The New NATO Policy Guidelines on Counterterrorism

At the basis of the policy guidelines rests the clear mandate from the Lisbon Summit. The guidelines reiterate the Strategic Concept statement that terrorism constitutes a direct threat to the security of the citizens of NATO countries and to international stability and prosperity more broadly and that it will remain a threat in the Allies' territory as well as in areas of strategic importance to NATO.[30]

In terms of NATO's role in counterterrorism, the guidelines implicitly acknowledge the absence of a specific policy since NATO's post-9/11 engagement in the global fight against terrorism, while claiming NATO's significant contribution.[31]

The guidelines place an accent on the danger that "conducive environments" present in terms of the spread of terrorism and terrorist safe havens, extremist ideologies, intolerance, and fundamentalism. They also focus on terrorists' use of conventional and unconventional means, as well as on the risk of terrorist access to CBRN materials and weapons. In doing so, the guidelines manage to ably define their realm of application in terms of terrorist means and center of gravity without entering into a controversial attempt to provide a shared definition of terrorism.

The Good News

As the new guidelines unfold, describing and defining the operational framework in which the Alliance will develop its contribution to countering terrorism, they translate into policy NATO's innovative approach to security introduced by the 2010 Strategic Concept.

To begin with, the guidelines have the great merit of not shying away from the intrinsic complexity of dealing with the terrorist threat and recognize from the outset that the primary responsibility in countering terrorism rests with "civilian" law enforcement and judicial authorities. The key word in this respect is *complementarity*. With its new policy guidance, NATO accepts that its role in countering the threat complements, and is complemented by, the mandates of other national and international organizations.[32]

Another important aspect of the guidelines is the introduction of a broader concept of countering terrorism, through the inclusion of the notions of prevention and resilience.[33] In enlarging the concept, the guidelines expand the extent of NATO's contribution to countering terrorism, as defined by the Lisbon Summit Declaration, beyond deterrence, defense, disruption, and protection.[34] This is also consistent with NATO's approach to emerging security challenges, as introduced by the Alliance Cyber-Defense policy.[35]

Also worthy of notice is the inclusion, at the end of paragraph 4, of the guidelines' goal to enable a more effective use of NATO resources through clear direction, enhanced coordination, and greater consistency of efforts. This reference is intended to meet the Strategic Concept's commitment to "continuous reform towards a more effective, efficient and flexible Alliance, so that our [NATO] taxpayers get the most security for the money they invest in defense."[36]

The stated aim of NATO's Policy Guidelines on Counterterrorism is to move beyond a mere restatement of the Strategic Concept and to avoid defining NATO's role in counterterrorism in a way that may limit its contribution. The aim is to anchor NATO's counterterrorism activities to its stated *core tasks* of collective defense, crisis management, and collective security, thus reaffirming its ideological adherence to a comprehensive approach to crisis management.[37] This is an important aspect of the guidelines. As pointed out by Dr. Jamie Shea, NATO's Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges, "The Alliance has learned to work with the United Nations and its agencies on the ground to integrate civilian priorities into *military* tasks [emphasis added]."[38] The new policy guidelines on counterterrorism confirm NATO's ambition to extend both the concept and the practice of its Comprehensive Approach to emerging security challenges.

In terms of concept, the guidelines recognize civilian leadership in countering terrorism, thus inverting the Comprehensive Approach equation to focus on NATO's value added to nonmilitary priorities.[39] In practice, the guidelines' aim is to focus not only on improved "awareness" of the threat and on providing "adequate capabilities" to address it, but also on "engaging" with other partners at the national or international level. To quote Dr. Shea again, in the future, "NATO's military organization and capabilities . . . will need to be coordinated with domestic police, health, and emergency management agencies and organizations like the European Union. So, NATO's progress in practically embracing the new challenges will depend upon its capacity for *effective networking* [emphasis added]."[40]

Against these premises, the new approach of the policy guidelines consists in providing strategic and risk-informed direction to NATO's counterterrorism activities based on clearly identified principles and value-added initiatives to enhance prevention and resilience.

As far as principles are concerned, the policy guidelines rest on three pillars: compliance with international law, NATO support to Allies, and nonduplication and complementarity.[41]

Compliance with International Law. From the United Nations (UN) Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights down to the UN Counter-Terrorism Strategy, Conventions, Protocols, and Resolutions, NATO's counterterrorism policy remains on safe ground by referencing to the UN legal framework.[42] The key message is that NATO's counterterrorism

strategy will remain firmly anchored to the principles of adherence to international rule of law and respect of human rights. Introducing compliance to international law as the first principle guiding NATO's counterterrorism policy represents not only a legal commitment, but also an important political statement of values.

NATO Support to Allies. In this case, the accent of the new policy guidelines rests on NATO's supporting role. As it has been clear from the outset in the guidelines,[43] the Alliance does not aspire to a lead role in counterterrorism, recognizing the primary responsibility of individual nations, in this case NATO's allied members, for protecting their populations and territories. This approach has been directly imported from NATO's Civil Emergency Planning, from whom the Alliance's approach to counterterrorism derives many of its principles, experience, and expertise.[44] Indicative of this "subsidiary" role is the explicit provision that NATO's support can be provided only upon specific request. There is therefore no automaticity in what NATO can do or when it can do it.[45]

Nonduplication and Complementarity. This last principle is further elaborated by the policy's commitment to coordinate and leverage NATO resources with those of other nations and international organizations. The focus of NATO activities is shifted to targeted programs and areas in which NATO has unique assets that can support Allies' efforts in the fight against terrorism. This provides the guidelines with a logical segue from defining the aim and principles of NATO's role in countering terrorism to the substance of its key areas of engagement.[46]

The guidelines accomplish this by recalling decades of NATO expertise and experience, developed in many areas such as civil defense, critical infrastructure protection, intelligence-sharing, air defense, airspace and maritime security, nonproliferation and CBRN response, special operations, and force protection.

This time, the good news introduced by the policy is not one of innovation, but one of consistency and consolidation. For many years, NATO's contribution to counterterrorism has been ancillary to "mainstream" activities. Following the 9/11 attacks, NATO's response included the decision, taken at the 2002 Prague Summit, to "adapt" the Alliance to the challenge of terrorism and make its assets and capabilities available to the fight against terrorism.[47] This has been the case, for instance, with Civil Emergency Planning (CEP), the discipline that—with the exclusion of NATO's operational engagements—has supported the Alliance's counterterrorism efforts more than any other. Specifically, the CEP contribution, in terms of CBRN response and consequence management, is the direct fallout of its civil defense role in mitigating the effects of a possible nuclear, biological, or chemical war. Equally, most of the planning capacity and advances in the area of critical infrastructure protection are due to CEP's role in supporting war

effort logistics and in ensuring the continuity of civil society. Similar considerations belong to NATO's role in air-space management and maritime security, which are immediately linked to the primary military defense mandate of the Alliance.

With the inclusion in the 2010 Strategic Concept of terrorism as one of the defining challenges of NATO's security environment, the Alliance has achieved conceptual consolidation by moving the fight against terrorism from the margins of its strategic debate to the center of its security agenda.[48] With the policy guidelines, the Alliance has achieved consolidation. The new counterterrorism guidelines close the strategy loop by bringing all counterterrorism activities under a single policy umbrella. The potential of this approach is significant if we consider that the new policy guidelines concentrate the Alliance's efforts in three areas where NATO has a long track record of success in supporting its members and partners: awareness, capabilities, and engagement.[49]

Consistent with the guidelines' ambition to cover the whole spectrum of the terrorist threat from prevention to resilience, NATO realizes the importance of shared awareness among Allies. The ability to anticipate intentions and mitigate effects of terrorist attacks depends on the capacity to understand the real nature of the terrorist threat against potential national and international targets and the vulnerabilities therein.[50] By its own nature, NATO provides a privileged forum of engagement in which Allies can carry out consultations, exchange intelligence, and share and receive assessments on the terrorist threat environment.[51] The key word in this case is trust, and admittedly there are few if any multilateral organizations and forums as reliable as NATO when it comes to sharing sensitive information and analysis. NATO's ability to make its structures and processes available to its members and partners is indeed an opportunity not to be missed.

Decades of military engagements, policy, planning, and collective defense experience make NATO a unique multiplier of Allies' and partners' capabilities. This is as valid for NATO operations as it is for the Alliance contribution to countering terrorism. Capability development and technological innovation, as a result of addressing emerging hybrid threats and facing out-of-area challenges, are not endstates. The policy guidelines recognize this, as well as NATO's value added in developing, maintaining, and providing adequate capabilities to prevent, protect against, and respond to terrorist threats on the basis of the level of ambition defined by NATO's Political Guidance. In doing so, a critical and direct connection is established between NATO's role in countering terrorism and NATO's Defense Planning Process (NDPP).[52] It is the NDPP that allows NATO to identify, develop, and muster the necessary capabilities to fulfill its missions. The NDPP represents the indispensable interface between the individual capability planning of the Allies and

NATO's security mandates. Extending the NDPP to include capabilities in support of countering terrorism ensures substance to the guidelines' policy aspirations.

The enduring and evolving nature of this effort is further reinforced by the policy commitment to maintain NATO's counterterrorism operational capacity through lessons learned; the development of training, education, and exercises based on threat scenarios; and the expansion of niche capabilities such as those available through NATO's Special Operations Headquarters (NSHQ).[53] Importantly, the inclusion of nonmilitary capabilities in support of Civil Emergency Planning or critical infrastructure protection completes the range of unique NATO assets in support of countering terrorism.[54]

At the crossroads between sharing awareness and providing capabilities stands NATO's commitment to engage with partners and the international community. At a meeting prior to the 2012 summit in Chicago, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh-Rasmussen and President Barack Obama agreed that NATO has become a hub for a global network of security partners that have served alongside NATO forces in Afghanistan, Libya, and Kosovo. Recognizing the important contributions provided by partner nations, the Secretary General and President Obama welcomed the recent decision by Allies to invite 13 partner nations to Chicago for an unprecedented meeting to discuss ways to further broaden and deepen NATO's cooperation with partner nations.[55] As NATO will look for specific areas of engagement, counterterrorism becomes an unquestionable candidate.

Committed to a holistic approach to countering terrorism, NATO places a premium on its ability to strengthen outreach and cooperation among Allies, with partners both close and far, and between international organizations, specifically the United Nations, European Union, and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).[56]

While this is no real news and NATO's archives are full of unfulfilled vows of increased cooperation and coordination, the policy guidelines introduce an element of healthy realism by remaining on the safe but reachable ground of enhanced consultations and more systematic practical cooperation with partners. Recognizing indirectly the current limits of NATO's institutional cooperation, the new policy guidelines offer to engage with partners "in accordance with existing mechanisms" and "consistently with NATO policies" in areas such as capacity-building, training, preparedness and crisis management, and scientific cooperation.[57]

Finally, the policy guidelines devote their last two paragraphs to NATO's response. The first, paragraph 13, essentially reaffirms the North Atlantic Council's authority in providing guidance to NATO's counterterrorism efforts and activities, and tasks the Terrorism Task Force to report on implementation on an annual basis.

More consequential is the last paragraph. In it, three short sentences reveal first-class policy and drafting skills by capturing the essence of four key assumptions of NATO's response to counterterrorism. First, terrorism has never been a static challenge, and NATO's efforts to counter it will remain dynamic and adaptive. Second, while recognizing the primacy of other national and international organizations, NATO will always be ready to lead counterterrorism efforts, in general or in specific areas, should the situation warrant. Third, notwithstanding the many facets of NATO's actual and potential contribution, it is Allies' capabilities that will make the difference in its response to terrorism, something that NATO defense planners will need to keep in mind when applying the concepts and principles of Smart Defense to the full spectrum of Alliance capabilities.

Fourth and final, the last 11 words of the document open and close a sensitive debate that is germane to the whole of NATO's emerging security challenges, from cyber defense to energy security: the extent to which the Article 5 collective defense commitment applies to the terrorist threat. In the case of cyber attacks, Allies have stumbled against the "attribution" hurdle. In the case of energy security, the nonmilitary nature of possible energy coercion or intimidation has led more than one Ally to question the very competence and mandate of NATO. When it comes to terrorism, both arguments may apply, with the additional temptation of setting magnitude thresholds for an attack to "be eligible" for Article 5 invocation.

In this case, however, NATO brings to the table the power of precedent. NATO has invoked Article 5 following a terrorist attack. In fact, the September 12 declaration is the only occasion in the history of the Alliance of Article 5 invocation.[58] Therefore, when the policy guidelines state, in the very last sentence, that "collective defense remains subject to decision by the North Atlantic Council," one should not be misguided in thinking that Allies have decided to delay the debate through an *if and when* approach. The contrary is true. The sheer mention of collective defense in NATO's policy guidelines on counterterrorism should be read like a stark warning to enemies and a reassurance to allies: if NATO did it once, it can do it again.

The Bad News

The overall judgment on the new policy guidelines can, and should, be positive. However, three "shadow areas" remain and will need to be clarified for the policy to express all its potential. Unsurprisingly, one of them is related to NATO cooperation, or lack thereof, with the European Union (EU). The second is a challenge common to all emerging security challenges, from nonproliferation to cyber defense: the need to reconcile the *horizontal* and cross-cutting nature of the terrorist threat with the *vertical* reality of NATO's structures. The third is the Alliance's

need to establish a clearer link between its political-military nature and the fundamentally non-military, counterterrorism constituencies within nations.

The Looming Shadow of NATO-EU Cooperation. These are the days when almost every debate on the future of NATO, European defense, or transatlantic relations writ large includes in its title "in an age of austerity." Experts concur that the lack of real cooperation between the two organizations generates the single largest waste of transatlantic defense resources, and worse, of security capital. At regular intervals, summits and ministerial communiqués call for stronger NATO-EU cooperation.[59] However, no solutions appear on the horizon due to a mix of political obstruction, bureaucratic resignation, and leadership hesitation. NATO's Chicago Summit Declaration confirms this deadlock. While recognizing the importance of strengthening the NATO-EU strategic partnership, the Chicago Declaration steers away from clear commitments or taskings, focusing instead on operational cooperation and capability development. While aspiring to "broaden political consultations," the inter-institutional dialogue has been reduced to an individual relationship between the NATO Secretary General and the EU High Representative.[60]

The accepted narrative is that NATO-EU relations work well on the ground and that the lack of strategic dialogue is compensated for by more pragmatic approaches at the operational level, from Kosovo to Afghanistan and from the Gulf of Aden to Libya. However, such an approach would be particularly risky in the realm of counterterrorism. It is clear that terrorists do not operate as self-contained individuals or groups. Be it the result of strategic partnerships or simple shared approaches,[61] the growing link among terrorist groups, insurgents, and international criminality requires a networked effort by security, law enforcement, and justice authorities at both the national and international level. The risk is that NATO-EU theater-level cooperation may not work outside NATO-led operations, where the Alliance is engaged with thousands of deployed forces. In other words, it would be extremely difficult to promote NATO-EU practical cooperation in areas such as counterterrorism, where the EU and its member states are not *demandeurs* of NATO's contribution. To make things more complicated, the policy guidelines further inhibit NATO's engagement ambitions with the EU by introducing, in footnote and in text, the condition that NATO's activities related to international organizations will be conducted "in accordance with the Comprehensive Approach Action Plan (CAAP) and the relevant decisions."[62] The reference to the CAAP is code language for another standard proviso of NATO-EU official texts known as "the agreed framework," limiting the cooperation between the two organizations to the areas and conditions determined by the Berlin Plus Agreement[63] and the related Security Agreement and Exchange of Letters.

The agreed framework de facto excludes Cyprus from any possible exchange of classified information between the two organizations.[64] On the EU side, the political and legal argument that the European Union is a "single entity" that includes Cyprus prevents variable geometry relations. The resulting deadlock does not bode well for any substantial cooperation beyond mere exchange of information on activities such as training and exercises, protection of civilian populations against CBRN attacks, and civil emergency planning.

Unfortunately, there is no easy way out of this situation and NATO and EU staffs' creativity will have to adapt to the pace of political evolution, hoping that breakthroughs are not preceded by loud explosions or images of chaos and suffering innocents.

A Round Peg in a Square Hole: The Challenges of a "Matrix Management" Approach to Counterterrorism. To segue into the second challenge the policy guidelines did not address, one could paraphrase a famous Henry Kissinger remark on Europe. The establishment of a counterterrorism section at NATO headquarters should answer the question: "Whom do I call when I want to speak to counterterrorism in NATO?" However, this leaves the door open to another European-inspired telephone joke: "Dial one for critical infrastructure protection; dial two for civil emergency planning; dial three for intelligence-sharing," and so on. In other words, the policy guidelines do not support conceptual and strategic consolidation with structural amalgamation and executive consistency. The guidelines make no reference to the existence and role of NATO's counterterrorism section and leave to the Terrorism Task Force (TTF) the task to report to council. Given that the TTF is an informal coordinating body with no real executive powers,[65] it does not introduce a "matrix management"[66] approach to NATO's counterterrorism activities.[67] NATO remains essentially a functional organization, and the policy leaves a management vacuum that reflects the enduring territorial resistance among various parts of the NATO International Staff organization and the struggle to reconcile the *horizontal* and cross-cutting nature of the terrorist threat with the *vertical* reality of NATO's structures. Unless specified elsewhere, NATO's counterterrorism section has no authority to define or at least deconflict activities and resources[68] for the execution of the policy guidelines across the NATO spectrum. To use a fitting military analogy, the guidelines do not clarify NATO's command and control structure for counterterrorism. The long-term risk of this approach is that counterterrorism activities will remain byproducts of other, predominantly military, mainstream activities of the Alliance, reducing the overall impact of NATO's counterterrorism policy.

Connecting to the Homeland Constituency. On the opposite side of the command and control spectrum sits the third unresolved challenge of NATO's policy guidelines on counterterrorism: the absence within NATO of a homeland security constituency. Currently at NATO,

only the Civil-Emergency Planning Committee and its subgroup on Civil Protection provide a forum for a number of national homeland security representatives. However, representation in these bodies is not very homogeneous, ranging from civil defense organizations, to civil protection agencies, to homeland security departments. The result is a lack of a coherent vision of the mandate of these committees and, as far as counterterrorism is concerned, the absence of authoritative national counterparts. The importance of this aspect should not be underestimated for at least two reasons. First, counterterrorism is intrinsically linked to a nation's territory and populations. Citizens expect their national and local authorities to protect their lives and property from terrorist attacks. Conversely, one of the destabilizing aims of terrorist actions is to undermine national sovereignty, seen as the government's ability to control the national territory and to guarantee security. This creates a responsibility and trust relationship between nations and their citizens that cannot—and should not—be transferred to a "third party" multinational organization. It therefore becomes crucial for NATO to establish a closer relationship between the support it provides to the counterterrorism efforts of Allies and partners and their respective populations.

The second important aspect is related to the nature of NATO as an organization. Even in its primary military defense responsibility, NATO has no direct access to all the necessary capabilities. With few exceptions, most notably for political consultations and command and control, NATO's assets and capabilities belong to its members. It is therefore not a coincidence that its planning process (the NDPP) represents one of the pillars of its integrated military structure. Through the NDPP, nations coordinate and apportion their capabilities to the Alliance's level of ambition. In case of need, a Transfer of Authority (ToA) mechanism allows national forces to fall under the control of NATO's Supreme Commander. In recent years, as a result of NATO's operational experience and the development of a comprehensive approach to operations, the NDPP was expanded to include selected nonmilitary capabilities, mainly in the area of logistics, stabilization, and reconstruction. However, no provisions have been implemented concerning the possible transfer of these capabilities under NATO command should a situation warrant. If and when they are made available by national organizations, civilian capabilities will always remain under national control. This requires a considerable effort to ensure national contributions to NATO's requirements,[69] and this challenge would extend also to counterterrorism assets. While the policy guidelines succeed in establishing a fundamental link between NATO's counterterrorism capabilities and the NDPP, they fall short of creating the equally important nexus between NATO and those organizations responsible for implementing national policies and controlling national assets. Mediated access through NATO's Defense Policy and Planning

Committee, the Deputy Permanent Representatives Committee, or the Policy and Partnership Committee would load this relationship with the burden and challenges of national interagency processes.

More Good News?

None of these shortcomings should belittle the contribution of the policy guidelines on counterterrorism efforts to NATO's continuous transformation process into a collective security organization. The mere fact that the Allies reached consensus on a role for NATO in countering terrorism is possibly the best news of all, irrespective of the caveats and nuances included in the guidelines.

More importantly, the guidelines jump-started a dynamic process that will culminate with the development of an "Action Plan to further enhance NATO's ability to prevent, deter and respond to terrorism" through initiatives that will improve NATO's threat awareness, capabilities, and engagement.[70] As work on the Action Plan progresses along these lines, many ongoing activities, already mentioned by the policy itself, will be consolidated into a single consistent program. Others will require new approaches and initiatives, and in identifying these, NATO policymakers have the opportunity to design new activities and adapt structures to optimize NATO's contribution to counterterrorism.

Awareness, capability, and engagement are mutually reinforcing dimensions of a broad counterterrorism effort. Partnerships multiply these capabilities and increase international awareness. Shared intelligence and strategic communications require outreach. Training and education are the result of continuous analysis and assessment. Naturally, some initiatives will fall under one category or the other. However, the opposite is also true. Much of NATO's value added in countering terrorism rests in the Alliance ability to bring together awareness, capabilities, and engagement so that the total is larger than the sum of its parts.

In line with these considerations, this report will focus on six cross-cutting proposals that should find their way into the Action Plan. The table on page 19 summarizes the potential value added of the proposals to the three dimensions of NATO's counterterrorism policy guidelines.

Apply Net Assessment to Counterterrorism. Shared awareness is a critical component of any counterterrorism strategy. We need to understand the terrorists' motives and anticipate their intentions if we are to plan effective prevention and response campaigns. We need to also be aware of our societal and material vulnerabilities to design effective mitigation and resilience plans. More importantly, all these components must be cross-analyzed to identify weaknesses, allocate resources, and create opportunities. This exercise of comparative analysis is inspired by

Table. Counterterrorism Policy Guidelines Key Areas and Potential Value Added			
	Awareness	**Capabilities**	**Engagement**
Net Assessment	Increased shared awareness and prevention. Develop scenarios and assess impact of terrorist threat.	Feed CT-related capabilities into NATO Defense Planning Process.	Collaborative effort involving CTS, SAC, IU, CCOMC, ACT, DAT-CoE, nations. Training and exercises.
Strategic Communications	Increased shared awareness and prevention. Effective messaging.	ACT Human Environment Capabilities project.	Outreach to ACT, DAT-CoE, HUMINT CoE, civil and military expertise, and public opinion.
Homeland Security Constituency/ Executive Role for the Terrorism Task Force	Homeland Security Committee. Engage national civil CT authorities in Ally and partner nations.	Feed CT-related capabilities into NATO Defense Planning Process. Access to national civil resources.	Engage national civil CT authorities in Ally and partner nations. Best practices. Training and exercises.
Border Security Initiative	Increased information-sharing among participants.	Maritime security operations. Support FRONTEX, OSCE, and UNODC.	Capacity-building. Best practices. Practical engagement with the EU.
Post-ISAF Counterterrorism Partnership Framework	Increased shared awareness and prevention. Coordinate strategies.	Capacity-building. Resource multiplier. Feed CT-related capabilities into NATO Defense Planning Process. Transfer COIN experience into CT.	Innovative "functional" partnership framework. Over 50 Allies and partners. Best practices. Training and exercises.
Participate in GCTF	Increased shared awareness and prevention. Coordinated strategies.	Resource multiplier. Innovative solutions.	Over 30 nations + EU involved. Opportunity to engage indirectly with EU. Best practices. Capacity-building. Training and exercises.

the concept of Net Assessment, developed in the United States during the Cold War to "provide an even-handed look at both sides of complex military competitions."[71] While applying Net Assessment to asymmetric threats such as terrorism in a multilateral environment is a complex effort, it has the potential to yield significant results for NATO's contribution to countering terrorism. Successful Net Assessment is the synthesis of close-hold and open source data. It relies on intelligence input, expert analysis, and public information. In this respect, NATO is most certainly a privileged environment where intelligence-sharing, cross-cutting expertise, and lessons learned come together. Threat and vulnerability scenarios can be developed in support of national preparedness efforts and multinational exercises designed to improve responses and consequence management.

The policy guidelines have already indicated that enhanced intelligence-sharing and strategic analysis will be at the center of NATO's strategy. The Alliance has greatly improved the quantity and quality of its intelligence analysis through a reform that culminated in 2010 with the establishment of the Intelligence Steering Board (ISB) and the creation of an Intelligence Unit (IU) at NATO headquarters. Downstream from intelligence, NATO's Strategic Analysis Capability has introduced Net Assessment methodologies in staff work, although its focus is still more "geographical" than functional. A number of NATO organizations, such as the headquarters' Situation Center and the Allied Command Operations' Civil-Military Fusion Center have the ability to collect and combine large amounts of open-source information. Greater effort should go to ensuring that all these assets work together consistently and coherently.

The Action Plan should ensure that coordinated net assessments of the global terrorist threat and of NATO's response (and potential responses) are produced on a yearly basis. These reports should also become the basis for designing regular counterterrorism training and exercises and act as an authoritative contribution to the NDPP.

Develop Effective Counterterrorism Strategic Communications. The policy guidelines contemplate strategic communications as a contribution to "promote common understanding of [NATO's] counterterrorism role as part of a broader international effort."[72] As important and innovative as it is to increase a shared awareness of NATO's contribution, the role of strategic communications in NATO's counterterrorism efforts should not be limited to mere outreach.

As a means to an end, terrorism is often used to spread a destabilizing message. Its impact on public opinion is immediate. Social media and the 24/7 news cycle provide terrorists with unprecedented opportunities to disseminate their narrative, boast about their successes, and expose their victims' vulnerabilities. Media coverage of terrorist acts becomes an unintentional

ally of terrorist groups, forcing national and international authorities into defensive postures to maintain public confidence and support.

In countering terrorism, much like countering insurgency, strategic communications become the instrument to fight for and win public opinion.[73] Terrorist actions and rhetoric aim to provoke overreactions that undermine the authorities' credibility and weaken the democratic foundations of nations. The counterterrorism message must be unwavering and unequivocal. Above all, it should be credible. NATO should develop a Counterterrorism Strategic Communications Strategy that speaks with equal force to Allies' public opinion and to possible adversaries. As counterterrorism and counterinsurgency share methodologies and lessons learned, NATO's experience in marshalling public support within and for its operations could be an asset in countering terrorists' propaganda. Mindful of General David Petraeus's "under-promise and over-deliver" guidance for Afghanistan,[74] NATO's Counterterrorism Strategic Communications Strategy should bring together the doctrinal and conceptual contributions of NATO's Center of Excellence for the Defense Against Terrorism (CoE/DAT) in Ankara, Turkey,[75] as well as those of national civilian counterterrorism organizations. In doing so, NATO must engage with its target audience in a two-way communications process through "strategic listening" opportunities.[76] NATO's Allied Command Transformation project on Human Environment Capabilities is a clear example of the importance of bringing together strategic communications, civil-military interaction, cultural advisors, and the Comprehensive Approach when facing emerging security challenges.[77]

Establish a Homeland Security Constituency in NATO and Foster the Executive Role of the Terrorism Task Force. Elsewhere in this paper, the lack of a "homeland security" constituency at NATO and the challenges of applying matrix management to counterterrorism have been described as policy shortfalls with possible negative effects not only on the process, but also on the substance of NATO's contribution to countering terrorism. This is valid at the decisionmaking and executive levels. The guidance does not identify or indicate which NATO bodies will receive delegated authority from the North Atlantic Council to oversee the implementation of the policy. In parallel, at staff level, NATO headquarters' Terrorism Task Force is only tasked to report on implementation.[78] Execution remains the responsibility of functional divisions, such as Operations, overseeing civil emergency planning activities; Political Affairs and Security Policy, responsible for political dialogue and outreach; Defense Policy and Planning, in charge of capability planning; and Defense Investment, leading on armament planning and procurement. This functional approach applied to counterterrorism raises a challenge of ambiguous authority.[79] Even with a well-defined Action Plan, the resources and efforts of these

divisions will focus on their primary functions and customers, to the detriment of NATO's counterterrorism effort.

In a recent article, NATO's Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges, Ambassador Gabor Iklody, stated that NATO "must work to break down the bureaucratic stovepipes that stand in the way of consistent action."[80] The cross-functional nature of today's emerging security challenges calls for a new and more decisive application of the matrix management principles to disciplines such as cyber defense or counterterrorism. Matrix environments are more conducive to innovation and cross-pollination but require clarity of roles and reporting structures.

To support this transformation and minimize risks for NATO's role in countering terrorism, the Action Plan should propose two distinct management solutions.

First, establish a Homeland Security Committee (HSC) under the direct authority of the North Atlantic Council. Unpopular as it may sound in an age of austerity and organizational rationalization, unless an HSC is established at NATO, the Alliance will not be able to engage with authoritative national counterparts and effectively deliver a value-added contribution to the global counterterrorism effort. Under the authority of the HSC, the network provided by NATO's Civil Emergency Planning could be more fully realized to plug into national civilian organizations and resources.

Second, define clear Terms of Reference for the Terrorism Task Force that elevate the body at the Assistant Secretary General level to act as a *matrix guardian* to ensure that the principles of matrix management are applied correctly[81] and include tasking and oversight authority over the implementation of the Action Plan. The Chairman of the TTF should also be the Chair of the Homeland Security Committee to ensure dialogue, transparency, and accountability between staff action and policy decisions. On behalf of the TTF, the counterterrorism section should become NATO's executive agent for counterterrorism-related issues. Its mandate should include an advisory role for counterterrorism resource requirements and allocation.

Promote a NATO Border Security Initiative. The nexus between terrorist groups and criminal networks has further blurred the lines between national responsibility and international response. The patterns of illicit trafficking and proliferation activities overlap with illegal immigration routes and international criminal hubs. Inevitably, sovereign prerogatives and national border controls grow at odds with the global nature of the terrorist threat. Ungoverned and undergoverned spaces on the margins of NATO's territory—from North Africa to the Balkans—expose large parts of Europe to the risk of penetration by terrorist groups, many of whom tailor their logistics to fit the different legislative frameworks.[82] In 2011, NATO's Allied Maritime Strategy rec-

ognized that the world's seas are an increasingly accessible environment for transnational criminal and terrorist activities,[83] and included support to law enforcement and preventing the transport and deployment of weapons of mass destruction among the roles of NATO maritime security.[84] NATO assets and contributions in patrolling the maritime environment are well known. Today's global financial challenges advocate smarter approaches to pooling capabilities and managing resources. NATO should encourage the launch of a Border Security Initiative (BSI) as a way to increase its value added in an area that is critical to Alliance efforts in countering terrorism and promote closer engagement with partners, especially the European Union and OSCE. The BSI should follow the same template offered by the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)[85] as a flexible and voluntary framework for participating nations to share information, enhance individual and collective capabilities, and promote capacity-building. Its focus should be on disrupting illegal immigration and trafficking networks, supporting interdiction efforts, collecting and sharing lessons learned, and developing best practices. The BSI would also offer NATO an indirect opportunity to cooperate with, and support, the European border protection agency, FRONTEX.[86] As FRONTEX is dependent on voluntary commitments by the EU member states, NATO cooperation through a BSI has the potential to complement European capacities and increase the effectiveness of FRONTEX operations.

Develop a "Functional" Counterterrorism Partnership Framework. The history of NATO demonstrates the Alliance's unparalleled capacity to form and sustain operational coalitions. The consistence and duration of ISAF, with more than 50 participating nations and over 10 years of operations, or the speed with which NATO has assembled a coalition around Operation *Unified Protector* in regard to Libya, are but two testimonies of NATO's partnership vocation. It is therefore not a coincidence that two of the most tangible deliverables of NATO's summit in Chicago in May 2012 are partnerships-related. The first, which is intrinsic to ISAF, is NATO's successful effort in persuading "ISAF nations [to] reaffirm their enduring commitment to Afghan security beyond 2014."[87] In other words, ISAF partners will continue to work together even after their combat troops have left Afghanistan. The second, more explicit deliverable was a meeting with 13 NATO operational partners.[88] Indeed, in this case, the form not the substance of the meeting was the true deliverable since it indicated a new way to enhance partnership cooperation within NATO.

The significance of these two decisions is a confirmation that partnerships are a key element of the Cooperative Security paradigm and of the growing post-ISAF notion of the Alliance as the ultimate operational enabler.[89] It is not a coincidence that in assessing the Chicago Summit, Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall, Senior Director for Europe at the National Security Council,

reiterated President Obama's vision of NATO as the emerging hub of a network of global security partners. In her words, "although NATO is regionally-based, we face global challenges, and so partners can play an increasingly important role in ensuring that the Allies can advance their shared interests."[90] Against this backdrop, counterterrorism becomes an immediate candidate to integrate partners more fully into NATO activities and a new functional Counterterrorism Partnership Framework (CTPF) could provide natural continuity to the deep operational relationship developed with partners through a decade of cooperation in Afghanistan.

The CTPF should move beyond the platform provided by NATO's Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism to become a peer-to-peer counterterrorism forum along the conceptual lines illustrated by the Connected Forces Initiative introduced at Chicago.[91] CTPF should not be an "element" of other partnership initiatives but an example of NATO's enhanced flexibility to address partnership issues in a demand- and substance-driven way.[92] The CTPF would be self-selecting and organized along the principles of voluntary participation, active contribution (including financial), and functional commitment. In return, the CTPF would allow for more inclusive decisionmaking mechanisms beyond the current Political-Military Framework regulating partners' participation in NATO-led operations.[93] Through the CTPF, Allies and partners would bolster NATO as a standard-setting and -enabling platform by bringing together regional approaches and functional solutions.[94] Above all, the CTPF would allow NATO to preserve and expand its outreach to Asia-Pacific partners who have proven crucial in Afghanistan and will be central to facing emerging security challenges.

Contribute to the Global Counterterrorism Forum. NATO should also contribute to existing communities of interest working on specific counterterrorism initiatives, and in particular to the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) launched in September 2011.[95] Cochaired by the United States and Turkey, the GCTF recognizes that countering terrorism requires a truly global approach and aims at establishing network-like, dynamic international cooperation to counter terrorism. While facilitating information exchange, the GCTF is intended to improve international and national coordination of counterterrorism efforts and knowledge exchange. Activity of the GCTF is organized around five working groups addressing various related issues such as border security, capacity-building, and the support of weak states and countering radicalization and extremism.[96] NATO's participation in the GCTF would enhance the relevance of the Alliance's counterterrorism efforts and bring NATO's expertise and experience to the forum.

In principle, NATO's involvement in the GCTF should not be controversial. GCTF cochairs are NATO Allies. Of the 30 GCTF founding members, only Nigeria, China, Colombia,

and South Africa do not engage in cooperation or in some sort of dialogue with NATO. The presence of the European Union[97] among the GCTF members should not be a showstopper given Turkey's cochairmanship of the forum.[98] Opposition by either of these members to NATO's participation in GCTF activities would be difficult to justify politically. Even the argument, common to all emerging security challenges, that NATO's involvement would imply a *militarization* of the issue is unconvincing when applied to counterterrorism. The militarization of terrorism has long preceded any involvement of national or international armed forces or the global War on Terror. Local terrorists have always borrowed tactics and techniques from asymmetric warfare. Insurgents have often joined forces with international terrorism. From training camps to improvised explosive devices, from recruitment to command and control, and to the use of failed, weak, or rogue states, history tells us that the militarization of terrorism is a tactical reality and that denying it would be a strategic mistake. In other words, NATO's engagement with the GCTF is an opportunity neither party should miss.

On a practical level, NATO could contribute to the GCTF while maintaining a low profile. For example, it could participate in selected activities as an observer in accordance with the GCTF assumption that "regional and sub-regional bodies, and non-government experts, will be invited to participate in the appropriate working group(s) and/or working group activities."[99] Capacity-building, training and exercises, research and technology, best practices, and lessons learned are all areas where NATO has the potential to add value.

Conclusion

The six initiatives mentioned above are only a few examples of the many areas and activities that the Action Plan will have to cover. From intelligence-sharing to capacity-building, from SOF to training, technology, and capabilities, the new NATO policy guidelines mark the beginning of a new phase of NATO's engagement in countering terrorism. However, these initiatives may well be necessary conditions to place counterterrorism at the center of NATO's post-ISAF agenda and NATO at the forefront of the international counterterrorism effort. This does not mean that NATO seeks a leading counterterrorism role, and the policy guidelines are very clear in this respect. Rather, it means that NATO's contribution should be acknowledged and accepted for the added value it brings to the common endeavors. Eleven years after 9/11 and the commencement of operations in Afghanistan, the Allies have come to accept the notion that NATO cannot be the main player in countering terrorism, but it is a player nonetheless.

By recalling the Alliance's many achievements, the policy guidelines formulate a compelling argument for NATO's continued role in counterterrorism and indicate the way ahead. In