

## UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

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NATO: Chicago and Beyond

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Chairman Kerry, Ranking Member Lugar, Members of the Committee, I am honored to speak at your hearing on the upcoming meeting of NATO heads of state in Chicago on May 20<sup>th</sup>.

As a former Senate staffer, who served this Committee and prior to that the late Senator William V. Roth, it is a real pleasure to return to these halls. It makes me recall the strong, bipartisan leadership this committee brought to the effort to extend NATO membership to the democracies of Central Europe. Those were historic decisions. They strengthened the Alliance and transatlantic security.

The Chicago Summit will be important in large part because of the context in which it takes place. That context includes:

- A war in Afghanistan from which both the US and Europe appear to be disengaging;
- Economic crises on both sides of the Atlantic that have atrophied European defense capabilities;
- A qualified success in Libya that nonetheless raised questions about US commitment to NATO and highlighted European defense shortfalls; and,
- The new U.S. defense guidance that features a pivot to Asia and reduction in American forces stationed in Europe.

Some have asserted that the NATO meeting in Chicago should be an “implementation summit” that focuses on Afghanistan and reviews Alliance progress under its new Strategic Concept promulgated in 2010. In the light of the above, that will be insufficient. That would reinforce a sense of NATO’s growing irrelevance and further a process of transatlantic decoupling.

**If the Chicago summit is to have one principal, overarching purpose, it should be to provide credible reaffirmation of the Transatlantic Bargain – one in which the United States demonstrates commitment to Europe’s regional security interests and our European allies demonstrate that they stand ready to address global challenges to transatlantic security.**

### **Why is NATO Relevant to today?**

Today, the transatlantic community lacks consensus over how to address the unprecedented dilemmas inherent in global connectivity and interdependence. Advances in transportation and the ongoing revolution in communications have facilitated the spread of prosperity, respect for human rights, democratic principles of governance, among other positive attributes of modernity. However, these benefits have also been accompanied by challenges, including transnational threats, socio-political upheavals, and a decentralization of global power.

Transnational Threats: Among the most urgent of these threats has been the proliferation of technologies pertaining to weapons of mass destruction, missiles and other means than can be used to terrorize, if not severely damage, societies. These threats have been accompanied by the emergence of powerful and sometimes dangerous non-state actors, the latter including criminal and terrorist organizations whose ideological and operational reach span across continents.

The Global Political Awakening: The revolution in communications, including global television, the Internet, and cell phones, now links previously isolated populations, exposing them to each other's economies and cultures, politics, standards of living and ideologies. The result has been recent events in Iran, Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Iran, and Russia -- referred to as a "global political awakening" by Zbigniew Brzezinski [full disclosure- he is my father<sup>1</sup>] and it is a a double-edged sword.

It can bring down dictators, end corrupt autocracies, and create opportunities for democracy, reform and accountability in government. It can also be an impatient force, one prone to violence especially when it is driven primarily by sentiments that flow from inequity and injustice. As demonstrated in Russia and the Middle East, this political awakening often generates social upheaval in the absence of leadership, a clear platform or ideology. In these cases, especially if events take a destructive turn, this upheaval can leave societies vulnerable to organized groups intent on leveraging dangerous ideologies.

The Rise of the Rest and the Dispersal of Power: What some have called the third strategic revolution involves a profound shift in the global balance of power.<sup>2</sup> If 1991 marked a brief unipolar moment featuring a globally preeminent United States, globalization has contributed to the emergence of a more complex constellation of actors with global reach and ambitions. These include China, India,

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<sup>1</sup> Brzezinski, Zbigniew, Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power. Basic Books, 2012. This work also influenced the section on the dispersal of global power.

<sup>2</sup> For insight into the emerging global balance of power and its ramifications see: Brzezinski, Zbigniew, Strategic Vision and Zakaria, Fareed, The Post American World: 2.0. W.W. Norton & Company, 2011.

Brazil, Russia, and could well include others in the future.

The implications of these three separate but related dynamics for the transatlantic community are both urgent and profound. Today's world is one where the United States, even in collusion with Europe, is no longer as predominant as it was in the past. The rise of new powers has resulted in a dispersion of global power away from the West and to other regions of world.

The emergence of new powers with regional, if not global, aspirations is often accompanied by territorial claims, historic grudges, and economic demands that can drive geopolitical tension, competition and collision. These increase the likelihood of regional conflicts. They make consensual decision-making more difficult, and they yield a world that is more volatile and unpredictable.

Managing this new global order and its proclivity to uncertainty, if not violence, is the defining challenge of our time. Its effective management will require:

- Economic resources that can be readily mobilized to foster economic development, if not to stave-off, economic crisis consequent to upheavals;
- Military capabilities that are expeditious and can be readily integrated with civilian efforts, including those fostering economic and political development;
- Political legitimacy that is optimized through multilateral versus unilateral action.

It is due to these requirements that the transatlantic community and its key institutions, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU), have grown in importance. Indeed, due to the growing complexity and turbulence of the post-Cold War era, the democracies of North America and Europe need each other more rather than less. Their respective ability to shape the world order is diluted by divergence and strengthened through collective action.

The transatlantic community brings to the table powerful capacities in each of these three dimensions. Europe and North America constitute the world's most important economic partnership, and that will remain the case for the foreseeable future. Today, the EU and U.S. account for 54% of world gross domestic product (GDP). In 2010, the U.S. generated \$15 Trillion in GDP, the EU \$16 trillion. (China in contrast produced \$6 trillion in GDP and today lacks partnerships akin to that between the United States and Europe.<sup>3</sup>)

Second, the cornerstone of the transatlantic community, NATO, remains

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<sup>3</sup> For an insightful annual survey of the EU-US trade relationship, see Daniel Hamilton and Joseph P. Quinlan (eds.), "The Transatlantic Economy 2012," Center for Transatlantic Relations, John Hopkins University, 2012.

history's most successful multinational military alliance. It is unmatched in its ability to generate and sustain interoperability among military forces, an increasingly challenging requirement in battlefields where operations are ever more technologically complex and whose technologies evolve ever more rapidly. In this regard, the value of NATO has been vividly demonstrated by coalition operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya.

Third, members of transatlantic community, particularly the newest members of NATO and the EU, offer experience useful to societies in North Africa and the Middle East transitioning from authoritarian to more democratically accountable systems of governance buttressed by market-based economies.

Fourth, the transatlantic community presents a collective of likeminded democracies – and herein lies a vision for its role in the global order of today and tomorrow. It can serve as the core of a geographically and culturally expanding community of democracies that act collectively to promote freedom, stability and security around the globe.

In a world where power is more dispersed, only by operating in concert will the nations of Europe and North America be able to tap this potential in the effort to manage the complex volatility consequent to the challenges posed by transnational threats, socio-political upheavals, and a shifting global balance of power.

### **Revitalizing the Transatlantic Bargain**

Herein, lies the challenge before President Obama and his NATO counterparts when they meet in Chicago on May 20<sup>th</sup>. In order for that potential to be tapped, the transatlantic bargain that sustained the Alliance during the first decade of the Cold War must be revitalized. Toward that end the United States should pursue **5 objectives** in Chicago if this summit is to be remembered as moment of transatlantic renewal rather than transatlantic disengagement.

**First, the President must credibly reaffirm Europe's centrality in US global strategy.** The drifting apart of the two continents has many causes, but they include a US transatlantic agenda whose dominant elements recently have been a vaguely defined reset of relations with Russia, a defense guidance that articulates a pivot to Asia, and reductions of combat capability deployed in Europe.

This has left many with the impression that America views Europe as increasingly irrelevant to US interests in the world at large. The force reduction decisions generate questions about America's commitment to NATO's article 5 responsibilities. The decision to withdraw two of the four Brigade Combat teams deployed in Europe contradicts the 2010 posture statement to Congress of the US Commander of EUCOM, Admiral James Stavrides who stated:

- "Without the four Brigade Combat Teams and one tactical intermediate headquarters capability, European Command assumes risk in its capability to conduct steady-state security cooperation, shaping, and contingency missions. Deterrence and reassurance are at increased risk."

The fact that US draw-downs in Europe occur in the context of an increasingly assertive Russian foreign policy, rising Russian defense expenditures, and increased Russian military deployments along the country's western frontiers only adds to a sense of regional consternation. The belligerent tone of Russian policy was recently underscored by the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Russia, General Nikolai Makarov, who threatened to launch preemptive strikes against missile defense sites the US plans to build in Central Europe.

The United States should remove the conditionality it has placed over those missile defense sites. That conditionality not only undercuts European confidence in the US commitment to the European Phased Adaptive Approach, it encourages and incentivizes the Kremlin's opposition to its implementation.

U.S. military reductions in Europe will make it even more important to ensure that those elements remaining are fully equipped and funded. Additionally, careful consideration needs to be given to how the U.S. and Europe will sustain interoperability between their military forces. American units stationed in Europe are highly effective, low cost force multipliers. They facilitate training, planning, and relationships essential for US and European forces to fight together effectively in Europe and elsewhere.

Recognizing this, the Obama Administration promised to increase rotational deployments to Europe. But, it will be challenging for a unit that rotates to Europe for six to eight weeks a year to match the engagement a unit permanently stationed there has with its European counterparts.

The Administration has yet to communicate when and what units will execute those exercise rotations. It would be appropriate and reassuring to NATO allies to have that training schedule articulated by the time of the Chicago Summit. Continued ambiguity on this issue communicates disinterest not just in Europe's regional security, but also in Europe's role as a military partner in out of area operations.

**Second, the Chicago Summit should be used to reanimate the vision of a Europe whole, free and secure as a guiding priority for the transatlantic relationship.** This vision has been largely sidelined since the 2008 NATO summit in Bucharest. While it may be too late to generate the consensus necessary for new invitations at Chicago, the summit should nonetheless leverage the process of enlargement forward, particularly concerning the candidacies of Macedonia, Montenegro, and Georgia.

NATO enlargement has strengthened the transatlantic community by integrating nations into community of free-market democracies committed to each other's security. A Europe that is undivided, whole and free would be a more stable and secure continent and one better able to address global concerns in partnership with the United States.

Imagine a Europe today that did not integrate Poland, the Baltics and Romania, Bulgaria, into NATO? Would the EU have integrated these countries? Would Russia and Poland be on the path today toward normalized relations?

Abandoning this vision would have strategic consequences. It would undercut those in aspirant countries -- and for that matter Kiev -- who seek a future for their countries in the transatlantic community. It would reinforce those in the Kremlin nostalgic for a sphere of influence over Russia's periphery vice those who see value in normal, cooperative relations with neighboring democracies.

To revitalize the process of NATO enlargement at the Chicago Summit, NATO heads of state can and should:

- Declare its intent to issue invitations to qualified aspirants no later than the next summit;
- Underscore the urgency of resolving Macedonia dispute with Greece over the former's name, the last remaining obstacle to Skopje's accession to the alliance;
- Assert that Georgia's path to NATO can be through the NATO-Georgia Commission; and,
- Applaud Montenegro's significant progress under the Alliance's Membership Action Plan .

The Chicago Summit presents the Alliance an opportunity to make clear that its "open door policy" is neither a passive phrase nor an empty slogan. The open door policy needs to be both a guiding vision that extends to all Europe's democracies and an active, forward-moving process central the Alliance's security strategy.

**Third, the Alliance must chart its way forward in an era of financial austerity.**

The Chicago Summit occurs in the midst of a prolonged economic crisis on both sides of the Alliance, but in Europe it has exacerbated an endemic problem of eroding European military capabilities. A study by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) recently found that total defense spending for 37 European countries had declined by an average of 1.8% annually between 2001 and 2009, from total of 251B Euros to 218B. Today, only two European NATO members spend 2% of GDP or more on defense.

The qualified success of NATO forces in Libya last year highlighted this crisis in underinvestment in European military capabilities. During Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR, European allies ran short of precision-guided munitions and found themselves dependent upon US intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities and refueling planes, among other critical assets.

Resource constraints are a double-edged sword. They can halt multi-national cooperation, undermine capabilities and generate division within the Alliance. We see this today as Central Europeans watch aghast as German, French and Italian firms sell military equipment to Russia in their effort to sustain their respective defense industries.

Austerity can also be leveraged to drive forward needed prioritization, innovation, and collaboration. Toward this end, NATO Headquarters and Allied Command Transformation are driving forward a capabilities package at the Summit consisting of a Smart Defense Initiative intended to foster pooling and sharing of resources, a Connected Forces Initiative to improve training and exercises and Force 2020, a long-term plan defining the forces the Alliance should be able to bring to the battlefield at the end of this decade.

The Alliance's capability shortfalls are real and urgent today. NATO has worked diligently to foster Smart Defense initiatives in areas of logistics and sustainment, force protection, training, intelligence, surveillance & reconnaissance, and combat operations. The Summit's capability emphasis should focus on these projects to which Allies can sign-up today and deliver in the near term.

Capability development need not always be revolutionary and dramatic. In an age of austerity, the focus should be on the practical and attainable. Such projects are not only needed for operational purposes, they are more credible to NATO publics than promises concerning the distant future.

**Fourth, the Chicago Summit should be used to expand and deepen the partnerships the Alliance has developed around the world.** The globalized and increasingly hybrid character of today's challenges make it important for the Alliance to expand and deepen its relationships with non-governmental organizations and non-member states around the globe. They have been of great value to NATO's efforts in Afghanistan, Libya and elsewhere. They include the military and financial contributions of Sweden, Australia, New Zealand, Korea, Jordan, the UAE, Qatar and Morocco, among others.

Partner contributions bring more than military forces. They can also serve vital political purposes and provide invaluable insight and intelligence specific to the cultural, historical, political, and geographic realities of their respective localities, be it the Greater Middle East, Asia, or Africa.

NATO should expand the Partnership for Peace so that is open to all who qualify and who seek to participate regardless of geography. It should be tiered to reflect the degree of engagement and integration sought by member states. Those who make regular and significant contributions to NATO operations – such as Sweden, for example -- should be eligible for a process that certifies them as interoperable with NATO forces. That certification should make them eligible for specified NATO programs, including: exercises; training; the integrated command structure; civilian agencies; centers of excellence; and, decision-making structures overseeing operations in which their forces are employed.

Global partnerships are an absolute requirement for an Alliance that has to be engaged around the world. They constitute one important means by which the transatlantic community, as a whole, can “pivot” from the challenges of the past to those of today and tomorrow.

**Finally, NATO must demonstrate unambiguous determination to sustain a stable Afghanistan.** At its last Summit in Lisbon in November 2010, the Alliance and the Afghan government agreed to a transition strategy intended to shift to Kabul full responsibility for security across all of Afghanistan. At Chicago, NATO aims to map out a strategic partnership with Afghanistan that will endure well beyond 2014. The US-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership, even if it is fleshed out robustly, will likely be insufficient to ensure success in Afghanistan in the absence of a long-term transatlantic commitment to the Afghan people.

Failure in Afghanistan would present its own negative regional consequences. It would also be a serious blow to the credibility of the Alliance and, thus, to the commitment of its member states who have sacrificed much largely out of resolute solidarity with the United States.

## **CONCLUSION:**

Strong US leadership has always been a pre-requisite for NATO’s vibrancy and success. Likewise, Europe’s ability to contribute the military forces and political capital necessary to address both regional and global concerns are equally essential to the Alliance’s relevance. It is neither in Europe’s nor the United States interest to allow the Transatlantic Bargain to drift into irrelevance.

The Chicago summit presents the United States an opportunity to contribute to the revitalization of the Transatlantic Bargain:

- Through robust military engagement with Europe, the United States would reinforce the credibility of its commitment to the North Atlantic Treaty and sustain, if not improve, the ability of European and U.S. forces to operate together within and beyond the North Atlantic area.



- By leading the effort to fulfill the vision of a unified, undivided Europe, the United States would drive forward a process that strengthens Europe's stability and security and thereby reaffirm the centrality of Europe in America's global strategy.
- By ensuring that the Alliances' Smart Defense initiatives feature not just long term vision but also practical near term initiatives, the U.S. will help NATO address urgent shortfalls and in a manner credible to its increasingly skeptical publics.
- By leveraging the potential offered by a network of NATO global partnerships, the United States and Europe can play a more effective role together addressing the global challenges that already define this century.

In these ways, the Chicago Summit can emerge as an important, if not inspiring, benchmark of American commitment and European ambition regarding the Transatlantic Alliance.