ARMADA DEL ECUADOR
ACADEMIA DE GUERRA NAVAL
Guayaquil
-o-

LECTURA RECOMENDADA

An Agenda for NATO

ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Lectura recomendada por:

Francisco Chamorro
Asesor de la Academia de Guerra Naval

2021

MOTIVACIÓN A LA LECTURA

Zbigniew Brzezinski (1928-2017) fue un politólogo estadounidense de origen polaco que ocupó el cargo de Consejero de Seguridad Nacional en el gobierno del presidente de los Estados Unidos Jimmy Carter (1977-1981). En cuanto a su vida académica fue profesor en la Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies de la Universidad John Hopkins, Washington D.C.

Los distintos trabajos de Brzezinski, entre los que se destacan: Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power, The Choice: Global Domination or Global Leadership y The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives, se constituyen como instrumentos fundamentales para los estudiosos de la geopolítica, la política internacional, la estrategia y la geoestrategia. En este contexto, se recomienda la lectura de uno de sus principales ensayos sobre seguridad internacional titulado “An Agenda for NATO”, publicado en octubre 2009 en la revista estadounidense Foreign Affairs.

Dicho ensayo tiene como propósito principal analizar la evolución de la Organización del Tratado del Atlántico Norte, NATO (por sus siglas en inglés), desde sus orígenes en 1949 hasta el 2009, año en el que la Organización celebró su 60 aniversario. La importancia de estudiar este ensayo radica en tres cuestiones principales:

1) Se trata de la alianza militar más importante del mundo que, al contrario de organizaciones similares, ha logrado superar la dinámica de la seguridad mundial;

2) La capacidad de adaptación a las demandas actuales se reflejó en los cambios y actualizaciones de su concepto estratégico; y,

3) Se analizan las implicaciones y las principales lecciones aprendidas en los 60 años de historia para proyectar el futuro de la alianza.

Tres cuestiones no menores que caracterizan el éxito de la organización en cuanto su principal responsabilidad, la defensa colectiva de los Estados Parte del Tratado, cuya naturaleza no ha sido modificada.

En este contexto, Brzezinski establece ciertos desafíos que la alianza debía -y posiblemente debe- enfrentar: en primer lugar, cómo lograr un resultado politicamente aceptable para la participación cada vez mayo de la NATO en conflictos internacionales; segundo, cómo actualizar el significado y las obligaciones de la "seguridad colectiva" tal como se encarna en el artículo 5 del tratado de la alianza; tercero, cómo involucrar a Rusia en una relación vinculante y mutuamente beneficiosa con Europa y la comunidad más amplia del Atlántico Norte; y cuarto, cómo responder a nuevos dilemas de seguridad global.

Para lograr una respuesta acertad a todas las inquietudes planteadas, el autor desarrolla un análisis sobre el rol de Occidente en la política internacinoal, la posibilidad de “ampliación” de Occidente, el rol de los Estados Unidos dentro de la organización y en cuanto a su liderazgo mundial.

Por esto, se trata de una lectura recomendada para los alumnos de la Academia de Guerra Naval y para quienes tengan interés en el tema, debido a que ofrece la oportunidad de conocer la aplicación de una teoría geopolítica y que a su vez abre la posibilidad de comparar un éxito aceptable de la organización versus los fallidos intentos de integración suramericana en los ámbitos de seguridad y defensa.

El ensayo se encuentra disponible en la siguiente dirección web:

https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/europe/2009-09-01/agenda-nato

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2009

An Agenda for NATO

Toward a Global Security Web

Zbigniew Brzezinski

Volume 88 • Number 5

An Agenda for NATO

Toward a Global Security Web

Zbigniew Brzezinski

NATO's 60TH anniversary, celebrated in April with pomp and circumstance by the leaders of nearly 30 allied states, generated little public interest. NATO's historical role was treated as a bore. In the opinion-shaping media, there were frequent derisive dismissals and even calls for the termination of the alliance as a dysfunctional geostrategic irrelevance. Russian spokespeople mocked it as a Cold War relic.

Even France's decision to return to full participation in NATO's integrated military structures—after more than 40 years of abstention—aroused relatively little positive commentary. Yet France's actions spoke louder than words. A state with a proud sense of its universal vocation sensed something about NATO—not the NATO of the Cold War but the NATO of the twenty-first century—that made it rejoin the world's most important military alliance at a time of far-reaching changes in the world's security dynamics. France's action underlined NATO's vital political role as a regional alliance with growing global potential.

In assessing NATO's evolving role, one has to take into account the historical fact that in the course of its 60 years the alliance has institutionalized three truly monumental transformations in world affairs: first, the end of the centuries-long "civil war" within the West for transoceanic and European supremacy; second, the United States' post–World War II commitment to the defense of

---

ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI was U.S. National Security Adviser from 1977 to 1981. His most recent book is *Second Chance: Three Presidents and the Crisis of American Superpower*.

Europe against Soviet domination (resulting from either a political upheaval or even World War III); and third, the peaceful termination of the Cold War, which ended the geopolitical division of Europe and created the preconditions for a larger democratic European Union.

These successes, however, give rise to a legitimate question: What next? What are the implications and lessons to be drawn from the past 60 years? NATO's new secretary-general has been tasked to "develop a new Strategic Concept and submit proposals for its implementation for approval at [NATO's] next summit." Given the current and likely future security dilemmas confronting the alliance, that new concept will have to deal with at least four fundamental challenges: first, how to attain a politically acceptable outcome for NATO's deepening engagement in the overlapping Afghan and Pakistani conflicts; second, how to update the meaning and obligations of "collective security" as embodied in Article 5 of the alliance's treaty; third, how to engage Russia in a binding and mutually beneficial relationship with Europe and the wider North Atlantic community; and fourth, how to respond to novel global security dilemmas.

The first two of these challenges pertain to NATO's credibility as a regional U.S.-European alliance, the latter two to its potential global role. Failing to cope with any one of these four challenges could undermine the three transformational legacies of NATO noted earlier. And those legacies, far from being only of historical significance, are relevant to the alliance's globally important mission today.

UNITING THE WEST

FOR THE last 500 years, world politics has been dominated by states located on the shores of the North Atlantic. As these states competed with one another for treasure and power, they in effect established the North Atlantic region's worldwide imperial supremacy. But that supremacy was not stable. It was periodically undermined by violent rivalries among the North Atlantic states themselves. In changing combinations, Portugal, Spain, France, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom competed, fought, and replaced one another as the preeminent overseas imperial power.

Over the course of the last two centuries, the global hierarchy changed dramatically even as the scope of the rivalry expanded, under Napoleon's France, from oceanic control to domination over Europe as well. Napoleon's challenge further transformed the geopolitics of the North Atlantic rivalry by precipitating the entry of two non-Atlantic powers—central European Prussia (which later became Germany) and Eurasian Russia (later the Soviet Union)—into the competition for the first time. A century later, World War I, which in fact was largely a European war, drew in the United States from across the Atlantic. The United States' entry proved decisive to the outcome of that war, and the victory of the new British-French-U.S. coalition seemed to assure the continued financial and political preeminence of the North Atlantic region.

That turned out to have been an illusion. France was bled to exhaustion. The United Kingdom was nearly bankrupt. The United States was still painfully ambivalent about its global role. And then Germany's quick resurgence triggered World War II. This global conflict was only very partially won by the latest variant of the North Atlantic coalition—the U.S.-British one—which had to share the spoils of victory in Europe with its wartime partner (and rising rival), the Eurasian Soviet Russia. Europe's central and eastern regions passed under Moscow's control, and its western remnants (still divided within by bitter memories of war) became dependent entirely on the future course of the United States. In the two world wars, Europe had effectively committed political suicide.

To its credit, the United States rose to the challenge. NATO was one of the two key instruments used by Washington to foster transnational cooperation in the western remnant of Europe. Although the Western Europeans themselves recognized the need to overcome their historical divisions, their initial postwar efforts centered as much on keeping Germany down as on advancing Western integration. It was the United States that, through the Marshall Plan, made Western Europe's economic recovery a genuinely transnational effort, one that even included the western parts of occupied Germany. And it was British diplomacy—driven by London's recognition that its day in the sun had come to an end and that the United Kingdom's world role depended overwhelmingly on its ability to tie itself closely to Washington—that

most persuasively pressed the United States to make an explicit and binding security commitment to Western Europe's survival as a collection of democratic states and as an integral part of the shrunken West.

Although NATO was created primarily to provide such assurance against the looming Soviet threat, its political effect in Western Europe was to promote reconciliation with the former Axis powers Germany and Italy, while fostering an enduring acceptance of transatlantic interdependence. Most notable and significant in that regard was the initially difficult termination of Franco-German hostility. The French at first strongly opposed any formula for German rearmament, even within a common European defense community. But gradually, farsighted French and German leaders cultivated a political reconciliation that eventually flowered into a genuine entente.

In the vulnerable decades after World War II, conflict was avoided largely because NATO remained united.

None of this would have happened without NATO. Its transnationally integrated but militarily U.S.-dominated structures made the inclusion of German forces (albeit without a separate command or general staff) more palatable to the French even before the eventual admission into the alliance, in 1955, of West Germany as a full-fledged member. The institutionalization of NATO and the later emergence of the European Economic Community (which subsequently evolved into the EU) thus meant that the civil war within the West was finally over. The historic importance of that fact cannot be overstressed.

NATO itself, however, was conceived in fear and born in a fatigued Europe. Expectations of a new war were initially widespread, and the sense of vulnerability was acute. U.S. forces, except for a relatively weak presence in occupied Germany, were back home and mostly demobilized. The Europeans naturally pressed for a rapid return of U.S. forces and for automaticity in launching a full-scale military response to an attack. At first, however, U.S. war planners were inclined to think of the United States' security commitment to Europe—in the event that war could not be deterred by what was then a U.S. nuclear monopoly and a Soviet ground offensive could not be stopped by a massive bombing of Russia—as realistically involving only the

obligation to defend a European bridgehead, to be followed later by a second liberation of Europe. Quite understandably, that was not entirely reassuring to the Europeans.

In that setting, the collective-action-triggering Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty was designed to bind the United States to Europe, but in a way that could overcome the traditional reluctance of Americans to become entangled in distant foreign conflicts. For the Americans, the wording in Article 5—to the effect that each ally would react to an attack on any one of them "by taking forthwith . . . such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force"—meant that Washington retained the right to determine how it would react militarily if Soviet forces crossed the Elbe River. For the Europeans, it was a pledge that the United States would in any case be militarily engaged from day one. The commitment itself was clear, but the nature of the response was contingent. Nonetheless, through NATO, the strategic interdependence of the West became binding. And that formula sufficed for the next 60 years.

Whether World War III was actually likely will never be known. The post-1945 Soviet Union, ensconced in the middle of Europe, loomed as an enormous threat. But it was also war weary, and it had to digest what it had engorged. On both sides, some strategically farsighted officials were arguing behind the scenes that the emerging new contest for global supremacy would be politically prolonged but probably—at least for quite a while—not resolved by force of arms. On the U.S. side, George Kennan made a compelling case that the Soviet Union, although aggressive, could be contained and eventually worn down. Arguing that the threat from the Soviet Union was predominantly political and not military, he warned against excessive militarization of the Western response.

It is now clear from the Soviet archives that some leading Russian experts on the West, casting their arguments in Marxist terminology, were similarly inclined. In 1944, the Soviet foreign minister, Vyacheslav Molotov, annotated for Joseph Stalin memorandums prepared by Ivan Maisky (the wartime Soviet ambassador in London and by then a deputy foreign minister) and Maxim Litvinov (at one point Maisky's equivalent in Washington and by then also a deputy foreign minis-

ter). They concluded that the postwar era would be marked by the United States' ascendancy, the United Kingdom's decline, intensified capitalist contradictions, and a prolonged period of growing competition between the United States and the Soviet Union—but not war. Even though Stalin occasionally spoke darkly of another world war, he also seemed to think that it would not come anytime soon.

In 1950, Stalin may have viewed the Korean War as a convenient diversion from the standoff in Europe and also as an opportunity to potentially increase China's dependence on the Soviet Union. However, fears in the West that the Korean War was a precursor to a larger war precipitated a massive U.S. military deployment in Europe. Thus, the Korean War induced a political psychosis that intensified the inclination of both sides to define the Cold War largely as a military contest. Paradoxically, by spurring a confrontation in Europe between two armed camps, the violent conflict in Asia may have made both a war of miscalculation and a political accommodation in a divided Europe less likely.

Of course, one can never know if a NATO defined less in military terms (as Kennan urged) might have been able to explore a political détente with the Soviet Union after Stalin's death, in 1953 (at the time there were some vague hints of Soviet interest in a compromise on Germany), during the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, or before the Soviet military suppression of the Prague Spring in 1968. All that is clear is that the possibility of exploiting the disarray in the Soviet leadership to achieve a peaceful revision of the political status quo was not seriously explored.

The reality is that in the vulnerable decades after World War II, conflict was avoided largely because the United States stayed committed to defending Europe and NATO remained united. That unity was tested during the two war-threatening crises of the early 1960s: the Berlin crisis and the Cuban missile crisis. In neither case is there reason to believe that Moscow was inclined to start a war, but in both the Soviet leadership was impatiently gambling that intimidation might work to alter the geopolitical status quo. Yet the paramount interest of the two antagonists in avoiding an all-out war prevailed, even if their continuing military standoff in a divided Europe did as well.

ENLARGING THE WEST

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Soviet Union's officially proclaimed expectations of surpassing the United States in both economic and military power had begun to look hollow, and strains within the Soviet Union itself—intensified by Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika—began to mitigate Western fears that growing Soviet strategic power might make Europe vulnerable to nuclear blackmail. In that setting, both sides became more willing to actively explore such issues as arms control, human rights, and even troop reductions. By the end of the decade, the rapidly growing disarray in the Soviet bloc—spearheaded by the success of the Solidarity movement in Poland and prudently exploited in its final phase by NATO (and particularly by closely cooperating U.S., German, British, and French leaders)—had gotten out of hand. Before long, both the Soviet Union and the Soviet bloc became history.

NATO's role then changed. It became the framework for stabilizing a suddenly unstable geopolitical situation in central and eastern Europe. It is now easy to forget that even after the dissolution of the Soviet bloc in 1989–90—the emancipation of Eastern Europe, the reappearance of independent Baltic states, and the reunification of Germany—the resented Russian army remained deployed, as during the Cold War, on the banks of the Elbe and, until 1994, in the former Soviet satellite states. Although the army's eventual withdrawal was all but inevitable, the uncertainties regarding regional security, border issues, and fundamental political identity in the former Soviet bloc were complex. With the emerging EU in no position to offer reassuring security, only NATO could stably fill the void.

What followed was less the product of strategic design than the result of history's spontaneity. The latter is often confusing and contradictory, and yet ultimately decisive. That was largely the case with NATO's expansion eastward. Initially, Russia's new leadership acceded reluctantly to it (notably, in the course of Russian President Boris Yeltsin's negotiations with Polish President Lech Walesa in August 1993); only on second thought, shortly thereafter, did Russia begin to object. Moreover, recently declassified materials clearly refute the oft-made argument that Russia was promised that NATO would not expand. In any case, there was no practical way of preventing the

spontaneous surge of the central and eastern European states toward the only Western institution that could simultaneously assure their security and help define their political identity.

One has to remember that the central and eastern Europeans were in a mood of enthusiastic emancipation from the Soviet Union's almost five-decade and rather heavy-handed domination. They were determined to become an integral part of the free Europe and disinclined to become a geopolitical no man's land between NATO and Russia. If the central and eastern European states had been left out, the Europe divided in two by the Cold War, instead of becoming one, would have become a Europe divided into three: the NATO states in the west; a West-leaning but insecure central and eastern Europe, as well as the newly sovereign but unstable Belarus and Ukraine, in the middle; and Russia in the east. How such an arrangement could have peacefully endured is difficult to imagine. An enlarged NATO has proved itself to be by far preferable to the instability or even violence (à la Ukraine or Georgia recently) that almost certainly would have at some point ensued in a central and eastern Europe left to its own uncertain devices between a reunified Germany in NATO and a resentful Russia still tempted to view the region as part of its "near abroad." (It is noteworthy that the freshly reunited Germany, an immediate neighbor to central and eastern Europe, had no such illusions on this score and played a key role in pushing forward the NATO enlargement process.)

In brief, NATO enlargement was historically timely and also the right thing to do. By the early years of the twenty-first century, the almost total geopolitical overlap between membership in NATO and membership in the EU made it clear that Europe was finally both secure and united. The closure of the prolonged European civil war meant that Americans and Europeans, in looking back at NATO's first 60 years, did have genuine cause for celebration in April 2009.

ADJUSTING TO A TRANSFORMED WORLD

And yet, it is fair to ask: Is NATO living up to its extraordinary potential? Nato today is without a doubt the most powerful military and political alliance in the world. Its 28 members come from the globe's two most productive, technologically advanced, socially

modern, economically prosperous, and politically democratic regions. Its member states' 900 million people account for only 13 percent of the world's population but 45 percent of global GDP.

NATO's potential is not primarily military. Although NATO is a collective-security alliance, its actual military power comes predominantly from the United States, and that reality is not likely to change anytime soon. NATO's real power derives from the fact that it combines the United States' military capabilities and economic power with Europe's collective political and economic weight (and occasionally some limited European military forces). Together, that combination makes NATO globally significant. It must therefore remain sensitive to the importance of safeguarding the geopolitical bond between the United States and Europe as it addresses new tasks.

The basic challenge that NATO now confronts is that there are historically unprecedented risks to global security. Today's world is threatened neither by the militant fanaticism of a territorially rapacious nationalist state nor by the coercive aspiration of a globally pretentious ideology embraced by an expansive imperial power. The paradox of our time is that the world, increasingly connected and economically interdependent for the first time in its entire history, is experiencing intensifying popular unrest made all the more menacing by the growing accessibility of weapons of mass destruction—not just to states but also, potentially, to extremist religious and political movements. Yet there is no effective global security mechanism for coping with the growing threat of violent political chaos stemming from humanity's recent political awakening.

Washington's arrogant unilateralism in Iraq and its demagogic Islamophobic sloganeering weakened the unity of NATO.

The three great political contests of the twentieth century (the two world wars and the Cold War) accelerated the political awakening of mankind, which was initially unleashed in Europe by the French Revolution. Within a century of that revolution, spontaneous populist political activism had spread from Europe to East Asia. On their return home after World Wars I and II, the South Asians and the North Africans who had been conscripted by the British and French imperial armies propagated a new awareness of anticolonial nation-

alist and religious political identity among hitherto passive and pliant populations. The spread of literacy during the twentieth century and the wide-ranging impact of radio, television, and the Internet accelerated and intensified this mass global political awakening.

In its early stages, such new political awareness tends to be expressed as a fanatical embrace of the most extreme ethnic or fundamentalist religious passions, with beliefs and resentments universalized in Manichaean categories. Unfortunately, in significant parts of the developing world, bitter memories of European colonialism and of more recent U.S. intrusion have given such newly aroused passions a distinctively anti-Western cast. Today, the most acute example of this phenomenon is found in an area that stretches from Egypt to India. This area, inhabited by more than 500 million politically and religiously aroused peoples, is where NATO is becoming more deeply embroiled.

Additionally complicating is the fact that the dramatic rise of China and India and the quick recovery of Japan within the last 50 years have signaled that the global center of political and economic gravity is shifting away from the North Atlantic toward Asia and the Pacific. And of the currently leading global powers—the United States, the EU, China, Japan, Russia, and India—at least two, or perhaps even three, are revisionist in their orientation. Whether they are "rising peacefully" (a self-confident China), truculently (an imperially nostalgic Russia) or boastfully (an assertive India, despite its internal multiethnic and religious vulnerabilities), they all desire a change in the global pecking order. The future conduct of and relationship among these three still relatively cautious revisionist powers will further intensify the strategic uncertainty.

Visible on the horizon but not as powerful are the emerging regional rebels, with some of them defiantly reaching for nuclear weapons. North Korea has openly flouted the international community by producing (apparently successfully) its own nuclear weapons—and also by profiting from their dissemination. At some point, its unpredictability could precipitate the first use of nuclear weapons in anger since 1945. Iran, in contrast, has proclaimed that its nuclear program is entirely for peaceful purposes but so far has been unwilling to consider consensual arrangements with the international community that would provide credible assurances regarding these intentions.

In nuclear-armed Pakistan, an extremist anti-Western religious movement is threatening the country's political stability.

These changes together reflect the waning of the post–World War II global hierarchy and the simultaneous dispersal of global power. Unfortunately, U.S. leadership in recent years unintentionally, but most unwisely, contributed to the currently threatening state of affairs. The combination of Washington's arrogant unilateralism in Iraq and its demagogic Islamophobic sloganeering weakened the unity of NATO and focused aroused Muslim resentments on the United States and the West more generally.

SUSTAINING ALLIANCE CREDIBILITY

THE DISPERSAL of global power and the expanding mass political unrest make for a combustible mixture. In this dangerous setting, the first order of business for NATO members is to define together, and then to pursue together, a politically acceptable outcome to its out-of-region military engagement in Afghanistan. The United States' NATO allies invoked Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty in deciding to join the campaign to deprive al Qaeda of its safe haven in Afghanistan. The alliance made that commitment on its own and not under U.S. pressure. It must accordingly be pursued on a genuinely shared military and economic basis, without caveats regarding military participation or evasions regarding badly needed financial assistance for Afghanistan and Pakistan. The commitment of troops and money cannot be overwhelmingly a U.S. responsibility.

To be sure, that is easier said than done, but it should be the central political duty of NATO's new secretary-general to keep insisting on both military and financial support. The basic operating principle has to be that every ally contributes to the extent that it can and that no ally is altogether passive. The actual (not just pledged) contribution of each ally to the needed military, social, and financial effort should be regularly publicized and jointly reviewed. Otherwise, Article 5 will progressively lose its meaning.

Theoretically, it is of course possible that NATO at some point will conclude (and some of its members privately talk as if they have already done so) that the effort in Afghanistan is not worth the cost. Individual

allies could quietly withdraw, salving their consciences by urging that NATO issue a grave warning of its collective intent to strike back from a distance if al Qaeda uses either Afghanistan or Pakistan as a base for launching new attacks against targets in North America or Europe. However, a NATO pullout, even if not formally declared, would be viewed worldwide as a repetition of the earlier Soviet defeat in Afghanistan. It would almost certainly prompt bitter transatlantic recriminations, would undermine NATO's credibility, and could allow Taliban extremists in Afghanistan and Pakistan to gain control over more than 200 million people and a nuclear arsenal.

Shortly after assuming office, the Obama administration concluded a policy review of the United States' goals in Afghanistan. Its reasonable conclusion was that a stable Afghanistan cannot be achieved primarily by military means. This goal will require a combination of a military effort that denies victory to the Taliban (and facilitates the progressive expansion of effective national control by the Afghan army) and a sustained international financial effort to improve the well-being of the Afghan people and the efficacy of the Afghan government. This is both more modest and more realistic than earlier notions of building a modern democracy in a society in which only the urban sectors are more or less quasi-modern and the rural areas are in many respects still quite medieval. Now that the elimination of al Qaeda's safe haven has been defined as the key objective, local accommodations with compliant Taliban elements no longer need to be excluded. NATO's military disengagement at some point could follow.

This redefinition of policy would provide a realistic basis for achieving a politically acceptable outcome but for one glaring omission: it does not address in a strategically decisive fashion the fact that the conflict with the Taliban in Afghanistan cannot be resolved without Pakistan's genuine political and military support for the effort to shore up a nonfundamentalist regime in Kabul. That full support has not been forthcoming in part because of the rising intensity of fundamentalist passions in Pakistan, especially among the rural sectors, and also because the geopolitical concerns of the Pakistani military about its country's own security are at odds with U.S. and British sensitivities regarding India's interests. Alas, for some in the Pakistani military, the extreme choice of a Taliban-controlled Pakistan that dominates a

Taliban-controlled Afghanistan could even be preferable to a secular Pakistan wedged insecurely between a threatening India and an Afghanistan that geopolitically flirts with India in order to be independent from Pakistan.

Given China's rivalry with India and its strategic stake in a viable Pakistan, engaging China in a geopolitical dialogue about Pakistan's long-term security could be helpful in reassuring Pakistan regarding Afghanistan and India. India—despite its reciprocal antagonism with Pakistan—also has a stake in its western neighbor's not triggering a regional upheaval. Similarly, Iran, which views the Taliban with hostility, could again play a constructive role in helping stabilize Afghanistan's western region, much as it did in 2002. A serious effort by NATO to engage China, India, and Iran in a strategic dialogue on how best to avoid a regionwide explosion is thus very timely. Without that dialogue, NATO's first campaign based on Article 5 could become painfully prolonged, destructively divisive, and potentially even fatal to the alliance.

REAFFIRMING COLLECTIVE SECURITY

IT WAS noted earlier that Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty sufficed for 60 years. But is it still credible? A closer look at its wording may be in order:

> The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them . . . will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.

Since European states 60 years ago yearned for guaranteed U.S. power but had no effective power themselves, that wording satisfied the basic European need. It mitigated their collective insecurity by committing the United States at a time when all knew that only the United States could respond with meaningful force. And once it did, all the others would pretty much have to follow. Now, however, the situation is different. The war in Afghanistan is a case in point. Most

of the United States' allies now feel relatively secure. It is the United States that needs committed allies in that war. But the qualified wording of Article 5 ("as it deems necessary") gives each of them the option to do as much or as little (or even nothing) as they think appropriate. And suppose the Taliban were to take over Pakistan, with its nuclear arsenal, and then threaten NATO in Afghanistan. Would that meet Article 5's triggering standard of "an armed attack against one or more of [the NATO allies] in Europe or North America"?

Even more perplexing is the current significance of Article 5 to Europe itself. It raises the question of how tightly binding are NATO's collective-security obligations. If a geopolitically exposed European member of NATO were to become a victim of an armed attack and if the United States and the United Kingdom and other NATO allies were inclined to come to its aid but, say, Greece and Italy were not, could Article 5 be invoked?

Despite the expansion of its membership to 28 countries, NATO remains bound by what it has defined as "a fundamental principle"—namely, that "all NATO decisions are made by consensus," that "consensus has been accepted as the sole basis for decision-making in NATO since the creation of the Alliance in 1949," and that "this principle remains in place." Accordingly, the secretary-general of NATO, as part of the task assigned to him at the recent alliance summit, might consider designating a senior allied group to undertake a review of the current meaning of Article 5. Not only the Afghan challenge but also the significant decline of the U.S. military presence in Europe, the increased membership in NATO itself, and the changes already noted in the global security context call for another look at this key article. Even if a war in Europe is unlikely (and in any such case, the U.S. reaction would be the most significant for some time to come), it is right to ask whether a single member—or even two or three members—of a collective-security alliance have the right to in effect veto a joint response. Perhaps some thought should be given to formulating a more operational definition of "consensus" when it is shared by an overwhelming majority but not by everyone.

Article 13 of the treaty should also be reviewed. It provides for the right of any member to leave NATO after 20 years but does not include any provision for NATO to exclude a member for not being true to its

obligations. Unfortunately, the possibility that at a critical juncture, some external financial or political influence could seduce a NATO member can no longer be entirely excluded, particularly given the size of the expanded alliance and the abundance of outside temptations. One should not sweep under the rug the fact that a vague consensus that shields divisions may help preserve NATO's formal unity but would do so at the cost of potential paralysis in a moment of urgent need. Credible collective security will have no enduring meaning if it involves only selective benefits.

ENGAGING RUSSIA

THE ALLIANCE also needs to define for itself a historically and geopolitically relevant long-term strategic goal for its relationship with the Russian Federation. Russia is not an enemy, but it still views NATO with hostility. That hostility is not likely to fade soon, especially if Prime Minister Vladimir Putin becomes president again in 2012. Moreover, for a while yet, Russia's policy toward NATO—driven by historical resentment of the Soviet defeat in the Cold War and by nationalist hostility to NATO's expansion—is likely to try to promote division between the United States and Europe and, within Europe, between NATO's old members and NATO's new members.

In the near future, Russia's membership in NATO is not likely. Russia—out of understandable pride—does not seek to be a member of a U.S.-led alliance. And it is also a fact that NATO would cease to be NATO if a politically nondemocratic and militarily secretive Russia were to become a member. Nonetheless, closer political and security cooperation with a genuinely postimperial Russia—one that eventually comes to terms, like the United Kingdom, France, and Germany did before, with its new historical context—is in the long-term interest of the United States and Europe. Hence, two strategic objectives should define NATO's goal vis-à-vis Russia: to consolidate security in Europe by drawing Russia into a closer political and military association with the Euro-Atlantic community and to engage Russia in a wider web of global security that indirectly facilitates the fading of Russia's lingering imperial ambitions. It will take time and patience to move forward on both, but eventually a new generation of Russian leaders will recognize that

doing so is also in Russia's fundamental national interest. Russia's increasingly depopulated but huge and mineral-rich Eurasian territory is bordered by 500 million Europeans to the west and 1.5 billion Chinese to the east. And the alternative favored by some Russian strategists—an anti-Western axis with China—is illusory for two reasons: its benefits would be dubious to the Chinese, and the economically weaker and demographically depleted Russia would be congested China's junior partner.

At this stage, the EU can be a more productive vehicle for promoting positive change in the East—by exploiting the fact that none of Russia's newly independent neighbors wishes to be its colony or satellite again—and NATO can make a contribution by consolidating the results of such positive change. In such a division of labor, the Eastern Partnership, originally proposed by Poland and Sweden, could very well be an effective instrument for promoting closer ties between the EU and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. With its activities ranging from providing financial and technological assistance to offering university scholarships and facilitating travel to the West, the initiative is responsive to the evident aspirations of the peoples concerned and capitalizes on the widespread public desire in the East for closer ties to the EU.

NATO has the means to become the center of a globe-spanning web of cooperative-security undertakings.

Russia today cannot react to such an initiative in the same manner as the Soviet Union would have in the past. The Kremlin has to respond by making equally attractive offers to the countries concerned, thereby indirectly confirming its own respect for their sovereignty, however reluctant that respect may be. In addition, the competition between Russia and the EU that such an initiative will foster will not only be beneficial to the countries so courted but also cultivate popular aspirations in Russia for similarly privileged social access to the West. Moreover, given the close social links between Russia and Ukraine, the more Ukrainian society gravitates toward the West, the more likely it is that Russia will have no choice but to eventually follow suit.

NATO has to be careful not to unintentionally reinforce Russia's imperial nostalgia regarding Ukraine and Georgia. The political subordination of each is still an evident, and even provocatively stated (especially

by Putin), objective of the current rulers in the Kremlin. In steering a prudentially balanced course, NATO should maintain its formal position that eventual membership in NATO is open to both countries but at the same time continue to expand its collaborative relationship with Russia itself, as well as with most members of the Moscow-sponsored Commonwealth of Independent States. In addition to forming the NATO-Russia Council, NATO has already developed Individual Partnership Action Plans with four CIS members. Moreover, 11 CIS members currently collaborate with NATO in both the Partnership for Peace program and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council.

These programs, although modest and carefully designed not to challenge Moscow's premier standing in the CIS, do provide the basis for considering a more formal security arrangement between NATO and Russia beyond the NATO-Russia Council. In recent years, Russia has occasionally hinted that it would favor a treaty implying an equal relationship between NATO and the Kremlin-created (and somewhat fictitious) Collective Security Treaty Organization, which was set up in 2002. Replacing the defunct Warsaw Pact and copying NATO's treaty, the CSTO now includes Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. NATO has been reluctant to consider a formal pact with the CSTO, since that would imply political-military symmetry between the two. However, this reservation could perhaps be set aside in the event that a joint agreement for security cooperation in Eurasia and beyond were to contain a provision respecting the right of current nonmembers to eventually seek membership in either NATO or the CSTO—and perhaps, at a still more distant point, even in both.

A NATO-CSTO treaty containing such a proviso would constitute an indirect commitment by Russia not to obstruct the eventual adhesion to NATO of either Ukraine or Georgia in return for the de facto affirmation by NATO that in neither case is membership imminent. The majority of the Ukrainian people presently do not desire NATO membership, and the recent war between Georgia and Russia calls for a cooling-off period (which should not exclude providing Georgia with purely defensive antitank and antiair systems, so that the country does not remain temptingly defenseless). It should be in the interest of both Russia and the West that Ukraine's and Georgia's orientation be determined through a democratic political process that respects

the national sovereignty and the political aspirations of the peoples concerned. Anything less could prompt a seriously damaging downturn in East-West relations, to the detriment of Russia's long-term future.

REACHING OUT TO ASIA

By thus indirectly resolving a contentious issue between NATO and Russia, a NATO-CSTO agreement could also facilitate a cooperative NATO outreach further east, toward the rising Asian powers, which should be drawn increasingly into joint security undertakings. Today's Shanghai Cooperation Organization was originally formed in 1996 as the Shanghai Five to deal with border issues among China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan. In 2001, it was renamed and expanded to include Uzbekistan. At that time, it was also charged with fashioning cooperative responses to terrorism, separatism, and drug trafficking. Afghanistan, India, Iran, Mongolia, and Pakistan have observer status. Turkey, given that it is a NATO member and has a special interest in Central Asia, could perhaps play a key role in exploring a cooperative arrangement between NATO and the SCO. A positive outcome could foster security cooperation on a transregional basis in one of the world's most explosive areas.

Such gradually expanding cooperation could lead, in turn, to a joint NATO-SCO council, thereby indirectly engaging China in cooperation with NATO, clearly a desirable and important longer-term goal. Indeed, given the changing distribution of global power and the eastward shift in its center of gravity, it could also become timely before long for NATO to consider more direct formal links with several leading East Asian powers—especially China and Japan—as well as with India. This could perhaps also take the form of joint councils, which could promote greater interoperability, prepare for mutually threatening contingencies, and facilitate genuine strategic cooperation. Neither China nor Japan nor India should avoid assuming more direct responsibilities for global security, with the inevitable shared costs and risks.

To be sure, it will not be easy to engage such new global players in fashioning the needed security framework. It will take time, patience, and perseverance. Despite the opposition of the rising powers to the United States' recent unilateralism in world affairs and their lingering

resentment of Western domination, it is easier for these powers to pay lip service to the notion of shared obligations while letting the United States (supported by Europe) assume the actual burdens. Accordingly, the enlistment of new players will be a protracted process, but it must nonetheless be pursued. There is no other way to shape effective security arrangements for a world in which politically awakened peoples—whose prevailing historical narratives associate the West less with their recent emancipation and more with their past subordination—can no longer be dominated by a single region.

THE CENTER OF THE WEB

To REMAIN historically relevant, NATO cannot—as some have urged—simply expand itself into a global alliance or transform itself into a global alliance of democracies. German Chancellor Angela Merkel expressed the right sentiment when she noted in March 2009, "I don't see a global NATO. . . . It can provide security outside its area, but that doesn't mean members across the globe are possible." A global NATO would dilute the centrality of the U.S.-European connection, and none of the rising powers would be likely to accept membership in a globally expanded NATO. Furthermore, an ideologically defined global alliance of democracies would face serious difficulties in determining whom to include and whom to exclude and in striking a reasonable balance between its doctrinal and strategic purposes. The effort to promote such an alliance could also undermine NATO's special transatlantic identity.

NATO, however, has the experience, the institutions, and the means to eventually become the hub of a globe-spanning web of various regional cooperative-security undertakings among states with the growing power to act. The resulting security web would fill a need that the United Nations by itself cannot meet but from which the UN system would actually benefit. In pursuing that strategic mission, NATO would not only be preserving transatlantic political unity; it would also be responding to the twenty-first century's novel and increasingly urgent security agenda.