



THE NEW NATO STRATEGIC CONCEPT: A VISION FROM SPAIN

Enrique Pérez Ramírez¹
Spanish Ministry of Defence

Abstract:

The paper begins with a description of the evolution of the NATO Strategic Concept (SC). Then, a two-fold analysis is made: firstly, the content of the presently in force 1999 Strategic Concept and the Comprehensive Political Guidance, and secondly, the position of Spain in relation with the NATO SC, both before and after joining the Alliance in 1982. Finally, the present process of developing a new Strategic Concept is studied, including an assessment of the inadequacies present in some elements of the 1999 SC and an estimation of alternative ways to address these elements in the new Strategic Concept, leading to some concrete conclusions.

Keywords: Strategic Concept, Comprehensive Political Guidance, Declaration on Allied Security, collective defence, article 5, crisis management, conflict prevention, partnership, comprehensive approach, enlargement, coalitions, Euro-Atlantic area.

Resumen:

El artículo comienza con una descripción de la evolución del Concepto Estratégico de la OTAN (CE). A continuación se realiza un doble análisis: Primero del contenido del Concepto Estratégico de 1999 y de la Guía Política General, ambos vigentes actualmente, y en segundo lugar de la posición de España en relación con el Concepto Estratégico de la OTAN, tanto antes como después de la incorporación a la Alianza en 1982. Finalmente se estudia el actual proceso de desarrollo de un nuevo Concepto Estratégico incluyendo una valoración de las insuficiencias que presentan algunos elementos del CE 1999 y una estimación de vías alternativas para tratar estos elementos en el nuevo Concepto Estratégico, llegándose a unas conclusiones concretas.

Palabras clave: *Concepto Estratégico, Guía Política General, Declaración sobre la Seguridad Aliada, defensa colectiva, artículo 5, gestión de crisis, prevención de conflictos, asociación, enfoque global, ampliación, coaliciones, área Euroatlántica.*

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¹ Rear Admiral Enrique Pérez Ramírez is Deputy Director for Defence Policy (Planning and International Relations) at the Ministry of Defence of Spain.



1. Introduction

In 2008, at the Bucharest Summit, NATO's Heads of State and Government asked the Council in Permanent Session to prepare a "Declaration on Alliance Security", for adoption at the following Summit, as a first step for the development of a new Strategic Concept.

The Declaration was approved by the Heads of State and Government at the Strasbourg / Kehl Summit on the 4th of April 2009 and in it, the Secretary General (SECGEN) was tasked to "*convene and lead a broad-based group of qualified experts, who in close consultation with all Allies will lay the ground for the Secretary General to develop a new Strategic Concept and submit proposals for its implementation for approval at our next summit*".

Former SECGEN Jaap de Hoop Scheffer initiated the work and designed a phased program including a series of seminars with wide participation of non-specialist people from media, NGOs, industries, etc. In fact, one of his last public interventions was to present the first of these seminars. It took place in Brussels on the 7th of July and led to some conclusions, among which we should select the following: the process should be transparent, inclusive and open. It should also be political, and not a public diplomacy or an academic exercise. This requires an appropriate balance between NATO and outside participation. And, finally, the Strategic Concept should keep its military planning dimension, which requires a senior military contribution throughout the entire process.

Immediately after SECGEN, Anders Fogh Rasmussen took office. He designated the group of 12 experts and made public a document establishing the roadmap for the drafting process of the new Strategic Concept.

The group of experts or eminent persons, chaired by former Secretary of State Madeleine Allbright, includes former ministers, high ranking officials, and personalities from industry, universities, etc, one of them being the Spanish Ambassador Fernando Perpiñá-Robert.

The road map consists of three phases: firstly, a reflection phase, including a series of four seminars to be developed during the second half of 2009 and the beginning of 2010; a second phase of consultations (consensus-building phase) with the NAC and Allied Capitals; and a third one for drafting and final negotiations of the New Strategic Concept, which will be presented for approval to the next Summit by the end of 2010.

Taking this program into consideration, it is easy to see that this is the right moment to present a vision from Spain on this new NATO Strategic Concept. But, before we go into this vision, we need to clarify some concepts and ideas on the nature of the Strategic Concept, the need to revise it, and also to review what has been done in former revisions of the Strategic Concept.

2. NATO Strategic Concept

2.1. Some Definitions and Previous Ideas

Let me begin with some ideas on collective action, coalitions and defence organizations.



Throughout history, nations have very frequently joined together to face common threats or to combat common enemies. These coalitions were always limited in time, as some of their members would quickly turn into enemies and vice versa. Three whole centuries of European history are full of these coalitions and confrontations which modelled the classical doctrine of “Equilibrium of Power”.

A different and more advanced kind of defence agreement is materialized by defence organizations. These organizations are like permanent coalitions, in which their members agree to defend themselves collectively even if there is no immediate or permanent threat, or no definite enemy.

It may seem foolish to establish these permanent coalitions, but it is by no means neither foolish nor useless. On the contrary, it may be extremely efficient and cost-effective.

But working together in a highly efficient way requires a high degree of commonality both in materials (weapons, sensors, command and control systems, etc.) and in doctrine and procedures among member states. This is an enduring and progressive process that cannot be achieved in the short life span of a coalition created to confront a precise threat.

In addition, member states should necessarily define what they have decided to defend through a defence organization. And they need to envisage which could be their future threats, thus making it possible to prepare to confront them.

In the case of NATO we, the allies, want to defend our common values of democracy, freedom and the rule of law. And we have analyzed and agreed which are our present and foreseeable threats and risks. And we have also agreed how we are to counter these threats and risks, that is, our strategy.

The document which includes these agreements is the Strategic Concept. It is clear that the Strategic Concept should be revised when some of these agreed elements vary, as for instance when we decide to enlarge the set of elements to defend or when the threats evolve in a way that current arrangements are no longer useful.

This is not the first occasion on which NATO has revised this basic document, the reasons for the change not always being the same, as we will see in the next pages.

2.2. NATO Strategic Concepts

The original Atlantic Alliance was quite different from the present one. Article 9 of the Washington Treaty only establishes a North Atlantic Council (NAC) as the highest body “*to consider matters concerning the implementation of this Treaty*”. This Council “*shall set up such subsidiary bodies as may be necessary; in particular shall establish immediately a defence committee which shall recommend measures for the implementation of Articles 3 and 5*”.

Article 3 states that the Parties *will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack*” and Article 5, surely the most widely cited, states that “*an armed attack against one or more of them [the Parties] in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all*”. These two articles establish NATO collective defence.



At that time, NATO had a single threat: A massive attack by the Soviet Union on Western Europe. NATO had to defend itself from such an attack, and the way to do so was to employ massively all available forces, including US nuclear power.

Throughout 1949, the Council² set up NATO's general organization. A new high-level body called the Defence Committee, composed of the Ministers of Defence, was created, as well as a Military Committee made up of the Chiefs of Defence Staff, along with a three-nation executive body called the Standing Group³.

The first strategic document elaborated by the Standing Group was a draft of "*The Strategic Concept for the Defence of the North Atlantic Area*" which was finally approved by the NAC as DC 6/1, on 6 January 1950, in fact constituting the first NATO Strategic Concept (SC) approved by the North Atlantic Council (NAC).

DC 6/1 strategy was based on the co-ordination of efforts by NATO nations, given that no Military Structure was in place. Each nation should "*contribute in the most effective form, consistent with its situation, responsibilities and resources*"⁴. This contribution included US nuclear weapons.

Based on the recent experience of the beginning of the Korean War in June 1950, three months later, in September 1950, the creation of a NATO Integrated Command Structure was approved by the NAC. In 1952, Greece and Turkey joined the Alliance, and a council of Permanent Representatives as well as an International Secretariat headed by a Secretary General were established.

All these relevant changes needed to be reflected in the Strategic Concept, and DC 6/1 was modified. The Military Representatives developed a new text called MC 3/5, "*The Strategic Concept for the defence of the North Atlantic area*", which was approved by the NAC on 3 December 1952.

MC 3/5 strategy required an enormous force. This same year 1952, the NAC met in Lisbon and agreed to field almost 100 divisions within two years⁵.

General Eisenhower took office as President of the United States early in 1953, just when the Korean War was coming to an end. Eisenhower pushed the US defence policy to the "New Look", which had a heavy reliance on the use of nuclear weapons with the aim of deterring war at minimum cost. The US strategic document NSC 162/2 in fact established that "*The major deterrent to aggression against Western Europe is the manifest determination of the United States to use its atomic capability and massive retaliatory power if the area is attacked*"⁶.

² At that moment, the Council was constituted only by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, there was not a Secretary General, and the Chairmanship was held in turn by the Parties according to alphabetical order in English language.

³ Pedlow, Gregory W., *Chief Historical Office SHAPE (ed): "The evolution of NATO Strategy 1949-1969"*, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), in <http://www.nato.int/docu/stratdoc/eng/intro.pdf>.

⁴ Donnelly, C. H.: "The Strategic Concept for the Defense of the North Atlantic Area", note by the Secretary for the North Atlantic Defense Committee, *North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), NATO Strategy Documents 1949 - 1969, DC 6/1* (01 December 1949), in <http://www.nato.int/docu/stratdoc/eng/a491201a.pdf>.

⁵ "NATO'S Strategy of Flexible Response and the Twenty-First Century", *Global Security*, NATO document, CSC 1986, Strategic Issues, in <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/report/1986/LLE.htm>.

⁶ Pedlow, *op. cit.*, p. XVII.



This change in US strategy provoked new NATO strategic studies, resulting in the document: *“The most effective pattern of NATO military strength for the next five years”* (MC 48), being the first official NATO document to discuss the use of nuclear weapons. Additional studies followed MC 48.

This study and the efforts made by some Allies, mainly the UK, to reduce defence expenditure, drove NATO to reconsider its strategy.

The result was a new Strategic Concept, MC 14/2 *“Overall Strategic Concept for the Defence of the NATO area”*, which was issued on 23 May 1957.

This Concept was much more complex than both the previous DC 6/1 and MC 3/5. MC 14/2 called for accurate and complete intelligence to bring NATO’s defensive posture to its maximum efficiency, analysed the probable nature of a future general war involving NATO (a total nuclear war), exposed threats to NATO security (asking for the need to take into account the dangers that might arise for NATO because of developments outside NATO’s area), stated the strategic concept, and gave guidance to develop force planning. In summary, *“massive retaliation”* was the key element of NATO’s new strategy. Under this policy, an aggression against any ally would automatically be followed by large-scale military retaliation, including nuclear weapons.

One remarkable decision in NATO’s defence public diplomacy took place at the meeting of the Heads of State and Government held in Paris from 16 to 19 December 1957. In the final communiqué, the HoSG stated: *“...To this end, NATO has decided to establish stocks of nuclear warheads, which will be readily available for the defence of the Alliance in case of need. In view of the present Soviet policies in the field of new weapons, the Council has also decided that intermediate range ballistic missiles (IRBM) will have to be put at the disposal of the SACEUR.”*

When Kennedy became the US President in 1961, and after the lessons learned from the Cuban Missile and the Second Berlin Crises, which were addressed without the recourse to nuclear weapons, the White House started to advocate a stronger non-nuclear posture and the need for a strategy of *“flexible response”*, which meant deterrence at intercontinental and theatre levels, with a mix of both nuclear and conventional arms.

The US tried immediately to convince NATO Allies to adopt a similar strategy in NATO, but the response was not favourable. From the European side, a return to a scenario of conventional confrontation on European soil was difficult to accept.

The most belligerent country against this flexible response strategy was France. The situation became so difficult to maintain that, in March 1966, France decided to withdraw from the NATO Integrated Military Structure.

In view of this situation, the Council decided in 1966 to task a group of independent experts to elaborate a document to *“study the future tasks which face the Alliance and its procedures for fulfilling them in order to strengthen the Alliance as a factor for durable peace”*. This document is known as The Harmel Report and was presented to the Council in December 1967. It is only four pages long but it sowed the seeds of the biggest change in NATO strategy up to that date. It added a second function for the Alliance in addition of the traditional one of *“deter aggression and defend the territory of member countries”*, which was to *“pursue the search for progress towards a more stable relationship in which the underlying*



political issues can be solved". For the first time, a strictly military way of thinking is substituted by a political argument. In fact, the document states that "the ultimate political purpose of the Alliance is to achieve a just and lasting peaceful order in Europe accompanied by appropriate security guarantees".

The recommendations of the Harmel Report were taken into account in the new version of the NATO Strategic Concept, MC 14/3, which continued to be a classified military document.

NATO strategy followed very closely that of the US, as most of the elements were common. MC 14/3 "Overall Strategic Concept for the defence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization area" was adopted by the Defence Planning Committee on 12 December 1967, and, finally, issued on 16 January 1968. The Defence Planning Committee became a body in charge of all defence matters, and consisted of the North Atlantic Council without France. NATO strategy was consistent with that of the US, and was known as "Flexible Response Strategy".

The new strategy allowed the Alliance to choose different options, nuclear or conventional, to face specific threats; one of the key differences from "massive retaliation" was that no automatic reaction was contemplated. This flexibility helped to make NATO's response to any threat or attack unpredictable for any possible aggressor.

MC 14/3 was unchanged as NATO strategy until the end of the Cold War having only slight innovations, the most important of which was the "forward presence" strategy developed in 1984. It was not a change in MC 14/3⁷, but simply an adaptation to reduce the unbalance of conventional forces with respect to the USSR.

2.3. The End of the Cold War and the 1991 Strategic Concept (SC 91)

In May 1989, the Heads of State and Government met in Brussels and agreed that "*based on today's momentum of increased co-operation and tomorrow's common challenges, we seek to shape a new political order of peace in Europe*". A few months later, in October 1989, the Berlin Wall was demolished.

At that moment, NATO strategy was the flexible response stated in 1967 at MC 14/3. It was necessary to react quickly, and at the London Summit in July 1990, the Allies decided to elaborate a new strategy: "*...NATO will prepare a new Allied military strategy moving away from "forward defence" where appropriate, towards a reduced forward presence and modifying "flexible response" to reflect a reduced reliance on nuclear weapons.*"

⁷ "NATO Military Strategy and Forces", *Global Security*, CSC 1985. Strategic Issues, in <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/report/1985/DRL.htm>.

Last year NATO defense ministers adopted a new, high-tech strategy for the early 1990's called FOFA, for "follow-on forces attack." It envisions a heavy dependence on "smart" munitions still in a costly development program; long-range airborne radar, and target selection by computer. It also calls for attacks across the border into Eastern Europe. The goal of FOFA will be to prevent enemy "follow-on" forces from reaching the front line after an initial attack. FOFA will give the alliance an alternative to nuclear weapons by reducing its numerical disadvantage against the Warsaw Pact in tanks, artillery and men. General Rogers, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, said: "We must let the Warsaw Pact know that if they initiate an attack, their forces will not enjoy sanctuary in their own territory".



In November 1990, NATO and the Warsaw Pact signed a non-aggression joint declaration. Eight months later, the Warsaw Pact was officially dissolved. Finally, on the 21st December 1991, the Soviet Union came to an end.

The new strategy was approved as the 1991 Strategic Concept. This Strategic Concept was a completely innovative one. For the first time it was an unclassified document. For the first time it went further than a military strategy. And for the first time it was not oriented exclusively to counter the Soviet Union.

The 1991 NATO Strategic Concept (SC 91) explicitly recognizes that *“the monolithic, massive, and potentially immediate threat which was the principal concern of the Alliance in its first forty years has disappeared”*. It also recognizes *“the historic changes that have occurred in Europe, which have led to the fulfilment of a number of objectives set out in the Harmel Report”*.

Thus, the *raison d’être* of the Alliance had been deflated. It is true that there was still much to do, namely to control *“both the completion of the planned withdrawal of Soviet military forces from Central and Eastern Europe and the full implementation by all parties of the 1990 CFE Treaty”*⁸. But a reversal of the process was not discarded. This is why the 1991 SC states that *“Soviet military capability and build-up potential, including its nuclear dimension, still constitute the most significant factor of which the Alliance has to take account”*.

In addition to this main focus, the 1991 SC describes other risks (not threats) mainly derived from instabilities that may arise in Eastern Europe, the Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East. There is also a reference to *“other risks of a wider nature, including proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, disruption of the flow of vital resources and actions of terrorism and sabotage”*.

From the analysis of the strategic context, SC 91 derives two conclusions: firstly, that the purpose of the security functions of the Alliance remains unchanged, and secondly that *“the changed environment offers new opportunities for the Alliance to frame its strategy within a broad approach to security”*.

And this is the point: The new NATO will develop a broader approach to security. But the elements described to implement this new approach are very limited: dialogue, co-operation and the maintenance of a collective defence capability. Dialogue and co-operation are specifically directed at Russia and other Eastern European nations and collective defence refers to *“military aggression directed against the Alliance”*. The paragraphs dedicated to crises management and conflict prevention describe in a very general way the need to co-ordinate appropriate measures *“from a range of political and other measures, including those in the military field”*. The comprehensive approach is described as the employment of both political and military means⁹.

There is no intention to deploy NATO forces out of the Alliance’s territory: *“The peacetime geographical distribution of forces will ensure a sufficient military presence throughout the territory of the Alliance, including where necessary forward deployment of*

⁸ SC 91 para. 6.

⁹ SC 91 para. 23: *The Alliance has always sought to achieve its objectives of safeguarding the security and territorial integrity of its members, and establishing a just and lasting peaceful order in Europe, through both political and military means. This comprehensive approach remains the basis of the Alliance’s security policy.*



*appropriate forces*¹⁰. However, an important mission is added: “*Allies could further be called upon to contribute to global stability and peace by providing forces for United Nations missions*”¹¹. This new mission was for the first time executed in September 1992 when the NAC approved making Alliance resources available to support efforts of the UN, CSCE and EU to bring about peace in the Former Yugoslavia, including protection of humanitarian relief and support for the UN monitoring of heavy weapons.

From our present perspective, SC 91 made an accurate analysis of the new threats and risks but, looking almost exclusively to Eastern Europe, was unable to design the new tools required to cope with those new threats and risks in their whole extension.

New tools tailored for Central and East European countries were immediately developed. In December 1991 the first meeting of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC)¹² took place. In January 1994, the Heads of State and Government launched the fundamental initiative “Partnership for Peace” (PfP)¹³ in Brussels, which later on came to be considered the most successful endeavour in NATO’s history. It was the key element in providing security and stability in Central and Eastern Europe after the collapse of the Soviet empire.

2.4. The 1999 Strategic Concept (SC99)

After the recognition in 1996 that a European Security and Defence Initiative (ESDI) would be accommodated inside NATO, the creation of Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF) in 1997, the first enlargement agreed in the Madrid Summit in 1998, the signing of the “*Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security Between NATO and the Russian Federation*” the same year and NATO involvement in peace support operations in the Balkans, it was clear that a revision of different aspects of NATO strategy was needed.

SC 99 was approved by the Heads of State and Government at the Washington Summit which was convened the 23rd and 24th April 1999 on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Alliance.

SC 99 states that the aim of the Alliance is “*to guarantee a pacific, just and lasting order in Europe*”, and adds “*As crisis and conflicts affecting the security of the Euroatlantic region could impede such a guarantee, NATO not only cares for the defence of its members but contributes to peace and stability in this region*”.

While SC 91 was limited to Europe, SC 99 refers to a much broader Euro-Atlantic region without establishing the limits of this area.

SC 99 NATO’s security tasks are *security, consultations, deterrence and defence, crisis management and partnership*. The task of preserving the strategic balance within Europe, which was a permanent one during the Cold War and even in SC 91, has disappeared, but a new fundamental one has emerged: crisis management.

¹⁰ SC 91 para. 45.b.

¹¹ SC 91 para. 41.

¹² NACC: A forum for consultations between NATO and non-NATO European countries, including initially 9 Central and Eastern European countries.

¹³ PfP: All NACC partner countries and CSCE states capable and willing to participate, were invited.



The new risks identified in SC 91 required a deep change in order to make NATO useful. SC 99 refined their definition avoiding again the term “threat” and speaking only of risks and challenges. Risks include uncertainty and instability in the Euro-Atlantic area and its neighbourhood, and the possibility of regional crises around the Alliance’s area which could affect to the security of the Alliance. Other challenges include nuclear powers out of the Alliance, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the worldwide distribution of technologies able to be employed for weapons production. Finally, it identifies other risks of a more general character, in particular acts of terrorism, sabotage or organized crime, disturbances in the flow of vital resources and important uncontrolled movements of large numbers of people.

This last group constitutes what are now called “global threats” and has had a great influence in subsequent discrepancies among the Allies concerning the role of NATO in the present security scenario.

To cope with these risks and challenges, SC 99 develops a new strategy which includes two very important changes: The first one is the possibility of developing non-article 5 operations for crisis response. The second is the possibility of operating out of allied territory.

With regard to this last possibility, it is interesting to note that the whole text of SC 99 is full of expressions like “*the Euroatlantic area*”, “*Europe and their surrounding countries*”, etc, and at any moment the requirement or even the possibility of worldwide action is established. All references to out-of-area activities seem to be limited to that undefined Euro-Atlantic area.

The SC 99 goes much further than simply establishing these new possibilities of non-article 5 and out-of-area operations. It develops in great detail what is required for this to become a reality. For instance, speaking of force posture it is established that the Alliance, in order to be able to comply with all its missions “*will dispose of essential operating capabilities such an efficient intervention potential, the faculty of deployment and mobility, capacity of survival of forces and infrastructure, and sustainability, which includes logistics and forces rotation*”, or “*Alliance forces and infrastructures should be protected against terrorist attacks*”.

Concerning the so-called “comprehensive approach”, SC 99 states that “*the Alliance is committed to a broad approach to security, which recognises the importance of political, economic, social and environmental factors in addition to the indispensable defence dimension*”. To develop this broad approach to security, NATO should count on other countries and organizations¹⁴. This cooperation with others is specifically indicated as the way to deal with crisis management: “*In pursuit of its policy of preserving peace, preventing war, and enhancing security and stability and as set out in the fundamental security tasks, NATO will seek, in cooperation with other organisations, to prevent conflict, or, should a crisis arise, to contribute to its effective management, consistent with international law, including*

¹⁴ SC 99 para 25: *This broad approach forms the basis for the Alliance to accomplish its fundamental security tasks effectively, and its increasing effort to develop effective cooperation with other European and Euro-Atlantic organisations as well as the United Nations.*

SC 99 para 26: *The Alliance seeks to preserve peace and to reinforce Euro-Atlantic security and stability by: [...] the continued pursuit of partnership, cooperation, and dialogue with other nations as part of its co-operative approach to Euro-Atlantic security, including in the field of arms control and disarmament.*



through the possibility of conducting non-Article 5 crisis response operations”¹⁵. There is no reference in the whole text to civilian capabilities in NATO.

The importance of partnerships in SC 99 is so fundamental that it is included as one of the NATO fundamental tasks¹⁶. To implement this task, it does not only refer to PfP and the Mediterranean Dialogue, but indicates the intention to establish a partnership with all democratic Euro-Atlantic partners¹⁷.

2.5. The Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG)

The SC 99 had introduced very important and far reaching concepts and ideas. Issues like the political role of the Alliance, its relationships with other organizations, especially the EU, and its role in the International Community were at the centre of the debates announcing new changes.

However, the real trigger of the changes was the unexpected 9-11 terrorist attacks in Washington and New York. Later on, Casablanca, Madrid, London, Casablanca, Bali, Mumbai and Islamabad confirmed the need for changes.

But not only terrorism had to be considered a threat to the Alliance, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery was also of great concern.

However, the Alliance decided to maintain the Strategic Concept 99 as it was, taking account of the risk of confronting such different positions among the Allies as to impede the approval of a new Concept, with the consequence of an undesirable loss of credibility.

Looking for a solution, a seminar was held in Riga to analyze possible ways of acting, and the idea of a new document called Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG) was launched. Finally, at the Istanbul Summit in 2004, NATO's Heads of State and Government agreed to mandate the Council in Permanent Session to elaborate the CPG. This document should reflect, on the one hand, a method to co-ordinate the different planning processes in NATO and, on the other, to introduce new complementary or explanatory strategic elements to the Strategic Concept.

The CPG was finally endorsed by the Heads of State and Government in Riga in November 2006. It reaffirms the validity of the evolving security environment described in SC 99. It identifies terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction as the main threats, and instability due to regional crises and failed states, availability of sophisticated conventional weaponry, the possibility of misuse of modern emerging technologies and disruption of the flow of vital resources, as the main risks. The most dangerous mix of these threats and risks is the one posed by terrorists using weapons of mass destruction.

¹⁵ SC 99 para 31.

¹⁶ SC 99 para 10: “Partnership: To promote wide-ranging partnership, cooperation, and dialogue with other countries in the Euro-Atlantic area, with the aim of increasing transparency, mutual confidence and the capacity for joint action with the Alliance”.

¹⁷ SC 99 para 33: “Through its active pursuit of partnership, cooperation, and dialogue, the Alliance is a positive force in promoting security and stability throughout the Euro-Atlantic area. Through outreach and openness, the Alliance seeks to preserve peace, support and promote democracy, contribute to prosperity and progress, and foster genuine partnership with and among all democratic Euro-Atlantic countries. This aims at enhancing the security of all, excludes nobody, and helps to overcome divisions and disagreements that could lead to instability and conflict”.



It is interesting to note that in both 1991 and 1999 SCs, the term “threat” had been avoided, stating only “challenges and risks”. The CPG sensibly recovers the reference to threats, which are in the foundation of collective defence.

It is also important to note that there is no indication of the geographical area in which NATO is expected to operate. There is not a single reference to the Euro-Atlantic area. On the contrary, it is stated that “*the Alliance must have the capability to launch and sustain concurrent major joint operations and smaller operations for collective defence and crisis response on and beyond Alliance territory, on its periphery, and at strategic distance*”. And even “*defence against terrorism and the ability to respond to challenges from wherever they may come have assumed and will retain an increased importance*”.

To make it possible, NATO “*requires forces that are structured, equipped, manned and trained for expeditionary operations*” and “*sufficient fully deployable and sustainable land forces, and appropriate air and maritime components*”.

The spectrum of missions has also been increased, now including “*the ability to support security sector reform, including demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration, and to bring military support, within available means and capabilities, to humanitarian relief operations*”. We can read also that “*Experience has shown the increasing significance of stabilisation operations and of military support to post-conflict reconstruction efforts*”.

This continuous trend to expand both the area and the nature of operations to be carried out by NATO is the logical result of the process followed to find a sound basis for NATO, beyond collective defence. The immediate post-Cold War years were dedicated to stabilize Central and Eastern Europe. But after the splendid success of PfP and the beginning of enlargement, this was not enough. And the response was first to support UN peace support operations and, subsequently, to participate in crisis response operations.

The problem is that some NATO Allies have neither the will nor the means to cope with these enormous new challenges. The Allies’ cohesion comes directly from the feeling of a common threat and the decision to cope with it collectively. Wider risks are assessed in very different ways by different Allies, sometimes in completely different ways. This situation has become more difficult after the successive enlargements.

With respect to the means, military capabilities required to operate “at strategic distances” are disproportionately expensive, and smaller countries are in a difficult position to dedicate their limited budget to their development, thus resulting, as expected, in a higher involvement of the bigger powers in those operations at strategic distances.

Civilian capabilities have followed a different track. Lessons learned from previous crises response operations, and especially from Afghanistan, have led to the development of the concept called “comprehensive approach”. The CPG incorporates this concept when it admits that peace, security, and development are more interconnected than ever. But specifically it indicates that “*While NATO has no requirement to develop capabilities strictly for civilian purposes, it needs to improve its practical cooperation, taking into account existing arrangements, with partners, relevant international organisations and, as appropriate, non-governmental organisations in order to collaborate more effectively in planning and conducting operations*”.



Consequently, close cooperation and coordination among International Organizations in crisis prevention and management is needed. Among these organizations, the United Nations and the European Union occupy the most relevant places. In particular, *“the European Union, which is able to mobilise a wide range of military and civilian instruments, is assuming a growing role in support of international stability”*.

The CPG establishes that NATO should have *“the ability and flexibility to conduct operations in circumstances where the various efforts of several authorities, institutions and nations need to be coordinated in a comprehensive manner to achieve the desired results, and where these various actors may be undertaking combat, stabilisation, reconstruction, reconciliation and humanitarian activities simultaneously”*.

2.6. The Bucharest Summit 2008 and the Declaration on Alliance Security

After the release of the CPG, the problems with the availability of key capabilities in operations, especially in Afghanistan, and in the rotations of the NRF¹⁸, began to grow. In fact, the NRF lost its full operational capability in July 2007. Continuous calls from ISAF Commanders fell on deaf ears. It was progressively clear that in the origin of these shortages there was something fundamental, such as the different vision of the Allies on the role of the Alliance.

This situation led to the forgetting of the concerns to accomplish a revision of the Strategic Concept that ended up with the CPG in 2006, and in April 2006 the Heads of State and Government agreed to initiate this revision. The final Communiqué of the Summit indicates *“The Summit will provide an opportunity to further articulate and strengthen the Alliance’s vision of its role in meeting the evolving challenges of the 21st century and maintaining the ability to perform the full range of its missions, collectively defending our security at home and contributing to stability abroad. Accordingly, we request the Council in Permanent Session to prepare a Declaration on Alliance Security for adoption at the Summit to further set the scene for this important task”*.

In compliance with this mandate, the Declaration on Alliance Security was issued at the following Summit, which took place in Strasbourg and Kehl in April 2009.

The Declaration is a very short document, scarcely two pages long, which insists on the increasingly global nature of new threats, such as terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, cyber attacks, energy security, climate change, as well as instability emanating from fragile and failed states, concluding that *“our security is increasingly tied to that of other regions”*.

To confront this situation, the Declaration requires that *“we will improve our ability to meet the security challenges we face [...], emerge at strategic distance or closer to home”*, so that *“we can respond quickly and effectively, wherever needed, as new crises emerge”*.

Additionally, the Declaration refers to the strengthening of the *“cooperation with other international actors [...] in order to improve our ability to deliver a comprehensive approach”*. Among these other actors it is necessary to single out the European Union, given

¹⁸ NATO Response Force: Joint Combined Reaction force created in the Prague Summit in 2002. The NRF is a high availability, technologically advanced, flexible, deployable, interoperable and sustainable force, able to be used as an Initial Entry Force and also as a catalyst for Allied capabilities.



that “*we are determined to ensure that the NATO-EU relationship is a truly functioning strategic partnership*”.

But the most important part of the Declaration is its last paragraph, in which the Heads of State and Government “*task the Secretary General to convene and lead a broad-based group of qualified experts, who in close consultation with all Allies will lay the ground for the Secretary General to develop a new Strategic Concept and submit proposals for its implementation for approval at our next summit*”.

2.7. The 2010 Strategic Concept

The Secretary General established the three-phase program described in the Introduction. The first two seminars have already taken place in Luxembourg on October the 16th and in Brdo (Slovenia) on November the 13th.

In Luxembourg, the seminar’s participants discussed the changing security environment, NATO’s core tasks, the Alliance’s political role and its strategy in the 21st century.

Among the main results we may highlight¹⁹ that NATO is a collective defence arrangement involved in cooperative security activities and a values-based political-military alliance. The most likely future threats to member states are hybrid and asymmetrical, rather than classical armed attack. Geopolitics is back. Article 5 remains at the core. There is a need to preserve a strong link between Article 5 and non-Article 5 tasks.

Concerning tasks, the seminar concluded that NATO's core purpose remains the defence of its members. Other tasks are likely to include: stabilization of weak and fragile states; prevention of genocide; strengthening governance and stability along NATO's periphery; mitigating the effects of natural or man-made disasters; combating piracy; and safeguarding energy flows. To deal with these challenges, the Alliance needs to develop partnerships and cooperative security arrangements.

In Brdo, discussions centered on five points: lessons of current operations and their implications for future strategy; dealing with evolving threats; facing the Arc of instability; NATO spectrum for engagement; and new steps for a comprehensive approach.

The need for a comprehensive approach in crisis response operations was highlighted. The possibility of acting against new threats like terrorism or piracy when such threats are at an embryonic stage was discussed. There was broad agreement that NATO should pursue a more active engagement in the Middle East. Several speakers said that Allies have yet to develop the full potential of the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative. Concerning NATO relations with other organizations, it was considered that NATO will need to accept limits to its vision and that the European Security and Defence Policy after the Lisbon Treaty has become a major element to consider.

In addition to the work of the Secretary General and the Experts Group, many other organisms and institutions are working on NATO strategy.

¹⁹ Highlights from the first Strategic Concept seminar in Luxembourg, accessed from <http://www.andinia.com/.../highlights-from-the-first-strategic-conc>.



Firstly we should note the important report by the Allied Command Transformation (SACT) “The Multiple Futures Project”, issued in April 2009²⁰. It describes four plausible worlds in 2030 which provide common grounds for an analysis of the risks and vulnerabilities that will potentially endanger Alliance populations, territorial integrity, values and ideas. The analysis is directed at four broad insights centred on the evolving nature of the threat, the need to act outside NATO’s traditional areas of engagement, the available advanced technology and the improvement of communications with international partners and populations. The security and military implications derived from these insights form the basis for a set of recommendations grouped in seven broad focus areas: Adapting to the demands of hybrid threats, operating with others and building institutions, counter proliferation, expeditionary and combat capability in austere environments, strategic communications and winning the battle of the narrative and organizational and force development issues.

The UK Parliament published, in March 2008, “The future of NATO and European defense”²¹. In this report we can read: *“Given the global nature of the threats facing the Allies, there is no alternative to NATO playing a global role. Its willingness to act to counter threats to its members wherever they arise is fundamental to the Alliance’s continuing relevance. If NATO limits itself to a regional role, it risks becoming marginalized. NATO’s willingness to fulfill a global role is critical to the continued support of the United States. Without US support, NATO has no future. But US support depends on NATO becoming more capable, deployable and flexible and on the European allies contributing more”*.

In the US, a “NATO Compact for the 21st century” has been developed by some universities and think tanks²². It concludes that *“To succeed in this new world, Europeans and Americans must define their partnership in terms of common security rather than just in common defence, at home and away. This will require the Alliance to stretch. Depending on the contingency at hand NATO may be called to play the leading role, be a supporting actor or simply join a broader ensemble. Even so, NATO alone –no matter how resilient- simply cannot stretch far enough to tackle the full range of challenges facing the Euro-Atlantic community. It must also be able to connect and work better with others, whether they are nations or international, governmental or non-governmental organizations. And, if NATO is to both stretch and connect, it will need to generate better expeditionary capabilities and change the way it does business”*.

The Rand Corporation report “Revitalizing the Transatlantic Security Partnership”²³ proposes measures to be applied in present conflicts such as Afghanistan, Iran, etc, and

²⁰ “The Multiple Futures Project – Navigating Towards 2030, Findings and Recommendations”, *North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)* (April 2009), in http://www.act.nato.int/media/Multiple_Futures/20090503_MFP_finalrep.pdf . It was developed by a multi-national, cross-functional team comprising military and civilian staff from HQ SACT to lead the exploration of the question “What are the future threats and challenges that could pose risk to the interests, values and populations of the Alliance?”.

²¹ House of Commons Defence Committee, Ninth Report of session 2007-08, ordered by the House of Commons.

²² Hamilton, Daniel; Barry, Charles; Binnedijk, Hans; Flanagan, Stephen; Smith, Julianne and Townsend, James “NATO Compact for the 21st Century”, *Atlantic Council of the United States, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Center for Technology and National Security Policy, National Defence University, Center for Transatlantic Relations, and Johns Hopkins University (SAIS: School of Advanced International Studies)*, February 2009; with the support of the, in http://transatlantic.sais-jhu.edu/bin/i/y/nato_reportfinal.pdf .

²³ Larrabee, F. Stephen and Lindley-French, Julian: “Revitalizing the Transatlantic Security Partnership, An Agenda for Action”, RAND Corporation, *A Venusberg Group and Rand Corporation project* (5 December 2008), in <http://www.rand.org/pubs/reprints/RP1382> .



addresses some important strategic issues such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, enlargement or energy security. In the chapter devoted to the reform of international institutions it states that *“The Alliance must forge a New Strategic Concept aimed at modernizing the strategic defense architecture of the Euro-Atlantic community so that an effective layered defense can be established against all threats to territorial integrity”*.

The main findings of the Wilton Park Conference WP952²⁴, are summarized in its report as follows: *“A new ‘Harmel report’ is needed, based on the Helsinki principles; NATO transformation has not worked well (failure of members to adapt); Afghanistan requires a Dayton-style agreement involving its neighbours; Europeans will pay a higher price to keep the US engaged in Europe; France’s reintegration in NATO is good news; NATO’s comprehensive approach is proving ineffective in practice; harmonize NATO’s Strategic Concept with the EU Security Strategy; demographics will sharply reduce future available military manpower; and most NATO members need to spend more and better in defence.”*

In April 2009, a Citizens Declaration of Alliance Security was launched at a “Shadow NATO Summit”²⁵ organized in conjunction with the 60th anniversary NATO Summit held in Strasbourg and Kehl. The Declaration includes a set of recommendations to be considered in the new Strategic Concept, which are to develop a wider and more inclusive network of partners, to explore the principles of ‘Non-Offensive Defence’, parliamentary accountability within NATO, to use force only when it is authorized by the UN Security Council or in self defence, to uphold the highest standards of international law, to develop a comprehensive approach to genocide prevention, etc.

Finally, we should make reference to the numerous documents issued by different Allies on the new Strategic Concept or on some of their specific elements that they consider necessary to include. These documents address all aspects of the Strategic Concepts, from the evolving strategic environment, through the nature and the core tasks of the Alliance, the meaning of Article 5 and the transatlantic link, to enlargement, internal reforms, etc., and are being considered by the Group of Experts and the North Atlantic Council.

3. Spain and NATO Strategic Concept

3.1. The Previous Years

After the Spanish Civil War in 1939, General Franco established a political regime similar to those of Germany and Italy. However, Spain did not participate in WWII. Franco limited himself to sending a division to fight beside the Germans on the Russian front. Once the war finished, the non-democratic Government of Spain became economically and politically isolated. Western countries withdrew their ambassadors from Madrid in 1951 while the Marshall Plan began to help the reconstruction of the rest of Europe.

²⁴ “NATO at 60: Towards a new Strategic Concept”, *Wilton Park*, (15-17 January 2009), in <http://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/highlights/viewstory.aspx?url=/>.

²⁵ Davis, Ian (ed.): “The Shadow NATO Summit: Options for NATO – pressing the reset button on the Strategic Concept”, *The British American Security Information Council (BASIC)*, Bertelsmann Stiftung, *International Security Information Service (ISIS) Europe and NATO Watch*, Brussels (31 March - 1 April 2009) in <http://www.basicint.org/pubs/natoshadow.pdf> .



At the same time, the United States had launched NATO and was building a ring of US bases all around the USSR to deploy its nuclear weapons and the vectors to launch them: Polaris submarines and B-29 strategic bombers with their logistic support.

Spain was selected by US analysts as a superb location for these bases in Europe, with an almost permanent capacity for air operations due to her excellent climate.

Cold War strategy was the US top priority and as a consequence, in 1953, the United States and Spain established a set of Agreements on Defence Cooperation, which allowed the US to use a naval-air base and three other air bases in Spain.

From the Spanish side, it meant the end of the isolation and the beginning of the reconstruction of an absolutely ruined country.

The results were so good, that the following year Spain was admitted in the United Nations Organization, thus accepting the Franco regime, which finally became accepted by the international community.

If Western countries were preparing to contain a possible USSR invasion, it was also a central preoccupation for the Government of Spain. The possibility of a Soviet attack on Spain was seen by its Government as a real threat. Spain could not contain such a threat individually, so an alliance was necessary and urgent.

The Agreements with the United States never contained a clause on mutual defence in case of an attack, which Franco tried again and again to obtain in every revision of the Agreements.

As this was demonstrably unachievable, an attempt was made to get US support to join NATO. This second approach was also a failure.

Including Spain in a collective defence system was not possible on a bilateral basis with the US, as Franco did not wish it, nor on a multilateral basis through NATO, which no one desired, so it was necessary to delay the solution until the death of Franco in 1975.

3.2. NATO Membership

Beginning in 1975, the transition to democracy was carried out in Spain in an incredibly ordered and rapid manner.

After a new Constitution was proclaimed in November 1978, one of the first organic laws approved was the National Defence Constitutional Law, in July 1980. There was no mention of collective defence, of the United Nations, of peace support operations or even of security in general. It was entirely devoted to national defence, including territorial integrity, protection of the population and defence of national interests, by strictly national means.

In 1982, the right wing and centre parties considered that the moment had come to join NATO and address the common defence issue. On the contrary, left wing parties were against this participation and organized a strong campaign with this objective. The UCD Government²⁶ initiated negotiations with NATO in 1979, and on 30 May 1982, a few months

²⁶ UCD: Democratic Center Union was a coalition of right and center parties.



before the general elections, Spain became the 16th member of the Alliance and sent a Permanent Representative and a Military Representative to Brussels.

As expected, in February 1982 the Socialist Party won the elections and, immediately, froze the integration process.

It was necessary to wait until 1986 for a reconsideration of this anomalous situation. Spain had joined the European Union the 1st of January that year, and the Government organized a referendum on the permanence of Spain in NATO on 24th March.

The referendum proposed staying in the Alliance with some conditions, among which was the non-participation in the Integrated Military Structure and the declaration of Spain as a non-nuclear country.

One of the reasons for including this non-participation condition was the existence of a NATO Command in Gibraltar. The political position of the Spanish Government with respect to this British colony, made it difficult to put Spanish forces under this Command. Another important reason was that Spain was not to be the only Ally outside of the Integrated Military Structure. France had abandoned this Structure in 1966 while maintaining its political and military influence in the Alliance.

The referendum was won and the integration process was restarted, but it was necessary to negotiate a set of six Agreements between the Supreme Allied Commanders and Spain to organize the participation of Spanish forces in NATO operations without participation in the Integrated Military Structure²⁷. These Agreements provided for some responsibilities for Spanish Commanders in NATO operations in and around Spanish territory.

In 1998, a full revision of the Integrated Military Structure, the Long Term Study, was developed. The fourth level of Command disappeared, and with it, the Gibraltar Command. This was the moment to raise the issue of full integration.

After a short parliamentary discussion, full participation in the Integrated Military Structure was approved²⁸ and it was effective on 1 January 1999, at the same time as the new Command Structure.

This was the end of the peculiar Spanish participation in the Alliance.

3.3. Spanish Defence Policy and NATO

The same year the Constitutional Act on National Defence was approved, 1980, the Prime Minister promulgated a policy document called the National Defence Directive (NDD). These two documents comprised the basic principles, the organization and the strategy for Spanish defence.

The evolution of the situation obliged the revision of the National Defence Policy several times. These revisions were done in 1984²⁹, in 1986 after the referendum on NATO

²⁷ Air Defense of Spanish Territory and Adjacent Areas, and Air and Naval Operations in Eastern Atlantic, both signed 21 May 1990, Air and Naval Operations in Western Mediterranean 22 Mar 1991, Preservation of the Integrity of the Spanish Territory 5 Apr 1991, Use of the Spanish Territory and Installations for Transit and Support as Logistic Base 1992 and Defense and Control of the Strait of Gibraltar 1992.

²⁸ The Spanish Congress authorized the Government to negotiate the full participation of Spain in the renewed Atlantic Alliance on 14 Nov 1996 with 293 votes in favor, 23 against and 4 abstentions.



and integration into the European Economic Community, in 1992 after the creation of the European Union in Maastricht, in 1996 with the entry into government of the Popular Party, in 2000 with the new legislative period, in 2004 with the new Socialist Government and finally in 2008 with the new legislative period.

In NDD 1984, in spite of our NATO membership since 1982, there is no reference to common defence, and the only reference to a multinational activity is an “action” that prescribes the definition of the model of commitment that Spain should attain with respect to security in the Western World, to which we are able to contribute in accordance with our objectives.

After the referendum held on March 1986, which resulted in Spain staying in NATO, a new NDD was issued in October. NDD 86 ranges much wider than the previous ones, develops detailed directions to negotiate Spanish participation in NATO outside the Integrated Military Structure, and depicts a two-fold strategy concerning both shared and non-shared threats, the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact being the origin of the shared threat. All other non-shared threats should be countered by national means only

There was no revision of the National Defence Policy immediately after the end of the Cold War in 1989, and the 1992 document did not include any change with respect to NATO. It simply stated that Spain will continue “*its participation in the Atlantic Alliance, in accordance with her model, in its adaptation to the new circumstances*”.

Spain went on with its “Spanish Model” based on the six Coordination Agreements, two of them still in the process of negotiation, and not much attention was paid to the new NATO Strategic Concept approved in November 1991.

The 1996 National Defence Directive, the first one of the Popular Party Government, was a very generic document, four pages long only. It establishes as one of its basic objectives “*to consolidate the presence of Spain in the international security and defence organizations*”. The main direction to implement this objective in relation with NATO is that “*The contribution to collective defence inside the Atlantic Alliance will include the full participation in its decision bodies, it will be balanced with that of the other Allies in the Staffs and the Command Structure and proportional to the national possibilities in the forces structures*”. The negotiations began immediately and the 1st of January 1999, in conjunction with the new Command Structure coming into operation, Spain began to fully participate in it.

Again in 2000, after full entry into the NATO Integrated Military Structure, the NDD was revised, and for the first time it indicates that the basic lines for the defence policy included in the document refer only to the current legislative period. In its three pages, it totally assumes membership to multinational security and defence organizations. It establishes three basic lines for Spanish defence policy. The first two are devoted to the defence of Spain and to the contribution to peace support and crisis management operations. In both cases it should be done exclusively in a collective way³⁰. The distinction between shared and non-shared threats has completely disappeared.

²⁹ The same year, the National Defence Act was also revised and the figure of the Chief of Defence Staff was established for the first time.

³⁰ Priority objectives: 1) to guarantee the security and defence of Spain and of the Spaniards in the frame of shared security and common defence with our partners and allies. 2) to contribute to humanitarian aid missions and peace support and crisis response operations carried out by the European and international organizations to



In December 2004, the new Socialist Government issued a new NDD. It is a longer document (9 pages) which recovers the duality between the maintenance of an autonomous defence capability and a simultaneous participation in collective defence and shared security. Concerning the Alliance, it states that Spain should “*actively participate in the initiatives of an enlarged and transformed NATO*”; one of the main lines of action being “*The assumption, jointly with our partners and allies, of our compromises in the fields of shared security and collective defence*”.

In December 2008, a new and still longer (14 pages) NDD was approved and remains today in force. It maintains exactly the same philosophy as NDD 04 in relation to NATO.

3.4. Spain and the 1999 Strategic Concept

When the first draft of SC 99 was issued in September 1998, Spain was finalizing the process of integration into the NATO Military Structure, and full participation in all NATO issues, in accordance with the current National Defence Directive. So the complete involvement of Spain in the drafting of SC 99, in contrast with the indifference observed in 1991, is not surprising.

The Spanish position could be summarized in the convenience of disposing of a UN Security Council Resolution to launch non-Art 5 operations, the acceptance of the “new missions”, especially Peace Support Operations, with two limitations (a functional one to avoid making the Alliance the only instrument to confront the risks, and a geographical one to limit the out-of-area operations to the Euro-Atlantic Area and its surroundings), the importance of Cooperation in the Mediterranean and the consideration of the Mediterranean Dialogue as an element of the European Security architecture, the limitation of the emphasis on non-proliferation (there are other organizations dealing specifically with this issue), the need to accept that ESDI could be developed also outside NATO, and the functional definition of threats, avoiding references to concrete countries.

4. Spain and the 2010 Strategic Concept. A Personal Vision

When in the Prague Summit, the Heads of State and Government discussed the need to revise the Strategic Concept, Spain was ready to analyze the implications of this revision for both the Alliance and Spain, and to actively participate in all and every aspect of the discussions.

A mixed Foreign Affairs/Defence Working Group was established to deal with all aspects of the new Strategic Concept, a document on the Spanish Position was developed and a Spanish diplomat was selected as one of the members of the Experts Group which will prepare the Report to the Secretary General.

But the ideas that follow, are not those developed in this Working Group, but my personal vision.

which Spain is a member... 3) to promote the conscience of national defence in Spanish society through defence culture.



4.1. NATO Security Tasks

It should not be forgotten that the main reason for the Allies to be members of NATO is to ensure their national defence. It is easier, better and cheaper to afford this defence in a collective way than by national means only, which in most cases would prove impossible. And this is the core of the Washington Treaty and what ensures the cohesion of the Allies.

The Washington Treaty addresses common defence only inside the NATO area, as defined in Article 6³¹. SC 99 considers that crises in and around the Euro-Atlantic area could spill over into neighbouring countries, including NATO countries, thus affecting the security of the Allies, and even considers other risks of a wider nature, including acts of terrorism, sabotage and organised crime, and the disruption of the flow of vital resources. This reasoning is what justifies the inclusion of crisis response out-of-area operations as a fundamental security task of the Alliance³². It seems clear that these operations should simply be a way to prevent subsequent Article-5 situations to occur. “Conflict prevention” and “crisis management including crisis response operations”, as stated in SC 99, should thus be simply considered as an extension of collective defence. But if there is no expectation or even possibility that the crisis could evolve into an armed attack on the NATO area, the cohesion provided by the Washington Treaty is notably diminished, being Article 7 of the Treaty insufficient for this purpose³³. Logically, measures taken by NATO for conflict prevention and crisis management out of the NATO area (article 6 of the Washington Treaty) should have the support of a United Nations Security Council Resolution if they imply the deployment of military forces.

It is not clear that NATO should support the United Nations in peace support operations world-wide. This should only be accepted if clear political support and an effective provision of forces and capabilities by the Allies ensure full coverage of the military requirements in the corresponding force generation conferences. In other cases, a coalition including the interested Allies should instead be considered. It is necessary to avoid any intention of involving NATO as a whole in operations different from the described “extended collective defence” although convenient to implement the national strategy of some Allies. We should avoid the controlled ambiguity in the use of the word “security” in SC 99. If we persist in this practice in SC 2010, we will not solve the present problems, and it will have been better to have issued a new Comprehensive Political Guidance, maintaining the Strategic Concept unchanged, as it was made in 2006.

One way of avoiding ambiguities and clarifying concepts is to reduce emphasis on a very military concept, such as *deterrence*, and replace it with a more “comprehensive” or “civil-military” term, such as *conflict prevention*. The fundamental tasks of the Alliance should be conflict prevention, crisis management and collective defence, in this order. All three of them have the same purpose of ensuring the defence of its members and contributing

³¹ For the purpose of Article 5 an armed attack on one or more of the Parties is deemed to include an armed attack on the territory of any of the Parties in Europe or North America, on the Algerian departments of France [eliminated in 1963], on the occupation forces of any Party in Europe, on the islands under the jurisdiction of any Party in the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer or on the vessels or aircraft in this area of any of the Parties.

³² Crisis Management: To stand ready, case-by-case and by consensus, in conformity with Article 7 of the Washington Treaty, to contribute to effective conflict prevention and to engage actively in crisis management, including crisis response operations.

³³ “North Atlantic Treaty”, Article 7: This Treaty does not affect, and shall not be interpreted as affecting, in any way the rights and obligations under the Charter of the Parties which are members of the United Nations, ...”



to the peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area, as it is defined in the SC 99³⁴. Conflict prevention includes military elements such as deterrence and other more political or civil-military elements, such as defence diplomacy. If defence diplomacy fails and we need to face a crisis situation affecting the security of the Allies, NATO should be able to manage this crisis. Finally, if deterrence also fails and the crisis ends in an armed attack against an Ally or a group of Allies, the Alliance should defend itself collectively.

In short, the new SC should address both collective defence as described in article 5 of the Treaty, and preventive measures so that article 5 situations don't develop. It should also permit the participation in other peace support and crisis management operations under the auspices of the United Nations, if enough support by the Allies is assured.

What happens with the security tasks included in SC 99? The first one is *security*, and the description given³⁵ is practically that of conflict prevention if we refer only to the security of the Alliance. The SC 99 considers two tasks *in order to enhance the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area*: *crisis management* and *partnership*. It is easier to understand crisis management as a specific security task, because its performance is quite different from other preventive tasks such as defence diplomacy. *Partnership* is a tool more than a task. We will develop it in more detail later on. The second security task in SC 99 is *consultation*. It seems clear to me that, again, it is not strictly a task. We may better consider that NATO performance is carried out in two complementary ways: consultation and collective action. The tasks refer to the actions. The third security task in SC 99 is *deterrence and defence*. They are different both conceptually and factually. The reason for putting them together is that they are the only strictly military tasks. As we have seen before, we should avoid too much military language in the SC 2010.

4.2. Treats and Risks

One of the most important problems with SC 99, if not the most important one, is the lack of specificity in defining threats and risks, employing expressions like *uncertain, unpredictable*, etc.

This fact, also present in SC 91, was not so important on that occasion because the main effort of the Alliance was directed at the former Warsaw Pact nations in Eastern Europe. But SC 99, which introduced out of area and non-article five operations, should definitely have corrected this dysfunction and it did not.

Without a clear definition and full agreement on the threats and risks we need to face together, it is very difficult to reach consensus on crises response operations, deployments, the NATO Response Force, and so on. This fact has been highlighted by some Allies in different meetings and declarations.

³⁴ SC 99 para 6: NATO's essential and enduring purpose, set out in the Washington Treaty, is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means. Based on common values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, the Alliance has striven since its inception to secure a just and lasting peaceful order in Europe. It will continue to do so. The achievement of this aim can be put at risk by crisis and conflict affecting the security of the Euro-Atlantic area. The Alliance therefore not only ensures the defence of its members but contributes to peace and stability in this region.

³⁵ SC 99 para 10. **Security:** To provide one of the indispensable foundations for a stable Euro-Atlantic security environment, based on the growth of democratic institutions and commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes, in which no country would be able to intimidate or coerce any other through the threat or use of force.



We have seen that NATO should address both threats and risks that could evolve into threats to the Alliance. The 2006 Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG) could serve as the basis to analyze these threats and risks, but we may easily note that not all threats and risks included in CPG correspond to the “extended collective defence” as described above.

There seems to be a clear consensus on the consideration of terrorism as a threat to the Alliance, after the terrorist attacks in Washington and New York in 2001, in Madrid in 2004 and in London in 2005 among others, and the numerous declarations of Bin Laden and other terrorists in the media against the Western World.

It is not so clear that “the spread of weapons of mass destruction”, without further elaboration, could be considered a threat to the Alliance. Chemical weapons have been employed in internal conflicts without supposing a threat to the Alliance, and it is arguable whether the disposal of short or medium range nuclear weapons is always a threat to the Alliance.

The new Strategic Concept should be more precise in establishing the present threats and also the risks that could evolve into threats in the future. Without such precision, we could again suffer undesirable fractures as well as new attempts to convert NATO into a global police force, which for the time being is not supported by all Allies.

4.3. Area of Interest

Closely related to the common perception of threats and risks is the issue of where NATO is expected to carry out operations. The position of some great powers is “everywhere as needed”, but some considerations should be taken into account.

Concerning the risks “of a wider nature”, which are normally identified with the so-called global threats, it is necessary to distinguish two different types: the first one is such an action or situation which takes place anywhere in the world and represents a risk for the Alliance because it may evolve and pose a direct threat to the Alliance, as may be the capacity to launch cyber attacks. The second one is that action or situation which takes place anywhere in the world and represents a risk only for that neighbourhood but, as it spreads world-wide, we consider it to be global, as is the case of failed states, the proliferation of short and middle range weapons of mass destruction³⁶ or the disruption of energy supplies. This last situation clearly represents a risk for the Alliance in the case of Russian gas passing through Ukraine into Western Europe, but a similar case in Latin America cannot be considered a risk for the Alliance. Most conflicts in the world, including those related to failed states, have a regional influence. Only a few of them have global influence.

This analysis leads to the conviction that the Alliance should mainly consider risks originating in and around the NATO area, that is, in the undefined Euro-Atlantic area, and only in very few and specific cases, which need to be clearly specified in the Strategic Concept, anywhere in the world outside the Euro-Atlantic area. This means that NATO should continue to be a regional Organization, with enough flexibility to cope with some situations “at strategic distance”, only to prevent future direct threats of article-5 type to the Alliance.

The inclusion in SC 2010 of the need to cope with operations at strategic distance, without further elaboration, will inevitably lead to an unacceptable determination of needed

³⁶ Most nations pursuing access to WMD have only regional interests. North Korea may be the only exception.



capabilities. The practical consequences of such a decision will only be lack of cohesion and insurmountable problems in the force planning process of the Alliance.

4.4. Comprehensive Approach

Another element that needs to be addressed in a better way than it is in the SC 99 is the way to achieve a comprehensive approach to crisis management.

For a long time, different positions have been adopted on the need, the appropriacy or the possibilities for NATO to have or not to have, civilian capabilities. After endless discussions the Comprehensive Political Guidance of 2006 (CPG) stated that “*While NATO has no requirement to develop capabilities strictly for civilian purposes, it needs to improve its practical cooperation, taking into account existing arrangements, with partners, relevant international organisations and, as appropriate, non-governmental organisations in order to collaborate more effectively in planning and conducting operations*”.

This decision has a similar foundation as that of avoiding a Military Command Structure in the European Union: The principle of no-duplication. The European Union has very important economic and civilian capabilities for crisis management which, through adequate agreements between both organizations, makes it unnecessary for NATO to acquire those types of expensive capabilities.

It seems reasonable to maintain in general terms the CPG prescription, but it implies that a comprehensive approach could only be achieved by working with others or, more technically, through partnerships. And there is general agreement on the need to apply this comprehensive approach concept to all processes of crisis management we may need to face in the future, although, as has been indicated by Peter Viggo Jakobsen³⁷, “*translating it into practical policy require a lot of hard work*”.

4.5. Partnerships

As a consequence, partnerships should play a key role in the new SC. NATO should, as a rule, operate side by side with its partners in both conflict prevention and, if it fails, in crisis management. But this can be done only if both NATO and its partners have enough common interests in order to act together.

Most of the common interests between NATO and its partner countries can be located in or around the NATO area, in the so-called Euro-Atlantic Area, never precisely defined, but clearly not including important geostrategic areas such as Latin America, East and South-East Asia and the Pacific Ocean.

It may be difficult to find things to do together with partners, in regions perceived as remote by the partners, most of which cannot be considered, and they do not consider themselves, as global players.

This idea has some correlations with and a similar philosophy to, the EU Neighbourhood Policy. Even being a global player, as the EU self-declares itself to be, to achieve stability and prosperity in its neighbourhood to grant security to Member States is considered fundamental for this organization.

³⁷ Jakobsen, Peter Viggo: *NATO's comprehensive approach to crisis response operations. A work in slow progress*. Danish Institute for International Studies, *DIIS Report* vol. 15 (2008).



On the other hand, things that can be done together with some partners are not suitable with others. As a consequence, we need different types of partnerships. Existing partnerships are, in fact, different. Partnership for Peace (PfP) is different in nature from Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI). And both types are different from the strategic partnership with the European Union and the special relations with Russia, Ukraine and Georgia. Even more, one of the problems in benefiting from the EAPC³⁸ is that PfP countries are not homogeneous, making it difficult to reach consensus in practical decisions.

The new SC should thus consider various types of partnerships: The first one is what we could designate as the “Eligible for Accession Partnership”, open to the countries which comply with Article 10 requisites to be a member of the Alliance, that is to be “*European states in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area*”. These countries would have a relation with the Alliance as extensive as they wish, even apply for accession, and they could share doctrine, procedures, standards, armaments programs, etc. The model for this partnership would be PfP, although it is not identical.

The new SC should also promote a set of Partnerships with all countries in the Euro-Atlantic Area, oriented to conflict prevention in this area, through co-operation and confidence-building measures. The Mediterranean Dialogue is a key element to prevent crises in North Africa, and could be a reference for establishing similar “Security Co-operation Partnerships” in the Middle East and Central Asia, not necessarily a single one. “Security Co-operation Partnerships” with North Africa, Middle East and Central Asia countries should be different from the described “Eligible for Accession Partnership”, should not be related to accession and should avoid the present confusion with PfP, which covers simultaneously these two different types of partnerships.

Partnerships with other security organizations such as the UN and the EU or with global powers such as Russia, should also be different. We may call them “Strategic Partnerships” and they should be oriented to cooperate and to address the common threats, regional or global, through a cooperative approach. These “Strategic Partnerships” are essential to address regional crises like those in the Middle East, and global ones like terrorism. But not all global threats are common. They affect differently to nations and organizations, and in many cases there may be a group of nations more involved than others. In the case of non-common threats, coalitions of interested states, and not NATO, should be considered.

The last type is the “Common Values Partnership”, open to far away countries which share values and principles with the Alliance, and for this reason usually cooperate with NATO and participate in NATO operations. This cooperation should always be agreed on a case by case basis and it should not require specific treaties or a permanent organization, so that the term “partnership” could not be properly employed, as we do when we speak of “global partnership”. When we refer to these “common values partners” we could include not only Australia, Japan or South Korea, but other like-minded countries, even if they are not contributors to NATO operations.

The Alliance should dedicate most of its conflict prevention capacity to the area of the “Eligible for Accession Partnership” (Balkans, Cyprus, Moldova ...) and to that of the

³⁸ The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council EAPC is composed of all NATO allies and PfP partners, which total 50 countries in America, Europe and Central Asia.



“Security Co-operation Partnerships” (Israel, Afghanistan-Pakistan, Iraq, Iran ...). In both cases it should be done with the participation of “strategic partners”.

“Common values partners” could be invited to participate in all NATO crisis management operations.

As a final comment, it should be clear that partnerships should not be specific tools for crisis management but fundamentally for conflict prevention.

4.6. Enlargement

Partnership for Peace has been the first step in the process of integration in NATO for all post-Cold War new allies. But it is necessary to note that this is not a general rule and it will not be advisable to force Article 10 of the Treaty and open NATO to non-European PfP countries.

Consensus is more and more difficult to achieve as the number of Allies increases. Once Balkan countries have completed their integration process, further enlargements should be seriously considered and perhaps limited only to non-NATO EU countries.

4.7. Coalitions

The existence of permanent organizations dedicated to security and defence does not impede the establishment of occasional coalitions. Global powers, be they nations or organizations, are frequently involved in conflicts that do not affect most of their allies and partners. In this case, the establishment of a coalition led by this global power is to be considered the preferred option. In these coalitions, both nations and organizations could participate. We may even consider the possibility that an organization of which the leading coalition nation is a member could participate in the coalition or operate in coordination with it. Afghanistan is an example of a crisis situation involving a coalition led by the United States, coordinated with an organization of which the United States is a member.

5. Conclusions

The decision to develop a new Strategic Concept implies the recognition of inadequacies in the present one. Therefore, the first thing to do should be to identify these inadequacies both in SC 99 and subsequent strategic documents to be able to correct them in the new Concept.

The first inadequacy is a lack of precision in the definition of the threats and, as a consequence, an imprecise set of tasks. The main task, the one which is at the core and provides cohesion to the Alliance, is collective defence as established in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. All other tasks should be connected with this one, comprising only those which prevent Article 5 situations, namely conflict prevention and crisis management. This means considering a wider interpretation of Article 5, which is the only justification of non-article 5 operations.

A second inadequacy is a lack of precision in the area of interest. The Alliance should be maintained as a regional one and should consider global threats only through a very careful analysis and on a case by case basis. Coalitions with other organizations or with single nations should be seriously considered as an alternate way to cope with these global threats.



The next refers to the lack of development of the comprehensive approach. NATO should avoid duplicating capabilities with other organizations, especially the European Union, and should address the comprehensive approach through a cooperative strategy with the UN, the EU and others.

We then have partnerships. This is the moment to develop a thorough analysis of this fundamental tool, avoiding the employment of a single partnership to address all the different things that NATO needs to do with others.

Enlargement has been demonstrated to be one of the best elements in providing security to the Euro-Atlantic area. However, it is almost reaching its limits and no attempt should be made to go further than Article 10 of the Washington Treaty.

Summing up, this is our challenge: to develop a new Strategic Concept which addresses the threats and risks of the 21st century while avoiding the inadequacies of SC 99.