

(prepared for delivery)

**Statement of Madeleine K. Albright
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Report of the Group of Experts on a New Strategic Concept for NATO
May 20, 2010**

Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, and thank you for inviting me.

When I came before you last fall, the NATO Group of Experts was just beginning its work.

Now we have just finished and I am pleased to share with you our recommendations.

As you know, the Group of Experts was conceived a little more than a year ago at the Alliance summit in Strasbourg-Kehl.

Its mandate was to provide analysis and recommendations to NATO's Secretary General as he prepares a new Strategic Concept for Allied consideration in Lisbon this coming November.

The Experts Group, like NATO, is diverse – and so we had spirited internal debates.

But also like the Alliance at its best – we were able in the end to speak with a single voice.

In fact, most of our recommendations flow from two basic conclusions.

First, the Alliance has an ongoing duty to guarantee the safety and security of its members.

Second, it can achieve that objective only if it engages dynamically with countries and organizations that are outside its boundaries.

To safeguard security at home, the Alliance must continue to treat collective defense as its core purpose.

This reflects the primacy of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty and our belief that the security of each Ally cannot be separated from that of all.

Accordingly, NATO must maintain a flexible mix of military capabilities, including conventional, nuclear, and missile defense.

It must also conduct appropriate contingency planning and military exercises so that Allies may feel confident that their borders will indeed be protected.

These measures are fundamental to NATO's identity and purpose -- but they are not sufficient.

Between now and 2020, the Alliance will face a new generation of dangers from sources that are geographically and technologically diverse.

These threats include violent extremism, nuclear proliferation, cyber assaults and attacks on energy infrastructure and supply lines.

Because such perils can arise rapidly and from any direction, the Alliance must become more versatile.

To this end:

- It should accelerate transformation through the development of military forces that are sustainable, deployable and inter-operable;
- It should improve its capacity for rapid response;
- It should attach a high priority to shielding information from cyber attacks; and
- With resources tight, it should allocate defense funds wisely, by increasing its commitment to joint procurement and specialized needs.

All this is vital -- for NATO's good intentions must be matched by its capabilities.

The Alliance must be strong, but it must also be smart and -- in our era -- nothing is smarter than having capable partners.

The Group of Experts was united in its view that partners should play an increasing role in NATO activities, and that the Alliance should explore every opportunity for strengthening its partnership ties both as a pragmatic means for solving problems and as an instrument of political dialogue.

Accordingly, NATO should improve its ability to work with other countries and organizations, especially in situations where a blend of military, economic and political measures are required.

This principle applies to countries that are part of a formal partnership arrangement with NATO and those that are not.

For example, Australia and New Zealand have contributed troops to Afghanistan, the Republic of Korea intends to send troops, and Japan has supplied money and fuel.

One of our recommendations is that such operational partners be given a significant role in planning and shaping the missions to which they contribute.

Another partnership that attracted discussion within our Group is that between NATO and Russia.

For reasons of history and geography, some Allies are more skeptical than others about Russia's commitment to a positive relationship.

This divergence was reflected among the experts, but there was no disagreement about what NATO's policy should be.

It is clearly in NATO's best interest to work with Moscow to build a cooperative Euro-Atlantic security order and to respond to such shared concerns as terrorism, nuclear proliferation, piracy, and drug trafficking.

Partnership, as we know, is a two way street – but from the Alliance perspective, the door to cooperation with Moscow should remain open at all levels.

NATO can also influence its security environment by continuing its policy of gradual enlargement.

Prospective NATO members in the Western Balkans and elsewhere in the Euro-Atlantic region have a right to fair consideration based on the same guidelines that steered decisions about new members in the past.

NATO today is busier than ever, but this does not mean that the Alliance must go everywhere and do everything – there are limits to its resources and to its responsibilities.

Indeed, the new Strategic Concept should propose criteria for making wise decisions about when and where to commit NATO resources beyond its boundaries.

In addition, Alliance leaders should learn from its experiences in Afghanistan by recognizing the imperative of political cohesion, the desirability of unified command, the value of effective planning, the importance of public communications, and the need to deploy forces at a strategic distance for an extended period of time.

There should be no question that NATO's fundamental purpose is to protect the security of its members.

But providing for security is a more complicated proposition than in the past.

Thus, NATO should consider the possibility, when resources are sufficient and legal authority is clear, of helping the world respond to catastrophic emergencies, whether caused by nature or by human beings.

Further, we should recognize that NATO is more than just a military alliance; it is also a political community, and should therefore make more regular and creative use of the mechanism for consultations under Article 4.

All of these measures should be accompanied by a commitment to organizational reform.

The Secretary General must have the authority and the mandate to streamline decision-making, prune the bureaucracy, and identify savings that can be used for military transformation.

Mr. Chairman, in the past eight months, The Group of Experts has had to think deeply about issues that some fear could undermine the future cohesion of the Alliance.

These include the apparent tension between homeland defense and expeditionary missions; the difference in attitudes toward Russia; the imbalance in military expenditures; and the nuclear question.

When we started out, I confess to harboring doubts about whether we would be able to define a common approach toward these and other issues.

But as we went along, I found that the desire for agreement outweighed the dubious pleasures of argument and that, with sufficient patience, the basis for a common approach could be found.

No one can expect an Alliance of 28 members to function without occasional grumbling and dissent.

However, I arrive at the conclusion of this process with more optimism about NATO's continued unity and future success than when I began.

Thank you; and now I would be pleased to respond to any questions you might have.