ARCTIC SUSTAINABILITY: THE PREDICAMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY

Erica M. Dingman

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| Arctic Sustainability: The Predicament of Energy and Environmental Security 1 Erica M. Dingman |
|--|
| Fergana as FATA? Central Asia after 2014 – Outcomes and Strategic Options 11 <i>Ted Donnelly</i> |
| Strategic Thinking about Future Security |
| NATO's Cooperation with Others: A Comprehensive Challenge |
| Assessing the Arab Spring in Libya and Syria: A Compilation of Varying Statements from Key Actors |
| Recent Trends in Security and Stability in the South Caucasus |
| The Evolution of Azerbaijani Identity and the Prospects of Secessionism in Iranian Azerbaijan |
| GAO Report on Arctic Capabilities |

Arctic Sustainability: The Predicament of Energy and Environmental Security

Erica M. Dingman*

Acquisition of Arctic hydrocarbon deposits is a strategic priority of Arctic states and numerous non-Arctic states alike. The U.S. Geological Survey estimates that the area north of the Arctic Circle holds 13 percent of undiscovered global oil reserves and 30 percent of undiscovered gas reserves, with the expectation that 84 percent of these reserves will be found offshore. Increasing global demand for energy, attributed primarily to population and income growth, alongside technical advancements and financial incentives will likely accelerate the rate at which stakeholders seek out these presumed Arctic hydrocarbons.¹

Several non-state and state actors are concurrently pursuing a variety of means by which to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). From financial incentives and regulatory schemes aimed at increasing the development and instillation of renewable energy sources to persuasive articulations that address the detrimental effects of climate change, these stakeholders recognize that an everlasting thirst for non-renewable resources is a proposition lacking in long-term viability. Whereas large multilateral climate change agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol have been exceedingly difficult to get right, regionally-based networks of like-minded parties have achieved considerable success. Examples of such networks include the Inuit Circumpolar Council and the European Union, both of which have made significant contributions toward addressing the implications of hydrocarbon dependency, albeit from very different perspectives.

The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC)—a group representing the interests of Inuit from Canada, Denmark, Russia, and the United States—now grapples with the balance between preserving their homeland and the potential socioeconomic benefits of hydrocarbon extraction. Instead of focusing solely on extracting energy resources, the European Union (EU) is seeking to reduce region-wide GHG emissions, and is emphasizing

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According to the *BP Energy Outlook 2030* report, demand for oil is on the decline while demand for conventional and unconventional gas is on the rise. However, non-fossil fuels, led by renewable energy sources, account for more than half the growth in energy demand. *BP Energy Outlook 2030* (London: British Petroleum, January 2011).

renewable energy sources as a means of increasing energy independence and contributing to economic growth.² Both the ICC and EU are on a quest to find solutions to difficult challenges, asking blunt questions that confront the status quo. Both the ICC and the EU seek a more influential voice in the outcome of Arctic strategy. The ICC is a Permanent Participant on the Arctic Council (AC), but unlike individual Arctic states the ICC does not have the right to vote. The EU is yet to have a voice at the AC, and is seeking Permanent Observer status. Both have a strategic interest in accessing Arctic resources.

In considering the potential for Arctic hydrocarbons we must also consider the implications of development. Could the ICC and the EU act as a potential counterbalance to Arctic nations that have strong interests in hydrocarbon extraction?

As Simon Dalby has written, "The assumption that the environment is separate from both humanity and economic systems lies at the heart of the policy difficulties facing sustainable development and security thinking."³

Environmental Challenges

Climate change is the most significant global variable of the twenty-first century. According to Sheila Watt-Cloutier, former chair of the ICC, "The Arctic is serving as a canary in the coal mine for the global environment."⁴ Joey Comiso, senior scientist at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, claimed: "The sea ice is not only declining, the pace of the decline is becoming more drastic," a sign of a warming trend that will have ecological, socioeconomic, and security implications.⁵

Permafrost thaw damages existing infrastructure; commercial and residential buildings and bridges suffer severe damage or collapse; and ice-roads are compromised and railway tracks buckle. As permafrost becomes less stable, oil pipelines may shift, increasing the risk of oil spills. Commercial interests rely on the persistence of permafrost for transporting supplies to and from mines and drill sites. A 2011 UCLA study on the effects of Arctic warming reports that Northern Canada's famed Tibbitt–Contwoyto "diamond road," reportedly the world's most lucrative ice road, is expected to suffer the effects of permafrost thaw.⁶ For remote indigenous communities, compro-

² European Commission, *Climate Action: The EU Climate and Energy Package* (last updated 18 October 2010); available at http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/package/index en.htm.

³ Simon Dalby, "Security and Ecology in the Age of Globalization," *Environmental Change* and Security Project Report 8 (Summer 2002): 101.

⁴ Inuit Circumpolar Council Press Release, "Inuit of Canada Amongst the Hardest Hit by Climate Change," (30 August 2000); available at http://inuitcircumpolar.com/index.php?ID= 137&Lang=En.

⁵ Patrick Lynch, "Arctic Sea Ice Continues Decline, Hits 2nd-Lowest Level," NASA News Feature (4 October 2011); available at http://www.nasa.gov/topics/earth/features/2011-icemin.html.

⁶ Scott R. Stephenson, Laurence C. Smith, and John A. Agnew, "Divergent Long-term Trajectories of Human Access to the Arctic," *Nature Climate Change* (29 May 2011): 156– 60; available at www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/v1/n3/full/nclimate1120.html.

mised winter roads could force communities "to switch to air cargo services, which will dramatically increase the costs of supplies," notes Scott Stephenson, lead author of the study.

Yet the study also noted that coastal communities would likely benefit from increased intercontinental shipping, and that Arctic coastal states will have greater access to their respective exclusive economic zones, including fisheries and hydrocarbons. Although states and corporate entities are the unquestionable beneficiaries of commercial activity, the extent to which indigenous communities will also reap the socioeconomic benefits remains questionable.

The accelerated erosion of Arctic shorelines further threatens vulnerable communities. The forced relocation of Alaskan Inuit villages is already a reality, creating what have been described as the first U.S. climate refugees. According to a 2004 U.S. Government Accountability Office report, four villages were in imminent danger as a result of flooding and soil erosion. By 2009, that number had risen to thirty-one villages, twelve of which decided to relocate. However, numerous complications have slowed the process, including the relocation costs of USD 95–200 million per village, the challenges in choosing a culturally acceptable location, and the trauma of uprooting families from generations of tradition.⁷

From an economic perspective the Arctic warming trend has potential consequences beyond those that have been observed thus far. Nicholas Stern of the London School of Economics noted that most scientific analysis is conservative in regard to long-term climate change forecasts.⁸ Until recently most Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) models did not take into account the dangers posed by the melting permafrost. As a result, the far-reaching economic consequences of this aspect of global warming have not been taken into account.

Emerging pollutants also provide cause for alarm. An IPCC study suggests that melting permafrost will result in the release of megatons of carbon by the end of the century.⁹ Additionally, retreating sea ice is resulting in the reemergence of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) of declining levels.¹⁰ POPs are the result of industrial pollutants produced elsewhere, much of which settles in the Arctic region.

⁷ Tribes & Climate Change, "Climate Change: Realities of Relocation for Alaska Native Villages"; available at www4.nau.edu/tribalclimatechange/tribes/ak_inupiaq_AkRelocation.asp.

⁸ Nicholas Stern, "Climate Change: The Economics of and Prospects for a Global Deal," video produced by the MIT Energy Initiative (19 November 2007); available at: http://mitworld.mit.edu/video/536.

⁹ Emily Chung, "Arctic Permafrost Thaw Will Boost Carbon Emissions," CBC News: Technology and Science (15 August 2011); available at www.cbc.ca/news/technology/story/ 2011/08/15/science-carbon-sink-source-arctic.html.

¹⁰ Jianmin Ma, Hayley Hung, Chongguo Tian, and Roland Kallenborn, "Revolatilization of Persistent Organic Pollutants in the Arctic Induced by Climate Change," *Nature Climate Change* 1:5 (24 July 2011) 255–60; available at www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/v1/n5/ full/nclimate1167.html?WT.ec_id=NCLIMATE-201108#auth-4.

Oil Spills and Response

The Arctic warming trend is also increasing the likelihood of access to potential hydrocarbon deposits, including access to deepwater oil drilling sites that are farther from shore. However, in the event of a hydrocarbon spill, this distance creates substantially more hazardous conditions for search and rescue missions (SAR) and clean-up responders. A likely rise in shipping activity and hydrocarbon extraction advances the inherent risk of oil spills and the environmental consequences, and the resulting loss to coastal communities would likely be long-lasting. A report by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reports that the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill dumped 11 million gallons of oil into Prince William Sound on the Alaskan coast. While Exxon claimed that the bulk of the clean up was completed in three years, the report indicates that decades later evidence of the spill is still present along the shores of Alaska, e.g., in a decline in the fish stock and contaminated mussel and clam stock. The Exxon Valdez spill occurred in relatively calm seas, conditions not standard in Arctic waters.¹¹

In 2009 the Coastal Response Research Center at the University of New Hampshire gathered experts from government, NGOs, industry, and Arctic indigenous groups to consider the risks of increased hydrocarbon exploration and extraction activity in the Arctic. Scenarios considered "likely" to occur were assessed in order to evaluate the capability gaps of SAR missions and environmental recovery efforts. Numerous gaps surfaced, including inadequate fleets of rescue vessels; differing and incompatible national policies; poor communications infrastructure; out of date or incomplete environmental degradation. Less obvious gaps included language barriers; inadequate onshore resources to house and care for large groups of victims and SAR teams; governmental hesitation to act as a port of refuge for damaged vessels; and associated costs to government/governments responsible for SAR and clean up.¹²

Dr. Abdel Ghoneim, senior principal engineer for Det Norske Veritas, a risk management foundation focusing on the maritime oil, gas, and energy industry, notes: "We

¹¹ United States Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, "NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration: Arctic Activities" (March 2009).

¹² Coastal Response Research Center at the University of New Hampshire, *Opening the Arctic Seas: Envisioning Disasters and Framing Solutions* (Durham, NH: conference report issued January 2009; conference held 18–20 March 2008). Responsible parties are expected to bear the cleanup costs of oil spills. However, as the 2010 Deepwater Horizon spill in the Gulf of Mexico revealed, federal, state and local governments bore a substantial portion of the cost. Numerous factors contribute to determining which party will bear the cost for SAR and environmental recovery efforts. For instance, the U.S.-based Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund was established to pay certain oil spill costs. However, the Fund is capped at USD 1 billion per incident, and was at risk of reaching its limit as of 2010. For more information, see GAO-11-90R *Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill: Preliminary Assessment of Federal Financial Risks and Cost Reimbursement and Notification Policies and Procedures* (Washingotn, D.C.: GAO, 12 November 2010).

are not really prepared for a disaster [in the Arctic]." Although Ghoneim claims that the industry has the technology to develop deepwater drill sites, he also believes that regulators need to be more involved. Risk analysis and accident preparedness remain the top challenges for hydrocarbon companies operating in the Arctic.¹³ Admiral Robert Papp of the U.S. Coast Guard also expressed concern about the environmental implications of an Arctic oil spill. The agency "needs an appropriate level of Arctic pollution response. Presently we have none," he noted.¹⁴

The Inuit Circumpolar Council and the European Union: Unusual Allies

Is there potential for an ICC–EU alliance as a counterbalance to the commercial impetus for Arctic development? As stated earlier, both groups seek solutions to difficult problems, and both are not afraid to ask hard questions that challenge received wisdom. Yet, a potential alliance is not without its complications. The two groups' asymmetrical history could derail any thought of an alliance based on a shared will to combat climate change. Yet there is reason to contemplate the potential for cooperation between the ICC and the EU.

Inuit Circumpolar Council and Arctic Development

Founded in 1977, the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (now Council) is a trans-boundary organization representing the interest of Inuit from Canada, Alaska, Greenland, and Russia. Since its creation its primary objective has been to "preserve the Arctic environment and to create a comprehensive Arctic policy."¹⁵ The Arctic scholar Jessica Shadian extols the ICCs political persistence and savvy media campaigns through which it has developed a role as an "influential political actor."¹⁶

At its embryonic stage, Eben Hopson, founder of the ICC, wrote a letter to U.S. President Jimmy Carter, stating: "We hope that our Inuit Circumpolar Conference will initiate dialogue between the five Arctic coastal nations necessary to lead to formal agreements for safe and responsible oil and gas development."¹⁷ Although hydrocarbon development was thought to be problematic, it would bring heat to Inuit homes, which was a significant consideration. In 1981 an article in *Foreign Affairs* noted that "[t]ransarctic diplomacy was thus not pioneered by the six governments of the adjacent

¹³ Abdel Ghoneim, "Meeting the Challenges of Arctic Development," *Offshore Magazine* webcast (24 February 2011); available at: http://www.offshore-mag.com/index/webcasts/ webcast-display/1403483920/webcasts/webcasts-offshore/live-events/os-arctic.html.

¹⁴ Stephen Lacey, "After North Sea Oil Spill, Shell Plans to Continue Arctic Drilling," *Grist* (16 August 2011); available at http://grist.org/fossil-fuels/2011-08-16-after-north-sea-oilspill-shell-plans-continue-arctic-drilling/.

¹⁵ Jessica Shadian, "Remaking Arctic Governance: The Construction of an Arctic Inuit Polity," *Polar Record* 42 (2006): 249–59.

¹⁶ Jessica Shadian, "From States to Polities: Reconceptualizing Sovereignty through Inuit Governance," *European Journal of International Relations* 16:3 (2010): 485–510.

¹⁷ Quoted in Shadian, "Remaking Arctic Governance."

states," but rather by the efforts of the ICC.¹⁸ The formalization of trans-Arctic diplomacy took place with the founding of the Arctic Council in 1996.

In 2000, the ICC was also well positioned to influence the Arctic Council's Sustainable Development Framework. The guiding principles of the framework stipulate that sustainable development must include "opportunities to protect and enhance the environment and the economies, culture and health of indigenous communities and of other inhabitants of the Arctic."¹⁹

When the Arctic Council's *Arctic Climate Impact Assessment* (ACIA) was ready for release, the United States attempted to delay it until an undisclosed date. Sheila Watt-Cloutier called on her Washington contacts to push the report forward. At her behest, Senators McCain, Lautenberg, and Snowe intervened, and the ACIA became public in November 2004 as originally planned. For the ICC, the ACIA was seen as a means to "bridge the gulf between European and American responses to global climate change." The ICC embraced the involvement of other non-Arctic states including the European Union, adding that the U.K. had been particularly involved in the work of the Arctic Council.²⁰

Many in the Inuit community associate sustainability with the cultural and economic implications of Western domination. Whereas the historic processes of colonization created artificial boundaries and attempted to eradicate Inuit traditions and culture, Aqqaluk Lynge, now chair of the ICC, associates climate change with the historic "culture-changing" effects of missionaries and colonizers.²¹

The rejection of historic colonialism is also evident in the ICCs *Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic*. The Declaration underscores cooperation between Arctic nations and indigenous peoples. This was particularly significant in light of a 2008 meeting held by the Arctic coastal states: Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia, and the United States.

Informally known as the Arctic 5, these states together wrote the *Ilulissat Declaration* in 2008, which appears to undermine the cooperative spirit of the Arctic Council. Brooks Yeager, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Environment and Development, observed that the meeting might signify an attempt by the Arctic 5 to take a "predominant role" in Arctic decision-making. Yeager noted, "Such a view obviously

¹⁸ Lincoln P. Bloomfield, "The Arctic: Last Unmanaged Frontier," *Foreign Affairs* 60:1 (1981):
90.

¹⁹ Arctic Council, *Framework Document (Chapeau) for the Sustainable Development Programme* (13 October 2000); available at http://arctic-council.org/section/documentation.

²⁰ Sheila Watt-Cloutier, *Climate Change and the Arctic: Bringing Inuit Perspectives to Global Attention,* Inuit Circumpolar Council, Address to the Norwegian Research and Technology Forum in cooperation with the Carnegie Institution second Trans-Atlantic Cooperative Research Conference, "Meeting the Climate-Energy Challenge" (Washington, D.C., 5 October 2004); available at www.inuitcircumpolar.com/index.php?ID=271&Lang=En.

²¹ Aqqaluk Lynge, "Strengthening Culture through Change: Will Climate Change Strengthen or Destroy Us?", Luncheon Address at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland (2009); available at www.inuit.org/index.php?id=280&L=1.

challenges the potential for either the non-coastal Arctic nations or non-Arctic governments to exert claims and interests in resources, or influence over their disposition."²²

Inuit, however, intend to exert their rights to all Arctic resources, some of which are protected under various international and domestic laws. While the *Declaration on Sovereignty* makes reference to natural resources, the 2011 *Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Resource Development Principles in Inuit Nuaat* suggests that the ICC has assumed a conditionally aggressive approach to natural resource development, linked to Inuit governance and the socioeconomic benefits that would accrue to Inuit people. The 2011 Declaration states that development of non-renewable energy resources can contribute to "Inuit economic and social development through both private sector channels (employment, incomes, businesses) and public sector channels (revenues from publicly owned lands, tax revenues, infrastructure)."

Yet differing degrees of national autonomy coupled with variations in the foreseeable access to natural resources weakened the final outcome of the declaration on resources. Where leaders had wished to impose stronger limitations on resource development, disagreements on the extent of development led to a more flexible set of guiding principles. Influenced predominantly by Greenland's imminent access to potential hydrocarbon production, Greenlandic leaders view development as an opportunity to gain economic independence from Denmark. Premier Kuupik Kleist argued: "Companies from the outside have been exploiting natural resources in the Arctic area for centuries now. The Inuit didn't. Now it's our turn."²³ Indeed, the great paradox of Inuit decision making sits at the nexus of environmental security and socioeconomic development.

The European Union and Arctic Development

When the European Union's Arctic policy comes to fruition, some believe its likely focus will emphasize climate change and environmental issues rather than energy security, which in some respects is aligned with ICC policy.²⁴ Concurrently the EU has a strategic interest in acquiring Arctic resources. However, in a best-case scenario the EU could extend its climate change strategy to the Arctic, linking emission reductions to energy security and economic growth.

In 2009, the EU adopted binding legislation known as the "20-20-20" targets. As of 2009, total EU-27 GHG emissions have dropped 17.4 percent from 1990 levels, achieved in part through the development of renewable energies. However, unlike

²² Brooks B. Yeager, "The Ilulissat Declaration: Background and Implications for Arctic Governance," paper prepared for the Aspen Dialogue and Commission on Arctic Climate Change (5 November 2008).

²³ Sarah Rogers, "Arctic Resource Development Inevitable and Safe: Greenland," *Nunatsia-konline.ca* (24 February 2011); available at http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/ 240124_arctic_resource_development_inevitable_safe_greenland/.

²⁴ Kristine Offerdal, "Arctic Energy and EU Policy: Arbitrary Interest in the Norwegian High North," Arctic 63:1 (2010): 30–42.

Canada, for instance, the EU is a net energy importer, which renders the development of renewable energy resources relatively uncontroversial. "EU climate policy," notes Miranda Schreurs, "is seen as a way of moving member economies toward greater energy autonomy, resource efficiency, and technological progress."²⁵

Although support for the emissions reduction scheme is not unanimous, some nations such as the U.K. have been particularly aggressive in pursuing reductions in carbon emissions. In 2008, the U.K. Climate Change Act became the first legally binding climate change framework; the emissions reduction goal was set to 80 percent by 2050. The policy received strong political and public support. Once a net supplier of oil and gas, the U.K. must now look to other sources for energy security, including renewable sources.²⁶ Additionally, studies have shown that rising sea levels will impact environmental and economic security in the U.K. A 2010 U.K. Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology study estimated that there is GBP 120 billion worth of infrastructure and resources at risk from coastal flooding and a further GBP 10 billion at risk from coastal erosion.²⁷ Beyond domestic and region-wide climate policy, the EU has a strategic interest in shaping strategies and policy pertaining to the Far North. Arno Behrens, an expert on the nexus of energy and climate change, notes: "Europe's transition towards a low-carbon energy system will only make sense in the context of global emissions reductions."²⁸

In the aftermath of the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster in 2010, the EU Parliamentary Committee on Industry, Research, and Energy passed a draft resolution calling for tougher environmental and safety standards on all offshore oil and gas drilling.²⁹ According to *Danish Maritime Magazine*, if the legislation had passed in its entirety it would have temporarily halted all deep sea drilling in the Arctic.³⁰ Instead, on 13 September 2011, Parliament adopted *Facing the challenge of the safety of offshore oil and gas activities*, which calls for tougher regulations on companies seeking a license for offshore exploration and exploitation licenses. In addition, industry should demonstrate

²⁵ Miranda A. Schreurs, "Federalism and the Climate: Canada and the European Union," *International Journal* 66:1 (2010–11): 91–108.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ United Kingdom Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, "Sea Level Rise," Postnote 363 (September 2010).

²⁸ Arno Behrens, "The Role of Renewables in the Interaction Between Climate Change Policy and Energy Security in Europe," *Renewable Energy Law and Policy Review* 1 (2010): 5–15.

²⁹ European Parliament, Committee on Industry, Research, and Energy, "Offshore Oil and Gas Drilling: Tougher Environment and Safety Standards Needed" (12 July 2011); available at www.europarl.europa.eu/en/pressroom/content/20110614IPR21329/html/Offshore-oil-andgas-drilling-tougher-environment-and-safety-standards-needed.

³⁰ "EU Wants Deepwater Drilling in the Arctic Stopped," *Danish Maritime Magazine* (13 July 2011); available at www.danishmaritimemagazine.com/Nyheder/nyhed.aspx?NewsID=13302 &Titel=EU%20wants%20deepwater%20drilling%20in%20the%20Arctic%20stopped.

the ability to bear the full cost of clean-up and compensation in the event of a disaster either through insurance or industry mutualization.³¹

When the European Parliament adopted *A Sustainable EU Policy for the High North* in 2011, it advocated for "broad all-encompassing ecosystem-based approaches most likely to be capable of dealing with the multiple challenges facing the Arctic related to climate change."³² However, at a parliamentary debate prior to the vote, one critic argued: "There seems to have been a very subtle shift ... in our thinking, towards security; security of energy supply and security of the use of resources."³³ Indeed, confidential U.K. Foreign Office documents obtained by Greenpeace revealed that the U.K. was considering "how best to support" Shell and BP in Russia's Sakhalin-2 gas field project. The U.K. is the largest foreign investor in the Russian energy sector, and has expressed significant interest in Arctic drilling and shipping.³⁴ Indeed, the EU's Arctic strategy lacks clarity, perhaps as a result of its tenuous position as it waits for a seat on the Arctic Council.

At present the EU is extolling the benefits of an *UN Convention on the Law of the Sea* (UNCLOS)-based Arctic governance system. Dr. Joe Borg, former EU Commissioner for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, reasoned that the challenges and opportunities facing the Arctic were of a "truly global nature," and that "the keywords for the 21st century international policy for the Arctic must be unity and cooperation."³⁵ By aligning their interests with UNCLOS, the EU seeks "to secure or enhance their status in the [Arctic] governance debate."³⁶

In terms of Arctic nations, upon ratification of UNCLOS, a country has ten years to make claims to an extended continental shelf which, if validated, gives it exclusive rights to resources on or below the seabed of that extended shelf area. However, UN-

³¹ European Parliament, "On facing the challenges of the safety of offshore oil and gas activities" (13 September 2011); available at www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do? pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2011-0366+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN.

³² European Parliament, *A Sustainable EU Policy for the High North* (A7-0377/2010) (Strasbourg, 20 January 2011).

³³ European Parliament, A Sustainable EU Policy for the High North (debate) (Strasbourg, 20 January 2011); available at www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT +CRE+20110120+ITEM-004+DOC+XML+V0//EN.

³⁴ Greenpeace International, "U.K. Government Documents on Arctic Drilling," greenpeace.org (24 May 2011); available at www.greenpeace.org/international/en/publications/ reports/UK-Government-Documents-on-Arctic-Drilling/UK-Documents-on-Arctic-Drilling/ and www.greenpeace.org/international/en/publications/reports/UK-Government-Documentson-Arctic-Drilling/UK-Document-on-Arctic-Drilling/.

³⁵ Joseph Borg, "The European Union's Strategy of Sustainable Management for the Arctic," speech given at the Arctic Frontiers Conference, Tromso, Norway (19 January 2009); available at: http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/speeches/speech190109 en.html.

³⁶ Timo Koivurova, "Protecting the Environment or Preventing Military Conflicts?: Policy Dynamics," *Environmental Policy and Law* 40:4 (2010): 170.

CLOS applies to nations beyond the borders of Arctic states.³⁷ In addition to acting as a mechanism regarding exclusive economic zones, UNCLOS includes freedom of the seas, and also classifies natural resources as belonging to "the common heritage of mankind" whereby no one state can exercise exclusive sovereignty over a given area. While UNCLOS has entered uncharted waters with the changing patterns of Arctic sea ice, Parker Clote suggests "UNCLOS is flexible, premised on balancing the customary freedom of the seas with the tendency of recidivist States to expand towards the high seas."³⁸

Both the Arctic Council and the United Nations will have a role to play in how Arctic strategy and governance develops in the region. Yet the direction in which the conversation tilts could determine the strength of each stakeholder's voice. Denmark's Foreign Minister Lene Espersen encouraged the Arctic 8 to fully support the Arctic Council so as to prevent it from turning into an "exclusive club." Failing to do so, she asserted, would risk creating a parallel Arctic forum at the UN, where Arctic nations "would not have a strong voice."³⁹

Conclusion

Is there potential for an ICC–EU alliance on climate change strategy? Yes, should each group decide to put aside their widely divergent histories of colonial practices in order to address the larger challenge: long-lasting environmental security. As we await a comprehensive international climate change agreement, transboundary associations such as the EU and ICC still constitute the best hope for producing creative solutions to global problems.

³⁷ Michael Byers, "Cold Peace: Arctic Cooperation and Canadian Foreign Policy," *International Journal* (Autumn 2010): 899–912.

³⁸ Parker Clote, "Implications of Global Warming on State Sovereignty and Arctic Resources under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea: How the Arctic is no Longer communis omnium naturali jure," Richmond Journal of Global Law and Business 8 (2008): 195.

³⁹ "New Strategy Outlines Denmark's Arctic Engagement," *People's Daily Online* (23 August 2011); available at http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90777/90853/7577436.html.

Fergana as FATA? Central Asia after 2014 – Outcomes and Strategic Options

Ted Donnelly *

Introduction

After more than a decade at war, the world's most powerful military withdrew its combat forces from Afghanistan. Having variously pursued counterinsurgency and counterterrorism strategies, the invading force had not been victorious, but neither had it been defeated. The superpower left behind a friendly Afghan government and reasonably well-trained and well-equipped Afghan security forces. It also left behind insurgents, including not only local Afghans but also foreign Islamists, whose capabilities had been disrupted and degraded but not defeated. The superpower continued to support its Afghan government allies, rendering financial support, military training, and technical assistance to address the insurgency. However, after two years, new political and fiscal realities forced the superpower to cease its support. Afghanistan descended into civil war, in which Islamic extremists prevailed. In return for their support, the new Islamist government repaid its foreign jihadist allies with safe haven, which they used to train and plan attacks against the United States, among others. They also destabilized Afghanistan's neighbors, creating conditions in which violent extremism thrived. To the north of Afghanistan, violent extremist organizations focused their attention on the Fergana Valley, a region that lies at the heart of Central Asia and is shared by three states.¹

The scenario described above began in 1989, and the withdrawing superpower was of course the Soviet Union and its Red Army. Drawing historical parallels can be dangerous, and other significant geostrategic events were certainly at work from 1989 to 1991 that affected post-Soviet Afghanistan and its neighbors.² Nonetheless, the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan holds lessons for the United States when it will eventually transfer security duties to the Afghan government in 2014. As B.H. Liddell Hart famously wrote, "the object in war is to attain a better peace."³ Yet, after thirteen years

^{*} Any views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position of the United States government, the Department of Defense, or the United States Army.

¹ In the context of this article, the terms "Central Asia," "Central Asian States," and "CAS" all refer only to the former Soviet Republics of Uzbekistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan. This is also the U.S. Department of Defense definition of the region.

² Shortly after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989, the Soviet Union began its final collapse. Unrest and upheavals in the Eastern European states of the Warsaw Pact initially drew Soviet attention toward Europe. By December 1991, the Soviet Union itself dissolved. Soviet/Russian Federation assistance to Afghanistan declined precipitously and ended shortly thereafter.

³ B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy* (London: Faber & Faber, 1954), 353.

of war in Afghanistan, the United States faces a potential post-2014 "peace" in which Central Asia is less stable, harbors more terrorists, and presents a greater security threat to the U.S. than on 10 September 2001. Ironically (and tragically), a war originally begun to eliminate violent extremist safe havens in Afghanistan could have the unintended consequence of producing violent extremist safe havens in the Central Asian States (CAS), just to the north. This is a realistic and even likely future scenario, in part because U.S. strategists have insisted on viewing a strategic problem through a purely operational lens. However, this is not the only future, and it is not inevitable. The proper strategy can prevent this outcome. The analysis presented in this essay will describe the most likely effects of the 2014 U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan on the Central Asian States, focusing on the Fergana Valley – the strategic center of gravity of the region. It will then evaluate U.S. policy options and recommend a post-2014 strategy.

The Significance of Central Asia

In 2001, the U.S. necessarily entered Afghanistan without an exit strategy. Furthermore, in over a decade of fighting, it has yet to develop a theater strategy that adequately addresses the vast region of former Soviet republics to the north of Afghanistan. From the beginning, U.S. theater strategy has approached Central Asia from a purely short-term, operational perspective. In 2001, the U.S. needed airbases to transport troops and supplies and to base fighters, tankers, and cargo planes, and successfully negotiated to establish them in Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic.⁴ Later, when ground supply lines through Pakistan came under increasing pressure, the U.S. established the "Northern Distribution Network" (NDN), a complex of ground supply routes running from Europe to Afghanistan, transiting various Central Asian states. The U.S. was quick to assure the Central Asian governments and nervous neighboring regional powers Russia and China that U.S. interests in the region were temporary and existed only in the context of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan. This message has been reiterated frequently, as this "temporary" U.S. presence in the region has now exceeded ten years. Thus, since 2001, U.S. military strategists have treated this

⁴ Shortly after 2001, the United States Air Force established two support bases in the Central Asian States: one in Kharshi-Khanabad, in southern Uzbekistan (known as "K2"), and the other at the Manas International Airport in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic (initially "Ganci Air Base," named after the New York City Fire Chief killed on 11 September 2001). K2 was the primary base used to support operations in Afghanistan until 2005, when disputes over rent payments and U.S. criticism of Uzbek government human rights abuses at Andijon (in the Fergana Valley subregion) led the government of Uzbekistan to evict the United States. Since December 2005, "Ganci" (given the cumbersome new title of "The Transit Center at Manas International Airport," or TCMIA, in July 2009) has been the only U.S. support facility in Central Asia, and as such its importance has increased significantly. For their troubles, Central Asian governments received marginally more U.S. assistance, more frequent highlevel visits (mostly military), and occasionally some respite from criticism on human rights and democracy.

region solely as a geographic and occasionally political obstacle to *operations* – something to be transited or crossed en route to or from Afghanistan. In accordance with the current strategy, when OEF ends, U.S. operational requirements in the region will also end, and Central Asia will cease to be of concern. Current U.S. military strategy in Central Asia is best summarized as "do whatever is necessary to keep our bases and supply routes open until the last U.S. soldier leaves Afghanistan in 2014."⁵

As important as it is to support the war fighters in OEF, the problem with this approach is that it fails to acknowledge the strategic significance of the Central Asian region in its own right. A strategic analysis of the region demonstrates that Afghanistan and Central Asia are inextricably linked, strategically as well as operationally. Strategic success in Central Asia is critical to strategic (not just operational) success in Afghanistan, and vice versa.

It is certainly legitimate to question why the U.S. should fear the prospect of instability in Central Asia after 2014, or even the specter of a Fergana-based Islamic caliphate, given that the U.S. will no longer have operational transit requirements in support of OEF. The answer is two-fold. First, stability in Central Asia is a prerequisite for stability and security in post-2014 Afghanistan. The Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) region of Pakistan provides a useful and relevant example of this point. The FATA region consists of largely ungoverned space and serves as a safe haven for numerous violent extremist organizations, many of which conduct operations in Afghanistan. These groups are a significant source of Afghanistan's present instability, and will remain so after 2014. An analogous region to the north (and one not even nominally friendly to the U.S.) would be devastating to Afghanistan's future, as that country would find itself surrounded by destabilizing regimes. In such an environment, it is inconceivable that Afghanistan could survive as a stable, independent state that does not sponsor or support international violent extremism.

Second, and perhaps more important from a strategic perspective, the Central Asian states have the potential to become what Turkey once was, and what Egypt, Libya, Iraq, and Syria will never be: moderate, secular, Muslim-majority states that are not hostile (and are perhaps even friendly) to U.S. interests. With the right strategy, this outcome is achievable, and without a massive expenditure of resources. The Central Asian states do not require expensive (and fruitless) nation building efforts, nor do they require awkward informational campaigns on the dangers of extremism and the merits of secularism. They do, however, require moderate support to maintain these traits.

While a post-2014 theater strategy should necessarily be focused on Afghanistan and Pakistan, it must not neglect the Central Asian states to the north. As noted above, Afghanistan and Central Asia are strategically linked. Furthermore, the array of problems facing Central Asia is not nearly as intractable as is the set of challenges confronting Pakistan. It is possible between now and 2014 to develop and implement a theater strategy that advances U.S. national interests by protecting Central Asia's stra-

⁵ James N. Mattis, "U.S. Central Command Posture Statement," presented before the Senate Armed Services Committee on 1 March 2011; available at http://www.centcom.mil/en/aboutcentcom/posture-statement/.

tegic center of gravity, the Fergana Valley. This will create necessary conditions to ensure strategic success in Afghanistan. Most importantly, in a time of reduced budgets and constrained U.S. international commitments, it is neither fiscally expensive nor a manpower intensive strategy.

Assumptions Regarding the U.S. Withdrawal from Afghanistan

The analysis presented in this essay proceeds from several assumptions. First, the U.S. combat commitment will end in December 2014 as promised, with security responsibilities transferred to Afghan forces.⁶ While NATO leaders have declared that the withdrawal will be "conditions-based, not calendar driven,"⁷ President Obama has stated that combat operations will be completed by 2014.⁸ Indeed, the withdrawal of U.S. "surge" troops has already begun. If the example of Iraq is any indicator, there will be little domestic political will to extend the U.S. combat commitment beyond 2014, and there could even be pressure to withdraw trainers soon thereafter. Whatever the ultimate date, it will come someday, and U.S. strategy must address an Afghanistan in which U.S. combat troops are not present and Afghan forces have overall responsibility for security.

The second assumption is that U.S. assistance, both military and developmental, cannot and will not continue at its current levels. This is not just a function of budget realities in the United States, but also of fatigue and waning interest among the American people and their elected leaders. The post-2014 strategy must assume that fewer financial and personnel resources will be available for U.S. efforts in the region. Given the first two assumptions, it is also reasonable to assume that the post-2014 Afghan government and its security forces will not control 100 percent of its territory.

Finally, the main regional powers Russia and China are unlikely to support any future U.S. strategy that involves continued U.S. presence and significant U.S. influence in the region. The post-1991 trend of active opposition to U.S. physical presence is likely to continue as it has for the past twenty years, glimpses into leaders' souls and reset buttons notwithstanding.

⁶ "Combat forces" in this context refers to large conventional units. There remains the possibility, even likelihood, that the U.S. Special Operations Forces will remain active in Afghanistan, and that the U.S. will continue to use drone attacks against high value targets.

⁷ NATO Public Diplomacy Division, Press Release 155, "Lisbon Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council" (Lisbon, 20 November 2010), 2; available at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_ 68828.htm?mode=pressrelease.

⁸ Barack Obama, Press Conference by U.S. President at the North Atlantic Meeting at the level of Heads of State and Government (Lisbon, 20 November 2010); available at www.nato.int/ cps/en/natolive/official_texts_68828.htm?mode=pressrelease.

Effects of the U.S. Withdrawal on the Central Asian States

In light of these four assumptions, what will be the effect of the U.S. withdrawal on the states in Central Asia post-2014? For insights it is worthwhile to briefly return to the Soviet experience mentioned above. The Soviet Union's withdrawal of forces from Afghanistan in 1989 created a power vacuum in the region and precipitated a civil war in that country. The collapse of the USSR itself two years later led to an end to Soviet aid to Afghanistan and to Soviet training and equipping of Afghan security forces. The Taliban won the civil war, and in turn offered its territory to like-minded transnational organizations, including of course Osama bin Laden's well-known Al Qaeda network, but also to lesser-known violent extremist organizations such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), which has the goal of establishing a Central Asian Islamic caliphate centered in the Fergana Valley.⁹

To the north, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent withdrawal of most Soviet security forces from Central Asia shortly thereafter created another power vacuum. Soviet central authority was replaced by five new, weak states that struggled to consolidate power internally and create their own national security forces from whatever scraps the Soviets had left behind. The IMU and related groups thrived in this environment, launching attacks against the government of Uzbekistan in 1999. The IMU also attempted to jump-start its Central Asian caliphate by invading the Kyrgyz Republic from its bases in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, successfully seizing and briefly holding territory during the "Batken Events" of 1999–2000.¹⁰

¹⁰ In 1999, the IMU launched a military offensive against the Batken region (then part of Osh Oblast) with the objective of severing it from the Kyrgyz Republic and creating an embry-onic caliphate. Batken was selected due to its remote location, proximity to Fergana, weak control by Kyrgyz central authorities, and the weakness of Kyrgyz security forces. The IMU successfully seized several villages and inflicted significant casualties on Kyrgyz forces before ultimately being beaten back by Kyrgyz counteroffensives. Batken Oblast is the poorest, most devout, and most remote region of the Kyrgyz Republic. It is a narrow, mountainous region that borders the Fergana Valley to the south. Post-Soviet political geography isolated it from the rest of the Kyrgyz Republic even more than its physical geography. Most Soviet roads ran through the Fergana Valley proper, meaning that to travel from the oblast capital of Osh to most points in Batken required crossing Uzbekistan. Given the poor relations between

⁹ U.S. Department of State, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2010* (Washington, D.C.: State Department, August 2011). The U.S. Department of State has designated two Central Asian groups as "Foreign Terrorist Organizations": the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU), itself an off-shoot splinter group from the IMU. Also active in the region is *Hizb-ut-Tahrir* (HuT), an ostensibly nonviolent group that seeks the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in Central Asia. The State Department does not consider HuT to be a Foreign Terrorist Organization, but it is outlawed in all Central Asian States and Russia. As the IMU is the oldest, most capable, and most dangerous violent extremist organization in Central Asia, for the sake of simplicity this analysis refers primarily to the IMU. However, the effects of a U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan will benefit all Islamist extremist groups in Central Asia, and the recommended U.S. policy option will address them all.

While the IMU was ultimately unsuccessful in these early tactical engagements, it was not defeated strategically, and indeed gained considerable prestige at the expense of the governments of Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic.¹¹ On 11 September 2011, the IMU could be said to have had strategic momentum in the Fergana Valley, despite its recent tactical defeats.

Operation Enduring Freedom stopped the IMU's momentum, and dealt them a severe operational defeat. Although not a specified target of OEF, IMU fighters conducting training and planning operations found their Afghan sanctuaries under attack. The IMU suffered many casualties from U.S. and Coalition attacks, and when the Taliban regime was toppled, they lost their safe havens as well.¹² IMU activity in Central Asia dropped precipitously in the aftermath of early U.S. and Coalition successes in Afghanistan in 2001 and 2002, and the organization relocated its rear areas to Pakistan, much further from their targets in the Fergana Valley and with U.S. military forces in Afghanistan in between.

As noted above, historical parallels are often imperfect, including this one. Clearly, the collapse of the USSR only two years following the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan was a significant factor in the success of both the Taliban and the IMU – one that cannot be overstated. However, it is difficult to imagine a post-2014 scenario in which Afghan security forces control all Afghan territory and make it inhospitable to foreign violent extremist organizations such as the IMU. It is quite likely that the U.S. withdrawal will create another power vacuum, and precipitate another power struggle.

So, whither Central Asia in this scenario? Again, the Soviet experience can only take one so far. The Central Asian states have been independent for more than twenty years and have developed their own governments and security forces. Unlike during the immediate post-Soviet period of the 1990s, they will not have to fight insurgents even as they attempt to create their own nations out of chaos. However, it is also difficult to envision a future scenario in which Fergana-based terrorist groups are not emboldened, empowered, and strengthened by the U.S. withdrawal in 2014. Clearly, the vacuum that will be created by the U.S. departure from the region in 2014 is not nearly as substantial as that left by the Soviet withdrawal in 1991 – as noted, U.S. presence in Central Asia has been minimal, its assistance uneven, and its interest short-term and operational.

Nonetheless, the U.S. withdrawal will have significant effects on the Central Asian states of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and the Kyrgyz Republic.¹³ While each has recently

the two countries, movement of military forces through Uzbek territory (i.e., along the most direct routes) is generally not possible.

¹¹ The Uzbek response was harsh, repressive, and disproportional. The Kyrgyz response revealed the incompetence and lack of readiness of Kyrgyz security forces.

¹² Richard Weitz, "Storm Clouds over Central Asia: Revival of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)?" *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 27:66 (2004): 507.

¹³ The immediate impact on Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan is likely to be less significant. These countries would be impacted only under the "worst-case scenario," discussed below.

celebrated two decades of independence, all remain weak states. In December 2011, the Kyrgyz Republic inaugurated a democratically elected president, the first peaceful transition of power in post-Soviet Central Asia. Yet that young democracy has significant ethnic tensions in its south, and a weak economy everywhere. Uzbekistan's Soviet strongman holdover, Islam Karimov, is old and sick, with no apparent succession plan in place, making that country less stable than it might appear. Tajikistan has yet to recover from the devastating civil war that it fought in the 1990s in the wake of the Soviet withdrawal, and Tajik military forces suffered significant setbacks battling insurgents in 2010.

Within Central Asia, the effects of the U.S. withdrawal will be strongest in the Fergana Valley subregion. As mentioned above, the Fergana Valley is the strategic center of gravity of Central Asia, owing to its central geographic location, extremely fertile soil, dense population, strong religious influence, instability, and lack of effective control by central authorities.¹⁴ Its territory is split between three states: Uzbekistan possesses most of the fertile valley floor itself, the Kyrgyz Republic holds the foothills and some major population centers, and Tajikistan controls the approaches. The international borders do not always follow traditional lines between ethnic groups in the region, adding yet another destabilizing factor. While the governments of Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic have generally good relations, there are many local disputes in Fergana Valley border areas. The governments of Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic have poor relations, making regional cooperation more difficult. The valley's central location, ethnic diversity, and shared political status guarantee that any instability in the Fergana Valley will at least affect these three countries. It is not at all a cliché or overly simplistic to state, "as goes the Fergana Valley, so goes Central Asia."

Potential Post-2014 Scenarios for the Fergana Valley

Three future scenarios are possible for the Fergana Valley. In the worst-case scenario, the Fergana dominoes will begin to fall immediately after 2014. Following the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, the IMU will launch a full-scale offensive in the Valley. Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan all will fall to Islamists within one to two years. This scenario is as unlikely as it is dire. Even in 1999–2000, weaker Central Asian governments were able to beat back the IMU offensives. Still, it cannot be entirely discounted. Events in the Kyrgyz Republic from April–June 2010 demonstrated just how quickly a seemingly "strong" government can collapse under limited pressure, and just how rapidly the security forces can lose control, and in such a comprehensive manner. Additionally, Tajik military forces suffered significant tactical defeats fighting the Taliban in 2010 and 2011.¹⁵ Nonetheless, an immediate Islamist takeover of Cen-

¹⁴ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operation Planning*, Joint Publication 5-0 (Washington, DC: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, 11 August 2011). Joint Publication 5-0 defines a "Center of Gravity" as "a source of power that provides moral or physical strength, freedom of action, or will to act. It is what Clausewitz called "the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends … the point at which all our energies should be directed."

¹⁵ U.S. Department of State, Country Reports on Terrorism 2010, 125–27.

tral Asia will be possible only if Afghan forces collapse quickly and spectacularly in the post-2014 period.

Even less likely is the best-case scenario, in which stability in Fergana flourishes in the wake of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. In this outcome, Fergana-centric extremist groups would wither away, disband, or join in non-violent political processes. Violent extremism would then become a rarity or a nuisance, not seriously affecting regional stability. Some critics (domestic and international) of U.S. policy in Central Asia have long argued that U.S. presence is the real source of instability in the region, providing a *raison d'être* for violent extremist groups.¹⁶ Presumably, in this view, removing the source (i.e., the U.S.) would remove, or at least marginalize, the problem.

However, this presumption ignores several key facts, namely that the IMU and its ilk significantly pre-date any serious U.S. interest (much less presence) in the Central Asia region, and that the IMU's activity only abated when the U.S. destroyed their Afghan sanctuaries. Furthermore, in a recent and relevant example, violent extremist activity in Uzbekistan did not decline after U.S. forces were expelled from the Kharshi-Khanabad Airbase in 2005. Additionally, several prominent regional leaders have publicly expressed concern that the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan will produce instability in Central Asia.¹⁷ (An opinion that is also frequently voiced privately by regional leaders and defense and security officials).¹⁸

Rather, the most likely post-2014 outcome is that the Fergana Valley will increasingly resemble the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) region of Pakistan. Like the FATA, the future Fergana Valley will consist of significant ungoverned space that would serve as a safe haven, breeding ground, and staging area for violent extremist organizations and militants. The IMU and other extremist groups would use this safe haven, as well as reconstituted rear areas in Afghanistan, to increase Islamist insurgent pressure on secular Central Asian governments.

Indeed, there are clear signs that this outcome has already begun to manifest itself. As discussed, the IMU was dealt a serious blow in 2001 and 2002 with the initial entry of U.S. forces into Afghanistan. However, as U.S. interest in Afghanistan waned and attention focused elsewhere, the IMU gradually rebuilt its organization. When coalition forces limited their operations to the north and east of the country, the IMU found new

¹⁶ These conclusions are drawn from numerous formal and informal discussions by the author with regional defense and security officials and civilians in the Kyrgyz Republic from August 2009 to June 2011, and at the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies from July 2006 to July 2009.

¹⁷ Outgoing Kyrgyz Republic President Roza Otunbayeva expressed this concern publicly; see Rick Gladstone, "Kyrgyzstan Sees Instability at End of Afghan Mission," *New York Times* (26 November 2011). So did the Russian Ambassador to NATO, the Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, and others. See Joshua Kucera, "Why Russia Fears U.S. Afghan Plan," *The Diplomat* (18 October 2011).

¹⁸ Formal and informal communications between the author and security officials and civilians in the region.

sanctuaries in the south. Operations in the Fergana Valley area resumed in the Kyrgyz Republic (Osh, Uzgen, Jalalabad, and Bishkek) and in Tajikistan in 2009 and 2010. This trend has continued into the present, with the recent disruption of a planned terrorist strike in the Kyrgyz Republic in October 2011.

As the U.S. expanded its area of operations into the south of Afghanistan in 2007, it again increased pressure on the IMU, and in the process almost perversely increased the presence of the IMU and related groups in the Fergana Valley as they fled areas of intense U.S. military activity in the south. In fact, increased presence of IMU fighters in Fergana is presented as evidence of success in Afghanistan. As coalition forces have pushed into previously uncontested areas in south and west Afghanistan, they have "squeezed the sponge," with the excess "moisture" (violent extremists, in this metaphor) landing in Fergana. Kyrgyz security forces conducted successful operations against violent extremist cells in the Fergana Valley cities of Osh and Jalalabad in the southwestern Batken Oblast in the fall of 2010, while having lesser success in the southwestern Batken Oblast in the fall of 2009. Tajik security forces did not fare as well, losing a significant percentage of their top counterterrorist unit to extremist activity in the fall of 2010. These events have definitely gotten the attention of senior Central Asian defense and civilian officials.

Clearly, terrorist acts centered on the Fergana Valley continue to trend upwards since 2007. As we have seen, in the context of recent history, Fergana-based terrorist groups tend to increase their activity and have greater success when there is a power vacuum or an Islamist-friendly government in Afghanistan. It is easy to conceive of a future scenario in which the IMU and its terrorist brethren become stronger and increase their activities following the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. The primary difference between the present Fergana and the future Fergana is that after 2014 the IMU and related movements will not face the military pressure on their Afghanistan rear areas that they currently face.

In terms of intent, this "Fergana as FATA" scenario does not differ much from the IMU's current strategic goal of establishing a Central Asian Islamic caliphate centered on the Fergana Valley. Indeed, this outcome continues the post-2007 trend of increased activity in and around the subregion. However, there will be a difference in degree and significance. Without U.S. pressure on their Afghanistan and Pakistan safe havens, Central Asian violent extremist organizations will be able to devote more resources to the Fergana Valley, and will most likely concentrate their efforts there.

Furthermore, the insurgent groups have changed since the 1990s. Just as the U.S. military is smarter, tougher, and more proficient after more than a decade at war, so too are Central Asian extremist organizations. IMU fighters have also had more than ten years to hone their tactics, techniques, and procedures in combat against U.S., NATO, and Afghan forces. These battle-hardened insurgents pose a much greater threat to Central Asia's relatively inexperienced security forces than their predecessors did in the 1990s. Furthermore, after 2014 violent extremist groups will continue to benefit from the now-robust Afghan narcotics trade, which was not the case in the 1990s. It is not an exaggeration to say that after the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, the strategic momentum in the Fergana Valley will again shift to Islamist extremist groups.

U.S. Policy Options

The United States has three broad policy options in Central Asia after 2014, which will be discussed below.

Option 1: Total Defense Withdrawal and Reprioritization. Under the current strategy, after 2014 Central Asia will return to its pre-September 2001 status – that is, a region of low priority for the United States, where minimal effort and resources will be expended. Under this option, the U.S. military will withdraw its forces, close its facilities, and revert to a low level of military engagement. Central Asian militaries would occasionally get invitations to international conferences, and would continue to participate in contractor-led computer exercises, but for the most part the U.S. Department of Defense would leave the region behind, treating it as a kind of "Dr. Moreau's Island" on which the Department of State could conduct experiments in democracy and human rights.

A total withdrawal would have its advantages. First, U.S. presence has always been contentious, both within the region and to skeptical neighbors and regional powers Russia and China. At a minimum, completely removing the U.S. military presence would eliminate a favorite theme of Russian Federation-sponsored negative media, which would in turn limit regional discontent. If properly executed, this option could create a major informational success for the U.S.

Meanwhile, freed from the burden of guaranteeing strategic access, U.S. diplomats could focus on other, non-military issues, including stability in the Fergana Valley. However, a complete U.S. withdrawal from and deprioritization of the region would leave U.S. diplomats with few resources and even less influence with which to promote stability in the Fergana. Additionally, the closure of the Transit Center at Manas will have a significant, direct, and immediate negative economic impact on the Kyrgyz Republic, including the loss of local jobs, rent payments, and purchase of local commodities.¹⁹ Lesser, secondary effects will be felt in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. A near-simultaneous reduction of U.S. foreign assistance would create a large, destabilizing economic vacuum.

Militarily, this option would deprive the Central Asian security forces of the successful training and equipping that continues to be provided as a result of the region's current high priority and operational significance for American policy makers. This would leave them unprepared to fight resurgent, battle-hardened violent extremist groups in the Fergana Valley, just when this capability is most required.

A variant of Option 1 could address some of its disadvantages through international action. In "Option 1a," the U.S. role would be the same as in Option 1, but it would work with other regional powers and organizations to fill the power vacuum. The U.S. withdrawal would be preceded by a strong diplomatic push to convince Russia, China, and India to work bilaterally with Central Asian governments to stabilize the Fergana Valley, similar to the way Russian troops helped to secure Tajikistan's southern border

¹⁹ Home page of the Embassy of the United States in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, at http://bishkek.usembassy.gov/tc_recent_contributions.html.

for many years. Additionally, the U.S. could attempt to work through regional organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), both of which are generally well regarded in the region.

Option 1a would hold a certain amount of appeal for U.S. policymakers. It is first and foremost a regional, multilateral solution to a regional problem, and one that would require minimal U.S. resources. It would provide a forum for increased cooperation with Russia under the "reset" policy. However, upon review, Option 1a seems unrealistic. First, on a bilateral basis, Russia, China, and India have different and often competing interests in Central Asia. While regional stability would seem to be generally in all parties' best interests, China has largely focused on its own economic interests in the region, while opting out of any role in regional security or stability. Russia, for its part, has sent mixed signals, deploying a forty-person paramilitary advisory group to assist the Kyrgyz Republic with border security in 2011, but also denying desperate Kyrgyz requests for peacekeepers during the ethnic violence of the "Osh events" of June 2010.

While the U.S. views regional stability in terms of strong, independent states, internally respectful of human rights and externally at peace with their neighbors, it is not clear that the Russian Federation shares this definition. With China already dominating the region economically (a trend that will undoubtedly continue, and even accelerate), Russia's primary value is as a security guarantor. Russia is less interested in ensuring the existence of strong, independent states capable of securing their own borders and their own territory. While Russia fears Islamists on its southern border, it also has a vested interest in security dependency on the part of the Central Asian states.

Additionally, Russia and China have generally opposed U.S. policy in Central Asia for the last ten years, often vehemently. While both will gladly attempt to fill the influence vacuum, it is not likely that they will immediately agree to carry water in support of U.S. interests. Furthermore, when the U.S. leaves the region, it will forfeit a great amount of influence, not only with the Central Asian governments but with the neighboring regional powers as well. U.S. diplomats would have extremely limited leverage with which to convince Russia and China to actively support U.S. interests in the Fergana Valley.

Multilaterally, as the SCO has formally called for an end to the U.S. presence in Central Asia,²⁰ it again seems unlikely that this organization would agree to work towards U.S. ends in the region. Meanwhile, neither the SCO nor the CSTO have proven to be effective beyond the level of rhetoric. Thus, while appealing at first glance, Option 1a falls into the "too good to be true" category, as it is extremely unlikely to occur. By relying almost totally on Russia, China, and organizations dominated by these countries, this option also significantly increases the risk that the desired U.S. strategy will fail and that American national interests will not be attained.

²⁰ Shanghai Cooperation Organization, "Declaration by the Heads of the Member States of the SCO," SCO Annual Summit, Astana, Kazakhstan, 5 July 2005; available at www.eurasianhome.org/doc_files/declaration_sco.doc.

Option 2: Post-11 September 2001 Status Quo. This policy option represents the opposite of Option 1. In this variant, little would change in Central Asia in 2015 and beyond. The region would remain a high priority – although, with the operational justification of military involvement in Afghanistan removed, U.S. policy would finally acknowledge and address the strategic significance of Central Asia in its own right. The U.S. would maintain a substantial military presence in the region, primarily at the Transit Center at Manas International Airport (TCMIA) in the Kyrgyz Republic. Despite recent statements by the newly-inaugurated president of the Kyrgyz Republic, Almazbek Atambayev, that the air base will be closed, the status quo option is viable. The U.S. could in fact negotiate an extension to the TCM agreement, and the government of the Kyrgyz Republic would be receptive if the right terms were offered.²¹

Of course, the requirement to transport large numbers of personnel and many thousands of tons of supplies to Afghanistan would be gone, so the Transit Center would require a new mission, a reconfiguration, and a name change. This "new" U.S. military facility would be reinvented as a regional support platform for U.S. and allied security cooperation, public diplomacy, and counterinsurgency activities. Legacy cooperation programs (Defense Institution Building, Security Sector Reform, military exchanges, limited training and equipping of regional security forces) would continue, but with a more regional focus. In this option, the U.S. Department of Defense would remain the lead agency for U.S. involvement, and the military element of national power would be dominant, as it has been since the events of 9/11. However, diplomatic, economic, and informational activities would continue as well.

The status quo option has the advantage of maintaining a strong U.S. presence (although still predominantly military) in the region after 2014. This presence would not only provide the U.S. with the resources to continue its current level of assistance, but would also demonstrate a continuing commitment to the region, irrespective of operations in Afghanistan. The substantial U.S. presence would continue to provide significant economic benefits as well, and maintaining it would prevent severe short-term, potentially destabilizing economic consequences.²²

However, the benefits of maintaining a large U.S. military facility in the region after 2014 are far outweighed by the negatives, primarily in strategic communications

²¹ The Transit Center provides substantial direct (rent) and indirect payments (increased assistance, local purchase, local employee salaries) to the Kyrgyz economy. The U.S. presence also provides a useful foil against Russia, allowing the Kyrgyz to extract greater concessions from them as well. Previous demands that the U.S. vacate the TCMIA have been merely opening positions in the negotiations that followed. In the context of Policy Option 2, the U.S. could make the case to the Kyrgyz government that the TCMIA needed to remain as a platform for U.S. assistance. If the compensation package included construction of a second runway and continued U.S. assistance in turning the Center into an international civilian cargo hub (both longtime Kyrgyz objectives, and the latter already partially-funded by the U.S.), then an agreement could likely be reached.

²² Home page of the Embassy of the United States to Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, at http://bishkek.usembassy.gov/tc_recent_contributions.html.

and diplomacy. Since its presence at the regional air bases was established, the U.S. has repeatedly assured regional governments and concerned neighbors Russia and China, both publicly and privately, that the Transit Center at Manas is only a temporary facility for the support of Coalition military operations in Afghanistan. Any attempt to extend the TCMIA beyond what is required for Operation Enduring Freedom would have a devastating negative impact on the United States' image and reputation in Central Asia. It would confirm regional conspiracy theories and long-standing Russian suspicions of a desire in Washington to establish a permanent U.S. presence, and would be exploited by both Russia and the IMU. While regional governments could be convinced that continuing to host a U.S. military facility is in their best interests, their people are much less likely to accept such an argument.

Furthermore, the requirement to maintain military facilities in the region has largely consumed U.S. diplomatic efforts since 2001, and has overshadowed nearly all nonmilitary engagement and assistance.²³ Continuing this requirement would ensure that the U.S. military presence would dominate all future significant dialogues, and prevent U.S. diplomats, development experts, and the military from focusing their energy and efforts on issues affecting the Fergana Valley and regional stability.

Finally, the status quo option does not achieve the theater strategic objective. More than ten years of military-dominated regional policy in the region has not produced stability in the Fergana Valley. A successful post-2014 strategy for Central Asia cannot simply continue the operational focus of the past decade—implemented from its primary artifact, the Transit Center at Manas—and expect to gain long-term acceptance in the region.

Option 3: Lessons Learned and Best Practices. There are many lessons to be learned from U.S. interactions with Central Asia over the last ten years. This policy option requires that the U.S. learn from the past decade, thinking strategically while incorporating the best practices and eliminating unsuccessful or damaging legacy approaches.

The first lesson is to think and act strategically, not operationally. To be successful in the long term, the U.S. must take a long-term approach, which requires first acknowledging the strategic significance of the region separate from operational considerations in Afghanistan. Ultimately, the Fergana Valley, as the strategic center of gravity for the region, must be central to any future strategy. Stabilizing the Fergana Valley must be the primary U.S. objective (versus the current "maintain our bases and supply routes" objective).

By making a stable Fergana Valley the primary objective, the U.S. would also align itself with the primary objective of the regional governments. This makes the second lesson easier to implement – namely, that regional governments should have the lead, as partners, rather than the landlord (them)–tenant (us) approach that has been pursued for the past ten years. This goes beyond mere semantics. Paying regional governments

²³ A significant amount of diplomatic time and effort (both at senior and working levels) in Central Asia since 11 September 2011 has been focused on basing and transit-related issues.

"rent" for the use of their territory, whether as direct rent payments for bases, indirect aid packages tied to bases, or tolls for air and ground transit reinforces the short-term nature of the U.S. interest and commitment in the region, which only encourages (literally) rent-seeking behavior and brinksmanship by regional governments. Both the U.S. and the Central Asian governments have a shared strategic interest in a stable Fergana Valley. The strategy should be shared as well, from development to implementation.

However, Russia and China are also part of the region, and the SCO and CSTO are well regarded, if ineffectual, regional organizations. Therefore, the U.S. should advocate and promote Russian, Chinese, SCO, and CSTO participation in the regional strategy. This is not a contradiction of the assertions above—that Russia and China have competing interests and are unlikely to actively participate in a strategy involving the U.S., even if regional governments lead the strategic implementation. It remains true that the U.S. should not expect substantive support from Russia or China, and may even face active opposition (not unlike Option 2 above). Rather, the open stance toward regional participation is primarily for political, diplomatic, and informational purposes.

Regarding information and strategic communications, the third lesson is that silence is the enemy of success in Central Asia. The U.S. must frame the information environment by being public and open about its strategic ends, and about the ways in which it intends to achieve them (with the obvious caveats for operational security and force protection). This goes beyond passive transparency, which has always existed, and would include active, enthusiastic public promotion of the strategy by senior leaders and through public diplomacy platforms. Silence, even in a completely transparent environment, breeds conspiracy theories and negative propaganda. In keeping with the previous lesson, the primary strategic communicators regarding U.S. strategy should be the Central Asian governments themselves, assisted by U.S. experts and resources where necessary.

Next, a large, overt U.S. military presence is counterproductive in Central Asia. Despite the often heroic efforts of public affairs offices and the real and substantive humanitarian work done by U.S. soldiers in the region, the fact remains that the U.S. military is a lightning rod for criticism and conspiracy theories, even in the open and public environment described above. This means that the Transit Center—at least in its current configuration—must be closed, and any subsequent, re-named or re-missioned configurations must feature no involvement by the U.S. military. The security cooperation envisioned in this option does not require a full-time, semi-permanent U.S. military presence (and even if it did, the TCMIA is poorly positioned to support efforts in the Fergana Valley).

Lastly, U.S. assistance efforts over the last ten years have generally been unfocused, disconnected, and overall ineffective. This is particularly true of military-run security cooperation programs, which have generally followed a legacy approach, unrelated to current security realities in the region, but it is also the case with many development, governance, and public diplomacy programs. This is at least in part due to the lack of a strategic approach. From a standpoint of security cooperation, certain approaches have been effective at protecting the strategic center of gravity, the Fergana Valley. Specifically, those programs and activities that focus on direct support, such as training and equipping counterterrorist forces, have yielded significant results, measured in successful operations against violent extremist cells. Border security programs have had success even after only partial implementation. Military-funded humanitarian assistance, when executed in conjunction with other U.S. government efforts, has also yielded benefits among the populace. Disaster relief/emergency response programs tend to be noncontroversial, respond to real and significant problems, foster positive relations with the populace, and fill gaps not addressed by other elements of the U.S. presence in the region.

Unfortunately, these approaches have succeeded not *because of* U.S. military theater strategy, but *in spite of it*. Rather than reinforcing these successful activities, the current strategy seeks to minimize and prohibit them in some cases. Instead, the vast majority of time and effort is spent on irrelevant and unsuccessful legacy programs. The primary U.S. line of support for Central Asian militaries is to promote broad-based "defense reform," with an eye towards closer cooperation with NATO. U.S. regional strategy development sessions are rife with 1990s clichés: "defense reform," "Defense Institution Building," "Noncommissioned Officer Development," "Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution," and "military professionalism." These programs are not totally without value, and were in fact executed with great success in Eastern Europe. But they are inappropriate, irrelevant, and even counterproductive in the strategic environment of post-2014 Central Asia. At bilateral talks at both the senior and working levels, the atmosphere is often surreal, as Central Asian military and civilian leaders stress contemporary and future Fergana Valley-based security threats, and U.S. leaders respond with pre-2001 platitudes.

Additionally, the U.S. corporate approach to security cooperation has been limited by a narrow focus on partner ministries of defense, neglecting other military units with more significant counterterrorism roles and missions. This misguided and myopic "mirror imaging"—in which U.S. Department of Defense officials only want to deal with their exact counterparts in Central Asian defense organizations—has led to a further misallocation of resources to lower-priority ministries of defense, which in Central Asia have the mission to defend against external state threats (which are not prominent in the contemporary security environment). Successful military cooperation and assistance require working directly and primarily with those units whose primary mission is the elimination of violent extremist threats in the Fergana Valley. Anything else wastes resources and effort.

After 2014, the U.S. must reinforce successful security cooperation, development, and public diplomacy programs, while unsuccessful, misdirected, and/or counterproductive legacy programs must be eliminated. The military-led security cooperation component will be smaller, but must focus on building the capabilities required to secure and stabilize the Fergana Valley: border security and interdiction to isolate the valley from Afghanistan-based insurgents; counterterrorism (focused on those units that fight insurgents in and around Fergana); counternarcotics to cut off funding

sources to violent extremist organizations; and disaster response. All of these lines of effort have had demonstrated success in the region, but resources are often diverted by a misguided focus on capital city-based legacy programs. Eliminating the legacy programs would release more than enough financial and personnel resources to support Option 3.

Option 3 frees diplomats from the requirement to constantly negotiate U.S. presence and access in the region. It would produce the desired U.S. strategic end state—a stable Fergana Valley—which is also a long-term strategic objective for each country in the region, as well as for Russia (as opposed to the current operational end states). It would require fewer total resources than Option 2 – the "status quo" choice (but more than Option 1, or "total withdrawal"). However, even with fewer resources, the strategic impact would increase due to more focused efforts.

Option 3 would increase the likelihood that the IMU and other violent extremist groups would begin to actively target U.S. interests, as U.S. policy begins to address them directly. This option holds the greatest risk of U.S. casualties, military or civilian, as U.S. programs push out from urban areas and into the Fergana Valley itself. To date, Central Asian extremist groups have not directly targeted U.S. military facilities or personnel, despite the presence of large, high-payoff, and relatively soft targets in Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic since 2001. This is almost certainly not a question of capacity, as the IMU has targeted other U.S. interests, including U.S. government offices, throughout Central Asia, most notably the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent in 2004, and has directly targeted host-nation government interests in all three countries. Rather, it is likely that Fergana-based extremist groups are focused on gaining control over the region's center of gravity, the Fergana Valley itself. Current, capital-based U.S. facilities and activities do not directly threaten Fergana-based operations. Indeed, to the extent that they siphon off U.S. and host-nation resources for the arcane, nebulous, defense reform-oriented bilateral security objectives discussed above, current U.S. military activities actually *help* these extremist organizations. Ironically, the relatively secure Central Asian environment in which the U.S. military has operated since 2001 is a testament to the inefficacy of the current strategy. This will change with Option 3. As U.S. military trainers deploy to the Fergana Valley to work directly with Central Asian counterterrorist forces, they will disrupt violent extremist groups' operations, and they are likely to be targeted. However, this risk can be mitigated with reasonable force protection measures, as are applied elsewhere in areas with similar dangers.

Recommendations

Clearly, Policy Option 3 offers the best way ahead for U.S. policy in Central Asia, leveraging U.S. lessons learned over the past ten years to craft a regional strategy. Stabilizing the Fergana Valley (and thus the whole of Central Asia) requires that U.S. policy and subsequent implementation efforts be focused on the Fergana Valley. It is also critical that Central Asian citizens perceive U.S. interests and policy in the region to be strategic – that is, having goals beyond short-term operational considerations in support of the military intervention in Afghanistan. This means jettisoning short-term, operationally-focused policy artifacts that Central Asian states and regional powers view with suspicion and derision. This will also free up resources (diplomatic, military, and economic) for a focused effort in the Fergana Valley itself, instead of the current, capital city-centric efforts toward development, diplomacy, and security cooperation.

The first step should be to remove the large U.S. military presence and footprint as soon as operations in Afghanistan allow (this could begin immediately, as the U.S. has already begun to withdraw some troops). Nothing symbolizes the U.S. operational approach more than the Transit Center at Manas International Airport, and its closure will herald a new strategic approach. Given the sunk costs and the existence of a first-rate facility, there will be a strong temptation to maintain the TCMIA as a platform for security cooperation. This temptation must be avoided. The Transit Center has a specific purpose, and one that will not be required (or required on a much smaller scale) after 2014. More importantly, with its location just outside Bishkek, far from the Fergana Valley, it is poorly positioned to support a Fergana-based strategy. On a related issue, while the Northern Distribution Network (NDN) is not nearly as contentious as the TCMIA, it is another artifact of the old approach, and its benefits to the people of the Central Asian states are vastly overstated. The U.S. would do well to downplay the significance and impact of the NDN.

Next, all diplomatic, economic, and military efforts should be redirected in support of a comprehensive regional strategy that focuses on stability in the Fergana Valley. This strategy should make every attempt to include Russia, China, and regional organizations, with the understanding that their participation will be unlikely. Fears of "expanded" Russian or Chinese influence are misguided. First, "influence" is not a zerosum "great game." Second, Russian political and social influence in the region is already significant, as is Chinese economic influence. Cooperation with the U.S. might even roll back the Russian and Chinese level of influence in the region.

Option 3 facilitates the maximum application of all elements of national power, and in the optimal proportion. Its focused approach allows the implementation of a more effective strategy with fewer resources than are currently allocated to the region. Because it addresses instability in the Fergana Valley directly, this option has the greatest short-term risk to the U.S. personnel and interests. However, it is the only option that directly and adequately addresses U.S. strategic interests in Central Asia.

Conclusion

In addition to its operational importance for the Coalition military effort in Afghanistan, the region of Central Asia is strategically significant in its own right, and critical to sustaining success in post-withdrawal Afghanistan. Failure to view the CAS region through a broader, long-term strategic lens jeopardizes success in post-withdrawal Afghanistan, is detrimental to regional security and stability, and increases the likelihood that the U.S. will be drawn back into conflict there on less than desirable terms.

Strategic Thinking about Future Security

Marian Kozub*

Strategic Thinking and the Language of Challenges

The reality that we face at the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century renders security issues, and in particular the ways of providing security, central to international attention, both in its present and future aspects. The reasons for this centrality are not only the revolutionary changes in science and technology, but also perhaps even more importantly the characteristics of the already diagnosed and existing threats and predicted challenges for the global security environment for which we have not yet found sufficient responses. This essay focuses on the notion of challenges¹ and opportunities created by the world in transition that we undoubtedly face, instead of relying on the "language of threats" and the responsive, symptomatic approach towards them that has characterized the discourse of the strategic community in the past. Discussing a new security environment requires a new set of terms.

Although we do live in times when the threat of a full-scale global conflict has been significantly reduced, the new phenomena, issues, and events that appear have a significant impact on our ability to sustain and create genuine international stability in the future. Those phenomena include, among others, economic, social, political, and ethnic tensions and crises; political instability and failed states; transnational organized crime; WMD/WME proliferation; the pace of technological change; terrorism; ecological and climate disasters; and the shift of strategic attention to peripheries.² Those phenomena,

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¹ The notion of *challenges* is here understood as the integral parts of a set of predicted events, phenomena, conditions, processes, etc. that a subject (organization) must take into consideration in the process of projecting the future course of action. By their nature, challenges are both subjective and objective, and they must be seen equally as threats and opportunities. Since they are neither negative nor positive—they are "electrically neutral"—the language of challenges should be the language of prognoses. A challenge will be then any event that might occur, and which must be taken into account by the subject when designing its future strategies, attitudes, and actions. Cezary Rutkowski, ed., *Security Management in Higher Education – Research and Didactics Issues* (originally published as *Zarządzanie bezpieczeństwem jako problem nauki i dydaktyki szkoły wyższej*) (Warsaw: National Defense University, 2003).

² "Weapons of Mass Effect" (WME) are used in some of the contemporary security studies literature as a counterpart of the previously used term "Weapons of Mass Destruction" (WMD). The shift is justified by technological developments that allow conventional armed equipment to gain the effectiveness equal to WMD. WME are a wide category of tools of energetic (kinetic) and informational destabilization and disintegration of any systems prone to those processes, in particular macrosystems. Marian Kozub, *Strategic Security Environment in the First Decades of the Twenty-first Century*; original title: *Strategiczne środowisko bez-*

however, are not only limited to one state or region, as had previously been the case; therefore, an approach that considers a state as the sole agent involved in creating its own security is no longer efficient. These phenomena and threats are interwoven, multi-dimensional, and transnational in nature, and their occurrence is usually of a systematic nature. External threats and challenges—whether real or potential, and whether of a political, economic, or of a psychological character—consequently pose internal challenges as well, creating a chain reaction of interrelated phenomena. We must also remember that many scientists and researchers, while seeking solutions and means of effective security policy and strategy, draw on the rich heritage of past methods in these fields. Their pursuits sometimes only serve to limit their attempts to discover certain universal features of security threats, and can lead them to recommend ways of dealing with such problems that might not always be adequate to the current situation.

The events of the past twenty-five years—most notably for our purposes, the fall of the Eastern Bloc and the end of the Cold War—have changed the geostrategic situation not only in Europe or America, but also globally. The East-West split has come to an end, and the states in Central and Eastern Europe underwent a deep transformation, which created in that region a thoroughly new security environment demanding strategic thinking on the level of individual states, instead of within the former framework of collective security.³ Of course, many of the previous threats have vanished or evolved, but those that replaced them might prove even more difficult to cope with. Strategic thinking about the future, then—in particular with respect to choosing the ways of en-

The skill of strategic thinking also means to be able to aim at generating the best intelligence in a given situation, investigating options, prioritizing goals and ways of utilizing available resources, bearing in mind that all has to be considered in a long-term perspective. It also involves creating a set of techniques and methods of data gathering, analysis and synthesis that will enable the realization of goals, as well as accommodating the imperatives of continuous change and integration of fields in which one operates in order to be able to prepare the organization for future functioning and development, and creating a positive image of the organization in society. Last but not least, strategic thinking demands that one consider the organization holistically, not merely as a sum of its parts. *Management strategique de PME/PMI, Guide methodologique* (Paris: Economica, 1991).

pieczeństwa w pierwszych dekadach XXI wieku (Warsaw: National Defense University, 2009).

³ Strategic thinking must be based on an interdisciplinary approach to strategic processes. Strategic processes are defined as processes that embrace a variety of unpredictable or indefinable factors, and that create multi-optional conceptions of future courses of action and lines of situational development. Strategic thinking, then, involves a directed and conscious use of the imagination, supported by the most accurate available knowledge about the future, resulting in the creation of different visions and scenarios that might appear as a result of a number of simultaneous changes in a given environment. Ideally, those scenarios should be able to embrace all possible conditions in which an organization might operate, indicating most of the uncertain and unforeseeable circumstances that will create both threats and opportunities.

suring and enhancing the strategic security environment⁴—should be an inherent attribute of functioning of every organization, above all of states and alliances. It should be remembered, though, that the construction and design of images of the strategic security environment's finite future is at all times condemned to failure. This is a consequence of the fact that virtually all processes and events are perpetually changing;⁵ they are by no means repeated in the same manner, and are thus by definition unpredictable.

Thus it would seem justified to keep certain key considerations in mind when formulating questions pertaining to the future security environment, in particular:

- Do the changeability and unpredictability of the strategic environment excuse each particular organization from thinking about the future course of events?
- Are all attempts to anticipate the future wholly irrational?
- How should an organization (state, alliance) function in an uncertain environment?
- How should we plan for action to help reach the organization's objectives in the unstable conditions of the contemporary and future environments?
- What might be the context of future social-military conflicts?

Each organization, and each of us, must address those questions. We must bear in mind, however, that the background of those considerations must be always security, which is the fundamental value and the prerequisite of the existence of all units and organizations. This is particularly the case since security is a category that embraces not only the very existence of the organization, but also its future survival and further possibilities of development. The main fields of interest of organizations and institutions responsible for security should thus be the analysis, assessment, diagnosis, and progno-

⁴ The strategic security environment is defined here as the realm consisting of the internal and external factors that determine the realization of a state's interests and strategic objectives. Those factors, among others, include: geostrategic context (conditions, relationships, trends, issues, and interactions), challenges, opportunities, threats, and risks. They can be analyzed in terms of abstract parameters that should be specified with regard to the organization (country, region) or the situation, either on a global basis in a specific (usually contemporary) phase of development of the international reality, or from the perspective of a particular country. In such cases, the strategic security environment will be slightly or substantially different for each state. Strategic objectives in the field of security, then, shall be understood as the defined future state of a state's security that embraces the needs and fundamental values expressed by vital national interests and is shaped by the environment and potential possibilities. It is crucial for strategic thinking that the defined condition must be calculated in a long-term perspective. See H. R. Yarger, *Strategic Theory for the 21st Century* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, United States Army War College, 2006), 17–19.

⁵ Heraclitus of Ephesus was the author of the most common concept of change as a central rule of the world order ("panta rhei"). As he stated: "You cannot step twice into the same river, for other waters and yet others go ever flowing on. They go forward and back again." William Harris, *Heraclitus: The Complete Fragments* (Middlebury, VT: Middlebury College, 1994), 11; available at http://community.middlebury.edu/~harris/Philosophy/heraclitus.pdf.

sis of the condition, character, and dynamics of change in the strategic thinking process, with special attention given to the careful consideration of diagnosed threats, risks, and challenges, since those conditions imply modes of action through which a given subject attempts to realize its objectives. We must also keep in mind that such challenges embrace all the spheres of life: political, economic, military, informational, diplomatic, social, scientific, ecological, cultural, spiritual, and many others. Those challenges, moreover, are not only new and emerging processes and phenomena, but also the elements of the aforementioned set of diagnosed events and trends that require a response through in-depth analysis, assessment, diagnosis, and management after the fact. The history and development of each and every nation, state, and civilization, along with the advance of the whole human race, should be considered from the very point of their capability to respond to challenges (not only to threats, as used to be the common mode of assessing such matters).

Profound analysis and assessment of the above phenomena can lead us to the conclusion that the contemporary condition of humanity and civilization is in transition, at a civilizational and cultural turning point. The capacity for adjusting strategic, systematic solutions to constantly emerging challenges is thus indispensable for any organization, whether it is a military unit, a defense ministry, a state, or an alliance.⁶ This transition process shapes a new construction of the international geopolitical and geostrategic system, which will also influence the future global security environment.

Strategy of the Future: Questions and Answers

Any attempt to characterize strategic thinking about future security, then, should be initiated by ordering our considerations: namely, we must create a strategy.⁷ There are around 450 extant working definitions of "strategy," varying according to the interpretation, approach, perspective, or application. For the purpose of our considerations here, however, we may choose from those carried out on the basis of research on the contemporary theoretical and practical aspects of strategy, and that embrace the three following areas of consideration:

• The aim (objective) and method of using power in a state's political activity⁸

⁶ Janusz Stacewicz, *Megatrends and the Strategy and Politics of Development*; originally published as *Megatrendy a strategia i polityka rozwoju* (Warsaw: Elipsa, 1996).

⁷ Strategy is here defined as a prudent idea or set of ideas for employing the instruments of national power in a synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve strategic, long-term (theater, national, and/or multinational) objectives of a given subject. JP 1-02: DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 15 July 2011), 341.

⁸ It should be noted here that the author understands "power" not only in military terms, since power is used in a variety of domains of a state's activity, whether it is politics, economy, diplomacy, information, etc. Each of those fields of a state's activity wields its own means and resources of power.

- The level of defining the goal and ways of functioning within the state (whether it is a short-term tactical objective, an operational one or, eventually, a strategic aim)
- The level of defining the objective and identifying the means of realization of a complex task.⁹

It is estimated that, given the three ways of understanding strategy outlined above, the one that allows for the widest spectrum of deliberations is the third approach, which defines strategy as the process of defining an objective and identifying the means by which to achieve a complex task. According to this approach, strategy is an integral part of each complex, multi-stage action. It indicates or presumes the existence of a subject, and comprises the cardinal components of the subject: its aim, means, resources, methods, and the environment in which a given organization operates. Understood in this way, then, strategy is an ordered set of assumptions, decisions, and choices that express the accepted and projected features of the organization as examined in the context of the circumstances, stages, and components of the courses of action and general objectives, means, resources, methods, and tactics and techniques of control and execution. Strategy determines the above objectives, actions, means, and resources in the simplest and most general manner, but in a scope necessary and sufficient for the identification and endorsement of the execution process.

This approach implies two cardinal and inherent attributes of strategy: its simultaneous subjectivity and objectivity.¹⁰ Subjectivity of strategy requires us to identify whose strategy it is, who its creator is, and who is willing to execute it. The objectivity of strategy, on the other hand, designates the specified field (mode, domain, and sector) of the subject's activity. In our subject matter, the field of activity of our subjectan organization, state, or alliance-will be the future strategic environment (as estimated until the end of the second decade of the twenty-first century). Therefore, when considering the security strategy of any given state, we should focus on its activities in the domain of widely interpreted security. Security, moreover, should be understood not only as the ability to respond to threats by means of hard power,¹¹ but as a multidimensional spectrum of activities aimed at satisfying and maximizing the existence, development, safety, stability, integrity, identity, independence, and standards of living on behalf of a state's citizens. What is more, strategic thinking should not be limited to considering external factors when envisioning threats and challenges. The subject's own weaknesses and flaws must be brought into focus, as they might create the gravest dangers for the very existence of given organization.¹²

⁹ Rutkowski, ed., Security Management in Higher Education.

¹⁰ It does not exclude, of course, emphasizing the subjective or objective approach towards strategy when necessary.

¹¹ J-P. Charney, *La Strategie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1995); translated into Polish by P. Gawliczek (Warsaw: National Defense University, 2008).

¹² Jerzy Stańczyk, Understanding Contemporary Security; originally published as Współczesne pojmowanie bezpieczeństwa (Warsaw, 1996).

This leads us to the first significant conclusion regarding strategic thinking about future security: it is high time for us to stop thinking about security only in terms of "threats," in particular those that are familiar and predictable. It does not, obviously, mean that we should neglect those traditional threats, but that we should think about those threats on a tactical level. Having performed a proper self-diagnosis to avoid breaking at the weakest points at the most unexpected moments, strategic thinking should primarily ponder challenges that ought to be seen as opportunities (chances). Hence, the solutions we advance with when tackling the challenges, risks, and threats ahead should evoke subsequent favorable opportunities.

Let us pay attention to a curious historical detail here. In both ancient China and in the Roman Empire, a state clerk who failed to seize an opportunity to amplify the glory and power of the state because he failed to accurately evaluate an adversary's strengths and weaknesses would be severely punished! Nowadays it seems reasonable to return to this tradition, since, as Sun Tzu said: "If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle."¹³ Applying that line of thinking to the future security environment, we might also infer that it is high time we abandon the mentality focused on seeking external threats and turn to a more unconventional approach - an approach that is based first of all on self-diagnosis, and secondly on searching for and exploring chances and opportunities where they might seem least expected to be found, just like modern business people do. Such activity, by rule, should be a process of changeable and adaptable dynamics that will properly respond to the constantly altering environment, civilizational progress, and the shifting range of needs of all subjects involved.

Having explained the notion of strategy in the field of security as an established set of activities of a subject, with clearly defined goals, resources, and tools, we can turn to the next substantial issue: which factors influence and shape those established activities, and to what degree? The intuitive answer might be that a number of those factors will influence all aspects of strategy. For instance, the level of civilizational development, the political goals, and the potential of a given state will influence its value systems, priorities, technological development, access to resources, geostrategic situation, etc. In such a situation, the considerations of strategic thinking about security should be guided by the common, yet not fully explored, notion that "the future will be so much different from what we are able to imagine today."¹⁴ But how exactly different from the contemporary situation will the future be? How will the global geostrategic environment develop? How will the understanding of security evolve? How will the nature of conflicts change? Will it still be possible to define them as social, political, military? Will all those matters be comparable to other conflicts, past or present? All of these questions are, of course, difficult to answer. There have been many attempts to

¹³ Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, translated from Chinese by Lionel Giles, 1910; see http://www.chinapage.com/sunzi-e.html.

¹⁴ Peter F. Drucker, *Post-Capitalist Society* (New York: Harperbusiness, 1994).

find a way to diagnose the course of future events. Theorists have developed the cyclical theory of history, and then also the linear theory of history and civilization that traces development to the great world religions, but none of these attempts on the part of historians have given us a ready and foolproof set of tools that would enable us to deal with the uncertainty of the future. There have also been postmodern theories that were supposed to address the unsteadiness of today and the unpredictability of tomorrow, yet despite their flexibility and unconventionality, and their focus on imagination rather than on rational prognosis, they have also failed to meet our needs for foolproof prediction. The key here might be our habitual human unwillingness to change, and our inability to accept that the future may in fact be unimaginable.

As a consequence, strategic analysis, assessment, and prognosis all evoke a deep anxiety, one that has been familiar to humankind for centuries. Thus we have tried to tame it in a way by setting laws and rules, in an attempt to bring order to chaos. We have created certain visions of our needs, demands, interests, strategies, and relations with other participants of this seemingly fixed order. But the order we knew-and along with it the strategic thinking about security—is altering, and it is impossible to shape it in the clearly defined fashion that was the norm during the Cold War. Due to the many factors of change mentioned above, the strategic security environment is in constant evolution, and instead of strategic balance we face a situation of unstable, multidimensional equilibrium. Thus, our strategic thinking should adapt and evolve to meet the new conditions, although it does not always manage to keep up. Security at present is hardly ever a clearly defined and sustained state; rather, it is a complex, multidimensional process that changes its range, form, character, and structure. As a result, the relations between various actors in the international arena change and evolve, new issues and phenomena occur, the balance of global power fluctuates, and new challenges appear. Moreover, along with different opportunities and challenges, we have to face a plethora of threats that were hitherto unknown, or ones that have been evolving latently for years. All the above determine the shape of the security environment, influence the conditions in which societies develop, and thus are deciding factors of the pace and direction of security development. Consequently, this state of constant metamorphosis forces us to create modes of implementing novel solutions pertaining to the use of hard and soft power, along with other instruments of strategy.

The Contemporary Strategic Security Environment and the Paradigm Shift

Given the many changes discussed above, the following questions arise. How can we characterize the contemporary strategic security environment? How much has it changed since the end of the Cold War? How has it evolved, and even more important, how is it going to change in the future? What are the new features of the new security landscape, and which familiar signposts are no longer there? In addressing these questions, we must bear in mind one of the key characteristics of today's global security

environment: growing global disproportions and asymmetries.¹⁵ The evident examples of growing asymmetries are such phenomena as unexpected behaviors on the part of states and other actors, unequal objectives and interests, disparate access to natural resources, and grave differences in potential and power (especially growing inequality in levels of social conditions and development). This disproportion is most clearly seen between the global North, which is deemed wealthy, developed, stable and thus predictable, and the poor, conflicted South, whose future is uncertain and the region itself is unpredictable. The existing asymmetry is also proved by the fact that the wealthy North is interested in protecting human rights, pursuing and expanding democracy, preventing and combating terrorism, and reducing WMD proliferation. As a general rule, Northern societies are willing to live in a predictable, safe environment, with clearly defined normative frames, in a stable and balanced way. Those countries are therefore dominated by a "Western-centric" way of thinking, shaped on the grounds of liberal and democratic values, aiming at establishing global stability and security in order to create the conditions for further development and prosperity. The global South on the other hand-in particular Africa, the Middle East, and numerous Asian countries, along with South America-in many (of course not all) cases, has not only stopped trying to eliminate the problems mentioned above, but does not even try to diminish them and eradicate their harmful consequences. What is more, those regions are a breeding ground of such phenomena as terrorism and illegal WMD production and proliferation. They also tend to reject the principle of democratic rule, forming totalitarian regimes and dictatorships instead. A frequent political tactic chosen by such states is the "shortcut" route - to strengthen their position and power, they refuse to act in compliance with international legal norms and democratic rules. North and South, moreover, understand power and rationalize its use very differently. In the South, hard, military power is the basic and indispensable tool that determines the position of a state, shapes its success in the political arena, and serves as the primary mode of influencing neighboring states or regions. Hence military power becomes the decisive element in determining the power or weakness of given state, and as a consequence, determining the position of that state in the local or regional hierarchy.¹⁶

It is also important to bear in mind that the necessity of changing our perspective and approach towards the future security environment is strongly justified by the paradigm shift in extant threats. As Robert Steele claims in *The New Craft of Intelligence*, the "new" threats, as contrasted with the "old" ones, will not be connected directly to any state, and will not originate from them.¹⁷ Their characteristic features will be

¹⁵ I define "asymmetry" as a feature designating different forms of disproportion, diversification, and disharmony. "Asymmetrization" then, is the process in which those disproportions emerge.

¹⁶ Adam Leszczyński, "UN: Overhaul or Demolition"?; original title, "ONZ. Remont czy rozbiórka?", *Gazeta Wyborcza* (12 August 2005); available at http://serwisy.gazeta.pl.

¹⁷ The paradigm of "old" threats focuses on nuclear and conventional military threats that can be clearly identified as belonging to a given state. Such potentials are designed for conventional field combat, according to operational plans with clearly established phases. The use

unconventionality, transnationality, a highly dynamic nature, and irregular occurrence.¹⁸ It is believed that those threats cannot be coped with through adherence to any previous or currently established doctrines, and therefore they will be more difficult to eradicate. Doing so will be an even more arduous task due to the growing connections between transnational organized crime and terrorism, along with the spread of corruption, that also add to the assymetrization of future threats to global security.

Taking into consideration the fact that the character of current threats differs greatly from those that we faced ten or fifteen years ago, and that the model of response that we have developed are insufficient, we must admit that the model of strategic thinking about future security will have to be much more innovative, unconventional, and flexible. This is particularly true in light of the fact that the strategic dilemmas of the new reality will become even more dynamic and unpredictable, but are also quantitatively and qualitatively different from the dilemmas of the previous decade. It becomes evident when we observe the contemporary threats and global issues that spread rapidly with no regard to either territorial or geographical limitations. The range and pace of that spread can easily not only undermine the economy of a sovereign state, causing fear, chaos, and social instability; it is also able to deepen such issues as global hunger and poverty, not to mention the possibility of producing significant infrastructural and human losses.

It is crucial to realize that these new threats are no longer the effect of state interventionism, as we were accustomed to perceiving them in bipolar world. Rather, they result from major strategic changes of a political, social, economic, and military nature – changes that occur at a level that is beyond the control of any state. Additionally, those intricately complex problems become interrelated and inextricably bound, as in the case of the difficulty in separating terrorism from organized crime. Similarly, it is not possible to wage war against only one phenomenon, excluding all the other sources of conflict and threats.¹⁹

What about the reality and our responses to the threats? Sadly, we still hold to a symptomatic mode of response. Instead of working in a preventive and preemptive manner that we should follow, we limit our actions to countermeasures once the threat has already manifested itself. We respond separately to the observed, evident symptoms, instead of taking comprehensive, holistic actions against complex challenges. In addition, the time horizon and range of our thinking is too limited, taking in too short a

of those weapons is also regulated by clearly defined rules and doctrines, hence the phase of deployment can be easily detected. From: Marian Kozub, "World Security in the First Decades of the Twenty-first Century," in *Contemporary Dimensions of Terrorism*; original title "Bezpieczeństwo Świata w pierwszych dekadach XXI wieku," in *Współczesny wymiar terroryzmu*, ed. Z. Piątek (Warsaw: National Security Bureau, 2006).

¹⁸ Robert D. Steele, *The New Craft of Intelligence: Achieving Asymmetric Advantage in the Face of Nontraditional Threats* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, United States Army War College, 2002), 5–7.

¹⁹ Robert Hall and Carl Fox, "Rethinking Security," *NATO Review* 49:4 (Winter 2001).

term for true strategic thinking and actions in the field of security.²⁰ We also seemingly fail to understand that what we do in this regard is insufficient when considering not only our reactions to already diagnosed threats, but also to those threats that are on the horizon. Paradoxically, all the aforementioned is taking place at a time that we know is vastly different from what we have known before, at a time when the civilizational transition demands a new perspective, fresh cognitive capabilities, and a different way of thinking. The future security environment needs a thoroughly new philosophy instead of modified common tactics, reactions, and adaptations, for undoubtedly we are facing yet another revolution – a revolution in philosophies of life, organization, and management.

Strategic Thinking about the Future

The requirement to think strategically about future security stems not only from the awareness of changes to the social structure within states and the evolution of the international environment that might be a breeding ground of threats, but is also generated by the challenges and opportunities appearing in such context. The need in question is also reinforced by the fact that today's security, due to the growing number of subjects involved, is becoming an increasingly complex domain.

Creating security in the first decades of the twenty-first century, given such phenomena as population growth, environmental change, globalization, WMD proliferation, extremist ideologies, terrorism (with the formerly unknown forms of cyber terrorism and superterrorism²¹), along with rapid technological development, will compel the institutions responsible for security to envision numerous (and increasingly improbable) scenarios regarding the potential use of violence. Religious and ethnic conflicts, climate change, the global narcotics trade, mass migrations, regional instability, transnational organized crime, epidemics, scarcity of resources, privatization of violence and the emergence of non-state militant groups of influence, are by nature unlimited territorially or legally. Hence they are also difficult to prevent, and it is frequently also difficult to identify and prosecute those responsible.²² We can then clearly infer that all those interrelated and inextricably bound issues, problems, and challenges that emerge in today's networked reality render security a subject that is highly susceptible

²⁰ Do we work with the same passion on planning future development and expansion as on ensuring current operational effectiveness and the reduction of structures? We spend less than 2 percent of our time on imagining and creating the future; on the scale of a month, this represents only an afternoon. Gary Hamel and C.K. Prahaland, *Competing for the Future* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 1996) (Polish edition: *Przewaga konkurencyjna jutra. Strategie przejmowania kontroli nad branżą i tworzenia rynków przyszłości*, Warsaw: Business Press, 1999).

²¹ "Superterrorism" is a form of terrorism in which weapons of mass destruction may be used. *Lexicon of the New Terrorism* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corp., March 1998).

²² Marian Kozub, "The Character of Threats and Conflicts in the First Decades of the Twentyfirst Century"; original title: "Charakter zagrożeń oraz konfliktów zbrojnych w pierwszych dekadach XXI wieku," *Myśl Wojskowa* 1 (2006).

to a vast range of negative influences. And out of all those, two trends are believed to impact the contemporary and future security environment most: globalization and the information revolution, since in the new era of electronic interconnection it is fairly easy to destabilize this sphere.

As we have discussed above, the security of sovereign states is not only limited to their local or territorial dimensions, embraced by state boundaries. Traditional physical state boundaries do not protect us from the expansion of distant threats, as has been shown by the recent spread of lethal flu viruses or the wave of revolutions in the Arab world. At present, at a time when the Internet has become a mass medium of global real-time communication, it takes merely a speech to incite crowds and urge them to action, as was the case of the recent speech by Pope Benedict that caused mass protests among Muslim communities from the West Bank, through Qatar, Iran, Turkey, and across the seas to Somalia and Malaysia.²³ Ulrich Beck explains that phenomenon as the "globalization of emotions":

The conflict between Israelis and Palestinians can break out in the middle of any other state and threaten the relations between the Jewish community and other citizens. A matter of the past is also the theory of identity, society and politics based on the belief that we live in states separated from each other, as if we were living in separated containers. In the global "television village," since the live broadcasts of wars and their victims became common, violence in one part of the world can cause retaliation in many other places. Influenced by the deeply moving scenes of suffering and deaths of civilians and children in Israel, Palestine, Iraq or Africa, the modern citizen has to take a stand, and hence transnational compassion is born.²⁴

Evidently, in the future we will most likely experience even more expanded "globalization of emotions," and this phenomenon might prove particularly significant and dangerous in multicultural, ethnically complex and ideologically or religiously divided societies. We must bear in mind, then, that future events influencing and shaping the global security environment taking place in distant parts of the world, through the mechanisms of globalization and the development of modern real-time communication media, will affect the security of the entire world system and will be able to manifest themselves in unexpected parts of the globe. This interdependence and its effects on the global security system were well described by Robert Kaplan, who stated that in the near future we might witness catastrophically expanding chain reactions. A terrorist attack in one part of the globe can cause a military retaliation elsewhere, which will instigate riots in yet another point of the globe, leading to a coup in one of the major states.²⁵

²³ In a lecture given in Regensburg, Germany on 12 September 2006, the Pope associated Islam with violence. A. Bostom, "The Pope, Jihad and Dialogue," *The American Thinker* (19 September 2006); available at http://archive.frontpagemag.com/readArticle.aspx?ARTID=2533.

²⁴ Ulrich Beck, "Half-blind," *Forum* (16–22 February 2004) (Quote translated from the Polish edition, "Ślepi na jedno oko," Warsaw, 2004).

²⁵ Robert Kaplan, "Cowboy on the Tiger"; translated from the Polish edition, "Kowboj na tygrysie," *Tygodnik Forum* (8–14 April 2002).

The analysts specializing in organization management predict that the most significant future changes should be expected to take place in the world's "peripheries" – places seemingly on the margins of the mainstream of political and economic activity, distant from the major interests of the main players on the international stage. This characteristic feature of the postmodern world is accented by, among others, George Soros, who holds that the paradox of globalization is that our security does not depend on the leaders of great superpowers, but of the regimes that rule at the world's edges.²⁶ This thesis fits with the predictions of Samuel Huntington, who stated that the peripheries of civilization—the meeting points and borderlands of cultures—are places where conflicts, clashes, instabilities, and crises may easily arise.²⁷ Nowadays those places are designated as "the arcs of instability." Hence the peripheries should be areas of particular focus in the future, and the object of constant observation and investigation, in particular respect to the coexistence and relations between various cultures, religions, ideologies, and political systems, as well as the potential conflicts that might result from them.

Another interesting theory related to the issues discussed is the claim of the French sociologist Pierre Hassner, who has observed that the contemporary international order is an order in name only, as we live in an epoch characterized by a deep diversity of political solutions and creations, and a chaos of conflicts and alliances between them.²⁸ The philosopher John Gray, on the other hand, asserts that Western societies are fading and the rising powers are torn by conflict, which renders the world progressively conflicted and divided; thus, the obvious solution should be to focus on the development of international cooperation.²⁹

Conclusion

All the above considerations lead us to important conclusions about the future security environment. First of all, the shape of the strategic security environment, and thus the strategic thinking about the reality we will face in the next ten years, will be determined by such decisive factors as the pace and direction of a wide spectrum of civilizational changes. When those changes are firmly established to be considered as civilizational megatrends, it will be easier to predict the direction of further developments in the strategic environment. Second, a profound analysis of those transformations will enable us to more accurately diagnose future challenges—both threats and opportunities—and to create risk scenarios and take proper measures against them. And last but

²⁶ Fernando Gualdoni's interview with George Soros; Polish title, "Kto usztywnia kruche racje," *Tygodnik Forum* (16–22 May 2005).

²⁷ Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*; Polish edition, *Zderzenia cywilizacji i nowy kształt ładu światowego* (Warsaw: Muza, 1998).

²⁸ Pierre Hassner, "The Age of Uncertainty"; Polish title "Stulecie niepewności," *Europa*. *Tygodnik idei* (30 June 2007): 13–14.

²⁹ Glyn Morgan, "Gray's Elegy for Progress," *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 9:2 (June 2006): 227–41; available at http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic207175.files/morgan_gray.pdf.

not least, we must remember that the growing interdependence of actors in the field of security has constantly expanded the range of subjects that bear a responsibility to help ensure security. In an open, globalized world this responsibility must extend out further and cross previously established limits and divisions. The new dictionary of today's and tomorrow's strategic thought must prioritize such key terms as "preemption," "anticipation," "creation," and "imagination," instead of the old terms of "adaptation," "reaction," and "pursuit," even if we find ourselves engaged in a race after all. This is the new language of strategic thinking about the future.

NATO's Cooperation with Others: A Comprehensive Challenge

Agata Szydełko *

What defines NATO when it is compared to the United Nations and the European Union? Is NATO an "institution of doing" (task-oriented), or an "institution of being" (identity-based)? While trying to define the role and reasons for NATO's existence in comparison to the United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU) and trying to answer whether NATO is an identity-based or task-oriented institution, it is worthwhile to reach out to the sources and find out when and why these three international institutions were established in the first place and what is the primary driver of their decision making.

When? The Establishment of the UN, EU, and NATO

The United Nations officially came into existence on 24 October 1945, when the Charter was ratified by China, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States and by a majority of other signatories of the fifty-one original member states. United Nations Day is celebrated on 24 October each year.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was established in Washington, D.C. on 4 April 1949. The treaty, signed by the foreign ministers of Belgium, Great Britain, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the United States, provided for mutual assistance should any one member of the alliance be attacked. Greece and Turkey joined NATO on 18 February 1952, and the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) on 9 May 1955, setting the initial group of the Alliance at fourteen member nations.

About one year after the founding of NATO, on 9 May 1950, Robert Schuman, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, made an important speech putting forward proposals based on the ideas of Jean Monnet. He proposed that France and the Federal Republic of Germany pool their coal and steel resources in a new organization that other

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Any opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the NC3A, NATO and the NATO nations but remain solely those of the author.

European countries would be able to join. This date can be regarded as marking the birth of the European Union, and 9 May is now celebrated annually as Europe Day. On 18 April 1951, six countries—Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands—signed the treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). So over the course of less than a decade—from 1945 to 1955—the European countries with the longest shared histories of military conflict over the past several centuries, and which just fought each other in two world wars in the preceding thirty years, decided to jointly establish or participate in three international institutions, each of which had a clear focus on the promotion of collaboration and collective efforts, international peace, and human rights.

Why? The Reasons for the Establishment of the UN, EU, and NATO

The original reasons for the establishment of these three institutions are described in their respective founding documents: the Charter of the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty, and the Statute of the Council of Europe, and can be summarized in the comparative table provided below.¹

Although the implementation of the values has evolved over time, the core values have remained essentially unchanged for over sixty years of the existence of the respective organizations. These six decades have not been without changes, however. The EU has ratified seven subsequent treaties since 1949—Rome (1957), Merger (1965), Schengen (1985), Nice (2001), Maastricht (1992), Amsterdam (1997), and Lisbon (2007)—while NATO has adopted seven Strategic Concepts since the creation of the Alliance.

When trying to distinguish NATO's founding principles from those of the UN and EU, the clearest distinction comes in the definition of the reasons for NATO's existence. The invocation of the generic values of peace and freedom (which are supplemented with democracy and individual liberty) refers directly to the concrete political systems that the Alliance sought to preserve. Already in its founding documents, NATO very clearly defined the actual implementation methods for the preservation of those values, both at the level of the establishment of a common identity through the rule of law, stability, and well-being, as well as at the level of putting steps in place for the preservation of peace and security through the collective defense guarantees between the member states.

¹ The Statute of The Council of Europe, available at http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/ Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?NT=001&CM=8&DF=26/12/2011&CL=ENG. Chapter 1, Article 1 of the Charter states that "The aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage and facilitating their economic and social progress." It goes on to explain that "This aim shall be pursued through the organs of the Council by discussion of questions of common concern and by agreements and common action in economic, social, cultural, scientific, legal and administrative matters and in the maintenance and further realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms."

| | United Nations: Charter of the United Nations (1945) | NATO: North Atlantic Treaty (1949) | EU: Statute of the Council of Europe (1949) |
|--|--|---|--|
| Values | International peace and security, respect for the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples | Peace, freedom, democracy, individual liberty | Ideals and principles that are the common heritage of the mem- bers; human rights and fundamental freedoms |
| Goals | Develop friendly rela- tions; promote and en- courage respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms; act as a hub to harmo- nize the actions of na- tions in the pursuit of these common ends | Rule of law, stability, well- being | Achieve greater unity between its members |
| Tasks | Take effective collective measures (and other measures as appropriate) to strengthen universal peace and achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an eco- nomic, social, cultural, or humanitarian char- acter | Ensure collective defense and preserve peace and security | Facilitate the economic and social progress of the member states; serve as a forum for discussion of questions of common concern; implement agreements and common action in economic, social, cul- tural, scientific, legal, and administrative matters and in the pur- suit of the further realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms |
| Geographical Limitations | None | North Atlantic Area | The European conti- nent (plus the United Kingdom) |
| Current number of member states | 194 | 28 | 27 |

Table 1: Original Reasons for the Establishment of the UN, EU, and NATO.

How? The Decision-Making Principles of the UN, EU, and NATO

The primary decision-making principles to be used vary significantly between the three institutions. However, in all of them the indispensable element of the decision-making process is the preparation of decisions before their formal approval, so that when the proposals are actually presented at the highest level, no real discussions need to take place. Instead, the decisions that were already agreed upon for approval are simply officially confirmed.

The new EU system of qualified majority voting is the decision-making system that most nearly resembles the actual political practices of the established European democracies. A qualified majority is achieved only if a decision is supported by 55 percent of the member states, including at least fifteen of them; the nations in this majority group must represent at least 65 percent of the Union's population.² Although certain policy fields remain subject to unanimity in whole or in part, in practice the Council attempts to achieve unanimous decisions, and qualified majority voting is often simply used as a means to pressure members to compromise in order to arrive at a consensus. For example, in 2008, 128 out of 147 European Council decisions were unanimous. Within the remaining decisions, there were a total of thirty-two abstentions, and only eight votes against the respective decision.³

² See "A New System of Qualified Majority," at http://europa.eu/scadplus/constitution/ doublemajority_en.htm. Article I-25 of the Constitutional Treaty defines a new system of qualified majority voting. The old system allocating each Member State a certain number of votes has been abandoned in favor of a double majority system. The provision according to which a qualified majority must be supported by 55 percent of member states, including at least fifteen of them, requires clarification: in a union of twenty-five member states, fifteen States represent 60 percent of the total. However, in a union of more than twenty-five states, this provision will lose importance: from the moment that the union enlarges to twenty-six member states, 55 percent of the total number of states will, mathematically, require at least fifteen of them. This provision can therefore be seen as transitional.

Article I-25 specifies that these provisions also apply in cases where the European Council decides by qualified majority, in which case the President of the European Council and the President of the Commission do not take part in the vote. This new system went into effect on 1 November 2009, the date when the new Commission was inaugurated following the 2009 European elections.

- Taxation
- The finances of the Union (own resources, the multiannual financial framework)
- Harmonization in the field of social security and social protection
- Certain provisions in the field of justice and home affairs (the European prosecutor, family law, operational police cooperation, etc.);
- The flexibility clause (352 TFEU) allowing the Union to act to achieve one of its objectives in the absence of a specific legal basis in the treaties

³ Certain policy fields remain subject to unanimity in whole or in part, such as:

[•] Membership of the Union (opening of accession negotiations, association, serious violations of the Union's values, etc.)

The European Parliament is the only directly elected body of the European Union. Voters across all of the member states of the European Union, comprising 500 million citizens, elect the 736 Members every five years. This means that 0.0001472 percent of the entire EU population participates directly in the Parliament. This representation ratio is nearly seven times smaller than the average ratio observed in the four major EU countries themselves – Germany: 0.0007585 percent (622 seats, 82 million population); France: 0.0009159 percent (577 seats, 63 million population); United Kingdom: 0.0010484 percent (650 seats, 62 million population); and Italy (630 seats, 60 million population). This also means that each vote in the European Parliament represents approximately 680,000 European citizens. As states are allocated their seats according to population, the four largest nations in the EU—Germany, France, Italy, and the United Kingdom—together represent nearly 43 percent of the entire parliament.

The decision-making system employed by the United Nations seems to represent the totally opposite extreme from the principles of European democracies. Out of the 194 member states, only fifteen (less than 8 percent) are represented on the United Nations Security Council. Within those fifteen, five are permanent members: the People's Republic of China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America; the non-permanent members are elected for a period of two years. Security Council decisions on procedural matters are made by an affirmative vote of nine members, while Security Council decisions on all other matters are made by an affirmative vote of nine members including the concurring votes of the permanent members. This means that the five permanent member countries, representing 2.58 percent of all the member countries, have veto power over all Security Council decisions on non-procedural matters.⁴

- The common foreign and security policy, with the exception of certain clearly defined cases
- The common security and defense policy, with the exception of the establishment of permanent structured cooperation
- Citizenship (the granting of new rights to European citizens, anti-discrimination measures)
- Certain institutional issues (the electoral system and composition of the parliament, certain appointments, the composition of the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee, the seats of the institutions, the language regime, the revision of the treaties, including the bridging clauses, etc.).
- ⁴ See Chapter V of the United Nations Charter, at http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/ chapter5.shtml. Article 23 of Chapter V governs the composition of the Security Council. It specifies that, in addition to the five permanent members, the General Assembly shall elect ten other members of the United Nations to be non-permanent members of the Security Council, giving consideration to the contribution of members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the organization, and also to equitable geographical distribution. These non-permanent members are elected for a term of two years; a retiring member is not eligible for immediate re-election. Each member of the Security Council has one representative.

Article 27 of Chapter V outlines the voting procedures on the Security Council. Each member of the Security Council has one vote. In addition to the provisions outlined above,

The decision-making principles of NATO are based on consensus, and thus best represent the principles of equality and solidarity of all the member states of the Alliance. All members of the North Atlantic Council (NAC) have not only an equal right to express their views but an equal share in the consensus on which decisions are based. Decisions are agreed upon on the basis of unanimity and common accord. There is no voting or decision by majority. This means that policies decided upon by the NAC are supported by and are the expression of the collective will of all the sovereign states that are members of the Alliance and are accepted by all of them.⁵

Key Challenges for NATO

NATO currently faces a wide range of tensions within and among its member states. While these tensions vary across the wide range of the organization (which reaches from the Pacific Coast of the United States and Canada eastward to the easternmost borders of Turkey), there are some common challenges. How can NATO deal with tensions resulting from political challenges within its member states? How can it address the balance between the civilian and military roles in intervention situations? And how can an organization that was founded to address the bipolar realities of the Cold War find a new role and new identity for itself in the post-Cold War era? One way to answer these questions is to examine what NATO actually does in cooperation with the UN and EU.

Formal Relationships between the Organizations

The formal relationship between NATO and the UN is established through NATO's founding document, the North Atlantic Treaty, which establishes a reporting mechanism on the invoking of Article V (NATO's collective defense guarantee) to the UN Security Council.⁶

any party to a dispute under consideration by the Security Council must abstain from the vote.

⁵ See http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49763.htm.

⁶ Full text of the North Atlantic Treaty is available at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/ official_texts_17120.htm. Article 1 of the treaty states that the parties undertake, as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, to settle any international dispute in which they may be involved by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered, and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

Article 5 holds that the parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America 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-defense recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the attacked party through such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area. Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result are to be reported to the Security Council. Any hostilities initiated under Article 5 will cease when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security.

With the working relations between the United Nations and the Alliance limited during the Cold War, after the fall of the Berlin Wall NATO contributed to a number of the UN Security Council's Resolutions. Examples of this cooperation include:

- UN Security Council resolutions that provided the mandate for NATO's operations in the Balkans and in Afghanistan, and the framework for NATO's training mission in Iraq.⁷
- UNSCR 1325, which was adopted in October 2000. This resolution recognizes the disproportionate impact that war and conflicts have on women and children, and highlights the fact that women have been historically left out of peace processes and stabilization efforts. It calls for full and equal participation of women at all levels in issues ranging from early conflict prevention to post-conflict reconstruction, peace, and security.⁸
- UN Security Council Resolution 1540, establishing for the first time binding obligations on all UN member states under Chapter VII of the UN Charter to take and enforce effective measures against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their means of delivery, and related materials.⁹
- UNSCR 1973, approved in March 2011, which called for the establishment of a ceasefire and a complete end to violence and all attacks against, and abuses of, civilians in Libya (the mandate ended on 31 October 2011).¹⁰ The importance of this resolution and NATO's engagement draws on the doctrine of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), the principle that sovereign states, and the international community as a whole, have a responsibility to protect civilians from mass atrocity crimes.

The EU developed a framework of cooperation with NATO that aimed to increase its visibility and capabilities.¹¹ Negotiations over the framework took almost three years, and were finalized in December 2002. It included the following elements:

• Berlin+ arrangements for the use of NATO assets and capabilities by the EU

Article 7 of the North Atlantic Treaty does not affect the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Article 12 states that, after the Treaty has been in force for ten years, or at any time thereafter, the parties can consult together for the purpose of reviewing the Treaty, having regard for the factors then affecting peace and security in the North Atlantic area, taking into consideration current United Nations measures.

⁷ See http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50321.htm.

⁸ See http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_56984.htm.

⁹ See http://www.state.gov/t/isn/c18943.htm.

¹⁰ See http://www.cfr.org/libya/un-security-council-resolution-1973-libya/p24426.

¹¹ Can Buharali, EDAM Board Member, "Better NATO-EU Relations Require More Sincerity," Discussion Paper Series 2010/1, Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies (EDAM), supported by the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF) (January 2010); available at http://www.gmfus.org/galleries/ct_publication_attachments/NATOgmf edamNATOpaper.pdf.

- Arrangements for a NATO-EU Strategic Partnership (set forth in the EU-NATO Declaration on European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) and an exchange of letters between Secretary-Generals)
- Arrangements in the Nice Implementation Document regarding the involvement of non-EU European allies in the ESDP.

Despite the further recognition of the benefits of the close NATO-EU collaboration in May 2010 by the Group of Experts on a New Strategic Concept for NATO,¹² declarations on strengthening the collaboration by the heads of state and government in the Lisbon Summit Declaration in November 2010,¹³ the creation of a new NATO Strategic Concept, and the call by NATO's Secretary-General for intensified NATO-EU practical cooperation,¹⁴ all formal collaboration between NATO and the EU is strictly channeled through the NATO-EU Capability Group. This group works from a selective list of discussion topics that are mutually agreed upon in advance between the NATO and EU representatives; the actual collaboration is effectively limited to staffto-staff exchanges at the working level.

Although the accession of Cyprus to membership to the EU in 2004 can be perceived as the main reason for the limited cooperation between NATO and the EU, due to the challenges this causes with NATO member Turkey in particular, there are other reasons why NATO-EU cooperation often faces challenges. One might be the EU's willingness to move into the area of defense and security, which has not traditionally been among the EU's foundational tasks, and historically has not been a responsibility that is attributed to the EU. With this move, the reciprocal relationships and roles of

¹² "NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement – Analysis and Recommendations," of the Group of Experts on a New Strategic Concept for NATO, 17 May 2010; available at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_63654.htm?selectedLocale=en. In the 1990s, NATO's primary goal (in association with the European Union) was to consolidate a Europe whole and free. For the first time in its existence it engaged in military action, putting a halt to ethnic cleansing in the Balkans. The Cold War's end enabled the Alliance to establish partnerships with former adversaries, including Russia, and to admit new members who embraced democratic values and who could contribute to NATO's collective security. The result was a Europe more democratic, united, and peaceful than it had ever been.

¹³ "Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation," adopted by Heads of State and Government in Lisbon, 19 November 2010; available at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/events_66529.htm. This concept stated that the NATO member states would, *inter alia*, strengthen NATO's strategic partnership with the EU, in a spirit of mutual openness, transparency, and respect for the autonomy and institutional integrity of both organizations; enhance practical cooperation in operations throughout the crisis spectrum, from coordinated planning to mutual support in the field; broaden political consultations to include all issues of common concern, in order to share assessments and perspectives; and cooperate more fully in capability development, to minimize duplication and maximize cost-effectiveness.

¹⁴ See www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-5BAFFF96-B6D80BDD/natolive/opinions_70400.htm.

both NATO and the EU need to be redefined, particularly in consideration of the very fine distinction between the concepts of protection and defense.

It is worth noting that the only truly joint NATO-EU operation was Operation Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina, launched in 2004. This level of collaboration has not been achieved in other instances where cooperation was not perceived to be imperative. Hence, today the two organizations do not fully cooperate, even though they work side by side in the same theater of operation in Kosovo (KFOR and EULEX), Afghanistan (ISAF and EUPOL), and the Gulf of Aden off Somalia (Ocean Shield and ATA-LANTA).

Since 2003, the EU has conducted more than twenty military and civilian operations. Among them, only two were Berlin+ type of operations that drew upon NATO assets and capabilities. There are at least two explanations for the low numbers of Berlin+ operations. First, these EU operations were small in scale, and hence all resources could be provided and managed by the EU. In any case, on most of these occasions their military component was restricted. Second, given the difficulties associated with NATO-EU relations, the EU has sought to build the capabilities to enable it to operate autonomously as early as possible.¹⁵

Mutually Reinforcing Institutions: Next Steps Toward Complementary Roles

The mutual reinforcement of the three international institutions—the UN, EU, and NATO—lies not only in the differences and complementary functions of their mandates, but also in the fact that the organizations share many member states. NATO and the EU already share twenty-one and possibly twenty-six members, with all the member states of those two organizations also being members of the UN.

Another aspect of the three institutions being complementary to one another is the direction of enlargement through the accession of new members to NATO and the EU. The European Union's direction of enlargement (bearing in mind the current financial difficulties within the Euro zone) is focused on the assimilation of the remaining countries of the Balkans—Croatia, Macedonia, and Montenegro—and is overshadowed with the dispute over the name of the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)¹⁶ between FYROM and Greece.¹⁷

The possible accession of Iceland to the Union would have a minor impact on the EU at large. The accession is being hindered by sensitive discussions over the protection of agriculture and fisheries and whale hunting, although it is likely that these problems can be resolved in the near future.¹⁸ The biggest challenge remains the possi-

¹⁵ Buharali, "Better NATO-EU Relations Require More Sincerity."

¹⁶ Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

¹⁷ See http://www.euractiv.com/enlargement/eu-macedonia-relations-linksdossier-329923. EU candidate status was granted in December 2005, under the U.K.'s EU presidency. Yet FY-ROM has not been able to open any negotiating chapters, with Greece vetoing the start of talks due to the name issue.

¹⁸ See www.europarl.europa.eu/news/nl/pressroom/content/20110318IPR15863/html/MEPswelcome-Iceland's-progress-towards-EU-membership.

ble accession of Turkey, a prospect for which the EU simply does not seem to be ready. The EU considers Turkey's accession to be different from previous enlargements because of the combined impact of Turkey's population; geographic size and location; economic, security, and military potential; as well as its cultural and religious characteristics.¹⁹ The accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey have been stalled since 2008.²⁰

The primary directions for NATO enlargement follow somewhat different courses:

- The accession of the additional Balkan nations (Bosnia and Herzegovina, FY-ROM, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia)
- Integration of the European countries that are not yet part of the Alliance (Austria, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, Ireland)
- Strengthening NATO's partnership with Russia
- Accession of the former Soviet Republics (Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan)

An interesting summary of the next steps to these complementary roles is the "Study on NATO Enlargement," dated 3 September 1995 (available on the NATO website), which considers the process of NATO enlargement as being complementary to the enlargement of the European Union – a parallel process that contributes significantly to extending security and stability throughout Europe and extending it to the new democracies in the East.²¹

Enlargement was to be conducted in line with the provisions of Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which states that "the parties may, by unanimous agreement, invite any other European state in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area to accede to this Treaty." In addition, enlargement presumes that new members will enjoy all the rights and assume all obligations of membership under the Washington Treaty; accept and conform with the principles, policies and procedures adopted by all members of the Alliance; strengthen the Alliance's effectiveness and cohesion; and preserve the Alliance's policical and military capability to perform its core functions of common defense as well as to undertake peacekeeping and other new missions.

New members are also expected to be part of a broader European security architecture based on true cooperation throughout the whole of Europe. Such a structure would threaten no one, but would serve to enhance stability and security for all of Europe. They are also expected to respect the continuing important role of the Partnership for Peace (PfP, which will

¹⁹ Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 6 October 2004, Sec 1202; Commission Staff Working Document on Issues Arising from Turkey's Membership (Com 656 final).

²⁰ See http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/candidate-countries/turkey/eu_turkey_relations_en.htm.

²¹ See http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_24733.htm. The Study on NATO Enlargement (3 September 1995) outlined several principles of enlargement, stating that the accession of new member states should help to promote the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, and to safeguard the freedom, common heritage, and civilization of all Alliance members and their people, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. New members are required to conform to these basic principles.

A Comprehensive Approach to Global Security

According to the European Security Strategy (ESS), "In contrast to the massive visible threat in the Cold War, none of the new threats [outlined in the ESS] is purely military; nor can any be tackled by purely military means. Each requires a mixture of instruments." Moreover, most of the present-day conflicts take place in locations that are physically distant from the European or Euro-Atlantic territories, yet many of them are still regarded as posing a threat to the populations of EU or NATO member states. The human security concept that is accepted within the EU²² and the UN concept of Responsibility to Protect²³ both call for the internationalization and globalization of responsibilities for preventing genocide and mass atrocities and for protecting potential victims.

NATO's new Strategic Concept, adopted at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, underlines that the lessons learned from NATO operations show that effective crisis management calls for a comprehensive approach involving political, civilian, and military instruments. Military means, although essential, are not enough on their own to meet the many complex challenges to Euro-Atlantic and international security. Allied leaders agreed at the Lisbon Summit to enhance NATO's contribution to a comprehensive approach to crisis management as part of the international community's effort and to improve NATO's ability to contribute to stabilization and reconstruction efforts.²⁴

So the changes in three dimensions of military conflicts—the combined nature of the threat, the distant geographical location of the conflict, and the recognition of the inter-territorial responsibilities for protection—are well identified and recognized. The answer to the challenges those changes bring is the adoption of a comprehensive approach that involves all the key international stakeholders, including the UN, EU, and NATO.

NATO has the benefit of great clarity about the reasons for its existence, directly calling on the principles of democracy and individual liberty and setting forth imple-

both help prepare interested partners, through their participation in PfP activities, for the benefits and responsibilities of eventual membership and serve as a means to strengthen relations with partner countries that may be unlikely to join the Alliance soon or at all. Finally, new NATO member states are expected to complement the enlargement of the European Union, a parallel process that also contributes significantly to extending security and stability to the new democracies in the East.

²² Mary Kaldor, Mary Martin, and Sabine Selchow, "Human Security: A New Strategic Narrative for Europe," *International Affairs* 83:2 (2007): 273–88. "[A] human security approach may be the only way to close what can be described as the security gap. Conventional military approaches do not seem to be working in places like Iraq or Afghanistan or Lebanon. Millions of people live in situations of deep insecurity, in large parts of Africa, the Middle East, the Balkans, Central Asia and the Caucasus. The inability of our institutions to address the challenge of global insecurity greatly weakens their legitimacy."

²³ Alex J. Bellamy, "The Responsibility to Protect – Five Years On," *Ethics and International Affairs* 24:2 (Summer 2010): 143–69.

²⁴ NATO, "A 'Comprehensive Approach' to Crisis Management" (updated 21 March 2012); available at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_51633.htm.

mentation principles through the collective defense provision. Actually, NATO can be regarded as an instance of regional implementation of the principles of the UN, with the added political context of democracy, and the benefit of building on numerous historical and economic commonalities between the member states. As such, it can serve as an implementation and consultation platform between the EU and UN, since it already shares twenty-one members with the EU. At the same time, NATO is able to remain clearly focused on the preservation of peace and security for its member states.

Although the decision-making principles of NATO are based on consensus, the stipulation that NATO operations require approval in the form of United Nations Security Council resolutions in order to go into effect *de facto* brings Alliance missions under the oversight of nations that are not part of NATO, including the Russian Federation (which is a NATO partner) and the People's Republic of China. This challenging arrangement establishes the need for extensive consultations about any Alliance operations and missions before the UN mandate is even granted, thus recognizing the key role of the non-NATO nations in the development of the mission and relevance of the Alliance. With an increasing regional role, Turkey, next to China and Russia, has emerged as the third key partner in the further development of the strategic partner-ships between the UN, EU, and NATO.

The call of United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on the UN to close the gap between its lofty rhetoric and its often less-than-lofty performance cannot be met by any single international organization alone. The complementary roles of the UN, EU, and NATO should continue to be fully employed—in particular in the case of NATO-EU collaboration—in the pragmatic implementation of high-level political decisions.

Assessing the Arab Spring in Libya and Syria: A Compilation of Varying Statements from Key Actors

Charles Simpson*

Introduction

The situations in Syria in February 2012 and in Libya in 2011 have provided the two most recent case studies in assessing a wide variety of international topics including NATO's future role in global security, the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) as a normative guide, the role of the League of Arab States (LAS) in the post-Arab Spring world, and the role of emerging powers on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Given the rapid proliferation of academic and professional examinations of the 2011 Libya and 2012 Syria cases, there appears a need for a compilation of the varying policies, resolutions, actions, and statements made by all relevant actors in both scenarios. The table below attempts to provide such a compilation in a concise and clearly structured format.

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| Position on Libya | Position on Syria | |
|--|---|--|
| Group 1 – International Organizations | | |
| Actor – United Nations Security Council (| UNSC) | |
| Pressure on Qaddafi began with UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1970 (26 February 2011), imposing sanctions on Libya consisting of an "arms embargo," "travel ban," "asset freeze," and "humanitarian assistance."¹ Adopted UNSCR 1973 (17 March 2011) authorizing "all necessary measures to protect civilians while excluding a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory," based on Chapter VII of the UN Charter.² This was passed in a vote of ten in favor, none against, with five abstentions. This provided the mandate for NATO Operation Unified Protector (22 March 2011).³ Reinforced UNSCR 1970 with UNSCR 2009 (19 September 2011), and also "looks forward to the establishment of an inclusive, representative transitional Government of Libya" while "reaffirming its previous resolutions 1674 (2006) and 1894 (2009) on the protection of civilians in armed conflict."⁴ Recognized the new transitional government by "taking note of [the] National Transitional Council's 'Decla- ration of Liberation' of 23 October 2011 | UNSC draft resolution was presented (4 October 2011) condemning "grave and systematic human rights violations" in Syria and included "reference to Article 41 of the United Nations Charter," which could allow for application of sanctions. No specific mention of sanctions was made, however.⁴³ UN General Assembly passed Resolution 2443 (19 December 2011) "strongly condemning" the Assad government. A second UNSC draft resolution was presented (4 February 2012) "expressing grave concern at the deterioration of the situation in Syria," "noting the announced commitments by the Syrian authorities to reform," "condemn[ing] the continued widespread and gross violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms by the Syrian authorities," "demand[ing] that the Syrian government immediately put an end to all human rights violations," and "demand[ing] that the Syrian government protect its population." However, this draft resolution does not mention pillar two or three of R2P, nor does it make any suggestion of military intervention. It was vetoed by Russia and China, with the other thirteen UNSC member states voting in favor.⁸ | |

¹ UN Security Council Resolution 1970, 26 February 2011; available at http://daccess-ddsny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N11/245/58/PDF/N1124558.pdf?OpenElement.

² UN Security Council Resolution 1973, 17 March 2011; available at http://daccess-ddsny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N11/268/39/PDF/N1126839.pdf?OpenElement.

³ Operation Unified Protector Final Mission Statistics, Fact Sheet, North Atlantic Treaty Organization Press & Media Section Media Operations Centre (Brussels, 2011); available at http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_11/20111108_111107-factsheet_up_factsfigures_en.pdf.

⁴ UN Security Council Resolution 2009, 19 September 2011; available at http://daccess-ddsny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N11/502/44/PDF/N1150244.pdf?OpenElement.

| in Libya" with UNSCR 2016 (27 October 2011).⁵ Called for stabilization and deproliferation of arms in Libya with UNSCR 2017, by "recognizing the urgent need for additional efforts to be made at the national, regional, and international levels, in order to prevent the proliferation of all arms" (31 October 2011).⁶ "Welcoming the establishment of the transitional Government of Libya" in UNSCR 2022 (2 December 2011), thus expanding the National Transitional Council's (NTC) legitimacy to govern.⁷ | |
|--|---|
| Suspended the Libyan delegation from participation in the League Council (22 February 2011).⁹ Called on the UNSC "to take the | • LAS suspended Syria's participation in the League Council in protest of the Assad government's attacks on civilians (16 November 2011). ¹² |
| necessary measures to impose immediately a no-fly zone on Libyan military aviation" to "provide the Libyan people with necessary protection" in response to "violations and grave crimes committed by the Libyan authorities, | Passed LASR 7441 launching an observer mission to Syria (24 November 2011).¹³ The observation mission was suspended on 29 January 2012 due to prohibitive levels of violence.¹⁴ Passed LASR 7442 (27 November 2011) to |
| which have consequently lost their legitimacy," with LAS Resolution (LASR) 7360 (12 March 2011).¹⁰ Recognized the NTC as the legitimate government of Libya by affirming an | impose sanctions on Syria, specifically to "ban the travel of top Syrian officials," stop "transactions with the Central Bank of Syria," halt "governmental trade transactions with the Syrian government," and freeze "the financial as- |

- ⁵ UN Security Council Resolution 2016, 27 October 2011; available at http://daccess-ddsny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N11/567/10/PDF/N1156710.pdf?OpenElement.
- ⁶ UN Security Council Resolution 2017, 31 October 2011; available at http://daccess-ddsny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N11/573/ 33/PDF/N1157333.pdf?OpenElement.
- ⁷ UN Security Council Resolution 2022, 2 December 2011; available at http://daccess-ddsny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N11/620/28/PDF/N1162028.pdf?OpenElement.
- ⁸ UN Security Council Draft Resolution, 4 February 2012 (minutes of the 6711th meeting of the UNSC); available at http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/PRO/N12/223/56/PDF/ N1222356.pdf?OpenElement.
- ⁹ Dominic Evans, "Syrian Forces Break up Hama Protest Marking Killings," *Reuters* (3 February 2012); available at http://af.reuters.com/ article/worldNews/idAFL6E8C52E220120203? sp=true.
- ¹⁰ League of Arab States Resolution 7360, "The outcome of the Council of the League of Arab States meeting at the ministerial level," Cairo, 12 March 2011; available at http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/Arab League Ministerial level statement 12 march 2011 english (1).pdf.

| NTC representative in the LAS Council (27 August 2011). ¹¹ | sets of the Syrian government."¹⁵ Called for the "formation of a national unity government," for "the international community to show support to the National Unity Government," and for the Assad regime to "withdraw all manifestation of military activity" with LASR 7444 and 7445 (22 January 2012).¹⁶ Passed LASR 7446 (12 February 2012) calling for an UN–Arab League peacekeeping operation in Syria, citing the "responsibility to protect civilians" as the cause.¹⁷ The Syrian government has rejected the proposed peacekeeping mission.¹⁸ |
|---|---|
| Actor – European Union (EU) | |
| Represented the largest foreign donor to address the humanitarian crisis in Libya (25 February 2011).¹⁹ The EU went beyond humanitarian | • Imposed an embargo on Syria covering "equipment which might be used for internal repression," an "import ban on crude oil and petroleum products," "restrictions on admission |

¹¹ League of Arab States Resolution 7370, "The Situation in Libya," Cairo, 27 August 2011; available at http://arableagueonline.org/wps/wcm/connect/1b53548048e9ef94b16bfd7abaae 88c3/%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B1+7370.pdf?MOD=AJPERES.

- ¹² Sheikh Hamad bin Jassem bin Jabr al-Thani, League of Arab States Official Press Release Statement, Cairo (13 November 2011); available at www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2011-11/ 13/content 14085036.htm.
- ¹³ Muhammad Ahmad Mustafa al-Dabi, "Report of the Head of the League of Arab States Observer Mission to Syria for the period from 24 December 2011 to 18 January 2012," Cairo, 27 January 2012; available at www.innercitypress.com/LASomSyria.pdf.
- ¹⁴ "Amid Violence, Arab League Suspends Observer Mission in Syria," CNN (28 January 2012); available at http://edition.cnn.com/2012/01/28/world/meast/syria-unrest/index.html? hpt=hp_t3.
- ¹⁵ League of Arab States Resolution 7442, "Following the Developments of the Situation in Syria," Cairo, 27 November 2011; available at http://www.openbriefing.org/regionaldesks/ middleeast/resolution7442.
- ¹⁶ League of Arab States Resolution 7444, "On the developments of the situation in Syria and the elements of the Arab Roadmap to solve the Syrian Crisis," Cairo, 22 January 2012; available at www.arableagueonline.org/wps/wcm/connect/76a9db8049e4238ba551bd526698d42c/ res+7444.pdf?MOD=AJPERES.
- ¹⁷ League of Arab States Resolution 7446, "Follow-up Developments on the Worsening Situation in Syria," Cairo, 12 February 2012; available at http://arableagueonline.org/wps/wcm/ connect/dbd065804a2433d984769c526698d42c/7446.pdf?MOD=AJPERES.
- ¹⁸ H. Zein, "Syria Rejects Decisions of AL Ministerial Meeting as Flagrant Interference in Syria's Affairs & Encroachment on its National Sovereignty," *Sana Syria News Agency* (14 February 2012); available at www.sana.sy/eng/21/2012/02/14/400175.htm.
- ¹⁹ European Union Press Release, "Crisis in Libya: European Commission Allocates €3 Million to Address Humanitarian Needs," Brussels, 25 February 2011; available at http://europa.eu/ rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/228.

| aid by imposing sanctions (28 February 2011) prohibiting the "direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer of arms," travel restrictions, and freezing of assets related to the Qaddafi government.²⁰ These sanctions aligned with, and went beyond, the sanction framework established with UNSCR 1970 (2 March 2011).²¹ The EU authorized the potential deployment of EUFOR "in support of humanitarian assistance operations" based on the Protection of Civilian measures cited in UNSCR 1970 and 1976 (1 April 2011). The UN has not yet requested EUFOR deployment.²² The EU was not initially unified in its member states' levels of support for intervention in Libya, as witnessed by German abstention from voting on UNSCR 1970 (26 February 2011),¹ and French unilateral recognition of the | i. | | |
|--|----|--|--|
| | | 2011) prohibiting the "direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer of arms," travel restrictions, and freezing of assets related to the Qaddafi government.²⁰ These sanctions aligned with, and went beyond, the sanction framework established with UNSCR 1970 (2 March 2011).²¹ The EU authorized the potential deployment of EUFOR "in support of humanitarian assistance operations" based on the Protection of Civilian measures cited in UNSCR 1970 and 1976 (1 April 2011). The UN has not yet requested EUFOR deployment.²² The EU was not initially unified in its member states' levels of support for intervention in Libya, as witnessed by | and economic resources of certain persons, entities and bodies," initiated in 2011 and reaffirmed in January 2012.²³ These measures conflict with earlier efforts to expand trade relations with Syria as outlined in the EU 2007–2013 Strategy Paper, and the fact that the EU is Syria's primary trading partner.²⁴ Recent developments in Syria have delayed the implementation of EU-Syrian economic and political cooperative agreements.²⁵ Up until around 2008, EU-Syria relations were positive and showed signs of greater participation in Euro-Mediterranean partnerships.²⁶ Conversely, present day EU statements have supported LAS and UN calls to "increase the international pressure on the Syrian regime," and welcome |
| UNSCR 1970 (26 February 2011), ¹ and alleviate the suffering of the Syrian | | intervention in Libya, as witnessed by | pressure on the Syrian regime," and welcome |
| | | | any "proposals to stop the violence [and] |
| French unilateral recognition of the population." ²⁷ | | UNSCR 1970 (26 February 2011), ¹ and | |
| | ļ | French unilateral recognition of the | population." ²⁷ |

²⁰ European Union, Council Decision 2011/137/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Libya, Brussels, 28 February 2011; available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/ LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:058:0053:0062:EN:PDF.

²³ European Union Restrictive Measures (Sanctions) in Force (Brussels, 2012); available at www.google.ch/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=european commission – restrictive measures restrictive measures in force &source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCIQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Feeas. europa.eu%2Fcfsp%2Fsanctions%2Fmeasures.htm&ei=5fg4T8LoOKrf4QT517WhCw&usg.

²⁴ European Commission, European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument: Syrian Arab Republic: Strategy Paper 2007–2013 & National Indicative Programme 2007–2010 (Brussels: European Commission, 2007); available at http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/ enpi csp nip syria en.pdf.

²¹ European Union, Council Regulation No.204/2011, Brussels, 2 March 2011; available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu.

²² European Union, Council Decision 2011/210/CFSP, Brussels, 1 April 2011; available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ. do?uri=OJ:L:2011:089:0017:0020:en:PDF.

²⁵ Bilateral Agreement, Council of the European Union, "Cooperation Agreement between the European Economic Community and the Syrian Arab Republic," L269 (Brussels: Official Journal of the European Communities, 1977); available at http://ec.europa.eu/world/ agreements/prepareCreateTreatiesWorkspace/treatiesGeneralData.do?step=0&redirect=true& treatyId=255.

²⁶ Council of the European Union, *Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial Conference* (Marseille: Consilium Press Office, 2008); available at www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms Data/docs/pressData/en/misc/103733.pdf.

²⁷ European Union, Statement by High Representative Catherine Ashton on the decisions by the League of Arab States on Syria, Brussels, 13 February 2012; available at www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/127953.pdf.

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| NTC's legitimacy (10 March 2011), ³⁸⁹ | | |
| but the EU's minimal role in the conflict | | |
| prevented policy fissures on these issues. | | |
| Actor – African Union (AU) | | |
| • The AU supported sanctions on Libya | Official statements claim that media | |
| in UNSCR 1970 (26 February 2011) and | depictions of violence amount to "misleading | |
| supported UNSCR 1973's R2P mission | campaigns conducted by some media to tarnish | |
| calling for "protection of civilians and the | Syria's image," and call for "solidarity between | |
| cessation of all hostilities," from an ad | the Arab and African peoples." Opposition | |
| hoc panel on the Libya situation (25 | groups are reported as terrorists (22 October | |
| March 2011). ²⁸ | 2011). ²⁹ | |
| Actor – Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) | | |
| Issued a statement basically restating | • The GCC has supported the LAS in its | |
| and voicing support for UNSCR 1970. | observation mission in Syria by providing forty- | |
| The GCC "condemned the serious | two of the original set of observers (two with- | |
| violations of human rights and | drew), and twenty-one vehicles. ¹³ | |
| international humanitarian law carried out | | |
| by the Libyan authorities," "expressed | | |
| their support for the UN Security | | |
| Council Resolution No. 1970," and | | |
| "called the UN Security Council to | | |
| impose an air embargo on Libya to | | |
| protect civilians" (8 March 2011). ³⁰ | | |
| Group 2 – UNSC Permanent Five (UNSC P5) | | |
| Actor – United States | | |
| • The U.S. Senate passed non-binding | • The U.S. began to impose sanctions on the | |
| resolution S.RES.85 (1 March 2011) | Assad family in April 2011. ³⁵ | |
| "strongly condemning the gross and | • The U.S. voted in favor of the first UNSC | |
| systematic violations of human rights in | draft resolution condemning the Syrian | |
| Libya," and "urge[d] the United Nations | government (4 October 2011). ⁴³ | |
| Security Council to take such further | • US voted in favor of the second UNSC draft | |
| action as may be necessary to protect | resolution condemning the Syrian government (4 | |
| civilians in Libya from attack." This is the | February 2012). ⁹ | |

 ²⁸ African Union Communique, "Meeting of the African Union High-Level Ad Hoc Committee on Libya," Addis Ababa, 19 March 2011; available at http://au.int/en/dp/ps/sites/default/ files/Communique_en_19_March_2011_PSD_Meeting_au_High_Level_ad_hoc_committee _Libya_Nouakchott_Islamic_Republic_Mauritania.pdf.
 ²⁹ African Union_Press_Palaese, "Christer and Press Palaese, and Press Palaes

²⁹ African Union Press Release, "Chairperson Ping Receives the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs," Addis Ababa, 22 October 2011; available at www.au.int/ar/dp/cpauc/sites/default/ files/Chairperson Ping receives the Deputy Foreign Minister of Syria.pdf.

³⁰ Joint Statement issued by the Joint Ministerial Meeting of the Strategic Dialogue between the Countries of the Cooperation Council for the Arab Gulf States and Australia (Riyadh: Gulf Cooperation Council Secretariat, 8 March 2011); available at http://www.gcc-sg.org/index c23e.html?action=News&Sub=ShowOne&ID=1919.

| first legal document suggesting intervention.³¹ Voted in favor of UNSCR 1973 (17 March 2011).³² Began enforcing a no-fly zone over Libya with Operation Odyssey Dawn in conjunction with the U.K. and France (19 March 2011),³³ before passing control to NATO Operation Unified Protector (22 March 2011).³⁴ | |
|---|---|
| Actor – United Kingdom Voted in favor of UNSCR 1973 (17 March 2011).³³ Began enforcing a no-fly zone over Libya with Operation Ellamy in conjunction with France and the U.S. before passing control to NATO Operation Unified Protector (22 March 2011) after the U.K. Parliament approved the application of military assets in a 557 for, 13 against vote (21 March 2011).³⁶ | The U.K. has pressed for sanctions, but is focusing primarily on the development of a UNSCR on the issue.³⁷ The U.K. voted in favor of the first UNSC draft resolution condemning the Syrian government (4 October 2011).⁴³ The U.K. voted in favor of the second UNSC draft resolution condemning the Syrian government (4 February 2012).⁹ |
| Actor - France Became the first state to recognize the France voted in favor of the first UNSC dra | |
| NTC as Libya's legitimate government (10 March 2011).³⁸ Began enforcing a no-fly zone over Libya with Operation Harmattan (19 March 2011) in conjunction with the U.S. and U.K. before passing control to NATO | resolution condemning the Syrian government (4 October 2011).⁴³ France's latest push for a UNSC draft resolution was vetoed (4 February 2012) by Russia and China.⁹ |

³¹ The White House, Executive Order 13572 (29 April 2011), (Washington, D.C.: Federal Register 76:85, 3 May 2011); available at http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/ Programs/Documents/13572.pdf.

³² United Nations Security Council Resolution, Minutes of the 6498th Meeting of the Security Council, 2011; available at http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/PRO/N11/267/18/ PDF/N1126718.pdf?OpenElement.

- ³³ Operation Odyssey Dawn (Libya): Background Issues for Congress, CRS Report for Congress (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2011); available at www.fas.org/ sgp/crs/natsec/R41725.pdf.
- ³⁴ Operation Unified Protector Final Mission Statistics.
- ³⁵ The White House, Executive Order 13582 (17 August 2011), (Washington, D.C.: Federal Register 76:162, 22 August 2011); available at www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/ Programs/Documents/syria_eo_08182011.pdf.
- ³⁶ Claire Taylor, "In Brief: Parliamentary Approval for Deploying the Armed Forces," House of Commons Standard Note SN/IA/5908 (London: House of Commons Library, 7 April 2011); available at www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN05908.pdf.
- ³⁷ "Syria Unrest: UK, France and Italy Press for Sanctions," *BBC World News* (26 April 2011); available at www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-13197277.

| Operation Unified Protector (22 March | |
|--|---|
| 2011). ³⁹ | |
| • Voted in favor of UNSCR 1973 (17 March 2011). ³³ | |
| Actor – Russia | |
| • Russia abstained from the vote on UNSCR 1973 (17 March 2011), ³³ and later opposed Operation Unified Protector as an improper exploitation of "fuzzy" wording in the document's text. Russia criticized NATO for going beyond R2P to achieve regime change. ⁴⁰ | Russia vetoed the first UNSC draft resolution on Syria (4 October 2011), citing "respect for the national sovereignty of Syria," as a concern.⁴³ Russia has vetoed (4 February 2012) the most recent UNSC draft resolution on Syria, blaming "international members of the interna- tional community" (i.e., the U.S., U.K., and France) for destabilizing the situation by "calling for regime change, encouraging the opposition towards power, indulging in provocation and nurturing the armed struggle," while contra- dictorily stating that "the bloodshed and violence in Syria must be immediately ended."⁹ Russia has suggested informal multilateral talks without preconditions in Moscow, instead of at the UN.⁴¹ |
| Actor – China | |
| • The People's Republic of China (PRC) attempted to balance non- interventionism with support for civilian protection missions by the Arab League by abstaining from the vote on UNSCR 1973 (17 March 2011). ³³ | The PRC vetoed the first UNSC draft resolution on Syria (4 October 2011), stating that their delegation was "highly concerned about the developments in Syria," but believed that "under the current circumstances, sanctions or the threat thereof does not help to resolve the question of Syria and, instead, may further complicate the situation."⁴³ The PRC vetoed the latest UNSC draft resolution on Syria along with Russia (4 February 2012), citing respect for the "sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Syria," as motivation.⁹ |

³⁸ "Libya: France Recognises Rebels as Government," *BBC News Europe* (10 March 2011); available at www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12699183.

³⁹ Official Statement, French Ministry of Defense, "Libye: point de situation opération Harmattan n°1," (25 March 2011); available at www.defense.gouv.fr/operations/autres-operations/ operation-harmattan-libye/actualites/libye-point-de-situation-operation-harmattan-n-1.

⁴⁰ Evans, "Syrian Forces Break up Hama Protest Marking Killings."

⁴¹ United Nations Press Release, "Security Council Debates Situation in Syria," 31 January 2012; available at www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp? NewsID=41090&Cr=Syria&Cr1=.

| Group 3 – Other Notable UNSC Non-Permanent Members | | |
|--|--|--|
| Actor – India | | |
| • Abstained from the vote on UNSCR 1973 (17 March 2011), voicing concerns that the intervention would increase civilian casualties and was aimed more at regime change than R2P. ³³ | Abstained from the first UNSC draft resolution vote (4 October 2011), stating that "India remains concerned about the unfolding events in Syria," but "given the complexity of ground realities in Syria, we believe that engaging Syria in a collaborative and constructive dialogue and partnership is the only way forward."⁴³ Voted in favor of UNSC draft resolution (4 February 2012), stating, "We strongly condemn all violence, irrespective of the perpetrators."⁹ | |
| Actor – Brazil | | |
| • Abstained from the vote on UNSCR 1973 (17 March 2011), voicing concerns that the intervention would increase civilian casualties and was aimed more at regime change than R2P. ³³ | Abstained from the vote on the UNSC draft resolution (4 October 2011), encouraging a "meaningful and inclusive national dialogue," using soft power influence from the "establishment by the Human Rights Council of a commission of inquiry," rather than sanctions.⁴² Was not a member of the UNSC during the latest UNSC draft resolution vote (4 February 2012), but worked multilaterally outside of the UN with South Africa and India to vocally pressure the Syrian government to reform.⁹ | |
| Actor – Germany | | |
| • Abstained from the vote on UNSCR 1973 (17 March 2011), proposing political, rather than military pressure to resolve the Libyan crisis. ³³ This was a break from the EU line of support for pressure on the Libyan government. | Voted in favor of the first UNSC draft resolution on Syria (4 October 2011) in alignment with EU members France, Portugal, and the U.K.⁴³ Voted in favor of the second UNSC draft resolution on Syria (4 February 2012) in alignment with EU members France, Portugal, and the U.K.⁹ | |

 ⁴² UN Security Council Draft Resolution, 4 October 2011 (minutes of the 6627th meeting of the UNSC); available at http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/PRO/N11/529/74/PDF/N11 52974.pdf?OpenElement.

| Actor – Turkey | |
|---|--|
| • Turkey was generally supportive of | Turkey has worked alongside the LAS to |
| the NATO mission, UNSCR, and LAS | impose sanctions on Syria.44 |
| positions. | However, Turkey represents Syria's second |
| Turkey has since given monetary aid | largest trading partner, and is bound by the |
| to support the transitional government. ⁴³ | states' economic ties. Turkey will need to find a |
| | balanced approach to preserve its "no problems |
| | with neighbors" foreign policy. ²⁵ |

Analysis

While intended initially as a reference guide, the table above provides several useful insights into the Libyan and Syrian crises. Two interrelated insights are particularly illustrative of underlying global trends: first, a decline from 2011 to 2012 in United States, United Kingdom, and French political will to pursue the Responsibility to Protect (R2P); and second, a reciprocal growing desire from the Russian Federation and China to defend incumbent governments from external intervention.

On the first trend, when comparing LAS involvement in Libya and Syria there appears to be a declining degree of real effort from the three Western members of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council to enforce R2P and pursue regime change. In the Libyan case, the U.S. Senate was active in calling for intervention, indirectly citing R2P as a motive. Similarly, the U.K. Parliament was eager to approve funding for a military-enforced no-fly zone. France was quick to recognize the NTC as Libva's legitimate government. All three of these states launched military missions to enforce a no-fly zone over Libya within two days of the UNSC requesting such action (constituting an instantaneous response when measured against the glacial pace of most international orchestration). On the contrary, in the Syrian case this rapid willingness to intervene has been relatively muted. While there has been an active diplomatic effort in the UNSC, representatives have been quick to compromise and dilute proposed resolutions. As a result, the October 2011 and February 2012 UNSC draft resolutions on Syria were much less aggressive in their wording when compared to the UNSCRs aimed at Libya in 2011. There have also been no formal governmental calls for action, as was witnessed in the U.S. Senate in 2011. And there have been no military mobilizations or serious suggestions of enforcing a no-fly zone.

A second, inverse trend can be seen with respect to the other two permanent members of the Security Council, China and Russia, when comparing the cases of Libya 2011 and Syria 2012. The most immediately obvious difference in these two nations' approach toward Syria and Libya has been the decision by China and Russia to veto the 4 October 2011 and 4 February 2012 UNSC draft resolutions on Syria, rather than

⁴³ "Libya: Turkey Recognises Transitional National Council," *BBC News Africa* (3 July 2011); available at www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14009206.

⁴⁴ Dan Bilefsky, "Turkey Moves to Intensify Sanctions Against Syria," *The New York Times* (30 November 2011); available at www.nytimes.com/2011/12/01/world/middleeast/turkeyintensifies-sanctions-against-syrian-regime.html?ref=arableague.

to abstain from voting (as they did in the case of UNSCR 1973 and Libya). Moscow and Beijing have clearly placed a greater importance on the defense of the Syrian regime relative to the Libyan government.

Limitations

The above insights are however, incomplete, and illustrate the limitations of the table in analyzing changing policy trends. The table serves its purpose in identifying *what* the differences are between both cases, but does not delve into the question of *why* these differences have developed as they did. Without the "why," and without a broader set of data than these two anecdotal examples, it is also unclear whether these differences represent fundamental policy changes, or if they represent a consistent policy being applied in different forms to address the unique circumstances in Libya and Syria. The following section will attempt to tentatively answer these two follow-up questions: "why," and "what are the implications?" However, further research will be needed to find definitive answers.

Further Assessment

There are several underlying forces that could explain the "why" in both of the aforementioned trends. With regard to the U.S., U.K., and France's differing approaches, this shift appears to be driven by three dominant constraints: domestic politics, economics, and the international legal environment. Both the U.S. and France will be holding presidential elections in 2012. With the prospect of being voted out of office looming on the horizon, the respective incumbent nominees Barack Obama and Nicolas Sarkozy appear less willing to take risks on major foreign interventions. The second force, economics, involves the fact that the U.S., the U.K., and France are all feeling the burden of the global financial crisis. With domestic demand for government social program spending on the rise and recently announced cuts in defense spending, the costs of foreign intervention now seem too great to justify. Therefore, given current circumstances in the U.S., U.K., and France, there is no longer enough political or monetary capital available to fund interventions. Third, this resource deficit is compounded by the fact that there is not yet any international legal approval for intervention in Syria - unlike the Libyan case, where the international community provided explicit authorization for military action in the form of a UNSCR, a resolution from Libya's affiliated party, the LAS, and consistent affirmations from various state governments that the Qaddafi regime had lost its legitimacy as the sovereign government of Libva. This legal platform to justify action is absent in the Syrian case. The LAS still regards Assad's government as legitimate, if deeply flawed, and the UNSC has not vet provided the approval necessary for R2P operations to begin.

China and Russia's changes in policy seem to be attributable to several driving factors. First, China and Russia have much more substantial military and economic ties to Syria than they did to Libya. Russia's sole Mediterranean naval base is located in Tartus, Syria. Moscow also has approximately USD 20 billion at stake in weapons and infrastructure deals with Damascus. China has its eyes locked on Syria's oil resources,

and both countries-Russia because of its close proximity, and China because of its insatiable demand for energy resources—have a profound interest in assuring stability in the region, an interest that could be undermined by a collapse of the Assad regime. Furthermore, both countries feel a need to rebuild their international reputations after providing *de facto* authorization to NATO's enforcement of Western interests in Libya. Having allowed the West to get its way in Libya, both states are now attempting to prove their equal power relative to the West by vetoing any further intervention in the Middle East and North Africa. Evidence for this motive can be witnessed in Russia's bilateral talks with Damascus and proposal that multilateral negotiations take place in Moscow, rather than at the UN. This suggests that Russia does want change in Syria, but wants Russian-managed change, rather than change enforced by the West or other bodies not aligned with Moscow, such as the LAS. There is also an implicit Chinese desire to reassure the world of its non-interventionist foreign policy after having appeared complicit, or at least permissive of, regime change in Libya. By vetoing any Security Council Resolutions on Syria, Russia and China are polishing their international image and reasserting themselves as global powers on par with the West, while countering institutions non-aligned with China or Russia. This could suggest a growing struggle for power-parity along an East-West divide.

Additionally important in China and Russia's recently insistent defense of Syria is the fact that China and Russia both represent governments in a similar situation to the Assad regime: all three states are examples of centralized, non-democratic governments with significant opposition movements that threaten national unity. This "same boat" mentality produces a desire for solidarity. Following a year when *Time Magazine* chose "the Protestor" as its Person of the Year, China and Russia are worried about the potential implications of another successful revolt on the passivity of their respective populations. There appears to be concern that a domino effect that started in Tunisia in 2011 could spread east to Moscow and Beijing if allowed to continue on its path through Damascus. Russia has seen recent protests against the rigging of national "managed elections," and consistently feels threatened by its Chechen minority population. Similarly, China has experienced the March 2011 Yunnan protest, the April 2011 Shanghai riots, the June 2011 Zencheng riot, and weekly pro-democracy protests in Beijing, and feels persistently threatened by minority populations in western China. Another successful revolt in Damascus could embolden protesters outside of Syria. Thus, assuring the stability of the Syrian regime abroad is regarded by Beijing and Moscow as an investment in domestic security in China and Russia.

Conclusion

This article is intended chiefly to provide a comprehensive comparison of international developments surrounding the situations in Libya in 2011 and Syria in 2012, thus illustrating any notable differences between them and any changes in policy among relevant actors. The assertions in the previous section about the implications of these differences are, however, only conjectures made in an attempt to fill any informational gaps in the table. Further research will need to be done to definitively understand the

forces behind these policy changes, and to grasp the repercussions these changes will have on the future of foreign policy.

Recent Trends in Security and Stability in the South Caucasus

Richard Giragosian and Sergey Minasyan*

Introduction

After twenty years of independence, the three counties of the South Caucasus-Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia—continue to struggle with a daunting set of challenges. In light of several unresolved conflicts and profound deficiencies in efforts directed at democratic and economic reform, the South Caucasus continues to be a "region at risk." As if this rather bleak landscape was not enough, three more recent trends have emerged to further threaten the region's security and stability. The first trend, and one that is likely to have the most profound effects over the long term, is evident in a subtle shift in the already delicate balance of power in the region, driven largely by a steady surge in Azerbaijani defense spending and exacerbated by a lack of progress in the mediation of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Since the 1994 ceasefire that resulted in the suspension of hostilities over Nagorno-Karabakh (but that did not definitively end them), this unresolved or "frozen" conflict has been subject to an international mediation effort conducted by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's (OSCE) so-called Minsk Group. This tripartite body co-chaired by France, Russia, and the United States seeks to engage and prod the parties to the conflict toward a negotiated resolution of the conflict.

Over the past two years, however, tension has mounted significantly, clashes and attacks have escalated, and violations of the ceasefire have culminated in a renewed threat of war. In response, the primary focus of diplomatic engagement has been modified to a more "back to basics" approach, moving from outright conflict resolution to a more basic mission of conflict prevention. But the outlook for diplomacy remains rather bleak, especially as Azerbaijan sees no real progress from the peace process and has instead reverted to a policy of threatening hostilities, warning of a military option to force a resolution to the conflict. This has also led to a new danger that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict may rapidly transform from a simmering (but manageable) "frozen" conflict into a new "hot" conflict. And although the warning signs of possible renewed hostilities over Nagorno-Karabakh have been clear for some time—marked by an escalation of clashes along the line of contact separating Nagorno-Karabakh from Azerbaijan—there has been far too little appreciation of the danger outside of the region.

Assessing the Threat of War over Karabakh

In terms of assessing the threat of war, recent developments suggest that the danger of renewed hostilities over Nagorno-Karabagh is now more pronounced than at any time

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since the ceasefire agreement of 1994 that effectively imposed a suspension of armed conflict. More specifically, such an increasing threat of war is driven by several factors. First, Azerbaijan has sparked a dangerous "arms race" in the region, steadily increasing its defense budget over the past several years, from USD 175 million in 2004 to between USD 3.1–3.3 billion in 2011, representing nearly 20 percent of the overall 2011 state budget and including USD 1.4 billion in targeted spending for modernization "through the purchase of up-to-date equipment and weaponry."¹

Although Azerbaijan's steady increase in defense spending should primarily be interpreted in the light of an effort to achieve military superiority over its rivals, it also reflects a strategy to compel Armenia to match the increases in order to put pressure on the much smaller Armenian budget and to exploit the perception of Armenian economic weakness and vulnerability. Moreover, despite the serious spike in defense spending, the impact of the substantial outlays over the past several years has actually been very limited in terms of enhancing any real military capacity in Azerbaijan, mainly due to entrenched corruption within the Azerbaijani armed forces.² More recently, however, Azerbaijan has devoted a significant proportion of its defense budget to the procurement of new, modern offensive weapon systems.

Another important factor that has only exacerbated tension is Azerbaijan's mounting frustration over the lack of progress in the Karabakh peace process. Since open hostilities were halted in 1994, the unresolved Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been the focus of an international mediation effort aimed at forging a negotiated resolution capable of solving the inherent contradiction between the principles of self-determination and territorial integrity. What makes this current situation much more serious than earlier rounds of increased spending and rhetoric is the fact that for the first time, there is now a direct correlation between more explicit threats and greater capability for offensive military action. At the very least, the current situation necessitates a new attempt to strengthen and deepen the existing ceasefire agreement by expanding the mission and mandate for OSCE observers. Given the recent escalation of tension and sporadic clashes, addressing the vulnerability of the current ceasefire regime should be an immediate priority for the international community. Thus, there is an obvious need to ease tension, prevent war, and reinvigorate a seemingly stalled peace process. This requires a new strategy, one that is capable of ensuring that Karabakh does not move from a frozen conflict to a serious "hot" war.

¹ "Azerbaijan to Nearly Double Defense Spending," *Agency France-Presse* (12 October 2010).

² For more background on corruption within the Azerbaijani armed forces, see Liz Fuller and Richard Giragosian, "Azerbaijan's Unsinkable General," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) *Caucasus Report* (14 March 2010); and Richard Giragosian, "Looking to 2020: Azerbaijan's Military Aspirations," *Jane's Islamic Affairs Analyst* (23 April 2008).

Nagorno-Karabakh and Deterrence Theory

Given the improbability of reaching a final compromise solution even in the mid-term, the most important goal in the Karabakh conflict should be the preservation of stability. The context is reminiscent, at a micro-level, of the Cold War, in which stability served to prevent a war between two superpowers trapped in bipolar confrontation. This stability was made possible by the use of two complementary restraining policies—military deterrence and political containment—both of which can be fully applied to the Karabakh conflict.³ Moreover, since the threat of renewing military operations is currently coming only from Baku, a policy of deterrence is used primarily by Armenia to prevent a resumption of hostilities in Karabakh.

Basically, Armenia seeks to "increase the price of war" by threatening targets of energy production and transportation infrastructure in Azerbaijan. To do so, however, it requires weapons capable of delivering effective disruptive strikes against sensitive targets deep in hypothetical enemy territory. Taking into account the weakness of the air forces of both sides, these weapons include heavy artillery, tactical mid-range and tactical operational long-range missiles, and large-caliber multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS). When assessing the local military balance, therefore, it becomes clear that, despite its deeper arsenal of long-range missiles, Azerbaijan remains vulnerable to attacks on its energy and industrial facilities. Using its large-caliber MLRS WM-80⁴ and tactical operational missile systems of the 9K72 Elbrus type (SS-1C Scud-B in NATO classification),⁵ Armenia has the capacity to seriously damage energy, industrial, infrastructural, and communication facilities deep within Azerbaijani territory.

Furthermore, in mid-2011, it was reported that the Armenian army possessed the new 300-mm Smerch MLRS missile system.⁶ Moreover, during the military parade in Yerevan on the twentieth anniversary of the independence of Armenia, four 9K79 "Tochka-U" tactical missile launchers were also publicly displayed. For a long time, Azerbaijan's own possession of such system was an argument within Azerbaijan for the resumption of hostilities.⁷ Baku hoped that the possession of such systems would

³ For more details see Sergey Minasyan, "The Quest for Stability in the Karabakh Conflict: Conventional Deterrence and Political Containment," *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo* No. 188 (September 2011); available at www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/ponars/pepm_ 188.pdf.

⁴ At the end of the 1990s, Armenia acquired eight WM-80 launchers of 273-mm MLRS of Chinese make (with maximum range, depending on missile type, from 80 to 120 km).

⁵ They were transferred to Armenia from the arms and ammunition dumps of the 176th Rocket Brigade of the 7th Guards Army in the course of the distribution of Soviet military property in the mid-1990s. The range of these rockets is up to 300 km, with probable circular deviation of 0.6 km at large distances.

⁶ Sarkis Harutyunyan, "Armenian Military 'Interested' in Russian Rocket Systems," *RFE/RL– Armenia* (6 June 2011); available at www.azatutyun.am/content/article/24228862.html.

⁷ In 2004–05, Azerbaijan purchased from Ukraine twelve launchers for the 9A52 "Smerch" MLRS. The range of the "Smerch" MLRS is from 70 to 90 km (depending on missile type). In 2008, Baku also purchased at least four 9K79 "Tochka-U" tactical missile launchers.

enable it to conduct "remote" military operations, thereby allowing Azerbaijani forces to avoid having to storm the Karabakh fortification line, an operation that would likely see heavy losses. But now, with its own Smerch and Tochka-U systems, and the prospects of acquiring additional long-range missile systems, Armenia's deterrent capability has been strengthened considerably.⁸ As a result, the Azerbaijani leadership faces a serious choice. It could instigate a full-scale military confrontation, in which both sides use heavy artillery, including MLRS and long-range missiles. However, this would lead to heavy losses and the destruction of much of Azerbaijan's energy and communication infrastructure, with no guarantee of a quick victory. Any such military conflict would also not last long, as the international community would intervene.

The alternative for Azerbaijan is to forgo using MLRS and long-range missiles in the hope that Armenia would also refrain from their use. This, however, seems unlikely. Azerbaijan would then have to restrict itself to a frontal offensive, "Stalingrad-style," over reinforced fortification lines. The heavy losses such an offensive would entail make this an unpalatable option.⁹ It is clearly very difficult for Azerbaijan to choose between these two operational alternatives. In either case, the price of war would simply be too high, and the possible outcomes too uncertain. Thus, it seems that Azerbaijan's leadership has for now chosen the only viable option: an arms race, hoping to exhaust Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. Even this arms race, however, reinforces Armenia's deterrence capacity. Armenia is able to maintain parity with Azerbaijan, despite the latter's high level of military spending, through the free and preferential arms transfers it receives from Russia, its military and political ally. The fact that Azerbaijan buys arms, even if from Russia, while Armenia receives them for free or at a heavily discounted price, gives Armenia the ability to keep up with Azerbaijan, maintaining the existing balance of power at ever higher levels of military capability. thereby reducing the likelihood of an outbreak of hostilities. This maintenance of parity is not a guarantee that military actions will not resume, but it is still a serious, and effective, deterrent.

A second important deterrent stems from the political context, with political containment rooted in the role of key international actors, which reject all consideration of a military settlement to the conflict. A related source of political containment is the possibility of direct involvement by Russia in the event of a renewal of hostilities. Currently, Armenia is the only country in the South Caucasus that has security guarantees and can expect to receive direct military assistance from a third country (Russia), as well as from a broader security alliance (the Collective Security Treaty Organization, or CSTO). The Armenian side generally operates under the presumption of a guarantee

⁸ It was reported in September 2011 that Armenia additionally bought eleven 220-mm 9P140 Uragan MLRS; see "Azerbaijan Deplores Reported Armenian Arms Acquisition from Moldova," *RFE/RL News* (17 October 2011); available at www.rferl.org/content/azerbaijan_ armenia moldova arms shipment/24361791.html.

⁹ For a more detailed analysis of the Karabakh conflict and the issue of military balance, see Sergey Minasyan, "Nagorno-Karabakh after Two Decades of Conflict: Is Prolongation of the Status Quo Inevitable?" *Caucasus Institute Research Papers* #2 (Yerevan, August 2010).

of Russian military assistance in case of war with Azerbaijan. Formally, the obligations of Russia and the CSTO in matters of mutual defense cover only the internationally recognized borders of the Republic of Armenia, not the internal disputed borders of the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. It is highly likely that, in the event of war, hostilities would extend beyond Karabakh and into Armenia proper. In this case, a failure to provide effective and immediate military support to a member state might discredit the CSTO, and could lead to irreparable consequences. Although Turkey and Azerbaijan have an agreement on military assistance, signed in August 2010, those provisions are vague and do not contain a commitment of direct involvement by Turkey.

Provocation or Providence? Russia–Georgia Tensions

Another recent development driving a subtle but serious shift in the regional balance of power emanates from lingering tension between Georgia and Russia. More specifically, as a result of the August 2008 "Five-day war" between Georgia and Russia, tension has actually increased as Russia has moved to consolidate and expand its military presence and support for South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Russia has bolstered its position by placing two military bases in the territories of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, which include a combined arms unit (one brigade, subdivision), engineering and artillery units, armed special forces units, as well as air defense units and a Russian Air Force presence, and the active construction and maintenance of military infrastructure (helipads in South Ossetia and a base in Ochamchira for coast guard vessels in Abkhazia). Further, in accordance with agreements with the governments of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, since January 2009 Russia has assumed responsibility for border security, which was then expanded with an agreement on 30 April 2009 allowing the deployment of Russian border troops along the perimeter of the boundaries of South Ossetia and Abkhazia with Georgia proper.¹⁰ In this context, the broader goal was the integration of the armed forces of South Ossetia and Abkhazia within a united Russian-dominated force posture.

Following the construction of these Russian military bases, the presence of a motorized infantry brigade was further bolstered by the deployment in 2010 of additional large-caliber MLRS "Smerch" weapons systems, and in December 2010, a division of the "Tochka U" tactical missile system was also deployed in South Ossetia. The de-

¹⁰ The seventh Russian military base includes a brigade deployed on a new organizational structure, as one of the first in the Russian Armed Forces that has been completed with the new T-90A tanks (forty-one tanks). Its arsenal includes more than 150 BTR-80A, two battalions of ACS 2S3 "Acacia," a battalion of MLRS BM-21 "Grad," and anti-aircraft complexes of the "Osa-AKM," ZSU-23-4 "Shilka," and 2S6M "Tunguska" types. The fourth military base in South Ossetia is largely similar to a battalion structure, but its tank battalion is armed with T-72B (M) tanks. Motorized infantry battalions are equipped with BMP-2, rather than the traditional BTR 80-As. For more, see Anton Lavrov, "The Post-war Arrangements of the Russian Armed Forces in the Newly Recognized Republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia," in *The Tanks of August*, ed. R. N. Pukhov (Moscow: Centre for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies, 2010).

ployment of such "surplus armaments" in South Ossetia (as well as in Abkhazia) far exceeds the normal limits of operational readiness for any possible renewed military action against Georgia, and can be interpreted in two ways. It could signal preparation for a possible new Russian offensive to seize the entire territory of Georgia, and even possibly extending beyond its borders. Or it could serve as a demonstration of "preventive containment" of any kind of escalation by the Georgian side along the borders of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, affirming a Russian willingness and readiness to overwhelmingly respond to even the slightest incident along the borders of the conflict zone.

Moreover, in September 2011, a member of the Presidium of the Public Council within the Russian Ministry of Defense, the well-known journalist Igor Korotchenko, warned that Russia could deploy new Mi-28N combat helicopters and the "Iskander-M" tactical weapon systems in South Ossetia and Abkhazia if "Georgia continues to expand its military potential."¹¹ Korotchenko also noted that the permanent redeployment of the new "Molnia" class missile boats as part of the Russian Black Sea Fleet to the Abkhaz port of Ochamchira was "reasonable." These developments clearly indicate that Moscow is ready to only further strengthen its military potential in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, considering it not only a platform for power projection, but also as a resource to increase its political influence throughout the region as a whole.

In turn, for the Georgian side, which no longer possesses the capacity to respond to Russian moves in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the focus has been on leveraging negative images of Russia within global public opinion and skillfully playing on the fears, phobias, and even deep-seated anti-Russian sentiment in the West. This Georgian discourse was both directed to an internal audience and also used as an element of Georgian foreign policy. Within Georgia, the inertia of the "five-day war" served as the main narrative discourse on foreign policy and as a basis of threat perception. Although the effectiveness of the rather alarmist rhetoric of the Georgian authorities has gradually decreased, it nevertheless efficiently promoted the strengthening of the Saakashvili government through the most dangerous post-war period, until the end of 2010.

Yet overall, there is an important factor constraining Moscow from starting a new war with Georgia – namely, the direct lessons from the invasion of August 2008, and with its related threat of Russia's international isolation. Thus, it is clear that, despite the external threats and hostile rhetoric from Moscow, the danger of any new war between Russia and Georgia is quite remote. The lessening severity of this threat is also confirmed by Georgian assessments, as well as by the direction of military spending and Georgian arms procurement. Although not in the same proportion as Russia, Tbilisi has been continuing to procure armaments and military equipment in order to replace its losses from 2008, and to equip the army with new types of armaments. This, however, was not comparable to the pre-war level of defense spending, procurement,

¹¹ "Russia Holds the Capability to Deploy Missile Systems in South Ossetia and Abkhazia," *RIA News* (22 September 2011); available at http://ria.ru/defense_safety/20110922/44194 2516.html.

and acquisition.¹² Moreover, according to official statistics, in 2008 (taking into account spending for the direct warfare during the August war) the Georgian military budget was about 1.625 billion laris (little more than USD 1 billion), while the military budget for 2009 was equal to 1.090 million laris (USD 665 million). In 2010, it was cut further, to 750 million laris.¹³

The Promise of Armenian-Turkish "Normalization"

Unlike the previous trends discussed above in terms of the shifting balance of power in the region, and the threat of renewed conflict between various regional actors, there is a third recent trend that is much more positive in nature. This trend stems from the possible restart of the Armenian-Turkish normalization, process a positive development that offers a refreshing and welcome opportunity for greater stability in the South Caucasus. Although the short-term outlook for any resumption of Armenian-Turkish diplomacy seems unlikely given the suspension of official diplomatic relations, the normalization process between the two countries does continue, although limited to small-scale civil society exchanges and "track two" efforts that merely seek to "sustain the momentum" until the two sides can return to diplomatic negotiations.

Yet over the longer term, there is more cause for optimism. The key to such renewed optimism stems not from any third country, but rather depends on strategic calculations in Ankara. More specifically, the Turkish side may actually consider returning to the stalled normalization process sooner than expected. Specifically, just as the Swiss-mediated diplomacy process between Armenia and Turkey was based on a Turkish reassessment of its strategic national interests, the scale and scope of challenges facing Turkish foreign policy today may trigger yet another reappraisal. Such a reappraisal stems from the daunting and complex long-term obstacles facing Turkey today, evident in recent developments in neighboring Syria, concerns over the Iranian nuclear program, and problems rooted in the confrontation between Turkey and Israel, to take only a few examples. In this context, the lack of any clear or immediate success in Turkish foreign policy may actually result in a policy of reengagement with Arme-

¹² According to the United Nations Register on Conventional Armaments and reports from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), in 2009 Georgia imported twelve 152-mm D-20 howitzers from Bulgaria and twelve Czech 122 PC 30 RM-70 (again through Bulgaria). The shipment of thirty APC-70 DI and twenty T-72 tanks from Ukraine, which started before the August war of 2008, has been completed, as has the purchase of seventy APC Ejder from Turkey. Some data has appeared about the shipping of air defense systems from Israel. There was information about possible large procurements of new tanks and PC30 from Ukraine, although it is not clear if that shipment took place or not. In 2009, a scandal broke out in Ukraine (initiated by the opposition) about exports of AME to Georgia. See http://unhq-appspub-01.un.org/UNODA/UN_REGISTER.nsf and http://armstrade.sipri.org/ armstrade/page/trade register.php.

¹³ In calculations and permanent numbers of 2008 according the methodology used by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI); also see: http://milexdata.sipri.org.

nia, with normalization offering prospects for more immediate gains, without the longterm investment and political capital required to overcome the more complex challenges facing Turkey.

Yet any such return to the normalization process will not be easy, and is not without its own unresolved challenges, inferring as it does a more sophisticated Turkish policy of sincerely engaging Armenia, facing the genocide issue more honestly and openly, and recognizing the fact that the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict can not be a direct precondition to normalizing relations with Armenia. But given the "win-win" nature of any potential Armenian-Turkish normalization, Ankara may be able to garner a key foreign policy achievement that has so far proved elusive. Nevertheless, the restart of the normalization process would now require a determination by the Turkish government to treat the Armenian issue, and all of its inherent implications, in a demonstrably more sincere manner. Only then could a second round of engagement work, especially since much of the international community sees the normalization issue quite differently than do many in Ankara, as expectations remain firmly on Turkey, with Armenia largely perceived as being more committed to normalizing relations.

It is clear that the real challenge, and the real burden, now rests with the Turkish side. It was Turkey that closed its border with Armenia in 1993 and suspended diplomatic relations. And, most crucially, it is Turkey that remains challenged by the need to face the historic legacy of the Armenian genocide. But at the same time, the normalization process between Turkey and Armenia offers a strategic opportunity and enhances regional stability by seeking to resolve disputes through diplomacy rather than force, in contrast to the deadly lessons of the Russo-Georgian war. Despite the poor record of past initiatives at normalization, however, the potential benefits from even the most basic and rudimentary form of engagement are clearly mutual for each country. For Turkey, opening its closed border with Armenia would constitute a new strategic opportunity for galvanizing economic activity in the impoverished eastern regions of the country, which could play a key role in the economic stabilization of the already restive Kurdish-populated eastern regions and thus meet a significant national security imperative of countering the root causes of Kurdish terrorism and separatism with economic opportunity. Likewise, an open border with Turkey would offer Armenia not only a way to overcome its regional isolation and marginalization, but also a bridge to larger markets that are crucial for economic growth and development.

In addition, the commercial and economic activity resulting from opening the Armenian-Turkish border would foster subsequent trade ties between the two countries that, in turn, would lead to more formal cooperation in the key areas of customs and border security. And with such a deepening of bilateral trade ties and cross-border cooperation, the establishment of diplomatic relations would undoubtedly follow. Thus, the opening of the closed Armenian-Turkish border could not only bring about a crucial breakthrough in fostering trade links and economic relations, but may also serve as an impetus to bolster broader stability and security throughout the conflict-prone South Caucasus.

The Evolution of Azerbaijani Identity and the Prospects of Secessionism in Iranian Azerbaijan

Emil Souleimanov*

Introduction

Conventional wisdom has it that Azerbaijanis, the largest ethnic minority in Iran, have historically tended to identify themselves with notions of Iranian statehood and Shiite religion rather than ethnic nationalism, a fact that has made them loyal subjects of Persian states. Yet recent years have shown a considerable growth of their Azerbaijani Turkic self-consciousness as part of their effort to achieve ethno-linguistic emancipation, an emancipation sometimes bordering on separatism and irredentism. Recent developments over the Tabriz-based Tractor Sazi football club (TSFC) and Lake Urmia have provided a further impetus to such developments that offer the potential to endanger the territorial integrity of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This article is an attempt to highlight the evolution of self-consciousness of Iranian Azerbaijanis in recent decades, shedding light on the key issues that have caused this evolution with the aim of exploring the prospects of Azerbaijani secessionism or anti-regime sentiments in the strategically important northwest region of Iran inhabited by ethnic Azerbaijanis.

Iranian Azerbaijanis: An Introduction

Beginning in the tenth and eleventh centuries, Iran—a term that once had much broader semantic content than it has today—was virtually exclusively ruled by Turkic dynasties and tribes, although these were subsequently subjected to strong Persian cultural influence.¹ This was not reversed until 1925, when Reza Pahlavi seized power in Tehran and founded the first purely Persian dynasty covering all of Iran in almost a millennium. The careful cultivation of Persian nationalism followed. This was to become the leading ideology in a multiethnic state that had always been distinguished by

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For instance, the dynasties of the Ghaznavids, Seljuks, Timurids, Ak Koyunlu, Kara Koyunlu, Safavids, Afsharids, and Qajars were all of Turkic or mixed Turco-Mongol (Timurids) or Turco-Kurdish (Safavid) descent that relied heavily on predominantly Turkic nobility and armies. Until the second half of the nineteenth century, the Turkic language was the language of the military, and for centuries Turkic had been the language of the court.

a high degree of ethnic and religious tolerance; even today, only roughly half of the country's population is believed to consist of ethnic Persians.²

Discrimination against ethnic minorities became a matter of state policy. This involved to no small degree the Turkophone Azerbaijanis, who, as mentioned, with around 20 million members represent the largest ethnic community of this nation of 75 million citizens after the Persians, and have had close cultural and ethno-linguistic ties to Soviet (Caucasian, Northern) Azerbaijan to the north and Turkey to the northwest. In the twentieth century, Persians' concern over the alleged lack of loyalty on the part of Iranian Azerbaijanis toward the idea of Iranian statehood were fostered by the establishment of two short-lived quasi-state entities in Iranian Azerbaijan that declared themselves independent from Tehran, the first in 1920–21 and the second in 1945–46. Intriguingly, during both instances the Iranian northwest was under Communist (Soviet) occupation; following the Soviet withdrawal from this territory, the Soviet-supported national republics in Iranian Azerbaijan ceased to exist, being overwhelmed by Persian (Iranian) armies. Even though popular support among Iranian Azerbaijanis for secession from Iran was far from widespread, reprisals followed in both cases, being particularly harsh in the aftermath of the 1946 instance.³

However, in an effort to secure the unity of this multi-ethnic nation, the Pahlavi regime subjected Azerbaijanis to intense assimilatory policies, through which the very ethno-linguistic identity of the Azerbaijani Turks was rejected. Discrimination against their ethno-linguistic rights as well as denial of their distinct identity was commonplace. Azerbaijanis were considered "Turkified Aryans," Iranians by origin, and the authorities promoted a sense of the cultural and racial inferiority of the Turks as descendants of nomadic barbarians, in contrast to the ancient cultivated Persians. It was in the Pahlavi period that the derogatory image of "a stupid Turk" ("Turkish donkey") was cultivated to be applied predominantly to Iranian Azerbaijanis. As a result, millions of Azerbaijanis—especially those that had moved to Teheran and other urban areas of central Iran since the 1960s and 1970s—tended to distance themselves from their Turkishness, assimilating into the Persian socio-linguistic mainstream. Provided they did so, they faced virtually no obstacles in reaching high positions in the state.⁴

The 1979 Islamic Revolution somewhat reduced overt Persian nationalism, giving way to Shiite Islam as the state doctrine of the Islamic Republic. Shiite Islam is common to all of the country's nationalities, save for the great majority of Kurds. Yet the character of Iran as a state made up mainly of Persians remained unshaken.

Tehran's concerns regarding the disposition of its northwestern regions increased with the independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the pan-Turkic sentiments

² James Minahan, Encyclopedia of the Stateless Nations: Ethnic and National Groups Around the World (New York: Greenwood Press, 2002), 1765–66.

³ Touraj Atabaki, *Azerbaijan: Ethnicity and the Struggle for Power in Iran* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2000), 27–53, 63–99.

⁴ See, for instance, Alireza Asgharzadeh, "In Search of a Global Soul: Azerbaijan and the Challenge of Multiple Identities," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 11:4 (2007): 7–18.

voiced by former President Abulfaz Elchibey, who called the "reunification of Azerbaijan a question of five years at the most." Iran even supported Christian Armenia against mainly Shiite Azerbaijan in the war between the two nations in the early 1990s over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region.⁵ In the early 1990s, Tehran took preventive measures: it broke up the Iranian province of Azerbaijan into several provinces, and continued to almost exclusively put Persians into office as leaders there. The government has also settled Kurds in areas bordering the Republic of Azerbaijan, seeking to create a sort of *cordon sanitaire* between the Azeri state and Iran's internal Azerbaijani minority. To further Tehran's strategy, the state has stoked conflict between Kurds and Azerbaijanis. As a result, talk about "Persian fascists" has mostly been heard from among Azeri intellectual emigrants, promoting from exile in Europe and the U.S. the idea of a national revival, freedom, and Turkic unity. Meanwhile, for many ordinary, well-integrated Azerbaijanis who hold leading economic, political, and military posts in modern Iran, the role of a common enemy is played by "Kurdish bandits" rather than by the figure of a Persian oppressor.⁶ Even today, notwithstanding the fundamentals of the Iranian Constitution, which nominally guarantees ethnic minorities' rights to enjoy education in their respective native tongues, education in Azerbaijani Turkish is prohibited, and only a limited number of media outlets print in Azerbaijani, while there is *de facto* no TV broadcasting in this language.⁷

Yet the situation has changed somewhat since the 1990s, and the establishment of the independent Azerbaijani Republic has played only a partial role in this shift. Over the past decade, Iranian Azerbaijanis have become increasingly vocal in their demands for education in their native tongue and recognition of their Turkic identity. Many thousands of Iranian Azerbaijanis travel frequently to Turkey for both work and recreation, coming to be affected by the strength of Turkish nationalism with its developed sense of pan-Turkic solidarity with both Azerbaijanis and representatives of other Turkic ethnicities. They have also experienced the reality that Turkey is, in comparison to Iran, a much more modern, free, and developed state. Turkish satellite broadcasting, with its rich menu of entertaining programs, has also entered the homes of ordinary Iranian Azerbaijanis, contributing to the improvement of their ethno-linguistic self-perception. Many Azerbaijanis started to regard Turkishness as by no means inferior to Persianness, since Persia, as they also found out, had been ruled predominantly by

⁵ Emil Souleimanov, "Dealing with Azerbaijan: The Policies of Turkey and Iran toward the Karabakh War (1991–1994)," *Middle Eastern Review of International Affairs* 15:3 (September 2011); available at http://www.gloria-center.org/2011/10/dealing-with-azerbaijan-thepolicies-of-turkey-and-iran-toward-the-karabakh-war-1991-1994/.

⁶ Indeed, Iranian Azerbaijanis are known for being well-integrated into Iranian society, as disproportionally high numbers of them are part of the political, economic, military, and cultural elite of Iran. For instance, the supreme leader of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and last year's key reformist presidential candidate Mir-Hossein Mousavi are both of Azerbaijani origin.

⁷ Bijan Baharan, *The Hidden Side of Iran: Discrimination Against Ethnic and Religious Minorities* (Paris: International Federation for Human Rights, 2010).

Turkic dynasties for a millennium. Many have come to embrace key personalities of Iranian history of Azerbaijani descent, such as Shah Ismail I, Shah Abbas the Great, Nadir Shah Afshar, and Mohammad Shah Qajar. However, there is general lack of consensus among advocates of emancipation over what should be achieved – whether the goal should be autonomy within Iran, independence, unification with Turkey and/or Azerbaijan, or simply the right to education in Azerbaijani Turkish. Nevertheless, the emancipation movement among Iranian Azerbaijanis has brought about increasing reprisals from state authorities, which culminated during the so-called "cartoon crisis" of May and June 2006 that cost the lives of dozens of Azerbaijani protesters.⁸ To sum up, any manifestations of discontent with the policies of the regime in Tehran brings about harsh reprisals from security forces, as the public space is under the authorities' strict control, which is particularly applied in cases of ethnic unrest or ethno-linguistically flavored demonstrations in the country's peripheries. In Iranian prisons, detainees are routinely subject to torture and humiliation.⁹ Accordingly, the authorities have effectively placed a ban on media coverage of any kind of anti-regime protests.

Nevertheless, the situation of Iranian Azerbaijanis has changed dramatically over recent years, which is facilitated by the overall atmosphere of détente in Iranian society. While two decades ago most Azerbaijanis preferred to speak Persian even in the streets of Azerbaijani-dominated Tabriz, Azerbaijani Turkish has now become commonplace, displacing Persian in most of the predominantly Azerbaijani areas of northwestern Iran. Ordinary Azerbaijanis in Tehran and elsewhere do not hesitate to speak in their native tongue, showing pride in their ethnic identity. Importantly, demonstrations for ethno-linguistic rights have become more frequent in Iranian Azerbaijan. Although they are often violently suppressed by police, with the demonstrators routinely subjected to torture and imprisonment, they still persist. Separatist flags of Southern Azerbaijan are occasionally displayed visibly overnight in Tabriz and other cities of Iran's Azerbaijani northwest, along with posters advocating Azerbaijanis' right to education in their native tongue.

⁸ In the 14 May 2006 issue of the pro-regime *Iran* newspaper, two cartoons were published in which the Azerbaijani Turks were likened to an insect. Immediately after the publication of the newspaper, in a manifestation of ethno-politically flavored public discontent that was unprecedented in the history of Iran, hundreds of thousands of ethnic Azerbaijanis took to the streets in the predominantly Azerbaijani-populated cities of Tabriz, Orumiye, Khoy, Zanjan, and even Tehran to protest the publication. Aside from that, demonstrators were calling for the establishment of school education in Azerbaijani Turkish and demanding more ethnocultural rights for their community.

⁹ For more information on the fate of political prisoners and detainees in Iran, see, for instance, a 2010 Amnesty International study, *From Protest to Prison: Iran One Year after the Election*; available at www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/062/2010/en/a009a855-788 b-4ed4-8aa9-3e535ea9606a/mde130622010en.pdf.

Sport Nationalism

As a result of the imposed restrictions on any politicized expression of Azerbaijani identity, the focus of Azerbaijanis has since then shifted to the realm of sports. The Tabriz-based Tractor Sazi football club has earned massive support of ethnic Azerbaijanis across Iran, breaking all nationwide attendance records. Many thousands of Azerbaijani fans accompany the Tractor football team to its matches, occasionally waving Turkish flags, carrying pan-Turkic symbols and shouting politically-flavored slogans ranging from rather moderate demands to establish school teaching in Azerbaijani Turkic to ones emphasizing their distinctiveness from the Persians ("Hey, look out, I am Turkish"; "Azerbaijan is ours, Afghanistan is yours") to explicitly supporting Azerbaijani separatism ("Long live Azerbaijan and down with those who dislike us"; "Tabriz, Baku, Ankara – our path is different than that of the Persians"). This, in turn, has contributed to growing tensions with the Persian fans, whose racist slurs ("Turkish donkey") are returned by Azerbaijani fans ("Persian dogs" or "Persian monkeys"), which often results in violent clashes, especially during the Tractor's matches with the Teheran-based teams. Persepolis and Esteghlal.¹⁰ In one instance, on 27 July 2010, following a match marked by mutual rounds of racial insults, the Tractor Sazi football club's Azerbaijani fans engaged in violent clashes with the ethnic Persian fans of the Tehran-based Persepolis football team and Iranian police. During the clashes, dozens of fans were injured, and police jailed dozens of predominantly Azerbaijani fans.¹¹

Importantly, this development has taken place alongside increasing numbers of violent incidents pitting Azerbaijanis against Iranian police and security forces being reported across the country. For instance, concerned over the dramatically growing scope of Azerbaijani nationalism aired during TSFC games, the authorities have started to limit the numbers of predominantly Azerbaijani TSFC supporters that are allowed to attend its games. During the frequently occurring racial and nationalistic clashes between Azerbaijani fans of TSFC and the predominantly Persian fans of Esteghlal and Persepolis, police and security forces usually do not hesitate to take the side of the ethnic Persians. A recent victory by TSFC over its traditional rival, Esteghlal, brought about mass celebrations in Tabriz, which were accompanied by political demands. The initiative was crushed by police and security forces and ignited a new wave of detentions of Azerbaijani activists, which continued for several weeks with relation to the Urmia Lake issue, which is detailed below.¹² In turn, this has been viewed by an increasing share of Iran's Azerbaijani community as additional evidence of ethnic discrimination, anti-Azerbaijani bias, and Persian nationalism.

¹⁰ Author's numerous interviews with local Azerbaijanis carried out in Tabriz as part of his fieldwork in the area in September 2010.

¹¹ Azadliq (1 August 2011).

¹² *Paywand Iran News* (15 September 2011); available at http://www.payvand.com/news/11/ sep/1142.html.

Lake Urmia

Mass demonstrations by ethnic Azerbaijanis protesting the drying up of Lake Urmia in northwestern Iran—the Middle East's largest water reservoir and the third largest saltwater lake in the world—recently struck the cities of Iranian Azerbaijan. Although information from the region is scarce, numerous reports state that hundreds of protesters have been beaten, arrested, and mistreated by Iranian police and security forces. Additionally, new clashes have taken place between supporters of the Esteghlal and Tractor Sazi football clubs, with the latter raising Urmia-related claims alongside their longtime demands for establishing school education in Azerbaijani Turkish.

Environmental protests have been on the rise since August 2011 following the Iranian parliament's refusal to accept an emergency rescue plan for reviving Lake Urmia, a lake that has the status of a UNESCO biosphere reserve. Indeed, this extremely salty lake (roughly four times as salty as seawater), characterized by unique flora and fauna, could be facing a large-scale environmental catastrophe resembling the fate of Central Asia's Aral Sea. This is a result of Tehran's recent policies of building numerous dams on more than twenty of the tributaries that feed into the lake, which has in turn reduced the average depth of the lake by around two-thirds, to less than 2 meters. The government's plan to build a bridge across the lake connecting the cities of Tabriz and Orumiye has further worsened its ecological situation.¹³

During football matches that took place shortly after parliament's decision, dozens of TSFC fans were arrested for protesting the Iranian government's failure to take measures to save the lake. In spite of the routine detainments of environmental activists and ordinary protesters, several thousand ethnic Azerbaijanis took to the streets of Tabriz, Orumiye, and other cities of Iranian Azerbaijan on 27 August and 3 September 2011, and more demonstrations are expected. These peaceful protests were crushed by large contingents of Iranian police and security forces using repressive means such as tear gas and firing metal bullets. According to local sources, the number of detainees has reached a thousand people, with many dozens of protesters injured and at least one killed.

In the meantime, violence recurred during a football game between TSFC and Esteghlal in Tehran on September 9, in which the TSFC's victory placed it among the leaders of the Iranian playoff. Before the game started, the authorities took measures to prevent thousands of TSFC supporters from entering the stadium. The authorities had received reports about the intention of TSFC supporters to articulate politically-tinged demands during the match, related to the apparent unwillingness of the regime to save Lake Urmia. Those who managed to attend the game still used the opportunity to chant slogans related to Urmia and condemning the authorities, which brought about the clashes with security forces.

Accordingly, long-standing ethno-nationalistic pro-Azerbaijan and pro-Turkey slogans have increasingly come to be accompanied by anti-Persian and anti-regime chants from the bleachers filled with TSFC fans, along with new chants focusing on Lake Ur-

¹³ Hürriyet Daily News (10 September 2011).

mia, such as "Lake Urmia is dying, Iran is ordering its execution," or "Urmia is thirsty, Azerbaijan must rise up, otherwise it will lose." Symbolically, these and similar chants were first articulated at a recent meeting of Azerbaijanis at the tomb of Sattar Khan in Tabriz, an ethnic Azerbaijani national hero of Iran and a key figure in the Persian Constitutional Revolution of 1905–11.

Even more importantly, confronted with Tehran's apparent unwillingness to put an effective end to the dehydration of Lake Urmia, increasing numbers of Azerbaijanis regard this as a result of an alleged sophisticated plan by the government to turn Iran's Azerbaijani provinces into a salty desert, as the salt beds left on the desiccated shoreline would be dispersed by winds throughout the whole region, destroying soil and crops. Since Lake Urmia plays a crucial role in Iranian Azerbaijan, and supports up to 15 million local inhabitants, the argument continues, the upcoming ecologic disaster would gradually force local Azerbaijanis to migrate into other areas of the country, effectively reducing the prospects of Azerbaijani secessionism and fostering their assimilation into the Persian mainstream.

Conclusion

Any signs of nationalism and separatism among Iran's largest ethnic minority, particularly when accompanied by loyalty to external nations, are of outmost concern to authorities in Tehran, as they might endanger the unity of the state, especially in light of Iran's internal problems with its Sunni (Kurdish, Baluchi) and to some extent also Arab minorities and its uneasy relationship with the U.S. and Israel. Although it is too early to envisage catastrophic scenarios for Iran, the ongoing tendency to suppress internal ethnic dissent is not without its potential dangers, and generational factors are leading among them.

In a country where around two-thirds of the population consists of people below the age of thirty, the younger generations of Iranians, especially those inhabiting urban areas, generally tend to have pro-reformist attitudes and wish to live in a freer country, as they showed during last year's protests over the results of presidential elections and subsequent violent reprisals. In fact, the theocratic regime in Iran has alienated many young Iranians, who are now eager to identify themselves not primarily with Shiite Islam but with alternative ideologies. For young Persians, this often takes the form of Persian nationalism, with its emphasis on its pre-Islamic roots, while for many Azerbaijanis, it is increasingly Azerbaijani nationalism, with its pan-Turkic overtones.

The ongoing split in Iranian society along social and ethnic lines is paralleled by the split within the Azerbaijani community itself. In this split, rural, less educated, deeply religious, and usually older Azerbaijanis, who are supportive of the conservatives, still link Shiite religion (the main layer of their self-identification) with Iran, and stick to the centuries-old tradition of referring to the Sunni Turks as heretics. For them, those who in their opinion seek the dismemberment of their Iranian homeland are traitors and "agents of Israel." However, as ethnic polarization within Iran deepens, they too are affected negatively by the increasingly anti-Turkic sentiments of their Persian compatriots, and are thus becoming increasingly aware of their ethnic roots. On the

other hand, pro-reformist, relatively educated Azerbaijani youth from urban areas generally incline toward ethnic nationalism, increasingly dissociating themselves from the Persians and adopting a stance that is oriented more towards Turkey and Azerbaijan. Whether or not the current emancipation stage of Azerbaijani nationalism results in separatist efforts over time now depends on the ability of Tehran to further secure the favor of its loyal Azerbaijani population while simultaneously keeping Azerbaijani nationalists and their rhetoric off the public stage, possibly meeting their basic ethno-linguistic and cultural demands. In any case, the genie of Azerbaijani nationalism is already out of the bottle.

So far, the significant successes and wide popularity across northwestern Iran's predominantly Azerbaijani provinces of the Tractor Sazi football club has contributed greatly to awakening the masses of once politically apathetic Iranian Azerbaijanis. The commitment to save Lake Urmia, regarded as the pearl of Iranian Azerbaijan, has further united many ordinary Azerbaijanis. This is regardless of their political feelings toward the idea of Iranian statehood or Azerbaijani Turkic nationalism, as well as efforts aimed at ethno-linguistic and cultural emancipation advocated by a portion of the Iranian Azerbaijani population. The indiscriminate use of force by the regime, even over this seemingly apolitical issue, has further deepened the ethnically-defined gap between Iranian Azerbaijanis and the Iranian state, paving the ground for considerable conflict in the future.

GAO Report on Arctic Capabilities

DOD Addressed Many Specified Reporting Elements in Its 2011 Arctic Report but Should Take Steps to Meet Near- and Long-term Needs^{*}

Highlights

Why GAO Did This Study

The gradual retreat of polar sea ice, combined with an expected increase in human activity—shipping traffic, oil and gas exploration, and tourism in the Arctic region—could eventually increase the need for a U.S. military and homeland security presence in the Arctic. As a result, the Department of Defense (DOD) must begin preparing to access, operate, and protect national interests there. House Report 111-491 directed DOD to prepare a report on Arctic Operations and the Northwest Passage, and specified five reporting elements that should be addressed. House Report 112-78 directed GAO to review DOD's report. GAO assessed the extent to which 1) DOD's *Report to Congress on Arctic Operations and the Northwest Passage (Arctic Report)* addressed the specified reporting elements and 2) DOD has efforts under way to identify and prioritize the capabilities needed to meet national security objectives in the Arctic. GAO analyzed DOD's Arctic Report and related documents and interviewed DOD and U.S. Coast Guard officials.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that DOD develop a risk-based investment strategy and timeline for developing Arctic capabilities needed in the near-term; and establish a forum with the Coast Guard to identify collaborative Arctic capability investments over the long-term. DOD and the Department of Homeland Security generally agreed with GAO's recommendations.

Main Findings

DOD's *Arctic Report*, submitted May 31, 2011, addressed three and partially addressed two of the elements specified in the House Report, as shown in Table 1.

^{*} The report under the title "Arctic Capabilities: DOD Addressed Many Specified Reporting Elements in Its 2011 *Arctic Report* but Should Take Steps to Meet Near- and Long-term Needs" (GAO-12-180) was presented to the relevant committees in the U.S. Congress by the United States Government Accountability Office in January 2012. The full text of the original report is available at www.gao.gov/products/GAO-12-180.

| Table 1: | Extent to Which DOD's Arctic Report Addressed the Five Specified |
|----------|--|
| | Reporting Elements |

| Specified reporting element | GAO assessment |
|---|---|
| An assessment of the strategic national security objectives and restrictions in the Arctic region. | Addressed |
| An assessment on mission capabilities required to support the strategic national security objectives and a timeline to obtain such capabilities. | Partially addressed (does not include a timeline for obtaining needed capabilities) |
| An assessment of an amended unified command plan that addresses opportunities of obtaining conti- nuity of effort in the Arctic Ocean by a single com- batant commander. | Addressed |
| An assessment of the basing infrastructure required to support Arctic strategic objectives, including the need for a deep-water port in the Arctic. | Addressed |
| An assessment of the status of and need for ice- breakers to determine whether icebreakers provide important or required mission capabilities to support Arctic strategic national security objectives, and an assessment of the minimum and optimal number of icebreakers that may be needed. | Partially addressed (does not include an assessment of the minimum and optimal |

Source: GAO analysis of DOD's Arctic Report.

While DOD has undertaken some efforts to assess the capabilities needed to meet national security objectives in the Arctic, it is unclear whether DOD will be in a position to provide needed capabilities in a timely and efficient manner because it lacks a risk-based investment strategy for addressing near-term needs and a collaborative forum with the Coast Guard for addressing long-term capability needs. DOD's Arctic Report acknowledges that it has some near-term gaps in key capabilities needed to communicate, navigate, and maintain awareness of activity in the region. However, DOD has not yet evaluated, selected, or implemented alternatives for prioritizing and addressing near-term Arctic capability needs. In addition, DOD and the Coast Guard have established a working group to identify potential collaborative efforts to enhance U.S. Arctic capabilities. This working group is focused on identifying potential nearterm investments but not longer-term needs, and it is currently expected to be dissolved in January 2012. Uncertainty involving the rate of Arctic climate change necessitates careful planning to ensure efficient use of resources in developing Arctic needs such as basing infrastructure and icebreakers, which require long lead times to develop and are expensive to build and maintain. Without taking steps to meet near- and long-term Arctic capability needs, DOD risks making premature Arctic investments, being late in obtaining needed capabilities, or missing opportunities to minimize costs by collaborating on investments with the Coast Guard.

Arctic Capabilities

The gradual retreat of polar sea ice in the Arctic region, combined with an expected increase in human activity—shipping traffic, oil and gas exploration, and tourism—could eventually increase the need for a U.S. military and homeland security presence in the Arctic.¹ In recognition of increasing strategic interest in the Arctic, the United States has developed national level policies that guide the actions of the Department of Defense (DOD), the U.S. Coast Guard, and other stakeholders in the region. These policies indicate that the United States has an enduring interest in working collaboratively with other nations to address the emerging challenges arising from the impacts of climate change and globalization in the Arctic, and they identify Arctic national security needs including protecting the environment, managing resources, and supporting scientific research.²

Over the years, we have completed a number of reviews related to the challenges of developing capabilities for operating in the Arctic. For example, we have reported on the difficulties DOD and other agencies face in achieving maritime domain awareness.³ We testified on the challenges of translating climate data into information that officials need to make decisions.⁴ We also reported on the Coast Guard's coordination with stakeholders on Arctic policy and efforts to identify Arctic requirements and capability gaps.⁵ A list of these related products is included at the end of this report.

In light of continuing concerns, the House Armed Services Committee directed DOD to provide a report to the congressional defense committees on its Arctic operations in the House Report accompanying a proposed bill for the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 (H.R. 5136).⁶ Specifically, DOD was directed to address five elements in the report, including an assessment of (1) the strategic national

⁶ H.R. Rep. No. 111-491, at 337 (2010).

¹ The DOD *Report to Congress on Arctic Operations and the Northwest Passage* defines the Arctic as the region that encompasses all U.S. and foreign territory north of the Arctic Circle, all U.S. territory north and west of the boundary formed by the Porcupine, Yukon, and Kiskokwim Rivers, and all contiguous seas and straits north of and adjacent to the Arctic Circle. According to the report, this definition is consistent with the Arctic Research and Policy Act of 1984 (15 U.S.C. §4111) and Arctic Council usage.

² National Security Presidential Directive 66/Homeland Security Presidential Directive 25, *Arctic Region Policy* (9 January 2009); *National Security Strategy* (Washington, D.C.: May 2010).

³ GAO, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance: DOD Needs a Strategic, Risk-Based Approach to Enhance Its Maritime Domain Awareness, GAO-11-621 (Washington, D.C.: 20 June 2011). According to DOD's Arctic Report, maritime domain awareness refers to the effective understanding of anything associated with maritime activity that could affect the security, safety, economy, or environment of the United States.

⁴ GAO, Climate Change Adaptation: Federal Efforts to Provide Information Could Help Government Decision Making, GAO-12-238T (Washington, D.C.: 16 November 2011).

⁵ GAO, Coast Guard: Efforts to Identify Arctic Requirements Are Ongoing, but More Communication about Agency Planning Efforts Would Be Beneficial, GAO-10-870 (Washington, D.C.: 15 September 2010).

security objectives and restrictions in the Arctic region; (2) mission capabilities required to support the strategic national security objectives and a timeline to obtain such capabilities; (3) an amended unified command plan that addresses opportunities of obtaining continuity of effort in the Arctic Ocean by a single combatant commander; (4) the basing infrastructure required to support Arctic strategic objectives, including the need for a deep-water port in the Arctic; and (5) the status of and need for icebreakers to determine whether icebreakers provide important or required mission capabilities to support Arctic strategic national security objectives and an assessment of the minimum and optimal number of icebreakers that may be needed. DOD submitted its *Report to Congress on Arctic Operations and the Northwest Passage (Arctic Report)* on May 31, 2011.

House Report 112-78, which accompanied a proposed bill for the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (H.R. 1540), directed us to provide an assessment of DOD's *Arctic Report*, any shortfalls noted, recommendations for legislative action, and any information deemed appropriate in the context of the review to the congressional defense committees within 180 days of receiving DOD's *Arctic Report*.⁷ Specifically, our objectives are to assess the extent to which (1) DOD's *Arctic Report* addressed the specified reporting elements and (2) DOD has efforts under way to identify and prioritize the capabilities needed to meet national security objectives in the Arctic. This letter and Appendix II provide our response to the direction in the house report and include an assessment of the degree to which DOD addressed each of the five specified reporting elements in its report provided to the defense committees.

To assess the extent to which DOD's Arctic Report addressed the five specified reporting elements, two GAO analysts independently reviewed and compared the Arctic *Report* with the direction in the House Report. We considered the reporting element to be addressed when the *Arctic Report* explicitly addressed all parts of the element. We considered the reporting element partially addressed when the Arctic Report addressed at least one or more parts of the element, but not all parts of the element. We considered the reporting element not addressed when the Arctic Report did not explicitly address any part of the element. To assess the extent to which DOD has efforts under way to identify and prioritize the capabilities needed to meet national security objectives in the Arctic, we reviewed documentation related to DOD's Arctic operations, such as the U.S. Navy's November 2009 Arctic Roadmap, the February 2010 Ouadrennial Defense Review, the U.S. European Command's April 2011 Arctic Strategic Assessment, the U.S. Coast Guard's July 2011 High Latitude Study,⁸ and the Navy's September 2011 Arctic Capabilities Based Assessment. We interviewed officials from the Office of the Secretary of Defense; Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; U.S. Northern Command and the North American Aerospace Defense Command; U.S. European Command; U.S. Pacific Command; U.S. Transportation Command; and U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps Arctic offices. We also interviewed Coast

⁷ H.R. Rep. No. 112-78, at 291 (2011).

⁸ ABS Consulting, *High Latitude Study Mission Analysis Report*, a report contracted by United States Coast Guard, July 2010.

Guard officials to determine their contribution to and collaboration with DOD on the *Arctic Report*.

We conducted this performance audit from July 2011 to January 2012 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. See Appendix I for a more detailed description of our scope and methodology.

Background

Diminishing Ice Opens Potential for Increased Human Activity in the Arctic

Scientific research and projections of the changes taking place in the Arctic vary, but there is a general consensus that Arctic sea ice is diminishing. As recently as September 2011, scientists at the U.S. National Snow and Ice Data Center reported that the annual Arctic minimum sea ice extent for 2011 was the second lowest in the satellite record, and 938,000 square miles below the 1979 to 2000 average annual minimum (see appendix 3). Much of the Arctic Ocean remains ice-covered for a majority of the year, but some scientists have projected that the Arctic will be ice-diminished for periods of time in the summer by as soon as 2040.⁹

These environmental changes in the Arctic are making maritime transit more feasible and are increasing the likelihood of further expansion in human activity including tourism, oil and gas extraction, commercial shipping, and fishing in the region.¹⁰ For example, in 2011, northern trans-shipping routes opened during the summer months,¹¹ which permitted more than 40 vessels to transit between June and October 2011. The Northern Sea Route opened by mid-August, and appeared to remain open through September, while the Northwest Passage opened for periods in the summer for the fifth year in a row. See Figure 1 for locations of these shipping routes. Despite these changes, however, several enduring characteristics still provide challenges to surface navigation in the Arctic, including large amounts of winter ice and increased movement of ice from spring to fall. Increased movement of sea ice makes its location less predictable, a situation that is likely to increase the risk for ships to become trapped or

⁹ A Joint Coast Guard/U.S. Navy Statement on Arctic ice terminology supports usage of the term "ice-diminished" rather than "ice-free" because both agencies recognize that the region will continue to remain ice-covered during the wintertime through the end of this century and the current and projected decline in Arctic sea ice is highly variable from year to year. The term "ice-free" means that no ice of any kind is present. The term "ice-diminished" refers to sea ice concentrations of up to 15 percent ice in the area.

¹⁰ In August and December 2011, the Department of the Interior approved preliminary plans for one operator to drill for oil and gas, pending receipt of the operator's well containment plan and other requirements.

¹¹ Open water indicates a large area of freely navigable water in which sea ice is present in concentrations less than 10 percent. No ice of land origin is present.

damaged by ice impacts.¹² DOD's *Arctic Report* states that scientists currently project transpolar routes will not be reliably open until around 2040 and then only for a limited period during the summer and early fall. DOD's report assessed that most national security missions will likely be limited to those months.

National Policies Guide DOD and Other Stakeholders' Operations in the Arctic

Key strategy and policy documents detail the United States' national security objectives and guide DOD's and other stakeholders' operations in the Arctic. The 2009 National Security Presidential Directive 66/Homeland Security Presidential Directive 25, Arctic Region Policy, establishes U.S. policy with respect to the Arctic region and tasks senior officials, including the Secretaries of Defense and Homeland Security, with its implementation. This directive identifies specific U.S. national security and homeland security interests in the Arctic, including missile defense and early warning; deployment of sea and air systems for strategic sealift, maritime presence and security operations; and ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight. Additionally, the 2010 National Security Strategy identifies four enduring national interests that are relevant to the Arctic¹³ and states that the U.S. has broad and fundamental interests in the Arctic. The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review also provides top-level DOD policy guidance on the Arctic, highlighting the need for DOD to work collaboratively with interagency partners such as the Coast Guard to address gaps in Arctic communications, domain awareness, search and rescue, and environmental observation and forecasting. Finally, since the Arctic region is primarily a maritime domain, existing U.S. guidance relating to maritime areas continues to apply, such as the September 2005 National Strategy for Maritime Security and National Security Presidential Directive 41/ Homeland Security Presidential Directive 13, the Maritime Security Policy.

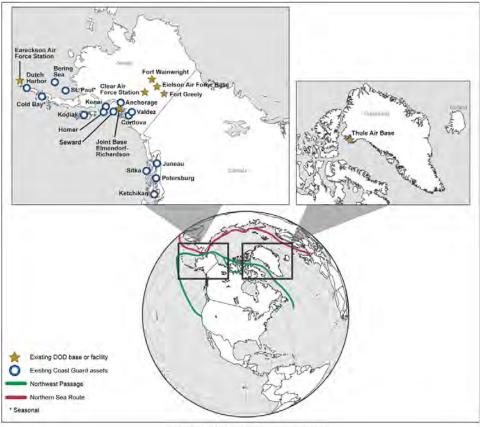
Multiple Federal Stakeholders Have Arctic Responsibilities

DOD is responsible in the Arctic and elsewhere for securing the United States from direct attack; securing strategic access and retaining global freedom of action; strengthening existing and emerging alliances and partnerships; and establishing favorable security conditions. Additionally, the Navy has developed an *Arctic Roadmap* which lists Navy action items, objectives, and desired effects for the Arctic region from fiscal years 2010 to 2014.¹⁴ Focus areas include training, communications, operational investments, and environmental protection.

¹² These challenges are noted in the U.S. Coast Guard's *High Latitude Study*, which the Coast Guard provided to Congress in July 2011.

¹³ The four enduring interests identified in the 2010 *National Security Strategy* are (1) the security of the United States, its citizens, and U.S. allies and partners; (2) a strong, innovative, and growing U.S. economy in an open international economic system that promotes opportunity and prosperity; (3) respect for universal values at home and around the world; and (4) an international order advanced by U.S. leadership that promotes peace, security, and opportunity through stronger cooperation to meet global challenges.

¹⁴ U.S. Navy, Arctic Roadmap (Washington, D.C.: 10 November 2009).



Source: DOD's Arctic Report and Coast Guard's High Latitude Study.

Figure 1: DOD Facilities and Coast Guard Assets in the Arctic and Alaska.

Since the Arctic is primarily a maritime domain, the Coast Guard plays a significant role in Arctic policy implementation and enforcement. The Coast Guard is a multimission, maritime military service within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that has responsibilities including maritime safety, security, environmental protection, and national defense, among other missions. Therefore, as more navigable ocean water emerges in the Arctic and human activity increases, the Coast Guard will face expanding responsibilities in the region. For DOD facilities and Coast Guard assets in the Arctic and Alaska, see Figure 1.

Other federal stakeholders include:

• The National Science Foundation, which is responsible for funding U.S. Arctic research—including research on the causes and impacts of climate change—and providing associated logistics and infrastructure support to conduct this research. The National Science Foundation and the Coast Guard also coordinate on the use of the Coast Guard's icebreakers for scientific research.

- The Department of State, which is responsible for formulating and implementing U.S. policy on international issues concerning the Arctic, leading the domestic interagency Arctic Policy Group, and leading U.S. participation in the Arctic Council.¹⁵
- The Department of the Interior, which is responsible for oversight and regulation of resource development in U.S. Arctic regions. The department also coordinates with the Coast Guard on safety compliance inspections of offshore energy facilities and in the event of a major oil spill.
- The Department of Transportation and its component agency, the Maritime Administration, which works on marine transportation and shipping issues in the Arctic and elsewhere, among other things.
- The Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which provides information on Arctic oceanic and atmospheric conditions and issues weather and ice forecasts, among other responsibilities.

DOD's *Arctic Report* Addressed or Partially Addressed All Five Specified Reporting Elements

DOD's May 2011 Arctic Report either addressed or partially addressed all of the elements specified in the House Report.¹⁶ Specifically, our analysis showed that, of the five reporting elements, DOD addressed three and partially addressed two. The elements not fully addressed were to have included a timeline to obtain needed Arctic capabilities and an assessment of the minimum and optimal number of icebreakers that may be needed to support Arctic strategic national security objectives. According to DOD officials, these elements were not fully addressed for a number of reasons such as DOD's assessment that Arctic operations are a challenge but not yet an urgency; the report's being written prior to initiating the formal DOD capabilities development process, making it difficult to provide a timeline for obtaining Arctic capabilities; and DOD's assessment that its need for icebreakers is currently limited to one mission per year. Furthermore, DOD's Arctic Report notes that significant uncertainty remains about the extent, rate, and impact of climate change in the Arctic and the pace at which human activity will increase, making it challenging for DOD to plan for possible future conditions in the region and to mobilize public or political support for investments in U.S. Arctic capabilities or infrastructure. Table 2 summarizes our assessment of the extent to which DOD's Arctic Report included each of the specified reporting elements

¹⁵ The Arctic Council is a high level intergovernmental forum for promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic states, with the involvement of the Arctic indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants on common Arctic issues, in particular issues of sustainable development and environmental protection. The eight permanent member states include Canada, Denmark (representing also Greenland and Faroe Islands), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States.

¹⁶ H.R. Rep. No. 111-491, at 337 (2010).

Figure 2: GAO Assessment of the Extent to Which DOD's *Arctic Report* Addressed the Five Specified Reporting Elements

| Reporting Elements and Comments | | | |
|--|------------------------|--|--|
| Reporting Element 1: An assessment of the strategic national security objectives and restrictions in the Arctic region. | | | |
| We determined that this element was addressed because the report includes an as- sessment of U.S. strategic national security objectives and restrictions in the Arctic. | Addressed | | |
| Reporting Element 2: An assessment of mission capabilities required to support the strategic national security objectives and a timeline to obtain such capabilities. | | | |
| We determined that this element was partially addressed because the report includes a capability gap assessment in relation to Arctic mission areas but does not provide a timeline to obtain identified capabilities. According to DOD, it was difficult to provide a timeline for developing Arctic capabilities in the report because DOD has not yet initiated the capabilities development process for the Arctic. | Partially addressed | | |
| Reporting Element 3: An assessment of an amended unified command | | | |
| plan that addresses opportunities of obtaining continuity of effort in the Arctic Ocean by a single combatant commander. | | | |
| We determined that this element was addressed because the report includes an as- sessment of the revised 2011 Unified Command Plan that addresses the impact of aligning the Arctic Ocean under a single combatant commander. DOD did not align the Arctic region under a single combatant commander; instead, it assigned both European and Northern Commands responsibility for the Arctic region in order to maintain long-standing relationships with key stakeholders. DOD assigned respon- sibility to Northern Command to advocate for needed Arctic capabilities. | Addressed | | |
| Reporting Element 4: An assessment of the basing infrastructure required to support Arctic strategic objectives, including the need for a deep-water port in the Arctic. | | | |
| We determined that this element was addressed because the report assesses the ex- isting Arctic infrastructure (e.g., bases, ports, and airfields) to be adequate to meet near- (2010-2020) to mid-term (2020-2030) U.S. national security needs, noting that DOD does not currently anticipate a need for the construction of additional bases or a deep-draft port in Alaska between now and 2020. | Addressed | | |
| Reporting Element 5: An assessment of the status of and need for icebreakers to determine whether icebreakers provide important or required mission capabilities to support Arctic strategic national security objectives, and an assessment of the minimum and optimal number of icebreakers that may be needed. | | | |
| We determined that this element was partially addressed because the report discusses the status of and need for icebreakers but does not include an assessment of the minimum and optimal number of icebreakers that may be needed to support U.S. strategic national objectives in the Arctic. According to DOD officials, the <i>Arctic</i> <i>Report</i> did not address the minimum and optimal number of icebreakers that may be needed, in part, because DOD's need for ice-capable vessels is currently limited to one mission per year – the annual resupply of Thule Air Base, Greenland which has been accomplished without U.S. icebreaker support from the Coast Guard. | Partially addressed | | |

and the reasons DOD officials provided for any elements that were not fully addressed. Appendix II includes our detailed evaluation of each of the specified reporting elements.

DOD Has Identified Arctic Capability Gaps, but Lacks a Comprehensive Approach to Addressing Arctic Capabilities

DOD has several efforts under way to assess the capabilities needed to support U.S. strategic objectives in the Arctic. However, it has not yet developed a comprehensive approach to addressing Arctic capabilities that would include steps such as developing a risk-based investment strategy and timeline to address near-term needs and establishing a collaborative forum with the Coast Guard to identify long-term Arctic investments.

DOD Has Efforts Under Way to Assess Near-term Arctic Capability Gaps but Lacks a Risk-Based Investment Strategy to Address These Gaps

While DOD's *Arctic Report* assessed a relatively low level of threat in the Arctic region, it noted three capability gaps that have the potential to hamper Arctic operations. These gaps include (1) limited communications, such as degraded high-frequency radio signals in latitudes above 70°N because of magnetic and solar phenomena; (2) degraded global positioning system performance that could affect missions that require precision navigation, such as search and rescue; and (3) limited awareness across all domains in the Arctic because of distances, limited presence, and the harsh environment. Other key challenges identified include: shortfalls in ice and weather reporting and forecasting; limitations in command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance because of a lack of assets and harsh environmental conditions; limited inventory of ice-capable vessels; and limited shore-based infrastructure. According to DOD's *Arctic Report*, capabilities will need to be reassessed as conditions change, and gaps will need to be addressed to be prepared to operate in a more accessible Arctic. Other stakeholders have also assessed Arctic capability gaps. Examples of these efforts include the following:

- U.S. Northern Command initiated a commander's estimate for the Arctic in December 2010 that, according to officials, will establish the commander's intent and missions in the Arctic and identify capability shortfalls. In addition, Northern Command identified two Arctic-specific capability gaps (communications and maritime domain awareness) in its fiscal years 2013 through 2017 integrated priority list, which defines the combatant command's highest-priority capability gaps for the near-term, including shortfalls that may adversely affect missions.
- U.S. European Command completed an *Arctic Strategic Assessment* in April 2011 that, among other things, identified Arctic capability gaps in the areas of environmental protection, maritime domain awareness, cooperative development of environmental awareness technology, sharing of environmental data, and lessons learned on infrastructure development. In addition, it recom-

mended that the command conduct a more detailed mission analysis for potential Arctic missions, complete a detailed capability estimate for Arctic operations, and work in conjunction with Northern Command and the Departments of the Navy and Air Force to conduct a comprehensive capabilitiesbased assessment for the Arctic.

- DOD and DHS established the Capabilities Assessment Working Group (working group) in May 2011 to identify shared Arctic capability gaps as well as opportunities and approaches to overcome them, to include making recommendations for near-term investments.¹⁷ The working group was directed by its Terms of Reference to focus on four primary capability areas when identifying potential collaborative efforts to enhance Arctic capabilities, including near-term investments. Those capability areas include maritime domain awareness, communications, infrastructure, and presence. The working group was also directed to identify overlaps and redundancies in established and emerging DOD and DHS Arctic requirements. As the advocate for Arctic capabilities, Northern Command was assigned lead responsibility for DOD in the working group, while the Coast Guard was assigned lead responsibility for DHS. The establishment of the working group—which, among other things, is to identify opportunities for bi-departmental action to close Arctic capability gaps and issue recommendations for near-term investments-helps to ensure that collaboration between the Coast Guard and DOD is taking place to identify near-term capabilities needed to support current planning and operations. Although the working group is developing a paper with its recommendations, officials indicated that additional assessments would be required to address those recommendations.
- U.S. Navy completed its first Arctic capabilities-based assessment in September 2011 and is developing a second capabilities-based assessment focused on observing, mapping, and environmental prediction capabilities in the Arctic, which officials expect to be completed in the spring of 2012. The Navy's first Arctic capabilities-based assessment identified three critical capability gaps as the highest priorities, including the capabilities to provide environmental information; maneuver safely on the sea surface; and conduct training, exercise, and education. This assessment recommended several near-term actions to address these gaps.

¹⁷ The Capabilities Assessment Working Group was chartered by the DOD and DHS Capabilities Development Working Group, established by the DOD Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics; the DHS Under Secretary for Science and Technology; and the DHS Under Secretary for Management. The Capabilities Development Working Group is a mechanism for improving cooperation and facilitating decision-making on DOD-DHS capability development. The group's charter states it will meet quarterly to discuss topics of mutual interest.

DOD's *Arctic Report* states that the development of Arctic capabilities requires a deliberate risk-based investment strategy, but DOD has not developed such a strategy. Although DOD and its components have identified current Arctic capability gaps, the department may not be taking appropriate steps to best ensure its future preparedness because DOD lacks a risk-based investment strategy and a timeline for addressing near-term capability needs. According to DOD officials, there had been no Arctic-related submissions to its formal capabilities development process as of September 2011; this process could take two or more years to be approved, followed by additional time for actual capability development.¹⁸

Our prior work has shown that industry best practices include using a risk-based strategy to prioritize and address capability gaps.¹⁹ A risk-based investment strategy may be used to define and prioritize related resource and operational requirements, as well as develop a timeline to obtain those requirements. This strategy includes five key phases: (1) setting strategic goals and objectives, and determining constraints; (2) assessing risks; (3) evaluating alternatives for addressing these risks; (4) selecting the appropriate alternatives; and (5) implementing the alternatives and monitoring the progress made and results achieved. Even though DOD has made preliminary efforts to identify Arctic capability gaps and assess strategic objectives, constraints, and risks in the Arctic, DOD has not yet evaluated, selected, or implemented alternatives for prioritizing and addressing near-term Arctic capability needs. For example, DOD officials stated that they are at the beginning stages of assessing Arctic capability gaps and challenges and have not yet begun to consider potential alternative solutions for addressing these gaps. Alternatives could include those that would minimize DOD investments by leveraging capabilities of interagency and international partners or they could also include submissions to DOD's formal capabilities development process. Another alternative could include accepting the risk of potentially being late to develop these needed capabilities in order to provide limited fiscal resources to other priorities.

Given that the opening in the Arctic presents a wide range of challenges for DOD, a risk-based investment strategy and timeline can help DOD develop the capabilities needed to meet national security interests in the region. Without a risk-based investment strategy and timeline for prioritizing and addressing near-term Arctic capability gaps and challenges, which is periodically updated to reflect evolving needs, DOD could be slow to develop needed capabilities, potentially facing operational risk and higher costs if the need arises to execute plans rapidly. Conversely, DOD could move too early, making premature Arctic investments that take resources from other, more pressing needs or producing capabilities that could be outdated before they are used.

¹⁸ For further discussion on DOD's formal capabilities development process (the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System) see GAO, *Defense Acquisitions: DOD's Requirements Determination Process Has Not Been Effective in Prioritizing Joint Capabilities*, GAO-08-1060 (Washington, D.C.: 25 September 2008).

¹⁹ GAO, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance: DOD Needs a Strategic, Risk-Based Approach to Enhance Its Maritime Domain Awareness, GAO-11-621 (Washington, D.C.: 20 June 2011).

DOD and DHS Have Established a Collaborative Forum to Identify Potential Near-term Investments but Not Long-term Needs

While DOD and DHS have established the working group to identify shared near-term Arctic capability gaps, this collaborative forum is not intended to address long-term Arctic capability gaps or identify opportunities for joint investments over the longer-term. DOD acknowledged the importance of collaboration with the Coast Guard over the long-term in its 2010 *Quadrennial Defense Review*, which states that the department must work with the Coast Guard and DHS to develop Arctic capabilities to support both current and future planning and operations. According to DOD and Coast Guard officials, although the working group is primarily focused on near-term investments, it has discussed some mid- to long-term capability needs. However, DOD and Coast Guard officials stated that after the completion of the working group's paper, expected in January 2012, the working group will have completed the tasks detailed in the Terms of Reference and will be dissolved. Consequently, no forum will exist to further address any mid- to long-term capability needs.

Although we have previously reported that there are several existing interagency organizations working on Arctic issues, these organizations do not specifically address Arctic capability needs. These organizations include the Interagency Policy Committee on the Arctic, the Arctic Policy Group, and the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee, among others.²⁰ DOD and DHS also have long-standing memorandums of agreement related to coordination between DOD and the Coast Guard in both maritime homeland security and maritime homeland defense. The objectives of these interagency organizations range from developing coordinated research policy for the Arctic region to tracking implementation of national Arctic policy to identifying implementation gaps, but do not specifically address capability gaps in the Arctic. According to DOD and Coast Guard officials we spoke with, only the working group is focused specifically on addressing Arctic capabilities. After the working group completes its tasks in January 2012, there will be no DOD and Coast Guard organization focused specifically on reducing overlap and redundancies or collaborating to address Arctic capability gaps in support of future planning and operations, as is directed by the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review.

While Northern Command officials stated they have plans for periodic reassessment of long-term capability needs, such as icebreakers or basing infrastructure in-

²⁰ The Interagency Policy Committee on the Arctic was created in March 2010 to coordinate governmentwide implementation of National Security Presidential Directive 66/Homeland Security Presidential Directive 25, and is co-chaired by the White House's National Security Staff and Council on Environmental Quality. The Arctic Policy Group was established in 1971 to coordinate U.S. policy positions on international Arctic issues and is led by the Department of State. The Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee was established by the Arctic Research and Policy Act of 1984 to help set priorities for future Arctic research. In July 2010, responsibility for this committee shifted to the National Science and Technology Council. See GAO-10-870, appendix IV for descriptions of other select interagency coordination efforts.

cluding a deep-water port, it is not clear how those plans consider collaboration with the Coast Guard. For example, officials stated the biennial review of Northern Command's Theater Campaign Plan²¹ and Strategic Infrastructure Master Plan²² will consider long-term capability and infrastructure needs. They added that the commander's Arctic Estimate is reviewed annually and also considers long-term priorities, such as identifying a need for icebreakers. However, the officials stated that the Arctic Estimate does not identify how DOD would acquire those icebreakers or how it would coordinate with the Coast Guard—the operator of the nation's icebreakers²³—to reconstruct existing or build new icebreakers. The Coast Guard has a more immediate need to develop Arctic capabilities such as icebreakers and has taken steps to address some long-term capability gaps. Meanwhile, given that it could take approximately 10 years to develop icebreakers would have to begin within the next year to ensure that U.S. heavy icebreaking capabilities are maintained beyond 2020.

Our prior work has shown that collaboration with partners can help avoid wasting scarce resources and increase effectiveness of efforts.²⁴ Without specific plans for a collaborative forum between DOD and the Coast Guard to address long-term Arctic capability gaps and to identify opportunities for joint investments over the longer-term, DOD may miss opportunities to leverage resources with the Coast Guard to enhance future Arctic capabilities.

²¹ A theater campaign plan encompasses the activities of a supported geographic combatant commander, which accomplish strategic or operational objectives within a theater of war or theater of operations, and translates national or theater strategy into operational concepts and those concepts into unified action.

²² A strategic infrastructure master plan identifies infrastructure requirements, installation and facility locations, existing or planned capabilities at each location, and required infrastructure improvements.

²³ The Navy and the Coast Guard have a long-standing memorandum of agreement regarding the use of the nation's icebreakers—the Coast Guard operates the nation's icebreakers and uses them, when needed, to support the Navy. The 1965 U.S. Navy-U.S. Treasury Memorandum of Agreement was executed to permit consolidation of the icebreaker fleet under one agency. That rationale was reinforced by a 1982 Roles and Missions Study which stated that polar icebreakers should be centrally managed by one agency and that the Coast Guard was the appropriate one because of the multimission nature of polar ice operations. This memorandum of agreement was updated in 2008. The signatories were DOD and DHS and the agreement included an update on responsibilities for coastal security.

²⁴ GAO, Interagency Collaboration: Key Issues for Congressional Oversight of National Security Strategies, Organizations, Workforce, and Information Sharing, GAO-09-904SP (Washington, D.C.: 25 September 2009); and GAO, National Security: Key Challenges and Solutions to Strengthen Interagency Collaboration, GAO-10-822T (Washington, D.C.: 9 June 2010).

Conclusions

At this time, significant DOD investments in Arctic capabilities may not be needed, but that does not preclude taking steps to anticipate and prepare for Arctic operations in the future. Addressing near-term gaps is essential for DOD to have the key enabling capabilities it needs to communicate, navigate, and maintain awareness of activity in the region. An investment strategy that identifies and prioritizes near-term Arctic capability needs and identifies a timeline to address them would be useful for decision makers in planning and budgeting. Without taking deliberate steps to analyze risks in the Arctic and prioritize related resource and operational requirements, DOD could later find itself faced with urgent needs, resulting in higher costs that could have been avoided.

In addition, unless DOD and DHS continue to collaborate to identify opportunities for interagency action to close Arctic capability gaps, DOD could miss out on opportunities to work with the Coast Guard to leverage resources for shared needs. DOD may choose to create a new collaborative forum or incorporate this collaboration into an existing forum or process. Given the different missions and associated timelines of DOD and the Coast Guard for developing Arctic capabilities, it is important that the two agencies work together to avoid fragmented efforts and reduce unaffordable overlap and redundancies while addressing Arctic capability gaps in support of future planning and operations.

Recommendations for Executive Action

To more effectively leverage federal investments in Arctic capabilities in a resourceconstrained environment and ensure needed capabilities are developed in a timely way, we recommend that the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, take the following two actions:

- develop a risk-based investment strategy that: 1) identifies and prioritizes near-term Arctic capability needs, 2) develops a timeline for addressing them, and 3) is updated as appropriate; and
- establish a collaborative forum with the Coast Guard to fully leverage federal investments and help avoid overlap and redundancies in addressing long-term Arctic capability needs.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

In written comments on a draft of this report, DHS concurred with both of our recommendations. For its part, DOD partially concurred with both of our recommendations. It generally agreed that the department needed to take action to address the issues we raised but indicated it is already taking initial steps to address them. Technical comments were provided separately and incorporated as appropriate.

With respect to DOD's comments on our first recommendation, DOD stated that its existing processes—including prioritizing Arctic capability needs through the Com-

mander's annual integrated priority lists; balancing those needs against other requirements through the annual planning, programming, budgeting, and execution system process; and addressing Service requirements through program objective memorandum submissions-enable DOD to balance the risk of being late-to-need with the opportunity cost of making premature Arctic investments. However, DOD's response did not address how it would develop a risk-based investment strategy. As stated in our report, DOD has considered some elements of such a risk-based investment strategy by setting strategic goals and objectives, determining constraints, and assessing risks (such as Northern Command's inclusion of two Arctic-specific capability needs in its fiscal years 2013 through 2017 integrated priority list). However, DOD has not yet conducted the remaining three phases of a risk-based investment strategy: evaluating alternatives for addressing these risks, selecting the appropriate alternatives, and implementing the alternatives and monitoring the progress made and results achieved. We believe that considering potential alternative solutions, such as leveraging the capabilities of interagency or international partners, could help minimize DOD's investment in Arctic capabilities. DOD's Arctic Report also emphasized the need for a risk-based investment strategy, noting that "the long lead time associated with capability development, particularly the procurement of space-based assets and ships, requires a deliberate risk-based investment strategy" and noted that "additional capability analysis will be required." By developing a risk-based investment strategy to prioritize near-term investment needs and a timeline for addressing them, DOD can be better prepared in its planning and budgeting decisions.

With respect to our second recommendation, both DOD and DHS cited the importance of collaboration to develop Arctic capabilities and identified some existing forums that include Arctic issues, such as the annual Navy and Coast Guard staff talks and the joint DOD-DHS Capabilities Development Working Group. Our report also identified additional existing interagency organizations working on Arctic issues, and we agree that these forums can help avoid overlap and redundancies in addressing long-term Arctic capability needs. However, these forums do not specifically focus on Arctic capability needs, and no DOD and Coast Guard forum will be focused on reducing overlap and redundancies or collaborating to address Arctic capability gaps following the dissolution of the Arctic Capabilities Assessment Working Group in January 2012. We continue to believe that focusing specifically on long-term Arctic capability needs will enable DOD and the Coast Guard to better leverage resources for shared needs.

List of Committees

The Honorable Carl Levin, Chairman The Honorable John McCain, Ranking Member Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate

The Honorable Daniel Inouye, Chairman The Honorable Thad Cochran, Ranking Member Subcommittee on Defense Committee on Appropriations, United States Senate

The Honorable Howard P. McKeon, Chairman The Honorable Adam Smith, Ranking Member Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives

The Honorable C.W. "Bill" Young, Chairman The Honorable Norman D. Dicks, Ranking Member Subcommittee on Defense, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives

Appendix I: Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

The objectives of our work were to determine the extent to which (1) the Department of Defense (DOD) report on the Arctic addresses the reporting elements specified in House Report 111-491²⁵ and (2) DOD has efforts under way to identify and prioritize the capabilities needed to meet national security objectives in the Arctic. To gather information for both objectives we reviewed various DOD and Coast Guard documentation. We interviewed officials from the Office of the Secretary of Defense; Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; U.S. Northern Command and the North American Aerospace Defense Command; U.S. European Command; U.S. Pacific Command; U.S. Transportation Command; and U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps Arctic offices. We also interviewed Coast Guard officials to determine their contribution to DOD's efforts to identify and prioritize capabilities.

To address the extent to which DOD's report on the Arctic addresses the reporting elements specified in House Report 111-491, we evaluated the DOD *Report to Congress on Arctic Operations and the Northwest Passage (Arctic Report)* issued in May 2011. We determined that the extent to which DOD addressed each specified element would be rated as either "addressed," "partially addressed," or "not addressed." These categories were defined as follows:

- Addressed: An element is addressed when the *Arctic Report* explicitly addresses all parts of the element.
- Partially addressed: An element is partially addressed when the *Arctic Report* addresses at least one or more parts of the element, but not all parts of the element.
- Not addressed: An element is not addressed when the *Arctic Report* did not explicitly address any part of the element.

Specifically, two GAO analysts independently reviewed and compared the *Arctic Report* with the direction in the House Report; assessed whether each element was addressed, partially addressed, or not addressed; and recorded their assessment and the basis for the assessment. The final assessment reflected the analysts' consensus based on the individual assessments. In addition, we interviewed DOD officials involved in preparing the *Arctic Report* to discuss their interpretation of the direction in the House Report and the DOD report's findings. To provide context, our assessment also reflected our review of relevant DOD and Coast Guard documents, as well as issues raised in recent GAO reports that specifically relate to some of the specified reporting elements.

To address the extent to which DOD has efforts under way to identify and prioritize the capabilities needed to meet national security objectives in the Arctic, we reviewed documentation related to DOD's Arctic operations, such as the U.S. Navy's November

²⁵ H.R. Rep. No. 111-491, at 337 (2010). This report accompanied H.R. 5136, a proposed bill for the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011.

2009 Arctic Roadmap, the February 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review, the U.S. European Command's April 2011 Arctic Strategic Assessment, the U.S. Coast Guard's July 2011 High Latitude Study, and the Navy's September 2011 Arctic Capabilities Based Assessment. We also interviewed officials from various DOD and Coast Guard offices.

We conducted this performance audit from July 2011 to January 2012 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Appendix II: Extent to which DOD's *Arctic Report* Addressed Specified Reporting Elements

Reporting Element 1: Strategic National Security Objectives and Restrictions in the Arctic

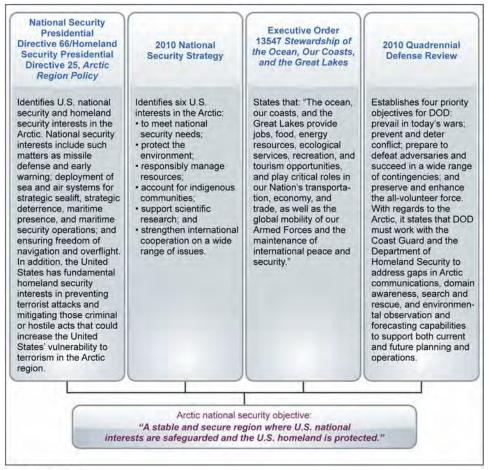
Detailed Assessment of This Element

We determined that the Department of Defense (DOD) addressed this element because the *Report to Congress on Arctic Operations and the Northwest Passage (Arctic Report)* includes an assessment of U.S. strategic national security objectives and restrictions in the Arctic. Specifically, the report states that DOD reviewed national-level policy guidance and concluded that the overarching strategic national security objective for the Arctic is a stable and secure region where U.S. national interests are safeguarded and the U.S. homeland is protected (see Figure 3 for descriptions of the policy guidance documents DOD reviewed). The report further identifies two DOD strategic objectives to achieve the desired end-state for the Arctic: (1) prevent and deter conflict and (2) prepare to respond to a wide range of challenges and contingencies. In addition, the report identifies and examines restrictions in the Arctic. For example, the report states that uncertainty about the extent, impact, and rate of climate change in the Arctic will make it challenging to plan for possible future conditions in the region and to mobilize public or political support for investments in U.S. Arctic capabilities or infrastructure.

Related Findings from Previous GAO Reports

In 2010, we reported on the difficulties associated with developing capabilities needed to understand the extent, rate, and impact of climate change. Specifically, we found that while agencies have taken steps to plan for some continued climate observations via satellite data in the near-term, they lack a strategy for the long-term provision of such data.²⁶ For example, we reported that DOD has not established plans to restore the full set of capabilities intended for the National Polar-orbiting Operational Environmental Satellite System over the life of the program. We noted that without a comprehensive long-term strategy for continuing environmental measurements over the coming decades and a means for implementing it, agencies will continue to independently pursue their immediate priorities on an ad-hoc basis, the economic benefits of a coordinated approach to investments in earth observation may be lost, and our nation's ability to understand climate change may be limited.

²⁶ GAO, Environmental Satellites: Strategy Needed to Sustain Critical Climate and Space Weather Measurements, GAO-10-456 (Washington, D.C.: 27 April 2010).



Source: GAO analysis.

Figure 3: Policy Guidance on the Arctic Identified in DOD's Arctic Report.

Reporting Element 2: Required Mission Capabilities and a Timeline to Obtain Such Capabilities

Detailed Assessment of This Element

We determined that DOD partially addressed this element because the *Arctic Report* includes a capability gap assessment in relation to Arctic mission areas but does not provide a timeline to obtain such capabilities. Specifically, the report identifies potential Arctic capability gaps over the near- (2010-2020), mid- (2020-2030), and far-term (beyond 2030) that may affect DOD's ability to accomplish four of nine mission areas in the region, including maritime domain awareness, maritime security, search and rescue, and sea control. The report notes that three capability gaps in particular have the

potential to hamper Arctic operations across all time frames: (1) insufficient communications architecture, (2) degraded Global Positioning System performance, and (3) extremely limited domain awareness. Other key challenges identified include: shortfalls in ice and weather reporting and forecasting; limitations in command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; and limited shore-based infrastructure and inventory of ice-capable vessels. Although DOD states in the report that capabilities will need to be reassessed as conditions change and gaps addressed in order to be prepared to operate in a more accessible Arctic, it does not provide a timeline for addressing capability gaps or challenges identified.

Related Findings from Previous GAO Reports

We previously reported on the challenges DOD and Coast Guard face in achieving maritime domain awareness, a capability gap identified in DOD's Arctic Report. For example, in 2011 we found that DOD lacks a strategic, risk-based approach to manage its maritime domain awareness efforts and to address high priority capability gaps.²⁷ To improve DOD's ability to manage the implementation of maritime domain awareness across DOD, we recommended that DOD develop and implement a departmentwide strategy that: identifies objectives and roles and responsibilities for achieving maritime domain awareness; aligns efforts and objectives with DOD's process for determining requirements and allocating resources; identifies capability resourcing responsibilities; and includes performance measures. We also recommended that DOD, in collaboration with other stakeholders such as the Coast Guard, perform a comprehensive risk-based analysis to prioritize and address DOD's critical maritime capability gaps and guide future investments. DOD concurred with our recommendations and identified actions it is taking-or plans to take-to address them. We also reported in 2010 that the Coast Guard faces challenges in achieving Arctic domain awareness, including inadequate Arctic Ocean and weather data, lack of communication infrastructure, limited intelligence information, and lack of a physical presence in the Arctic.²⁸ Other challenges reported include minimal assets and infrastructure for Arctic missions and diminishing fleet expertise for operating in Arctic-type conditions.

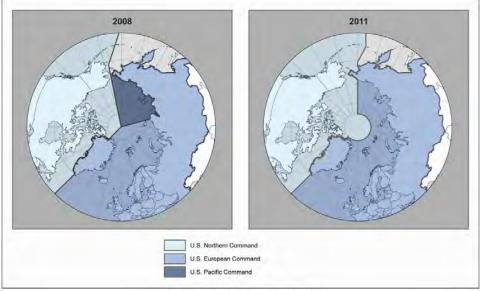
Reporting Element 3: Amended Unified Command Plan

Detailed Assessment of This Element

We determined that DOD addressed this element because the *Arctic Report* includes an assessment of the revised April 2011 Unified Command Plan that addresses the impact of aligning the Arctic Ocean under a single combatant commander. The April 2011 Unified Command Plan shifted areas of responsibility boundaries in the Arctic region.

²⁷ GAO, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance: DOD Needs a Strategic, Risk-Based Approach to Enhance Its Maritime Domain Awareness, GAO-11-621 (Washington, D.C.: 20 June 2011).

²⁸ GAO, Coast Guard: Efforts to Identify Arctic Requirements Are Ongoing, but More Communication about Agency Planning Efforts Would Be Beneficial, GAO-10-870 (Washington, D.C.: 15 September 2010).



Source: GAO analysis of the 2008 and 2011 Unified Command Plans.

Figure 4: Arctic Responsibilities under the Unified Command Plan: 2008 and 2011.

As a result of this realignment, responsibility for the Arctic region is now shared between U.S. Northern and U.S. European Commands—previously, under the 2008 Unified Command Plan, the two commands and U.S. Pacific Command shared responsibility for the region, as shown in figure 4. In addition, the April 2011 *Unified Command Plan* assigned Northern Command responsibility for advocating for Arctic capabilities. The *Arctic Report* states that having two combatant commands responsible for a portion of the Arctic Ocean aligned with adjacent land boundaries is an arrangement best suited to achieve continuity of effort with key regional partners and that aligning the entire Arctic Ocean under a single combatant command would disrupt progress in theater security cooperation achieved over decades of dialogue and confidence building by Northern and European Commands with regional stakeholders. The report also notes that although having multiple combatant commands with responsibility in the Arctic Ocean makes coordination more challenging, having too few would leave out key stakeholders, diminish long-standing relationships, and potentially alienate important partners.

Reporting Element 4: Required Basing Infrastructure, Including the Need for a Deep–Water Port

Detailed Assessment of This Element

We determined that DOD addressed this element because the *Arctic Report* assesses the existing Arctic infrastructure to be adequate to meet near- (2010-2020) to mid-term (2020-2030) U.S. national security needs, noting that DOD does not currently antici-

pate a need for the construction of additional bases or a deep-draft port in Alaska before 2020. Specifically, the Arctic Report examines the defense infrastructure such as bases, ports, and airfields needed to support DOD strategic objectives for the Arctic, and it discusses the environmental challenges and higher costs associated with construction and maintenance of Arctic infrastructure. It concludes that with the low potential for armed conflict in the region, existing DOD posture is adequate to meet U.S. defense needs through 2030. In addition, the report states that DOD does not currently anticipate a need for the construction of a deep-draft port in Alaska before 2020. The report does not address the basing infrastructure required to support long-term U.S. national security needs. The report notes that given the long lead times for construction of major infrastructure in the region, DOD will periodically reevaluate this assessment as activity in the region gradually increases and the combatant commanders update their regional plans on a regular basis. The report also states that one area for future assessment might be the need for a co-located airport and port facility suitable for deployment of undersea search and rescue assets but does not provide a timeline for completing such an assessment.

Related Findings from Previous GAO Reports

Our prior work has identified the high costs associated with operating and maintaining installations outside the contiguous United States. In February 2011, we reported that DOD's posture-planning guidance does not require the combatant commands to compile and report comprehensive cost data associated with posture requirements or to analyze the costs and benefits of posture alternatives when considering changes to posture.²⁹ We noted that without such requirements, DOD's posture-planning process will continue to lack critical information that could be used by decision makers as they deliberate posture requirements and potential opportunities to obtain greater cost efficiencies may not be identified. We recommended that DOD revise its posture-planning guidance to require combatant commands to include the costs associated with initiatives that would alter future posture, and that DOD provide guidance on how the combatant commands should analyze the costs and benefits of alternative courses of action when considering proposed changes to posture. DOD agreed with our recommendations and identified corrective actions, but additional steps are needed to fully address the recommendations. These findings underscore the importance of DOD and Northern Command identifying and analyzing the costs and benefits of alternative courses of action associated with future defense posture in the Arctic.

Reporting Element 5: Status of and Need for Icebreakers, Including an Assessment of the Minimum and Optimal Number of Icebreakers

Detailed Assessment of This Element

We determined that DOD partially addressed this element because the Arctic Report identifies current U.S. polar icebreakers, but it provides limited details on the status of

²⁹ GAO, Defense Management: Additional Cost Information and Stakeholder Input Needed to Assess Military Posture in Europe, GAO-11-131 (Washington, D.C.: 3 February 2011).

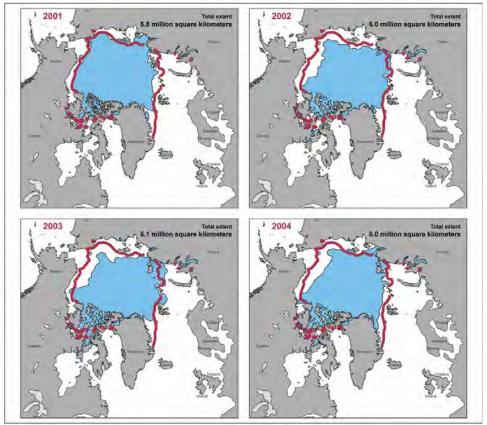
U.S. icebreakers and does not assess the minimum and optimal number of icebreakers that may be needed. For example, the Arctic Report states that the U.S. Coast Guard owns the U.S. inventory of three icebreakers, while the U.S. Navy owns one icestrengthened tanker. The three U.S. icebreakers include the Healy, a medium-duty icebreaker with an estimated 18 years of service life remaining; the Polar Sea, a heavyduty icebreaker expected to be decommissioned in fiscal year 2011 because of engine problems; and the Polar Star, a heavy-duty icebreaker expected to return to service in 2013 with an estimated 7 to 10 years of service life remaining. The Arctic Report also states that DOD's current needs are met by foreign-flagged commercial contract vessels or through cooperation with Canada. It notes that in the future, assured access in the Arctic could be met by means other than icebreakers, including submarines, aircraft, and ice-strengthened vessels. However, the Arctic Report does not provide an assessment of the minimum or optimal number of icebreakers or other needed assets, although it does note that the U.S. Navy's 2011 Capabilities Based Assessment and a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) effort to study icebreaking options in fiscal year 2012 will provide further information about future U.S. icebreaking needs.

Related Findings from Other Coast Guard and DHS Reports

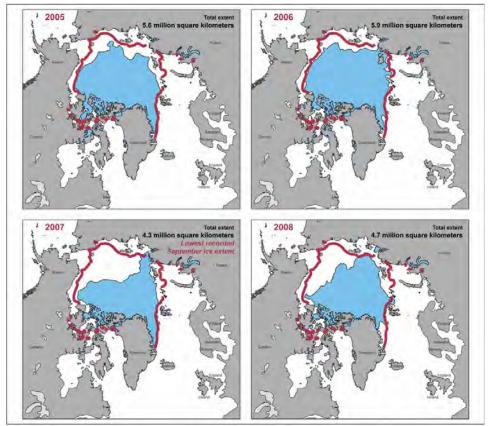
In July 2011, the Coast Guard provided the High Latitude Study to Congress, which concluded that the Coast Guard requires six heavy and four medium icebreakers to fulfill its statutory mission requirements and the Navy's presence requirements in the polar regions. The report also identified six scenarios for meeting needs in the Arctic that include capabilities beyond icebreakers, such as non-icebreaker cutters and aircraft. The DHS Office of the Inspector General also reported in January 2011 that the Coast Guard is unable to meet its current Arctic mission requirements with existing icebreaking resources, including providing DOD with assured access to the region, and without funding for new icebreakers or service life extensions for existing icebreakers with sufficient lead time, the U.S. will lose all polar icebreaking capabilities by 2029. However, as we have previously reported, given the uncertainty about the Coast Guard's long-term budget outlook, it may be a significant challenge for the Coast Guard to obtain these Arctic capabilities.³⁰ In November 2011, the Coast Guard provided to Congress a report that assessed options for recapitalizing its existing icebreaker fleet. The report found that the most cost effective option is to build two new heavy icebreakers, while performing minimal maintenance to keep the existing icebreakers operational while construction is taking place. However, the report noted that acquiring two new heavy icebreakers through the Coast Guard budget would have significant adverse impact on all Coast Guard activities, and concluded that the recapitalization of the polar icebreaker fleet cannot be funded within the Coast Guard budget.

³⁰ GAO-10-870.

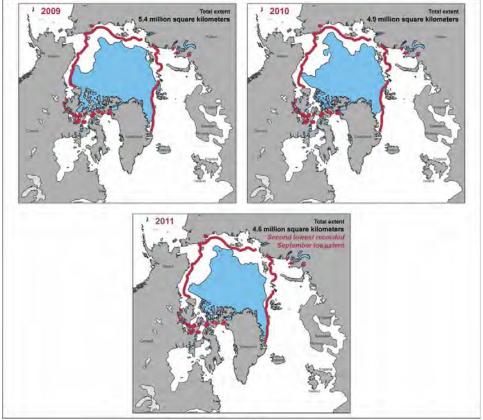
Appendix III: Change in Summer Minimum Ice Extent from 2001 to 2011, Compared with the 1979 to 2000 Median Minimum Ice Extent



Source: National Snow and Ice Data Center.



Source: National Snow and Ice Data Center.



Source: National Snow and Ice Data Center

Appendix IV: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contact

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Staff Acknowledgments

In addition to the contact named above, key contributors to this report were Suzanne Wren (Assistant Director), Susan Ditto, Nicole Harms, Timothy Persons, Steven Putansu, Frank Rusco, Jodie Sandel, Amie Steele, and Esther Toledo.

Stephen L. Caldwell (Director), Dawn Hoff (Assistant Director), and Elizabeth Kowalewski contributed expertise on the Department of Homeland Security and Coast Guard.

Related GAO Products

Coast Guard: Observations on Arctic Requirements, Icebreakers, and Coordination with Stakeholders, GAO-12-254T (Washington, D.C.: 1 December 2011); available at www.gao.gov/products/GAO-12-254T.

Climate Change Adaptation: Federal Efforts to Provide Information Could Help Government Decision Making, GAO-12-238T (Washington, D.C.: 16 November 2011); available at www.gao.gov/products/GAO-12-238T.

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Polar Satellites: Agencies Need to Address Potential Gaps in Weather and Climate Data Coverage, GAO-11-945T (Washington, D.C.: 23 September 2011); available at www.gao.gov/products/GAO-11-945T.

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Interagency Collaboration: Key Issues for Congressional Oversight of National Security Strategies, Organizations, Workforce, and Information Sharing, GAO-09-904SP (Washington, D.C.: 25 September 2009); available at www.gao.gov/products/GAO-09-904SP.

Defense Acquisitions: DOD's Requirements Determination Process Has Not Been Effective in Prioritizing Joint Capabilities, GAO-08-1060 (Washington, D.C.: 25 September 2008); available at www.gao.gov/products/GAO-08-1060.

Coast Guard: Condition of Some Aids-to-Navigation and Domestic Icebreaking Vessels Has Declined; Effect on Mission Performance Appears Mixed, GAO-06-979 (Washington, D.C.: 22 September 2006); available at www.gao.gov/products/GAO-06-979.

Executive Guide: Effectively Implementing the Government Performance and Results Act, GAO/GGD-96-118 (Washington, D.C.: June 1996); available at www.gao.gov/products/GGD-96-118.