

THE 2022 NATO MADRID SUMMIT AND THE NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT PROVISIONS

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Abstract: The 2022 Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Alliance was held in Madrid in June 28-30. The Summit took place in the context of a conventional threat to the security of the Euro – Atlantic area as well as in a time of war on the European soil. NATO leaders discussed strategically important issues facing the Alliance, endorsed the New Concept of the Alliance, and made a series of key decisions that will have a direct impact on the future of the Alliance. Namely, at the Summit, the leaders agreed on fundamental shifts regarding the deterrence and defense doctrine, on the challenges and threats from the South related to the fight against terrorism and the 360-degree approach to deterrence and defense. They agreed to invest more in NATO with the intention to increase common funding for the Alliance's adaptation to growing challenges such as climate change, and invited Sweden and Finland to join the Alliance. The Leaders agreed on long-term support measures for Ukraine by strengthening the Comprehensive Assistance Package and reaffirmed common interests and shared values. The Summit has set NATO's new strategic direction for the future, ensuring that the Alliance will continue to adapt in a changing world in order, at any moment to be ready to provide protection to over one billion people living within its borders.

Key words: NATO, Strategic Concept, threats, deterrence, defense.

Introduction

The 2022 New Strategic Concept (The Concept) and the Declaration of Heads of Government and State (Declaration) are two significant and public available Summit documents. Other Summit documents are not public releasable. A key Summit document is the NATO Strategic Concept 2022, which provides the postulates for the adaptation and directions of action of the Alliance until the end of the decade and beyond. The NATO 2030 reflection process was preceded by the preparation and adoption of the Concept. NATO 2030 is a comprehensive analysis which incorporate the security environment in which we live, the rapidly evolving threats and challenges and all those elements that may affect the future and survival of the Alliance in the next decade and beyond (NATO 2030: United for a New Era, 2020). The creation of a stronger Alliance is the vision of NATO 2030 - United for a New Era. This Document basically presented the Alliance's ambitious reform agenda in order to

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ensure continuity in its adaptation and readiness of its members to deal with existing and new challenges and threats to the security.

The Concept is basically a plan in order to provide conditions for timely adaptation of the Alliance in the new more dangerous and competitive world. The postulates rely on building a common approach to the full spectrum of traditional, conventional, asymmetric, hybrid and other threats that include Moscow, terrorism and cyber-attacks. Also, in the Concept, a collective assessment of security challenges that may have implications on the security of the Alliance was made. This assessment includes security challenges such as: climate change, emergency and destructive technologies (EDTs), mass migration, protection of human security, outer space and the systemic challenge from China. The mechanisms for responding to security threats and challenges are unequivocally defined by clearly setting the political and military tasks that NATO plans to carry out. An integral part of the Concept is the re-affirmation of the postulates of the existence of the Alliance embodied through the shared values, common interests, goals and tasks of NATO (NATO Summit, 2022).

NATO 2022 Strategic Concept

Structurally, the Concept includes a preface, an assessment of the security environment in which the Alliance exists, an elaboration of the threats and challenges expressed through the three key tasks, then the need for an increase in defense investments, shared financing, burden sharing and a demonstration of readiness for the future.

In the preface, NATO emphasizes determination and determination to deal with threats and challenges regardless of where they come from. The main goals of the Alliance, which derive from the Washington Treaty, are also grounded in the Concept through the determination to protect the citizens living within the borders of the free world, the defend the territory of the member states and safeguard freedom and democracy in the free world. To achieve these goals, the Alliance plans to reinforce unity, cohesion and solidarity enhanced by the transatlantic bond between nations and strengthened by the shared democratic values of member countries.

And, The Alliance's priority goal in the Concept is to ensure collective defense in accordance with Article 5 of the Washington Treaty through the 360-degree approach. This priority goal is intended to be realized in practice through the realization of the three core tasks: deterrence and defence, crisis prevention and management, and cooperative security. It is interesting that in this Concept, unlike the Concept of 2010, it is emphasized that ensuring of national and collective resilience is of vital importance for the achievement of the three core tasks. Also, in particular emphasis the need of cross cutting importance of increased investment in technological innovation, and integrating of climate change, human security and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the three core tasks (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:1).

In the new Concept, the Alliance is declared as a defense alliance with the basic goal of providing collective defense against all threats and from all courses of action. At the same time, the freedom and security of its member rests on the basic postulates of the Charter of the United Nations and the Washington Treaty of 1949, which refer to the rule of law, individual liberty, human rights and democracy. NATO is presented as a unique, essential and indispensable transatlantic forum to consult, coordinate and act on all matters

related to individual and collective security. The main pillar that keeps the Alliance unique is the indivisibility of security on both sides of the Atlantic, solidarity and the commitment to implement the provisions of the Washington Treaty, especially Article 5 (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:3).

Challenges and Threats to Alliance's Security

Regarding the threats and challenges that exist in the Euro-Atlantic area and beyond, for the first time in a NATO Concept after 1990, the traditional military threat threat to Europe's security is highlighted. The war was brought to the European's soil by the Russian Federation through its assertiveness and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine. After more than three decades, the Alliance again fears that an attack is possible in order to threaten the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the members. Unlike the 2010Concept, when Russia was treated as a partner and a partnership relationship was built (Strategic Concept, 2010), in the 2022 Concept Moscow is seen as a significant and direct threat to the security, peace and stability of the Euro-Atlantis Area as well as to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the member states (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:4).

When it comes to the threats that exist in the Euro-Atlantic area, it is stated that they are interconnected and global, and the wider security environment is also characterized by global trends expressed through strategic competition, pervasive instability and recurring shocks (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:3). The following threats are listed in the Concept: the traditional conventional military threat, authoritarian models of governance, Russia as significant and direct threat, terrorism in all its forms and manifestation as direct asymmetric threat, conflicts, fragility and instability in Africa and the Middle East. While, as challenges which can threaten the security of the Alliance, are pointed out: climate change, the erosion of the architecture for arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, cyber space, authoritarian regimes and the systemic challenge from China. In terms of technological innovation and emerging and disruptive technologies, it is seen as both an opportunity and a risk for the Alliance.

The assessment is that authoritarian regimes may challenge the values, interests and democratic way of life of Alliance members. The activities of such regimes are aimed at undermining the rules-based international order by attempting to promote authoritarian rule. This is based on the assumptions that the covert investments that these authoritarian systems make are related to the development of sophisticated conventional, nuclear and missile capabilities. In this way, the adversaries test resilience of the Alliance and in every possible way try to exploit its openness, interconnectedness and digitalization of the members as their advantage. At the same time, authoritarian regimes do not hesitate of using mechanisms and means to undermine democratic processes and institutions. Their goal is to challenge the security of citizens by using the tactics and methods of hybrid warfare, directly or indirectly, through proxies in the country where the activities are directed. These methods and tactics of hybrid warfare are complemented by malicious activities in cyberspace and space, disinformation campaigns, fake news, instrumentalization of migration, manipulation of energy supplies and employment of economic coercion (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:3).

Russia is no longer treated as a partner but as a direct conventional threat to the security of the Alliance and to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. These statements are supported by Russia's intention to re-establish "spheres of influence and zones of interest" with direct control through coercion, subversion, aggression and annexation, similar to the Cold War era. In doing so, in pursuit of its political and other goals, Russia uses a multitude of actors and tools that employ conventional and asymmetric methods of hybrid warfare, including cyber and hacker attacks, the media, fake news, disinformation, instrumentalization of energy through energy dependence, and other forms of economic coercion and influence, as well as aggressive nuclear rhetoric.

Moscow has established special teams under the control of the state, which make extensive use of social media and the Internet and conduct Soviet-era psychological operations (psy-ops) in order to achieve their political goals (Mckew, 2017). This is complemented by appropriate rhetoric, corrective military coercion, willingness to use force to achieve its political goals and undermine the international rule-based order (Galeotti, 2020), i.e. create strategic dilemmas for the Alliance. In addition to that, the program for the modernization of the nuclear forces and the continuous expansion novel and disruptive dual-capable delivery systems, as technological innovations and emerging and destructive technologies. The ultimate goal of the instrumental application of such activities of Russia is to destabilize the states of the East and South. Moscow's aspirations also extend to the High North with a clear intention to disrupt reinforcement and freedom of navigation and challenge the Alliance on a strategic level (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:4).

NATO clearly and unequivocally emphasizes that Russia is not a threat to Alliance's security. However, NATO will not tolerate Russia's hostile activities and its military threats against states, but is willing to keep open channels of communication. The answer will move in the direction of taking appropriate reasonable measures and activities. This in no way implies that NATO will be the first to use military force. Those measures and activities include strengthening defense and deterrence, improving resilience to Russian assertiveness and supporting partners in strengthening their resilience and efforts to suppress Russia's malicious activities (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:4). Despite pointing out Russia as a direct threat to the security of the Alliance, the possibility of communication with Russia is left open in order to manage and mitigate risks and prevent their further escalation into conflicts. Moscow's activities in the last decade have shown that the dual approach that NATO has been building since 2014, as well as defense and deterrence, have not yielded adequate results and have not deterred Russia from using military force to achieve its political goals.

The next threat to the Alliance's security is terrorism in its all forms and manifestations. He is still considered a direct and asymmetric threat to the security not only of the Alliance but also in terms of international peace and prosperity. The intent of terrorist organizations, non-state military groups, and state-sponsored actors seek to attack or inspire attacks against Allies. In pursuit of their goals, they do not hesitate to use every available opportunity, including exploiting conflicts and the weakness of state institutions to increase their strength. To this end, terrorists and terrorist organizations are expanding their networks, upgrading capabilities and investing in new technologies to increase the lethality of attacks (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:4).

The Alliance assesses that its security and security of partners may be directly challenged by conflict, fragility and instability in Africa and the Middle East. This assessment

was made on the basis of the demographic, economic and political challenges faced by the neighbors on the southern border of NATO (Middle East, North Africa and the Sahel region). These challenges, according to NATO, driven by climate change, unstable institutions, health crises, rising energy prices and food shortages are the main generators of instability and terrorism. On the other hand, instability enables illegal migration, displacement and violence against people and this in turn challenges the resilience, security, economic, social and health stability of the states through their excessive migration and seeking livelihood in the member states of the Alliance (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:4).

In this Concept, space is given for the first time to the growing role of China, which can challenge the interests, security and values of NATO (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:5). In that context, it points to the malicious hybrid and cyber operations used by China, which aim to undermine the security of the Alliance, as well as its rhetoric and disinformation aimed at allies. One of China's goals is to establish control over key technological and industrial sectors, critical infrastructure and the supply of strategic materials on a global scale. In achieving its goals, China also uses its economic supremacy to cause economic dependence of countries and increase its influence.

NATO remains open for constructive engagement with China on a reciprocal basis and in a transparent manner with determination to defend the interests of the Alliance. However, to achieve this it is necessary that all Allies without exception need to work together in order to address appropriately to China's systemic challenge in the Euro-Atlantic area and to ensure the lasting ability of the Alliance to guarantee the defense and security of all Allies. In doing so, allied cooperation includes boost and strengthening awareness of the challenge from China, advancing resilience and readiness to respond to any corrective tactics by China that aim to divide allies (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:5).

Next elements that are given attention in the Concept are cyberspace, outer space, and emerging and disruptive technologies. For NATO, cyberspace is a field where enemies attempt to threaten critical infrastructure, disrupt the functioning of state institutions, extract intelligence and other sensitive information, steal intellectual property, and disrupt the operations of Alliance forces. Allies are aware that strategic competitors and potential adversaries are investing in space technologies aimed at enabling them to control and dominate outer space. NATO must follow suit, if it wants to be a key player on the international stage. At the same time, the Alliance is aware that those who secure supremacy in these areas of operation will be at a strategic advantage in the event of war.

NATO is simultaneously treated EDTs as an opportunity and a risk. The Alliance sees them as having the ability to change the character and course of operations on the battlefield and to gain a major strategic advantage for whoever controls them. Investing in the development of these technologies should enable NATO to make the most of new technology for transatlantic security. In order to achieve these provisions, NATO in 2022 established two mechanisms. In April it promoted the Defense Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic - DIANA, and on June 30, 2022, it established the Innovation Fund (NATO Innovation Fond) (NATO, 2022c). The promoted approach in the development of innovative technologies enables the active involvement of the academia and the private sector in the development of new technologies. DIANA aims to concentrate EDTs that have been identified as priorities including artificial intelligence, big data processing, quantum-enabled technologies, autonomy, biotechnology, new composite materials and outer space (NATO, 2022b).

A challenge related to the erosion of the arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation architecture, according to NATO, has a negative impact on the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area. In the past decade, Russia has selectively applied or grossly violated the provisions of the agreements that made up the architecture of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons, to which it is a signatory. Undemocratic and authoritarian states such as Iran and North Korea continue their programs to develop nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them, while others have restarted their programs for the use of chemical weapons such as Syria. NATO considers the potential use of CBRN materials and weapons by hostile states and non-state actors can be a threat to the security of member states (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:6). Also, China, which is treated as a systemic challenge to the security of the Alliance, without much transparency is rapidly increasing its nuclear arsenal and developing sophisticated delivery systems. China's active involvement in arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation mechanisms would be of great benefit to security and peace, as well as to reducing the risk of a new arms race.

NATO defines climate change as a challenge of our time with a profound impact on the security of allies, whereby NATO must contribute to mitigating the consequences of climate change. They do not represent a threat in themselves, but are a crisis and a multiplier of threats that can fuel conflicts and geopolitical competition. Their manifestation is usually through the increase in the temperatures of the land, water and air, which causes the melting of the ice polar caps and the rise in the level of the seas and oceans, the frequent occurrence of forest fires and the more frequent extreme weather events. All these manifestations of climate change contribute to environmental degradation and disrupt societies, undermine security and threaten the livelihoods and lives of the Alliance's citizens. Climate change directly affects the armed forces and the way they operate, military equipment and infrastructure, and materials (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:6). Therefore, in 2021, NATO adopted the Climate Change Action Plan, which outlines the effects that changes have on the Alliance and what Allies should do to mitigate the effects of climate change (NATO Climate Change and Security Action Plan, 2022). According to the words of NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg, at the 2022 Summit, the Allies agreed on a new methodology for mapping the military emission of greenhouse gases and specific targets to reduce NATO emissions with the aim of reducing them by 45% in the NATO structure and commands by 2030 and to contribute to the achievement of the "Zero Emission" Agenda by 2050 (Stoltenberg, 2022).

It is more than clear that NATO faces a big task in the coming period to update the documents and incorporate the effects of climate change in the conduct of military operations on the long term. This implies that within the framework of military exercises, he will have to plan scenarios that will incorporate the impact of climate change on the armed forces and their ability to conduct operations. The provisions of the Concept indicate that the Alliance is already working on the challenge of including climate change and other non-military threats in NATO planning, response preparations and solutions in relation to the new reality, building resilience and crisis management. Some countries, especially the Nordic ones, took such steps more than a decade ago. For example, since 2010, the Nordic countries have emphasized the effects of climate change and their impact on the security of the region in their documents and political statements. They affirmed that: "Climate change is a long-term process that will initiate a host of multidimensional demographic, economic,

geopolitical, and national security issues with many unknown and significant contingencies" (Romig Jr., Backus, and Baker, 2010:3).

The Three Core Tasks of the Alliance

What can be noticed in this Strategic Concept, in comparison to the 2010 Concept, that what has been done is a redefinition of the three core tasks of the Alliance. Namely, instead of "Collective Defense", the doctrinal approach of "Deterrence and Defense" is now emphasized, which is marked as a "Fundamental Change in Deterrence and Defense" (NATO, 2022d) with more deployed combat formations, highly prepared forces and more repositioned equipment. It is the biggest "overhaul" of collective defense since the end of the Cold War (Stoltenberg, 2022a). Then, Crisis Management Operations are redefined in Crisis Prevention and Management, and Cooperative Security remains unchanged (Strategic Concept, 2010). Such rhetoric is reminiscent of NATO's doctrinal approach typical of the seventies of the last century when the Doctrine of Deterrence was in force, which ultimately helped it emerge victorious in the Cold War. Therefore, the redefinition of the core tasks and the change of the approach in the collective defense should enable the Alliance to be more aware and more efficient in its efforts for deterrence and defense, competition and refusal in all domains and courses of action according to the approach of 360 degrees in defense of the territory of the Alliance's members.

The Concept decisively emphasizes that NATO remains a "defense Alliance" whose main goal is the defense and protection of democratic values, the rule of law, individual freedoms and human rights of the democratic world. Its determination and resolve for collective defense, in accordance with Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, is also seen in this Concept, where NATO is determined to defend every "inch" of the territory of the Allies and to preserve the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all Allies. Such an approach should strengthen the reputation of the Alliance so that no one has doubts about the strength and determination to defend the territory of the Alliance, to preserve the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all allies and prevail against any aggressor. In the implementation of deterrence and defense, the strategic nuclear forces, especially those of the USA, still are the supreme guarantee of the security of the Alliance, but the independent strategic nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France have a deterrent role of their own and contribute significantly to the overall security of the Alliance. The Concept emphasizes that "NATO's deterrence and defence posture is based on an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional and missile defence capabilities, complemented by space and cyber capabilities. It is defensive, proportionate and fully in line with our international commitments" (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:6). In the implementation of deterrence and defense, NATO will use all military and non-military mechanisms and tools at its disposal in order to ensure a coherent and integrated approach in dealing with all threats to its security (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:6) including the conventional threat.

NATO is resolute in its intention to provide effective and efficient posture, stressing that it intends to strengthen deterrence and defense with the clear aim of to deny any potential adversary any possible opportunities for aggression. In support of this determination are the plans that the Alliance has for ensuring a significant and permanent presence in all domains of warfare (on land, at sea and in the air), which includes the strong integrated air

and missile defense. The strengthening of the alliance's air and missile defenses is a response to the development of hypersonic missiles by Russia and China. The development of land, sea and air forces entails the creation of robust, multi-domain, combat-ready forces with advanced command and control, adequately manned and well equipped, and ready to act at very short or no notice. The goal is to ensure the Alliance's defense capability and ensure that deterrence and defense are credible, flexible, targeted and sustainable in the long term (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:6).

The Alliance plans, on a collective and individual basis, to provide the necessary forces, capabilities, plans, resources, assets and infrastructure necessary to achieve deterrence and defense over the next decade. The forces it plans to develop should be capable, trained for multi-domain and high-intensity warfare peer-competitors. For the effective and efficient action of the forces, adequate robust service and combat service support, a resistant and integrated command structure, aligned with the national and NATO defense plans and a strengthened and modernized NATO force structure are necessary. Also, in the coming period, NATO plans to strengthen training and exercises of live forces, adapt and rationalize the decision-making process, enhance planning and improve the efficiency of the crisis response system (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:6).

It is interesting that maritime security, which is qualified as the key to peace and prosperity, is gaining importance. The determination also imposes the need to strengthen the capability and situational awareness for deterrence and defense against all types of threats in the maritime domain as a counterweight to Russia's attempts to disrupt and hinder these processes. The goal is to ensure freedom of navigation, to secure commercial sea routes, including those of the Arctic, as well as to strengthen lines of communication (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:7).

The basis for ensuring effective deterrence and defense is also maintaining primacy in space and cyberspace. Similar to Reagan's doctrine of "low intensity" and "star wars", this Concept envisages the development of capabilities that will enable the Alliance to maintain primacy and operate effectively in space and cyberspace. In that way, the Alliance, through appropriate mechanisms and tools, will be ready and able to detect and respond to the entire spectrum of threats. Investments and primacy in cyberspace are more than necessary because the Alliance has already officially declared that this type of a single or cumulative set of malicious hostile operations, cyber activities to, from or within space against Alliance members and could lead the North Atlantic Council to invoke Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:7).

One of the effective deterrence and defense mechanisms is building resilience to deal with military and non-military threats and security challenges. The idea of building resilience dates back to the Warsaw Summit when this policy was launched. Namely, the Alliance plans to build resilience through the implementation of the seven basic requirements adopted at the Warsaw Summit and the development of the civil preparedness of the Alliance's member countries. The implementation of these requirements will allow the Allies to reduce their energy dependence on the East and provide them with continuity of the government, dealing with mass migrations, as well as development and continuity in providing critical services to citizens and the armed forces in peacetime, crisis and war (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:7).

The development of the necessary capabilities for preparation, resistance, response and rapid recovery from strategic shocks, as well as from the coercive use of political, economic, energy, informational and hybrid tactics, also requires increased investment in resources. Deep cooperation and synergy with the European Union, as well as the support of partners in building their capabilities to deal with hybrid threats will be of great benefit to the Alliance on long-term (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:7).

NATO remains a nuclear Alliance. The strategic nuclear forces of the United States, the United Kingdom, and France have a deterrent role to the adversaries and have intended to support the peace and security of the Alliance. The conditions in which nuclear weapons could possibly be used are extremely rare and depend on the nature of the conflict that would be conducted against NATO. The Alliance will take all necessary steps to ensure credibility, effectiveness, reliability and security in nuclear deterrence. Maintaining a credible deterrence will enable the strengthening of strategic communications, improve the effectiveness of exercises and reduce strategic risk (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:8).

Also, key element to achieve deterrence and defense is reducing the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as strengthening arms control through the existing security architecture related to arms control, disarmament and its non-proliferation. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is the essential bulwark against the spread of nuclear weapons. NATO remains fully committed to its full implementation, which would prevent further uncontrolled proliferation of nuclear weapons and preserve peace and security (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:8).

The threat of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations to the security of the Alliance's members is still at a high level. The countering terrorism is essential to the collective defense of the Alliance. The countering terrorism is a fundamental element of the three key tasks and is an integral part of the Alliance's 360-degree approach to defense and deterrence. To deal effectively with this asymmetric threat, NATO plans on long-term to strengthen cooperation with international organizations such as the UN and the EU in order to create conditions to prevent its further spread (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:8) and to reduce its destructiveness until its eradication.

Crisis Prevention and Management

The change in the Alliance's approach to crisis management operations is more than evident. Namely, in the 2010 Concept, in the section on crisis management, the application of political and military tools was emphasized to manage the development of the crisis before it has the potential to threaten the peace of the Alliance, that is, before it turns into a conflict (Strategic Concept, 2010). In the new Concept, in addition to the "vigilant" monitoring of the development of the crisis, its prevention and response, NATO envisages the upgrading of the "unique" capabilities and expertise that have been acquired in three decades of crisis management. More specifically, NATO envisages to "invest in crisis response, preparedness and management, through regular exercises and leverage our ability to coordinate, conduct sustain and support multinational crisis response operations" (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:9).

The Concept foresees reforms based on the experience gained from Afghanistan, with the aim of improving the command and control system, training and exercises. The

goal is ensuring deployability and sustainability in managing of military and civilian crises, stabilization and the countering terrorism from a strategic distance. To achieve this, it is necessary to improve the readiness of civilian and military capabilities, coordination and civil-military planning. It will contribute to increasing the ability of the Alliance to respond in a very short period of time in order to support civilian crisis management and relief operations, as well as prepare to deal with the effects of climate change, food shortages and challenges for the health of the citizens (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:9).

NATO also counts on support from partners in the implementation of crisis management operations through political dialogue and continuity in maintaining interoperability. Such commitments imply enhanced support to partners, including assistance in building resilience and capacity to counter terrorism and address common security challenges. The goal is to reduce the vulnerability of partners by strengthening their resilience and strengthening their capabilities to fight against malicious threats and prevent their destabilization by adversaries. In the realization of these conceptual ideas, by reinforcing cooperation and coordination, NATO counts on the support of international organizations, primarily the UN and the EU and regional organizations such as the OSCE and the African Union (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:9).

Cooperative Security

Within the framework of cooperative security, it is pointed out that NATO's greatest historical success is its expansion. The expansion increased the security zone of the free democracies and contributed to the strengthening of stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic area. It remains an "open door" policy for all European democracies that share the common values and interests of NATO and are ready to assume the obligations and responsibilities arising from membership. Symbolically, but still realistically, at the Summit, an invitation was sent to Finland and Sweden to join the Alliance, which practically demonstrated the functionality of the determination to expand. NATO appreciates that the security of aspiring countries is intertwined with the security of the Alliance and is ready to help them by strengthening political dialogue and strengthening resilience in dealing with common security threats and challenges. Political dialogue and practical cooperation with partners based on mutual trust and respect is an important segment that contributes to strengthening security at the national level and in support of the Alliance's core tasks. Partners are seen as a factor influencing the protection of global goods, enhancing resilience and protecting the rules-based international order (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:9).

The EU remains NATO's most important partner, a partner that shares the same values and interests. It is more than understandable because 21 EU member states are also NATO members, and with application of Sweden and Finland for NATO membership that number will increase to 23. Therefore, NATO plans on long term to strengthen strategic partnership with the EU, enhance political consultations and increase cooperation on issues of mutual interest such as military mobility, resilience, the impact of climate change, in the development of EDTs, the fight against cyber and hybrid threats and handling with China as the systemic challenge to Euro-Atlantic security. The aim of the enhanced cooperation is to increase defense spending and avoid possible duplication in the development of capabilities,

which also requires the synchronization of NATO and EU planning processes in the area of defense planning and capability development (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, 2022:9).

It is interesting that in the new Concept, in addition to the Western Balkans, NATO attaches strategic importance to the Black Sea region. This is due primarily to Russia's assertiveness, illegal annexation of Crimea, the illegal presence of Russian forces in part of the territory of Moldova, in South Ossetia and Abkhazia in Georgia, and the unprovoked aggression that Moscow has carried out against Ukraine since February 2022. The Alliance's interests in dealing with security threats and challenges also extend to the Middle East and North Africa and the Sahel region. The Indo-Pacific region is treated as a region whose security can directly challenge and influence Euro-Atlantic security.

Ensuring the Alliance's Continued Success

The realization of such an ambitious Concept and goals also requires support from appropriate resources. In the new Concept, very little is devoted to the provision of resources. What can be noted is that NATO calls on members to provide the necessary resources, infrastructure, capabilities and forces necessary to fulfill the Alliance's core tasks and decisions as agreed by Wales in 2014. Namely, at the 2014 Summit in Wales, NATO members agreed to share the burden of developing capabilities and financing on a fair basis. The policy implies that it is the obligation of each member state to reach a level of 2% of GDP for defense expenditures by 2024, of which at least 20% is required to be invested in the procurement of new major equipment and research and development. With the provisions of the new Concept, the Alliance clearly and unequivocally calls on nations to adhere to those provisions and achieve agreed Defense Investment Pledge because it is the only way to deliver the necessary capabilities, especially in situation where the world is facing energy shortages and a conventional military threat in Europe.

At the moment, NATO allocates more than 2.5 billion euros annually for common funding, or 0.3% of the total costs of the Alliance. All 30 members contribute to the joint funding based on an agreed formula based on GDP for cost sharing, and depending on the economic power of the member country (Funding NATO, 2022). Common funding is used within the framework of: the civilian budget which refers to the costs of the NATO Headquarters; the military budget which refers to the costs of the Integrated Command Structure; and the NATO Security Investment Program which refers to military infrastructure and existing capabilities (Funding NATO, 2022). NATO's announcements are that common funding will increase over the years, but no more specific indicators are presented as to how much it will increase. According to NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg, NATO Allies have agreed to increase common funding, invest more in modern capabilities and contribute more to capability deployments and exercises. Funding is necessary for capacity building, as well as for more training and exercises, command and control and engagement with partners (Stoltenberg, 2022b).

Conclusion

In the past year, NATO worked intensively on the implementation of the 2022 Strategic Concept. The measures and actions taken by the Alliance in terms of deterrence and defense were reflected by strengthening the forces of the Eastern flank and their growth from

the eight battle groups from battalion to brigade level. The increased presence allows for enhanced deterrence and defense, but also the need for more resources. The future defense spending policy and its long-term implications to the Alliance's security is a debating issue.

It is more than clear that an investment in NATO is an investment in security and the future and the best way to ensure unity between European and North American allies. They have the same goal, which is a joint contribution and protection of global peace, stability and security. The stable funding of the Alliance should enable continue to protect and defend democratic values and western way of life, as well as guarantee the peace, security and prosperity of over one billion citizens living within the borders of the Alliance. The responsibility for security and peace rests with all allies and all should contribute together in dealing with threats and challenges to national security. A final policy decision on the Alliance's future funding is expected at the Vilnius Summit in July 2023.

The alliance, in dealing with challenges, threats and security risks, relies on the 360-degree approach, as well as on cooperation with strategic partners, primarily with the EU and the countries of the Indo-Pacific region. Its main priority is building resilience against the conventional threat and preventing Russia from achieving its political goals through military means. The joint cooperation with the EU in this domain and on the bilateral level of the members themselves is a real indicator that things are moving in the right direction.

In any case, NATO must work more engaged and dedicated, with greater cohesion and commitment of the member countries in order to realize what is outlined in the Concept in the next decade. The goal is to create an Alliance that will have the ability to adapt to new challenges, threats and risks to the safety of its citizens.

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