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NATO'S NEW COMMAND STRUCTURE KLAUS NAUMANN

General Klaus Naumann joined the military as an artillery officer in 1958. He has held numerous challenging command and staff appointments in the German armed forces, culminating in his appointment as the Chief of Staff of the Federal Armed Forces in October 1991. On 14 February 1996, he assumed his current appointment as the Chairman of NATO's Military Committee, thereby becoming the senior military officer of the Alliance.

As NATO celebrates its 50th anniversary, the longest-lasting and most successful defensive alliance in the history of mankind has much to be proud of. Not only did it effectively deter aggression and eventually bring an end to the monolithic threat facing member nations for nearly four decades, but it has also continued to thrive in the multi-faceted and challenging security environment of the post-Cold War era. Indeed, it is as vital and relevant to continued peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic area into the twenty-first century as it was 50 years ago, immediately following the signing of the Washington Treaty in the aftermath of the Second World War.

There are two fundamental reasons for this conspicuous success: one, the ability of the Alliance to proactively and effectively manage change in the face of uncertainty; and two, the enduring, unqualified commitment of the member states to Collective Defence as the *raison d'être* of its existence and as the bedrock upon which other capabilities, roles and responsibilities can be based. Both are reflected in the new NATO military command structure which ministers agreed to in December 1997 and upon which the North Atlantic Council is expected to take a single, irreversible activation decision as these words go to press.

But before examining NATO's new command structure in more detail, it is worthwhile to set the scene by reviewing four key risks and uncertainties that, by their very nature, will condition the environment in which NATO's new command structure, and indeed NATO itself, will operate in the future.

The first risk concerns the significant instability in Russia. Please do not interpret these comments as a desire to return to the days of confrontation since nothing that NATO does is directed against that country and our objective is to achieve security with Russia and not against her. That said, as everyone in Turkey understands clearly, Russia remains in a state of considerable instability and no one can predict with confidence the duration and the final outcome of her transformation process. This does not mean we should abandon this great nation, far from it, as we should engage this country as much as possible realising that her transformation, if it occurs as we hope, will be slow in coming. But in closely co-operating, we must not compromise on our ideals and values, and we must not hesitate to tell our Russian partners in clear words where they stand and what we feel is wrong. The dialogue is important. They need to understand that the bipolar world has gone and that we now live in a world in transition in which there is only one superpower left, the United States of America, and a number of regional powers, among them some with nuclear weapons. In such a world there is little room for a security concept that is primarily based on the control of territorial zones of

dominant influence. NATO will continue to fully engage in dialogue and co-operation with this immense nation, and we, the Alliance military, will continue to play our full role in such a politically controlled dialogue.

The second major area of risk to the Alliance flows from both the unresolved disputes, claims, ethnic tensions and so forth in Europe, and the inherent instability and uncertainty of the nations resting on its periphery, from Morocco to India. In this regard, Bosnia and Kosovo are perhaps the most visible examples these days. We must not, however, forget that several other lingering problems and uncertainties of a similar nature are percolating in and around Europe. In a definite change from the Cold War period, and of interest to Turkey, is the fact that for today and the foreseeable future, it is the Alliance nations in Southern and especially South Eastern Europe that are most at risk.

The third risk that we face is the continuing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deploy them. As Turkey well appreciates, this is no longer a theoretical threat. The Alliance believes that over 25 countries have, or may be developing, nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons and the means to deliver them; an even larger number are capable of producing such weapons. While I definitely share the concerns regarding nuclear or chemical weapon proliferation, my greatest concern is of some trans-national terrorist group employing the 'poor man's nuke', namely biological weapons, against one of our nations. Our post-industrial modern societies are ill equipped to cope with such an attack.

The fourth major area of risk is often referred to as the emerging risks. These include, among others: renewed reasons for conflict (such as the search for vital resources such as water) and, in conjunction with it or as a consequence of it, mass migrations, and new forces of conflict (such as trans-national crimes, terrorism and non-state actors using military means or high technology). They represent a clear and present danger that transcends state or regional boundaries, but it should be kept in mind that it is an open question to what extent military means can be considered to counter such risks.

Without any doubt, the 'Old NATO' with its associated 'heavy' integrated military command structure was extremely successful, but it had been built to cope with the threat posed by the former Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. However, against the background of the fundamentally changed strategic landscape of today, with its increasingly multi-faceted, multi-dimensional, and trans-national risks and uncertainties, NATO not only has to review its concept for security in and around Europe, but it also has to review the tools it has at its disposal. In this regard, the new NATO military command structure is tangible evidence to both Allies and Partners that the political will to manage change, as first manifested at the London summit of 1990, is aggressively being pursued by the Military Committee. But what, you ask, is the new structure?

In essence, the new NATO integrated command structure consists of two overarching Strategic Commands, one for the Atlantic and one for Europe. As illustrated in Figure 1, Strategic Command Atlantic consists of three Regional Commands and two Combatant Commands. The structure of Strategic Command Europe (shown in Figure 2) is somewhat more elaborate with only two Regional Commands but with two Component Commands and a number of Joint Sub-Regional Commands (JSRCs) reporting to each of them. For comparison purposes, this new structure of only 20 headquarters distributed over three levels of command replaces one of 65 headquarters with four associated levels of command. The new structure is mission-oriented and readily provides for the implementation of Alliance strategy. It enables the Alliance to deal with localised crises and

conflicts whilst maintaining its collective defence capability, striking a balance between mission-driven requirements and the level of resources made available by nations, and providing the Alliance with the full range of capabilities needed to meet the challenges of the future.

The new command structure is comprised of a wide distribution of integrated command capabilities and promotes Alliance cohesion with a single, militarily-effective, multi-capable and flexible structure able to undertake the complete spectrum of alliance roles and mission requirements—Collective Defence, Peace Support Operations, Expansion of Stability Tasks and Counter-Proliferation—of which Collective Defence remains the core. The structure contributes to the fundamental operating principles of the Alliance: common commitment and mutual co-operation amongst sovereign states in support of the indivisibility of security for all its members. It is the most explicit signal of cohesion and gives substance to solidarity within the Alliance, ensuring that no single ally is forced to rely upon its own national efforts alone in dealing with basic security challenges, without depriving member states of their right and duty to assume their sovereign responsibilities in the realm of defence.

The new structure promotes alliance cohesion in many ways. For example, it is instrumental in maintaining a strong transatlantic link, in tying all member nations to the Euro-Atlantic environment, in strengthening multi-nationality, in preventing re-nationalisation of defence, in supporting the European pillar of the Alliance, and in providing appropriate roles for all member nations. Of particular interest to European nations such as Turkey are the provisions within the new structure for the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) which enable European Allies to make a more coherent and effective contribution to all Alliance missions and activities. It comprises multi-nationally manned, joint and component headquarters responsive to flexible use of military capabilities, including those from non-NATO nations. This flexibility further accommodates the ability to make available structural elements for Western European Union (WEU)-led operations, as directed.

Given that both the Internal and External Adaptation of the Atlantic Alliance have occurred in parallel, the development of the new NATO military command structure has fully taken account of progress in the field of enlargement. It is thus into this flexible, re-engineered command structure that NATO enthusiastically welcomes with open arms the accession of three new member nations—the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland—who will significantly enhance the contribution of the Alliance to peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic area. This has largely been made possible through the provision of regionally-aligned headquarters as key components in the planning and execution of the full range of military activities, making optimal use of the expertise and capabilities in each region.

The foregoing military assessment would indicate that the new command structure has more than sufficient inherent structural and organisational flexibility to fully address the demands of the future. However, just as importantly, if not more so, are the operational level doctrinal concepts that have evolved in the process of developing the new structure and which, in my opinion, are the enduring elements that will, if optimised, guarantee the ability of the Alliance to effectively undertake the full spectrum of roles and missions into the next century; they are the tools that will allow us to innovate, adjust and overcome the challenges, some of which, at this point in time, we cannot even conceptualise. They reflect new thinking a paradigm shift in the manner in which the Alliance will both conduct exercises and undertake operations. Four briefly deserve mention.

First of all, recognising the unlikely prospect of Alliance-wide conflict and the fact that most crises in the foreseeable future will be of a localised nature, the focus of Alliance military activities—to include exercises and operations—will be at the regional level, emphasising interdependency amongst regions. The regional commanders will be theatre commanders mandated to develop and execute, together with their subordinate commanders, campaign plans at the operational level. They will provide the bridge between strategic level direction and the tactical level execution by those elements of the force structure apportioned to the supported and supporting commanders for a specific operation or campaign.

Second, the flexible approach adopted with respect to command and control measures, such as boundaries, co-ordination lines and phasing, will greatly facilitate the conduct of exercises and operations. The new thinking associated with the new command structure proffers that boundaries, indeed all command and control measures, must be used to enhance the successful prosecution of military activities, not hinder them. Hence they are mission/contingency-specific. They are used only for advance planning, exercises and the conduct of operations and when they are established, they are limited in time and scope.

A third concept, which is inextricably linked to the first two, is that of the supported-supporting command relationship. It provides a superior commander with the flexibility of committing the subordinate command most suited for a particular operation or a specific phase of a campaign, and supporting it appropriately, through the direct apportionment of assets or the designation of supporting commands available throughout the Alliance. Hence, it too is a concept limited in time and scope—as a campaign evolves, or the context of an operation changes, so will the supported commander. The supported-supporting inter-relationship constitutes recognition that the provision of capabilities is more important than ownership and is a tangible manifestation of the new thinking associated with the new command structure.

The fourth innovation embodied in the new command structure is the Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) Concept, another element of NATO's Internal Adaptation, which will provide the Alliance with the means to react quickly and more effectively in time of crisis, and which will draw on the tremendous flexibility derived from the three aforementioned concepts. Although CJTFs were primarily designed with peace support operations in mind, reflecting the reality that today's peace support operation may pre-empt tomorrow's Article 5 mission, they constitute a crisis management tool eminently well suited for the full spectrum of potential Alliance roles and missions. The strength of the concept lies in reliance on mission-specific task organisation of a nucleus of sufficient critical mass to rapidly provide the basis of a cohesive headquarters from the very onset of an operation. But the advantages of the CJTF concept transcend mere questions of reaction times. Three examples are worthy of note. First, the fact that CJTFs may play a role in the collective defence task of NATO was an important consideration, among others, that led NATO to decide to forego any stationing of NATO command structure headquarters on the territories of the Czech Republic, Hungary or Poland. Second, within the more specific context of European security, Military Committee-agreed arrangements within NATO that can be employed by the WEU, coupled with the mission-specific task organisation inherent in the CJTF Concept, significantly strengthen ESDI by providing the WEU with a very potent capability. And third, CJTF 'multi-nationality' could easily result in many Partner officers in a CJTF headquarters fully integrated in the military planning, decision-making, execution and supervision of a peace operation providing their respective nations have contributed troops to that operation.

These four concepts will certainly modify how the Alliance conducts operations, both within and beyond the NATO Treaty Area.

Before leaving the topic of command structures for a moment, you no doubt noticed references to multi-nationality in the preceding discussions. Of particular interest is the fact that an increased focus on multi-nationality was indeed a Military Committee objective with regard to the manning of the new headquarters. This may lead to a representation of all member nations at the Strategic Command level, to a cross representation of nations adjacent to Regional Commands which will enhance and facilitate initial reinforcement capabilities, and to a wider participation at the JSCR level, which will allow an appropriate representation of nations neighbouring a JSRC headquarters host nation. This approach was agreed to by all nations. Hence upon implementation, we will for instance, see Greek officers serving in Joint Headquarters South East at Izmir and Turkish officers at Joint Headquarters South Centre at Larissa.

It was mentioned earlier that the increasingly multi-faceted, multi-dimensional, and trans-national risks and uncertainties of the future will oblige the Atlantic Alliance to review the tools it has at its disposal. As described above, this has driven the development of the new command structure. But while very significant, such reforms to enhance the flexibility, effectiveness and responsiveness of the Alliance command and control structures form only one key element of NATO's military equation. The second key facet comprises the military forces provided by the Alliance nations themselves. These latter forces are the teeth, and if they were insufficient both in terms of quality and of quantity, they would render all our efforts to modernise our command and control capabilities inefficient. Hence it would be appropriate to devote a few words to this related topic.

During the Cold War, military forces provided by the nations were optimised for collective defence in a territorial defence setting with 'heavy' forces drawing from well-established relatively static Alliance and host nation support networks. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall and despite a reduction by one-third, many of the remaining forces are still very 'heavy' in nature and effectively committed to territorial defence. But, given the range of risks described earlier and the possibility to execute missions in a multitude of locations, these factors will demand that nations realign their force structures as appropriate. This means to make them more flexible to be able to undertake a variety of tasks, more mobile to be able to react quickly and decisively, more strategically deployable to be able to get those national forces to where they are needed within or beyond the NATO Treaty Area, and more sustainable to enable them to remain effective and efficient over the longer term in remote or austere areas. Some of these forces require high combat readiness and all of them need to be properly equipped with modern material, especially in the sphere of command, control, communications and information technology, lest we reach the state on actual operations where certain Allies can no longer pass information or communicate with others. Additionally, the trend to considerably smaller national armed forces has given rise to a much greater propensity for multi-national formations at much lower levels than was the case before, including on occasion even at individual unit level, thereby increasing the relative importance of operational and tactical interoperability.

In conclusion, NATO's new command structure is a lean, militarily functional and effective organisation designed from the outset to enable the Alliance to perform the whole range of its new missions and roles, something, it should be noted, that the previous structure could never do. Its implementation later this year is perhaps the most visible expression of NATO's military transformation to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. Once all the military command and

associated structure reforms are implemented, the military forces of the 'New NATO' will be extremely well poised to successfully and efficiently support the full spectrum of any likely North Atlantic Council task. Although this next phase of Internal Adaptation work is clearly a daunting undertaking, the Alliance has repeatedly demonstrated in the course of half a century of security guarantee that it is up to the task. Hence, I remain convinced that NATO will stay at the forefront of promoting change in the interests of long-lasting peace and security in a Europe whole and free—which includes Turkey—well into the next century.
