

# **“War Without Borders”: NATO Proclaims Itself Global Military Force**

Lisbon Summit: Strategic Concept

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The recently concluded North Atlantic Treaty Organization Treaty summit in Portugal gave Washington everything it demanded from its 27 NATO allies, at least 20 NATO partners providing troops for the war in Afghanistan, the European Union and Russia.

The U.S.-controlled North Atlantic Alliance endorsed without reservations and even without deliberations American plans to include all of Europe in the Pentagon's and its Missile Defense Agency's worldwide interceptor missile system. The summit's declaration states: "NATO will maintain an appropriate mix of conventional, nuclear, and missile defence forces. Missile defence will become an integral part of our overall defence posture." [1]

In adopting its new Strategic Concept it also authorized an analogous continent-wide cyber warfare operation to work in conjunction with – and for all practical purposes under the direction of – the Pentagon's new U.S. Cyber Command.

It reaffirmed the bloc's Article 5 commitment to render collective military assistance to any member state under supposed attack and stretched the concept of attack to include non-military categories like computer, energy and terrorist threats. The Strategic Concept "reconfirms the bond between our nations to defend one another against attack, including against new threats to the safety of our citizens." [2]

"NATO members will always assist each other against attack, in accordance with Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. That commitment remains firm and binding. NATO will deter and defend against any threat of aggression, and against emerging security challenges where they threaten the fundamental security of individual Allies or the Alliance as a whole."

While there are no conventional military threats – and no nuclear ones as well – which is to say no military dangers at all confronting NATO's North American and European members, other – contrived – concerns will serve as the basis for the activation of Article 5. They include attacks on or threats to computer networks:

"Cyber attacks...can reach a threshold that threatens national and Euro-Atlantic prosperity, security and stability," NATO claims, so its members are obligated to "develop further [the] ability to prevent, detect, defend against and recover from cyber-attacks, including by using the NATO planning process to enhance and coordinate national cyber-defence capabilities, bringing all NATO bodies under centralized cyber protection...."

European "dependence" on Russian oil and natural gas and control of strategic sea routes

and shipping lanes:

“Some NATO countries will become more dependent on foreign energy suppliers and in some cases, on foreign energy supply and distribution networks for their energy needs. As a larger share of world consumption is transported across the globe, energy supplies are increasingly exposed to disruption.”

And several other issues not even remotely related to military matters [3]:

“Key environmental and resource constraints, including health risks, climate change, water scarcity and increasing energy needs will further shape the future security environment in areas of concern to NATO and have the potential to significantly affect NATO planning and operations.”

NATO also reiterated its commitment to maintaining American tactical nuclear weapons in Europe, with the Strategic Concept stating, “as long as there are nuclear weapons in the world, NATO will remain a nuclear Alliance.”

And the Alliance went along with the White House and Pentagon shift from an earlier pledge to “draw down” U.S. and NATO troops from Afghanistan next year to what Washington has of late referred to as “provisional” and “aspirational” plans for a “transitional” strategy that could see Western military forces still in theater in the Asian nation 15 or more years after they first arrived. The Lisbon Summit Declaration states: “Transition will be conditions-based, not calendar-driven, and will not equate to withdrawal of ISAF-troops.”

There is no nation or group of nations offering NATO any serious challenge, none posing a threat to the world’s only military bloc, and hardly any even standing in the way of its global expansion. “However, no one should doubt NATO’s resolve if the security of any of its members were to be threatened....Deterrence, based on an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional capabilities, remains a core element of our overall strategy....As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance.”

“The supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies is provided by the strategic nuclear forces of the Alliance, particularly those of the United States; the independent strategic nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France, which have a deterrent role of their own, contribute to the overall deterrence and security of the Allies.”

Formalizing the international deployments of the past eleven years – in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Arabian Sea – NATO’s new Strategic Concept compels all member states and scores of partners to “develop and maintain robust, mobile and deployable conventional forces to carry out both our Article 5 responsibilities and the Alliance’s expeditionary operations, including with the NATO Response Force,” and “ensure the broadest possible participation of Allies in collective defence planning on nuclear roles, in peacetime basing of nuclear forces.”

Invoking the little-noted catch phrase that since 1989 has been employed in anticipation and later fulfilment of plans to subordinate all of Europe under NATO’s military command [4], Alliance heads of state in Lisbon last week also endorsed the completion of expansion plans affecting the Balkans and the former Soviet Union:

“Our goal of a Europe whole and free, and sharing common values, would be best served by the eventual integration of all European countries that so desire into Euro-Atlantic structures.

“The door to NATO membership remains fully open to all European democracies which share the values of our Alliance, which are willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership, and whose inclusion can contribute to common security and stability.”

In particular, NATO will “continue and develop the partnerships with Ukraine and Georgia within the NATO-Ukraine and NATO-Georgia Commissions, based on the NATO decision at the Bucharest summit [in] 2008” and “facilitate the Euro-Atlantic integration of the Western Balkans.” Specific mention was made of Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

The NATO-Georgia Commission was established in September of 2008, the month after the five-day war between Georgia and Russia, which itself was launched by the Mikheil Saakashvili government in Tbilisi a week after 1,000 U.S. troops completed the Immediate Response 2008 NATO Partnership for Peace war games and while American troops and equipment were still in Georgia.

The Bucharest summit decision on Georgia and Ukraine’s eventual full membership in NATO and the creation of the NATO-Georgia Commission gave rise to an Annual National Program to expedite Georgia’s NATO integration. The traditional route to accession, a Membership Action Plan (MAP), was not presented to Georgia in 2008 because of two NATO provisions: That member states cannot be involved in lingering territorial disputes (which is why, for example, Cyprus would not be given a MAP if it were to join the Partnership for Peace) and there cannot be foreign – which is to say non-NATO – military forces on a prospective member’s soil.

The Georgian government claims the now independent nations of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as its own and two years ago there were small contingents of Russian peacekeepers in both countries. The NATO-Georgia Commission and NATO’s Annual National Program – a unique vehicle to integrate Georgia (and Ukraine) into NATO through bypassing the above-mentioned constraints of a Membership Action Plan – is complemented by the United States-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership which was announced shortly after the 2008 war and signed on January 9, 2009. (The comparable United States-Ukraine Charter on Strategic Partnership was signed between Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Ukrainian Foreign Minister Volodymyr Ohryzko on December 19, 2008.)

It is the contention of several observers, including the present one, that the Georgian attack on South Ossetia on August 7, 2008 was, if successful, to be immediately followed by one on Abkhazia, thereby eliminating both the aforementioned obstacles to NATO’s full expansion into the South Caucasus.

The NATO Parliamentary Assembly autumn session in Poland on November 12-16 passed a resolution calling Abkhazia and South Ossetia “occupied territories,” which led the Abkhazian Foreign Ministry to respond:

“NATO is an organization that has been contributing to the intensive militarization of Georgia for many years, stirring up the revanchist mindset of the Georgian leadership, which led to the August 2008 bloodshed in South Ossetia.” [5]

Obama held a one-on-one meeting with Georgia’s Saakashvili on the sidelines on the Lisbon summit on November 19,

NATO's plans for a further drive east and south of what most people understand to be Europe are not limited to the Caucasus.

The Lisbon summit, in approving the bloc's new doctrine, also for the first time bluntly stated that NATO's reach is as broad as the world itself:

"The promotion of Euro-Atlantic security is best assured through a wide network of partner relationships with countries and organisations around the globe."

President Obama and the other 27 NATO heads of state endorsed the new Strategic Concept which also states:

"We are firmly committed to the development of friendly and cooperative relations with all countries of the Mediterranean, and we intend to further develop the Mediterranean Dialogue in the coming years. We attach great importance to peace and stability in the Gulf region, and we intend to strengthen our cooperation in the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative."

The Mediterranean Dialogue consists of NATO and seven nations in Africa and the Middle East: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia.

The Istanbul Cooperation Initiative of 2004 [6] aims at upgrading Mediterranean Dialogue partnerships to the level of those of NATO's Partnership for Peace program, which has prepared 12 nations in Eastern Europe for full membership since 1999: Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

It also cultivates the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council – Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates – as NATO military partners. Jordan and the United Arab Emirates are official Troop Contributing Nations (TCNs) for NATO's International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, as are Partnership for Peace members Georgia and Ukraine in former Soviet space and Bosnia, Macedonia and Montenegro in the Balkans.

This past weekend NATO vowed to "deepen the cooperation with current members of the Mediterranean Dialogue and be open to the inclusion in the Mediterranean Dialogue of other countries of the region" and "develop a deeper security partnership with our Gulf partners and remain ready to welcome new partners in the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative." That is, to incorporate all of the Middle East and northern Africa into its broader military nexus with an eye on nations like Iraq [7], Lebanon, Yemen, Libya, Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Senegal, Mali, Niger, Chad and even Kenya.

The summit declaration confirmed the continuation of Operation Active Endeavour, "our Article 5 maritime operation in the Mediterranean," Operation Ocean Shield off the Horn of Africa, the airlifting of Ugandan troops to Somalia for the fighting there and support for the African Standby Force and NATO Training Mission-Iraq.

In addition to detailing expansion plans in Europe, Asia and Africa ad seriatim, NATO has announced that it is now an international military-political formation. The summit declaration expressed "profound gratitude for the professionalism, dedication and bravery of the more than 143,000 men and women from Allied and partner nations who are deployed on NATO's operations and missions."

Its new doctrine also states: "Unique in history, NATO is a security Alliance that fields military forces able to operate together in any environment; that can control operations anywhere through its integrated military command structure...."

The bloc's NATO Response Force (NRF) "provides a mechanism to generate a high readiness and technologically advanced force package made up of land, air, sea and special force components that can be deployed quickly on operations wherever needed." [8]

The NRF was proposed by then-U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld in September of 2002 and formalized at NATO's Prague summit in November of the same year. It conducted its first live-fire exercise, the large-scale Steadfast Jaguar 2006, in the West African island nation of Cape Verde. At the end of the year it was declared to be at full operational capability with up to 25,000 troops "made up of land, air, sea and special forces components...capable of performing missions worldwide across the whole spectrum of operations." [9]

Alluding in part to the NRF, the new Strategic Concept states:

"Where conflict prevention proves unsuccessful, NATO will be prepared and capable to manage ongoing hostilities. NATO has unique conflict management capacities, including the unparalleled capability to deploy and sustain robust military forces in the field."

It also commits its member nations to "further develop doctrine and military capabilities for expeditionary operations, including counterinsurgency, stabilization and reconstruction operations."

In Lisbon, Obama and his fellow heads of state agreed that:

"We, the political leaders of NATO, are determined to continue renewal of our Alliance so that it is fit for purpose in addressing the 21st Century security challenges. We are firmly committed to preserve its effectiveness as the globe's most successful political-military Alliance."

The world's only military bloc does not protect Europe from chimerical missile and nuclear threats or from concerns better addressed by its respective members' judiciary, internal security forces and environmental, immigration, energy, public health and weather ministries and departments.

It rather employs the European continent as a base of operations for military deployments and campaigns most everywhere else.

That role has been solidified with the military integration of the U.S., NATO and the European Union [10]. On November 19 the president of the EU's European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, addressed NATO leaders in Lisbon and said, "the ability of our two organisations to shape our future security environment would be enormous if they worked together. It is time to break down the remaining walls between them." [11]

NATO's new 21st century doctrine affirms:

"[T]he EU is a unique and essential partner for NATO. The two organisations share a majority of members, and all members of both organisations share common values. NATO recognizes the importance of a stronger and more capable European defence. We welcome the entry

into force of the Lisbon Treaty, which provides a framework for strengthening the EU's capacities to address common security challenges.

"Non-EU Allies make a significant contribution to these efforts. For the strategic partnership between NATO and the EU, their fullest involvement in these efforts is essential. NATO and the EU can and should play complementary and mutually reinforcing roles."

NATO has also acquired a new partner in Eurasia, one with the world's largest land mass, stretching from the Baltic and the Black Seas to the Pacific Ocean: Russia. The subject of another article.

## Notes

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