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MILITARY CAPABILITIES AND THE EVOLUTION OF THE TRANSATLANTIC SECURITY COMMUNITY

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INTRODUCTION

Europe's strategic context is increasingly defined by declining defense resources. At the end of the Cold War the United States accounted for 50 percent of NATO defense spending with Europe and Canada picking up the other half. Now, this ratio had changed with the US meeting 75 percent and future trends indicating the US making up four-fifth of NATO expenditure.[1] It is no surprise that the persistent imbalance in alliance burden-sharing is a major source of friction in the transatlantic relationship.[2]

Former US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates warned the allies of 'collective military irrelevance'.[3] Leon Panetta, his successor, concluded that were the Libya operation conducted in 2012 the United States would have to provide not the 60 percent support it did in 2011 but more like 80 percent. Testifying before Congress, Panetta stated, 'we can't do it alone. We've got to be able to have alliances like NATO to be able to work with us in confronting the many challenges we face in the world'.[4] Writing in Foreign Affairs, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen challenged Europeans 'to avoid having the economic crisis degenerate into a security crisis.'[5]

Calls for an increase in European defense spending are legion; the fiscal crisis has added urgency and Russia's annexation of Crimea a new sense of immediacy.[6] There is no shortage of recommendations on avoiding further defense decline and spending precious resources efficiently. At the same time, there is a pervasive sense of déjà-vu and a looming fear that repetition of message and advocacy for reform will yield little actual improvement. European leaders themselves speak of the need for change, commit to do more, as they have done before, and then fail to deliver. To explain the persistence of this cycle and determine if it can be broken is the purpose of this paper.

Why indeed is Europe as a whole unresponsive to calls for military capability generation while its leaders commit themselves to ambitious security agendas they cannot realize? Why this repeat of commitments and failures? To move beyond description and prescription, a theoretical perspective is necessary. Without it, we lack the tools to evaluate reform initiatives and miss the larger picture of what reforms might actually be achievable.

This paper argues that the security practices that have defined the transatlantic security community can no longer be assumed to produce the smooth fit of old. Created under structural conditions that stressed the dominance of U.S. leadership and confined the reach of the community to a clearly delineated transatlantic space, the community is now challenged in two ways. Internally, it needs to define how the practices of keeping peace within impact on the community's ability to respond to transformations between itself and the security environment. Externally, the security community must explore the extent to which it can develop new practices that preserve the accomplishments of the community and make it an effective global actor.

The transatlantic security community has, of course, weathered challenges in the past. None, I argue, measure up to the one at hand. Neither the end of the Cold War, not the community's enlargement to the East, nor the political fallout of the war in Iraq, have so profoundly challenged what the community is and does. The twin challenge of identity and action, of aligning internal practices with external performance tests the community's ability to evolve.

Engaging the debate on Europe's military capability shortfalls offers an opportunity to explore how debates on military capability represent particular security practices, what community identity these practices reveal and where established practices and community identity may require renewed efforts to determine what the transatlantic community is and what it does.

This paper builds on the concept of security communities first introduced by Karl Deutsch in the late 1950s. Distinguishing between pluralistic and amalgamated security communities, this concept offers a specific theoretical framework well suited to analysis of Europe's defense ambitions and failures. Several reasons confirm this choice of approach.

In the first instance, it identifies the link between traditional defense practices and the pluralistic community structure which encourages these same practices. Second, the security community approach allows us to distinguish between different defense sector reform proposals and enables us to evaluate which proposals are compatible with the pluralistic security community and which must fail since they cannot be accommodated within its existing structure. Third, it helps us outline how the security community must evolve, how its practices must change, in order to preserve its internal accomplishments and be an effective global player. Fourth, it permits the engagement of more recent scholarship on security community evolution and assesses the potential for friction between the practices that create and sustain a security community and those that make it effective externally.

Section one explains the defense practices Europeans adopted under a pluralist structure, the rise of defense individualism, and how these practices came to be politically tolerated. Section two builds on Deutsch's original differentiation between pluralistic and amalgamated security communities and evaluates the initiatives undertaken by NATO and the European Union to introduce greater efficiency into these practices without changing the pluralistic structure of the security community. Section three introduces the idea of partnerships beyond the community's boundary and explores whether these partnerships can be regarded as an extension of community practices, a new hybrid form of practices with different goals internally and externally or, a departure from established community practices altogether.

THE TRANSATLANTIC SECURITY COMMUNITY DURING THE COLD WAR

In the past, political tension across the Atlantic over European spending shortfalls was successfully contained not least because NATO was not called to deploy troops. During the Cold War, inefficiencies in force planning and procurement, nationally determined requirements and resultant duplications as well as lengthy procurement cycles and cost overruns were noted but no compelling case was made to change the status quo. The strategic rationale for the American presence in Europe and its commitment to European security allowed NATO inefficiencies to persist; an alliance focus on nuclear deterrence shifted attention away from conventional capabilities.

A culture of defense individualism took root. Duplication of national capabilities became the norm. Though members of an alliance created to thwart a common threat in a geographically limited area, Europeans nurtured individual national defense traditions. Commonality did exist at the cognitive level in the sense that Europeans accepted that 'they were in this together'. Were the Warsaw Pact ever to defy NATO's deterrence posture, they would stand together and confront invading forces. This commonality was, however, counteracted by an increasingly strong belief in the 1970s and 1980s that open conflict was not the answer to Europe's security problems. Rather, dialogue and negotiations with Moscow would yield a stable Cold War environment. Further eroding defense commonality was a seemingly inexhaustible American tolerance of European defense under spending. As a power with global interests and responsibilities, the United States could count on strong domestic support for its defense budgets, allowing its European partners to fall ever more behind. European defense collaboration, when it did occur, was not driven by specific threat analyses. More commonly, it had to meet financial, industrial infrastructure, and employment needs as well as the symbolic needs of national status and prestige.[7]

Hence at the end of the Cold War, European defense establishments had become socialized into three dominant practices. First, war in Europe had become increasingly unthinkable. Détente and arms control as well as rapprochement between the two Germanys shifted attention from military capabilities towards diplomacy. Second, habitual reliance on the United States as the ultimate security provider had become deeply ingrained, leaving Europe without critical security responsibilities and reinforcing the belief that diplomacy, not deterrence will assure peace. Third, both practices made the temptation to pursue defense capabilities for reasons other than security irresistible.

These practices were challenged with the Balkan wars in the 1990s. It was then that Europeans became aware that most of their troops were un-deployable and military equipment either unavailable or unsuitable for managing crises in their neighborhood. Lord Robertson, NATO's Secretary General famously commented that European alliance members maintained two million troops but were able to deploy less than ten percent.[8]

Since the Balkan wake-up call Europeans have struggled to transform their militaries into flexible, light and, above all, deployable forces. They have largely abolished conscription, relying more on professional armies. But progress has been slow and the lack of a shared strategic culture has turned military transformation into another national, not common, project. As a result, there is little coordination across the alliance and opportunities for efficiencies through collaboration are missed. As Vasilis Margaras sums up, 'Europeans have different views on the use of force, different defense traditions and diverging geopolitical interests; none of which makes for a common strategic culture'.[9]

NATIONAL INDIVIDUALISM

It is hard to exaggerate the persistence of national individualism and its impact on the emergence of common European policies and goals in defense and security. While the Soviet Union existed, American leadership and a European willingness to follow obviated the need for Europeans to define their interests. The presence of the Soviet threat assured transatlantic consensus on doctrine and strategy. The alliance relied on strong hierarchies that placed the US at the top as Europe's security provider and the Soviet threat uppermost as a shared strategic challenge. These hierarchies are gone. The global balance of power is shifting from Europe and the transatlantic region towards Asia; transnational extremism, regional instabilities, and the spread of weapons of mass destruction point towards new risks and challenges beyond the transatlantic space.

It is against this backdrop that Europe must face up to the reality that despite more than sixty years of cooperation in NATO and more than fifty years of European integration there is little commonality in thinking strategically. The economic crisis of the past several years has exposed the prevailing fragmentation of Europe's defense and exacerbated the need for cohesion.[10]

Not only must European states do more, they must do more together and what they do together must create financial and performance efficiencies. In the European Union, this recognition is represented with the concept of 'pooling & sharing' where the focus is on preserving and enhancing national military capabilities through more intensified defense cooperation.[11] In NATO, the concept of 'smart defense' too emphasizes collaboration to build capabilities and reduce duplication and redundancy.[12] Pooling resources in innovative ways, thinking 'smartly' about the needs of future missions, and communicating effectively across national procurement agencies, has become the single most important priority for both NATO and European Union force planning.

Currently, 17 NATO allies spend 1.5% of GDP or less on defense. These cutbacks exacerbate Europe's chronic defense under-spending. NATO data shows that over the past ten years Europeans defense spending has not kept pace with increases in GDP and not recovered from the initial downsizing following the end of the Cold War. Of special concern are the disproportional cutbacks which have affected NATO's and the EU's newer members. Poland and the Baltic States, for example, could not participate in the Libya operation since they lacked appropriate equipment. For both NATO and the EU these developments are detrimental to political cohesion and risk sharing. When NATO forces leave Afghanistan in 2014, domestic pressures to decrease defense budgets further may even rise especially if the economic crisis continues to demand austerity measures. The return of forces from Afghanistan will deprive governments of the argument that resources need to be in place to meet mission goals. With neither NATO nor the EU engaged in sizeable missions, defense budgets become vulnerable. Moreover, with both NATO and the EU drawing on the same shrinking resources, rising competition between the two is likely.[13]

To make a bad situation worse, declining overall defense resources have taken their toll on defense investment. More than half of the European allies spend over 50% of their defense budget on personnel. In 2011, for example, eight countries spent 20% and seven spent less than 10% of their budget on major equipment. Since there are 28 European NATO members there is an equally fragmented defense industrial base and Europeans do not receive the spending efficiencies a more integrated market would offer. Christian Mölling foresees the emergence of 'Bonsai-Armies', ever smaller and less capable forces claiming to cover the spectrum of a modern military but ultimately unable to deliver effectively. Without a corresponding reduction in level of ambition, he argues, Europe's forces will be stretched intolerably.[14]

Hence the notion of intensified defense cooperation makes a great deal of sense. Why struggle on one's own in generating capability when likely missions will see Europeans next to one another on the ground? If defense has become a question of financial affordability, does it not make more sense to combine efforts?

As defense cooperation is fast becoming the new mantra of the European and transatlantic discourse, several factors need to be considered in order to evaluate the extent to which new cooperation proposals are likely to improve military capabilities.

Most European militaries rely on long traditions in force planning and institutions that have socialized generations of planners. If not ossified, processes and institutions perform poorly, complacent as the level of political tolerance for inefficiencies remains high and leadership fails to canvass change.

Most importantly, however, is to consider what the goals of intensified defense cooperation might be. Since no single European state is able to provide and sustain a full spectrum of military capability for high intensity operations, it is reasonable to argue that the goal of defense cooperation is to achieve the highest degree of interoperability possible. This is 'the ability of systems, units or forces to provide and accept services from other systems, units or forces and use the services so exchanged to enable them to operate effectively together'.[15] For the EU interoperability means autonomous performance across the whole range of Petersberg Tasks, from rescue to combat missions. For NATO, interoperability is about allies joining American-led coalitions, being able to inter-operate with American troops and equipment. Whether Europeans engage in EU or NATO missions, their national forces should be able to smoothly integrate at the place of operations. Anything short of this impacts the mission negatively.

At the same time, however, US-led missions can be expected to be very different from European-led missions. The United States has a global strategic outlook emulated in Europe only by the UK and France. The US also has a strong tradition of utilizing high-end technology especially in the areas of command, control and communication as well as ISR. For Europeans inter-phasing with American troops requires a much higher standard of equipment than currently available and much greater investment in defense technology than Europe appears ready to advance. EU-led missions, though including the use of force, are grounded in peacekeeping and peace-building. Europe still sees itself as reacting to contingencies, not as shaping its doctrines, force structures and force postures to anticipate systemic change.

US-European differences in strategic outlook are enormous but any effort to improve European military capabilities will have to take this into account. Each European state has only one military hence it must determine how it will maintain standards of interoperability. Defense cooperation with a focus on low end capabilities for example does not enhance the kind of interoperability complex missions require. What are needed are highly mobile forces fully conversant with state of the art enabling technologies. What Europe can bring to the table will determine what it can accomplish and with whom. While the capability gap with the United States is large and growing, European are also challenged to work with each other effectively. With only Britain and France investing significantly in military capabilities, interoperability among Europeans is threatened too, questioning the collective ability to satisfy Petersberg Tasks ambitions. Especially new EU and NATO members have fast turned into security consumers and miss the mark of defense investment by a large margin.[16]

Last, high level political support for defense cooperation is critical not least to reform ingrained ways of thinking and established practices. Interoperability in NATO will become more demanding and has already eliminated many European militaries from high end operations. To act as an alliance, to share risks and responsibilities, requires the ability to make contributions that enhance performance at the operational level. The prevailing economic situation in most European countries suggests that interoperability in both NATO and the EU will be severely affected. Though most European countries are cutting defense budgets, only those who hold a strategic perspective can be expected to nonetheless preserve essential interoperability capacities. Being able to work with the US shaping international order is a prime national interest for the UK and France. For others, finding the right fit for their military in Europe and in transatlantic relations will inevitably become more difficult. Being left behind becomes a real possibility.

In sum, chronic under-spending on defense, low levels of defense investment, the absence of a strategic culture, and declining interoperability with US forces and among European militaries themselves characterize Europe's defense condition.[17] The economic crisis brings further erosion. The question of what the goal of intensified defense cooperation should aim to accomplish is therefore critical. More than the mantra of summit meetings, future defense cooperation is perhaps Europe's last opportunity to collectively carve out a meaningful military partnership with the United States and define itself as a strategic actor within CSDP. Failure will diminish the NATO alliance and Europe as a strategic actor in international affairs. Europe can lead missions but these are likely to be small and reactive to events. Likewise, Europe can participate in NATO-led operations but its contribution will necessarily be non-essential, a fig leaf to American leadership.

Alternatively, failure will invite the renationalization of defense where institutions are irrelevant and NATO as an alliance as well as the EU as a security actor have no influence on shaping the international system. Individual countries will supplant any notion of 'Europe', align with the United States as their best option for meaningful international engagement, and abandon the expectation of collective European action beyond territorial defense. If Europe is unable to create a meaningful defense and security entity in NATO and through the EU, individual countries may see greater opportunity going it alone. The Anglo-French defense cooperation agreement of 2010 is the most telling example of by-passing European institutions.[18]

CHANGING PRACTICES?

The above issues reveal the intimate connection between military capabilities, or the lack thereof, and questions about the balance between state and institutional power. Ever since Europe embarked on its integration project, this balance has been at the heart of determining the very nature of integration itself. Whether and how to share power with the institutions of integration, has been an almost permanent negotiation in the history of European integration. The instances where a true transfer of sovereignty has taken place do not include defense which has remained staunchly national.[19]

The only attempt at creating true integration in the defense field was a proposal by France almost sixty years ago to evolve a European Defense Community (EDC). Had the EDC been launched, it would have led to an unprecedented transfer of national sovereignty to a commonly administered authority. There would have been a European army with all the attendant integration of defense industrial bases, procurement planning, and force generation. The EDC still serves as a powerful idea for advocates of greater political integration for whom defense integration is an essential part of political union. For others, the thought of losing national command authority is unacceptable and any attempt at reviving the EDC encounters principal resistance.

For the most part, the absence of consensus among Europeans about the role of defense in the overall integration enterprise has meant that defense cooperation has not been connected to a political design. Indeed, though 'the EU's role in international security has become central to the contemporary narrative of European integration', it has become the subject of a European level debate only due to financial pressures and thinly veiled American threats of losing interest in Europe as a strategic partner.[20]

Such defense cooperation as has taken place up to now aims to enhance national capabilities in recognition of the fact that to maintain sovereignty, cooperation is an essential enabler. No European country is able to maintain full spectrum capabilities relying on national budgets alone. Hence significant defense cooperation projects have focused on those capabilities no single state would have been able to procure alone or only with great difficulty. Especially in aerospace, cooperation can point to some notable successes. At all times, however, it was to enhance national capabilities that drove the desire for cooperation, not the lofty goal of communitarization of requirements.[21] Cooperation did not erode national command authority. It was an obvious practical way to stretch precious resources and to stay ahead of technological change.

It is critical to appreciate the persistently national dimension of defense. Often cloaked in European rhetoric, especially under such notions as NATO's 'European pillar' and the EU's 2003 Security Strategy and its Common Security and Defense Policy, defense remains a national prerogative. Europeans think and do defense nationally, periodic assertions of commonality notwithstanding.[22]

An immediate consequence of national orientation is the limits this imposes on innovation in defense cooperation. If previous defense cooperation has allowed Europeans to maintain sovereignty, would not enhanced cooperation achieve similar sovereignty gains? The case can be made that 'pooling resources' is indeed a path towards maintaining sovereignty in times of ever more scarce resources and growing international responsibilities. Interestingly, however, it is not clear how current proposals for enhanced cooperation would deal with the evidently national character of defense. Pooling and sharing capabilities is not merely an advanced version of previously practiced defense cooperation, it is fundamentally different. It involves sharing and jointly operating capabilities and even allowing others to generate capabilities one does not own oneself. In fact, if pooling and sharing is not seen in this way, all cooperation initiatives will lead to national enhancement, not European-level capability building. Hence the degree to which new cooperation initiatives are able to challenge inherently national approaches to defense cooperation emerges as a critical benchmark against which to measure their true innovation potential.

Under conditions of resource austerity, innovation must include progressive Europeanization. Traditional approaches do not cumulatively lead to Europeanization of military capabilities. Less than ten percent of European procurement is done multi-

nationally. Historically the incentive for cooperation stems from nationally driven military requirements and a desire to maintain national defense industries. How else is it to be explained, as Faleg and Giovannini show, that among 'the top 50 EU defense companies, there are 13 producers of aircraft, 10 of missiles, 9 of military vehicles, 8 of ships. This situation appears inefficient if compared to those of the US where, with a defense market two times bigger, there are 12 producers of aircraft, 5 of missiles, 8 of military vehicles, and just 4 of ships'.[23] It is difficult to take proposals on intensified defense cooperation seriously while sovereignty is understood as an effort to maximize autonomy.[24]

Pooling & sharing and smart defense rely on a different vision of sovereignty. Here, the emphasis appears to be on the range of capabilities required to accomplish likely missions and the most efficient ways of procuring these capabilities. These initiatives are about effective engagement with international security challenges, not about maintaining the traditional bond between state sovereignty and autonomy. Defense cooperation prioritizes the mission over defense autonomy. Indeed, autonomy is given a negative connotation.

What takes priority is the ability to act, to underpin diplomacy with the threat and use of force or, at a minimum, deny potential adversaries the option of degrading European values and interest, wherever they may be challenged. Military capabilities also play an essential role in shaping the international environment. European values and interests may be challenged not by direct threats by the general condition of the environment in which values and interests are brought to bear. Zones of instability can lead to degenerating regional security with detrimental effects to trade flows and resource access. Managing such crises may involve the use of military means, among others. Hence Europe's ability to successfully manage local instabilities has strategic consequences with direct impact on the citizens of the European Union. The range of capabilities required for missions of crisis management are fundamentally different from those of the Cold War where tank battles were a war planner´s staple and wars still had clearly identifiable front lines. Where civil wars threaten regional stability as in the MENA region, for example, there is no front or rear and small arms are the weapons of choice. 'War among the people' blurs and erodes traditional concepts of military operations and reshuffles the relationship between what is civilian and what is military.[25]

None of this is to suggest that the bar on the use of force should be lowered in any way. On the contrary, having an appropriate military capability does not translate into frivolous use. What it does allow though is effectively exploring a range of options that does, should national authorities decide, include the use of military means. In the absence of such military capability, the range of options is necessarily limited. In the past, Europeans have heavily relied on the United States to fill in the capability gaps in their own forces and shied away from coherent plans to redress these shortfalls. At NATO summits in Prague in 2002, Istanbul in 2004, and Riga in 2006, commitments to capability improvement were made; the EU's 1999 Cologne Summit, the Lisbon Treaty of 2009 as well as the NATO's New Strategic Concept of 2010, all attest to declining capabilities and the need to spend more and more effectively to improve Europe's ability to act.

Enhancing the ability to act is at the heart of pooling & sharing and smart defense. Therefore, instead of connecting national sovereignty with an increasingly hollow notion of autonomy, sovereignty should be connected to what Europe actually wants and needs to accomplish as a credible international actor. The emphasis must be on Europe and its collective ability to act since no single nation is able to act alone. The sovereignty benefits will, however, accrue to the individual nation, too and enable it to maintain an active foreign policy, fully engaged in a range of activities. The key difference between this and traditional defense cooperation is the introduction of a European level capability as the preferred way of doing business. The sovereignty benefits to individual nations will not be in national military hardware but in empowering a collective European ability to act. Foregoing unaffordable national ventures for cooperation on the basis of comparative advantage makes economic and strategic sense. Traditional approaches to defense cooperation increasingly make less sense economically and strategically and are unlikely to fill the capability gaps.

The challenge to Europeans then seems to be whether they can muster the political will to start thinking defense at the European level. Clearly, the incentives to do so have been present for more than a decade, now made more pressing due to the fiscal crisis and America's reordering of its own strategic priorities. A Europeanization of defense would sent important signals to the United States, and the rest of the world, that Europe is intent on living up to its ambitions, that national defense policies reflect overall European strategic goals, and that Europe

has a recognizably coherent defense posture. The more defense integration Europe can accomplish the more clout it will have as a partner to the US and as a claimant of its values and interests.

Disincentives, however, are formidable and have in the past derailed attempts at defense consolidation within a European framework. In fact, Europe has not been the preferred option and countries have relied on pairing up with others of a similar strategic culture (Britain and France), comparable historical experiences hence similar points of departure (the Visegrad Four), or common cultural affinities (the Nordic States). At times, Europeans have opted for opportunities arising from similar requirements and a coincidence of procurement cycles. The overall experience of multinational cooperation, however, has been mixed. National specifications as well as technical problems and performance issues have delayed service entry and increased cost in many instances.[26]

Scholars are also increasingly pointing to inherent organizational problems that distinguish collaborative procurement in the defense sector making it difficult for states to create efficient governance structures. As De Vore points out, the political commitments on the part of states to collaboratively procure defense equipment levy a high cost on possible defection from the joint endeavor. States defecting from collaboration bear high reputational cost as well as financial penalties. These negative consequences of state defection empower defense contractors to behave opportunistically vis-à-vis states. Costs are inflated, efficiency sacrificed and schedules overrun. And, given the uniqueness of the defense market where the state is most often the only buyer and its ability to effectively monitor industry's efficiency is limited, contractors are in a position to conceal inefficiencies and price inflation.

In addition, De Vore argues, contractors in collaborative ventures fear declining competitiveness as collaboration may involve a high level of company to company information and know-how sharing. Hence contractors will tolerate collaboration inefficiencies if this preserves their overall market competiveness. De Vore projects that 'taken to an extreme, such behavior may render collaboration so inefficient as to obviate the many advantages initially anticipated'.[27] Thus far, no multilateral cooperation model satisfies the need for efficient production at reasonably predictable cost.

Even more of an obstacle to defense consolidation than the vicissitudes of managing large, complex projects multi-laterally is the fear of long term dependence on others for essential combat capability hence specialization is eschewed. Especially Europe's larger nations, Germany, France, UK, and Italy are keen to avoid the loss of key military capabilities. The overriding question for these states is whether capabilities under joint command authority would in fact be available when needed. No country would want to be subject to another's mission caveats or rules of engagement. Especially when considering combat missions states want to have the greatest possible control over deployment options. Whether and how to be involved in any one operation is a national responsibility no state wants to out-source. At a minimum, firm guarantees would have to be in place on how operational control over jointly held assets would be assured. At present, no such framework is conceivable.[28] The strategic consequences of national specialization trump economic arguments in favor of pooling & sharing as well as smart defense. Henius and McDonald argue that national specialization did not even happen when the purpose of the alliance was confined to Article 5 missions, when expectations of collective defense were at their most credible. In the new security environment of non-Article 5 crisis management and cooperative security commitments, different threat perceptions and domestic political constraints lead to shifting coalitions whose constellation is unpredictable. Hence the new security environment is likely to inhibit national military specialization.[29]

The measure of defense collaboration Europe has experienced thus far is not accidental but reflects country-specific preferences. It is interesting to note that neither the sum of joint procurement projects nor the consistent rhetoric encouraging more multilateral initiatives, nor the institutional resources for more collaboration at the European and NATO levels have impacted significantly on nationally focused thinking. This persistent lack of a European-wide or transatlantic defense planning and procurement culture sends strong signals to proposals that presume the existence of such a culture or under rate the obstacles to be overcome to create it. At the European level collaboration has remained bi- or tri-lateral patchwork and inherently inefficient.[30] At a time of fiscal austerity, defense collaboration that yields no financial benefits should not merely follow the simple logic of 'together is always better than alone'.

Even if we set aside collaboration inefficiencies, a key challenge to pooling & sharing and smart defense is to get EU and NATO members to 'buy in'. At the alliance's Chicago Summit, May 20-21, 2012, national leaders accepted the call for significant capability improvements. NATO must acquire the military assets necessary to meet the security challenges it identified in its New Strategic Concept in 2010. There is no doubt that the allies understand the urgency of capability improvement and that scarce resources point in the direction of collaboration. But, once back in their capitals, will they implement what they agreed to? How will they interpret their commitments? Will they devote the resources? Will they lead national discussions about Europe's security responsibilities? In short, will this time be different?

PLURALISTIC AND AMALGAMATED SECURITY COMMUNITIES

Looming large in any discussion of Europe's defense cooperation record is the question of how much defense integration can reasonably be achieved and what kind of community can be created in the defense sector. Strong national beliefs in sovereignty in defense affairs necessarily limit defense integration and pose significant systemic obstacles to what can be accomplished. Europeans have chosen to maintain national defense traditions and to shield these traditions from attempts to achieve real communality. Hence the conditions under which Europe creates defense capabilities closely resemble what Karl Deutsch calls a pluralistic security community, a community based on national sovereignty.[31]

As a model for building security in Europe after World War II the pluralistic security community has worked well. Europeans no longer pose a threat to one another. Some sixty years of integration have generated an unprecedented transnational network of interdependence. Despite different national interpretations of what 'Europe' is, for each state 'Europe' has become an integral part of its own narrative. Integration has had a critical impact on how each European state defines its identity. Germany, for example, closely connects its own identity with its embeddedness in European and transatlantic institutions. The UK on the other hand holds fast to an identity that emphasizes national distinctness and expresses this in opposition to a European identity. For Deutsch's pluralistic security community it is important to maintain national sovereignty, to integrate on the basis of a collective need but preserve national independence. Sovereignty takes priority over integration. National governments are in charge and any sovereignty transfer takes place at their discretion. Each state can decide what measure of integration is appropriate. This model of a security community fits well with Europe's defense cooperation experience. Cooperation happens when it serves national purposes.

Deutsch's second model of a security community is more demanding. An amalgamated security community is more about the community than the state. Here, retaining 'the legal independence of separate governments', the hallmark of a pluralistic security community, gives way to deep integration.[32] Sovereignty is progressively relinquished with the aim of creating true political union. The United States, for example, is an amalgamated security community where previously independent states are joined in a federal union with one central government. While member states retain important functions, defense is the responsibility of the federal government.

Both forms of community have advantages and disadvantages. Quite clearly, a pluralistic security community provides for the main purpose of a security community which is to eliminate war as a means of political change among its members; it identifies a common purpose to which all members subscribe. It encourages transparency in members' dealings with one another and creates a predictable internal environment. Most importantly, a pluralistic security community lengthens the shadow of the future by creating 'dependable expectations of peaceful change'.[33] What is interesting in the present discussion about Europe's defense cooperation is that a pluralistic security community offers critical security gains without making demands on member's sovereignty. It eliminates the security dilemma and reduces the defense burden. Europe's single market, the Schengen border agreement, and NATO's integrated military command are all examples of what a pluralistic security community can accomplish once the threat of war no longer crowds the political agenda.

Potential drawbacks to this model of security integration stem in the first instance from its approach to integration itself. A plurality of states is primed to view integration as a form of nationally determined cooperation. The format of cooperation can be intense and carried on over long periods; it will always be, however, a form of cooperation along functional lines. The model does not contain mechanisms for its transformation into political union. It does not offer a vision of the future that is different from the building blocks that led to its creation. States remain in charge, continuously negotiating among one another, assured that negotiations are the only accepted way of resolving differences. A pluralistic security community then is neither a slippery slope towards political union nor a portal to much deeper integration. It is an organizational form

with distinct boundaries, clear purpose, and states firmly in the driver's seat. In short, it affects state behavior in one particular area namely the role of force in their relations with each other. This focus on behavior rather than identity makes pluralistic security communities compatible with the prevailing state system. Certain norms are privileged by consent and all abide by the rules. Interestingly, a pluralistic security community is attractive to states precisely because it makes no demands on their national identity. Individual national approaches to defense and security are not challenged and different strategic cultures can persist at the same time.

Security communities also have an external dimension and it is here where their utility must also prove itself. If the internal benefits of a pluralistic security community are as described above, how do these benefits translate into the international environment? How well does Europe's pluralistic security community serve Europe's goals in the wider world? Does it provide leverage commensurate with Europe's economic weight, global interests and strategic responsibilities? In short, can it be credibly argued that the organizational form of security integration matches expected functions?

The evidence points to increasing disutility and dysfunction. The traditional pluralistic security community is not generating the kinds of capabilities Europe needs in the 21st century security environment. Pluralism encourages individualist approaches in defense, and national add-ons for jointly developed capabilities. It positively discourages the growth of a common approach to defense cooperation and renders largely irrelevant agencies created for cooperation and political commitments made. If, as NATO leaders expound, Smart Defense is about changing the way the alliance thinks about generating capabilities, the current organizational concept is ill-suited to elicit appropriate change. Existing ways of thinking will offer resistance.

To elaborate, Europe's pluralistic security community is historically grounded in the international relations of the Cold War. Underwritten by the United States, it flourished under US leadership and engendered an unprecedented period of peace on the continent. It is well known, however, that with the end of the Cold War Europe has struggled with a whole host of issues, all related to determine its place in a globalized international system. These issues have revealed weaknesses in Europe's integration structures, most recently in Europe's fiscal crisis where the lack of a fiscal union exposed the vulnerabilities of the single currency. And, in defense too, we see extraordinary weaknesses stemming from countries' habit to satisfy their pluralistic preferences. While during the Cold War and some years beyond the United States could be relied on to step in and provide, as it did in the Balkans in the 1990's and 'from behind' as in Libya, it is increasingly obvious that the pluralistic security community is falling short of effectively adapting to the new environment. A security system designed to preference individuality cannot reasonably be expected to develop common purpose. Hence the absence of a European strategic culture which would presume a convergence of separate national strategic cultures; a pluralistic security community is the wrong place to seek it.[34]

Beyond the calls for greater ability to act, however looms the issue of power, how the military tool is both expression of power and means to stem the rise of unfavorable power balances. The biggest elephant in the room in many European discussions about peacekeeping, peace support operations, and crisis management, the links between security and development, and security sector reform – all topics European elites are well versed in – is the neglect of power. The pluralistic security community has created a Europe at peace with itself. In large part this achievement was accomplished through a down-grading of the utility of military force as an expression of national competition. Power is about domination, denial, and balancing for advantage, all terms of a vocabulary in a now archaic political dictionary. Indeed, Europe's pluralistic security community is based on practices of persuasion and compromise and encourages their perpetuation.

Yet, as Robert Cooper reminds us, Europe's post-modernity is not emulated elsewhere.[35] The rest of the world is by and large steeped in the very power politics the pluralistic security community has successfully eliminated. There, actors compete for influence, spend treasure on military capabilities, and seek to position themselves to exploit future options; hence America's shift in focus towards Asia to counter the rapidly expanding influence of regional and even global challengers.

This situation puts Europe at an intellectual disadvantage. Having divested themselves of traditional power politics, Europeans have little ground on which to rehabilitate power as a means of diplomacy and force as its ultimate guarantor. Notions of 'soft-power' have gained legitimacy in public

discourses; seen as an alternative to hard power, not part of a spectrum of different tools that can be mixed and matched. Hard power is a source of division and dissent among Europe's elites and publics as was amply shown in the Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya.

As a result, Europeans are slow to embrace ideas of international conduct reminiscent of the blunt power instruments they themselves have disavowed. When Nick Witney writes: 'The fact is that military power is important in determining how the world is to be run and the rules and values by which it would work. Unless it gets over its discomfort with hard power, Europe's half-hearted efforts to improve the efficiency of its defense spending will continue to fail,'[36] he is not at all confident that Europe will be able to 'avoid being marginalized in a world where newer and more hard-nosed powers make the rules and assert their interests and values…'.[37] Hence in addition to emphasizing sovereign independence, the pluralistic security community has socialized states into a particular understanding of the instruments of power. More efficient defense spending therefore will require less attachment to the notion of sovereignty coupled with an appreciation of military capabilities as legitimate instruments of international influence. Quite clearly, without the acceptance of hard power it will be difficult politically to make the case for pooling sovereignty in defense. After all, why would greater defense efficiency be sought if hard power capabilities were not seriously considered useful? If hard power is not seen as enhancing Europe's ability to entice, persuade, and, if needed, coerce others, calls for defense cooperation lack essential political rationale.

With Deutsch's amalgamated security community one is looking at a very different organizational form. This community relies on a political framework which is why it only exists within a state where a constitution regulates rights and obligations. Federalists who favor the ultimate creation of a European state see an amalgamated security community as indispensable. Political union is the only guarantee for coherent action. Sovereignty is pooled, resources are bundled, tasks are shared, and missions commonly identified. 26 European NATO Defense Ministers and 27 EU Defense Ministers (Denmark does not take part in CSDP) bound by consensus rule do not meet the requirements of an amalgamated security community. Though Europeans share a preference for 'soft power' and emphasize a broad interpretation of security, there is very little coordination at the policy levels. Sharing preferences does not automatically lead to actionable joint policies. Instead, it serves as a rhetorical umbrella for ideas of commonality detached from what is possible in the political playing field.

An amalgamated security community presumes common purpose and organizational structures that reflect it. Far too often, Europeans create structures for cooperation that presume the common purpose of an amalgamated security community only to find that the lack of commonality marginalizes them. The NATO Rapid Reaction Force (NRF), the EU's multinational Battle Groups, the European Defense Agency (EDA), and the provision for Permanent Structured Cooperation (PSC) in the EU's Lisbon Treaty, are all examples of the rhetoric of an amalgamated security community in a pluralistic security community. It comes as no surprise that neither the NRF nor the Battle Groups have been deployed, that the EDA is struggling to get attention, and PSC has stalled. Europeans speak the language of an amalgamated security community but they do so in the context of the pluralistic security community they actually live in. They profess unity of effort but ultimately follow separate paths.

As a result, their claims and ambitions are far ahead of their actual ability to deliver. This explains the often profound mismatch between words and actions. Europe talks the talk but doesn't do the walk.

Europeans are aware that the international community expects greater cooperation in the defense and security sector. The demand for European civilian and military missions has increased and led to more than two dozen EU missions to date. Europeans have responded to the calls from the international community, though missions often came together only slowly and most of them were small. In other words, there is evidence that EU involvement in international crisis management is both desired and, in some fashion, acted upon. Closing the gap between the rhetoric of action and action itself is what Pooling & Sharing and Smart Defense mean to accomplish.

Yet these and previous defense cooperation initiatives are launched in the first instance to reduce the obstacles to cooperation inherent in the pluralistic security community; to increase the community's responsiveness and inject a degree of efficiency into its operations. Their goal is not to move towards an amalgamated security community. Instead, the hope is that a Europe gains greater defense coherence,

more capabilities, and greater operational flexibility; that Europe, faced with declining defense resources, will be able to muster the political will to follow through.

Comparing the two different security communities it is apparent that Europeans find themselves structurally anchored in a pluralistic community where state sovereignty rules. At the same time, we also note Europe's international engagement and its desire to make a positive contribution to international order. Europe no longer looks exclusively inward. The pacification of relations under the pluralistic security community has been a historical success and Europe has begun to address issues well beyond its boundaries. As its commercial interests have taken on strategic significance, Europe is compelled to be concerned about resource access, the freedom of the high seas, and regional power balances. European leaders recognize the commonality in many of the challenges they face. Indeed, their rhetoric embraces the fact that sovereign boundaries are porous, if not entirely meaningless. Increasingly, this very rhetoric is a source of entrapment where lofty speeches, followed by limited and uncoordinated action, make Europe look either unserious or incompetent, or both.

From a structural perspective, however, an amalgamated security community is not in the offing even though the limitations of the pluralistic security community are evident. The conditions for it are not in place and cannot to be created by fiat. Advocates of deeper defense and security integration should take note.

Deutsch was aware of the possible tension between the foundational objective of a pluralistic security community and the requirements for its endurance. He was skeptical that peace among members alone provides sufficient cohesion for pursuing additional goals. Once peace ceases to be novel and becomes normal, its pursuit no longer provides the overriding goal for the community. Not that the commitment to peaceful relations has waned. Rather, the attainment of peace does not guarantee unity of actions. For instance, Deutsch observes that keeping the peace among themselves may not be the only purpose community members have. What matters too, is 'joint capacity for action' so that the community is 'capable of acting as a unit in other ways and for other purposes'.[38] His historical research revealed that while pluralistic security communities make fewer demands on members and are therefore more easily created than amalgamated security communities, it is the latter that have the capacity to 'act quickly and effectively'.[39] Deutsch argues that pluralistic security communities are preferable only as peaceful relations between members are the overwhelming goal.

One may now add that as the practices of peace have become deeply embedded in relations between European member states and peace is a normal condition, the lack of capacity to 'act quickly and effectively' is exposed and shows the limitations of the security community. In other words, peace in Europe is no longer making headlines. As difficult as it appears to grow security communities elsewhere, in Europe itself, the non-use of force has long ceased to be exceptional. Hence the primary threat to the endurance of a pluralistic security community seems not to arise from an erosion of shared values, as suggested by some, but from achieving its very purpose.[40] As peace becomes normal and is taken for granted, a sense of purpose is lost. Following this logic, we can better understand why Europe seeks to be a global actor and is adrift at the same time. The tension Deutsch identified is clearly visible. Acting globally reflects the rise of community goals other than peace at home; the lack of unity of purpose shows the structural limitations of the community itself. Resolving this tension without either undoing the internal achievements of the pluralistic security community or promising a unity of effort that cannot be delivered, will determine the future of the transatlantic security community.

Following Deutsch's logic, we need to consider whether it makes sense for Europe to pursue 'joint capacity for action'. By nature, a pluralistic security community has limited potential for joint action. That this is so is evident from the European record in defense. To ask for more under conditions of pluralism is to insist that structural limitations can somehow be overcome or set aside, that capacity for joint action can be achieved nonetheless. Deutsch, however, would caution against such thinking. A pluralistic security community is not a lesser form of an amalgamated security community that can be enhanced to become something more comprehensive. An amalgamated security community differs not in degree but in kind. Its capacity for joint action comes at a price namely, the elimination of pluralistic security choices. Hence pushing a pluralistic security community to behave like an amalgamated one simply creates new sources of disagreement among members. Debates across the Atlantic on some members not spending enough on defense, resisting cooperative initiatives, imposing

mission caveats, or not participating in missions, are already legion. These are also evidence of community members struggling to contain the political fallout of national approaches to defense and security planning that rubs painfully against calls for collective action.

Deutsch raises complex issues about the interaction between the structure and the performance of a security community. Structure imposes performance limitations, sets the boundaries for what is possible. Structure also can be at odds with the ambitions of the community when its original purpose has been internalized and new ambitions take hold. Deutsch would argue that peace among members, the foundational goal of the pluralistic security community, must be preserved since no capacity for joint action can be presumed to emerge from lesser integrated communities. Hence Deutsch's concern was first and foremost to explore how pluralistic security communities come in being that is how peace can become constitutive in relations between states, not how they perform. Nonetheless, the distinction he makes between pluralistic and amalgamated security communities are logical and compelling: structure determines the nature and range of choices open to the community. An amalgamated security community does not suffer from lack of unity. Decision-making authority is centralized and capacity to act assured. Structure, in this case, has an enabling function. By contrast, the pluralistic security community is hampered by decentralized decision-making, where consensus on external action only slowly, if at all emerges, emerges. Here, structure is confining, closely tied to the original purpose of the community and reliant on members' ability to rally behind new community goals.

As we think about the future of the transatlantic security community, we need to think in terms of the confining structure the pluralistic security community imposes. The extent to which the community is able to satisfy that 'men have often wanted more' than peace, as Deutsch puts it, must be carefully explored.[41] If pluralism, from a structural perspective, is a hindrance to developing joint capacity for action, how can the transatlantic security community meet the security challenges of the 21st century? How can it evolve appropriate tools?

Specifically, can security integration be advanced to a level sufficient to deliver the capabilities necessary without changing the pluralistic structure of the European state system? Can Europe get the kind of defense cooperation it needs without political union? These questions go to the heart of the European integration project and raise issues of compatibility between the internal environment Europe has created to deal with its own historical problem of war and what it now needs to effectively perform internationally. In some fashion, Europe needs to reinvent itself, strike new bargains between the structure it wants to preserve and the tasks it needs to perform.

These questions also move us into a post-Deutschian setting where issues of emergence of security communities, the core of Deutsch's work, matter less than issues that concern the community's relationship with its strategic environment. Writing in the mid-1950s Deutsch, though prescient, could not have foreseen either the endurance of the Atlantic community nor the external challenges it now faces. What is of interest now is how the community frames its choices, how it develops options, and how it assesses the price of failure. What matters is the steady evolution of the security community that both preserves and adapts.[42]

The transatlantic community enters this phase of development with a set of shared practices whose merit is uncontested.[43] Decades of security cooperation within the community, peaceful resolution of conflict, consensus politics, and countless opportunities for communication across and between members and community institutions have all contributed to a pervasive sense of how security identity is formed, shared, and practiced. In the aftermath of the Cold War, when states to the East and South of the community wanted to join, the spread of community practices signified both the appeal these practices held for others and the community's ability to make these practices inclusive. As Emanuel Adler shows, NATO, by adopting cooperative security as a central tenet of reaching out to Central and East European countries, became 'a leading institutional agent of the cooperative security community of practice.'[44] Membership for those who wanted to join was carefully prepared especially through cooperative mechanisms put in place within the Partnership for Peace (PfP).

Sharing of security community practices was new for the alliance who had previously engaged its external environment through policies grounded in balance of power thinking where military balances served as barometers of the shifting quality of its external relationships. Leaving behind the practices of balance of power policies and embracing cooperative security,

Adler argues, constitutes a significant innovation in NATO's identity.[45] Now the alliance was no longer primarily against something but stood for something. In essence, the alliance had successfully transformed the shared practices of cooperative security which it had developed to practice peace internally, to serve the spread of the security community. The practice of peace, Vincent Pouliot argues, is not merely the hallmark of a security community but a self-evident way of being.[46] 'Diplomacy,' he explains, 'is the only thinkable way to solve disputes'.[47] It is both context/structure within which problems are perceived and the repertoire with which to solve them.[48] Practicing peace then is about creating and shaping diplomatic solutions that exemplify and reproduce expectations of peaceful change.

The spread of the transatlantic security community, however, replicated the limitations of the erstwhile community. Though new members had to make explicit commitments to embrace the peaceful practices of the community, the pluralistic structure of the transatlantic community itself did not change. Indeed, as new members reproduced expectations of peaceful change, they also reproduced and reaffirmed the community's preference for pluralism. The community evolved in the sense that enlargement meant it became an actor in a significantly expanded space. That allowed it to continue to practice policies of peaceful resolution of disputes, extend the rule of law, and extend the reach of democratic governance.

As significant as EU and NATO enlargement is, its utility as a model for the next step in evolving the transatlantic security community is limited. Spreading the security community on the basis of internally developed practices requires very specific conditions.[49]

In the first instance, institutional membership was extended to those who desired it and met the requested qualifications. Hence security communities spread more easily when membership requirements compel applicants to embrace community practices. Without the incentive of future membership security practices can spread to 'like-minded' states who already share the peaceful disposition of the community. As we will see below, this has taken place and formal membership is not an issue. These states share with the community a common security identity that stems from their own path towards overcoming the politics of the balance of power. They are members by identity, not formal accession.

Second, for the transatlantic security community to meet the challenges of its external environment it has to engage as what it has become through enlargement[50] and in the presence of others 'doing things as well'.[51] Ciuta suggests that the very accomplishments of practicing peace the alliance can point to, do not equip it for practicing cooperative approaches elsewhere. He argues that 'since the features of a security community are different from that of a balance of power built on alliances, the meaning of security is bound to be different in these environments. NATO cannot 'be' a security community and 'do' the things associated with it in an environment which by definition denies the existence of such a NATO.'[52] Moreover, when others are 'doing things as well', as Waever anticipates, their actions may well thwart attempts to develop shared practices of peace. Thus practicing cooperative security in a context governed by balance of power politics where others seek relative gains and practice policies based on coercion runs counter to how NATO security thinking has evolved. What NATO now is and what it does may not serve it well when it encounters unfamiliar terrain.[53]

NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept identifies collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security as the alliance's primary missions.[54] As NATO embarks on operationalizing these missions, several observations can be made based on the previous discussion of security communities. First, pluralism imposes clear limits on the method and direction of evolution. Methodologically it relies on increasing cooperation between sovereign members through sustained message, on institutional salesmanship, and effective marketing of defense cooperation. The central idea is to develop momentum along neo-functionalist lines where spill-over effects would assert themselves and, over time, create commonality and community in defense. In short, 'doing together' would evolve into 'thinking together'; shared cooperation practices would create a new European-level reality diminishing the bond between defense and sovereignty without actually eliminating it.[55] Pooling & sharing and smart defense are but the latest examples of institutional message to foster defense collaboration.

Under conditionals of pluralism the direction of community evolution is guided by engaging external actors who already share a peaceful disposition or might be socialized into shared practices. The pluralistic security community and its emphasis on sovereignty encourage the creation of partnerships. Partners allow complex missions to go forward, enhance the legitimacy of the community's external action and make no demands on community

members' sovereignty preference. Hence the community evolves through cooperative engagement beyond its borders following an expanded vision of its role in global security, not through structural change. Engagement of partners can be both formal and informal depending on collaboration expectations. The security community would see itself in a position of choosing who to cooperate with and on which missions. The only critical variable would be the extent to which interoperability is necessary but that, too, could be assured by picking willing as well as capable partners.[56] In essence, external partnerships would constitute the spread of the security community much like Eastern enlargement has done before. However, unlike Eastern enlargement, where the political goal of membership was clearly defined and supported by all, partnerships extended to distant actors begs the question of what the community's strategic interests are. As Magnus Christiansson argues, 'the 'partnerfication' of NATO raises the issue of what the strategic logic of partnerships actually is.[57]

PARTNERSHIPS AND CAPABILITY BUILDING

In an alliance capabilities are usually created by the member states. NATO, however, is not a traditional alliance. Since the end of the Cold War NATO has augmented its capabilities through a series of programs that allow non-NATO members to contribute to alliance missions. Through the Partnership for Peace (PfP) and the European-American Partnership Council (EAPC), the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD), and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI), NATO has developed networks of partners in the transatlantic region, North Africa, and the Middle East. NATO also maintains a host of relationships with countries that lie outside these regions, including Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and South Korea. In the present discussion on evolving the transatlantic pluralistic security community, three observations about these networks can be offered.

First, the pluralistic security community as currently configured has strong support from its members. Though aware that more military capabilities could be more efficiently generated through greater defense integration, member nations prefer a high degree of sovereignty over defense resource efficiency. Under these conditions it makes sense for NATO to look elsewhere to boost its capabilities and connect with states whose values and interests are compatible with the alliance's own.

Second, reaching out to non-NATO members has important implications for the pluralistic security community. On the one hand, it reduces the pressures for defense integration and offers alternative paths towards capability enhancement. On the other hand, formalized relations with non-members carry the potential of significantly expanding NATO's role, turning it into a global security provider.

Third, these relationships raise questions about the very nature of the alliance. US leaders are keen to involve NATO in their strategic perspective of regional and global security issues. Europeans are divided on the extent to which NATO should raise perceptions of global reach. At NATO's Riga summit in 2006, for example, Germany and France opposed the creation of a 'global NATO'. Others, notably newer alliance members from Europe's east, are wary of the alliance's expeditionary leanings altogether and still view its primary purpose as collective defense at local and regional levels

Such preferences may be rendered moot if partnership networks take on greater importance for NATO capabilities.[58] As partners become more critical to NATO missions and as they gain influence in NATO's planning and decision-making processes, it will be difficult for members to resist the progressive globalization of the alliance. Indeed, the more they resist the more reliant on partners NATO may become and the more global its role might be. Moreover, progressive reliance on partnerships might encourage members free-riding. If missions are possible through contributions by partners, members may become reluctant to invest in maintaining their own capabilities.

Hence seeking to improve NATO's military capabilities through working with non-member nations is far from straightforward. It involves questions about the relationship between members and non-members, partner troop contributions and alliance decision-making, and the very direction in which NATO evolves. These questions are important to ask since the alliance has already taken strides towards globalizing its reach.

For the pluralistic security community it is clear that capability enhancement through partnerships around the globe must be part of a larger, strategic discussion about where NATO is going and who its most important interlocutors will be; a reflection about the balance between a territorial and a functional focus. Partners can fulfill many useful roles for the alliance, supplying extra capabilities being but one of them. In turn, they shape what NATO is and how the alliance sets about realizing member interests. As Rebecca Moore argues, 'cooperation cannot be an end in and of itself'.[59] NATO needs to determine what it means to have partners across the globe. Thus far, the technicalities of arrangements to facilitate the alliance's working relationships with partners have commanded greater prominence than their political and strategic purposes. In other words, NATO has focused more attention on how to work with non-members than on the consequences of these relations for its role in international security.[60]

NATO PARTNERSHIP POLICY

NATO's official position is that the alliance needs partners to meet the security challenges of the 21st century.[61] In the early post-cold War years partners were largely those countries who aspired to eventual full alliance membership. For formerly communist Central and East European nations this goal was met in 1999 with the accession of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, and in 2004 with the accession of ten more applicant states. Though NATO's door to new members remains open, no strategically significant enlargement is planned. Membership, of course, is not always what countries that cooperate with NATO aim for. They may prefer an affiliation with the alliance limited to joining NATO-led missions that contribute to stability in their region and/or project their national interests and values. Hence seven partners fought with NATO in Kosovo, twenty-two in Afghanistan, and five in Libya.

Over the past decade NATO has increasingly embraced the concept of partnerships, of allies who want to develop a relationship with NATO without seeking to formally join. Its new Strategic Concept identifies 'cooperative security', working with non-members, as a principal alliance objective. At the Lisbon summit in 2010 major steps were taken to reenergize existing partnership programs, reflecting the evolution of the needs of the alliance and the preferences expressed by partners. Their experience in NATO-led missions had created demands for more flexible partnership arrangements and greater access to NATO planning and decision-making in operations to which they contribute troops and equipment. At NATO itself, the different partnership arrangements had become unwieldy. Political reform in countries transitioning from communism to democracy had initially driven the creation of partnerships and NATO acted as a conduit in the transfer of political values. More recently, the alliance has deemphasized this role, partly due to formal Eastern enlargement but also due to a greater orientation towards missions and military capabilities. NATO no longer aims to impact upon the democratic credentials of its partners. Far more salient is the ability of partners to offer practical cooperation to advance the alliance's security goals.

Deliberations at NATO led to a Foreign Ministers meeting in Berlin in April 2011 where a new partnership policy was agreed. Based on this new policy, 'NATO will develop political dialogue and practical cooperation with any nation across the globe that shares the Alliance's interests in international peace and security. NATO will also engage with key global actors in a flexible and pragmatic manner'. This agreement is a critical step in the development of NATO's relationship with non-members. It allows the alliance to have one centralized approach to all partnerships instead of multiple and differently structured regionally or thematically focused initiatives. More specifically, all partnerships are now part of a single Partnership Cooperation Menu (PCM) comprising some 1,600 events and activities from which partners can construct their relationship with the alliance. Each partner will have an Individual Partnership and Cooperation Program (IPCP) detailing the nature and extent of the partnership. Streamlining partnership structures creates a 'toolbox' for cooperation with the alliance and offers unprecedented opportunities to partners across the globe to access NATO decision-making.[62]

In effect, NATO is turning itself into a 'security hub', a place where nations from around the globe can connect, assess security developments, plan responses, develop capabilities cooperatively, and execute joint missions. Partnerships that originally reflected a desire to deepen defense cooperation in the traditional transatlantic space have been replaced with mechanisms that enhance the alliance's global reach. Though PfP and EACP continue to exist, they have been supplemented with a range of tools to engage with any nation whose security perspective coincides with NATO. As officially stated, 'many tools are focused on the important priorities of building capabilities and interoperability', a clear expression of what drives the partnership reform process.

The Berlin Declaration of April 2011 emphasizes the thrust of what the alliance aims to accomplish. It pointedly speaks of an alliance that wants to be actively shaping international security; recognizes that this goal requires cooperation with others; and that such cooperation can best be gained by offering flexible arrangement to those interested in working with NATO.

Flexibility ranks high. NATO recognizes that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to gaining partners. Countries have different expectations of their

relationship with the alliance, different national interests, and differ in their ability to contribute. To reflect the need to specially acknowledge the commitment of existing partners in EACP/PfP, the MD and the ICI to the alliance, NATO has pledged to develop 'deeper political and practical engagement …. in a spirit of joint ownership and mutual understanding'. Hence NATO offers 'enhanced political consultation on security issues of common concern', assuring a continuous exchange between members and partners and creating a sense of shared perspectives on security developments.[63]

In addition, the alliance has revised its 1999 Political Framework for NATO-led Operations. The new document, Political Military Framework for Partner Involvement in NATO-led Operations, creates 'a structural role for NATO's operational partners that formalizes the modalities of their participation in shaping strategy and decisions from the planning to the execution phase of current and future NATO-led operations which they contribute'.[64] These revisions make it possible for nations that contribute to NATO missions be more than troop contributors, should they wish to do so, and again reflects the flexibility NATO has adopted in dealing with nations that seek a more strategic role in international security without alignment beyond missions.

Offering a structural role to partners in operational planning and implementation is a significant evolution of the partnership concept. Partners are not members and, by definition, their role in decision making must remain limited. Yet the decisions taken at the 2011 Berlin meeting dilute the idea that it is NATO members alone who run missions. In times of declining defense resources, a rapidly changing international security environment, and a focus on deployable, interoperable forces, partners are no longer optional for NATO. They have become essential to its very relevance. The Berlin documents reaffirm the authority of the North Atlantic Council (NAC), NATO's decision making body and it is the NAC who decides on missions and whether to recognize a country as a partner in an operation. At the same time, room has been created to formally involve partners in shaping NAC decisions. As the alliance states, 'full consultation, cooperation and transparency with operational partners and as appropriate potential operational partners, on all aspects of the operation throughout its life-cycle, are a fundamental part of their involvement in operations.'[65] Much emphasis is placed on timely involvement of partners and to assure them of relevant input into all mission aspects. To be sure, partners continue to accede to decisions formally made by the NAC but NATO's efforts to secure partners and its reliance on their contributions make it clear that the relations between members and partners are evolving. So too is the alliance's relationship with the rest of the world where it seeks 'wider engagement' for 'political dialogue and practical cooperation' in 'a flexible and pragmatic manner'.[66] At NATO's 2012 Chicago Summit, for example, an unprecedented number of nations and organizations participated attesting to the alliance's increasing reach. A special meeting was convened for thirteen of NATO's closest partners in recognition of their 'exceptional contributions'.[67]

In his assessment of the state of NATO partnerships, Karl-Heinz Kamp is rightly cautious. When the US government states that it 'strongly supports NATO's cooperation with partners as a means to more effectively share burdens and act worldwide to accomplish our common security goals' and that the alliance is 'poised' to 'further define its role as a hub for security around the world', it is not clear what the overarching political goals actually are.[68] Kamp is concerned that the concept of flexible cooperation creates flexibility at the price of political clarity. What, he asks, is a security hub? A place, not unlike the hub of a wheel, where allies and partners on occasion make up the spokes for joint action? Partners for partnership sake?[69]

These are critical questions. Organizational flexibility is about security pragmatism. Principles and values often take a back seat and political conceptualization becomes a lesser priority. NATO, of course, has an interest in offering organizational flexibility to partners and potential partners. The fewer the demands made on partners the more likely they are to view cooperation with the alliance to be in their interest. This is particularly important for countries that share a strategic interest with NATO but otherwise do not want to be associated. Heidi Reisinger sees value in that the new partnership process is 'customizable', allowing countries to cooperate with NATO in specific areas where the alliance has needs.[70] She too, however, is concerned about the lack of political vision. The Berlin partnership reforms, she argues, reflect 'a focus on overcoming the limitations of institutionalized structures in favor of flexible solutions'.[71] Nonetheless, partnerships raise the issue of how organizational structure and flexible partner engagement are actually related. Reisinger's mixed assessment is shared by Rebecca Moore who observes that 'the policy remains vague, however, as to the larger vision that partnerships are intended to serve'.[72]

Despite these shortcomings NATO now has a partnership framework in place no longer tied to regional or thematic problems but adaptable to individual national requests for cooperation. Though ostensibly signing on to advance liberty, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, partners anywhere are welcome for their willingness to contribute to NATO missions and their ability to do so effectively. Hence the alliance has enabled itself to be more responsive to security challenges and, above all, better equipped for timely response.

The lack of political vision is not surprising. NATO members do not agree on the purposes of the alliance beyond its primary function of territorial defense. The Berlin partnership reform agreements therefore appear more concerned with managing different forms of cooperation and different levels of engagement more efficiently than the purposes of the overall enterprise. And yet, the sum of recent efforts, ranging from the deliberations that led to the new strategic concept in 2010, to the experience of working with partners in missions, leads to but one conclusion. NATO's structure is catching up with its practice. That practice has been shaped by the experiences of Kosovo, Afghanistan, Libya, and anti-piracy operations in the Horn of Africa, against insurgents, terrorists, and leaders who would sacrifice civilians for their own political survival. NATO's experience on the ground has decisively shaped perspectives on future missions. Arguably, setting itself up to work with others is the most significant transformation of the alliance since the end of the Cold War.[73]

Questions, of course, remain. For example, implementation of the Partnership Cooperation Menu (PCM), the mechanism that allows partners to shape their relationship with the alliance, is vulnerable to politically motivated disruption. Turkey blocked the participation of Israel, a member of the Mediterranean Dialogue, in the PCM. Since the alliance takes decisions by consensus, Turkey's veto held up the implementation of PCM as a whole. Turkish objections to Israeli participation in PCM also meant that Israel was prevented from attending the Chicago summit in May 2012. Political issues of this kind are not new as is evident in the obstacles to cooperation between the EU and NATO due to the lingering dispute between Turkey and the Republic of Cyprus. At the same time, such disputes have a habit of affecting the entire alliance and impede the efficiency of cooperation.

Second, NATO's window of opportunity to improve capabilities and develop partnerships is limited. Pressures on national budgets will continue, perhaps even worsen over the medium term. For smart defense to be more than lip-service, projects need to be developed that demonstrate commitment to the alliance's ambitions.[74] Interoperability too, is a priority issue for the alliance especially with the drawdown of forces from Afghanistan at the end in 2014. Partners are concerned that once their operational contributions cease NATO will place lesser value on partnerships and spend less energy on fostering complex networks of relationships. Keeping partnerships going at the sophisticated levels of recent engagements will be a formidable challenge. The connected forces initiative with its focus on information exchange, education, training, and exercises will be critical testing ground for how well NATO can maintain partnerships beyond military operations.

Third, American attention to security developments in Asia has led the government to create partnerships with countries throughout the region.[75] These partnerships have implications for the alliance's posture towards Asia especially since the Obama administration is keen to engage Europeans in its dialogue with Asian partners.[76] With Washington taking the lead, partnerships with Asian countries are part of US grand strategy, a logical follow-up to the 'pivot to Asia'.[77] In the process, partnerships will be designed to facilitate the forward deployment of US forces, and the cooperation with partner militaries. US goals are to reassure partners by raising its military presence in the region. American forward deployment will raise confidence among partners to handle regional security issues while American diplomatic engagement with partners provides US strategy with the necessary political legitimacy. 'Forward partnering' and 'enabled partners' are terms describing the enhanced US presence in the region and illustrate the extent to which the concept of security partners has gone beyond operational requirements.[78] Indeed, for the US partnering in Asia is about finding efficient ways to extend its reach by enabling partners to do more on their own. Defense cooperation here is political strategy; an active step towards regional security management where Washington's presence is critical and enjoys the support of regional actors. Then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made a clear connection between American grand strategy and partnership when she said that 'we will use our power to convene, our ability to connect countries around the world, and sound

foreign policy strategies to create partnerships aimed at solving problems…..We believe this approach will advance our interests by uniting diverse partners around common concerns'.[79] The United States, she argued, is 'tilting the balance away from a multi-polar world and towards a multi-partner world'.[80]

As the US is creating new partnership realities on the ground, Europeans are mere by-standers. It is in the context of a larger discussion about the military tool in Europe's security strategy where both the EU and NATO lag behind Washington. At the same time, Europe is critically affected by U.S. policy and Europeans themselves have strategic interests in the security and stability of the region. Washington defining partnerships in the region stands in stark contrast to the professed unity of the transatlantic alliance and increases Europe's dependence on American leadership. In this situation, American strategic interests simply default to its European allies. As NATO's most capable member, the U.S. continues to set the agenda for all.

Finally, despite recent reforms of the alliance's approach to non-members, doubts linger about the sheer complexity of NATO's networks. The very flexibility NATO offers to partner nations might turn an asset into a burden if not managed with care. With 1600 partnership tools, nations can create confusion as much as make contributions. Of concern too, is the prevailing claim to sovereignty in defense matters which no amount of customized partnerships can overcome. To obtain the operational effectiveness the alliance craves, members and partners alike will need to focus more on operational requirements than institutional fine-tuning.

Returning to the evolution of the pluralistic security community, NATO's emphasis on partnerships raises the possibility of extending the community to like-minded states across the globe. Though this is not a subject on NATO's agenda for the short term, it should be central to any longer term deliberations about the alliance's future. It addresses the principal question of what the ultimate purpose of alliance partnerships is. Is it to manage, in ad hoc fashion, international crises around the globe, where partners 'plug and play' alongside alliance members? Or, is it to foster a particular vision of world order as Hillary Clinton proposed where partnerships are expected to also serve the export of democratic values? Are partnerships about 'fixing' problems or transforming relations between states? And, what is the extent to which Europeans are actively engaged in the discussion of these questions?

Thus far, the alliance has opted to invite partner nations whose security interests coincide, or are similar to those of NATO. Providing additional military capabilities for NATO missions focuses partnerships on specific tasks to be accomplished. As long as the completion of the task is in the foreground, partners are not evaluated on their democratic credentials. Hence a mission focus obviates the need for developing specific criteria that might qualify one nation as a partner and disqualify another. Were NATO to introduce a strict catalogue of democratic qualifications many of its partners in the MD and the ICI would not qualify.

This puts NATO partnerships at odds with the pluralistic security community as traditionally understood. It rests on shared values as the basis for peace. Nonetheless, it makes sense for NATO to reach out to states in strategically important regions where potential instabilities could impact the security of members and the wellbeing of their citizens. Networks of communication increase transparency and create predictability. This is especially important for countries with which NATO does not share the values of democracy.

If, as argued here, the pluralistic security community does not generate the kind of military capabilities necessary for the challenges of 21st century security, augmenting capabilities through partnerships is a sensible choice. Europeans value the benefits of the pluralistic security community and tolerate the shortcomings of inter-governmentalism. As long as the basic bargain between sovereignty and defense is upheld, it is difficult to imagine Europe changing course. Hence partnerships promise capacity to act without diluting the benefits of peace among community members.

On the other hand, the absence of greater security integration in Europe is not without cost. While partners beyond Europe offer capacity enhancement overall, this very possibility reduces incentives for Europe to increase its own contributions to the collective effort and retards discussions in Europe about the management of the continent's own strategic interests. Europe may find itself one among many players, dependent on U.S. leadership and following U.S. strategic interests; occasionally part of coalitions of the willing and able but itself not assuming responsibilities in predictable and efficient fashion.[81]

CONCLUSION – EVOLVING THE PLURALISTIC SECURITY COMMUNITY

Europe's pluralistic security community is in trouble from unexpected quarters. Its problems have nothing to do with its internal performance of practicing peace. In this it has been enormously successful. Indeed, its future is bright. Peace in Europe is not threatened by any member of the community. Rather, its problems stem from the international or global tasks it needs to perform commensurate with its political and economic weight.

As currently structured, the community's effective engagement with international challenges will remain limited and questions the credibility of Europe as a global actor. Pluralism relies and perpetuates national sovereignty and necessarily impedes the kind of integration required for coherent action. National individualism is encouraged. As a result, there is no consensus in Europe about the role of power and the use of force in international relations; procurement cycles remain uncoordinated and mission caveats impose operational inefficiencies.

Geopolitical developments and the onset of the financial crisis have exposed Europe's deficiencies especially in the defense sector. Europe is not generating the kind of military capabilities required to conduct complex military operations. Capability asymmetries have arisen among Europeans and between Europe and the United States. CSDP has stalled and NATO now appears as Europe's only path to leadership in global security affairs. Issues of burden-sharing across the Atlantic and within Europe threaten to turn erstwhile security providers into security consumers.

European leaders are fully aware of this defense malaise. The pluralistic security community provides mechanisms for the peaceful management of intra-community relations. It eliminates the security dilemma and lengthens the shadow of the future. Thus freed from the threat of major war among members, the community relies on cooperation to manage change. Though there are many forms of cooperation, it can be assumed that its principal motive is voluntary, that members of the community agree to develop common practices. Sovereignty however assures that in those areas where states believe their essential identity as states might be affected, cooperation is minimal and, where it does take place, its practices are overwhelmingly inter-governmental. To function, the pluralistic security community does not demand states to relinquish sovereignty. There is indeed much room to affect greater efficiencies in the defense sector but these can be expected to stop well short of pooling and sharing in areas critical for operational control. Not surprisingly, Giegerich and Nicoll conclude that 'there is no visible move in larger programs towards greater pooling of requirements and collaboration, in spite of the fact that many governments have repeatedly said that this is necessary'.[82] Structure turns out to be a powerful inhibitor to change.

The limitations sovereignty imposes on defense integration are clearly illustrated in the responses to Europe's military capability shortfalls. These responses do not aim at a structural reform of the community but encourage intensified cooperation. There is to be more cooperation in defense, more efficiency in capability planning, greater exploitation of collaboration opportunities, and more sharing of low-end facilities and agency resources. More partners are to be recruited and relations with existing partners intensified. Institutional flexibility has been introduced to make cooperation simpler and more convenient and turn partners into stake holders. In short, the underlying structure of the pluralistic security community remains untouched. The community has spread to Europe's East and to like-minded partners across the globe and institutional evolution in terms of spreading practices has seemingly obviated the call for defense integration at home.

NATO's partnership idea holds more promise. It offers a quantitative approach to capability shortfalls and brings in regional expertise NATO lacks. Partners receive recognition, help plan missions, 'plug-and-play' in operations and lend legitimacy to the use of force where consensus is hard to come by. Partnerships across the globe make the alliance accessible to non-members and allow flexible relationships. Though there are issues among members on the ultimate goals of NATO partnerships, the relationships between partners and members and how partnerships impact on the future of the alliance

as a whole, the contributions partners offer make this option overwhelmingly attractive, especially to the United States.

The evolution of the European/transatlantic pluralistic security community is thus taking shape. NATO emerges as the only viable external representative of the community. It does this both by default and by design. By default, since CSDP is unlikely to become the kind of coherent, efficient, and effective security provider Europeans once hoped; it will continue what it has done in the past quite effectively namely relatively small, less complex operations. By design, since partnerships represent preferred security community practices. The community is not compelled to trade pluralism for external effectiveness. Against the backdrop of declining defense budgets and geopolitical uncertainties, partners – for the time being – are the transatlantic security community's least disruptive option.

In the longer term, however, the partnership solution to the lack of structural change merely pushes the question of defense integration down the road and increases Europe's security dependence on the United States. Politically, this dependence is likely to produce new points of friction across the Atlantic as the United States seeks to strengthen its own global position to contain the consequences of a power shift to the Asia-pacific region. Europe's insistence on pluralism hinders its collective engagement with the United States, erodes its influence on U.S. policies, and dilutes its voice globally.

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