time.

Conventional arms control in Europe rests on three pillars: the 1990 Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, the 1990 Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the 2002 Treaty on Open Skies. In the AIV's opinion, the Vienna Document – one of the most important confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) that the OSCE has at its disposal – can help increase stability in Europe by providing a platform for renewed talks on further arms control and improved relations with Moscow. Consultations on politico-military matters can take place in the OSCE's Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC).

96 Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Defence to the President of the House of Representatives of the States General containing the government's response to AIV advisory report no. 94, The Hague, 11 November 2015, p. 2.

97 Lucien Kleinjan, 'Conventional Arms Control in Europe: Decline, Disarray, and the Need for Reinvention', *Arms Control Today*, vol. 46, June 2016. See: <https://www.armscontrol.org/ACT/2016_06/Features/Conventional-Arms-Control-In-Europe>.

The Vienna Document was accepted by all the member countries of what was then known as the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Today, it obliges the OSCE's 57 participating states to share information on their armed forces on an annual basis (including data on budgets, planning and organisation, and weapon systems), keep each other informed about large-scale military exercises, allow inspections and participate in monitoring activities. Over the years, the Vienna Document has been amended several times (in 1992, 1994, 1999 and 2011). Various new OSCE participating states have signed up to the Vienna Document, the inspection and monitoring activities have been fleshed out and states can conclude supplementary agreements at bilateral and/or regional level.

In 2016, Russia blocked the planned revision of the Vienna Document. Recent military developments (such as the use of unmanned aerial vehicles), a wish to lower the notification threshold (to cover military activities involving fewer troops but heavier weapons) and Russia's snap exercises make it essential to update the Vienna Document, precisely in order to close certain loopholes that currently allow countries to circumvent its letter and spirit.[98] It is doubtful that Russia is eagerly awaiting talks on the Vienna Document, let alone arms control in a broader sense. Over the past few years Moscow has intensified its anti-Western rhetoric to such an extent that any return to the negotiating table will be difficult. Furthermore, it is very much open to question whether the countries of central and eastern Europe see any point in a dialogue with Russia. In 2016, Germany's then foreign minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, tried to put arms control back on the agenda.[99] He proposed various concrete steps, including regional ceilings, measures to promote transparency and a dialogue on recent military and strategic developments.

The initial responses to Steinmeier's initiative were cautiously positive. In the context of CSBMs, the idea of restarting the arms control dialogue can only be applauded. At the same time, however, the aforementioned problems regarding the modernisation of the Vienna Document remain rife. In addition, certain countries are concerned that this debate could undermine the implementation of existing instruments, such as the Vienna Document. Steinmeier's initiative has yet to produce concrete results, but it was one of the factors that encouraged ministers to participate in the OSCE Structured Dialogue – an informal exchange of views on security challenges in Europe.

The second pillar of conventional arms control, the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), has also reached an impasse. In the framework of the CFE Treaty, NATO and the Warsaw Pact destroyed 72,000 pieces of heavy military equipment, ending Russia's enormous quantitative advantage in the field of conventional weapons. The accompanying inspection regime monitored the implementation of the treaty, and the entire process contributed to a sense of mutual trust. In 2007, however, Russia

98 Ibid.

99 Frank-Walter Steinmeier, 'Mehr Sicherheit für alle in Europa - Für einen Neustart der Rüstungskontrolle' (More security for everyone in Europe: A call for a re-launch of arms control), *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 26 August 2016. See: <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/Infoservice/Presse/Interviews/2016/160826_BM_FAZ.html> An English translation is available at <http://www.osce.org/cio/261146>.

unilaterally suspended the treaty.[100] As a result, consultations in the CFE framework have lost much of their relevance.

The third pillar of conventional arms control, the Treaty on Open Skies, is functioning relatively well. The fact that the advantages for Russia of complying with the treaty currently outweigh the disadvantages is probably a relevant factor in this regard. However, Russia interprets the treaty more restrictively with regard to flights over its own territory. The Treaty on Open Skies brings together 34 states parties, which are authorised on the basis of the treaty to conduct observation flights over each other's territory (for example over military installations and weapons facilities). Like the CFE inspection regime, these flights are meant to build mutual trust.

The AIV believes that NATO's efforts – and those of the Netherlands in particular – should focus on reviving the talks on modernising the Vienna Document. Certain aspects of Steinmeier's plans, such as the need to devote attention to the many new military and strategic developments, should definitely be included in this process. As a result, the emphasis will shift from the numerical reduction of different categories of weapon systems to restricting threatening innovations in the field of hybrid warfare, such as disinformation and cyber weapons. However great the objections of certain countries may be and however intractable the problems may seem, the AIV believes that dialogue remains necessary.

100 Kingston Reif, 'Russia Completes CFE Treaty Suspension', *Arms Control Today*, vol. 45, April 2015. See: <https://www.armscontrol.org/ACT/2015_04/News-Briefs/Russia-Completes-CFE-Treaty-Suspension>.

# VI Tensions within the Alliance

## VI.1 Divisions within NATO

NATO, the largest and – thus far – most successful military alliance in history, struggles with serious internal problems. Since January 2017, its most powerful member, the United States, which has formed the political and military backbone of the Alliance since its establishment in 1949, cannot be depended upon to provide political leadership. The arrival of President Trump has cast doubt on the United States' unofficial patronage of the Alliance and its compliance with its treaty obligations. At present, it is still difficult to say where the current president's ambiguous policies will lead. However, it is fair to assume that the North Atlantic Treaty will continue to enjoy the support of a large majority in the United States Congress.

*Brexit*
At first glance, the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU does not appear to have major implications for NATO. British security policy is expected to place even greater emphasis on the transatlantic Alliance following Brexit. According to former UK defence secretary Michael Fallon, 'Brexit has coincided with our stepping up in NATO.'[101] The United Kingdom has long been strongly opposed to the duplication of NATO's capabilities within the EU. As far as the British are concerned, NATO remains the primary vehicle for shaping European military cooperation. The United Kingdom's commitments within the Alliance and the availability of British military assets for NATO operations are not in dispute, nor are bilateral agreements between the UK and other Allies. In fact, it is through NATO that the UK will be able to demonstrate its relevance as a partner of the United States and Europe. At the same time, in a paper published in September, the British government indicated that it wishes to continue its close cooperation with the EU: 'It is the UK's ambition to work as closely as possible together with the EU, protecting our citizens, promoting our values and ensuring the future security of our continent.'[102]

In matters relating to security and defence, the United Kingdom has traditionally served as an important intermediary between the EU and NATO and between the United States and Europe. That role is set to become smaller. Given the size of its military and its membership of both organisations, France can be expected to take over this particular task. Although relations between France and NATO have improved dramatically, it is currently unclear what the country's enhanced status as the fulcrum of the European security debate will entail. In addition, Germany may also become more influential, especially if the new German government decides to raise its defence expenditure to the 2% target after the elections. Brexit may also have implications for the role of NATO's Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (DSACEUR). This position, which is traditionally occupied by a British national, forms a vital link in EU-NATO military cooperation.

101 'Splendid Isolation? Tight Budgets and Imminent Brexit Threaten Britain's Armed Forces', The Economist, 6 July 2017. See: <https://www.economist.com/news/britain/21724826-new-aircraft-carrier-symbolises-britains-ambitionbut-also-its-confusion-tight-budgets-and>.

102 Department for Exiting the European Union, 'Foreign Policy, Defence and Development: A Future Partnership Paper', 12 September 2017. See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foreign-policy-defence-and-development-a-future-partnership-paper>.

Should the negotiations on the future relationship between the United Kingdom and the EU27 end in failure, leading to a 'chaotic' Brexit without clear agreements on trade and security cooperation, relations between the European countries and the United Kingdom may be affected. If the mood between the United Kingdom and its continental partners sours, cooperation within NATO – and between the EU and NATO – will also suffer. It is therefore in NATO's interest that the divorce proceedings between the EU and the United Kingdom be conducted in a constructive manner. In order to keep the United Kingdom involved in European security, the AIV recommends reviving the Eurogroup, which played a useful supportive role within NATO between 1968 and 1994.[103] The Eurogroup was established in 1968 at the initiative of then British defence secretary, Denis Healey, for the purpose of strengthening European defence cooperation within NATO. A new Eurogroup would enable the United Kingdom, France (which did not participate in the past) and Germany, along with the other European member countries, to discuss – informally and in a NATO context – how their political, military and financial efforts can best serve transatlantic cooperation.

*Internal divisions*

Within NATO, opinions on the nature of the threat emanating from Russia and on the Alliance's relationship with Russia vary widely. In Eastern Europe, people are particularly afraid of the threat posed by a resurgent Russia and consequently highlight the importance of a military response. At the same time, Germany, Italy, France and the Netherlands want to pursue a two-pronged approach towards Russia, encompassing deterrence and dialogue. There is also disagreement on NATO's priorities. According to the eastern members, NATO's priorities lie on its eastern flank, while those in the south believe that the Alliance should prioritise its southern flank. The eastern members favour the permanent stationing of NATO units, while other members do not wish to go beyond the deployment of a military presence consisting of – rotating – forward deployed NATO forces. There is also disagreement within NATO regarding the role of nuclear weapons and their contribution to deterrence. The energy dependency of several European countries is a further potential source of tension. Russia is a key energy supplier for several NATO countries, including Germany. European countries depend on Russia for 30% of their gas supplies, which leaves them vulnerable in this area. The completion of Nord Stream 2, a pipeline system running between St Petersburg and Germany, will enable Russia to double the amount of gas it supplies to Germany. However, the July 2017 decision of the United States Congress to expand sanctions against Russia may affect Nord Stream 2. This decision, which provoked a fierce response from Germany, could turn into a source of contention between European countries and the United States.[104] The AIV believes that the security policy implications of Nord Stream 2 need to be acknowledged and that the EU must not shy away from an internal debate on this issue.

103 NATO Information Service, 'Aspects of NATO: The Eurogroup', Brussels, 1972. See: <http://archives.nato.int/uploads/r/null/1/3/137609/0159_Aspects_of_NATO-The_Eurogroup_1972_ENG.pdf>, p. 24. This Eurogroup should not be confused with the current EU Eurogroup, which comprises the finance ministers of the countries that make up the euro area.

104 Arie Elshout, 'Acuut conflict tussen VS en Europa dreigt nu Congres nieuwe sancties tegen Rusland wil' (Acute conflict between US and Europe looms now that Congress wants new sanctions against Russia), *De Volkskrant*, 26 July 2017. See: <https://www.volkskrant.nl/buitenland/acuut-conflict-tussen-vs-en-europa-dreigt-nu-congres-nieuwe-sancties-tegen-rusland-wil~a4508199/>. Arthur Beesley and Stefan Wagstyl, 'Europe Caught in Crossfire as US Turns Screw on Russia', *Financial Times*, 27 July 2017.

NATO's common values in the field of human rights, democracy and the rule of law are under threat in several member countries. Much effort will be required to maintain the transatlantic Alliance as an effective defence organisation and a community of shared values. These concerns are especially justified in the case of Turkey, which is becoming increasingly autocratic. Tens of thousands of people have been dismissed or arrested for holding views that deviate from those of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. NATO itself is also feeling the consequences, as Turkish military personnel and senior officials serving in the Turkish armed forces and NATO institutions have been dismissed – so far without replacement. At present, Turkey's foreign policy deviates strongly from the traditional political orientations of the post-1945 Turkish Republic. Under President Erdoğan, the country is drifting further and further away from NATO and the EU,[105] as clearly demonstrated by its purchase of Russian S-400 air defence systems. Political developments in Hungary and Bulgaria and the attitude of these countries towards Russia are also a source of concern.[106] The same applies to Poland, where the rule of law is under pressure and the armed forces are being thoroughly reorganised for party political reasons.[107]

The NATO members' contributions to collective defence vary widely, from 0.4% to 3.6% of GDP. For years, the United States and the United Kingdom, in particular, have been calling the other Allies to account for their 'free-rider' behaviour. This unequal willingness to contribute to collective defence undermines the core of the Alliance. The same applies to the apparently limited willingness in some European NATO countries to come to the aid of a fellow Ally that is threatened militarily by Russia. According to opinion polls, only 40% of the German population would support such action (compared with 72% in the Netherlands).[108] In addition, Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey are divided over attempts to take combined action against Russia's military build-up in the Black Sea region. Since the beginning of 2016, Romania has been calling for an enhanced NATO presence in the area, while Turkey and Bulgaria have adopted a more restrained approach. It is no coincidence that, in a WIN/Gallup International poll conducted at the end of 2016, the populations of Turkey and Bulgaria, along with those of Greece and Slovenia, indicated that Russia would be their preferred ally in the event of an attack.[109]

105 Aykan Erdemir and Merve Tahiroglu, 'Turkey's Drift from the West: from Transactionalism to Hostility', War on the Rocks, 17 August 2017. See: <https://warontherocks.com/2017/08/turkeys-drift-from-the-west-from-transactionalism-to-hostility/>.

106 See also AIV advisory report no. 104: 'The Will of the People? The Erosion of Democracy under the Rule of Law in Europe', The Hague, June 2017.

107 'In 2016, 90 percent of leading positions were replaced in the armed forces' General Staff, responsible for strategic planning, and 82 percent in the General Command, which has operational control. Even Poland's defence university was reorganised, with 100 staff losing their jobs.' Zosia Wasik and Neil Buckley, 'Poland's military shake-up has critics up in arms', *Financial Times*, 17 May 2017. See: <https://www.ft.com/content/cc83fcaa-3a1c-11e7-ac89-b01cc67cfeec>.

108 Bruce Stokes, NATO's Image Improves on Both Sides of Atlantic, Pew Research Center, 23 May 2017. See: <http://www.pewglobal.org/2017/05/23/natos-image-improves-on-both-sides-of-atlantic/>.

109 'Four NATO nations would pick Russia to defend them if threatened: Poll', Bloomberg News, 17 February 2017. See: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-02-17/melania-trump-s-slovenia-would-pick-russian-over-u-s-protection>.

## VI.2 Transatlantic cooperation

The relationship between Europe and the United States has never been straightforward and has gone through difficult periods on more than one occasion. NATO could accordingly be described as a troubled partnership.[110] Over the past decade, moreover, the United States has increasingly shifted its focus to Asia. The current US administration has its hands full with North Korea and Chinese expansion in the South China Sea. Incidentally, on top of the measures agreed within NATO, the United States has strengthened its military presence in Europe in recent years in response to the Russian threat (Operation Atlantic Resolve). It has done so not by increasing the number of troops permanently stationed in Europe (67,000 including two Army Brigade Combat Teams) but through other measures, for example by deploying a third Army Brigade Combat Team, with the necessary logistic support, on a rotational basis. The cost of the European Reassurance Initiative, for stationing troops, pre-positioning materiel, improving infrastructure and conducting military exercises, is expected to amount to approximately $5 billion.[111]

President Trump has put further pressure on transatlantic relations by linking the 2% target for defence expenditure agreed in Wales to the United States' willingness to come to the aid of the European Allies in the event of aggression. The AIV shares the United States' concern, as previously articulated by Trump's predecessors, that the European Allies are not meeting their commitments. Solidarity should be based on proportional contributions to collective defence (i.e. burden sharing).

President Trump's comment that NATO has become 'obsolete' was later retracted, but it will take more than that to restore trust. Trump was widely expected to explicitly endorse article 5 at the summit meeting in Brussels in May 2017, but this did not happen. Later, in an apparent attempt to repair this omission, he said the following during a press conference on 9 June: 'I'm committing the United States to Article 5. And certainly we are there to protect. And that's one of the reasons that I want people to make sure we have a very, very strong force by paying the kind of money necessary to have that force. (…) [A]bsolutely, I'd be committed to Article 5.'[112] The AIV considers it vital that the US government be absolutely clear on this issue and that it leave no ambiguity as to America's commitment to Allied solidarity.

Taking all the above considerations into account, the AIV believes that there are more reasons than ever for the European NATO countries to join forces. All the previous Atlantic objections to European cooperation are losing their persuasiveness. More European cooperation is not a luxury in a world where China and India are becoming increasingly assertive, Russia is driven by revanchism and the United States is preoccupied with internal disputes. In a world in which Europe's power is destined to decline, European countries can remain strong by standing together.

110 Henry A. Kissinger, *The Troubled Partnership: A Re-Appraisal of the Atlantic Alliance*, Praeger, 1982.

111 European Reassurance Initiative, Department of Defense Budget, Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), May 2017, p. 25. See: <http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2018/fy2018_ERI_J-Book.pdf>.

112 'Remarks by President Trump and President Iohannis of Romania in a Joint Press Conference', White House Press Office, 9 June 2017. See: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/06/09/remarks-president-trump-and-president-iohannis-romania-joint-press>.

# VII Cooperation with third parties

## VII.1 EU-NATO cooperation

The EU and NATO have long been searching for opportunities to work together, especially now that the security situation has deteriorated and many new threats are emerging. Such cooperation has failed to get off the ground in the past, in part due to the 'membership issue', in which the friction between Cyprus (a member of the EU but not of NATO) and Turkey (a member of NATO but not of the EU), made cooperation almost impossible. However, the organisations' difficult relationship can also be attributed to a degree of rivalry concerning their respective roles in European security. In addition, there are certain practical obstacles to cooperation, such as difficulties with regard to sharing confidential and classified information.

It seems that the member states of both organisations have finally realised that the complexity of the security situation necessitates closer cooperation. Relations between the EU and NATO have improved significantly.[113] In February 2016, for example, they concluded a cyber defence agreement to improve information sharing. They also work together on maritime border management operations in the Aegean Sea and, as of November 2016, in the Mediterranean Sea, in the framework of EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia. The two NATO operations in question assisted the EU by sharing intelligence and providing logistic support. In July 2016, the EU and NATO issued a Joint Declaration on cooperation,[114] along with 42 action items on such issues as hybrid threats, cybersecurity, operational cooperation, defence capabilities, the defence industry, defence-related research, military exercises and capacity building.[115]

NATO plays a relatively limited role in tackling the problems on Europe's southern border. European security is being threatened in particular by the spillover effects of conflicts in the Middle East and Africa: refugee flows, irregular migration, transnational crime and terrorism. The EU is better equipped to tackle these problems, since it has at its disposal a much wider range of instruments and powers in the field of 'internal security', encompassing border management, counterterrorism and efforts to combat cross-border crime. During the Dutch EU presidency, the EU member states quickly decided to replace the existing Frontex border management agency with the European Border Security and Coast Guard Agency, which will be larger and enjoy broader powers than its predecessor.

113 Margriet Drent and Dick Zandee, 'Hybride dreigingen en EU-NAVO samenwerking' (Hybrid threats and EU-NATO cooperation), *Magazine Nationale Veiligheid en Crisisbeheersing*, no. 5, December 2016.

114 Joint Declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Warsaw, 8 July 2016. See: <https://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/official_texts_133163.htm>. Statement on the implementation of the Joint Declaration signed by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 6 December 2016. See: <https://www.nato.int/cps/ua/natohq/official_texts_138829.htm>.

115 Drent and Zandee, op. cit. Measures have already been taken in several areas. The EU and NATO are preparing informal playbooks to better coordinate their response to hybrid threats. In the field of cybersecurity, information-sharing and joint training exercises have been increased.

In the field of counterterrorism, national intelligence services are working together more closely, in part because recent terrorist attacks have once again demonstrated the importance of doing so. In the past, the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) focused primarily on the stabilisation and reconstruction of failed states far away from Europe. Today, EU military operations are also being conducted close to Europe's external borders. The aim of Operation Sophia is to map – and where its mandate permits, combat – the activities of people smugglers in the central Mediterranean.

A natural division of labour thus appears to be emerging between NATO and the EU in response to the aforementioned new threats. However, this is still insufficient in the AIV's view, since neither organisation is able to cope with these threats on its own. NATO, which generally relies on military deterrence and territorial defence, cannot take effective action against most hybrid (non-military) threats, quite simply because it lacks the necessary powers. The EU will further enhance its non-military capabilities, with an emphasis on the key issue of border management. However, without the support of NATO (read: the United States), it cannot stand up to President Putin or counter the escalation (and effects) of a military conflict on its southern flank. Both organisations need each other in order to find effective and integrated solutions to a wide range of security threats. In addition, NATO and the EU must work together to create the conditions for a 'military Schengen area'.

Recent progress in the cooperation between the two organisations is due in no small part to the efforts of the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, and NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg. In June 2017, they published a progress report on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed by NATO and EU Councils on 6 December 2016.[116] This report stated that a culture change had occurred in the six months separating the adoption of the aforementioned action items and the publication of the report, and that EU-NATO cooperation is increasingly the norm. In terms of practical cooperation, particular progress has been made in the field of hybrid threats, as a result of exchanges between the EU Hybrid Fusion Cell and the new NATO Hybrid Analysis Branch, and joint exercises. The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats, which opened in Helsinki on 2 October 2017, is another example of enhanced NATO-EU cooperation.[117]

Under the European Defence Action Plan (EDAP), the European Commission will, by creating a European Defence Fund (EDF), play a major role in defence-related research and the joint development and procurement of capabilities by groups of EU member states. Building on the recent initiatives of the Council and the Commission in the field of defence, Franco-German leadership in particular could stimulate an increase in European military strength. Now that Angela Merkel can look forward to a new term as chancellor of Germany and President Emmanuel Macron has unveiled his ambitious plans for European

116 Progress Report on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed by NATO and EU Councils on 6 December 2016, Brussels, 14 June 2017. See: <http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2017_06/20170619_170614-Joint-progress-report-EU-NATO-EN.pdf>.

117 Teri Schultz, 'EU-NATO Hybrid Threat Center Launched in Finland', Deutsche Welle, 3 October 2017. See: <http://www.dw.com/en/eu-nato-hybrid-threat-center-launched-in-finland/a-40784773>.

cooperation, including in the field of defence,[118] there seems to be fresh momentum in this area. This is good for the EU as well as for NATO, since the European NATO countries are the ones that need to catch up in the areas of research, innovation and capabilities. Thanks to the Joint Declaration, cooperation between the European Defence Agency (EDA) and NATO has become more structured. For example, 20 of the 22 NATO/EU countries that provide information to NATO in the framework of the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP) have also made this information available for the EU Capability Development Plan (CDP), which will be reviewed at the beginning of 2018. For the purpose of replacing its shared AWACS capability, NATO has sought the EDA's assistance on the regulation of military aviation in European airspace (Single European Sky). Another good example is the EDA programme for the joint acquisition of tanker transport aircraft (with the Netherlands as lead nation), for which NATO has signed the contract with Airbus on behalf of the participating countries.

At its meeting on 22-23 June 2017, the European Council decided to develop concrete plans for Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) in order to strengthen European security and defence and implement the EU Global Strategy. The European Council is expected to decide in favour of implementing PESCO at the end of 2017 or the beginning of 2018. A majority of member states have expressed an interest in participating, including key partners of the Netherlands such as Germany and Belgium.

The AIV believes that the entry into office of President Trump and the United Kingdom's impending departure from the EU make good EU-NATO cooperation even more important. In order to safeguard their own security and present themselves as a credible security partner to the United States, the Europeans will have to make optimum use of the various mandates, memberships and instruments that the two organisations have at their disposal. From this perspective, EU-NATO cooperation has undeniably improved, but there is still a long way to go. Past proposals to create a two-pillar structure within NATO continue to encounter significant objections. The position of Canada and those EU countries that are not members of NATO, as well as disagreements within Europe concerning the advisability of radically reforming the Alliance, stand in the way of the realisation of this idea.

### VII.2 NATO enlargement

At the summit meeting in Warsaw, NATO reaffirmed its 'open door' policy. On 5 June 2017, Montenegro joined NATO in the first enlargement of the Alliance since the accession of Albania and Croatia in 2009. Further enlargement is unlikely in the short term. Some Allies believe that NATO expanded too quickly in recent decades and that it needs to resolve a range of problems, including its relations with Russia, before it can absorb new members. Other NATO countries believe that the prospect of NATO membership will deter Russia from using aggression against the countries in question and that NATO should therefore proceed with enlargement.[119]

118 In a speech at the Sorbonne on 26 September 2017, French president Emmanuel Macron argued in favour of an autonomous European capacity for action, complementary to NATO. His plans also include developing a common strategic culture, establishing a new European intervention force and creating a shared defence budget. See: <http://www.elysee.fr/declarations/article/initiative-pour-l-europe-discours-d-emmanuel-macron-pour-une-europe-souveraine-unie-democratique/>.

119 Paul Belkin, 'NATO's Warsaw Summit: In Brief', Congressional Research Service, 14 November 2016, p. 8.

### VII.3 Cooperation with partner countries

In addition to working with the EU and other international organisations, NATO maintains partnerships with other countries as well.[120] This cooperation takes place in the following frameworks: the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the Mediterranean Dialogue, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative and Partners across the Globe. The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) is a multilateral forum comprising all 29 NATO Allies and 21 participating partner countries, mainly former Soviet states or Warsaw Pact countries.[121] Following Russia's annexation of Crimea, not much is left of the original idea of using the EAPC to promote closer ties between NATO and former Eastern Bloc countries.

The belief that security in Europe is closely linked to stability and security in the region surrounding the Mediterranean led to the establishment in 1994 of the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD), a forum for cooperation between NATO and Tunisia, Morocco, Mauritania, Jordan, Israel, Egypt and Algeria.[122] This cooperation is generally of a bilateral and practical nature,[123] in part because the security interests of the various partner countries differ widely. For example, NATO-Israel cooperation focuses on missile defence, while NATO-Jordan cooperation concentrates on the fight against IS. The contribution of the MD partner countries to NATO missions is limited. Jordan is the only partner country of the MD countries to have contributed to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan and Operation Unified Protector in Libya in 2011.

The Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI), established in 2004, focuses on practical regional security cooperation between NATO and Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.[124] Here, too, NATO operates primarily on a bilateral basis. Moreover, it is striking that Oman and Saudi Arabia, which together account for more than half of all defence expenditure in the region, are not part of the ICI.[125] Both the ICI and the MD hardly play any role in managing the current security problems in Syria and Iraq.

The Partners across the Globe (PatG) initiative provides a framework for bilateral cooperation between NATO and Afghanistan, Australia, Iraq, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, New Zealand and Pakistan.[126] The details of this cooperation, which is of a

120 The forms of cooperation described in this section fall under the heading of cooperative security. This (third) core task, which was introduced in 2010, encompasses an ill-defined network of partnerships that are used to pursue a whole range of objectives, including – besides political dialogue and regional cooperation – arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament, military interoperability, information-sharing and coordination during the implementation of military operations.

121 See: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49276.htm>.

122 See: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_60021.htm>.

123 Ibid.

124 See: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_58787.htm>.

125 Karl-Heinz Kamp and Heidi Reisinger, 'NATO's Partnerships After 2014: Go West!', Research Paper no. 92, NATO Defense College, Rome, 2013. See: <http://www.ndc.nato.int/news/news.php?icode=528>.

126 See: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49188.htm>.

practical nature, differ for each partner country. In Iraq and Afghanistan, the emphasis is on state building, civil-military planning and capacity building in the security sector. By contrast, Australia is an important strategic partner that made a significant contribution to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan.[127]

At the summit meeting in Wales, NATO decided to enhance its political dialogue and practical cooperation with key like-minded partners. In this context, it took steps to intensify its cooperation with Finland and Sweden, which are formally part of the EAPC, including the possibility of their contributing to the NRF.[128] In addition, it decided to launch the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative,[129] which has so far been implemented in Georgia, Iraq, Jordan and Moldova.

The AIV believes that NATO could make better use of the aforementioned partnerships. This can be achieved in various ways. Markus Kaim argues for the creation of one- to two-year action programmes tailored by country and priority.[130] Karl-Heinz Kamp and Heidi Reisinger propose an entirely new partnership model that focuses less on geography, since different countries may experience similar problems. They also believe that partner countries should be given a right to speak within NATO in some way and that NATO should explore the possibility of looser forms of – ad hoc – cooperation, without the need for partnerships.[131] The AIV believes that these are valuable ideas.

### VII.4 Cooperation with the UN and the OSCE

*United Nations*

In the preamble of the Washington Treaty, the contracting parties reaffirm 'their faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations'.[132] Since the 1990s, NATO and the UN have worked together on crisis management in countries such as Sudan and Somalia, where the UN supported operations conducted by the African Union. Moreover, NATO assisted in the UN relief operation in Pakistan in 2005. Security Council resolutions have provided mandates for NATO operations in the Balkans, Afghanistan and Libya, as well as for the training mission in Iraq. Cooperation between the two organisations has the potential to produce a win-win situation, as NATO has the necessary military capabilities that the UN lacks, while UN programmes in the field of state-building and reconstruction are vital to the implementation of a comprehensive approach. Military interventions in conflict areas should be carried out in the framework of an integrated effort that includes diplomatic initiatives and development cooperation.

127 See: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_48899.htm>.

128 Markus Kaim, 'Reforming NATO's Partnerships', Research Paper, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), Berlin, January 2017, pp. 16-17. See: <https://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/research_papers/2017RP01_kim.pdf>.

129 See: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_132756.htm>.

130 Markus Kaim, op. cit., p. 22.

131 Karl-Heinz Kamp and Heidi Reisinger, op. cit.

132 The North Atlantic Treaty, Washington D.C., 4 April 1949. See: <http://www.nato.int/cps/iw/natohq/official_texts_17120.htm?selectedLocale=en>.

In practice, UN-NATO cooperation does not always run smoothly, owing to the organisations' differing orientations and interests.[133] The situation in Libya in 2011 is a good example of this. Initially, NATO depended on the UN, since it required a Security Council mandate for military intervention. However, as soon as it received a mandate to use all necessary means to protect the civilian population, the dependency shifted. Following the launch of Operation Unified Protector (OUP), the UN depended on NATO to implement and share information about the operation.[134] Russia and China accused NATO of overstepping its mandate and pursuing regime change above all else.[135] UN-NATO cooperation in Afghanistan also gave rise to problems, for example concerning the coordination and division of labour between the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and NATO's ISAF.[136] In spite of this, the AIV believes that the UN and NATO are indispensable to each other. In certain situations, the UN cannot carry out a mission without military support from NATO. Likewise, UN programmes can contribute to the success of NATO missions.

*Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe*
The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is a key partner for NATO, as the two organisations complement each other's efforts to promote security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area, for example in Kosovo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina.[137]

As a large regional security organisation with 57 participating states, including Russia,[138] the OSCE has played – and can continue to play – a valuable role as a forum for consultation. Owing to mutual differences, however, there currently appear to be far fewer opportunities for it to do so. In this context, the OSCE Secretary-General has spoken of a 'shrinking space' for dialogue.[139] Through its Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine and its management of the Minsk Process, the OSCE is helping to promote stabilisation in Ukraine. In 2016, an attempt by the German Chairmanship of the OSCE to relaunch a meaningful dialogue aimed at restoring cooperative security in Europe was largely unsuccessful.

133 Michael F. Harsch and Johannes Varwick, 'NATO and the UN', Survival: Global Politics and Strategy, vol. 51, no. 2, 2009.

134 See: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_71652.htm>.

135 Michael F. Harsch, 'NATO and the UN: Partnership with Potential?', Research Paper, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), Berlin, January 2012. See: <https://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/research_papers/2012_RP02_har.pdf>.

136 Ibid.

137 See: <http://www.osce.org/mission-in-kosovo/what-we-do>.

138 See: <http://www.osce.org/participating-states>.

139 Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the President of the House of Representatives of the States General concerning the annotated agenda for the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting on 8-9 December 2016, The Hague, 24 November 2016.

According to the report ‘Reviving Co-operative Security in Europe through the OSCE’, prepared by the OSCE Network of Think Tanks and Academic Institutions, the OSCE could strengthen its role in the security sphere, for instance by expanding its presence in crisis areas and establishing a permanent dialogue between Russia and the West in order to revitalise consultations on conventional arms control and confidence-building measures.[140]

140 Teija Tiilikainen (ed.), ‘Reviving Co-operative Security in Europe through the OSCE’, Contribution of the OSCE Network of Think Tanks and Academic Institutions to the Panel of Eminent Persons, Vienna, 2015. See: <http://www.osce.org/networks/188176>.

# VIII Dutch security and defence policy

## VIII.1 Security policy

For a long time, Dutch security and defence policy was pursued within familiar international frameworks and in cooperation with fixed partners. NATO formed the 'cornerstone' of Dutch security policy, the Netherlands worked closely with the United States and the United Kingdom, and the international security situation was fairly straightforward. As noted in previous chapters, the entry into office of the new US president, the various challenges to NATO cohesion, the United Kingdom's impending departure from the EU, the West's declining influence and the security threats on the eastern and southern flanks, as well as those emanating from the Middle East, have given rise to a diffuse security situation. The AIV believes that, alongside its transatlantic orientation, Dutch security and defence policy should focus more heavily on the continental dimension. Although the United Kingdom and the United States will remain key security partners in the future, European security and defence policy is expected to develop considerably in the next few years under the leadership of France and Germany. The Netherlands would be wise to keep pace with this development.

In order to be credible, Dutch security policy needs to be backed up by powerful instruments. The AIV believes that the new Dutch government has a key role to play in this area, namely by pursuing a fully integrated security and defence policy with an adequate budget.[141] In light of the current security challenges, the AIV regards substantial additional investment in the Netherlands' international activities as a necessity – not only to strengthen the armed forces but also to bolster Dutch foreign policy, for example by reinforcing the network of diplomatic missions. The AIV previously drew attention to this last issue in its advisory letter on the Dutch government's presence abroad.[142] A coherent foreign policy also implies efforts aimed at preventing further disruption in the countries on the eastern and southern flanks of NATO's European territory. The AIV agrees with the Advisory Council on Government Policy (WRR) that this preventive capability should be strengthened at national level, as well as within NATO and the EU.[143]

*The Netherlands and the eastern flank*
The Dutch government regards the annexation of Crimea as a watershed in Dutch relations with Russia.[144] Returning to 'business as usual' is not an option. At the same time, the Netherlands believes it is important to keep the lines of communication open, because the two countries have many common interests. The government therefore refers to the necessary approach as one of both a closed fist and an open hand:

141 See also Advisory Council on Government Policy (WRR) report no. 98: 'Veiligheid in een wereld van verbindingen. Een strategische visie op het defensiebeleid' (Security in a connected world: A strategic view of Dutch defence policy), The Hague, May 2017.

142 AIV advisory letter no. 32: 'The Dutch Government's Presence Abroad', The Hague, May 2017.

143 WRR report no. 98, p. 133.

144 Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the President of the House of Representatives of the States General concerning the policy letter on relations with Russia, The Hague, 13 May 2015, p. 6.

deterrence through NATO, and cooperation – where possible – through the OSCE and the NRC. Russia's unwillingness to cooperate with the criminal investigation into the downing of flight MH17 is hampering Dutch-Russian relations. The Netherlands is currently regarded as a 'difficult' country, and Russia is restricting its access to government representatives in Moscow. In the area of energy, Dutch and Russian companies have been working closely together for some time, but the Dutch government has refrained from facilitating consultations with Russian energy entities since 2014. Incidentally, as a result of the scaling down of gas extraction in Groningen, Dutch imports of Russian gas actually doubled between 2010 and 2015.[145] The AIV believes that Europe – including the Netherlands – should reduce its dependence on Russian gas. As it argued in its 2014 advisory letter 'The EU's Dependence on Russian Gas', this can be achieved, among other things, by adopting a European energy policy, diversifying the supply of oil and gas and moving towards a more sustainable energy model.[146] Following the annexation of Crimea, military cooperation between the Netherlands and Russia was suspended. The AIV is of the opinion that resuming this cooperation in the immediate future is not on the cards. Other areas of cooperation are being assessed on a case-by-case basis. For instance, the Netherlands is working with Russia on police matters and cybercrime. In light of Russia's cyber activities, the AIV believes that the government should exercise extreme caution in this area.

*The Netherlands and the southern flank*

The Netherlands sees a role for NATO in connection with the security threats on the southern flank, especially in the field of capacity building and support for efforts to combat people smuggling. Within the anti-IS coalition, the Netherlands is currently contributing to capacity building in northern Iraq, deploying a KDC-10 aircraft for air-to-air refuelling and providing force protection for Belgian F-16s in the region, as well as funding various projects and providing trainers and advisers in cooperation with other international organisations.[147] The Netherlands was initially reluctant about the United States' proposal to allow NATO to join the coalition, given the military implications of such a step and its potential repercussions on relations with Arab allies. The AIV believes that, where possible, NATO resources for capacity building and counterterrorism should not go unused.

*Tensions within the Alliance*

Cooperation with and the positions of the United States and the United Kingdom have traditionally served as important guidelines for Dutch foreign and security policy. Following the entry into office of the new US administration, the Dutch government believes that US involvement in European security is no longer a foregone conclusion. According to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bert Koenders, a strong Germany is, more than ever, in the best interests of the Netherlands, which would do well to help Germany accept its

145 'Import compenseert vermindering aardgaswinning' (Imports make up for reduction in natural gas extraction), Statistics Netherlands (CBS), 19 April 2016. See: <https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/nieuws/2016/16/import-compenseert-vermindering-aardgaswinning>.

146 AIV advisory letter no. 26: 'The EU's Dependence on Russian Gas: How an Integrated EU Policy Can Reduce It', The Hague, 13 May 2014.

147 Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Defence to the President of the House of Representatives of the States General reporting on the special meeting of the heads of state and government of the NATO countries on 25 May 2017, The Hague, 15 June 2017, p. 3.

leadership role in Europe – especially now.[148] The AIV supports this view and previously advised the government to 'encourage Germany to take a more clearly defined position in security matters as in other fields'.[149] It is expected that, in the coming months, France and Germany will initiate deeper European security and defence cooperation. The AIV believes that the Netherlands should keep pace with this development. In addition, it agrees with the Dutch government that it is important to agree on a 'security arrangement' with the United Kingdom so that the UK remains involved in European cooperation on security policy.

The Dutch government is keen to continue working with Turkey within the NATO framework, despite the country's complex political situation, including the recent slide towards autocratic rule, human rights violations, the purchase of advanced Russian air defence systems and the initial refusal to allow German members of parliament to visit Incirlik air base. In light of the country's strategic location and the tasks that NATO carries out there (deploying AWACS surveillance aircraft), and in the hope that Turkey will eventually resume its path toward democracy and the rule of law, the AIV agrees with this policy. At the same time, it is essential to continue calling on Turkey to act in accordance with the Alliance's values and norms.

*The Netherlands and the measures agreed in Wales and Warsaw*
The Netherlands was one of the first countries to contribute to the VJTF following the NATO summit meeting in Wales in September 2014. In 2017, in the framework of NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence, the Netherlands is contributing to the multinational battlegroup in Lithuania and the maritime component of the NRF. In the second half of 2017, it is contributing to the air component of the VJTF and for 2018 it has also undertaken to provide various contributions. In addition the Netherlands is participating in various military exercises, as part of NATO's reassurance measures, and the Air Policing mission in the Baltic states. The AIV believes that the Netherlands should continue to contribute to these NATO efforts on a proportional basis in the future.

The Netherlands occupies a special position in relation to nuclear weapons, and sees itself as a 'bridge builder' on the issue of disarmament. However, it is not about to abandon its nuclear task, which the government intends to maintain as long as NATO remains a nuclear alliance.[150] The Netherlands was the only NATO country to participate in negotiations with 131 other countries at the United Nations on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, but was ultimately the only country to vote against it, on account of its incompatibility with the Netherlands' membership of NATO, the lack of a reliable verification mechanism and the risk that it would undermine existing agreements

148 Speech by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bert Koenders, on global security, Leiden, 17 November 2016. See: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/toespraken/2016/11/17/toespraak-minister-koenders-over-wereldwijde-veiligheid>.

149 AIV advisory report no. 94: 'Instability around Europe: Confrontation with a New Reality', The Hague, April 2015, p. 46.

150 Report of a written consultation between the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, 19 April 2017 (2017Z07999), pp. 14-15 and p. 21.

and standards.[151] The AIV considers it vital that the Netherlands continue to toe the NATO line on this issue, precisely because of the solidarity and politico-military burden-sharing that exist within NATO. The future role of nuclear weapons is one of the topics on which the AIV plans to advise the government in the next few months.[152]

*OSCE*
The Netherlands regards the OSCE as a key forum for conducting a dialogue with Russia and is in favour of modernising the Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures. Two Dutch proposals are currently on the table: one on restricting snap exercises and one on carrying out special inspection missions in the event of military activities that cause concern. The AIV considers it important that the Netherlands continue pursuing initiatives to keep the talks within the OSCE going.

*NATO enlargement*
The Netherlands believes that Russia should not have a say in any future enlargement of NATO or the EU. In the Netherlands' view, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine and Georgia do not currently meet the requirements for NATO membership. The same applies to other countries in the Western Balkans. At the same time, the Dutch government considers it important to devote special attention to the Western Balkans – in cooperation with the EU – given the threats to regional stability arising from the stagnation of reform processes, organised crime, terrorism and the influence of Russia. The AIV believes that further NATO enlargement would likewise not be appropriate at this time and supports the Netherlands' position in this regard.

*European defence cooperation*
Given its transatlantic orientation, the Netherlands has not always been a strong advocate of a European defence policy. In light of changes in the positions of the United States and the United Kingdom, however, the Dutch government currently appears to be moving cautiously towards participation in the deepening of European defence cooperation. The government welcomed the European Commission's Reflection Paper on the Future of European Defence.[153] It has identified several positive terms of reference in the second ('shared security and defence') and third ('common defence and security') scenarios set out in the report but ultimately favours the second scenario. It is also worth noting that, after many years of opposing a European military headquarters, the Netherlands has agreed to the establishment of a Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC).

It is doubtful whether the Netherlands would support any Franco-German proposals to turn the MPCC into a true military headquarters – a move dismissed as 'window dressing'

151 Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the President of the House of Representatives of the States General assessing the outcome of the negotiations on a nuclear arms ban, The Hague, 14 July 2017, p. 4.

152 AIV Work Programme for 2017-2019. See: <http://aiv-advies.nl/63r/in-voorbereiding#werkprogramma-aiv-2017-2019>.

153 European Commission, Reflection Paper on the Future of European Defence, COM (2017) 315, Brussels, 7 June 2017. See: <https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/27948/Reflection%20Paper%20on%20the%20Future%20of%20European%20Defence,%2007%20June%202017>.

by former Dutch Minister of Defence Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert.[154] The Netherlands currently, if somewhat tentatively, supports enhanced defence cooperation. During a debate in the House of Representatives, Hennis stated as follows: 'We have said from the outset that PESCO has potential, but it should not become a goal in itself. In general, the greatest risk for Europe would be to continue and end up with a project whose added value is at the very least uncertain.'[155] Over the next few years, the Commission's new role in the field of defence-related research and financial support for the development and acquisition of defence capabilities could give a significant boost to European defence cooperation.[156] In addition, the Netherlands would like the civilian aspects of the CSDP to be strengthened, especially in the fields of migration, terrorism and hybrid threats.[157] The AIV considers it important that the Netherlands support new initiatives in these areas, because a negative or 'wait-and-see' approach is not in the interests of Europe or the Netherlands. The Netherlands also attaches great value to NATO-EU cooperation and sees opportunities for improvement, especially when it comes to efforts aimed at tackling hybrid threats, strengthening operational cooperation and organising combined or coordinated crisis management exercises.

*Cyber defence*

Cyber defence encompasses many areas in the Netherlands. It has an international cyber strategy,[158] a defence cyber strategy[159] and a national cyber security strategy.[160] A report on the economic and social need for more cybersecurity, which was prepared at the request of the Dutch Cyber Security Council (CSR), states as follows: 'The threat situation is profoundly worrying. Dutch government agencies and companies based in the Netherlands are constant targets of digital espionage by countries such as Russia and

154 'Hennis: EU niet gebaat bij window dressing' (Hennis: EU will not benefit from window dressing), news report, Dutch Ministry of Defence, 27 September 2016. See: <https://www.defensie.nl/actueel/nieuws/2016/09/27/hennis-eu-niet-gebaat-bij-window-dressing>.

155 Report of a meeting between the Permanent Parliamentary Committees on Defence, European Affairs and Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Defence on 5 September 2017 concerning the Foreign Affairs Council with Ministers of Defence, Parliamentary Paper 21501-28, no. 163, p. 11.

156 Margriet Drent and Dick Zandee, 'European Defence: From Action to Commitment', Clingendael Institute, March 2017.

157 Letter from the Minister of Defence to the President of the House of Representatives of the States General concerning the annotated agenda for the meeting of the Foreign Affairs Council with Ministers of Defence on 18 May 2017, The Hague, 4 May 2017, p. 4.

158 '"Building Digital Bridges" – International Cyber Strategy: Towards an Integrated International Cyber Policy', government strategy paper, 12 February 2017. See: <https://www.government.nl/documents/parliamentary-documents/2017/02/12/international-cyber-strategy>.

159 Letter from the Minister of Defence to the President of the House of Representatives of the States General concerning the modernisation of the Defence Cyber Strategy, The Hague, 23 February 2015.

160 National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism, 'National Cyber Security Strategy 2: From Awareness to Capability', The Hague. See: <https://english.nctv.nl/binaries/national-cyber-security-strategy-2_tcm32-84265.pdf >.

China.'[161] The authors of the report therefore recommend more government control and a multi-year action plan in cooperation with the private sector.[162] The AIV believes that the Netherlands should indeed invest heavily in cyber defence. In addition, it needs to improve interministerial coordination and expand cooperation with the private sector.

### VIII.2 Dutch defence efforts

The Netherlands' defence efforts are intended to support its foreign and security policy. In response to the government's request for advice on NATO's long-term adaptation requirements, the AIV decided to initially publish a short advisory letter on the impact of the new security situation on the Netherlands' defence efforts, particularly in light of Russian policy. This advisory letter, which was published at the beginning of March 2017, outlines the current state of the Dutch armed forces, the impact of developments in the national and international security situation on the core tasks of the armed forces, the financial implications and the essential operational measures. Its main findings are summarised below.

The AIV notes that the state of the Dutch armed forces is cause for grave concern. The Council deems it very serious and irresponsible that, if current policy remains unchanged, the armed forces are not expected to return to a basic level of readiness before 2021. While the security situation has deteriorated sharply in recent years, as a result of threats emanating from Russia, the Middle East and North Africa, the deployability of the armed forces has been further eroded. NATO is also highly critical of the Dutch defence contribution: 'Configuring the Netherlands Armed Forces to meet the significant challenges of the new security environment (…) without sustained, predictable increases in defence expenditures in real terms, will be an almost impossible task.'[163] The criticism focuses mainly on the land forces: 'The highest priority for the Netherlands is to increase the readiness and combat effectiveness of its land forces'.[164] In its advisory letter, the AIV strongly advises the new Dutch government to honour the financial agreements reached at the 2014 NATO summit meeting in Wales. Over the next four years, the defence budget should rise to the European NATO average. Over the subsequent four years, it should reach the 2% target. According to the Ministry of Defence, in 2015 the Dutch defence budget stood at 1.09% of GDP, which is well below the European NATO

161 Cyber Security Council, 'De economische en maatschappelijke noodzaak van meer cybersecurity. Nederland digitaal droge voeten' (The economic and social need for more cybersecurity: Keeping 'dry feet' in the digital era), The Hague, September 2016. For an English summary of the report, see: <https://www.cybersecurityraad.nl/binaries/20161101_Need_for_more_cybersecurity%20-%20keeping%20dry%20feet_tcm56-214439.pdf>.

162 See also Isabelle Duyvesteyn, 'Cyberaanvallen: organisatie, besluitvorming en strategie' (Cyberattacks: organisation, decision-making and strategy), *Internationale Spectator*, vol. 70, no. 6 (2016).

163 'NATO Defence Planning Capability Review 2015/16 – The Netherlands – Draft Overview', p. 8. See: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/binaries/rijksoverheid/documenten/rapporten/2016/03/24/nato-defence-planning-capability-review-2015-2016/nato-defence-planning-capability-review-2015-2016.pdf>.

164 Ibid., p. 5.

average (1.43% of GDP in 2015).[165] After excluding those parts of the budget that do not contribute to sustaining the armed forces, less than 0.7% of GDP is actually available for this purpose rather than the official figure of 1.09%. The AIV further believes that, in addition to the 2% target, the government should impose an output target.[166]

With the exception of operations on Dutch territory, all future deployments of the armed forces will take place in an international framework and will need to take account of diffuse threats and different forms of hybrid warfare. The likelihood of the armed forces being deployed for all three of their core tasks simultaneously has increased. The connection between internal and external security has intensified as a result of various factors, such as the threat and perpetration of terrorist attacks. The importance of the Defence organisation's operational intelligence and cyber capabilities, as well as other non-lethal forms of warfare, is increasing. The importance of striking a good balance between the Defence organisation's 'teeth' (lethal capabilities), its capabilities in the information domain (non-lethal) and its support capabilities cannot be overemphasised. To stay relevant, the armed forces must press on with operational reform and innovation.

With a gradual increase in the defence budget over the next few years, the first essential step will be to eliminate existing shortfalls. This means not only replenishing stocks of spare parts and munitions that are currently in short supply, restoring the balance between combat and support capabilities and preventing weapon systems from becoming obsolete, but also 'repairing' operational capabilities that have been scrapped in recent years purely because of cuts. The growing importance of all three core tasks, especially the first, makes it all the more vital to eliminate these shortfalls. Priority should be given to restoring the military's striking power, in particular by endowing land-based operations with sufficient escalation dominance and improving the balance between the armed forces' combat and support capabilities. Only then would it be appropriate, in the view of the AIV, to raise the armed forces' level of ambition and increase their sustainability, bearing in mind the shortfalls that exist within NATO.

165 Report containing a list of questions and answers from the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Defence concerning the budget statements of the Ministry of Defence (X) for 2017, The Hague, 7 November 2016, Parliamentary Paper 34 550 X, no. 14, pp. 6-8 (in Dutch).

166 Such a target could include contributions to missions and operations both within and outside the NATO framework.

# IX Summary, conclusions and recommendations

## IX.1 Summary and conclusions

The security challenges facing the Alliance are substantial and complex. European security is under threat from Russia's destabilising actions and the arc of instability spanning the Middle East and North Africa. Russia is harming European security by violating the integrity of sovereign states and through its attempts to expand its influence in the 'near abroad' and undermine the credibility of NATO and the EU. In addition, Europe is vulnerable to terrorist attacks and must, for the foreseeable future, bear in mind the serious prospect of terrorist acts by organisations, lone actors or ISIS fighters returning from Syria and Iraq. Europe faces direct security threats emanating from North Africa, including terrorism and religious extremism, drug trafficking and people smuggling, and arms proliferation.

In light of these significant threats, it is all the more worrying that NATO's internal unity is fragile. Since January 2017, the United States, which has formed the political and military backbone of the Alliance since its establishment in 1949, cannot be depended upon to provide political leadership. The Alliance's internal cohesion is also under pressure caused by differences of opinion between the eastern and southern Allies concerning NATO's general direction, the differing defence efforts of the NATO countries and the difficult relationship with Turkey. The energy dependency of several European countries is also a potential source of tension. Russia is a key energy supplier for several NATO countries, including Germany. As in its June 2014 advisory letter 'The EU's Dependence on Russian Gas' (no. 26), the AIV therefore recommends creating a European energy policy, diversifying oil and gas imports and making the energy supply more sustainable.

Security threats have not been this substantial, and NATO has not been in such a poor position, since the end of the Cold War. The security situation has changed dramatically since the adoption of NATO's most recent Strategic Concept in 2010. The AIV believes that it would have been appropriate to re-examine the basic principles and policies of the Strategic Concept in light of these developments. However, due to the current lack of US leadership and differences of opinion within NATO, it will be difficult to reach agreement on a new Strategic Concept. The AIV regrets this. For the time being, the final declarations of the summit meetings in Wales and Warsaw, which date from the time of the Obama administration, will have to serve as strategic guidelines for the Alliance.

In the present advisory report, the AIV analyses the security threats on NATO's eastern and southern flanks, evaluates the measures NATO has taken and identifies what decisions are required to secure the Alliance's long-term future. In addition, it presents various recommendations for Dutch security and defence policy.

Security policy and military developments on the eastern flank
Russia aspires to the status of a great power that is able to take military action outside its own region. Its efforts to strengthen its military potential ('hard power') play an instrumental part in achieving this aim. Russia has shown that it will not hesitate to deploy military assets (e.g. in Georgia, Ukraine and Syria), or threaten to do so, if the opportunity arises. It is increasingly seeking to influence political developments in Central and Eastern Europe. The politically unstable countries in the Balkans have become more vulnerable. Not enough progress has been made on economic reforms, strengthening the

rule of law and fighting corruption and organised crime. The ethnic reconciliation process is also moving slowly. This state of affairs presents Russia with opportunities to expand its influence.

Russia cannot win a prolonged, large-scale conflict with NATO, but it is capable of rapidly assembling a large military force at regional level, for example in the vicinity of the Baltic states. In 2008, it launched an ambitious, large-scale programme to modernise its armed forces, resulting in a substantial increase in combat strength in both qualitative and quantitative terms. Russia has access to, among other things, sophisticated offensive and defensive cyber capabilities, and is highly proficient in information warfare. Russia's military action in Ukraine has shown that its weaponry is more advanced than NATO's in several key areas. Examples include a new generation of cluster munitions filled with thermobaric explosives, which are significantly more lethal than conventional explosives, the extensive use of tactical drones for target acquisition, and electronic warfare capabilities. Russia has robust Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) capabilities, which can be used to partially or fully deny an adversary the use of land, sea or airspace. These weapon systems, including air defence systems and ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear payloads, constitute a threat to the Baltic states in particular.

Military exercises are an effective way of hiding one's intentions in the build-up to a surprise attack. Such a scenario would leave NATO with hardly any time to respond in the event of an attack on the Baltic states. Many Russian military exercises are characterised by offensive scenarios targeting the Baltic states, Poland and Scandinavian countries. Given the current lack of transparency, NATO can do little more than monitor Russia's capabilities, since intentions can change rapidly. Although Russia does not currently appear to be planning to attack these countries, the possibility cannot be ruled out. It could happen – for example when NATO and the EU are distracted by a different crisis – in response to US actions in another part of the world or because of domestic problems in Russia. In such a case, the Russian propaganda machine could frame the country's actions in a given light, by claiming, for example, that it needed to protect oppressed Russian-speaking minorities, that it was responding to a planned attack by NATO or that it needed to safeguard access to Kaliningrad.

NATO cannot afford to entertain the illusion that the confrontation with Russia is fleeting in nature. It may be possible to achieve modest results on arms control and to make agreements to reduce the risk of 'war by accident', but Russia's desire to exercise control over neighbouring countries should never be tolerated. Engaging in realpolitik, for example by accepting Russia's annexation of Crimea, would be morally reprehensible and strategically ill-advised. Russia is part of the global community and is involved in decision-making on many issues. It therefore cannot be isolated or ignored. However, NATO can attach clear conditions to doing business with the regime and, if necessary, impose new sanctions.

For the sake of the stability of the Baltic states, it is important that Estonia and Latvia resolve the issue of the statelessness and lack of political rights, including the right to vote, of Russian-speaking minorities within their borders. For reasons of principle, and in view of security policy considerations, official and non-governmental representatives of other NATO countries should continue to emphasise the importance of integrating Russian minorities in their discussions with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Discrimination, unemployment and other disadvantages suffered by pro-Russian minorities pave the way for open and covert attempts by the Russian government to undermine social cohesion in the Baltic states and to fabricate reasons for Russian intervention.

*Defence and deterrence posture* – credible military deterrence

Deterrence can be achieved through the deployment of military and non-military instruments of power. Non-military options include diplomatic and economic sanctions and denial of access to the SWIFT international payment network. Deterrence by military means can take the form of 'deterrence by denial' or 'deterrence by punishment'. The first strategy aims to convince an adversary that it cannot achieve its objective. Such a preventive approach requires the defender to maintain a strong and visible conventional presence in the territories that the aggressor might attack. The second strategy aims to convince an adversary that any objective it achieves is only of temporary value and will always be followed by a response that more than wipes out any advantage it has gained. Possession of nuclear weapons contributes to both forms of deterrence, but 'deterrence by denial' is far preferable since it helps prevent armed aggression and the risk of nuclear escalation.

Effective military deterrence rests on three pillars: capabilities (possessing sufficient military striking power to prevent an adversary from achieving its objectives), credibility (convincing an adversary that, if necessary, all available assets can and will be deployed) and communication (clearly communicating one's willingness, if necessary, to deploy all available assets). One of the questions in the government's request for advice concerns the effectiveness of the measures agreed at the summit meetings in Wales and Warsaw. These measures accordingly need to be assessed against the three pillars. For instance, what impact would they have on a potential Russian invasion of one of the Baltic states, where NATO is at its most vulnerable?

Deterrence by denial relies on the visible size, strength and location of NATO's forward deployed forces in peacetime. However, the multinational battalions stationed in the Baltic states lack striking power and serve exclusively as a tripwire. Even the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) – should it be able to reach the deployment area within the specified response time – consists largely of light units and lacks the power to prevail in a military confrontation with Russian troops. The Initial Follow On Forces Group (IFFG), which complements the NATO Response Force (NRF), has a lengthy response time of 30 or 45 days and thus would provide scant relief in the event of a surprise attack. In the context of NATO's current defence and deterrence posture, a strategy based on deterrence by denial therefore lacks credibility. Such weakness may provoke aggression and could increase the risk of NATO having to resort to nuclear weapons.

At present, NATO is thus obliged to rely on deterrence by punishment. Under this strategy, its true military strength must come from deployable and available follow-on forces, in conjunction with a credible nuclear strategy. US involvement is crucial to this strategy too. Credible deterrence by punishment requires that the aforementioned follow-on forces be available and that NATO be able to reach a decision by consensus with regard to military deployment involving heavy losses. Years of cuts in defence spending and a focus on light units and counter-insurgency and stabilisation missions have seriously eroded the capability of particularly the European NATO countries to operate successfully in high-intensity conflicts. Significant improvements would be required in a large number of areas for a period of several years in order to achieve credible deterrence by punishment and reduce NATO's reliance on nuclear weapons.

For NATO, the greatest weakness of a deterrence-by-punishment strategy lies in the requirement to reach decisions by common consent during a military conflict with Russia. The question arises whether Russia can be prevented from paralysing the decision-making process by exploiting a lack of unity within NATO, for example through intimidation,

including nuclear threats, and by spreading disinformation. For this reason, too, deterrence by punishment is significantly riskier than deterrence by denial.

In all likelihood, Russia is not intent on a prolonged, large-scale conflict with NATO. Among the many relevant considerations, certain non-military factors and risks may persuade Moscow to exercise caution, such as the costs arising from Russia's ongoing interventions in Ukraine and Syria, the economic impact of tighter Western sanctions, and popular opposition to a new military adventure. At regional level – especially in the Baltic region, which lacks strategic depth – Russia could achieve military dominance by carrying out a rapid surprise attack. The AIV believes that the greatest risk facing NATO is misjudgement on the part of Russia. Russia should not be tempted to swiftly create a fait accompli, for example by suddenly invading one of the Baltic states.

The AIV believes that NATO's strategy should therefore focus as much as possible on deterrence by denial. The Alliance's decision-making processes will always be considerably slower than Russia's. Credible deterrence by denial requires more forward deployed units with sufficient striking power, creating additional response time for deploying the VJTF. This is particularly important owing to the impossibility of pre-positioning military equipment and supplies for the VJTF on account of the force's multinational character and the fact that its composition changes with each rotation. In addition, NATO should transform the current air policing mission into an air defence mission, reinforce the Standing Naval Forces in the Baltic Sea and ensure the availability of deployable follow-on forces as soon as possible. After all, if deterrence by denial fails, NATO must be able to fall back on these follow-on forces. Furthermore, it should be absolutely clear to Russia that deploying nuclear weapons in a conventional conflict would fundamentally change the nature of that conflict. In order to ensure that nuclear weapons never have to be deployed, a credible NATO nuclear strategy is thus essential.

In addition to the above, other measures are needed to shorten response times, such as lifting restrictions on the transport of military units and materiel across national borders (a 'military Schengen'), shortening the response time of NRF units and establishing a fast-track procedure for political approval in national capitals. The AIV believes that it is wrong to assume that measures supporting credible deterrence would lead to escalation. On the contrary, a weak stance on the part of NATO would be more likely to tempt Russia into taking undesirable action.

Nuclear weapons play an important role in Russian military doctrine. Russia recognises the political and strategic significance of being the first to carry out a 'demonstration strike' with nuclear weapons in order to 'de-escalate' an escalating conflict. The purpose of such a strike might be to discourage NATO countries from intervening in a conflict or taking any further action. Public references to nuclear weapons are therefore very common. During its annexation of Crimea, President Vladimir Putin referred explicitly to Russia's nuclear capability. The AIV therefore believes that it is important to determine whether NATO's nuclear strategy and assets, in particular its sub-strategic – and specifically its 'tactical' – nuclear weapons, still exert sufficient deterrent (i.e. conflict-preventing) force.

Communication is an essential component of credible deterrence. It is therefore vital that NATO member countries should aim to speak with one voice, set a joint course and keep their populations well informed. In some NATO countries, doubts are emerging as to their willingness to come to the aid of a threatened Ally. In Germany, for instance, only 40% of the population believes that the country should deploy military assets if a NATO Ally is

attacked by Russia. The AIV believes that such signs should be taken seriously and that NATO has a key responsibility here where strategic communication is concerned.

Dialogue with Russia

It is very important that NATO and Russia resume their dialogue. Since Russia's annexation of Crimea, discussions in the main forum – the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) – have practically come to a standstill. At the same time, it is essential to keep talking, especially when relations are tense, in order to prevent misunderstandings and accidents. Issues of common interest, such as developments in Syria and counterterrorism, should be discussed. However, it remains to be seen whether Russia is truly interested in a meaningful and constructive dialogue.

Talks on conventional arms control have also stalled. Russia blocked the revision of the Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in 2016 and suspended its participation in the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe in 2007. All in all, the two sides' contradictory principles, perceptions and political interests, as well as the mutual mistrust and suspicion concerning each other's intentions, leave little room for an improvement in NATO-Russia relations. On the other hand, there is an unmistakable need to stabilise the current situation as soon as possible, before accidents and misjudgements lead to a serious escalation. The AIV firmly believes that it is worth considering making optimum use of the complementarity between the NATO-Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security and the EU-Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, in order to hold trilateral consultations on issues of common interest that also fall within the EU's sphere of competence. This applies, for example, to the issue of counterterrorism, as Russia is interested in working together in this area, while the NATO countries themselves still need to further their coordination on this issue.

Furthermore, NATO's efforts – and those of the Netherlands in particular – should focus on reviving the talks on modernising the Vienna Document. Certain aspects of the plans of former German foreign minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, such as the need to devote attention to the many new military and strategic developments, should definitely be included in this process. As a result, the emphasis will shift from the numerical reduction of different categories of weapon systems to restricting threatening innovations in the field of hybrid warfare, such as disinformation and cyber weapons. The same applies to the spirit of the German initiative: however great the objections of certain countries may be and however intractable the problems may seem, the AIV believes that dialogue remains necessary.

Security policy developments on the southern flank

The security threats emanating from the Middle East and North Africa – refugee flows, irregular migration, transnational crime and terrorism – are increasingly drawing NATO's attention. The Alliance's efforts in the Middle East and North Africa are part of its Projecting Stability initiative, a catch-all concept that lacks clear geographical or substantive boundaries. This illustrates the diffuse nature of NATO's involvement in these regions. Individual countries are participating in the fight against ISIS, for example by carrying out air operations, while NATO is supporting Afghan security institutions through the Resolute Support Mission (RSM) and organising training activities and supporting capacity building in the framework of the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative. The AIV would welcome the expansion of these DCB activities where possible. Working in close cooperation with the EU, which has a wider range of instruments at its disposal, NATO can add value,

particularly in non-permissive environments.

NATO lacks a clear-cut strategy for its southern flank. The AIV believes that the security threats emanating from this area are more likely to increase than decline in the coming decades. Partly for this reason, it believes that NATO should develop a southern strategy and step up its cooperation with the EU in this area. This would also address the concerns of the southern Allies, help discourage unilateral military intervention and promote cohesion within the Alliance.

EU-NATO cooperation

For many years, EU-NATO cooperation was hampered by friction between Cyprus and Turkey and interinstitutional rivalry. More recently, the member states of both organisations have realised that the complexity of the security situation necessitates cooperation, and a natural division of labour is emerging between the EU and NATO. Relations between the two organisations have improved significantly. In July 2016, they issued a joint declaration containing 42 action points on such issues as hybrid threats, cybersecurity, operational cooperation, defence capabilities, the defence industry, defence-related research, military exercises and capacity building.

Under the European Defence Action Plan (EDAP), the European Commission will, by creating a European Defence Fund (EDF), play a major role in defence-related research and the joint development and procurement of capabilities by groups of EU member states. Building on the recent initiatives of the Council and the Commission in the field of defence, Franco-German leadership, in particular, could stimulate an increase in European military strength. The AIV welcomes the European Council's decision of June 2017 to develop concrete plans for Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), in order to further deepen EU defence cooperation.

The AIV believes that the entry into office of US president Donald Trump and the United Kingdom's impending departure from the EU make good EU-NATO cooperation even more important. In order to safeguard their own security and present themselves as a credible security partner to the United States, the Europeans will have to make optimum use of the various mandates, memberships and instruments that the two organisations have at their disposal. From this perspective, EU-NATO cooperation has undeniably improved, but there is still a long way to go.

In order to keep the United Kingdom involved in European security, the AIV recommends reviving the Eurogroup, which played a useful supportive role within NATO between 1968 and 1994. The Eurogroup was established in 1968 at the initiative of then British defence secretary Denis Healey, for the purpose of strengthening European defence cooperation within NATO. A new Eurogroup would enable the United Kingdom, France (which did not participate in the past) and Germany, along with the other European member countries, to discuss – informally and in a NATO context – how their political, military and financial efforts can best serve transatlantic cooperation. Such a mechanism might also be helpful in keeping the lines of communication open with Turkey.

Dutch security and defence policy

The AIV firmly believes that, alongside its transatlantic orientation, Dutch security and defence policy should focus more heavily on the continental dimension. Although the United Kingdom and the United States will remain key security partners in the future, European security and defence policy is expected to develop and deepen considerably in the next few years under the leadership of France and Germany. The AIV believes

that the Netherlands would be wise to keep pace with this development, since the lack of clarity in US policy, Brexit and the current security situation require a coordinated approach. The AIV agrees with the Dutch government that it is also important to agree on a 'security arrangement' with the United Kingdom so that it remains involved in European cooperation on security policy. However, the AIV would note that the United Kingdom has often attempted to block proposals to expand European defence cooperation in the past. It should not be given any leeway to do so in the new constellation, and the Netherlands should play no role in facilitating such behaviour.

The need to strengthen collective defence and deterrence does not detract from the importance of the Alliance's other two core tasks: crisis management and cooperative security. If a confrontation with Russia were to occur, it would be very likely to manifest itself in varying degrees not only in Eastern Europe but throughout the continent's periphery. Quite apart from our relations with Russia, our security interests may come under threat in the vicinity of the Alliance or elsewhere in the world. In this context, it is also important to take China's growing influence into account. The Netherlands must therefore be able to make full use of the range of diplomatic and military instruments for prevention, partnerships and outreach, including the ability to initiate or participate in crisis management operations. This means that the Dutch armed forces must retain their capacity to carry out expeditionary operations.

In light of the current security challenges, the AIV regards substantial additional investment in security as a necessity – not only to strengthen the armed forces but also to boost cyber defence and expand the network of diplomatic missions. The AIV previously drew attention to this last issue in its May 2017 advisory letter 'The Dutch Government's Presence Abroad' (no. 32). NATO is highly critical of the Netherlands' defence efforts, particularly its land forces. The AIV considers it crucial that the defence budget be raised to meet the European NATO average over the next four years. During the subsequent four years, it should reach the 2% target. According to the Ministry of Defence, in 2015 the Dutch defence budget stood at 1.09% of GDP, which is well below the average for the European NATO countries (1.43% of GDP in 2015).

This very necessary increase in the defence budget over the next few years will first have to be used to eliminate existing shortfalls. This means not only replenishing stocks of spare parts and munitions that are currently in short supply, restoring the balance between combat and support capabilities and preventing weapon systems from becoming obsolete, but also restoring operational capabilities that have been scrapped in recent years purely because of cuts. The growing importance of all three core tasks, especially the first, makes it all the more vital to eliminate these shortfalls. The AIV firmly believes that the Netherlands should also invest heavily in cyber capabilities, both in financial terms and in terms of interministerial coordination, and cooperation with the private sector.

The Netherlands occupies a special position in relation to nuclear weapons, and sees itself as a 'bridge builder' on the issue of disarmament. It was the only NATO country to participate in negotiations with 131 other countries at the United Nations on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, but was ultimately the only country to vote against it. The AIV has doubts about the Netherlands' role as a 'bridge builder' in the field of nuclear disarmament. Our country cannot afford to chart its own course. The AIV considers it vital that the Netherlands continue to toe the NATO line on this issue.

The AIV wishes to draw particular attention to the position of the States General in connection with the deterioration of the international security situation, the likely increase

in demands on the Dutch armed forces and the need to intensify European defence cooperation. Under article 97 of the Dutch Constitution, the government is not obliged to inform parliament in advance of deployment of the armed forces in the event of an article 5 situation. However, the government has given the House of Representatives its undertaking that it will do so whenever possible. The AIV believes it is essential that the House of Representatives consider potential scenarios, certainly including those that fall below the threshold of article 5, and reflect on its own role in such situations. The AIV also believes it is important to invest substantially in interparliamentary contacts in order to promote consensus on matters affecting all NATO Allies.

### IX.2 Recommendations

1. Political discussions within NATO, based on exchanges of information and consultations between partners, should be frequent and wide-ranging. The NATO Secretary-General should develop a recognisable profile, for example by presenting initiatives in the framework of international diplomatic consultations.

2. It is crucial to continue investing in the transatlantic relationship, since the United States remains indispensable to European security. In this context, it is important to pursue a common policy on sanctions against Russia. In order to ensure the United Kingdom's continued involvement in European security, the AIV recommends breathing new life into the Eurogroup within NATO.[167]

3. At the same time, the Netherlands would be wise to be actively involved from the outset in the discussion on the French-German proposals for developing and intensifying European defence cooperation and to participate ambitiously in enhanced cooperation. This has various implications, including active involvement in the implementation of PESCO. A half-hearted approach would undermine the Netherlands' position as a key discussion partner in the development of new collaborative initiatives. It is important to ensure that the United Kingdom remains involved in European security, but the UK should not be granted any say over the shape of defence cooperation within the EU.

4. The collective defence of the Alliance's eastern border will be one of NATO's primary tasks in the coming years. In this context, the AIV considers it crucial to develop deterrence by denial as much as possible. To this end, the forward deployed forces, particularly those in the Baltic states, need to be reinforced considerably. Options include deploying a rotating brigade-sized unit in each Baltic state of sufficient military strength to provide additional response time for VJTF units in particular, if the need arises. NATO should also develop an adequate response to the A2/AD threat. In addition, it should transform the current air policing mission into an air defence mission, reinforce the Standing Naval Forces in the Baltic Sea and ensure the availability of deployable follow-on forces as soon as possible.

5. In addition to investing heavily in military capabilities, a further key priority is the swift movement of military units. The numerous formal restrictions on transporting military materiel and logistic assets across the borders of European NATO countries must be lifted. In cooperation with the EU, these countries should establish a military Schengen area as soon as possible.

167 This Eurogroup should not be confused with the current EU Eurogroup, which comprises the finance ministers of the countries that make up the euro area. See footnote 103.

6. It is vital to improve NATO's relations with Russia. The agenda of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) should focus, in particular, on measures aimed at preventing aerial and maritime accidents (risk reduction), maintaining hotlines between military headquarters and ensuring compliance with the Vienna Document, especially as regards the notification and observation of Russian snap exercises, which are perceived as threatening.

7. The Alliance's ability to act decisively is contingent on the degree of political agreement between national governments. The military recommendations on which the North Atlantic Council (NAC) bases its decisions must bring together and consolidate factors that address the complexity of modern crisis situations. The AIV believes that regular exercises involving various actors, including the NAC, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), the Military Committee and the national parliaments of the NATO countries, are vital to ensuring that NATO is able to take effective action where necessary. Such exercises should focus, in particular, on decision-making in conflict situations, such as cyberattacks, that fall below the threshold of article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

8. The AIV recommends that the States General establish a parliamentary committee to examine parliament's role in the potential deployment of the Dutch armed forces and the various scenarios that might arise in this context.

9. In the coming years, NATO must continue to contribute to the fight against terrorism and other security threats emanating from the Middle East and North Africa. Crisis management outside the treaty area remains one of the Alliance's key tasks. Military interventions in conflict areas should be carried out in the framework of an integrated approach that also comprises diplomatic initiatives and development cooperation. In close cooperation with the EU, NATO can add value, particularly in non-permissive environments. The AIV believes that NATO should develop a southern strategy given its security interests in these regions.

10. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of Turkey has shown that his views on democracy, freedom of expression and the rule of law are incompatible with the values cited in the preamble of the Washington Treaty. Turkey should be called to account on this issue both within NATO and in other international forums. Nevertheless, the AIV warns against alienating the country from NATO. Given its location and size, Turkey remains a key partner in confronting the numerous security challenges facing the Alliance. It may also be necessary to call other NATO countries, such as Hungary, Bulgaria and Poland, to account on steps that undermine the rule of law and violate the shared values that NATO seeks to uphold.

11. At the present time, NATO should refrain from further expansion. Relations with Ukraine, Georgia and states in the Balkans should be fostered on a different basis, including strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation with Ukraine.

12. NATO needs to develop an effective offensive cyber strategy. In addition, NATO and the EU should intensify their efforts in the field of cybersecurity. The same applies to cooperation with the private sector and cooperation among the NATO countries themselves.

13. An effective NATO nuclear strategy is crucial to maintaining a credible deterrent. As long as nuclear weapons are indispensable to deterrence and defence, the Netherlands should not make a unilateral decision to reject NATO's nuclear task. It is open to question whether NATO's nuclear strategy and assets, in particular its sub-strategic – and

specifically its ‘tactical’ – nuclear weapons, are still adequate. In fact, the AIV believes that developments in this area make it imperative for NATO to re-evaluate its nuclear strategy.

14. As a result of developments in the national and international security situation, the three core tasks of the Dutch armed forces – and especially the first (protecting Dutch and Allied territory) – have become more important. The armed forces will have to ensure the simultaneous availability of capabilities for all three core tasks. Over the next four years, under the new government, the defence budget should rise to meet the European NATO average. During the subsequent four years, it should reach the 2% target.

15. Priority should be given to restoring the military’s basic level of readiness and its striking power, in particular by endowing land-based operations with sufficient escalation dominance and improving the balance between the armed forces’ combat and support capabilities. Only then would it be appropriate, in the view of the AIV, to raise the armed forces’ level of ambition and increase their sustainability, bearing in mind the shortfalls that exist within NATO and the EU. If the armed forces are to remain relevant, it is important that operational reform and innovation (for example in the information and cyber domains) feature prominently in every step that is taken over the next few years.

## Request for advice

Professor Jaap de Hoop Scheffer
Chairman of the Advisory Council on International Affairs
P.O. Box 20061
2500 EB The Hague

Date October 2016
Re Request for advice on NATO's long-term adaptation

Dear Professor De Hoop Scheffer,

At the NATO summit meetings in Wales and Warsaw, the NATO countries' heads of state and government took several key steps to adapt the Alliance to the changing security environment. The Readiness Action Plan (RAP) addresses the concerns of those Allies that feel most threatened by Russia and demonstrates the Alliance's determination to defend the treaty area. In today's turbulent security environment, it is vital that NATO continue to reflect on the scope and effectiveness of the RAP's adaptation measures and the Alliance's enhanced forward presence in the Baltic states and Poland, which was approved in Warsaw.

Following a period in which the main emphasis was on crisis management operations outside NATO's territory, the Alliance's original purpose – collective defence and deterrence – has clearly gained in importance, especially as a result of the change in Russia's stance. In addition to reinforcing its deterrence and defence posture, NATO is focusing specifically on dialogue with Russia, cooperation with partners, and arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. Finally, in addition to collective defence, NATO's two other core tasks – crisis management and cooperative security – remain as important as ever.

Russia's actions require a firm response, as the AIV rightly noted in its April 2015 advisory report 'Instability around Europe' (no. 94). The issue is not just Russia's annexation of Crimea and its destabilising actions in eastern Ukraine and Syria. Other concerns include the increase in military activities along the eastern and northern flanks of the Alliance, the far-reaching modernisation of the Russian armed forces, the expansion of Russia's Anti-Access/Area Denial capabilities, which pose a direct threat to the Baltic states and the region around the Black Sea, Russia's doctrine on the deployment of nuclear weapons, and the use of hybrid or 'new generation' warfare, in which the information domain plays a prominent role.

In addition, the Alliance is under threat from terrorism emanating from the Middle East and North Africa, due in part to the presence of ISIS, and European NATO countries are facing an acute migration crisis and cross-border problems resulting from the collapse of state authority elsewhere. In general, the Alliance's interests and values are increasingly under pressure as a result of global power shifts and geopolitical changes.

The Alliance is expected to act as a collective defence organisation in an environment that in many respects differs substantially from the one that prevailed during the Cold War. The organisation no longer faces a single (and to some extent predictable) potential adversary and has undergone far-reaching changes, due in part to the accession of a large number of new members. Further examination is required to determine how NATO can best defend

itself against conventional military threats as well as mixed, hybrid tactics and advanced cyber warfare. Due to the complexity and multiplicity of these threats, both individually and collectively, modern crisis management requires closer cooperation with security partners, such as the EU, in order to guarantee joint access to a wider range of capabilities and instruments. The recent NATO-EU joint declaration, issued at the summit meeting in Warsaw, reflects this view.

As a result of the worsening security situation, NATO's collective defence tasks are placing increasing demands on military units. In light of the new security context, NATO has set higher standards for the readiness, rapid deployability and availability of military capabilities. The Netherlands is a member of NATO with good reason, and it is expected to make a meaningful contribution to the Alliance. The roles and tasks that the armed forces must be able to perform in response to assorted threats, as well as in a wide range of locations and during various stages of a conflict, have important implications for their composition, equipment and readiness.

Within these parameters, the government requires a detailed analysis of the adaptation measures the Alliance will have to take in the long term and their implications for the Netherlands. For this purpose, the AIV can build on the analysis presented in its aforementioned advisory report, though it should also take more recent developments into account, such as the outcome of the NATO summit meeting in Warsaw – which highlighted the importance of arms control and non-proliferation – UN peace operations, the adoption and further elaboration of the EU Global Strategy, the ongoing military conflicts in eastern Ukraine and Syria, the United Kingdom's decision to leave the EU, the attempted military coup in Turkey and the response to it, and the Dutch public debate concerning all these developments. Finally, the analysis could also cover potential changes in the direction of US foreign and security policy as a result of the entry into office of a new president and administration.

Against this general background, the government would ask the AIV to address the following specific questions:

Principal question

Given the diffuse and variable nature of the threat situation, how can NATO continue to perform its three core tasks in a sustainable manner in the long term, what is the best way to build on the results of the summit meetings in Wales and Warsaw, and what are the implications of NATO's adaptation requirements for Dutch security policy and defence efforts?

Subsidiary questions

1. What is the AIV's assessment of the measures taken by NATO thus far in response to the threats on Europe's eastern and southern flanks, both in terms of strengthening its deterrence and defence posture and regarding its use of diplomacy and other instruments of security policy?

2. What follow-up steps does the AIV consider necessary? In its response to this question, the AIV should at any rate devote attention to the following issues:

    - The change in Russia's stance and new methods of warfare. What demands do these developments place on NATO? How should it respond to provocations and conflict

situations that remain below the threshold of article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty? How can NATO conduct a meaningful and constructive political dialogue with Russia without returning to 'business as usual'? What topics might such a dialogue cover and what objectives might it reasonably pursue?

- Projecting stability. What role should NATO play with regard to responding to the challenges on its southern flank and the threat of terrorism? How does its contribution to stabilisation efforts and crisis management in this region relate to similar efforts in other, more distant deployment areas, such as Afghanistan?

- Cooperative security. What are the AIV's recommendations regarding cooperation with other international organisations, in particular the UN and the EU? The translation of the NATO-EU joint declaration into actual opportunities for cooperation is an important starting point. In this context, the government would also ask the AIV to examine NATO's cooperative relations with partner countries, countries that wish to join NATO and countries in unstable regions. What existing and additional options does the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) initiative offer? How can NATO realistically revive the debate on and implementation of conventional arms control in Europe? How likely and relevant is the establishment of a new regime along the lines of the CFE Treaty? From a Dutch perspective, should the first priority be to modernise the Vienna Document? German foreign minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier's recent attempt to relaunch conventional arms control and the United States' cautious response to this initiative are also relevant here. In this respect it is crucial to determine what form and degree of military transparency is needed to address the concerns of NATO's eastern Allies, particularly with regard to Russia.

3. How can NATO ensure that it remains able to perform all three of its core tasks in an effective manner? How can NATO's member countries – and the Netherlands in particular – contribute to this goal?

This request for advice has been included in the AIV's 2016 work programme. We look forward to receiving your advisory report, preferably in the first quarter of 2017 so that its recommendations can be included in the preparations for the next NATO summit meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Bert Koenders
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert
Minister of Defence

## List of abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| **A2/AD** | anti-access/area denial |
| **AIV** | Advisory Council on International Affairs |
| **AIVD** | General Intelligence and Security Service |
| **AWACS** | Airborne Warning and Control System |
| **BMD** | ballistic missile defence |
| **CAVV** | Advisory Committee on Issues of Public International Law |
| **CDP** | Capability Development Plan |
| **CFE** | Conventional Armed Forces in Europe |
| **COE-DAT** | Centre of Excellence – Defence Against Terrorism |
| **CSBMs** | confidence- and security-building measures |
| **CSDP** | Common Security and Defence Policy |
| **CSR** | Cyber Security Council |
| **CVV** | Peace and Security Committee (AIV) |
| **DCB** | Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative |
| **DSACEUR** | Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe |
| **EAPC** | Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council |
| **EDA** | European Defence Agency |
| **EDAP** | European Defence Action Plan |
| **EDF** | European Defence Fund |
| **EU** | European Union |
| **EUFOR** | European Force |
| **EULEX** | European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo |
| **EUNAVFOR MED** | European Naval Force Mediterranean |
| **FSC** | Forum for Security Co-operation (OSCE) |
| **GDP** | gross domestic product |
| **ICI** | Istanbul Cooperation Initiative |
| **IED** | improvised explosive device |
| **IFFG** | Initial Follow On Forces Group (NATO) |
| **INF** | Intermediate Nuclear Forces |
| **ISAF** | International Security Assistance Force (Afghanistan) |
| **IS** | Islamic State |
| **KFOR** | Kosovo Force |
| **MD** | Mediterranean Dialogue |
| **MPCC** | Military Planning and Conduct Capability |
| **NAC** | North Atlantic Council |
| **NATO** | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| **NDPP** | NATO Defence Planning Process |
| **NFIU** | NATO Force Integration Unit |
| **NRC** | NATO-Russia Council |

| | |
|---|---|
| **NRF** | NATO Response Force |
| **OSCE** | Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe |
| **OUP** | Operation Unified Protector |
| **OVV** | Dutch Safety Board |
| **PatG** | Partners across the Globe |
| **PESCO** | Permanent Structured Cooperation |
| **PCSC** | Partnerships and Cooperative Security Committee |
| **RAP** | Readiness Action Plan |
| **RSM** | Resolute Support Mission (Afghanistan) |
| **SACEUR** | Supreme Allied Commander |
| **TEU** | Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union |
| **UK** | United Kingdom |
| **UN** | United Nations |
| **UNAMA** | United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan |
| **US** | United States |
| **VJTF** | Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (NATO) |
| **WRR** | Advisory Council on Government Policy |