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IV Forum on Euroatlantic Security

NATO after the implementation of the New Strategic Concept

An International Think-Tank Debate on the NATO's Future

NATO remains the most important political military alliance in the world. It has served as a primary forum for transatlantic cooperation and has brought 60 years of stability and peace. Thus, the challenge now for the Alliance is to appropriately define its role, strategy, relations with other international actors, and its continuing transformation, which will further streamline the Alliance, maximize efficiency, and minimize costs. Only the unity of the alliance, the coherent vision and political will, can ensure the desired position in the international arena. If it allows itself to be torn apart by internal disputes, the Alliance could prove to become a weak partner with Russia's increasing assertiveness, an easy target for terrorist organizations, and unable to share the values of the transatlantic community that are based in

democracy, human rights, and freedom. Just as in the past, these values still lack the dominance that we would like to see.

Energy security, cyber terrorism, and the China's growing influence are challenges that compel us to deepen internal cooperation and strengthen partnerships. Individual European countries, even the strongest, are in and of themselves unable to meet these challenges. We could still venture to say that the NATO's forces determine the safety of Europe in the changing world of the 21st century.

We are offering the debate divided into the following panels:

- Evaluation of the results from Lisbon from the viewpoint of the basic tasks of the Alliance
- Is Central Europe safer after Lisbon?
- European Security: in search for Russia's place

The panels will be organized as "brainstorming" sessions, with two or three introductory lectures at the beginning of each to present the views of experts with various views about the proposed topic. After introductory speeches, an open discussion will begin, in which participants will be able to express their own views, analysis, and conclusions, or further substantiate the views earlier expressed.

After the conference, the Institute for Strategic Studies Foundation will release a report containing a transcript of the invited speakers and a record of the discussion. This publication will be distributed to a number of key decision-making entities in Europe and the United States.

The Round Table entitled: "Evaluation of the results from Lisbon from the viewpoint of the basic tasks of the Alliance"

The implementation of the new Strategy of the Alliance, adopted at the Lisbon Summit, poses new challenges for the NATO. The new situation and new challenges faced by all Member countries affects the view of many issues. There is a widely felt impression that the declared "Open Door" policy is coming to a close. NATO's wave of enlargement between 1999-2009 has taken on almost all the countries which aspired to be a part of this elite security club.

With the accession of its newest members, the Alliance's enthusiasm for expansion has faded. A similar phenomenon occurred in the European Union. More and more, the idea is being voiced that the organization needs a few years time to assimilate the new countries. This has similarly begun to change the philosophy of Western countries that opened NATO's core structures to new members in a wave of enthusiasm. Now, there is a new perspective that puts forth the opposite effect; that new countries must bring added value to NATO, as expressed in the Declaration on Alliance Security, adopted at the Strasbourg-Kehl summit in April 2009.

In the context of the Open Door policy, the level of continuing NATO involvement in Eastern Europe and the Caspian region is of particular significance. It will affect whether countries like Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Turkmenistan and Belarus will choose more "pro-West", more independent way to conduct foreign policy, or remain under the strong influence of Russia. Further utilization of the open door policy could prove to be a key challenge for the Alliance.

Another challenge, also in the context of New Strategy, is still the mission of the International Security Assistance Force in the Afghanistan. Some experts and politicians have expressed the opinion that the possibility of failure in the country could spell the end of the Alliance. While this opinion seems a bit exaggerated, it is important to remember that NATO's function is to serve as a pillar for collective defense, rather than to quell rebellion in this Asian country that is geographically remote from any NATO members. Therefore, the lack of ISAF success would negate the ideals stemming strongly from American policy at the turn of the twenty-first century, but not the Alliance's *raison d'être*.

Panel I Is Central Europe safer after Lisbon?

There is a lucid correlation between the strength of new security guarantees and territorial capacity and scope of the countries that would make them. If the Alliance decides through this New Strategic Concept to strengthen its defensive function, the Western members will not be eager to embrace more countries geographically or culturally (e.g., from the Caucasus region.) The war in Georgia plainly conveyed the serious difficulties that may arise while attempting to defend such countries.

There is also a conviction among the countries of Western Europe, particularly as expressed by former French President Jacques Chirac, that opposes giving new member states the equal position and level of influence within the Alliance to which they aspire. In the near future, it is likely that the Western countries will try to maintain a position of advantage over the newer Eastern members. One example of this apprehension is concern over the possibility of Ukrainian entry to the Alliance, which could serve to strengthen the faction of the former Warsaw Pact. This, among other reasons, is why most Western European countries who formerly were ready to welcome new members with open arms, without imposing restrictions to individual state autonomy, are no longer seeking further enlargement.

Now, NATO must establish a clear enlargement policy that will set priorities and time frames. The Alliance should not be deprived of the occupation that it so perfectly filled in Central and Eastern Europe and partially in the Balkans as a stabilizer and an incentive for democratic development.

Panel II European Security: in search for Russia's place

The threat of failure in Afghanistan, or earlier doubts about NATO's role in the conflict in Kosovo has shown that attempts of "globalization" of the Alliance's actions are not without risks. Thus, among the allies increasingly voices are heard, that the organization should return to its primary function, which is collective defense. It should be clear that this should not mean abandonment of NATO's transformation towards the development of expeditionary capabilities. Mobility and efficiency of the Allied forces is the essential element of collective defense in the event of a threat of any Member State. It is worth recalling that members of NATO are for example Iceland or Norway – countrys which are not adjacent to any other member of the Alliance on land. On the other hand, the example of the Georgian army is significant, as it was trained for operations outside the country and supported the U.S. in Iraq, but was not able to offer the least resistance to the Russians in defence of their own territory. Smaller countries of the Alliance, which do not have great financial and personal resources should draw the obvious conclusions of fact.

By declaration, the Allies have supported the fight against terrorism, recognizing the notion that it would be more effectual to engage the enemy on their own territory. Despite this mission, ISAF continues to face serious problems. One of these is the lack of participation by many Allies in its undertakings. The main burden for combat lies with the Americans, who contribute almost 50 percent of the NATO contingency, and in light of a proposed shift in forces (including some troops from Iraq) this percentage will rise. Other countries represented in the international armed forces of Afghanistan include Great Britain, Canada, and Poland, particularly. These are the countries that are chiefly affected by the fight against the insurgency, because not only have they sent notable contingencies to Afghanistan, but they have not restricted their utilization. Among the caveats of ISAF's limitations, the numbers of troops from countries such as Germany (3,380) and Italy (2,350) looks impressive on paper, but they are not necessarily reflective of increased NATO effectiveness. A lack of political will, whether on the question of increased expenditures, or, at the very least on the subject of pulling out of Afghanistan entirely may be factors preventing success.