

N° 03/2010

*recherches &
documents*

Perspectives on Extended Deterrence

Avec le soutien du Commissariat à l'énergie atomique

Édité et diffusé par la Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique
27 rue Damesme – 75013 PARIS

ISSN : 1966-5156
ISBN : 978-2-911101-51-9
EAN : 9782911101519

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Foreword

Bruno Tertrais¹

In November 2009, the Foundation for Strategic Research (Fondation pour la recherche stratégique, FRS) convened a workshop on « The Future of Extended Deterrence », which included the participation of some of the best experts of this topic, from the United States, Europe, the Middle East and East Asia, as well as French and NATO officials.

The attached papers were prepared for this seminar. Several of them were updated after the publication in April 2010 of the US Nuclear Posture Review.

The seminar was organized with the support of the French Atomic Energy Commission (Commissariat pour l'énergie atomique, CEA).

¹ Senior Research Fellow, Fondation pour la recherche stratégique, May 2010.

The Future of Extended Deterrence: A brainstorming paper Bruno Tertrais¹

What is Extended Deterrence?

“Extended deterrence” consists in extending the logic of deterrence to a third party, that is, persuading a potential adversary that the costs of attacking a protected country would exceed its benefits through a “security guarantee” given to the protected party.² To a large degree, it stems from any form of military alliance between a stronger country and a weaker one – although alliances per se generally include a *mutual* defense commitment, which is not a prerequisite to extended deterrence.

It is generally agreed that *there is no “one size fits all” formula* for successful extended deterrence. At one end of the spectrum, extended deterrence may rely on mere unilateral statements of protection. At the other end, it may rely on the permanent presence of nuclear weapons on the protected country’s territory. In between is often a web of policy statements, consultations mechanisms, joint exercises and planning, defense cooperation, ports visits, and presence of foreign troops – varying from country to country.³

Extended deterrence has three potential nuclear dimensions:

- If the protector has nuclear weapons, extended deterrence *may* become, explicitly or not, a form of extended *nuclear* deterrence. The protector may have an interest in maintaining ambiguity on this point.
- A security guarantee given by a nuclear protector can be a useful nuclear-nonproliferation measure.
 - This is the main function of what is called “assurance” in the United States.⁴ Whereas the credibility of the “deterrence” part of a security guarantee is to be appreciated by the potential adversaries, the credibility of its “assurance” part is to be appreciated by the protected country.
 - But extended deterrence could also perhaps have a “dissuasion” role. This is what the US administration seeks by stating that a “defense umbrella” over the Middle East would negate a possible Iranian nuclear capability, thus apparently hoping to discourage Tehran to build the Bomb.

¹ Final version September 18, 2009.

² This was sometimes called “Type II” deterrence during the Cold war.

³ According to US Ambassador Maynard Glitman, such “*habits of cooperation*” gave its real value to the US extended deterrence commitment. Lewis A. Dunn, *Deterrence Today – Roles, Challenges, and Responses*, paper prepared for the Institut Français des Relations Internationales, 14 May 2007, p. 9.

⁴ The expression “reassurance” was used during the Cold war.

*The requirements of “deterrence” and “assurance” may not be identical. A modest conventional presence on the protected country’s territory, for instance, may be enough as a “trip-wire” or as a symbol of commitment – thus providing significant assurance, but not necessarily enough deterrence. Conversely, a very small chance of nuclear use to protect an ally may be enough to convince an adversary that the cost would not be worth it – thus providing significant deterrence, but not necessarily enough assurance.*⁵ The NATO Cold War doctrine of “flexible response” was an attempt to bridge the gap between these two different requirements. It also sought to resolve a dilemma which is at the heart of extended deterrence: simultaneously reducing the twin fears of “entrapment” (for the protector) and “abandonment” (for the protected).⁶

The sizing of the US nuclear arsenal in 2001 was determined by the combination of these requirements.

The debate on extended deterrence is mostly about US security commitments. Washington has given security guarantees that include a nuclear dimension to about 30 countries, including NATO member States, Japan and South Korea. Whether or not other US allies, bound to Washington by treaty (such as Australia, Thailand and the Philippines) or by statements of commitment (such as Israel and Taiwan) can be considered as covered by a nuclear umbrella is left unsaid, in some cases deliberately so. However, other nuclear countries have given security guarantees to their friends and allies, which sometimes explicitly or implicitly include nuclear deterrence commitments. The United Kingdom and France have stated that their nuclear forces contribute to the overall security of the Atlantic Alliance. They also have defense commitments vis-à-vis several Gulf countries.

The Role of Security Guarantees in Nuclear Non-Proliferation

The lack of a strong security guarantee, or doubts about the scope and value of an existing one, have been key drivers of nuclear proliferation since 1949. China, France, Israel, India, Pakistan, North Korea and South Africa did not benefit from a security guarantee (or did not consider it as being credible) when they went nuclear. For countries which are known to have embarked in a nuclear program – or to have seriously entertained the thought – the question of security guarantees also loomed large. Most did not benefit from such a guarantee at all (Egypt, Iraq, Indonesia, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, Brazil, Argentina, Libya), or felt that it was weakening (Taiwan); and most of those who gave up their nuclear option in the face of a clear threat only did so when they felt reassured that they would be adequately protected, formally (Norway, Germany, Australia, South Korea, Japan) or not (Sweden).

The fact is that countries who considered or embarked in a nuclear program were also countries which did not benefit from a credible security guarantee, and most of those countries who gave up the nuclear option in the face of a threat benefitted from such a guarantee. This quasi-universal correlation suggests that such guarantees are critical as a nuclear non-proliferation measure.

⁵ This idea was called the “Healey theorem” during the Cold war, after UK defense minister Dennis Healey who said that “it takes only 5% credibility of American retaliation to deter the Russians, but 95% to reassure the Europeans” (Dennis Healey, *The Time of My Life*, London: Michael Joseph, 1989, p. 243).

⁶ George Perkovich, *Extended Deterrence on the Way to a Nuclear-Free World*, International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, May 2009.

This is not to state that a credible security guarantee is a panacea for non-proliferation; only that its presence decreases the chances of a country going nuclear, conversely that its absence increases such chances. A similar conclusion was reached by a 2007 report by the US Department of State's International Security Advisory Board.⁷

Why the Extended Deterrence Debate is Evolving

Extended deterrence is increasingly relevant as an international security instrument:

- The number of countries protected by the United States and its allies has increased through the three successive enlargements of NATO (to Central Europe, the Baltic States, and several Balkan countries), as well as, to a lesser extent, by recent interventions (Iraq, Afghanistan).
- Among our friends and allies, there is a growing sense of threat from major powers (Russia, China), new nuclear-capable states (North Korea), and potential nuclear-capable countries (Iran).
- There is a risk that failing to ensure adequate extended deterrence could lead to further nuclear proliferation, principally in the Middle East and in Asia.
- The security of some countries not covered by a nuclear umbrella is being put to test or questioned (ex: Georgia, Ukraine).
- Emerging nuclear powers might consider giving a form of extended deterrence to some of their friends and allies (Pakistan to Saudi Arabia, Iran to Syria?).

The debate on how best to implement extended deterrence is evolving:

- Possible complements (or even alternatives) to nuclear weapons as instruments of extended deterrence are increasingly available: missile defenses are more credible than in the past, and the United States is developing new long-distance conventional precision strikes means.
- The growing importance of the “nuclear abolition movement”, as well as the universally-recognized need to shore up the non-proliferation regime, have led to calls for a lessening of the importance of nuclear weapons in defense postures, with possible consequences on both the “deterrence” and “assurance” parts of security guarantees.
 - o In particular, calls for the reinforcement of negative security assurances, the adoption of “no-first-use” doctrines, or the withdrawal of weapons stationed on foreign territories, have a direct impact on the extended deterrence debate. Such calls are sometimes heard in countries covered by the US nuclear umbrella.⁸

⁷ “There is clear evidence in diplomatic channels that US assurances to include the nuclear umbrella have been, and continue to be, the single most important reason many allies have foresworn nuclear weapons” (International Security Advisory Board, *Report on Discouraging a Cascade of Nuclear Weapons States*, 19 October 2007, p. 23).

⁸ In particular in Germany and Belgium.

- Some US allies are increasingly uncomfortable with the new US discourse on “nuclear abolition” combined with the prospect of drastic reductions in the American arsenal.
- Questions regarding the validity of deterrence vis-à-vis “new” threats (State-sponsored terrorist aggression, cyber-attacks...) have to be addressed in the context of *extended* deterrence.⁹

Reinforcing Security Guarantees: Problems and Dilemmas

Many problems and dilemmas appear when countries consider reinforcing existing security guarantees or giving new ones. Some of them are well-known and already existed during the Cold War.

- Protected States can be tempted to reduce their conventional defense commitments, thus making them more dependent on foreign protection, enhancing the risk for the protector to be quickly and heavily involved in a military crisis involving the protected country.
- It may be difficult to discriminate among allies and friends: those who feel “left out” will either ask for identical guarantees – but failing to meet their demands may encourage nuclear proliferation. (For instance, some in the Gulf have noted the debates in Washington about more forceful and explicit security guarantee to Israel, and wonder “what about us?”).
- States covered by “umbrellas” can be emboldened and embark in dangerous adventures. Such is the case why the United States never wanted to give Taiwan a complete assurance of support in *any* circumstance – an attitude which could induce the temptation for Taipei to declare its independence, and lead to conflict with Beijing. It is no coincidence that the term “ambiguity” has been frequently associated with the expression “security commitments”. (Conversely, nuclear guarantees may be resisted by the recipient State, which may fear for its freedom of action. Many Israelis oppose a formal defense pact with the United States for this reason.)
- Giving security commitments to countries that have unfriendly relations can prove a tricky diplomatic balancing act. During the Cold war, for instance, Washington protected both Greece and Turkey, as well Brazil and Argentina, but not one against the other. Also, the SEATO treaty provisions covered only the case of a “communist” aggression. And the US State Department expressed the fear that a publicly declared security guarantee to Israel would harm America’s relations with the Arab world – especially since it may have been seen as giving a “free hand” to Israel in the region.

Some dilemmas concern more particularly the *reinforcement* of existing guarantees:

- Countries that give a security commitment generally want to preserve a margin of maneuver and not be caught in “entangling alliances”. A key reason why Article 5

⁹ 9/11 was recognized as an « armed attack » in the sense of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty by the NATO allies.

of the Washington treaty remained vague is that the US Congress would not have sanctioned an automatic commitment to war. After 1957, Washington never wanted to give any automatic character to its nuclear response to a Soviet aggression. Fear of a “commitment trap” is one reason why US, UK and French leaders have chosen to cloud with uncertainty what the nature of their response to a CW or BW attack would be.

- Stronger, more explicit guarantees run counter to the very principle of ambiguity embedded in the policy of deterrence. If one assumes that the efficiency of deterrence supposes that the adversary is unable to calculate the exact costs and risks that would be associated with aggression, then there is an inherent limit to what is possible to achieve in terms of strengthening security assurances for the purpose of non-proliferation without compromising deterrence.
- New security guarantees can pose political problems to the “donor” or to the “recipient”. Since the end of the Cold war, and most importantly since 9/11, questions have been raised about the wisdom to continue giving protection to countries such as Pakistan or Saudi Arabia. But the problem may also exist the other way round. Some countries may not *want* to be openly protected by the United States. A formal security guarantee to Saudi Arabia, which would mean open and complete reliance on the United States for its security, may be challenged from within. Many in the Gulf countries do not want an open US nuclear guarantee, for fear that it would mean being considered by Iran as an enemy.¹⁰
- Another dilemma exists regarding the possible deployment of nuclear weapons. Critics of the Atlantic Alliance’s nuclear posture have a point when they say that NATO has established a pattern that it does not want others to emulate. In legal terms, nothing would preclude, for instance, Islamabad from deploying nuclear weapons in Saudi Arabia, or forbid the presence of Chinese nuclear weapons in, say, Burma, or prohibit the stationing of future Iranian nuclear weapons on Syrian soil – as long as such weapons are not under the control of the recipient country... Such countries would be more than happy to use the US precedent to justify themselves. In addition, nuclear presence can induce a sense of insecurity in a neighboring country, heightening its need for nuclear weapons (e.g. Turkey/Iran). In the case of Turkey, one should also note also that the presence of US nuclear weapons gives a “nuclear education” and training that could be helpful if one day that country decided to go nuclear. Nuclear stationing thus presents a dilemma: it can be both a non-proliferation tool and a mechanism that reinforces, to some extent, the risk of proliferation.
- Might not the creation or the reinforcement of security guarantees actually *contribute*, to some extent, to proliferation? The US-Taiwan treaty of December 1954 has been called the “last straw” leading to Mao’s decision to go nuclear. The contemporary cases of Iran and North Korea also deserve consideration. Assuming that Iran has not yet decided to build operational nuclear weapons, the existence of a growing web of alliances around the country could be used, in

¹⁰ This is the reason why the United States mentions a « defense umbrella » rather than an explicit nuclear guarantee.

internal debates, as an argument for “going all the way”. As per Pyongyang, it seems to consider that the very *existence* of a US nuclear umbrella over South Korea is a rationale for its nuclear program.

Finally, the increase in the number of security guarantees could create the risk that, mathematically, one of them will be seriously tested though a conflict or a crisis. The problem then for the protecting country is that it may have to intervene more forcefully than it would have otherwise to maintain its “reputation” as a reliable ally – and the higher the number of allies, the higher the stakes. Also, an important number of security commitments may raise the cost of “defeat” or “withdrawal” when the protecting State is involved in a war which does not involve a protected country. (Some in the Johnson administration argued that a key reason to remain involved in Vietnam was that absent a US victory, the credibility of US security guarantees would be weakened. The same argument was made in the years 2004-2008 regarding Iraq.) It can also be argued that a further expansion of nuclear umbrellas may lead to the definition of “new lines of confrontation” between various blocks of allies.

Some Questions To Be Addressed

General questions about extended deterrence

1. To which extent is the *nuclear* part of extended deterrence a critical dimension today? Could deterrence *as well as* assurance be ensured through an appropriate combination of missile defense and long-range conventional strike means? For countries currently under a nuclear umbrella? For other countries?
2. Is there a meaningful difference between an explicitly nuclear guarantee (e.g. US to NATO, Japan), and an implicit one, given that a security assurance given by a nuclear power includes by definition a potential nuclear component?
3. Can there be “substitutes” to the permanent presence of US nuclear weapons on allied territories – such as (a) non-permanent presence, (b) presence on neighboring US territories (Asia), (c) deployment of SLCMs on SSNs in the region, (d) increased involvement of allies in US/common nuclear planning?
4. How does the evolution of US nuclear policy affect extended deterrence? Conversely, how does extended deterrence affect US nuclear policy? Is the need to deter non-nuclear threats to allies an obstacle to the adoption of a no-first-use posture by Washington?
5. To what extent is it affected by the current administration’s emphasis on the goal of “nuclear abolition”?
6. Regarding the US nuclear arsenal, how much does *quantity* matter? Do US allies covered by a nuclear umbrella believe that the United States has to remain “second-to-none”? And do potential adversaries have the same perceptions? More generally, are nuclear sizing requirements different for deterrence and assurance?
7. And how much does *diversity* matter? Does extended deterrence today require specific nuclear means?

8. How much does *quality* matter? Does the current debate about the credibility of the US nuclear arsenal with or without ratifying the CTBT, with or without developing new generations of nuclear warheads affect the credibility of extended deterrence?
9. How does extended deterrence cover State-sponsored terrorist aggression, or cyber-attacks? Is it conceivable that major attacks of such kinds would be credibly covered by extended *nuclear* deterrence?
10. How is extended deterrence affected by conventional military redeployments? How much do numbers matter here, i.e., is the presence of a small number of soldiers enough to ensure both assurance and deterrence?
11. How is extended deterrence affected by ongoing military operations in the same region or other regions? Do Western countries have to fight wars or stay in a region just to “maintain their reputation” as security guarantors?

Specific questions about extended deterrence in Europe

1. What would be the consequences of the withdrawal of US nuclear weapons from Europe? What would be the costs and benefits of retaining nuclear weapons only in Turkey?
2. What would be the *political* impact of a complete withdrawal of US nuclear weapons on deterrence (Russia, Iran, etc.), on assurance (Turkey), and on transatlantic relations in general?
3. Would it have any significant *strategic* impact for deterrence operations by the Alliance? Do other US combatant commands (CENTCOM) plan on the availability of those nuclear weapons stationed in Europe which are carried by US aircraft?
4. How would it be possible to deter military aggression against a friendly but non-allied country such as Georgia or Ukraine without giving those countries a security guarantee?
5. Can EU membership be considered as a form of security guarantee, as a partial substitute (Finland, Sweden...) or a possible complement (Turkey...) to NATO membership?
6. How relevant is the “assurance” function today for nuclear non-proliferation in European Union countries? Would there be a risk of proliferation in the EU if the US extended deterrent was seen as weakening?

Specific questions about extended deterrence in Asia

1. What would be the most appropriate means to reinforce extended deterrence to countries such as Japan and South Korea?
2. Would the deployment of nuclear weapons on neighboring US territories (Guam) or at sea (cruise missiles on SSNs) be a useful option? Could the permanent presence of US nuclear weapons on Japanese (Okinawa) or South Korean territory ever be considered again?

3. Should the United States formally include its East Asian allies in nuclear planning discussions?
4. Would a Chinese extended deterrent to North Korea – combined with the dismantlement of the DPRK’s nuclear capability – be a good thing or a bad thing?
5. How would changes in the US extended deterrent to NATO (declaratory policy, nuclear weapons, missile defense) be viewed in Asia?

Specific questions about extended deterrence in the Middle East

1. What policies and postures could best ensure that Western allies and friends in the region feel protected against the potential Iranian threat?
2. How can extended deterrence be ensured in a region where large-scale Western military deployments and heavy reliance on the United States can be so politically sensitive?
3. What would be the overall costs and benefits of an openly acknowledged US “nuclear umbrella” over the Arab/Persian Gulf? Is there a demand for such an “umbrella” in the region?
4. Can and should deterrence be extended to friendly but non-allied countries such as Egypt?
5. Can and should the United States make a difference, in terms of declaratory policy for extended deterrence, between its various friends and allies in the region (Israel, Saudi Arabia, Gulf States, Egypt, Iraq)?
6. What are – if any – the extended deterrence benefits of UK and French security commitments towards some Gulf countries?
7. Should the conventional (and possibly nuclear) deterrence postures of the United States, the United Kingdom and France in the region be better coordinated?
8. Can extended deterrence have a “dissuasion” effect – i.e., would a stronger deterrence stance vis-à-vis Gulf countries diminish Iran’s apparent willingness to build nuclear weapons?
9. What would be the overall costs and benefits of a Pakistani extended deterrent vis-à-vis Saudi Arabia?
10. How would possible changes in the US nuclear posture be viewed in the Middle East?
11. How would possible changes in the US extended deterrent to NATO (nuclear weapons, missile defense, etc.) be viewed in the Middle East?

US Extended Deterrence in NATO and North-East Asia

David S. Yost¹

Some observers have recently argued that the withdrawal of the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe would send a powerful signal in support of nonproliferation and promote the “global zero” agenda of abolishing nuclear weapons. The deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe has been a central element of NATO’s nuclear deterrent posture since the 1950s, and proposals for their removal have raised questions about U.S. extended deterrence on a level not seen since the “dual track” controversy of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Indeed, some “global zero” advocates have singled out U.S. extended deterrence commitments worldwide as an obstacle to the fulfillment of the abolitionist goal. For example, according to Barry Blechman, “extended deterrence is a concept that served a vital purpose during the Cold War, but whose time has come – and gone.”²

These arguments highlight the need to reconsider the fundamental purposes of U.S. extended deterrence and the political and strategic goals that it serves. This brief essay discusses the meaning of extended deterrence before examining U.S. extended deterrence arrangements in NATO. It then compares the current context for U.S. extended deterrence in Europe with the situation in north-east Asia.

The essay concludes that U.S. extended deterrence commitments in both regions remain a central pillar of international security. The beneficiaries of U.S. extended deterrence have shared security interests – above all, upholding the credibility of U.S. security guarantees. Removing U.S. nuclear weapons from Europe and weakening U.S. extended deterrence commitments could have unintended and destabilizing consequences, including an erosion of the nuclear nonproliferation regime. Such an erosion, with the emergence of additional nuclear-weapon states, would be a major setback to prospects for achieving the long term objective of nuclear disarmament.

Defining and Pursuing Extended Deterrence

The long-standing distinction between central and extended deterrence remains valid. Central deterrence means preventing aggression or coercion against one’s vital interests, including the homeland, by threatening to punish and/or defeat an adversary or to thwart his aggression. Effective missile defenses might, for example, be able to intercept and foil a missile attack and thereby deny the enemy the achievement of his operational objectives. Extended deterrence means providing protection to an ally or security partner via comparable deterrent threats – threats of punishment and/or threats

¹ Professor, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California. The views expressed are those of the author alone and do not represent those of the Department of the Navy or any U.S. government agency. Thanks are owed to those who commented on earlier drafts of this article, including Giuseppe Cornacchia, Thérèse Delpech, Joseph Pilat, Guy Roberts, Alberto Rosso, Michael Rühle, Paul Schulte, and Colin Stockman.

² Barry M. Blechman, “Extended Deterrence: Cutting Edge of the Debate on Nuclear Policy,” Policy Forum Online 09-066A, 13 August 2009, available at <http://www.nautilus.org/fora/security/09066Blechman.html>

of denial, also known as threats of operational defeat. Some experts would extend the threats of punishment beyond the unacceptable costs that could be imposed by military means to include economic or diplomatic sanctions or even prosecution for war crimes. As the term “nuclear guarantee” suggests, however, U.S. extended deterrence is often taken to mean the extension by Washington of an umbrella of nuclear protection to an ally. Although U.S. extended deterrence has always included significant non-nuclear elements, this essay focuses on the nuclear dimension.

Extended deterrence is intrinsically harder to accomplish than central deterrence for at least five reasons. The first is making the threat credible to the adversary. The second is providing credible assurance to the protected country – both the government and the public, whose views on deterrence requirements (and hence assurance) may differ substantially from those of the government. The third is convincing domestic public opinion that extending such protection – taking risks to ensure the security of a distant country – is necessary and in the national interest. In normal times public opinion is a secondary or permissive factor, but in crisis situations public opinion in the protected country or the guarantor country could become a complicating factor – one that could undermine the credibility of deterrence or make it harder to sustain a deterrence posture.

The fourth reason why extended deterrence is more difficult to achieve than central deterrence resides in the imperative of convincing the political elite of the security guarantor. The visible convictions of the political elite are important if the security commitment is to be sustained on a bipartisan basis from administration to administration and remain credible to adversaries and protected allies and security partners over time. Sustaining a domestic consensus in support of extended deterrence may become increasingly difficult with generational change if fewer legislators, military officers, and government officials recall the initial underlying rationale for the extended deterrence commitment and associated arrangements, or recognize their continuing importance and relevance to national and allied security.

The fifth and final reason why extended deterrence presents greater demands than central deterrence is the challenge of sustaining national determination and willingness to employ military capabilities if deterrence efforts fail. Herman Kahn once wrote, “Usually the most convincing way to look willing is to be willing.”³ To be truly willing may be a challenge in specific cases because of the intrinsic dangers, domestic factors, and concurrent international obligations.

All five of the factors listed above involve the requirement of credibility. One need not be an open skeptic regarding the reliability of U.S. extended deterrence (such as, for instance, General de Gaulle in the 1950s and 1960s) to acknowledge that the prospect of eliciting a strong reaction from Washington is inherently more plausible in the case of an attack against the United States than in the case of an attack against an ally thousands of miles away from North America. The risk for the United States is that action in defense of a distant ally might in some contingencies escalate to intercontinental nuclear war. A deterrence-by-denial strategy based on highly effective air and missile defenses might in some circumstances alleviate some of the political and

³ Herman Kahn, *On Thermonuclear War* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2007; first published by Princeton University Press in 1960), p. 287.

strategic credibility problems associated with extended deterrence (for instance, the risk of putting Boston at risk to protect Bologna); but it could not eliminate them completely.

It is axiomatic that the credibility of extended deterrence hinges on the robustness and reliability of central deterrence. No government can credibly extend deterrence protection unless it can ensure its own security with some confidence. Even central deterrence entails a considerable amount of guesswork, intuition, and reliance on assumptions that cannot be tested, short of a deep crisis; and the evidence for the functioning of central deterrence often seems impressionistic and anecdotal.

This is all the more the case with extended deterrence, which adds other variables: above all, whether potential adversaries are convinced of the solidity of the U.S. security commitment to an ally, and whether the allied government regards the deterrence posture as likely to be effective.

It has long been recognized that the requirements of assuring allies and deterring adversaries may differ. Denis Healey, who was the British Minister of Defense in the late 1960s, formulated what he called “the Healey Theorem” in order to underscore the difficulty of the assurance aspect of extended deterrence – that is, “it takes only five per cent credibility of American retaliation to deter the Russians, but ninety-five per cent credibility to reassure the Europeans.”⁴

Conversely, it must never be forgotten that an adversary may undertake aggression even when, according to the guarantor’s assessment of the vulnerabilities and risks, he ought to be deterred. Therefore, measures to provide assurance might in some circumstances be excessively persuasive in relation to the actual deterrence results. Washington and the ostensibly protected allies might feel subjectively comfortable about their level of protection but in fact underestimate the requirements of deterrence in relation to certain adversaries. They might thus live in “a fool’s paradise” based on an unwarranted assumption that their adversaries are and will remain reliably deterred; they might then fail to take the steps truly needed to bolster their posture for deterrence and defense.

The United States can guarantee the sincerity of its political commitment to the security of its allies and the seriousness of its military efforts to deter adversaries; but it cannot guarantee the success of these deterrence efforts. Assurance may, however, give allies the encouragement necessary to devise and sustain in cooperation with Washington a deterrence posture with a higher probability of successfully preventing aggression or coercion than would otherwise be possible.

U.S. Extended Deterrence in NATO

One of the classic questions about deterrence during the Cold War was, “How much is enough?” In the United States this question focused on elaborate assessments of survivable nuclear retaliatory capabilities, among other factors. In NATO it was even more complicated. It involved not only nuclear weapons but a complex and emotional process of trial-and-error that included a divisive debate over escalation boundaries, control and consultation mechanisms, and the unsuccessful Multilateral Force proposal.

⁴ Denis Healey, *The Time of My Life* (London: Michael Joseph, 1989), p. 243.

By the late 1960s all of the NATO Allies except France reached a working consensus on the requirements of an effective Alliance deterrence posture.

For decades certain European Allies have had a direct role in maintaining NATO's nuclear posture: under bilateral programs of cooperation with the United States, they have hosted U.S. nuclear weapons and U.S. delivery systems on their territory, and they have maintained their own national capabilities for delivery of U.S. nuclear weapons. By participating in the operational aspects of nuclear deterrence, these Allies have demonstrated NATO's political and military cohesion, and added to the credibility of NATO's nuclear posture. Their participation in the operational aspects of deterrence has also strengthened their voice in the Nuclear Planning Group, NATO's senior-level consultative body focused on nuclear issues. It is by participating in the work of the NPG that Allies have gained and exercised considerable influence in the formation of NATO's nuclear policy and its associated decision-making process.

Determining how much is enough in NATO has not focused on numbers and types of weapons as much as on other arrangements that have contributed to assurance as well as deterrence. In addition to the NPG and other bodies for consultations, the Alliance offers opportunities for non-nuclear-weapon-state allies without host or delivery roles to participate in the implementation of the Alliance's nuclear policy in other ways, including exercises; seminars and workshops; command, control, and communications links; and non-nuclear air support options. Such activities help to compensate for the fact that the number of allies with nuclear host and/or delivery responsibilities is a shrinking proportion of the total, owing in part to NATO enlargement.

While there have been some refinements and adaptations since 1989-1991, the consultation arrangements devised during the Cold War have remained effective in post-Cold War conditions. The NPG continues to oversee the consultation mechanisms and associated command and control arrangements that underscore the collective character of NATO's nuclear decision-making.

NATO's nuclear deterrence posture has thus included multiple dimensions. Without considering the roles of France and the United Kingdom,⁵ the objectives have included making the U.S. extended deterrence posture credible to the adversaries to be deterred and to the allies to be assured, and acceptable to the United States.

In the NATO context, U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe have served three functions at once:

- first, communicating a message to adversaries that an Alliance deterrent has been constituted, with multiple Allies involved in consulting on policy, maintaining the posture, and preparing for possible operations;
- second, assuring the Allies of the genuineness of U.S. commitments, with the weapons, delivery systems, consultations, and other concrete and tangible arrangements creating a presumption of concerted action in the event of a crisis; and

⁵ According to the current NATO Strategic Concept, "The supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies is provided by the strategic nuclear forces of the Alliance, particularly those of the United States; the independent nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France, which have a deterrent role of their own, contribute to the overall deterrence and security of the Allies." North Atlantic Council, Strategic Concept, 24 April 1999, paragraph 62, available at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_27433.htm

- ➔ third, making the extended deterrence responsibility more acceptable to the United States – that is, rather than the United States bearing the burden all by itself, the Allies have assumed security roles, financial costs, and political risks and responsibilities.

The existing arrangements are not flawless, but it is hard to think of better ones that would satisfy the need for risk- and responsibility-sharing, with some European Allies having an operational role. The operational role provides the Allies bearing host and delivery responsibilities with credibility and thus influence in the policy formation process. The Allies would probably lose that influence with a termination of the existing NATO arrangements, and greater political and strategic responsibilities would be placed on the shoulders of the United States, as well as Britain and France. These would not be positive developments for alliance cohesion.

Indeed, removing the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons from Europe and terminating the nuclear-sharing arrangements would have disadvantages such as politically singularizing the United States, and depriving the United States of the assistance of Allies that have been willing to help bear the political and practical risks and responsibilities of maintaining an Alliance deterrence posture. Moreover, these Allies would lose the sense of participation and policy influence that is derived from bearing these responsibilities. The Nuclear Planning Group and other consultation mechanisms might remain, but with a critical difference – the absence of nuclear-sharing and of the sense of a jointly sustained posture. The end of nuclear burden-sharing among the Allies could over time make consultations an increasingly empty exercise and cost the states terminating their participation their exceptional influence on U.S. decision-making.

The non-nuclear-weapon-state European allies would also lose expertise regarding nuclear deterrence issues, and there would be less of a sense of a common deterrence culture within the Alliance.⁶ This would have implications for the arms control and disarmament policies of the Allies, as well as for deterrence and assurance.⁷

In short, NATO's nuclear-sharing arrangements, based on U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe, have made possible a European Allied operational role and European Allied involvement in the maintenance of an Alliance deterrent posture. It is generally agreed that the removal of U.S. nuclear weapons from Europe would not mean the end of U.S. extended deterrence in NATO or nuclear policy consultations in the Alliance. The U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe nonetheless make possible the constitution of an Alliance deterrent that could be of genuine value for crisis management and deterrence.

⁶ According to a highly regarded French expert, the “political value” of the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe “is today much more important than their military value. For me, the principal interest in their presence is to maintain a common deterrence culture within the Alliance.” Bruno Tertrais, “Désarmement nucléaire en Allemagne: un ‘tournant majeur,’” 2 November 2009, available at <http://secretdefense.blogs.liberation.fr/defense/2009/11/d%C3%A9sarmement-nucl%C3%A9aire-en-alle-magne-un-tournant-majeur-selon-bruno-tertrais.html>

⁷ The interdependence between the nuclear-sharing and consultation arrangements under Alliance auspices and the acceptance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) by certain NATO Allies is worth recalling. For an illuminating account, see Hal Brands, “Non-Proliferation and the Dynamics of the Middle Cold War: The Superpowers, the MLF, and the NPT,” *Cold War History*, vol. 7, no. 3 (August 2007), especially pp. 404-409.

Some observers regard the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe as less important than in the past owing to their judgment that the scenarios in which they might be useful for such purposes are quite improbable and remote;⁸ that they entail both “opportunity costs” and investments in maintaining nuclear certification for dual-capable aircraft and crews, as well as in providing security at the weapons storage sites; and that in a crisis any targets could be struck by U.S. strategic systems.

These arguments rule out entirely what cannot be fully excluded: the possibility that a contingency could arise in which the constitution of an Alliance deterrent could be relevant for successful crisis management and deterrence. These arguments also overstate the “opportunity costs” and financial investments required to maintain this part of the Alliance’s nuclear deterrence posture. According to the *Report of the Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management*, the cost of maintaining U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe is “low and worth paying” as the price of an Alliance deterrent with transatlantic risk- and responsibility-sharing.⁹ The target coverage approach relying solely on U.S. strategic systems would politically singularize the United States and, as some Allied observers have noted, empty the Alliance consultation mechanisms of much of their content.

Moreover, the long-standing judgment of many officials and experts in NATO countries persists: U.S. nuclear weapons based in Europe send a more potent deterrent message about U.S. commitments than reliance solely on U.S. nuclear weapons deployed at sea or based in North America. With the U.S. nuclear weapons presence in Europe, extensive nuclear risk- and responsibility-sharing, and consultative arrangements for decision-making, the Alliance has greater confidence in its strength and cohesion than it would have without these interrelated attributes – and greater confidence that adversaries will recognize NATO’s resolve and capabilities.

It was in view of these considerations that the U.S. Congressional Commission concluded in 2009 that the nuclear-sharing arrangements involving U.S. and Allied dual-capable aircraft and U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe should be continued: “In Europe, the current fleet of dual-capable aircraft is slated for retirement within the next decade. A future variant of the advanced fighter, the F-35 or Joint Strike Fighter, is intended to be a replacement for the current dual-capable aircraft beginning in 2016. NATO allies are committed to the modernization of dual-capable aircraft and the United States should proceed in partnership with them.”¹⁰

⁸ It should be noted that NATO’s 1999 Strategic Concept stated that the “Allies concerned consider” that “The circumstances in which any use of nuclear weapons might have to be contemplated by them are . . . extremely remote.” North Atlantic Council, *Strategic Concept*, 24 April 1999, paragraph 64, available at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_27433.htm

⁹ James R. Schlesinger, chairman, *Report of the Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management, Phase II: Review of the DoD Nuclear Mission* (Arlington, VA: Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management, December 2008), p. 60. This report is available at <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/PhaseIIReportFinal.pdf>

¹⁰ *America’s Strategic Posture: The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States*, William J. Perry, Chairman, and James R. Schlesinger, Vice-Chairman (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2009), p. 26, available at <http://www.usip.org/programs/initiatives/congressional-commission-the-strategic-posture-the-united-states>

The Congressional Commission's recommendations in this respect were honored in the April 2010 Nuclear Posture Review, in that it included the following announcement:

“The Air Force will retain a dual-capable fighter (the capability to deliver both conventional and nuclear weapons) as it replaces F-16s with the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter. As described in more detail below, the United States will also conduct a full scope B-61 (nuclear bomb) Life Extension Program to ensure its functionality with the F-35 and to include making surety – safety, security, and use control – enhancements to maintain confidence in the B-61. These decisions ensure that the United States will retain the capability to forward-deploy non-strategic nuclear weapons in support of its Alliance commitments. These decisions do not presume the results of future decisions within NATO about the requirements of nuclear deterrence and nuclear sharing, but keep open all options.”¹¹

Implications of the Proposed Withdrawal from Europe of U.S. Nuclear Weapons

Whether the long-standing NATO nuclear deterrence posture can be sustained in the current political climate remains to be seen. This climate includes various proposals for nuclear disarmament, including recommendations that the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe be removed.

Perhaps the most significant recent development in this regard has been the October 2009 coalition agreement of the new CDU/CSU-FDP government in Berlin. The key sentence might be translated as follows:

“In this context, and in the drafting of a new NATO Strategic Concept, we will engage within the Alliance, as well as across the table with the American Allies, such that the remaining nuclear weapons in Germany are removed.”¹²

What this will signify in practice for the German government's policy remains to be seen, but this is a potentially momentous development. When asked about the possible withdrawal of U.S. nuclear weapons from Germany, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said, “I think that has to be considered in the context of NATO strategy. But I also think we have to be very careful about how we evaluate the different threats, the need for deterrents. So it's a complicated issue. And I think NATO is the appropriate forum to consider all of the ramifications, because we have obligations to states further east.”¹³

At present it appears that the new government in Berlin will construe the coalition agreement to mean that Germany should not take unilateral action but should, as the text indicates, “engage within the Alliance” in order to seek the eventual withdrawal of U.S. nuclear weapons from Germany within the framework of an Alliance decision

¹¹ U.S. Department of Defense, *Nuclear Posture Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, April 2010), pp. 27-28.

¹² “In diesem Zusammenhang sowie im Zuge der Ausarbeitung eines strategischen Konzeptes der NATO werden wir uns im Bündnis sowie gegenüber den amerikanischen Verbündeten dafür einsetzen, dass die in Deutschland verbliebenen Atomwaffen abgezogen werden.” *Wachstum.Bildung.Zusammenhalt: Koalitionsvertrag zwischen CDU, CSU und FDP*, 17 Legislaturperiode, 26 Oktober 2009, p. 120.

¹³ Interview with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton by Dr. Sebastian Hesse-Kastein of MDR Radio, Berlin, 9 November 2009, available at <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/11/131722.htm>

respecting the requirements of collective defense and effective deterrence. In February 2010 the German Foreign Minister, Guido Westerwelle, joined with his counterparts in Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Norway to propose that NATO discuss what it could do to advance the goal of nuclear disarmament.¹⁴ In March 2010, all the main parties in the German parliament supported a motion calling on the government “to argue, in discussions both within the Alliance and with the American allies, for a withdrawal of the nuclear weapons that remain in Germany.”¹⁵

Some observers in Germany have suggested a concept of retaining nuclear readiness in NATO Europe without a U.S. nuclear weapons presence in Europe. If the U.S. weapons were removed from Germany, however, it is doubtful whether the German government would work with the United States to maintain nuclear-certified aircraft and crews.¹⁶ It is also debatable as to what extent other allies with nuclear host and delivery responsibilities would continue to uphold them in the absence of a German contribution. The pivotal role of Germany derives not only from its political, military, and economic weight within the Alliance, but also from the historical circumstance that the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe and the development of associated nuclear-sharing and decision-making arrangements are largely – though not exclusively – products of German influence on U.S. and NATO thinking about deterrence and assurance requirements since the 1950s. These arrangements formed an essential part of the context for accession to the NPT by the Federal Republic of Germany.

The potential implications of the withdrawal of the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons from Europe are significant. There is little question but that such a withdrawal would be seen as a strong sign of U.S. strategic disengagement in some quarters, notably in Central and Eastern Europe, with damaging political consequences in terms of alliance cohesion and the credibility of U.S. assurances. Any weakening of the trans-Atlantic relationship brought on by removing U.S. nuclear weapons from NATO Europe would be a source of considerable satisfaction in Moscow, as these have both been Russian

¹⁴ The foreign ministers of Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Norway sent the letter articulating this proposal to the NATO Secretary General on 26 February 2010. The letter is available at the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands:

<http://www.minbuza.nl/dsresource?objectid=buzabeheer:200281&type=org>.

For a discussion of critical reactions to this proposal, see David S. Yost, *The Future of NATO's Nuclear Deterrent: The New Strategic Concept and the 2010 NPT Review Conference, A Workshop Report* (Rome: NATO Defense College, April 2010), pp. 6-7, available at <http://www.ndc.nato.int/download/downloads.php?icode=193>.

¹⁵ Antrag der Fraktionen CDU/CSU, SPD, FDP und Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, *Deutschland muss deutliche Zeichen für eine Welt frei von Atomwaffen setzen*, Deutscher Bundestag, Drucksache 17/1159, 24 March 2010.

¹⁶ Some have argued for a “reconstitution” approach to U.S. extended deterrence in NATO – in essence, deploying U.S. nuclear weapons to Europe only when and if a crisis requires them. This approach would be politically, strategically, and operationally problematic, even if periodic exercises of redeployments were politically feasible, and flight crew and load crew proficiencies were adequately maintained along with storage facility security. Having to redeploy nuclear weapons to Europe during a crisis would impose an additional decision point on Allied leaders at the least opportune moment. It is most unlikely that NATO’s leaders would elect to reconstitute an air-delivered nuclear capability in Europe during a crisis owing to fear that such action would be perceived as “escalatory.” The argument that reconstituting the capability could itself be a crisis management maneuver is implausible, given the time lines involved with such assets. A “reconstitution” approach would therefore probably fail to provide convincing assurance to allies or credible deterrence to potential adversaries. Furthermore, investments in maintaining nuclear-certified crews, aircraft, and storage facilities would probably not be sustained without the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe.

aims of long standing. The slightest suggestion of U.S. disengagement from NATO security commitments would also be a matter of grave concern for the Alliance's newest members, particularly the allies that were once occupied by Soviet forces.

Some observers also focus on the impact on the Alliance posture for deterrence and crisis management operations of withdrawing the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons. The U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe have made it possible to organize an Alliance deterrent. That is, dual-capable aircraft from several NATO nations could conduct a combined air operation to signal the Alliance's capacity to act together against an adversary. This operation could well involve some non-nuclear-weapon-state allies without host or delivery roles, because (as noted previously) they could participate in the implementation of the Alliance's nuclear policy through non-nuclear air support activities.

The Allies did not choose to retain air-delivered weapons in Europe in a fit of absent-mindedness, with no supporting rationale. The Nuclear Planning Group communiqués in 1989, 1990, and 1991 endorsed a shift in emphasis towards longer-range and more flexible air-delivered weapons. The criteria articulated in the communiqués included "longer ranges," "greater flexibility," and "widespread Alliance participation."¹⁷

How strategically valuable is it for the Alliance to retain this combined nuclear crisis management option? People who take a purely operational target coverage approach see it as of little or no value, because (as they point out) any targets of interest could be struck by U.S. SLBMs or ICBMs or U.S.-based bombers.

The U.S. and Alliance objective, however, is not to get to the point of striking targets with nuclear weapons, but to maintain deterrence and assurance and to keep the Alliance together. It cannot be excluded that in some circumstances a combined Alliance air operation could have a powerful deterrent effect. Steps to mount the operation could be communicated to the adversary, and the visible expression of resolve on the part of the Alliance as a whole could have a deterrent effect distinct from that of a U.S. threat to act on behalf of an ally or the Alliance as a whole. Moreover, a combined Alliance operation could, at least in some circumstances, keep the Allies together more effectively than a solitary operation by the United States.

The multinational NATO posture has genuine operational and political-military utility. As the *Report of the Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management*, the so-called Schlesinger report, stated in December 2008, "DCA fighters and nuclear weapons are visible, capable, recallable, reusable, and flexible and are a military statement of NATO and U.S. political will."¹⁸ Because the maintenance and exercise of the capability on a collective basis constitute an expression of political resolve and cohesion, the capability may well have a constructive deterrent effect.

¹⁷ For a more detailed discussion of this point, with references to the pertinent sources, see David S. Yost, "Assurance and US Extended Deterrence in NATO," *International Affairs*, vol. 85, no. 4 (July 2009), pp. 770-772.

¹⁸ James R. Schlesinger, chairman, *Report of the Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management, Phase II: Review of the DoD Nuclear Mission* (Arlington, VA: Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management, December 2008), p. 59. This report is available at <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/PhaseIIReportFinal.pdf>. The acronym DCA stands for dual-capable aircraft

If these weapons are as irrelevant and useless as some observers maintain, why do the Russians attach so much importance to getting them out of Europe? If the answer is that the Russians want all U.S. nuclear weapons out of Europe as a matter of political principle, it might be asked, is that a political principle that NATO should endorse, especially in the presence of the enormous Russian arsenal of non-strategic nuclear forces?

The Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States recently noted that “Russia enjoys a sizeable numerical advantage” over the United States in non-strategic nuclear forces (NSNF) and “stores thousands of these weapons in apparent support of possible military operations west of the Urals. The United States deploys a small fraction of that number in support of nuclear sharing agreements in NATO . . . Strict U.S.-Russian equivalence in NSNF numbers is unnecessary. But the current imbalance is stark and worrisome to some U.S. allies in Central Europe. If and as reductions continue in the number of operationally deployed strategic nuclear weapons, this imbalance will become more apparent and allies less assured.”¹⁹

Some European Allied observers have expressed concern in view of Russian declarations that certain new Allies have made themselves potential targets for nuclear attack by supporting U.S. missile defense plans.²⁰ While the U.S. government revised its missile defense plans regarding NATO and Europe in September 2009, the Russian government has not modified its nuclear doctrine. Recent Russian exercises have simulated nuclear attacks on Poland and other NATO Allies.²¹ As the Congressional Commission noted, “Some allies located near Russia believe that U.S. non-strategic forces in Europe are essential to prevent nuclear coercion by Moscow and indeed that modernized U.S./NATO forces are essential for restoring a sense of balance in the face of Russia’s nuclear renewal.”²²

In the long run, keeping the Alliance posture based on nuclear-sharing would offer multiple advantages for assurance and extended deterrence. It would offer advantages for assurance because of Allied participation in a jointly maintained and practiced posture. It would keep up the level of expertise and confidence in non-nuclear-weapon-state allies and sustain risk- and responsibility-sharing, so that Americans would regard

¹⁹ *America’s Strategic Posture: The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States*, William J. Perry, Chairman, and James R. Schlesinger, Vice-Chairman (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2009), p. 21, available at <http://www.usip.org/programs/initiatives/congressional-commission-the-strategic-posture-the-united-states>.

²⁰ See, among other examples, the statement by Colonel General Anatoly Nogovitsyn, the Deputy Chief of the Russian General Staff, quoted in Damien McElroy, “Russian General Says Poland a Nuclear ‘Target,’” *The Daily Telegraph*, 15 August 2008, available at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/georgia/2564639/Russian-general-says-Poland-a-nuclear-target-as-Condoleezza-Rice-arrives-in-Georgia.html>. Russian statements regarding possible deployment of the dual capable Iskander missile in Kaliningrad are also significant in this regard.

²¹ Matthew Day, “Russia ‘Simulates’ Nuclear Attack on Poland,” *The Daily Telegraph*, 1 November 2009, available at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/poland/6480227/Russia-simulates-nuclear-attack-on-Poland.html>

²² *America’s Strategic Posture: The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States*, William J. Perry, Chairman, and James R. Schlesinger, Vice-Chairman (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2009), p. 20, available at <http://www.usip.org/programs/initiatives/congressional-commission-the-strategic-posture-the-united-states>

their NATO allies as partners in this endeavor and not simply dependents. The bonus for Alliance cohesion would be in itself a contribution to deterrence, but on top of that NATO would retain the option of a combined nuclear crisis management operation and the possibility of future force modernization.

Furthermore, the assertion that withdrawing the remaining U.S. weapons from Europe would encourage the Russians to eliminate or substantially reduce their immense holdings of non-strategic nuclear forces reflects an excessively sanguine view of Moscow's readiness to undertake action in this respect. As the Congressional Commission noted, Moscow has not complied with the 1991-1992 pledges by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and Russian President Boris Yeltsin to eliminate and reduce certain types of non-strategic nuclear forces.²³

If the U.S. nuclear weapons presence were withdrawn from Europe unilaterally, the Russians would have fewer incentives to accept any arms control measures, including any verification and transparency regime. Since the 1950s it has been argued in various quarters that Moscow would be more cooperative in dealings with the West if it were granted its wish that U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe be entirely removed. It is far more likely, however, that the Russians would simply "pocket" a unilateral withdrawal of the U.S. nuclear weapons as something they had always demanded. Under both Soviet and Russian rule, Moscow has considered the U.S. nuclear weapons presence in Europe not simply threatening to its security, but politically illegitimate, a symbol of U.S. intrusion into Moscow's rightful sphere of influence.²⁴ From a Russian perspective, a unilateral withdrawal of the U.S. nuclear weapons presence in Europe would be rectifying an old injustice and imposition, rather than offering a signal for Russian NSNF disarmament. For NATO, even if Russian NSNF could thereby be numerically reduced, there would be little or no strategic gain. Russia would hold a monopoly on NSNF in Europe. Moscow's NSNF holdings would be unverifiable, but would probably remain in the thousands. If drastic reductions in U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe since 1991 have not led Moscow to resolve the massive uncertainties in the West about Russia's NSNF,²⁵ why should it be expected that complete withdrawal (entirely removing any Alliance negotiating leverage) would bring about a response that NATO could regard as satisfactory?

The Russians – and key observers in NATO Europe – might consider the withdrawal of the U.S. nuclear weapons evidence of America's decreased willingness to defend its allies with nuclear means. Moscow might then expect its European neighbors to become more deferential to Russia, in view of the perceived change in the balance of

²³ In the words of the Congressional Commission, Russia "is no longer in compliance with its PNI [Presidential Nuclear Initiative] commitments." *America's Strategic Posture: The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States*, William J. Perry, Chairman, and James R. Schlesinger, Vice-Chairman (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2009), p. 13, available at <http://www.usip.org/programs/initiatives/congressional-commission-the-strategic-posture-the-united-states>

²⁴ It should be noted that Moscow nonetheless accepted NATO nuclear-sharing arrangements, including the NPG and the bilateral programs of cooperation involving the United States and non-nuclear-weapon-state NATO Allies, as consistent with the NPT. The Soviet Union seems to have agreed to the continuation of these arrangements because of U.S. assurances that they would not enable the Federal Republic of Germany to become a nuclear power.

²⁵ "The total reduction in the current NATO stockpile of sub-strategic weapons in Europe will be roughly 80%." NATO Nuclear Planning Group, Final Communiqué, 17-18 October 1991, par. 5.

power and commitments, with unpredictable consequences. The withdrawal of U.S. nuclear weapons could thus have counterproductive and even dangerous geopolitical consequences, because of the conclusions that could be drawn in Russia and Europe about U.S. security commitments.²⁶

In April 2010, the U.S. government took two steps that reassured experts and officials in NATO governments convinced of the continuing importance of retaining U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe. First, the Nuclear Posture Review included a positive statement about the continuing importance of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe and the need for Alliance consensus on making any changes in NATO's nuclear posture:

“In Europe, forward-deployed U.S. nuclear weapons have been reduced dramatically since the end of the Cold War, but a small number of U.S. nuclear weapons remain. Although the risk of nuclear attack against North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members is at an historic low, the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons – combined with NATO's unique nuclear sharing arrangements under which non-nuclear members participate in nuclear planning and possess specially configured aircraft capable of delivering nuclear weapons – contribute to Alliance cohesion and provide reassurance to allies and partners who feel exposed to regional threats. The role of nuclear weapons in defending Alliance members will be discussed this year in connection with NATO's revision of its Strategic Concept. Any changes in NATO's nuclear posture should only be taken after a thorough review within – and decision by – the Alliance.”²⁷

Second, at a meeting of NATO foreign ministers, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton affirmed the importance of sharing nuclear risks and responsibilities in the Alliance and linked “any future reductions” in U.S. nuclear forces in Europe to negotiations with Russia on non-strategic nuclear forces. In her words, “We should recognize that as long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance . . . As a nuclear alliance, sharing nuclear risks and responsibilities widely is fundamental.”²⁸ With regard to Russia's non-strategic nuclear weapons, Secretary Clinton said, “In any future reductions, our aim should be to seek Russian agreement to increase transparency on non-strategic nuclear weapons in Europe, relocate those weapons away from the territory of NATO members, and include non-strategic nuclear weapons in the next round of U.S.-Russian arms control discussions.”²⁹

In light of the new U.S. Nuclear Posture Review, Jiri Schneider, the program director of the Prague Security Studies Institute and a former political director at the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, wrote,

²⁶ The two paragraphs above are derived from the author's article, “Russia's Non-Strategic Nuclear Forces,” *International Affairs*, vol. 77 (July 2001), pp. 531-551.

²⁷ U.S. Department of Defense, *Nuclear Posture Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, April 2010), p. 32.

²⁸ Secretary of State Hillary Clinton quoted in Mark Landler, “U.S. Resists Push By Allies For Tactical Nuclear Cuts,” *New York Times*, 23 April 2010.

²⁹ Secretary of State Hillary Clinton quoted in Arshad Mohammed and David Brunnstrom, “U.S. signals its nuclear arms stay in Europe for now,” Reuters dispatch, 22 April 2010, available at [http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE63L54Q20100422?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+reuters%2FworldNews+\(News+%2F+US+%2F+International\)](http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE63L54Q20100422?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+reuters%2FworldNews+(News+%2F+US+%2F+International))

“Is it actually even possible to imagine nuclear deterrence without the physical presence of American weapons in Europe? Although there are two nuclear powers in Europe, it is unfathomable that they could provide nuclear guarantees for their European allies, not to mention for the European Union. For now, it seems that the United States is not going to be in a hurry to withdraw its nuclear weapons from Europe, and, as the new nuclear doctrine (US Nuclear Posture Review) indicates, it is not expected that the new NATO [strategic] concept, which is currently being elaborated, would bring any radical changes to the current situation.”³⁰

According to an analysis of German reactions to the new U.S. Nuclear Posture Review, the German coalition parties are divided, with the Free Democrats led by Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle much more positive than the Christian Democrats about a near-term removal of the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe. The other major coalition party consists of the CDU/CSU, and “many Christian Democrats aren’t exactly known to be staunch opponents of the deterrence strategy. They argue that as long as Russia doesn’t significantly reduce its arsenal of tactical atomic weapons, Germany should not rush things.”³¹

The German government spokesman, Christoph Steegmans, appeared to link the future of the U.S. nuclear weapons remaining in Germany with the outcome of potential U.S.-Russian negotiations concerning non-strategic nuclear weapons: “We explicitly welcome the US president’s announcement that after the new START treaty he’s also willing to discuss a reduction in tactical nuclear weapons with Russia . . . The outcome may then have a direct impact on the fate of the US warheads on German soil.”³²

The U.S. approach linking the future of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe to progress on arms control negotiations with Russia appears likely to win support from various NATO allies. The Latvian Foreign Minister, Maris Riekstins, said in April 2010, “It is in Latvia’s interests to see positive steps in the future towards transparency and downsizing of tactical nuclear weapons near our borders.”³³

While the NATO allies may be able to reach a consensus that any future reductions in U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe should be pursued as part of an arms control agreement affecting Russian non-strategic nuclear forces, negotiating such an agreement would face several fundamental problems.³⁴

³⁰ Jiri Schneider, “Road to World Without Nuclear Weapons?” in *Lidovky.cz* in Czech, 3-4 April 2010, available in open-source.gov, EUP20100407249003.

³¹ Hardy Graupner, “Berlin Appears Divided Over the Presence of US Nuclear Warheads,” in *dw-world.de* in English, 8 April 2010, available at open-source.gov, EUP20100408085018.

³² Steegmans quoted in *ibid.*

³³ Maris Riekstins, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia, in *BNS* in English, 7 April 2010, available in open-source.gov, EUP20100407200002.

³⁴ Aside from the apparent Russian lack of interest in NSNF arms control, defining an arms control regime for NSNF would face several intrinsic problems, including verification, geographical scope, agreement on the participants, the availability of dual-use delivery systems, and the baseline (or initialization) challenge of determining the numbers and locations of Russian NSNF. The political and strategic basis for an NSNF arms control regime would not be self-evident, in view of the fact that the number of U.S. weapons in Europe is not a function of hypothetical targets in Russia. Moreover, the Russians attribute utility to their NSNF for reasons other than the U.S. nuclear weapons presence in Europe — for example, to deter powers other than NATO (such as China) and to substitute for advanced non-nuclear precision-strike systems. As with previous nuclear arms control treaties

Contrasting the Situations in Europe and North-East Asia

Looking beyond Europe, the United States needs to be concerned about extended deterrence and assurance for allies and security partners in two other major regions –the Asia-Pacific region and the Middle East.³⁵ The complex dynamics of the current context for U.S. extended deterrence may, however, be best illustrated with a contrast between the situations in Europe and north-east Asia.

It should be recalled that U.S. extended deterrence arrangements in Europe and the Asia-Pacific region have differed in various ways. In contrast with the situation in Europe, U.S. alliance relations in the Asia-Pacific region have not been centered on a multilateral collective defense organization comparable to NATO,³⁶ and there have been no institutions such as the Nuclear Planning Group and no nuclear-sharing arrangements – nor any nuclear-weapon-state allies. Instead, in the Asia-Pacific region the United States has for the most part maintained separate bilateral relations with each of its non-nuclear-weapon-state allies and security partners. Moreover, U.S. nuclear weapons deployments have not usually been a feature of the bilateral relationships with allies and security partners in the Asia-Pacific region, and the U.S. nuclear weapons presence in this region was essentially removed in 1991-1992 as a result of the Presidential Nuclear Initiatives taken by George H. W. Bush.

A similarity in NATO and the Asia-Pacific region has been close attention to the role of U.S. declaratory policy in extended deterrence. High-level U.S. officials have regularly reconfirmed U.S. extended deterrence commitments in joint declarations with their counterparts in Japan and South Korea. In NATO, moreover, the Allies have historically declined to make a collective pledge of “no first use” of nuclear weapons. In the 1999 Strategic Concept, for example, the Allies declared that “The fundamental purpose of the nuclear forces of the Allies is political: to preserve peace and prevent coercion and any kind of war. They will continue to fulfil an essential role by ensuring uncertainty in the mind of any aggressor about the nature of the Allies’ response to military aggression. They demonstrate that aggression of any kind is not a rational option.”³⁷

The April 2010 U.S. Nuclear Posture Review could be seen as at variance with the principle of “ensuring uncertainty in the mind of any aggressor about the nature of the Allies’ response to military aggression” in that the NPR introduced a new formulation

affecting European (and global security) NATO would not be a direct party to the negotiations between Russia, the United States, and perhaps other governments, but its security interests would be affected; and the United States would formulate its positions in close consultation with its NATO allies.

³⁵ The Middle East may also present near-term challenges for U.S. extended deterrence. If Iran acquires nuclear weapons, the United States will have to face questions about extended deterrence and the security of Israel, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, among others. Emerging security challenges in the Middle East could have implications for U.S. allies and security partners in Europe and the Asia-Pacific region as well.

³⁶ Accords such as ANZUS (the Australia, New Zealand, and United States Security Treaty, concluded in 1951) have not reached a level of institutionalization comparable to that in NATO. Nor has there ever been a U.S.-led multilateral collective defense organization in the Asia-Pacific region as comprehensive in its membership as NATO.

³⁷ North Atlantic Council, Strategic Concept, 24 April 1999, par. 62, available at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_27433.htm

of the U.S. negative security assurance. According to the April 2010 Nuclear Posture Review,

“The United States will continue to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in deterring non-nuclear attack. To that end, the United States is now prepared to strengthen its long-standing ‘negative security assurance’ by declaring that the United States will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states that are party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and in compliance with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations. . . In making this strengthened assurance, the United States affirms that any state eligible for the assurance that uses CBW against the United States or its allies and partners would face the prospect of a devastating conventional military response—and that any individuals responsible for the attack, whether national leaders or military commanders, would be held fully accountable. Given the catastrophic potential of biological weapons and the rapid pace of biotechnology development, the United States reserves the right to make any adjustment in the assurance that may be warranted by the evolution and proliferation of the biological weapons threat and U.S. capacities to counter that threat. In the case of countries not covered by this assurance – states that possess nuclear weapons and states not in compliance with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations – there remains a narrow range of contingencies in which U.S. nuclear weapons may still play a role in deterring a conventional or CBW attack against the United States or its allies and partners. The United States is therefore not prepared at the present time to adopt a universal policy that the ‘sole purpose’ of U.S. nuclear weapons is to deter nuclear attack on the United States and our allies and partners, but will work to establish conditions under which such a policy could be safely adopted. Yet this does not mean that our willingness to use nuclear weapons against countries not covered by the new assurance has in any way increased. Indeed, the United States wishes to stress that it would only consider the use of nuclear weapons in extreme circumstances to defend the vital interests of the United States or its allies and partners.”³⁸

While NATO experts have noted that the new U.S. negative security assurance is not entirely consistent with “ensuring uncertainty in the mind of any aggressor about the nature of the Allies’ response to military aggression,” this discrepancy has not to date occasioned significant public concern among Allied experts and officials, partly because of the positive response to other elements of the NPR. The solution in the NATO Strategic Concept review that is to be concluded in November 2010 may be simply to delete this “ensuring uncertainty” language, on the ground that negative security assurances are unilateral undertakings by the governments making them, not their allies.³⁹ Although dissenting views can be identified,⁴⁰ many Allied observers would agree with Bruno Tertrais’s judgment that “The change in US doctrine is more

³⁸ U.S. Department of Defense, *Nuclear Posture Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, April 2010), pp. 15-16.

³⁹ For background, see David S. Yost, “New Approaches to Deterrence in Britain, France, and the United States,” *International Affairs*, vol. 81 (January 2005), pp. 111-114.

⁴⁰ For example, an Italian politician, Fiamma Nirenstein, has argued that the new policy could incite adversaries to seek chemical and biological weapons, since they might reason that they need not fear U.S. nuclear retaliation for their use. See Nirenstein’s article in *Il Giornale*, 10 April 2010, available in opensource.gov, EUP20100410058008.

apparent than real. It probably does not fundamentally alter the way an American president would react to a serious military threat.”⁴¹

The French Foreign Ministry pointed out that UN Security Council Resolution 984 of 11 April 1995 reaffirmed that security assurances do not affect the inherent right of individual and collective self-defense recognized in Article 51 of the UN Charter.⁴²

Japanese observers appear to have reacted in more divergent ways.⁴³ The Japanese Foreign Minister, Katsuya Okada, welcomed the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review and drew particular attention to the new U.S. negative security assurance as a step forward toward a “sole purpose” doctrine.⁴⁴ While the *Asahi Shimbun* endorsed the “sole purpose” objective, it noted that “Some believe the threat posed to Japan by North Korea means that nuclear weapons should also serve to deter biological and chemical weapon strikes.”⁴⁵ An editorial in the *Sankei Shimbun* declared, “We are concerned that by decreasing the previous strategic ambiguity, the flexibility of application of the ‘nuclear umbrella’ that the United States provides to Japan and other allies will be damaged.”⁴⁶ As these comments suggest, in north-east Asia, China and North Korea loom larger as potential threats than do Iran and Russia. For example, in April 2009, Hirofumi Nakasone, then the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, drew attention in a speech on nuclear disarmament to North Korean nuclear and ballistic missile activities and to Chinese nuclear force modernization. Nakasone said, “In light of the situation in East Asia that I mentioned earlier, it goes without saying that the extended deterrent including nuclear deterrence under the Japan-U.S. security arrangements is of critical importance for Japan.”⁴⁷ U.S. allies in north-east Asia attach increasing significance to arrangements affecting the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence protection.⁴⁸

⁴¹ Bruno Tertrais in *Nuclear Reactions: The 2010 Nuclear Posture Review*, 10 April 2010, available at <http://csis.org/blog/nuclear-reactions-2010-nuclear-posture-review>. Tertrais added, “it is legitimate to wonder whether it is worth the cost of limiting the President’s freedom of action for very hypothetical non-proliferation benefits.”

⁴² Statement by Bernard Valero, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Paris, 7 April 2010, available in open-source.gov, EUP20100408056001.

⁴³ For background on Japanese concerns about U.S. declaratory policy in relation to extended deterrence, see Keith Payne, Thomas Scheber, and Kurt Guthe, *U.S. Extended Deterrence and Assurance for Allies in Northeast Asia* (Fairfax, Virginia: National Institute Press, March 2010), p. 34.

⁴⁴ Statement by Mr. Katsuya Okada, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, on the release of the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review, 7 April 2010, available at http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2010/4/0407_01.html

⁴⁵ *Asahi Shimbun* Online in English, 16 April 2010, available in open-source.gov, JPP20100416969012. See also the editorial in *Asahi Shimbun* Online in English, 8 April 2010, available in open-source.gov, JPP20100408969006.

⁴⁶ *Sankei Shimbun* quoted in Foreign Press Center Japan Online in English, 14-15 April 2010, in open-source.gov, JPP20100415035003.

⁴⁷ Hirofumi Nakasone, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, “Conditions towards Zero: 11 Benchmarks for Global Nuclear Disarmament,” *Kyodo News*, 27 April 2009, available at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/POLICY/un/disarmament/arms/state0904.html>

⁴⁸ The Japanese Foreign Ministry noted that U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton visited Japan in February 2009 as her first foreign destination and that she “reiterated the U.S. commitments to the defense of Japan, including its nuclear deterrence under the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements.” Summary of the Meeting and Luncheon between Foreign Minister Nakasone and Secretary of State Clinton, 17 February 2009, available at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/meet0902.html>

Although some reports have conveyed the impression that the new government led by the Democratic Party of Japan, which took office in September 2009, may have less interest than its predecessor in U.S. extended deterrence protection, the new Prime Minister, Yukio Hatoyama, stated in November 2009 that, “Looking at the security dimension of the Japan-US alliance, I believe we need to create various types of new security systems, including extended deterrence, information protection, the modalities of missile defence and the use of outer space, amongst others.”⁴⁹ The Japan-U.S. Joint Statement toward a World without Nuclear Weapons, issued by Prime Minister Hatoyama and President Obama, indicated that the two governments will seek the “total elimination of nuclear weapons . . . in a way that promotes international stability and security while ensuring that those steps do not in any way diminish the national security of Japan or the United States of America and its allies.”⁵⁰

Similarly, in January 2010, on the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, the Japanese Foreign and Defense Minister and U.S. Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense declared that “The United States and Japan will strengthen their efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons, while maintaining necessary deterrence.”⁵¹

The NATO Allies may wish to consider the potential impact of what would be a fundamental change in the Alliance’s nuclear deterrence posture – removing the remaining U.S. nuclear forces. The impact could range beyond the Euro-Atlantic area to other regions in which the United States has extended deterrence commitments. In this regard it is noteworthy that some South Korean experts have injected what seems to be a note of regret in their discussions of the U.S. withdrawal of nuclear weapons from South Korea in 1991. For example, according to Kang Choi and Joon-Sung Park of the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security in Seoul,

“South Korea was forced to review its security and defense policy in the absence of U.S. ‘ground-based’ nuclear deterrence . . . In the wake of the termination of the Cold War, the United States discarded its long-maintained NCND [neither confirm nor deny] policy. And the U.S. nuclear deterrence on the Korean peninsula, based on physical presence, was converted to ‘off-shore deterrence’ . . . U.S. deployment of tactical nuclear weapons was the tangible manifestation of U.S. security commitment . . . As discussed earlier, it is now clear that ‘ground-based’ nuclear deterrence has been replaced by ‘offshore’ deterrence. The former was viewed as particularly strong since it consisted of a ‘trip-wire’ strategy with forward deployment of the USFK [United States Forces Korea] and the presence of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons on South Korean soil. Though more flexible, ‘offshore’ deterrence is mainly conventional and is largely

⁴⁹ Joint Press Conference by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama of Japan and President Barack Obama of the United States of America, 13 November 2009, available at http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/hatoyama/statement/200911/13usa_kaiken_e.html

⁵⁰ The November 2009 Japan-U.S. Joint Statement toward a World without Nuclear Weapons is available at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/pv0911/nuclear.pdf>

⁵¹ The U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee Marking the 50th Anniversary of the Signing of The U.S.-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, Secretary of State Clinton, Secretary of Defense Gates, Minister for Foreign Affairs Okada, Minister of Defense Kitazawa, Washington, DC, 19 January 2010, available at <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/01/135312.htm>

symbolic in nature . . . The present problem is that both Seoul's and Washington's efforts to compensate for the loss of physical links and a weaker security guarantee have fallen short of each other's expectations."⁵²

If some South Korean experts regret the withdrawal of U.S. nuclear weapons and see it as having weakened extended deterrence, does this hold a message for the West European proponents of such a withdrawal?

It should nonetheless be noted that, while other South Koreans (including former defense ministers) have in recent years expressed interest in a return of U.S. nuclear weapons, "the redeployment idea to date has had 'little backing' in South Korea."⁵³

The government of South Korea has expressed confidence that the new negative security assurance articulated by the United States in the April 2010 Nuclear Posture Review will not undermine the reliability of extended deterrence. As Lee Myung-bak, the President of the Republic of Korea, observed, "the United States . . . made an exception for countries like North Korea and Iran so we have no doubts about the reassurance of a nuclear umbrella to South Korea. . . President Obama . . . reassured me personally that there will be no changes to the nuclear umbrella provided by the United States to South Korea."⁵⁴

Some Japanese experts have recently drawn attention to the potential desirability of deploying U.S. nuclear weapons on Japanese soil and moving toward what some Japanese observers have called a "German model." To quote a paper co-authored by Katsuhisa Furukawa of the Research Institute of Science and Technology for Society in Tokyo,

"Japanese officials and scholars close to the government have floated the idea of announcing an intention to revise the Three Non-Nuclear Principles, specifically as a means to strengthen the credibility of the U.S. extended deterrent. The purpose would be to enable the introduction of U.S. nuclear weapons onto Japan's soil . . . In addition, there is increasing aspiration among Japan's strategic planners to secure some notional influence or ownership in the U.S. nuclear umbrella . . . There is the 'German model' of dual-controlled tactical nuclear weapons that Japan would not be able to operate without the United States."⁵⁵

It is ironic that some Japanese security experts have expressed interest in what they call the "German model" at a time when the utility of this model is being questioned in Germany.

⁵² Kang Choi and Joon-Sung Park, "South Korea: Fears of Abandonment and Entrapment," in Muthiah Alagappa, ed., *The Long Shadow: Nuclear Weapons and Security in 21st Century Asia* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2008), pp. 379, 384, 385, 392-393.

⁵³ Keith Payne, Thomas Scheber, and Kurt Guthe, *U.S. Extended Deterrence and Assurance for Allies in Northeast Asia* (Fairfax, Virginia: National Institute Press, March 2010), p. 15.

⁵⁴ Fred Hiatt, interview with President Lee Myung-bak, 7 April 2010, available at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/04/11/AR2010041103045_pf.html

⁵⁵ Michael J. Green and Katsuhisa Furukawa, "Japan: New Nuclear Realism," in Muthiah Alagappa, ed., *The Long Shadow: Nuclear Weapons and Security in 21st Century Asia* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2008), p. 360.

In September 2009 a group of Japanese experts – scholars and retired ambassadors and generals – issued a report setting out four options:

“Should the strategic situation in East Asia further deteriorate, Japan and the USA might be forced to consider additional measures to assure the reliability of the US extended deterrent. These might include (1) creation of a mechanism modeled after the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) of NATO to discuss how the USA should best employ its nuclear weapons for the defense of Japan; (2) modification of Japan’s Three Nonnuclear Principles so as to permit the USA to introduce nuclear weapons into the territory of Japan; (3) establishment of a system in which Japan would field delivery vehicles for nuclear weapons introduced by the USA with the latter retaining full control of the warheads in peacetime; and (4) provision by the USA to Japan of technology related to nuclear weapons and means of their delivery, thereby enabling Japan to attain a limited nuclear capability, which would be employed in conjunction with that of the USA.”⁵⁶

The third option is what some Japanese observers have called the German model, and the fourth option might be called the British model.

The 2009 Congressional Commission report declared that “now is the time to establish a much more extensive dialogue with Japan on nuclear issues, limited only by the desires of the Japanese government. Such a dialogue with Japan would also increase the credibility of extended deterrence.”⁵⁷ The Congressional Commission also reported that “In Asia, extended deterrence relies heavily on the deployment of nuclear cruise missiles on some Los Angeles class attack submarines—the Tomahawk Land Attack Missile/Nuclear (TLAM/N). This capability will be retired in 2013 unless steps are taken to maintain it. U.S. allies in Asia are not integrated in the same way into nuclear planning and have not been asked to make commitments to delivery systems. In our work as a Commission it has become clear to us that some U.S. allies in Asia would be very concerned by TLAM/N retirement.”⁵⁸ Subsequent news reports from Tokyo have indicated that the previous Japanese government contributed to the findings of the Congressional Commission in this regard.⁵⁹

In January 2010, the Japanese Foreign Minister, Katsuya Okada, made public a letter that he had sent the previous month to the U.S. Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense in order to deny reports that Japan’s diplomats had called for U.S. retention of TLAMN and to request “that an explanation be given on any impact that the retirement

⁵⁶ *A New Phase in the Japan-US Alliance, “The Japan-US Alliance toward 2020,” 2009 Project Report* (Tokyo: Research Group on the Japan-US Alliance, Institute for International Policy Studies, September 2009), page 10.

⁵⁷ *America’s Strategic Posture: The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States*, William J. Perry, Chairman, and James R. Schlesinger, Vice-Chairman (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2009), p. 70, available at <http://www.usip.org/programs/initiatives/congressional-commission-the-strategic-posture-the-united-states>

⁵⁸ *America’s Strategic Posture: The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States*, William J. Perry, Chairman, and James R. Schlesinger, Vice-Chairman (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2009), p. 26, available at <http://www.usip.org/programs/initiatives/congressional-commission-the-strategic-posture-the-united-states>

⁵⁹ Masakatsu Ota, “Sources Say Japan Lobbied for Robust Nuclear Umbrella Before Power Shift,” Kyodo World Service report in English, Tokyo, 23 November 2009.

of the Tomahawk missile will have on expanded deterrence and . . . a separate explanation on ways to supplement the retirement of the missile.”⁶⁰

The U.S. government announced in the April 2010 Nuclear Posture Review that the TLAMN will be retired, and offered the following rationale:

“The United States will retire the nuclear-equipped sea-launched cruise missile (TLAM-N). This system serves a redundant purpose in the U.S. nuclear stockpile. It has been one of a number of means to forward-deploy nuclear weapons in time of crisis. Other means include forward-deployment of bombers with either bombs or cruise missiles, as well as forward-deployment of dual-capable fighters. In addition, U.S. ICBMs and SLBMs are capable of striking any potential adversary. The deterrence and assurance roles of TLAMN can be adequately substituted by these other means, and the United States remains committed to providing a credible extended deterrence posture and capabilities.”⁶¹

Foreign Minister Okada endorsed the U.S. decision, and said that TLAMN retirement “would reduce the likelihood of nuclear weapons being brought into Japan on U.S. vessels in the future.”⁶²

The fact remains that some Japanese observers supported the extension in service or replacement of the TLAMN with another sea-launched cruise missile on the grounds that it could be a deterrent suitable for a “local” contingency and that it could send a message of U.S. political commitment to Japan in the case of a crisis with North Korea. Moreover, some Japanese supporters of U.S. retention of a TLAMN-like cruise missile capability judged that it could be helpful to deterrence and escalation control because it would have a flight profile different from that of a U.S. ICBM, SLBM, or strategic bomber. That is, they argued that the North Koreans might recognize that the United States could use such a cruise missile against them with less concern that China or Russia might mistake its employment as a U.S. strategic nuclear attack.⁶³

If certain “Japanese officials and scholars close to the government” are interested in replicating key features of the U.S. extended deterrence arrangements in NATO (U.S. nuclear weapons on allied soil, so-called dual-key delivery systems, and formal consultation arrangements on deterrence policy), it would be reasonable to suppose that they would regard developments concerning these arrangements in the NATO framework as having implications for Japan and other U.S. allies in the Asia-Pacific region.

Would experts and officials in Australia, Japan, South Korea and elsewhere in the Asia-Pacific region perceive the removal of the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons from

⁶⁰ Press Conference by Minister for Foreign Affairs Katsuya Okada, 22 January 2010, available at http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/fm_press/2010/1/0122_01.html. See also John K. Warden, *Does Okada's Letter Opposing TLAM/N Signal Changes in Japanese Foreign Policy?*, 26 January 2010, available at <http://csis.org/blog/does-okadas-letter-opposing-tlamn-signal-changes-japanese-foreign-policy>

⁶¹ U.S. Department of Defense, *Nuclear Posture Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, April 2010), p. 28.

⁶² Okada quoted in indirect discourse in the Daily Yomiuri Online in English, 7 April 2010, available in opensource.gov, JPP20100407969083.

⁶³ Author's interview with a Japanese expert, 16 November 2009.

Europe as undermining U.S. extended deterrence commitments, even if the United States asserted that its nuclear umbrella over the continent would remain in place?

This is, of course, a speculative question, and no one can offer more than an informed judgment in reply. It is nonetheless reasonable to assume that at least some politicians, officials, and experts in Australia, Japan, South Korea and other countries would regard the withdrawal of key instruments of U.S. extended deterrence policy in Europe as having adverse implications for U.S. extended deterrence policy globally. Much would depend on the overall political context and the specific bilateral relationship.

East Asian observers monitor political and strategic developments in Europe and NATO and assess their implications for their own national security interests. For example, in March 2009 Ken Jimbo, a professor at Keio University, wrote of Japanese concerns about possible adjustments in U.S. missile defense plans in Europe. In his words, “Japan worries about the negative implications of U.S. missile defense installation plans in Europe. A U.S. decision to delay, downsize, reconfigure or even cancel the European deployments because of Russian hostility may lead to the belief that the missile defense program can be negotiated. China is closely watching these discussions and Japan does not want Beijing to get the impression that rollback of Tokyo's missile defense plans are an option. Japan wants the U.S. to take a rigid stance on the missile defense plan in Europe.”⁶⁴

The concerns that Jimbo raised were well-grounded in that the U.S. government decided in September 2009 to significantly reconfigure its approach to missile defenses in Europe. However, the U.S. government's new “phased adaptive” approach to missile defense has not led to any “rollback” of U.S.-Japanese missile defense cooperation. Indeed, the new U.S. approach to missile defense in Europe has led Washington to ask Tokyo to export a ship-based missile interceptor, the SM-3 Block IIA, which is under joint development by Japan and the United States, to European allies.⁶⁵

As the U.S. Department of Defense noted in February 2010, “The United States and Japan have made considerable strides in BMD cooperation and interoperability in support of bilateral missile defense operations. Japan has acquired a layered integrated missile defense system that includes Aegis BMD ships with Standard Missile 3 interceptors, Patriot Advanced Capability 3 (PAC-3) fire units, early warning radars, and a command and control system. The United States and Japan regularly train together, and our forces have successfully executed cooperative BMD operations. One of our most significant cooperative efforts is the co-development of a next-generation SM-3 interceptor, called the Block IIA. This co-development program represents not only an area of significant technical cooperation but also the basis for enhanced operational cooperation to strengthen regional security. The U.S.-Japan partnership is an outstanding example of the kind of cooperation the United States seeks in order to tailor a phased adaptive approach to the unique threats and capabilities in a region.”⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Ken Jimbo, “Japanese Perceptions of Obama's Nuclear ‘Twin Commitments,’” *Japan Times*, 5 March 2009, available at <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/print/eo20090305a1.html>

⁶⁵ Kyodo News, “U.S. Urges Japan to Export SM-3s,” *Japan Times*, 25 October 2009.

⁶⁶ U.S. Department of Defense, *Ballistic Missile Defense Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, February 2010), pp. 32-33.

Missile defense and other non-nuclear capabilities are increasingly important elements of U.S. extended deterrence; and the U.S. government has highlighted the multiple dimensions of extended deterrence in its recent policy statements. Nuclear forces nonetheless remain a fundamental factor in U.S. extended deterrence. In NATO since the 1950s U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe and bilateral programs of cooperation for nuclear-sharing have been key aspects of U.S. extended deterrence.

The removal of the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons from Europe could have damaging consequences on the U.S. extended deterrence posture in other regions and perhaps worldwide if this step was perceived and interpreted by allies and adversaries as a weakening of U.S. security commitments. Indeed, a perceived weakening of U.S. extended deterrence protection could lead some allies and security partners to consider seeking their own national nuclear forces or to invest more in potential hedging measures such as air and missile defenses and/or enrichment and reprocessing capabilities. As Walter Slocombe testified in 1997, “The extension of a credible U.S. nuclear deterrent to allies has been an important nonproliferation tool . . . Indeed, our strong security relationships have probably played as great a role in nonproliferation over the past 40 years as has the NPT.”⁶⁷

In other words, averting a breakdown in the nonproliferation regime depends on ensuring the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence commitments as well as on preserving the NPT. Indeed, sustaining the robustness of U.S. extended deterrence may well contribute to the health of the NPT regime. If the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence and assurance was diminished by the withdrawal of the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons from Europe, the United States and its allies would be obliged to devise compensatory measures to reassure allies and security partners worldwide and to warn potential adversaries of the continuing resolve of the United States to honor its security commitments. The rise of China, including its nuclear and missile build-up; Russia’s nuclear force modernization efforts; and other developments in Eurasia may oblige U.S. allies in widely separated regions, including Europe and the Asia-Pacific region, to recognize the extent to which their shared security interests include upholding the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Walter B. Slocombe, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, prepared statement before the Senate Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on International Security, Proliferation and Federal Services, *The Future of Nuclear Deterrence*, Hearing on 12 February 1997 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997), p. 23.

⁶⁸ For an incisive discussion, see Stephan Frühling and Benjamin Schreer, “NATO’s New Strategic Concept and US Commitments in the Asia-Pacific,” *RUSI Journal*, vol. 154, no. 5 (October 2009), pp. 98-103.

The Future of US Extended Deterrence Elaine Bunn¹

Even though the Nuclear Posture Review and several other major defense policy reviews are still underway in the United States, it is clear that extended deterrence will figure prominently in the Obama administration's decisions about the US nuclear and overall defense posture. During the next five to ten years, the security concerns of US allies will change as the capabilities and objectives of their potential adversaries evolve. The threats from proliferant states and non-state actors may become more severe, and the United States' security commitments may require it to exercise extended deterrence in poorly understood global commons such as space and cyberspace. Against this backdrop, maintaining extended deterrence in the near future will require a strategic force posture that not only deters but also reassures across a broad spectrum of actors, contingencies, multi-dimensional threats, and domains. That some advocate the United States formally or tacitly expanding its security umbrella to include several Middle Eastern states only compounds the complexity of this challenge.

To understand the future of extended deterrence, we must first assess where we are now; and then grapple with the changes that may occur. This paper will then approach the future of extended deterrence within the context of the debate about US deterrence that is currently unfolding within the United States. As my time and your attention are limited, I will focus on three specific issues: extended deterrence in space and cyberspace; the implications of a nuclear-armed Iran, and the potential challenges of and alternatives to extending US deterrence to the Middle East; and extended deterrence on the path to nuclear zero.

Extended Deterrence Today

After almost two decades in the shadows, extended deterrence is back in the spotlight. This is not surprising, given North Korea's nuclear test in May, as well as its original nuclear test in 2006, and its series of missile tests this year; Iran's ongoing quest for nuclear weapons which can rattle the Middle East; China's ongoing military modernization; and Russia reasserting itself.

Some believe the world is on the brink of a nuclear tipping point, where a combination of changes in the international environment could set off a domino effect, with countries scrambling to develop nuclear weapons so as not to be left behind – or to develop nuclear latent or "hedge" capacities that would allow them to build nuclear arsenals relatively quickly, if necessary. In such a circumstance, some who have previously renounced nuclear weapons could reconsider, including some US allies.

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In the past, US security guarantees – including extended deterrence broadly and extended *nuclear* deterrence specifically – have been credited with helping nations toying with the idea of going nuclear to renounce that path. The United States is the only country which explicitly makes a commitment of its nuclear weapons for the protection of others – at this point, 30 other countries (the other 27 NATO nations, Japan, South Korea and Australia). Walt Slocombe, in testimony to Congress in 1997 when he was Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, asserted: “The importance of the role of US nuclear capability in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons often goes unnoticed. The extension of a credible US nuclear deterrent to allies has been an important nonproliferation tool. It has removed incentives for key allies, in a still dangerous world, to develop and deploy their own nuclear forces, as many are technically capable of doing. Indeed, our strong security relationships have probably played as great a role in nonproliferation over the past 40 years as has the NPT.” In a world of proliferation challenges, reexamining extended deterrence, including extended *nuclear* deterrence, needs to be a priority for the United States.

Of course, in order to *extend* deterrence, the United States must first be able to deter.

There has been an ongoing and evolving reassessment of deterrence in the United States for more than a decade. There is not yet complete consensus on what deterrence means, whom we are most concerned about deterring from doing what, which capabilities should be included in any examination of deterrence, and how to deter most effectively (recognizing that there is less confidence than during the Cold War that deterrence will always be successful). But there is a widely-held recognition in the US that it makes sense to explore whether and how deterrence concepts could be adapted, adjusted, and made to fit 21st-century challenges – the need to adjust deterrence to each of a wide range of potential opponents, actions, and situations, and a wider range of capabilities that contribute to deterrence. The 2006 Deterrence Operations Joint Operating Concept states that the objective of deterrence operations is “to decisively influence the adversary’s decision-making calculus in order to prevent hostile actions against US vital interests... An adversary’s deterrence decision calculus focuses on their perception of three primary elements”: the benefits of a course of action; the costs of a course of action; and the consequences of restraint (i.e., costs and benefits of not taking the course of action we seek to deter).

The challenges of deterrence broadly defined (not just nuclear deterrence) and its viability can be examined by looking at three factors. First, improving the odds of successful deterrence requires understanding potential adversaries – for example, who makes decisions, how they think and what they care about, how they’re influenced by domestic constituencies and politics, what they see as key objectives, how they weigh costs and gains, how risk averse or risk tolerant they are, and what they believe about the deterrer. All those aspects require expertise on the region, country, group or leader in question (expertise that lies not only within the US government, but potentially in think tanks, academia, allies and elsewhere). The answers to some of these questions are difficult to discern, and others may never be answered – but reducing one’s ignorance as much as possible would seem to be desirable when it comes to deterrence; and some of the unknowns will become variables in the planning process. Secondly, adapting the mix of capabilities relevant to deterring specific actions by specific actors in specific situations will be important as well. The potential capabilities for deterrence certainly go beyond just nuclear weapons, and include non-nuclear and non-kinetic

strike, defenses of all types (both passive and active), non-military tools such as diplomatic, economic or legal measures which can affect an adversary's decision calculus by either increasing costs or reducing the benefits of the action to be deterred, or inducing restraint. Third, the clarity and credibility of American messages in the mind of the deterree are critical to deterrence. US policymakers need mechanisms to assess how their words and actions are perceived, how they affect each adversary's deterrence calculations, and how they might mitigate misperceptions that undermine deterrence.

Thus, one aspect of reassurance rests on how well allies believe the United States can deter actions against those allies' interests. But just as the United States is reexamining deterrence, it must consider the requirements of *extended* deterrence in the evolving security environment: how to assure allies and friends that the United States will meet its security commitments to them, so they will not feel the need to develop their own nuclear weapons or other capabilities that the United States would view as counterproductive. While US views on deterrence are evolving, so may those of US allies—including whom they are concerned about deterring, as well as the role of offenses and defenses, and the role of US capabilities versus their own capabilities to underpin deterrence.

To be sure, extended deterrence is more than just extended *nuclear* deterrence. US conventional capabilities play an important – and increasing – role in extended deterrence. Defenses, particularly missile defenses, have gained acceptance, even enthusiasm, among some allies as a complementary part of extended deterrence (witness the emphasis and resources Japan is putting into the Aegis/SM-3 system and Patriot, or the desires of the Polish government for US missile defense deployments). Forward military presence and force projection capabilities continue to help the United States extend deterrence to allies. Beyond just military capabilities, extended deterrence broadly understood rests on the overall health of the alliance relationship, including shared interests, dialogue, consultation, and coordinated defense planning and exercises.

In addition, the United States' reputation as a security guarantor is shaped by trends in US behavior in the international arena. Historically many allies have been conflicted on this—on the one hand, fearing abandonment (wondering if the United States will really be there when needed, illustrated by the age-old question, “Would the U.S really trade New York for Berlin (or Los Angeles for Tokyo, or Chicago for Ankara)?”); and on the other, fearing entrapment or entanglement (getting pulled into situations or conflicts against the ally's interests). To be assured, allies need to have confidence in American judgment and reliability; if not, specific capabilities – nuclear or otherwise – do not really matter.

However, focusing specifically on extended *nuclear* deterrence, what characteristics do US nuclear forces need in order to continue making this unique contribution to global security? What nuclear force posture and declaratory policy will persuade US allies that their security interests are best served by continuing to forgo the development of their own nuclear capabilities?

It is not impossible that allies could get to the point where they are insufficiently reassured because of the details of the size or composition or basing of the US nuclear

arsenal. This occurred in the late 1970's, when West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt voiced concerns shared by other European NATO nations that the Soviets' SS-20 could 'decouple' the US strategic nuclear force from the defense of Europe. This led to the dual-track decision and the basing of Pershing IIs and Ground-Launched Cruise Missiles in Europe – because nuclear Tomahawk cruise missiles (TLAM-N) off the coast of Europe were seen as insufficiently "coupling" to reassure NATO allies. So there have been times in history when allies did care greatly about the precise composition and disposition of US nuclear forces.

But at this point, there is nothing to indicate that allies are *insufficiently* reassured about the US nuclear arsenal because of any specific technical characteristics of it. Of course, they can be talked into it by *self*-denigration of US nuclear capability. In particular, talk of the US being "self-deterred" – usually put forward by those who most support new nuclear weapons – is counterproductive from an assurance (and a deterrence) stand point. By the same logic, although it is unlikely that allies will no longer be assured if the United States fails to adopt a specific modernization program for its nuclear arsenal, public statements of concern by US officials about the continued health of the US nuclear infrastructure may evoke concern among US allies about the long-term dependability of US extended nuclear deterrence. Granted, it is a catch-22 situation: in a democracy, changes one may think are needed will not be made unless there is public examination and debate; but unless the United States is able to come to a domestic consensus to fill the gaps identified, pointing out perceived gaps in US nuclear capabilities can undermine assurance (as well as deterrence).

According to Lewis Dunn's work on foreign perspectives on US nuclear policy and posture, questions are beginning to surface in both Japan and Turkey – not about specific nuclear weapons characteristics, but about the credibility of the US nuclear guarantee. Within the Japanese defense community, there was during the LDP government an interest in US-Japan discussions of the types of conflict scenarios that could bring the American nuclear guarantee into play as one means to demonstrate and buttress the credibility of extended deterrence. It is unclear what the DPJ government position will be; while recent polls showed that 61% of Diet members would like to get out from under the US nuclear umbrella,² That view may or may not be sustained once the potential implications for Japanese defense budgets are examined.

Do US nuclear weapons need to be deployed or deployable to the region in question in order to reassure allies? At present, the only US nuclear weapons deployed on allied territory are the remaining air-delivered bombs in several NATO countries that could be delivered by dual-capable US or allied aircraft. While the United States at one time deployed nuclear weapons in South Korea, they were removed almost two decades ago, and the extension of nuclear deterrence to allies in the Asia-Pacific region has since then been by offshore nuclear forces.

² Based on poll by Kyodo News, as reported in *Japan Times* Oct. 11, 2009; see <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20091011a1.html>. The Kyodo News survey was conducted on 308 members of the House of Representatives and drew responses from 211, or 68.5 percent, of them. While 58.3 percent of respondents said Japan should try to end its reliance on the United States' nuclear arsenal in the future, 2.8 percent said they wanted Tokyo to do so immediately. In contrast, 28.4 percent said Japan should remain under US nuclear protection.

The ability to deploy nuclear weapons to a region to deter or assure has declined over the years. In 1991 and 1992, President George H.W. Bush's Presidential Nuclear Initiatives eliminated most so-called "tactical" nuclear weapons³. In 1994, the United States announced its decision to permanently give up the capability to deploy nuclear weapons on aircraft carriers or other surface ships. While the decision in 1994 was to retain the capability to redeploy TLAM-N on attack submarines, there has been a budget battle nearly every year since over whether to retain TLAM-N. Thus, TLAM-N is a system that has not been updated with all the modern improvements made to the conventional version, and may atrophy soon. However, some Japanese have been said to place importance on retention of nuclear Tomahawk missiles, even if in a reserve status, as evidence of the credibility of US security guarantees. If this continues to be the case under a new Japanese government, the question is whether or not Japan could be reassured about the US nuclear guarantee through other means. *If a visible presence is important to the reassurance of allies, there are other capabilities which can be made visible.* The deployment of nuclear-capable B-2s to Guam or Diego Garcia have been covered in the news media at various times (probably not by accident); and looking to historical precedents, even nuclear submarines can be made visible in order to send a deterrence and reassurance signal: when the US withdrew its intermediate-range missiles from Turkey in the 1960s as a consequence of the Cuban missile crisis, a *Polaris* strategic submarine, then deployed in the Mediterranean, made a port call to Izmir to demonstrate the continuing US nuclear presence in the region. The question is, how much does visibility matter to the credibility of US extended nuclear deterrence?

Besides visible nuclear forces or forces deployable to the region, there may be other ways to help demonstrate the credibility of US extended nuclear deterrent for the future security of Japan, South Korea, Turkey and others. Options range from additional affirmation of the US nuclear guarantee through the type of discussion of nuclear scenarios that some Japanese have informally suggested, to the institutionalization of exchanges on nuclear deterrence matters. Similarly, in light of the perceived importance of a US-NATO nuclear tie in the thinking of "new" NATO members, how best to provide that tie in a changed environment also merits further examination.

As officials in the United States think about numbers and characteristics of nuclear forces, they will need to consciously address the issue of how to reassure allies that the extended nuclear pledge is still viable. But one should recognize that aspects of "nuclear posture" which reassure one ally may frighten or disturb another – whether that is nuclear weapons deployed on their territory, or US modernization of its nuclear weapons. US officials should constantly consult with allies about what reassures them, and what factors are most important to their remaining nonnuclear—even when they face potential adversaries who are, or are on the road to being, nuclear-armed. It is not the specific characteristics or size of the US nuclear arsenal that are likely to impact allies' views of the credibility of extended nuclear deterrence. However, the perception of inattention to things nuclear – the cumulative effect of numerous individual events, incidents, decisions or lack of resolution over how to sustain US nuclear capabilities and infrastructure – may at some point add up to allied concern. It is through lack of attention that the US can best undermine the nonproliferation aspects of its nuclear

³ The term "tactical" or "non-strategic" nuclear weapons is oxymoronic: all nuclear weapons would be strategic in their effect; "tactical" or "non-strategic nuclear weapons are really just differently-deployed. This is leftover terminology, meaning nuclear weapons not covered by START, SORT or other arms control agreements

posture in providing cover for its allies. In the end, if the US is comfortable with its own nuclear posture and can – and does – make the case to allies that its security commitments, including extended nuclear deterrence, remain strong, then allies are likely to be assured.

The Future of Extended Deterrence

Deterrence and Extended Deterrence in Space and Cyberspace

The United States and others utilize space and cyberspace for military purposes, and these valuable global commons also form the avenues through which the international community participates in a vibrant and interconnected economic (as well as social and scientific) system. But these commons create new vulnerabilities too. Great powers, regional actors, rogue elements within states, and non-state actors may attempt to employ force in these domains to deny or destroy another actor's ability to leverage space- and cyberspace-enabled capabilities and services, such as communication satellites, the Global Positioning System (GPS), and networked information systems. Some argue that this dynamic is already underway. For instance, China's 2007 ASAT test and the 2008 US satellite knockdown reignited debates among policymakers and defense analysts about security and stability in outer space⁴. And the Obama administration's decision to appoint a cyber security czar highlights the seriousness with which the US views threats to cyber infrastructures and networks.

We do not yet understand how vulnerabilities in space and cyberspace will affect how we exercise deterrence. The United States and other actors need to better understand the unique characteristics of space and cyberspace to deter potential adversaries from targeting these domains. Fortunately though, we are not starting from scratch; exercising deterrence in the twenty-first century may be more challenging than it was during the Cold war, but there are several attributes that are fundamental to any relationship in which one actor attempts to deter another from a given action. As a starting point, we can think about deterrence in space and cyberspace as a function of our ability to influence three variables in a potential adversary's decision-making calculus: the perceived benefits of action, the perceived costs of action, and the perceived costs and benefits of inaction.

Benefits of Action: Denying an actor the benefits of an attack space and cyberspace will require an ability to defend US space and cyber assets, as well as a responsive space

⁴ In the post-Cold War era, space capabilities have become increasingly routine, ubiquitous, and commoditized. The United States first began lashing together the space infrastructure it built to support strategic warfare and using it to produce operational and tactical level effects during the buildup for Operation Desert Storm in 1990-91. The nascent reconnaissance-strike complex that emerged during the Gulf War showed that space could have a transformational effect on the conduct of military operations and enable a new American way of war. The trend towards long-range, precision strike has continued and accelerated such that the use of precision guided munitions has increased from only 3 percent in 1991 during the Gulf War to almost 70 percent in 2003 during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Commercial space capability development and US military reliance upon these capabilities are proceeding apace. Commercial imagery companies now provide a major portion of space imagery used by the United States Government and commercial systems carried over 80 percent of satellite communications traffic during the combat phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Moreover, while space may have been perceived as a strategic sanctuary in the past, today it is becoming an increasingly contested military domain like land, sea, or air where tactical operations face a variety of threats, interference, and actual attacks that are within the capability of more actors.

and cyberspace capability to enable the United States to operate even if a portion of its space and cyber assets are damaged or destroyed. Space and cyber experts frequently note that defending attacks in these domains is difficult. For instance, spacecraft are fragile, difficult to maneuver, and the United States must improve its space situational awareness (SSA) to better detect attacks in space. But defensive capabilities need not be impenetrable to contribute to deterrence; rather, they are helpful so long as an adversary perceives them as effective enough to potentially deny it the benefits of an action.

Costs of Action: The United States can raise the costs of aggression in space and cyberspace by holding at risk assets that are of high value to potential adversaries. The notion that space and cyber deterrence requires an ability to retaliate against an adversary's space and cyber assets, or would need a tit-for-tat declaratory policy, is erroneous. Since not all nations are equally dependent upon space and cyberspace and therefore are not equally vulnerable to attacks in these domains, threatened responses to cyber or space attacks do not necessarily need to be in the same domain (although caution is required in that such a response would need to be credible). Of course, a threat of retaliation will be incredible if we cannot identify the attacker, and we cannot currently assume that we will be able to trace all space and cyber attacks back to the perpetrator.⁵ Therefore, the possibility that actors could attack the United States in space and cyberspace and retain their anonymity is a major challenge to contemporary deterrence. But we should not limit our thinking about the costs of offensive operations in these domains to the military realm. The economic utility of space and cyberspace may deter many countries from endangering stability in these domains even when doing so serves their immediate security needs because such an attack could disrupt the services that enable their country to participate in and benefit from a complex web of economic relationships.⁶ It seems to me that enmeshing potential attackers in a web of interdependence could make them think twice about the blowback costs to them of certain types of cyber attacks; this might be a form of deterrence by entanglement. The Eisenhower Center for Space and Defense Studies has made the same observation about space.

Strategic Communications: Developing the knowledge and tools to shape these variables is not enough; we must also communicate our capabilities and intent to the actors that we are trying to deter. The clarity and credibility of American messages in the mind of the deterree are critical to deterrence. Deterrence in space and cyberspace is similar to deterrence in other domains in this regards.

Extending US security commitments to the space and cyber capabilities of NATO states, Japan, South Korea, and Australia merits further consideration. Some may perceive this discussion as primarily academic. For instance, one could argue that space and cyberspace are included in US security obligations and that a formal recognition of such is unnecessary. In fact, a declaratory policy of calculated ambiguity for space and

⁵ See Ambassador Roger D. Harrison, Major Deron R. Jackson, and Collins G. Shackelford, *Space Deterrence: "The Delicate Balance of Risk,"* (Eisenhower Center for Space and Defense Studies, April 2009), pp. 15-17; and Franklin D. Kramer, "Cyberpower and National Security: Policy Recommendations for a Strategic Framework," in *Cyberpower and National Security*, edited by Franklin Kramer, Stuart Starr, and Larry Wentz, (Washington, DC, Potomac Books and National Defense University Press, 2009), pp. 15-16.

⁶ For an example of this argument for space, see. Harrison *et.al, op cit.*, pp. 21-23.

cyberspace would give the United States more flexibility to respond during future crises in which force employment may not be an appropriate and efficacious retaliatory option. This may be the United States' de facto position on the issue until US allies grow sufficiently concerned about space and cyber attacks to request an explicit security guarantee. Such an approach to extended deterrence in space and cyberspace, however, should not prevent the United States from initiating a dialogue on space and cyber security with its allies. In fact, as US strategists identify and develop the necessary policies and capabilities to deter attacks against the United States in these domains, they should consult with US allies in the hope of cultivating shared understandings of threats, concepts, policies, and doctrine.

Again, even though we are not familiar with exercising deterrence in these domains, we do know that extended deterrence must deter potential adversaries and reassure allies. In light of these demands, the United States and its allies should consider if extended deterrence in these valuable global commons is feasible and desirable.

Would Potential Adversaries Perceive US Security Obligations in Space and Cyberspace as Credible? Convincing potential adversaries that the United States would risk treasure, military assets, and American lives to protect an ally is one of the core challenges to extended deterrence. Exercising extended deterrence in space and cyberspace may compound this challenge. Can the United States credibly threaten to employ force in response to a cyber attack against a NATO state? Many analysts question if the United States would risk Los Angeles for Seoul, can we credibly claim that we will risk Los Angeles for Seoul's information grid? Would the United States take the nuclear option off the table for these contingencies? Clearly, the declaratory policies and capabilities that the United States adopts for extended deterrence will flow from the larger debate about proportionality, credibility, escalation, the offensive-defensive balance, and stable deterrence relationships in space and cyberspace.

Would US Allies Accept Extended Deterrence in Space and Cyberspace? US extended deterrence in these domains would be credible only if the United States and its allies possess a shared perception of the threats in space and cyberspace and the appropriate responses to aggression. The United States could not credibly deter a potential adversary from attacking an ally's cyber infrastructure if its declaratory policy is fundamentally at odds with that of the ally's government. For instance, US declaratory policy may hold that non-kinetic attacks on the space and cyber components of its missile defense systems constitutes an attack against the territory, troops, military assets, and allies which the shield is intended to protect. US allies, however, may perceive this position as either extreme and unnecessarily escalatory, or as weak. Again, this challenge is universal to all extended deterrence commitments, but it is currently more acute for space and cyberspace because both domains are relatively new and a consensus about the threats to each has yet to coalesce.

Strengthened Deterrence in Space and Cyberspace through Resilience and Security Cooperation – Coalition space capabilities can enhance resilience, redundancy and operational continuity during military contingencies that involve counterspace attacks.⁷ Establishing the agreements, procedures, and institutional relationships to rapidly

⁷ Colonel Francois Malo, "Schriever V: Lessons Learned- A Canadian Perspective," *High Frontier* 5, 4 (August 2009), p. 30.

offload space services to allies may strengthen deterrence by reducing the potential payoffs of an attack on US and allied space assets during a conflict. By this logic, the United States could exercise extended deterrence in space by deploying interoperable systems with its allies, and this would enhance its own deterrence posture too. Likewise, resilience and redundancy in networks and the ability to find other cyber routes if some routes are disrupted can lead to deterrence by denial.

Extended Deterrence in the Middle East

Before moving forward with this discussion, I should remind everyone that the US government remains committed to a diplomatic solution that prevents Iran from becoming a nuclear weapon state. However, if Iran proceeded, despite many nations' best diplomatic efforts, to become a nuclear weapons state, the situation would warrant consideration of extended deterrence to friends in the Middle East. US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton recently raised the prospect of extending the US "defense umbrella" to the Middle East in response to a nuclear-armed Iran. (She did not specify this as a *nuclear* umbrella.) The principal objectives of formal security commitments would be to assure US friends in the region, blunt a nuclear proliferation chain, and contain Iran. Without taking a position on this question, I am going to discuss several of the issues that would shape a policy debate about extended deterrence in the Middle East.

Assuming a nuclear-armed Iran is the core threat to regional security, which countries would fall under the US security umbrella? GCC countries, including Saudi Arabia? Israel? Egypt?

Tailoring an extended deterrence commitment must begin with extensive consultations with the allies that the United States is trying to assure and an analysis of the adversary it wants to deter. From these discussions, the United States and its allies can identify the actions they are trying to deter, the Iranian assets that must be held at risk to do so, the defensive capabilities that will enable them to deny Iran the benefits of these actions, the capabilities and deployments necessary to assure US allies, and their declaratory policy. The United States would also need to consider US public opinion, the impact on US security commitments in Asia and Europe, the long-term financial and strategic costs of extending deterrence, and the potential second and third order consequences of increasing the scope and complexity of the United States' involvement in the Middle East.

What are the Current US Commitments? Forward deployed US troops and weapon systems are important elements of extended deterrence in Europe and Asia. They symbolize our stake in our allies' security, and they physically link any attack on a US ally to an attack against the United States. Setting aside our military presence in Iraq, the United States currently has troops temporarily deployed in other Middle Eastern countries, including the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman. Do these deployments constitute a tacit security commitment? Even in the absence of a formal security pledge, an adversary will probably perceive the risks involved in an attack on any of these countries as higher because of the current presence of US forces. Is this sufficient for deterrence and assurance? Would it be sufficient for deterrence and assurance if Iran has nuclear weapons?

Extended Deterrence in the Middle East Would Probably Not Mirror Extended Deterrence in Asia and Europe: The United States extended deterrence to Asia and Europe in specific circumstances and tailored its deterrence and assurance relationships to its allies, the regional dynamics, the capabilities, intentions, US and allied perceptions of potential adversaries, and the political climate in the United States. And we adjust our policies to reflect significant changes in any of these variables. Tailored extended deterrence and assurance relationships in the Middle East will likely be different than tailored extended deterrence and assurance relationships in Asia and Europe, which of course are not identical, because the variables are different.

Forward Deployed Forces in the Middle East: Permanently stationing military personnel and assets to a politically volatile region, which possesses a population that is acutely sensitive to what they perceive as Western interference, may be counterproductive. For instance, imagine that the United States deployed a modest number of US troops to Saudi Arabia and Egypt to operate theater missile defense systems. If the population perceives these deployments in a threatening light, the United States may conclude that the risk to US troops and the cost of force protection are too high to sustain such a commitment. At the same time, widespread public disapproval of a visible US presence could destabilize the countries that the United States is trying to assure. The United States might be asked by a foreign government or decide on its own to withdraw its forces.

A Capabilities-Enabling Approach: Recognizing these difficulties, the United States may consider a different approach. Rather than forward deploy US military capabilities to the region and sign binding security treaties, the United States could provide its friends with conventional weapon systems, such as missile and air defense capabilities. Such an approach would increase the difficulty of a successful missile and bomber attack against these countries and allow foreign leaders to publically downplay their security ties with the United States. Furthermore, the United States could potentially cooperate with Russia and China, and other such as France and the U.K., to train and equip Middle Eastern allies with robust conventional defenses. Such a joint commitment to Middle Eastern security may convey to Iran that its nuclear capability does not mean great powers' acceptance of a more coercive Iranian foreign policy. On the other hand, we must consider the possibility that a capabilities-enabled approach would spur an arms race and exacerbate tensions between Iran and the beneficiaries of such arms sales.

Extended Nuclear Deterrence: Effective conventional defenses may be insufficient for assuaging the security concerns of US regional allies if Iran possesses nuclear weapons. After all, there is a psychological dimension to nuclear deterrence. As one Australian analyst put it, "nuclear weapons speak a unique dialect of the language of deterrence." Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and others might conclude that they must acquire their own nuclear capabilities unless the United States (or others) protects them with its nuclear umbrella.

Before examining the implications of extending the nuclear umbrella, though, it is worth briefly exploring whether the United States could extend a formal defense commitment to the region without pledging to keep nuclear weapons "on the table." Recall that current US declaratory policy for extended deterrence is that the United States will consider using nuclear weapons in response to an attack on its allies. How

would others react if US declaratory policy for its Middle Eastern security umbrella stipulates that the United States will respond with *conventional weapons* or if it is ambiguous? Segments within the Arab community may point to this policy decision as proof that the United States views Arabs and Muslims as inferior to Europeans and Asians. And US friends in the Middle East may decide to move forward with their own nuclear weapons programs. Similarly, Iran may doubt the United States' commitment to a purely conventional security pledge, which would undermine deterrence. Or Iranian leaders may conclude that threatening to cross the nuclear threshold will allow them to coerce their neighbors with impunity, thus driving them towards a more belligerent foreign policy. From an operational perspective, this declaratory policy could complicate US military planning, training, deployments, and doctrine for a conflict against a nuclear-armed adversary. Moreover, taking the nuclear option off the table would probably require the United States to forward deploy a larger conventional force presence in order to support its assurance and deterrence relationships during peacetime, to credibly threaten and deter military action in a crisis, and to prevail in an actual conflict. Such a deployment, however, may be hard to reconcile with a US conventional security commitment because US policymakers would be unlikely to station US troops in a region indefinitely for a deterrence mission without the protection of US nuclear forces.

Of course, a security commitment that includes an explicit nuclear pledge carries risks as well, including the risk of escalation. Would the United States forward deploy nuclear forces to the Middle East if Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and others concluded that it was necessary to deter Iranian aggression? Would forward deployed nuclear weapons be an attractive target for terrorists? Could we ensure the safety of forward-deployed nuclear assets in the Middle East? Or would US nuclear weapons there be just as safe and secure as nuclear weapons in Europe? Would nuclear deployments undermine other US non-proliferation goals? And how would other countries, including Russia and China, react to such a deployment?

Would the United States support Extended Deterrence? The expert community often forgets that the perceptions of Congress, the public, and the federal bureaucracy influence the credibility of extended deterrence commitments. A large segment of the American public may believe that the costs of extending the security umbrella to the Middle East are too high. This could undermine US efforts to deter Iran and reassure its allies-to-be in the Middle East. A related issue is how US security obligations would evolve if Iran developed the ability to launch nuclear strikes against the continental United States. Would public support for US extended deterrence diminish?

Asymmetric Challenges: The threat of Iranian proxies attacking American soldiers in Iraq in retaliation to US or Israeli strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities illustrates another challenge: Iran's ties with Hezbollah and Hamas. Would attacks by these and other Iranian proxies against Israel trigger US security commitments? Would the threat of terrorist attacks against the United States or US forces in the region deter the United States from fulfilling its security obligations?

The Implications for Other Extended Deterrence Commitments: How would a Middle Eastern security umbrella impact existing US security obligations? One danger is that US allies in Europe and Asia may doubt the sincerity of US security commitments if they perceive the United States is "diluting" extended deterrence by assuming

responsibility for the security of more and more countries. Similarly, a failure to make good on Middle Eastern security commitments may undermine the credibility of the United States' commitments to its other allies. By this logic, any additional extended deterrence pledge will exacerbate the challenges of maintaining current US security commitments.

Extended Deterrence on the Path to Zero

What would extended deterrence look like in a world of reduced numbers of nuclear weapons, on the path to eventual elimination? This issue becomes particularly interesting in the in-between phase of the road to elimination – that is, after the follow-on to New START, and before zero. There seems to be a growth industry in next steps and last steps, but a lack of analysts focused on the middle steps – that is, the “three-digit phase”: not thousands, not teens, but some hundreds of operationally deployed nuclear weapons.

That middle area is worth contemplating for several reasons. Arms control in that case would necessarily be a multi-player discussion, not just a bilateral US-Russian negotiation. If one assumes that the United States and Russia have come down well below 1000; UK and France have stayed about where they are, as has Israel; China has continued modest modernization; India and Pakistan have continued to increase their nuclear arsenals, then that would be eight nations with arsenals in the hundreds. (And who knows what to assume about NK and Iran some years down the road?) The three-digit phase is also where the issue of *numbers* may be less important to strategic stability than the *postures* of nuclear forces. The third complicating factor is that for a number of nations, the posture of their nuclear forces, particularly at low numbers, will be related not just to their potential adversaries' nuclear forces, but also to their conventional forces and active defenses. Extended nuclear deterrence in such a world would be even more complex than today, and the perception of whether the US (without the numerical nuclear advantage it has today vis-à-vis all countries except Russia) would or could credibly pledge to risk Los Angeles for Seoul or New York for Istanbul could be called into even more question.

In the longer term, there are larger questions: Will the United States continue to play a major role in the world, in underpinning global stability through extended deterrence, and specifically in extending *nuclear* deterrence to others? What are the implications of much lower nuclear force levels (in three digits) for extended deterrence? Will other nuclear nations, as their relative power increases, take on explicit or implicit extended nuclear deterrence commitments to others' security?

The Future of Extended Deterrence: A South Korean Perspective Seok-soo Lee¹

Introduction

The end of the Cold War brought about a dramatic shift of global nuclear challenges. Under the Cold War structure, the United States and Soviet Union had enjoyed a certain degree of strategic stability stemming from balance of nuclear capabilities which dictated a strategic doctrine of deterrence. Political will and military capability of the two superpowers for retaliation against the first strike served both status quo and avoidance of the nuclear war. Since the end of the block confrontation between the East and West, nuclear materials, technologies, know-how and scientists have been diffused to states and non-state actors such as rogue states and terrorists.²

Against this backdrop, the strategy of extended deterrence began to capture attentions again from strategic planners and scholars. In Northeast Asia, North Korea has yet to make a strategic decision to forego nuclear program while involved in negotiation for nuclear dismantlement. It already conducted nuclear test twice in 2006 and 2009. In Middle East, Iran seems to be developing nuclear weapons on the basis of uranium enrichment program. It is these two countries that pose serious nuclear threats to the world.

Amid the emerging trend of nuclear proliferation, South Korea faces a direct nuclear threat from North Korea. The Korean peninsula seems to be one of the heavily armed places in the World. South Korea shares the territorial border with North Korea which claimed itself as a nuclear weapon state in public. As a result, Pyongyang poses military threat to Seoul with conventional and nuclear capabilities as well. The latter joined non-proliferation and arms control regime and pursued denuclearization policy within the framework of “The Joint Declaration of Denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula” in 1992. More striking is that South Korea continues to abide by the accord so far despite the North’s violation of the agreement.

Even though South Korea occupies 5th rank in terms of number of nuclear reactor, it is not permitted both to enrich uranium and to separate plutonium. This precludes the potential that Seoul is able to build nuclear weapon. Now facing North Korea’s nuclear threat, Seoul is completely relying on extended deterrence with the nuclear umbrella provided by the United States. That is the reason why South Korea is so sensitive to North Korea’s nuclear test and raise questions about credibility of the U.S. nuclear guarantee and assurance. The recent national-wide debate on what is called ‘nuclear sovereignty’ offers the case.

¹ Korea National Defense University. Final version November 16, 2009.

² Keith Payne et. al. *Nuclear Guarantees, Extended Deterrence, and the Assurance of Allies* (Virginia, National Institute Press, 2009)

Considering the recent renewed discussion on extended deterrence, this paper is designed to examine the credibility of the U.S. extended deterrence to South Korea and discuss how to reinforce the extended deterrence. Assumption underlying this study is that North Korea's development of nuclear weapons significantly affects South Koreans' sensitivity to the credibility of the U.S. nuclear guarantees. In other words, North Korean nuclear tests changed South Koreans' concerns over and perspectives of the U.S. extended deterrence. The first part of this article is devoted to overview of contending views on extended deterrence to South Korea. The second part is assigned to discussion on extended deterrence before North Korea's first nuclear test in 2006. The third part is focused on South Korea's policies of extended deterrence to cope with North Korean nuclear threat since the nuclear test. Lastly, the paper is concluded with summary of research findings and policy implications.

Recent Debates on Extended Deterrence in South Korea

North Korea's second nuclear test in May last year stimulated discussion on deterrence against nuclear attack, which were led by politicians and media. Even though the Korean peninsula is surrounded by nuclear weapons state of China and Russia, South Koreans have not premised nuclear attacks from neighboring countries. Seoul has been preoccupied with conventional threats rather than nuclear one from Pyongyang before its nuclear development program move forward. Immediately after the test, South Koreans began to be seriously concerned about deterrence against North Korea's nuclear attack.

The recent debates revolve around how to deal with North Korea's nuclear challenge which looms real and true. South Korean armed forces are deficient of nuclear capability, perfectly relying on the U.S. capability since the Korean War. With the threat imposed by the North, some South Koreans are worried about strategic vulnerability without nuclear weapons. Four perspectives have been contending since the second nuclear test last year. First one is related to building independent nuclear deterrent by possessing nuclear weapons. Second one concerns establishing the nuclear fuel cycle. Third one is associated with a complete relying on the U.S. extended deterrence. Final one has to do with negotiation for nuclear dismantlement of North Korea.

Intelligence sources estimate that North Korea is highly likely to possess nuclear weapons. In response to nuclear threat created the North Korea's second nuclear test, a group of conservatives led the discussion which stressed nuclear sovereignty of South Korea. Nuclear sovereignty comprises 'military' and 'peaceful' one. The former is to acquire nuclear weapons for the purpose of self-defense, while the latter concerns a complete nuclear cycle and peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Proponents of military nuclear sovereignty justify their stance, providing several reasons for nuclear armament. As the United State failed to deter the two nuclear tests by Pyongyang, there emerged suspicion of credibility of the U.S. extended deterrence capability in Seoul. Given distrust of extended deterrence, this line of reasoning concluded that South Korea should be equipped with nuclear weapons to effectively cope with nuclear challenge from the North and expedite dismantlement of North Korean nuclear program. Critics of this strategic option raised a question of feasibility due to multilayered constraints imposed on South Korea's nuclear development. Supporters of military nuclear sovereignty argued that the South was not responsible

for abiding by the denuclearization agreement in 1992 which the North already violated.

This perspective is represented by so called nationalists, seriously lacking popular supports. Even though most South Koreans regard the nuclear weapon card as infeasible and undesirable one, the minority opinion clearly demonstrated South Korea's sensitivity to North Korea's nuclear threat and suspicion of the U.S. nuclear security guarantee. Peaceful nuclear sovereignty has been discussed since the conclusion of the 1992 denuclearization accord. Some experts criticized the declaration in which South Korea gave up enrichment and reprocessing of nuclear materials for peaceful purpose. They contended that South Korea should be permitted to construct the fuel cycle, proposing economic and strategic rationale. Nuclear energy occupies about 40 percent of electricity in South Korea which runs 20 nuclear power plants. Without enrichment and reprocessing facilities, South Korea should import nuclear fuel completely and just accumulate huge amount of the spent fuel at storages.

Most of South Koreans feel that constraints on them are too rigid and strict. In comparison, Japan was allowed to have enrichment and reprocessing facilities which provided it with a virtual nuclear deterrent. In a strategic sense, it is claimed that a virtual nuclear deterrent of the South, once built, would drive the North's nuclear dismantlement. Some South Koreans hope that they are guaranteed to be involved in enrichment and reprocessing activities for economic and strategic reasons as discussed. In a nutshell, proponents of peaceful nuclear sovereignty want to enjoy right for peaceful use of nuclear energy paralleled to Japan. They argue that South Korea remain non-nuclear state under any circumstances.

Mainstream and official thinking is that South Korea without nuclear capability should rely on the US extended deterrence guarantees. This group of thought rejects the strategic option of possessing nuclear weapon, judging that it is neither effective nor feasible for South Korea. The group tried to draw strong public commitment of the U.S. extended deterrence to South Korea. After the second nuclear test last May, the United State reaffirmed in public its commitment of extended deterrence including nuclear umbrella several times at both presidential and ministerial level. As stipulated in 2001 NPR, the United States extended deterrence consists of three elements: offensive strike systems (both nuclear and conventional), defense (both active, such as ballistic missile defenses, and passive), and a responsive defense infrastructure that would provide new capabilities to meet emerging threat.³ South Korea has built capabilities cross three domains except nuclear sector so as to complement the U.S. deterrent to North Korea. While showing a highest degree of confidence in the U.S. security assurance, the group is also afraid of decline of the U.S. extended deterrent.

Most of the liberalist places a priority to global non-proliferation and denuclearization on the Korean peninsula rather than nuclear deterrence. They perceive that emphasis on extended deterrence with nuclear umbrella lays a hurdle for negotiation with North Korean to eliminate nuclear weapons. Furthermore, it is contended that frequent reaffirmation of extended deterrence catalyzes North Korea's nuclear development. They are also concerned that the North would propose nuclear arms control talk with

³ Christopher F. Chyba and J. D. Crouch, "Understanding the U.S. Nuclear Weapons Policy Debate," *The Washington Quarterly*, 32:3 (July 2009), p. 23.

the United States. In short, this view is predicated on the assessment that the U.S. extension of deterrent to South Korea is not an appropriate measure for peace and denuclearization on the peninsula. This group recommended that settlement through negotiation is the proper path to be free from nuclear threat from the North. This view is criticized in that it underestimated nuclear threat from the North.

Extended Deterrence before North Korea's Nuclear Test

Nature of military threat from North Korea

Since 1978 when the United States mentioned nuclear umbrella for the first time, it remains the provider of extended deterrence to South Korea. Adapting to changes of security environment, South Korea seems to utilize the U.S. security commitment to it for its own strategic objective. In other word, there is a correlation between the nature of security threat and the U.S. security guarantees.

Before detonating nuclear device in 2006, North Korea remained conventional military threat to South Korea. There have been sporadic low-intensity armed clashes between the two Koreas. Inter-Korean relations were defined as a protracted armed conflict. The North demonstrated its intention of invasion to the South by initiating military provocations and sending guerrillas. Its provocative behavior culminated in an abortive guerrilla attack on the Blue House of presidential residence and infiltration of 120 North Korean special operation forces in 1968. In 1976, an accident occurred in the Joint Security Areas with two casualties of American soldiers.⁴ There were three naval clashes in the West Sea in the 2000s. As history shows, North Korea has been aggressive and provocative toward the South, sometimes violating the Armistice Agreement which prohibits hostile action toward each other on the Korean peninsula. Very recently, both sides were involved in naval armed clashes on the West Sea on 10 November in 2009. As such, the Korean peninsula continues to be unstable and volatile. In this vein, it is not surprising that South Koreans have suffered from fears of North's military attack toward the South.

With aggressive intention and challenging behavior demonstrated after the national division, the North has made an effort to build military capabilities as strong as possible. It became common sense that Pyongyang was superior to Seoul in terms of a conventional military equation. Entering the 2000s, new assessment of inter-Korean military balance emerged, challenging the traditional wisdom of the North's conventional advantage. Some liberal experts began to hold that the South was superior to the North in terms of conventional capability. This estimate has been under fierce attack by conservative experts. Now both sides seem to reach the consensus on conventional military capabilities that equation favors the South in quality, while the latter maintains edge over the former in quantity. Furthermore, it is argued that North Korea pursued nuclear weapons program and put an emphasis on building asymmetrical capacity due to weakening conventional edge over the South. Despite the emerging evaluation that the North's comparative advantage of conventional forces reduces, the North still possesses over 1 million troops which are armed with conventional weapons whether advanced or obsolete in part. There is little objection to the evaluation that North Korea

⁴ This is an armed clash between the United States and North Korea. When the U.S. soldiers prune poplars in JSA, North Korea soldiers approached and attacked Americans all of sudden and kill and injured them.

keeps posing conventional military threat to South Korea with aggressive intention, behavior and capability.

South Korea was not afraid of nuclear threat until North Korea conducted the first nuclear test in 2006. During the Cold War, there existed, if not high, a danger of nuclear war between the two superpowers on the Korean peninsula, which might have evolved from inter-Korean conventional armed conflict. However, North Korean conventional forces created military tension on the Korean peninsula. Under the framework of the Cold war, South Korea did not perceive seriously nuclear threats from the former Soviet Union and China with confidence in the U.S. nuclear primacy. Since the first nuclear crisis in the early 1990s, North Korea's nuclear program gained much attention from the world as a proliferation issue. Nuclear threat from North Korea was not deemed as a direct and real one until the first nuclear test, even though the North proclaimed as a nuclear weapon state in February 2005. It seems that South Korea had ignored the threat caused by North Korea's nuclear program. In reality, South Korea had been trapped in the vicious cycle of conventional military confrontations until 2006. South Korea perceived that conventional threat is greater than nuclear threat by the first nuclear test.

The U.S. extended deterrence to South Korea

As discussed, South Korea has felt military threat generated by conventional forces of the North. In contrast, it has not been concerned about nuclear threat posed by the Soviet Union (now Russia) and China. Given these perceptions, Seoul aimed to achieve the strategic objective of deterring conventional attack by the North, with little concern about nuclear risk. It seems that the United States had two-pronged goals to extend deterrence to South Korea. First of all, it intended to deter conventional and nuclear invasion.⁵ Secondly, it wanted to prevent Seoul from developing nuclear weapons.

A historical case supports these observations. In the early 1990s, president Park Chung Hee pursued development of nuclear weapons and conventional military build-up so called 'Yulgok Program' as well. Although these efforts had been made for the political and security purposes, it seems apparent that he tried to build military capability strong enough to deter North Korea's aggressive ambition of conventional attack. Furthermore, he wanted South Korea to reduce or remove its strategic dependence on the United States.⁶

In this vein, President Park was strongly interested in developing nuclear weapons in the early 1970s. Finally, he failed to realize his nuclear ambition due to the U.S. harsh pressure for non-proliferation. Following his decision to give up the nuclear card, the United States announced its commitment of extended deterrence to South Korea in 1978 with dual purposes of deterrence and non-proliferation. It promised to provide the nuclear umbrella to South Korea.

⁵ See, Kathleen C. Bailey, et. al., "White Paper on The Necessity of The U.S. Nuclear Deterrence," updated August 15, 2007, p. 1, available at www.nipp.org. "During the Cold War, the U.S. nuclear deterrent had two basic missions: deterrence of nuclear attack (by threatening swift, effective retaliation) and deterrence against overwhelming conventional attack, against NATO countries by the Warsaw Pact"

⁶ He wanted political independence following security autonomy.

The forward deployment of ground troops in South Korea laid the groundwork for the credibility of extended deterrence.⁷ The tactical nuclear weapons deployed in southern part constituted essential capability of extended deterrent before the United States withdrew them completely from South Korea in 1990.⁸ The U.S. nuclear umbrella contributed to deterring conventional attack by North Korea. Before the first nuclear test by North Korea, South Korea and the United States focused on nuclear dismantlement rather than nuclear deterrence in dealing with nuclear challenge stemming from the North.

Extended Deterrence after North Korea's Nuclear Test

Nature of military threat from North Korea

North Korea does not forego nuclear weapons development program, still maintaining huge conventional forces as before.⁹ Entering the 1980s, it began to lose conventional edge over South Korea. It is speculated that North Korea was no longer involved in conventional arms race with South Korea due to chronic economic hardship. Under this circumstance, North Korea seems to have a strong incentive to concentrate on building its asymmetric capabilities.¹⁰

North Korea has advanced nuclear and missile development program. It seems that the North has secured about 40kg of plutonium and conducted nuclear tests twice.¹¹ It probably has somewhere between six and twelve nuclear weapons, or at least explosive devices.¹² Most recently, it announced that its uranium enrichment program for nuclear weapons production has entered its final phase and that it is making more weapons from extracted plutonium.¹³ This means that it took the two paths of nuclear development using plutonium and uranium. Assessment diverges on weaponization technology. There is no agreement whether North Korea can make warhead small enough to be mounted on missile.

Defiant North Korea went ahead with the long range rocket launch in April, 2009 despite international appeals not to send up a rocket. Pyongyang made effort to sophisticate ballistic missile technologies while launching Taepodong 1 in 1998 and Taepodong 2 in 2006. The two tests revealed its technological deficiency which resulted in the failure of the experiments. It is in this context to speculate that Pyongyang intended to advance ballistic missile technology by launching a long range rocket on last April. Delivery system of missile formulates an essential element of

⁷ Kathleen J. McInnis, "Extended Deterrence: The U.S. Credibility Gap in the Middle East," *The Washington Quarterly*, 28:3 (Summer 2005), p. 180.

⁸ Berry M. Blechman, "Extended Deterrence: Cutting Edge of the Debate on Nuclear Policy," May 28, 2009, p. 1, available at www.stimson.org

⁹ The Ministry of National Defense, ROK, *Defense White Paper 2008*, p. 25.

¹⁰ International Crisis Group, *North Korea's Nuclear and Missile Programs*, Asia Report N 168, June 2009.

¹¹ The Ministry of National Defense, ROK, *Defense White Paper 2008*, p. 37.

¹² There are various official and private estimates on North Korea's nuclear capabilities. For more details, see International Crisis Group, *North Korea's Nuclear and Missile Programs*, Asia Report N 168, June 2009; Larry A. Niksch, *North Korea's Nuclear Weapons Development and Diplomacy*, CRS Report for Congress, 27 May 2009.

¹³ *JoongAng Daily*, September 5, 2009.

overall nuclear capability. The pure military purpose to improve strategic capability should not be ignored.¹⁴

The rocket test contributes to ratcheting up tensions on the Korean peninsula, Northeast Asia, and the world. The international community shows the immediate response that North Korean rocket launch is aimed at developing ballistic capability and thereby threatening the world with weapons of mass destruction. With regard to the performance of the rocket, however, different assessments are contending. A group of experts in South Korea estimated that the test was successful in that it extended range of missile to at least around 3,300 km. The other group mainly composed of American scientists underestimated North Korean ballistic missile technology, paying attention to the fact that no object entered into orbit. They believe that both the third stage boost and the payload might fall into the Pacific Ocean.

The United States became relaxed on the basis of an assessment that North Korea would take several years to sophisticate ballistic missile which is able to reach the western part of America. An American space expert contended that “The missile doesn’t represent any kind of near-term threat.”¹⁵ General James Cartwright, vice chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, said that “On the idea of proliferation, would you buy from somebody who had failed three times in a row and never been successful?”¹⁶ This statement symbolizes U.S. estimate of the launch.

Before the launch, North Korea has posed missile threat to Seoul and Tokyo which are within the short and medium range of Scud and Rodong missile. Psychological impact of the launch on the region is more serious than the real strategic one. The test made South Koreans and Japanese feel being insecure, making the latent North Korean missile threat surface. Following the long-range rocket firing, the North conducted the second nuclear test. It seems to improve overall nuclear capability including delivery system. Nuclear threat to South Korea becomes real and intensified, while conventional challenge weakens.

The U.S. extended deterrence to South Korea

The effectiveness of U.S nuclear umbrella began to call into question in South Korea and Japan. North Korean delivery system with nuclear weapons appears to be able to reduce nuclear deterrent in South Korea and Japan guaranteed by the United States. This strategic assessment would lead to a nuclear domino effect and space arms race in Northeast Asia. North Korean ICBM capability could diminish conventional deterrent, either delaying or blocking additional troops dispatched from the U.S. military bases in Guam and Okinawa.

South Korea might have the two strategic objectives. One is to reinforce nuclear deterrent of South Korea and the United States, which encompasses nuclear strikes, missile defense, and new long-range precision strike capabilities. The other is to keep pursuing North Korean nuclear dismantlement and missile moratorium, mobilizing multilateral,

¹⁴ For more details, see International Crisis Group, *North Korea’s Nuclear and Missile Programs*, Asia Report, n 168, June 2009.

¹⁵ William J. Broad, “Failure hurts Pyongyang’s quest to be a feared entity,” *International Herald Tribune*, April 7, 2009, p. 1.

¹⁶ Lee Young-jong and Yoo Jae-ho, “Behind North’s jubilation was anxiety,” *JoongAng Daily*, April 8, 2009, p. 2.

bilateral, and unilateral approaches. In addition, it is recommended that Seoul and Washington begin to discuss about how South Korea has an access to uranium enrichment and fuel separation in the context of peaceful use of nuclear energy.

In regards to the first ingredient of deterrent, Seoul has been totally relying on the U.S. extended deterrence. In order to elevate political credibility of extended deterrence, South Korea wanted the United States to reaffirm commitment to providing extended deterrence since the first nuclear test in 2006. At the 38th SCM (Security Consultative Meeting), it was stipulated that “the United States offered assurance of firm U.S. commitment and immediate support to the ROK, including continuation of the extended deterrence offered by nuclear umbrella, consistent with the Mutual Defense Treaty.”¹⁷

As South Korean fear of nuclear capability of the North grows after the second nuclear test, South Korea continues to ask the United States to ensure nuclear guarantee and assurance. The United States reiterated its commitment of extended deterrence to South Korea at a June Summit and the 41th SCM.¹⁸ President Lee Myung-bak stated at a joint press meeting immediately after the last June summit that “President Obama reaffirmed this firm commitment to ensuring the security of South Korea through extended deterrence, which includes the nuclear umbrella, and this has given the South Korean people a greater sense of security.”¹⁹ Furthermore, at SPI (Security Policy Initiative) meeting, both sides agreed to have discussion on how to enhance extended deterrent.

Secondly, South Korea tries to construct competitive ballistic missile defense capability. The Ministry of National Defense revised National Defense Reform 2020, which was completed by the former government. The newly revised one would meet an increasing strategic requirement to effectively cope with North Korean missile threat. Seoul seems to put a priority to allocate military budget to improve capacity of monitoring, tracing and intercepting cruise and ballistic missiles from Pyongyang.

A Korean-version missile defense system what we called is under construction, comprising a missile defense command and control structure of the AMD (Air and Missile Defense)-Cell, the early warning radars and AWACs (Airborne Warning and Control System), and anti-ballistic missiles such as PAC-2, SM-6. The Korean missile defense system reflected South Korean security conditions and budget restraints. South Korea doesn't need to have medium and high altitude interceptors unlike Japan and the U.S. Because North Korean missiles deployed along the frontline can strike Seoul in a short time of 2-3 minutes. Furthermore, South Korea cannot afford cutting-edge interceptors and early warning radar system. The AMS-Cell is a missile defense command and control center which will play a pivotal role in detecting and attacking missiles from North

¹⁷ The 38th Security Consultative Meeting Joint Communiqué.

¹⁸ Defense Secretary Gates articulated in Seoul: “the United States is committed to providing extended deterrence using the full range of American military might—from the nuclear umbrella to conventional strike and missile defense capabilities. To be sure, the United States will maintain an enduring and capable military presence on the Korean peninsula.” For more details, see Robert M. Gates, “U.S.-ROK Military,” A speech delivered in Seoul, Korea, October 21, 2009, available at www.defenselink.mil/utility/printitem.aspx?print

¹⁹ See, “Joint Remarks by President Obama and President Lee Myung-bak, June 2009,” available at www.cfr.org

Korea. Prompt detection and precision attack will determine performance of a Korean style missile defense.

On a multilateral format, South Korea can utilize UN, the PSI (Proliferation Security Initiative), and the six-party talk. For instance, UN adopted the resolutions of 1718 and 1874 to impose sanctions on North Korea's nuclear tests. South Korea decided to join the PSI as not an observer but a regular member. This decision might contribute to international counter-proliferation efforts. Still, there is no doubt among membership countries that the Six-party talk is the only and efficient multilateral mechanism to promote dismantlement of North Korean nuclear program. South Korea faces a policy dilemma between condemning bad behavior of and resuming dialogue to North Korea. In dealing with North Korea, Seoul will combine hard line with soft line policies under the multilateral framework. All in all, South Korea has to utilize diverse measures under the multilateral, bilateral, and unilateral frameworks for the exit from North Korean nuclear and missile quagmires.

Concluding Remarks

Before the nuclear tests, South Korea had been preoccupied with threat from conventional forces. The US nuclear guarantees helped deter North Korean conventional attack and prevent South Korea's nuclear development as well. After the nuclear tests, South Korea has been exposed to real nuclear threat from the North. The U.S. extended deterrent commitment to South Korea grows significant.

Despite growing importance of extended deterrence, Seoul seems to face challenges which could entail demise of extended deterrent. First, President Obama proposed a world without nuclear weapons.²⁰ His new nuclear policy is characterized by nuclear arms control and disarmament, non-proliferation, and nuclear cooperation and security.²¹ In this vein, it is unavoidable for the United States to be involved in nuclear arms reduction. This could diminish extended deterrent.

Second, North Korea enhances nuclear and missile capabilities without indicating its real intention. Iran is estimated to develop nuclear weapons with uranium enrichment program. It seems problematic that rogue states continue to be involved in nuclear activities during the negotiation talks are stalled. If they extend range of delivery system, they could pose serious threat to homeland of the United States. Now nuclear threats from rogue states contribute to making extended deterrent diffused.

Third, the United States keeps an eye on South Korea's nuclear activities, strictly imposing regulations and pressures on the ally for non-proliferation. It is pointed out that the Washington's pressures on Seoul seem to be too harsh in comparison to Japan. Seoul has respected the principle of non-proliferation, maintaining nuclear transparency. The United States is still very negative to uranium enrichment and separation of the spent fuel ahead of negotiation on nuclear energy between the two allies. Lastly, the ROK-US alliance is under structural transformation identified by

²⁰ See, The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, "Remarks by President Barack Obama," April 5, 2009, available at www.whitehouse.gov

²¹ Arms Control, Association, "Transcript: Arms Control Association Annual Meeting-Speaker Luncheon with Gary Samore," available at www.armscontrol.org/print/3671

wartime operation control transfer from the United States to South Korea. This rearrangement of alliance could deteriorate extended deterrent commitment too.

Under these unfavorable conditions, the two allies should reinforce extended deterrent so that they can confront emerging nuclear challenges on the Korean peninsula and in the region and globe effectively. The strong alliance bolstered by the Mutual Defense Treaty and presence of 28,500 troops in South Korea is a starting point to reinforce extended deterrent.

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Reflections on Extended Deterrence in the Middle East

Ariel E. Levite¹

Preface

Discussion of Extended Deterrence (ED) in the Middle East must inevitably begin with an effort to define both ED and the Middle East. In neither case can one safely draw on any consensual existing definition. So let me settle for now on rather simple definitions of both constructs, leaving room for follow up discussion on further elaboration and refinement of either or both definitions and discussion of the implications of such redefinitions on the overall study. For purposes of this paper the Middle East refers to the swath of land stretching from North African to the Persian Gulf, whereas connotes an application of a deterrence posture on behalf of a friend or ally, as well as other salient interests in the region.

History in a Nutshell

On the whole, ED has been extensively practiced in the Middle East, rather frequently so since WWII. While it has mainly been practiced by the US on behalf of its allies in the region, the Soviet Union, and to a lesser extent France and the UK have also similarly engaged in ED in the Middle East. These have usually done so by themselves, but occasionally also as part of an ad hoc coalition. But ED has also been occasionally applied by some Middle East parties from Egypt and Iraq to Israel and Iran in support of both state (e.g. Egypt for the Gulf states, Israel for Jordan) and non state (such as the Kurds in Iraq, the Maronite Christians in Lebanon, and Hizballah in Lebanon) allies in the region, and occasionally even beyond it. Moreover, most parties in the Middle East have at some point or another been on the receiving end of ED.

Remarkably, since the 1950s the overwhelming majority of ED relationships have not evolved in the context of a formal treaty relationship (other than the NATO-Turkey one), and the early and ill fated example of the Baghdad Pact (CENTO) has hardly been repeated since. Some of these have occurred as an extension of a broad cooperative framework (such as the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation the Soviet Union has had with the likes of Egypt and Syria) even outside the context of any other formal alliance structure, either as an ad-hoc arrangement or even a continuous one (e.g. between the US and Israel). Interestingly enough, some of the peace keeping arrangements in the region did have either an implicit or even (less commonly) more explicit ED flavor. This held especially true when these arrangements injected the US as a de facto political and occasionally even military guarantor of a peace, armistice, cease fire or disengagement accord or arrangement between regional parties.

¹ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. I am indebted to Bruno Tertrais for his invaluable suggestions and support. I am also grateful to comments received from George Perkovich, Paul Schulte, and several of the FRS workshop participants. Special thanks are due to Kimberly Misher for her outstanding research in support for this paper.

Interestingly enough and probably related to the earlier point, some of the ED arrangements in the Middle East may not have been originally conceived as such, and certainly have not originally been publicly portrayed as ED arrangements by the recipient and certainly not by the provider. In certain cases (such as those that commonly pertained in the contexts of arms transfers) this may have been done intentionally, driven by the interest of one and at times both sides to maintain as vague or ambiguous the nature of the ED obligations incurred in order to avoid some of the pitfalls typically associated with such arrangements.

For the provider the incentives to stop short of formalizing the arrangement it commits to as ED often included sparring itself the need to defend or secure formal backing domestically for entering into such obligations, to refrain from (excessive?) emboldening of the protégé, to avoid the creation of credibility trap for itself, and to minimize potential escalation that might be associated with entering into overt such arrangements. Whereas the recipient may have also deliberately sought such ambiguity in order to leave itself enough elbow room for independent maneuver, as well as to spare itself the need to defend against domestic criticism that may arise for entering into such arrangements with a foreign party. But in other cases the ambiguity may have been a true reflection of the original situation in which they evolved, and their development over time into ED arrangements may have occurred due to the emergence of strong interest in such transformation by at least one of the parties to them, and/or the emergence of circumstances which required that they be clarified or solidified.

Lastly, while ED has largely been practiced in the Middle East on behalf of and in collaboration with one or more regional ally, it has occasionally also taken the form of extra regional deterrence of encroachment on other interests in the region or adjacent to it, mostly directed at either prevention of disruption of the freedom of navigation in critical waterways by other warlike actions, piracy, or arms and WMD technology shipments.

Common Forms of Extended Deterrence in the Middle East

It has already been noted that ED in the Middle East, unlike other regions, has usually occurred outside the context of a formal treaty relationship. It has thus been commonly anchored in bilateral (and more rarely multilateral) public (and/or at times discreet) understandings, but has often taken the form of declaratory statements, contingency planning (some of it joint), exercises, crisis resupply, permanent and occasional stationing of forces (most recently evidenced by the establishment of a French military based in Abu Dhabi), putting forces on alert, redeployment, deployment of fighting units in crisis (e.g. Patriot and later also Aegis missile defense unit in and off Israel, naval forces), direct interjection (reflagging of Kuwaiti tankers, “Desert Storm”). These have all had an overwhelmingly conventional character.

The Nuclear Dimension

It is rather doubtful whether ED by nuclear powers to their Middle East allies has ever reflected a serious willingness on their part to use nuclear weapons merely in defense of those allies, regardless of the threats the latter faced. It is also doubtful whether use of nuclear weapons had ever been seriously contemplated in the Middle East for any global ancillary benefits associated with demonstrating resolve to counter certain forms of aggression. Furthermore, the nuclear dimension has always been largely implicit,

and more recently also further qualified in the context of Middle Eastern ED relationships. Nevertheless, it does seem that the nuclear dimension may have played a more pronounced role in Middle East ED than the aforementioned observations may otherwise suggest.

One clear context in which nuclear weapons have played a role is in countering Soviet actions on behalf of its allies. The US has explicitly practiced nuclear signaling toward the end of the October 1973 War to deter certain Soviet actions on behalf of its failing Middle Eastern allies. Other contexts in which nuclear weapons are widely assumed to have played an important role is in discouraging proliferation and especially deterring WMD use, against American and allied forces, not by explicitly committing to a US (and in at least one case--the Iraq War of 1991-- potentially also a UK one) but in refusing to rule it out, by pledging to undertake a deliberately undefined "overwhelming" or "absolutely devastating" response.

Perhaps most intriguing is the potential utility of nuclear weapons in the Middle East in another context. Here I refer to the possibility that by refusing to rule out a nuclear response, or even nuclear first use, on behalf of its allies or vital interests in the region, (a position that France has also come to adopt in the mid 1990s) the US may have been able to reassure its allies and deter their and its foes while still sparring itself the need to engage in a very elaborate conventional pre-deployment, or force projection and perhaps even joint contingency planning. The mere nuclear shadow and the escalation dominance contained therein may have sufficed to make the prospects of confrontation with the US uniquely unpalatable and consequently also make the US deterrence ED reassuring enough to its local allies. Under the same circumstances a conventional substitute may have been less compelling in the absence of both proven and available capabilities to back it up.

Underlying Motivations for Extending Deterrence to (in) the Middle East

A quick survey of motivations that have commonly driven parties to provide ED to and in the Middle East reveals that these are hardly unique to this region, even if the specific combination of incentives that has applied in the concrete Middle Eastern cases may have been rather unique. The most important underlying motivations appear to have been one or more of the following:

- Guaranteeing oil supply
- Safeguarding freedom of navigation in key supply and transit routes
- Lubricating arms sales
- Diminishing incentives for WMD (especially nuclear) proliferation or use
- Preventing the loss of symbolic or strategic assets for fear of a domino effect and spillover beyond the region
- Preserving one's reputation and zone(s) of influence (especially pronounced during the Cold War)
- Cultural affinity to the protégé

- Pressure of domestic lobby favoring the protégé(s).

Clearly many if not all of these factors (with the exception of oil as such) have motivated extending deterrence to allies in Europe and Asia. Similarly, there seem to have been few if any original motivations for Middle East parties to seek or accept ED relationships. What is perhaps unique to the region is that these Middle East arrangements have occasionally applied also to non state parties and not just to nation states. Consequently, many of the dilemmas and dynamics associated with the ED relationships that have pertained in other regions, have also applied to and in the Middle East. For the provider of the ED these have typically included concerns for free riding or emboldening of protégé(s) as well as some "tar baby" or creeping entrapment characteristics. Still the gravity of some of these consideration might have been somewhat ameliorated by the less formal nature of many of those ED obligations in the Middle East.

US Middle East ED Track Record

The US has for decades been a central ED player the Middle East and certainly is the leading one at present. It may thus prove useful to reflect in brief on its ED track record in this region. It would seem that the overall experience with US ED in the region is rather mixed in terms of its reliability, namely the predictability that the US would honor its obligations once push came to shove. It has been far more successful in terms of efficacy by which I mean its ability to accomplish the desired reassurance and deterrence impact once its had actually extended its deterrence posture over a Middle East ally.

There are many cases in which the US has proven less than forthcoming in honoring what were believed to be solid ED obligations once these were put to a test, especially in the Arab-Israeli and non proliferation context. Its mixed track record in this regard may well be directly correlated with the juxtaposition of the informality of the US ED relationships with parties in the region, the high incidence of conflict in the region, and the prospects for escalation of conflicts into actual conventional armed confrontations. It seems to have been further aggravated by the burdens on the US associated with its other global commitments and priorities and the complex mosaic of US Middle East relationships. The latter refers to the multiple cross cutting regional conflicts in the Middle East that have not only complicated life for the US in undertaking and carrying through ED commitments to the region, but also made it more difficult for its intended recipients to accept them. This has also been manifest in the ambivalence of some regional parties toward hosting US forces (or trip wire) on their territories, as well as in the US assessment (especially in recent years) of the risks these forces may be exposed to when they deploy in the region. None of these concerns is unique to the Middle East, and they have been very much evident with varying intensity in Western Europe and Asia. Nevertheless, their salience in the Middle East seems to have been greater than that evident in either Europe or Asia.

The net effect of the informality of the US ED obligations to the region and its mixed track record in carrying them through has been to trigger acute anxiety among its regional allies whether the US will actually stand by them when push came to shove. This anxiety has been further heightened by concern over the resilience of the US ED obligations over time given the tendency of the US to reexamine its overseas

commitments once administrations change. The unrivalled US superpower status coupled with intermittent interventions in support of its ED posture have generally sufficed to prove sufficiently appealing to make and retain the US as a coveted ED partner in the region. They have also generally accorded the US ED posture with the presumption of credibility once extended. But the lingering uncertainty over the reliability of US ED has, nevertheless, propelled several regional parties to hedge their bets and pursue other and complimentary measures for looking after their security. These have typically taken the form of acquisition of conventional forces as well as WMD capabilities and their delivery means, all the way up to political hedging versus adversaries, and pursuit of reinforcing ED relationships with other states to complement the US ones. The latter has been especially evident since the 1991 Gulf War among the US Gulf State allies.

Looking Ahead

Some of the regional dynamics that has thus far driven Middle Eastern states to seek ED and other parties to provide them will probably remain unchanged for some time to come. But further Iranian progress toward nuclearization is bound to be a defining moment for everybody in the region and beyond, propelling the requirements for ED by regional parties to an all new level as well as heightening the risks associated with denying them. This seems to hold especially true in light of Iran's desire to legitimize its nuclear pursuits as serving the broader cause of Moslems in the region (not dissimilar to Saddam's claim with regard to his chemical weapons arsenal) and beyond it (Iran maintains that its role extends to Central Asia and the Caucuses as much as the Persian Gulf and the Middle East). These all seem like a sure recipe for much greater friction and instability in region the long run.

Yet the anxieties related to Iran's posture are already building up rather rapidly even when Iran is still a certain distance from acquiring a nuclear weapon capability. What drives it are Iran's pronounced hegemonic claims in the region, its professed hostility toward (and repeated calls for the destruction of) Israel and outright contempt toward its Arab neighbors, its active subversion of Sunni regimes and support for Shia's factions, as well as its own engagement in ED on behalf of its allies and surrogates.

But scenarios in which ED might play a role in the Middle East in the future are not confined to the nuclear context. Present Middle East dynamics, and the trends one sees ahead suggest a high probability that other threats to regional stability and the security of the Western allies in the region will ensue. These range from intimidation, terror, and subversion all the way up to cyber attacks, border skirmishes, stand off conventional attack(s), and cross border conventional attacks all of the above by state and non state actors alike.

It seems a safe bet that that the pull of the Middle East to extra regional players will not go away in coming decades, nor will the desire of regional parties to enhance their security through ED relationships with parties in the region and certainly beyond it. Assuming that the regional allies can not or will not prove sufficient (or coveted) providers of ED guarantees, we may be seeing in the future not only the US but also other powers, from the traditional ones (France, the UK and Russia) all the way to Pakistan, China and India, and Turkey playing some role in ED in the Middle East, be it by themselves or in some coalitions. Especially interesting opportunities for the formal alliances and collective security arrangements might arise if there was some progress

toward peaceful settlement of one or more of the Middle East conflicts, first and foremost obviously the Arab-Israeli one.

The Nuclear Versus the Conventional Dimension of ED

Evolution of the Iranian nuclear threat would certainly put a premium on offsetting nuclear deterrence and ED arrangements in the Middle East. But the relevance of nuclear weapons to the Middle East security and stability equation far exceeds the narrow nuclear context. It very much comes to the fore in the context of the severely handicapped US ability to shape events in the region due in part to a growing perception of the US overstretch, weakness, and limited resolve. The formal US commitment to proceed toward nuclear disarmament could further diminish US clout should it become very pronounced and concrete, especially in the absence of an offsetting enhancement of its conventional and force projection capabilities. And its missile defense umbrella much on offer to its allies the region (as well as to those in Eastern Europe and Asia) seem inherently limited for now in its capacity to act as a substitute instrument of ED, especially when lacking a continuous footprint in the region.

One should not read into the above observation any ideological or even pragmatic opposition toward nuclear disarmament, especially if accompanied with a correspondingly hopeful progress in the domain of non proliferation. The reverse holds true. The sole issue raised here is that any diminished role for nuclear weapons must take into consideration and strive to offset the security deficit that is likely to emerge in that context. And nowhere will this prove more visible and challenging than in the Middle East. This is not because of the warfighting potential inherent in nuclear weapons. Paradoxically quite the opposite seems to hold true.

In the Middle East, but not only there, the nuclear shadow and stature has in many cases obviated the need to engage in elaborate calculations of conventional sufficiency while still overcoming the anxieties associated with assuming risk especially in the domain of ED. This did not require that nuclear weapons be ruled in these scenarios, but it did seem to necessitate that their use not be ruled out. Even an open ended amorphous ED has thus far proven sufficiently compelling and reassuring, especially when its credibility has been enhanced by formal commitments, declaratory obligations, and forward presence footprint or trip wire.

The outright substitution of an open ended ED by a purely conventional alternative not only enhances the prospects of an arms race but runs against a broad perception that conventional wars are more likely, messier and ever more politically controversial, which it turn inevitably affects the willingness to extend new ED obligations to the region which raises the very real specter of such entanglements in the first place. The appetite for the latter seems in any event to be rapidly dissipating in the West, even outside the context of ED. The challenge these present for transition toward a conventional ED guarantee are thus formidable indeed.

Extended Deterrence, Security Guarantees and Nuclear Weapons: US Strategic and Policy Conundrums in the Gulf

James A. Russell¹

In July 2009, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton told reporters during a visit to Bangkok: “We want Iran to calculate what I think is a fair assessment that if the United States extends a defense umbrella over the region, if we do even more to support the military capacity of those in the Gulf, it's unlikely that Iran will be any stronger or safer because they won't be able to intimidate and dominate as they apparently believe they can once they have a nuclear weapon.”

Some seized upon these comments as an indication that the United States would be prepared to explicitly commit its strategic nuclear deterrent to the defense of the region. The strategic nuclear deterrent would fit together in a seamless web of conventional and nuclear weapons as part of a US-backed system of regional security to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran from creating a coercive political framework to intimidate its smaller gulf neighbors. Not all America's regional allies found her comments useful. Israeli officials immediately criticized Secretary Clinton's statement as evidence that the United States would accept the possibility of a nuclear-armed Iran. Reaction in Arab capitals was more muted, although Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak stated that Egypt would not participate in such an umbrella and would not allow foreign troops on its soil.²

Secretary Clinton's formulation contains a number of interesting elements and usefully raises many questions about US regional strategy and policy. A core issue is simply this: what roles do the estimated 2,200 operational nuclear warheads that constitute the nation's strategic nuclear deterrent play in America's security strategy in the Gulf?

Clinton's remarks come as the Obama Administration is drafting the congressionally-mandated 2009-2010 *Nuclear Posture Review*. Due out in February 2010, the report is expected to describe the Administration's plans for the size and configuration of the nuclear arsenal and the role of these weapons in national security strategy. President Obama reportedly ordered drafters of the report at the Pentagon to go back to the drawing board to embrace further deep cuts in the nuclear arsenal consistent with his Administration's commitment to an aggressive disarmament agenda.³

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² Jumana al Tamimi, “Clinton's Statement on Iran Receives Cool Reaction,” *Gulf News*, July 22, 2009; Mubarak remarks reported by Egypt News “Mubarak: Israel Normalisation Second Priority,” August 17, 2009, accessed online at <http://news.egypt.com/en/200908176982/news/middle-east/mubarak-israel-normalisation-second-priority.html>

³ See Marc Ambinder, “On Nukes, Obama Plans a Hands-On Approach,” *The Atlantic*, October 23, 2009; Also see Ambinder, “More Nukes?” *The Atlantic*, September 3, 2009.

The paper will address the challenges facing policy-makers in the Gulf region as they seek to square the Obama Administration's policy goals of nuclear disarmament with a variety of regional security commitments that, as indicated by Secretary Clinton, may implicitly draw upon the nuclear arsenal. This paper will explore the issues that the NPR drafters *should* be considering as they think through the role of the strategic arsenal as tool to secure the nation's strategic objectives in the volatile Gulf and Middle East regions.

Past as Prologue?

How useful is the Cold War past in suggesting lessons for today's strategic planners in thinking through the role of nuclear weapons in regional strategy? The strategic deterrent has made episodic appearances as a tool of American foreign policy in the Middle East and the Gulf. Throughout most of the Cold War, nuclear weapons were seen as the ultimate guarantor of the broader military mission to "defend the region" against encroachment from outside powers like the Soviet Union. Planning for the use of nuclear weapons in the Middle East began in earnest in the early 1950s as military strategists sought ways to redress Soviet conventional military superiority around the world.

In June 1950, the National Security Council issued a report (NSC 26/3) titled *Demolition and Abandonment of Oil Facilities and Fields in the Middle East*. The report addressed the possibility of plugging Saudi oil wells "as a means of conservation and denial during enemy occupation." Nuclear weapons were looked at as a possible tool to deny the Soviets access to the oil fields. The report found, "Denial of wells by radiological means can be accomplished to prevent an enemy from utilizing the oil, but it could not prevent him from forcing 'expendable' Arabs to enter the contaminated areas to open well heads and deplete the reservoirs. Therefore, aside from other ill effects on the Arab population, it is not considered that radiological means are practicable as a conservation measure."⁴ Such was the initial (and unsuccessful) attempt to find a useful role for nuclear weapons in regional strategy.

In October 1973, US forces – including the Strategic Air Command – were placed on heightened alert in response to possible Soviet military intervention to keep the Israelis from destroying the surrounded Egyptian Third Army. During the crisis, Henry Kissinger sent Soviet leader Brezhnev a message stating that the introduction of Soviet troops into the region would represent a violation of the recently signed Agreement Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Prevention of Nuclear War. The implication of Kissinger's message was obvious: introduction of Soviet troops could have led to a nuclear face-off between the Cold War antagonists.

In January 1980, following the takeover of the American embassy in Iran and in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, President Carter stated, "An attempt by an outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force." At the time, Carter's

⁴ Declassified Top Secret Memorandum for the National Security Council, June 29, 1950, NSC 26/3, Subject: Demolition and Abandonment of Oil Facilities and Fields in the Middle East.

statement was widely considered to encompass the use of nuclear weapons in response to a potential Soviet advance onto the Gulf. In February 1980, details of a Pentagon report emerged indicating that the United States might have to use tactical nuclear weapons in response to a Soviet move towards the Gulf.⁵ The Pentagon study, *Capabilities in the Persian Gulf*, helped form the basis for recommendations to create the Rapid Joint Deployment Task Force, which later became the US Central Command.

In the spring of 1996, the application of the strategic deterrent in the region occurred in the context of counterproliferation policy. The United States detected construction of an underground site at Tarhuna in Libya that was widely believed to be related to Libya's production of chemical-warfare agents. Secretary of Defense William Perry stated that the United States would consider a wide range of options to ensure that Tarhuna did not become operational. In discussing the Libyan site, Perry stated that any country attacking the United States with chemical weapons would "have to fear the consequences of a response from any weapon in our inventory." He further elaborated that "we could make a devastating response without the use of nuclear weapons, but we would not forswear that possibility."⁶

Potential use of nuclear weapons emerged in wars with Iraq in 1991 and again in 2003. Statements made by a variety of senior government officials in both crises reflected a belief by decision makers that the nuclear arsenal had a role in deterring the potential use of chemical or biological weapons against US forces.

In the 2002 *Nuclear Posture Review*, the Bush Administration assigned a variety of roles to nuclear weapons in the region.⁷ The 2003 NPR noted that nuclear weapons could both reassure allies of the US commitment to their security and could dissuade potential adversaries from competing against American pre-eminence. The document strongly implied that the strategic deterrent was committed to the defense of Israel. It specifically suggested that nuclear weapons might be needed to target hardened and deeply buried targets in the region. The 2009-2010 NPR will have to address some of these same issues.

Conceptual and Strategic Clarity?

The NPR drafters face a tall order insofar as their deliberations involve the application of the strategic deterrent in the Gulf. Despite the fact that the region is home to over 150,000 troops housed in an extensive and widely dispersed basing infrastructure, there has been little strategic thinking about US regional strategy and policy since the decision to defend the Arabian Peninsula and evict Saddam Hussein from Kuwait in 1990. After the war, the United States essentially settled upon a comfortable "holding action" administered by its Navy and Air Force under the rubric of enforcing United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions – an approach that continued the strategic drift in US strategy and policy. To the extent that the approach of the 1990s era of "dual

⁵ Richard Burt, "Study Says a Soviet Move in Iran Might Require U.S. Atom Arms," *The New York Times*, February 2, 1980, p. 1.

⁶ Perry's statements as cited in the Arms Control Association Fact Sheets, "U.S. Nuclear Policy: 'Negative Security Assurances,'" at <http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/negsec.asp>

⁷ For treatment of the NPR and the region in the Bush Administration, see James A. Russell, "Nuclear Strategy and the Modern Middle East," *Middle East Policy* 11, No. 3 (Fall 2005), 64-78.

containment' can be considered a strategy – it's clear that the approach failed on at least one count: Iranian influence is perceived to be on the rise, courtesy of the removal of its major regional adversary, Saddam Hussein, courtesy of the United States military.

The 2003 invasion of Iraq initially justified as a preventative war based on counter-proliferation objectives came not a result of strategic clarity but from the strategic drift and obtuseness of the 1990s that then became coupled with the ill-defined concept of the “war on terror.” While useful for domestic political purposes the term served no strategic use and created conceptual confusion from which US security strategy still suffers. Symptomatic of the strategic fog is the disinterest in exploring the “real” reasons for the Iraq invasion and determining whether the invasion today could be at all related to national strategic objectives.

Today, American regional strategy seems shaped more by the inexorable forces of organizational and bureaucratic momentum than by enunciated strategic requirements by the national command authority. The US forward deployed military has built out a vast physical basing infrastructure in Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. For example, the 5th Fleet Headquarters in Manama, Bahrain, occupies 62 acres that is home to 54 tenant commands. In the last five years, the Air Force has poured over \$60 million in military construction into Al Dhafra Air Base in the United Arab Emirates that is now home to 1000-odd military personnel that work at the base's Information, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Launch and Recovery Facility and Maintenance Complex. Another \$75 million in military construction funding has been used to construct an “aerial port” at Ali Al Salem Air Base in Kuwait. Hundreds of millions in military construction projects has created many large bases in Iraq. These are but a few examples of the way in which US Gulf strategy is being “built” by Army Corps of Engineers projects instead of policy pronouncements from civilian and military leaders.

Since President Carter's pronouncement, no subsequent administration has articulated an enduring formulation of American strategic interests in the region and the role that force, including nuclear weapons, would play in securing those objectives.⁸ Directly relating nuclear weapons – whatever their number -- to strategic objectives will thus require a clear enunciation of those strategic objectives – objectives that remain unclear in the aftermath of the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq.

Does the United States still seek to defend the region? If so, from whom? Does it see its military presence as a tool to preserve regional stability and manage the regional balance of power? If so, what should a stable balance look like and what role should its conventional and nuclear forces play in maintaining that balance? Does it see the forward deployed force as an instrument to help create democracy and civil societies? What is the role of conventional and nuclear forces as an instrument of nonproliferation policy? Is the forward deployed presence intended primarily to preserve stable pricing in world energy markets? All these unanswered questions only deepen the intellectual fog surrounding American strategic objectives in the Gulf.⁹

⁸ Discussed in some detail in Robert H. Johnson, “The Persian Gulf in U.S. Strategy: A Skeptical View,” *International Security* 14, No. 1 (Summer, 1989), 122-160.

⁹ Andrew Bacevich argues that access to oil remains the overriding US strategic imperative in “The Real World War IV,” *The Wilson Quarterly* 29, No. 1 (Spring 2005), 36-61.

Extended Deterrence and Security Assurances in the Gulf

Secretary Clinton's pronouncement interestingly addresses some of these issues – despite the lack of an overarching strategic and policy framework. It in some senses her remarks provide a useful starting point for strategic planners working on the NPR to consider the role that nuclear weapons could and even should take as a tool in furthering American regional interests. In the Gulf, the United States maintains a complex and intersecting web of conventional and nuclear guarantees meant to reassure allies of American commitment to their security and to deter adversaries from threatening those allies.¹⁰ Not all the recipients of these guarantees are on friendly terms. For example, the United States maintains close security relationships with regional antagonists in the Arab-Israeli dispute. Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, which operate under US protection, have no diplomatic relations with Israel, which is also the recipient of American security guarantees.

In Israel's case, it has been the object of repeated and specific assurances of American commitment up to and including nuclear weapons if necessary. In extending a nuclear umbrella over Israel,¹¹ senior American officials have repeatedly made veiled references of their commitment to use all means at their disposal to defend Israel up to and including nuclear weapons. Vice President Dick Cheney offered the following representative formulation of the American commitment to Israeli security in 2008 when he stated: “America's commitment to Israel's security is enduring and unshakable ... as is our commitment to Israel's right to defend itself always against terrorism, rocket attacks and other threats from forces dedicated to Israel's destruction.”¹² Then-President Bush specifically stated in February 2006 that the United States would defend Israel militarily in the event of an attack by Iran.¹³ In October 2007, President Bush went so far as to state that a nuclear-armed Iran might lead to World War III.¹⁴ In remarks that received no disavowals from government sources, then-Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton stated in April 2008 that the United States would “obliterate” Iran if it ever attacked Israel with nuclear weapons.¹⁵

Clinton's remarks in Bangkok reflect an implicit belief that this intersecting web of deterrent objectives and security commitments serve the dual purpose of (1) warning an adversary against any expectations that acquisition of nuclear weapons will lead to

¹⁰ The problematic and historical context of these arrangements is interestingly discussed in Shahram Chubin, “US Security Interests in the Persian Gulf in the 1980s,” *Daedalus* 109, No. 4 (Fall, 1980), 31-65.

¹¹ Strongly implied in the *Nuclear Posture Review*, January 8, 2002, Department of Defense, Washington, DC, 16; posted on the *Global Security.org* website, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/policy/dod/npr.html>

¹² “Cheney Affirms US Commitment to Israeli Security,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 28, 2008, <http://articles.latimes.com/2008/mar/23/world/fg-cheney23>

¹³ Glenn Kessler, “Bush Says US Would Defend Israel if Necessary,” *Washington Post*, February 2, A18, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/02/01/AR2006020102134.html>

¹⁴ Bush made his comments at a press conference on October 17, 2007 in which he said: “We got a leader in Iran who has announced that he wants to destroy Israel. So I've told people that if you're interested in avoiding World War III, it seems like you ought to be interested in preventing them from [having] the knowledge necessary to make a nuclear weapon.” Text posted on the *MSNBC* website, <http://firstread.msnbc.msn.com/archive/2007/10/18/417347.aspx>

¹⁵ As quoted in “Clinton Warns Iran of US Nuclear Response,” *MSNBC*, April 21, 2008, <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/24246275>

regional political dominance; and (2) reassuring regional allies that acquisition of nuclear weapons by the adversary will not subject them to coercive influence from the adversary as a result of American political and military commitment to their security. In this particular case, the statement is intended to signal Iran that no tangible benefit will obtain from nuclear weapons while simultaneously seeking to deter its allies from taking corresponding steps should Iran achieve nuclear weapons status. These assurances are thus regarded as a vital non-proliferation tool as the United States seeks to prevent a regional arms race in response to Iran's apparent pursuit of a nuclear capability.

Her formulation reflects a firm historic grounding in the time-honored Cold War concepts of extended deterrence and security assurances, both of which have served as vitally important tools of American statecraft since the dawn of the nuclear age.¹⁶ Extended deterrence is the threat to use force, including nuclear weapons, against an adversary that threatens an ally. As noted by political scientist Paul Huth: "The objective of extended deterrence is to protect other countries and territories from attack, as opposed to preventing a direct attack on one's own national territory."¹⁷ Security assurances are the means through which the actor drawing upon extended deterrence conveys the commitment to an ally's security. Each of these concepts is critically contingent on the credibility of the actor extending the deterrent umbrella and the security guarantees, which may or may not involve the specific commitment of nuclear weapons.¹⁸ To be effective, the actor receiving these assurances and the antagonist threatening action must be convinced that the security provider is prepared to follow through on its conveyed commitments.¹⁹

The linked concepts of extended deterrence and security guarantees are nothing new to American security strategy.²⁰ During the Cold War, the United States' commitment to defend Europe became operationalized through a series of extended deterrent commitments that included the basing of nuclear weapons in Europe that could have been used in the event of a Soviet attack. In Europe, the United States and its NATO allies eventually constructed a "seamless" web of conventional and nuclear capabilities to deter and, if necessary, defeat a Soviet invasion.²¹

¹⁶ An opposite view is taken by Ted Galen Carpenter, "Closing the Nuclear Umbrella," *Foreign Affairs* 73, No. 3 (Mar.-April 1994), 8-13.

¹⁷ Paul Huth, "Extended Deterrence and the Outbreak of War," *American Political Science Review* 82, No. 2 (June 1988) 424. Also see Huth, *Extended Deterrence and the Prevention of War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); Timothy W. Crawford, "The Endurance of Extended Deterrence: Continuity, Change, and Complexity in Theory and Policy," in T.V. Paul, Patrick M. Morgan, and James J. Wirtz, *Complex Deterrence: Strategy in the Global Age* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 2009).

¹⁸ Addressed by Vesna Danalovic, "The Sources of Threat Credibility in Extended Deterrence," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45, No. 3 (June 2001), 341-369. Also see Thomas Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960) and Schelling's *Arms and Influence* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966).

¹⁹ The Cold War history of role that extended deterrence played in U.S. strategy in the Middle East is addressed in Janice Gross Stein, "Extended Deterrence in the Middle East: American Strategy Reconsidered," *World Politics* 39, No. 3 (April 1987), 326-352.

²⁰ Alexander George and Richard Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974)

²¹ The evolution of nuclear strategy in the 1970s is summarized by Walter Slocombe, "The Countervailing Strategy," *International Security* 5, No. 4 (Spring, 1981), 18-27.

More recently, United States clearly still believes that the concept has great relevance in Northeast Asia. In response to North Korean nuclear and missile tests during the last several years, senior US officials quickly and routinely fan out to South Korea and Japan to “assure” them of America’s commitment to their security.²² A main target of these efforts is to forestall the possibility that either South Korea or Japan will reconsider decisions not to develop nuclear weapons. Japan in particular has a robust nuclear infrastructure and is now widely considered to be a “latent” nuclear power that could develop a weapon reasonably quickly.

As is the case in Northeast Asia, the United States today routinely acts as if extended deterrence and security assurances together constitute active, ongoing and useful tools in managing its regional security relationships in the Gulf. Secretary Clinton’s recent remarks only represent the latest evidence that this is the case. In May 2006, for example, the Bush Administration embarked on a much ballyhooed “Gulf Security Dialogue” that sought to re-invigorate US security relationships with the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council. The initiative was presented as part of a consultative process to focus attention on building regional self defense capabilities; consulting on regional security issues like the Iran nuclear program and fallout of Iran’s struggle against Sunni extremists; the US invasion of Iraq; counter-proliferation; counter-terrorism and internal security; and critical infrastructure protection.²³ The dialogue came as the Bush Administration proposed billions of dollars in new arms sales to Israel and its Gulf partners that included precision guided munitions such as the Joint Defense Attack Munition and the Advanced Medium Range Air to Air Missile.

The Gulf Security dialogue is but the latest chapter of an active and ongoing practice of reassurance that dates to the early 1990s, and, in the case of Saudi Arabia, to 1945 and the assurances made by President Roosevelt to the Saudi leader, King Abdul Aziz al-Saud. The United States has worked assiduously to operationalize conventionally-oriented extended deterrence commitments and security guarantees in the Gulf. As noted by Kathleen McKiness: “Extended deterrence is not a hands-off strategy. It cannot be created from a distance through a submarine capability in the Persian Gulf or a troop deployment in another country such as Iraq. It is a real, tangible, physical commitment, to be palpably felt both by allies and adversaries.”²⁴ The United States has indeed worked hard at this in the Gulf largely through its ever-efficient military bureaucracies.

In the aftermath of Operation Desert Storm, the United States actively sought and concluded a series of bilateral security agreements with each of the Gulf States that became operationized under something called defense cooperation agreements, or DCAs. These commitments between the United States and the regional signatories contained a number of critical elements: (1) that the United States and the host nation should jointly respond to external threats when each party deemed necessary; (2) permitted access to host nation military facilities by US military personnel; (3) permitted the pre-positioning of US military equipment in the host nation as agreed by

²² For a relatively recent example see, “Obama Reassures Allies,” *AFP*, May 27, 2009.

²³ Background in Christopher M. Blanchard and Richard F. Grimmett, *The Gulf Security Dialogue and Related Arms Sales Proposals*, Congressional Research Service report RL 34322, October 8, 2008.

²⁴ Kathleen J. McKiness, “Extended Deterrence: The US Credibility Gap in the Middle East,” *Washington Quarterly* 28, No. 3 (2005), 180.

the parties; (4) and status of forces provisions which addressed the legal status of deployed US military personnel. The United States today has agreements with all the Gulf States except Saudi Arabia, which is subject to similar bilateral security commitments conveyed in a variety of different forums. Under these agreements, the United States and the host nation annually convene meetings to review regional threats and developments in their security partnerships. One of the principal purposes of these meetings is for both sides to reassure the other side of their continued commitment to the security relationship. In short, this process operationalizes the conveyance of security guarantees in ways that reflect the principles in the DCAs.

Using this Cold War-era template, the United States built an integrated system of regional security in the 1990s that saw it: (1) preposition three brigades worth of military equipment in the Gulf in Qatar, Kuwait and afloat with the Maritime Pre-positioning ships program; (2) build host nation military capabilities through exercises, training and arms sales; and, (3) build out a physical basing infrastructure that continues its expansion today. Each of the Central Command's major service components today have forward headquarters in the region today spread between Arifjan in Kuwait, Al Udiyd Air Base in Qatar and the 5th Fleet Naval Headquarters in Manama. After the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the United States further added to this infrastructure with bases in Iraq and a space at Al Dhafra Air Base in the United Arab Emirates used by the Air Force for ISR missions.

As is the case in Northeast Asia, there is a substantial basing infrastructure with significant numbers of forward deployed US military personnel. The major difference in Northeast Asia is that a hostile actor (North Korea) has already achieved a nuclear capability while in the Gulf, Iran may aspire to achieve North Korea's nuclear status. In Northeast Asia, the nuclear component of US extended deterrence and security guarantees is palpable, whereas in the Gulf it is more implicit, or existential.

Conventional and Nuclear Deterrence

The build out of the US military infrastructure points around the region provide the hosting states with tangible evidence of the credibility of the American military commitment to their security. The military footprint today in the Gulf is no "trip-wire" force, but is engaged in tangible military operations, such as the multi-national maritime security operations conducted in the Gulf and the Arabian Sea by the combined task force command operating out of the 5th Fleet Headquarters in Manama.

Since the British withdrawal from the Gulf in the early 1970s, the United States has repeatedly demonstrated its willingness to deploy its conventional forces to the region in response to regional instability. Starting with Operation Earnest Will in 1988, the United States slowly but inexorably inserted itself into the role played by the British for over a century as protecting the Gulf States from external threats. Following Operation Desert Storm, the United States kept sufficient forces in theater to enforce the United Nations' cease fire resolutions on a recalcitrant Saddam. Last, but not least, it flowed significant forces and absorbed the monetary costs of toppling Saddam and providing a protective conventional force that can be readily called upon by the Iraq regime if needed. Given this history it is difficult to see how any state could doubt the credibility of the United States' commitments to use its conventional forces as an instrument of regional defense.

This history suggests an overwhelming emphasis on the role of conventional force in operationalizing American security guarantees and extended deterrent commitments. In the Gulf – unlike Northeast Asia – the role of nuclear weapons has never been explicitly spelled out and has very much remained in the background. However, while reference to nuclear weapons might remain unstated, the reality is that they *are* explicitly committed to defend American forces whenever the commander-in-chief might deem it necessary. The entire (and substantial) American military regional footprint operates under a quite explicit nuclear umbrella – headlines or no headlines. If a nuclear umbrella is indeed draped over America’s forward deployed Gulf presence, it’s hard not to see how that umbrella is similarly draped over the states that are hosting those forces. The only problem with Secretary Clinton’s recent statements is that she seems unaware of this fact, i.e., the United States already maintains a nuclear umbrella backed by nuclear weapons in the region.

While the United States has pledged not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear signatories of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (known as negative security assurances), it maintains a policy of calculated ambiguity in honoring those commitments if its forces are attacked by chemical or biological weapons.²⁵ President Clinton reinforced this position in *Presidential Decision Memorandum 60* in December 1997, which stated:

The United States reaffirms that it will not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon state-parties to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, except in the case of an invasion or any other attack on the United States, its territories, its armed forces or other troops, its allies, or on a state toward which it has a security commitment carried out, or sustained by such a non-nuclear-weapon state in association or alliance with a nuclear-weapon state.²⁶

As previously noted, the United States last unsheathed this proverbial sword in 1996 with the discovery of a potential chemical weapons plant in Libya. The sword, however, remains at the ready in the Gulf where Iran’s development of chemical weapons, long-range missiles, and its emphasis on terrorism and asymmetric warfare constitute prominent elements of the regional threat environment. If anything Iran’s weakened conventional forces potentially drive Iranian military responses during an armed conflict to those weapons that would lead the United States to consider forswearing its negative security assurances.²⁷ In this scenario, it seems clear that American nuclear weapons are a component in the web of military capabilities designed to discourage Iranian use of its unconventional weapons in war.

Conclusion

Nuclear weapons have historically helped implicitly and explicitly support America’s far flung global commitments in the Gulf and elsewhere. The system of Gulf security

²⁵ Background on negative security assurances in George Bunn and Roland M. Timerbaev, “Security Assurances to Non-Nuclear-Weapons States,” *Nonproliferation Review* (Fall 1993), 11-21.

²⁶ As quoted by Darryl Kimball, “US Negative Security Assurances At a Glance,” *Arms Control Today*, a online at <http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/negsec>, accessed November 3, 2009.

²⁷ As argued in James A. Russell, “Strategic Stability Reconsidered: Prospects for Escalation and Nuclear War in the Middle East,” *Institut Français des Relations Internationales Proliferation Papers* 26 (Spring 2009).

built by the United States reflects a time-honored template of regional defense and security honed in decades of Cold War experience. In the Gulf, the dual tools of extended deterrence and security assurances have proven a cornerstone of a system of regional security efficiently administered by America's military organizations. Nuclear weapons today undeniably form part of this system – explicitly protecting US forces and implicitly protecting regimes hosting those forces.

It remains to be seen how today NPR drafters will address the historic context of these commitments in the Gulf and the role of nuclear weapons in helping maintain a Cold War-era template of regional security. Actively promoting nuclear disarmament on the one hand while also drawing upon nuclear weapons on the other to prevent a regional nuclear arms race in the Gulf is a contradiction that must be addressed by the NPR drafters. They must therefore try and square a series of circles of competing and contradictory requirements in relating nuclear weapons to global and regional strategic priorities.

The Obama Administration's aggressive disarmament agenda is sure to emphasize continued cuts in the strategic arsenal and will almost certainly include an attempt to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. A reduced number of warheads will need to be apportioned to national-level protection and extended deterrent commitments in Northeast Asia and the Gulf region. The possible signing of the CTBT will represent another nail in the coffin of what may become a "wasting asset" of strategic nuclear weapons in the American arsenal.²⁸ That stockpile is slowly withering away as aging weapons deteriorate and the human and material infrastructure around those weapons becomes more difficult and expensive to maintain.²⁹

In short, the United States is slowly but surely disarming itself – a scenario that must be addressed in NPR. This trend will mean that the United States will one day be unable to draw upon any nuclear weapons to back extended guarantee commitments in the Gulf and elsewhere around the world. This inevitability will lead planners down some of the same paths of the 2002 report, which spent proposed using conventional weapons for missions once assigned to nuclear weapons. In the Middle East, the problem of targeting hardened and deeply buried targets will rear its head in 2010 as it did in 2002.

In the Gulf, nuclear planners must determine the role played by nuclear weapons in the region. This in turn means drawing upon a set of clearly articulated regional objectives that have so far not been forthcoming. If policy-makers determine that extended deterrence and security guarantees are to remain as vital tools of strategy and policy (as implied by Secretary Clinton), the NPR will have to sort out the numbers and types of weapons that may be needed to fill these commitments while also satisfying the Obama Administration's goal of nuclear disarmament. Nuclear disarmament and extended deterrent commitments are not compatible, whatever the expanded roles for conventional munitions.

²⁸ Fears initially raised at the dawn of the nuclear era. See Marc Trachtenberg, "A 'Wasting Asset': American Strategy and the Shifting Nuclear Balance, 1949-1954," in Marc Trachtenberg, *History and Strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991). More recently, Andrew Krepinevich interestingly draws upon this metaphor in "The Pentagon's Wasting Assets: The Eroding Foundations of American Power," *Foreign Affairs* 88, No. 4 (July/August 2009) 18-33.

²⁹ Covered by Clark A. Murdock, "The Department of Defense and the Nuclear Mission in the 21st Century," Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, DC, 2008

Last but not least, the United States today faces the prospect of extending deterrence and security assurances in a regional political environment in which the governing elites must pay increasing attention to publics which do not necessarily share their leaders' enthusiasm for American protection.³⁰ This is an issue that cannot be managed by the NPR drafters, but it is nevertheless an uncertainty that may reduce the utility of extended deterrence in the Gulf before the erosion of the nuclear stockpile.

³⁰ As argued by McKiness, *op. cit.*

Extended Deterrence in the Gulf: A Bridge Too Far? Emile Hokayem¹

The idea of extending a US defense or nuclear umbrella to the six Gulf states members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Qatar) has gained steam since 2008 in the context of a prospective nuclear-capable or nuclear-armed Iran. As options beyond preventive actions are examined (and assuming that diplomacy and engagement could fail, in which case contingency planning is understandably necessary), some policy makers and analysts who see a nuclear Iran as having a profoundly transformative impact on Middle East security and geopolitical dynamics consider conventional responses such as containment, conventional deterrence and missile defense as too limited.

This idea has found a major proponent in Hillary Clinton who has articulated, as presidential contender in 2008 and as US secretary of state since 2009, the grand principles that would underly such an umbrella.

April 2008:

“An attack on Israel would trigger massive retaliation from the United States. So would an attack on those countries (Saudi Arabia, UAE and Kuwait) that are willing to go under the security umbrella and forswear their own nuclear ambitions. We've got to deter other countries from feeling they have to acquire nuclear weapons.”²

April 2008:

“If Iran were to launch a nuclear attack on Israel, what would our response be? And I want the Iranians to know that if I am president, we will attack Iran. And I want them to understand that. Because it does mean that they have to look very carefully at their society. Because whatever stage of development they might be in their nuclear weapons program, in the next 10 years during which they might foolishly consider launching an attack on Israel, we would be able to totally obliterate them. That's a terrible thing to say, but those people who run Iran need to understand that. Because that, perhaps, will deter them from doing something that would be reckless, foolish, and tragic.”³

May 2008:

Clinton said she would "provide a deterrent backup" that would extend U.S. nuclear protection beyond Europe and Japan to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other Arab countries, guaranteeing "massive retaliation" if Iran targeted Israel or Arab allies. The Arab countries -- but not Israel -- would have to promise not to obtain nuclear weapons, which Clinton said would prevent a nuclear arms race in the region.⁴

¹ Political Editor, The National.

² <http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1208356969587&pagename=JPArticle%2FShowFull>

³ <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/babylonbeyond/2008/04/iran-considerin.html>

⁴ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/05/03/AR2008050301875.html>

July 2009 as US secretary of state:

“We want Iran to calculate what I think is a fair assessment that, if the United States extends a defense umbrella over the region, if we do even more to support the military capacity of those in the Gulf, it's unlikely that Iran will be any stronger or safer because they won't be able to intimidate and dominate as they apparently believe they can, once they have a nuclear weapon.”⁵

The idea has also found resonance and supporters in mainstream Washington policy circles. The Washington Institute on Near East Policy, an influential think tank, published a report authored and endorsed by senior US figures, some of whom joined the Obama administration in senior positions:

“One issue needing much more thought is how a US nuclear guarantee (or ‘umbrella’) would work and whether it is appropriate in the Middle East. Many in the Gulf seem to think that the region already benefits from a de facto US guarantee; they may welcome its formalization [...] The United States should be ready to offer robust security guarantees and cooperation (..) to address the security concerns that would lead Egypt, Saudi Arabia, or any other regional state to consider such proliferation”⁶.

In Western discussions about the merits of extending a US defense umbrella to the Gulf states, much is made of the US experience in Western Europe with its NATO allies and in East Asia, where the US acts as a formal security provider with a military presence on the ground against the perceived conventional and nuclear threats from the then Soviet Union, China and North Korea, to support the notion that extended deterrence would mitigate the effects of a nuclear Iran, contain its power and provide for regional stability.

Important conceptual and analytical questions arise from these analogies: What lessons from these successful experiences, if any, apply to the Gulf? What specificities of the Gulf region (nature of the threat, role of external actors, distribution of regional power, strategic culture, political considerations etc.) complicate or even undermine such analogies? Is there a genuine demand on the part of the Gulf States for a formalized security guarantee?

In this paper, it is understood a nuclear umbrella would come in the form of an explicit declaratory policy that would commit the US to use its nuclear arsenal in case of a nuclear attack or in case of an attack of existential nature against an ally. In this definition, an assurance along the same lines conveyed and reiterated in private to the Gulf leaderships by the senior most US officials does not qualify as an umbrella because it draws no clear redlines that would influence the strategic posture of other actors, including the country meant to be deterred.

The current US commitment to Gulf security is difficult to understate. The key question is whether formalizing it further would contribute to the objectives listed below, and ultimately facilitate the establishment of a more stable Gulf security environment.

⁵ <http://www.voanews.com/english/archive/2009-07/2009-07-22-voa8.cfm?CFID=318797888&CFTOKEN=74453471&jsessionid=8830f18de35eee37e75d767d82e2eb39703e>

⁶ <http://www.thewashingtoninstitute.org/templateC04.php?CID=308>

Because the US is a nuclear weapons state (in fact, the state with the most advanced and deployed nuclear arsenal), it is often, if implicitly and perhaps abusively, understood that a security umbrella provided by the US would be the same as a nuclear umbrella. This is not necessarily true, as ambiguity is an essential element of deterrence. But the US security commitment to the Gulf is so deep that the next threshold, if ever reached, would be a formal security guarantee.

(Since the US has not had to confront a nuclear-armed regional state so far, the only precedent of relevance is the US liberation of Kuwait, but Iraq at the time was not even a nuclear capable power. Therefore, although the nature of Iraqi aggression was existential from the Kuwaiti viewpoint, the liberation of Kuwait was done through conventional means only, with the US threatening devastating consequences to a potential Iraqi use of WMD against coalition troops).

The main arguments in favor of a formal security umbrella are the following:

- should diplomacy and engagement fail, it could nevertheless persuade Iran not to develop a nuclear weapons capability if the strategic costs of doing so are clearly outlined and communicated;
- it would deny Iran any strategic gain from a potential nuclear capability, establishing deterrence;
- it would enshrine the US commitment to the security of its allies, strengthening assurance;
- it would prevent a nuclear arms race in the Middle East.

Debating Iran's nuclear ambitions and regional strategy

The debate about whether and how a nuclear capability would enhance Iranian power has not settled yet. Views vary from one extreme to the other, from a Middle East completely dominated by Iran that constantly bullies neighbors and sets the regional agenda to an Iran incapable to leverage a nuclear capability and increasingly isolated as a pariah state.

Analysts generally agree that the danger is not that Tehran would use a nuclear capability to flatten another country, even the much-vilified Israel, at least in the medium term. Iran will lack the capacity in terms of fissile material and delivery systems to equip itself with and deploy a large and diversified nuclear arsenal, much less a second strike capability. In any case, even in case of failure of deterrence, the response would be devastating and overwhelm Iranian defensive capabilities.

Rather, the real concern is that a nuclear capability would serve as a shield while Iran uses its asymmetric capabilities (the trifecta of “money, mullahs and militias” as aptly put by journalist Barbara Slavin) as the sword. In other words, Iran would feel emboldened by knowing that it holds a nuclear card and would feel free to press its advantage in the region. When it comes to the Gulf states, the real concern is that an Iranian nuclear capability would severely constrain their security, defense and security policies, forcing upon them a gradual erosion of their traditional strategic alignment with the West and potentially requiring them to espouse the tenets of Iranian foreign policy.

The grand strategies of the Gulf States and Iran are in fundamental contradiction. Iran's grand strategy is to indigenize Gulf security (i.e. obtain the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the region) to maximize its own power and influence, while the grand strategy of the Gulf states consists of internationalizing Gulf security by turning into a global public good. The Gulf States are now using their new economic clout and the associated economic interdependence to give an increasing number of states an interest in their security and survival and thus build layers of protection, from international organizations to privileged allies at the UN Security Council. This new strategy is in profound contrast with the Gulf States' previous complete reliance on external security actors, most prominently the US. This reliance had engendered strategic passivity, turning the Gulf States as bit security and defense players in their own region. This is no longer the case, though Gulf security policies are still very uncoordinated at the GCC-level, which preserves the role of the US as the key defense actor in the region.

The main opposing argument is that given how disruptive and extensive Iran's current behavior and involvement in the region is, a nuclear capability does not matter much.

Finally, there is the question of whether a nuclear Iran would extend a security umbrella to its allies and proxies in the region, including Syria, Hamas and Hezbollah. This is doubtful as such a move would undermine the deniability and flexibility of these actors, two characteristics that have proven most useful as they advance their own local agendas as well as Iranian strategic interests.

Understanding the balance of power in the Gulf

There are three major state powers in the Gulf, Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia, and five smaller states, the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and Bahrain. Traditionally, the large northern states (Iraq and Iran) have posed direct threats to or tried to assert their political hegemony and leadership on the southern states. Iran and, until 2003, Iraq, fielded large armies equipped with the full range of conventional weaponry as well as WMD and asymmetric capabilities. In comparison, the southern states have much smaller and younger militaries which, though often equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and trained by Western military advisors, cannot yet provide for their territorial defense, on their own or as part of a coalition with other Gulf armies.

Because the Gulf States are young states that attach enormous importance to their sovereignty, have internal disputes, have differences in threat perceptions and conduct independent foreign policies, collective security has not yet become their paramount objective. The Gulf Cooperation Council, once envisioned as political-security alliance, has become an organization primarily concerned with economic integration, the failure of Peninsula Shield, a joint GCC force, to deter or repel the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, has for all purpose frozen all serious efforts at building a collective conventional deterrent. The fate of Peninsula Shield is still unknown, with some reports declaring it defunct and others mentioning a possible revitalization.

The perceived hegemonic ambitions of Iran and Iraq, the imbalance of power, the physical and political vulnerability of the small Gulf States, and the need to secure the flow of oil and gas explain why external actors have been so involved in Gulf security.

In their dealings with foreign actors, the Gulf States prefer to build and strengthen bilateral relationships that increases their leverage instead of multilateralizing such

relations within a GCC framework. Gulf States sign up to NATO's Istanbul Cooperation Initiative on an individual basis.

This reluctance to multilateralize GCC security also explains the little progress made on essential integrated GCC-wide early warning, air defense and missile defense systems. These functions are currently filled by the US through Central Command.

The US commitment to the Gulf

The US has acted Saudi Arabia's security partner ever since 1945, but has assumed ever greater responsibility in the region since the withdrawal of the British from the Gulf in 1971, gradually deepening its involvement in the region without ever providing automatic, irrevocable, blanket assurances. In public, the US has constantly tried to maintain some ambiguity and flexibility about its security guarantee. The trend has been a move from region-wide doctrines to country-specific arrangements and issue-specific actions with as little formalization as possible.

1969: Nixon doctrine

"First, the United States will keep all of its treaty commitments. Second, we shall provide a shield if a nuclear power threatens the freedom of a nation allied with us or of a nation whose survival we consider vital to our security. Third, in cases involving other types of aggression, we shall furnish military and economic assistance when requested in accordance with our treaty commitments. But we shall look to the nation directly threatened to assume the primary responsibility of providing the manpower for its defense."

1980: Carter doctrine

"An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force."

1980-88: Iran-Iraq war and tanker war

During the Iran-Iraq war, after Iran started targeting oil tankers sailing in the Gulf, the US promoted the reflagging of tankers and provided protection to tankers.

1990-91: Liberation of Kuwait

The US led a successful coalition effort to repel the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

1993-2003: Dual containment

The US articulated and conducted a strategy designed to contain and roll back the regional power and influence of Iraq and Iran.

2003 Iraq war

The US mounted an invasion of Iraq, deeply upsetting the regional balance of power.

The current US involvement

The US involvement in the Gulf is deep and multidimensional. The US has defense agreements with most GCC states (importantly not with Saudi Arabia). It maintains bases in Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and the UAE. It designed and animates the Gulf Security Dialogue, as much a framework for confidence-building as it is about arms sales and military cooperation. After the tumultuous Rumsfeld years, when the Gulf

States were treated at best as a nuisance, at worse as treacherous, the Pentagon under Robert Gates and his commanders are reestablishing trust in the US security commitment. The US has also approved the sale and upgrading of missile defense systems, including the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense to the UAE. Other arms sales include air defense and missile systems, aircraft sales and upgrading, land-based systems.

Strategic Culture in the Gulf

Strategic thinking in the Gulf States is the purview of senior decision makers who rarely consult or rely on their bureaucracies for strategic advice. Strategic decisions are debated in small, almost impenetrable settings and communicated later to the rest of the government. Strategic engagement is heavily personalized because ruling elites prefer to conduct high-level diplomacy, make commitments and receive assurances in person, with as little pomp and light as possible.

Are the Gulf States interested and asking for a formal defense umbrella? Several US analysts argue that in private, Gulf leaders are debating its merits and seem inclined to accept the need for a more robust US commitment. It is difficult to establish the veracity of these claims, but given that most strategic decisions have been made in similar conditions with the senior most US officials, it is difficult to dismiss them as well.

There are two main arguments to counter the claim that the Gulf States are really interested in a formal security guarantee at this point.

The first one relates to the notion of acceptability and visibility. Gulf governments face a dilemma: they want and need a visible US military presence on their soil as a way to link US security to their own (the entanglement and trip-wire effects) but at the same time they need to manage and even limit the visibility of this presence to avoid a popular backlash giving the high anti-US sentiments in the region.

There is no precedent that indicates that a formal nuclear umbrella would be acceptable to Gulf public opinions. The fact that Saudi Arabia and the US have constantly refused to formalize their intense defense relations reflects the idea that US protection is still considered a political liability that could damage the legitimacy of the ruling elite. Much of the criticism made by Osama bin Laden of the House of Saud revolved around the notion that the royal family had surrendered its security and that of the country, including its Holy Sites, to the US, but criticism of the Arab security dependency on the US extends beyond extremist movements such as Al Qaeda.

Furthermore, the Gulf States would be at pains to explain to a largely anti-US, Iran-sympathetic Arab public how deepening strategic relations with the US advances other Arab interests. In Arab eyes, the US umbrella serves to secure the survival of the regimes rather than serve Arab national interests. Arab governments in general are vulnerable to accusations that their relations with the US emasculate them

In short, the current relationship with the US comes with a manageable amount of political toxicity, but this could become a bigger problem if the US commitment were to be formalized and publicized.

Furthermore, Gulf leaderships and the US government alike realize the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of securing US popular and congressional support for a treaty that would obligate the US to equate an attack against a Gulf state with an attack with the US homeland and pledge an automatic response. In the post-9/11 environment and with the mounting perception on both sides that US and Arab interests and values are less and less aligned, such a political battle may end up hurting both sides.

Another dimension that Gulf governments will consider is the impact of a declared defense guarantee on their long-term relations with Iran. The Iranian challenge is seen as complex and multidimensional: timeless (Persian nationalism supersedes Shia expansionism), psychological (a perceived Iranian sense of cultural superiority), religious (Iranian claim to Islamic leadership), structural (size of country and population) and tangible (Iran's regional outreach and recent history in the Gulf). The Gulf perception of Iran is shaped by insecurity, an acute perception of imbalance of power, and a sense that Iran under any regime will seek regional hegemony. The nuclear program is seen an additional tool in its arsenal, and by some a fundamental game-changer.

With this perspective in mind, a nuclear umbrella that further antagonizes Iran without preventing it from going nuclear has no upside for the Gulf States. Iran will always be their neighbor while US attention, interest or even power may eventually vanish.

This is why the Gulf States need to maintain a degree of ambiguity in their relations with Iran as part of a hedging strategy and are unlikely to request or respond positively to a formal US security umbrella. In international politics, ambiguity is a valuable instrument of statecraft often mistaken for hypocrisy. States often don't announce policies or capabilities precisely to avoid an unwanted overreaction, and other states often respect ambiguity to avoid being drawn into an escalatory dynamic.

Non-US Security Providers

European countries

As part of their grand strategy of internationalizing Gulf security and loosening their dependence on the US, the Gulf States are reaching out to new actors, leveraging their economic clout to tie partners into relations with a strategic dimension. The first targets of this strategy are the members of the Security Council other than the US.

Two Western nations have a considerable presence in the Gulf, France and the United Kingdom. Both have a first class military, nuclear status, a readiness to project power, technological and industrial prowess, and a seat at the UN Security Council. Furthermore, both have signed defense agreements with several Gulf States, are major arms providers, provide military training and assistance. France is quickly supplanting the UK as the major European strategic player in the Gulf, as illustrated by the opening of a French military base in Abu Dhabi.

The two countries affirm that they are committed to the security of their allies, and have made their defense agreements known to their public and parliament, contrary to the US. But even then, the language is not one of automatic, unconditional assurance, and does not include any mention of a nuclear dimension to their security guarantee. For instance, the French agreement with its closest Gulf ally, the UAE, states that the two

countries “would jointly decide of specific and tailored responses, including military ones, if the security, the sovereignty, the territorial integrity and the independence of the UAE was threatened.”

NATO

Many Gulf analysts believe that the Gulf countries that have agreed to join NATO’s Istanbul Cooperation Initiative are in reality interested in obtaining a NATO security umbrella along the lines of Article 5. But NATO is adamant that the ICI is a capacity-building and confidence-building exercise not intended to provide ICI members with a security umbrella or any other kind.

Pakistan

Several Gulf states, most prominently Saudi Arabia, enjoy a longstanding relationship with Pakistan that extends to the military realm. Saudi Arabia is suspected to have funded the Pakistani nuclear program and Pakistani troops have even at times served under Saudi colors.

This explains why there is much speculation that Pakistan could extend to Saudi Arabia a nuclear umbrella should the Kingdom request so to balance a Iranian nuclear capability. Such a decision would not be without complications. Saudi Arabia would need to factor the implications for the US-Saudi relationship. It would need to work out a strategic and operational framework with Islamabad. It would need to factor whether and how political instability in Pakistan impacts the credibility of a Pakistani nuclear deterrent.

The Future of Extended Deterrence: The Case of Turkey Mustafa Kibaroglu¹

Introduction

Turkey has been considered as a “staunch ally” of the United States since the establishment of the strategic relations in the aftermath of the World War Two. Even though there were episodes of strained relations mainly due to the diverging approaches of both countries to the resolution of the conflict over Cyprus between the Turks and the Greeks communities, in the overall, the scope and the content of Turkish-American relations has been rich and satisfactory for both parties.

Turkey’s NATO membership and its enthusiastic support for the strategies adopted by the Alliance made the Turkish as well as the American authorities confident about the effectiveness of the extended deterrence against the threats posed by the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact throughout the Cold War period. The collapse of the bipolar international system did not bring a change in the view of the Turkish authorities to endorse the notion of extended deterrence of the Alliance, which was considered to play a significant role against the new challenges and threats to Turkey’s security this time emanating from the Middle East.

Since recently, however, Turkey is having unprecedentedly good and comprehensive relations with its immediate neighbors in the Middle East, namely Iran, Iraq, and Syria, against which the extended deterrence of the Alliance was thought to be a highly useful instrument in the defense of the country. This new situation may call into question as to whether Turkey would still need to be a part of the extended deterrence of NATO.

With these in mind, this paper will discuss what the notion of extended deterrence meant for Turkey, and how Turkey’s role has evolved, throughout the Cold War period and in its aftermath. Then, the paper will discuss how and why Turkey’s position within the strategy of extended deterrence of the Alliance may be subject to a change given the dramatic changes that are being experienced in the nature of Turkey’s relations with its neighbors. The paper will then conclude by discussing the options that are available to Turkey in the years to come.

The Cold War Context

During the Cold War years, Turkey relied heavily on the presence of nuclear weapons on its territory for national security. Turkish political and security elite considered these weapons as a credible deterrent against the Warsaw Pact Organization (WPO) in general and the huge military might of the nearby USSR in particular. Nuclear weapons were deployed according to the mutual commitments of Turkey and NATO. At the NATO’s heads of governments summit meeting in Paris, France in December 1957, the deployment of intermediate range ballistic missiles (IRBM) in Europe was the topical issue on the agenda. Around 1960, the US Thor and Jupiter missiles became operational in the UK, Italy and Turkey. The Jupiter

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missiles in Turkey, which had a range of approximately 3,000 km and a warhead yield of 1.5 megatons, were phased out by 1963 as part of a secret deal between Kennedy and Khrushchev achieved during the Cuban missile crisis in October 1962.²

The initiation of nuclear weapons to Turkey under the auspices of its NATO membership owes more to the geostrategic significance of the country for the United States in its confrontation with the Soviet Union.³ Because, as was the case for countries like Denmark and Norway, the North Atlantic Treaty did not bring a compelling undertaking to the member states with regard to the deployment of nuclear weapons or any other specific weapons systems. There were, however, good reasons for Turkey to rely on a nuclear deterrent. Soviet claims on the Turkish Straits and on some of the eastern provinces of Turkey during the Stalin reign inflicted grave security concerns in the Turkish political and security elites.⁴ Turkey's vulnerable situation in the aftermath of the World War Two and the timely pledge of the United States to extend its security umbrella towards Turkey marked the beginning of substantial US-Turkey bilateral military cooperation.⁵

During the 1960s and 70s, the Soviet threat was felt more explicitly both in Turkey and in the United States as the Russians closed the gap with the Americans in the nuclear field. The Soviets have also increased their military presence and capabilities both in conventional and unconventional weaponry across the eastern frontier of Turkey, as well as their naval presence in the Mediterranean. That period also witnessed intensifying relations between the Soviet Union and Syria and Iraq in many respects including the cooperation in the military field. Growing military presence of the Soviet Union both in quantitative and qualitative terms across the southern flank of NATO instigated the Alliance in general and Turkey in particular to rely extensively, though gradually, on nuclear forces.

Hence, fully aware of the overwhelming preeminence of the Warsaw Pact countries in the conventional weapons systems, Turkey opposed the proposal to establish a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (NWFZ) in the Balkans. A proposal for a nuclear-weapons free Balkans was first avowed by the Soviet Union in June 1959. As the deployment of US medium range nuclear missiles to Turkey was seen on the horizon, Soviets initiated counter measures at the international level, and 'recommended' to the Turks not to accept these weapons that could hit targets in the Soviet Union, and therefore would be the target of Soviet nuclear missiles. However, Turkish attitude was not receptive to the Soviet threat.

The proposal was reiterated by the Balkan members of the WPO in the early 1980s. Non-deployment or removal of nuclear weapons from the territory of Turkey was believed to expose it to a very difficult situation militarily. For Turkey, the existence of nuclear weapons on its soil meant the active presence and full backing of NATO in general and the United States in particular in contingency plans involving the WPO countries. Hence, Turkish security elites did not opt for a nuclear-weapons-free Balkans while such an occurrence could

² See Nur Bilge Criss, "Strategic Nuclear Missiles in Turkey: The Jupiter Affair (1959-1963)," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 1997.

³ See *World Armaments and Disarmament SIPRI Yearbook 1982*, London, Stockholm Peace Research Institute, 1982, p. 7.

⁴ The straits of Istanbul (Bosphorus) and Canakkale (the Dardanelles) in northwestern Turkey are highly strategic sea routes for the countries littoral to the Black Sea. The status of the straits is agreed upon in the Treaty of Montreux of 1936.

⁵ See Melvyn P. Leffler, "Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War: The United States, Turkey, and NATO, 1945-1952," *The Journal of American History*, 1985, Vol. 71, No. 4, pp. 807-825.

be politically desirable for some of the countries in the region and politicians for the sake of conducting “high politics” with their rhetoric of disarmament.⁶

Similarly, when the Soviet Union declared in 1982, as part of a peace offensive, that it would not be the first to resort to nuclear weapons and initiated a ‘no-first-use’ strategy, Turkey considered the Soviet pledge to be a mere propaganda tool. During the East-West rivalry, NATO countries relied on their nuclear capability to offset the superiority of the Warsaw Pact countries in conventional weaponry.⁷ Because it was envisaged that NATO might not win a war without resorting to nuclear weapons, whereas the Warsaw Pact countries might, with their conventional superiority.

Notwithstanding its opposition to a Balkan NWFZ, Turkey, on the other hand, fully supported the proposal that aimed at establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East (NWFZ/ME), originally co-sponsored by Egypt and Iran as early as 1974. Besides, Turkey also expressed its concern that such a zone should encompass all sorts of weapons of mass destruction as well as their delivery means. One principal reason for supporting the idea of a NWFZ/ME was the threat perceived from the spread of nuclear, chemical and biological (NBC) weapons of mass destruction into the Middle East. Such a threat however was not in the primary concern of NATO and its commitments to Turkey.⁸

The Middle East was generally considered by most of the NATO countries to be “out of area.” Therefore, it was not clear to the Turkish political and security elites as to whether the “nuclear umbrella” of NATO would be effective in defending Turkey in case a conventional or unconventional attack launched by any or a combination of its Middle Eastern neighbors. Being confident enough that Turkish conventional arsenal could fairly cope with its Middle Eastern neighbors, if not superior to them, any proposal that would eliminate the unconventional capabilities of these state would be desirable for Turkey's security. Thus, Turkey assumed a supportive role for a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction.

At this stage, it may worth elaborating further on the concept of “out of area” and the respective Turkish attitude which may serve as an indicator of the chronic dilemma inherent in Turkey’s foreign and security policy. Whereas, the United States suggested the inclusion of an “out of area” intervention in contingency plans encompassing the Persian Gulf region, Western European members of NATO generally opposed the idea, as the threat perceived from the Eastern Europe was of primary importance for them. Turkish political and security elites did not want to get into a bilateral commitment with the United States alone in contingencies including the Middle East where the Western Europeans would probably not be present in the scene.

The possibility of such an undertaking was not desirable politically or militarily for Turks due to some reasons. To cite a few, Turkish security elites believed that the United States did not have a clearly defined strategy with regard to the contingencies in the Middle East, especially those short of a Soviet involvement. Hence, elites feared that Turkish military would have to be involved in US operations specifically designed to back Israel against Arab states. Even

⁶ For instance, Greece, despite the fact that it was a NATO ally, had not only welcomed the idea of a Balkan NWFZ, but had also become a co-sponsor of subsequent deliberations initiated by the Warsaw Pact countries.

⁷ It was generally estimated that the Warsaw Pact countries had approximately 50 percent superiority over NATO countries in the overall conventional weapons capability.

⁸ See Article 6 of the Washington Treaty that created the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on 4 April 1949.

though Turkey kept its diplomatic correspondence with Israel at very low levels de facto and de jure and at the same time tried to keep clear from intra-Arab disputes, Turkish political elites did not want to be seen as taking side in any Arab-Israeli dispute.⁹

Second, the memories of unsuccessful and ill-fated deliberations to institutionalize cooperation among the states in the northern tier of the Middle East reminded Turks of the significance of their institutional ties with Europe and the need for strengthening them. Following its reception to NATO, Turkey was trying to pursue an active policy in the Middle East as a regional actor which promoted Western policies. Hence, the Pact of Mutual Cooperation, or the so called Baghdad Pact, signed at Baghdad on 24 February, 1955, was an outcome of this policy. Based on the lessons learned, Turkish political and security elites desired to stay away from the highly intricate intra-regional politics of the Middle East.

In sum, due to its national and regional security concerns, and due to its foreign policy principles and objectives, Turkish political and security elites preferred to keep their political and military freedom to be able to decide independently on whether or not to participate in the contingencies concerning the Middle East, taking into consideration the attitude of the Western European members of NATO as well.

The Post-Cold War Context

Almost concomitantly with the relaxation of the East-West tension, Turkey found itself facing new threats and challenges to its national security, mostly emanating from the Middle East. The eruption of the intra-state as well as inter-state conflicts in the Balkans and in the Caucasus were of no less significance for the security of Turkey. However, the profile of the threats posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery vehicles (i.e., ballistic missiles) in the Middle Eastern was given a much higher priority in the strategic considerations among the Turkish security elite. The growing unconventional capabilities of Turkey's neighbors such as Iran, Iraq and Syria were equally concerning Turkey's allies within NATO, the United States being at the forefront, which had plans to deploy missile defense systems in various parts of the world including the Middle East. In this context, Turkey was considered, from the US perspective, as one of those locations where the missile defense systems could be deployed so as to provide a forward defense capability to its troops as well as its allies in the Middle East.

Due to the similarities in the perceptions of the threats emanating from the Middle East, Turkey has, in principle, supported the US plans to establish a "Missile Shield" that would constitute a new and significant component of the extended deterrence of the North Atlantic Alliance in the "new world order" of the 1990s. Turkey's support, however, was not unconditional and rested primarily on the satisfaction of the demands of the Turkish authorities to have a role in the development as well as the operation of the system in the medium to long-term by way of sharing the advanced technology that would be used in the system. Another

⁹ Turkey was one of the first countries to recognize the State of Israel in March 1949. Nonetheless, Turkish politicians have expressed their regrets as regards Israel's invasion and occupation of Arab lands. Turkey also repeatedly urged Israel to return to its frontiers prior to 1967 war and to comply with the UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. Eventually, Turkey decided to repeal its entire high level diplomatic staff from the Turkish Embassy in Tel Aviv in December 1980 (right after the military coup staged in Turkey) and asked from Israel to take a similar action with regard to its Embassy staff in Ankara. Eventually, withstanding the growing pace of recent Arab-Israeli rapprochement, the Turkish-Israeli relations gained a new momentum. As an expression of this, a senior Turkish diplomat again assumed his office in the Embassy in Tel Aviv right after the Peace Accord between Israel and the PLO signed in Washington, D.C., in September 1995.

condition that the Turkish authorities had in mind was to see the support of other members of the Alliance for the development and deployment of the missile defense project the territories of the allied nations.

Neither of these conditions could be easily satisfied. Because, on the one hand, there was a deep divide between the allies on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean regarding the feasibility as well as the utility of the missile defense systems proposed by the United States. European allies were concerned whether the project, even if successfully realized against all the technical hurdles experienced then and now, could be of any use for the security of their territory against the missile capabilities of the Middle Eastern states that were situated in far away distances and had no significant political controversies with most European states anyway. Moreover, European allies also feared that the project could provoke the Russians to take such counter measures that would disrupt the security and stability situation that was reached in Europe since the abolishing of the Warsaw Pact threat. On the other hand, regarding the desire of the Turkish authorities to get involved in the development of the system, the United States was reluctant in meeting Turkey's expectations. The United States was not ready to share the cutting edge technology that was being developed at the expense of billions of dollars of investments in scientific research and development in America's most advanced institutions.

Due to these two factors, the appetite of the Turkish authorities to endorse the US "Missile Shield" project was diminished considerably. But since their desire to deploy missile defenses in Turkey for the protection of the country against the WMD and the ballistic missile capabilities in the neighboring countries, Turkish authorities started to look for alternative air defense systems of Russian and Chinese origins. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, especially the Turkish military officers have paid frequent visits to these countries. No purchase agreement has been concluded to date by either of the two potential suppliers. However, the most advanced Russian air defense systems, namely the S-400s have been frequently referred to in the media as the next generation Turkish missile defense system. The Undersecretary of Defense Industries Murad Bayar is quoted for saying that Turkey had plans to buy 8 battalions of air defense systems and the candidates were Russian S-400s, Israeli Arrow-IIs, Chinese Hongqi-9s (HQ-9) as well as the American PAC-3s.¹⁰

US Nukes in Turkey: A Proof of Continued Reliance on Extended Deterrence?

The absence of common positions of Turkey and the United States with respect to the missile defense project, throughout the 1990s, however, did not cause a change in Turkey's reliance on the extended deterrence of the Alliance for its security. Because, the US missile defense project was still underway and was yet to come to final stages that would lend enough confidence to both the American and the European authorities that the system would at least be operational, let alone useful, against the challenges the Alliance was likely to face in the future. One clear indicator of Turkey's continued reliance on the extended deterrence of the Alliance has been the presence of the US nuclear weapons deployed in Turkey. Since the end of the Cold War era, Turkey remained among the few members of the Alliance, which still

¹⁰ See for instance "Istanbul ve Ankara'ya Fuze Kalkani" (Missile Shield to Istanbul and Ankara), *Milliyet*, 10 August 2008, <http://www.maxicep.com/konu-disi/istanbul-ve-ankaraya-fuze-kalkani-155310.html>

retain the US nuclear weapons in their territories, even though they are believed by the Turkish authorities to have a symbolic military value.¹¹

The decision to keep US nuclear weapons on Turkish soil owes to a number of political and military considerations. Turkish officials consider nuclear weapons more as political weapons than as having a significant military value and they do not seriously think of contingencies where nuclear weapons could or even should be used. Having said that, they do believe in the deterrent value of US nuclear weapons stationed in Turkey. It is true that the Middle East and adjacent regions are far from being peaceful or stable and that this situation is unlikely to change soon. Adding to the unrest arising from the political situation in Iraq, and the Palestine-Israel conflict, is Iran's substantial nuclear development program that may have weapons development potential. Uncertainty about Iran's capabilities as well as its intentions further complicate the threat assessments of Turkish security elite, especially those in the military domain. Hence, retaining the US nukes in Turkey 'to be on the safe side' sounds like a better option to them.¹²

Another fundamental reason why Turkish officials wanted to keep these weapons, at least to date, has to do with the nature and the scope of Turkish-American relations in particular, and Turkey's place in the Western alliance in general. First and foremost, the deployment of the remaining tactical nuclear weapons in Turkey is believed to strengthen the bonds between the US and Turkey. These bonds were severely strained during and after the crisis in Iraq in late 2002 when the US wanted to deploy tens of thousands of troops in Turkey as part of its war plans against Saddam Hussein's Iraq and the Turkish Parliament did not approve such a request. Hence, neither party got what it wanted.¹³ Withdrawing the US nuclear weapons from Turkey in the aftermath of such a delicate period was feared to weaken the bonds in the longstanding strategic alliance (or the 'partnership' as many Turkish and American analysts would prefer to term it).

Turkish officials also saw the deployment of these weapons as part of the 'burden sharing' principle within the Alliance. They would prefer that some other allies also continue to host US nuclear weapons on their soil, if only in symbolic numbers. Then, Turkey will not stand out as the only country in NATO that retains US nuclear weapons in Europe. It was reported in 2005 that there were some 480 tactical US nuclear weapons that were deployed in a handful of NATO allies.¹⁴ This figure has come down to the level of 200 plus nuclear weapons in more recent reports and in the updated versions of the studies where analyses of the military and political implications of the presence of these weapons are also made.

Having expressed their desire to keep US nuclear weapons in Turkey at the expense of the political and economic burden attached to them, Turkish officials also pointed out to a serious concern of theirs regarding the true desire of the American administration. They worry that the United States might have secretly developed, or might be in the process of developing,

¹¹ See Hans M. Kristensen, *US Nuclear Weapons in Europe: A Review of Post-Cold War Policy, Force Levels, and War Planning*, Washington, D.C.: Natural Resources Defense Council, February 2005, p. 9.

¹² See Mustafa Kibaroglu, "Isn't it Time to Say Farewell to US Nukes in Turkey?" *European Security*, Vol. 14, No. 4, 2005, pp. 443-457.

¹³ See Mustafa Kibaroglu, 'Turkey Says No', *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Vol. 59, No. 4, July/August 2003, pp. 22-25. Also see Mustafa Kibaroglu, 'Missing Bill Clinton', *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Vol. 60, No. 2, March/April 2004, pp. 30-32.

¹⁴ See Hans M. Kristensen, *US Nuclear Weapons in Europe*, *ibid.*

new weapons systems, which would not necessitate overseas deployment. Should this be the case, Turkish officials fear that the solidarity principle may be seriously hurt and the Alliance might lose its spirit and its *raison d'être*.

The Current Situation

Despite these views that are generally endorsed among the Turkish security elite, a series of steps recently taken by Turkey in the foreign policy realm vis-à-vis its Middle Eastern neighbors, namely, Syria, Iran, and Iraq, may very well call into question the validity of the longstanding policy of reliance on extended deterrence.

Turkey and Syria have far advanced their relations since October 1998 when the two have come to the brink of a hot confrontation due to the longstanding support of the Syrian authorities and the Syrian secret services to the PKK terrorist organization, which was capable of sustaining a separatist movement against Turkey. Similarly, the controversy between Turkey and Syria over the use of the waters of the Euphrates and the Tigris Rivers both of which originating from Turkey has long shadowed the bilateral relations that were nonetheless affected by the Cold War context as well. Added to this, has been the problem of Hatay, which was annexed to Turkey in 1939 with a referendum after long deliberations between Turkey, France and Syria in the second half of the 1930s. To date, Syrian authorities have never acknowledged such a decision and have thus depicted Hatay as “Alexandretta” being part of sovereign Syrian territory.

Since the signing of the Adana Protocol between the two countries soon after the crisis was resolved, Turkey and Syria are engaged in taking far reaching steps in the development of trade relations in the first place that have become the conveyor of political, diplomatic, social, cultural and even military cooperation, which have culminated in the opening of the borders in October 2009 to free transit of each other's goods and services and abolished the visa requirements for each other's citizens. Since the most recent rapprochement between Turkey and Syria, these and other problematic issues are not pronounced by the political authorities. However, no immediate and lasting solutions have been reached in the diverging attitudes of the parties, either. One may hope that “time will solve the problem” as Beshar Esad said on a number of occasions, especially during his official visits to Turkey in the past few years.

In mid-October 2009, when Turkey and Syria opened the borders, Turkish and Iraqi government officials held a joint ministerial cabinet meeting in Baghdad presided over by the prime ministers of both countries. The joint ministerial cabinet meetings are said to continue in the future by expanding the scope and the content of cooperation. These and other unprecedented developments in this part of the world reminds one the “Schuman Plan” of 1950 which eventually led to the integration of the former archenemies on the European continent. In the same vein, the degree of Turkish-Iranian rapprochement lately has been unprecedented and unseen even during the Shah period when both countries were the main pillars of the US in its Middle East policies.

All of these rather favorable developments from Turkey's perspective, which however caused serious concerns especially in the diplomatic and military circles of Turkey's western allies as to whether the traditional pro-Western Turkish foreign policy deviates from its main thrust, are explained with the “zero conflict with the neighbors” doctrine of Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu who is essentially a professor of International Relations. Should this be the case, and if Turkey is not going to have troubled relations with its Middle Eastern neighbors

anymore, then the simple question will be “against whom Turkey would need NATO’s (or US) extended deterrence?”

Interesting enough, these developments have taken place at a time when the United States seriously revised its previous policy of deploying missile defenses to central and eastern Europe and thus returned back to options for deployment in friendly territories like Turkey sitting nearby the Middle Eastern sources of threat, such as Iran. Hence, these currents, which seemingly run against each other, may become a serious bone of contention between Turkey and its Western allies as well as Israel. Besides, Turkish-Israeli relations, which had reached their climax especially in the military domain in the mid-1990s with the military cooperation agreement signed in 1996 have come down to such low levels that bitter statements from each side follow one another harshly criticizing each other’s attitude toward the countries in the region. Turkish politicians have been the most critical of Israel’s Gaza operations in January 2009, while Israeli politicians criticized Turkey for its supportive stance towards Iran’s nuclear program and undermining the dangers associate with it for regional security and stability. Such a cold atmosphere experienced lately in the political domain had direct bearings on the future of military cooperation between Turkey and Israel, which had envisaged, among others, possible joint-projects in the area of development and deployment of air defense systems.

The Future

Against this background of recent dynamic developments, the issue of extended deterrence requires a careful planning and a fine-tuned approach of the Turkish authorities both from the political and the military circles. Because, the visions of the parties involved in the decision-making mechanism in Turkey may run contradictory to each other resulting in either an ill-fated policy, or no policy at all, regarding what has to be done with respect to the defense of the country against actual and potential threats emanating from the Middle East.

That said, it wouldn’t be unfounded to argue that, given the warm atmosphere in the political relations between Turkey and its three immediate Middle Eastern neighbors, namely Iran, Iraq and Syria, the chances for a decision to be taken by the current Turkish government to host the US missile defense systems in Turkey would not be too much. Because, the “Missile Shield” is known for being developed by the United States against the long-range ballistic missile capabilities of the countries like Iran and North Korea. Hence, if deployed, the presence of US missile defense systems in Turkey will be considered by Turkey’s neighbors, especially Iran, as contradictory to the positive atmosphere reached in the bilateral relations with them.

But, on the other hand, taking into consideration future contingencies, Turkish military authorities and the security elite would probably like to have air defense systems in various parts of the country. Because, Turkey is neighboring the Middle East, which is a highly volatile region. One can hardly talk about regime stability in the Middle Eastern states. It is difficult to argue with great certainty as to whether the current regimes and/or the current governments in the neighboring countries with which Turkey is developing highly advanced and comprehensive relations will remain the same, and whether the pace and the nature of bilateral/regional relations will also be the same in the foreseeable future. These are some of the questions whose answers are open to speculation given the long history of the Middle East that has taught many dear lessons to the authorities of the regional as well as extra-regional actors.

Turkish authorities might, therefore, consider the deployment of missile defense systems in Turkey as a precautionary measure against such contingencies in the medium to long term. Such a decision, if taken, may not necessarily be made part and parcel of the US plans to erect a Missile Shield in the Turkish territory. In such case, Turkey's decision may not be seen as a hostile move by Turkey's neighbors, especially Iran, which has cut a similar deal with Russia to buy the S-300 air defense system.

Turkey's choice as to which missile defense system to buy will be highly critical. If Turkey chooses the US made PAC-3 air defense system, then the operation of that system might be compatible with the overall US plans to operate air defense systems at the global scale. But, if Turkey chooses the Russian S-300/400 and/or the Chinese HQ-9 missile defense systems, then, one may conclude that Turkey will have decided to establish an air defense system independent from the United States and also from the North Atlantic Alliance. Should this be the case, the extended deterrence of the US and the Alliance may have not much to offer to Turkey except for the presence of a limited number of US nuclear weapons that are reportedly deployed in the Incirlik base, near Adana.

Then, the status of the US nuclear weapons that are still deployed in Turkey may be subject to a debate both inside and outside of the country. European allies within NATO in whose territories US nuclear weapons are still deployed have already expressed their desire to send them back to the United States. Turkey's Middle Eastern neighbors may very well expect Turkey to adopt a similar stance vis-à-vis these weapons at an early date so as to see the Turkish authorities to act in accordance with their recent attitude toward them. That said, there is no sign coming from the Turkish political or military circles regarding whether there is any plan to send US nuclear weapons back in the near future. So long as these weapons remain on Turkish soil, one may conclude that the extended deterrence of the Alliance will continue to be in force with the active participation of Turkey in future contingencies.

The Future of Extended Deterrence: A UK View Paul Schulte¹

Introduction and Definitions

To reduce the confusions, and bring out the contradictions, inherent in this topic, I begin with Sir Michael Howard's terminology in his classic 1983 essay on *Reassurance and Deterrence*².

"The object of deterrence is to persuade an adversary that the costs to him of seeking a military solution to his political problems will far outweigh the benefits. The object of reassurance is to persuade one's own people, and those of one's allies, that the benefits of military action, or preparation for it, will outweigh the costs."

Howard goes on to observe that, in the 1980s:

"It is also apparent, at least in Europe, that reassurance cannot be re-established by any improvement in the mechanism of deterrence, certainly not of nuclear deterrence. Perhaps we should all feel safer if the United States did develop the capacity to carry on, and 'prevail' in, a prolonged nuclear exchange with the Soviet Union but in fact public opinion in Europe is terrified by the prospect – and so is much of it in the United States. In the calculus of nuclear deterrence both developments may appear appropriate, even essential, but such a calculus does not translate easily into the language of political reassurance and certainly not in a Europe where any nuclear exchange, on however limited a scale, spells almost inconceivable disaster. Limited nuclear options do not look very attractive if we are likely to be one of them ourselves."

It is salutary to introduce right at the start of a discussion of Extended Deterrence the very possible disjunction between its constituents of deterrence and reassurance, which reverberated gratingly through European security politics of the 1980s. But I shall not assume that this disjunction will necessarily be encountered in all future situations, theatres and scenarios where Extended Deterrence may be applied. Indeed, avoiding it will be a key policy objective. As I shall argue, new resources for this include the availability of effective missile defences and other types of precision guided advanced conventional weapons, networked in rapidly deployable land and sea and air units, expensively available, in limited numbers, to a few advanced or rich countries, and overwhelmingly to the United States.

To bring out the deterrent possibilities of evolving military technologies, I propose the following definition of Extended Deterrence as:

¹ Kings College/LSE/UK Defence Academy. Final version October 2009.

² <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/37127/michael-howard/reassurance-and-deterrence-western-defense-in-the-1980s>

*'the systematic, multidimensional, attempt to persuade an adversary, through the prospect of military engagement, defensive support, intervention or retaliation, not to attack an ally, and to provide reassurance to that ally about the continuing security of the relationship.'*³

Additionally, and more controversially, it might be strategically prudent, and it is likely to be politically popular, at least amongst the defenders public, to include a concern to extend some degree of reassurance to the potential aggressor, as part of a fully comprehensive concept of Extended Deterrence.⁴

Structural Aspects of Extended Deterrence

Extended Deterrence has certain essential structural features, but we should be prepared to see them combined in extremely varied ways:

- *A triadic structure* of defender(s) (or deterrer(s)/ally (allies)/challenger(s)
- *A political relationship*, based upon acknowledged interest on both sides, in which ideological or religious opposition to the challenger (s) may play a major role.
- *Some degree of cultural or ideological affinity, sympathy, or at least understanding of the ally and its strategic predicament* (as Bernard Brodie once pointed out, "good strategy presumes good anthropology and sociology". The lack of common values between Saudi Arabia and the US, for example, has frequently been brought up by American commentators as a reason to doubt or repent US guarantees to the Kingdom. But it has been managed)
- *Joint incentives*: some two-way mix of strategic, ideological, reputational, diplomatic or economic payoffs. Some of these may be secret, but widely suspected.
- *A process of Alliance management* to consult and decide on the other features, at whatever level of formality, seniority and frequency.
- *A peace time basing mode*: with choices over *forward presence*? Are elements of the defender's nuclear or conventional forces normally ashore, or nearby at (or under the) sea? If they are based on the ally's territory, are they sufficiently large to contribute to deterrence by denial of any possible attack, or are they simply – but potentially very importantly – a tripwire? "*Forward presence has been crucial for credibility because, while no state or group thinks it can defeat the US outright, some think it won't always fight*"⁵
- *Some balance of burden sharing*, dependent upon the manpower, technical level, and available government resources of the ally, but also upon its nuclear sensitivities.
- *Some jointly agreed decision on the extent of publicity or reticence over the deterrent relationship*. At one extreme, as in NATO, this may involve its formalisation in an open Treaty, around which a common Alliance identity may be constructed as a political project, building upon shared cultural traditions. At the other end, as in Japan/American relationship, there has been great domestic political inhibition in admitting to the

³ I am indebted to Hassan Elbahtimy of King's College War Studies Department for original ideas behind this definition.

⁴ I am grateful to Prof Malcolm Chalmers of The Royal United Service Institute for raising this point.

⁵ Patrick M Morgan, "Deterrence Now", Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 256.

Japanese public that their country was part of the US nuclear alliance system and its security rested ultimately upon a nuclear guarantee by the defender which had bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. (This has so far led to a notably restricted Japanese appetite for detailed nuclear consultations, though there are signs this may be changing with the new government, formed in September 2009 by the Democratic Party of Japan.) And the domestic legitimacy of Middle Eastern regimes, in particular, may be affected by ill-advised publicity for formal extended deterrence relationships with Western defenders, especially the US.

- *Some understanding (whether or not formalised) about the limits of actions by the ally which the defender would accept and support (America's conditional support for Taiwan is the best example)*
- *Development of some level of joint Alliance doctrine, perhaps, at the high end, including joint planning for demanding and regularly updated scenarios.*
- *Decisions on how far to clarify the red lines facing the challenger: whether clearly signalled or left to "constructive ambiguity".*
- *A resultant overall posture of a more or less well signalled, agreed, planned and capability - backed mix of defensive or retaliatory (including, above all, nuclear) responses to aggression.*

Extended Deterrence and its Controversies

Extended Deterrence is an elemental configuration in international security affairs. It will continue whenever militarily stronger states decide to commit themselves to the security of weaker and more threatened ones. It need not automatically involve the threat of nuclear retaliation: the "nuclear umbrella". But in a world dominated by the threat of nuclear attack or blackmail, there is likely to be a corresponding emphasis on deterrence by retaliation.

Extended Deterrence is almost always politically controversial, though can over time become a more or less accepted part of the international landscape – except to the challenger nations. Proponents will claim that, because it deincentivises military action, it is inherently stabilising and so increases the provision of global security. They can additionally argue that it generously protects common values and smaller threatened allies, and farsightedly contributes to the stability of the world's major economic assets such as the oil-fields and sea lanes.

Critics, especially within revisionist challenger nations, and those sympathetic to them or simply hostile to guarantor states, will tend to denounce extended deterrence arrangements as aggressive increases of Great Power influence in contested geopolitical zones, especially "shatter belts"⁶ like the Middle East or Eastern Europe. Accusations typically amount to seeking "blood for oil", or for other resources, contracts, or bases, in a reckless, exploitative hegemonic form of connection to states whose elites make geopolitical or economic concessions to stronger outside powers for their own enrichment or survival.

Extended Deterrence becomes automatically more controversial if, as it usually has since 1945, it possesses a nuclear dimension. The nuclear guarantee involved can then be justified

⁶ A 'shatterbelt' is a "a region that combines internal cultural, economic and political diversity and conflict proneness, with competing external (superpower) involvements without clear spheres of influence", John O'Loughlin, (1994) *Dictionary of Geopolitics*.

as an even stronger resource for stability, and as an important, or even indispensable, means of reducing global demand for additional nuclear weapons. In a recent discussion of the case for making an explicit nuclear guarantee to US regional allies in response to the Iranian nuclear program, Michael Krepon recently argued that:

"Extended deterrence remains very important. It is a key element to preventing cascades of proliferation," ... "It's up to the Obama administration now to shore up the credibility of that guarantee," he said, adding that long-range bombers deployed at a U.S. air base on the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia would be sufficient for launching a nuclear strike in the Middle East...⁷

But sceptics about nuclear deterrence will contest the certainty of the assumed link between extended deterrence and non-proliferation and emphasise the contrary possibility. They argue, with varying audibility in different countries, that the principal consequence is instead the exposure of millions of extra human beings to additional nuclear miscalculations: citizens of the ally being defended, citizens of the defending state offering the protection, the innocent population of the challenger state, and, potentially also, citizens of the defender's less well defended allies who might become more convenient targets for the retaliation of nuclear-armed challengers. According to Jonathan Pollock in the same discussion ⁸

"Nuclear extended deterrence, if it fails, could embroil the United States, or whoever else is providing this guarantee, in a nuclear war that they otherwise could have avoided," "These second-hand retaliatory threats that we're talking about may not be quite as credible as the retaliatory threats one would make on behalf of one's own country."

Critics excoriate extended nuclear deterrence arrangements as undermining NPT obligations by conferring special nuclear security upon some states but not others, and thus intrinsically obstructing the recently renewed aspiration to eliminate nuclear weapons. There is constant international pressure for nuclear weapon states to sign no first use undertakings, despite – or for some campaigners, precisely *because* of – the difficulty of combining them with Extended Deterrence. Western antinuclear activists join with Non-Nuclear Weapons State diplomats in denouncing NATO's nuclear sharing arrangements which had been evolved, in the interests of Extended Deterrence, before the NPT was negotiated. Their objections would rise to a crescendo if similar arrangements were ever proposed elsewhere. Some critics also assert that there is an inevitable and deeply undesirable

"Link between extended deterrence and the nature of US nuclear strategy. Counterforce nuclear planning doctrines and escalation control strategic concepts are linked with extended deterrence because of the nexus between credibility and extended deterrence. Relying on extended deterrence, indeed extending that reliance, for non-proliferation only further encourages the maintenance of such nuclear strategies and ultimately dents non-proliferation because of Article VI effects⁹.

Given this widespread international disapproval, there are many reasons nuclear extended deterrence will not be emphasised, explicit or even admitted.

⁷ Experts Mull Potential Middle East Nuclear Umbrella” NTI Global Newswire Wednesday, Aug. 26, 2009 http://gsn.nti.org/gsn/nw_20090826_5956.php

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Marko Beljac “Extending US Nuclear Deterrence to the Middle East is a Crazy, Bad, Idea”The Nuke Strategy Wonk <http://scisec.net/?p=166>

But repetitive antinuclear criticisms may have limited impact. More serious warnings come from senior military officers, in-house planners and politicians whose roles require them to consider how much more inherently difficult Extended Deterrence is to conduct successfully than Simple Deterrence and therefore how much harder it may be to justify to elite and public opinion. They are well aware of its historically established problems: of credibly establishing a defender's determination to risk catastrophic national damage for less than ultimate national interests, of overextension, misinterpreted signals, underestimation of challengers' motivations, and commitment traps¹⁰. All in all, given the growing intensity of international disapproval, and the notorious difficulty of proving past triumphs of deterrence, there are many reasons to expect that extended deterrence, especially in its nuclear aspects, will only rarely and reluctantly be publicly emphasised, or explicit.

The Decisiveness of Strategic Culture

How far these varying considerations are weighed up will depend upon the political balances and Strategic Cultures within states potentially involved in a relationship of Extended Deterrence. I use Strategic Culture here as shorthand for the way the use of force is conceptualised in different nations¹¹. The culture of course interacts with the military capacities which the state builds up to be able to use. The point is that, however profound and farseeing they might be, proposals or policy initiatives inconsistent with Strategic Culture tend to be ignored. Those cultures themselves change over time, as a result of developing international opinion, fluctuating economic fortunes, positive or adverse historical experiences. Very few countries have Strategic Cultures which could even hint at a willingness to take on the responsibilities of Extended Deterrence. National self-confidence and willingness to commit to the defence of distant would-be allies is a political factor which can rise or decline over time, as it obviously has with French or British willingness to consider armed intervention in the Middle East over the past six decades. In the nuclear field, perhaps above all, we should assume that national risk-taking and assertion will be different between even major members of the same Alliance, and that it may be rather different for all of us in 10 years time.

It is impossible to know what declaratory concessions may be made by any of the nuclear states next year in the NPT Review Conference in order to avoid diplomatic isolation and international abuse as obstacles to the forward march of nuclear de-legitimisation and disarmament. Certainly the UK has now invested so much in its effort to claim the international lead toward disarmament that it would be most unwilling to be seen to block any hint of progress.¹² In textbook terms, the logic of continuing to refuse to give a No First Use undertaking, in order to maximise deterrence, remains strong.¹³ But that consideration may very possibly be overwhelmed by the politics of antinuclear yearning which are, to varying degrees, now important constituents of Western strategic cultures.

¹⁰ Morgan "Deterrence".

¹¹ See Lawrence Sondhaus "Strategic Culture And Ways of War", Routledge London and New York, 2006.

¹² see "The Road To 2010: Addressing the Nuclear Question in the 21st Century", a Cabinet Office Strategy Paper (CM 7675) <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/reports/roadto2010.aspx>

¹³ See "The Case for No First Use: an Exchange", *Survival*, Volume 51, Number 5, October-November 2009.

Unprovable Calculations -Balancing Security Losses from Reduced Deterrence against Security Gains through Increased Support for Denuclearisation

There is a genuine problem in determining the significance of robust Extended Deterrence in its various scenarios against the chance that, if its strength is somewhat reduced, defenders and allies will still benefit overall from a benign global process of de-nuclearisation and strengthened non-proliferation. One can have genuine doubts whether the gamble is likely to succeed, but it is politically unsustainable at this stage to refuse to bet anything at all. There is no common currency for measuring what is at stake and no good means of estimating the relative probabilities. With this degree of uncertainty, it seems unlikely that the strategic requirements of Extended Deterrence will be a winning argument for resisting change in the direction of nuclear delegitimisation for anyone outside the US.

This clearly does not bode well for the continuation of US nuclear weapons in Europe. NATO may be facing a new disjunction between deterrence and reassurance (and perhaps, too, as in 1983, between elite and public opinion). But this time reassurance may involve a large number of Alliance governments assuring their electorates that they will be joining in the shared risks of pursuing a nuclear free world.

To examine the downsides of that push towards reassurance, withdrawing US nuclear weapons from Europe would probably have few direct operational consequences. There is a frequently encountered, but obviously unofficial, view that the first nuclear weapon fired by NATO in Europe would come from a US Trident SSBN at the direct and precise request of SACEUR. It is hard to see why nuclear tipped SLCMs, whether in Europe or the Pacific would be operationally or politically preferable, and they would certainly open up a Pandora's Box of arms control verification problems. Similarly, nonpermanent presence of US nuclear weapons on Allied soil would be a pretext for demonstrations and uncertainty, and a contributor to crisis instability. SSBNs seem to be the weapon of choice for sustaining worldwide extended deterrence but the numbers and types of weapons involved are far less critical than previously during mutual deterrence between superpowers. However, doubts are likely to creep in among allies as well as Americans themselves about American commitment to their networks of deterrence if US nuclear weapons numbers were allowed to fall below Russia's or China's.

But because extended deterrence is much more complicated than rocket science, political psychology cannot reliably predict what it would be like for NATO Europe to live in the long-term next to a huge Russian stockpile of Theatre Nuclear Weapons with no balancing equivalents whatsoever on the side of the Atlantic. We can perhaps say that it is at least unlikely to be conducive to a firm determination to avoid intimidation of exposed member states and, at worst, to lead to an anxious desire to accommodate Russian choices without open dispute – just as the old Soviet Correlation of Forces doctrine would predict that it should do. The alternative of future nuclear proliferation among European states who might come to feel themselves insufficiently protected seems extremely unlikely, given the antinuclear attitudes incorporated into their strategic cultures and the easier option of calling for some real intensified form of US nuclear commitment.

Uninhibited Strategic Cultures Offering Purchasable Portfolios of Extended Deterrence?

New nuclear nations may have fewer inhibitions about taking on such commitments. Their strategic cultures could motivate them to push for maximum return from their expensive

national nuclear investments and a grander international role. It is certainly imaginable – although it would be inflammatory to canvass in any official document – that an economically desperate Pakistan, perhaps facing reduced US and European subsidy, could offer extended nuclear deterrence (not just an Islamic but a Sunni bomb) to Saudi Arabia or other rich status – quo Gulf states, against Iranian threats, in exchange for continuing cheaper oil supplies. This might be a secret guarantee with little developed planning to leak out. It could be completely devoid of any conventional component and quite possibly taken up in addition to American or European promises. One possible future for Extended Deterrence in places, above all the Gulf, that can afford to pay for it, therefore, is a portfolio of overlapping guarantees. That would be highly undesirable. Saudi Arabia doesn't need more nuclear backing, given US dependence on its oil, and no one should encourage Pakistan to become a virtual nuclear mercenary state, relying on missiles to increase its importance and revenue. Nor could it be a good idea to further complicate control of a major nuclear crisis in the Gulf by bringing in additional players who are not prepared to subordinate themselves to the command of a lead nation in an international coalition.

The Possible Future Global Contexts of Extended Deterrence

Extended Deterrence is not an objective in itself, but a joint response to anticipated threats within a wider security climate. Its necessity, frequency and salience, and particularly the degree to which it relies on nuclear threats, will therefore depend very much on which of the two broadly discernible international tendencies prevails. For simplicity we might call them Obama World or Khan Planet.

Obama World

In this future, a still-nuclear America remains the global hegemon and keystone of stability, the NPT regime holds and indeed strengthens, nuclear weapons are progressively reduced in number and salience, nuclear use is further delegitimised, the risk of nuclear terrorism is minimised, and there are no additional nuclear armed states. To make this achievable, there would have to be intense political, diplomatic, and strategic consultations with allies covering non-proliferation policies, regional diplomatic and security initiatives, and bilateral security cooperation. As a result, general military tensions are lowered, regional problems are contained, even if not solved, and there are no major high-stakes revisionist challenges. Extended Deterrence does not disappear, since exposed allies will still need reassurance. But it is a less risky and potentially escalatory strategic enterprise that no longer needs to emphasise nuclear retaliation.

Khan (and Ahmadinejad /DPRK Politburo) Planet

Here, global hegemony is decisively rejected and undermined by the righteously inspired attainment and spreading of nuclear capability by determined revisionist nations, consciously inspired to change the American backed status quo in the interests of ideological, religious or nationalist aspirations. Even if great power rivalry is avoided so that their carefully insulated relations are not characterised by deterrence calculations, the demand for Extended Deterrence by lesser powers, from as many suppliers as possible, is very high. There is an inevitably strong nuclear component and serious consequent risks of confrontation, miscalculation and escalation.

American Dissuasion as the Highest Form of Extended Deterrence?

US writers point out that only America can provide the "dissuasion" which would avoid, or, at least, manage and moderate Khan Planet, by operating even before General Deterrence became applicable

*"Whereas deterrence is the logic of military coercion under dark war clouds, dissuasion is the logic of peacetime strategic influence in settings marked by wary manoeuvres ... dissuasion aims at urging potential geopolitical rivals not to become real rivals by making clear that any sustained malevolent conduct will be checkmated by the United States. It involves military pressure applied with a velvet glove, not crude threats of war and destruction."*¹⁴

Dissuasion, in its American meaning, is a concept associated with the strategic grandiloquence of GW Bush's presidency. Whether it will remain plausible will depend upon how far America maintains the economic, technical, military, diplomatic, and "soft" strengths which underpin its leadership role. The chance of having "dissuasion" exercised sympathetically in one's interest will offer a strong additional incentive for allies to seek US Extended Deterrence. But opponents and challengers will wish to believe that US power is on the decline and the future is unwritten. Dissuasion, even more than deterrence is an elusive concept to test historically. But in all the hard identified proliferation cases like Iran and North Korea, it has by definition failed and there is no reason to suppose that at this stage it will not go on failing. Libya seems the single recent exception and that regime has an idiosyncratic one-man worldview and decision system. It also faced a uniquely effective sanction arrangement. Politburos and Byzantine interlocking Iranian committees are likely to be harder to dissuade.

Technology, Numbers, Affordability and Rapid Availability

Amid the daily footage of grinding low intensity conflict in Afghanistan, it is important to remember that high-tech Armed Forces really do create new strategic balances. New military technologies, and the synergies available from their effective networking, promise to deny success to any conventional aggression by large but less technically sophisticated challenger forces. Aimed against leadership or national infrastructure targets such as power stations or desalination plants, aircraft, UAVs, or precision guided missiles with non-nuclear warheads, (including large advanced volumetric munitions, with explosive yields approaching those of small tactical nuclear weapons, designed to be effective against hardened or buried targets) could also progressively inflict some of the retaliatory damage of a nuclear strike -but without crossing the annually more fateful nuclear threshold.

But the procurement, training, maintenance and volunteer manpower costs of modern armoured divisions, fighter wings and major warships are enormously high and growing. Very few states can afford many such units, while the strategic lift to bring them to a threatened theatre is a major cost in itself. Outside forces which could not be rapidly transported would offer little in terms of Immediate Deterrence. They could only represent General Deterrence, through their ability to assist in the destruction of enemy forces and the eventual reconquest of Allied territory which may by then have been subjected to occupation and scarred by at least two campaign phases.

¹⁴ Richard L. Kugler, "Dissuasion as a strategic concept", Strategic Forum, Dec. 2002.

Shared intelligence and space imagery information, to track developments over the entire theatre and optimise long-range targeting, are also resources for deterrence by denial, in which, again, the US has a large comparative advantage. Very few conventional Armed Forces can keep up, securely digitally communicate, and interoperate with the US military, whose unassailed technical domination in the initial, high intensity phase was the positive message of the 2003 Iraq War. (The difficulties then encountered during the insurgency, and in Afghanistan, provide perhaps another relevant message for Extended Deterrence: that the aggressor leaderships may not now calculate that defeat by a US coalition would automatically lead to their permanent replacement by imposed regime change)

The rarity of modern forces capable of providing deterrence by denial, through their continually updated technical superiority over an aggressor, partially explains why true *collective security*, in which there would be multiple defenders, each capable of guaranteeing their most exposed allies, is unlikely to become a frequent form of Extended Deterrence. A further reason is the lack of regional cohesion, or of strategic cultures in most of the world which seek to become able to defend one's neighbours.

Missile Defences

These expensive and ambitious systems now embody the cumulative strategic impact of hundreds of billions of dollars invested by successive US administrations since 1945. They are becoming the great hope – perhaps the panacea – of both of the American Right and Left for ameliorating the tensions of Extended Deterrence-as a Heritage Foundation study puts it:

“it is becoming increasingly clear that the means for applying the policy of extended deterrence is changing in two fundamental ways. First, extended deterrence is less about retaliating against an attack and more about convincing the enemy that he is unlikely to achieve the political and military purposes behind an attack. Second, the rise of the multi-polar world means that the extended deterrence policy must be supported by a layered structure of alliances and security commitments. The new approach will place less emphasis on US retaliation for an attack and more emphasis on protecting and defending the ally. It will also rely less on a single commitment to alliance security and more on concurrent commitments.

*These changes are timely because a retaliation-based extended deterrence policy is [now] prone to breakdowns The relative clarity of the bipolar world permitted carefully designed signals about which actions by a potential aggressor would result in retaliatory and escalatory steps by the US. The multi-polar world makes sending these signals much more difficult, because the signals must apply to multiple actors operating in different contexts and with different perceptions of the US and its allies”.*¹⁵

While, for George Perkovich:

*“In discussing the Middle East, the concept of extending nuclear deterrence to Iran’s neighbors now is both premature and counterproductive. Conventional deterrence and missile defenses should be emphasized instead.”*¹⁶

¹⁵ Europe, Missile Defense, and the Future of Extended Deterrence, Baker Spring, Heritage Foundation, WebMemo 208, 25 September 2008.

¹⁶ George Perkovich "Extended deterrence On the Way To a Nuclear Free World" "International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, May 2009.

Missile Defences will rely upon US technology and linkage to American global sensor and C3I systems, even though they may be operated by other nations, as with the expanding number of warships of the Japanese, Korean, Australian, Spanish and Norwegian navies mounting the Aegis Combat System (ACS) or the land-based Patriot batteries in Germany, Greece, Israel, Japan, Kuwait, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Spain and Taiwan. They, and their successor systems, can therefore contribute to deterrence of any kind only in the context of operationally functioning US Alliance.

Seaborne missile defences, in particular, represent an exceptionally flexible and relatively non-provocative means of strengthening immediate deterrence in a crisis. The automatic precautionary arrival of additional Aegis capable vessels as regional tensions mount may become as common in the 21st Century as the dispatch of gunboats was in the 19th. High Altitude Airships are further mobile developments for missile defence, now under active investigation, although the Airborne Laser Program has been cancelled. Widespread theatre missile defences will also create air defence cover over wide areas, further blunting and denying possibilities of conventional aggression. The industrial and contractual aspects of these expensive and sophisticated systems will also, no doubt, add to the probability of their prolific introduction.

Americans would have every reason to send convincing numbers of mobile missile defence assets to a crisis, and to use them unhesitatingly if incoming threats were detected. The policy questions for others are then likely to be simply how much they want to participate in the ballistic missile defence project (and on what industrial terms) and how closely they would wish to be associated with the US handling of a specific crisis.

For deterrence purposes it is not of course necessary to assume that these missile defence systems will work perfectly at any particular time against all challengers' rockets and whatever countermeasures they may come to incorporate. The psychological impact of their presence by itself can be a huge strategic factor for reassurance, as with the early version of Patriot in Israel in 1991, which hit no incoming Iraqi missiles.

But it is hardly necessary to point out that, even perfect, rapidly deployable missile defences, proven capable of smothering anything launched by regional challengers, would be no substitute for successful political efforts to detoxify regional tensions. Unextinguished conflicts could still be expressed through state-sponsored subversion and terrorism, including the apocalyptic WMD scenarios which have been predicted for it.

Eastern Europe - Constructing Deterrent Credibility by Multidimensional Alliance Practice?

But, in Europe, it has become increasingly clear throughout 2009 that Russia will not accept, and the US will not try to impose, a situation where its nuclear potential might be even slightly degraded by NATO missile defences. This accentuates the problems of extended deterrence for Alliance countries as militarily exposed as the Baltics now are, and potential future members of NATO might become. Relatively new members on the periphery of the Alliance who could not be defended conventionally against Russian attack might also be seen as insufficiently important and central to the Alliance to justify initiating a nuclear exchange. For such countries, there is an uneasy feeling that the reliable supply of Extended Deterrence in adverse conditions may not meet their demand. But this fear is rarely vocalised, in case its public utterance turns into a self fulfilling warning about uncertain Alliance commitment.

When it does surface, it tends to refer to third parties, including .in this case, conveniently unofficial ones like Stratfor:

....” *security guarantees from third nations always suffer from credibility problem. History provides many examples when extended deterrence fails (e.g. British and French security guarantees did not deter Germany from attacking Poland in 1939). Extended nuclear deterrence is even more difficult to implement. For the United States, the United Kingdom or France to prove to other nations that they are ready to risk nuclear holocaust for the sake of the Baltic States is extremely difficult. For example, in Stratfor’s view, it is doubtful that Russia would believe the United States’ willingness to risk a nuclear confrontation over the Baltics*”.¹⁷

This situation will certainly not be improved if US nuclear weapons are withdrawn from Europe. Deterrence by retaliation would of course remain possible but with the obvious questions about the credibility of any nuclear response made even more sceptical. Improving conventional deterrence by denial would require expensive rearmament or provocative eastward rebasing which no one believes is practical. In the present climate, the problem is not militarily pressing, and the best available solution seems to be to raise the salience of Alliance membership and strengthen collective belief in its Article V obligations for over 20 other nations as a guarantee.

Proposals by Łukasz Kulesa of the Polish Institute of International Affairs would amount to what could be called *soft forward presence*:

“*From the perspective of Central Europe, the greatest danger...would be to create the impression that NATO has somehow gone soft [over] defending the territories of the member states...[there], would probably need to be ... a set of decisions giving credible reassurances on the value of Article V...it’s about putting the physical infrastructure of the alliance within the member state...some of the allies would most probably expect the United States to increase its presence on their territory, though not necessarily by building new bases or new installation.*”¹⁸ “

Associated ideas include more frequent exercises of Alliance forces, putting physical NATO infrastructure into Eastern European countries, and increasing the presence of US troops or Patriot batteries (even without permanent bases).

These seem to be acceptable responses to the dilemma at present. Similarly enhanced visits and connections (but in this case without troops) might also be developed for non-NATO nations whose security NATO and the EU was interested in preserving. It might amount to a form of *general extended economic and diplomatic deterrence*. This would be a constructivist approach, reliant upon the willed assertion and development of common identity, rather than hard defence capabilities. It would signal that, while the Alliance, or, naturally, the EU, would not go to war for these countries, painful economic sanctions and the rupture of diplomatic relationships, would have to be expected if they came under attack.

These are worthwhile approaches for exploration in today’s reasonably benign climate. But if they were continued when political relations had deteriorated to the point of real military

¹⁷ Vaidotas Urbelis and Kestutis Paulauskas “NATO’s Deterrence Policy – Time for Change? “Baltic Security & Defence Review, Volume 10, 2008.

¹⁸ See: <http://csis.org/blog/under-new-missile-defense-plan-there-are-still-options-assurance>

threat, they could become a kind of obsessive-compulsive defence- diplomatic displacement activity to avoid coping with the real anxieties of failing deterrent credibility. That, historically, was how the League of Nations started to behave as the 1930s darkened.

France and Britain: the Middle Eastern role of small nuclear powers with attitude

Britain and France have attempted for decades, sometimes rivalrously, to advance their economic and diplomatic interests in the Middle East by military assistance and security commitments which are also intended to contribute to the stability of an obviously vital region. For their part, Gulf countries, particularly Saudi Arabia, seem to have used the allocation of exceptionally lucrative arms, training and support contracts as a way of buying increased confidence that Western supplier states could be counted on to come to their aid in an emergency. (Part of the intention behind this process might be described as the pursuit of additional deterrence by purchased outside military entanglements.) Promising support to Gulf Allies consequently serves national interests in peace time and both Britain and France have multiple reasons to involve themselves in Extended Deterrence for the Gulf.

France has recently significantly raised its regional profile by opening its first permanent base in the Gulf, the naval, air and ground forces "Peace Camp" in Abu Dhabi in May 2009, followed by a report in *Le Figaro* that, according to an unnamed senior official, the new defence agreement with the United Arab Emirates was more stringently written than Article 5 of the NATO treaty and committed France to use "all available means" – and therefore presumably nuclear weapons – in defence of the UAE. It was claimed that the agreement has considerably increased the possibility of an "automatic activation of the bilateral contract, because an attack by Iran could now be interpreted as a violation of vital French interests."¹⁹ The exact extent of French commitment remains unclear, and no open or direct public nuclear promises have been made, but the agreement has evidently increased the salience of French military involvement with the UAE.

The UK has repeatedly emphasised its military commitment to the stability of the region, but, especially in view of the intensity of domestic political dispute about Trident replacement is quite unclear that it would go as far as any kind of a nuclear commitment. Nevertheless, the potential involvement of nuclear weapon states in regional conflict inevitably raises questions about nuclear use.

Both countries would face problems of credibility. Under what circumstances would the Americans not be involved in the defence of Gulf allies? And if they were, could the two European nuclear powers contribute more than additional, rubble-bouncing, devastation and shared responsibility in a nuclear use? On the other hand, their much smaller and less specialised nuclear capabilities would not matter since they would not be engaged in counterforce targeting, and it is not completely unreasonable to think that, as in Europe, their involvement could contribute some unquantifiable extra general deterrence value by creating additional sources of decision that a challenger would have to take into account. But in immediate circumstances of real tension, crisis control would be best achieved by the equivalent of a single Middle Eastern SACEUR, able to coordinate overall military responses and control escalation. Conversations to bring that about and achieve harmonised command and control arrangements, inevitably on the basis of American primacy, could be worthwhile but would be exceptionally sensitive.

¹⁹ *Le Figaro*, 15 June 2009.

Conclusion

The future of Extended Deterrence is protean. It will remain a permanent but extensively adjustable building block in international security architectures across the globe. Economies of scale, and cumulative US technical investment, mean that the most sought-after versions will be overwhelmingly produced in America. The addition of missile defences and other precision guided munitions will help its acceptable adaptation into more regional configurations than ever before, though Europe may be an exception. If wider security developments do in fact reduce the salience of nuclear weapons, Extended Deterrence could also become less and less nuclear. Alternatively, if the non-proliferation system fails, and the future involves more and more nuclear armed actors in, for example, an irretrievably more nuclear Middle East, a clearly announced outside nuclear component may be highly stabilising.

But Extended Deterrence may be put in place unwisely, or inadequately maintained with the necessary range of associated political and economic as well as military efforts. Its requirements will often be controversial and divisive. It will usually be so expensive that it cannot credibly be offered by many states in many situations. Even without a Manichaeian ideological disputes driving confrontation, it could still fail, catastrophically, in practice. That range of risk and promise is daunting but usually better than not trying at all. Although the sophistication and analytical rigour of thinking about Extended Deterrence has continually increased, the inherent complexities of extending it in the post-Cold War are greater than ever before – and the current international experiment with nuclear delegitimation will not make matters simpler. There are few grounds to assume that Extended Deterrence will in future either become less necessary or more likely to be introduced and managed successfully.

NATO and Extended Deterrence

Oliver Thränert¹

With his Prague speech of April 2009 in which he declared the global elimination of nuclear weapons as his goal, US President Barack Obama framed the international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation debate. At the same time, Obama's global zero vision has an impact on the upcoming debate about NATO's new strategic concept. The same is true for Obama's September 2009 decision to shelve previous plans of the Bush Administration to install missile defense components in Poland and the Czech Republic and at the same time to concentrate the future missile defense architecture on enhanced collaboration with NATO allies. Both decisions may pave the way for NATO to change from offense to defense in its extended deterrence posture.

In Prague, Obama announced that the United States, to overcome Cold War thinking, will reduce the role of nuclear weapons for its national security. As a consequence, the significance of nuclear weapons for NATO's deterrence posture can also be expected to diminish. At the same time, Obama made it clear that as long as nuclear weapons exist, the US will maintain a safe, secure and effective nuclear arsenal to deter any adversary and to guarantee that defense for US allies as well.

Since the 1960s, NATO has been practicing what came to be known as "nuclear sharing": The US deploys nuclear weapons under its strict control in Europe, whereas – in addition to US delivery systems stationed in Europe – some European Allies maintain aircraft and formerly also ballistic missiles for delivery of these US nuclear weapons during wartime. Moreover, participating in the NATO Nuclear Planning Group (NPG), non-nuclear allies take part in NATO's nuclear planning. There have been four purposes of this arrangement. First: Deterrence. During the Cold war, US nuclear forces were stationed in Europe to better deter the Soviet Union, which enjoyed a numerical superiority in conventional weaponry; today the purpose is to better hedge against Russian recidivism. Second: Transatlantic ties. The purpose of US nuclear weapons in Europe has been to bind the US to the European continent by making the US commitment more credible and visible. Third: Non-proliferation within the Alliance. US nuclear bases in Europe were meant to prevent US allies from developing their own nuclear weapons. And fourth: Cooperation. The purpose here is to give European allies a voice in NATO's nuclear force planning.

Today, many in Europe and in the US as well, believe that this arrangement is a relic of the Cold War. Others maintain that terminating the nuclear sharing arrangements and removing all US nuclear forces from Europe would sharpen the difference within the Alliance between nuclear weapons haves and the have-nots. Nuclear weapons would again be turned into symbols of purely national power and prestige with negative effects on the political dynamic

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inside NATO.² In the coming years, this debate will become even more controversial, because decisions have to be made about the modernization of the aging nuclear forces in Europe.

Modernizing nuclear forces in Europe?

At the peak of the Cold War, there were more than 7,000 US non-strategic nuclear weapons on a wide variety of platforms available in Europe. Today, only about 200 B-61 gravity bombs remain.³ In addition to US fighter wings based at Aviano/Italy and Incirlik/Turkey, the air forces of the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Greece, Turkey and Germany maintain aircraft and crews in different readiness states to use these nuclear weapons during wartime. These aircraft are aging, and their military value is often called into question. Although they have been adjusted to the changing strategic challenges and therefore still have useful military capabilities, the ranges of these aircraft as well as their airspace penetration capabilities remain limited. The US Air Force has increasingly lost its interest in the stationing of nuclear forces in Europe as has been underscored by the quiet drawdown of such weapons from the UK, Greece, Germany and Turkey in recent years. However, due to the aging of platforms, NATO at some point in the future has to make a political decision whether it sees the modernization of its nuclear forces in Europe as necessary.

In any event, it would be very difficult to modernize NATO's nuclear forces in Europe in terms of both hardware and political legitimization. There is a huge difference between maintaining nuclear forces in Europe and modernizing them. Any such decision process would trigger a debate about strategic requirements, relationships with Russia and other countries to be deterred, the impact of such a decision on the nuclear non-proliferation regime, technical issues and costs. Most importantly, a decision to modernize nuclear forces in Europe would signal that the Alliance is inclined to use nuclear weapons for deterrence until 2050 and beyond – a proposition in stark contrast to President Obama's global zero vision.

With the East-West confrontation and the Soviet threat now history and the US government aiming at the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, it seems very unlikely that a public policy campaign in favor of modernizing nuclear forces in Europe could be successful. In fact, such a debate would turn out to be an uphill battle for politicians in all countries currently hosting US nuclear forces – with the possible exception of Turkey.

In Germany, on the insistence of the liberal party, whose party leader Guido Westerwelle became Germany's new foreign minister, the government now aims at the complete elimination of the remaining US nuclear weapons from the German territory. While the new conservative-liberal German government intends to act in cooperation with the US and NATO, it is now crystal clear that Germany will not support any initiative to modernize nuclear capable delivery systems such as fighter aircraft in a nuclear role. Any plans to give the Eurofighter Typhoon a nuclear role let alone to purchase the US F-35 aircraft as a national asset for nuclear missions are now anathema. As a result, as far as Germany is concerned, nuclear sharing is doomed to be phased out by about 2020. Many in the Christian Democratic Party may oppose such a development, but given the widespread anti-nuclear sentiment in the

² See David S. Yost, Assurance and US extended deterrence in NATO, in: *International Affairs*, Vol. 85, No. 4/2009, pp. 755-780; Michael Rühle, NATO and Extended Deterrence in a Multinuclear World, in: *Comparative Strategy*, No. 28/2009, pp. 10-16.

³ See Robert S. Norris/Hans M. Kristensen, Nuclear Notebook: US nuclear forces, 2009, in: *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, March/April 2009, pp. 59-69.

German public and President Obama's Global Zero initiative, a vast majority of Germans believe that their country should make a contribution to his effort to make the world free of nuclear weapons.

And if Germany refuses, other NATO partners are unlikely to go it alone. Some Central and Eastern European NATO partners might become interested in filling the gap, but they are barred from hosting US nukes due to NATO's three no's first articulated in 1996 and then reiterated in the course of the NATO-Russia Founding Act of 1997: no intention, no plan and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members.

Currently, Belgium and the Netherlands operate F-16 aircraft for nuclear missions, while Germany and Italy use Tornados. Both weapon systems could be in operation until at least about 2020. In general, there are two replacement options under consideration, the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter or the Eurofighter Typhoon. The Hague's decision to participate in the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program is based on the assumption that this aircraft could be used not only in a conventional but also in a nuclear role. However, a decision has not been made yet whether the new aircraft should be used for nuclear missions. Belgian policy-makers consider abandoning fighter aircraft altogether and working with France and the Netherlands to secure Belgian airspace. Thus, Belgium is likely to end its participation in NATO's nuclear sharing. Italy may in the future join the Netherlands in using the F-35 in a nuclear role as it, like the Netherlands, is participating in the F-35 development and production program. But it can not be taken for granted that Rome will take a decision to adopt the F-35. In addition, Turkey and Greece, which continue to earmark F-16 aircraft for nuclear missions although in limited state of readiness, could pass decisions to replace their F-16 with F-35 Joint Strike Fighters. Furthermore, the US Air Force is using F-16s based in Italy and Turkey in nuclear roles. Absent a decision by its European partners to introduce F-35 for nuclear missions, the US can hardly be expected to replace nuclear F-16s with nuclear F-35s to be stationed in Europe.⁴

To be sure, any possible decision about modernizing NATO's nuclear forces in Europe would be taken in light of NATO-Russia relations. This relationship cooled down for a number of reasons including the Caucasian war of summer 2008 and the Russian recognition of Abchasia and South Ossetia as well as Russian complains about NATO's enlargement policy. The Obama Administration is aiming at improved relations with Russia, but it seems safe to assume that the NATO-Russian relationship will continue to go through ups and downs for the years to come. Neither will both sides solve all issues on the agenda, nor will relations deteriorate to a point where a direct military confrontation becomes more likely. If the latter would to occur, NATO would be confronted with an adversary possessing a powerful nuclear arsenal. But Moscow does not have a huge numerical superiority in conventional weapons anymore as it did during the Cold War. In reversal of the Cold War situation, NATO today has a huge conventional superiority over Russia and does not need to think about using forward-based nuclear weapons in the early hours of a military conflict. Even if relations with Russia would deteriorate, the value of US forward-based nuclear forces in Europe therefore seems questionable. From a Russian perspective, the presence or absence of a limited number of US nuclear weapons in Europe with limited capabilities to penetrate Russian airspace hardly would make a difference in its military calculations. Furthermore, politically, many would fear that a decision to modernize NATO's nuclear forces would be perceived in Moscow as an act of aggression which would severely damage NATO-Russia relations.

⁴ See Ian Anthony, *The Future of Nuclear Weapons in NATO*, Paper presented at the 20th Cercle Strategique Franco-Allemand, 11-12 June 2009.

The second region to be taken into consideration when discussing NATO's possible nuclear modernization is the Middle East. Today, we do not know yet whether it will be possible to stop Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapons option. Moreover, we do not know yet which route Iran will take as a country given the tremendous power struggles within the religious and political elite. If Iran becomes nuclear-armed and at the same time more assertive vis-à-vis Israel and its other neighbors, NATO will come into play not at least because NATO ally Turkey shares a border with Iran and the Alliance is cooperating with Israel and Arab countries through the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative. Although not very likely, a confrontation between Iran and the US/NATO could not be ruled out, in which case nuclear weapons could play a role. Again, however, in pure military terms, it would seem unnecessary to have available nuclear forces in Europe. The US could deter Iran with its strategic as well as its sea-based non-strategic forces (sea-launched cruise missiles on attack submarines). Furthermore, modern conventional weapons could be used which in many ways perform as nuclear weapons in many challenging military missions.

Hence, from a purely military point of view it seems reasonable to argue that NATO already today does not need land-based US nuclear weapons in Europe. In the future, the modernization of these forces would not be necessary even if the political and military environment were to change dramatically. Against this background and given the global zero debate, it seems unreasonable to expect European governments to successfully legitimize a modernization of NATO nuclear assets in Europe. But while no modernization in the future is one thing, unilateral withdrawal now is a quite different matter. As the following section shows, there are a couple of reasons why NATO should not abandon nuclear sharing today, and why a substitute for this years-long practice would be necessary when NATO arrives at the point where the exiting platforms would need to be phased out.

Alliance cohesion

Extended deterrence has always been a complicated endeavor, particularly because credible deterrence is not the same as credible reassurance for allies. During the Cold War, numerous discussions took place within NATO about the requirements for extended deterrence, with US views often differing from those of its European allies, directly exposed to the Soviet threat. Today, things are becoming even more complicated within NATO. The perception of Russia differs among NATO members, with new allies and also Norway perceiving an evolving threat, and most other NATO countries being much less alarmed by the current Russian foreign policy. Turkey, for its part, feels more threatened by current developments in the Middle East, particularly the Iranian nuclear program, than other NATO members do.

Eastern Europeans value America's presence in Europe to counterbalance Russia in light of their specific historical experience of the Cold War, when they for more than forty years became part of the Soviet empire against their will. This still distinguishes them from other NATO members, who experienced the Cold War from the other side of the Iron Curtain. Today, many new NATO members see Russia as becoming ever more authoritarian. Moreover, Moscow's foreign and security policy is perceived as assertive if not aggressive. Particularly after the Caucasian crisis of 2008, Eastern Europeans more than ever feel the need to engage the US militarily in Europe for their protection. Against this background, these new NATO members can be expected to oppose any development that might lead to the withdrawal of US nuclear forces from Europe now. They would fear a weakening of the US commitment to Europe. Given these threat perceptions, a debate about US nuclear withdrawal from Europe could trigger a controversy within the Alliance that would undermine NATO

cohesion. Many NATO members could lose their confidence in the alliance's defense commitments in general and the US commitment to defend Europe in particular.

Ending the US nuclear force presence in Europe would also end the NATO allies influence on NATO's nuclear policy making. Only the US and the U.K. would remain as NATO partners directly involved in NATO nuclear policy. True, the work of the NPG would nevertheless continue, but this body would certainly lose its significance over a short time, while NATO members would lose their nuclear competences.

In addition, NATO's nuclear sharing has always been a nuclear non-proliferation endeavor. After all, this concept was born during the 1960s at a time when the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) was negotiated and the US needed to convince the Federal Republic of Germany to forgo a nuclear weapons option and to adhere to the NPT as a non-nuclear state. To reassure Germany and to give Bonn as well as other European allies a say regarding NATO's nuclear policy, the NPG was created and the practice of nuclear sharing implemented. Today, Turkey is sometimes considered the most likely candidate to develop its own nuclear weapons. True, it would not be easy for Ankara to conduct a clandestine nuclear weapons program because it could not be sure that this would go undetected. But if Iran pursues its current nuclear course and if at the same time the US were to withdraw all its nuclear installations from Incirlik, those voices in Turkey that already talk about a Turkish bomb would become much stronger and influential.

In many ways, a removal of US nuclear forces could have negative effects on the Alliance. It could highlight different threat perceptions among allies; contribute to the loss of confidence in the US commitment to Europe; diminish the role of NATO allies in nuclear policy making; and make under certain circumstances nuclear proliferation within NATO more likely.

At the same, the end of US nuclear bases in Europe would not automatically be the end of some form of extended deterrence. Nuclear options could be replaced by advanced conventional capabilities. Moreover, US sea-based nuclear forces such as cruise missiles deployed on attack submarines could become more important for extended deterrence in Europe, as is already the case regarding Japan. But an important NATO symbol irrevocably would be phased out, for a return of US nuclear forces to European territories could hardly be envisioned unless a severe crisis involving Russia or the Middle East were to take place. In such a scenario, if Washington would decide to re-deploy nuclear forces in Europe, not only would this cause tremendous logistical problems, but it would also probably contribute to crisis escalation.

Missile Defense as a substitute for Nuclear Sharing

Prudent policy-makers on both sides of the Atlantic should not withdraw US nuclear forces from Europe in the next years. Such a decision would only highlight differences within the Alliance in addition to other controversies, for instance regarding NATO's engagement in Afghanistan. At the same time, a modernization of NATO's aging nuclear forces would militarily be not necessary, have a negative on the nuclear non-proliferation regime, and would hardly be swallowed by the already nuclear-averse audiences in Western Europe where new nuclear weapons would need to be deployed.

Contradictory as these arguments may seem, there is a possibility to reconcile them: While US nuclear forces still remain in Europe, NATO should step-by-step develop missile defenses into an ever more important element of its defense posture, adding a strong element of

deterrence by denial. Establishing an effective missile defense system could be substituted for nuclear sharing as a means to keep the US committed to European defense over time. Moreover, NATO allies would be given a new opportunity to actively participate in NATO force planning. Specific arrangements similar to the work of the NPG could be the focal point for transparency and consultation. Because effective missile defenses would make improved protection available particularly for allies such as Turkey, those NATO partners would not feel inclined to develop their own nuclear weapons. Finally, a NATO missile defense endeavor would not differentiate between nuclear and non-nuclear European NATO countries, thereby avoiding special roles for France or Great Britain in that field. The aim would be to have a NATO missile defense as a substitute for the US nuclear presence in Europe developed at a time when a decision to modernize these forces would need to be made. At this point, instead of investing in contentious new nuclear forces, NATO would be in the process of establishing efficient missile defense architecture.

Most significantly, as opposed to US nuclear forces in Europe, a NATO missile defense project would make sense militarily. Such a defense would deal with one of the most likely military threats the Alliance will have to face in the coming years. Particularly in the Middle East, which is to say in the immediate NATO neighborhood, more nuclear powers may emerge, some possessing evermore advanced ballistic missiles. Such nuclear newcomers certainly would not be as irrational as to directly attack NATO, still the most powerful military alliance in the world. But they might conduct aggression against their non-nuclear neighbors. NATO as an Alliance that feels responsible for maintaining world order and which might be mandated by the UN Security Council for military operations to reconstitute order could come into a situation where it would need to decide whether it wants to use its conventional forces against aggression in a contingency that might result in severe damage to its own populations caused by the use of nuclear ballistic weapons by the aggressor. Deliberately accepting one's own vulnerability as was the case during the Cold War does not seem the appropriate strategic approach in such a context. Moreover, even limited missile defenses would have an impact on an aggressor's calculations, as he could not be certain actually to cause damage with his nuclear missiles. Despite all their technical limitations, missile defenses could provide a damage limitation option for situations where escalation to the nuclear level could not be ruled out.⁵

NATO already is developing its Active Layered Theatre Ballistic Missile Defense System (ALTBMD). The aim of this project is to combine existing as well as future missile defense systems in order to protect troops against short- and medium-range missiles. Much will depend on whether it will be possible to stop Iran on its way to become a nuclear power. In any event, missile defense will continue to be a significant part of the NATO defense posture. The Obama Administration's change of emphasis from interceptors to be deployed in Poland to sea-based systems such as Aegis which would cruise the Mediterranean or forward-based defenses such as THAAD has the advantage of better protecting NATO's southern flank.

Of course there is one important caveat to making missile defense a substitute for nuclear sharing: Although US/NATO missile defense activities are not directed against Russia, Moscow often perceives them as a threat to its own security. To convince Russia that America's or NATO's missile defenses are not aimed at undermining Moscow's nuclear

⁵ See this argumentation in more detail: Oliver Thränert, Europe's Need for a Damage-Limitation Option, in: Michael Emerson (Ed.), Readings in European Security Volume 5, European Security Forum, Brussels/London/Geneva 2009, pp. 62-77.

deterrence posture, the most persuasive approach is to establish missile defense cooperation between the two sides. Indeed, at their summit meeting in Moscow in July 2009, Presidents Obama and Medvedev reached agreement on the establishment of a joint data exchange center and on a joint threat assessment of ballistic missile threats. It appears that it may be possible to make the missile defense issue less controversial between Russia and the West, particularly now that President Obama shelved previous plans to deploy missile defense elements in new NATO countries. Indeed, as far as missile proliferation is concerned, Russia and NATO more or less are facing the same threats. Therefore, their aim should be to cooperate as far as possible in establishing missile defenses.

Only if it were feasible to establish close NATO-Russia cooperation in the field of missile defenses will it be possible to substitute missile defense efforts for nuclear sharing. Otherwise, missile defense will trigger controversies not only between Washington and Moscow, but also within the Alliance. To be sure, NATO/US-Russia missile defense cooperation is not an easy undertaking. Numerous problems would need to be resolved. Most importantly, both sides would need to develop trust and confidence over time to allow for transparency in technical cooperation. In addition, China needs to be taken into consideration. Already today, Beijing perceives NATO-Russia missile defense cooperation as counter to its national security interest, given that China has only a small force of ballistic nuclear missiles. Hence, both NATO and Russia should seek a dialogue with China about the future of missile defense at the earliest possible junction.

As far as missile defense is concerned, there are numerous political, technical as well as financial hurdles to overcome. But given the growing dangers resulting from nuclear and ballistic missile proliferation, however, there is hardly any alternative.

Cooperative missile defense as a means to achieve global zero

NATO's extended deterrence strategy will soon arrive at a crossroads. For the moment, the Alliance should not withdraw US nuclear forces so as to avoid yet another deep controversy among its members. At the same time, missile defenses should step-by-step substitute for the role that US nuclear forces in Europe play for NATO cohesion. This effort should be undertaken in accordance and in cooperation with Russia (and China) wherever possible. If successful, NATO-Russia missile defense cooperation could become the nucleus for a wider missile defense that could provide some re-assurance against a nuclear break-out in a world free of nuclear weapons. Only this way could President Obama's vision become true, for a world with no nukes would not be a world without dictatorships. Verification therefore always will have limitations, and it would not be a world without missiles, as increasingly more countries will develop civilian space programs.

Extended Deterrence and Assurance in Central Europe

Lukasz Kulesa¹

For the region of Central Europe, including for the purposes of this essay the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary and the “Baltic 3” – Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, geography and history have dictated the need to pay special attention to the issue of security and survival of the state. The nation-states which emerged from the collapse of the Soviet empire nurtured the feelings of victimization and distrust for both its potent neighbour to the East, and the “West”, frequently accused of ignoring or betraying the interests of the region.

Despite their legacy of successful political, societal and economic transformation, and membership in NATO and the European Union, security cultures of the countries in the region are still characterized by the fear of abandonment and a high degree of caution regarding political declarations not backed by actions. Especially with regards to the three Baltic states and Poland, their quest for external guarantees did not stop at securing formal commitments from NATO. The credibility of both conventional and nuclear deterrence is constantly assessed against the background of outside developments and internal state of the affairs within the Alliance.

The starting point of this analysis in the description of the limitations of the shape of the deterrence posture in the countries of the region during the process of NATO enlargement. A political agreement reached with Russia precluded the stationing of nuclear weapons or substantial combat forces at the territory of the countries admitted to the Alliance. In practice, the credibility of the NATO’s commitments depended mostly on the perception of the strength and unity of the Alliance itself. Whereas such a solution was fully acceptable in the 1990s, the second part of the essay describes the factors which in the last years contributed to the diminishing of the credibility of deterrence pledges: the change of the situation in Russia, the policy of the new US administration, and doubts over NATO’s cohesion. The third chapter describes the actions taken at the initiative of the countries of the region to influence the policies of NATO and the US towards increased reassurance of the Eastern allies. The possibilities of the emergence of the alternative sources of security guarantees (EU, European states) are also discussed. Finally, the article turns to the unsuccessful attempts to establish a form of extended deterrence for the benefit of Georgia and Ukraine.

This text draws partly upon the interviews conducted with the representatives of the public administration (MFAs, MoDs) and strategic community of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Lithuania and Latvia in the framework of the ongoing PISM-SIPRI project “The attitudes of the Central and Eastern European members of NATO towards the Alliance’s nuclear strategy”.

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“Soft” extended deterrence for Central Europe

In the 1990s, the military capabilities of Russia were at its lowest point, therefore the issue of providing visible extended deterrence for the countries of Central Europe which were to be admitted to NATO was seen as a minor one. Much more pressing was the need to show the opponents of the enlargement, both in the NATO member states and in Russia, that the fears of the negative impact of the process for the strategic stability in Europe were unfounded.

Among the most prominent arguments against the enlargement were the ones concerning the “encirclement” of Russia and the possibility of using the territory of its neighbours as possible launching pods for an attack against Russia. To offset those a political deal was agreed by NATO with Russia on the limitation of the Alliance’s presence in Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. Negotiated in 1996 and confirmed by the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act, this political commitment involved:

- 1) the nuclear “three no-s”: the Alliance declared it had “no intention, no plan and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members, nor any need to change any aspect of NATO's nuclear posture or nuclear policy”;
- 2) in the “current and foreseeable security environment”, the pledge to fulfil the collective defence and other functions not by “permanent stationing of substantial combat forces”, but through “ensuring the necessary interoperability, integration, and capability for reinforcement”;
- 3) to rely on the „adequate infrastructure” to fulfil the above-mentioned task².

These provisions were criticized inside NATO as an attempt to placate the Russian leadership at the expense of the Alliance’s cohesion. Nevertheless, they provided a political cover for President Boris Yeltsin in his decision to continue the cooperation with the Alliance despite its decision to move on with the enlargement process. The prospective member states, which had no formal power to influence the Alliance’s decisions, concentrated on the assurances that the future observance of the promises made to Moscow relies on the developments of the situation in Russia. If the security situation changed to worse, the Alliance would be prepared to modify its defence posture accordingly. According to Ronald Asmus, who was a member of the US negotiation team, a deployment of a corps-size unit to Poland were promised in case of emergency.³ While such plans were never made public, a contingency plan for Alliance’s actions in the context of Article 5 threat to Poland was drafted by the NATO planners in 1999 in order to address Warsaw’s reservations about its “second-class” membership status.

The Alliance’s preoccupation with the stabilization of the Balkans, and later with the global antiterrorist campaign following the attack of 11 September 2001 kept the issue of the credibility of extended deterrence at a back-burner. At that period, Russia was slowly recovering from the political and economic turmoil of the 1990s, and militarily preoccupied mainly with the situation in the North Caucasus. Also, the decision to support the US in the anti-terrorist campaign contributed to the scale-down of anti-NATO rhetoric. It is worth

² *Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation*, 27 May, 1997; available at: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_25468.htm

³ R. Asmus, *Shattered Confidence In Europe*, “Washington Post”, 19 September 2009, available at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/09/18/AR2009091803046.html>

noting that the implementation of the decision to enlarge NATO to Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia, which in other circumstances would have been firmly opposed by Russia, was not attacked with the same ferocity as the decision on the first “wave” of enlargement.

Credibility of deterrence under stress

The credibility of the Alliance’s security guarantees has been recently called into question. Three major factors cause the renaissance of interest in extended deterrence and repeated calls for the need to re-assure the countries of Central Europe about the dependability of the United States and other allies.

The change in Russia’s strategy towards the West. In the narrative which gained in importance in Russia in the first years of the XXIst century, its security was directly threatened by the advance of the Western institutions into so-called traditional sphere of interests, which involved the countries of the post-Soviet space. For Russia, the “colour revolutions” in Georgia (2003) and Ukraine (2004) seemed to signify a renewed effort to roll back the political and economic influence of Russia in its immediate neighbourhood, and possibly also to prepare the ground for the political changes in Moscow. The continuation of the process of NATO enlargement (commonly referred to as “NATO expansion”) was considered a part of the same grand plan. Consequently, the Russian government decided to include the military dimension to its efforts to counter the Western incursions and re-establish Russia as a great power. The reform program of the Russian military accelerated, with a seven-fold increase in defence budget between 2000 and 2008. Russian strategic aviation resumed regular patrol flights, the yearly number of patrols of the strategic submarine forces increased significantly. Highly-publicized events such as the visit of Russian ships and strategic bombers to Venezuela received wide coverage in the Russian media, as a sign of re-emergence of Russia as a centre of power with global reach. The decision to unilaterally suspend the observation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe in December 2007 was supposed to signal Russia’s dissatisfaction with the regional security architecture.

What might be seen from Russia as defensive measures, in the countries of Central Europe was perceived as a confirmation of the deep-seated suspicions about the aggressive and revisionist character of the Russian state. Together with Russia’s actions clearly directed against the NATO countries of Central Europe (e.g. frequent violations of airspace of the Baltic countries by the Russian aircraft), they seem to represent a preparatory stage for launching a more aggressive policy vis-à-vis the region. Russia’s assertions that it should have a say in the strategic decisions involving the region, for example the MD deployment, were interpreted as a first step in re-gaining control over them or emulating the Cold War “Finnish scenario” of limited independence. The 2008 crisis in the South Caucasus, culminating in the August war with Georgia, raised further the level of suspicion about Russia’s motives. In the prevailing interpretation, by provoking a conflict with Georgia, Russia managed to test the limits of support by the United States, NATO and the EU for the pro-Western forces in the post-Soviet space.

Despite the Georgian-Russian war, the return of the discussions on the need to provide Central Europe with re-assurances about the continued attachment of NATO and the US to their defence has only remote connection with the assessment of the changes of military balance in the region. Although the process of military reform and modernization of Russia’s armed forces is closely monitored, Russia is not considered to be able to pose a threat to NATO countries. However, the prevailing feeling in the Central European countries is that

actions to re-assure the Allies should be taken as soon as possible, in order to establish the “rules of the game” for NATO-Russia relations in the next decades.

The policies of the Obama administration. During the presidency of George W. Bush, the position of Central Europe in the hierarchy of US allies reached an unprecedented level. As firm supporters of the administration’s antiterrorist strategy and the intervention in Iraq, countries of Central Europe seemed to represent the preferred partners for the US, which found it difficult to enlist the support of the major Western European countries (France and Germany). The pro-Americanism of the region made it also the perfect target for the Bush administration’s plans for the deployment of the Missile Defence installations in Europe. Taking into account this context, the advent of the new, democratic administration was greeted with caution. At minimum, countries of the region expected to be informed about the plans of the administration regarding the future of Missile Defence, relations with Russia and the NATO policy. Whereas the US policy of “reset” of relations with Russia was introduced early in 2009, the formulation of other elements of the US agenda was repeatedly delayed. This created a strong impression of neglecting the interests of the region and downgrading the relationship – as visible in the open letter published by a group of eminent personalities (former politicians, diplomats, and intellectuals) from the region in July 2009.⁴

The roll-out of the new approach to Missile Defence by the US in September 2009 did not help in the strengthening of the credibility of the administration. The news of the US decision reached Poland and the Czech Republic before the authorities had a chance to examine the details of the US strategy, which envisaged a much less important role for Poland in the new configuration of the MD (and seemingly no role for the Czech Republic). The subsequent visit of the US Vice-President Joseph Biden to the region eased the tensions, but the confidence in the US has not entirely recovered.

The state of the Atlantic Alliance. Developments within NATO added to the perception of decreased reliability of the extended deterrence pledges towards Central Europe. Initially, the focus on out-of-area missions (the Balkans, later Afghanistan) was viewed in a positive light, as a way to preserve the relevance of the Alliance in the new strategic environment. Also, the process of transformation of the Member States’ armed forces concentrated on expeditionary capabilities was accepted and implemented. Nevertheless, the broadening of Alliance’s agenda was seen as an addition to, and not replacement of the traditional tasks of NATO.

The countries of Central Europe have taken for granted that with the change of situation in their neighbourhood (increased assertiveness of Russia), the Alliance as a whole would re-emphasize the importance of the collective defence function. Also, in their views, it should have confirmed its support for the membership of Ukraine and Georgia in NATO, despite Russia’s opposition and the internal problems of both candidates. Instead, they have found it difficult to discuss collective defence within the Alliance, which was preoccupied with the operation in Afghanistan and divided over the interpretation of the Russian foreign policy. The threat perception differed, the majority of the Allies underlined rather the need to engage and cooperate with Russia, especially taken into account its increased value as a partner in conduct of the Afghan operation. The fiasco of the Bucharest Summit, where the coalition of Central European countries led by Poland did not manage to persuade other Allies to grant the Membership Action Plan to Ukraine and Georgia, was seen as a sign that the Alliance is

⁴ *An Open Letter to the Obama Administration from Central and Eastern Europe*, available at: http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,6825987,An_Open_Letter_to_the_Obama_Administration_from_Central.html

moving in a wrong direction. A modest reaction of NATO to the Georgian-Russian war in August 2008, and the decision to resume the contacts with Russia despite its continued violation of the ceasefire agreement, also testified to the fact that corrective measures should urgently be agreed to restore the importance of Art. 5 in Alliance's thinking.

Strengthening assurance and deterrence in Central Europe

Nuclear weapons, be it at the disposal of NATO countries or Russia, have only marginal importance in the public discourse and for the policymakers in Central Europe. The increased demand for re-assurance about the credibility of security guarantees of NATO and the United States works at different levels, and should not be artificially narrowed down to the issue of credible nuclear extended deterrence, or the continued presence of the US tactical nuclear weapons in Europe.⁵ From the point of view of the Central European "consumers" of extended deterrence, as important as the existence of the adequate military means to fulfil the defence pledge is the psychological component – the belief that the providers of extended deterrence share their threat perception and understand their sensitivities.

NATO. At the psychological and political levels, the countries of the region expect their partners at NATO to recognize that Russia's policy may be a source of potential threats to the NATO Member States and the partners in the joint neighbourhood. Accordingly, the Alliance should not ignore the provocative actions of Moscow in the interest of maintaining the policy of engagement with Russia.⁶ Defining the limits of the "pragmatic partnership" would help to offset the impression that the Alliance has adopted a *de facto* policy of not upsetting Russia. A strong signal of the shared perception of security threats would ideally be included in the new NATO strategic concept document.

Another aspect of the re-assurance would involve the increased attention to article 5 tasks in the functioning of the Alliance, including the resumption of the practice of defence planning, either in the form of updating or preparing plans for Art. 5 contingencies for specific countries or regions, or through more generic approach to the planning of defence of Alliance's territory and population. Correspondingly, the process of shaping the capabilities of the armed forces and their training (both national and multinational exercises) should take into account the need to sustain the readiness of NATO member states to act together in the collective defence scenarios, such as repelling an attack or the demonstration of forces in a given region. The role of nuclear weapons in such scenarios would need to be carefully examined.

⁵ According to publicly available information, the issue of US tactical nuclear weapons in Europe it is considered a secondary one in the overall reflection about the credibility of Art. 5. No willingness to increase the operational profile of nuclear weapons or to change the "three no-s" policy is expressed in the open fora. Additionally, many experts and officials in Central Europe express reservations about starting a debate at NATO which could result in a US decision to withdraw the nuclear weapons from Europe. It is highlighted that such developments would create additional platform of conflict between the Allies and send the message of Alliance downgrading the collective defence function. Also, it is pointed out that the US and some allies may opt for quick gains ("global zero" agenda) instead of seriously debating the role of nuclear weapons for deterrence, and possible replacements.

⁶ A case in point is the initial lack of NATO's reaction to the joint Russian-Belorussian exercises "Zapad-2009" [West-2009], conducted in September 2009, mainly at the territory of Belarus and Kaliningrad. The scenario of the exercise involved the suppression of the Polish minority-led insurgency, supported by the regular armed forces of the neighbours, by the joint Russian-Belorussian combat group. Only in November 2009, under the pressure of a group of Member States, North Atlantic Council formally expressed its concern over the impact of such exercises on NATO-Russia relations.

Thirdly, a visible form of seeking re-assurance is an increase of demand for NATO's presence in the region (decisions on the location of new command & control structures, NATO institutions). Recent decisions to establish NATO's Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence in Estonia, main base for the jointly-acquired C-17s (Heavy Airlift Wing initiative) in Hungary, or the elements of NATO's C3 battalion in Poland can be interpreted as reactions to this demand. Granted, the efforts to place the elements of NATO infrastructure at the territory of the new Allies have often been justified along the lines of prestige, practicality, the need to avoid discrimination or even financial benefits for the concerned states. However, the argument about the need to secure physical presence of multinational NATO units as a means to strengthen the link between the Allies is also present. None of the above-mentioned deployments contradict the 1997 pledge concerning the stationing of "substantial combat forces". One might expect more pressure from the Central European members of NATO, especially the Baltic 3, to examine the options for new permanent deployments of NATO forces and installations on their territories.

The United States. The US is still considered in the region as the most important member of NATO and an indispensable actor in guaranteeing the security of Europe. The US is also believed to be the only country capable of influencing Russia's behaviour during a possible crisis involving Central Europe, when it might be difficult to secure the political cohesion of the European Union or NATO. The attitude of the United States is of crucial importance to the countries of the region. Besides the formal security guarantee through Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, efforts are made to establish multidimensional links with the US in order to guarantee its attention and support during a crisis.

The deployment of the US conventional military forces to the region was seen as the most credible backup of the US security assurances. The prospects of hosting US bases seemed for a long time unrealistic, taken into account the overall scaling down of the US military presence abroad and the political limitations connected with the 1997 NATO-Russia agreement. However, when the US began the process of selecting the partners in the Missile Defence project, the countries of the region immediately volunteered to host the elements of the system. One of the main arguments supporting their participation highlighted the crucial importance of the planned installations for the security of the United States, which would guarantee Washington involvement in the affairs of the region (this line of thinking was particularly visible in the Czech Republic). In Poland, the discussion about the project evolved towards a more comprehensive approach, where it was claimed that Warsaw should use the negotiations over MD to significantly broaden the relations with the US and establish a system of contacts which would go beyond the MD project.⁷ Consequently, the political declaration which accompanied the legally-binding basing agreement signed in August 2008 provided for a wide-ranging cooperation and consultations in the political sphere (in the format of the reinforced Strategic Dialogue and a new body – Strategic Cooperation Consultative Group), military-to-military contacts, defence industrial and research cooperation.⁸ At the request of the Polish side, a pledge to deploy the US Army *Patriot* missile battery to Poland was included in the declaration. Taken into account a limited military value of such deployment, it was clearly to serve as a political symbol of the US

⁷ See e.g. L. Kulesa, *Missile Defence Dossier. The Polish Perspective*, 'Points de Vue', Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, 2007. As the controversies surrounding the MD project in the US were growing, in the final stages of the negotiations the Polish administration emphasized that the agreement should outlive the Bush presidency.

⁸ *Declaration on Strategic Cooperation between the United States of America and the Republic of Poland*, Warsaw, 20 August, 2008.

commitment to the security of Poland. Paradoxically, with the change of the concept of the MD, this pledge can become the most tangible legacy of the MD project in Central Europe. The Obama administration decided to carry on with the deployment plans, and the first deployments of the US *Patriot* unit from Germany to Poland (on a rotational basis) is planned for the first part of 2010.

The efforts to secure the US interest in the security of the region continue. One track involves communicating to Washington that the Central European countries can act as useful allies in supporting the US strategy globally (involvement in Afghanistan, promotion of democratic and economic transformation) and regionally (supporting pro-Western forces in the post-Soviet space). The other track consists of the attempts to warn against the negative consequences of neglecting the security of the region for the long-term interests of the United States. The countries of Central Europe might be less willing to support global US security initiatives – be it in the framework of NATO or “coalitions of the willing”, if their more basic interests are not taken care of. Also, the diminished credibility of the US security guarantees for some NATO members may be damaging not only for the US image in Europe, but also in other regions.

The European Union and other European countries. For the foreseeable future, the EU or any particular European state or group of states would not be seen as credible alternatives to NATO and the US in providing hard security guarantees for Central Europe. It should be noted that significant changes have occurred in this area since the accession of the Central European states to the European Union. It is recognized in the region that the membership in the EU is a unique project, which binds the member states together to the degree unprecedented in history. In many areas connected with foreign policy, including the European Neighbourhood Policy, development assistance or energy policy, the European Union is the most important actor and the member states increasingly turn to Brussels as the main forum of interaction.

In its present state, the EU could be described in terms of “existential deterrence”, with its size, internal cohesion and potential discouraging other actors to contemplate aggressive acts against its members. An attractive hypothesis, it is nevertheless difficult to test because of the overlapping of the membership in NATO and the EU. Crucially, in terms of outsiders’ perceptions, the EU does not seem to possess the profile to act as a credible actor for deterrence/assurance. Its foreign policy is believed to be incoherent and ineffective. The security mechanisms of the ESDP are still underdeveloped, and matched with rather basic capabilities. Even with the changes introduced by the Lisbon Treaty, the EU is not seen as an organization providing its member states with security guarantees across all spectrum of threats. In the military sphere, where the credibility of extended deterrence is decided, the EU appears to be a particularly weak contestant.

As for the major European states – partners of the Central European countries, they still suffer from credibility problem having their roots in history and their approach both to Russia and to the region. Whereas the United States is viewed as a country which (to a certain degree) subscribes to an idealistic agenda in foreign policy, the major European powers are still seen through the prism of *realpolitik*. Notwithstanding the close cooperation in bilateral, EU-related and economic spheres with Germany or France, there is a reluctance to contemplate these ties as an alternative to the US-led security arrangements.

On the positive side, the European cooperation on the defence matters is not longer automatically seen as a threat to NATO or carefully screened in search of 'hidden agendas'. In this area, the developments of the French foreign and security policy seems to be observed with growing interest and appreciation (implementation of the White Book recommendations, return to the integrated military structure of NATO, involvement in the ESDP). In case of Poland, a joint agenda with France has been formulated regarding NATO and ESDP issues, with a number of specific initiatives agreed. Noteworthy, the declaration adopted at the Polish-French summit in November 2009 explicitly introduced "the role of nuclear deterrence in the present strategic environment" as a topic of the bilateral dialogue.⁹ It remains to be seen to what extent the political statements would be translated into tangible results.

Extending deterrence beyond Central Europe? The support for Ukraine and Georgia

After the victory of the "colour revolutions" in Georgia and Ukraine, the issue of providing support for both countries, which adopted a policy of integration with NATO and the European Union, emerged as a political and strategic problem. It could be expected that Russia would overtly or covertly work to undermine the chances of success of the pro-Western governments, especially reaching the goal of NATO membership. Additionally, whereas the changes in both countries were generally welcomed in the West, there were wide differences regarding the degree of support which should be made available to them. A group of countries (including Central European members of NATO and the EU) advocated the fastest possible track of admitting them to NATO and forging closer ties with the EU as a way to strengthen the reformist forces, regardless of the opposition of Russia and with little scrutiny of the internal situation and their level of readiness. The opponents questioned the rationale for speeding up the processes of enlargement, especially taken into account EU's "enlargement fatigue", NATO's preoccupation with Afghanistan, and the danger of antagonizing Russia.

As a result, the issue of the scope of Western guarantees for the security of Ukraine and Georgia was never dealt with explicitly. In case of NATO, it could be implied that the acknowledgement of the aspirations of both countries to join the organization meant that their security was a matter of concern to the Allies. NATO also frequently expressed its support for the independence and territorial integrity of the both countries. That was especially important for Georgia, whose integrity had been challenged by the situation in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, where *de facto* protectorates of Russia were set up. However, no formal guarantee of security was ever offered by NATO or its member states to Georgia or Ukraine. The situation became even more peculiar after the April 2008 Bucharest summit, where both countries were refused the MAP, but assured that they would eventually become members of the Alliance.

The test of whether the extended deterrence had been established with regards to Georgia came during the August 2008 war. It should be noted that between 2003 and 2008, Georgia was active in the attempts to establish multidimensional links with the West. In the context of the generally pro-Western policy, attention should be brought to the attempts by President Saakashvili to forge close, informal contacts with foreign leaders, offering Georgia's territory as an element of the transit route of energy resources from the Caspian Sea and Central Asia, enlisting US support for the reform of the Georgian armed forces (including the training of the Georgian troops by US advisors), participation in the mission in Iraq, and arms procurement from Turkey, Israel and Poland. These links clearly have not deterred Russia from escalating

⁹ *Déclaration commune sur la sécurité et la défense*, sommet Franco-Polonais, Paris, 5 November 2009.

the crisis in the South Caucasus before the outbreak of hostilities. However, President Saakashvili might have acted under the impression that in case of failure of the Georgian operation against South Ossetia, launched on August 7th, 2008, Russia might be deterred from taking retaliatory steps against Georgia. That strategy backfired, since all available information suggest that Russia made the decision to stop the military operation against Georgia after it reached all pre-planned goals (occupation of all Abkhazia and South Ossetia, destruction of the Georgian military potential) not because of outside pressure.

After the Georgian conflict, an attempt was made by the Polish foreign minister Radoslaw Sikorski to signal to Russia that further coercive action in the post-Soviet zone would not be tolerated. In a speech at Columbia University in September 2008, and later in a lecture at the Atlantic Council of the US in November 2008, he proposed a ‘Sikorski doctrine’, stating that “any further attempt to re-draw borders in Europe by force or by subversion will be regarded by Poland as an existential threat to its security and should entail a proportional response by the whole Atlantic community”.¹⁰ His statement was evidently not consulted with other members of NATO, and received no support or confirmation from other Polish officials. Without the necessary support, the issue of guaranteeing the security of Eastern European countries was dropped from the agenda. Instead, Poland and other Central European countries concentrated on the internal credibility of NATO’s security guarantees.

Conclusion: in search for re-assurance

The present security situation of the Central Europe has been often described as the most fortunate in history. Membership in the European Union and NATO, close contacts with the United States, new quality of relations with Germany and internal stability should equip the countries of the region with a strong sense of self-confidence. Nevertheless, the legacy of history often prompts the strategic communities in the region to act on the basis on the worst-case scenarios, especially regarding the future developments in Russia.

The concerns about the long-term developments in Russia, and the reactions of the United States and the rest of NATO’s allies caused the countries of the region to re-assess the value of security guarantees and the credibility of the extended deterrence offered by their partners in NATO. The developments in the Central Europe’s neighbourhood are not severe enough to require the return to the adversarial posture in NATO-Russia relations. In the view of the countries of the region, it is nevertheless prudent to seek additional re-assurances on the capabilities and willingness of the allies to support them in the event of future security crises.

¹⁰ *Poland 2009. Ten years in NATO, five years in the EU. Plus the lesson from Georgia*, Address by Radoslaw Sikorski Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland, 25 September, 2008, School of International Public Affairs, Columbia University, New York.