Renewing NATO's Partnerships: Towards a Coherent and Efficient Framework

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Implicit in NATO's change from a static, collective defence organization into a flexible security alliance with potential for global reach is the need to strengthen and develop relations with existing and potential partners worldwide. In response to the challenge posed by the requirement for increased cooperation, this strategy paper aims to contribute to the development of NATO's relations with its partners by presenting clear criteria for development in three ideal approaches, extending from grass-roots reform to complete reform. These approaches provide useful arguments for future development.

Partnerships as a Tool for Achieving NATO's Objectives

Partnerships are an integral part of NATO's security policy; a tool to achieve NATO's objectives. Consequently, as part of its broad approach to security, NATO has developed different types of partnerships since 1991. The initial idea was to build security through dialogue and cooperation, but objectives nowadays are far more ambitious. The present network of partnerships is extremely varied: Partnership for Peace, Mediterranean Dialogue, Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, NATO-Russia partnership, NATO-Ukraine partnership, NATO-EU partnership and so forth. In addition, a wide range of different countries have expressed growing interest in closer contacts and different degrees of cooperation. The key question now is how to make the best use of existing programmes and potential new partnerships in order to best serve NATO's objectives.

Present Partnerships – Advantages and Disadvantages

Partnerships have been one of the Alliance's success stories after the Cold War. NATO has succeeded in building confidence through cooperation, thereby enhancing security and stability throughout Europe and its rim lands. The preparation of former Warsaw Pact countries for NATO membership has led to the reunification of the European

continent. Moreover, the success of NATO's partnership policy has generated considerable interest in distant countries that are now keen to establish closer contacts and cooperation with the Alliance.

But past success does not necessarily translate into present success. There are admittedly a variety of problems to be solved: the unclear role of partnerships in the attainment of NATO's goals, the rigidity of partnership frameworks based on geographical division, the lack of opportunities for self-differentiation, the lack of genuine regional cooperation, the arguably dysfunctional EAPC, and managerial inefficiencies and inconsistencies. These problems are all related to NATO's internal functioning. In addition, from an external point of view, there are other problems that cannot be dismissed lightly: the interests of both existing and potential partners are too varied and often left unanswered and, far from enhancing cooperation, the fragmentation of programmes only adds to mistrust at regional level.

Criteria

Clear criteria have to be defined for the reader to comprehend our reasoning on the reform of NATO's partnerships.

Internal criteria are imperative for the achievement of organizational purposes. One fundamental principle guides the elaboration and management of partnerships: <u>the principle of efficiency</u>. This principle, which calls for efficient and appropriate action tailored to stated objectives, has four derivative aspects to it: proportionality, manageability, complementarity and coherence.

External criteria aim to regroup partners in a way that will enable NATO to concentrate its efforts. They come under three headings: <u>geography</u>, which groups countries together into single regional entities; <u>functionality</u>, which classifies countries according to their capabilities and their political willingness to cooperate with the Alliance; and the <u>values-orientated approach,</u> based on commitment to democracy and good governance.

Approach 1: Tailored Partnership

Table 1

EAPC role – evaluative body (all) or policy council (functionality)
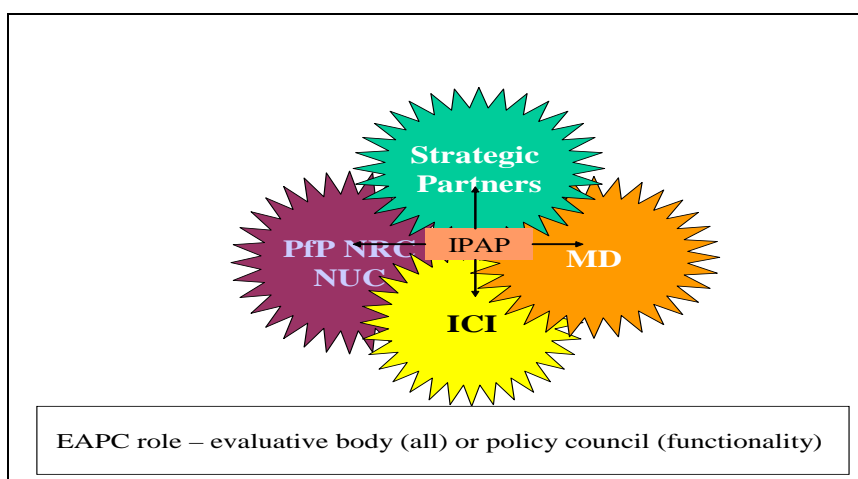
Tailored Partnership is a <u>grass-roots reform, a solution midway between geography and functionality</u>. Tailored Partnership is an amalgam of all existing arrangements plus new ones, linked by a single aim: better achievement of NATO's objectives. This aim is achieved through a centralizing instrument (IPAP). Although programme-specific political objectives continue to guide the use of the partnership tools chosen via an IPAP, functionality is progressively gaining a stronger footing. Functional tasks create a direct linkage to NATO and its objectives. Functionality is enhanced through practical work. In this model, the role of the EAPC is developed either as an evaluative body, whose membership embraces the totality of the partnership, or as a policy council, whose composition depends on the functional subject being discussed. In essence, Tailored Partnership constitutes an enhancement of current partnership policies and frameworks.

When evaluated in light of development criteria, the Tailored Partnership with individual partners, forming a simplified whole, is easier to conceive, evaluate and develop further for more effective achievement of NATO's objectives than the present efficiency enhanced patchwork.

Because it retains the geographical dimension, this model allows for the progressive rationalization of existing structures – without totally abandoning them. Consequently, the model is realizable. Functionality is enhanced, too, so that linkage to NATO's objectives is reinforced.

Approach 2: Functional Partnership

Table 2
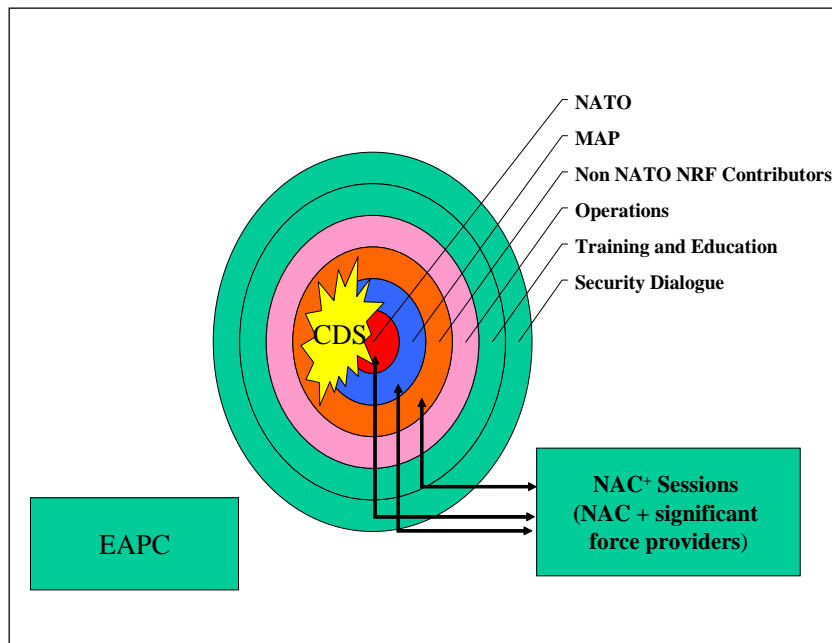
On the basis of functionality a number of issue-based forums for practical military cooperation, training and education, as well as political dialogue, are created as a system of concentric circles. According to their political willingness and military capabilities, partners decide in which forum(s) they would like to participate. For each forum there is a Framework Document with clear political criteria and a system of continuous evaluation. Under certain preconditions, entrance into other functional circles closer to NATO is possible. Relative proximity to

NATO would be determined by a country's willingness to subscribe to NATO's political and military goals and its readiness to contribute a significant number of forces to NATO-led operations. Cooperation in this functional sphere includes a commitment to democracy and the possibility of security consultations.

The regional dimension becomes dispensable because future cooperation would be clustered around issues with participants from different parts of the world. Decision making reflects this development. Instead of continuing with the various regional dialogue and partnership frameworks, NATO would replace them all with multilateral meetings between the NAC and the countries belonging to one specific forum (e.g. NAC + non-NATO NRF contributors). The EAPC could be transformed into an annual ministerial meeting, whereas the NAC would meet with all countries participating in all the functional partnership forums to discuss political issues.

The Functional Approach supports efficiency because the organizational focus is on those programmes that make the most difference and contribute most to NATO's interests. Enhancement of politico-military functionality creates a direct link to NATO's core objectives. At the same time, care is taken to maintain enough interest in partnership among those not active at the high end of the military cooperation spectrum. This model is, however, incomplete, because the geographical dimension is gradually neglected as transformation of regional dynamics is abandoned. And, apart from functionality, there is no basis for facilitating cooperation with countries or institutions. These considerations could have adverse effects on general stability.

Approach 3: Mixed Partnership

Table 3.1
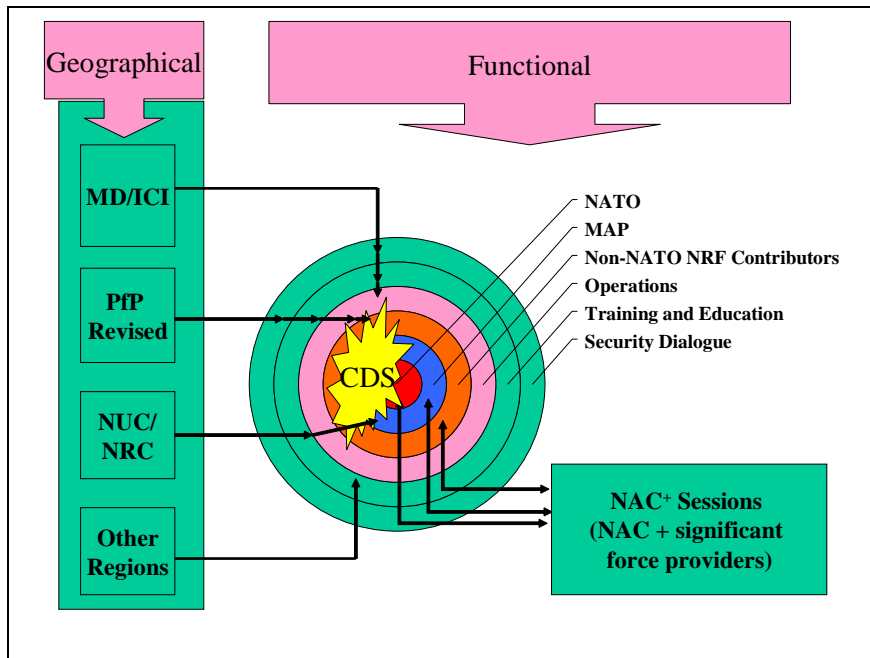
*Strategic Partners and Western Five participate in the functional framework
**The smaller arrows from the geographical to the functional strand indicate potential participation of individual partners in functional cooperation

Mixed partnerships include three partnership strands. The first strand, functionality, is complemented with a regional strand and an organizational strand. Common action takes place either in the functional strand (main emphasis) or organizational strand.

Firstly, the multilateral dimension of current partnerships continues to exist in a limited, strictly political, discourse-oriented dimension. The future aim of the regional dialogues would be to discuss regional security issues with the current partners in existing partnership frameworks. In this way, discussion forums are also preserved amongst countries that belong geographically to the same region but have different

cooperative relations with NATO in the functional strand of the partnership framework. The recalibration of the regional approach could pave the way for new geographically oriented partnerships. Cooperation would take place on the basis of self-differentiation.

Secondly, as in the geographical strand of the approach, NATO could continue working with diverse intergovernmental organizations under the organizational strand of its partnership architecture, as illustrated in the following table.

Table 3.2
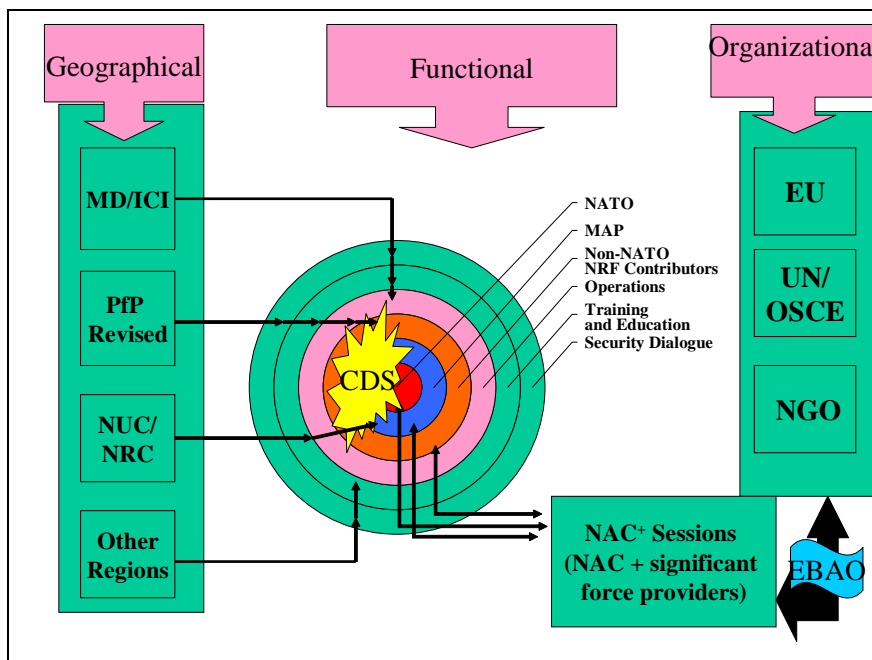
*Strategic Partners and Western Five participate in the functional framework
**The smaller arrows from the geographical to the functional strand indicate potential participation of individual partners in functional cooperation.

The extension of this level of cooperation to non-governmental organizations might strengthen common responses to common security challenges.

Decision-making and policy-council structures are also adapted. In addition to the observations on the functional model, new or modified structures are to reflect the aims of each strand. A more limited composition of the EAPC (fewer members), flexibility and variety of different regional/organizational meetings upon request, and a steering institution (NAC) are all provided for.

Besides the advantages of the purely functional approach, this model has the greatest potential to meet all of the development criteria. It would increase proportionality and efficiency in the pursuit of NATO's own strategic goals by creating a community of states which is willing, able and ready to act whenever military action is deemed necessary, by preparing and helping others who would like to cooperate more closely with NATO (via security sector reform or training and education), and by maintaining links with partners who are simply seeking a political dialogue with the Alliance. The model also fulfils the principle of internal efficiency, since responsibilities are clearly allocated, and each pillar of the partnership architecture has a specific and distinct focus. Coherence and complementarity are therefore ensured. Moreover, by having the NAC as the supreme steering body of the entire framework it is possible to create synergistic effects between the three pillars of NATO's renewed partnerships. The model is at the same time functional, geographical and implicitly value driven.

Policy Recommendations

To implement the mixed partnership approach NATO should start its internal discussion and reflection process now. The two Strategic Commands and the MC should also provide input for this debate.

Once the internal reflection process has been concluded, a proposal should be submitted to the NAC for discussion and Allied agreement on the matter.

Before the Riga Summit, NATO should call a special meeting with all partners and contact countries at Foreign Minister level in order to present the conceptual framework of its new partnership architecture and discuss it with both the partner and the contact countries, thus ensuring that partner interests are taken into due account at an early stage.

The new framework can then be announced at the Riga Summit, heralding a new era of NATO partnerships. Planning for implementation of the new partnership model is the next step, with a clear timetable for its concrete introduction.

16

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INTRODUCTION

When NATO Heads of State and Government meet in November 2006 in Riga for the NATO Summit, the issues vying for the Alliance's attention include the interim balance sheet on Transformation, the future of enlargement, the current operation in Afghanistan and the progress the Alliance is making with regard to the NATO Response Force: all these issues need to be discussed and evaluated, and decisions have to be taken. Among the potential summit issues the future development of NATO's various partnerships is one which – according to NATO's Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer – ought to be on the agenda. He has repeatedly stated that NATO needs to think about "the need to work more effectively with current partners and reach out to new ones".[1]

The statement's rationale is obvious and timely. With NATO's recent development from a static organization for collective defence into a flexible defensive alliance with potential global reach, it is in the Alliance's direct interest to think about strengthening and developing its relations with existing and potential partners worldwide.[2] Only through cooperation can the challenges of today's comprehensive security environment be met. The same applies to existing and potential partners as well. Admittedly, development of existing programmes has occurred along the years, but at present there seems to be a demand, and a need, for greater reform.

This paper examines various ways of meeting this ambitious challenge to partnership development. It looks at three different approaches for renewal of NATO's partnership frameworks and discusses their advantages and disadvantages. The starting point of the discussion is a genuine renewal of existing frameworks, enabling partnerships to be

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[1] Jaap de Hoop Scheffer: Speech at the 42nd Munich Conference on Security Policy, 3.02.2006, accessible under: http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2006/s060204a.htm. See also Jaap de Hoop Scheffer: A New NATO, Speech at the Norwegian Atlantic Committee, Oslo, 3.03.2006, accessible under: http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2006/ s060303a.htm.

[2] Jaap de Hoop Scheffer: Speech at the NATO Defence College, Rome, 21.02.2006, accessible under: http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2006/s060221a.htm.

redefined to match NATO's future needs. The purpose is to contribute concretely, with three approaches and evaluative criteria, to the on-going discussion on what this future partnership framework should look like.

Chapter 1 examines the rationale of NATO's partnerships. From a NATO perspective, partnerships should facilitate the attainment of NATO's objectives in its post-Cold War strategic environment, namely transfer of stability and security sector reform. So far, the solution has been a wide range of partnership programmes. At present, though, NATO's partnerships are confronted with a number of fundamental problems, suggesting the need for their renewal.

In Chapter 2, criteria are presented for developing and evaluating approaches for partnerships which are at the same time realistic and practical. On the basis of these criteria, concrete recommendations can be made on how to improve NATO's partnership structures in the future.

In Chapter 3, criteria are outlined for the evaluation of three development-oriented partnership approaches: the tailored partnership approach, the functional partnership approach and the mixed partnership approach.

The paper concludes with recommendations: first, on the partnership framework that seems best suited to NATO's strategic goals in the future; and second, on a timetable for introducing this framework at the Riga Summit.

CHAPTER 1
NATO AND PARTNERSHIPS

1.1 Partnership Framework

1.1.1 Partnerships as a Tool for Attaining NATO's Objectives

Partnerships are to be understood and evaluated against NATO's constitutive framework, which is made up of its founding document, the North Atlantic Treaty (Washington Treaty), and the strategic environment in which this Treaty is to be applied. Challenges stemming from the Treaty and its application are met with the Alliance's security policy, of which partnerships are an integral part. Consequently, partnerships need to be understood as part of a greater whole, and their role and place in NATO's constitutive framework must be assessed.

In the Washington Treaty, NATO's objectives are clearly specified. NATO aims for the collective defence of its Members and for the preservation of peace and security in the North-Atlantic area. These objectives highlight NATO's mission and purpose, and they constitute the legal basis from which NATO's authority to act in different questions flows. Consequently, any planned NATO action, including the development of partnerships, is to be determined on the basis of whether or not it supports the achievement of NATO's objectives.

The other element of the constitutive environment is the strategic environment in which NATO strives to achieve its Treaty-based objectives. After the end of the Cold War, the Alliance found itself in a changed strategic environment. But this had very little impact on its fundamental objective, which was and still is to be a defensive alliance of its Members. At the same time, the emergence of security risks other than direct military threats enhanced the importance of the Washington Treaty's "non-military articles". Consequently, the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations was emphasized, as the security and stability of Members were understood as having political,

economic, social, and environmental elements also. A widened geographical outreach - central and eastern Europe, South Mediterranean and Middle East - with a renewed threat concept - WMD, terrorism, regional conflicts, failed states, disruption of vital resources and organized crime - became part of NATO's broad approach to security.

It is precisely as part of its broad approach to security that NATO has developed different types of partnerships since 1991. These include the Partnership for Peace (PfP), the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD), the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI), the NATO-Russia (NRC) and NATO-Ukraine (NUC) partnerships, the South East Europe Initiative (SEEI) and cooperation with international organizations (IGOs), especially NATO-EU relations. The paper focuses on the first five of those just mentioned, but offers a mechanism for including IGOs and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The first five partnerships are based on a bilateral, state-orientated and highly structural approach, while SEEI is a set of different initiatives, uniting Members, partners and other countries that have a specific interest in the region concerned. NATO-EU partnership is a relationship between two organizations and is consequently somewhat different in focus from country-specific partnerships. Nonetheless, much of the analysis can also be applied to the latter two initiatives.

1.1.2   Partnership Programmes

The **Partnership for Peace (PfP)** was launched in 1994 for the purpose of forging an authentic security relationship with any OSCE state judged suitable by the North Atlantic Council. Over the years, thirty countries have joined the PfP. At present, the partners number twenty[3]. The main idea of the partnership was the enhancement of security and common values in the Euro-Atlantic area *at large*. The basis of the PfP is its Framework Document, which spells out NATO's and its partners' commitments.[4]   Concrete   practical   aims   have   progressively   been

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[3] Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Croatia, Finland, Georgia, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.
[4] Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council/North Atlantic Cooperation Council, NATO Headquarters, Brussels, 10-11 January 1994 (*Press Communiqué* M- 1(94)2) and Annex including *Partnership for Peace: Framework Document.* Found at www.nato.int/issues/pfp/index.html.

specified: dialogue and cooperation on common concerns (e.g. terrorism, proliferation of WMD, small arms and mines), (democratic) reform efforts in the defence and security sector, participation in NATO-led non-Article 5 operations, disaster preparedness and NATO enlargement. The PfP is based on an individual partnership between NATO and the partner concerned, which chooses activities based on its ambitions and abilities. The guiding principles are self-differentiation, joint ownership and mutual interest.

A wide variety of practical mechanisms and activities, alongside an individual partnership programme (IPP), were gradually introduced for the realization of PfP goals. These include initiatives such as an Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP), a Planning and Review Process (PARP), the Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC) and a Political-Military Framework (PMF), a Membership Action Plan (MAP), subject matter-focused Partnership Action Plans (e.g. PAP-T (terrorism), PAP-DIB (defence institution building) and so forth.[5] In addition, as part of the partnership process, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) was set up in 1997 as an organ guiding PfP activities and as an overall multilateral consultative framework on defence and security matters for NATO and its partners.[6]

The **Mediterranean Dialogue (MD)** was initiated in 1994 for the purpose of contributing to regional security and stability, achieving better mutual understanding and dispelling misconceptions among NATO and its Mediterranean partners.[7] The number of partners has increased from the original five to today's seven.[8] Initially, the idea was to create a forum for confidence-building and dialogue. The main format was a bilateral meeting between a MD country and NATO representatives. Over the years the MD has become more structured and new possibilities for practical cooperation, particularly in the military field, have been

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[5] For the political framework of review of PfP, see for instance *Final Communiqué*, Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Sintra, Portugal, 29 May 1997, NAC-1(97)65; Madrid *Declaration on Euro-Atlantic Security and Cooperation*, Issued by the Heads of State and Government, M-1-(97)81; *Report on the Comprehensive Review of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and Partnership for Peace*, Prague 21 November 2002 and *The Euro-Atlantic Partnership – Refocusing and Renewal*, Istanbul, 23 June 2004.
[6] Basic Document of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, Sintra, Portugal, 30 May 1997.
[7] Brussels, 1 December 1994, NAC – Foreign Ministers Meeting/M-NAC-2(94)116, para. 19.
[8] Algeria (since 2000), Egypt, Israel, Jordan (since 1995), Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia.

endorsed.[9] In 2004, the MD was elevated to a genuine partnership based on mutual benefit, joint ownership, self-differentiation, complementarity and progressiveness. Specific objectives relate to enhancement of existing political dialogue, interoperability, the fight against terrorism and defence reform. A series of mechanisms draw on the PfP toolbox: the possible use of NATO Trust Funds, subject-specific action plans and individual cooperation programmes.[10]

The **ICI** was launched in 2004 for the purpose of contributing to security and stability in the broader Middle East region.[11] At present, there are four countries[12] participating, and others have shown significant interest. The ICI abides by principles that are also found in the MD: joint ownership, self-differentiation, complementarity and inclusiveness. Specific areas of practical cooperation include tailored advice on defence reform, budgeting, planning and civil-military relations; military-to-military cooperation; the fight against terrorism, the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery, and cooperation in border security and civil emergency planning. Practical implementation will draw on activities and mechanisms developed in the PfP framework and will build on experiences gained in the MD.[13]

Tailored partnership has been developed with two PfP countries: Russia and Ukraine. NATO and Russia consult regularly on current security issues and develop practical cooperation in areas of common interest. The formal basis for NATO-Russia relations is the 1997 Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation.[14] The main forum for

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[9] Madrid, 8 July 1997, NAC – Heads of State and Government Meeting/M-1(97)81, para 13; Washington, 24 April 1999, *Summit Communiqué*, NAC –S(99)64, para 29; Prague, 21 November 2002, NAC - Heads of State and Government Meeting (2001)127, para. 10; *The Alliance's Strategic Concept*: NAC-S(99)65 of 24 April 1999, para. 38.

[10] *Final Communiqué*, Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Brussels, 4 December 2003, para. 17; *Istanbul Summit Communiqué*, Heads of State and Government, Press Release (2004)096, 28 June 2004.

[11] Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, Policy Document, 28 June 2004, accessible under: www.nato.int/issues/ici/index.html.

[12] Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

[13] *Security and Cooperation with the Mediterranean Region and the Broader Middle East*, NATO, Public Diplomacy Division. See www.nato.int/med-dial/home.htm.

[14] The Act emphasizes the common goal of lasting security in the Euro-Atlantic area. The Permanent Joint Council (PJC) was set up as a forum for regular consultations. However, lingering Cold War

advancing these relations is now the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), established in 2002. Key areas of cooperation mostly reflect those on the general PfP "menu": the fight against terrorism, crisis management, theatre missile defence, non-proliferation, military-to-military cooperation and defence reform.[15]

The formal basis for NATO-Ukraine relations is the 1997 NATO-Ukraine Charter on a Distinctive Partnership,[16] which established the NATO-Ukraine Commission as the principal structure for developing partnership activities. Over the five years that followed, a substantial programme of cooperation was developed in "PfP menu" areas of peace support operations and security, defence and security sector reform, the economic aspects of defence, military-to-military cooperation, armaments, civil emergency planning, and scientific and environmental cooperation. The relationship broadened in 2002 with the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan. The NATO-Ukraine Intensified Dialogue on Ukraine's aspirations to membership, with a package of short-term actions in key reform areas, was launched in April 2005.

Further to this, a wide range of countries have expressed increasing interest in closer contact and different degrees of cooperation with NATO. They include the so called Contact Countries, like Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, Colombia, Japan and New Zealand.[17] NATO also has special relationships with Afghanistan and Iraq. There is no institutionalized cooperation yet on either of these aspects. The study assesses further development of this kind by asking the question: Should other countries be included in NATO's partnerships (and if so, which ones?), could they contribute to NATO's objectives (how?), and in what way could these be achieved?

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prejudices prevented the PJC from achieving its potential, and differences over NATO's Kosovo air campaign finally led Russia to suspend its participation in the PJC. From 1999 onwards, relations started to improve significantly, culminating in the joint declaration on "NATO-Russia Relations: A New Quality", signed in Rome on 28 May 2002, establishing the NRC. Official texts can be found at www.nato.int/issues/nato-russia/index.html.

[15] Other areas of cooperation include: airspace management, logistics, civil emergency planning, scientific cooperation and environmental security. More info:
www.nato.int/issues/nrc/cooperation.html.

[16] Official texts and other information can be found on the NATO site at: www.nato.int/issues/nato-ukraine/index.html.

1.1.3   Conclusion

Any evaluation of partnerships must be made in the context of the Washington Treaty and NATO's strategic environment. The added value of partnerships for NATO is that they should contribute to the achievement of NATO's objectives. However, evaluation of the contribution of partnerships to NATO is made increasingly difficult by the differences in their internal objectives and the wide variety of cooperation instruments and mechanisms employed, and also by the emergence of other countries interested in a relationship with NATO. Understanding, let alone administering the "greater whole" advocated above, becomes quite difficult.

1.2   Assessment of the *Status Quo*

NATO's partnership policy has been one of the Alliance's greatest success stories of the post Cold War era. Basically it has accomplished the following purposes:

- The Alliance has successfully demonstrated its willingness to extend its cooperation offers to former Cold War adversaries (as in the case of the PfP) and to countries (such as North African and Middle Eastern countries) which, because of their geographical location outside the Euro-Atlantic area, previously were not considered as potential NATO partners. NATO's Partnerships have been – besides out-of-area Operations - the most visible expression of NATO's transformation from a static, collective defence organization into a flexible security alliance.
- The Alliance has created closer practical ties with partners. Consequently it has succeeded in building confidence through cooperation and in enhancing security and stability throughout Europe and its rim lands. As regards relations with Russia and Ukraine, both partnership frameworks (the NRC and the NUC) have helped to build mutual understanding of common security between former adversaries and to reduce misperceptions in Ukraine and Russia about NATO's transformation after the Cold War.

- Third, the Partnership for Peace, which the former Secretary General of NATO, Lord Robertson, once called "one of NATO's gold dust assets"[18] and one of the "best investments ever for a future safer world"[19], has contributed significantly to the preparation of former Warsaw Pact countries for NATO membership by shaping their political order, thereby helping to reunite the European continent. For some nations, partnership is only one step towards the ultimate goal of NATO membership. The prospect of joining NATO has continued to be a powerful incentive for interested countries to tackle the challenge of reforming their armed forces, their political system and their security sector.
- Fourth, through its different Partnership Frameworks, NATO has received military support from different partner countries for its various stabilization and reconstruction missions.
- Over the past 10 years the success of NATO's partnership policy, as well as NATO's own transformation from a purely defensive alliance into a contributor to global security and stability, has generated considerable interest in distant countries regarding the establishment of closer contacts and cooperation with the Alliance.

For all the above reasons, NATO's partnership policy has mushroomed (as can be seen from the countless acronyms - EAPC, PAP, IPP, PARP, PMF, OCC, IPAP, PAP-T and PAP-DBI, to mention just a few). Two different bases for criteria emerge from an analysis of the potential problems of partnerships today: NATO's internal functioning (which includes questions of purposes and effectiveness), and Partner interests and capabilities.

1.2.1   NATO's Internal Functioning

- NATO's partnership system is becoming unmanageable because the frameworks which NATO has set up over the past 15 years are too rigid. Although established on the principle of self-differentiation, most partnership frameworks are based on geography. Partners are placed into a partnership according to their geographical location,

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[18] Lord Robertson: Farewell Speech to Council, 17.12.2003, accessible under:
http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2003/ s031217a.htm
[19] Ibid.

thereby neglecting the different contributions they are or could be making to help NATO fulfil its core missions. Current frameworks do not differentiate between countries that are security contributors (providing significant force contributions to NATO-led operations), and those that are security consumers.

- What is more, the current frameworks do not allow for flexibility and differentiation between those countries that actively contribute financially to partnership frameworks (like the Western Five[20]) and those receiving money from the Alliance via different Trust Funds and Work Programmes. The regional approach on which NATO's partnership policy is still based entails a risk of fragmentation, since partners within their respective regions have less and less in common (in terms of their political interest and financial and military resources). This can already be observed in PfP through various IPPs and IPAPs.

- With regard to NATO's expectations, the results from PfP and the Mediterranean Dialogue[21] are also suboptimal. So far neither the PfP nor the MD has stimulated the regional self-organization among the partners to enable them to contribute to regional stability and security, for the simple reason that Central Asian, Caucasian, North African and Middle Eastern partners are reluctant to cooperate with one another in the field of security and defence.[22] And most of the remaining PfP members, as well as most of the MD and ICI partners, are unwilling to pursue a reform agenda which goes beyond pure military reforms and reaches into the political sphere. But both categories - regional cooperation among partners and comprehensive reforms - are a central part of NATO's definition of partnership and NATO's expectations of its partners.[23]

- Another problem concerns the purposes of NATO's partnerships. It is not always clear what the aims of the single partnerships are. Sometimes observers have the impression that NATO is seeking

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[20] Under the term Western Five we subsume Ireland, Sweden, Finland, Austria and Switzerland.

[21] For the time being it is too early to tell whether the ICI will face the same problems as the MD and PfP.

[22] See: Gunther Hauser: *The Mediterranean Dialogue: A Transatlantic Approach*, Cologne 2005 (Working Paper Series, Chair of International Relations at the University of Cologne, No. 2).

[23] See: Eugine Tomiuc: *NATO: Ten Years On, Partnership for Peace Looks Farther East*, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 30.01.2004.

partnerships and dialogues "just for the sake of it".[24] Whilst in the past this dictum was particularly true of the Mediterranean Dialogue, after the second round of enlargement it can now also be applied to Partnership for Peace. What – from a NATO perspective – is the PfP's purpose today and how does it differ from the MD or the ICI (apart from its geographical orientation)? What does NATO hope to achieve with <u>its</u> partnerships in the future? These are questions the Alliance has to address and to find answers to, not only for itself but also for its partners.

- A specific shortcoming, which only affects the PfP, is the arguably dysfunctional Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. Although monthly meetings of the EAPC are held at ambassador level, over the past years the EAPC has turned into a ritualistic body unable to fulfil the tasks assigned to it in 1997.[25] Its membership is simply too diverse in terms of interests, capabilities and commitments to the Alliance's goals.

- There is a growing funding problem. The increased work within the MD framework, the new ICI, as well as the development of a range of PfP tools, mean that the Alliance's resources are spread ever more thinly. Thinking about the future of NATO's partnerships must also include a basic cost-efficiency calculation and an assumption that costly reforms of NATO's partnership system will not gain consensus among NATO Allies.

- A degree of ineffectiveness and incoherence can be observed in the management of partnerships within the NATO structure. There is basically no central coordination mechanism within the Alliance for managing the various activities and programmes conducted in the framework of the different partnerships. <u>Or worse, there is no central evaluation mechanism</u>. The number of actors involved is enormous (ACT, ACO, NATO-IS and IMS, NATO School, NATO Defense College, NATO-PDD, among others). Also, owing to the absence of a

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[24] Christopher Bennett: "Building Effective Partnerships", in *NATO Review,* Autumn 2003, accessible under: http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2003/issue3/english/art1.html.

[25] See Basic Document of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, Sintra 30.05.1997, accessible under: http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b970530a.htm. Para 5 states: "The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council will meet, as required, in different formats: In plenary session to address political and security-related issues of common concern and to provide information as appropriate on activities with limited participation. In a limited format between the Alliance and open-ended groups of Partners to focus on functional matters or, on an ad hoc basis, on appropriate regional matters. In such cases, the other EAPC members will be kept informed about the results."

coherent and efficient steering mechanism, duplications and frictions occur between and among the various division/branches involved in the implementation of the various partnership programmes.

1.2.2   Partner Interests and Capabilities

But it is not only the question of manageability and effectiveness (although from an internal HQ perspective it might be the most important one), which nowadays calls NATO's partnership policy into question. A closer examination of the crowded landscape of NATO's partnerships also reveals substantial problems regarding NATO's partners.

- Various partners and potential partners have very different interests. Aspirants to membership (Adriatic 3[26]), countries which have expressed their strong wish to join NATO (Ukraine, Georgia), countries which are like-minded but not interested in joining (Western Five Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Israel); countries which are unlikely to join in the foreseeable future but interested in improving their interoperability (e.g. Russia, ICI and MD partners); partners who are still working through their institution building phase (e.g. Armenia, Moldova, some of the MD members); partners who are interested in working closely with the Alliance on specific issues but do not seek interoperability (like Switzerland); countries which – given NATO's global reach – are interested in having political relations with the Alliance (China, Pakistan); countries with which NATO is in the process of developing close contacts but whose future institutionalized relations with the Alliance – for the time being – remain unclear (Afghanistan, Iraq); and the problem cases whose commitment to partnership must be questioned (Uzbekistan, Belarus). [27]
- Partnership for Peace after the second round of NATO membership enlargement in March 2004 is a case in point. The remaining PfP members are radically different in their security concerns, their interest in PfP, their domestic strength and many other issues. Differences in interest and capabilities can also be observed in the

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[26] Albania, Croatia and Macedonia.

[27] This is by no means a comprehensive list. Its purpose is to illustrate that there are many differences among partners.

Mediterranean Dialogue. While Israel wants to establish a special kind of relationship with the Alliance (focused on counter-terrorism and intelligence sharing)[28] - and Algeria[29] and Morocco[30] have shown their interest in moving forward with interoperability issues, Tunisia and Egypt are still reluctant to establish closer contacts with the Alliance. Furthermore, before the recent elections, the Palestinian Authority asked NATO for closer cooperation.

- Countries which have recently expressed their willingness and readiness to become major force contributors to NATO operations today have the least access to the Alliance and its decision-making bodies (Australia, South Korea and Japan). It seems unlikely that in the future these countries will contribute forces to NATO-led operations unless they have greater institutionalized say in the planning process.

- The fragmentation of NATO's partnerships affects the way partners perceive their importance for the Alliance. This is an issue that cannot be blithely ignored by Alliance members. NATO officials working on Alliance relations with Russia, Ukraine, Central Asia and the Caucasus are quite often faced with the problem that partners from one region or country are suspicious of NATO's cooperation with regional neighbours, especially when they think that the Alliance accords more priority to its relations with the other. This is especially true of NATO's partnerships with Ukraine and Russia. This argument can, *in nuce*, also be made with regard to NATO's relations with the MD and ICI countries.

Given all the problems that NATO's partnerships are facing today, we must ask ourselves: Does the Alliance need to rationalize its partnerships? What are the potential options for reforming NATO's partnerships in order to make them more efficient and better able to serve Alliance goals?

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[28] Thomas Papenroth: "Israel and NATO. Which Course Will Relations Take?", Berlin 2005 (Foundation for Science and Politics: *Comments,* No.41).
[29] Lyes Aflou: "NATO and Algerian navy conduct joint manoeuvres", in: *Magharebia,* 27.02.2006, accessible under:
http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en_GB/features/awi/features/2006/02/27/feature-01
[30] "Morocco first Arab state to hold NATO meeting", in: *Arabicnews,* 10.03.2006, accessible under: http://www.arabicnews.com/ansub/Daily/Day/060310/2006031013.html

But all "out of the box" thinking about the future of NATO's partnerships has to be realistic, feasible and politically enforceable. In the following pages, therefore, we do not discuss options based on the assumption that there would be consensus among NATO Allies to wipe the slate clean and start again. Nor do we believe that the addition of just one more partnership framework to the existing ones, as proposed recently by some countries,[31] would contribute to the achievement of a coherent and efficient partnership framework. Clear criteria, therefore, have to be defined, to enable the reader to comprehend our reasoning on the reform of NATO's partnerships. The next Chapter develops and defines these criteria before presenting different approaches for renewing NATO's partnerships and discussing their potential advantages and disadvantages.

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[31] See Daniel Dombey: "NATO looks beyond geography to build military ties", in: *Financial Times*, 3.04.06.

CHAPTER 2
NATO'S PARTNERSHIP CRITERIA

2.1   Internal Criteria

Internal criteria provide guidelines for the different activities conducted by an organization. As such, they support the organizational purposes and must, therefore, always be linked to these purposes. They are NATO's internal tools, enabling it to perform its tasks "correctly and better".

One fundamental principle guides the elaboration and management of partnerships: the principle of efficiency. It calls for efficient and appropriate action, tailored to stated objectives, and has four derivative aspects to it: proportionality, manageability, complementarity and coherence. Although it cannot be ruled out that an organization might also want to abide by principles other than this one, efficiency is still the minimum requirement for any organization's normal functioning.

Proportionality is directly linked to the achievement of organizational purposes. A projected action must be pertinent to and necessary for the achievement of NATO's purposes. In other words, an action has to be linked to purposes, and must be "in proportion to" them. After all, the authority to act is reserved only to those actions that enhance the collective self-defence of NATO Members and/or the maintenance of peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. In practice, the question is whether a specific action is pertinent and necessary for achieving NATO's objectives. Proportionality is not enhanced by actions which are not directly relevant to NATO's objectives.

Manageability concerns internal management of an action. To be efficient, action needs to be manageable. In addition to NATO's internal division of work, in which efficient, streamlined solutions should be the goal, manageability touches upon the substance to be managed. In partnership agreements, a level of manageability can already be achieved

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by relying on the law of treaties, from which clear contractual clauses can be extrapolated for the elaboration of different partnerships.

Complementarity is about a projected action's <u>compatibility with</u> the organization's other actions or with another organization's actions. Complementarity reduces risks of overlap and unnecessary duplication. Ideally, all the actions of an organization should be mutually supportive, and their different parts should complement one other in the achievement of the organizational purposes.

Coherence has two dimensions. First, a planned action needs to be <u>internally coherent</u> so that all its parts are consistent in their purposes. Second, a planned action also needs to be <u>externally coherent</u> with an organization's other similar actions, so that all that organization's actions are conceptually consistent with one another, and aim for the achievement of organizational purposes.

2.2   External Criteria

External criteria aim to regroup partners in a way that will enable NATO to concentrate its efforts efficiently. NATO needs to ensure that a new partnership system sustains enough interest for current as well as potential future partners. There are three criteria NATO could use when considering reform of its partnerships.

- NATO could look at its partnerships through a **geographical lens**. This is more or less the approach on which the existing partnership system is based. A region is considered not as an arbitrarily defined set of countries, but as a distinct system of states united by their geographical proximity, whose security relations are so significant as to establish the location of boundaries with other regional formations. However, quite often countries of one region differ in their military capabilities, their political orientation and their domestic situation as well as in the extent to which they are willing to cooperate with the Alliance. Furthermore, the limits of a geographical/geopolitical approach are reached when potential partners do not consider themselves as part of a security complex (e.g. Israel) or when they are the only country (or one of the few) in a security complex whose

intention is to move closer to the Alliance (e.g. Australia and Colombia)

- If these asymmetries are taken into account, a **functional orientation** of NATO's partnerships appears to be an alternative criterion. A functional orientation of NATO's partnerships would distinguish between partners according to their capabilities and their political willingness to cooperate with the Alliance. A purely functional approach would deliberately disregard the geographical position of a country, focusing only on its degree of willingness, readiness and capabilities. It would group partners into different pairs of categories, such as potential future members versus non-members, security providers versus security consumers, countries that have interoperable forces versus those that wish to be interoperable in the future, countries whose interest is focused on military to military cooperation with NATO versus countries that for the time being (or in general) are only interested in a political dialogue or the option of formalized consultations with the Alliance. A functional approach would create concentric circles of partners around the Alliance.
- However, both geographical and functional criteria ignore the ever-increasing role played by shared values in international relations and the fact that, in their cooperation with third countries, all NATO member countries attach great importance to the principles of good governance and democracy in current and potential future partner countries.[32]
- Recognition of values as an integral part of NATO's partnerships leads to a possible third benchmark, which could be labelled as the **values approach**. If values drove the debate on reform of NATO's partnerships the Alliance would have to examine the possibility of reforming its relations with PfP, MD, ICI and contact countries in light of their commitment to democratization and good governance. As a consequence NATO would establish close partnerships with those countries that are already established democracies and with countries that are judged as making steady progress in democratization and good governance. In the end this would lead to a

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[32] The clearest statement with regard to the role good governance and democracy play for the Alliance can be found in the PfP framework document.

kind of democratic security community[33] centred on the Alliance**.** If the Alliance reorganizes its partnerships on the basis of the value approach, it will have to tackle three major issues.

- How are progress or regress in good governance and democratization measured?
- How is NATO prepared to deal with countries whose commitment to values is questionable?
- Finally, how would NATO deal with a country that might be an important strategic partner or a major force contributor but gives other issues priority over democratization?

In addition to these questions to be considered by NATO, there is always the risk of a democratic security community among NATO and of partners being misperceived by other countries (which by NATO standards are not committed to democratization and good governance) as an "anti-Alliance" (against China or against Islam).

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[33] See: Daniel Fried (US Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs): *Putting Transatlantic Power to Work for Freedom*, Address to the American Enterprise Institute Washington, DC 14.12.2005, accessible under http://nato.usmission.gov/News/Fried_Dec1405.htm. Fried calls this "global democratic security community". This idea was aired for the first time by the then U.S. PermRep to NATO, Ambassador Nicholas Burns, in his article **"**Expanding the Alliance of Democracies", *Washington Post*, 29.03.2004.

CHAPTER 3
PARTNERSHIP APPROACHES

3.1 Tailored Partnerships – Geography Rationalized

3.1.1 Introduction

The existing partnership framework is already relatively tailored, since self-differentiation is one of the guiding principles of each partnership programme. Consequently, the scope and quality of cooperation have already been based on an individual decision by each partner. In PfP, individual partnership programmes (IPPs) and individual partnership action plans (IPAPs) have been tailored to fit individual partners' needs. Russia and Ukraine have their own partnership structures. Similarly, in MD and ICI, the participation of partners as part of different tools and mechanisms borrowed from the PfP has been based on a tailor-made package.

In Tailored Partnership, partnerships would form a single conceptual architecture (see table 1 below). This tool consists of all existing arrangements, plus new ones, linked by a sole aim: better achievement of NATO's objectives. This aim would be achieved through a centralizing instrument (IPAP). Different partnerships with their geographical orientation, however artificial,[34] would continue to exist. The EAPC's role would be developed either as an evaluative body, whose membership embraces the totality of the partnership, or as a policy council, whose composition depends on the subject being discussed. Tailored Partnership constitutes an enhancement of current partnership policies and frameworks and can be illustrated as follows:

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[34] The difficulties in defining a region have already been discussed in the UN connection. There is absolutely no precise concept for this, and definitions tend to be arbitrary and subjective. See for instance Yakemtchouk, R., *L´ONU. La sécurité régionale et le problème du régionalisme*, Paris (Pedone) 1955, p. 147 et seq.

Table 1. Tailored Partnership –approach

EAPC role – evaluative body (all) or policy council (functionality)
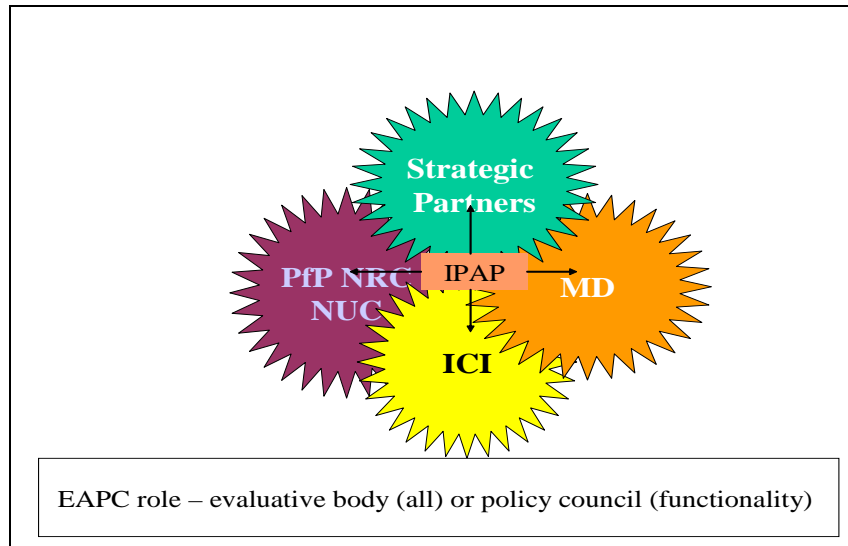
3.1.2   The Basic Idea: Structural Reform

This approach is based on a more concrete and coherent institutionalized application of the same tools and mechanisms to all partnership programmes. MD and ICI are already on this path, since they resort to some of the PfP tools and mechanisms, to varying degrees. But in a Tailored Partnership, PfP tools and mechanisms are available to all other existing and future partnerships. Existing PfP instruments are not changed, but their applicability, or dimension, is. Self-differentiation continues to be the guiding principle. <u>The aim is rationalization through extended and coherent use of tools and mechanisms as part of an overarching framework.</u>

Rationalization would be achieved via a centralizing instrument, such as the concept of a renewed IPAP. An IPAP is an overarching instrument for tailored programmes. NATO and partners already have experience of its use and management. An IPAP is made with each NATO partner, and through an IPAP a partner chooses the tools and mechanisms it wants to abide by. An IPAP is revised periodically, to

reflect necessary changes in partnerships. Limits for a country-specific IPAP flow from that partnership's inherent objectives, which the partner country helps to formulate.

Since the political aims of different partnerships would not be changed, original PfP partners would constitute a different category. This is because these countries have signed the PfP Framework Document, which contains two specific undertakings: the right to consultations with NATO in the event of the security of a partner being threatened, and a commitment to democratic values. The other partnerships do not, at least at present, contain such elements. Nor do they have any prospects of Membership Action Plans (MAP), which are made solely with PfP countries. Whether other partnerships should be developed to include elements of democracy, security consultations and potential membership is another question altogether. Leaving aside the membership issue, one could even speculate on the likelihood of such a rapprochement with partners who strive for ever-closer military cooperation with NATO and abide by democratic values (e.g. like-minded countries). Should this rapprochement be achieved, there would be no obstacles to the non-discriminatory application of one centralized instrument to all partnerships.

The role of existing partnership organs also needs to be taken into account. The NRC and NUC are relatively functioning structures, but the luxury of country-specific organs can most likely not be extended further. The only multilateral body, the EAPC, is more problematic in this model.

3.1.3   Tailored Partnership Approach against Criteria

The evaluation of partnership organs is made on the basis of the different criteria enumerated above.

An aspect of functionality is introduced through practical work. As a result, even if different PfP tools are not explicitly divided on a functional basis, they do in fact create such functional areas of cooperation. For instance, partners work under the Operational Capability Concept (OCC), Partnership for Peace Planning and Review Process (PARP) and Political-Military Framework (PMF) for the purposes of interoperability, which is a functional aim, not a geographical one.

Similarly, they work under the Civil Emergency Planning (CEP), the Training and Education Enhancement Programme (TEEP), the Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building (PAP-DIB), the Partnership Action Plan on Terrorism (PAP-T) and so forth, to enhance common functional aims: civil emergency planning, training and education, defence reform, combat against terrorism. These are all functional aims. Their indiscriminate use in Tailored Partnership strengthens functionality. Furthermore, potential new partnerships, in addition to existing partnerships, with a variety of different countries would scarcely fit any geographical definition. In this perspective, the functionality strand will be reinforced in the future by the admission of new partners in different fields of functional cooperation.

Efficiency is enhanced by the present model, which allows a degree of rationalization through a single instrument (IPAPs). Tailored Partnership forms a single conceptual architecture. The immediate consequence of the simplified whole is that the partnership arrangement, with its different sub-programmes, is easier to conceive, evaluate and develop for more effective achievement of NATO's objectives than the present patchwork of various partnership programmes. Also, evaluation of a programme's pertinence and necessity with respect to its proportionality becomes easier.

From the partners' viewpoint, rationalization needs to guarantee efficiency even if a colourful variety of partners is allowed to participate indiscriminately in functional work. It is evident that some partners are more advanced than others. But the idea of partnerships is cooperation, not solo acts, and the success of work is measured as a totality of the success of partners participating in work under an overarching framework. The leadership of the more advanced partners can significantly contribute to building up the capacity of less advanced partners. And to sustain interest, NATO can resort to attractive "carrots", like access to the NRF.

Manageability of Tailored Partnership is a more difficult question, leading, at worst, to a decentralized approach in which the totality of partnerships would be administered on a fragmented, country-by-country basis. But administering partnerships on the basis of functionality is bound to lead to a degree of internal efficiency. New

partnerships should be developed with an eye toward manageability, given likely grounds for an approach based on functionality instead of geography.

The present approach offers an opportunity to enhance complementarity and coherence by bringing practical work under the same administrative umbrella. Tailored Partnerships create a more coherent architecture with fewer possibilities for overlap and duplication. The common aim, the achievement of organizational purposes, becomes somewhat easier to perceive. But failure to synchronize the political aims of the different partnership programmes can undermine complementarity and coherence.

The role of the EAPC is developed with the aim of enhancing efficiency. If the use of PfP tools is open to all partners, the contours of PfP become shaded, along with the EAPC. An enlarged EAPC is not a likely option in its present format (46 + 7 + 4 + an uncertain number of functional partners), unless it remains a purely evaluative body for the entirety of partnerships. Such a function is admittedly of key importance for monitoring the performance of the various partnerships and assessing to what extent they are actually meeting NATO's objectives. Periodic evaluation is essential for maintaining strong partnership, as it is for any other effective organizational function. The EAPC, enlarged to cover the entirety of NATO's partnerships, could perform this key role.

If the EAPC is to be used as a policy council, then instead of being responsible for evaluation it needs to operate on a realistic and responsive basis, in which fixed geographical definitions rarely fit well. Admittedly, a true policy council takes into account concerns about a specific country, region and organizations, but it operates on the basis of "what is being done", which equals functionality. Instead of the EAPC's present mandate for each and every security issue, these issues would be explicitly defined on the basis of functionality (e.g. interoperability /reform / political dialogue and so forth). A more limited working composition is necessary, separate from the entirety of NATO countries and partners, in which the countries involved in a specific issue would participate. It is noteworthy that EAPC is already well equipped to do this, since its founding document provides for the possibility of flexible and very different combinations.

<u>Geography</u> continues to play a role in this approach, since existing partnership programmes will continue to guide the practical use of partnership tools and mechanisms. The individual objectives are still based on the geographical concept of specific regions forming a whole. Conservation of the geographical aspect in this model allows progressive rationalization of existing structures - without totally abandoning them. Geography's utility, functionality and role can be rethought and re-modelled over time on the basis of experience.

Tailored Partnership would be a solution midway between geography and functionality. It would perceive partnerships as a single conceptual whole, whose aim is directly linked to NATO's objectives. Programme-specific political objectives would still continue to guide the use of partnership tools, but functionality is progressively given a stronger role. Functional tasks would create a direct linkage to NATO and its objectives. Whether this rationalization would produce clear advantages would depend on how the reform is carried out in practice. Criteria would provide a solid starting point for reform. If positive, experiences gained as a result of the approach would act as an incentive for deeper reform. Progressively, there might also be scope for streamlining politically all partnerships into one, with an emphasis on functionality. This deeper reform will be examined in the approach described in the following Section.

3.2   The Functional Approach

3.2.1   The Basic Idea: Functionality

Another way of renewing NATO's partnerships would be to create a number of issue-based forums for practical military cooperation, training and education as well as political dialogue. In such an approach the issue areas would cover, for example, interoperability and operational cooperation, SSR, training and education and political dialogue.

- On the basis of self-differentiation, and according to their political willingness and their military capabilities, countries would decide in which forum they would like to participate. NATO should then sign with the participating partners a Framework Document for each issue area. In such a document the political criteria of the partnerships

would become clearly defined, since they are related to progress via a system of continuous evaluation. A country that has achieved all the benchmarks set forth in a specific Framework Document would have the right, if it so wished, and if NATO members agreed, to move ahead with its cooperation and enter another functional area of cooperation with the Alliance. Such a system of political criteria would ensure that the functional model of NATO's partnerships is permeable, and would allow partner countries to move from one cooperation forum to another and closer to NATO.

- In a purely functional approach, relative proximity to NATO would be determined by a country's willingness to subscribe to NATO's political and military goals as outlined in the Strategic Concept of 1999 and subsequent similar documents, and by its readiness to contribute a significant number of forces to NATO-led operations.[35]
- Additionally, some partner countries should be offered the chance to commit units to the NRF. Therefore, the OCC concept of developing a pool of forces certified up to the level needed to contribute to the NRF should be applied and further developed.[36] Additionally, the Framework Document in this functional circle should also include a reference to the importance of democratic values as the one basic principle for this cooperation, as well as the obligation for the Alliance to provide security consultation for non-NATO members similar to paragraph 8 of the PfP Framework Document[37].
- Those countries that accept the offer from NATO to commit troops to the NRF would then be NATO's closest partners (in addition to MAP countries). We assume that these will most likely be Contact

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[35] Major General Bornemann (Assistant Director Plans and Policy Division IMS, NATO HQ) recently stated that NATO has enough combat troops. What is lacking is sufficient support for NATO troops and capabilities which enable NATO troops in missions to fulfil their tasks in the event that only limited support in the area of engagement is available. This might be an area for non-NATO NRF countries to become engaged. See Jürgen Bornemann: *Die NATO auf dem Weg zum Gipfel in Riga – ein Werkstattbericht aus militärischer Sicht*, speech delivered at the German Council on Foreign Affairs in Berlin, 23.02.06, pp.7-8. Australia, for example, has recently announced that it will acquire up to four new Boeing C-17 military transport aircraft to boost the rapid deployment capabilities of its armed forces. See: Agence France Press, 3.03.2006. These are assets which could be assigned as an Australian contribution to the NRF.
[36] See *NATO Partnership for Peace: Appendix D – Operational Capabilities Concept for NATO-led PfP Operations*, accessible under: http://www.nato.int/pfp/docu/d990615e.htm.
[37] *Partnership for Peace Framework*, Document approved by the North Atlantic Council, 11 January 1994, par. 8. According to Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty, "The Parties will consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened".

Countries[38] and the Western Five. Consequently, NATO would implicitly create a Community of Democratic States (CDS) comprising the Alliance and the countries participating at the higher end of the security spectrum, without putting the values approach too visibly in the front line and thereby running the risk of creating misperceptions about NATO's policies and intentions. If the entry hurdle for the inner circle consisted of a combination of capability and value criteria, the Community of Democratic States would emerge organically and would not have to be artificially created[39].

- Training and education would become a major activity for the Alliance in this model. Since most of its partners do not possess the necessary military capabilities to certify forces assigned to the NRF and still fall far short of democratic standards, winning hearts and minds will become a major issue. Resources and responsibilities for a training and education partnership forum will need to be reallocated and increased. Both strategic commands have a role to play here, and stronger emphasis should be placed on Mobile Training and Education Teams from the NATO School (on a tactical level of education) and the NATO Defense College (on the strategic level of education) as well as Public Diplomacy.[40] If NATO member countries were willing to spend more money on training and education, the return on this investment could be a more stable security environment for the Alliance and its member states. Helping other countries to build up complementary armed forces could contribute in the long run to a more equal share of the burden of maintaining global security.

- A purely functional approach to partnerships would make the regional dimension of NATO's partnerships dispensable, because future cooperation would be clustered around issue areas on the basis of self-differentiation. Instead of continuing with the various regional

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[38] However some of them, notably Japan, have first to overcome some constitutional hurdles. See Voice of America news: *Japan Mulls Constitutional Reform*, 15.02.06 and the speech given by Yasuhisa Shiozaki (Senior Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs) on the occasion of the 42nd Munich Conference on Security Policy 5.02.06, accessible under
http://www.securityconference.de/konferenzen/rede.php?menu_2006=&menu_konferenzen=&sprache=en&id= 162&.
[39] See James Traub: "The Un-U.N.", *New York Times Sunday Magazine*, 11.09.05.
[40] The idea of creating more training centres in Partner countries (especially in Middle Eastern or African countries) seems premature today, since NATO would have to be responsible for the fortification of these facilities in order to deter terrorist groups from attacking them. As long as NATO would need to spend more money on protection than on training we think that existing facilities should be used in order to pursue training and education activities.

dialogue and partnership frameworks for decision making, NATO would replace them all with multilateral meetings between the NAC and the countries belonging to one specific forum (e.g. NAC + non-NATO NRF contributors; NAC + countries who participate in training and education; NAC + countries in a political dialogue etc.). Countries participating in NAC + "formation" would have better access to planning and policy development of "their" issue area. The EAPC could be transformed into an annual ministerial meeting where the NAC and all the countries participating in functional partnership forums would convene to discuss political issues concerning the development of NATO's partnership frameworks.

In the end a functional approach would result in a system of concentric circles based on self-differentiation, inclusiveness and permeability. In such a model, the degree of closeness to NATO would be determined by geographical proximity but by the acceptance of security responsibilities, as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Functional approach
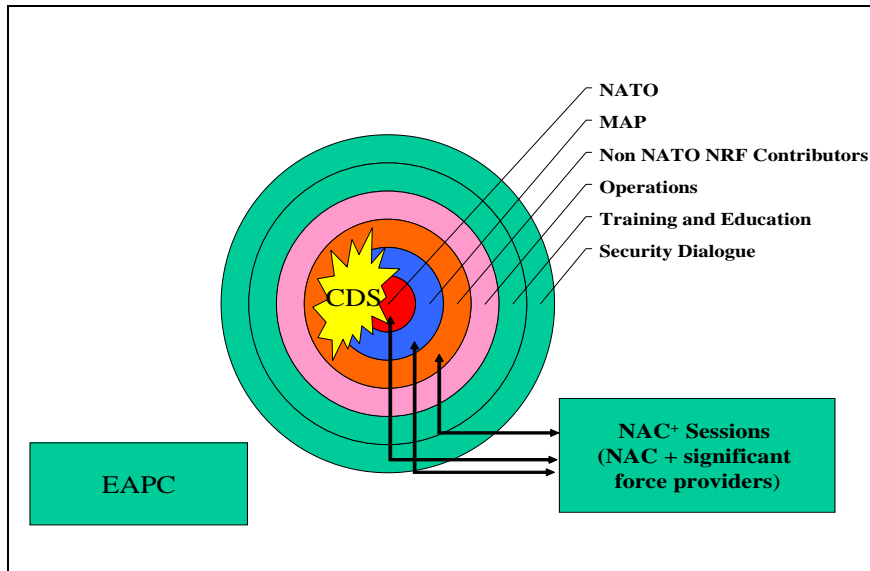
3.2.2 Functional Approach against Criteria

When measured against the criteria presented in Chapter 2 of this study, a purely functional approach to NATO's partnerships would offer a number of advantages.

- The functional approach would meet the benchmark of efficiency. By rationalizing partnerships and regrouping partners according to their capabilities and political willingness, NATO would enhance its objectives by bringing like-minded countries with sophisticated military capabilities closer to the Alliance, whilst continuing its cooperation with other partners by focusing on training and education, the fight against terrorism, capability building and so forth.
- In this concentric circle approach the core of partnerships (NATO + force contributors and NATO + MAP countries) would constitute a community of states ready to act on a global scale when NATO and partner interests so demand, while the partnerships NATO continues to maintain with other countries would serve to enhance security in the broad sense. NATO would therefore be able to increase its efficiency by concentrating its efforts on those programmes which make the most difference and contribute most to NATO's interests, and at the same time would be able to sustain enough interest in partnership among those who are not drawn to the Alliance by the lure of membership or military cooperation at the high end of the spectrum. Additionally, cooperation with countries which do not belong to a specific region (Afghanistan, Iraq) could be enhanced by focusing on functionality.
- Furthermore, the establishment of clear benchmarks in the individual Framework Documents as well as the principle of permeability between "adjacent" forums would avoid the misperception that there are two classes of NATO partners, and that the Alliance is dividing them into first class partners (countries with a MAP and force contributors, and those who wish to enter the inner circles of the model) and second class partners (those who wish to cooperate with the Alliance but have no intention of drawing too close to NATO). On the basis of the principle of self-differentiation, the countries themselves could choose the extent and quality of cooperation with

NATO. It is very likely that this would result in strengthened Partnerships, because partner interests would be well accommodated.

- Manageability of functional partnerships is a difficult problem to address. The application of the functional model by the Alliance would probably require reform of the NATO Headquarters divisions that deal with different partnerships and cooperation. In order to administer the functional partnerships accordingly, the Alliance would need to set up a steering mechanism for all functional circles, whilst each functional circle needs to have its own management structure. The NAC should be tasked to monitor all circles and act as the political steering body of NATO's partnerships, but it could only take over this new role if it were relieved of routine day to day administration and had appropriate support from both the IS and the IMS, which in this approach would be in charge of managing the functional cooperation forums within their field of expertise.
- Although it has much to commend it, the functional approach to NATO's partnerships is incomplete, since it eliminates the geographical dimension. A purely functional approach towards NATO's partnerships would undermine NATO's plan to transform regional dynamics. Indeed, the objective of achieving regional stability through dialogue and partnerships could be jeopardized if NATO were to pursue a purely functional approach to future partnerships, implicitly neglecting regional security issues. It is even conceivable that regional dynamics could be adversely affected by a functional partnership framework if countries of the same region found themselves in different circles. Regional animosities could develop among these countries, potentially hampering regional cooperation in general. Moreover, it must be recognized that some security issues in the Caucasus are distinct from those in Central Asia, and some security issues in the Mediterranean are distinct from those in the Persian Gulf. A purely functional approach, therefore, would be unable to address these issues together with partners from the same region or sub region.
- Additionally, a purely functional approach would deprive NATO of the chance to establish cooperative multilateral relations with regions that are presently not the focus of NATO's attention (e.g. South East Asia, Pacific, North East Asia), but which could become more important for Euro-Atlantic security in the future.

- Another key challenge in a functional renewal of NATO's partnerships concerns the role that other international and regional organizations would have. NATO attaches great importance to its relations with those organizations,[41] and therefore they should have a place within the NATO partnership structure which is not completely separated from the functional partnerships, in order to reinforce them and create synergistic effects between them.

If NATO wishes to address regional cooperation and to create synergies between the functional approach to partnerships and the evolution of its partnerships with other international and regional organizations, it should combine the functional model with a regional - and probably also an organizational - approach.

## 3.3   The Mixed Approach for Partnerships

3.3.1   The Basic Idea: Combination

In this approach we suggest that NATO complement its functional partnership framework with a) a regional strand and b) an organizational strand.

In our view, NATO should not eliminate the multilateral dimension of its current partnerships but rather aim to limit and thereby strengthen it. This limitation would maintain NATO's regional focus, but with a strictly political, discourse-oriented, dimension. The future aim of the regional dialogues would then be to discuss regional security issues with current partners in the different existing partnership frameworks.[42] The second aim of the multilateral dimension would be to maintain discussion forums among countries that belong geographically to the same region but might have different cooperative relations with NATO in the functional strand of the partnership framework. By keeping the regional focus as well, NATO would avoid the potentially negative repercussions that a purely functional partnership framework might have on regional cooperation.

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[41] See Jaap de Hoop Scheffer: *A New NATO*, Speech at the Norwegian Atlantic Committee, Oslo 3.03.2006, accessible under: http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2006/s060303a.htm
[42] With the exception of the EAPC, which will be discussed later.

Table 3. Mixed Partnership –Approach I
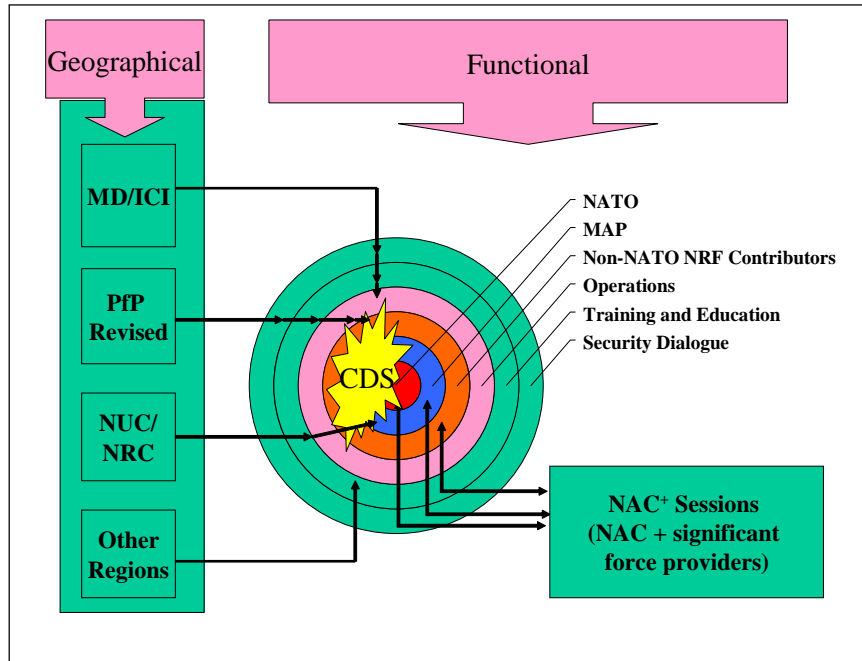
*Strategic Partners and Western Five participate in the functional framework
**The smaller arrows from the geographical to the functional strand indicate potential participation of individual partners in functional cooperation

But even in this approach NATO's regional dimension needs a strategic face lift. Firstly, meetings of countries that belong to one region but to different sub-regions should be possible upon request. There is no justification for not holding joint meetings between NATO, the MD and the ICI countries, since some regional security issues affect both the MD and the ICI partners. By the same token NATO should consider holding joint sessions of the NRC and the NUC. Meetings of this kind could significantly contribute to confidence building between Ukraine and Russia, whose relations – as we have seen in the past – are not free of tension, especially when the issue of Ukraine's potential accession to NATO is on the table.

There is also a need for reform within PfP and the EAPC. One approach would be to reduce the number of partners within PfP and the EAPC to the five Central Asian and three Caucasian partners and to divide them into two sub-regional groups (NATO-Central Asia and NATO-Caucasus). As with the joint MD-ICI-NATO meetings, joint meetings between the Alliance and all remaining partners (NATO + Central Asia + Caucasus) should be possible.

The reform of NATO's regional approach to partnerships potentially paves the way for new geographically oriented partnerships as well. In such a mixed approach the creation of regional partnership forums for the Black Sea[43] or Sub-Saharan Africa[44], or in the future for some other regions, could logically be added to the geographical strand of NATO's renewed partnership framework.

In such a mixed approach the principle of self-differentiation applies not only to the functional strand, but also to the geographical pillar of NATO's partnership framework. Partner countries should be allowed, if they so wish, to participate only in the geographical pillar, without being part of one of the functional circles. Those that express the wish to do so would need to meet the criteria set out in the corresponding functional Framework Document. Given the current members of NATO's geographical partnerships, it is expected that all members of the various geographical frameworks would participate in one or the other functional circle. However, the possibility that partner countries' interest in NATO might change in the future cannot be ruled out and should be taken into consideration. The application of the principle of self-differentiation would give NATO the opportunity to maintain or even to establish contacts and dialogue with "problematic partners" via the multilateral venues. It would offer the chance of expanding membership within the geographical frameworks to countries which are important for regional

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[43] See: Kurt Volker (US Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs, Department of State): *Remarks* at Howard University's Model NATO Conference, Washington D.C, 23.02.06, p. 7, accessible under: http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/2006/62073.htm. For an older but more analytical plea see: Ronald D. Asmus / Bruce P. Jackson: "The Black Sea and the Frontiers of Freedom", in: *Policy Review Online*, June 2004, accessible under:
http://www.policyreview.org/jun04/asmus.html.

[44] See: Stefan Mair: *Terrorism and Africa. On the Danger of Further Attacks in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Berlin, 2003 (Foundation for Science and Politics).

security and stability but, owing to their political regime, are "less desirable partners" in the functional strand. The admittance of self-differentiation between the functional strand and the geographical strand would not, as some might argue, lead to a loss of coherence between the two strands, since the functional strand is focused on <u>common action</u> and the geographical strand is dedicated to <u>political dialogue</u> on regional security issues.

3.3.2 "Bringing IGOs and NGOs in"

The renewal of NATO´s partnerships along a regional and functional strand would be incomplete if it did not encompass what is considered by some as one of the most demanding tasks for NATO's partnerships in the future: NATO´s relations with other regional and international organizations (commonly termed intergovernmental organizations, hereafter IGOs). Whilst this paper does not deal with the contents of NATO's partnerships with other organizations, and the authors are fully aware that it might be politically premature to talk about the inclusion of NATO's institutional relations into a common partnership architecture, this subsection shows how these relations could fit into an overall partnership architecture.

In addition to the functional and the geographical strands, NATO should think about adding a third strand for its partnerships with other regional and international organizations, and with major international non-governmental organizations. As in the geographical strand of the approach, NATO would continue working with the EU, the UN and the OSCE, and in the future would also work with the GCC, the AU and other organizations, under the organizational partnership pillar of its partnership architecture.

The extension of this cooperation to Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) could help the Alliance meet the requirements laid down by the Effects Based Approach to Operations (EBAO).[45] If operations in the future are to be conceived and planned in a systems framework that considers the full range of direct, indirect, and cascading

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[45] See: Paul Davis: *Effects-Based Operations (EBAO): A Grand Challenge for the Analytical Community*, Santa Monica, 2001(RAND Corporation).

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effects — effects that may, with different degrees of probability, be achieved by the application of military, diplomatic, psychological, and economic instruments, NATO should think more rigorously about how to include NGOs at an early and preferably pre-combat stage in its planning process. Moreover, institutionalized cooperation between NATO and NGOs could facilitate what promises to be one of the key functions of the Alliance in the future: the stabilization and reconstruction of war-torn societies.[46]

A renewed NATO partnership framework would be based on three strands: one functional, one geographical, and one organizational, as shown in the table below.

Table 4. Mixed Partnership –Approach II
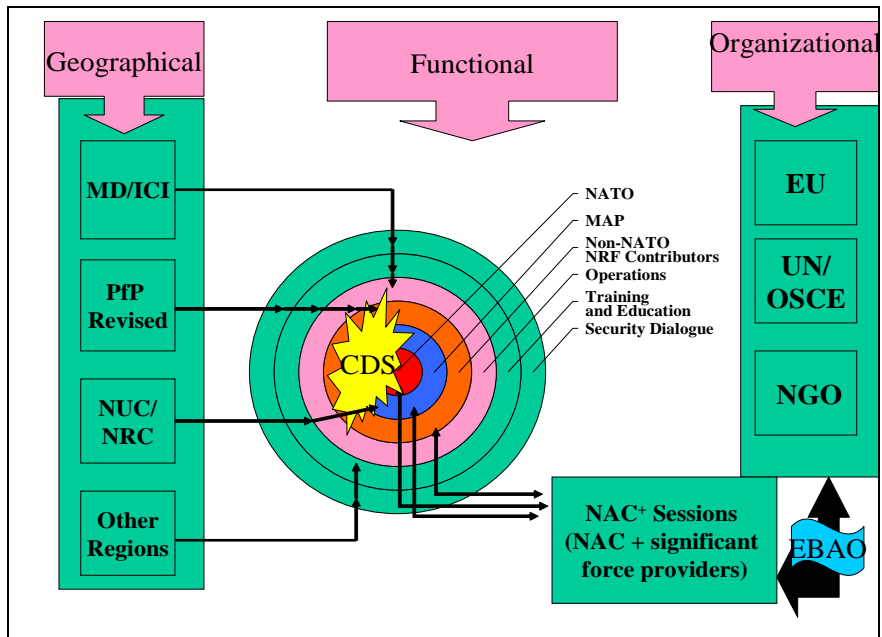
*Strategic Partners and Western Five participate in the functional framework
**The smaller arrows from the geographical to the functional strand indicate potential participation of individual partners in functional cooperation

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[46] Hans Binnendijk and Richard Kugler; "Needed: a NATO Stabilization and Reconstruction Force", *Defense Horizons*, No. 45, Washington D.C., 2004.

3.3.3   Mixed Partnership against Criteria

When evaluated against internal and external benchmarks the mixed approach would offer NATO a number of advantages in addition to those of the purely functional approach outlined in Section 3.2.

- NATO would have one partnership framework with three different but interconnected strands. All the various forms of partnerships would fit into the same coherent and logical architecture, and therefore synergistic effects between the three different strands would become possible.
- The architecture would offer a high degree of flexibility for both NATO and its potential partners. The principle of self-differentiation would apply not only to the functional strand but also to the relationship between the functional and the geographical strands. It would allow countries to maintain contacts with NATO via multilateral dialogue forums without being obliged to cooperate with the Alliance in a functional area. However, NATO's cooperation with countries in the various functional circles would not be hampered by other partners who are reluctant to become engaged with the Alliance on functional issues.
- A three-pronged partnership structure would contribute to NATO's partnership goals more effectively than a purely functional or a tailored approach, since it would combine the strengths of having partners for common operations (functional), preparing partners for future military cooperation (functional), strengthening cooperation with international and non-governmental organizations in order to share the burden of regional and global security (organizational), and discussing regional security issues with regional actors (geographical, organizational), as well as encouraging regional cooperation (geographical, organizational).
- To sum up: Given NATO's strategic partnership goals of building security through dialogue and cooperation, training partners for common operations and acting with partners in operations, the three-pronged partnership approach would offer the Alliance the appropriate framework to pursue each of these goals effectively and efficiently without running the risk of friction between the different partnership strands. If each of the three strands were kept focused in terms of responsibilities, tasks and purposes, there would be an opportunity to

pursue complementarity and common activities across the three strands.

But this partnership architecture could only be managed effectively if responsibilities were clearly allocated. In order to make the proposed approach work, a steering institution should oversee cooperation in the different strands of the partnership framework, evaluate progress or regress in the single activities, and develop clear political guidance on how to develop partnerships further. The NAC, provided it reclaims its political role, seems best able to fulfil these tasks.

Thus it seems that this model, measured against external and internal criteria, has the most potential to meet all the benchmarks.

- The model is at the same time functional, geographical and implicitly value-driven.
- It would increase NATO's ability to meet its strategic goals by creating a community of states which is willing, able and ready to act whenever military action is deemed necessary, by preparing and helping others who would like closer links with NATO (via security sector reform or training and education) and by maintaining cooperation with partners that only have an interest in a political dialogue with the Alliance.
- The model also applies the principle of internal efficiency, since responsibilities are clearly allocated and continuously evaluated, and each strand of the partnership architecture has a specific and distinct focus. In this way, coherence and complementarity are also ensured.
- With the NAC as the steering body of the whole framework, it is possible to create synergistic effects between the three strands of NATO's renewed partnerships.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Partnerships retain their importance for NATO. However, they should be adapted to the new strategic environment. Further development is required if current and future partner countries and Alliance members are to remain constructively engaged. NATO's upcoming summit in Riga is an opportunity for Alliance members to begin a fundamental renewal of NATO's partnerships.

This paper offers a long term vision for NATO's partnerships based on the principle of supporting NATO in the fulfilment of its purposes. A renewed partnership framework must be efficient and manageable in its approach and should include aspects of functionality and geography in its architecture. It should also be able to maintain the interests of current partners, while at the same time reaching out to new ones who have expressed their interest in developing closer cooperation with the Alliance.

A mixed approach meets all of these criteria and creates a logical and coherent overarching framework for NATO's partnerships which is flexible for the Alliance as well as its partners. Additionally, it has the potential to create synergies between the functional, the geographical and – if adopted – the organizational strands of NATO's partnerships. Furthermore, the proposed approach offers NATO the chance to add further forms of cooperation to each strand in a logical and coherent manner.

The Riga summit will be a timely opportunity to discuss thoroughly the reform of NATO's partnerships at Alliance Heads of State and Government level, for the purpose of reaching an Allied agreement on the matter. Only thereafter can the Alliance proceed to announce that NATO will start work on practical implementation and on the changes to be made in the current system, with a view to introducing a renewed partnership framework in the near future that is better suited to NATO's future needs.

The next steps in the long term vision for partnerships presented in this paper ought to include all current and potential partners at an early stage in the consultation process. This can be done either through a special NAC + "all partners" meeting where the Alliance presents and discusses with its partners the new partnership framework, or via several meetings within the existing partnership frameworks. The advantage of the first option would be that NATO could invite the Contact Countries to attend this meeting and to express their ideas on their future relations with the Alliance. An early consultation process would have the additional advantage that partners would not consider NATO's announcement of a renewal of its partnerships as a *fait accompli.* The renewal of NATO's partnerships can only take place on a basis of joint ownership.

Depending on the success and speed of the reform, by 2008 NATO could announce the introduction of the implementation of its new partnership framework, thereby bringing to an end its political transformation from a static, collective defence organization into a flexible security alliance with a potential for global reach.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACO	Allied Command Operations
ACT	Allied Command Transformation
AU	African Union
CDS	Community of Democratic States
CEP	Civil Emergency Planning
EBAO	Effects Based Approach to Operations
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
EU	European Union
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
ICI	Istanbul Cooperation Initiative
IGO	Inter Governmental Organization
IMS	International Military Staff
IPAP	Individual Partnership Action Plan
IPP	Individual Partnership Programme
IS	International Staff
MAP	Membership Action Plan
MD	Mediterranean Dialogue
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NRC	NATO Russia Council
NRF	NATO Response Force
NUC	NATO Ukraine Commission
OCC	Operational Capability Concept
OSCE	Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe
PARP	Planning and Review Process
PMF	Political Military Framework
PAP	Partnership Action Plan
PDD	Public Diplomacy Division

PfP	Partnership for Peace
PAP-T	Partnership Action Plan on Terrorism
PAP-DIB	Partnership Action Plan on Defense Institution Building
TEEP	Training and Education Enhancement Programme
UN	United Nations
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction