

The European Security and Defence Union

Transatlantic relations A new ballgame after Afghanistan?



Russia is a Transatlantic-European partner

Ambassador Vladimir A. Chizhov,
Permanent Representative of the
Russian Federation, Brussels



**Creating the instruments
for transatlantic armament
cooperation**

Matteo Bisceglia,
Director of OCCAR, Bonn



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Flight from responsibility or wise calculation?

In a few decades time, will historians judge that the decision to withdraw from Afghanistan was wise? Will the uncoordinated withdrawal of the NATO allies enable the USA to maintain its position as the world's No1 power by shifting its geostrategic focus from the sprawling, continental and militarily ungovernable Middle East to the Indo-Pacific region?

There, it faces an increasingly armed and politically aggressive China, its greatest rival, even before Russia, and whose goal is to be on a par with America militarily by the mid-2030s.

Released from its commitments in Afghanistan and soon in Iraq but retaining its leadership in NATO as an anchor of stability in Europe vis-à-vis Russia, the US will be better able to shift its attention to the Indo-Pacific region and deploy its military might there. This will primarily consist of naval and airborne capacities, which are likely to be partially financed by a reduction in land forces.

However, military might can only be part of an overall policy. In a new world order shaped by great power rivalry, the USA will have to rely more than ever on diplomacy. There is also a growing awareness that aspects other than purely military ones are gaining importance.

China's current stance is puzzling. It claims world power status but is it really striving to replace the USA as the world's No1 power? What effect will the expansion of Beijing's strategic nuclear potential have on Chinese nuclear strategy, once the American mainland can be reached? Is it China's goal to annex Taiwan militarily?

Beijing cannot currently afford a military conflict with the United States. This is a reassuring prospect that will

ensure that common sense prevails and limit an arms race. For now therefore, the rivalry will be played out on the economic and technological fronts.



Hartmut Bühl

photo: private, USphoto.com

US diplomacy has started to strengthen ties to Japan, develop relations with the ASEAN states and renew security guarantees for Taiwan. Its high point so far has been the inclusion of Australia in its geostrategic concept through the agreement between Canberra, London and Washington (AUKUS) of the summer 2021, in which France was not only ousted as a European ally and replaced by London but also deprived of a €50 billion contract for the delivery of French submarines that was unilaterally terminated by Australia to the benefit of the USA. All with the blessing of Boris Johnson! The British Prime Minister thus showed his true colours and what he thinks of the Entente Cordiale (The Lancaster House Treaties) with France.

As for the joint planning of European defence, the European Union will have to consider very carefully how far it can rely on the breakaway United Kingdom with its unrealistic great power ambitions. Nevertheless, British capabilities will be needed to expand NATO's European pillar, which is also intended to relieve pressure on the United States in the western hemisphere.

Even if it turns out that the US decisions were truly wise, the way President Biden has treated his allies is unworthy of America and damaging to NATO.

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CLIMATE

New forest strategy

(Ed/nc,Paris) On 2nd November, a first major agreement was reached at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) which started in Glasgow on 31st October and will last until 12th November. 100 world leaders promised to end deforestation and land degradation by 2030. The “declaration on Forest and Land Use” was signed by countries representing over 85% of the world’s forests, spanning from the northern forests of Canada and Russia to the tropical rainforests of Brazil, Colombia, Indonesia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The leaders recognise “that to meet our land use, climate, biodiversity and sustainable development goals, both globally and nationally, will

require transformative further action in the interconnected areas of sustainable production and consumption; infrastructure development; trade; finance and investment; and support for smallholders, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities, who depend on forests for their livelihoods and have a key role in their stewardship.”

The “forest deal” foresees a public and private funding totaling \$19.2bn (€16.5bn). European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced that the European Union will contribute to the global pledge with €1bn.

 **Declaration:** <https://bit.ly/3EES6UC>


 **COP26 website:** <https://ukcop26.org>

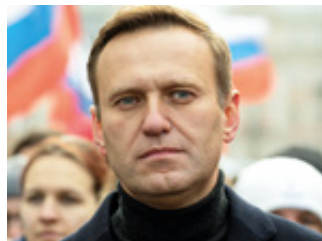


photo: © shutterstock/robsonviajante

AWARDS

Navalny receives 2021 Sakharov Prize

(Ed/Nils Cazaubon, Saint-Germain-en-Laye) This year’s Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought has been awarded by the European Parliament on 20th October to Alexei Navalny, Russian politician and major opponent of Vladimir Putin. He is known for organising anti-regime demonstrations



Alexei Navalny in Moscow, 20th February 2020

photo: © shutterstock/Gregory Stein

and advocating anti-corruption reforms. For this, Navalny was

poisoned in August 2020 and sentenced to a three and a half years in prison after returning to Moscow. His actions are currently classified as “extremist and undesirable” by the Russian authorities, and his anti-corruption foundation has been banned by a Russian court.

“Navalny has helped expose abuses and mobilise the support of millions of people across Russia”, said Parliament President David Sassoli. “In awarding the Sakharov Prize to Alexei Navalny, we recognise his immense personal bravery and reiterate the European Parliament’s unwavering support for his immediate release”, he added.

The Parliament also honoured a group of Afghan women for their fight for equality and human rights in Afghanistan. “We chose to honour the bravery of these women, as they are among the first to suffer violations of their most basic rights and freedoms after the Taliban seized control of Afghanistan”, said Vice-President Heidi Hautala. The Sakharov award ceremony will be held on 15th December in Strasbourg.

 **More information:** <https://bit.ly/2ZHdfy9>

Karl Carstens Prize goes to Gerald Knaus

(Ed/hb, Paris) On 28th October, the 2021 Karl Carstens Prize was awarded to Gerald Knaus, founding chairman of the thinktank European Stability Initiative (ESI). Named after the former German Federal President Karl Carstens, the prize is awarded every two years by the Friends of the German Federal Academy for Security Policy (BAKS) to personalities



Gerald Knaus (left) receiving his prize from Brigadier General (ret) Armin Staigis, chairman of the Friends of BAKS

photo: © BAKS/Adamzik

who have made an outstanding contribution to security policy issues. During the award ceremony, the laudatio was given by Madeleine Albright, former US Secretary of State under Bill Clinton. She highlighted Knaus’ fight for democracy and ESI’s direct impact on policy making. Born in Austria, Gerald Knaus studied in Oxford, Brussels and Bologna, taught economics at the State University of Chernivtsi in Ukraine and spent five years working for NGOs and international organisations in Bulgaria and Bosnia and Herzegovina. He founded ESI together with friends in summer 1999 in Sarajevo. As a passionate European, he fights for the safeguard of human rights, especially in the area of migration policy.

 **More information on ESI:** www.esiweb.org

→ In edition n° 39, we published an interview on migration with Gerald Knaus, in a dialogue with Luxembourg’s Foreign Affairs Minister Jean Asselborn.

 **Interview:** <https://bit.ly/3Byc80B>

ARMED FORCES

Change of command at Eurocorps

(Ed/hb, Paris) On 2nd September, Lieutenant General (BE) Peter Devogelaere took over the command of the multinational Eurocorps from Lieutenant General (FR) Laurent Kolodziej. The change of command ceremony took place at the Château de Pourtalès, near Strasbourg, and was presided over by the French Chief of



Lt Gen Devogelaere, Gen Thierry Burkhardt, Lt Gen Kolodziej at the change of command ceremony (from left to right)

photo: © Eurocorps

Defence, General Thierry Burkhardt. He lauded Lieutenant General Kolodziej for his outstanding leadership as the Commanding General of the Eurocorps headquarters (COMEC) and his accomplishments throughout his career in the French forces. He then handed over the command to Lieutenant General Peter Devogelaere, assuring him that he has the confidence of all 11 nations forming this army corps. The Belgian Commander is experienced in operations in Zaire, Lebanon, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali, where he led the EU Training Mission.

Eurocorps actually is engaged in missions in Central Africa and Mali and is preparing to take responsibilities in the NATO Joint Task Force.

Eurocorps was created in 1992 and was initially a French-German initiative under German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and French President François Mitterrand.

Web www.eurocorps.org

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Twenty years of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism

(Ed/nc, Paris) On 23th October, the European Union (EU) celebrated the 20th anniversary of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. Created in 2001, the mechanism aims to strengthen cooperation between the EU Member States and 6 Participating States (Iceland, Norway, Serbia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Turkey) on civil protection to improve prevention, preparedness and response to disasters. The mechanism is activated when a country is requesting assistance because the scale of an emergency overwhelms its response capabilities. The European Commission's DG for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (ECHO) is in charge of the mechanism.

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary, Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner for Crisis Management said: "The EU Civil Protection Mechanism ensures swift and well-coordinated emergency assistance whenever a disaster hits the EU or beyond. It is a concrete example of EU solidarity in action."

Since its creation in 2001, the mechanism has been activated more than 500 times to coordinate assistance to people affected by natural disasters and other crises in Europe and worldwide. Large operations have included a response to the 2014 Bosnia and Herzegovina floods, the 2019 Mozambique tropical cyclone Idai, the repatriation from all over the world of EU citizens for Covid-19 in 2020, and the forest fires in the Mediterranean in 2021.

More information: <https://bit.ly/3wbwOeg>

CYBERSECURITY

MEPs adopt report on new NIS directive

(Ed/nc, Paris) On 28th October, the European Parliament's Industry Committee (ITRE) adopted a report on the Commission proposal for a review of the 2016 Directive on security of network and information systems (NIS Directive). To be able to respond to the growing threats posed with digitalisation and the surge in cyberattacks, EU countries would have to meet stricter supervisory and enforcement measures, and harmonise their sanctions regimes. The new legislation (NIS2) also includes proposals for national and EU levels to cooperate with each other on cyber crisis management. MEPs confirmed that given the current high level of cybersecurity threats, an update of the legislation is much needed. "Cybercrime doubled in 2019, ransomware tripled in 2020 and yet our companies and institutions are spending 41 percent less on cybersecurity than in the US" said Rapporteur Bart Groothuis (Renew, NL).

"Essential sectors" such as the energy, transport, banking, health, digital infrastructure, public administration and space sectors would be covered by the new security provisions. Furthermore, so-called "important sectors" such as postal services, waste management, chemicals, food, manufacturing of medical devices, electronics, machinery, motor vehicles and digital providers would be protected by the new rules.

The Parliament will now start negotiations with the Council on the NIS2 directive.

Video: <https://bit.ly/3k0yyIs>

EP study: <https://bit.ly/3mDlIggo>

→ see also the article on cybersecurity by Jean-Louis Gergorin/Léo Isaac-Dognin, pp. 34-35

In the Spotlight

+++ Rule of Law +++

At stake is the protection of Human Rights in the strictest sense of the word

The law that is inconvenient, but which protects

by Jean-Dominique Giuliani, President of the Robert Schuman Foundation, Paris

European judges are being criticised by European populists for undermining the “legal sovereignty” of EU member states. The law has become an electoral issue and the most far-fetched promises and assertions flourish in the public debate. Two courts are now at issue: the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), which judges the conformity of the European Convention on Human Rights that entered into force in 1953 and applies to the 47 member states of the Council of Europe, and the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), which judges the conformity of the acts of the European institutions and the 27 member states with the European treaties. Both of these courts can be called upon by states and individuals. The judgments of the ECHR are binding on states, while those of the CJEU are binding on states and their national courts, for which it also interprets common rules.

The dangerous Polish game

The Polish constitutional court recently took the lead in challenging the primacy of EU law and thus the jurisdiction of the CJEU, on the grounds that certain provisions of the treaties and

the court’s decisions were contrary to the Polish constitution. Elsewhere in Europe, in such cases, an amendment to the constitution is put forward. Not in Poland, where only the most archaic nationalism supports a majority that has run out of steam. The Polish government constantly uses the European Union as a scapegoat. There is nothing European about its nationalism. Yet it says it does not want to leave the EU. One can understand why: 80% of Poles feel European. The German constitutional court had for a moment flirted with the same line of reasoning, worrying the partners of the continent’s largest economy. But as is often the case in Germany, a sense of negotiation and compromise prevailed and... the composition of the court changed.

In France, the approach of the presidential election has triggered the demagoguery of those who advocate a ‘constitutional shield’ or the primacy of national law over European law. We have even seen a former European commissioner dare to propose an exception to the primacy of European law, for immigration, which has become – alas – the favourite theme of politicians, but fortunately not of the French!

documentation

European Parliament

Defending the rule of law in the EU

(Ed/nc, Paris) On 19th October in Strasbourg, the European Parliament had a heated plenary debate with Poland’s Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki on the contentious verdict of Poland’s Constitutional Tribunal of 7th October stating that cornerstone provisions of the Treaty on the EU (Art. 1 and 19) are unconstitutional under Polish law. A majority of MEPs condemned this ruling and called into question the independence of the court itself. They warned that the Polish government has taken a regressive path towards totalitarianism.

On behalf of the Slovenian EU Presidency, Foreign Affairs Minister **Anže Logar** took part in the debate and stated that the primacy of

EU law is the foundation of the EU. The rule of law is indeed one of the fundamental values upon which the EU is based and to which all EU countries voluntarily agree when they join the Union. The rule of law guarantees fundamental rights and values, and allows the application of EU law. It means that governments should be bound by law, that they should not take arbitrary decisions and that citizens should be able to challenge their actions in independent courts.

Commission President **Ursula von der Leyen** also participated in the plenary debate and said: “The ruling of the Polish Constitutional Court puts into question the foundation of the EU and is a direct challenge to the unity of the

European legal order.” She underlined that “it is the first time that a court from a member state finds the EU treaties incompatible with a national constitution”.

Polish Prime Minister **Mateusz Morawiecki** said that “the primacy of EU law does not extend to the constitutional system” and he added that “the Polish Constitution is the highest legal act in Poland; it stands above any other principle of law”.

The European Parliament called on the Commission to act immediately to defend Polish citizens and the foundations of EU law, by triggering the conditionality mechanism (enabling the EU to stop funding governments that disrespect values such as the rule of law)




Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki during the debate in the European Parliament

photo: © European Union 2021,
Source : EP/Frederic Marvaux

Treaties are inferior to constitutions

If treaties are superior to laws, they are inferior to constitutions. Whatever the usual critics of European integration may say, they respect the “constitutional identity of the States”. This is even explicitly stated in the text of Article 4 of the Treaty on European Union. If a state chooses to sign a treaty or agree to a European text, it must undertake to apply it and, if necessary, to adapt its constitution or legislation. This is the way to ensure reciprocity from its partners. These treaties strengthen individual and collective rights.

and launching infringement procedures. MEPs also asked the Council to act in accordance with Article 7 TEU (allowing for the suspension of voting rights in case of a 'serious and persistent breach' of EU values by an EU country). Some MEPs, however, criticised the EU institutions, saying they are worrying about the independence of the judiciary and separation of powers only in certain member states and arguing that the primacy of EU law is used to give more powers to the Union than it is originally defined in the treaties.

 **Video of the debate:** <https://bit.ly/3CjXvQe>

They protect citizens, including from their own governments or national laws that threaten their freedoms. This is obviously a problem in an age of mass electronic surveillance and national withdrawal.

Attacking judges rather than the laws they interpret is a serious mistake. This is what autocratic regimes, such as Russia or Turkey, usually do, refusing to implement decisions that protect their opponents.

In these debates, what is at stake is the protection of Human Rights in the strictest sense of the word (not “human rights” which do not exist any more than do “inhuman rights”). They should be addressed only with infinite caution, and it is dangerous to offer them up for electoral debate. Europe has been built by law, because in its history it has experienced force and coercion rather too much. It will resist through law, which is still its citizens’ greatest achievement.

For if the law is sometimes inconvenient, it more often than not protects!

“Attacking judges rather than the laws they interpret is a serious mistake. This is what autocratic regimes, such as Russia or Turkey, usually do, refusing to implement decisions that protect their opponents.”

In the Spotlight

+++ European Union +++

documentation

State of the Union 2021 – Letter of intent

(Ed/nc, Paris) In her State of the Union address on 15th September 2021, the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, outlined the flagship initiatives of the Commission for the coming year. She addressed a Letter of intent to the President of the European Parliament, David Sassoli, and to the Prime Minister of Slovenia (EU Presidency) Janez Janša (excerpt below).

Dear President Sassoli,
Dear Prime Minister Janša,

Today will mark the tenth time a Commission President has delivered a State of the Union address to the European Parliament. The evolution in the themes of the previous speeches reflects the changing nature of our focus and the speed of the transitions in the world. They map the course of very different crises and recoveries. But they also remind us of an enduring truth: our Union is only as strong and as ambitious as it is united and resolute.

(...)

Twelve months ago, vaccines were not yet approved. A year on, the European Union has now vaccinated more than 70 % of the adult population and is the largest vaccine producer in the world. We have delivered more than 700 million vaccines to our Union and more than 700 million to the rest of the world. We agreed in record time on an EU Digital COVID Certificate, which has enabled more than 400 million individual certificates to be generated since the beginning of the summer.

This helped people to travel and enjoy their summer, and it enabled our economy to reopen its doors and bounce back faster than was expected. Nineteen Member State economies are now expected to return to pre-pandemic levels by the end of the year. This has also been made possible thanks to the historic agreement reached on our recovery programme. NextGenerationEU is now up and running, financing projects and reforms that invest in the recovery of today and the economy of tomorrow.

We have accelerated our work on the ambitious and transformative agenda that we first set out in the Political Guidelines. In the last year, the EU has approved the first European Climate Law, and we have presented our proposals to deliver it. The EU is the first major economy to concretely lay out how it will reach its climate goals. We have also made ground-breaking proposals on digital services, digital markets and digital identity, and we have updated our new industrial strategy and worked to strengthen our supply chains.

(...)

We must also look at the indelible mark left by the crisis on people and on society. The continued implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and the commitments agreed to in Porto earlier this year will be key priorities. We will continue to stand up for values, justice and equality, and to promote and defend the rule of law and media freedom across the EU. We would like to focus on the future by advancing the work on the Conference on the Future of Europe and honouring all young people by making 2022 the European Year of the Youth.

The external challenges we face will also multiply as the world becomes more contested. We will further strengthen our partnership with NATO and our allies, and discuss a common way forward on defence and security. We will continue to develop global partnerships and support our neighbourhood, in particular the Western Balkans, at the upcoming summit organised by the Slovenian Presidency of the Council. Finally, we will remain committed to implementing our international agreements and will remain united in our support of Ireland and of peace on the island of Ireland.

(...)

Ursula von der Leyen
Maroš Šefčovič

 Web State of the Union speech: <https://bit.ly/3bg97rh>

Commentary

Europe in a post-Merkel world...

by Hartmut Bühl, Publisher, Paris



In Brussels, the old Greek saying that progress is only stimulated by crises carries weight. The fact that Angela Merkel, the German Chancellor, is taking her leave of the circle of EU leaders after 16 years has been taken with equanimity in Brussels, in the knowledge that her departure will not provoke an internal crisis in the Union.

German voters rejected radicals and have given the three leading European-minded parties in the Bundestag the opportunity to form a solid coalition. Merkel's successor will represent a stable, Europe-oriented Germany in the Union and, like Merkel, he will focus on maintaining stability and represent a forward-looking Germany. He will urge the further development of the EU, focusing on sound finances, progress on the Green Deal, a solution to the refugee crisis and a balanced neighbourhood policy. However, there is not likely to be much enthusiasm for orienting the Union's strategic compass towards military capabilities.

Crises can quickly loom within the Union. The "culture wars", triggered first by Hungary and now Poland over the EU's values could lead to an identity crisis, but it could also encourage all other Member States to close ranks, as they did over Brexit, and therefore consolidate the Union's internal cohesion.

On European foreign policy, French President Macron has repeatedly made visionary proposals for Europe, but these have been received without enthusiasm, especially by Germany, and ended up on a back burner in Brussels.

The French EU Presidency wants to move the Union forward in a big way in the first half of 2022. Brussels, however, has doubts that France will succeed in this venture as Macron will face re-election in May and would need Germany as a strong partner to implement his ideas. It remains to be seen whether Germany's new coalition will be broad enough politically to support such large designs.

The EU will miss Angela Merkel with her composure and her sense of an 'honest' and solid compromise. There will be memories of all night meetings in small or large groups, in

which she usually succeeded in harmonising Member States' various interests. Stabilising and preserving was her policy. In her 16 years as Federal Chancellor, Angela Merkel gained a well-deserved reputation as a convinced European. She has strengthened the Union, even though she was not a visionary laying out ground-breaking and long-term strategies. Her visions were more spontaneous, shaped by humanitarian and ethical convictions. Her reaction to the Syrian refugee crisis in 2015 is a case in point.

Opening the German borders to refugees was not an economic decision, as critics have charged, especially in France accusing the Chancellor of wanting to stabilise the shrinking German labour market. No, it was a profoundly dignified, humanitarian decision in the full glare of German history, in which the Nazi dictatorship destroyed millions of lives with the utmost cruelty. Here was an opportunity for the Germans to prove their humanity and help save millions of lives. The images of an unexpectedly welcoming culture will long be remembered.

Angela Merkel also freed Germany from its self-imposed restraint on foreign policy, encouraged in doing so by the EU Commission. She, whom the armed forces generally considered with professional indifference, nevertheless succeeded in demonstrating Germany's solidarity with the EU in security and defence policy. However, moving on from training support and logistical provision to combat deployment is a step she has left to her successor.

She is stepping down at a time when the world is changing, alliances are shifting, and the great powers are redefining their priorities. The world is also facing a digital quantum leap that must be mastered as well as other big issues like the reshaping of globalisation after the corona pandemic.

Angela Merkel played a key role in successfully manoeuvring the EU through major crises from which the Union has emerged stronger. The task now is to move the Union forward without her and to adapt it to the new challenges. The German Chancellor has done her duty with dignity for the future of her country and the European Union.

In the Spotlight +++ Security and Defence +++

Impetus for European Defence!

Twenty years of the Berlin Security Conference

Interview with Uwe Proll, Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of ProPress / Behörden Spiegel-Verlag, Berlin

The European: Mr Proll, in 2001 you founded the Berlin Security Conference (BSC) and you are still its acting conference director, celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2021. I remember that in January 2000, you phoned me asking for a one-to-one meeting to reflect on European security and defence. And you said: “I have an idea!”

Uwe Proll: At that time, after the St Malo Summit in 1998 and the Helsinki Headline Goals of December 1999, in line with the NATO summit in 1999, I was convinced that European security and defence could be built up as a coherent pillar within NATO in order to meet future threats.

The European: When we met you brought up the idea of a Conference on European Security and Defence with a specifically European focus, in parallel to the Munich Security Conference, which successfully covers global policy. What was the strategy behind that idea?

Uwe Proll: Firstly, it was my conviction that after the fall of the Berlin wall we couldn’t afford to give up our military capabilities in Europe, a tendency which was visible, especially in Germany, where there were calls for a “peace dividend” at a time when we were seeing continuous turmoil in the Balkans and the Mediterranean.

The European: What was your business model?

Uwe Proll: I was convinced that a European Security Conference – that was the name in the first years – should be financed independently, not depend on any German or European government money and therefore rule out possible influence on the content of the conference.

The European: What was the concept of your conference at the outset?

Uwe Proll: Not only at the outset! The concept has proven its worth over the years: a focus on Europe, covering every aspect of security and defence. My idea was to stage discussions between key politicians from democratic parties around Europe, the Commission, academia, industry and the security forces. I also considered that there had to be representatives from the USA, Russia, Africa and Asia.

BSC Berlin Security Conference
20th Congress on European Security and Defence

The European: In 2003 you moved the BSC from Bonn to Berlin – and the number of participants rose from 300 to about 1000. What was different?

Uwe Proll: It was impressive to see how well the move to Berlin was

accepted by all sides; we even had to be careful not to have too many German officials! And it was also an appropriate time to provide professional support for the concept, the speakers and the organisation. In 2007 therefore, I engaged Brigadier General (ret) Reimar Scherz as a moderator for the conference, with the task of preparing and moderating it.

The European: What instructions was he given on the structure and content of the programme and the speakers?

Uwe Proll (smiling): I gave him a mission – a standard type order in the sense of General von Moltke: prepare, organise and lead the conference to the highest and most serious



Uwe Proll (left) and Hartmut Bühl discussing in the Garden of the PropPress publishing house in Bonn.

photo: ESDU

possible level, culminating in concrete proposals for European security and defence that could be taken up in Brussels by the EU and NATO.

The European: *The BSC is indeed known for high quality debates and outstanding organisation. Could you sum up for our readers the highlights that have emerged from the conference's past decade?*

Uwe Proll: Yes, a concise summary could be: we still need NATO without a shadow of a doubt, but we have to build up more European power and flexibility; we have to guarantee stability in our relations with Russia; we must be alert to our changing geopolitical interests throughout the world, in other words considering the whole of the Mediterranean basin as Europe's immediate surroundings, but also looking further afield.

The European: *Indeed, South and East Asia have continuously been covered by your conferences, with guests from India, Japan, Myanmar and official delegations from Taiwan. Are you surprised by the reorientation of the US to the Indo-Pacific region?*

Uwe Proll: No, I am not surprised. Already under President Obama there was a perceptible change in America's strategic focus. At the time Europe did not want to consider the consequences. Now Europe must adapt to this situation and procure equipment so as to be less dependent on the US while at the same time giving the US more freedom for strategic action. The challenge is that not all European Member States of NATO are compliant with NATO resolutions on the required level of defence expenditure. Too many allies, including Germany, are too often standing on the brakes.

The European: *Back to the conference: was the establishment of the Board in 2012 helpful in defining the future shape of the conference? And to be frank: aren't there too few women involved?*

Uwe Proll: Setting up the Board was essential. In terms of gender policy, we have always done our best to invite women speakers. On our Advisory Board we have Bettina Cadenbach, Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Security Policy at NATO and Ambassador Claude-France Arnould, Senior Advisor on European Affairs of the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI). They are two highly competent experts. And we actively supported UN Security Council Resolution 1325, "Woman, Peace and Security", in our Berlin Conference in 2019.

The European: *Yes, I followed that interesting discussion in the plenary. What about the implementation of Gender Policy in NATO?*

Uwe Proll: This issue will be discussed at our next Berlin Security Conference in November 2021.

The European: *Last year's conference took place digitally and was moderated by Major General (ret) Reinhard Wolski, the successor of General Scherz. What is your experience concerning the organisation, participation and efficiency of such a digital conference? Is it a model for the future?*

Uwe Proll: For content and discussions of important issues, the digital format is perfectly appropriate and we will certainly continue to offer digital formats in the future. But we are not talking about web-based conference services like Zoom, Web-ex or Teams. They are rather tedious and people tend to switch off. Our concept was always different: produce TV quality by using professional studio technology. This is essential to achieve acceptance.

The European: *But you are reverting to "real events" with the Berlin Security Conference 2021. Isn't there a contradiction?*

Uwe Proll: No, not at all, because we are currently offering every fortnight, a digital format on a number of issues, as preparation for the next event. The two fit together well! In September we had an online discussion on the issue, "Afghanistan – No exit – Lessons Identified", with the participation of the armed forces, secret services and parliamentarians.

The European: *I understand your strategy: eager to react to current events at short notice and not wait until the next conference. This is a new challenge for the moderator. What is Major General Wolski's mission for the design of the forthcoming conferences?*

Uwe Proll: To accompany the changes occurring in Europe. For example, armed forces in several countries, including Germany, are being radically restructured, creating capability clusters and enabling more European cooperation. This is a development we want to support with a focus on "more Europe".

The European: *The 20th Conference will take place in Berlin on 25th and 26th November 2021. What will be the highlights?*

Uwe Proll: The main issue in the planning stage was "Developing capabilities for a credible defence". But after the Afghanistan debacle the lessons learned will also feature prominently.

The European: *Thank you Mr Proll for this conversation. All the best to you and your BSC Team.*

Uwe Proll

is Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of the Behörden Spiegel Group's print and online products as well as an organiser of international conferences. Born in Bonn 1953, he started his career in 1976 as a freelance journalist in Germany. In 1985 he co-founded Behörden Spiegel, an independent monthly newspaper for public services, and since 1990 he has been the founder, publisher and Editor-in-Chief of several national and international magazines. In 2013 he founded the Cyber Akademie in Berlin and is currently its managing director.

Innovative and attractive concepts for testing and vaccination

Covid-19: How industry can powerfully contribute to healthcare

by Kaan Savul, Head of International Cooperation and Global Affairs, Ecolog Deutschland, Düsseldorf

To the many entrenched global inequalities – wealth distribution, education attainment, life expectancy and human rights – we can now add access to safe, effective vaccinations. In many developed countries, 80% or more of the adult population has now received two Covid-19 jabs, and health ministers are talking about booster programmes and making vaccines available to children. By comparison, in most parts of Africa, vaccination rates hover below 2%. This glaring statistic has prompted significant nervousness within the global community and the past few weeks and months have seen multiple headline-grabbing financial commitments from political leaders including the G7, alongside donations of industrial quantities of vaccines. Hot-off-the-press pledges to African countries have included 4.4 million doses from the US to Nigeria and Ethiopia, 817,000 doses to Kenya from the UK, 260,000 doses to Mozambique from China and many more.

Generating momentum for vaccination

So why, with such an intense global effort, do vaccination rates in Africa remain so low? Numerous explanations have been suggested – public mistrust of governments and public health officials, a youthful population that doesn't recognise the risk, anti-vaccination propaganda, and the fact that Covid-19 symptoms lack the graphic nature associated with other prevalent diseases on the continent.

None of these challenges seem insurmountable and, at EcoCare, we are confident that vaccination rates will rapidly gather momentum once concerted efforts to reassure at-risk populations are underway.

Many of the tools to raise take-up are self-evident, and simply require effective implementation through advocacy by trusted community and religious leaders, mandates by major employers, especially where staff operate in close proximity and healthcare professionals as early adopters.

Alongside actions such as these, which create a positive backdrop for testing and vaccination programmes, one cannot underestimate the importance of the customer experience when they come forward to receive a jab. If this process is wrecked with bureaucracy, complexity and anxiety, then

bad word-of-mouth will spread to family members and peer group. To this end, vaccinations programmes are no different from TripAdvisor: positive recommendations are essential to generate momentum and future customers!

For this reason, it should be no surprise that our operating model for our African and other countries under development, testing and vaccination programmes are rooted in 'delivering with integrity'. The goal is to make the process smooth and seamless for all who encounter it.

EcoCare's bold vision

Many of the vital operating principles have been enshrined in our EcoCare Pledge, and I will highlight four where we've managed to maximise customer attractiveness through innovation, technical excellence, and a bold vision.

1. Maximising customer attractiveness

Our safety compliance is second to none, not least because we recognise that any safety breach would overnight undermine trust and confidence in the programme. Our containerised Biosafety Level-2 (BSL-2) laboratories are configured to be compliant with the diagnostic safety recommendations of the Robert Koch-Institut Berlin (RKI), and the special WHO and Centre for Disease Control (CDC) instructions for testing SARS-CoV-Safety are also embedded throughout our physical and digital processes.

2. Robust infection protection

In our vaccination and testing centres, protocols include robust infection protection, a designated chief emergency doctor on every shift, traceability logging, antigen tests offered where needed and mandatory training on hygiene, vaccine handling and patient processes.

In our digital platform, we capture, document, protect, report and archive viral data throughout the vaccination process, embedding quality at every step.





photo: ecolog



“One of our most important commitments is to spread the benefits of vaccination beyond the major urban conurbations into rural areas and vulnerable communities.” Kaan Savul

3. Leveraging logistics and engineering

Engineers are natural problem solvers, and the challenge of last-mile vaccination supply has sparked their curiosity. We have learned that the easy part is transporting a few hundred thousand doses to a secure warehouse; the difficulties mount when one tries to transfer the doses onwards from the warehouse and into people’s arms. We have designed multiple service modules that can cope with these complexities. These are:

- vaccination centres, established within existing facilities and/or a standalone setup;
- mobile testing units that are highly flexible and involve buses or trucks on 20 or 40 ft containers;
- mobile containerised testing infrastructure, capable of deployment in vastly different locations due to their adaptability and self-sufficiency;
- central testing facilities, designed for high processing capacity to ensure maximum throughput.

4. Reaching diverse communities

Any vaccination programme in Africa will have failed if its ambitions are limited to protecting the high earning business community in the major cities. One of our most important commitments is to spread the benefits of vaccination beyond the major urban conurbations into rural areas and vulnerable communities. And this pledge is not idly made. In Ecolog’s 20-year history, we have been engaged by many multinational bodies to complete complex logistical operations in some of the world’s most inaccessible regions – including Ulaanbaatar, Maputo, Kabul, Somalia, and Tetovo.

The evidence suggests that those at greatest risk from Covid-19 are usually those with other health conditions, and these are exacerbated when the public health infrastructure – for exam-

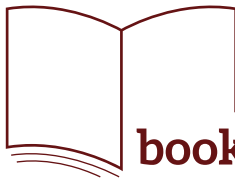
ple, water supply and sanitation – is lacking.

For a given quantity of vaccines, most lives will be saved if the products can be delivered intact and with world class safeguarding to those distant communities.

“Out of complexity, find simplicity.”

Every customer contact is an opportunity to build confidence in the ethics and impact of vaccinations, and we have designed each such interaction with an eye to reassuring those who are hesitant and overcoming skepticism. Thus communication must be clear and simple and all the required information in one place, but communication must also be regular in before and after. For sure, digital is first but we are making alternatives available by allowing access to our EcoCare App via mobile phones. Last but not least, wherever necessary, paper alternatives are of course available. Clinical protocols are adhering to best practice in terms of confidentiality, ID verification, informed consent, and applying exclusion criteria to ensure wellbeing.

Albert Einstein once declared, “Out of complexity, find simplicity.” In this short piece, we hope we’ve conveyed that delivering vaccines from the border to the point where they can be safely injected in difficult environments is a hugely complex multi-variate challenge. However, it must not seem that way to the customer, whose role is simply to arrive on time at the mobile centre, receive their jab, and proceed about their business. For the customer, receiving protection from a virus that has ravaged the world must be as simple as biting an apple. That is the legitimate expectation, and that’s what all of us involved in vaccination supply, working in collaboration, must ensure.



books & publications

Ein europäisches Gewissen – Hans Gert Pöttering

by Michael Gehler and Marcus Gonschor

Herdervelag Freiburg-Basel-Vienna, 2020

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A European conscience

The comprehensive biography “Ein europäisches Gewissen” (A European conscience) by the authors Michael Gehler and Marcus Gonschor, with a foreword by Donald Tusk, pays attention to small details, providing an excellent portrait of Hans-Gert Pöttering, former President of the European Parliament (EP), but also, to a large extent, tracing the history of the European People’s Party (EPP).

Pöttering’s influence on the EPP in preparation for the party’s congress in Madrid at the end of 1995 and its input to the Intergovernmental Conference of 1996 (“Perspectives for the year 2000”) has not been forgotten. When preparing the EPP guidance paper, Pöttering was primarily concerned with extending the EU co-decision mechanism to new policy areas. He wanted the EP to be able to act on an equal footing with the Council of Ministers. On the question of majority decision-making, he insisted that the procedure should not lead to the defeat of smaller states and that the principle of democracy should be upheld. In his remarkable Madrid speech on 6th November 1995, Pöttering referred to Jean Monnet in forging his own “creed” for the future of the Union: “What is at stake is that sovereignty in the European Union must be exercised collectively, as Jean Monnet intended, in order to bring about an ever closer union of European peoples.”

The biography notes that, for Pöttering, effective political action is on a par with democracy and tolerance. The EPP was thus able to participate in the Intergovernmental Conference with the three decisive criteria, capacity to act, democracy and tolerance. Pöttering had made history.

He retains a special interest in security and defence. Major in the Bundeswehr Reserve, he had to wait until 2009 for his security and defence expectations to be met in the Lisbon Treaty.

Pöttering, for whom solidarity among nations is paramount, was disappointed with the results of the Nice Summit (2002), for which he had major hopes for progress on the future of the Union. He reacted angrily to the fact that, after reunification, with more than 80 million citizens, Germany ended up with the same number of votes (49) in majority decisions as France with just over 60 million inhabitants. For Pöttering, Nice was proof that he had to continue the struggle for the Union’s ability to expand and strengthen democratic legitimacy.

In the biography, the close ties between Pöttering and the US are also made clear. Nevertheless, controversies with the US about Turkey’s possible accession to the EU, which the US wanted to impose on the EU, but which the EPP, and above all Pöttering, did not want, did not fail to emerge. And his reactions to 9/11 in terms of the fight against terrorism are still valid today.

The biography shows that Pöttering has countered his opponents intellectually and his friends have followed him because of the power of his innovative thinking, his vision and his hard work. His political skills enabled him to rise to the highest office that Europe has to bestow: President of the European Parliament.

As chairman of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (2010-2018) he was successful in difficult times. The Foundation rewarded him by appointing him European Affairs Officer. The Berlin Security Conference (BSC) elected him to its advisory board. The former President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, sees in Pöttering a man who “carries Europe in his heart.”

The authors of this book deserve respect for joining up the dots and marshalling myriad details to form an overall picture of Hans-Gert Pöttering, the passionate European!

by Hartmut Bühl

→ see also the interview with Dr Pöttering on pp. 18-19 of this magazine


A photograph of Joe Biden and Charles Michel standing outdoors by a body of water. Biden is in the foreground, wearing a dark suit and a blue tie, smiling. Michel is behind him, wearing a grey suit and a patterned tie, also smiling. The background shows a calm sea and a distant shoreline under a cloudy sky.

MAIN TOPIC

Transatlantic relations

After the Afghanistan debacle, the future of transatlantic relations, already weakened during the Trump era, is now even more in doubt. Will the United States continue to be the privileged partner of Europe in a geopolitically changing world, as it was over the last decades? Will we finally see a real change in the European Union's global security objectives responding to the aggressiveness of both China and Russia? And what will be the Union's optimum strategy for becoming less dependent on the United States and NATO?

In this chapter, the authors discuss what is important for Europe at this juncture.



Americans and Europeans share the same values, but...

The essence of the transatlantic security and defence relationship

Interview with Professor Dr Hans-Gert Pöttering,
former President of the European Parliament,
Berlin

The European: Professor Pöttering, what was your first thought when you heard US President Joe Biden, on the occasion of his visit to NATO headquarters in Brussels some months ago, say that “America is back again”?

Hans-Gert Pöttering: We all were happy to hear this message from President Joe Biden. We really believed NATO would become an alliance again, in which each partner is respected. The most important was: Americans and Europeans share the same values, and there is a new president who says it and believes in it.

The European: While the US is reshaping its leading role in NATO – not without some impact on Europe’s efforts in defence – the European Union is reflecting on how to become a geostrategic player, gearing up to be a valuable partner for the US in Europe and so giving Americans more room for manoeuvre in critical regions of the world. Do you believe that the unwavering solidarity of Europe towards the US is reflected in a similar level of solidarity of the USA towards Europe?

Hans-Gert Pöttering: We Europeans are good in rhetoric, but we lack action. There is not enough political will on our side. Americans are right that Europeans are not doing enough as far as security and defence are concerned. We have to see how far the United States will be engaged in the world in the future. The new alliance between the US, Australia and Great Britain – cancelling Australia’s commitment with France in military supply – is not only a negative signal to France, but the European partners of France as well. This is a great disappointment, but the US will be in solidarity with its European partners in the future though, maybe not as unwavering as they were in the past.

The European: After these deliberations, what are the essential

features of the relationship between Europe and the US? What is the essence of the transatlantic relationship leading us especially to this unique partnership in security and defence?

Hans-Gert Pöttering: NATO is the most successful alliance in history. Europeans should never forget that without the US neither national socialism nor communism would have been defeated. NATO – with all its problems and difficulties – is in principle an alliance of freedom. This is the most essential thing. The essence of this unique partnership are our common values. I hope that this is the basis for our relationship also in the future not only in words, but also in action. But there are increasing doubts.

The European: Will Europe be able to meet future challenges by pursuing its own policy?

Hans-Gert Pöttering: History is always in a changing process. Each generation has its own challenges. Hopefully the US will remain our strongest partner. But they are not perfect, as we Europeans are not perfect. So Europeans and the world were misled when the Bush administration said that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction. It was taken as a reason to start the Iraq war – with consequences we all know. And Europeans made a similar mistake in Libya.

The European: Was Henry Kissinger right when he urged a policy to prevent China and Russia from ever becoming allies? Are Russia and China expanding powers?

Hans-Gert Pöttering: Yes, they both are expanding powers. For Russia we can name the examples of Crimea, East Ukraine, Abkhazia. For China, the South China Sea, the oppression of Muslims in Xinjiang, and destroying democracy in Hong Kong or the Tibetan culture etc.

The European: How can Europe meet these challenges?

Hans-Gert Pöttering: United and strong. If possible, together

“We Europeans are good in rhetoric, but we lack action.”

with the US. And at the same time, we should continue dialogues with Russia and China. We have to develop a double strategy: diplomacy and determination, based on strength. The High Representative of the EU, Josep Borrell, is working on that. We should support him. Without a common line and vision, Europe will not be able to meet these immense challenges.

The European: *But aren't we in the process of "losing" Russia, largely European in geographic terms, as a potential security partner?*

Hans-Gert Pöttering: We should not have illusions, but we should never give up making the world a better place. For the time being, Russia is not a security partner, maybe tomorrow. But we should not be too optimistic. We are in great danger as far as hybrid warfare is concerned. It is one of the great challenges to convince our Russian partners to stop these activities, otherwise it must have consequences. And this would be a disadvantage for both sides. So there is a common interest for dialogue and cooperation.

The European: *I see a Europe that is divided, with those countries who can see Russia as a future partner on one side, and those who had been under Moscow's yoke for so many years and have a different feeling about their security, on the other. But do they all believe in the US and have an enormous mistrust towards Russia?*

Hans-Gert Pöttering: So far, the EU has been more or less successful in giving a common answer to Russia's aggression and occupation of Crimea. But sometimes a common attitude of EU countries is difficult. This is a reason for majority voting in questions of foreign and security affairs.

The European: *Might NATO become the catalyst to bring them together and can the US thus become the promotor of a real European pillar in security and defence within NATO?*

Hans-Gert Pöttering: The US – except under President Trump – was always in favour of a strong Europe at its side. But the work to be strong must be done by Europeans themselves. In the EU, there are some juridical problems with Poland. But as far as security and defence are concerned, the Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki is speaking about a “real European army that can defend Europe in the south, east and north.” This is very encouraging.

The European: *Might the disastrous western crisis management in Afghanistan in mid-August 2021 have repercussions on cohesion within the Alliance and on future allied actions in peace making policy of NATO and the European Union?*

Hans-Gert Pöttering: The developments in Afghanistan are a tragedy for the people in Afghanistan and for the West:



photo: private

Dr Hans-Gert Pöttering

is a German politician, who was born in 1945. He studied at the universities of Bonn, Geneva and New York and completed his PhD in political science and history in 1974. A member of the European Parliament from 1979 to 2014, he was the chairman of the Parliamentary Group European Peoples Party (EPP) from 1999 to 2007, and President of the Parliament from 2007 to 2009. Dr Pöttering was Chairman of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation from 2010-2018. He is currently Member of the Board of the Berlin Security Conference (BSC).

politically, militarily and morally. When I was a student, I read a book, “The golden rule of consultation”. When President Trump's administration negotiated the Doha agreement in February 2020 with the Taliban, the Europeans were not really consulted. They just agreed to the results. And the great disappointment is that President Biden did not really consult the Europeans when he decided to leave Afghanistan.

The European: *Is this a turning point in the European-American relations?*

Hans-Gert Pöttering: Certainly, I see it as a turning point. Why? For the time being we need the US to defend Europe. But what happens if the Americans are no longer willing to do it and we Europeans are unprepared? The only answer is that security and defence must become – besides climate change – one of the priorities of EU policy. We have to use the Biden years to prepare ourselves for the event that in American politics a policy might dominate that is not in solidarity with Europe anymore. We don't want such a development, but if it occurs, we must be prepared.

The European: *What are the consequences?*

Hans-Gert Pöttering: We need European sovereignty, if possible always in cooperation and solidarity with the US. We have to develop such sort of capabilities. It is a question of political will and hopefully the Europeans learn from this experience. Without security, our freedom, our way of life is in danger. We have to wake up!

The European: *Professor, my sincere thanks for this conversation.*



NATO's lessons learned and its new horizon

NATO 2030: securing an uncertain future

by Camille Grand, Assistant Secretary General, Defence Investment, NATO, Brussels

We face a challenging security environment marked by systemic competition from assertive powers, instability near Europe's borders, terrorism, cyber-attacks, disinformation, and much more. This year, NATO leaders took the decisions needed to strengthen our Alliance in light of these threats and to prepare it for the future. At our NATO Summit in June 2021, Allied Heads of State and Government reaffirmed their unity and solidarity and agreed the further adaptation of the Alliance. President Biden also stressed the renewed and enduring commitment of the United States to NATO.

NATO's ability to adapt to evolving threats

NATO's strength lies in its ability to adapt to evolving threats and ensure the continuity of its core tasks of collective de-

fence, crisis management and cooperative security.

NATO 2030 is a vision for preparing the Alliance to meet the challenges both of today and of tomorrow. No country, no continent can deal with these challenges alone. But in NATO, we are not alone.

NATO is a unique platform that brings together North America and Europe every day to consult on matters of security. NATO 2030 will deepen this unity by consulting on a broader range of threats. It will strengthen our deterrence and defence with more common funded resources, building on the steady increases over the past years in defence spending. It will broaden the security agenda, addressing issues such as resilience and the impact of climate change. It will ensure that Allies have reliable and resilient infrastructure and telecommunications



Camille Grand

is Assistant Secretary General for Defence Investment at NATO since October 2016. He was previously Director of the Fondation pour la recherche stratégique, the leading French think tank on defence and security (from 2008 to 2016). In this capacity, he has contributed to several senior expert panels for NATO, EU, UN as well as for the French Government. Mr Grand has also held senior positions in the French Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence. He taught at the Paris School of International Affairs at Sciences Po Paris, at the Ecole Nationale d'Administration (ENA) and at the French Army Academy.

“NATO 2030 is a vision for preparing the Alliance to meet the challenges both of today and of tomorrow. No country, no continent can deal with these challenges alone.”

networks. And it will see us invest in emerging disruptive technologies so that we can maintain our technological edge. NATO 2030 is also about building new partnerships and strengthening existing ones. We will continue to work with partner organisations such as the European Union and the United Nations. Cooperation with the EU in particular is a strategic imperative. Both organisations face the same broad range of threats and challenges. A task of this magnitude can only be mastered through cooperation – between the members of the two organisations as well as between NATO and the EU themselves.

Core tasks and strategic shift

To protect the rules-based international order, we will also seek deeper relationships with countries in the Asia-Pacific, and strengthen our partnerships with like-minded democracies around the world. We will continue to support our neighbouring countries to help them become more secure.

Key to this will be the drafting of a new Strategic Concept, to be agreed at the next NATO Summit in Madrid in 2022. It will reaffirm the continued relevance of NATO's three core tasks while adapting them to reflect the new security environment.

This year also marked the end of NATO's longest military operation, in Afghanistan. After many rounds of consultation, all Allies agreed to follow the United States and withdraw their remaining troops. This was not an easy decision. Whether we stayed or not, we knew there were risks, be it from the return of the Taliban or an open-ended mission with further attacks on our troops.

The lessons to be drawn from NATO's engagement, and that of the whole international community, in Afghanistan will undoubtedly feed into the NATO 2030 agenda. It will reinforce the need for broader consultations, close work with partners and greater burden sharing, among others.

Confidence and engagement

Our Alliance embodies the deep, historic bond between Europe and North America. It ensures the defence of our territory, our populations and our core values of democracy, liberty, fundamental rights and the rule of law. Through NATO 2030, we are taking the steps necessary to remain strong today and to address whatever threats and challenges the future may bring.

documentation

The future NATO

(ed/hb, Paris) On 21-22 October, NATO defence ministers met in Brussels to discuss the future of NATO and lay down the ground for the NATO Summit in Madrid next June.

During a press conference at the end of the meeting's first day, the NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said: "NATO is already making a major adaptation to our Alliance, and we are undertaking a major adaptation to a more complex and competitive world." To defend the Alliance in crisis and conflict, NATO defence ministers endorsed a new overarching plan for the future NATO during their meeting.


17 allied countries* signed a declaration of intent for the creation of the **NATO Innovation Fund** with a first investment of €1bn. This multinational fund is aimed at helping NATO to retain its technological edge by enabling investment in dual-use technologies of potential application to defence and security.

Together with NATO's **Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA)**, which was launched at the Brussels NATO summit in June, the Innovation Fund will support the development of a protected transatlantic innovation community.

The Secretary General said: "DIANA and the Innovation Fund will be true transatlantic endeavours, headquartered in both Europe and North America, binding our Alliance together and forging a shared Euro-Atlantic path on new technologies." Both initiatives are expected to be fully in effect by NATO's Madrid Summit in 2022.

Another major initiative is the launch of the Alliance's first ever **Artificial Intelligence (AI) strategy**, which includes standards of responsible use of AI, in accordance with international law. The strategy also outlines the threats posed by the use of AI by adversaries and how AI can be applied to defence and security in a protected and ethical way.

* Belgium, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and the United Kingdom

 **Web Press conference:** <https://bit.ly/3BrUo7f>

We must accept that there are limits to exporting our western values

The failure of the NATO concept in Afghanistan

Interview with General (ret) Harald Kujat, former German Chief of Defence and Chairman NATO Military Committee, Berlin



The European: *General Kujat, in politics, a thin line separates victory from defeat. Any military intervention has to be carefully weighed up and armed forces should only be engaged if, on the basis of a comprehensive analysis of the situation, there are good prospects of success. Who should take responsibility for the debacle in Afghanistan?*

Harald Kujat: Victory has many fathers but defeat is an orphan. In this case however, the opposite is true. It is the alliance, in other words, all its members who must take responsibility for the failure of the intervention in Afghanistan. What failed was the attempt to turn a profoundly Islamic country into a free society with democratic structures and respect for human rights. Let's not forget that the political goal was to create the conditions in which the Taliban would be prevented from regaining political influence and military power. The failure is that of both the West and of Islam.

The European: *So it turned out to be impossible to defeat the Taliban.*

Harald Kujat: Initially, it is true that the Taliban were not defeated but they were beaten back everywhere. However, they were able to retreat to Pakistan and regroup there. Over all these years, it proved impossible to deny them that strategic advantage. That is an essential reason why they were not defeated.

The European: *Let us go back a few years. I remember a public debate in 2010 in which the former German Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, concluded that NATO and its partners' "war goals" were unachievable. You yourself said, at about the same time, that politically the intervention had failed.*

Harald Kujat: Chancellor Schmidt was a politician with a firm grasp of security issues and sound strategic judgement. And indeed, I too have often and publicly said since 2011 that lessons must be learnt from the failure of this intervention.

The European: *That was not what people wanted to hear but what caused you to say it?*

Harald Kujat: The political concept based on the Lead-Nation

principle was not sustainably implemented: the political system was corrupt to the core, there were no economic success stories, particularly of a structural nature, and the security forces – police and military – were not able to provide adequate security, neither within the country nor to ward off attacks from outside.

The European: *So what mistakes were made? As the German CHOD at the time, you advised former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder to intervene and a little later, you were Chairman of NATO's Military Committee, its senior military body.*

Harald Kujat: Initially, we should have stepped up our military efforts to prevent the Taliban from returning to Afghanistan. The shift from active combat to a training role should not have occurred abruptly in 2014 but more gradually, on the basis of the increasing capabilities of the Afghan security forces. There should have been far more vigorous attempts to fight corruption and drive the country's economic growth. Finally, efforts should have been made with Afghanistan's neighbours to promote regional stability, and particularly to dissuade Pakistan from supporting the Taliban and stop the export of narcotics, their main source of finance.

The European: *So, who had the real power in NATO in respect of the intervention in Afghanistan?*

Harald Kujat: The United States made the largest military contribution. However, at the start of the campaign a lot of its troops were still tied up in the war in Iraq. Politically, in 2014, 2020 and finally in April 2021, the United States took decisions with obviously no prior in-depth consultation of its allies. That contributed to the failure.

The European: *When did it become clear to you that the United States' only remaining goal was to withdraw? In order to prepare the ground for that step, the Afghan combat forces had to be trained and equipped in a very short time.*

Harald Kujat: In 2014, President Obama pressured his allies to stop the combat mission and concentrate only on training



photo: Tobias Köhler/mediendek, stock.adobe

the Afghan security forces. That made it clear to all, including the Taliban, that it would only be a matter of time before NATO withdrew completely from Afghanistan.

The European: *The Doha Accord of 29th February 2020 gave the Taliban a free passage. It must have been indeed clear at that point, at the latest, that the US would withdraw. Once President Biden had decided in 2021 to implement the Doha Accord signed by his predecessor, were there any talks among the allies about a coordinated withdrawal?*

Harald Kujat: Immediately after President Biden's announcement on 14th April 2021 that the US would withdraw by 31st August, the allies decided to start withdrawing on 1st May. The actual withdrawal was not however, as one might have expected, planned and coordinated by NATO. The evacuation of local support staff could have been done in parallel and step by step.

The European: *I find that totally incomprehensible and certainly no great publicity for NATO! What will be the consequences for the future?*

Harald Kujat: Training and equipment missions can only succeed if there is a stable political situation, if a majority of the population supports the mission and if the national security forces are prepared to stand fairly and squarely behind their people and their government. A similar mission in Irak failed. The European Union's current intervention in Mali will also fail. In future interventions, political, economic and social measures must remain under a single unified international administration until such time as a positive outcome is clearly achieved.

The European: *What can you say about the role of the military?*

Harald Kujat: Military measures can only create the conditions

“A similar mission in Irak failed. The European Union's current intervention in Mali will also fail. In future interventions, political, economic and social measures must remain under a single unified international administration until such time as a positive outcome is clearly achieved.”

General (ret.) Harald Kujat



photo: private

served as Chairman Military Committee at NATO HQ in Brussels from 2002–2005. Born in 1942, he joined the German Air Force in 1959. Between 1980–1984 he served two German Chancellor's and was then appointed as Deputy Director ISM/ NATO. He became Director Policy at MOD Bonn in 1998 and in 2000 German Chief of Defence (CHOD) in Berlin.

for the tasks I have just described. And we must accept that there are limits to the possibility of exporting our western values through military campaigns. What is important for Europeans at this juncture is to strengthen their military capabilities in order to reinforce the European pillar of NATO and make it a force to be reckoned with, so that it is able, if necessary, to defend its own interests by itself.

The European: *General Kujat, many thanks for this interview.*

The Interview was led by Nannette Cazaubon.

EU High Representative Josep Borell on the need for a Strategic Compass

(Ed/nc, Paris) The presentation of the draft Strategic Compass will take place mid-November 2021. On a blog, HR/VP Josep Borell underlined the importance of the Strategic Compass and the steps to set out in the area of security and defence.

“10/10/2021 – HR/VP Blog (...) In less than a month, we have gone through the withdrawal from Afghanistan and the announcement of the AUKUS defence deal. These events have sharpened and accelerated the debate on Europe’s global rôle. (...) In fact, there are two major trends affecting us more and more. First, we are witnessing a strengthened reaction to China’s rise and assertiveness, of which the AUKUS case is a good illustration. Second, we are seeing a multipolar dynamic where actors like Russia and others are seeking to increase their margin of action and sphere of influence, either regionally or globally. (...)

The result is that today Europeans are at risk of becoming more and more an object and not a player in international affairs, reacting to other people’s decisions, instead of driving and shaping events ourselves. (...) We have of course discussed these issues for years already. That is why we should avoid our usual tendency to have an abstract, and frankly divisive, debate on whether we should either strengthen Europe’s own security capacities or do so in NATO. We clearly need to do both. The stronger we become as EU, the stronger NATO will be. (...)

Concretely, I see four main lines of action:

1. The priority of all priorities is to develop both our capacities and our will to act. For this, we must focus on what unites us and continue building the necessary trust among us. It cannot be the agenda of one, or a handful of countries. And the basis to achieve this is to nurture a common strategic culture, a shared sense of the threats we face.

This is precisely what the so-called Strategic Compass is all about: it will lay out a strategic approach for our security and defence that will guide our actions to 2030. It will give a sense of direction: how we should develop the necessary defence capabilities and overcome strategic gaps and how we



photo: European Union

should bring greater focus and results to combating hybrid threats and protecting EU interests in cyber, maritime and outer space. (...)

2. Many leaders rightly stressed that the transatlantic partnership is and remains irreplaceable. Based on an ambitious Strategic Compass and a new joint EU-NATO statement that should come out in the coming months, we must strengthen the transatlantic relationship and place it on a stronger footing. However, as repeatedly stated over the last years and demonstrated by recent developments, including the Afghanistan withdrawal and AUKUS, our American friends expect us Europeans to carry a greater share of responsibility - for our own and the world’s security. (...)

In addition to the need to develop our capacities and willingness to act, recent developments have also reinforced the imperative of having a coherent strategic approach to the Indo-Pacific, including how we deal with China and develop our relations with the rest of a region that will mark world events in the 21st century.

3. On China, leaders agreed that we must remain strong in our approach, based on the “partner, competitive, rival” triptych. In terms of practical policies, the challenge is often how to blend these three elements into a coherent whole. For me it is clear

that the best way to engage China is from a position of unity and strength. We must encourage dialogue and cooperation in certain areas like climate policy. But we should also be ready to push back when Chinese decisions run counter to our views, notably on human rights and geopolitical choices. That was the line I took last week when I spoke with Foreign Minister Wang Yi during the EU-China Strategic Dialogue.

4. At the same time, we have to deepen our engagement in and with the Indo-Pacific region, based on our recently adopted strategy. To recall: 40% of EU trade passes through the South China Sea and the region produces 60% of global growth. The EU is also still biggest investor in the region (not China, as many believe) so we have a big stake and contribution to make. (...)

The debate on Europe’s global role has reached a critical stage. It is what Germans call a *Chefsache*: a question for EU leaders i.e. presidents and prime ministers. Big trends and decisions are compelling us to act. In the months ahead, we have a chance to turn the realisation that Europe cannot afford to be a bystander into concrete actions. The world is not waiting for us. »

 **More blog post by HR/VP Borrell:**
<https://bit.ly/3BQTa5M>

Europe's special interest in a strong NATO, partnering with the European Union

The EU has to shoulder more responsibility for security and order in its near abroad

by Christian Schmidt, former German Federal Minister, President of the German Atlantic Association and High Representative for Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sarajevo

The 2020 US election marked an important change in transatlantic relations. Contrary to his predecessor, President Joe Biden sees the EU as a partner, not a “foe”. He honors the US’s international commitments, like the Paris Climate Agreement. And he understands the added value of international institutions. NATO, in his view, is more than a bargain, but the strong foundation on which transatlantic security and shared prosperity can be built. Donald Trump reportedly called NATO obsolete. President Joe Biden calls NATO’s article five a “sacred commitment”.¹

Europe is a backbone for US global policy and ...

For the US, the EU remains an indispensable economic and military partner: both economies amount to more than 40% of the world’s GDP and more than 40% of global trade in goods and services.² In geopolitical terms, the US also continues to have a strong interest that Europe remains “whole and free”: its military presence in Europe remains crucial for its global ambitions, power projection into the wider Middle East and containment of Russia and China. And the 30-nation NATO alliance gives it a considerable political advantage over its great power competitors.

... Europe needs US military capabilities in NATO

But Europe has an equally strong strategic interest in preserving and, in fact, deepening transatlantic relations – and NATO in particular. NATO’s core function of nuclear deterrence acts as a bulwark against the renationalisation of European nuclear

policies. Embracing small and big countries alike, NATO accords equal security for all through its article 5 commitment and forestalls the creation of new alliances on the continent. Its countless consultation processes foster trust among the allies and contribute to keeping inter-allied conflicts (for instance between Greece and Turkey) manageable. Its modus operandi (NATO decides by consensus) provides it with legitimacy in the eyes of European populations, many of which are skeptical about military affairs.

Especially for the central and eastern European states, NATO continues to be the only viable security option in the struggle to remain free from Russian interference in its “privileged abroad”. And when it comes to crisis management, NATO provides the best option for burden-sharing and a shared buy-in to European security problems. Through numerous interoperability programmes, NATO fosters multinational military cooperation. Last but not least, its over 40 partnerships provide a platform to discuss security issues worldwide.

NATO and the EU have no separable interests

As the June 2021 NATO Summit has made clear, NATO will have to continually adapt to new threats, be it the emergence of China as a systemic challenger to the international order, Emerging Disruptive Technologies (EDT), climate change or evolutions in cyber space. And all of this happens against the backdrop of Washington’s strategic reorientation toward the Asian Pacific region. Europeans can and must do more to sustain NATO’s relevance in the eyes of an American public increasingly wary of its security commitments to the “Old Continent”.

As Secretary General Stoltenberg has said, NATO must “stay strong militarily, be more united politically, and take a broader

→ Continued on page 26



photo: private

Christian Schmidt

took office as the new international High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo in August 2021. Born in 1937, he studied law in Erlangen and Lausanne before joining the CSU (Christlich-Soziale Union) in 1974, where he was its deputy chairman from 2011 to 2017. He was elected to the German Bundestag in 1990 and was a member of the Foreign Affairs and the Defence Committee. He served as Parliamentary State Secretary of Defence between 2005 and 2013, before becoming State Secretary for Economic Cooperation and Development. From 2014 to 2018, Schmidt served as Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture. In 2006, he was elected President of the German Atlantic Society.

“Especially for the central and eastern European states, NATO continues to be the only viable security option in the struggle to remain free from Russian interference in its ‘privileged abroad.’”

approach globally”³ if it wants to be able to face the multitude of threats and challenges. But this can only happen if Europeans increase their efforts to strengthen the European pillar inside NATO. In this regard, many recent developments have been positive. With the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and the European Defence Fund, some of the Europeans’ capability shortfalls are starting to be addressed. The EU is conducting a major review, the so-called Strategic Compass, in order to define the level of its ambitions. And the EU and NATO have signed agreements to further their cooperation. They now cooperate on a range of 74 projects.

The concept of “European autonomy” is divisive

Developing European capabilities should not mean decoupling European from American security. The buzzword of “European autonomy” is a divisive concept, at least if it nurtures the illusion that Europe can defend itself without crucial US support. However, the EU does have to shoulder more responsibility for security and order in its near abroad. With the instability in its surroundings, where conflicts can flare up from northern Africa to the Balkans, it is easy to imagine a scenario where European peacekeepers could be called upon to provide security. Therefore, the first element of a renewed partnership between the EU and NATO must be that the EU strives to become capable of fielding its EU Battlegroups in a real scenario. Given its limited capabilities, this would necessarily be a modest operation, but the Europeans must nevertheless strive to achieve it. This also implies finding the political arrangements to avoid

strategic cacophony in a situation that demands fast action. The second element is that, in a world where economic prosperity is largely dependent on resilience in telecommunications and the cyber domain, the EU must come to terms with its relationship to China. While it seems unlikely that the US would ask European militaries to fight for Taiwan, it is clear that the EU can add much value to international security if it cooperates closely with NATO on questions like cyber defence or disinformation campaigns. Especially because of the low-intensity nature of hybrid warfare, this domain is a good candidate for cooperation between NATO and the EU.⁴

The third element is that the EU can add much value to deterrence in the east of EU territory, notably through its PESCO project on Military Mobility in Europe. This and other projects can contribute to allied deterrence if they succeed in standardising cross-border military transport procedures via rail, road, air or sea. Similarly, all of the EU’s new defence initiatives are useful if they help reinforce NATO’s ongoing efforts in deterrence and defence.

In 1991, the foreign minister of Luxembourg, Jacques Poos, famously claimed that his was “the hour of Europe”, but in what followed, Europeans were unable to live up to their own expectations to keep the peace in the Balkans. This must not be repeated. In an increasingly dangerous world, Europe’s ability to keep the peace and project stability depends on a strong transatlantic relation and a good relationship between the EU and NATO. It is in our own hands.

1 Remarks by President Biden in Press Conference (Brussels: NATO Headquarters, June 14, 2021) Last accessed on 27.08.2021. <https://bit.ly/3AT8DIk>

2 See the EU Commission’s information sheet on EU-US trade. Last accessed on 27.08.2021. <https://bit.ly/3FNK6Sq>

3 Secretary General launches NATO 2030 to make our strong Alliance even stronger (NATO 08 June 2020). Last accessed on 27.08.2021. <https://bit.ly/3GaqqAS>

4 Luis Simón, EU-NATO Cooperation in an Era of Great-Power Competition (The German Marshall Fund of the United States, Policy Brief, No° 28, 2019). Last accessed on 27.08.2021. <https://bit.ly/3GaqqQm>

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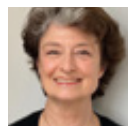
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Restoring common political France and in a common

by Dr Ronja Kempin, Senior Fellow at EU/
Europe Research Group, German Institute for
International and Security Affairs (SWP), Berlin

For a long time, the German federal government, led by Chancellor Angela Merkel, found it difficult to discuss Europe’s “strategic autonomy” in the Common Foreign Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Representatives of the outgoing government avoided using this central concept of the EU’s 2016 Global Strategy.

At the beginning of September 2021, however, the German Defence Minister Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, admitted: “We were dependent on the Americans in Afghanistan”, and that it is necessary to define “what it means in concrete terms to be really capable of acting on a European level”. Less than 10 days later, Paris called on its EU partners again to “raise loud and clear the issue of European strategic autonomy”.

Dr Ronja Kempin



photo: private

is a Senior Fellow at the EU/Europe Research Group of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) in Berlin. Her research focuses on the CSDP, France and Franco-German relations. Ms Kempin studied political science in Marburg, Berlin, Rennes and Paris. From 2010 to 2014 she was the head of the EU External Relations Research Group at SWP and advised the German Foreign Ministry on the CSDP.

Are Afghanistan and AUKUS turning points?

France is furious with the US and Great Britain for having joined forces with Australia to form an Australian-United Kingdom-US alliance (AUKUS), expanding military influence in the Indo-Pacific. France was not involved, although it entered a strategic partnership with Australia in 2016. This decision reminds Paris of the President Trump era, who showed little respect for his most important allies. In a joint communiqué, France’s Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian and Defence Minister Florence Parly stated on 16th September: “The American decision, which leads to the exclusion of a European ally and partner like France from a crucial partnership with Australia at a time when we are facing unprecedented challenges in the Indo-Pacific region, be it over our values or respect for a multilateralism based on the rule of law, signals a lack of consistency which France can only notice and regret.” French President Emmanuel Macron even ordered his country’s ambassadors in Washington and Canberra back to Paris for consultations on the matter – a unique event among allies.

Can the debacle in Afghanistan and the AUKUS incident lead to Franco-German cooperation intensifying further?

A pacemaker with a handicap

It goes without saying that the Franco-German relationship must be the nucleus of any European defence integration. What was true in the past holds true in the area of great-power rivalry: a truly joint Franco-German approach in the area of security and defence policy could be the starting point of a European project. Conversely, only a strong committed bilateral relationship uniting interests in a common global strategy will enable the EU and Europe to confront the present threats and challenges. However, a look at the recent cooperation between the two countries makes it clear that this can only succeed if

al influence

Germany must unite their interests on global strategy

both sides have the courage to do so. The year 2017 saw the Franco-German couple rise anew. Although the two countries held national elections, Berlin and Paris left no doubt about their wish to re-boost their bilateral relationship and their determination to play a leading role in defining the future of the European project “under threat”. Security and defence, an area of politics where France and Germany certainly differ, became one of the main axes of their agenda. The United Kingdom’s decision to leave the EU made them realise that there was room for *quid pro quos* on security and defence. And since cooperation with US President Donald Trump was largely impossible, the two countries seemed to have drawn the same conclusion: Europe can no longer rely fully on the United States, it has to reflect on its strengths and take its fate into its own hands. France and Germany thus gave fresh momentum to their security and defence policy cooperation and finally gave a boost to the CSDP. The ambitious military capabilities that the two countries intend to develop and procure together – above all the Future Combat Air System (FCAS) aircraft and the Main Ground Combat System Tank (MGCST) - should contribute to the EU becoming a globally capable actor in security and defence in the sense of the Treaty of Aachen signed in January 2019, which stipulates “strengthening Europe’s ability” to “act independently.”

A missing political dialogue

Against the background of this intensified cooperation, numerous observers were amazed in winter 2020 when President Macron and Minister Kramp-Karrenbauer publicly presented two completely different ‘development paths’ for European security policy. The German defence minister called the idea of European strategic autonomy an “illusion” and the French president pointedly countered that this was a “faulty interpretation of history.” Kramp-Karrenbauer responded that Europe’s most important ally in security and defence policy remained the United States, and that without its nuclear and conventional capabilities, Germany and Europe could not protect themselves. For her, these were the sobering facts from which conclusions for the EU had to be drawn. With Trump voted out of office and a policy change in the United States looming, it

has become clear that France and Germany based their joint call for greater European capacity to act and strategic autonomy on different motives, and that they have associated very different operational scenarios with it.

This ‘conflict’ also highlighted the greatest weakness of Franco-German cooperation in foreign and security policy: cooperation and joint proposals are almost exclusively linked to capabilities, sometimes at industrial levels. This also holds true for the Franco-German proposals presented since 2017, which are important steps forward. However, they need to be embedded in a further-reaching political dialogue on the ways in which they may serve the overall objective of strategic autonomy. The pre-condition for any successful Franco-German cooperation – bilateral, European or within the framework of the EU’s CSDP – is a common strategic understanding.

Political and strategic autonomy

This goal can best be reached through a Franco-German White Paper on Security and Defence, which should contain a shared analysis of the current security environment and the risks and threats it presents. Regional and functional priorities should be derived from this analysis. Based on these priorities, a joint level of ambition has to be defined.

A strategic, political dialogue between Paris and Berlin in the true meaning of the term is no easy task. Although postulated by the 1963 Elysée Treaty, it still is neglected in Franco-German security and defence cooperation. Foreign, security, and more importantly defence policy traditions are largely different in the two countries. Ideas on the role of the military and the use of force differ, as well as societies’ perceptions of their armed forces. Security and defence policy priorities do not neces-

sarily go together either, be it in terms of threat perception, regional priorities, or readiness to resort to military action.

For France and Germany to be able to take the lead in working towards the objective of European strategic autonomy, it is first indispensable that they reach a common understanding at the bilateral level. They need to agree on both the content and the implications of political autonomy as the *sine qua non* dimension of strategic autonomy.

“The pre-condition for any successful Franco-German cooperation – bilateral, European or within the framework of the EU’s CSDP – is a common strategic understanding.”

Russia is a Transatlantic-European partner, but the West is continuously failing to accept it as such

The world is too complex for every country to adhere to the same political recipes

by Vladimir A. Chizhov, Ambassador and
Permanent Representative of the
Russian Federation, Brussels

Though relations between Russia and the West have always been a complex story of ups and downs, one should not forget that from the outset we have been sincerely interested in developing cooperation with Transatlantic and European partners, NATO and the EU. Regretfully, our relations with both of these entities are now, as Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov noted, in a deplorable state.

From a strategic partner to an adversary?

Yet life proves that the West's current shift of perception of Russia— from a strategic partner to an adversary, let alone “enemy”, can only lead to a dead end. The reason is that Russia is one of the very few countries in the world that has the privilege of being a self-sufficient power, a state that can afford an independent foreign policy. Clearly, this is a disconcerting fact for a number of actors on the international stage. Wide-spread negative labelling of Russia and its actions, together with a cherished but false sense of exceptionalism, stand in stark contrast to the principles of tolerance, respect and acceptance of different views considered as a cornerstone of Western culture.

These conclusions, however, do not imply that all the current international threats are only a matter of Russia-Transatlantic or Russia-EU relations. The world we live in is diverse and multipolar, no matter how much some politicians – not to speak of some generals – seek to prove otherwise.... The current state of relations between Russia and the West has

been exacerbated by several factors, among them the domestic crisis in Ukraine, the reckless military adventure in Libya, which led to the collapse of a normally functioning state, not to mention Syria to which the same fate had been prescribed, but was luckily avoided, albeit with some help from Russia. As for the most recent example, Afghanistan, there is no need here to rehearse once again what we already know. The only thing I would like to emphasise in this regard is that, as Chinese philosophy postulates, this crisis, as much as any other, has the potential to open a window of opportunity for all members of the international community, and, hopefully too, for the Afghan people themselves.

What is the future of European independence?

The EU, for instance, has a chance to re-evaluate the essence and meaning of its strategic autonomy without being blinded by the euphoria of having a new Administration in Washington. The worrying trend however is that its political and military independence is being eroded by its strategic partnership with NATO, with as many as 74 joint proposals currently on the table aiming to merge the defence dimension of the two organisations. Most European defence initiatives are becoming aligned on US and NATO military planning priorities. Three non-EU countries (US, Canada, and Norway) were recently approved as partners in Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) projects. Any further developments of this kind are likely to further strengthen the already dominant American position in the European defence market. Cooperation on command and control structures, including on countering “hybrid” threats, is being built up, joint cyber capabilities are being strengthened.



And on top of all this, a bolt from the blue: the US decision to withdraw from Afghanistan without any sort of coordination with its European allies. One more conclusion therefore, however uncomfortable it may sound to some readers of this magazine, is that the concept of priority of values over interests has lost much of its shine as a result of developments in Afghanistan. The same can be said of the motto “steadfast transatlantic solidarity”.

Speaking of solidarity, I also have to add that it failed to pass a crucial test during the coronavirus pandemic. A chance to unite forces against a common enemy – one completely devoid of ideology or political affiliation and equally threatening all mankind, was missed. During the first and most dangerous months, the reaction of the EU and the “collective West” was chaotic. One can still witness worrying trends emerging from this disaster, such as politically motivated non-recognition of certain vaccines, confirming that the poison of double standards has spread to purely humanitarian issues.

Challenges to be solved by cooperation

Responsible members of the international community would never resort to the language of ultimatums and ignore equitable dialogue as a means to address concerns in various areas. Unfortunately, our Western counterparts follow a different pattern, like creating *ad hoc* alliances of the like-minded and imposing unilateral restrictive measures against economies and individuals who are singled out for blame, often for imaginary misbehaviour.

However, finding real solutions to the numerous international problems and common challenges that we all face lies in cooperation and not in outright rejection, nor in the flawed logic of a “zero-sum game”, nor the practice of replacing international law with a so-called “rules-based world order”

“Today is the right moment to re-assess the role of my country as a geostrategic partner. Every reasonable person would agree that ‘making friends against Moscow’ is irrational and contrary to any constructive logic.”

which runs counter to the universal principles of international law with the UN Charter as its primary source. And speaking of rules, one may wonder if there is really any difference between the UN Charter as a set of universal rules, and the various proposals being pushed by proponents of certain alliances of multilateralists or defenders of liberal democracy, in which many of the same words are used.

The key difference is that they tend to divide the world between the enlightened front-runners and those who are left with the option of either catching up or being left behind in the swamp of authoritarianism. This would inevitably lead the world into instability or, worse, disaster.

Russia: a partner for security and peace

No wonder my country rejects this selective approach and emphasises the overriding importance of international law. Do we really need further tragic examples to bring about a change in the current abnormal state of international relations? Another Afghanistan? Another pandemic? Obviously now is the right time to see the elephant in the room and finally realise

that the world is too complex for every country to adhere to the same political recipes.

Today is the right moment to re-assess the role of my country as a geostrategic partner. Every reasonable person would agree that “making friends against Moscow” is irrational and contrary to any constructive logic. The reality is that Russia constitutes an integral element of the balance of power on the international stage. Russia is ready to be part of collective and mutually beneficial endeavours to ensure peace, security and predictability in every part of the world.

Ambassador Vladimir A. Chizhov



photo: www.RussiaEU.ru

and joined the diplomatic service in 1976. Over his career, Ambassador Chizhov has been a member of embassy staff in several European countries and has held several positions in the European Department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 2002, he became Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

has been the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the European Union since 2005. Born in 1953, he graduated with honours from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO University)



Britain's continued commitment to European defence

A European Security Council provides the basis for re-engagement

by Robert Walter, President of EuroDéfense-United-Kingdom, London

The chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan, the apparent continuation, under President Biden, of “America First”, and of course Brexit, provide a critical challenge for Europe and the strategic defence of our continent, our values and our interests.

The reaction in Brussels to the horrors of Kabul airport was to launch yet another initiative for a rapid-reaction military force to operate independently of the United States. A new “initial entry force” that could be deployed quickly to intervene anywhere in the world, particularly to safeguard the evacuation of officials and staff.

Rethink the big picture of strategic capabilities

The European Union has proved that it can, albeit slowly, mount military missions to crisis areas in a peacekeeping role. But as the “battlegroups” concept first established in 2007 has shown, that rapid deployment of a standing force has proved impossible.

Former Swedish Prime Minister, Carl Bildt, recently commented; “The problem isn’t primarily that the EU lacks military muscle, but that it lacks the political will to use even what it

has. The last two decades or so are littered with declarations of building different forces and battle groups, but they are rarely if ever used. That’s the issue.”

If we in Europe are to be able to defend our territory, our values and our interests without the guaranteed umbrella of the United States, we need to rethink the big picture of strategic capabilities.

NATO is the cornerstone of European security against external threats, but NATO is underpinned by the United States and 7 (seven) European NATO members are outside the European Union. Although the United States still has 64,000 troops in Europe, however long they stay, they are there to defend America’s interests.

Without undermining either NATO or the European Union, Europe needs to have a mechanism that can demonstrate to any aggressor that we can effectively and rapidly defend ourselves. That mechanism cannot depend on majority voting in the EU Council and must include non-EU NATO members, who are as much part of Europe as the 27 Member States. Such an arrangement would not by-pass the already considerable achievements of the EU in the defence field, but would, where they were available, build on them. Europe faces a strategic crisis, and we must marshal all our resources to the defence of our people, interests and values. And, we must do it now.

We have to act now

There is no longer time for a continuing dialogue on how 27 EU Member States, with diverse defence cultures, can create a credible and effective EU military machine. Russia and China, not to mention ISIS and other terror groups, see the failure of Afghanistan as a fundamental weakness in the West’s ability to

“The problem isn’t primarily that the EU lacks military muscle, but that it lacks the political will to use even what it has.” Carl Bildt



photo: private

Robert Walter

is President of EuroDéfense-United Kingdom, and President of the European Security and Defence Association. He was a British Member of Parliament (1997-2015), and President of the Assembly of the Western European Union (2008-2011).

Mr Walter was Vice-President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (2010-15), and Vice-President, of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (2013-2015).

“Many politicians and political commentators in the UK have used the Afghanistan debacle as the key to British re-engagement with its European neighbours.”

Robert Walter

defend itself. Across Europe, people expect their governments and their supranational institutions to be able to defend them against external threats. Looking forward, the United Kingdom, which has the largest military budget in Europe, has continued to emphasise its commitment to European defence through NATO and several bi-lateral arrangements, most particularly with France. The political declaration attached to the Brexit withdrawal agreement envisaged a close relationship with the EU on defence and security matters, but sadly in the cloud of post-Brexit political rhetoric there has not been any progress here.

Many politicians and political commentators in the UK have used the Afghanistan debacle as the key to British re-engagement with its European neighbours. Significantly, the Chairman of the House of Commons Defence Committee and former Conservative minister, Tobias Ellwood, said “This has to be a totemic moment when we realise the limits of what ‘Global Britain’ is. We have to recognise that America doesn’t always make the right decision”. He went on “Britain has to rise above the pettiness of Brexit and work more closely with our European allies.”

Build up a European Security Council

France and Germany have discussed forming a ‘European Security Council’ (ESC) to strengthen European foreign policy and co-ordinate closely with the UK in the post-Brexit era. While the EU is a trade and regulatory superpower, it has consistently punched below its weight in foreign and security policy. This is most pronounced when it comes to taking military action. The EU also lacks a common ‘strategic culture’, and that is unlikely to change in the near future.

Many have confused the ESC concept with an EU Security Council, which would merely replace or duplicate the European Council’s existing Political and Security Committee.

The ESC initially could simply be an expanded E3 format, the informal forum through which France, Germany, and the UK have discussed policy towards Iran. Ideally an effective ESC would be an intergovernmental arrangement involving several EU Member States, but including non-EU NATO members, principally the UK. This would not be a competitor to either the EU or NATO, so the EU High Representative and the NATO Sec-

retary General should be at its meetings. With a larger military presence in Europe than most European nations, the question will arise as to whether the United States should also be at the table.

The development of an effective European strategic capability can only be done as a coalition of the willing who have the resources that they are prepared to commit. France and the United Kingdom bring their nuclear weapons capability to the table. They also bring their diplomatic clout as permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

But if Europe is to match or replace the military might of the United States, we have to spend more effectively through cooperative projects, such as the European Defence Agency (EDA), the European Defence Fund (EDF) and the Permanent Structured Co-operation (PESCO).

Most importantly, most Member States must also spend significantly more. For many years too many European nations have failed to meet their 2% NATO defence spending commitment. In the frightening new world we are entering the threats are increasing and we cannot avoid the reality that we need to commit more if we are to protect and defend our continent. This is not a call for a massive re-armament, but in the current uncertain climate, when it comes to ensuring the security of people and our way of life, there is no cheap option. We respect those countries who wish to retain their neutral or non-aligned status. But for most of us we recognise that our cherished Europe, which has been predominantly at peace for the last 75 years, is under threat. This is yet another wakeup call!

The UK is ready to contribute to Europe’s security

The time is right for a new European strategic assessment. To some this may seem like the re-creation of the Western European Union or a European “caucus” within NATO. History has moved on and we must respond to the threats and challenges of the 21st century. And the time is right for a new European strategic assessment combining the forces of NATO, EU and the coalition of willing nations prepared to commit significant resources to give Europe the ability to protect itself and ultimately defend its people, with or without the United States. The Franco-German proposal for a European Security Council would seem to be a timely and sensible way forward.

Europe must wake up to the geopolitical dimension of cybercrime

“Resilience” is a necessary yet insufficient condition of European security in cybe

by Jean-Louis Gergorin and Léo Isaac-Dognin,
co-authors of “Cyber, la guerre permanente”
(Editions du Cerf, 2018), Paris

A year ago, we voiced our concerns regarding the exponential rise of ransomware attacks, and over the impunity enjoyed by certain cybercriminals - modern pirates sometimes more akin to corsairs – in the countries from which they conduct their operations.¹ At the time, despite ample commentary from cybersecurity firms and media, no senior western public official had ever spoken on record about the responsibility that states held in such events.

Sophisticated ransomware attacks

In the nine months leading up to October 2021, cyberattacks of all types have grown both in number and in impact, particularly when it comes to ransomware. A report by Sonic Wall, a cybersecurity firm, suggests that the number of ransomware attempts observed in the first semester of 2021 – 304.7 million – was equivalent to that observed in the whole of 2020. Ransomware attacks have also grown in sophistication – recent attacks have even been linked to groups previously associated with the use of zero-day vulnerabilities which up until now remained the exclusive realm of state-sponsored hackers.²

One of the most alarming traits of recent ransomware activity is the increase of attacks against public health systems and hospitals. The most dreadful of these targeted Ireland’s Health Service Executive (HSE), which manages all hospitals and health services across the country. Hit on 14th May 2021, the HSE had recovered a mere 70% of its IT systems by the end of June. As we write, Irish citizens still

face delays of two to three months in registering births, leading to knock on delays in accessing free healthcare or passports for new-borns.³

Brussels’ enduring silence...

Responsibility for the attack was claimed with pride by a Russian group currently referred to as Wizard Spider and supposedly operating from St Petersburg. Most strikingly, the code in Wizard Spider’s Conti malware is specifically written to “uninstall itself if it locks onto a Russian language system or any systems featuring internet protocol (IP) address in former Soviet states”.⁴ On 6th September, the Irish Gardai’s National Cyber Crime Bureau announced that it had seized web domains used by Wizard Spider to prevent a further series of attacks. This rare public intervention by an EU member makes it even harder to understand Brussels’ enduring silence regarding an attack of “unprecedented scale” according to the UK NCSC former director, perpetrated by individuals that are knowingly based within the borders of a major EU economic partner.

... and Washington’s countermeasures

Such geopolitical passivity comes in stark contrast to the change of tone and strategy assumed by US leadership over the same period. It only took a few days after the ransomware attack against Colonial Pipeline for President Biden to publicly say the US would act to “disrupt” capabilities of the group of cybercriminals that had claimed responsibility – named DarkSide, and who similarly used malware programmed to spare targets in former Soviet states – if Russia did not. A day later, DarkSide announced its self-dissolution “due to US pressure”.⁵ This was quickly followed by news from the FBI that they had managed to recover 80% of the \$4.4m bitcoin ransom paid

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alarming traits of recent
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cient rspace

out by Colonial Pipeline to restart its operations. Biden also announced he would be raising the issue with his Russian counterpart and did not under deliver: half of the historic Geneva meeting between the two world leaders on 16th June focused on cybersecurity. It appears that the US President listed 16 types of critical activities that must be protected from cyber-disruption, and that both leaders agreed to reinstate a direct line between their administrations on matters of cybersecurity, as was shortly implemented under the Obama presidency. Five days later, Alexander Bortnikov, head of the FSB, stated at a security conference in Moscow that Russia “will work with [the United States] on locating hackers and hope for reciprocity”.⁶

Pragmatic Russian-US dialogue

Following a separate attack against the US software supplier named Kaseya by a group named REvil, whose effects reverberated across the globe on 9th July 2021, Biden immediately declared that he had called his Russian counterpart and made clear that the US expects Russia to intervene when “a ransomware operation is coming from its soil...if we give them enough information to act on”, later adding that the US would take down the perpetrators’ servers if Putin did not. On 13th July, REvil’s websites and other infrastructure vanished from the internet. Ten days later, Kaseya announced it had received the key to decrypt its files from a “trusted third party”. REvil reappeared early September and on 18 October was deemed responsible for an attack against the Sinclair Broadcast Group, one of the largest US TV station operators. Three days later, the FBI and US Cyber Command acted to definitively take down their infrastructure according to people directly involved interviewed by Reuters.

All of the events above clearly point in the direction of an agreement between Presidents Putin and Biden that attacks originating from their respective sphere of influence against the others’ critical infrastructure are out of bounds and to the fact that they will not hesitate to use cyber-offensive capabili-

Jean-Louis Gergorin



photo: Julio Piatti

is the owner of JLG Strategy, an aerospace, defence, and cyber consultancy. An alumnus of Ecole Polytechnique, Ecole Nationale d’Administration and Stanford Executive Program, he is co-founder of the French-American Cybersecurity Conference. He teaches a course at Sciences Po Paris. He was previously inter alia executive vice-president (strategy) of EADS (now Airbus) and head of policy planning of the French Foreign Ministry.

Léo Isaac-Dognin

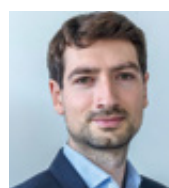


photo: Hannah Assouline

is a director at Capgemini Invent’s Citizen Services practice in Paris, where he advises European public and private organisations on digital strategy, security, and sovereignty. He holds a BA from the University of Cambridge and a joint MPA/MIA from Columbia University and Sciences Po Paris. He also lectures at Sciences Po Paris. Léo previously worked for the UK’s Financial Conduct Authority as a financial crime analyst and policy advisor.

ties to enforce deterrence. This form of deterrence, specific to cyberspace, implies swift and focused retaliation each time a red line is crossed.

A recent article published in Kommersant⁷, one of Russia’s leading news outlets, suggests that Moscow is particularly satisfied to have established a new field of strategic dialogue on equal terms with the United States thanks to its multi-pronged, decade-long cyber strategy.

Shortfalls of the EU Cybersecurity Strategy

But while there may henceforth be reasons for cybercriminals to shift their attention away from US-based targets, the same cannot be said for Europe. Make no mistake, the authors of this paper commend the initiatives brought forward by the current European Commission in its renewed EU Cybersecurity Strategy, announced in December 2020.⁸ Measures like the revised NIS Directive and proposed new Directive on the resilience of critical entities pave the way for stronger protection of European critical infrastructure and services by heightening cybersecurity requirements and broadening their scope of application. These will be bolstered by further requirements on Internet of Things (IoT) devices announced last month as part of a proposed ‘Cyber Resilience Act’.

In addition, the EU’s strategy plans the launch of a coordinat-

→ Continued on page 36

ed network of Security Operations Centres across the EU to enable faster detection, containment, and remediation of cyberattacks, together with a Cybersecurity Competence Centre based in Bucharest, as well as increased support to SMEs for research and upskilling. Thanks to the EU Recovery and Resilience Fund, Member States have themselves planned even further investments in public and private sector cybersecurity. The Commission is also expanding the EU External Action Service's "Cyber Diplomacy Toolbox" and outreach activities to establish international norms of behaviour in cyberspace, support states in the EU's "Eastern and Southern neighbourhood" with cyber capacity building, leverage the PESCO mechanism to coordinate responses to cyber-attacks, and impose sanctions where dialogue does not yield sufficient results. Finally, over the summer the Commission laid out its vision to build a "Joint Cyber Unit" that seeks to enable more coordinated operational responses to major cyber-attacks and facilitate further information sharing between member states. Still, all these initiatives – collectively branded as a "Cyber Shield" for Europe – do no more than what they say: build resilience, or at best, soft forms of response to cyber-attacks. They do not address the current reality in cyberspace, namely that resilience and defence at large are insufficient and, above all, uneconomical to deter adversaries in cyberspace, as the cost to hackers remains low, and the pace of digital innovation continuously creates new risks. That is precisely the consequence of cyberspace becoming a "great equaliser in the way power can be used today by rogue states or non-state groups", as expressed by President von der Leyen in her most recent State of the Union address.

European leaders must wake up

Too little is planned to end the impunity enjoyed by groups that attack European assets, and to grant Europe the ability to weigh on the behaviour of partners and rivals. We recommend four strands of action.

First: European leaders must wake up to the fact that cyber-threats have become a matter of national security to be dealt with at the highest political levels. In particular, commitments on cybersecurity similar to those agreed between Biden and Putin should become a condition of any future economic trade discussions with the EU's partners. Given the key achievements gained in 'Normandy format' negotiations on Ukraine, the French president and future German chancellor should put this on the agenda of a joint summit with their Russian counterpart, together with the Commission President and High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

Second: This change of tone at political and diplomatic levels must be backed by credible deterrence capabilities: specifically, the ability to trace the origin of the most sophisticated

“Too little is planned to end the impunity enjoyed by groups that attack European assets, and to grant Europe the ability to weigh on the behaviour of partners and rivals.”

attacks back to specific locations and operators and disrupt their capabilities if required. While the Joint Cyber Unit and existing PESCO mandates go to some lengths in this direction, they remain driven by "solidarity and assistance" between member states rather than deterrence, and they aim for a level of inclusiveness of all "civilian, military, and private sector actors" that is detrimental to effectiveness in highly sensitive operations.

The reality is that the type of prerogatives needed to act in this realm remains in the hands of national capitals, and as long as this remains the case, Europe must accept strengthened collaboration between a restricted circle of member states that sufficiently trust each other to share the type of intelligence required for attribution – similar to what anglosphere countries achieved with Five Eyes. This European "cyber-coalition of the willing" should bring together member states with the capabilities and most importantly the willingness to undertake counter-offensive measures and remain open to collaboration with Five Eyes members.

Third: EU policymakers should deepen initiatives that reduce criminals' ability to leverage the proceeds of cybercrime. The Commission's recent proposal to enforce transparency on cryptocurrency transfers by enforcing application of the same rules as currently apply to traditional financial services should be supported by all member states. Europe can leverage its economic weight to encourage other continents to enforce these measures and impose pressure on states that harbour intermediaries in the money laundering chain.

Finally: For Europe to speak and act with one voice, a single coordinator needs to be designated at Commission or Council level to jointly orchestrate resilience, external relations and deterrence policy.

Pending these changes, Europe is bound to become the primary global target of cybercrime, depleting its wealth, and weakening its balance of power with global rivals.

¹ The European – Security and Defence Union, Volume n° 37, Edition 4/2020, pages 15-16.

² <https://bit.ly/3piCSQN>

³ <https://bit.ly/3jcRSLW>

⁴ <https://bit.ly/3DNFctI>

⁵ <https://nyti.ms/3DPsFPv>

⁶ <https://reut.rs/3wbn13v>

⁷ <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/5007866>

⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_20_2391



Security and Defence

The European Union is continuing efforts to develop own defence capabilities in cooperation, adapting structures and creating financial instruments for security and defence.

Although European armaments cooperation is still in its infancy, the groundwork has been laid for drones, future air combat systems and ground combat systems – but they all involve political and technological risks.

OCCAR: a centre of excellence for cooperative programmes

Creating the instruments for transatlantic armament cooperation

Interview with Matteo Bisceglia, Director of OCCAR, Bonn

The European: *Mr Bisceglia, you have been the Director of the Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation (OCCAR) in Bonn since 2019. OCCAR was established by Jacques Chirac and Helmut Kohl in 1995 to facilitate and manage collaborative European armament programmes throughout their life cycle. Is it a success story?*

Matteo Bisceglia: Yes, it is! Twenty years ago, OCCAR's initial Programme Portfolio consisted of a small number of programmes, but since then has progressively increased to 16 programmes with a total operational budget of around €80bn that OCCAR manages on behalf of its Member States and Non-Member States.

By managing programmes from the definition stage up to disposal, OCCAR lives up to both its mission and vision, becoming at the same time a valuable vehicle for the EU in its aim for strategic European defence autonomy.

The European: *What are your systems of reference?*

Matteo Bisceglia: OCCAR procures and delivers defence systems that should become the reference baseline within the European defence scenario. The organisation manages different and diverse armaments cooperation programmes such as, among others, A400M, FREMM, ESSOR, MALE RPAS, and Boxer whilst improving efficiency and reducing costs, along with con-

tributing to strengthening the European Defence Technology and Industrial Base (EDTIB).

The European: *OCCAR was founded in 1996 on the so-called French-German Principles of Baden-Baden (1995). Have you been successful in meeting the “juste retour” criterion, creating a global balance of work over several programmes and years?*

Matteo Bisceglia: Through the global balance principle, nations have renounced the principle of *juste retour*, moving away from the application of “cost-share equals workshare” in order to achieve a global balance of work over several projects and years.

The European: *Does that mean that OCCAR promotes greater freedom in the supplier selection?*

Matteo Bisceglia: Indeed, and we achieve a more cost-effective approach, which is beneficial to national industries including Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), maximising the benefits of collaboration for strengthening the competitiveness of the EDTIB. This approach enhances the creation of complementary industrial and technological expertise in the relevant fields between Member States, thus guaranteeing support for their own armed forces.

The European: *Has the application of programme management procedures based on best practices led to cost effectiveness and competitiveness?*

Matteo Bisceglia: To tackle cuts on defence spending, OCCAR strives to develop and optimise programme management methods to fulfil all customers' expectations. To this end we adopt efficient procurement best practices, based on lessons learned and standard competition processes, thus improving the effectiveness of the EDTIB and delivering best value-for-money defence systems.

The European: *Your organisation has become a centre of excellence in armament cooperation, but it is not alone in Europe. There are also the European Defence Agency (EDA) in Brussels*

Vice Admiral Matteo Bisceglia

has been the Director of OCCAR since September 2019. He earned his engineering degree from the University of Pisa in 1983 and then started his naval officer career. Among various positions, he was the Italian representative at the NATO Sparrow Project in Washington DC (1990-1993), Deputy Director of Maintenance Department of Navy Yard, La Spezia (1995-1997), and Programme Manager at OCCAR, Bonn (2010-2014). Before becoming the Director of OCCAR, Vice Admiral Bisceglia was in charge of the Naval Armaments Directorate of the Italian MoD in Rome (2014-2019).





Programmes mentioned in the interview

A400M is a tactical and strategic airlifter meeting the demands of efficient, all terrain transport of modern military operations: all weather, day and night, for troops and/or material up to helicopters. It can also be used as a tanker.

Boxer is an 8x8 all-terrain heavily armoured utility vehicle with a unique modular concept of a common drive module and an exchangeable mission module, making it a flexible military vehicle, thus ensuring maximum strategic and tactical mobility.

COBRA is a counter battery radar system. It is considered the world's most advanced land based weapon locating system comprising a high performance radar, advanced processing and an integrated, flexible command, control and communication system.

ESSOR is an innovation in the world of military radios that defines the next generation of interoperable software defined radio, enabling radios from different manufacturers and nations to be interoperable, to foster coalition activities. The ESSOR Wideband Waveform is now being considered to become a NATO standard in 2022.

FREMM is a European Multi-purpose Frigate. The FREMM programme is the most ambitious and innovative European naval defence project which will set new standards for design and built costs. The FREMM will be built in Anti-Submarine and Anti-Air Warfare and General Purpose versions.

MALE RPAS is a medium altitude long endurance (MALE) remotely piloted aircraft system (RPAS), designed to carry out worldwide long endurance Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance missions and provide support capability to ground forces through weapons engagement.

MMF is the Multinational Multi-Role tanker transport fleet, providing new state of the art military transport (passenger and cargo), medical evacuation and air-to-air refuelling capability to Europe.

TIGER is a new generation multi-role combat helicopter developed in Europe and in service in Australia, France, Germany and Spain. It was designed from a common platform complemented with different elements building a number of variants tailored to the customers' needs.

and the Luxembourg based NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA), which is part of the NATO Support and Procurement Organisation. How does cooperation with these agencies differ?

Matteo Bisceglia: OCCAR and EDA consider each other as complementary partners in the domain of cooperative European defence capability development and delivery. EDA identifies and initiates cooperative armament programmes in the preparation phase, whilst OCCAR implements and manages the follow-on phases. The NSPA is also a valuable partner through its support to a number of OCCAR managed programmes. Current agreements allow the NSPA to support OCCAR in the management of the MMF, A400M, COBRA and TIGER ISS (In-Service-Support) phase. We are all complementary.

The European: Could you describe two or three flagship cooperation projects with EDA and the advantages for participating countries?

Matteo Bisceglia: OCCAR manages the ESSOR and MALE RPAS programmes within the relationship with EDA. ESSOR has been selected as a project of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), which led the Participating States to launch new ESSOR related projects in 2021 with the financial support of the EDIDP. MALE RPAS is planned to be delivered in 2028.

The European: OCCAR's cooperation with the NATO Support and Procurement Organisation (NSPO) is based on a Framework Memorandum of Understanding from 2005. Have Canada and the United States manifested any interest? What are the two most important projects with NATO?

Matteo Bisceglia: There was no negative reaction from the US or Canada! On the contrary. The effectiveness of OCCAR has been recognised by the USA who recently decided to launch a new naval programme based on the experience gained

→ Continued on page 40

from the FREMM design. OCCAR and the NSPO have created a collaborative environment, ensuring continuing success in programme management. Among the projects managed in cooperation with NATO, I would mention the A400M, where NSPA supports OCCAR in the management of the ISS phase, along with MMF, where OCCAR manages the Acquisition Phase on behalf of NATO.

The European: *And your very personal view?*

Matteo Bisceglia: We are partners, not competitors. Every agency has its own strengths. Putting those into action and combining them can only be beneficial for any programme and for our customers, namely the nations.

The European: *Director, what is OCCAR doing to preserve its future? Obviously, the organisation is looking at future business opportunities such as the Future Combat Air System (FCAS) or Main Ground Combat System (MGCS).*

Matteo Bisceglia: I am personally investing a lot of time and effort into the promotion of OCCAR, within the nations and industry, as the centre of excellence and first choice for managing complex cooperative programmes. In industry, I especially aim at SMEs as I believe they are the backbone of the European economy. Moreover, I try to convince nations that one common weapons system is more efficient and economical than multiple weapons systems with the same goal. However, the nations keep the final decision authority.

The European: *OCCAR distinguishes between “Participating States” and “Member States”¹. What are the criteria for each category and are you intending to enlarge one or both of them?*

Matteo Bisceglia: OCCAR is composed of 6 Member States that provide high-level governance through a Board of Supervisors. OCCAR is a very lean and flexible organisation, able to adapt itself to the challenging and fast-paced defence environment. On the other hand, we are striving to widen the number of Participating States, and this is a key OCCAR principle.

“OCCAR procures and delivers defence systems that should become the reference baseline within the European defence scenario.”

The European: *Mr Bisceglia, is it in OCCAR’s interest to keep the number of Member States low?*

Matteo Bisceglia: The more decision makers there are the more complex the decision-making process becomes, especially in an environment which needs unanimity for its decisions. The current strategic level based on six Member States has granted high flexibility and capability to quickly adapt and change the overall OCCAR organisation as needed, in order to effectively face the defence environment’s challenges. Therefore, the current situation is not about to change in the immediate future.

The European: *And do the Participating States have less privileges as Member States?*

Matteo Bisceglia: Firstly, OCCAR is an open house, meaning that every Non-Member Nation is welcome as Participating State in a programme as long as that nation accepts the OCCAR principles. Secondly, a Participating Nation has the same privileges and decision-making authority in the Programme Board of its programmes.

The European: *Finally, what is the role of your Board of Supervisors (BoS)?*

Matteo Bisceglia: The BoS directs and supervises the OCCAR Executive Administration. It is the highest decision-making body of OCCAR and decides on all matters concerning the implementation of the OCCAR Convention. It consists of the six ministers of defence or their delegates. The BoS is assisted by four committees in specific areas: the Future Tasks and Policy Committee (also Audit Committee), the Finance Committee and the Security Committee. For day-to-day business, the ministers of defence have delegated the Board of Supervisors’ membership to their national armament directors or other appropriate representatives.

The European: *Mr Bisceglia, thank you for our conversation.*



Mr Bisceglia (right) and Hartmut Bühl during the interview in Bonn

photo: OCCAR

¹ OCCAR Member States: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom. OCCAR Participating Member States: Finland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, and Turkey



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Strategy for European and NATO partnerships

Contribution in missile technology to the EU's strategic compass

Interview with Thomas Gottschild, Managing Director of MBDA Deutschland GmbH and Executive Group Director Strategy MBDA, Schrobenhausen

The European: *Mr Gottschild, MBDA was created in 2001 after the merger of missile systems companies from France, Italy and the UK, later followed by enterprises from Germany and Spain. Will MBDA further expand to become an even bigger European champion?*

Thomas Gottschild: It is our natural aim to maintain and develop our role as an industrial leader in Europe. We continuously monitor the development of our own capabilities, opportunities for strategic partnerships, as well as mergers and acquisitions.

The European: *What does this mean for your core business?*

Thomas Gottschild: In our core business – missiles and air defence systems – we focus on the development of the skills of our employees and their working environment. We offer facilities and means to drive technological development and innovation in all the countries of the MBDA footprint. We hire highly qualified engineers, offer programmes to further develop their skills and set incentives for innovation. On the other hand, MBDA is part of strategic partnerships cooperating with companies all over

Europe and in NATO territories, including startups and top-class SMEs. These startups and SMEs are indispensable in our production chain and are drivers for innovation and creativity for future capabilities. Finally, we continuously evaluate opportunities for mergers and acquisitions to gain new capabilities or strengthen our regional footprint.

The European: *Since 2016 you have been the Managing Director of MBDA Deutschland GmbH, shortly MBDA Germany, and since 2018 the Executive Group Director Strategy of MBDA. What is MBDA's 2040 horizon?*

Thomas Gottschild: We live in challenging times. The needs of our customers are changing rapidly, requiring flexibility and creativity on the industry side, whilst budgets need to reflect this. Recent conflicts made clear that the protection of forces and valuable assets is becoming predominant, such as dominance in the air, at sea, and on the battlefield. On top, the relevance of space, cyber and subsurface military operations is growing.

The European: *Indeed, these are many threats. How will you counter them with military means?*

Thomas Gottschild: In this context, it is our aim to provide appropriate military effects against evolving threats in different domains and mission scenarios. Our customers need to use the means most suited to the different scenarios to achieve the appropriate effect against

Thomas Gottschild

has been the Managing Director of MBDA Deutschland GmbH and member of the MBDA Executive Board since 2016, and Executive Group Director Strategy of MBDA since 2018. Born in 1969, he served in the Bundeswehr's air defence and then graduated in electrical engineering. He joined Siemens in 1996. From 2008 to 2011 he was the associate head of the EADS Brussels office as Director EU Defence Policy and he then headed the Technical Sales Support and Portfolio Management units at Cassidian Mission Systems, including the marketing of unmanned platforms (2011–2014). From 2014 to 2015 he was responsible for the strategy of the Space Systems division of Airbus Space & Defence.

“Startups and SMEs are indispensable in our production chain and are drivers for innovation and creativity for future capabilities.”

their adversaries. We support them with the right systems to manage these effects, be it missiles, lasers or electronic warfare.

The European: *Could you elaborate on those systems?*

Thomas Gottschild: MBDA is a key player in building critical future systems, such as Integrated Air and Missile Defence (IAMD) systems, Future Combat Air System (FCAS) or Main Ground Combat System (MGCS). There will be further ground, naval, air and space platforms with new capabilities and new weapon systems. Therefore, the need to develop new technologies, such as high-energy lasers, artificial intelligence, and hypersonic weapons, as well as new materials and manufacturing processes, is demanding for our engineers.

The European: *New technologies will lead to new capabilities, as you explained. What are they?*

Thomas Gottschild: They are systems and capabilities like Counter UAS, hypersonic strike and counter hypersonic missiles, collaborative engagement and others.

The European: *There is a huge variety of upcoming systems and capabilities. You already mentioned the demanding task for your engineers, but what does an innovation push mean for your company?*

Thomas Gottschild: To continue the MBDA story, we are building on our strengths. We have the right employees, efficient processes, modern tools and the appropriate industrial setup to play a leading role for this innovation push.

We are embarking on the renewal of our key products, while exploring the capabilities of next-generation systems. Accordingly, we are working on all key technologies, such as laser, hypervelocity, new materials, swarming, collaboration, artificial intelligence, or network-enabled missions.

The European: *No single company can master all these technologies on its own!*

Thomas Gottschild: Indeed, to offer outstanding technologies and performance, partnerships are key to success, partnerships with industry, research institutes and universities.

The European: *The German Ministry of Defence (MoD) in Berlin – unreasonably for observers – stopped in 2020 the support for the Tactical Air Defence System (TLVS), better known under the name of MEADS and decided to extend the lifecycle of Patriot, the US system. Was there any political pressure from the US or did the German air force intervene, well known as US minded? Or was it the technological status of the system?*

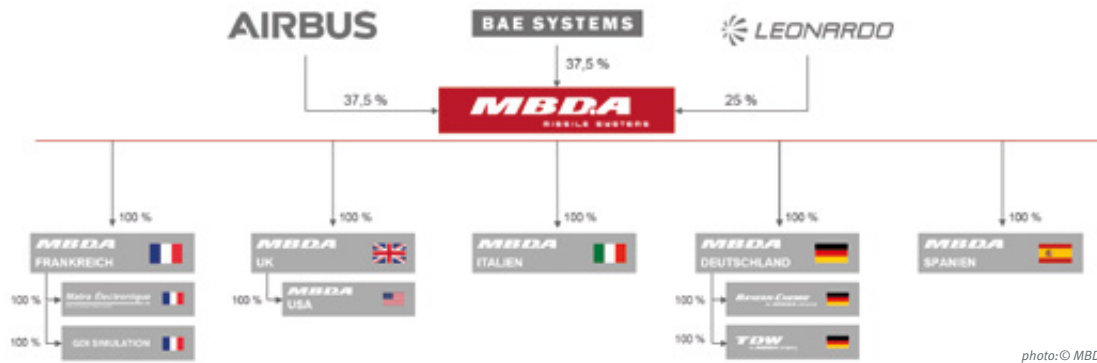
Thomas Gottschild: Only the MoD can answer these questions but let me describe the process up to now. In 2015, the German Ministry of Defence selected TLVS to develop a ground-based air defence system to counter a wide range of current and future airborne threats. Germany was confirmed to take a leading role as a framework nation in NATO to support other countries with a modern and pioneering system. Finally, we submitted a proposal, which met the needs of our customer and the requirements of the German Procurement Agency (BAAINBw). However, as we know from recent budget plans and announcements, the focus of the MoD has shifted.



Thomas Gottschild (left) showing to Hartmut Bühl the model of a new category of weapons: FCAS (Future Combat Air System) Remote Carriers are various air-launched autonomous platforms that deliver multiple effects, whether lethal or non-lethal, as well as new services for munitions such as intelligence, targeting, and deception of enemy sensors

photo: MBDA

→ Continued on page 44



The European: And what will be MBDA's future role in German air defence?

Thomas Gottschild: Patriot will still be the basis of German air defence in the early 2030s. As a long-standing partner of the Bundeswehr in the Patriot programme, we will continue to play a leading role in the expected extension of Patriot's service life. We are eligible to contribute to European programmes like Twister, an initiative for Timely Warning and Interception with Space Based Theatre Surveillance. On the other hand, we can also address Short Range and Very Short Range Air Defence.

The European: In fact, if I understand correctly, your expertise is bringing MBDA Germany in the position to contribute to all layers of air defence. But is there any hope for a revision of the MoD's decision on TLVS?

Thomas Gottschild: Formally, it is still an ongoing procurement process and according to the capability requirements of Bundeswehr the introduction of TLVS is vital with the current and developing threat situation in mind. Developments in the field of hypersonic missiles, and new intelligent missiles emerging in several countries around the world, underline this need. It is not about our hopes; it's about what the Bundeswehr needs in the long run.

The European: Europe is said to be lagging behind China, Russia and the US in terms of technology eg high-tech issues of laser and hypersonic weapons. Are you within the MBDA family's Research and Development (R&D) capabilities able to close this gap?

Thomas Gottschild: With its universities, research facilities and a strong industrial base, Germany is still a motor for innovation and technology. Other countries in Europe, like the home countries of MBDA, are in the position to claim the same for themselves. What needs to be improved are the respective national and European frameworks to support the inherent industrial capabilities for innovation and efficiency. The EU's

Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) Framework and the European Defence Fund (EDF) are European initiatives to support meeting these objectives.

The European: Could you give an example of fields where MBDA has the most advanced technological capabilities?

Thomas Gottschild: One example within MBDA is that already in 2003 Bayern Chemie, an MBDA subsidiary, developed a hypersonic missile reaching Mach 7 near ground, up to now an unbroken record. We continued this early work and developed concepts for interceptors on a national basis as well as in the European PESCO Framework.

Another field covers laser weapons. We are developing a demonstrator for integration and testing in 2022 on the F124 Frigate "Sachsen" of the German navy. The German navy will use the demonstrator to test capabilities such as operation, the interaction of sensor technology, tracking and effect as well as the rules of engagement on board the frigate.

The European: Will a broad field of requirement in the future be the support of forces' mission planning?

Thomas Gottschild: You are fully right and that is why our main goal is to support the mission of our customers. MBDA develops advanced tools for mission planning and I give your readers the example of the next generation anti-ship missile "Teseo". The intelligent tools for Teseo provide a fast reaction time, while mission parameters are adjustable via a two-way data link to the real time tactical picture. This allows target update, reassignment as well as mission abort.

The European: Mister Gottschild, those examples may give evidence that the German and European industry has the joint capabilities to work on eye level with the China, US and other leading nations worldwide. Let me encourage you and thank you for this conversation.

The interview was led by Hartmut Bühl

“To offer outstanding technologies and performance, partnerships are key to success, partnerships with industry, research institutes and universities.”

“The Union must be in the driving seat!”

Questioning initiatives in European defence

In a telephone conference, we asked Dipl-Ing, Major General (ret), Reinhard Wolski, Moderator of The Berlin Security Conference, to take a stand on some of the developments in the EU's security and defence policy and major armament developments.

Nannette Cazaubon: General, the EU High Representative and Vice- President of the European Commission, Josep Borrell has made a proposal to enable the EU to better react to crises with its military capabilities by building on an operational Intervention Force of 5000 military personnel. What should be the criteria for the deployment of such a force, that should replace the current system of battlegroups?

Reinhard Wolski: Thank you for inviting me to this telephone conference. My answers will reflect my personal views. Indeed, what would be the criteria? Certainly, it is not only international crisis management operations that should be in the remit of this force. As we observed in Kabul in August, but also in Somalia in 1993, so called “Peace Support Missions” require the full spectrum of political, strategic, and operational willingness to commit forces to high-density war operations... and the will to commit a combat force. The political and legal framework for committing such a force at EU level should include crisis management operations, but also rapid reaction operations wherever needed in the defence of Europe – possibly as a first responder. The Union must be in the driving seat in this decision making!

Nanette Cazaubon: What needs to be included in such a construct to make it fully operational?

Reinhard Wolski: We know that terrorist groups, non-state actors or other non-combatant potential adversaries (eg organised crime, freedom fighters acting across national borders to raise money...) enjoy high-tech weapons and force multipliers, such as cyberspace capabilities, Unmanned Systems (UAS) etc. So, the 5000 men/women strong force must be equipped and trained for multi-domain operations. This would include a resilient, powerful Command and Control (C2) system, fully digitised and standardised for the whole force, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities that range from tactical and operational assets (eg drones, reconnaissance and attack helicopters, radar sensors) to the access to “reach back” strategic EU intelligence, such as satellite and human intelligence – without “national caveats”! In terms of impacts, this force requires non-kinetic and kinetic capabilities with direct and indirect firing, electronic and cyber warfare capabilities, air power and strategic communications to cover the area of responsibility. I think that is clear enough.

Hartmut Bühl: This force would therefore need the whole spectrum of land force capabilities. But what about strategic and operational mobility and logistical support?

Reinhard Wolski: Strategic and operational mobility is the condition sine qua non for each operation. The air and sea transport facilities have to be contributed by the Union and, if necessary, supported by NATO (Berlin Agreement 1994). Tactical mobility in the theatre has to be guaranteed by a proper

→ Continued on page 46

Reinhard Wolski, Major General (ret),

has been the moderator of Berlin Security Conference since 2020. Born in 1955, he holds an aerospace engineer degree and served in the German Bundeswehr from 1974-2019. Trained as a paratrooper and an army aviator, he served in command and General Staff positions in Germany, Great Britain, Belgium and Norway with main focus on operational warfare and capability planning. He was also deployed to Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan. He is a lecturer at University of Bundeswehr, Munich.

composition of the force. For the support functions, high mobility is a must: by air (the most crucial of course), by ship, by rail and by road. Basically, all equipment – including indirect firing weapon systems – must be able to be flown into the theatre. Logistics and medical support must be flexible, standardised and “just in time” – but resilient.

Hartmut Bühl: *Such a force should have the same or at least interoperable equipment as far as possible. This is not feasible at the moment. Of highest importance for the next decades are the Future Combat Air System/ FCAS (France, Germany and Spain) and the Main Ground Combat System/ MGCS (France and Germany). There are always political risks in cooperation, but what technology and engineering risks do you see in these two programmes?*

Reinhard Wolski: To be very frank, I hope that FCAS will not be a “money burning” machine for European nations, eating up resources needed for other services. We have to keep everything in balance. Only a balanced development of land capabilities, naval, air and cyberspace forces can provide full spectrum dominance. FCAS will remain one element for joint operations.

Hartmut Bühl: *But what are the stakes for this air combat system?*

Reinhard Wolski: The stakes are high: after the US F-35, this will be the next level up of air combat systems, 6th generation (nobody knows yet what it will be really capable of...). Companies involved are seeking to regain technological supremacy in terms of Manned-Unmanned-Teaming, Combat Clouds, Artificial Intelligence, including other military and civilian spin-offs. For me, the manned fighter aircraft belonging to the Next Generation Weapons System (NGWS) is also well placed for export, whereas the Remote Carrier (RC) and the resilient Combat Cloud (CL) with data rates >250 Mbit/s between aircraft close to or above supersonic speed will bear the greatest development risk.

Nannette Cazaubon: *But the UK, together with some EU Member States, is developing the “Tempest”, a combat aircraft which seems to have much the same military requirements...*

Reinhard Wolski: What really strikes me, and you are right, is that the “Tempest” Strike Aircraft is being developed by the UK, Italy and Sweden in parallel. To be quite frank, having these developments in parallel in Europe is not sensible. I would even say that it is politically irresponsible.

Nannette Cazaubon: *Do you see any solution, apart from one group running out of money?*

Reinhard Wolski: That would be a very bad outcome indeed, because too much money would already have been burned. My proposal is that OCCAR* should bring the two concepts together. These two programmes have to be reviewed in order to streamline and optimise European High-Tech military aviation projects and make them affordable.

Hartmut Bühl: *It seems, that the Main Ground Combat system (MGCS) is less complicated and therefore fraught with fewer risks.*

Reinhard Wolski: I do hope so. The MGCS will not be a pure successor to the Leopard 2 A7V and the Leclerc Main Battle Tank (MBT), but a system of systems including sensor-to-shooter capabilities, teaming with unmanned ground systems, self-protection also against drones and other smart ammunitions. It is ambitious but technologically, it is far less complicated of course than the FACS. Politically, it might still be risky. We need to assess what the role of heavy armour is likely to be in the future. A “technology demonstrator” will show what capabilities will be needed and how integrated a system it should be.

Nannette Cazaubon: *Could you imagine that other Member States would join these two programmes or would it be wise to keep the number of “actors” to a minimum?*

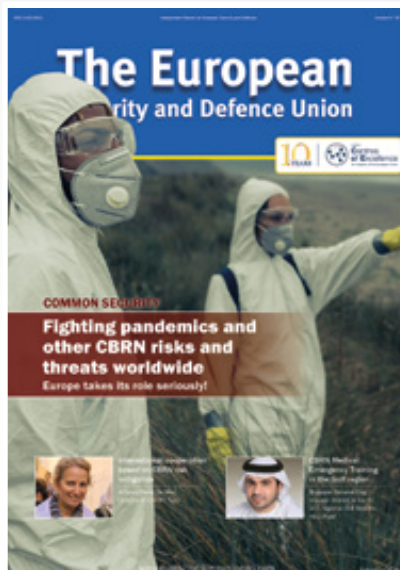
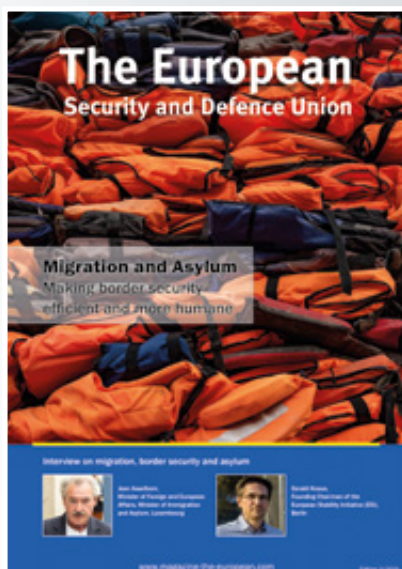
Reinhard Wolski: Concerning the MGCS, other European nations are looking for a successor to Leopard 2. In view of the progress, complexity and costs of the programme, France and Germany should be seeking participation from other nations, while ruling out additional national requirements and complexity of course.

Regarding the FCAS, I am still not convinced that other nations will buy into the project, especially in the face of competition from the “Tempest” programme already in place.

And, by the way, we certainly need a European “Future Combat Rotary Wing System” (FCRWS) for dominance in the lower airspace, attack helicopters teaming with UAVs.

Hartmut Bühl: *General, thank you for answering our questions.*

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