

**For Such a Time as This¹:
The Sino-Russian Axis and Security Challenges for Transatlantic Relations**

by Dr. Christina Y. Lin

Abstract: While NATO is getting increasingly engaged in Afghanistan a new strategic challenge is gaining importance: the interplay of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) with NATO. The SCO was founded in 2001 by the leaders of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and has evolved, as many observers believe, to serve as a counterbalance to NATO and the United States. With China and Russia systematically using lucrative energy issues to divide transatlantic relations, given China's designs on Taiwan, Russia's designs in the Middle East via Iran, and the nuclear nexus between Iran and North Korea, three flash points come to mind: Taiwan straits, Korean Peninsula, Israel-Iran. These potential scenarios give rise to security challenges that may encompass both military as well as economic security that will require the NATO alliance to stand together in solidarity.

Introduction

The year 2009 began as a year of important sea changes on the global stage. The year kicked off in January with Russia yet again rattling its energy weapon and cutting off gas to Ukraine in the dead of winter; a global recession that prompted the G-20 summit with calls for G-2—U.S. and China—to take the lead in remedial measures for the international economic order; a new U.S. administration after eight years of Global War on Terror since the aftermath of 9/11; Iranian missile launch in February followed by North Korean missile launch in April in defiance of UN Security Council resolutions; celebration of NATO's 60th anniversary in midst of an ongoing Afghanistan campaign that is testing NATO solidarity. Against the backdrop of these emerging threats, an entity is arising that is challenging the west to shape the new global security architecture—the Sino-Russian led Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, or the SCO.

SCO-NATO in Afghanistan

On 27 March 2009, the SCO for the first time hosted a conference in Moscow that included NATO, U.S., and ministers from 36 countries. The conference on Afghanistan reflects the growing clout of Russia, China and SCO in the region.² Just one month after Russia influenced Kyrgyzstan to evict U.S.

¹ The title is taken from the Bible's Book of Esther 4:14, on the need to deliver the children of Israel from annihilation by the Persian Empire. The story took place during the reign of King Xerxes (486 to 465 B.C.) when a high-ranking official Haman sought to destroy all the Jews in the kingdom. Queen Esther, a Hebrew woman in the royal court, was exhorted to intercede on behalf of the Jews: "For if you remain completely silent at this time relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a times as this?" About 2,500 years later, once again a high-ranking official from Persia (Iran) is calling for the annihilation of the Jews and to wipe Israel off the map.

² Vladimir Radyuhin, "SCO—towards a high-profile role in Afghanistan", *The Hindu*, 31 March 2009; Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, "Unlikely bedfellows in Afghanistan", *Asia Times*, 18 March 2009. SCO members are Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and observers are Iran, Pakistan, India and Mongolia. Outside the SCO, the conference included UN Secretary

troops from Manas Airbase, the Moscow conference is a diplomatic coup for Russia and the SCO. Moreover, the Summit unanimously adopted a SCO-Afghanistan Action Plan that called for closer Afghan involvement in SCO-wide collaboration in fighting terrorism and drug trafficking in the region, which reads like a roadmap for pulling Afghanistan into the SCO fold.³ Indeed, SCO members and observers already surround Afghanistan, and Russia is linking Afghanistan to other strategic issues. For example, Russia has approved of rail transit of non-military supplies to Afghanistan and suggested this could include military cargo—but approval may be conditional on U.S. action affecting Russia such as missile defence and Iran.⁴

Russia is also offering Afghanistan as a forum for U.S.-Iran dialogue under the auspices of the SCO. At the Moscow conference, Iran's deputy foreign minister Mehdi Akhundzadeh sat across the table from U.S. envoy, insinuating that cooperation with the SCO may offer U.S./NATO an acceptable format to bring Iran into a dialogue. Iran's membership status is currently under consideration and will be addressed in the next SCO summit in Yekaterinburg, Russia in June.⁵

The New Warsaw Pact

The fact that the SCO consists of a bloc of authoritarian countries that is becoming more militarised has sounded alarms within some academic and policymaking circles. In recent years the SCO has been dubbed the new 'Warsaw Pact' or 'NATO of the East', with creeping militarisation of the organisation.⁶ This is measured by increased security cooperation among members including CSTO-SCO ties, as well as ties to NATO: joint military exercises of Peace Mission 2005 that was said to target Taiwan or the Korean Peninsula⁷ and Peace Mission 2007 with CSTO; the signing of SCO-CSTO defence agreement in 2007⁸; establishment of CSTO Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) similar to NATO RRF⁹; integration of state sponsors of terrorism such as Iran with nine-digit line item in national budget for Hamas, Hezbollah and other terrorist organisations.¹⁰ In 2006 SCO was called "the most dangerous organisation that Americans have never heard of", according to Christopher Brown, director of the Menges Hemispheric Security Project at the Centre for Security Policy. Radio Free Europe cited a Moscow-based scholar that "By letting Iran enter the SCO, Russia and China would

General Ban Ki-moon, OSCE Secretary General Mark Perrin de Brichambaut; U.S. DAS for South/Central Asian Affairs Patrick Moon; NATO Deputy Secretary General Martin Howard; as well as representatives from G-8 countries, Organisation of the Islamic Conferences, and Afghan Foreign Minister Rangin Dagdar Spanta.

³ SCO members have systematically engaged Afghanistan in recent years. In 2005, SCO and Afghanistan set up a liaison group based in Beijing to deal with drug trafficking, cross-border crime and intelligence sharing. In 2007, Afghanistan joined SAARC. As an energy consumer, India has supported Afghanistan membership in SCO due to interests in building a pipeline that traverses from Turkmenistan to Afghanistan, Pakistan, India (TAPI), which competes with Russian-backed IPI pipeline that traverses from Iran, Pakistan, to India. Ariel Cohen, Lisa Curtis, Owen Graham, "The Proposed Iran-Pakistan-India Gas Pipeline: An Unacceptable Risk to Regional Security", *Heritage Foundation Backgrounder* #2139, 30 May 2008, p.2.

⁴ Eric Walberg, "NATO, SCO, or PATO?", *Intelligence Daily*, 22 April 2009.

⁵ *RIA Novosti*, "SCO regional security group considering Iran membership—source", 17 February 2009.

⁶ Christina Y. Lin, "The Prince of Rosh: Russian Energy Imperialism and the Emerging Eurasian Military Alliance of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation", *Institut für Strategie- Politik- Sicherheits- und Wirtschaftsberatung (ISPSW)/ ISN ETH Zurich*, 11 February 2009; Marcel De Haas, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's Momentum Towards A Mature Security Alliance", *Sciennia Militaria* 36 (1), 2008. M K Bhadrakumar, "The new 'NATO of the East' takes shape", *Asia Times*, 25 August 2007; Adam C Castillo, "SCO: Rise of NATO East?", *Diplomatic Courier/ISN ETH Zurich*, 18 August 2008; Col. Raul K. Bhonsle, "SCO: NATO of the East", *Boloji*, 25 August 2007; Alexander Khramchikhlin, "SCO: means new Warsaw Pact?" *Russia Beyond the Headlines*, 26 September 2007; Adrian Blomfield, 'Putin praises strength of 'warsaw pact 2'', *Telegraph*, 18 August 2007; Kin Ming Liu, 'The most dangerous unknown pact', *New York Sun*, 13 June 2006.

⁷ Kin-Ming Liu, "The most dangerous unknown pact".

⁸ Christina Y. Lin, "The Prince of Rosh," p.2; Marcel De Haas, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's Momentum Towards A Mature Security Alliance", p.23.

⁹ Roger McDermott, "Central Asia—again Russia's 'sphere of influence'?" in *World Security Network Newsletter*, 11 May 2009. Following the recent February CSTO and Eurasian Economic Community (EuAsEC) summit in Moscow, President Medvedev announced the standing up of a CSTO RRF that "will not be inferior to NATO forces in terms of combat potential". CSTO member states comprise of Armenia, Belarus, and the remaining five states that are also SCO members--Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. CSTO charter precludes all participating states from joining other military alliances or other groups of states, while aggression against one signatory would be aggression against all (mutual defence clause). Within the SCO, all members except China have ties with NATO—through PfP and NATO-Russia Council.

¹⁰ Michael Jacobson, "Grading US performance against terrorism financing", *The Washington Institute*, 5 September 2007; Matthew Levitt and Michael Jacobson, "The money trail: Finding, following and freezing terrorism finances", *The Washington Institute*, November 2008.

clearly demonstrate that they side with Iran and its nuclear program and would embark on a collision course with the West”.¹¹

In Afghanistan, for many years Russia attempted to influence NATO to deal with CSTO. However, NATO refused and dealt with CIS countries on a bilateral basis within the Partnership for Peace (PfP) framework. Now, with the standing up of the new CSTO RRF, Russia is courting NATO’s Central Asian PfP partners and diverting resources away to CSTO to impede NATO solidarity and interoperability. This Russian initiative to divert NATO assets to CSTO resembles French initiative to divert NATO assets to ESDP.¹² Similar to the 60,000-strong EU force that would draw on the very same troops currently committed to NATO¹³, the forces that Kazakhstan will contribute to this Russia-led RRF will be drawn from airmobile forces—the same earmarked for developing future interoperability with NATO. This would reduce potential future options for NATO planning staffs to develop other formations within Kazakhstan’s airmobile forces for interoperability.¹⁴

Andrey Kokoshin, deputy chairman of the United Russia party and member of the Duma, noted that “Today we see that obvious deterioration of the situation in Afghanistan, where NATO force is failing to cope with the threats posed by the Taliban. The threat of expansion of Islamic extremism—which is infiltrating Central Asia, a zone of Russia’s strategic interests—is growing.”¹⁵ Russia is linking deterioration in stability of Afghanistan and Russian negative assessment of NATO’s Afghan mission as driving elements in forming CSTO’s RRF. Similarly, China has strategic interest in Central Asia as an alternative source of energy from the Middle East and Russia, as well as a stabilising force to prevent separatism of its western Xinjiang Province via the SCO. Indeed on 28 April 2009, at a Moscow meeting between Russian defence minister Anatoly Serdyukov and his Chinese counterpart Liang Guanglie, China and Russia announced closer military cooperation as part of their burgeoning ‘strategic partnership’.¹⁶ They announced that as many as 25 joint manoeuvres are to be staged in 2009 in a demonstration of strengthening the Sino-Russian axis and underscored the SCO’s growing military role.¹⁷ Given that NATO’s Afghan mission has been fraught with lack of solidarity and divisive problems such as ISAF’s national caveats, insufficient troops, lack of interoperability, duplicate commanding structures of OEF/ISAF and two-tiered NATO¹⁸, a resurgent Taliban and fear of eventual “bleed out” of Islamic militancy and extremism from Afghanistan-Pakistan through Central Asia and south Russia, this has created a vacuum for Sino-Russian led SCO to enter and carve out a slice of the Afghan security pie.

The fact that Russia has successfully influenced NATO to engage with CSTO indirectly through SCO in Afghanistan, and that Afghanistan is now an arena of interplay between SCO and NATO, will have serious ramifications for the transatlantic alliance. Afghanistan is a test case for the resolve, solidarity and effectiveness of the NATO alliance—how it plays out in face of a resurgent Russia and emerging China will have wider implications elsewhere on the global stage that may bring the west on a collision course with the authoritarian coalition of the SCO bloc.

Three Flash Points: Israel-Iran, Korean Peninsula, Taiwan Straits

¹¹ Kin-Ming Liu, “The Most Dangerous Unknown Pact”.

¹² The European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) is a long-term policy goal of Paris. Under the existing Berlin Plus arrangements (a package of agreements between NATO and EU), NATO alliance maintains the right of first refusal if EU wishes to use NATO assets. It can draw on NATO assets only if the whole alliance agrees. With the re-introduction of France into NATO command structure and risk of an autonomous ESDP force within the Alliance with access to NATO assets, some scholars view this as a dilution of U.S. and British influence over decision-making and a transformation of NATO from an Euro-Atlantic alliance to an European alliance. Nile Gardiner and Sally McNamara, “Sarkozy’s NATO Demands Are Unreasonable”, *National Review Online*, 27 March 2008.

¹³ Soeren Kern, “Why France wants to Rejoin NATO”, *World Politics Review*, 23 April 2008.

¹⁴ Roger McDermott, “Central Asia—again Russia’s sphere of influence?”

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Tony Halpin, “Russia and China announce new era of military cooperation”, *Times Online*, 20 April 2009.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Vincent Morelli, Paul Belkin, “NATO in Afghanistan: A Test of the Transatlantic Alliance”, *CRS Report RL33627*, 23 January 2009.

On the international stage currently there are three flash points that may potentially pull U.S. and her allies into a major combat operation—Israel-Iran, Korean Peninsula, and Taiwan Straits. Israel, Republic of South Korea (ROK) and Taiwan are all under U.S. security umbrella. As such, military aggression from Iran, Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK) and China may not only involve U.S.' bilateral allies, but also alliance organisations such as NATO (e.g., NATO's invoking Article 5 when U.S. was attacked on 9/11). Given these three flash points involve countries such as China, Russia and their allies, there is a risk of escalation and other alliance members of SCO and NATO being pulled into a wider regional conflict.

Defence planner such as Victor Corpus, retired U.S. brigadier general who portrayed a scenario involving SCO allies in a Taiwan contingency, has indeed sounded these potential risks.¹⁹ Moreover, some perceived the Sino-Russian military exercise of Peace Mission 2005 under the auspices of SCO as aimed towards Taiwan and Korean Peninsula contingencies. Additionally, the Iran-DPRK nuclear nexus²⁰ and joint missile development have caused some pundits to consider a scenario of simultaneous attacks by DPRK and Iran against U.S. and Israel—what Iranian President Ahmadinejad condemns as “Big Satan” and “Little Satan.”²¹

Israel-Iran

In the Middle East, Secretary of Defence Gates and Middle East envoy Ambassador Dennis Ross recently conducted shuttle diplomacy in the region to reassure allies of U.S. engagement with Iran. There are some in the Obama administration who also believe Russia may be a partner to exert pressure on Iran's nuclear issue. However, based on Russia's recent behaviour and anti-western rhetoric, Kremlin appears to differ in its threat perception of Iran and rather sees it as a platform to expand its regional influence and challenge U.S. in the Persian Gulf/Middle East.²² Russia and Iran, through the SCO, seems embarked on an anti-western path that seek to dilute U.S. power, revise international financial institutions which comprise of post-Bretton Woods world order, call for an SCO currency to replace the dollar as a reserve currency²³, weaken NATO while forging a counterbalance to Euro-Atlantic alliance, establishing an anti-US coalition of Russia, Iran, Syria, Venezuela, Hamas, Hezbollah, while hoping to attract China, India and other states into this orbit.²⁴

Indeed China, with its vast energy interests in Iran, is assisting Iran's procurement of anti-ballistic missile defence system to deter a possible Israeli air strike against its nuclear installations. With Russia stalling its sale of S-300 to Iran, Iran is turning to China for Hong Qi-9/FD-200 system, which combined elements “borrowed” from Russian S-300 and the American NIM-104 Patriot System.²⁵ Under the protective coverage of Russia and China in the UN Security Council, Iran continues unabated on its uranium enrichment programme in defiance of UN Security Council resolutions, and in February 2009 launched a two-stage liquid fuel rocket that put a satellite into space.²⁶ Although it maintains the satellite programmes are civilian, in reality these programmes are under control of the

¹⁹ Christina Y. Lin, “Prince of Rosh”, p.8.

²⁰ This was highlighted in the September 2007 Israeli air strike of the DPRK-assisted Syrian nuclear reactor, which was to be used as Iranian nuclear reserve site. David Eshel, “Assad's ‘Big Secret,’ A Joint Iran-Syrian DPRK Nuclear Program?” *Defense Update News Analysis*, 14 September 2007.

²¹ Some intelligence experts in Japan and ROK are convinced DPRK has nuclear warheads and have smuggled/sold one or two warheads to Iran. Given DPRK's escalating rhetoric and Iran's Holocaust denial and campaign to demonise Israel and the Jewish people, there may be a possibility of a simultaneous sneak attack against Israel and the U.S.. “Did North Korea Sell Nuclear Warheads to Iran?” 24 April 2009, *China Confidential*. For a history of DPRK-Iran's joint Shahab-No-dong/Taepo-dong missile programmes and possible nuclear collaboration, see Christina Y. Lin, ‘The King from the East: DPRK-Syria-Iran Nuclear Nexus and Strategic Implications for Israel and the ROK’, *Academic Paper Series On Korea*, Vol. 2, (Washington, D.C.: Korea Economic Institute, 2009).

²² Ariel Cohen, “The Russian Handicap to U.S. Iran Policy”, *Jerusalem Issue Briefs*, Vol. 8, No. 28, 22 April 2009, p.3.

²³ Genedetta Berti, “Iran aims to get shanghaied”, *On Line Opinion*, 13 January 2009; “Iran proposes using SCO currencies” in *Iran News*, 28 August 2008.

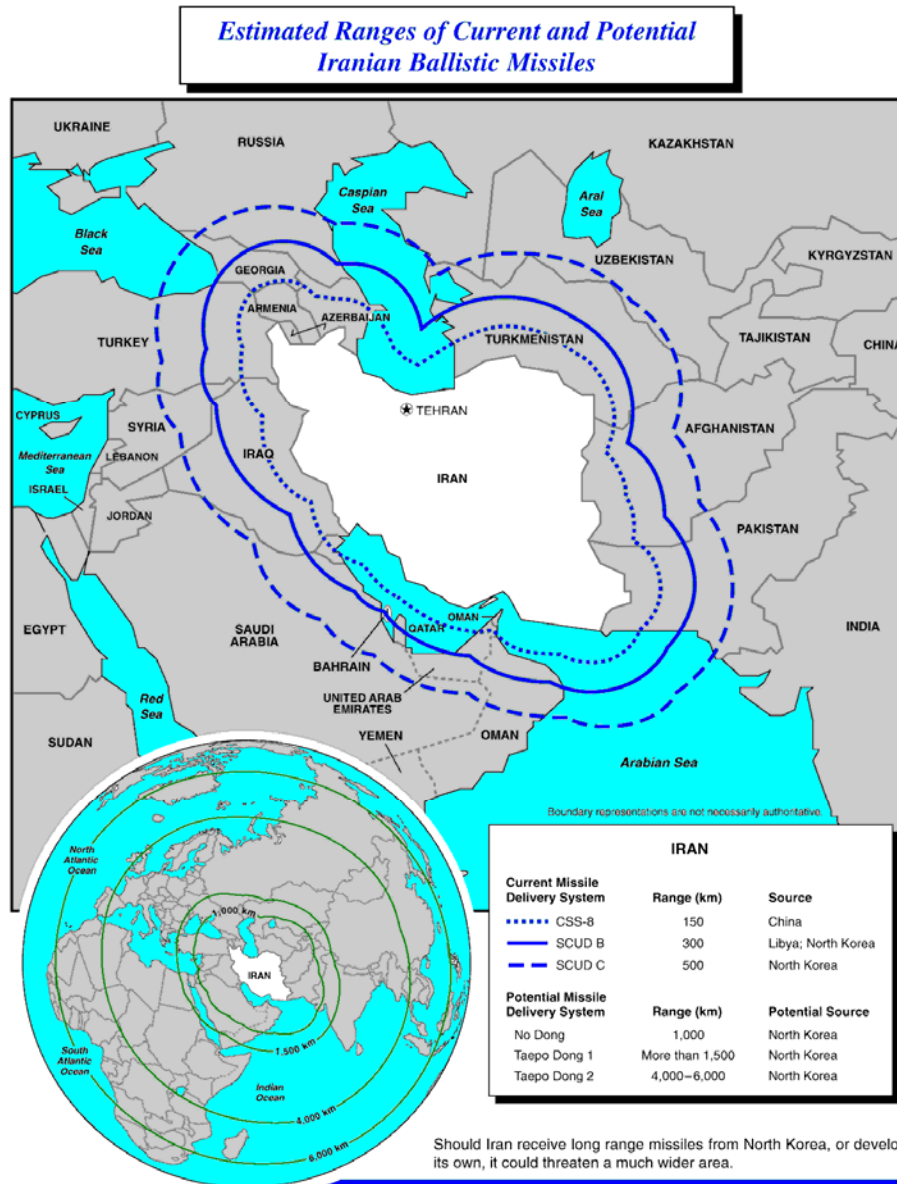
²⁴ Ariel Cohen, “The Russian Handicap to U.S. Iran Policy”.

²⁵ The Jerusalem Post, “Iran to procure Chinese defence system”, 10 May 2009.

²⁶ Robert Tait, “Iran launches first domestically produced satellite—Omid launch likely to stoke western fears of missile capabilities”, *Guardian*, 3 February 2009.

Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).²⁷ DPRK followed suit by launching its own ballistic missile Taepo-dong 2 in April also in defiance of UN Security Council resolutions²⁸, with a team of Iranian nuclear experts at the test site. The history of Iran-DPRK joint long-range missile development and nuclear collaboration has been well documented in the proliferation literature, and puts at risk not just Israel, but now EU and the U.S. within range of their Shahab 5 and Taepo-dong 2 missiles. Iran's Shahab 5, based on the Taepo-dong 2 missile, has a range of 4,200 miles that can reach beyond Israel to EU and NATO assets in the region [See Figure 1].²⁹

Figure 1: Map of area within range of Iran's Shahab 5 (Taepo-Dong 2) missiles



Source: Federation of American Scientists, <http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/prolif97/pg28.gif>

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Amos Harel, "What North Korea's missile means for Israel and Iran", Ha'aretz, 6 April 2009.

²⁹ Jennifer Kline, "Special Report: Challenges of Iranian Missile Proliferation—Partnership with North Korea", *WMD Insight*, October 2006.

Similarly, DPRK's Taepo-dong 2 missile³⁰ can reach beyond U.S. military assets in Japan and Guam to North America (Alaska) [See Figure 2]. One study has stated that with a reduced payload, the missile could travel 10,000 km (6,200 miles), which would theoretically put the western U.S. mainland within range.³¹

Figure 2: Map of area within range of North Korea's Taepo-Dong 2 missiles



Indeed, DPRK has allegedly weaponised and miniaturised its nuclear warhead so the missiles can travel longer range to hit farther targets.³²

Current conventional view is that Iran's nuclear weapons ambition is merely a localised threat to the state of Israel with possible unsavoury attendant nuclear proliferation in the Middle East region, and since diplomacy and sanctions have failed thus far to arrest their nuclear programme, the west should tacitly accept Iran as an eventual nuclear power and default to a policy of deterrence. However, this quiet acquiescence is dangerous. Even putting aside Iranian President Ahmadinejad's apocalyptic rhetoric of committing genocide and wiping Israel off the map, the fact that Iran is systematically and aggressively developing missile capabilities beyond the range of Israel betrays their underlying intentions for targets beyond Israel to reach U.S. and western interests.

³⁰ DPRK is believed to have more than 800 ballistic missiles, including long-range missiles that could one day strike the U.S. . They were developed based on the Scud missile design, which reportedly came via Egypt in 1976 in return for DPRK support against Israel in the Yom Kippur War. BBC, "North Korea's missile programme", 23 February 2009. In July 2006 DPRK test fired the Taepodong-2 which crashed 40 seconds into the flight.

³¹ Jack Kim, Reuters, "Factbox: North Korea's Taepodong-2 Long-range missile", 13 March 2009.

³² In January 2009, DPRK officials from Foreign Ministry and Korean People's Army (KPA) told Selig Harrison, visiting American scholar, that DPRK had weaponised its nuclear deterrent. Chris Buckley, "N Korea Says Plutonium 'Weaponised' and Off-Limits", *Reuters*, 17 January 2009; Barbara Demick, "N Korea Says It Has Weaponized Its Plutonium Stock" *Los Angeles Times*, 18 January 2009. A February 2009 International Crisis Group Report indicated that DPRK succeeded in miniaturising its nuclear devices as warheads for the Nodong medium range ballistic missile that is capable of striking most of Japan. "North Korea's Nuclear Deterrent The Status of Pyongyang's Nuclear and Missile Programs," International Crisis Group, February 2009 , cited in Daniel A. Pinkston, "DPRK Claims to Have 'Weaponized' Nuclear Deterrent as Six-Party Talks Stall", *WMD Insights*, February 2009; "N. Korea miniaturized nuclear warheads for Rodong missiles: expert", *Kyodo World News Service*, 31 March 2009; Kwang-tae Kim, "Blast shows North Korean nuclear threat growing", *Associated Press*, 27 March 2009.

Moreover, failure to stop Iran's nuclear programme will harm credibility of U.S. security commitment to her allies in the Middle East. Despite Defence Secretary Gates shuttle diplomacy to reassure Gulf allies³³, Saudi Arabia for one has taken matters into its own hands by courting Russia via close arms cooperation.³⁴ It is hedging itself by signing a military technical agreement to try to woo Russia away from Iran—fearing U.S. overstretch in Iraq and Afghanistan and inability to provide security umbrella to the Saudis. It is also attempting to develop its own nuclear weapons programme, with close Pakistani assistance. Fear of an unstoppable nuclear Iran is already setting off a cascade of nuclear proliferation in the Gulf region, with the GCC (established in 1981 as a security organisation against Iran during the Iran-Iraq War) declaring the right to peaceful nuclear development in December 2006.³⁵

Israel is concerned with the DRPK WMD proliferation to Iran and Syria and officials have met often with ROK and Japan to discuss intelligence collaboration against the DPRK-Iran nuclear partnership.³⁶ Despite the obvious DPRK-Iran nuclear nexus, EU-3 however seemed to only focus on Iran without the other half of the nuclear equation, and dialogue with ROK and Japan has not been forthcoming.³⁷

For Israel, a nuclear Iran poses an existential threat and deterrence is not an option.³⁸ Should Israel attempt an air strike to take out the nuclear installations as it had in 1981 on the Iraq Osirak reactor and 1997 Syrian nuclear reactor, Iran and her allies may be drawn into a conflict with Israel. Russia and Iran have a treaty called the Russo-Persian Treaty of Friendship that was signed on 26 February 1921, which stipulates that if a country attacks Russia via Iran, Russia can invade Iran to counter this threat.³⁹ If Iran is admitted as an SCO member at the upcoming June summit, Iran—backed by Russia and SCO members, and Israel—a NATO partner in the Mediterranean Dialogue⁴⁰ and backed by U.S. and NATO, may draw the SCO and NATO into wider regional conflict.

Korean Peninsula

On 5 April 2009, DPRK launched a Taepo-dong 2 rocket to put a satellite in orbit—only two months after Iran' launched its Safir-2 rocket.⁴¹ Japan's Sankei Shimbun newspaper claimed a 15-strong delegation from Tehran had been in the country advising the North Koreans since the beginning of March.⁴² The Iranian experts include senior officials from Shahid Hemmat Industrial Group that is responsible for Iran's ballistic missile programme. It has been listed by the US., British, and Japanese governments for proliferation activities, and as early as April 2000 has been subjected to U.S. sanctions for cooperating with DPRK for violation of missile export controls. Reportedly the Iranians brought a letter from Iran President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to DPRK leader Kim Jong-Il stressing the importance of space technology cooperation.

³³ Lara Jakes, "Gates plans to reassure allies on Iran outreach", *Associated Press*, 4 May 2009.

³⁴ "Saudi-Russian military cooperation," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 18 July 2008, by John C K Daly.

³⁵ Christina Y. Lin, "The King from the East", p.202.

³⁶ Amir Tsarfati, former vice governor of Jericho and captain in the Israeli Army Reserve, conversation with author, Costa Mesa, California, 29 August 2008.

³⁷ Ambassador Charles "Jack" Pritchard, former U.S. nuclear envoy to the Six Party Talks, conversation with author at the Korea Club, Arlington, Virginia, 30 October 2008.

³⁸ To understand Israeli mentality, one should visit the Masada fortress, which was taken by the Romans following a three-year siege after Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70. Just before they were overrun, all the defending Jews along with their wives and children committed suicide rather than be captured and enslaved. The Israeli Defence Force (IDF) commissioning ceremony takes place atop Masada—where each soldier takes an oath that "Masada shall not fall again." The new soldiers are given a rifle in one hand to understand what they are fighting for, and a Bible on the other hand to understand why they are fighting for it. Captain Amir Tarfati, "Zion the Lord's Chosen Habitation" lecture, Costa Mesa, California, 10 October 2007; Joseph Telushkin, "Masada", Jewish Virtual Library.

³⁹ Trita Parsi, *Treachrous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran and the U.S.* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), p.106.

⁴⁰ NATO's 1994 Mediterranean Dialogue partners include Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia.

⁴¹ Patrick Goodenough, CNSNews.com, "Missile Collaboration Between North Korea and Iran Goes Back Year", 31 March 2009.

⁴² *The Sunday Times*, "Reports: Iran Experts Aiding North Korea Rocket Launch", 29 March 2009.

Iran-DPRK missile collaboration has been ongoing for sometime: Iranian attended the May 1993 DPRK No-dong missile testing; DPRK observed the Iranian testing of Shahab 3 in 1991 and 1998; Iranians were present at the launch site of the July 2006 missile testing of Taepo-dong 2.⁴³ A high level Iranian defector Ali Reza Asghari, says Iran financed DPRK participation in Syria's nuclear weapons programme.⁴⁴ Ali Reza Asghari, a retired general in Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards and a former deputy defence minister, changed sides in February 2007 and provided considerable information to the West on Iran's own nuclear programme.⁴⁵

DPRK's missile launch was a blatant violation of the three-year old UNSC Resolutions 1695 and 1718, yet the UN revealed its impotence to implement resolutions in face of veto-wielding China and Russia, DPRK's legal advocates in the UNSC. A U.S.-based scholar criticised that "China's willingness to derail international efforts to punish North Korea for its blatant violation plucks the fig leaf from the cherished misconception of Beijing as a 'responsible stakeholder,'"⁴⁶ and argued that the incident reiterated the need for missile defence for U.S. and her allies—something that China and Russia adamantly oppose. Indeed U.S., Japan and ROK had the assurance of missile-defence systems in place to provide protection had the test launch gone astray—the absence of missile defence during a real threat scenario would leave the U.S. with inadequate policy choices of pre-emption or retaliation.⁴⁷ And despite being depicted as a "failure", the missile flight more than doubled previous range in 2006 and underscores Pyongyang's continuing *intent* to develop the capability to threaten the entire U.S. with a nuclear warhead.

The case for missile defence is all the more pressing given DPRK's brinkmanship behaviour on 25 May by testing their second nuclear device with a higher blast yield (10-20 kilotons) akin to the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki;⁴⁸ launching additional missiles which prompted the ROK to finally join the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), a U.S.-led effort to stop transport of illicit nuclear weapons material;⁴⁹ restarting their nuclear reactor in Yongbyon, and declaring war on ROK by announcing the annulment of their 1953 armistice agreement.⁵⁰ This has prompted Russia to take unspecified security measures (which may include military) for fear of an escalation of military conflict involving nuclear weapons.⁵¹ As such, ROK and Japan have been upgrading their military ties with NATO as a wider regional deterrent against DPRK's missile threats.

NATO-ROK. For the ROK, the new President Lee Myung Bak in 2007 envisions a strategic partnership with the U.S. and new role of a "Global Korea"—participating in security challenges such as peacekeeping, overseas development assistance, disaster relief, and post-conflict stabilisation efforts.⁵² Within the U.S.-ROK bilateral context, there has been underlying fear of U.S. abandonment and dependency—Nixon withdrew 20,000 troops from ROK in 1971 for the Vietnam War; 1995 Nye Initiative underscored only the U.S.-Japan alliance as the lynchpin of U.S. security policy in the region; bilateral rift under the Kim administration in 1998 and Roh administration in 2002. Thus, ROK Ministry of Defence and NATO recently announced plans to increase cooperation and open new channels of communication. ROK defence officials recently sent an army colonel to the NATO Defence College for a six-month programme, in accordance with a 2008 National Defence Ministry white paper designed to upgrade ties with NATO.⁵³ Indeed, ROK is already a NATO contact country

⁴³ Stephanie Griffith, "Iran Present at North Korea Missile Launch Says US", *Agence France Press*, 20 July 2006.

⁴⁴ Ryan Mauro, "Iranian Experts in North Korea for Missile Launch", *worldthreats.com*, March 2009.

⁴⁵ Report by Hans Rühle, former chief of planning staff of the German Defence Ministry. *The Associated Press*, "How IDF troops 'infiltrated alleged Syria nuke site'", 22 March 2009.

⁴⁶ Bruce Klingner, "How should the U.S. handle North Korea?" *The Heritage Foundation Commentary*, 4 May 2009.

⁴⁷ In preparation for the Taepo-dong missile launch, Japan deployed Patriot missiles around Tokyo and sent war ships armed with interceptors to the waters between Japan and the Korean peninsula. Two U.S. destroyers, USS McCain and the USS Chafee deployed for waters near DPRK, and ROK also dispatched its Aegis-equipped destroyer. Hyung-jin Kim, "Warships set sail ahead of N. Korean launch", *Associated Press*, 30 March 2009.

⁴⁸ Robert Burns, "Analysis: NKorea's bomb test adds to atomic threat", *Associated Press*, 26 May 2009.

⁴⁹ Hyung-Jin Kim, "Report: North Korea test-fires 2 more missiles", *Associated Press*, 26 May 2009.

⁵⁰ Hyung-Jin Kim, "N. Korea threatens to attack US, S. Korea warships", *Associated Press*, 27 May 2009.

⁵¹ Oleg Shchedrov, "Russia fears Korea conflict could go nuclear-Ifax", *Reuters*, 27 May 2009; Adrian Blomfield, "North Korea: Russia takes extra security measures in case of nuclear conflict", *Telegraph*, 27 May 2009.

⁵² Scott Snyder, "Pursuing a Comprehensive vision for the U.S.-South Korea Alliance", *Csis*, April 2009.

⁵³ "South Korea to strengthen ties with NATO", *Middle East Times*, 11 March 2009.

and has forces in Lebanon and Iraq, as well as contributed to the NATO mission in Afghanistan. Under President Lee's "Global Korea" vision, it is looking for ways to join NATO Global Partnership.

NATO-Japan. Japan is also looking to upgrade ties with NATO. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to NATO headquarter in January 2007 was the first visit by a Japanese head of government. Since 1990 NATO and Japan have held strategic dialogue and series of NATO Japan Security Conferences. After 9/11, Japan and NATO have cooperated on the Global War on Terror—Japan sent naval assets to the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea to re-supply western navies; in 2003 Japan contributed to disarmament, de-mobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of armed groups in Afghanistan and underwriting support to NATO-led PRTs; Japanese Self Defence Forces (SDF) worked alongside several NATO member countries' forces in UN-led peacekeeping operations in the Golan Heights, in humanitarian and reconstruction assistance in Iraq, and earthquake disaster relief and rescue in Pakistan.⁵⁴

Article nine of Japan's 1947 constitution appears to states that Japan cannot maintain any armed forces, but the government's position is that Japan has a right to defend itself and thus created the Self Defense Forces (SDF) in 1954. Nonetheless, it is still barred from exercising "right of collective self-defence" and precludes SDF from fighting together with NATO's other partners.⁵⁵ However, Japan is seeking security partners, if not defence partners, beyond the U.S.-Japan alliance—an initiative encouraged by the U.S. for its partners to share more security burdens.⁵⁶ A joint Japan-NATO security agenda would include security-related issues of trans-national crimes, disaster relief/humanitarian assistance, energy security, and most importantly two key pillars to address the nuclear threat on the Korean Peninsula and deter conflict in the Taiwan Straits: (1) prevent WMD proliferation (especially from DPRK) via the Proliferation Security Initiative, and (2) raise the cost for military aggression by China against Taiwan.

Currently, China calculates only U.S. and Japan will intervene in defence of Taiwan in a cross-strait conflict. Its rapid military modernisation prepares for operations against Japan on the assumption that Tokyo would provide logistical support for any U.S. intervention in a cross-strait conflict. However, if other major powers and organisations such as NATO begin to communicate 'strategic ambiguity' to China to perhaps support the U.S. in a Taiwan scenario, Beijing may reconsider use of force against Taiwan.⁵⁷ It is also worthwhile to note since 9/11, China has consistently been upgrading SCO from a regional conflict prevention organisation to a collective defence bloc, which suggest the SCO has the potential to become a major adversary to both Japan and NATO.⁵⁸

Taiwan Straits

Taiwan and China have been a point of contention in transatlantic relations. The 2005 EU attempt to lift the arms embargo on China underscored how wide the rift was between U.S. and EU perceptions and overall policy towards the cross-strait issue. Establishment of the U.S.-EU Strategic Dialogue in the aftermath of the EU arms embargo crisis was a good beginning to share concerns and coordinate approaches, but U.S. and EU need to widen and deepen transatlantic cooperation.

Prior to 2005, EU did not really have a policy towards China or the Taiwan straits. China and EU relations have been mainly commercial and the EU did not have a policy at the strategic and political level. However, the 2005 arms embargo incident punctuated why Europe should care about Taiwan, and underscored that economics couldn't be disaggregated from the politico-military dimensions of

⁵⁴ Masako Ikegami, "NATO and Japan: Strengthening Asian stability", *NATO Review*, Summer 2007; Masashi Nishihara, "Can Japan Be a Global Partner for NATO?" *Research Institute for Peace and Security (RIPS) Policy Perspectives*, No. 2 December 2006.

⁵⁵ Masashi Nishihara, "Can Japan be a Global Partner for NATO?", p.4.

⁵⁶ Randall Schriver, former U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia, conversation with author, Armitage International, Washington D.C., 7 May 2009. ; Randall Schriver and Mark Stokes, "The U.S.-Japan Alliance: President Obama's First 100 Days", Project 2049 Institute's Occasional Paper, 29 January 2009.

⁵⁷ Masako Ikegami, 'NATO and Japan: Strengthening Asian stability'.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

China from a transatlantic standpoint.⁵⁹ When the EU announced it would lift the arms embargo, some Americans conjured up image of U.S. soldiers being blown up by French missiles on the beaches of Taiwan.

Despite the burgeoning bilateral trade relationship (EU ranks 1st as China's trading partner while China ranks 2nd as EU partner), trade frictions have increased as EU deficit with China reached \$235 billion in 2007, only slightly smaller than US-China deficit.⁶⁰ The initial honeymoon of establishing China-EU 'strategic partnership' soon exposed irreconcilable differences of fundamental world views—that of communist authoritarianism and democratic values. Commercial relation is now fraught with conflicts and accusations of China's mercantilist and unfair trading practises—dumping goods at unfair prices, IP infringement, currency under-valuation and manipulation, toxic goods in toys and food, industrial espionage, lack of market access, corruption. Through its mercantilist policies, China currently has the highest foreign exchange reserves in the world at US\$2 trillion, and is seeking to reshape the western liberal international economic order based on the Washington Consensus into its own model of the authoritarian Beijing Consensus.⁶¹ Robert Kagan, political scientist and husband of former U.S. NATO Ambassador Victoria Nuland, envisions the current multi-polar world order will coalesce into two competitive poles with underlying political values determining friends and allies. He forewarned that Russia-China could form an "axis of autocracies", united by their dislike of western political liberalism. This would be faced with an axis of democracies of U.S., EU, Japan and possibly India.⁶² Indeed, this trend appears to be unfolding with the emerging SCO as an energy, economic and military coalition of authoritarian regimes that is challenging NATO and its global partners.

Nowhere in Asia is a democracy more under threat by an authoritarian regime than Taiwan. Across from Taiwan—since the 1996 cross-strait incident of China lobbying missiles and the U.S. displaying its commitment to defend Taiwan by dispatching the 7th Fleet—China has been aggressively modernising its military capabilities and has over 1,000 missiles aimed at Taiwan. It has made impressive strides over the past decade, transforming itself from a primarily coastal defence force into one with power projection beyond a Taiwan contingency to defend China's maritime interests.⁶³ Its growing wealth, international clout and military power have emboldened China's military and especially naval behaviour—it is aggressively asserting its presence in the South China Sea by harassing U.S. naval vessels⁶⁴, violating Japanese territorial waters in the East China Sea by the disputed Senkaku Islands⁶⁵, partaking in joint anti-piracy efforts off the Gulf of Aden to improve its naval operations⁶⁶, embarking on building aircraft carriers⁶⁷--in a goal to challenge U.S. naval dominance and protection of SLOCS for supply of energy and trade.

⁵⁹ Charles Grant with Katinka Barysch, *Can Europe and China Shape a New World Order?*, Centre for European Reform, May 2008, p.65.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p.10.

⁶¹ Washington Consensus is based on Bretton Woods institutions of the IMF, World Bank, WTO, that emphasise good governance and democratic liberalisation as a precursor for economic growth. The Beijing Consensus seeks to supplant the western model by arguing that countries can enjoy economic growth while retaining authoritarian governments similar to China.

⁶² Robert Kagan, "End of dreams, return of history", *Hoover Institution Policy Review*, August-September 2007.

⁶³ U.S. Department of Defense, *Military Power of the People's Republic of China* (Washington, D.C.: 25 March 2009); Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, "China's National Defense in 2008", 26 January 2009.

⁶⁴ China is increasingly resorting to use of force in territorial disputes with energy reserves. South China Sea is a vital shipping lane for energy supplies to Northeast Asia and its Spratly and Paracel island groups are claimed by China, Brunei, Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Taiwan. In March and April 2009, Chinese vessels have harassed unarmed U.S. ships (USNS Impeccable and USNS Victorious) conducting underwater surveillance on international waters. U.S. DoD, China Military Power Report 2009; William Lowther, "Bold PRC vessels alarm Pentagon", *Taipei Times*, 7 May 2009; Richard Weitz, "Maritime Confrontation Highlights Troubled State of China-U.S. Defense Diplomacy", *China Brief*, The Jamestown Foundation, Vol. IX, Issue 9, 30 April 2009.

⁶⁵ Christina Y. Lin, "Militarisation of China's Energy Security Policy—Defence Cooperation and WMD Proliferation along its String of Pearls in the Indian Ocean", *Denkwürdigkeiten, Journal der Politisch-Militärischen Gesellschaft*, Nr. 45, July 2008; U.S. DoD, China Military Power Report 2008; Masako Ikegami, "NATO and Japan: Strengthening Asian stability", *NATO Review*, Summer 2007.

⁶⁶ Zhang Quanyi, "China's multi-purpose naval mission", <http://www.upiasia.com>, 26 December 2008; David Lai, "Chinese Military Going Global", *China Security*, Vol. 5, No. 1 Winter 2009.

⁶⁷ L.C. Russell Hsaio, "In a Fortnight: Changxing Shipbuilding Base—Home for China's Future Indigenous Aircraft Carrier?", *China Brief*, The Jamestown Foundation, Vol IX, Issue 9, 30 April 2009.

In fact, a report drafted by U.S. Secretary of State's International Security Advisory Board (ISAB) states that Taiwan would be the biggest threat to U.S.-China relations in the near future. The internal draft of the report was leaked to the press in October 2008 and states that "The United States is viewed as China's principal strategic adversary and as a potential challenge to the regime's legitimacy, specifically with regards to Taiwan."⁶⁸ China is attempting to break out of the 1st island chain of democracies of Taiwan, ROK, Japan that surrounds its coast, and it is doing so by the current rapid *rapprochement* with Taiwan under the KMT administration—the former authoritarian party that placed Taiwan under Martial Law for 40 years from 1947 to 1987.

The rapid integration between an authoritarian KMT administration in Taiwan and the authoritarian communist regime of China has resulted in erosion of Taiwan's democracy, and raised alarms among U.S. policymakers. As a result this has prompted a call within the U.S. government for a Taiwan policy review and a re-evaluation of the Taiwan Relations Act.⁶⁹ This is all the more pressing given China's rising military power and joint military exercises within the SCO—with Peace Mission 2005 that was suggestive of an amphibious Taiwan contingency. Given these contingencies in East Asia, there has been ongoing debate about constructing a new East Asian regional security architecture that perhaps connects U.S.-bilateral alliances in the region within the broader framework of NATO global partnership—especially in face of an emerging SCO.

Sino-Russian Axis

Axis of Convenience or Strategic Partnership

Some scholars observe that the Sino-Russian axis is one of convenience and mutual interests, and not necessarily a partnership at the strategic level.⁷⁰ Russia sees China as a strategic *counterweight*, rather than a *partner*, to balance the U.S.⁷¹ China, on the other hand, does not need Russia as a balancer and has successfully courted friends on the international stage—EU, U.S., ASEAN, Africa and South America. They need Russia as an alternative source of energy supply from the Middle East and also to handle Central Asia by pressuring them to suppress East Turkestan Islamic Movement and prevent separatism in China's western Xinjiang province.⁷² The main point of contention in bilateral relations is the Russian Far East (RFE), where it consists of 40% Russian landmass but only 10% of the population that is declining. This is an issue where Russians have an underlying fear of Chinese irredentism—in the 19th century this land belonged to the Chinese Qing dynasty, but the Romanov Empire through the three "unequal treaties" procured 1.5 million square km of territory from the Qing emperor.⁷³

Today the RFE is home to Chinese shuttle traders and rife with illegal immigration, criminal links, smuggling, corruption by local officials that discourage investment and inflow of small & medium-sized enterprises.⁷⁴ The Far East is Russian version of the 'wild wild west' where lawlessness and anti-government demonstrations are rampant. Moscow tried to convince Central Asian republics' ethnic Russians to work in the RFE, but jobs are limited as they require narrowly specialised skills for the legacy arms industries, or cheap labour that Russians consider too demeaning and lowly paid. As such Putin had tried to use energy projects to develop the RFE, but little progress has been made on

⁶⁸ Charles Snyder, "Report warns State on PRC aims", *Taipei Times*, 3 October 2008; U.S. Department of State, "China's Strategic Modernization: Report from the ISAB Task Force" (Washington, D.C.: October 2008). The 17-member board is composed of outside experts who provide independent advice to the secretary of state and is currently headed by Paul Wolfowitz, former deputy secretary of defence and current chairman of the U.S.-Taiwan Business Council.

⁶⁹ Michael Fonte, Washington liaison for Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), conversation with author, Washington, D.C., 29 April 2009; author notes from attendance of CSIS video conference with Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou, "U.S.-Taiwan Relations in a New Era: Looking Forward 30 Years After the Taiwan Relations Act", Washington, D.C., 22 April 2009.

⁷⁰ Bobo Lo, *Axis of Convenience: Moscow, Beijing, and the New Geopolitics* (London: Chatham House, 2008).

⁷¹ Bobo Lo, *Axis of Convenience*, p.43.

⁷² *Ibid*, p. 92.

⁷³ The three "unequal treaties" were Aigun (1858), Peking (1860), Tarbagatai (1864). *Ibid*, p.21.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p.66.

the Kovykta gas pipeline, Trans-Siberian railway into Korean Peninsula, and the ESPO (East Siberia-Pacific Ocean) pipeline.⁷⁵

Despite the RFE issue, overall Sino-Russian relation is robust. China is Russia's number two trading partner and trade is increasing. For many years China wanted to keep the SCO an economic bloc and resisted Russian efforts to militarise it, but with the 2007 SCO-CSTO defence agreement, stepping up of Sino-Russian military cooperation during the April SCO defence ministers meeting in Moscow, and the elevation of SCO as a security bloc to work with NATO on Afghanistan suggests a trend that the partnership is at a strategic level. China's energy economic priority and the military power necessary to protect security of energy supply are where Chinese and Russian interests converge in the SCO.

'Divide and Rule' the Transatlantic Alliance

Within the E.U., Germany is Russia's key partner to further its goals of energy export monopoly and stop NATO enlargement in the CIS area. Germany imports 40% of its natural gas from Russia—the highest in Western Europe—and has a lucrative deal with Gazprom to build the Nord Stream pipeline under the Baltic Sea. Germany is Russia's number one trading partner and its Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier is pro-Russian.⁷⁶ Due to its energy dependency on Russia and domestic resistance to deploying more troops for NATO mission in Afghanistan, Germany is treading carefully in its relations with U.S./NATO and Russia.

In NATO, Germany has opposed membership for Ukraine and Georgia, the latter of which was invaded by Russia in August 2008. In the aftermath of the Georgian invasion, NATO military commander General John Craddock wanted to draw up contingency plans to protect new members—many ex-Soviet states—but faced resistance from older European members such as France and Germany.⁷⁷ With a parliamentary mandate for 4,500 troops in Afghanistan, the German contingent is the 3rd largest in Afghanistan, but engagement in combat operations against Taliban is very small due to national caveats.⁷⁸ All these issues are irritants within NATO and prevent consensus and solidarity.

Additionally, Russia is courting Turkey, another NATO member and a key energy corridor nation. In recent years, domestic changes of creeping Islamism and 2002 election of the anti-western Justice and Development Party (AKP) has created a rift between Turkey and its European neighbours. Its recent actions have also alarmed some to question the fidelity of Turkey's continuing membership in NATO—on 27 April 2009 Turkey and Syria conducted a 3-day joint military exercise on their border, and at the NATO summit on 3-4 April, it threatened to block the appointment of Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen as Secretary General until it received an appeasement package to name Turkish officers to top command positions in NATO's military structure.⁷⁹ There is also a disturbing trend of anti-western actions: repeated siding with Iran over Saudi Arabia; hosting Iran president Ahmadinejad, Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal, Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir who government committed genocide; advocating Iran's nuclear programme; developing an Iranian oil field; transferring Iranian arms to Hezbollah; openly supporting Hamas; viciously condemning Israel, and turning Turkish public opinion against the U.S.⁸⁰ These Islamic and anti-western values are

⁷⁵ "Gazprom and Russia's Great Eastern Pipe-Dreams" by Nina Poussenkova, *Russian Analytical Digest*, No. 58, 21 April 2009.

⁷⁶ Constanze Stelzenmuller, "Germany's Russia Question: A new Ostpolitik for Europe", *Foreign Affairs*, 3 March 2009, Vol. 88, No 2.

⁷⁷ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, "NATO Chief Seeks Defense Plan for Allies Near Russia", 6 October 2008.

⁷⁸ Justyna Gotkowska, "German Problems with their mission in Afghanistan", CES Commentary Issue 15, 1 December 2008.

⁷⁹ Saban Kardas, "Turkish-Syrian Security Cooperation Testing Turkish Foreign Policy", *Eurasian Daily Monitor*, Vol. 6, Issue 84, 1 May 2009; Saban Kardas, "Turkey Reaches Compromise Over New Head of NATO" in *Eurasian Daily Monitor*, Vol. 6, Issue 65, 6 April 2009. Turkey's appeasing package deal from Obama stipulates that positions of NATO Deputy Secretary General, Deputy Assistant General for Arms Control, and Special Envoy for Afghanistan are all to be drawn from Turkey. Turkey threatened to veto the Danish prime minister because he defended the freedom of expression of a Danish cartoonist in depicting their prophet Mohammad.

⁸⁰ Daniel Pipes, "Does Turkey Still Belong to NATO?", *Israel Behind the News*, 7 April 2009; Zeyno Baran, Onur Sazak, "The Ambassador", *Weekly Standard*, 16 February 2009; Zeyno Baran, "Will Turkey Abandon NATO?", *The Wall Street Journal*, 29 August 2008; Ariel Cohen, "Obama in Ankara: Turkey's Dangerous Drift", *Heritage Foundation WebMemo*, No.2383, 6 April 2009.

antithetical to the western core values of NATO based on democracy, individual liberty, freedom of expression and rule of law. In fact, in April, French Minister of Foreign Affairs Bernard Kouché announced that he is no longer in favour of admitting Turkey to the EU. He stated that he changed his mind due to Turkey's behaviour at the NATO summit, and opined that "Turkey's evolution in, let's say, a more religious direction, towards a less robust secularism, worries me,"⁸¹ With the prospect of Turkey's EU membership growing dim and its AKP government pulling Turkey towards an Islamist trajectory, Turkey appears to be on a trend of turning away from the west and towards the Russian-Iran axis including Syria, Hamas and Hezbollah.⁸²

Moreover, Russia targets Turkey within NATO because of its position as an energy corridor between the east and west. It is a key transit country for the Nabucco pipeline that will bring Caspian hydrocarbons to Europe and bypass Russian control, thereby reducing European energy dependency on Russia.⁸³ As such Russia is attempting to draw Turkey away from Nabucco to maintain Europe's energy dependency on Gazprom monopoly.

With Turkey being pulled into the Russian-Iran orbit, NATO is now facing a three-pronged attack to divide and neutralise its effectiveness as a military alliances: (1) Russia using CSTO to divert NATO assets from PFP partners in Central Asia; (2) Russia courting Turkey into its orbit to maintain EU energy dependency and dilute NATO solidarity; and (3) France and Germany possibly diverting NATO assets to ESDP. Given this, it is important for the west to stand firm against Russian designs. The EU needs to overcome its fear of energy dependency on Russia—the East Asian energy market is not a viable threat at present and Russia is actually dependent on western energy markets and capital, so the EU should foment a common energy policy and improve their bargaining power vis-à-vis Russia. As a corollary to this the EU should take proactive steps to diversify energy sources: support non-Russian controlled gas pipeline like Nabucco, develop alternative energy mix, conservation and energy efficiency.

Conclusion: NATO and the Transatlantic Alliance—Quo Vadis?

In one of the great epics of Western literature, the *Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien, the hero—overwhelmed by numerous and powerful enemies—temporarily succumbed to self-pity and lamented, "I wish none of this has happened." The hero's wise adviser responds, "So do all who live to see such times, but that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us."⁸⁴

Indeed, this is such times in history when overwhelming forces are testing the transatlantic alliance. A force is arising from Eurasia that is once again threatening to supplant western liberal democratic values and freedom with totalitarianism. Led by the Sino-Russian axis, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is gaining prominence on the international stage—culminating in the recent Moscow summit on Afghanistan. How NATO and the transatlantic alliance withstand divisive attacks from within and without, designed by the Sino-Russian led SCO, will have ripple effects of NATO's effectiveness in other theatres on the global stage—Israel-Iran in the Middle East, the Korean Peninsula and Taiwan Straits in the Far East.

Despite some views that Russia can be a partner on Iran by pushing the reset button, or that China is a responsible stakeholder, their pattern of behaviour points to a different view. A resurgent Russia has been bellicose with harsh anti-western rhetoric; stepping up military modernisation and re-establishing Cold War naval bases; recently cancelling the NATO-Russia Council and expelling NATO envoys;

⁸¹ Thomas Landen, "The Purpose of NATO is to Prepare for War", *The Brussels Journal*, 14 April 2009.

⁸² Soner Cagaptay, "Turkey's Turn from the West", *The Washington Post*, 2 February 2009; Ariel Cohen, "Obama in Ankara: Turkey's Dangerous Drift", *Heritage Foundation WebMemo*, No.2383, 6 April 2009.

⁸³ Vladimir Socor, "Shah Deniz Phase Two Postponement Officially Confirmed", *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 6, Issue 84, 1 May 2009).

⁸⁴ J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002); James P. Pinderton, "The Once & Future Christendom: The Call of Duty—and Destiny", *American Conservative Magazine*, 10 September 2007.

intimidating its neighbours and invading Georgia; wielding its energy weapon against former Soviet states; employing a 'divide and rule' strategy of lucrative energy deals with large European states such as Germany, France, Italy to the detriment of smaller East European states; claiming traditional Soviet spaces of "near abroad" and "spheres of interest"; watering down UNSC sanctions on Iran and DPRK.

Similarly, a rising China has been a rampant WMD proliferators; supporting rogue regimes in the Middle East and Africa for energy deals; manipulating currency and unfair trading practices; aggressive military behaviour in the South China Sea and East China Sea; calling for its own renminbi currency to replace the dollar as the international reserve currency⁸⁵; seeking to supplant the liberal Washington Consensus with its authoritarian Beijing Consensus as the new world economic order; watering down UNSC sanctions on Iran and DPRK.⁸⁶

In face of these challenges, the transatlantic alliance needs to formulate a strategy towards Russia as well as China. The U.S.-EU Strategic Dialogue on China in the aftermath of the 2005 EU arms embargo issue needs to be broadened, and U.S. and EU also need a strategic dialogue on Russia, especially on energy issues. To that end, the U.S. and EU need to support the Nabucco pipeline in order to diversify energy supply and improve EU bargaining position with Russia; the EU needs to implement a common energy policy and take steps to diversify energy sources such as building LNG terminals, nuclear power, competitive renewables; both the U.S. and EU need to strengthen NATO and have a policy towards SCO, as well as engage Russia on areas of mutual interests in Afghanistan (e.g., prevent resurgent Taliban, counter narcotics/drug-trafficking).

Additionally, the U.S. and EU need to proceed with missile defence in East Europe against Iran and East Asia against DPRK. Their systematic and aggressive missile testing and nuclear weapons development in defiance of the international community underscores this need.

NATO is an alliance that was birthed in the aftermath of a destructive Nazi Germany, the Holocaust, fascism, and the early stages of the Cold War and communist totalitarianism. In the post-9/11 world, the means to threaten freedom and democracy may have changed (evolved from fascism to communism to jihadism), but the threat of totalitarianism has not changed. As such, NATO is just as relevant today as it was in 1949.

Why NATO has celebrated 60 years when Warsaw Pact disintegrated is because it is not just an interest based alliance, but an alliance based on values—of human rights, individual liberty, rule of law. As U.S. Ambassador to Norway said recently, without the will to defend basic values upon which the alliance was founded, it cannot assume leadership. If the alliance believes in a world defined by freedom and democratic values, then it must speak out for those values without apology and actively defend them, even when it might be easier to do nothing.⁸⁷ Indeed Albert Einstein said, "The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing." In face of fighting Islamic jihadists in Afghanistan (and Pakistan's tribal areas)—and defending freedom and democracy in Taiwan, ROK, and Israel against authoritarian regimes—now is the time that the transatlantic alliance, more than ever, need to take a stand in solidarity. Martin Niemoeller, a German pacifist, warned about the failure of Germans to speak out against the Nazis: "First they came for the Communists, but I was not a Communist so I did not speak out. Then they came for the Socialists and the Trade Unionists, but I was neither, so I did not speak out. Then they came for the Jews, but I was not a Jew so I did not speak out. And when they came for me, there was no one left to speak out for me." Now is the time—for such a time as this—the transatlantic alliance needs to speak out and take a stand in solidarity for its values of democracy and freedom.

⁸⁵ Gordon G. Chang, *China's Assault On The Dollar*, *Forbes*, 26 March 2009.

⁸⁶ China is Iran's #1 trading partner, and in 2004 China signed MOU to invest \$20 billion in the Iranian gas industry. In 2007-8, Sinopec and CNOOC announced new deals in Iran; such commercial interests make China reluctant to put pressure on Iran by supporting economic sanctions. Charles Grant with Katinka Barysch, "Can Europe and China Shape a New World Order?", p.79.

⁸⁷ "Reaching out and Standing up: Moving the Transatlantic Alliance Forward", remarks to the Oslo Military Society by U.S. Ambassador Benson K. Whitney, 16 March 2009.



Remarks:

Opinions expressed in this contribution are those of the author.

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